

**MANLINESS AND THE ENGLISH SOLDIER
IN THE ANGLO-BOER WAR 1899-1902:
THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME**

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To Jim, who inspired me to study history

ABSTRACT

This thesis uses the Victorian ideology of chivalric manliness to explain the class-oriented army hierarchy developed by volunteer soldiers from northern England during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. Newspaper reports, advertising, and popular fiction reveal a public mythology of imperial manliness and neo-chivalric ideals that was transferred onto civilian volunteers, creating an ideal warrior that satisfied a thirst for honour. This mythology created a world view in which northern communities, once supporters of the burgeoning peace movement, became committed supporters of parochial units of volunteer soldiers that fought in the newly expanded army. Soldiers' letters and diaries reveal that ingrained ideals of manliness and chivalry led to class-differentiated hierarchies within the army that mirrored those in civilian life. Contrary to the conclusions of some current historians, the Regular soldier remained in his traditional place at the bottom of the army structure, so that "the more things change, the more they remain the same."

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INTRODUCTION

Late Victorian England experienced rapidly changing social conditions that created a “crisis in masculinity,” and resulted in the creation of a cult of imperial manliness that was transmitted through public schools and literature. By late century this cult incorporated neo-chivalric warrior imagery based on a juxtaposition of sporting manliness and English honour, which resulted in distinct hierarchies of manliness that reinforced traditional societal structure. In parts of England an apparent subscription to pacifist ideals co-existed uneasily with the belief that manliness required a form of heroic patriotism. This was particularly marked in the northern county of Lancashire, where a strong peace movement gave way to strong support for the area’s volunteer soldiers, a shift in allegiance that, for the historian, raises issues involving the ideology of manliness and its function in peace and war.

The Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 affords a unique opportunity to study English social and individual attitudes towards manliness. Beginning in late 1899, the British began a new program of enlisting civilians to form volunteer units that fought alongside the regular army and then returned to civilian life after one to two years in South Africa.¹ Some of these men, from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, wrote letters or kept diaries chronicling their thoughts and experiences as soldiers, thereby providing a rich resource for the examination of individual attitudes and prejudices about war, class, and masculine ideals.

Studies to date on both the Anglo-Boer War and pacifism have tended to be

¹ See Appendix I for composition of the army. Throughout this thesis, “volunteers” will be a general term used when referring to all components of the new temporary army; the specific terms “Volunteers” and “Imperial Yeomen” will be used when distinguishing between corps is necessary. Further discussion of these two entities can be found in Chapter Two: Soldiers.

chronological assessments of events and developments. While researchers have used the First World War to investigate changing social attitudes toward soldiers and warfare, the Anglo-Boer War has been neglected, remaining largely represented as a capitalist war brought about by the political maneuvering of a small number of individuals.

Comprehensive war histories revolve around battles and generals, rarely mentioning and certainly not evaluating the radical change in War Office policy that resulted in civilians being enlisted as short-term soldiers and officers. Focusing on the Anglo-Boer War in the limited manner of traditional narrative excludes the study of social and individual attitudes that existed before and during the developmental stages of the war, and precludes the integration of an examination of masculine identity into the social and political events of the war.

This thesis will argue that a public focus on honour in the chivalric tradition created artificial hierarchies within the army in which manliness was a defining construct and will challenge the assumption that the incorporation of civilians into the temporarily expanded army of 1900-1902 transformed the social construction of a manly ideal throughout England. A sub-theme of this thesis will be the relationship between manliness and the peace movement of the 1890s. Devotion to the chivalric tradition resulted in a decline of the previously significant peace movement of the north, an indication that the Victorian cult of imperial manliness was deeply ingrained in northern culture.

While the peace movement is not a contentious historical issue, historians have studied its development from a religious to a secular and political movement emphasizing the changing demographic and gender involvement of the participants, but ignoring the

impact that the Anglo-Boer war had upon public subscription to pacifist ideals. The popularity of the peace movement in northern England should have created ideological problems for the public once their men were called upon to join England's temporary army; that it did not is worth consideration.

The term pacifism was not in use until 1901; the very date of its inception implies that English attitudes toward the Anglo-Boer War were significant and that pacifist beliefs were important to a large segment of the population.² The peace movement, as it was called prior to the Anglo-Boer War, was a predominantly religious movement in the early to mid-Victorian period.³ War appears to have been a catalyst for the growth of the movement so that during the half-century of small wars beginning with the Crimean War, secular peace groups developed. After the first "Boer War" of 1880-81, a number of these groups began to exert political pressure on Parliament so that by the time of the Anglo-Boer war of 1899 the peace movement had become a political issue widely supported in England's north. Highly volatile peace meetings were held throughout England, with massive support from the public in the Manchester and Lancashire areas.⁴ The *Manchester Guardian* supported the peace movement in its editorials and political affiliation, and peace meetings all over the north were written up in local and district newspapers.

Belief in the peace ideology may explain the singular lack of interest in war

² Charles Chatfield, "Thinking about Peace in History" in *The Pacifist Impulse in Historical Perspective*, ed. Harvey L. Dyck (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 37.

³ For the development of pacifism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from various perspectives see Katherine Berkman, Peter Brock, Martin Ceadel, Charles Chatfield, Harvey L. Dyck, David Martin, and Anne Wiltsher. Full citations in bibliography.

⁴ The north formed a traditionally strong base of support for peace groups. A Crimean soldier had written in 1854 that there were a number of soldiers from Manchester, "although that town is noted for its peace principles." Cited in Roy Palmer, *The Rambling Soldier: Life in the Lower Ranks 1750-1900 Through Soldiers' Songs and Writings* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1977), 200.

matters in the fall of 1899, but contrasts sharply with massive press and community support for the high numbers of men who volunteered in 1900. Prior to January 1900, soldiers from the Lancashire and Yorkshire counties received scant and often dismissive press coverage, but the new volunteers were hailed as heroes, suggesting a radical change in public allegiance at this point.⁵

Historian Richard Price suggests that men volunteered for monetary reasons, rather than patriotic fervour that would have contradicted their pacifist ideals.⁶ This would seem unlikely for northern volunteers of 1900, as these men were largely from the employed middle class and skilled labouring class. Sociologist David Copp, in *Morality, Normativity and Society* (1995), offers a model applicable to motivation that offers an alternate explanation consistent with the apparent paradox of co-existing pacifism and patriotism.⁷

Copp theorizes that “belief in” a standard is not the same as “subscription to” a standard, and that the relationship between belief and subscription is a function of social stability. Motivation is “internal” to the state of subscribing to a moral standard even though it is “external” to the state of believing in a moral proposition.⁸ Belief in a philosophy of pacifism can, therefore, under the right conditions, be superseded by subscription to an overriding philosophy. In this case, insight into the decline of public support for the peace movement can be attained by examining the relationship between

⁵ Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1972), 17-232. Price offers the potentially confusing information that while civilian working class men were almost universally against the war, this same group comprised the largest proportion of volunteer recruits.

⁶ Price, as above.

⁷ This model is simplified here, for brevity. For deeper contributing rationalizations for war support in pacifist personalities, see Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Pimlico, 1976), 202-03.

⁸ David Copp, *Morality, Normativity and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4.

the growth of a neo-chivalric movement and public perceptions of manliness during a time of political instability.

Studies of masculinity have been far more comprehensive than studies of the Anglo-Boer War, but have focused on civilian men in the public/domestic spheres. There has been little interest in the pre-World War One soldier as a focus for studying the complex interplay of social and personal attitudes towards masculinity. Masculinity, however, carries the connotation of a relationship to the feminine, creating difficulties in a study of men and their relationship to other men.⁹ Manliness, a subset of masculinity related to homosocial groups such as the army, was the referential point through which soldiers were evaluated both by the community and by one another, and given a place in the artificial hierarchy that resulted once temporary soldiers were introduced into the paradigm.

The hysterical enthusiasm with which Victorian England sent off its volunteer forces serves as a beginning point for evaluating late nineteenth century manliness as a social construct related to Empire and the Anglo-Boer War. Manliness and masculinity in the Victorian period have been studied in their everyday context of home, school, work, clubs, and games, and the possibility for adding to this relational analysis is provided in the circumstances of the volunteers, as these men could no longer be regarded purely as civilians, but neither were they soldiers in the traditional sense.

Regular soldiers' conceptions of manliness were both class oriented and hierarchically moulded so that the addition of auxiliary forces to regiments of northern factory communities enabled a reconstruction of the familiar social structure of the

⁹ This concept will be discussed in detail in Chapter One: Constructing Manliness.

factory. Manliness in Victorian social discourse was a conflation of individual and community conceptions dependent upon pre-existing standards, and expressed in forms familiar along the masculine/feminine continuum. Volunteers, composed of the labour aristocracy and middle class, and the traditionally elite Imperial Yeomanry, were the Regular soldier's social superiors during peace time and remained so during war.

The last thirty years have seen numerous scholarly studies on masculinity. Throughout this body of work, historians have tended to confuse masculinity and manliness, using the terms as substitutes for one another when in fact they are complements. Martin Francis, in a recent article discussing current publications on masculinity, makes the point that masculinity is about gender, and manliness about men's behaviour as gendered beings.¹⁰ Masculinity and manliness, therefore, have relational identities but not equal connotations, and can be studied independently of one another.¹¹

In this paper, manliness will refer to the relationship between men in a homosocial environment such as the army during the Victorian period.¹² Masculinity will be understood as a relational construct understandable only in juxtaposition and sometimes opposition to femininity. Distinguishing between the two is necessary to understand the complicated permutations of male social and individual identity that will be studied in terms of the army and social attitudes towards these men before and during the war.

Manful Assertions: Masculine Identities in Britain since 1800 (1991), an edited

¹⁰ Martin Francis, "The Domestication of the Male? Recent research on 19th and 20th Century British masculinity," *Historical Journal* 45, (September 2002): 637.

¹¹ Francis, 634-637. This will be discussed in Chapter One: Constructing Manliness. For a more thorough discussion, see Sheila Bannerman, "Masculinity and Manliness: a case of mistaken identity?" (essay, University of Lethbridge, 2003).

¹² Homosocial environments are those in which boys and men create and participate in artificially single-sexed groups with distinct boundaries separating them from traditionally female areas of influence and control. Such groups will be discussed in detail in the section on manliness.

text by Michael Roper and John Tosh, has been widely accepted as a “landmark” in the study of masculinity in Victorian Britain.¹³ Roper and Tosh demonstrate that by the 1880s masculinity was an uncertain construct whether in the home or in public, possibly as a result of the changing roles of women and their increasingly public identities. If a concrete sense of being masculine was dependent upon knowing what it was to be feminine, the uncertainty is understandable. In direct response to masculine uncertainty, manliness and the male homosocial environment began to gain importance. Private clubs devoted to both politics and leisure became a symbol of the isolation of manly pursuits from home pursuits and became common ground for all classes of men.¹⁴ In this environment, according to Tosh, the ideology of imperial manliness was a dominant discourse among white, middle-class Englishmen.¹⁵

This discourse incorporated the public school games ethic, an established viewpoint documented particularly well by historians James Mangan, John Springhall and James Walvin. In *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (1981) Mangan describes the games cult as the procreator of a hard-headed Victorian manly ideal involving “success, aggression and ruthlessness, yet victory within the rules, courtesy in triumph, and compassion for the defeated.”¹⁶ Mangan’s analysis continues in *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (1986), providing a convincing argument for a pervasive dissemination of imperial ideals. In *Manliness and*

¹³ Francis, 638. Many texts concur with Francis; the work of Roper and Tosh is cited regularly and deferentially.

¹⁴ John Tosh, “Domesticity and Manliness,” in *Manful Assertions: Masculine Identities in Britain since 1800*, ed. Michael Roper and John Tosh (London: Routledge, 1991), 65-68. It should be noted that clubs were specific to occupation or class.

¹⁵ Tosh, 68.

¹⁶ James Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 135. For Anglo-Boer War literature, see later in this introduction.

Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940 (1987), a collection of essays co-edited by Mangan and James Walvin, neither the authors nor the editors attempt to define manliness, leaving considerable room for interpretation. This is particularly difficult in terms of parallels drawn between middle and working class Britons, in which they describe a form of “social osmosis” through which the working class absorbed manly ideals.¹⁷

The discourse of manliness within the working class has been less well studied than that of the middle class, possibly because of the lack of written material produced by a traditionally less literate portion of society. After the 1870 Education Act, literacy levels increased, working class men joined clubs and colleges, and by 1899, working class volunteer recruits were literate writers of letters and diaries chronicling their South Africa experience.¹⁸ This material is valuable, but the lack of earlier material for comparison and contrast means that the historian must tread carefully when drawing conclusions based upon limited sources. With this in mind, historian George L. Mosse, in *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (1996), places the individual/group construction of manliness in a rationally deduced perspective where manliness can be seen as a goal of the individual, attained through association with and in relation to, a group.¹⁹ This theory, in conjunction with F.M.L. Thompson’s thesis of working class individuality, provides direction for assessing primary source documents from the Anglo-

¹⁷ J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 2.

¹⁸ Price, 198.

¹⁹ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 1996), 5.

Boer War period in terms of a working class discourse of manliness.²⁰

Recruitment practices in the Anglo-Boer War created a soldier distinctly different from those in any modern war fought previously by the British; soldiers and officers were drawn from all segments of society for contract periods of one year, in some cases extended to two. These temporary soldiers entered their period of service with clearly idealistic attitudes toward war, honour, and glory reflected in war reporting and in the public image of the soldier as a manly entity. Historians John M. Mackenzie, Glenn R. Wilkinson, and Penny Summerfield, among others, have posited that the Regular soldier had become a socially acceptable individual by the time of the Anglo-Boer War, and that the integrated structure of the newly expanded army resulted in a more manly image for both the working class man and the Regular soldier.²¹ Their work focuses on sources produced in the London area, but sources referring to and produced by soldiers in the north of England reveal that there, manliness was a static construct unchanged by new systems of recruitment. Studying the north reveals that the word “soldier” had several meanings and many connotations, and that the London press, community, and volunteer corps are not a suitably representative community from which to draw general conclusions about the relationship between community and soldiers, or among soldiers

²⁰ F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain 1830-1900* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), passim. Thompson hypothesizes that the working classes were not so much coerced into adopting middle-class values as they were conscious borrowers and adapters, incorporating what best fit into an already established moral and cultural social structure.

²¹ John Mackenzie discusses the “favourable and acceptable face of the soldier everywhere” in *Popular Imperialism and the Military*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 4. Glenn Wilkinson uses advertising images before and during the Anglo-Boer War to support his thesis that soldiers were elevated to “heroic status” in “‘To the Front’: British Advertising and the Boer War” in John Mackenzie, ed. *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 205; and Penny Summerfield views the increased frequency of the soldier as a cultural icon as an example of increased esteem in “Patriotism and Empire Music Hall Entertainment 1870-1914” in Mackenzie, *Imperialism*, 17-48.

themselves.

Early news reports, advertising, and literature pertaining to the war subjected the army to daily public scrutiny. Weak attempts were made to equate Regular soldiers with chivalric warriors, consistent with the late Victorian neo-chivalric obsession that was promulgated through the public school muscular Christian ideal, and through popular literature for boys. After several serious defeats, auxiliary recruits were added to the army, all pretence of regarding Regulars as honourable and manly was dropped, and soldiers themselves settled into familiar hierarchies that excluded the Regular soldier from a respectable position. Whatever respect he appeared to have gained was, therefore, temporary and illusory.

In order to use the Anglo-Boer War as the backdrop for a study of masculinity and pacifist attitudes, a basic understanding of the events of the War, and the raising and disposition of the volunteer troops is necessary. Thomas Pakenham's comprehensive history *The Boer War* (1979) includes a detailed and critical assessment of primary sources, integrating this material into a well-constructed chronological history of the war.²² Pakenham concentrates on the political and military history of the war itself, so that the raising of volunteer troops is not discussed in depth. Will Bennett, in *Absent-Minded Beggars: Volunteers in the Boer War* (1999) fills this void, although in a much less scholarly format, and Hugh Cunningham's *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (1975) provides the social context for the public enthusiasm that accompanied the inclusion of Volunteers into the army. Price discusses with scholarly rigour the link between social class, volunteering and attitudes towards the

²² Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London: George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979).

Anglo-Boer War.²³

In general, histories of the volunteers tend to focus on several high profile companies formed in London and the surrounding counties, rejoicing in the class equality that seems to have been achieved, particularly in the celebrated City of London Imperial Volunteers (CIV). Contemporary war correspondents, too, shortsightedly accepted the CIV as the standard by which volunteer enlistment and service could be evaluated. Most war correspondents represented London papers, with the significant exception of John Black Atkins of the *Manchester Guardian*; thus the London public has come to represent the English public in studies of the Anglo-Boer War, and English soldiers as a group are generally assumed to have demonstrated the patriotic enthusiasm and class intermixing typical of London area volunteers.

The mill and mining towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire differed in socio-economic structure from the agricultural or cosmopolitan areas usually represented in Anglo-Boer War studies. In class terminology, these communities can be comfortably situated in middle class and (employed) working class with respect to occupational and social structure.²⁴ The departure from traditional enlistment practices and army structure provides a concrete construct for studying masculinity and pacifism from a new perspective. The focus on social reactions to war and soldiering contained in this thesis complements Price's study of the economic impulses that drove volunteers and

²³ Pakenham; Will Bennett, *Absent Minded Beggars: Yeomanry and Volunteers in the Boer War* (South Yorkshire: Leo Cooper, 1999); Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (Connecticut: Archon, 1975), and Price, cited above.

²⁴ This is clearly demonstrated throughout Price and in Patrick Joyce, *Work, Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Later Victorian England* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980), *passim*. For the purposes of this paper I have relied upon a combination of class theory as proposed by David Cannadine in *Class in Britain* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1998) and John Benson in *The Working Class in Britain 1850-1939* (London: Tauris, 2003) and Price.

communities to support the war in terms of an important segment of the English population.

Men who had never fought or been trained in army discipline served as temporary soldiers, carrying civilian preconceptions into the war and soldierly attitudes out. Letters, journals, newspaper reports and official records reveal public and private ideals and motivations that, analyzed for content, allow the researcher to interpolate and integrate the relationship between regular and volunteer soldiers into a study of manliness transferred (how the community saw the soldier) and manliness inferred (how soldiers saw themselves and each other).

Content analysis requires that a relationship be determined between what was written, what was meant, and what was read. Letters may reflect both what the individual soldier thought and what he thought the recipient would want to read. Letters are critical primary sources, especially when balanced with the material contained in diaries, as diaries may have been more likely to contain thoughts that the soldier would not express to others. Many letters, though, were remarkably frank, containing detailed descriptions of battles, blood, and death, and not refraining from criticizing army systems and soldiers' superiors.

Importantly, there was no mail censorship, which created a loophole through which journalists could provide uncensored reports.²⁵ Stories sent over the wire services were subject to strict censorship, often capricious and dependent upon a senior officer's mood. Letters were a way of writing freely, but present a problem for the historian wishing to examine soldier's letters. Journalists' "letters" were usually unsigned, and

²⁵ Stephen Badsey, "War Correspondents in the Boer War" in *The Boer War: Direction, Image and Experience*, ed. John Gooch. (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 192.

often contained “what the public wanted to believe.”²⁶ Once the scam was recognized, many newspapers ceased publishing these accounts, and the *Aldershot Gazette*, published at the Aldershot military training facility, even published a note assuring the reader that all letters published were signed and authentic and inviting any doubters to drop in and peruse the originals.²⁷

Letters published in the Lancashire county *Adlington Chronicle* were almost always signed, and often named the recipient and noted his/her relationship to the writer. Not infrequently, the address of either the recipient or the home address of the soldier was also published, so that there can be little doubt as to the authenticity of letters published. It is unlikely that all letters submitted were published, but the published selection does at least provide a sample that represents volunteers and Regulars.

Newspaper coverage of local soldiers and companies can be evaluated for ideology and contemporary rhetoric through a comparison with the general contents of a particular paper. The *Adlington Chronicle*, *Lancaster Guardian*, and the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* were distributed in communities over a wide area of northern-western England.²⁸ These three papers, representing Conservative, Independent, and Liberal views respectively, illustrate the complex identity of the factory community representative of the north of England, which differed distinctly from the cultural identity of England’s south. The analysis of Patrick Joyce in *Work, Politics and Society* (1980) and Ross McKibbin in *The Ideologies of Class* (1990), establish a distinct northern identity that provides the basis for studying northern sources as a challenge to those who have viewed the London

²⁶ Robert Baden-Powell about his previous incarnation as a war reporter, quoted in Badsey, 193.

²⁷ *Aldershot Gazette*, 26 Jan. 1900.

²⁸ See Appendix II for the *Press Directory* (1900) description of newspapers used in this study. Most entries include political affiliation and a brief outline of the communities in which they were distributed.

of 1899-1902 as a community culturally representative of the whole of England. London was, in terms of community attitudes and volunteer corps, in fact distinctly non-representative, as will be demonstrated by using the construct of manliness to measure difference.

The regional newspapers that will be used in this study published astonishingly detailed reports of council, church and political meetings, entertainments, court proceedings, library statistics, sporting events, deaths (usually of the sudden type), and included regular feature articles and stories that may be assumed to have interested a majority of the readers.²⁹ These papers also provided coverage of peace meetings; the *Manchester Guardian* covered those held throughout the county while the other three limited themselves to meetings held within the districts served by their respective papers. There can be no doubt that the district newspaper represented society as a whole in its pages, which provides an extremely rich resource.

Newspapers were widely read, and most households subscribed to a Sunday paper if they did not take a daily.³⁰ It must not be assumed that readers of the newspapers used in this study did not have access to a variety of other papers. In the Hindley district

²⁹ For example, see *Adlington Chronicle*, 2 Feb. 1901. There were a number of working men's clubs in the areas served by both the *Chronicle* and the *Lancaster Guardian*, whose meetings were reported. These reports list songs sung, report on speeches given, and in one occasion where there was a slide show, the subject matter of *each slide* is described in the published report. Community reporting of this type is infinitely valuable in any attempt to understand a community's interests or to evaluate its potential subscription to ideals.

³⁰ Dailies taken in working class communities were likely to be those emphasizing sporting news, but virtually every household by 1890 subscribed to a standard Sunday paper. Alan J. Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press, 1855-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), 40 and Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas: A companion for the modern reader of Victorian Literature* (New York: Norton, 1973), 62. Robert Roberts remembered that "nearly all the members of the working classes took Sunday newspapers...The 'Sunday' was of far greater social and literary importance than any other newsprint or periodical." Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), 129; 132. The *Lancaster Guardian* and *Yorkshire Weekly Post* were Sunday papers, and the *Adlington Chronicle* published Wednesdays and Sundays.

(Lancashire) report of the Leyland Free Library, it was recorded that “the reading room has during the year [1900] been exceedingly well attended, the newspaper stands being often crowded by readers anxious for information as to the progress of the war in South Africa.”³¹

A persistent and inconclusive debate continues in histories of newspapers concerning whether newspapers instructed or reflected their readers’ views.³² It would appear that by the late nineteenth century the latter was often more true, an opinion borne out in this study through the comparison of soldiers’ personal views expressed in diaries and letters with opinions and news selections published in their home newspapers.

The reading public’s ability to evaluate news from a critical perspective is also debated among literary and social historians, and is difficult to evaluate. The existence of newspaper reading rooms and debating clubs specifically devoted to news implies that news was digested, but does not definitively indicate the depth of thought given to news reports and editorials.³³ The contemporary historian J.A. Hobson cynically wrote that the working class “crowd” was “singularly destitute of intellectual curiosity” having:

during the last few decades been instructed in the art of reading printed words without acquiring an adequate supply of information or any training in the reasoning faculties such as would enable them to give a proper value to the words they read.³⁴

The critical ability of the working classes is not important in this study; what is

³¹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 2 Feb. 1901.

³² Badsey and Wilkinson in Gooch; Michael Harris and Alan Lee, eds. *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, Part Two: the Nineteenth Century (London: Associated University Presses, 1986); Aled Jones *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1996); and Raymond Sibbald, *The Boer War: The War Correspondents* (Stroud: Bramley, 1993).

³³ Jones, 113-121.

³⁴ J.A. Hobson, in the *Quarterly Review*, 192 (Oct. 1900), 520-41 cited in J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa: Its Causes and Effects* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1900), 26.

important is how the community responded to the war in terms of community values and the community's volunteers. While several newspapers may have been read by some individuals, it is the chosen content of the local papers that reveals community bias and subscribed ideology, whether this expresses adherence to and critical assimilation of fact and opinion, or creation of a mythology.³⁵

Newspaper advertising is significant as an adjunct to news, representing what advertisers believed to be topics that would interest the reader and stimulate a desire for the particular product being advertised. War imagery, and particularly images of soldiers either as word pictures or drawings, became prevalent in the early phases of the war, reaching a peak before September 1900, and thereafter declining significantly as the war settled into the less glorious guerilla phase.

During this latter phase of the war, manliness became a figment of the imagination, both in the minds of soldiers, and in war literature. Volunteer companies were no longer dominated by gentlemen, and even gentlemen were becoming demoralized at the prospect of a delayed homecoming and little prospect of either glorious action or the frenzied public welcome that had greeted the London volunteers who were discharged in October of 1900.³⁶ Letters, diaries, newspapers, journals and contemporary fiction form the basis for evaluating attitudes towards manliness in the army of the period 1899-1902.

Chapter One will explain the narrative of manliness that underscored the public

³⁵ During the first Boer War, (1881), newspapers had expressed views consistent with their philosophy and mandate. As a result of a public that wanted to read a reflection of its own views, circulation rates among anti-war newspapers fell dramatically, a clear indication that the reading public had the power to dictate content and opinion. See Aled Jones, 197-203.

³⁶ The CIV were honoured by London, but resented by other units in South Africa because of the special treatment they received by the press, the London public, and especially the War Office.

discourse. Two sections of this chapter will distinguish between masculinity and manliness and argue the significance of this distinction. This distinction is critical for this thesis because an understanding of what Victorians meant by manliness is necessary to understand how the entity of the “soldier” was contentious and has been difficult for modern historians to resolve. The third section in this chapter will integrate the rebirth of chivalric ideals as an ideology promoted in schools and in late Victorian imperial literature for boys, with the thumos of imperial manliness. Chapter Two will place the Anglo-Boer War in political and social perspective and will provide details on the Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteers relevant to the integration of the combined study of manliness and pacifism. Chapters Three and Four will integrate primary research into a critical and comprehensive assessment of the relationship between pacifism, manliness and soldiers serving in the Anglo-Boer War.

Chapter One

CONSTRUCTING MANLINESS

Manliness

The terms masculinity and manliness tend to be used interchangeably by historians of the Victorian period, creating unnecessary confusion over the roles of men in different parts of their lives. Victorians themselves rarely used the term masculine to relate to men themselves, but rather to “actions or attributes,” although usually in a comparative context and not usually referring to persons.¹ Manly, on the other hand, was commonly used by men referring to other men, usually in a homosocial context, indicating a point of reference in which manly is referential only in regard to other men.² Masculinity, as a relatively recent subject of study, incorporates but is not restricted to manliness, being contextualized in terms of a masculine opposition or complement to the feminine. In order to establish the validity of viewing masculinity and manliness from a relational but dualistic perspective, a retrospective view of recent scholarship is valuable. For this thesis, it is important that a concrete and viable definition of the term manliness be established; one applicable to the period under study and in particular to the groups in question.

In the last thirty years, historians have examined masculinity as other than a monolithic and hegemonic version of patriarchy. Viewing masculinity as a social

¹ *Oxford English Dictionary* 2nd edition, Vol. IX (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 322. *Oxford* uses examples appropriate to usage in particular time frames, aiding the historian in use forms common to particular periods. While examples are necessarily limited by editorial selection, they nevertheless provide a starting point for investigation.

² The feminine always-already was necessarily a component of homosocial communities. While I recognize the importance of this as an underlying factor, discussion of its existence is a topic too large for discussion in this thesis.

construct has resulted in the acceptance of a variety of masculinities and the recognition that Victorian masculinity was not a static concept. Michael Roper and John Tosh, in *Manful Assertions* (1991), describe scholarship on masculinity as having focussed on masculinity as a homosocial construct to the neglect of other areas of a man's life. It troubles them that masculinity "takes on a sharper focus when women are removed from the scene" and that in literature on public schools there has been little acknowledgement of maternal involvement in character development before boys reached school age.³ They state that "the proponents of manliness intended their teaching to influence men's behaviour in the home," using an analysis by Graham Dawson in which he cautions against studying masculinity in isolation from other identities.⁴

The problems that Roper and Tosh see in historical reconstructions of masculinity result directly from the confusion between manliness and masculinity. Victorian neo-chivalric ideology combined with Carlylean philosophy resulted in the (impractical) concept of a concentration of masculine essence that enabled genius to focus.⁵ This was exemplified in the artificial but socially influential monastic community formed by the mid-century pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and, although the focus on ephemeral genius gradually gave way to physical prowess, the ideology remained.

Physical prowess, in its manifestation as "muscular Christianity" and by late century as "imperial manliness," became the goal of the English public school. J.A.

³ Michael Roper and John Tosh, eds. *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London: Routledge, 1991), 3.

⁴ Roper and Tosh, 4 and Dawson quoted in Roper and Tosh, 14.

⁵ Thomas Carlyle. "On Heroes and Hero Worship" and "Past and Present" in *The Carlyle Reader*, G.B. Tennyson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 387-417. Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities: Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature and Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16-72; 111-172.

Mangan and Robert MacDonald agree that it is doubtful that the rhetoric of public school manliness was intended to fit young men for home lives.⁶ Home existed, to be sure, but in terms of manliness it was peripheral compared to the formative influence of the middle-class school or working-class street culture. As well, Dawson's caution is only relevant if the term masculinity is what is meant, and not manliness, which is what Roper and Tosh imply.

The term "manly" is truly applicable only in situations in which men's behaviour is related to men, without feminine interference. In this sense it becomes a subset of masculinity, developed in socially artificial homosocial environments that existed within the realm of the heterosexual masculine/feminine continuum. Tosh's objection to the use of manly only in reference to the homosocial environment is based on an objection to the pervasive ideal of public school manliness that has dominated research and perception. As demonstrated by Herbert Sussman, however, there were earlier constructions of manliness embodied in homosocial communities in which conceptual manliness depended upon the exclusion of women, and that formed the model for future public school, literary and neo-chivalric ideologies.⁷

Sussman chronicles the development of a focus on monasticism as a discourse appropriate to middle-class artistic fashioning of male identity.⁸ In the early nineteenth century, Thomas Carlyle described a male community being integral to the development of manliness, distinctly separate from obvious feminine influence and disassociated from

⁶ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), and Robert Macdonald, *Sons of the Empire: the Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), iv.

⁷ Sussman, "Artistic Manhood: The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood" in Sussman, 111-172.

⁸ Sussman, *passim*.

feminine qualities.⁹ Carlyle's analogy of monasticism was enthusiastically received as "the exemplar of all that is manly."¹⁰ The implication is that manliness, before mid-century was more dependent on intellectual creativity than physical prowess.

Monastic manliness was embraced by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a group of male artists and writers who isolated themselves (in theory, at least) in a bond of "artistic manhood" developed on a medieval monastic model after Carlyle. The aesthetic community was intellectual, and therefore appropriately manly. The early Victorian Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood created a community reliant on the principles of medieval monasticism as a means of establishing gender security within a male environment. Within this discourse, the contradictory possibilities of manhood across the spectrum of Victorian life could be relegated to a safe place within the (ideally, but not always) wholly male artistic life of the proponents. The Brotherhood embraced a chivalric code of manliness in which women were theoretically idealized in what they called "sacred womanhood."¹¹

This is important for Roper's and Tosh's concerns in that it demonstrates that masculinity was, at times, purposely constructed to avoid the masculine/feminine axis. In this artificial creation of a separate existence for men, psychic discipline is used to create a manly ideal that incorporated a "valorization of self-regulation": a reaction to both the

⁹ Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1888), passim, and Sussman, 16-72. Carlylean notions of masculinity and manliness are complex; excerpted ideas are true to but represent only a small part of Carlyle's philosophy.

¹⁰ Sussman, 27.

¹¹ K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-1886* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 332. For a discussion of Carlyle, Brotherhoods and Victorian masculinity see James Eli Adams, *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Manhood* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 39-41 and 61-106.

morally undisciplined aristocracy and the “irregularity” of the working classes.¹²

The chivalric themes favoured by the Brotherhood and their associates were embodied in a popularization of the Arthurian myths in both art and literature, in which the chivalric character came to be equated with English honour. The ideological knight errant became associated with the cult of manliness developed in the public school system in the second half of the Victorian period, so that by the time of the Anglo-Boer War, the middle-class soldier volunteer was clearly expected to be a manly and chivalric figure.

In “The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness” (1996), David Rosen explains that the middle-class cult of manliness developed out of two separate events in Victorian England.¹³ First, social boundaries became important as rural labourers became urban workers, and the newly enfranchised middle-class found that their identities were no longer clearly demarcated in terms of wealth. The second catalyst, occurring later in the century, was the growth of the women’s movement that stimulated men to create artificial homosocial environments that would protect and insulate men.¹⁴ This is clearly an issue between men, a “connection between masculine potency and social and economic power” that resulted in the marginalization of the newly urbanized, and a less successful attempt at creating an ideology of masculine/feminine separate spheres.¹⁵

Rosen credits Thomas Carlyle with initiating references to “manliness” as the

¹² Sussman, 11.

¹³ David Rosen, “The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness” in Donald E. Hall ed., *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 20.

¹⁴ Rosen, 29.

¹⁵ Adams, 34-36.

“quality most conferring leadership.”¹⁶ Carlyle believed, too, in a healthy mind and a strong moral character.¹⁷ In Sussman’s assessment of Carlyle’s impact, there is clearly a lack of distinction in his use of the terms manly and masculine. Sussman erroneously places Carlyle’s emphasis on manliness as oppositional to the feminine, a subject position that Carlyle did not mean and that Victorian men did not associate with a manly identity. Once the feminine enters the dialectic, it is masculinity that is being discussed, not manliness.

As pointed out by George Mosse in *The Image of Man* (1996), manliness was not related to the appearance or strength of the human body until after mid-century. Manliness, in this later context, is a counter to effeminacy, a “strong-armed man’s religion that melded courage, faith, spirit, and body.”¹⁸ This became the discourse of Empire, out of which the term “muscular Christianity” was coined in 1857.¹⁹

The establishment of the public school provided a purely male environment that served as the locus for male homosocial bonding and the creation of leaders for the next generation. Thomas Arnold of Rugby has been credited with instilling the moral imperative of muscular Christianity that transmitted a manly ideal to a middle-class audience. During Arnold’s tenure as headmaster of Rugby school, it is clear that a form of manly Christianity dominated the curriculum and widely influenced the development of other public schools. Arnold, a devout Anglican, believed that moral education needed to

¹⁶ Rosen, 21.

¹⁷ Jerome Buckley Hamilton, *The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 38.

¹⁸ George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University press, 1996), 8. John Pennington, “Muscular Christianity in Curdie” in Hall, 133.

¹⁹ J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 3.

be introduced in the public school in order to curb rampant violence and produce scholars with integrity, honesty, loyalty, and faith. This manliness was to be in the mould of St. Paul, who had talked of “running the race with patience and fighting the good fight of faith.”²⁰

Arnold’s intention was spiritual and moral renewal, not the subsequent muscular Christianity popularized by Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown’s School Days*.²¹ Hall states that for the influential writers Thomas Hughes, Charles Kingsley, and others of this period, “manliness was synonymous with strength, both physical and moral” and was “thoroughly grounded in male experience and the male body.”²² Ironically, in its focus on creating leaders, muscular Christianity lost much of its religious emphasis and became a physical emblem of the body politic.²³

The public school became the quintessential training ground for manliness through moral discipline and games, inculcating class consciousness and a sense of noblesse oblige: promoting duty, service, single-mindedness, and respectability.²⁴

Mangan contests the view that Arnold of Rugby was responsible for incorporating

²⁰ Brian Simon and Ian Bradley, eds., *The Victorian Public School* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), 117.

²¹ Mangan, 17. Thomas Hughes. *Tom Brown’s School Days*, 6th edition (New York: Lupton, n.d.). The original was published in 1859.

²² Hall, 9-10.

²³ Mangan and Walvin, 4. Jeffrey Weeks states succinctly: “The model of the early public school was the monastery. The model of the later public school was definitely military.” *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality since 1800* (London: Longman, 1981), 40.

²⁴ Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), 82; Mangan and Walvin, 1. In spite of arguments to the contrary in Mangan and Walvin, it would appear that the concept of Christian manliness embodied in the spread of muscular Christianity remained largely the province of the middle-class. The wholesale commitment of the public school to the development of manliness engendered a dislike of the principles involved among boys of other social strata. See, for example, F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain 1830-1900* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), 145; MacDonald, 11; and Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

muscular Christianity into the school curriculum, giving credit instead to Edward Thring, headmaster at Uppingham from 1853, and Hely Hutchinson Almond, headmaster at Loretto from 1858.²⁵ Both men were determined to institute reforms that would create a more well-rounded boy and a better relationship between boys and faculty. Both men believed in health as a means of improving mental acuity, and both incorporated competitive games into the curricula of their respective schools.

Richard Hingley, in *Roman Officers and English Gentlemen* (2000), makes a convincing connection between the revival of interest in classical literature and the rise of the games culture of the public school. Manliness retained its classical identity as a homosocial construction that maintained the solidarity of an elite group.²⁶ This is corroborated in Mangan's description of Thring as a subscriber to the classical ideal of the "whole man" as both physically and mentally healthy.²⁷

Almond's ideal tended more to a restructuring of curricula to include "games in which success depends on the united efforts of many, and which also foster courage and endurance" for these were the "very lifeblood of the public school system."²⁸ His reforms at Loretto stemmed from his disgust at the growing commercialism of the new industrial middle class, a vice that he believed weakened the "true man" and therefore society.²⁹ Both Almond and Thring believed that games built "character," a Victorian synonym for

²⁵ Mangan, 44-58. Both Thring and Almond were influenced by Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's School Days*, in which Hughes changed Arnold's focus on spiritual strength into one of temporal strength.

²⁶ Richard Hingley, *Roman Officers and English Gentlemen: The Imperial Origins of Roman Archaeology* (London: Routledge, 2000), 9-10.

²⁷ Mangan, 45; 49-56.

²⁸ Almond quoted in Mangan, 56.

²⁹ Mangan, 49. This attitude has Carlylean overtones, linking Carlyle's aesthetic manliness with the new games ethic.

manliness.³⁰

Arnold of Rugby may not have instituted a system of games as the groundwork for ideal manliness, but it would appear that his fictional representation in *Tom Brown's School Days* influenced middle-class parents' choice of schools.³¹ In an assessment of the impact of *Tom Brown*, Jane Bingham and Grace Scholt declare that by mid-century young men being groomed for careers in the army, the colonies, civil service, and business crowded the public schools, which had become the "dumping ground" for sons of the gentry and middle class.³² It was expected, of course, that these boys would marry, but marriage was not the goal behind a public school education. They were not, as Roper and Tosh state, being groomed for domestic life, but for service to the Empire.

George Mosse gives credit for popular acceptance of the ideal of muscular Christianity jointly to Thomas Hughes and Charles Kingsley.³³ In their seminal works, *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and *Westward Ho!* (1855), "godliness and manliness were joined," but in the mid-to-late-century dissemination of muscular Christianity popularized by Thring and Almond, it was the "so-called manly qualities that counted."³⁴ Hughes located imperialist ideals within his construction of manly identity, paving the way for popular adventure-story writers such as G.A. Henty and George Ballantyne, and weeklies such as the *Boy's Own Paper*. In these works, the virtues learned on the playing field became synonymous with those necessary in the building and maintaining of country

³⁰ Mangan, 45.

³¹ Mangan, 132.

³² Jane Bingham and Grace Scholt, *Fifteen Centuries of Children's Literature* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980), 151. Also in Hingley and appears regularly in Mangan's work.

³³ Mosse, 48.

³⁴ Mosse, 50.

and empire.³⁵

By the late 1800s, games were a “moral enterprise” that developed the British ideal of manliness, one that had been modified from its earlier stress on “seriousness, self-denial and rectitude” to one of “robustness, perseverance and stoicism.”³⁶ Jonathan Rutherford, in *Forever England: Reflections on Masculinity, Race and Empire* (1996), states that the focus on games resulted in a loyalty to house and school that “formed a micro-language of loyalty to race and nation.”³⁷ Boys trained in the homosocial environment of the public school were fit to assume posts in the imperial system, in which they would become leaders and perpetuators of patriarchal power.

It is clear that in both adult and boy-centred homosocial environments women were distinctly and purposely excluded. Masculinity was reduced to the sub-category of manliness in which the established order was a male order. Both the Pre-Raphaelites and public school boys assessed their competencies against other males in what David Rosen described as a platonic conception of “*thumos* - a deep, central force from which manly action flows and through which virtue...and masculine primacy are reconciled and reiterated.”³⁸ Rosen’s assessment of Carlyle serves as a unifier for the homosocial groups discussed: the monastic community of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the public school muscular Christian. Carlyle believed that men belong in groups (the team, the army, the classroom) with the aim of solving social problems through a natural quality

³⁵ MacDonald, 171; Weeks, 40. G.A. Henty and George Ballantyne, various titles listed in bibliography. *The Boy's Own Paper* Jan. 1870-Dec. 1902.

³⁶ J.A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (London: Viking, 1986), 18.

³⁷ Jonathan Rutherford, *Forever England: Reflections on Race, Masculinity, and Empire* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1997), 16.

³⁸ Hall, introduction to Rosen in Hall, 10.

inherent in men and which made them manly.³⁹

Masculinity

In the homosocial environment, the construction of manliness is clearly related to men in the absence of women. Once the heterosexual environment is entered, the inherent problems caused by using the terms manly and masculine interchangeably become apparent. Martin Francis, in his article on recent research in masculinity, inadvertently encapsulates the problem that historians have had with the two terms. He is very clear that masculinity is a referential term, meaningless without the feminine, but is not clear how it differs from manly and uses the two interchangeably.⁴⁰

Francis correctly suggests that an understanding of male response to domesticity is a complex and difficult study, and that “it was possible simultaneously to both embrace and reject the attributes of domestic *manliness*.”⁴¹ Here, Francis confuses the issue by using the term manliness, for if it is to be understood to relate only to the homosocial environment, manliness cannot be used in reference to the domestic, heterosexual environment. Domestic masculinity is much easier to understand when seen as a social construct relating to the masculine/feminine dynamic of domestic discourse. It is not, and cannot be, domestic *manliness*, for the relational context does not exist in the domestic sphere.

Francis finds the relationship between manly and masculine problematic: “though authors of adventure stories appeared to find it necessary to denude their narratives of any domestic material, this did not preclude their being read by suburban fathers” and

³⁹ Rosen, 22.

⁴⁰ Martin Francis, “The Domestication of the Male? Recent research on 19th and 20th Century British masculinity,” *Historical Journal* 45, (September 2002): 637.

⁴¹ Francis, 643. Italics mine.

“conversely, imperial soldiers and adventurers could fill their letters with longing for home and domesticity.”⁴² He suggests a reconceptualization involving an awareness that men existed in both spheres, as indeed they did.

John Tosh, in “Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class” (1991), cautions that separating manliness and masculinity in their late Victorian construction is inapplicable in modern historiography.⁴³ He bases this on a quotation from the great Victorian moralist Samuel Smiles: “it is in the home that ‘a man’s real character...his manliness’ is most surely displayed.”⁴⁴ What Tosh does not recognize is that a man can be manly anywhere, but that manliness remains the homosocial construct in which men define themselves in relation to other men. It is not relational in masculine/feminine terms, and whether or not men behaved in a manly fashion at home is therefore independent of the domestic environment.

Tosh’s argument revolves around Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall’s *Family Fortune: Men and Women of the English Middle Class*, in which they argue that masculine self-respect depended upon both a public code of behaviour and, importantly, “a properly ordered household which required of men a commitment to family life.”⁴⁵ It is important to note that Davidoff and Hall’s study ended at 1850, the point at which the public school began to exert considerable influence and a mid-point in the middle-class subscription to manly codes of the earlier evangelical period. By the late 1860s, masculinity as a domestic construct was in conflict with the masculine narrative of which manliness was a dominant discourse. In the public schools, muscular Christianity was

⁴² Francis, 643.

⁴³ John Tosh, “Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class” in Roper and Tosh, 44.

⁴⁴ Tosh, 44. The actual Smiles quote is in single quotation marks.

⁴⁵ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall quoted in Tosh, 45.

displacing moral Christianity and the games ethic began to inform the popular conception of the masculine stereotype.

This masculine stereotype is carefully explored in Joseph Bristow's "Coventry Patmore and the Womanly Mission of the Mid-Victorian Poet" (1996).⁴⁶ Patmore wrote and revised his poem "The Angel in the House" over a period of thirty-two years, creating a running commentary on the development of domestic masculinity in the period 1854-1886. This is a particularly important period in the discourse of masculinity as it roughly spans the time in which one generation was born, was initiated into the manly ethic of the public schools, and became fully independent adult men. Most men who enlisted in the Anglo-Boer War would have been sons of men of this generation.

Patmore's poem has been widely accepted as a definitive depiction of the separate spheres philosophy in which women were subordinate to men, and in which patriarchal values informed the power structure of the domestic environment.⁴⁷ At the time of the first publication, evangelical hegemony dictated that the domestic environment should be warm and loving, allowing men to express emotions and be fully involved parents. By the time of the last publication, the stoic ethic of the public schools had become the discourse of masculinity, so that although it is quite likely that men still loved their families, they felt it weak (unmanly) to be demonstrative.

Patmore wrote in what Bristow describes as a feminine style, one that was deemed appropriate for the "delineation of home scenery, the reproduction of familiar

⁴⁶ In Andrew Miller and James Eli Adams, eds., *Sexualities in Victorian Britain* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 118-136.

⁴⁷ Hoppen, 332.

emotions,” and the “drama of domestic life.”⁴⁸ The significance, in a study of Victorian masculinity is the juxtaposition of the masculine and the feminine and the extent to which overlapping qualities were socially acceptable, as well as the hierarchies implicit in the discourse. This is also borne out in Tosh’s description of domestic masculinity, in which a patriarchal hierarchy clearly existed, and which defined the contours of domesticity. Linda K. Hughes has suggested that the feminine language of “The Angel in the House” marginalizes the subject of home to the periphery of the world of work and business, the man’s world of power of which the domestic environment that Tosh describes was simply a reflection.⁴⁹

By the 1880s, Patmore’s feminine style apparently called his own masculinity into question. His poem was considered too feminine for the late Victorian market, and even an erstwhile sympathetic reviewer wrote that the poet had become “the laureate of the tea table with his hum-drum stories of girls that smell of bread and butter.”⁵⁰ Patmore’s relegation to the clearly feminine world of the “tea table” reflects the late century shift to a greater distinction between the public and private worlds of middle class professional men, with, according to Stephen Garton, a “consequent pull towards a homosocial and imperial world of adventure, manly achievement, and a related denigration of home as routine and feminine.”⁵¹ This distinction resulted in the domestic becoming a very private sphere in which adult masculinity was defined in relation to the feminine without the intrusion of external and non-domestic manliness.

⁴⁸ Aubry DeVere (1854), cited by Bristow in Miller and Adams, 119-120.

⁴⁹ Linda K. Hughes cited by Bristow in Miller and Adams, 121.

⁵⁰ Edmund Gosse (1886) cited by Bristow in Miller and Adams, 121.

⁵¹ Stephen Garton, “The Scales of Suffering: love, death and Victorian masculinity,” *Social History* 27, no. 1 (January 2002), 41.

Garton's analysis of the diaries of Dr. John William Springthorpe, an Australian emigrant scientist of significant influence and middle-class respectability, indicate the same transition in masculine domestic values shown through the public reception of Patmore's poems.⁵² Early in his marriage Springthorpe embraced the helpmate ideal of Patmore's "Angel in the House;" a feminine counterpart to his masculine domestic role.⁵³ By the time of his wife's death in 1897, the ideal had shifted so that feminine intelligence and independence were less valued and more emphasis was placed on her role as a "complement to his male subjectivity."⁵⁴ Upon her death, however, Springthorpe mourned in terms of "deeper romantic and emotional imaginings" of her place in his life. According to Garton, this is an indication of the "tensions between the public and the private male self at a time when the codes of Victorian masculinity were focused on the rigorous presentation of a controlled and ordered self."⁵⁵

Springthorpe's anguish upon the death of his wife appears to bear out the observations of John Tosh in *A Man's Place* (1999), that Victorian men can be seen as domestic creatures and that there was a domestic masculinity independent of social masculinity and homosocial manliness.⁵⁶ Francis objects to this construction of a domestic masculinity, pointing out that the men studied by Tosh were not so much attached to the domestic environment as attached to the ideology of imperial masculinity in which the manly public school ethic underscored the discourse of domesticity. In the home environment, middle-class men retained power over all transactions and routines,

⁵² Garton, 40-58.

⁵³ Garton, 47.

⁵⁴ Garton, 47.

⁵⁵ Garton, 55.

⁵⁶ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1999).

subjugating the feminine to the subordinate status indicated in Springthorpe's diary.⁵⁷

If, as claimed by Tosh, domestic masculinity was truly a state of mind rather than an obligation or an association, the fluctuations apparent over the course of the late nineteenth century become difficult to understand.⁵⁸ Tosh himself records a "flight from domesticity" in the late nineteenth century, one that he attributes to the inability of men to relate in a loving and accepting manner towards their male children.⁵⁹ In this case, domestic masculinity is a construct that is relational not only to domestic femininity but to public masculinity and the shifting and uneasy relationship between middle-class men and the late Victorian development of multiple masculinities related to an increasingly complex world.

This complex world included the growth of what is widely termed "new Imperialism." Graham Dawson discusses the psychic shift that took place in cementing a publicly acceptable version of masculinity as heroic and chivalric.⁶⁰ Shifting class boundaries, the economic uncertainty of the 1880s, women's growing visibility in the public sphere and the growth of a consumer culture all played a part in the need for definitive boundaries, resulting in a reactionary integration of manliness into the adult male middle-class masculine identity.

⁵⁷ It must be noted that while women exercised considerable control over the dispensation of earned income, this was conducted within the boundaries of masculine expectations and subject to masculine approval of household social and structural functions. In the working classes, feminine control was different, often involving control over money to the extent that an "allowance" was designated for the social needs of the male wage earner. See Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), 26; 36 and Thompson, 101-102. The concept of moral manliness was largely a middle-class focus, a factor important in the comparison of soldiers from mixed class backgrounds.

⁵⁸ Tosh cited in Francis, 639-640.

⁵⁹ Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness" in Roper and Tosh, 65-68 and in *A Man's Place*.

⁶⁰ Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British adventure, empire and the imagining of masculinities* (London, Routledge, 1994), 2.

One of the problems that concern Francis in his discussion of domestic masculinity is the crossing and re-crossing of the “domestic frontier” even if only in the imagination. For Francis, men reading adventure stories to themselves and to their children is an example of the “contradictory impulses of domestic responsibility and escapism.”⁶¹ His point is that there can be no monolithic domestic masculinity, but that men must be seen as incorporating multiple masculine selves into the larger narrative of social masculinity.

Dawson incorporates the imaginary into his discussion of masculinity, relating it to a “dominant conception of masculine identity” required by the nationalist discourse of imperialism.⁶² He terms this “psychic masculinity,” described as the ways in which men live lives that appear multi-faceted and sometimes contradictory, but which are informed by the “hegemonic constraints of an effectively established culture.”⁶³ Masculinity, then, becomes a matter of internalized values expressed in the social world of domesticity in terms that fit into the relational construct of domestic identity.

This gives new meaning to the “state of mind” that Tosh declares informed a construction of domestic masculinity. Tosh is careful to include examples of men who worked in home offices (such as lawyers and clergymen) as an example of the intersection of the public and private and influencing the formation of a distinct domestic masculinity. Unfortunately for his thesis, Tosh describes these men using their offices as sanctuaries from the domestic environment and spaces where punishment and correction

⁶¹ Francis, 643.

⁶² Dawson, 2.

⁶³ Dawson, 23.

was administered to wives and children.⁶⁴ The examples used by Tosh reinforce Dawson's thesis of imagined masculinities so that domestic masculinity becomes a fictional construct within the broader social continuum of hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity overshadowed the development of multiple social masculinities, creating what some historians have seen as a "crisis of masculinity." The study of a consumer culture reveals conflicts in public ideology as women became less confined to the home and more visible in the public sphere. Men found themselves to be objects of ridicule as they struggled to retain a masculine identity in what had been seen as the feminine world of shopping and fashion.⁶⁵

Men, as objects of consumer culture, were confronted with choices that represented the variety of "masculine subject positions" in the late Victorian period.⁶⁶ Christopher Breward sees male fashion and consumer habits to be indicative of the disruption of gendered categories, although in his account it seems that professional men continued to avoid the vagaries of fashion in an attempt to maintain clearly readable class distinctions. It may also be true that consistency in fashion enabled the middle-class man to feel secure in his masculine identity and status, another uniform in the continuum of uniforms of school, sports, and clubs.⁶⁷

Overlapping of masculine/feminine identities can be seen as a contributing factor in Tosh's "flight from domesticity" that resulted in men inventing a public version of the

⁶⁴ Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness," 59-65 and in *A Man's Place*, passim.

⁶⁵ Francis, 641 and Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, fashion and city life 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 1-2.

⁶⁶ Breward, 214.

⁶⁷ Breward, 77-78; 250. It would be interesting to continue the uniform theme in a study of the loss of distinctive regimental uniforms, and the introduction of one uniform for all ranks regardless of class or training.

homosocial world of the public school. In this re-invention of masculinity, manliness was paramount, and men's identities became a construct firmly rooted in the homosocial world of work, clubs, and imperial ambition.⁶⁸

Middle-class manliness and the imperial ideal became the foundation for boys clubs of the late nineteenth century. A discussion of these clubs could fit within the above discussion on manliness, but it is included in this section as the formation of clubs was a direct response to the indeterminate masculinity of the domestic sphere. Manliness was an informing discourse in the development of the masculine narrative of the boys' club, and an integral part of strengthening masculine character.

Clubs began as attempts to educate working-class boys in the finer points of muscular Christianity, but failed to attract the target group.⁶⁹ Uniforms and manuals were too expensive for these boys, but as John Springhall has pointed out, they were also simply not interested in middle-class ideals of manliness and respectability.⁷⁰ This was reflected in the disdain with which middle-class Volunteers had been met by working-class boys and men, although the popularity of the Volunteer movement increased as "respectable" working men gradually came to make up the bulk of new recruits. Employers in the north of England welcomed the character building activities that Volunteers engaged in, seeing the Volunteers as a kind of boys' club for grown men,

⁶⁸ John Springhall, "Building character in the British Boy: the attempt to extend Christian manliness to working-class adolescents" in Mangan and Walvin, *Manliness and Morality*, 52-74.

⁶⁹ Springhall, in Mangan and Walvin, *Manliness and Morality*, 53; 59.

⁷⁰ Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society*, 85-93; "Building Character," 69. It is possible that working class manly ideals, typified by Roberts as including independence from domestic tasks perceived as feminine also included independence from overweening middle-class reformers. While Roberts admits that working class boys absorbed a form of the public school ethos, it was transformed into a philosophy of might is right, equally expressible as a desire for social dominance in the neighborhood as imperial dominance in the world. Roberts, *passim*.

through which manly values were absorbed.⁷¹

The growth of boys' clubs was phenomenal in the period beginning in the 1880s. In *Sons of the Empire* (1993), Robert H. MacDonald discusses the predominantly middle-class fear that the influence of the home created unmanly boys who could not be effective representatives of empire.⁷² The development of clubs is seen as a logical extension of the public school ethic of manliness, a development that was to have important repercussions in the acting out of domestic masculinity.⁷³ Many boys could not attend exclusive schools, and were therefore seen as threatened by the femininity of the home environment, and subject to the demoralizing influence of penny dreadfuls and unwholesome entertainment.⁷⁴ The attempt to provide an alternate leisure activity that would perpetuate imperialist hegemony through instilling the manly qualities of loyalty, team spirit, patriotism, and 'pluck' was highly successful in middle-class circles as the youth movement spread quickly throughout England.⁷⁵

Youth movements built on the foundations laid by the public school, but served the interests of the "new imperialism."⁷⁶ The various "Brigades" that flourished in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century attest to the pervasive masculinity of the middle-class and the hegemonic quality of middle-class masculine ideology.⁷⁷

Masculinity was clearly in a state of flux, being fashioned in a reactionary manner

⁷¹ Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History* (Canada: Archon Press, 1975), 28-30.

⁷² MacDonald, 16-17. Macdonald's work primarily concerns the Boy Scouts, founded in 1908 and therefore beyond the scope of this paper. His introductory comments are relevant, given the Victorian mindset that contributed to the subsequent development of the Scouting movement.

⁷³ John Springhall, "Building character" 63.

⁷⁴ John Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), 15.

⁷⁵ Springhall "Building character", 52-69.

⁷⁶ J.A. Mangan, ed. 'Benefits Bestowed?' *Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 6.

⁷⁷ Weeks, 81.

to societal change and uncertainty. The home may have been a refuge of sorts, but men were required to exert influence and direction in both the public and domestic spheres. The result was an attempt to crystallize and stabilize masculine values and expectations through educating as many boys as possible in the virtues of manliness, fitting them to carry on the work of nation and empire.

Chivalry and literature: Training the manly character

Consistent with the distancing of manliness from the domestic dialogue was the re-emergence of the tenets of chivalry into the building of manly character. The chivalric renaissance of the late nineteenth century coincided with the childhoods of the men who would form the bulk of recruits at the time of the Anglo-Boer War. Thomas Carlyle and the Pre-Raphaelite group developed a newly romanticized version of medievalism and the knight so that chivalry had become a fashionable hobby for the rich and educated by mid century.⁷⁸ By the late nineteenth century, the chivalric heroes appearing regularly in boys' papers and novels were noble through bearing rather than birth, making the chivalric character attainable by any man of right mind and ambition, an ideology that informed the construction of hierarchies evident in public opinion and soldierly ideals during the war.

Enacting the chivalric required dispensing with the anachronistic aspects and

⁷⁸ Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), passim. The re-birth of chivalry began slowly in the late eighteenth century, gaining momentum with the improvement in printing processes and through the changing emphases in education through the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as discussed by Richard D. Altick in *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 177-187. J.S. Bratton, "Of England, Home and Duty: the Image of England in Victorian and Edwardian Juvenile Literature," in John Mackenzie, ed., *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986). Mangan and Bratton make it clear that the obsession with chivalry was not just the province of gentlemen, but also of schoolboys and street children. Popularized in weekly papers and in novels, its position in popular culture and education ensured a widespread familiarity with the principles of chivalric manliness by the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

developing a new chivalry that could be incorporated into contemporary manly ideals. In 1824, Sir Walter Scott contributed a lengthy essay on chivalry to a supplement of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.⁷⁹ This work emphasized the romantic character of the knight errant, who was “bound to volunteer his services” to the weak and oppressed, and in these services found “fit occasion for the exercise of his valour.”⁸⁰

Chivalric valour was closely connected to the goals of public school training. J.E.C. Weldon, headmaster of Harrow, believed that “the health and temper which games impart” created “men of will, spirit and chivalry.”⁸¹ Hely Hutchinson Almond, headmaster of Loretto, stated explicitly that the purpose of a public school education was to create the “neo-imperial warrior” of chivalric character and ideals.⁸² The paintings of G.F. Watts, pre-Raphaelite associate, were displayed in public schools throughout England and, according to Mangan, an association between the grail legend and militarism was promoted in public schools.⁸³

Alfred Austin, poet laureate in 1896 wrote a poem marrying cricket and chivalry:

Why mourn ye the age of bright chivalry fled
While each knight of the bat has a fair one to win?
Why deem we that courage and honour are dead
While cricket enobles the young heart within?⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Sir Walter Scott, *Essay on Chivalry* <eserver.org/fiction/scott-misc-prose-6.txt-101k> (June 12, 2004).

⁸⁰ Scott, *Chivalry*, 50; 52. There are humorous parallels in the formation of the various mounted “Special Service” companies raised for the Anglo-Boer War. Some, such as the Duke of Cambridge’s Own, Lord Lovat’s Scouts, and Paget’s Horse appeared to operate under the delusion that knight errantry was the order of the day and operated largely independently in South Africa to the point that they were often at odds with the commanding officers of nearby regiments. The result was Monty Python-esque frustration and confusion. See Pakenham, Louis Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 7 vols. (London: Caxton, 1900-1902), esp. vols 2-5, and Arthur Conan Doyle *The Great Boer War* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), passim.

⁸¹ From a speech given by Weldon in 1895, cited by Mangan, “The Grit of Our Forefathers” in Mackenzie.

⁸² Hely Hutchinson Almond, quoted in J. A. Mangan, *Games Ethic and Imperialism* (London: Viking, 1986), 48.

⁸³ Mangan, xlv. The public school version of the grail legend became less spiritual and more militaristic, incorporating chivalric self sacrifice in the pursuit of imperial goals.

⁸⁴ Cited in Girouard, 235.

But as Henry Newbolt recognized in his 1911 novel *The Twymans*, valour, heroic self-sacrifice and other manly virtues needed to be reinforced by more than the public school games ethic of teamwork and fair play.⁸⁵ J.S. Bratton, in “Of England, Home and Duty,” discusses the relationship between the public display of manly action required by schools and the complementary place of fiction in boys’ experience. In this model, the imaginary world becomes a place in which the individual develops a personal connection to an ideology of manliness and empire through a romantic emphasis on the chivalric as an individual avocation.⁸⁶

Scott’s own works of chivalric fiction contributed to the re-popularizing of the principles of chivalry. In his essay, Scott clearly recognized that chivalry had decayed beyond recognition by the time of the Wars of the Roses, when war was of “a nature so bitter and rancorous, as was utterly inconsistent with the courtesy, fair play, and gentleness, proper to Chivalry.”⁸⁷ His novels, however, were an attempt to revitalize the tenets of chivalry even if knighthood in its medieval sense had become extinct. Scott’s heroes were chivalric representations that the Victorians revered as examples of heroic

⁸⁵ Henry Newbolt, *The Twymans*, excerpted in J.S. Bratton, “Of England, Home and Duty: the Image of England in Victorian and Edwardian Juvenile Literature,” in Mackenzie, *Imperialism*, 74-75. Newbolt was the author of the famous poem “Vitae Lampada” also known as ‘Play up! Play up and play the game!’ intended as a memorial to the games ethic that supposedly inspired soldiers during the first Boer War of 1880-81.

⁸⁶ J.S. Bratton in Mackenzie, *Imperialism*, 73-93. Works discussed include a number of boys’ papers published from the 1860s on, as well as the immensely popular novels by (among others) Rudyard Kipling, G.A. Henty, W.H.G. Kingston, Gordon Stables and Charles Reade. Bratton conducts a thorough investigation into the reading habits of Victorian children, making it clear that the papers and books discussed in “Of England” were not only published, but also widely read.

⁸⁷ Bratton, 80.

manliness.⁸⁸ In a series of six installments on chivalry in June 1891, the *Boy's Own Paper* insisted that “the spirit of chivalry can never pass,” extrapolating ideals of physical and moral training from Scott’s essay, and setting as role models popular medieval heroes such as Edward, the Black Prince.⁸⁹

It is unlikely to be coincidental that Samuel Smiles, in his 1880 tome *Duty*, included the Black Prince in his essay on soldierly virtue, nor that the popular author G.A. Henty published a chivalric novel about the Black Prince at about the same time.⁹⁰ Henty’s preface instructed the reader that tales of war could teach the “true courage generally accomplished by magnanimity and gentleness” coupled with the imperialist admonition that “if this empire is ever lost, it will be by the cowardice of their [the builders of the British Empire] descendants.”⁹¹

The infusion of chivalric ideals and imperialistic themes that permeated some forms of fiction and much of the material in boys’ weeklies was slow to impact upon the real lives of men. Many of the ideals of chivalry were implicit in the public school games ethic, but appeared to have little currency outside the school and playing field when boys joined the real world. The late blooming of chivalric character as a popular ideal is evident, in part, through its absence in war reporting through the many small wars that Britain fought over the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Prior to the Anglo-Boer

⁸⁸ Scott, “Chivalry,” 66-67. The Leeds Free Public Library included Scott’s *Ivanhoe* and the Waverley novels on its list of “standard novels,” published in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* on June 15, 1901, along with standard imperialist boys’ novels such as those by Henty and Kingsley. See also Bratton, *passim*; Girouard, *passim*; and Altick, *Common Reader*, 294-317; 348-364.

⁸⁹ Albert E. Hooper, “Chivalry” in *The Boy's Own Paper* nos. 647-650, vol. XIII (June 1891). Scott’s essay is extensively quoted. Chivalric reincarnation relied heavily upon the mythic figure of Edward, the Black Prince, and idealized versions of the battles of Poitiers, Crecy and Agincourt. According to Scott, the perfection of chivalry peaked at about the time of the battle of Crecy.

⁹⁰ Samuel Smiles, *Duty* (London: John Murray, 1880), 201-206. G.A. Henty, *St. George for England* (London: Blackie and Son, n.d).

⁹¹ Henty, *St. George*, 5.

War, soldiers were rarely referred to as symbolic knights or war as a chivalric arena, and it was not until 1899 that contemporary war reports and literature extemporized on the exercising of valour, whether real or imagined.⁹²

Henty's juxtaposition of chivalric ideals and new imperialism characterized both the public response to the new volunteers and the rush to enlist. Far from being jingoistic, men were clearly responding to the call for volunteers from an ingrained manly ideal that began to form in the early Victorian period and coalesced into chivalric responsibility by the time of the Anglo-Boer War. The chivalric trope is useful for determining manliness, both that imputed to the volunteer by the community (manliness transferred) and that demonstrated by the volunteer in action and at rest (manliness inferred). Its aristocratic association remained, as seen in the use of the Black Prince as ideologue by many authors, and in the focus outlined by Scott, in glory and renown.⁹³ Ironically for the working-class reader of Smiles, the Regular, working-class soldier gained little renown in the Anglo-Boer War, and participated only peripherally in the accumulation of glory.

⁹² War reporting tended to refer to officers in terms such as "calm" and "unswerving" and although Tommy was "unkempt, unshaven" he advanced "gravely" in "orderly" form. G.W. Steevens of the *Daily Mail* writing of battle in the Sudan in 1898, cited in Edward Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1902* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 197.

⁹³ Scott, "Chivalry," 25.

Chapter Two

SOLDIERS: MANLINESS AND THE MILITARY HIERARCHY

Regular enlisted soldiers were not traditionally viewed as manly men. The evolving definition of manliness incorporating the public school games ethic combined with elements of the chivalric left no place for the dispossessed who tended to enlist because they had no other option.¹

Traditionally, the British army was composed of officers from the educated and landed classes and of Regulars, or “Tommys,” who tended to be those who could not find employment elsewhere. This was reflected in low pay, poor living conditions even at home in the training camps, and food that was barely adequate.² In the mid 1850s, the army was seen to be the “dernier resort of the idle, the depraved, and the destitute,” an attitude that persisted through the Victorian period.³ Major-General J.F.C. Fuller described the late Victorian army as “almost feudal,” in which the leaders were the sons of gentlemen, and the men were “a rough lot, simple, tough, illiterate, largely recruited from down-and-outs.”⁴ In this pre-ordained hierarchy, officers expected obedience, and soldiers expected to obey.

Anglo-Boer War historians focusing on sources originating in the greater London area have tended to conclude that the intermixing of classes and occupations served as a

¹ Edward Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 29.

² Diary and contract excerpts in Roy Palmer, ed., *The Rambling Soldier: Life in the lower ranks 1750-1900 through soldiers' songs and writings* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1977), 90-92. Soldiers paid for replacement of uniforms, repair of weapons, normal wear and tear of accommodations, and any food beyond the daily regulation one pound of bread, tea and three-quarters of a pound of meat.

³ Sergeant J. MacMullen in Palmer, 12; John Laffin, *Tommy Atkins: The Story of the English Soldier* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004), 191; Spiers, 202-203. Letters in the *Aldershot Gazette* indicated that Tommies felt undervalued and despised, particularly after fall 1900, when the returning CIV had been feted and honoured.

⁴ Quoted in Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Pimlico, 1976), 234.

leveler that increased social tolerance and raised Tommy in the public opinion.⁵ Instead, both soldiers themselves and the English public developed for the army an artificial hierarchy that mirrored class hierarchy, and which was based on *ignoring* rather than accepting inter-class mixing.⁶ In the army described by Major-General Fuller, there were “two distinct classes,” but in January of 1900 this changed. Now there were several indistinct classes, and adjustments needed to be made.

While the public profile of Regular soldiers increased as the century progressed, their value as individuals remained low in public estimation, and the introduction of auxiliary forces composed of more respectable men served to highlight the contrast between a new soldierly class of manly men and the traditional soldier of dubious moral standing. The contrast was enhanced by press rhetoric that glorified volunteers in chivalric terms and that was reflected in letters that soldiers sent home. British honour became firmly attached to the volunteer units as they were sent off to remedy a dire situation and defeat the “wily” Boer, as Tommy had been unable to do.⁷

The Boer declaration of war was received on 11 October 1899 and the war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging on 28 May 1902.⁸ In both the summer

⁵ In fact, a number of historians assert that Tommy’s reputation had gradually risen over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century so that acceptance in this new army was simply one more step towards social approval of soldiering as a profession. It was not, in fact, until WWI that soldiering truly became accepted for men of all classes. Laffin, 176-221.

⁶ Class mixing was only marked in the City of London Imperial Volunteers (CIV). For other Volunteer units, officers remained gentlemen and privates tended to be lower middle or upper working class. In the Regular Army, officers remained predominantly gentlemen and the soldier of the line held little hope of advancement, regardless of ability. Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class: Working Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War 1899-1902* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), 254-56; Spiers, 96-97.

⁷ Arthur Conan Doyle referred to the Boers as “wily” as a poetic means of absolving the army from disgrace after Black Week. See *The Great Boer War* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), passim.

⁸ The ultimatum delivered by President Kruger of the Transvaal was sent October 9, received and rejected on the 10th and war officially declared on the 11th. Sources vary on which date actually constituted the beginning of the war. The Treaty formally recognizing the end of the War was signed on 28 May 1902,

preceding the Boer declaration of war and again in November 1899, independent companies of volunteer soldiers offered themselves to the War Office as a means of increasing the numbers of soldiers and officers available for service.⁹ These offers were either ignored or refused on the grounds that the Volunteer Act of 1895 did not authorize the War Office to send volunteers overseas.¹⁰

In October 1899, the total force of regular soldiers and reservists numbered approximately 340,000 men dispersed throughout the empire, resulting in the actual number available for active service in South Africa being about 70,000.¹¹ The estimated Boer force was 35,000, and the War Office was confident that the British forces were strong enough to counter the sporadic raiding expected by supposedly disorganized and poorly led groups of Boers.¹² By the middle of December 1899, however, the British had suffered three serious reverses in the period of a week and “Black Week,” as it came to be called, became the catalyst for official recognition that more men, and men of a better quality, were needed. On December 24, a Royal Warrant was issued authorizing the raising of an auxiliary force of 11,600 men to be drawn from the existing Volunteer Forces and Imperial Yeomanry, augmented by appropriately screened private citizens.¹³

The Yeomanry and Volunteers had a history and status independent of the regular

although cessation of hostilities actually took four days more, as the news was slow to reach commandos of guerilla forces spread throughout a large territory.

⁹ Will Bennett, *Absent-Minded Beggars: Volunteers in the Boer War* (South Yorkshire: Leo Cooper, 1999), 7-9.

¹⁰ Bennett, 8.

¹¹ Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (Great Britain: George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), 72; 111. Tabitha Jackson reports 63,104, in *The Boer War* (London: Channel Four Books, 1999); Denis Judd, in *The Boer War* (London: John Murray, 2002) estimates about 60,000. Regardless of the estimate, the British Army was significantly larger than the Boer force of about 35,000. Obviously, then, these men were not manly enough for the job although the press was willing to make excuses until the volunteer forces arrived.

¹² Pakenham, 77.

¹³ Bennett, 21.

army. An informal organization of county-based Volunteer Forces (infantry) and Imperial Yeomanry (mounted infantry) had been formed in the late eighteenth century by citizens concerned with the possibility of a French invasion. These men were committed to serving only in their own county, and only in the case of foreign invasion, and were not formally recognized as a potentially useful adjunct to the regular army until 1859.¹⁴ At this time, a renewed fear of French invasion coupled with the necessity of stationing most of the army overseas resulted in a media effort spearheaded by *The Times* to push the government into forming a permanent Volunteer force for home defense purposes, if needed.¹⁵

The conditions of service were, in 1859, explicitly designed to attract middle-class men who would not otherwise have joined the army, and who would train in regional groups identified by county designations.¹⁶ In the north of England, the middle-class structure gave way as Volunteer companies began to be formed by individual firms, particularly large factories. Officers were typically owner-operators while the rank and file tended to be skilled workers, creating a solidarity and loyalty related to the factory community.¹⁷ Initially, working men were not encouraged to enlist, but within the first ten years of its existence, the Volunteer force was clearly becoming a working-class rather

¹⁴ Price, 184; Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (Connecticut: Archon Press, 1975), 11-15.

¹⁵ Cunningham, 11-15.

¹⁶ Cunningham, 13. The Government circular outlining the composition of the Volunteers stated that they were to be men "whom he [the recruiting officer] has known and with whom he has lived from his youth up" and "intimately acquainted with the country [county] in which he would be called upon to act." Cunningham, 13-14.

¹⁷ Cunningham, 21; Palmer, 98; John Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), 71.

than a middle-class organization.¹⁸ Working class recruits tended to be from the skilled segment of the labour force, referred to in an 1862 Royal Commission chiefly as artisans and machinists.¹⁹ Volunteer recruitment did not, then, interfere with recruitment for the Regular army or Militia, whose recruits tended to be from the seasonally employed or the unemployed.²⁰

These part-time soldiers were, in general, hobby soldiers with regular jobs, no experience of military conflict, and little expectation that they would actually be called upon to fight in a war. In direct contrast, seventy to eighty percent of the recruits to the regular army came from the ranks of the unemployed, and, after the Cardwell reforms of the 1870s were committed to a twelve year period of service.²¹

After Black Week, it was clear that the British army was simply too small for the job at hand. Faced with the need for thousands of new recruits, the Volunteer and Yeomanry forces appeared to be expedient choices for the War Office in its attempt to mollify an angry and imperialistic public; the offer of service had already been made and the Yeomanry had local administrative structures that could be used to facilitate recruitment.²²

The Royal Warrant stated that recruits to the Imperial Yeomanry were to be a mix of Yeomanry, Volunteers, and civilians. Volunteer companies were to be a mix of

¹⁸ Cunningham, 18. Cunningham relates the initial bias against working-class recruits as a middle-class fear that unpropertied men with rifles would acquire property rather than defend others' property. This class-based opposition was particularly strong in Lancashire. As a middle-class force, the Volunteers was not a successful movement. By the late 1860s, businessmen were equipping their employees, and corps were formed in which officers were employers and managers while the rank and file were employees. This structure was to persist, so that by 1899, companies of Volunteers had strong local ties. Cunningham, 20-30.

¹⁹ 1862 Royal Commission on the social composition of the Volunteer Force. Cited in Cunningham, 25.

²⁰ Spiers, 129; Palmer, 10-12.

²¹ Spiers, 129; 9-10.

²² Bennett, 21; Pakenham, 252.

existing Volunteer Force corps and civilians, and provision was made for a number of other auxiliary force companies to be formed independently from the previously existing Yeomanry and Volunteers.²³ Recruits were organized according to county of residence and officers were often men known to those in the ranks. The wide range of acceptable recruits meant that in some areas, the wealthy and influential fox hunting elite who flocked to the flag were mixed in the ranks with middle class clerks and working class machinists, although the ratio differed depending upon the origin of the company.²⁴ Richard Price estimates that over half of the Imperial Yeomanry came from the middle classes, and Creswicke lists the titled aristocrats who served in the ranks, both unusual in terms of traditional British army structure.²⁵ Class mixing was most evident in the London City Imperial Volunteers (CIV), in marked contrast to most units in the rest of the country.²⁶

Historians have studied the formation and structure of the CIV, placing much emphasis on the mixing of social classes within the CIV, and the fact that titled gentlemen served in the ranks along with bankers and errand-boys.²⁷ As a result of this focus, it has been assumed that the same was true of units throughout England, an assumption that is not borne out in studies of occupational data for officers and soldiers

²³ Bennett, 12.

²⁴ The CIV, for example, was structured as a free-standing army, with infantry, mounted infantry and artillery. Though as a whole it incorporated a cross-section of society, the hierarchies remained, so that a private in the ranks was much more likely to be a clerk than a private in the mounted infantry. Price, 180.

²⁵ Price, 200-201, 204-205; Louis Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, 7 vols. (London: Caxton, 1900-1902), appendix to Volume VI lists names and occupations based on available attestation forms for the CIV.

²⁶ According to Price, middle-class professionals and men of leisure formed 1,006 of the CIV while working class men made up the remaining 943. Many of the men in the first group served in the ranks in a more egalitarian distribution of the classes than was possible elsewhere. Price, 254-58.

²⁷ Price, 254-56. Bennett, *passim*.

of the line.²⁸ Limiting evidence to London volunteer units and news sources creates a skewed reality that is not found in written sources from the less distinctive service units or in war news and advertising that appeared in newspapers in other parts of the country.²⁹

The CIV was a jingoistic enterprise funded by the City of London and sponsored by the Lord Mayor. A combination infantry, mounted infantry and artillery regiment, it consisted of recruits from the London Volunteers, the Imperial Yeomanry and select civilian volunteers, raised within a month of the Black Week disasters and much celebrated in the press.³⁰ Money flooded into staff headquarters at the Mansion House and the regiment purchased the finest equipment available, including artillery better than that used by the regular army.³¹ The special status of the CIV in both the military and public consciousness is evident in their early discharge from service, a consideration not awarded to any of the other Volunteer units, and which resulted in much bitterness among those remaining in South Africa.³² Lance-Corporal Ross, of the Yorkshire Imperial Yeomanry wrote home "...the British Army feels aggrieved at the praise bestowed on the

²⁸ This assumption was also a contemporary one, appearing in London correspondents' reports. *The Times*, 20 Dec. 1899. For data, see Price, 199; also Bennett, 17; 31.

²⁹ Of the 943 working class members of the CIV, thirty percent were clerks, and only four point two percent labourers. Price concludes that despite the apparent inter-class structure, London Volunteers were "almost certainly not working class in either status or attitude." Price, 199. The ambiguous position of clerks in class structure further complicates the analysis.

³⁰ Bennett, 25-29. *The Times*, and even the working-class (and peace oriented) *Daily Mail* published effusive articles about the CIV from late December through to their embarkation January 21.

³¹ Bennett, 27; Price, 180; Pakenham, 420-426.

³² Bennett, 78. P. T. Ross, *A Yeoman's Letters* (London: Simkin, 1901), 118. The CIV were discharged in October 1900; the Yeomanry in progressive stages in 1901, and the Volunteers in mid 1901. That these forces were discharged during the war is indicative of their non-army status as the attestation forms they signed on enlisting stated specifically the terms being "for the duration of one year *or until the cessation of hostilities*" [*italics mine*]. Terms of enlistment printed in the *Adlington Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1899. It had generally been assumed that the war would not last long, and the men had enlisted believing that normal life would be resumed within the year. If patriotism was a motive for enlistment, it was time-limited patriotism for the majority of men.

CIV Regiment, and its early return to England” resulting in “envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness [sic].”³³ Upon their arrival home in London, the CIV were celebrated in a special issue of the *London Illustrated News*, and attended a thanksgiving service at St. Paul’s before a Guildhall banquet in their honour.³⁴

The high profile of the CIV made them the focus for complaints from soldiers in other units in South Africa, unlike the other special service corps who were largely ignored by soldiers and the media. These exclusive units included four Special Service Companies and Lord Lovat’s Scouts, a paramilitary police force. Each of these units had specific tasks in South Africa, and were not integrated into the existing army.³⁵ These units have been excluded from this study due to their distinctly elite composition and independent function in the field of war.

The three groups forming the main focus of this thesis are the Imperial Yeomanry, Volunteers and Regulars. The war can be conveniently divided into three recruitment periods, the third of which will not be considered as recruits during this period did not arrive in South Africa before the end of the war and were used primarily as a police force during Reconstruction.³⁶ The first and second contingents, recruited during early 1900 and 1901, were quite different in class character, the first being only thirty-three percent working class and the second, sixty-five percent.³⁷ Price’s work indicates that this is significant in terms of social attitudes towards both masculinity and pacifism, although

³³ Ross, 149.

³⁴ Bennett, 76-77.

³⁵ Bennett, 24-34.

³⁶ Bennett, 215.

³⁷ Price, 202; 206.

the changing character of the war itself must also be considered in this assessment.³⁸

Prior to the war, the Imperial Yeomanry, being the descendants of medieval cavalry, and formed by tradition from the aristocracy and landed classes, were venerated by virtue of longstanding tradition and individual status.³⁹ In the initial year of volunteer recruitment, the Yeomanry were accorded independent status, allowing companies to recruit and equip men under the already existing administrative structures, and to supply their own officers. During the war, the Yeomanry maintained their elite status in the eyes of the public regardless of the actual social composition of the force, and received particular press attention that other ranks did not receive.⁴⁰ Press reports and war histories consistently referred to the Yeomanry in chivalric terms regardless of their actual performance in the field, signaling their elite status and setting them apart as models of chivalric manliness.

In October of 1900 the War Office rescinded the separate status of the Yeomanry, so that new recruits were registered by the army, although companies continued to function as independent units attached to various segments of the army.⁴¹ The first contingent of Yeomanry was predominantly upper middle class including about fifteen

³⁸ The British were conditioned to warfare as a set battle affair, and lost interest once the war degenerated into a cut and chase form of guerilla warfare. The northern provincial press, while reducing war coverage continued to reveal biases in favour of the stereotypically manly exploits and focus on men of the community with traditional status.

³⁹ Arthur Conan Doyle, "Song of the Bow" in *War Songs and Songs and Ballads of Martial Life*, John Macleay, ed. (London: Walter Scott, 1901?), 13; Pakenham, 252; Judd, 71-73.

⁴⁰ In late 1901, when the Yeomanry was composed of men of considerably lower social status than the first contingent, the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* published an article entitled "What is a Gentleman?" which argued that a gentleman could be "made," in a clear attempt to justify the chivalric honour accorded the Yeomanry regardless of the social origin of its recruits. *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 26 Oct. 1901.

⁴¹ The Yeomanry kept detailed records of enlistment and discharge, which, in the confusion of incorporating so many new soldiers into the army the regular army did not do. Unfortunately, when archives were moved to the Public Records Office in the mid-nineteen seventies, Yeomanry files were disastrously culled, limiting the available sources for study. Richard Price was able to access records that have since been destroyed, making his work an invaluable resource. Once yeomanry recruits were registered by the army, the same disregard for permanent records was manifested and few records exist.

percent landed aristocrats.⁴² Later contingents lacked the landed element and included mainly skilled workers, but the Yeomanry's total 34,733 recruits remained, as a whole, decidedly the favoured group in the minds of the public, represented in the press and contemporary histories as the heirs of knightly tradition.⁴³

Volunteers, being a relatively new addition to home defense, and never having included the aristocracy, had a fluctuating status based on membership and locale, although always socially superior to the Regular army.⁴⁴ The Volunteers, comprising 19,714 recruits, were accorded semi-official status as an adjunct to the army, battalions being either dispersed by company among many regiments of Regulars, or functioning as guards for supply lines and garrisons.⁴⁵ According to Bennett, Volunteer recruits were middle-class or skilled working-class, with the second contingent being predominantly working class.⁴⁶ Overall, then, the Volunteers came from segments of society with lower social status than the Yeomanry, and were represented by the press as secondary in importance, although still far more representative of English manliness than the Regular soldier.

Prior to the introduction of volunteers into the army structure, hierarchies within the army were clearly identifiable; in general, officers were the educated sons of the

⁴² Bennett, 17; Price, 259-260.

⁴³ In the case of the second contingent, public opinion tended to focus on the Yeomanry as an historically elite entity so that its actual composition was ignored, although individual ability was remarked upon, particularly where there was a sporting connection. For statistics, see Price, 259-260. For press and contemporary histories, see Chapter III of this work.

⁴⁴ The Volunteers began as a largely middle-class organization, and arguably formed the basis for many of the paramilitary boys clubs. By the 1880s, local Volunteer companies could be formed of lower middle class and upper working class men. Nonetheless, the annual camps were hugely successful events reported upon in detail by virtually all of the local papers. Volunteers were highly visible in the community in parades and national celebrations and their bands were relied upon to aid in community fund-raising endeavors. These men represented the community in a generic sense that most could identify with. The Yeomanry, in contrast, remained elite and distinct.

⁴⁵ Cunningham, 128-132.

⁴⁶ Bennett, 31. See also Price, Table 17, 206.

wealthy, and Tommies came largely from the uneducated working classes.⁴⁷ Tommies had traditionally been much maligned as those who could not find work elsewhere, and who were considered by Society to be of questionable moral and physical quality. A career in the army, unless as an officer graduate from a military academy, was not considered an appropriate career choice when other options were available.⁴⁸

In this sense, it is significant that Volunteers prior to the war had never been referred to as “soldiers” and that Volunteering became respectable in its own right, bearing no perceived relationship to Tommies.⁴⁹ Cunningham describes the Volunteers as embodying many of the “canonized values” of the Victorian period: “self-help, local initiative, discipline, order, health-giving recreation” and a form of patriotism.⁵⁰ These were the same character building values that youth organizations purported to instill in boys through activities similar to those of the Volunteers, indicating that the gradual shift to working class recruitment by middle-class officers may have been for purposes of social improvement or social control.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Judd, 64.

⁴⁸ This is borne out in a variety of memoirs from various levels of society. Sir Shane Leslie, educated at Eton and Oxford, wrote in his memoirs that “military proficiency was rated low” and the school Volunteers were derided. *The End of a Chapter* (New York: Scribner, 1917), 43. From the other end of the social spectrum, Robert Roberts wrote of social attitudes towards soldiers still prevalent in the early twentieth century: “With us, as with the rest of the working class, ‘regulars’, ex-regulars and their families stayed unquestionably low.” A young man joining the army was seen to have “brought shame and disgrace on all the family.” Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972, originally published 1901), 145.

⁴⁹ This was in spite of the fact that Volunteers attended military camps and sometimes shared officers with the Regular Army. Cunningham discusses factors that seem to have indicated a desire by Volunteers to be identified with Regulars such as the adoption of standard military uniform, and hope expressed in the press and the officers mess that the existence of the Volunteers would serve the function of reducing the stigma attached to the Regular soldier. Cunningham, 94-98. Cunningham is unable to provide convincing evidence that this happened, and evidence that will be discussed in Chapters Three and Four indicates that Volunteers were considered socially superior to the Regular, both in the opinion of the public and in their own private opinions.

⁵⁰ Cunningham, 98.

⁵¹ This assessment of the social value of Volunteering was a middle-class viewpoint recorded in Royal Commission hearings into the value of the Volunteers. Cited in Cunningham, 29.

Victorian attitudes toward the army were complex and the position of the soldier in the public consciousness has become a matter of some confusion, particularly among historians studying texts with ambiguous meaning such as advertising and music hall.⁵² Several factors contribute to this confusion, the primary one being the multiple identities contained within the word “soldier.” Tommies were, of course, soldiers, but so were officers, and during the Anglo-Boer War, civilians were also soldiers. A common uniform did not mean a common identity, and in spite of increased prominence in the press and a kind of public affection that developed in late century, Tommy’s reputation suffered in comparison to the Volunteers and Yeomanry during the Anglo-Boer War. Regardless of the similarities in uniform and function it is the common soldier, the Tommy of the Regular army, whose reputation has been debated.⁵³

War correspondents’ reports were the means by which Tommy entered initially into the public consciousness as an individual. The Crimean War was the first war in which the telegraph allowed war correspondents to publish up to date reports, bringing graphic descriptions of successes, failures and horror into the everyday lives of the English.⁵⁴ At roughly this point, soldiers began to be a regular feature of music hall skits and songs, and war art appeared in newspapers, journals, and by the 1880s, in Royal

⁵² See John M. Mackenzie, ed., *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), passim.

⁵³ See particularly Glenn Wilkinson in John Gooch, ed., *The Boer War: Direction, Image, Experience* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), passim, and John Mackenzie in *Popular Imperialism and the Military* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 2-7.

⁵⁴ Prior to the Crimean War, the few reporters covering events relied upon the mail to deliver their reports. With the advent of the telegraph and virtually instantaneous coverage, the *Times* either capitalized upon or created a public interest in the daily progress of the war. By the time of the Anglo-Boer war, there were many more newspapers and a corresponding increase in the numbers of reporters sent to cover the war. For a full history, see Raymond Sibbald, *The Boer War: The War Correspondents* (Stroud: Bramley, 1993), 1-9.

Academy exhibitions.⁵⁵ At the time of the Anglo-Boer War, soldier imagery began to appear in advertising for both everyday and luxury commodities, although the images tended to be generic and sterile representations open to some interpretation.⁵⁶

Publicity did not guarantee respectability, and while the small and successful wars of the late century generated an increased appreciation of the army, Tommy himself was not appreciated other than as a subject of humour and deprecation. Music hall, particularly, while capitalizing on increased interest in England's imperial fortunes, continued to portray Tommy as morally fallible and selfishly oriented, and therefore unmanly.⁵⁷

Music hall depictions of Tommy are fraught with double meaning and innuendo, making these songs difficult to assess in terms of impact and social significance. Music hall songs were intended as light entertainment, and more likely to reflect already held values than to be the catalyst for changing ideologies.⁵⁸ Though music hall popularized and often romanticized the soldier, he remained simply a "worker in the Empire."⁵⁹ Tommy's perceived character was clearly portrayed in the music halls of Victorian

⁵⁵ Mackenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, passim.

⁵⁶ The tenor of the medium is of critical importance to this analysis. Newspapers carried graphic descriptions that humanized the common soldier, making him available to the public as a figure of pathos. Art, on the other hand, tended to romanticize him. The soldier in art, was not recognizable as Tommy, even though they wore the same uniform and performed the same duties, for the soldier in art, whether wounded, dying or victorious, might be bloody but was never torn, rumpled or distressed. In short, he was a gentleman. This is clear in the range of paintings and press engravings in permanent collections at the National Army Museum, Imperial War Museum and the National Gallery: London, U.K. Advertising art was similarly restricted to the portrayal of gentlemanly soldiers, as seen in all of the newspapers and journals used in this study.

⁵⁷ Examples to follow in this chapter.

⁵⁸ Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in Working Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 225.

⁵⁹ Penny Summerfield, "Patriotism and Empire: Music Hall Entertainment 1870-1914" in Mackenzie, 37. This statement contradicts Summerfield's assertion that Tommy gained respect, and bears out Stedman Jones position (above) that Tommy's music hall persona was "strongly rooted in the realities of working-class life." Stedman Jones, 225-30.

England, of which the earliest may have been in the town of Bolton, Lancashire.⁶⁰ Typical songs included those exalting Tommy's attractiveness with "the ladies", or his expert ability to avoid the heat of battle, such as:

I don't want the Sergeant's shilling,
I don't want to be shot down;
I'm really much more willing
To make myself a killing
Living off the pickings of the Ladies of the Town...⁶¹

or the equally sexual "Tommy Atkins you're all right" (1890):

Tommy Tommy with your heart so big and warm
Don't he look a picture in his dandy uniform,
Tommy Atkins all the girls are on your track,
Tommy, Tommy you're the pride of Union Jack.⁶²

and:

Riding in the ammunition van
Amidst the shot and shell I've been.
While my comrades fought,
(As comrades ought)
I was nowhere to be seen.
I was covered with the Flag,
Listening to the din and strife
When the fight was o'er, out once more,
And that's how I saved my life.⁶³

Penny Summerfield writes that by the 1890s a shift had occurred in which music hall "celebrated" the "ordinary soldier," giving as an example "Soldiers of the Queen." In this song, however, the allusion to Empire makes it quite clear that these soldiers are the

⁶⁰ Peter Bailey, *Music Hall: The business of pleasure* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), 53. This indicates that music hall was well established in northern communities at the time that the future Anglo-Boer War soldiers were growing up. According to Bailey, however, working men tended to attend only once a week, on Mondays. Bailey, 73.

⁶¹ British Army songs popular throughout the nineteenth century. In Les Cleveland, "Soldier's Songs: The Folklore of the Powerless" (*New York Folklore* 11, 1985), 1. From a full text site at <<http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/fishml/folksongs/les01.htm>>

⁶² Summerfield in Mackenzie, 37.

⁶³ Written during the Anglo-Boer War by Major H. Corbyn, cited in Summerfield, 40.

same colonial soldiers (and not English soldiers) of earlier music hall songs who rally to the flag in support of the Queen.⁶⁴ There is nothing to indicate that Tommy is the subject and in fact Summerfield's invocation of Rudyard Kipling's famous "Absent-Minded Beggar" as being of this genre, is curious.⁶⁵

In his introduction to *War Songs and Songs and Ballads of Martial Life* (1899?), editor John Macleay speculates on the lack of army songs in relation to navy songs. He makes the obvious observation that the empire had been attained and secured by the navy, giving the navy supremacy in public opinion, writing that:

The army, on the other hand, has never impressed the popular mind as the navy has done...A subtle difference marks our regard for soldier and for sailor. That it should be so seems hardly fair...evidence is increasing that the soldier is to remain no longer under even the hint of a cloud.⁶⁶

Macleay attributes the late development of the genre of soldier songs to the music hall predilection for sailors until the late century development of "new imperialism" during which small land wars proliferated and soldiers gradually gained stage time. While the soldier was forcing his way into the public consciousness, it was still as a rather ignoble figure. Macleay's assertion that these songs are permeated with a "robust and manly spirit" is counterbalanced by his description of the soldier portrayed in these songs as a stereotypical hard fighting, hard living man with an "alarming swagger" and "a

⁶⁴ Summerfield has discussed this earlier in her article, convincingly demonstrating the English belief that "free' colonial populations owed [duty]...in return for the benefits of British rule." Summerfield in Mackenzie, 33.

⁶⁵ Kipling's verse shall not be discussed here except to note that the "Absent-Minded Beggar," put to music by Gilbert and Sullivan, was nothing but a fund raising gesture. It does not express any kind of favour towards soldiers; only pity for their destitute families. Paula Krebs, *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 158-59. Kipling himself said "I would shoot the man who wrote it if it would not be suicide." Kipling, quoted in M. van Wyk Smith, *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 105. "Absent-Minded Beggar" is judiciously excluded from the *Collected Verse of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1922).

⁶⁶ Macleay, xvii.

quaint, aggressive pride in his calling; humanly full of discontent and grievance and with not more love than the stay-at-home folk for blistering marches and an empty belly.”⁶⁷ Macleay may have come very close to the mark in his description of the soldier without realising that it was his very closeness to the “stay-at-home folk” that distanced the English public from Tommy.

Edward M. Spiers, in *The Late Victorian Army 1868-1902* (1992), presents the likely hypothesis that the public made a fundamental distinction between the army as an honoured institution and soldiering as a less than respectable career choice.⁶⁸ This attitude permeates the soldiering stories published in the *Boy's Own Paper* where as late as 1898 Tommies continued to be stereotypically destitute/or orphaned.⁶⁹

The Volunteers, however, had some status in both literature and popular attitude. In *Rob Roy* (1817), Sir Walter Scott described a father's reaction to his son's wish to volunteer: “He readily acquiesced in my proposal: for, though he disliked war as a profession, yet upon principle, no man would have exposed his life more willingly in defense of civil and religious liberty.”⁷⁰ Similarly, the *Boy's Own Paper* also dissuaded boys from an Army career, recommending the discipline of the Volunteers instead, and promoting the strong, steadfast public school hero; the neochivalric knight of England.⁷¹ Auxiliary forces did not appear in music hall entertainment, a significant factor indicating differing levels of respect for various segments of the extended army.

⁶⁷ Macleay, *ibid.*, xxiv; xxvii.

⁶⁸ Spiers, 203. Related discussion, 147.

⁶⁹ Weigall, C.E.C., “From Reveille to Last Post,” in *The Boy's Own Paper* No. 1021, Vol. XX (Saturday, 6 Aug. 1898), 717; and Saturday, 13 Aug. 1898, 730. Indicative of its bias against soldiering, an account of a Boy's Brigade Camp, a *military* training group, actually included the observation that many boys like the sea, “a fortunate thing for England...for she needs many sailors.” *Boys Own Annual* (1898), 140.

⁷⁰ Sir Walter Scott, *Rob Roy* (London: Penguin, 1995), 463. Originally published 1827.

⁷¹ In answer to a reader's letter, a boy was advised to join the Volunteers rather than the army, for then he would “at least know your drill.” *Boy's Own Paper* no. 377, vol. VIII (3 Apr. 1886).

The depth of this distinction between Regulars and auxiliaries was never a significant factor in the social consciousness until the Anglo-Boer War, at which point the discourse of manliness underwrote behaviour on the battlefield and informed press reports in a manner that solidified distinction rather than enhancing cohesion.⁷²

⁷² Lord Garnet Wolseley had been Inspector-General of the Reserve Forces in 1874-5, and a leading proponent of army reform. His desire to see an efficient and respectable army was evident in his passionate speeches concerning the Volunteers and what he perceived as their contribution to heightened respect for the army. His speeches have been quoted on the assumption that respect for the institution equaled respect for the individual, the crux of the paradox of individual respectability within the military hierarchy. During the Anglo-Boer War, Wolseley, as Commander-in-Chief through December 1900, commended individual soldiers regardless of rank, but seemed oblivious to either public opinion or the social stratification that occurred within the ranks. Wolseley, quoted in Cunningham, 96-97; Commendations quoted in soldiers' letters. Wolseley's autobiography (1903) is titled *The Story of a Soldier's Life*, an obvious example of Wolseley's sense that the term soldier was not, or should not be, pejorative.

Chapter Three

MANLINESS TRANSFERRED

Recognizing the distinctly different social references to Tommy and the auxiliary soldier is crucial to understanding the dichotomy between subscription to, and belief in, the efforts of the peace movement. Peace meetings in the northern counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire continued to be well attended through the early months of the war, and were supported in the local press, yet both individual and community support for men enlisting in the Volunteer and Yeomanry forces was also high. It would appear that while pacifist belief was common, subscription to these beliefs was suspended for the duration of the war, superseded by ingrained subscription to the ideal of imperial manliness and bolstered by a sense of competition between communities. In support of their volunteers, communities transferred the previously existing public ideal of manliness onto the individual soldier, creating an idealized Briton that was not consistent with continued support for peace activists.

The shift in emphasis from pacifist to imperial support is chronicled in the pages of the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Adlington Chronicle*, where a gradual acceptance of government policy is evident. Editorials that, before 11 October 1899, condemned the impending war and urged arbitration and honourable settlement of the dispute became editorials urging support and acceptance of the status quo. Liberal politicians and supporters, in Parliament and at peace meetings, decried the necessity of war but accepted the inevitable and urged compliance, believing that a swift conclusion could be attained without dishonour to either the English or the Boers. It is this sense of honour that

informed editorials and district reports, and gradually became a war discourse in which imperial manliness was encouraged and glorified.

The London *Times* was stridently imperialist and as such held a steady stance as negotiations faltered and war became increasingly likely. The *Times* supported the Foreign Secretary's position that the Boers were stubbornly unreasonable in the face of British reason and desire for "equal rights for all men."¹ That this proved to be patently untrue as a justification for war was made clear by Pakenham in his thorough treatment of the negotiations prior to, during, and after the war.² Publications such as *the Black and White Budget*, however, reflected the rhetoric that juxtaposed traditional chivalric honour with national pride and provided a rationale that could be widely accepted: "Her Majesty is known to have a strong bias in favour of peace with honour; but her splendid sense of national prestige rebels against peace with dishonour, a condition that would undoubtedly ensue were we to knuckle under to the Boer."³

After war was declared, the *Manchester Guardian* devoted considerable space to condemnation of a government who, it believed, had not truly committed itself to peaceful settlement, and responded specifically to the assertion that honour was at stake. It reported that Mr. Maddison, the Liberal member of Parliament for East Manchester stated at a public meeting that there was:

still less ground for glory in a war in which the mightiest empire upon which the sun has ever set was to launch its legions against a handful of rude, undisciplined Boer farmers whose total population was only about that of East Manchester.⁴

¹ *The Times* cited in Raymond Sibbald, *The War Correspondents: The Boer War* (Stroud: Bramley, 1993), 14-15.

² Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (George Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), passim.

³ *Black and White Budget*, 21 Oct. 1899.

⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 13 Oct. 1899.

He concluded his speech with an appeal that foreshadowed the turning of public pacifist belief into almost wholesale subscription to an imperial ideal:

If we were to be Jingoists, if we were to be blatant Imperialists for Heaven's sake let us have something worthy of our steel. They [imperialists] know that if there were two football teams, one of which was miserably undermanned, there would be no sport there...and surely in the national game of war the sportsman's honour ought at least to remain.⁵

Maddison's references to glory and sportsmanship make clear that at least for some Liberals pacifist goals were less important than the public school ethos of glory and honour on the field.

As the fall of 1899 progressed, it became obvious that English numbers and pluck were not enough to defeat the Boers either quickly or honourably, and the "game" had become one with seriously underestimated odds. By mid-November, the British effort was clearly not going well, and excuses were made such as "the British Army have shorter-range eyes than the Boers," due apparently, to the English being largely urban dwellers.⁶ In mid-December the Boers inflicted three serious defeats upon the Empire, charitably referred to as "reverses," although it is not clear that anything had been accomplished that the army could "reverse" from. The press resolutely downplayed these defeats; the editorial in the *Adlington Chronicle* stated: "the latest news from General Gatacre and Lord Methuen is not of a reassuring character," and the *Manchester Guardian* reflected that even Wellington had suffered defeat.⁷ In Parliament it was, surprisingly, the leaders of the opposition who brushed off these "humiliations and

⁵ *Manchester Guardian*, *ibid.*

⁶ *Adlington Chronicle*, 18 Nov. 1899.

⁷ *Adlington Chronicle*, 16 Dec. 1899; *Manchester Guardian*, 12 Dec. 1899. These were written after the disasters of Stormberg and Magersfontein, and before news of the defeat at Colenso had been received. It was estimated that about 1600 men had surrendered under Boer pressure. It was only after Colenso that the week of December 10-16 came to be called "Black Week."

mortifications.”⁸ But when news of the third reverse had been received, the press began to mythologise both Britons and Boers; the former as heroes whose “bravery and pluck excited universal admiration” and the latter, in an attempt to salvage wounded pride, as a foe worthy of the British Army.⁹ After the third reverse, at Colenso, and in spite of it being a decisive defeat, Bennett Burleigh of the *Daily Mail* wrote of the “superb spectacle of invincible manhood,” while the *Adlington Chronicle* explained:

it is now realized that the Boers, from their natural surroundings, their knowledge of the class of country and their unsurpassed marksmanship constitute probably the finest mounted infantry in the world...it is obvious that experienced tacticians are directing their operations.¹⁰

The Lancashire regiments of Regulars had suffered particularly heavy losses at this point in the war, and the casualty lists in the major newspapers were long. The above editorial is written in a dispirited vein, with complaints that “if the first Transvaal war had been finished, this one might not have happened” and mildly expressed criticism of operative manoeuvres in the field questioning the relevance of the manly qualities of “dash” and “valour”:

The valour of both officers and men has been undoubted...yet probably dash and valour are hardly qualities with which to best cope with a foe who subtly fights at long range and takes advantage of every ridge of cover.¹¹

It is ironic that it was during a week of humiliation that Tommy was represented as fittingly manly, the only time during the war that he was to receive any kind of

⁸ Lord Asquith quoted in Pakenham, 248.

⁹ John Black Atkins in the *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Dec. 1899.

¹⁰ *Daily Mail*, 16 December, 1899; *Adlington Chronicle*, 23 Dec. 1899.

¹¹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 23 Dec. 1899.

commendation in the press.¹²

On 9 December 1899, the *Black and White Budget* had assessed both the Volunteers and the Yeomanry as unlikely solutions to the manpower problem, because the Volunteers had little cavalry and no artillery and the Yeomanry were “hardly trained for war.”¹³ On 18 December, the *Manchester Guardian* published the as yet unofficial news that a mounted infantry corps was to be formed from the Yeomanry and an infantry corps from the Volunteers. Suddenly all previous reservations about the suitability of the volunteers were forgotten, and the recruiting news was followed with articles defending the rights of these volunteers to their share of distinction at the front, and the belief that the volunteers would wish to share equally with the regular soldiers “the danger, the hardships, and the glory of the campaign.”¹⁴

Following the Royal Warrant of 23 December 1899, companies of Imperial Yeomanry were authorized to be formed from existing companies with the addition of qualified Volunteers and civilians; Volunteer companies were to be formed with the addition of civilians where necessary. Yeomanry were to serve as mounted infantry attached to regiments as needed, and Volunteers were to serve as infantry attached to regular line battalions. Both Yeomanry and Volunteers were to be recruited and administered through existing Imperial Yeomanry offices independent of the War Office, but subject to established War Office guidelines.¹⁵

¹² John Black Atkins reported that at Magersfontein the soldiers “never flinched and it is impossible to chronicle all their acts of reckless daring.” *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Dec. 1899. In fact, according to Pakenham, they turned tail and fled the battle. Pakenham, 206.

¹³ *Black and White Budget*, 9 Dec. 1899.

¹⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 18, 21 and 26 Dec. 1899.

¹⁵ Will Bennett, *Absent-Minded Beggars: Volunteers in the Boer War* (South Yorkshire: Leo Cooper, 1999), 12-13; *Adlington Chronicle*, 23 Dec. 1899. It is interesting that qualifications for the Imperial

Response to recruiting ads was tremendous, and all counties of England were very proud of the troops they were sending to South Africa. The *Adlington Chronicle*, in an editorial entitled “To arms! Ye brave, to Arms!” commended the “imposing demonstration of national solidarity in supporting the indomitable determination of the Government to vanquish, once and forever, those who have threatened the existence of the Empire in South Africa.”¹⁶

Lancashire and Yorkshire had existing Volunteer and Yeomanry regiments, members of which expressed a high level of commitment to service. Civilians responded quickly to the War Office request for volunteers for South Africa, supported by their mine and mill employers and funded through community efforts. While largely eschewing the jingoistic recruiting announcements and articles common in the London papers, Lancashire and Yorkshire papers expressed considerable pride in the numbers of recruits, listing hometowns, occupations and both familial and, significantly, any sporting connections.

The emphasis on sporting connections was one that was to continue throughout the war, in both newspaper and letters. Athleticism was promoted in schools and, according to Roberta J. Park, in “Biological thought, athletics and the formation of a ‘man of character’: 1830-1900” (1987), “the athlete was the new hero.”¹⁷ This was certainly the position of the late century *Boy’s Own Paper*, in which each edition carried a

Yeomanry included a minimum height of 5’3” and weight of at least 115 pounds. According to a recruiting poster in the Guards Museum, London, minimum height requirement for soldiers of the Crimea was 5’8”.

¹⁶ *Adlington Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1899.

¹⁷ Bruce Haley quoted by Roberta J. Park in “Biological thought, athletics and the formation of a ‘man of character’: 1830-1900” in Mangan and Walvin, 7. While Parks deals mainly with American manliness, this quote refers specifically to the Victorian English games playing ‘cult.’

sporting story, and frequently biographies of famous athletes, particularly cricketers.¹⁸

Tommy did not stand a chance against such heroes. The *Aldershot Military Gazette* reported Tommy had gained prestige as a result of serving with volunteers so that “the soldier today [Tommy] better understood the civilian [volunteer], and...the civilian better understood the soldier.”¹⁹ But the intermixing of classes and the supposed greater acceptance of Tommy were both vastly exaggerated phenomena. It must be noted that Aldershot was a training facility for the army, and news originating there naturally favoured the wish that Tommy would be respected. While Tommy’s public profile had increased, it is also true that he remained at the bottom of the heap in the increasingly complicated system of social hierarchy within the army. The addition of new types of service corps created hierarchies that reflected the dependence of late-Victorian society on the public school ideology and the entrenched image of manliness. This is obvious in the language chosen in news relating to the new recruits as individuals, as well as war coverage detailing the movements and engagements of their detachments. H.W. Wilson, for example, in *With the Flag to Pretoria, a History of the Boer War 1899-1900* (1900), explained that character and intelligence had been lacking during the Black Week engagements, adding “and now at last the Volunteers...were to be called upon to show what stuff they were made of.”²⁰

Reporting on the new service corps revealed a bias against Tommy, implying that

¹⁸ During its first five or so years, the target group of *The Boy's Own Paper*, (based on content) was likely a lower-middle/upper working-class boy. By the mid 1880s, the intended boy was much more likely to be middle to upper-middle class. Magazines such as *Gem*, remembered by Robert Roberts, featured boxing stories as well as the copycat Greyfriars series.

¹⁹ *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 1 Jun. 1900.

²⁰ H.W. Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria: A History of the Boer War 1899-1900* vol. 1 (London: Harmsworth, 1900), 212-214. Wilson was a war correspondent for the *Daily Mail*.

once real men were in the field, the fortunes of war would surely be reversed. The *Adlington Chronicle* editorialised that with the efforts of these new corps, good news would surely be forthcoming that “all true, born sons, of the Empire will feel amply rewarded for their sterling loyalty...”²¹

It is unclear why Tommy should not also have been recognized for his “sterling loyalty” except that the English public had never embraced the regular soldier as a manly man fully qualified to do the job and do it well. Tommy was not expected to “be of good character” as were the new recruits, and was traditionally regarded as a man of loose morals fighting for pay rather than for any patriotic conviction or loyalty to his Queen.²²

The English public needed something more than the mercenary Regular to inspire their patriotism; they needed a “*Boy’s Own*” hero who would volunteer for the sake of honour and triumph over adversity without ever forgetting that he was a gentleman. That Tommy was not, and never could be a gentleman, could not be forgiven him, regardless of his performance in battle. This attitude was strongly manifested in the northern press.²³ The Volunteers filled a place in the public imagination that equaled middle-born heroes of Henty, while the Yeomanry were seen as the true saviours.²⁴ Their heritage and tradition placed them in the upper echelons of Society, rendering honourable their

²¹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1899.

²² The issue of pay is an interesting one. Volunteers and Yeomanry were paid, just as the Regular was paid, but somehow the public could not respect a man paid *regularly* for soldiering instead of only temporarily.

²³ The North Lancashire Regiment (Regulars) was one of the regiments besieged at Kimberley but their predicament was ignored in the local press.

²⁴ G.A. Henty published many books from the 1870s into the early twentieth century. In each one, a humbly but respectably born boy rises to comport himself well in battle or moral conflict. These boys frequently find themselves fighting alongside such national heroes as Wellington, Nelson, Clive or Gordon. Henty also wrote for *The Boy’s Own Paper* for many years.

willingness to place themselves at risk for a pittance.²⁵ In South Africa, the Yeomanry forces commander described them as “physically magnificent” intelligent men; largely gentlemen, and “vastly superior” to the Regular.²⁶ This connection of Yeomanry to society was clearly stated in the London society magazine *Vanity Fair*’s declaration that there was “scarcely *anyone* who has not volunteered to join” the Yeomanry [my italics].²⁷

According to Bennett, the social prestige accorded the Imperial Yeomanry was nationwide. Government contributions toward clothing and equipment were inadequate, but appeals to individuals and corporations provided enough capital to furnish the Yeomanry with “the very best of everything.”²⁸ Not so for the Volunteers. Public appeals for funds did not meet with the same enthusiasm with the result that Volunteers, though adequately equipped, were neither expensively nor lavishly supplied.²⁹ It would appear that the largest contributing factor was that the Yeomanry were composed, in Bennett’s class terminology, largely of the upper-to-middle professional class, while the Volunteers were composed of the lower middle-class and skilled working-class.³⁰

In the northern counties, the relative status of the Volunteers and Yeomanry was not evident from the source and dispersion of funding. Donated money was collected in funds intended for both types of volunteers, and dispersed according to need. In Horwich, Lancashire, the fund was called the “Urban and District Council Imperial Yeomanry and

²⁵ It is clear that England was not one homogenous group of people, but there is no consensus as to how divisions should be categorized in the historical perspective. Whichever theory one subscribes to, it is clear that there were differences related to income/wealth, education, family connection, place of residence, relation to capital and a host of other factors.

²⁶ Major-General John Brabazon quoted in Bennett, 17-18.

²⁷ *Vanity Fair*, 4 Jan. 1900.

²⁸ Major Wyndham Knight, Chief Staff Officer of the Imperial Yeomanry quoted in Bennett, 23. Bennett’s sources, however, are London area sources.

²⁹ Bennett, 30.

³⁰ Bennett, 27-31.

Volunteer Equipment Fund,” recognizing the two types of volunteers but not giving either precedence. In Blackrod, the fund was called simply the “South African War Fund.”³¹

While equal treatment may have been afforded those in financial need, the terminology employed in descriptions of the volunteers, and the precedence given to reports of Yeomanry activities throughout the war, indicated a clearly defined hierarchy in the public mind.

Early in the recruiting period, this hierarchy was not yet obvious. Pride in all volunteers was immense, and the north was particularly pleased to have provided an unusually large number of recruits. The *Aldershot Gazette* reported that the distribution of volunteers was “curiously unequal” from county to county, although no reason was suggested.³² In the first contingent embarking in the winter of 1900, the three counties of Lancashire and West and North Yorkshire contributed eight of forty-four English companies.³³ The *Manchester Guardian* proudly reported that response all over the North was “great”; this was echoed in the *Lancaster Guardian* with the added cachet of statistics and enthusiastic reports of recruits’ willingness for active service. Apparently sixty-five percent of the pre-existing 1st Volunteer Battalion Lancaster Regiment had volunteered, all of whom hoped to see active service, “a contrast to other places where the majority have been for garrison duty.”³⁴

This sense of regional competition pervaded press reports, official despatches, and

³¹ The first notice of these funds appears in the Horwich and Blackrod district news published in the *Adlington Chronicle* on 20 Jan. 1900. Blackrod itemized contributions as being from the Parish Church and church school, the collieries and the Sunday School.

³² *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 19 Jan. 1900.

³³ Bennett, Appendix III, 229-231. This does not include the special service companies such as the CIV, Paget’s Horse and the Sharpshooters. There were at this time 45 counties in England.

³⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 27 Dec. 1899; *Lancaster Guardian*, 3 Jan. 1900.

community bulletins. Competition required rules, and it quickly became apparent that patriotic feeling was not required in order to place first. Offense and defense are both important in the field of war, but the Lancaster volunteers were clearly considered ahead in the competition because they preferred fighting duty to other duty. The rhetoric employed indicated that manliness in war included devotion to duty, but also physical prowess, sportsmanlike behaviour, and chivalrous attitudes.

The language of chivalry informed descriptions of the volunteers. Early press reports applauded the patriotism of the volunteers, although it was not primarily patriotism that caught the public fancy and, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Four, it was not primarily patriotism that motivated the volunteers. The northern provincial press quickly dropped the London rhetoric of patriotism in favour of the volunteers' more personal motivations. Throughout England, the public appeared to be confused over which issues England was fighting for, with various political parties and individual campaigners championing separately the rights of English citizens living in Boer territory (Uitlanders), the issue of suzerainty, and the control over resources.³⁵

Lord Salisbury had stated in August 1899 that England was being forced to expend "considerable military effort – and all for a people whom we despise [the Uitlander] and for territory which will bring no profit and no power to England."³⁶ Peace advocates too, although for different reasons, discounted the rescue theory of war, believing that what might have been an issue at one time had been subordinated to "an

³⁵ Editorials in *The Times*, and the *Black and White Budget*, as well as each of the northern papers in this study. October through December, 1899.

³⁶ Lord Salisbury, Conservative Prime Minister 1895-1902, quoted in A.J.P. Taylor 'The Boer War' in *Essays in English History* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1976), 183.

issue of supremacy of the English flag in South Africa.”³⁷ In the north, a clear vision of the war was formed. In the Adlington and Lancaster areas, the *Uitlander* was adopted as the theme around which a just war could be constructed, enabling the volunteers to be portrayed as chivalric crusaders defending the weak and establishing right by might.³⁸ Yeomanry embarking at Liverpool “emerged from the station leading their faithful steeds,” and there were “no stouter hearts in the country than those beating in the breast of the volunteers.”³⁹ The *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, a Conservative newspaper, initially promoted the issue of suzerainty in support of the government. This was clearly an imperialist position, rather than a ‘rights of Englishmen’ position, but nonetheless the *Post* quickly shifted to the same exaltation of the volunteer as a chivalric hero.

Chivalric notions had always been embodied in the public perception of the Volunteers. The formation of the Volunteers in 1860 coincided with the widespread introduction of the rifle to replace the traditional musket.⁴⁰ The Victorians romanticized the rifle, incorporating it into the chivalric mythology that was beginning to transform mid-Victorian ideals of muscular Christianity and manliness. The *Times* equated it with the medieval long-bow, and reported that rifle-shooting expertise required the chivalric traits of “...moderation and temperance, a victory over the will, and a mastery over passions which hurt the soul.”⁴¹

Once the public had embraced their volunteers as potential chivalric heroes,

³⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 12 Dec. 1899.

³⁸ This formed the theme of January 1900 editorials in all the northern papers studied.

³⁹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 20 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1900.

⁴⁰ Cunningham, 113. The point is made that the rifle was not a new weapon, but that it was much more suited to middle-class individualists, who could “train for a form of warfare that required skill and intelligence.”

⁴¹ *The Times*, 29 June 1860 quoted in Cunningham, 114.

supporting the peace campaign became difficult to justify. The *Adlington Chronicle* regularly reported both Conservative and Liberal concerns as war became likely, and through the fall of 1899 reflected growing Liberal support for England at war if not for the government that had taken her there. There was remarkably little political stone throwing reported as both sides settled in to contend with important issues of army supply and transport. On 20 December 1899, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Liberal-Imperialist leader of the opposition, stated in Parliament the official position that the “Liberals accept no responsibility for the war but support efforts to bring it to a positive conclusion.”⁴²

The number of peace meetings in larger northern centres declined after the War Office volunteer recruitment announcement of December 24, although in some smaller communities, activists continued to draw interested audiences as late as March 1900.⁴³ Regardless of individual opinions on peace and war, the public seemed to embrace Campbell-Bannerman’s statement as a thumbs-up for war, throwing themselves wholeheartedly into preparations for the embarkation of their volunteers.

Volunteer battalions tended to be parochial, while Imperial Yeomen were attached to companies including men from a wider area, although still within county boundaries.⁴⁴ In *The Volunteer Force* (1975), Hugh Cunningham wrote of the Volunteers’ connection to community in 1863, an assessment that was just as true in 1900. The Volunteers had always been highly visible in parades, rifle contests, training camps, fundraising bazaars,

⁴² Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Dec. 1899.

⁴³ The *Manchester Guardian* did not report a single peace meeting until 16 Mar. 1900; *Adlington Chronicle* on 31 March. The *Lancaster Guardian* continued to report on peace meetings held in Settle and Long Preston on 27 Jan., 18 Feb., and 16 and 31 Mar. 1900.

⁴⁴ Bennett, 31.

and theatricals, exciting public interest and pride.⁴⁵ Once in South Africa, the larger units of parochial origin were often split into smaller units and attached to various battalions as needed, making their movements difficult to track for their communities at home.⁴⁶

Letters became the best method of knowing an individual's movements and regimental attachments, although of course there was a significant time lag. As a result, war reporting in the provincial papers tended to be divided between the current official news, and large amounts of space devoted to letters received by relatives and friends. Activities described in letters were supplemented by official documents whenever local men or detachments of volunteers had been given particular mention.⁴⁷ Communities were clearly proud of their volunteers, at once recognizing individual manly qualities and appropriating their successes as a standard of community honour. Louis Creswicke, in his somewhat irreverent although meticulously documented seven volume history of the war, wrote on the volunteer enthusiasm of 1899-1901:

Their promptitude was goodly to look upon and to read of, for it showed that, Communities appeared to be enthralled with the men as representatives of their particular areas, extolling their virtues and mourning their wounds and deaths as the war progressed....⁴⁸

According to Creswicke, who appears to have no connection to the north of England, the Lancashire regiments of Regulars had acquitted themselves admirably in battles of the early 1900s, yet the Lancashire press made no mention of this.⁴⁹ The lack of information concerning Regulars of the Lancashire units is particularly disturbing in

⁴⁵ Cunningham, 68.

⁴⁶ P.T. Ross, *A Yeoman's Letters* (London: Simkin, 1901), 36.

⁴⁷ It is worth noting that though Tommies received commendations, and mentioned these in their letters and diaries, these were not reported in the press.

⁴⁸ Louis Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War*, Vol. III (London: Caxton, n.d.), 5. Creswicke overestimated the patriotism of the volunteers, but his assessment of community support was credible and supportable.

⁴⁹ Creswicke, 147; 192-93.

terms of disasters and casualty reports. At the battle of Spion Kop, for example, in January 1900, 800 Lancashire Fusiliers participated in the battle and 250 were killed.⁵⁰ The names of the dead appear in official casualty reports published, but they are not mentioned in district news, even as a group. Yeomanry and Volunteers, however, received regular press coverage in the northern district newspapers, whether there was real news or not.⁵¹

Early coverage of mass enlistment reflected the jingoistic enthusiasm of the London papers but this attitude did not last beyond early spring 1900, and the northern press settled into its own style of reporting. The *Adlington Chronicle*, *Yorkshire Weekly Post* and *Lancaster Guardian* rarely printed the reports of newspaper correspondents, choosing to print official despatches instead, and enhanced this dry and factual news with publication of letters sent home from South Africa. Coverage of enlistment and embarkation continued, although the chivalric emphasis lessened after September 1900, with the onset of the guerilla phase of the war.

The chivalric trope was common in England, beginning with the Pre-Raphaelite group and still evident in World War I advertising posters. Chivalric images were regularly found in pictures and stories in boys' papers and adventure novels, and in the idioms employed by statesmen and politicians. By the late Victorian period, the manly man was moulded in the chivalric image, particularly in respect to the homosocial community and specifically in relation to military service and the Anglo-Boer War.

⁵⁰ H.W. Wilson, 304. Men of good social standing served as officers and early in the war experienced high casualty rates. These men were equally as ignored by the press as the socially inferior men in the ranks, indicative of the artificial status accorded the Volunteers and Yeomanry.

⁵¹ In the second half of the war there was often little to report. Newspapers would then devote space to anecdotes involving notable individuals who had volunteered.

In *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (1986), a collection edited by John M. Mackenzie, and *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War* (1978), by M. vanWyk Smith, chivalric imagery is examined in terms of its influence and utility in social rhetoric. Tracing the chivalric provides insights into the hierarchical position the various military organizations held in the social consciousness, and provides a reference for understanding the transformation of the public and state school muscular Christian into an esteemed warrior. The chivalric trope also provides insight into the predominance of militarism where once there had been a predominance of peace activism.

In “Secular and Moral Critiques of the War,” David Nash makes the important point that the South African War “provided the British nation with the first struggle in living memory between adherents of the same religio-moral system,” creating a moral dilemma for the English public.⁵² There were two main solutions, both of which were indiscriminately and inconsistently followed by news correspondents prior to Black Week. One was to portray the Boer as an unlettered and backward rural innocent needing British guidance to run his country; the second was to portray the Boer as a warrior intent on the destruction of all that was good in the British Empire, as well as a worthy foe.

Following the disasters of Black Week, the English adopted the warrior imagery, constructing a foe against whom the regular soldier had clearly been proven inadequate and setting the stage for new heroes. In “Warrior Values: A Socio-Historical Survey,” Barry McCarthy lists physical courage, endurance, strength, skill, and honour as warrior

⁵² David Nash, “Secular and Moral Critiques of the War,” in *Writing a Wider War: Rethinking Gender, Race and Identity in the South African War, 1899-1902*, ed. Greg Cuthbertson et. al. (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002), 268.

traits commonly esteemed in many cultures.⁵³ These are the traits of manliness transferred from “the literary heritage of romance and neo-chivalric values” into the military ideal and superimposed upon the volunteers by the public.⁵⁴ In *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* (1999), Paula Krebs states that

chivalry was a useful way of teaching the soldier how to behave and of teaching the British public how to think about the soldier during a war that saw the recruitment of an entirely different kind of soldier.⁵⁵

Unfortunately for Tommy, these new values were considered applicable only to the stable, educated man with a respectable job.

The London press lionized this “entirely different kind of soldier,” portraying him as heroic and patriotic, but also making very much of the fact that in the CIV volunteers came from such a wide cross-section of society that many titled gentlemen would serve in the ranks along with clerks and tradesmen. A London correspondent gushed: “Volunteers are...anxious to take their place shoulder to shoulder with the regular soldiers and the men from the colonies, and to share equally the dangers, the hardships, and the glory of the campaign.”⁵⁶ Ironically for this reporter, these London volunteers, the CIV, got tired of the hardships pretty quickly, and when war became less glorious, they simply went home.⁵⁷

⁵³ Barry McCarthy, “Warrior Values: A Socio-Historical Survey” in John Archer, ed., *Male Violence* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 105-6.

⁵⁴ Mark Moss, *Manliness and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War* (Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2001), 25. Moss provides a concise and well researched history of militarism relying on English traditions relevant to this thesis.

⁵⁵ Paula Krebs, *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 81. Krebs uses chivalry to construct a suspect relationship between men and women in South Africa using questionable evidence; nonetheless, her observations on chivalry in its general application are useful.

⁵⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Dec. 1899.

⁵⁷ The CIV were in South Africa for only seven months before being formally discharged. No other units were discharged before one year of service was complete.

Historians have tended to assume that all the volunteer forces can be described in terms similar to those used in describing the CIV, although most other companies were composed of a fairly uniform mixture of tradesmen and skilled labourers, with officers from the professional segment of the middle class.⁵⁸ During this war, only 136 officers were promoted from the ranks, from a total 448,435 officers and men, and 90 percent of officers remained “public school men,” indicating that despite the jubilation recorded in the *Times* over the perceived new equality within the army, the status quo had changed little if at all, regardless of new types and classes of soldiers.⁵⁹

Unlike London papers, Lancashire and Yorkshire papers began comparing volunteers favourably against the regular even before the war began. A Lancashire Hussar (Imperial Yeomanry) was described as “of splendid proportion and physique,” with a “splendid reputation” in both swordsmanship and horsemanship, while the *Manchester Guardian* reported two cases of desertion and one of suicide among Regulars as war loomed.⁶⁰

The northern press neglected the Regular soldier in the early stages of the war, except when the army failed in its duty, and public morale needed boosting. Then, he was ascribed the adventure story quality of courage, and commended as if he were a schoolboy for “not being funky.”⁶¹ Newspapers printed casualty lists but little else that

⁵⁸ M. vanWyk Smith writes of class mixing in the army generally without realizing that all of his references are memoirs of the CIV. M. vanWyk Smith, *Drummer Hodge: The Poetry of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), passim. The worst example of the tendency to exaggerate the importance of the CIV is in Byron Farwell, *The Great Anglo-Boer War* (New York: Norton, 1976). He states simply: “There were other volunteer units besides the CIV.” Farwell, 143. Specific social composition of the volunteers as a whole: Bennett, 17, 31; Price, 178-232 and Appendices V-VII; Cunningham, 33-51.

⁵⁹ Laffin, 192. *Times* 19 and 26 Dec. 1899; 6 January and 27 Oct. 1900.

⁶⁰ *Adlington Chronicle*, 7 Oct. 1899; *Manchester Guardian*, 8 and 10 Oct. 1899.

⁶¹ Editorial, *Adlington Chronicle*, 16 Dec. 1899; Letter from an officer in the *Manchester Guardian*, 13 Dec. 1899.

concerned Regulars from the districts served by the newspapers in this study. Where the Regular did appear, it was often in news items confirming the negative stereotype described by Macleay, or in letters exclusively from officers.⁶² While in the *Chronicle* and the *Lancaster Guardian* the Regular was damned with faint praise, the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* specifically published articles illustrating a widening gulf between the Regular and the volunteer. One such article asked why the Imperial Yeoman “is so far ahead of the ordinary regular soldier and is even, on occasion, a match for the wily Boer when few Thomases ever have been?” The answer given was that the Yeoman possessed intelligence and was resourceful.⁶³

Advertisements for volunteers requested “respectable young men” between the ages of 20 and 35.⁶⁴ The January 13 district report from Golborne reported that four men “of well-known and respected families” had joined the Lancashire Hussars (Imperial Yeomanry), marking the beginning of a “public show of interest in the war.”⁶⁵ Horwich volunteers were commended for joining the Volunteers for “perilous service” in South Africa, and it was reported that the Pope had recognized the “valour” of British volunteer soldiers.⁶⁶ The *Lancaster Guardian* regularly and unimaginatively referred to both the Volunteers and Yeomen as “gallant.” The *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, though markedly more reserved than the *Chronicle* or the *Lancaster Guardian*, persisted in highlighting local athletes who had volunteered, listing their “laudable” accomplishments and describing

⁶² This is not because Tommy did not write. Numerous collections of letters testify otherwise, some of which will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁶³ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 16 Mar. 1901.

⁶⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, *Adlington Chronicle*, *Lancaster Guardian* and others in every issue from 24 Dec. 1899 to early March 1900.

⁶⁵ *Adlington Chronicle*, 13 Jan. 1900.

⁶⁶ “Perilous service” clearly equated the new volunteer with the chivalrous knight of tradition and literature. *Adlington Chronicle*, 13 and 20 Jan., and 10 Feb. 1900.

their superior physical qualities: true representatives of the Victorian manly ideal.

Manly men, whether on the home playing field or the field of war, remained honourable in victory or defeat.⁶⁷ Success achieved by the Yeomanry and Volunteers was of course noted, and special commendations reported. But failures, too, were reported with bravado and cheer. One of the most mismanaged incidents in the early months of Imperial Yeomanry service involved a series of mistakes caused by miscommunication and lack of forethought. On 30 May 1900, eighty Imperial Yeomanry were killed and 450 taken prisoner during an ambush at Lindley. This incident was not important for strategic or tactical purposes, but it was important as a measure of the perceived courage and competence of the volunteers and as such received wide and unwarranted press attention.⁶⁸ According to Pakenham, this battalion was the “social and political show-piece of the new volunteer army,” being “one of the most blue-blooded battalions of the Imperial Yeomanry.”⁶⁹ It was politically expedient to report the disaster in terms that excused the Yeomen on recognizably manly grounds, so that in the “undoubted disaster,” the men were surprised by a “very superior force” and responded with “pluck.”⁷⁰

Other, less significant losses were reported in the *Guardian* and *Chronicle*, but not in the major London papers, indicating the parochial nature of reporting. It is not just in reports of war that community values can be studied, but also in advertising, imagery, and fiction. This study focuses principally on the newspapers because circulation numbers

⁶⁷ This was clearly a tenet of public school ideology.

⁶⁸ Leo Amery, writing *The Times* history several years later, stated: “this incident received undue press attention at the time.” *The Times History of the War in South Africa*, cited in Judd, 269.

⁶⁹ Pakenham, 436; Jackson, 121.

⁷⁰ *Lancaster Guardian*, 9 June 1900. It was not mentioned that they had scouted poorly and been in lax marching formation. *Adlington Chronicle*, 28 July 1900. This was in direct contrast to an earlier *Times* article in which the 450 Yeomanry prisoners had apparently been seen guarded by only eight Boers. Clearly, reporting was biased depending on the source and the investment of the community in the force being described. *The Times* 9 Jun. 1900.

imply that they were widely read, and also that they must have represented public opinion to a degree that ensured continued subscription. Advertising in newspapers was calculated to appeal to the masses; the content and imagery are therefore significant.

As mentioned previously, current historians tend to both read and use the term soldier as though it always means the same thing, not realizing that the soldier, in all his representations, must be distinguished as a Regular or a volunteer in order for analysis to be meaningful. Glenn R. Wilkinson's study, " 'To the Front': British Newspaper Advertising and the Boer War" (2000), provides a useful overview of the purposes of advertising and the significance of the soldier as a cultural icon but fails to recognize that advertising images were idealized portraits that bore little resemblance to Tommy. Photographs from South Africa would have made it very clear to the public that Tommy was not the soldier represented in advertisements. After 1900, when Lord Roberts took over as Commander-in-Chief, advertising images depicting soldiers bore an unmistakable resemblance to photographs of Roberts.

Wilkinson correctly assesses the position of the Victorian press as a medium with severely limited ability to educate or persuade the public, so that "images in newspapers had to conform to the perception of war that readers already held."⁷¹ Because of this, "advertisements depict recognizable and socially acceptable scenarios" designed to engage the reader at a level that the reader would respond to quickly and non-critically.⁷²

The soldier became a popular icon for promoting products. Advertisers tried to create some logical connection between soldiers and their product with the result that in

⁷¹ Wilkinson in *The Boer War: Direction, Image and Experience*, ed. John Gooch. (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 204; Bristow in Andrew H. Miller and James Eli Adams, eds., *Sexualities in Victorian Britain* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 191.

⁷² Wilkinson, 204.

the unsophisticated northern press health products were heavily featured.⁷³ These advertisements took one of three forms: the traditional form with a product identifier, a slogan, and sometimes a picture; the “puff” being a text column that mimicked a newspaper article; and text columns disguised as editorials. By the late 1890s, editorial integrity was gradually eliminating the latter and there are few examples over the period of the war in the papers studied.

The *Adlington Chronicle*'s few advertisements related to the war in the fall of 1899 were for products attractive to specifically the less well-educated and less financially secure.⁷⁴ The first two appear on 4 November, for Williams Pink Pills (liver pills) and Homocea, a skin cream for rashes and irritation. The Williams advertisement is a “puff” in which a “soldier” is interviewed by a “reporter.” While connecting soldierly and civilian health, the text included the “testimony” not of a soldier in the Anglo-Boer War, but a retired soldier who had served in Burma. Whether a bias of the advertiser or a reflection of public opinion, it is clear that judgement on the suitability of the Regular as a product promoter was being withheld. The Homocea advertisement referred to troops in action, implying that if only they would use Homocea they would have a greater capacity for victory, a judgment on the manly capabilities of the Regular.⁷⁵

No more war related advertisements appeared until 1900, at which point they became clearly associated with the volunteers. Instead of a three-line insert, the new

⁷³ In publications such as *Vanity Fair*, advertisements tended to be for tyres [sic], restaurants, trains, hotels and safe deposit boxes, indicating the social status of its readers.

⁷⁴ Virginia Berridge, “Content Analysis and Historical Research on Newspapers” in Michael Harris and Alan Lee, eds. *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, Part Two: the Nineteenth Century (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), 209-18. Berridge discusses the place of home remedy and health related advertising in the provincial press. Advertising differed considerably between “society” papers and the popular press.

⁷⁵ *Adlington Chronicle*, 4 Nov. 1899.

Homocea advertisement was two columns wide and a third of a page long. The same theme was employed, but now the message was that with superior troops, referred to as “Britons,” being sent to the front with a supply of Homocea, victory would be assured.⁷⁶ “Britons” connotes chivalric warriors, the new volunteers having clearly superseded Tommy as the preferred saviours of British honour.

In late February 1900, volunteers were still being actively recruited. One advertisement, disguised as a war correspondent’s report, tried shaming the armchair warrior into enlisting by accusing him of letting the ordinary Tommy carry out “men’s work” and taking “men’s risks.”⁷⁷ The obvious implication was that Tommy had failed, not being manly enough for real men’s work or risks. This sentiment echoed an earlier editorial in the *Manchester Guardian* which stated: “the Volunteers who are chosen will be picked men, and, one feels confident, quite equal to any work that may be given them.”⁷⁸

Some recruiting advertisements mimicked the boys’ adventure story typical of the penny weeklies, a strategy intended to interest the Sunday reader.⁷⁹ In March 1900, one story featured an infantry Volunteer from Manchester with a “light springy step” and a “keen confident look” in his “merry, laughing eyes.” This healthy, attractive, confident Volunteer was also a champion of women, exclaiming “You cowardly swine!” to an abusive artillery Regular in defense of a waitress who had stepped on his foot. Our

⁷⁶ *Adlington Chronicle*, 20 Jan. 1900. The new format featured a soldier wearing the Imperial Yeoman’s slouch hat urging “patriots” to see that “Britons” remained healthy, for “VICTORY depends upon WHOLE SKINS (sic).” Earlier ads did not use the term Briton, which, following Black Week, came to be associated the new recruits, implying a long tradition of chivalric warriors.

⁷⁷ *Adlington Chronicle*, 24 Feb. 1900.

⁷⁸ *Manchester Guardian*, 20 Dec. 1899.

⁷⁹ Sunday newspapers had grown tremendously in popularity by late century and were devoted to stories and sports. Lee, 71; 125-6.

Volunteer was not averse to a fight, however, firmly placing him on a lower rung of the social ladder than his friend the Yeoman, who deplores the fighting and does his best to reform his mate. Eventually, the unfortunate Yeoman was killed while attempting to save his fallen comrade, and “none were nobler or purer than the chums who were True til Death [sic].”⁸⁰ This story encapsulates the hierarchy in which the Yeoman is the true gentleman and the Volunteer a rougher but still honourable version of the manly man, calculated to inspire volunteers of differing backgrounds. The incorporation of public school slang, as in “chums,” firmly places both the Volunteer and the Yeoman in a social class above that of Tommy, who remained a character in need of reform, and necessarily at the bottom of the hierarchy.

A common recruiting story form of 1901 was the “true” account of a soldier who had volunteered with the first contingent. One of these began to run one week after the first recruiting announcements appeared and ran as a continued story until mid-March, when the ads were withdrawn. This “Volunteer” is portrayed as one who was initially reluctant to serve but, once committed, found fulfillment and honour in his service as a Volunteer. The reluctance to serve featured in the story’s opening installment was a transparent reference to the diminishing numbers of new recruits as the war progressed, and the appeal to honour is clear.⁸¹

Fiction, too, had its place in the promotion of the soldier as an imperial icon, but in the pre-war fiction of Henty and George Ballantyne, officers were the preferred representatives of the army and Regulars were usually the colonial forces in seemingly exotic parts of the empire. *The Boy’s Own Paper* published many stories featuring Jack

⁸⁰ *Adlington Chronicle*, 31 Mar. 1900.

⁸¹ My interpretation.

Tar, but in the twenty three years between its inaugural issue and the Anglo-Boer War, published only one story in which a Regular soldier was the main character, and here he was distinguished by being awarded a Victoria Cross.⁸²

Besides recruiting stories printed in newspapers, poetry was the only fiction published during the war that represented soldiers. Penny Summerfield, M. van Wyk Smith and John Laffin believe that Rudyard Kipling's poetry and prose did much to raise the respectability of the Regular soldier in the public consciousness, Smith declaring that Kipling's Tommy became implanted in the public mind as a thoroughly human, loveable rogue.⁸³ Conversely, in *The Late Victorian Army* (1992), Edward Spiers suggests that Kipling's poetry and prose probably contributed to the image of Tommy as "poorly paid, lacking status, and bereft of prospects...periodically engaged in drunken and licentious behaviour."⁸⁴ Both views could be true, and it is entirely possible that the public liked Tommy in between wars, but did not see him as the imperial rescuer necessary after Black Week.

War poetry, such as that cited in Summerfield, was published in London area newspapers but with a few exceptions avoided by northern newspapers. The soldier represented in poetry published in the northern press was local, consistent with the highly localized content of even the large papers such as the *Manchester Guardian*. Poetry was rarely published, and what was published was of execrable quality, such as: "Hurrah for the Volunteers who face the wily foe/ Who are anxious to clear the slate/And wipe off

⁸² I suspect that the subject of the story had risen to public prominence and that the story was a sort of obituary, but I have not been able to find evidence to date.

⁸³ M. vanWyck Smith, 27; Summerfield in John Mackenzie, ed., *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 37.

⁸⁴ Edward Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 200-201.

what is owed.”⁸⁵ The intent was obvious, Volunteers once again being expected to rescue the nation.

Following the relief of Mafeking on 17 May 1900, and the surrender of Pretoria on the 5th of June, British troops continued their work of forcing the Boers out of the Transvaal. On September 24, Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief, marched into Komati Port, and official opinion was that the war was all but over.⁸⁶ The Boxer Rebellion took precedence in the press, and official reports from South Africa began to be summarized by editors rather than printed in full.⁸⁷ At this point, news of the Yeomanry and Volunteers began to appear in the district reports instead of on the editorial page and fewer letters from soldiers were printed.⁸⁸

As companies returned home and the second contingent of volunteers began to be raised, reporters manufactured a thin veneer of enthusiasm in their reports. The previous year, it had been confidently stated that hundreds saw the new recruits off at the station; now the crowd was simply “large,” and they “received just such an enthusiastic send-off as was accorded to their comrades who volunteered in the more stirring time of 12 months since.”⁸⁹ In contrast, the returning companies were met by “thousands” and

⁸⁵ In the Horwich district news, *Adlington Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1899.

⁸⁶ Farwell, 312. Roberts had said specifically that “There did not appear to be much more for the army to do...there is nothing now left of the Boers but a few marauding bands.”

⁸⁷ On 7 July 1900, the *Adlington Chronicle* introduced news from China as “Blood-Curdling Stories.” It was not just provincial newspapers that were becoming bored with the war. Sibbald maintains that *The Times*, too, “seemed just a little bored with South Africa.” Sibbald, 176. *The Times* did continue to publish full reports, although no longer daily, and the northern provincial papers condensed these reports if they chose to publish them at all. On 9 March 1901 the *Yorkshire Post* editorial stated simply “there is no war news...of any importance this week.”

⁸⁸ The relegation of news to district reports meant that many contributing editors were writing copy. The bias towards Yeomanry first and Volunteers second continued, indicating that this was representative of the smaller communities served by each paper.

⁸⁹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 2 and 9 Mar. 1901.

commended for their heroism and “gallant services nobly and voluntarily rendered.”⁹⁰ They were commended for their “soldier-like” qualities, a reminder that in performing their manly duty they were never real soldiers or true Tommies, so had not lost their respectability.⁹¹

The language of chivalry is strenuously adhered to throughout the raising of the second contingent in 1901 even though public interest in the war had clearly declined. Attempts to manufacture the appearance of enthusiasm are manifestations of respect for the volunteers even though the war itself was no longer of primary interest. Official war reports appear infrequently throughout 1901, and war news remained in district news pages, indicating a continuing parochial interest in individuals, but little interest in the army as a whole.

Publications such as the *Contemporary Review* eschewed jingoism for reasoned debate on various issues concerning the war, but even here a bias in favour of the Yeomanry is clear. In July 1901, an article defended the Yeomanry’s inability to function creditably, faulting the insistence on blind obedience that was army policy. The *Review* also lauded the manly and aristocratic sporting culture of the Yeoman officer: “Our Yeomen are intelligent, responsible beings; their officers are, almost without exception, sportsmen, and possess the inestimable advantage of common sense....”⁹² And of course, common sense was what Tommy invariably seemed to lack.

After September 1900, many war correspondents left South Africa, and war histories began to appear on the market. The “fashion” for publishing history during the

⁹⁰ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 25 May 1901.

⁹¹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 25 May 1901.

⁹² “Our Methods in South Africa,” *Contemporary Review*, July 1901, 57.

course of a war was scorned in a 1907 article published by “A British Officer” in the *American Historical Review*.⁹³ He objected to the ahistoricism of these “popular books” that had a “considerable although purely ephemeral sale.”⁹⁴ Though these books may have been rush publications, and may have been somewhat lacking in historical veracity, their popularity is of interest in determining what the popular rhetoric was. Most of these books fit into one of three genres of histories, represented in this thesis by the works of novelist Arthur Conan Doyle, historian Louis Creswicke and *Daily Mail* assistant editor H.W. Wilson. Conan Doyle’s history is novel-like and mimics the adventure stories published in *The Boy’s Own Paper*. Creswicke’s history is factual, but with a wryly sarcastic viewpoint on the artificial focus of the press and public on chivalric honour, and H.W. Wilson reported events transcribed from official despatches, without analysis, but with a decidedly imperialistic flavour. These three histories appeared in the Leyland Free Library list of acquisitions published in the *Adlington Chronicle* in mid-1901, suggesting strongly that they are suitable choices for a discussion of social attitudes represented in contemporary publications.

In *The Great Boer War* (1901) Conan Doyle wrote history with flair, championing Tommy through the initial three months of the war, but transferring praise to the volunteers once they arrived in early 1900. Tommy had, according to Conan Doyle, been often brave and sometimes gallant but became “hampered by drill and discipline” and lacked the “spirit within...that makes a formidable soldier.”⁹⁵ The Yeomanry were “high-mettled...good sportsmen of the shires...” and credited with giving up prestigious

⁹³ A British Officer, “Literature of the South African War, 1899-1902,” *American Historical Review*, Vol.12, No. 2 (Jan., 1907), 313.

⁹⁴ A British Staff Officer, *An Absent Minded War* (London: John Milne, 1901), 313.

⁹⁵ Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), 393.

positions to become “simple” volunteers.⁹⁶

Conan Doyle’s account of the disaster at Lindley is worth recounting in full:

The men were of peculiarly fine quality, many of them from the public schools and from the universities, and if any would fight to the death these with their sporting spirit and their high sense of honour might have been expected to do so...No blame can rest upon the men, for their presence there at all is a sufficient proof of their public spirit and their gallantry.⁹⁷

Conan Doyle’s over-exuberant praise applied to lesser-born volunteers as well. In an account of twenty post office Volunteers among a hundred-odd men demanded by a Boer general to surrender, Conan Doyle fancifully reported: “But it is not in nature for a postman to give up his postbag without a struggle. ‘Never!’ cried the valiant postmen.”⁹⁸ Yeomanry and Volunteers were accorded respect according to their position in the hierarchy; Yeomen being gentlemen and Volunteers valiant. Tommy was no longer mentioned. Conan Doyle concluded his book with recommendations for reform of the army. This included the recommendation that the unskilled labouring classes were not suitable for the modern army, lacking the necessary “intelligence and individuality” inherent in the sporting classes that, according to him, represented the “picked manhood of the country.”⁹⁹

Creswicke’s exhaustive and factual history was enlivened with wit and insight, possibly standing as a good measure of the social attitudes of his intended market. Copious numbers of army lists, copies of official despatches, speeches to the troops, maps, illustrations and like material enhance the narrative. Throughout, Creswicke

⁹⁶ Doyle, 393, 430, 441.

⁹⁷ Doyle, 462.

⁹⁸ Doyle, 465.

⁹⁹ Doyle, 532-33.

skillfully selected his descriptive vocabulary to form a narrative structure that constructed a particular history. Boers were consistently called “obnoxious,” “marauders,” and “gangs.” Creswicke provided a reasonably balanced account of the activities of Regulars, Volunteers and Yeomanry although he was prone to exaggeration where there was room for interpretation, particularly in his assessment of Volunteers and Yeomanry. However, his market would have expected precisely this interpretation, making his work useful in this context.

In his chapter on January 1900, Creswicke reported on the country’s confidence in the newly enlisted volunteers, reflecting upon their “natural spirit of chivalry” and their desire to endure the “hardship and dangers of the trooper in emulation of the regular soldier.”¹⁰⁰ Here again, the volunteer is not a real soldier, but a simulated soldier, one who was destined to perform the “glorious errand of deliverance” that the Regular had been incapable of on his own.¹⁰¹ Creswicke’s Tommy was given a share of praise, frequently referred to as “plucky,” “doughty,” and “dogged,” and very occasionally “gallant,” but these terms did not carry the cachet of those used to describe the volunteers, who were consistently “gallant” and “noble,” and “magnificent,” clearly implying hierarchical value placed on the troops in action.

H.W. Wilson, assistant editor of the *Daily Mail*, published war articles in serial form, titled “With the Flag to Pretoria,” later publishing these same reports in book form under the same title. Wilson described the army of early December 1899 feeling “deep depression” and during the defeats of Black Week “dispirited,” and “shaken and

¹⁰⁰ Creswicke, vol. III, 5. 169.

¹⁰¹ Creswicke, vol. IV, 30.

“demoralised.”¹⁰² The news that the government was raising troops from the Volunteers and Yeomanry became a source of “encouragement and hope” that the “British forces could assume the offensive.”¹⁰³ Here again, the pre-volunteer army does not stand up manfully to difficult situations, unlike the volunteers who “sacrificed comfort and ease for a life of pain and hardship in South Africa.”¹⁰⁴

Wilson’s book is particularly valuable for the sub-text evident in photographs and drawings reproduced from newspaper editions. Photographs of Tommies bear little resemblance to the idealized soldier in drawings, who is also the idealized soldier in newspaper advertisements. The photographs reveal an often unkempt man with jacket open and puttees torn. One shows a group of Lancashire Regulars crossing a river, with a heading that emphasized that they did not bother to take their boots off before fording the river: clearly a matter of ill-breeding.¹⁰⁵

In summary, the regional press referred to the Yeomanry and Volunteers of the Anglo-Boer War as chivalric heroes. While the Yeomanry held a position superior to that of the Volunteers, both were held in markedly higher public esteem than Tommy. This imagery, consistently prevalent in the northern press and underscored in advertising, fiction and histories, created a public image of the soldier consistent with the need for a reassuring vision of English competence and, in the north, a reaffirmation of traditional hierarchies that reflected those of the community and the workplace.

¹⁰² Wilson, vol. I, 170, 196, 199.

¹⁰³ Wilson, 234.

¹⁰⁴ Wilson, 232. Wilson implies that the act of volunteering is somehow more noble than simply enlisting in the Regular Army. It is distinctly interesting that except for the initial War Office terms of service, pay is never mentioned. Volunteers were paid the same as Regulars: thirteen shillings a week, while Yeomen received substantially more, at thirty-five shillings per week.

¹⁰⁵ Wilson, 276.

This type of parochial allegiance created the paradox of pacifist belief that was resolved through the rhetoric of honour. Once England's honour was perceived to be at stake, the county stood solidly behind its volunteers as they prepared for war, for "true chivalry fought for honour" in a war that had taken on the character of a fight for "the existence of the Empire in South Africa."¹⁰⁶

The imagery embraced by the press and presumably the public portrays the soldier as others saw him, an incomplete entity described from the outside. The transference of contemporary ideology onto the person of the soldier was convenient and comfortable, but left out the identity that the soldiers constructed of and for themselves; an identity incorporating the ideology of chivalry and manliness, and needed for a thorough understanding of the Anglo-Boer War soldiers as men. This theme is developed in the following chapter.

¹⁰⁶ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 22 Jun. 1901; *Adlington Chronicle*, 30 Dec. 1899.

Chapter Four

MANLINESS INFERRED

Volunteer soldiers in South Africa had a distinct view of manliness that was clearly influenced by public school ideology and, with the exception of officers, distinctly without the chivalric language common in the press, literature, and histories. The chivalric trope was clearly a rhetorical convention that had little to do with personal experience, beyond that of the officer class. What the English public saw as chivalric, the volunteer soldier referred to as fair play, a reference to the games culture of the public school. Men serving as non-commissioned officers did not refer to each other's performance as "gallant" and chivalric terms are conspicuously absent from letters and diaries, replaced with public-schoolboy-like tales of "marvelous escapes" and "manful endurance."¹ This was likely because men saw their own and others' actions in a microcosm of events, conversations, and the daily round of routine and change. Unlike those at home, they had not the sense of a wider war in which their individual and regimental successes and failures had relative meaning. With no sense of the war as a progression of events, they focused on relationships and daily minutiae, forming the social rhetoric that appeared in their letters and diaries.

Although the language of chivalry was absent, its ideals were present in the accounts given by volunteer soldiers of battles and specific personalities, whether officers or fellow volunteers. The term "manly" was rarely used by soldiers themselves, although at all levels their perceptions of themselves as men were clearly based on the chivalric

¹ P.T. Ross, *A Yeoman's Letters* (London: Simkin, 1901), 15 Jun. 1900; Graham Chambers, *A Soldier's Diary: The Boer War 1899-1902* (Cambridge: Pentland Press, 1999), 2 Apr. 1900.

ideal developed by schools and transmitted through novels, boys' papers, and the paramilitary organizations that proliferated in the late nineteenth century. As such, it was also a clearly middle-class perception, regardless of the origins of individual soldiers. The manly ideals taught in schools and which permeated literature for boys, were subscribed to by middle class recruits and, as became clear as the war progressed, were accepted by Tommy as an irrefutable marker of his place in the social scheme.²

The letters and diaries excerpted in this study were written by soldiers in northern regiments, although one author, Lieutenant Moeller, began his service with the CIV. The high attrition rate meant that few volunteers remained in the same company or battalion, and Moeller ended up as a Lieutenant in one of the Lancashire Volunteer Battalions. Moeller was a London clerk prior to enlisting, and his lower-middle-class social standing was reflected in his insecurity and judgmental disposition, while his early association with the CIV left him feeling superior to other ranks.

Social class remained the single most important determinant of status in the army of the Anglo-Boer War, although in some cases it was social class by association, so that being in a traditionally elite unit such as the Imperial Yeomanry conferred a higher status than would have been obtained in the community.³ This occasioned discontent from Tommy, and a certain amount of subdued rivalry among Yeomanry and Volunteers. Comparisons of situations and attitudes described in letters and diaries indicate many parallels between the Volunteer and Yeomen, and a Tommy at once irascible and sometimes honourable.

² Letters and diaries in general. Patrick Joyce, *Work, Politics and Society: The Culture of the Factory in later Victorian England* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980), 91-92; 169.

³ Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class: Working Class attitudes and reactions to the Boer War 1899-1902* (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1972), 200.

Honour was forged on the playing field, and disseminated to all classes through literature and social groups. Honour, for the Yeoman and Volunteer, was integral to self, while for Tommy, honour was more likely related to a group. In a general sense, honour meant winning, but it also referred to the ways and means by which winning was accomplished. The *Black and White Budget* had expressed this in national terms in October of 1899: “Her Majesty is known to have a strong bias in favour of peace with honour; but her splendid sense of national prestige rebels against peace with dishonour, a condition that would undoubtedly ensue were we to knuckle under to the Boer.”⁴

For the less well educated Regular, these ideals created conflict. Humphries states that for working-class members of boys’ clubs, the “public school ethos of manliness that permeated these movements [was] often viewed with cynical detachment.”⁵ Yet Robert Roberts, in *The Classic Slum* (1976), recounts that the public school adventures of the fictitious Greyfriars school published in the boys’ papers *Magnet* and *Gem* were read and admired by the boys of working-class Salford, and “it came as a curious shock” when he and his contemporaries realized that the “low cads so despised at Greyfriars” were boys like himself.⁶ This realization resulted, for some Tommies, in a desire to be included in the social hierarchy through association with volunteers attached to their regiments.

Cynical detachment, therefore, did not preclude the acknowledgement that such ideals created social stability in the familiar structures of factory and community that came to be regarded as regularizing foundations for army life. Friendships between

⁴ *Black and White Budget*, 21 Oct. 1899.

⁵ Stephen Humphries, *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), 134.

⁶ Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972, originally published 1901), 128; 127.

volunteers and Regulars existed, although as indicated by P.T. Ross, these were lop-sided, and resembled the patron/patronized factory community of northern England. For the Regular, this conflict was resolved in a sort of solidarity of contrived disinterest that excluded the volunteers as a group, but on a personal, individual level, accepted them as social superiors that allowed enjoyment of the perks that having them along entailed.⁷ The *Yorkshire Weekly Post* was under the impression that “Regular soldiers are glad to have “well-to-do officers of good social position because they like to have fun, play games and be genial.”⁸

Through the various inferences of manliness, it is obvious that a hierarchy existed through which the Regulars, Volunteers, and Imperial Yeomanry identified themselves. Tommies wished to acquit themselves well as soldiers, but in their personal time, they often reverted to less-than-honourable behaviour consistent with their unrespectable public reputation. Gareth Stedman Jones, in *Languages of Class* (1983), and F.M.L. Thompson in *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain 1830-1900* (1988) provide convincing discussions of a distinct working-class culture that included a moral code distinct from that of the middle classes. Judgement on their character came from those outside the code, resulting in disapprobation and Tommy’s place at the bottom of the new army hierarchy.⁹

The moral code embraced by the Volunteers and particularly the Imperial Yeoman

⁷ Details are given throughout the diary of P.T. Ross, and in *Private Tucker’s Boer War Diary*, eds. Pamela Todd and David Fordham (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980). Specific examples will follow in this chapter.

⁸ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 16 Dec. 1900. All, of course, gentlemanly characteristics.

⁹ Gareth Stedman Jones, *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 183-235. F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain 1830-1900* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1988), passim.

required that honour and fair play be both subscribed to and incorporated into everyday life. These ideals applied to soldiering but were not restricted to soldiering, resulting in a more circumscribed persona than Tommy's, and one which never truly allowed them to identify with the soldier or the profession of soldiering. They could, therefore, function temporarily in this role while still despising the profession.

In *Duty* (1880), one of the widely acclaimed self-help volumes by Samuel Smiles, a series of biographies of English heroes was designed to illustrate desirable character traits for the instruction of the working classes.¹⁰ Smiles stressed "honest and upright performance of individual duty, which constitutes the glory of manly character."¹¹ He did not stress initiative and innovative thought, but duty as blind obedience to authority, whether to an employer or in a more general sense of duty to God, the Queen and Country. Devotion to duty was common to both volunteers and Tommies, but with a fundamental and significant difference in the depth to which duty was a part of the manly character. For Tommies, duty was an action, "an anxiety to acquit themselves well in the performance of a duty demanded of them by the State [sic]," while for the gentleman volunteer, duty was an integral part of the character that informed "thought, word, and deed."¹²

¹⁰ Samuel Smiles' self-help series began as lectures to a Leeds working men's club. *Duty* (London: John Murray, 1880), v. According to the introduction to *Duty*, the previous two books in the series had been reprinted numerous times and translated into a number of European languages as well as Japanese and some Indian dialects. In *Duty*, Smiles uses the example of the obedient and disciplined soldier. The effectiveness of Smiles' works is described by Robert Roberts in *A Classic Slum* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), 15-16.

¹¹ Smiles, *Duty*, v.

¹² Robert Baden-Powell, *Quick Training for War: A Few Practical Suggestions* (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1904), 9. Baden-Powell was referring specifically to Regulars in the Anglo-Boer War. The second quote is from the Boy Scout law in Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* (London: C. Arthur Pearson, 1910), 6. As described by Springhall in *Youth*, the Boy Scouts was a movement begun by Baden-Powell in an attempt to instill middle-class ideals into working-class boys in order to fit them for future wars. John Springhall,

Tommy's duty appeared to encompass a variety of allegiances including home and family, and solidarity with fellow Tommies. Soldiers' letters reveal that many Tommies were supporting families at home in England, implying that soldiering was a necessary job. Duty for these individuals meant performing well enough that there was a paycheque to send home, while patriotism was expressed in vague terms inconsistent with any sense of jingoistic excitement. It is clear in Tommy's written record that there was little interest in patriotic celebrations and holidays besides the extra beer allowed. In a typically terse diary entry, Private J. Gullick wrote: "Funeral of the Queen. Red letter day, all drunk."¹³ On the death of Queen Victoria, an unnamed Tommy was recorded stating simply: "Well, she done her juty [sic]."¹⁴

The gentleman's sense of duty was integral to his sense of being, and informed all of what he did. Duty required sacrifice, but could also result in honour and glory, a recurring theme in works by such as Henty, stressed in *The Boy's Own Paper*, and experienced on the playing field. Volunteers referred less than Tommies to duty, since duty was assumed, and more to the manly qualities of courage and principle required in carrying out duty, qualities which the editor of the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* felt to be essential qualities of the true gentleman.¹⁵

"Building character in the British Boy: the attempt to extend Christian manliness to working-class adolescents" in Mangan and Walvin, *Manliness and Morality*, 65, footnote 8. The principle of being "pure in thought, word and deed" were appendices to the Boy Scout promise, which opened with "On my honour, I promise that I will...do my duty..." *Scouting for Boys*, 6. See also Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Pimlico, 1976), 234.

¹³ Gullick, 2 Feb. 1901 in *The Boer War Diaries of Major H.G.D. Shute and Private G.J. Gullick 1899-1902*, Frank Stockman, ed. (London: Anglo-Boer War Philatelic Society, 1999). This is consistent with Robert Roberts' recollection that "except in periods of national crisis or celebration, industrial labourers, though Tory, royalist or patriotic, remained generally uninterested in any event beyond the local..." Roberts, 129.

¹⁴ Recorded by P.T. Ross, 158.

¹⁵ Editorial. *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 26 Oct. 1901.

Those in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Volunteer and Yeomanry corps appeared to be men with regular employment not threatened by the economic downturn of the war years, 1901-1902, indicating that unlike Tommy, military service was not the sole option for employment.¹⁶ These men idealized the relationship between war and community in the fashion of adventure stories, in which honour required personal sacrifice and subscription to the code that it was a manly responsibility to defend the wider community of Englishmen (in this case the Uitlander).¹⁷ P.T. Ross, of the Imperial Yeomanry expressed the juxtaposition of honour and sacrifice while pondering the possibility that he might be shot down while on scouting duty: "Still, the knowledge that the report of his [the Boer] Mauser would warn one's comrades was eminently satisfactory."¹⁸ Adventure, too, was sought, and the opportunity for adventure as a result of defending the helpless was consistent with the code of chivalric honour evident in the volunteer soldier's written record.¹⁹

Soldiers' honour is consistently referenced through all primary sources to officers and volunteers, recognition that whatever Tommy may have meant by honour, it was class specific and clearly not the broader chivalric honour learned from literature and games, and expected of officers, Volunteers, and especially the socially superior Imperial Yeomanry. Honour, like duty, was clearly distinct from patriotism. Honour was personal,

¹⁶ For specific information on employment information see Price, appendices.

¹⁷ Ironically, attestation papers indicate that volunteers agreed to serve "for a period of one year, or for the duration of the war." National Army Museum, London, U.K. Most volunteers remembered only the phrase "one year" and discontent set in after this time. See particularly P.T. Ross, letters about the early return of the CIV, and after January 1901, when his first year's service was complete. Responsibility to community is demonstrated in the competition evident between communities and the clear sense of pride demonstrated by these communities regardless of how nebulous their commitment to this particular war may actually have been.

¹⁸ Ross, 31 July 1900.

¹⁹ See above note.

and related to an individual's place in the community. Patriotism, which can be seen as a more general responsibility towards Queen and country, was heralded by the London press as rampant amongst the volunteer forces.²⁰ As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the northern provincial press pretended to adopt patriotism as part of its enthusiastic response to the request for volunteers, but quickly dropped the façade and did not revive it when new contingents were required. Volunteers themselves rarely referred to patriotic inducements, but rather to local allegiances.

In *The Working Class in Britain: 1850-1930* (2003), John Benson argues that despite problems assessing working class patriotism, it was evident among the very poor in, among other factors, strong neighborhood parochialism and their participation in national celebrations.²¹ Robert Roberts asserted that staunch patriotism was a component of state education, so that support for the empire was strong and unquestioned.²² Roberts, however, made it clear that national patriotic celebrations were at least a distraction and at best a holiday for the working classes, and importantly, that patriotism was an automatic, formulaic response that had little to do with personal beliefs.²³ The strong association with parochial loyalties in Roberts' memory and Benson's study corroborates Price's assertion that patriotism was not a motivating factor in decisions to enlist.²⁴ For both Regulars and volunteers, parochialism rather than patriotism appeared to be dominant; for the Yeomanry in particular, the deeply ingrained ideal of knightly service required that

²⁰ Will Bennett, *Absent-Minded Beggars: Yeomanry and Volunteers in the Boer War* (London: Leo Cooper, 1999), 36.

²¹ John Benson, *The Working Class in Britain 1850-1939* (London: Taurus, 2003), 148-150; 160-162.

²² Roberts, 112-113.

²³ Roberts, 4;145.

²⁴ Price, 46-96.

county honour be defended through a show of manly action.²⁵

According to a series of articles on the new chivalry in *The Boy's Own Paper*, service was the first virtue practiced by the knight.²⁶ "Service" was a broad directive incorporating but not limited to duty, leaving the choice of "master" up to the individual. While the chivalric trope was distinctly not a part of the rhetoric employed by either the Regulars or the Volunteers, chivalric ideals were embedded in the psyches of the educated volunteers. The patriotic trope imposed on all of England's volunteers by the press did not always fit, but the concept of service did.

Factory towns such as those in the north of England tended to have retained an almost feudal support structure where the factory functioned as community, and factory owner or overseer as overlord or benefactor.²⁷ This type of localized loyalty may have made individuals and communities less susceptible to jingoism, bearing out Price's conclusion that Volunteers from the north were less likely to have volunteered out of patriotic motives than those from the much studied London area. Parochial loyalty was the subject of a speech at the celebratory banquet in honour of the returning Yorkshire Imperial Yeomanry. One Yeoman stated: "they [had] found their esprit de corps in the history of York and Yorkshire – in the feeling that every individual man was charged with the duty of keeping unsullied the good name of the county."²⁸

The northern popular press created a form of competition between localities,

²⁵ In terms of this war, this meant defending the rights of English citizens in South Africa: the Uitlander, as an extension of the home community.

²⁶ According to *The Boy's Own Paper* no. 650, Vol. XIII (Saturday, 27 Jun. 1891), 622-623.

²⁷ Joyce, 90; Roberts, 160.

²⁸ Speech printed in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 15 June 1901. Probably county is emphasized to please county supporters, but still, if national patriotism had been strong, *country* would have taken precedence in the speech.

fostered by printing occupation and address alongside the names of new Volunteers. The Lancashire town of Golbourne failed to provide any volunteers until three weeks into the first recruitment drive, a fact derided in the *Adlington Chronicle*.²⁹ Mine and mill owners may have encouraged their workers to volunteer as a kind of reflection upon their personal honour, duty requiring that they contributed men to the cause.³⁰ In theory, community values represented the home soil being defended, although in peaceful England, defense was likely internalized as a *Boy's Own Paper* adventure, rather than risk.

Shortly after the Anglo-Boer War, statements to an army reform commission referred to Volunteers joining up because their friends had done so, or for a desire for "sport." A Colonel of the Lancashire Fusiliers, whose men were skilled workers in the cotton industry of Salford stated that he did not think most men joined for patriotic reasons, but for a change of pace. A Horwich Volunteer said that he was "going to fight on behalf of the oppressed Uitlander."³¹ This was not patriotism, specifically, but duty on behalf of one's fellow man, a personal expression of manly honour.³²

Tommy, as an unemployed or at best seasonal worker, was not part of the artificial feudal system found in many mining and factory towns. Once in South Africa, his proximity to volunteers drew him into the model, but he was never functionally important to the model, except peripherally. Some Tommies welcomed the diversion of new additions to their temporary communities, while others resisted association with

²⁹ *Adlington Chronicle*, 13 Jan. 1900.

³⁰ Hugh Cunningham. *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (Connecticut: Archon, 1975), 21-24.

³¹ Cunningham, 108-109. *Adlington Chronicle*, 10 Feb. 1900.

³² "Greater patriotism," in which English citizens outside Britain were seen to need protection was described in a letter in the *Adlington Chronicle* as "sane imperialism." *Adlington Chronicle*, 3 Feb. 1900.

Volunteers, resenting them as a slur on the military competence of themselves and their comrades. Private J. Waddington wrote: “The volunteers that come out here are only guarding the places we have fought for and taken. It is a piece of rot sending them out here at all.”³³

The first contingent of Volunteers and Yeomanry were undoubtedly educated men between sixteen and thirty years old whose formative years coincided with the heyday of papers and novels dedicated to the inculcation of imperial, heroic values. This literature also stressed the necessity of a class system and even encouraged middle-class boys to demonstrate their superiority to foreigners and the working class.³⁴

Superiority was demonstrated as condescension, sometimes stupidly ignorant, and other times kindly. In the first vein, Lt. Malcolm Riall, a Volunteer in the West Yorkshire Mounted Infantry, believed that “the men manage to keep very snug and warm in the bivouacs they make out of blankets and don’t feel it [the cold] very much, but it is different with us officers.”³⁵ Private Tucker’s journal for the same period records: “It was too cold to sleep...there was a very strong keen wind which seemed to cut through me. It was impossible to keep warm...,” the men were “miserable” and the Colonel “has no regard for our health and comfort!”³⁶ Of the condescending type, Private Ross, of the Imperial Yeomanry, developed a “friendship” with a Regular whom he dubbed “Nobby” and who featured as a character in Ross’s letters and diary.

³³ *Adlington Chronicle*, 23 Jun. 1900.

³⁴ An attitude prevalent in virtually every *Boy’s Own Paper* story as well as in popular novels by Henty, Ballantyne, Kingsley and others. *Gem* and *Magnet* included at least one such story in each edition; often more.

³⁵ Lt. Malcolm Riall, *Boer War: The Letters, Diaries and Photographs of Malcolm Riall from the War in South Africa 1899-1902* (London: Brassey’s, 2000), 5 June 1900.

³⁶ Pamela Todd and David Fordham, eds., *Private Tucker’s Boer War Diary* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980), entries for 28 May and 5 June 1900.

Ross's compilation of letters and diary entries was intended to illustrate the "true campaigning atmosphere" and "everyday life of a trooper in the Imperial Yeomanry."³⁷ To achieve this, he commented that he has left in the "grousing of the ranker" even though the reader might find it "objectionable."³⁸ Ross enjoyed his relationship with Nobby for its entertainment value, and endowed him with elevating gifts such as a bible and an unwanted yeoman's slouch hat.³⁹ Ross maintained a level of social distance, being "not anxious to know" Nobby's real name, and conducted the relationship from a distinctly class-oriented perspective in which kindness and charity could be dispensed without, in Alan J. Kidd's phrase, "challenging the entrenched social inequities between donors and recipients."⁴⁰

Tommy was, however, not without pride and particular loyalty to his own regiment.⁴¹ The press and senior officers frequently offered much praise to the volunteers, both English and colonial, while, on the whole, neglecting the Regular. Tommy's pride was particularly hurt when the Regular infantry was deprived of deserved recognition. An ironic manifestation of this occurred on 3 March 1900, after the relief of Ladysmith. General Sir Redvers Buller issued a special order commending all ranks, although the cavalry who happened to arrive in Ladysmith first had, in fact, rushed ahead only after the

³⁷ Ross, vii.

³⁸ Ross, vii.

³⁹ Ross, 100; 131. Upon acquiring some books of diverse natures, he bestowed the devotional titles on Tommy, and the hat was given when he received an unwanted replacement for his broken in one.

⁴⁰ Alan J. Kidd, "Philanthropy and the 'Social History Paradigm'" quoted in "'Making the Working Man Like Me': Charity, Pastorship, and Middle-Class Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain; Thomas Chalmers and Dr. James Philip Kay," *Victorian Studies* Vol 43, No. 4 (Summer 2001), 595.

⁴¹ This kind of localized pride may again reflect the working class culture of community described in Joyce and Roberts. Tommy's regimental pride was noted by P.T. Ross, 95.

infantry had effected a Boer defeat.⁴² The cavalry managed to enter Ladysmith fully thirteen hours ahead of the rest of the regiment, accepting honour that was not due to them, and occasioning serious discontent amongst the Regulars, discontent the more acrimonious because appropriate recognition was never given. Tucker complained bitterly to his diary at the time: “Our much belated cavalry were safe on the other side of the river, instead of backing us up... That night they galloped into Ladysmith, and must have snatched all the honours from the papers at home, while we remained... for another night in the rain with the stench of dead horses.”⁴³

Tommy’s pride was wounded, too, by the continued arrival of new volunteers, who he described contemptuously as “counter jumpers and pale faced apprentices,” and much bitterness was occasioned by pay differences, with Tommy receiving only one quarter of that of the raw recruits.⁴⁴ Clearly, it was the Regular against all other soldiers, while competition in the volunteer service included the Regular but was more pronounced between Volunteers, Yeomanry and specifically, the CIV.

In South Africa, hierarchies of respect existed along service lines, with Regulars at the bottom, militia and reserves next, Volunteers in the penultimate position, and the Imperial Yeomanry at the top, regardless of actual military performance. This reflected

⁴² Apparently, the cavalry were generally ineffective during most of the war. Doyle had a particularly vituperative attitude towards them, and ended his history of the war with a prescription for retraining (or losing) the entire mounted troops.

⁴³ Private Tucker, 27 February 1900. Tucker continued complaining on 1 March and 24 March, and was still bitter more than two months later in a diary entry of 7 May.

⁴⁴ Gullick, 1 April 1901. Christopher P. Hosgood, in “‘Mercantile Monasteries’: Shops, Shop Assistants and Shop Life in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain” discusses the emasculating nature of this type of work. *Journal of British Studies* Vol. 38, no.3 (July 1999), 322-352. Shop assistants may have been particularly identified by Tommy as introducing a threat to his own masculinity by being deliberately introduced as a superior, although without training or experience, and traditionally situated in the borderline area between working-class and lower middle-class. In 1901, Tommy received thirteen pence per day, less than a quarter of the Imperial Yeoman’s pay of five shillings a day. A shilling was worth twelve pence.

pre-war middle-class perceptions, as outlined in a *Boy's Own Paper* response to a letter enquiring after status in the army.⁴⁵

Early in the war as troops embarked for South Africa, the public was fed rhetoric intended to underscore public opinion of the Regular, pointing out his fractured sense of duty and lack of manly honour. The *Daily Chronicle* declared that “twenty men of the troop had expressed their unwillingness to fight,” a position denounced in the imperialist *Black and White*, which insisted that “the men are evidently in tremendous spirits – just as keen on war as true soldiers ought to be.”⁴⁶ Major Shute’s diary contradicts the *Black and White*, affirming that of his regiment, “Major Wrottesley threw himself overboard, his Sgt. Major had shot himself shortly before embarkation and an officer of the Royal Engineers threw himself overboard also.”⁴⁷ Unfortunately for the reputation of these soldiers, the “tremendous spirits” mentioned in the *Black and White* were likely the result of tremendous amounts of spirits imbibed during the procession of troops to the waiting ships.⁴⁸

Soldiers’ letters and diaries are individual accounts of both personal and group activities that contain reflections of a personal nature. As such, they are valuable sources although limitations on the content must be recognized. It must be assumed that the contents of letters home were tailored to the intended audience in light of the soldiers’

⁴⁵*The Boy's Own Paper* No. 979 Vol. XX, 48. Imperial Yeomanry were not mentioned as, prior to Dec. 1899, they had been an entirely separate entity. Their rank above Volunteers during the war was a function of their association with the land-owning elite.

⁴⁶*Black and White Budget*, 14 Oct. 1899.

⁴⁷Major Shute, diary entry 26 Oct. 1899.

⁴⁸Letter home from an officer of the 1st Manchesters, describing the voyage to South Africa: “It is strange indeed, how important a part is played by the whisky-bottle in the farewells of the poor.” Dated 17 Nov. 17 1899. National Army Museum 8425-1. The officer’s name is illegible. Orders for the parade to embarkation of the 3rd East Yorks Militia Regiment include a note to make “arrangements for beer for soldiers – best to tell the brewer beforehand.” NAM 8407-20.

perception of recipients' sensibilities. Letters to friends and brothers often contain information that does not appear in letters to parents, and letters sometimes seem limited by the ability of an individual to communicate an experience out of the range of the recipients' experience.

Diaries may contain a more honest and complete account of daily experience, but may be informed by the writer's psychological needs, as required by individuals in order to maintain mental strength and a sense of personal dignity in often ignominious circumstances. Joshua Goldstein asserts that the "manly qualities" of bravery and discipline enable the soldier to continue functioning despite fear, and significantly that "If a man is to carry out manly deeds" he must "will debilitating emotions out of his mind."⁴⁹ It is not unusual to find diaries containing facts free of emotional *entendre* although a careful reading of the types of facts recorded can reveal more than the literal words on the page. What an individual chose to record, the order in which events were recorded, and particularly repetitious recording of the same or similar information can be interpreted as an indication of individual reaction and emotional investment in events.

The language used in letters and diaries is also significant in determining attitudes and inferences. Sporting terminology familiar to cricket and fox-hunting circles was used by officers and many soldiers in their accounts, demonstrating social class and clearly separating the working-class Tommy, who did not use this slang, from his social superiors.⁵⁰ This does not indicate that English volunteer soldiers and officers saw war as

⁴⁹ Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 267.

⁵⁰ This is evident in official dispatches quoted in Pakenham and Creswicke, throughout Ross' and Gullick's diaries and letters, and in letters and reports printed in newspapers. Two very common phrases: things that were not fair were "not cricket" and the tally of captured and dead Boers was the "bag."

a game, and killing Boers as sport, merely that sport was an important part of the identity of these men. Letters, diaries, and even official despatches did use such terminology, but its use was equally prevalent in peace time personal and public literature, and used to refer to all aspects of these men's lives. The use of sporting terminology would appear to be habitual among public school men as a life view rather than a specific reflection of their views on war.

Sport as a defining construct limited the abilities of the volunteers to determine merit, as men with sporting connections were singled out as intrinsically more worthy than other men. Ross's letters frequently mention casualties, but on the occasion of the death of a noted cricket player, the burial was noted in detail and the dead man described as "a thorough sportsman, keen as mustard, quite unaffected, absolutely fearless," and "a true English gentleman."⁵¹ Lt. Moeller, too, described a deceased officer as having been "awfully courageous...and the keenest sportsman I have ever met."⁵² Neither Ross nor Moeller describe actual military ability, but imply proficiency based on a sporting reputation.

In the guerilla phase of the war, volunteers were disgruntled at the style of fighting required. In their familiar world of conflict between teams, fair play meant men meeting face to face and battling under a system of rules. The analogy that did fit was that "our work is rather like deer hunting-we go after the enemy and they run away."⁵³ In both the early set-battle phase and the later guerilla phase, warfare was referred to as a "game," in which the Boers, who "would not stand and fight" were reduced to the status of animals

⁵¹ Ross, 79-80.

⁵² Lt. B. Moeller, *Two Years at the Front with the M.I.: Being the diary of Lt. B. Moeller* (London: Grant Richards, 1903), entry for 10 Nov. 1900.

⁵³ Yeoman Arthur Oubridge, letter published in the *Adlington Chronicle*, 28 Mar. 1900.

without honour and were therefore unmanly.⁵⁴

One very curious example of British myopia in terms of manly honour concerned the type of bullets used. Volunteers and Yeomen express much disgust with the Boers' use of the so-called expanding bullet, the Mark IV and V types. These bullets were soft-nosed and created serious internal damage in contrast to the newer Mark II bullets that tended to leave clean exit holes. Mark II bullets had been approved for use by the British War Office after the Geneva Peace conference of 1899, but production could not meet wartime demand so that the existing 100 million rounds of expanding bullets would have to be used when supply failed.⁵⁵ Soldiers claimed to recognize the expanding bullets, but refused to acknowledge that it was not only Boers who used them, and declared that their use by the Boers was not "fair play."⁵⁶

Expanding bullets were not mentioned in the records of Regulars. Many of these men, like the volunteers, had no previous war experience, but turned their disgust on war itself rather than on the tactics of the Boers. The regular soldier felt free to complain about his lot, often explicitly stating that "we are all sick of it now as it has been rough and hard work for us."⁵⁷ This is significant for it represents the attitudes that the volunteers held of themselves and their endeavor as participants in a game that honour required they finish. Pining to return home was not manly, neither was viewing the war as disgusting. Instead, the volunteers embraced the war as a challenge, not wanting to suffer

⁵⁴ Letter from Volunteer in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 29 Jun. 1901.

⁵⁵ *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 12 Jan. 1900.

⁵⁶ This one-sided view of the use of expanding bullets did not vary. Lt. B. Moeller complained that "The Boers are not playing the game fairly now; they use explosive Martinis and expanding bullets only...." Diary entry 14 Dec. 1900.

⁵⁷ Private J.H.C. Waddington. *Adlington Chronicle*, 23 Jun. 1900.

either personal or regimental defeat.⁵⁸

The challenge of war was also seen as a challenge of hierarchy, with Regulars pitted against Volunteers and Volunteers against Yeomen. The criteria for establishing this hierarchy were the public school oriented qualities of sportsmanship, gentlemanly conduct, and public recognition of courage and prowess on the battlefield. While Tommy appeared to be comfortable in his inferior position, he did want recognition for his contribution. This was not often forthcoming, and a poem printed in the *Greenhoward's Gazette* in December 1901 stated bitterly that: "We have no friends in the London press/ For we are only common men."⁵⁹

Regular soldiers did not feel honour bound to relish hardship or to respect their superiors (or at least to publicly excuse their faults), nor was honour related to behaviour that was not strictly in the line of duty. Lt. Riall of an unspecified Yorkshire volunteer regiment wrote that an associate Tommy's diary "reflects general disillusionment" with the progress of the war, and Private Stephens of the 1st Gloucesters felt free to report that "General Buller wasn't as strong as the enemy."⁶⁰ Diaries of regulars indicate that drinking, stealing, and discontent were common, as recorded by Private G.J. Gullick, a former policeman and reservist from Windsor. His records list frequent punishments received by men in the ranks for "rifling things," their habit of regularly bemoaning the restrictions on drinking, and descriptions of evenings in which a "fine time" in town

⁵⁸ Examples can be found in Corporal Oubridge's letter: "The captain asked me if I would go and of course I did not want to be beaten so I went through water three feet deep." And from an un-named Lancashire Hussar: "...when you look at your dead and wounded comrades, it makes you want to have another go at them [the Boers]." *Adlington Chronicle* 5 May and 7 Jul. 1900

⁵⁹ vanWyk Smith, 104.

⁶⁰ Lt. Riall, 6 Feb. 1901. NAM, number not noted.

included “boozing.”⁶¹ Gullick’s entries dealing with food indicate bitterness over the fact that the officers “do” all right while “troops have nothing but biscuits...”⁶² On 16 March 1901, the *Yorkshire Weekly Post* reported that twenty-five Tommies had been brought home from South Africa for military offences including “sleeping at their post, drunkenness and disobeying orders.”⁶³

There were humorous descriptions of Tommy’s irascibility, such as the poem written by a Tommy confined to barracks for having eaten the forbidden emergency ration:

Oh! Potted Meat...and chocolate Sweet
Of you I will sing in Praise
But should I lose...or if I use
I am sure to get eight days⁶⁴

Volunteers, on the other hand, described hardships from a completely different frame of reference. Sleeping huts with no floor or roof were described as “really good from a health point of view; plenty of fresh air,” and the food, at a time when daily rations were reduced to half, then quarter and finally no rations at all described as “All right, as it hardens one, and one always has the comforting thought of good times to come.”⁶⁵ (There was no mention of a volunteer having eaten his emergency ration).

Battle, too, was described honestly and realistically by Tommy, when he admitted that “it is an awful thing to see your poor fellows shot down and moaning on the ground

⁶¹ Gullick, specific examples include journal entries for 19 and 21 Feb. and 20 May 1900.

⁶² Gullick, entry for 13 Apr. 1900.

⁶³ *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 23 Mar. 1901.

⁶⁴ “Ode to an Emergency Ration” composed by Tommy and recorded by Lt. Riall. 21 July 1901.

⁶⁵ Lt. Moeller. Diary entry 21 Feb. 1901. Given the overall tone of the diary, this cheerfulness is probably genuine, and not facetious.

some with arms off some with legs off and bullets through the head and body.”⁶⁶ One wrote home “if this is what they call war, I want no more of it,” and another that besides shelling and fighting, “there was that more important [hardship], the scarcity (sic) of food.”⁶⁷ A letter worth quoting at length is from Infantry Regular Private J.H.C.

Waddington, a machinist:

We have been busy on the line of march and chasing the enemy for over 200 miles out of Cape Colony into the Free State, and we have had some big fights with the enemy and God knows we are all sick of it now, as it has been rough and hard work for us. I can tell you we have had some suffering in one way or another, what with hard marching and getting little or no rest, and our clothes are all worn out and ragged, and our boots pinching us with having no sole on them. They pinch our feet in walking, and I tell you no wonder we are sick of it. The fighting is the best part of it, only, of course, it is dangerous.⁶⁸

Private Waddington concluded with the heart-rending revelation: “I feel rather lost now, as my chums are all either killed or wounded.”⁶⁹

It is ironic that such honesty was regarded as less manly than the following type of sentiment typical of the Imperial Yeomanry. These men wrote of hardships being tackled manfully, to their personal credit and the credit of their units. Statements such as: “We are at last on real warfare and it is simply grand,” were not unusual.⁷⁰ Two months later, when the Yeomanry and Volunteers had seen enough action that they were no longer raw and inexperienced, their accounts still differ from that of Private Waddington, revealing their pride in themselves and their battalions, companies and regiments:

...After two hours fighting they [the Boers] ran...It was a terrible fight...and

⁶⁶ Letter from a Regular of the Coldstream Guards from the Bolton area. *Adlington Chronicle*, 27 Jan. 1900.

⁶⁷ Letter, *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 12 Jan. 1900; Private S. Goddard. *Aldershot Military Gazette*, 11 May 1900.

⁶⁸ Private J.H.C. Waddington, *Adlington Chronicle*, 20 May 1900.

⁶⁹ Waddington, *Adlington Chronicle*, 20 May 1900.

⁷⁰ Letter from Corporal Arthur Oubridge of the Imperial Yeomanry, *Adlington Chronicle*, 5 May 1900.

Captain Kemp said he wished for no better men under him. But our losses were heavy ... and the wounds were ghastly. I am thankful to be alive and our officers say it is a miracle we were not all killed and only our British pluck saved us.⁷¹

The writer repeated his account of the battle several times, indicating that he, like Waddington, was emotionally shaken, but manliness required the traditional stiff upper lip. Goldstein's theory of avoidance as a coping technique seems to be applicable to repeated affirmations of British capability, and war appeared to take on the function of a kind of improvement exercise when it was not a game.

By the fall of 1900 the war had become a cross-country guerilla war. Differences in experience between Regulars and volunteers became less marked as food became scarce, and the offensive tactic of farm burning was formally instituted by Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief. The rhetoric of volunteering had been wrapped up in trappings of honour and glory, yet the realities of war and deprivation created situations in which suffering silently would have meant death, and all but officers found they had to fend for themselves. Narrowing of the experience gap revealed a clear division in attitude that revealed much about the personal and national ideologies of reporters, historians, and soldiers in the field.

Food shortages for the troops became endemic due to challenges in transporting large amounts of supplies over difficult terrain and to short sighted planning in respect to troop movement and needs. Both Regulars and volunteers were reduced to eating whatever was available and looting when the opportunity arose. Creswicke diplomatically placed looting in the realm of war, so that the Harrismith Volunteers "captured" farm

⁷¹ Letter from a Trooper of the Lancashire Yeomanry, *Adlington Chronicle*, 14 Jul. 1900. Sergeant A.D. Ward to the Captain of the Wigan Cricket Club: "The men were exhausted, but would not give in. The conduct of the Lancashire Hussars that day was splendid." *Adlington Chronicle*, 26 May 1900.

animals and were covered in their “retreat” by the Yeomanry, showing their “pluck.”⁷² Doyle, on the other hand, insisted that “the most stringent orders” were issued against “looting” but that this was not necessary as “nothing could exceed the gentleness of the troops.”⁷³ Wilson stated bluntly- but falsely- that “There was no looting or plundering.”⁷⁴

Looting did happen, and was recorded by soldiers. The obviously conflicting evidence offered by contemporary historians is indicative of the ideological conflict inherent in allowing the supposedly chivalric and honourable volunteers to behave in a manner expected of Tommy. In reality, however, there was a difference between Tommy and the volunteer both in their attitudes towards looting, and the manner in which it took place. In a letter to his father, Corporal Arthur Oubridge of the Lancashire Hussars Imperial Yeomanry recalled “it is part of my duty to watch the farm and stock; but of course I was looking the other way as I know our chaps are fond of game of that sort,” and “we made up for the march by STEALING ALL THE SHEEP [sic] and fowl we could lay hands upon....”⁷⁵ In defense of their manly principles, it does appear that looting by the volunteers was carried out at unoccupied premises, owned by known Boer guerillas.⁷⁶

The Regular was neither a restrained nor reluctant looter. Private Tucker, who had enlisted in the army at the age of fourteen after a minimal education, records delight in

⁷² Louis Creswicke, *South Africa and the Transvaal War* Vol II (London: Caxton, 1900-1902), 42.

⁷³ Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), 369. Doyle perhaps had in mind the chivalric quality of gentleness satirized in Chaucer’s “goode and gentil knyghte.”

⁷⁴ H.W. Wilson, *With the Flag to Pretoria: A History of the Boer War 1899-1900* (London: Harmsworth, 1900), 359.

⁷⁵ Corporal Arthur Oubridge, Letter published in the *Adlington Chronicle*, 5 May 1900.

⁷⁶ Lieutenant B. Moeller, *Two Years at the Front with the Mounted Infantry: Being the Diary of Lt. B. Moeller* (London: Grant Richards, 1903), 45. Moeller wrote of looting farms where guns and ammunition were stored, but “naturally” paying for goods otherwise; P.T. Ross, *A Yeoman’s Letters* (London: Simkin, 1901), 38. Ross stated explicitly that Tommies looted more when their officers were Regular officers, and that the Imperial Yeoman had more stringent standards.

the “sport” of farm burning: “we amused ourselves watching the Engineers burning the farms and blowing them up,” and “a fine day we had looting farms.”⁷⁷ Gullick records that farm burning was a “good change” in the usual routine.⁷⁸ It was reported by L. March Phillips of the colonial Rimington’s Tigers, themselves known for their excessive use of violence, that “Looting is one of Tommy’s perpetual joys...looting or the sheer fun of the destruction...”⁷⁹ Volunteers and Yeomanry had a clearly thought out response to the necessity of both looting and farm burning that may have been calculated to ease their consciences but in any case was expressed and interpreted within the boundaries of honourable warfare: “I hate the job [farm burning and turning out women and children] most heartily” but “such is war, though the inevitable answer is ‘your husband is fighting against us, he should be at home and then his property would be respected.’”⁸⁰

There were situations in which volunteers and Regulars seemed to subscribe to similar codes of honour. Chivalric honour required fair treatment of the enemy based on an admittedly biased definition of fairness. *Blackwood’s Magazine* commented on the chivalry and humanity of the forces “so long as any regularly organized commandos confronted them in the field” and a German staff officer among Boer prisoners remembered that they had been treated in a “thoroughly friendly and humane” manner and that “not only the officers but even the Tommies behaved to the prisoners like thorough gentlemen.”⁸¹ His surprise at Tommy’s honourable behaviour was a reflection

⁷⁷ Tucker, diary entries for 15 Oct. and 8 and 17 Dec. 1900.

⁷⁸ Gullick, 23 Apr. 1900.

⁷⁹ L. March Phillips. Letter cited in Tabitha Jackson, *The Boer War* (London: Channel Four Books, 1999), 123.

⁸⁰ Letter home from Yorkshire Yeoman James McKillop, 28 Jun. 1900. Cited in Jackson, 124.

⁸¹ *Blackwood’s Magazine*, Vol. 205, 260. Germans were only one of many nationalities represented by mercenaries that fought with the Boers.

on the general reputation of the Regular.

Honour was also evident in the treatment of Boer women by both Tommies and volunteers. Gender historians have tried to construct a power struggle between the masculine and feminine in South Africa, using the late war concentration camps as evidence of domination and subjugation.⁸² Paula Krebs, in *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* (1999), touches upon an ideological problem inherent in the chivalric language employed during the War to exalt soldiers, and by extension the empire. She states: “chivalry as a working ideology depends on assumptions about relations between men and women. Even in the homosocial system of war, women or the idea of women must have an important place.”⁸³

The new chivalry, however, with its foundation in Carlyle, the pre-Raphaelites, and adventure literature for boys, was not concerned with relations with women but with a form of generic respect that dealt in a very peripheral way with the idea of women. Women were to be treated honourably, as were Boer prisoners and other “inferiors,” making chivalric behaviour less about gender than about manliness.⁸⁴

Lord Roberts, Commander in Chief, in his farewell address to the troops, made a

⁸² See Paula Krebs, *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Greg Cuthbertson et al., eds. *Rethinking Gender, Race and Identity in the South African War 1899-1902* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002); and Donal Lowry, *The South African War Reappraised* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000). While concentration camps were a war issue, their existence has more to do with War Office policy than decisions of the army and therefore will not be discussed in this paper.

⁸³ Krebs, 81-88. Krebs' argument revolves around a debate between W.T. Stead, editor of the *Daily Mail* and Arthur Conan Doyle that continued throughout the war. Stead argued “we can make war like cannibals or make war like knights,” referring to the degradation of women that occurred as result of Lord Roberts' scorched earth policy and the later institution of camps. This is not an issue related to this thesis as policies of farm-burning and incarceration of families was beyond the control of the individual soldier. Where they did exercise control was in the interaction with women as they were turned out of their homes and transported to camps. Doyle's argument, that all soldiers always displayed chivalric motives, is also dealt with in this and other connections.

⁸⁴ Hooper, in his column on chivalry instructed that a “sweet courtesy towards the weaker sex” would strengthen the “manly character.” *The Boy's Own Paper* No. 650 Vol. XIII, 619.

point of commending them on “the courtesy and chivalry displayed by all ranks to the women of the country in which our fighting has been carried on...”⁸⁵ Strictly speaking, soldiers were required to follow orders, and could not choose to leave homes unburned, although Tucker reveals that there were times when women were left alone, he recounted that a friend’s company did not turn out the women at a farm where one of the women was “not in a fit state to be moved” [pregnant].⁸⁶ Tucker also recorded “a very disgraceful thing” [rape] that had taken place, and it was with relief that he added that the man was from one of the colonial companies and not his own. The fact that the incident was deplored, investigated, and troops confined to camp until the perpetrator was discovered indicates that in this area, many soldiers shared the same values, regardless of rank.

The Yeomanry were delegated the more delicate tasks, such as housing and feeding Boer women and children on their way to concentration camps, indicating their status as gentlemen. In this sense, they had more scope for chivalry towards women than the Regular, and chivalry towards women was taken seriously. These women and children were housed comfortably and safely while with the army, who took seriously their honourable role as guardians. In one camp, Boer women were entertained at lavish teas in which the men took pride in offering food above the usual army standard, when possible.⁸⁷

Lt. Moeller, who had begun his service as an officer in the CIV, was less happy with his subsequent position with the Volunteer mounted infantry, declaring that while

⁸⁵ Lord Roberts, quoted in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1905), 325.

⁸⁶ Tucker, 8-9 Dec. 1900.

⁸⁷ Arrangements for the comfort of the women were mentioned in diaries with pride, and one tea described in particular detail by Lt. Moeller of the 14th Yorks Mounted Volunteers. “We make things as happy as possible for the Boer women. Today we asked them to coffee, cake and biscuits (Huntley and Palmer, not ration)...” Diary entry 7 Sept. 1901.

the majority of the CIV had been gentlemen, and the mounted infantry generally “excellent men,” they were “not quite as intelligent” as CIV mounted infantry.⁸⁸ Lt. Riall was clearly discomfited when his command of Volunteer mounted infantry was joined by second contingent Imperial Yeomanry in 1901, revealing professional rivalry.⁸⁹

The second contingent of Imperial Yeomanry were not the predominantly landed elite of the first contingent.⁹⁰ Many who had volunteered early in the war clearly felt their duty was done, and had business and other interests to return to. With the fall in enrollment, the War Office raised the pay of the Yeomanry from the cavalry rate of 1s 2d/day to 5s/day as the minimum for privates.⁹¹ Standards were lowered in response to the shortage of new recruits, and men who, in 1900, would have been turned away were now accepted, and Volunteer enrolment suffered.⁹² The opportunity for increased pay must be considered, but there is also the matter of prestige.

After September 1900, it became apparent that most of the work required of Volunteers in South Africa involved patrolling railway lines, guarding supply depots and in the latter phase, blockhouse duty. This reduced opportunity for glory and honour coincided with the decline in the number of middle-class Volunteers. Price connects employment with working-class volunteering, indicating that numbers of working class Volunteers rose as employment opportunities fell, but in Yorkshire and Lancashire the areas of highest volunteering were actually in areas that were not experiencing a serious

⁸⁸ Moeller, 2; 84.

⁸⁹ Moeller wrote of the “forty recruits who have never been near their regiment, never had a barrack-room training, and don’t know what discipline means.” Moeller’s indignation is particularly interesting as he had, according to the chronology of his diary, been in that same position a year before.

⁹⁰ Price, 203; 206.

⁹¹ War Office recruiting ad in the *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 16 Jan. 1901.

⁹² It is impossible to say whether the second contingent Imperial Yeomanry enrolled exclusively for the increased pay, or whether it was simply that there was now a place for them.

economic downturn.⁹³ One explanation for the change in class structure from the first to second contingents of volunteers could be that the unglamorous duties required of the Volunteer did not fit the middle-class ideal of heroic action, and therefore volunteering fell off, leaving spaces for the culturally less desirable working classes. In the terms of an unidentified war correspondent,

War is...endurable for the Tommies who are actually in the fighting line doing men's work and taking men's risks. But it is simply unendurable for the unlucky [Volunteer] troops who are planted in ignominious safety in a miserable hole like De Aar [a supply depot], sweating from morning til night, at a kind of work which any self-respecting Punjabi Coolie would consider undignified....⁹⁴

The context of the above quotation is that Volunteers were still needed; the implied subtext that as long as this was the type of work required, it would be difficult to recruit manly men. The troops described in this quotation worked in safety, so had no opportunity to display their courage, take risks, or experience adventure. They sweated, which was not commonly considered an acceptable ability in gentlemen, and the work was undignified.⁹⁵ This contrasted strikingly with the work of the Imperial Yeomanry who acted as "scouts and advance parties, and drawing the fire of the enemy."⁹⁶ By the time that the second contingent of Yeomanry and Volunteers was arriving in early 1901, warfare had become a dreary round of cut and chase without any clear sense of progress. Diary entries became sporadic and mundane, and few letters were written. Despite the forced enthusiasm recorded in the press surrounding the second contingent, volunteers

⁹³ Price, 178-252; Appendix VII. It is in the northern counties of Lancashire and SE Yorkshire that employment remained relatively stable. Price recognized that these counties did not fit very well into his theory, although there remained enough evidence from other counties to support it.

⁹⁴ War correspondent's report in the *Adlington Chronicle*, 10 Feb. 1900.

⁹⁵ This is well documented in many well researched publications on literature and the business of Empire. For specific examples see Jonathan Rutherford, *Forever England: Reflections on Race, Masculinity, and Empire* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1997), 12.

⁹⁶ Ross, 117.

felt distinctly ignored once in the field.⁹⁷

Upon arriving home, too, they were disappointed that there was “no party, no decorations, no band.”⁹⁸ Whether this was a result of the anticlimactic and long drawn-out ending to the war, or a reflection of the much lower social standing of the second contingent is a matter of pure conjecture, but the lack of interest even in the volunteers did not bode well for Tommy’s hopes of recognition. Not surprisingly, none of the newspapers in this study so much as mention the return of the Regular army. Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteers returned to their regular jobs, enabled by a War Office dictum of 15 June 1901 that reminded employers of the great sacrifice made by the volunteers for the honour of their country, and implied dishonour to the firms that did not re-hire volunteers.⁹⁹

Over the course of the war, intense enthusiasm was exhibited by the first contingent of Yeomen and Volunteers. This contingent had clearly distinguished class connections that reinforced their pre-war position in society and dictated that Tommy would retain his position at the bottom of the hierarchy. The second contingent saw a marked decrease in the numbers of professional men volunteering, so that the Imperial Yeomanry lost its elite membership and the recruits to the Volunteers were also of markedly lower social status, creating an illusion of greater social equality across all ranks. While there was still rivalry among the ranks, the distinct language was less clear and the rhetoric of chivalric manliness had all but disappeared.

⁹⁷ A letter from the entire Lancaster Volunteer company that had arrived in April 1901 complained “we write these few lines to you hoping you will insert these few lines in your paper...for we have never been mentioned, neither our whereabouts or doings...” *Lancaster Guardian*, 8 Feb. 1902.

⁹⁸ *Lancaster Guardian*, 1 Mar. 1902.

⁹⁹ *Yorkshire Weekly Post, Lancaster Guardian, Adlington Chronicle*, 15-18 Jun. 1901.

CONCLUSION

The Anglo-Boer War, a distinct event within a discrete time period, provides a forum for testing theories about manliness and war. Basing the study on the north of England provides an alternate viewpoint to London-based studies that form the current canon of research and provides a counterpoint to conclusions concerning equality within the British army system.

The introduction of volunteer forces created tensions within the army related to class and resulted in a fusion of masculine ideology evident in, on the one hand, newspapers and literature representing a transference of this ideology onto individuals serving in the war, and on the other, letters and diaries representing soldiers' internalization of Victorian masculine ideals. A comparison of sources representing the public view and those representing soldiers' views supports the conclusion that civilian soldiers established and maintained hierarchies within the army that mirrored those in civilian life. This included reinforcing the status of Yeomanry as the most noble recruits, Volunteers as respectable and manly members of the army hierarchy, and Tommy as unrespectable and unmanly.

Tommy had traditionally received short shrift in public opinion. Macleay postulates that the position of the navy in securing and providing for the Empire necessarily relegated the soldier to a position of lesser importance. This lesser importance coupled with the tendency for army recruits to be uneducated and unemployed made Tommy a subject of ridicule that was capitalized upon and widely publicized by the music hall industry. Newspapers reported war news, but did not report on specific news related to the large number of Lancashire men serving in the Regular army, indicating that

there was no particular interest in these individuals and that their relationship to the community may have been tenuous. At once necessary and denigrated, Tommy's low position in the hierarchy of the army was secured by the addition of Yeomanry and Volunteers who were, conversely, at once necessary and exalted. The very fact that volunteers became necessary served to cement the perception of Tommy's inadequacy.

The introduction of necessary volunteers required that the public choose whether to support their men, or continue to support advocates of the peace movement.

Throughout the fall of 1899, peace activists continued to hold public meetings. Reports in the northern press indicate that these meetings continued to be well attended, although there is some doubt as to the level of personal conviction of the audience. In spite of the fact that local men served as Regulars in a number of regiments in South Africa, many people in England's northern counties had continued to support the secular peace movement, yet these same areas provided substantial numbers of recruits for the volunteer forces raised in early 1900. Not only did men volunteer, but communities responded with pride and a concerted effort to mythologize these men as heroes in the manly public school tradition of chivalric honour.

Honour in the chivalric tradition became the focus for public interest in the war, as well as the catalyst for the development of artificial hierarchies within the new army structure. Studies of volunteers from the London area seem to indicate that the introduction of volunteers created a form of class equality within the army that resulted in hopes for increased esteem for the Regular soldier.¹ While this may have been true of the London CIV, it does not seem to have been true of all of England, a conclusion borne out

¹ An article in the *Aldershot Military Gazette* expressed the hope that the civilian would come to better understand the soldier, 1 Jun. 1900.

in studies of northern England. In fact, integrating volunteers into the army seems to have strengthened existing class hierarchies, transferring public bias in favour of the public school man into fervent acclamation of his superiority as a soldier.

This bias was a direct result of the Victorian cult of imperial manliness, in which men trained in the public school ethic of manliness were conditioned to invent themselves in terms of the homosocial community, resulting in a proliferation of male centred schools and clubs. For middle-class men, the devotion to duty that had manifested itself in the mid-Victorian focus on family, had been replaced by the ideology of chivalric manliness that incorporated individual honour into a responsibility to community. For the increasingly literate working-classes, manly values appeared to be interpolated into the common experience, informing the development of working men's clubs and teams, and providing a narrative for their experience in the Anglo-Boer War.²

The broad narrative of both middle and working class men in northern England included a commitment to the peace movement that did not affect decisions to enlist in the volunteer forces, or public support for the new recruits. Peace activism was new, and public involvement in the issues had not existed long enough for subscription and belief to have coalesced into a working ideology. The trope of chivalry and the rhetoric of imperial manliness had, by late century, become firmly entrenched in the public consciousness to the point where subscription to the theme of peace was easily superseded by the belief in a manly ideal that idealized the warrior and defender. Men enlisted and communities supported them from a deep-seated subscription to English

² It is widely accepted that social clubs for lower middle and working class men did not transform working class culture into a middle class mirror, yet it is clear that the ideals of manliness found in literature and clubs were absorbed in a manner that resulted in a form of respect for, if not outright adoption of, the ideology. See Mangan, F.M.L. Thompson, and Hosgood, among others.

honour, the central tenet of the manly ideal, leaving peace activism to be revived only long after the war was over.

APPENDIX I

The British Army prior to 1899

OFFICERS

SOLDIERS = Regulars, Militia and Reserves

The British Army, Fall 1899

OFFICERS = Officers of the British Army, South African and Colonial

Volunteers

SOLDIERS = Regulars, Militia, Reserves

South African Volunteers (Infantry and Scouts, some Cavalry)

Colonial Volunteers (Cavalry and Scouts)

Naval Gunners

THE BRITISH ARMY 1900-1902

All of the above, with the addition of

OFFICERS of the Imperial Yeomanry

BRITISH VOLUNTEERS =

Imperial Yeomanry (Mounted Infantry) composed of existing

Yeomanry with the addition of qualified Volunteers and

Civilians

Volunteers (Infantry) composed of Volunteers and Civilians

London City Imperial Volunteers (CIV)

Special Service Corps

APPENDIX II

From the *Newspaper Press Directory*, 1900.

ADLINGTON CHRONICLE (Lancashire)

“Adlington is a growing town, and is noted for its bleaching and dyeing works and its cotton spinning and weaving mills. There are also numerous coal mines in the district. Population, about 20,000.

Independent. Circulates in Adlington and surrounding townships. The local and district news of the town and district are fully reported.” 1d.

BLACK AND WHITE (WEEKLY) BUDGET

“The Family Newspaper [sic] for the people. Does not claim an extensive circulation in London, but for reaching all parts of Scotland, Ireland and the provinces, it is without a rival. 1d.”

LANCASTER GUARDIAN

“The county town of Lancaster is a neat well-built and rapidly increasing town. Large waggon [sic] works are carried on here and it carries on a large trade in coal and limestone and waggon building, and has manufactures of furniture, cotton, linen, varnish, linoleum and oilcloth. The district around is mining, agricultural and manufacturing. Population (1891) 38,224.

Liberal. Circulates throughout Lancaster, Morecambe, Carnforth, Kirkby, Lonsdale, Settle, Ulverston, Grange, Barrow, the district of Craven, Lake District, the Fylde, Garstang and the adjoining important districts of North Lancashire, Westmorland and West Riding of Yorkshire.

Gives great attention to local reports and local subjects, also agricultural matter, and for more than 60 years has been recognized as an influential organ of public opinion in the district and a useful family journal.”

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

“The population of Manchester is second only to London; but the district through which the local papers circulate contains a population of more than a million.

Liberal. 1d. Circulates throughout the whole of the district dependent on the cotton and woolen manufactures; also in nearly every market town and village in the north of England. Advocates the interest of the locality in which it circulates; devoting special attention to all subjects relating to commerce and manufactures. It is a political journal and in religious matters is perfectly neutral.

There is much stern independence in the expression of political opinion in this organ of Liberalism; and subjects connected with foreign policy come in for elaborate consideration.

Its reports of local meetings are particularly full and accurate.”

VANITY FAIR

“A Political and social review of the week. Light and racy articles on the current events

written in a caustic though not ill-natured spirit. 6d.”

YORKSHIRE WEEKLY POST

“Conservative. Illustrated family journal with a very wide circulation. 1d.”

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