The Official and Unofficial Treatment of War Widows and Disabled Ex-Service Personnel in Britain, Ireland and Northern Ireland 1900-2000

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Abstract

Research into the public's perception of the armed forces has been limited particularly because it is generally perceived that people do, and always would, support their military; though not always its use. Why would the public not support those employed in its Army, Navy and Air Force to protect society's citizens? We look upon the military institutions as essential to protect and uphold the values that bind our society together. This dissertation questions this perception by focusing on the post-conflict treatment of the widows and military disabled; challenging the belief, through a series of individual, though interlinked, comparative case studies, as to whether the public perception and treatment of military families prior to conflict matches their post conflict treatment. The individual case studies challenge the accepted view that the State honours and maintains the families of those who have died in conflict.

Almost every 20th Century conflict has been academically evaluated and scrutinised in minute detail emphasising the role played by the combatants but almost always ignores the impact of the widowed or disabled. The failure to examine how these military engagements affected society through the widowed and the disabled leaves an open void in any true historical analysis of post conflict Britain. This is particularly relevant to the perceived role of women during any conflict and their subsequent treatment in the aftermath. Men and women volunteer their lives in times of crises but are then often neglected in the aftermath as exemplified by the treatment of more than one million widows who lost their husbands either during World War One (WW1) or in the early years thereafter. This work also questions whether military widows and disabled are considered valued members of society or does society quickly try to financially forget those who are now bereaved or injured? While Governments openly offers sympathy to the bereaved, it is questionable how much physical and financial support is given to widows or those who return permanently injured and whether society recognises how it ignores those who have suffered. Three examples are used to explain why the proposition is made that society does not support its military combatants once they have returned home nor support the wives and partners of those that have died beyond their very basic needs.

Glossary Of Terms

DSSF – Discharged Soldier's and Sailor's Federation.

IDF – Irish Defence Force.

IRA – Irish Republican Army.

KOBF – King's Own Scottish Borderers Widows and Orphan Fund.

LVF – Loyalist Volunteer Force.

MOD – Ministry of Defence.

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

NICRA – Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association

NSPCC – National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

PIRA – Provisional IRA.

RBL – Royal British Legion

RHC – Royal Hospital Chelsea

RIC – Royal Irish Constabulary .

RPF – Royal Patriotic Fund.

RPFC – Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation.

SSFA – Soldiers' Sailors' Families Association.

SSAFA – Soldiers' Sailors' Airmen's Families Association.

TD – Teachtaí Dála

UUP - Ulster Unionist Party.

WW1 - World War One.

WW2 - World War Two.

INTRODUCTION

Research Topic and Rationale

This thesis examines the public opinion and treatment of war widows and military disabled during the 20th century and the path through which they eventually achieved, or were denied, a pension. The research starts its analysis in 1900, a stage in British history when Victorian social morals effectively chose to ignore all discharged military personnel, the bereaved and injured, and continues through to the year 2000, when it will hypothesise that society still continues to ignore these groups. The chronological historical approach of this work is based upon archival primary research, personal letters and supported by a range of secondary source material. Within the framework the contribution of Lomas, Smith and Hetherington is acknowledged and their work expanded upon by offering extended comparative analyses of Ireland's widows and veterans.[1] Additionally, this research is reinforced by the critical assessment of over 800 letters from widows or disabled veteran's spouses, who documented their frustration and anxiety in letters now held within the archives of the Royal British Legion (RBL), The Sailors' Soldiers' Airman's Families Association (SSAFA), The National Trust's Mrs Pennyman collection and the National Archives pension records. Whilst the subject of these letters will not be individually documented, the content is examined to identify and quantify the problems individuals had in obtaining pension benefits. Within this, an analysis will be offered which allows a clearer understanding of the barriers and obstacles that so many encountered in attempting to gain desperately needed financial support.

The information obtained from the above charities provided the core of information, alongside data from the National Archives, which later offers a conclusion that widows and disabled servicemen have never, and still do not, receive either public acclamation or financial rewards and will suggest that Britain honours its war dead but ignores the living victims of any conflict.

Historiography and Literature Review

Historians such as Reid, Farrell, Marwick, Fraser and Nwadinobi have provided important critical surveys of the topic. In 1900, veterans, disabled or injured, were considered a social burden or pariahs, effectively ignored by the Government who allocated responsibility for their care within the framework of the Poor Law Act or devolved responsibility, without financial contribution, to charitable institutions.[2] It took the expansion of industrial warfare to create the stimulus for a 'war of social change', jolting society from ignoring the plight of military widows and the injured into accepting the need to support the casualties of war.[3] The support offered in 1901, being the first enlisted widows and disabled pension scheme, was still tempered by the demand to ensure that these groups did not receive enhanced beneficial treatment. In 2001 the United Nations determined that war widows were the 'invisible victims of conflict' generally ignored or forgotten by society because the concept and emotion associated with death left an incomprehensible shadow over the living.[4] This report reflects the attitude that was present 120 years ago and, this thesis will argue, remains unchanged. Women, and particularly military wives, who have always been the primary victims of war, largely ignored prior to the intense scale of industrial killing,

were solely dependent on a governmental patriarchal benevolence to determine what benefits, if any, should be applied to the bereaved and injured. The carnage of, firstly, the Boer War, when the first state funded non-contributory pension was granted to widows, and subsequently the mass casualties of WW1 would stimulate the need for significant social change. The seeds of attitude change to the role and perception of women were altered firstly by the casualties of these two wars but also by the demands of industry and agriculture to fill vacancies, in a previously dominated male workplace, with female workers. Whilst this regressed at the conclusion of peace, the wartime contribution by women was momentarily acknowledged with the Representation of the People Act (1918), giving women over 30 the vote, and the Sex Disqualification Removal Act (1919) - which, in theory, made it illegal to exclude women from jobs because of their gender.[5] The movement for improved benefits continued in the interwar years with the Widows', Orphans' and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act (1925) when women over 65 were awarded a pension, albeit based on their partner's insurance contribution. The true legacy of these post-war reforms should have been a shift in political thinking, but instead those who were most affected by war would be easily forgotten. Karin Hausen writes persuasively that 'War widows, especially those with children, paid the costs of World War I in instalments of their daily lives. They were "war victims," along with disabled veterans.'[6]

British history and national culture readily documents those who have fought and died for their country and then been honoured by a grateful nation. Statues abound in London, for example, proclaiming a diverse military history honouring the leaders of

numerous conflicts. Trafalgar Square is dominated by Nelson's column which honours the 1805 battle that took his life. But if you go beyond the victorious heroes, society's consideration of those who form the body of its military is most often overshadowed or ignored, with the exception of financial expenditure, until the threat of imminent conflict encroaches on the individual. This is particularly prevalent when the conflict is located overseas and does not impinge on the daily life within society. Where there is no local threat the perception and importance of a country's armed services is often completely negated and forgotten. There are numerous domestic and international examples which highlight this point including Britain's participation in the Russian/Soviet Civil War 1918-1920; the Korean War - a war fought by conscripts; the early years of the Vietnam War; Britain's policing of Ulster; the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; British and American participation in the 20 year Afghan conflict; America's perception of the 'European War of 1917-18' and later World War Two (WW2).[7]

Outside of WW1 British troops have been officially deployed over 268 times and the public have little knowledge of these deployments or detailed awareness of those killed and injured.[8] The British public are generally only concerned if lives are threatened within a close proximity. The policing in Ulster during the 'Troubles' exemplified this point as, initially, events in the Province attracted headlines and commentary on the front page of many newspapers but, as time passed, incidents were either relegated to obscurity or not reported. The initial interest and concern

diminished once the conflict dragged on and the deaths or injured were lost in the 'melee' of other news.

Weaknesses in the Historiography

During the last 100 years the press, historians and many of the individuals recounting their participation have recorded almost every incident of the conflicts, but rarely within these testaments are the more than 187 million deaths clearly quantified or documented.[9] Almost all of those killed were innocent non-combatant victims whose deaths were caused by unquantifiable religious hatred, covetous ambition or arrogant pride.[10] The historian Eric Hobsbawm wrote that civilised societies during the 20th century had allowed men and women to be 'killed or allowed to die' by 'human decision' in what he also described as a very 'short megadeath century'.[11] Leitenberg, publishing his research, analyses Hobsbawm's work and concludes that the total deaths in the 20th century have been underestimated, being higher than previous calculations at 231 million, with the number of military deaths nearer 41 million.[12] However, the historiography has not adequately reflected this. Even Hobsbawm, in his writing about the human tragedy of war, whilst not diminishing the individuals who participated or remained civilians, does not elaborate on the hidden cost of war: those that are left behind. The families and individuals left behind are required to cope on the home front living, in many cases, with their children, awaiting either the return of their partners or to be informed of their death or injury. In almost all cases it is the women of the countries involved that bear as much of the strain of war as those engaged in actual fighting. Grayzel probably best quantifies the role of women when

writing that 'The child is the asset of the nation, and the mother the backbone'.[13] In times of conflict women rally together when and where needed, ably carrying on and supporting their nation. This is not specific to any one country as these attributes traverse all conflicts and all of those nations involved. Women were simply expected to 'do their duty' just carrying on supporting both their families and their country through any adversity until peace be agreed.[14]

Whatever the final outcome, whether victory or defeat, one conclusion is arguably self-evident: that in any military conflict men and women will be killed or physically injured. Others will return home without any outward signs of injury, but suffering from mental scarring. For some, the signs of mental fatigue are immediately obvious, but for others it may take years to manifest any symptoms. Once the men and women who have served return home, it is their families who are required to support their integration back into civilian life; for those without any family the task of reintegration is the hardest to achieve. Burki writes that 'the same event need not affect everyone in the same way' and, while some are immune to the pressure of battle, 'others are vulnerable and traumatised'.[15] Government very quickly blankets these issues at the end of a conflict, preferring to highlight the benefits of a conflict's cessation. In the aftermath, those who have fought and survived, no matter their physical condition, are often honoured by their nation for their participation, particularly if victorious. This has not always been the case as, while British service personnel who participated in WW1, WW2 and the Korean War were honoured by a grateful nation with victory parades, for those who returned having served in Northern Ireland no parades were

forthcoming, despite more service personnel being killed and injured in that conflict than in the Korean War.[16] To the contrary, since 1996 the British Army has gone to great lengths to sanitise and distance its role in the Province, all to the detriment of those who served there.[17]

The Comparative Context

It is also important to understand that, contextually, Britain and Ireland would treat their war widows, military disabled and ex-servicemen no differently than any other country involved in any of the 20th century' s conflicts. By ignoring these individuals and honouring only the dead, Governments achieve a self-justification for the continued treatment enacted on these three groups. This is exemplified by France, where WW1 created over 670,000 war widows and 4.2 million disabled veterans.[18] While the Government became responsible for the maintenance of all orphans, until their eighteenth birthday, widows received pensions of just 800 francs per annum along with 300 for each child. Disabled veterans received annual payments of 2,400 francs. Both these payments fell far short of the 7,600 franc average annual earnings.[19] France, like many European countries, spent millions honouring its dead by building monuments to their glory whilst ignoring the disabled and widows that the war had created.

In Belgium, a law decreed on 1st July 1919 replicated the French entitlement but included far greater restrictions and morality clauses, which would lead to many veterans and widows losing their pensions. Within the now defunct Ottoman Empire a

widow or disabled soldier would receive only 25% of the active duty wage which in itself was less than half of commercial wages. Once the Empire fell apart the value of their remuneration was almost worthless, eventually being stopped in 1929.[20] German nationalism accelerated after reunification in 1871 culminating in the first global conflict which created over 700,000 windows and 4.6 million disabled veterans who received payments of less than half their previous income. By the end of the war the purchasing power of the mark had fallen to less than 25% of its pre-war level.[21] Their income would deteriorate to nothing when reparations initiated economic hyperinflation further eroding their purchasing power resulting in mass starvation. Between 1919 and 1930 over 38% of German war widows would die from malnutrition and disease.[22] German history gives little regard to the women who remained at home and were called upon to substantially support the war economy during WW1.[23] Despite these hardships renewed nationalism, fuelled by the belief that the country had been robbed of victory by corrupt sectarian industrialists, created a second global conflict leaving another 1.2 million widows and 3.6 million disabled veterans.[24] To cope with the savagery of German actions in WW2 the country developed a 'theology of repentance' known as 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' for the crimes committed against the Jews and Slavs. Within this repentance was a revision of attitude towards its military, such that the post-war support given to veterans, widows and their children was significantly greater than that implemented by victorious Allied powers. By 1975 a German veteran or widow was receiving financial benefits four times greater than the British equivalent and more than twice that of American.[25] This issue was highlighted in Parliament in 1975 by Graham Page who stated:

> 'The widows of the men that were buried in the field-grey uniform of the Third Reich live, honoured and respected, with a pension of the equivalent of £50 a week—and we do not grudge them their security. But the widows of the men who died in khaki live in penury when they have no means of their own—on £13 a week.'[26]

Page underlined an issue that has been prevalent throughout the last 100 years and remains constant once the emotion of entry and exit from any conflict has been negated. This can be quantified, as it is not who initiates war or who is involved in the combat. It is those who are left behind or return that will eventually fund the aftermath through their economic endeavours. These are the individuals who have to deal with the inevitable post-war financial burden and must pay for economic reconstruction, war debt and those who have been disabled or widowed. All the countries involved in WW1 would incur enormous financial debt and this would significantly influence their peacetime social welfare policies.

Structure of the Work

The difference between the action of 'supporting our troops' as they leave to engage in conflict and the subsequent post-war support is immense. In all of these cases, society had the best of intentions to honour those who had engaged in conflict, but often failed in the aftermath to support those who had engaged therein. This raises important points about the methodological and structural approach adopted in this thesis. It has not been possible, for example, because of word limits, to include all the countries mentioned, nor has it been possible to document the 900,000 women who

served in munitions factories and the more than 80,000 women who volunteered for overseas war service. In the event of their death, while working or nursing near the frontline, their families received no death benefit. These are aspects that could possibly be returned to in future research. Neither has it been possible in this thesis to offer an in-depth analysis of the importance of the inter-war charities who significantly contributed to easing the suffering of many widows and discharged soldiers. Again, this is an area that remains ripe for further investigation and the thesis will, hopefully inspire future researchers to take up the baton.

However, as will become apparent, new research frontiers have been carved out on three key areas. In the following chapters, three examples are given where both the public attitude and their response is examined to quantify whether the public has really understood that being part of its armed forces is far more than 'just a job'.[27] Thus, in chapter 1, the thesis explores and critically evaluates the evidence concerning British war widows and disabled ex-Servicemen. In chapter 2, the research then offers a dialogue on the case of Ireland and ex-Service personnel. In chapter 3, the focus of the discussion then evaluates Northern Ireland and the treatment its military widows and ex-service personnel.

Chapter 1

British War Widows and Disabled Ex-Servicemen: The Lost Generations of the Bewildered and Forgotten.

Carl von Clausewitz wrote in 1815 that 'War is inevitable'.[28] He hypothesised that greed, religion, political ideology, nationalism or nationalistic ambitions would self-validate and sustain any and all conflicts; being the essence of all disagreements during the 19th and 20th centuries and where Britain's military was involved in the vast majority .[29] The majority of these conflicts began, continued, and were sustained within one of the noted criteria but without the combatants clearly understanding the true cost to the societies involved. The effect of war on women is always secondary, if not disregarded, to the prevalent ambitions of the conflict. In some cases women, unaware of the true brutality of war, become as absorbed in the drama and atmosphere of 'historic romance', created through propaganda, as the protagonists. Women were inspired with the romantic idea of the noble knight or dashing hero saving the nation, emphasising the 'heroic ideals of conflict', rather than the reality of death and destruction.[30] This is demonstrated in the oratory, posters and newspaper articles which preceded many conflicts. In the Napoleonic, Crimean and Boer Wars newspaper articles and cartoons actively supported their country's campaigns, justifying events through patriotic characterisation .[31] Burrows writes that 'The propaganda struggle, whilst less significant than the economic and military conflict, was nevertheless considered important by all protagonists.'[32] Sustained propaganda created a fervent atmosphere where individuals believed in the nobility of the expounded cause. Prior to the commencement of WW1, newspapers in France,

Germany and Britain fuelled the growing nationalism encouraging patriotism and demanding action for any and every slight which they deemed infringed their country's honour. When war was declared men rushed to enlist trusting in their heroic cause and believing that 'the war would be over by Christmas 1914'.[33] It is only when the lists of the dead and injured were published did the reality of war become apparent. For those who were left at home their patriotic duty was always, within the socially ingrained and established expectation, to 'grin and bear' any loss.[34] Women suffered doubly because they were left alone to sustain the family unit and then required to function even if their partners were killed or injured. This issue is prevalent within all nations and all religions for rarely does any woman who is left alone or has lost their husband, feel that society supports their 'psychological well-being during deployment-induced separation' or the traumatic distress of unexpected bereavement.[35] In many cases military widows were not allowed to mourn their loss but expected to continue their lives as if nothing had happened. Nor was there prestige in being the widow of a fallen soldier as the hardship of living overtook any labelled honour. The relationship between widows, society and government is rarely thought of, considered or discussed but the 20th Century created millions of widows who became objects of pity, often forgotten but more often simply ignored. After WW1 widows were expected to follow the Victorian convention of dressing in black for at least twelve months thereby retaining allegiance to their late husband, clearly identifying and confirming their continued respectability.[36] Widows were effectively a burden on society, despite the sacrifices they and their partners made, and it was expected that they clearly identified their status as well following a strict code of morality. It was not just the widows who

felt isolated, but also women whose partners had returned with either physical or mental disfigurement. [37]

The process and experience of bereavement for any individual is at best unpleasant and worst devastating. This was particular prevalent in WW1 when industrial weaponry changed the face of combat and death came daily to thousands of men and their families. In the first week of the July 1916 Battle of the Somme the number killed and wounded was 69,470, which exceeded the total of those lost and wounded in both the Crimean and the two Boer wars. This level and frequency of death and injury left the country struggling to formulate a process to cope with the loss. The progress of the war gave rise to an army of black clothed women mourning their loss with a limited structure in place for them to be supported, both in their struggle to cope with bereavement and having little or no income to survive. The bereavement process was not helped by the fact that their husband's bodies were buried in another country; assuming a body was available to be buried; Britain prohibited the return of any soldier's bodies until public opinion forced a change during the Falklands campaign of 1981. The Government had maintained a policy that it was not responsible for men after death, which included the cost of transporting their remains, and only a limited responsibility for the injured until discharge. Military policy dictated that any costs involved in transportation resided with the family as at the point of death a soldier was officially discharged from duty and no longer their responsibility.

For countries that suffered defeat the soldiers almost certainly returned to devastation, enduring hardship, hunger and unemployment long after the wars had ended. Nor are soldiers always honoured for their participation. Many who returned from the Vietnam War were shunned, with the American public believing their country's involvement a matter of shame and while military involvement in Vietnam has been widely academically debated, little attention given to the treatment of veterans. Christian Appy describes how America in the late 1970's 'unjustly spurned' Vietnam veterans, with many men no longer acknowledging their military service to save verbal and physical abuse to themselves and their families.[38] Willard Waller comments that there were many in American society who had nothing but hatred for Vietnam veterans and their families, associating all the problems that the war inflicted on society directly with the men and women who served in the conflict.[39] For those left at home during this conflict, as well as every other conflict, there are no medals and rarely do governments mention their names or acknowledge their existence. For France, the Algerian and Indo-China conflicts are considered a national disgrace and these incidents officially forgotten. In Britain, rarely are those who served in Northern Ireland honoured.

But what of those whose husbands or partners never returned home? For many politicians the widows or widowers were a post-conflict financial cost and possibly an embarrassment, for even if the conflict was successful these individuals were the living reminder of the human, material and financial cost. In the vast majority of cases those who were left behind were women who spent the duration of the conflict struggling to

survive while caring for both themselves and their children.[40] At the same time they were expected to contribute to the war effort, learning new trades, replacing the men in engineering, agriculture and manufacturing; which all the women become adept. For many this was the first time they would work outside of the home and it brought a new sense of freedom, particularly during WW1, where women were presented with opportunities in education and employment that would have been impossible to obtain pre-war. It was particularly important for the poorest classes of women who had seen their partners killed or severely injured and were now reliant on the income from being employed to feed themselves and their families, albeit being paid at a much lower rate than their male counterparts.

Over 65 million men were actively involved in the 1914 conflict with the vast majority fighting in central Europe. Britain's armed forces included personnel from some twenty of the countries and territories within the Empire.[41] Many travelled thousands of miles to participate in a conflict never to return home. During the four years of conflict nearly 10 million men were killed, 21 million wounded, 3.4 million reported as missing in action and 2.1 million died of their wounds as well as an additional 1.9 million who died in the first seven years of the post-war period from wounds sustained in active service.[42] By the end of the war there were over 9 million European widows, all of whom would have to face life without their husbands. Not only did widows have the burden of feeding themselves , and their families, but the likelihood of finding another partner was extremely limited. All women after this conflict faced the difficulty of marrying because so many eligible men had been killed. In 1917,

Rosamund Essex, the senior mistress of Bournemouth High School, informed her sixth form that only one in ten of them would marry.[43] If young unencumbered eligible girls would struggle to find partners what hope was there for any widow with or without children. For those unmarried men who returned, marrying was not the highest priority, with many simply wanting to overcome the trauma of war before considering such action. Gertrude Stein, later used by Ernest Hemingway, coined the phrase, 'The Lost Generation', to describe how the war had changed so many Americans who had returned and were deeply affected by the witnessed carnage.[44]

Women who had lost their husbands or those who were declared missing in action during the Boer War or WW1 faced a constant struggle for survival. There was no previous precedent for the number of deaths, nor the speed at which these deaths occurred in this new age of industrial mechanised warfare. For both the bereaved and Government this war created such unprecedented demands that the bureaucracy of the military was unable to cope and during the first twelve months of either war, relied heavily on charitable organisations such as the Royal Hospital Chelsea (RHC) to manage the demands of widows and the injured. The RHC was established in 1682 to administer the care of those non-commissioned and enlisted men who had become disabled by wounds suffered in action and had served a minimum seven years' service or able bodied personnel who had twenty or more years' service and were provided with either institutional care or a small pension.[45] Wives were not allowed to reside at Chelsea as it was restricted to single men or widowers and for those in receipt of a RHC pension it ceased on their death with no provision thereafter for the men's

widows. The first time officers' widows were entitled to a pension was 1708 and these were restricted to on-the-strength wives, being defined as having been given permission from his regiment to marry. Enlisted men did not receive a pension until 1901 and receipt was highly qualified dependent on length of service and marital status.[46].

The plight of war widows was not new and had been a problem long before the outbreak of WW1. The general public was first awakened during the Crimean War to the predicament of many soldiers and their wives when a wide number of newspapers reported on the poor sanitation and particularly the inadequate treatment of the wounded. One of the most influential came from the comprehensive reporting by *The TImes* correspondent William Russell whose work significantly contributed to the public awareness of the mistreatment of its troops.[47] Over 27,000 men sailed to the Crimea in 1853 but within nine months 7,000 had been lost to cholera alongside another 5,000 killed in battle. For the Army their responsibility ended when a soldier was killed as he was deemed discharged from active service on the notification of his death.[48] All pay and benefits were removed from his family from the date of notification. The Army only had a responsibility for the wounded and many would owe their lives to the changes implemented by volunteer nurses whose work prevented more than 4,000 men dying from either wounds or disease.[49] With the increasing death toll and the mounting poverty amongst soldiers' widows, newspapers brought public attention to their growing plight. In order to address this concern, as the number of military widows exceeded 9,000, the Royal Patriotic Fund (RPF) was created

in 1854 and which, by 1858, had raised more than £1.5 million from public donations.[50]

Victoria's Royal Warrants defined that a Royal Commission administer the RPF trust and the status of the fund was significantly enhanced when Albert, the Prince Consort, agreed to become its first president. The RPF would become the first real source of funds for on-the-strength war widows outside of the Poor Law. Prior to the RPF the destitute military were reliant on the Poor Law but the introduction of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act had significantly reduced the circumstances where money could be paid out to widows and orphans and which was still in effect after Crimea. The 1834 Act required all claimants, the majority being women and children, to be available for work and where unavailable forced them into workhouses.[51] In 1899 the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed which, whilst not reversing any of the 1834 draconian criteria for relief, did allow a more flexible interpretation and more particular was the emphasis on caring for elderly widows with special wards built in the workhouses to accommodate them.[52] In the period from Crimea to the Boer war the RPF filled part of the void for military wives as claimants were again restricted to those on-the-strength with all others excluded.[53] In 1876 the work of the RPF was enshrined with the passing of the Royal Patriotic Fund Act which confirmed and protected all of the trusts' activities in law. Whilst the majority of revenues received for the RPF were from voluntary contributions, the fund also received income from the Soldiers' Effects Fund. When a soldier died leaving no instructions for his estate his belongings were sold off as per The Regimental Debts Act 1893 and the monies given to the RPF.[54] The money

from the Soldiers' Effects Fund set a precedent in using government revenue, which normally would have been returned to the exchequer, to formally support social funding. The addition of these trustees and the use of the Soldiers' Effects Fund gave the RPF a foothold in government and this was undoubtedly the beginning of the move towards the state providing pensions.

The gap for wives off-the-strength was not filled until 1885 when the Soldiers' Sailors' Families Association (SSFA) was founded by Major James Gildea to support the families of men posted overseas whose income was only just above the poverty line. Gildea's efforts to establish the SSFA coincided with Victorian philanthropy that had rediscovered the poor in the latter part of the 19th century.[55] The philanthropy was also conjoined with a rise in militarism throughout Britain where supporting the troops was seen as a matter of necessary pride.[56] The SSFA also tried, within the charity, to suppress the class distinctions of officers and men, which was only becoming possible because the rigid rules of marrying within the military were being stretched. By early 1890 local branches of the SSFA were established in most of the garrison towns and naval ports. The War Office initially objected to the workings of the SSFA as it could be seen as encouraging unofficial marriages but this changed with the realisation that the responsibility for both paying and caring for these women was devolved.[57]

It was during the second Boer War that the SSFA would face its first major challenge as it had to administer both RPF claimants and those made directly to the SSFA from the families of the growing number of casualties amongst the 490,000 troops that had

been deployed to South Africa. During this conflict over 55,000 men were killed or seriously injured and the SSFA not only assisted the wives of these individuals but also assisted another 150,000 servicemen's wives and their dependants, distributing £1.25 million to those in the greatest need.[58] Both organisations worked closely to ensure that there was minimum bureaucracy to claimants but that all claimants understood payments were not considered a lifetime support.[59] One of the greatest achievements of the SSFA during this war and later was its ability to attract contributions from all levels of society including members of the aristocracy.[60] Royal patronage followed which attracted new benefactors giving the SSFA the financial foundation to further support those most in need.

1.1 Widows and the Boer War

The problem of Army wives became complicated by the Boer War as, prior to 1900, the Army only recruited single men who were required to obtain permission from their commanding officer before marrying. Army regulations of 1867 defined the number men per regiment and per rank that could receive permission to marry.[61] However, there was a general reluctance to allow marriage with most regiments restricting permission to less than that defined by these regulations and by 1899 only six out of every hundred enlisted men were given permission. The others, averaging nine out of every hundred, would marry without permission but in doing so would receive no recognition.[62] The Army's attitude changed during the second Boer War (1899-1901) when it found difficulty in recruiting physically fit single men and was forced to change its regulations allowing married men to join.[63] This created a somewhat difficult

situation as the number of married men increased to a point where the Army could no longer ignore these women. The Army was required to address the growing problem when it was recorded in Parliament that soldiers' wives were being forced into Poor Houses because they could not support their families on the basic 1 shilling a day.[64] Despite government promises, the issue of being in a sanctioned marriage was again raised as it was depriving women of allowance on which they needed to live. The case of George Powell was raised in parliament by Michael Joyce, the MP for Limmerick who enquired,

> 'I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will take the case of the wife and children of George Powell, R.A., No. 82930 into his consideration, seeing that this man has over ten years good service, never had a crime, that he married without leave in 1893, and that his wife lived with him in Woolwich until he was sent to South Africa, leaving his wife with three children at home with a very small sum allotted to them from his pay, quite insufficient to keep them; and, whether, if on inquiry this woman's statement is found to be correct, he will order such increase in the pay as will keep herself and her children'.
>
> Lord Stanley replied 'If this soldier would have been entitled to transfer to the Reserve had no war taken place, his wife can be given separation allowance; but no separation allowance can be given to the wives of men married without leave who are not on the strength of the regiment'.[65]

Families were totally reliant on charitable support to survive. For those women with large families the plight was even greater and they were often forced to lodge their

children in the local workhouses. The Boer War was also the catalyst for change with the Government under great pressure to address the issue of welfare for those who had been killed or disabled. In 1901 a Royal Charter was signed which agreed to allocate a pension to the widows and orphans of enlisted soldiers who had been killed or severely injured on active service but with the proviso that they had to be on-the-strength to receive any benefit. The on-the-strength requirement was at the insistence of the War Department as they were concerned about the significant cost of paying a separation allowance to all the off-the-strength women.[66] The Boer War ultimately created 5,000 widows from amongst the 22,000 men who lost their lives in this war.[67]

From the beginning of the 19th century until the outbreak of WW1, the military gave very little thought to the wives, widows and children of the enlisted men. The military perceived no obligation to recognise any responsibility for a soldier's relations or initiate any process to support them before or after death. Off-the-strength soldiers' wives were an unnecessary burden whose morals, because they had married without permission, were repeatedly called into question. Despite their husbands being part of the military, they were left to fend for themselves, whereas those on-the-strength were rewarded with meagre rations, strict discipline, poor housing conditions and the most menial occupations; the rations and the accommodation were paid by deduction from their husband's army pay. Gildea wrote that women left behind were unsupported such that

> 'the distress to on-the-strength wives was serious and often desperate with some being reduced to starvation while the off-the-strength wives were left behind to enter the workhouse or encounter some worse.'[68]

There was also the problem that the Army protected men from supporting wives as there was no obligation on any man to provide for his family. If a soldier left his wife the Poor Law commissioners who could normally have brought charges against the individual were stopped by the Mutiny Act of 1837. This Act excluded Army personnel from the laws which allowed wives to seek respite from their husbands. It also allowed married men to join the Army, if they wanted to escape their wives and families, exempting them from the responsibility of caring for their wives and dependants.[69] There was also no obligation for a soldier to provide for his family whilst overseas. He could apply to have part of his wages paid to his family but this was a matter of choice and not a specific requirement. It left many women desperate and if they could not qualify for the local 'relief' then their only option was the workhouse.

The Army also used the constant threat of being removed from the list of recognised wives to control the behaviour of on-the-strength wives residing in the barracks. To achieve this the military was dependent on having large numbers of off-the-strength women living in worse conditions than those endured by on-the-strength wives. While the standing army remained small, all demands for change were resisted because the military were able to highlight the aid given to soldiers' families by the many philanthropic organisations, particularly the SSFA and the RPF, which the soldiers'

families would not otherwise receive. This was a classic case of 'Catch 22' philanthropy being used as a means to control any improvements in the treatment of military families. The armed services remained resistant to transformation until forced to encompass radical change in order to meet the uncompromising circumstances foisted upon them by the Boer War and more specifically by the onset of the Great War.[70]

All the families of men posted overseas were entitled to a separation allowance to cover the cost of accommodation normally provided by the Army and the Boer war had seen this annual cost to the Exchequer increase to more than £1.25 million; this issue would deprive many unrecognised wives of a pension for more than twenty-five years.[71] However, the rules for those who should have been entitled to a pension were both arbitrary and unjust as exampled in the case of Mrs Josephine Downey, who was an on-the-strength wife and whose husband James was killed while on active service in South Africa. In June 1901 Josephine made a claim under the new regulations for a pension but her claim was denied as she was advised that her husband had been off-duty and killed by a tram in Paardekop.[72] The claim was denied despite her husband being on active service as the new regulations defined that a pension was only payable when a soldier was killed as a result of military action. It was also the case that widows and their dependants were denied support from the charities and a government pension where men deemed to have been negligent or their injuries or deaths resulting from self-inflicted wounds. The government chose to adopt the relevant sections of the 1897 Workmen's Compensation Act when defining

eligibility to receive the benefit of a pension. Enshrined within this Act was the premise that any payment had to be due to 'an unexpected event' and not due to 'own-fault' or negligence.[73] The issue of self-inflicted wounds became even more pertinent during WW1 as did those executed for perceived cowardice.[74]

The wives of men who were declared missing in action were also denied pensions and deprived of both the pay due to their husbands along with any widow's pension until it could be proved that their husbands had not deserted or absconded. Another anomaly was that since 1881 Army widows had been entitled to a bereavement gratuity equal to a year's pay from Army funds, but this regulation was defective because it applied only if the RPF was unable to award a pension.[75] If the wife was entitled to a pension then the value of this was frequently a fraction of the gratuity as it was common practice to award the lesser of the two benefits. In comparing the pension given to widows at this time it was less than 50% of the separation allowance paid to serving soldiers and their families.[76] The separation allowance for privates' wives was originally 8 pence a day, or 4s 8d weekly, increasing in January 1903 to 13d and 2.1/2d for each child per day. Included within this allowance was a weekly deduction of 3s for equipment and accommodation from the soldier's pay of 7s. A soldier could receive as much as 16 shillings per week in total pay but when determining how much widows were paid the only factor was the weekly pay of 7 shillings. This meant that an enlisted private's widow was entitled to a pension of just 5 shillings. This payment was based on the presumption that all women would be able

to remarry or gain employment thereby removing themselves from dependency on state aid and once they did the pension was stopped.

It was during the Boer War that many of the most significant elements of the pension framework were defined and later implemented during WW1 in the 1915 Pensions Act. The precedents set in the 1901 Act shaped and influenced how military widows' pensions were awarded, not just in Britain but also across the Commonwealth and influenced other European countries' payment systems for the next fifty years.[77] The new pension was administered by the RPF but they passed over the vetting and qualification of claimants to the SSFA. Two years after the initial granting of the first pensions, Parliament passed the 1903 Royal Patriotic Fund Re-Organisation Act which converted the RPF from a commission into a corporation (RPFC). The newly formed corporation was required to adhere to stricter guidelines when assessing claimants as well as also ensuring that every candidate should be of sound morals. For those women who were granted a pension, each was required to present their children weekly before the local board to ensure they were still living and entitled; a requirement which was not formally abolished until 1963.[78] Widows were also regularly questioned on their morals and Church attendance and in some cases the regulatory board required proof of their attendance verified by their local diocese. Under these regulations any women whose conduct was considered questionable or who remarried was denied the pension and had no right of appeal. In the period up to 1916 there was also strict enforcement of the on-the-strength enlisted men's criteria with women's committees established to ensure that all claimants were monitored;

something that was not enforced for officers. Enlisted men's widows who qualified for a pension received 5 shillings plus 1s 6d for each child per week. This was approximately a third of their family's former income when allowing for Army victuals and accommodation. Myra Trustan, when writing about the Army's attitude to women in this period comments that 'women and children were considered a millstone around the Army's neck, affecting mobility, discipline and efficiency'.[79]

1.2 The Disabled, Widowed and Merchandised Warfare

The outbreak of WW1 in August 1914 would test a British nation eager to prove that the Empire could halt the German advance through Belgium and northern France as well as winning the war; and all before Christmas 1914. Patriotic fervour drove the country forward stimulated by newspaper's stories of atrocities against Belgium refugees unable to defend themselves from German aggression.[80] The British Army at the start of the war consisted of some 250,000 men, of which 120,000 formed the British Expeditionary Force, with the remainder stationed throughout the Empire.[81] The Army could also call upon 465,000 reservists and Territorial Army units if additional manpower was required, but most in the Army and the general public felt that the British soldier would easily stop the German advance. In the first year of the war there was also no shortage of volunteers with Lord Kitchener's recruiting campaign successfully attracting over 35,000 volunteers each month ready to serve 'King and Country'. In the first five months of the war Britain suffered 30,000 killed and 90,000 wounded.[82] By April 1915, 760,000 married men were serving in Britain's armed forces and the war was creating an average 15,400 widows each month. In the

peak months of battle this mechanised war was killing and maiming men almost as fast as they arrived at the front and any respite in fighting was only conceded to move more men to the front. France likewise lost 155,000 men in the same period with 27,000 lost at a single engagement at the Battle at Charleroi on 22nd August 1914, just three weeks into the war. France continued to lose men at average rate of 2,200 each day between August 20th and January 1st 1915.[83] At the end of January 1915 the German Army first deployed gas as a military weapon and whilst this attack was only partially successful, the subsequent use in April would cause over 18,000 British and French casualties with over 60% dying immediately or within a few days. The Allies were not alone in suffering high casualties, as in the same period Germany lost 142,000 men killed in action and another 241,000 wounded.[84] Germany created less widows in the early war years only because their soldiers were predominantly younger and unmarried.

Britain was physically and mentally unprepared for industrial warfare and this was reflected in the approach and attitude of some of the committees established in the early months. There was no expectation of mass casualties and these committees were more concerned with the expected levels of unemployment due to a decline in trade than the fighting in France.[85] In August 1914, the Cabinet Committee and Local Government Board established the National Committee for the Prevention and Relief of War Distress. This committee became responsible for the distribution of funds from the Prince of Wales National Fund and the Lord Lieutenant's County Fund. Controlled from a central hub, each county was authorised to establish its own sub-committee

with the aim of ensuring that no one affected by the war would be left destitute. The Surrey Committee was established on 19th August 1914 and was tasked to coordinate and cooperate with the fourteen other institutions currently active in supporting those in distress.[86] The SSFA and the Red Cross were then given the remit to distribute the required funds to those whom the fund deemed worthy. However, these committees were not benefactors handing out funds to the local populace. Men and women were expected to work and every person who applied for relief had to prove that they were unable to work and in the case of men they were unfit for military service. The committee was entrusted with establishing a central county employment bureau to ensure everyone was given the opportunity to contribute to the war effort. Women who were unable to work were expected to offer their time to the local Red Cross or assist at the 66 auxiliary hospitals created in Surrey; over 3,000 auxiliary hospitals would be created nationally during the four years of the war. These volunteers allowed over 11,000 men to be released for war service; a possible benefit to the war or disastrous for those sent to France as almost 70% of these would never return home.[87] In addition, soup kitchens were established to provide sustenance to any family unable to receive assistance or for those who received limited financial support; mass catering was considered cheaper than providing individual benefit. In certain circumstances money was given to some applicants but it was for rent payments and not to provide subsistence. While these objectives were paramount at the beginning of the war, they rapidly changed by early 1915. Once the casualties increased and more men were required by the armed forces, women became the essential element to fill the gaps left in agriculture and manufacturing. The Board of Trade reported in

December 1914 that rather than an increase in unemployment, both war work and enlistment had reduced the labour pool and all sectors of the economy were reporting a need for more workers.[88] Thousands of women were recruited and trained in manufacturing and industrial work, particularly munitions, filling the gaps left by the enlisted men. These women would enjoy freedoms and previously unobtainable incomes as the demand for workers rose. Between 1914 and 1918 more than 1.4 million women joined the country's workforce, moving either from domestic service or from the home and became significant contributors to the war effort.[89] But that which is often misunderstood, is the time lapse between the war economy improving employment and those who were dependent on the income of a son or husband in the period after they were killed. When any individual in the military died their pay and allowance were stopped at that date, denying income when it was most needed. Women were forced to struggle and face the stigma of seeking help from the numerous charities, something many were reluctant to do until forced by desperation, simply because their husbands had been killed.

1.3 Women, Wages and Morality

In the early months of the war for many women seeking work became a necessity, where jobs could be found, since the economy had stalled as the country entered war. When their husbands and sons had eagerly joined up they left jobs which had paid significantly higher than that received from the Army. Even allowing for the payment of the separation allowance the significantly reduced income from enlistment would

leave many women without sufficient means to sustain their families.[90] This issue was highlighted in Parliament by Hamar Greenwood, Member for Sunderland:

> 'The separation allowance at the moment to a soldier's wife is 7s. 7d. per week and 1s. 2d. per child per week. So if a wife has two children she will have 9s. 11d. weekly while her husband is abroad. The soldier at the front gets 6s. 8d. per week… and with reference to the officers, there have been hundreds of men killed in the recent contests who get only 5s. 3d. a day from this ungenerous Government.'[91]

In the same debate the issue of naval personnel being denied a separation allowance was also highlighted by Bertram Falle, Member for Portsmouth:

> 'It is the failure of the Government to give a separation allowance to the sailor's wife. The soldier's wife receives an allowance. On the other hand the sailor's wife receives absolutely nothing. There is no separation allowance for her or for the wife of the Royal Marine or for the child of the sailor or of the Royal Marine. The Special Reserve man receives 7s. 7d. a week. The ordinary A.B. under six years' service, I believe, receives 11s. 8d. Some of these men are able to send home 10s. a week to their wives. There is nothing for the child, and on 15s. a week the woman and her children have to pay rent and live. At present there is no work to be had.'[92]

The average weekly wage of a woman employed in metal pressing in 1914 was 12 shillings for a 55-hour week but by March 1915 this would increase to 20 shillings, following an agreement with the Government. This was a direct result of the negotiations between the Treasury, trade unions (who had objected to women

receiving higher wages) and manufacturers allowing women to be employed at a rate comparable with the lowest rate previously paid to men.

This agreement was reached to protect post-war male wages which would have been devalued if employers were allowed to pay women a lower wage. The circular 'L.2', with its promise of 'equal pay for equal work' was issued by the Munitions Supply Committee, coming into effect in October 1915.[93] However, it would still require the Minister for Munitions in January 1916 to issue a directive that this circular had the force of law behind it to ensure employers adhered to the wage agreement. This was a significant step forward for women as it gave many a living wage on which to support their families, allowing them to cope in some way with the continual rising prices of foodstuffs. Widows with families would also benefit by being offered the opportunity to work from their homes engaging in suitable 'piece work'. However, it was the first time that an accepted precedent was defined by the trade unions and Government that women could and should be separate and unequal. In defining this precedent it set the standard of treatment for women during the next eighty years.[94] For those women unable to work from home or who had more needed skills, employers and factory owners introduced nurseries.[95] This was not a benevolent introduction as workers had to both staff and pay for these facilities, but the increased wages ensured that women could afford child care. Many widows during the war period chose to forgo a pension on the death or disability of their husbands, because it was taxed as unearned income, for the greater income offered by working. However, having achieved a significant increase in wages, there was the problem that once employed a

worker could not leave for another job without a 'leaving certificate'. The Defence of the Realm and The Munitions of War Acts prohibited free movement of workers. These acts were passed due to the increasing demand for war materials and employees using the labour shortage to leverage employers, moving to those offering the highest wages. Employers manipulated the 'leaving certificate' to control the movement of wages and workers even in those industries not affected. A number of trade unions complained to the government offering examples of women not granted certificates when pregnant or widows being forced to remain at work when their children were ill.[96] Not every employer abused the system as many saw the benefits of engaging with their work force and the increased wages did give many women previously unobtainable social and economic freedom.

The wages now being paid to women and those men in reserved occupations have to be compared with the enlisted mens' wages. An enlisted man in 1914 was paid 8s. 2d. per week along with, if married and as previously noted, a separation allowance of 7s. 7d. plus 1s. 2d. per child per week. In almost all cases this was significantly below their average civilian wage of 20s.[97] In order to combat the growing criticism in regard to the insufficient monies being paid to soldiers and their families the Government, in March 1915, authorised the increase of the separation allowance to 12s. 6d. for single wives and 21s. for those with two children.[98] This allowance included a deduction of 3s. 6d. from a soldier's weekly pay giving a married soldier's wife and two children 25s 8d per week.[99] The new allowance, despite being later described in parliament as a 'miserable pittance', further increased the differential between serving families as the

maximum payment to a widowed family was 10s.[100] Even after the first mass casualty lists began to be published there was still an expectation by government that any hardship could be alleviated by the various charitable organisation thus ensuring no person received more than was equitable. There was likewise the expectation that women should find gainful employment as the government never considered any pension to be for life. However, in respect of all payments there was the morality clause. Women in receipt of a pension or benefit from the charitable organisations were still governed by the morality clause. They had to act in a manner as if still married and any affairs or illegitimate children would see their benefits cancelled. In Surrey the women who volunteered to evaluate claims for the various local charities, County funds and RPF were engaged firstly to evaluate whether the women were fit to receive the funds and, if approved, to secondly continue to monitor their fitness to receive the benefit.[101] Almost all of the rules used by the RPF and the SSFA were a continuation of the guidelines for issuing funds under the Poor Law. The police, who had been extensively used by the charities prior to 1901, were at the forefront of monitoring the morality of both soldiers' wives and later widows and their services were adopted by Central Government in the same vein.[102] The War Office wanted to ensure that those in receipt of government money in the form of the separation allowances, and later the pension provision, met the very defined Victorian policy of chastity and virtue while their husbands were absent.[103] In December 1914 the War Office, via the Home Office, instructed all Chief Constables to record any of the soldiers' wives who deviated from the requirement being 'of good character', since this was the criteria for any payment. Some, but not all Chief Constables refused and

the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, together with the Chief Constables of Manchester and Glasgow amongst others, objected to this requirement but as is noted in the diary of a Buckinghamshire Constabulary Sergeant

> 'The Chief Constable has asked us to use great care and tact in supervising the wives of soldiers on active service should any misbehaviour be noticed. If any warnings need to be issued to the wives they will be done by the superintendent or other senior officer. It is hard to believe a wife would betray her husband while he is away fighting. I hope we will not have any cases in the area.' [104]

The criteria 'of good character' left widows open to gossip, malicious anonymous letters and false accusations which were transmitted to the War Office who immediately suspended payment pending investigation. In almost every case the widow had to justify the accusations without the ability to face their accusers. In the vast majority of cases there was no evidence to substantiate the allegations but the investigation often cost the women their independence as the charities would not support them whilst a case of immorality was investigated. Many women were forced to place either their children as well as themselves into the workhouses until the investigation was concluded. Even if these women did not position their children in the workhouses, the threat of their removal by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) was ever present as any women accused of immorality were automatically guilty as the War Office had absolute discretion over their guilt or innocence. In some cases the removal of children was justified as in the case of Miriam Burrows, a Mansfield woman whose husband was serving in France, having left

her children ‘unattended and without food as a result of having succumbed to excessive drinking’.[105] Additionally in the case of ‘Alice Tuckwood, a soldier’s wife in receipt of 23s. a week separation was found guilty of neglect of her three children having pawned everything she owned to buy alcohol, was sentenced in May 1916 to four months' imprisonment at Nottingham Magistrates Court.’[106]

In the early months of the war sensational reports appeared in many newspapers condemning the increasing number of women using their allowance for alcohol consumption to the neglect of their families.[107] There were increasing calls for women to be barred from purchasing alcohol or the ability to frequent public houses. The fact that women were becoming financially independent through the military allowances was seen as a threat to the structure of Britain’s patriarchal society fuelling this speculation. However, the vast majority of the newspaper articles were based on a single case but were highlighted as representing the majority. These articles were contradicted by two separate reports published in 1915. The NSPCC reported in January 1915, from information compiled by its inspectors, a report which concluded that ‘female drunkenness had declined since August 1914 and that the charges against soldiers’ wives were ‘a great slander’.[108] This was supported in a report released by the Home Secretary in November 1915 detailing that the number of women convicted in London for drunkenness, up to 31st October 1915, were 16,526 but of these only 62 were in receipt of a military allowance.[109] Further evidence of misrepresentation was presented to Parliament detailing that arrests for drunkenness amongst women in areas such as Liverpool and Birmingham had fallen significantly by more than 50 % for

each of the months of 1916.[110] For many women the inaccurate newspaper reporting developed because the military allowances were paid directly to the wives, and not to their husbands which fostered both envy, from those not in receipt, and a new independence for the recipients. Both the allowance, or pensions, provided a stable reliable income which was often not the case when their partners were or had been present.[111] However, their payment, as Hughes and Meek comment, 'was structured around maintaining the domestic rights of men…A wife's eligibility for a separation allowance was based on a husband's status as a soldier rather than her contribution to wartime society.'[112]

Allegations were also made in the press that the birth rate, fuelled by alcohol, was rapidly increasing near military camps. Public opinion was strongly influenced by newspaper reporting such that a perception was created, particularly amongst the middle classes, portraying adroit women who, without the guiding stability of their husbands being present and with money of their own, were subject to temptation and increased moral risk.[113] In Oxford a self-appointed Vigilance Committee was reformed in 1916, having previously been active during the late 1880's. The committee was reactivated in response to concerns about falling moral standards, establishing women auxiliary patrols, to record and deter acts of immorality, though without any official status or statutory power of arrest. In November 1916 the committee published a report which, while stating immorality was on the increase, provided figures that the number of illegitimate births had in fact fallen from 53 in 1914 to 50 in 1915.[114] This contradiction is representative of many who perceived that women were overcome

with 'Khaki Fever' significantly reducing their ability to resist temptation and fornication.[115] However, Trevor Wilson's research has clearly established that the reported moral laxity amongst wives and widows was pure speculation as there was no significant increase in ex-nuptial or extramarital births.[116] This was also confirmed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who wrote in *The Times* in July 1915 that having reviewed the matter the information received from the various diocese recorded that the allegations of mass impropriety on the part of soldiers wives was unfounded.[117] However, while these newspaper reported cases exaggerated the expanding influence of alcohol, for those accused because of innuendo or malicious gossip, the removal of income caused family destitution and possibly initiated immorality.[118] Fortunately for both wives and widows the rules changed in 1917 and the War Office only acted to stop payments where actual evidence of immorality was provided.[119] The accusations of drunkenness and immorality would remain constant throughout the war as women's growing independence was deemed inappropriate. In May 1918 a Home Office report on 'Drinking Conditions among Women and Girls in Woolwich and District' concluded that despite the number of women now openly drinking in bars doubling since 1916 the arrests for drunkenness had fallen significantly.[120]

The exception to the separation payments were officers' wives. The government paid no allowance to the wives of any serving officer as it was expected that their families would be able to support themselves. It had been a long tradition in the Army that officers paid for almost everything from their uniforms to their mess bills. In the navy the cost of becoming an officer was immense, requiring a minimum of £200-250

(equalling £18,348.02 in 2018) to see a midshipman through each of his first two years at sea, and this was after the cost of his training at Dartmouth, all of which was paid for by an individual's family.[121] In the early stages of WW1, the majority of officers were drawn from upper class families with these men coming from families who could afford to provide the necessary funds to enable their sons to participate. John Semple writes 'The young gentlemen from Eton and the Edwardian public schools paid a terrible price for this duty. It was a funny old world war, the First World War, but there was one unassailable, and surprising, truth about it. The more exclusive your education, the more likely you were to die.'[122] Once the war progressed, and the life expectancy of a subaltern in the western front trenches decreased to less than seven days, the need for more officers intensified and more married men were drawn into the services. Anyone over 18 who had received a private school or professional education was deemed suitable officer material. These individuals then underwent a four week training course, were considered competent to lead their men into battle, and then shipped, with their regiments, to the frontline.[123] The only benefit, if it can be seen as such, for an officer's wife was in the event of their husband's death they, unlike the enlisted and non-commissioned officers, would receive a pension. For many officers' wives this pension was completely inadequate when compared to their husband's pay and their pre-war income.[124] Lord Onslow highlighted this in a letter to his wife in September 1918 where he writes,

> 'While waiting for a meeting with Fletcher the Military Secretary, he told me that Lady Hay is the president of the Relief Fund for Officers' Widows. It appears that there are some awfully bad cases. Many men in private

> life enlisted at the beginning of the war and perhaps primed as officers then they married and got killed. Consequently, there are quite a number of officers' widows actually in danger of the workhouse. The Pensions Ministry will do no more for them than for the widows of private soldiers.'[125]

Officers' widows also saw little differentiation from enlisted men when applying to the charity organisations for relief. It was still expected, if they were of reasonable age and had children, for them to deposit these with family or the workhouse and engage in 'gainful employment'.[126]

Another hardship for both widows and married women was the common, but often unpublished, act of spousal desertion. The case of Mrs Martha Sarah Gardner, wife of Sapper Gardner, was referenced in a parliamentary debate highlighting the growing plight of women refused any income because their husbands ignored or falsified their enlistment records. Mrs Gardiner had been refused separation allowance on the grounds that she was not living with her husband at the time of his enlistment. Her husband had deserted his wife and four children on the 11th February, 1911, leaving them destitute and with no source of income forcing them to enter the workhouse. Mrs. Gardner made every effort to discover her husband's whereabouts, and only by chance discovered his enlistment into the Royal Engineers. After contacting the Army, she was advised that they were unable to grant her separation allowance owing to her husband's allegation of infidelity; the opposite being fact. Sapper Gardner was summoned to appear at the Tower Bridge Police Court where he unreservedly

withdrew the allegation of infidelity. The magistrate ordered that she was entitled to maintenance and the separation allowance.[127] This was one of many cases brought before magistrates by women desperate to survive and avoid the workhouse.

1.4 The Need for a Military Pension

During the early months of 1915 the scale of death intensified; by the end of March an average of 263 men were being lost each day with an accumulative total of 55,545 killed and 119,434 injured. The increasing death toll influenced many in Westminster to seek a solution to the immediate destitution of soldiers' families caused by their death.[128] Both the RPF and the SSFA were pressing the Government to take action. This is exemplified by the number of dependants being assisted by the SSFA in the first four months of war which were 320,748 wives, 763,916 children and 197,150 widows/dependants: a total of 1,281,814 individuals receiving financial support totalling £1,096,472.[129] The Church also entered the debate when the meetings of the Canterbury Houses of Convocation and Laymen in February 1915 declared that 'when a soldier gave his services to his country, those that depended upon him should be provided for'.[130] The hardship to military families was additionally intensified when notice was given to all of the families resident in military barracks to vacate by February 1915 and find alternative accommodation as the space was need for the ever expanding Army.[131] No monies were given to assist this transition or any understanding of the hardship which this decision created. The SSFA, where possible, helped these individuals and their children to find alternate accommodation but this often meant their dispersal throughout Britain as there was insufficient local

accommodation in the areas which they resided. In many cases this relocation caused additional hardship for the families, having little knowledge of their new location and often unable to find work to sustain their families. Families who had been used to the routine of military barracks now had to deal with poor sustenance and low grade housing both of which had to be purchased at commercial rates. Many of the long-term generational military families who had fathers, husbands and sons in the military, and had benefitted from regimental support, now found life detrimentally altered with little support from the War Office.

In January 1915 the first of three White Papers and two supplementary Special Reports were published by the Government on the implementation of a war pension for widows, disabled veterans and their dependants.[132] The Government had come under intense pressure from women's organisations and societies to resolve this issue, as the intensity of the fighting was leaving four injured for every man killed and of these over a third were permanent invalids. Deborah Coen, quoting from a 1915 edition of *The Morning Post* writes that,

> 'The principle undoubtedly approved by the nation is that the disabled sailor and soldier are the care of the State, and that the State should ensure their welfare and comfort for the remainder of their lives. The official practice is very different. It consists in trying to discover how little the State can do without incurring popular odium.'[133]

There was considerable opposition to the introduction of a pension with the Chancellor of the Exchequer arguing that, with the cost of war separation allowances

exceeding £50million, the added substantial expense of pensions would be too much for the country to facilitate when there were so many charitable organisations supporting wives, widows and their families.[134] However, despite the Treasury's opposition these White Papers progressed into the Naval and Military War Pensions Act which was enacted in November 1915, establishing a Statutory Committee under the authority of the RPF and responsible for the distribution of monies to the dependants.[135] In passing this Act the State, for first time, recognised its responsibility and obligation for the treatment and care of soldiers, their widows and those discharged due to service injury. This Act was far more significant than either the 1908 Old Age Pension or the 1911 National Insurance Act in that it overturned an ingrained Victorian/Edwardian mentality based on a notion of philanthropic charity being the basis of all relief, achieving a cataclysmic shift in social and moral responsibility. However, whilst this Act was a fundamental move forward, its implementation was fraught with difficulty. Amongst many academics the implementation and running of the new pension also appears to be a subject difficult to comprehend, with many ignoring the period from November 1915 until 1917. This is possibly because the implementation and administration of the new pension was confusing, being divested through six departments including the War Office, which catered directly for Army officer's pensions, with all other ranks processed through the new Statutory committee; the Admiralty, who likewise catered for naval officers and again devolved all other ranks to both the Statutory Committee and Greenwich hospital; Chelsea Hospital administered Army disability and long service pensions along with the Military Services (Civil Liabilities Commission) from whom the dependants of the conscripted

could apply for funds.[136] Alongside these, the SSFA dealt with the administration of separation allowance for the Army and Navy.

The administration by the RPF in validating pension applications was delegated to a system of committees and sub committees established throughout the country.[137] The membership of which included representatives from various interested parties including local government, each meeting either weekly or monthly to organise the administration of the new pension. It is this issue which, where evaluated within the available academic writings, there appears a clear lack of comprehension and understanding of the exponentially expanding task faced by the RPF. Even utilising the pre-existing established SSFA structure, the unprecedented scale of applications overwhelmed an organisation used to a sedate leisurely committee based assessment and decision process. The committee system had worked well where, as in the Boer War, 20,000 claimants were processed over several years but to then process a similar number in one month quickly recognised the inadequacies of the new organisation. The Committee simply could not process the escalating demands of both the widows and the disabled as the number of men were killed or injured increased. The fighting on one day, 1st July 1916, would leave 60,000 men killed and wounded and by the end of that month another 61,507 had died with another 218,000 injured.[138] To attempt a solution the RPF sought the assistance of the SSFA to aid in the administration as they already had over 900 branches established, coordinating some 50,000 volunteers.[139] However, it quickly became obvious that the SSFA also could not cope with the problems as it likewise used a process of monthly meetings to assess and evaluate

claimants' applications. By the time a meeting was convened each committee had become inundated by thousands more claimants. The first Battle of the Somme, fought in the last six months of 1916, generated more than half a million casualties, causing the Statutory Committee system to effectively implode. It was finally understood within Government that all the individual organisations validating pension claims had to be unified to counter the chaos and growing discontent amongst the bereaved and injured.[140]

The SSFA had already expressed concern to the Government that the RPF methods of controlling and distributing the new pension would be detrimental to those in need but the SSFA had itself established a poor reputation in its management of the separation allowance. A number of historians have offered a critical analysis of the SSFA including Hetherington who argues that the SSFA volunteers were too entrenched in their attitudes towards claimants to adapt to the rapidly spiralling losses in France, since the majority of SSFA's volunteers were drawn from middle or upper-class women.[141] This viewpoint is supported by Riedi who notes that Gildea insisted 'that branch presidents and vice-presidents 'shall be Ladies'–as were the members of the SSFA's council'.[142] This is supported by Wootton, quoting from a 1915 Speech by the General Secretary Bernard Bosanquet, noting that the SSFA now 'recognised the danger that charitable funds were in danger of being regarded as being given for the benefit of one class "at the discretion of a different class"'. There was a belief that working class ethics could be improved and it was their duty as moral and patriotic educators to initiate this change, but at the same time with the underlying motive of

ensuring individuals understood society's structure and that they were effectively receiving state charity, emphasising the associated stigma this entailed.[143] Whereas Peter Reese places more emphasis on State influence arguing that SSFA's approach was a mere reflection of government ineptitude.[144] Angela Smith agrees with Hetherington determining that this attitude was firmly entrenched within many of the volunteers despite the pension being non-contributory or means-tested. The volunteers used the 'morality' clause embedded in the legislation to ensure that women adhered to their vision of how women should act in society despite the significant gap between their social classes.[145] The volunteers were frequently denying claimants money, beyond that which was specified in the legislation, or stopping payments following unsubstantiated malicious accusations or gossip rather than after factual investigation. This attitude was already present but heightened after the Statutory Committee delegated responsibility to the SSFA in deciding whether a woman was worthy to receive any pension payments. If there were any doubts raised in her moral actions or attitudes a system called 'administration in trust' was implemented. This system closely followed the practices operated by the SSFA from the Boer War and was in effect monitored probation. The wife or widow had her military pension, or separation allowance, controlled by and then allocated in whatever manner the Committee deemed necessary. [146] This would include removing direct cash payments to the individual and diverting money for rent payments directly to their landlord with whatever monetary balance left being paid as food vouchers to be encashed at local merchants. The 'administration in trust' was intended to ensure that the wives and widows maintained or became moral upstanding citizens

guaranteeing that no money was wasted on drink or frivolity but was intensely unfair and degrading to those falsely accused. Documented regular visits accompanied this control to monitor compliance and behavioural reports were distributed to both the central Committee and the police. Only if the individual proved to be worthy, of good temperance as well as meeting all the Committee's criteria for good conduct would the control of finances be returned. However, a number of women would also be adjudged to have failed to meet the necessary criteria, not because they had actually infringed the statutory requirements but because they had failed to meet the SSFA visitor requirement.[147]

It was difficult for women to complain as this would have been unpatriotic, if not likened to treasonous, with many finding no relief when the Ministry of Pensions was established in 1917 as it absorbed many of the committees and volunteers of the RPF and the SSFA.[148] The stern attitude of middle class volunteers was somewhat tempered as their own husbands were killed or injured. The historical analysis of social standing after WW1 has been widely debated and within this Davis and Moore reason that social position and status are directly linked to an individual's income and if their family cannot supplement a widow's income then there is an immediate decline in social status.[149] Scheidel also comments that 'the biggest shock of the inter-war period.. was the Great Depression which reduced income and wealth' bringing unprecedented pressure on those who were the most vulnerable in society. Correspondingly the research of Lloyd-Sherlock, Corso, and Minicuci quantifies this in concluding that 'widowhood is strongly associated with a wide range of deprivations

across low and middle-income'.[150] This was particularly prevalent amongst married women who enjoyed a comfortable middle-class pre-war lifestyle, and were part of the monitoring process for war widows, having lost the generated income stream on the death or serious injury of their partner. This loss would see a downgrading of their social status radically altering their perception of the war and their social classes' perception of them. Despite an officer's perceived social status, the annual pension set for a Captain's widow in 1919 was set at £100 and £24 for each child; prior to 1919 children were not counted when allocating officers' widow's pensions.[151] In 1945, the first major review of widows' pensions, this was increased to £140. In real terms the purchasing value of the 1919 pension in 1945 had diminished to equal £37.[152] This issue of 'buying power' of pensions was highlighted from 1915 onwards and became as prevalent after the War as inflation, recessions and the later Great Depression influenced prices. Academics often overlook the economic influences which adversely affected the cost of living, frequently failing to appreciate the hardships that the increased cost of living created, particularly to those on a fixed income. During the early stages of the War the cost of basic food stuffs were stable as the supply remained constant with stocks supplementing any immediate market shortfall. This changed as Germany's submarine warfare restricted deliveries from late 1915 significantly increasing prices, in some cases more than 600% of their pre-war level, which significantly impinged on the unchanging income allocated to widows and disabled ex-servicemen.[153] The problem for all widows or the disabled, whether enlisted or commissioned, was that the pension benefit calculation was based on the

perceived earnings obtainable in 1913/14 with no allowance for future inflation or changes in circumstance.[154]

1.5 The Creation of the Ministry of Pensions

The move in 1916 towards a unified system continued to be opposed by both the RPF and the SSFA, both of which made representations to Asquith's Government to halt or reverse any decision to remove the Statutory Committee. But the Government had a twofold objective, to reduce the accelerating unrest and increasing level of complaints amongst the bereaved and to radically reduce the costs of administrating the pension system; the latter, for the Government, being the most important objective. The Government was unmoved by the opposition and proceeded with the passing and implementation of the Ministry of Pensions Act 1916 which transferred all of the responsibilities and administration from the Army Council, Hospital Commissioners, RPF, SSFA and the Admiralty from February 1917 into one government body.[155] The newly appointed Pensions Minister, George Barnes, was tasked with resolving the issues of administration and reducing public anxiety at the government's lack of response to the issue of the War dead and disabled. The new Ministry set forth an idealistic ethos, and one that it would fail to maintain, when stating that,

> 'The pension of to-day is intended to embrace not only the man himself within its benefits, but also his dependants, no matter the degree of relationship, and to provide for his and their future, to the extent which might perhaps have been realized had he lived, or, if living, retained the full possession of his powers and faculties.'[156]

The creation of the Ministry, and the subsequent press coverage, was as much to bolster David Lloyd-George's pursuit of the Premiership as to resolve the issues pertinent to those most in need.[157] The warrant that created the Ministry gave absolute power to the new organisation, but, even after its official creation, the new Ministry was totally dependent on the administrative services of both the RPF and the SSFA without which there could be no organisation.[158] A noteworthy administrative feature of the Pension Act was that the statutory committees absorbed from the RPF and the SSFA were allowed to include representatives from Trade Unions and women. This was an important precedent, being one of the very first occasions when 'workers' and 'women' were allowed to become constructive contributory participants in a governmental organisation. The remit of the committees was also expanded from not merely the giving of assistance in paying out pensions and allowances but to take on a constructive character having the power to 'to make provision for the care of disabled officers and men after they have left the service, including provision for their health, training, and employment.'[159] While the Government was extolling policies aimed at rewarding its armed forces it simultaneously encouraged business to replace women, many of whom had worked throughout the war, allocating their jobs to the returning soldiers. This caused immense hardship for all women and particularly widows with children who struggled to sustain their families. With the lack of opportunity post-war unemployment rates amongst women averaged 56%.[160]

When the war ended in November 1918 the real work of the Pensions Ministry should have commenced. Initially the nation, as Lloyd George proclaimed, sought 'To make

Britain a fit country for heroes to live in' both rehabilitating and remembering those who had fought and died.[161] But as much as many wanted to honour the armed forces the reality of the cost of war and the financial debt incurred would heavily influence this task. Britain's war debt exceeded £7.5 billion which would, behind closed doors, dictate the country's approach to the payments made to both the disabled and widows.[162] One of the key policies of the post-war government was 'bricks before benefits' through the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act 1919. This Act enabled new-house deficit building costs to be subsidised by 75% for a period of 7 years. The policy was initiated to restart the stagnant construction industry providing jobs for returning soldiers, particularly as many were now eligible to vote following the introduction of the March 1918 Reform Act granting universal male suffrage. However, for the physically disabled veterans many would have to seek accommodation, training and employment through charitable organisations as the government put its main emphasis on providing war pensions rather than training and housing. For the mentally disabled the situation was even more problematic. The system of defining pensions for those suffering mental illness was both unsupportive and discriminatory. The 'stiff-upper-lip' attitude of those presiding on medical boards ensured that many claimants were denied disability pensions as the claimants failed to reach the exacting standards defined by the board necessary to describe an individual as mentally ill.[163] The medical board policy was reinforced by the Treasury whose sole objective was to reduce the pensions liability and which 'had decisive authority in setting the austere economic agenda'.[164] Michael Robinson identifies that 'There was particular concern (in the Treasury) about rising pension costs as veterans aged' and

the Government policy of introducing austere reductions was only tempered by 'intense public and political lobbying on behalf of the welfare of disabled veterans'.[165] While this issue is only just beginning to be debated amongst historians, Niall Barr offers the additional, often overlooked, point that money was not the sole issue concerning the veterans and the Government. He argues that many of the disabled servicemen would have readily agreed to a reduced pension if adequate training to re-enter the workforce was provided, something the Government generally ignored leaving implementation to the various charities.[166] William McDougall best quantifies the problem when writing in 1920 that for those in the most need 'the Great War is supposed by some to have revolutionised all our ideas of human nature and of national life' but 'little had changed in the post-war period'.[167]

The establishing of the Ministry of Pensions should have finally resolved all the issues that so many had fought for during the war years. But the Government saw its duty to implement any payment only within the guidelines created at its formation.
These guidelines had been established by the Treasury who were keenly aware of the escalating provision that pensions demanded from the economy. This was noted in a parliamentary debate in 1919,

> 'There are 957,000 disabled officers and men to whom payment of pensions, gratuities or allowances is being made at the rate of £3,970,000 a month. This sum includes the cost of the allowances paid in respect of 670,000 children of disabled men. There are 930,000 widows, children and other dependants of deceased officers and men, to whom payment is being made

> at the rate of £2,609,000 a month. The monthly cost of administration by the Ministry of Pensions, including fees to medical boards, hospital staffs, etc., is £260,000. The expenditude by the local war pensions committees on advances, allowances, etc., is at the rate of £1,742,000 a month, and the administration expenses of the committees is approximately £83,000 a month. The total expenditure on benefits is, therefore, £8,321,000 a month, and on administration £343,000.'[168]

The Treasury policy would influence how applicants were treated and the weekly rates of remuneration set in 1918, although reviewed annually, was only modestly increased. The object of these payment levels was to encourage all in receipt to obtain work and remove themselves from state support. This policy is particularly reflected in the rates paid to childless widows under 40 of 20 shillings (£1) per week which saw no increase until 49 years later in April 1969 when a new rate of 30 shillings (£1.50) was payable; by the year 2000 the rate payable was £27.90.[169] In real terms the 1918 payment was equal to 2/3rds of the average weekly wage but by 1969 that had changed to being equal to 1/15th and the year 2000 to 1/20th.[170] The number of complaints increased with repeated questions being raised regarding the length of time taken to evaluate claimants. From detailed payment records it was not uncommon for women to wait between five and nine months to have their claims approved during which time they were expected to sustain themselves; with their claim pending they were also excluded from the workhouses or any other statutory payments.[171] This issue was repeatedly raised in Parliament resulting in the 1921 War Pensions Act being passed which revised criteria and the process for assessing

eligibility.[172] This Act also established an improved committee system to streamline assessing casualties to November 1918 and those allowable in the seven year period after cessation.

Several factors have also to be noted in that it was decided by the Treasury in 1919 that all pension payments were to be treated as unearned income and that in the event of remarriage, or cohabitation, all pension rights were lost. This decision, based on the now 1.97 million pension claimants, was taken to ensure the minimum cost to the nation and that those who had suffered war disability or bereavement were not seen to gain from their circumstance. This ideology would continue throughout the 1920's when the economic implications of sustained war benefits replaced sympathetic understanding as noted in a House of Commons debate: 'The Great War, fortunately for us, is over. The situation has, therefore, to be reviewed. The call for economy is in the air.'[173] In respect of taxation it was also deemed pertinent to ensure widows were encouraged to engage in full time employment at the earliest opportunity, thus removing their dependency on State aid. But for women with children, who by necessity needed additional income, this created hardship finding their wages reduced because of the high taxation rates applied on unearned income as the maximum annual allowable income, from all sources, before taxation was £135.[174] A woman with four children and who was able to work found her pension reduced by 4s 6d for every £1 she earned over the annual allowance; after WW2 the taxation rate was increased to 9s in the £.[175] The issue of taxation was raised multiple times in parliament and on each occasion the Minister stated that the matter would be

reviewed.[176] The Treasury ignored the parliamentary requests and simply let the real value of war pensions diminish. It was further eroded by the introduction of Purchase Tax in 1940 at 33.3% which initially covered luxury goods but was expanded to cover almost all items except foodstuffs.[177] It was not until April 1979 that the government finally conceded that widows' pensions should not be taxable; a cost to the treasury of £129 million per annum.[178] For widows that remarried or cohabitated the rule change to allowing pension retention would not be implemented until 1 April 2015.[179] However, this decision was not ratified retrospectively for if a spouse died between 31 March 1973 and before 5 April 2005, and the individual then remarried or co-habited, the Pension was permanently lost. Between April 2005 and 2015 a separate scheme, the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, took precedence following the death of a military partner. The final issue relates to the value of a war pension becoming applicable to a conflict. A WW1 widow received a pension which differed from that of a WW2 widow or any other subsequent conflict. Fairness should have dictated that all military pensions be equal but the original policy was defined in 1918 where a pension was calculated solely on the earnings applicable to the year the conflict was initiated. This policy took no account of wartime inflation or economic change, resulting in WW2 widows being paid more than WW1 and a Korean war widow being paid more than both. A childless WW1 widow of a private soldier was still paid £1 in 1946 and a WW2 widow received £4.0.6d. By 1982 the WW1 widow was now receiving £4.50p, a WW2 widow £40.90 and a Northern Ireland widow £85.98 per week.[180] When reviewed in 1989 the WW2 pension increased to £44.30 and the Northern Ireland pension was granted an average £167.17 per week; almost four times the WW2 pension.[181] By

effectively leaving pensions in limbo and restricting retrospective increases, the Government saved extraordinary amounts of money much to the detriment of those who had been disabled or widowed.

Whenever a conflict is initiated there are those that participate and those that are left behind. In the case of widows or widowers they are the victims that society almost always remembers at the moment of their partner's death and again at annual remembrance events but then they fade from the memory. The fact that these individuals are forgotten is not through malice; it is simply that society moves forward leaving the dead behind. Monuments may be created and buildings constructed to honour those that have been lost to wars but once the generations progress the testimonials to those who served their country are easily forgotten. Since 1945 the world has tried hard not to enter into another global conflict preferring instead to promote regional localised engagements. For whatever reason men and women have participated in these conflicts which inevitably leave victims who have to survive in the aftermath. This is not a new phenomenon as it has been happening since the first societies were formed and neither is it new that society has tried to forget those who have served ever exisited. In the wars previous to 1914 men who died on the battlefield were either left to rot or buried where they fell, generally placed in forgotten graves throughout the world; their families often knowing only that they had gone to war and failed to return. The concealed policy of ignoring the military veterans and their families has continued through the centuries and on into the 21st. Men and women chose the armed forces as a career but having finished their time

they then find that society now has little respect for their service, finding only that they are no longer required. The pensions that disabled veterans and widows have received should be a shame on a society but since they were most often forgotten society sees no shame. It has been left to the numerous charities, many of which were formed after each global conflict, to take up the reins for the disabled and the widowed but they can do only so much. Had it not been for the work of organisations such as The Royal British Legion, The Comrades of the Great War Association, Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association and the Stoll Foundation, the 'Khaki Riots' of 1919 may have seen mass rioting breakout.[182] These charitable organisations became the backbone of supporting and re-training ex-servicemen offering them an opportunity to regain their lives after the trauma of war; a fact repeated again after WW2. Society, including government and all its constituent parts, has failed to accept and understand that it is not just the money expended while a conflict lasts but it is the material, physical, mental and emotional price of the aftermath which appears to be so easily and quickly forgotten. We expect so much of our armed forces and their families, honouring their memory by ceremonies, but we have repeatedly ignored the physical and mental needs of those who have dedicated their lives to serving Britain.

Chapter 2

Ireland - Ex-Service Personnel:
Those who Served for Empire and the Republic.
'Lad siúd a sheirbheáil as Impireacht agus an phoblacht'.

In order to fully understand the men and women born in Ireland and who then joined, fought, were injured or died in Britain's military, a number of factors have to be appreciated. Only a very limited amount of research appears to have been undertaken on the social impact of those affected by both the external and internal military conflicts within Ireland.[183] This is particularly relevant to firstly, in the period 1900-1922 when actively fighting the British to achieve independence, as well as also participating in both the Boer and Great Wars, and secondly, the 12 month civil war which erupted shortly after independence was agreed in 1922.[184] Boyce writes that 'because the fighting did not appear to end from 1900 until 1925 those mostly affected have been hidden in plain view'.[185] It also relates to a belief by the Nationalists that by publicly accepting that Ireland's men and women fought and died in support of the British Empire in some way undermines the myth of Irish freedom fighters: how can you fight imperialism when fighting for imperialism?[186] McClintock also notes that 'by treating Ulster as anything other than an occupied colonial outpost inhibits the move towards a united Ireland'.[187] Likewise the Protestant Unionist position, and its loyalty to the Crown, has not diminished and both Rafferty and McGrattan offer an alternative view that the people of Northern Ireland benefit far more from being part of Britain's 68 million population than they would if they were disseminated or subjoined to the Republics 4 million.[188] Any question of forming a United Ireland is an anathema to the

Unionists and Johnathan Tonge argues that despite the rhetoric the two sides have much in common but different objectives. He writes that 'the Unionist's based their case to be British upon a similar premise as the Irish Republican Army (IRA): the right to national self-determination.'[189] The divide between the two sides is, and has always been, their perception and requirement of loyalty towards what each sees as their 'cause'. This then filters down and translates into how both sides treat any family or individual that is or has been involved in Britain's military; it is not always the case that Protestants are more supportive and Catholics less sympathetic.[190]

It is also necessary to have a comprehension of the political and social history and the impact of the growing pains of a country trying to establish its own identity while still economically dependent on Britain in the period up to and including WW2. There is likewise a differentiation between Nationalism and Nationalists as many of the soldiers who would fight in the two wars were not Nationalists. These men wanted home rule but at the same time retaining close links to British traditions and the Crown; as other parts of the Empire, particularly Canada, enjoyed.[191] Additionally, those who fought in WW1 had a significant influence on society, both in respect of how their service to the British Empire was viewed by the general populace, both before and after Independence, and how they were treated by the supporters of Irish nationalism.[192] The social and economic history of Southern Ireland is heavily intertwined with military service with over 20% of the workforce working or supporting the military before 1914 and more than 50% during wartime.[193]

Ireland's struggle with England is not a recent phenomenon and dates from well before the Norman invasion. In the seventeenth century and eighteenth centuries a series of conflicts, uprisings and failed rebellions against the Crown left the majority of the Irish as disenfranchised Catholics who were subject to political control from London enforced by English and Scottish Protestant settlers. It is therefore somewhat unusual to find that Ireland's men and women became a consistent and essential part of Britain's military, both before and after the establishing of the Irish Free State in March 1922. This contradiction between the hundreds of thousands of Irishmen who have been eager and willing to fight for, or with, Britain against the hereditary backdrop of English cruelty to the Irish, particularly the Catholics, is difficult to understand and comprehend.[194] For many Irish men and their families there were long periods in the 19th and 20th centuries when only three choices available; starvation, emigration or the military and for the poor Irish worker, Britain's military gave them security of sustenance and employment.[195]

Richard English writes that the roots and growth of Irish opposition to British rule were founded over many centuries based on 'blood sacrifice, martyrdom, and tragic failures of the Irish people'.[196] But of all the events in their history the Irish Rebellion of 1798, an uprising directly inspired by the American and, more importantly, the French revolutions, was not the first serious attempt to overthrow British rule but it was significant that within its failure the raw brutality of its suppression would become an ideological turning point in Irish history. The rebellion was one of Ireland's most horrific events which rapidly developed into sectarian cleansing rather than any issue

related to freedom and independence.[197] The rebellion was quickly suppressed with the main ring leaders along with 35,000 rebels killed.[198] Alongside those killed 16,000 were transported and another 26,000 families would see their homes taken as retribution for their involvement or perceived involvement in the rebellion.[199] This rebellion was of such significance in that it would later influence the Republican government in its approach to those who had served for the Empire and the later the men that supported Britain in WW2.

2.1 Ireland, the Boer War and the Introduction of the first Pension

Throughout the remainder of the 19th century Irish nationalism was supressed with its most vocal proponents, outside of the House of Commons, jailed. It would be the Boer War that would initiate a resurgence allowing all the nationalist parties to unite behind a single issue.[200] Constitutional Nationalists and separatists associated the Boer fight against the British Crown and particularly British business with their own struggle for home rule or independence. The Nationalists issued a proclamation that no Irishman should serve in the British Army assisting in the tyrannical suppression of the Boers. Their protests continued with an active anti-recruitment campaign aimed at reducing the number of men who enlisted.[201] Stout writes that ''pro-Boer fever' engulfed nationalist Ireland as pro-Boer demonstrations were held, pro-Boer rioting occurred and the flag of the Transvaal Republic—the Vierkleur—was to be seen in Dublin'.[202] In garrison towns, protesters took to the streets throwing stones and attacking any soldier caught out of barracks. The Louth North MP, Timothy Healey, expressed the sentiment of the Nationalists when he spoke in Parliament quoting from one of his

constituents 'My son,' said he, 'is fighting for the English in Africa, but I would rather hear of his death than of an English victory'.[203]

The outbreak of war was seen as Britain imposing its imperialistic will on the two free Boer republics, for which there was a great deal of sympathy in Ireland. Both spontaneous and organised rioting took place in Dublin creating an effective no-go area for British soldiers on the streets. Posters supporting the Boers were plastered onto walls and lampposts, and their flag decorated many of the most prominent buildings.[204] In Limerick, a serious riot engulfed the town, fuelled by opposition to Irish involvement in the war; despite many thousands of textile workers' employment being directly linked to Army contracts for the supply of khaki uniforms.[205] These riots were despite Ireland's textile industry benefitting from British Army clothing orders which significantly improved employment throughout the country following a 20 year manufacturing decline.[206] The textile workers proved to be amongst the most vociferous opponents to the war. There was also the contradiction in Ulster where Nationalists openly celebrated any Boer success while conversely Unionists celebrated any British triumph.[207] There was also an attempt to use the Catholic Church to promote anti-British feeling as by 1900 Ireland's population was over 84% Catholic. The Nationalists attempted to influence those who enlisted and their families through the pulpit, arguing that participation, association or acquiescence to anything British was seen as supporting tyranny.[208] The Nationalist cause failed because it could not counter the growing military euphoria which had gained momentum in Britain and

Ireland in the previous 20 years and which had led to an expansion of all the military services particularly the Royal Navy.

Despite the Nationalists' best attempts, patriotic fever swept through many parts of Ireland where Union Jack waving supporters lined the streets of Dublin as soldiers marched to the docks for departure. It was the same for recruitment; despite all the attempts at hindering recruitment the number of volunteers continued to rise.[209] McNamara writes that recruitment in rural Ireland, particularly on the west coast was intensely difficult, but 'the vast majority of recruits were farmers' sons and the sons of the working poor of the towns who joined for economic reasons.'[210] John Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalist Parliamentary Party, when arguing in Parliament on the contribution made by the Irish to the Boer War stated:

> 'Irishmen are just as capable as anyone else of judging the policy and the merits of the conflicts in which this Empire chooses to embroil itself, more especially when, as in the present instance, an impoverished and over-taxed country is called upon to pay so heavy a proportion of the cost, and when so many thousands of Irish families, rich and poor alike, are called upon to pour forth the still more precious treasure of their children's blood. Do not imagine that this war does not come home to us in Ireland. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that there is scarcely a family in Ireland, from the poor people who live in Dublin slums to the highest in the land, that is not represented, in one shape or other, upon one side or other at the front. This is more the case with regard to Ireland than it is here, because in proportion

to the population a larger number of our people take to soldiering for the mere love of the calling than with you, and when they do get to the front a far larger proportion of them are thrust into dangerous posts'.[211]

Sheehan continues this theme where he comments that much of Ireland's history in regard to those who have participated in military service has been lost due to the unspoken discomfort it would cause in undermining the carefully crafted myths of resistance to the British rule. By suppressing what is regarded as 'positive collaboration' then any idea of cooperation and acquiescence to Crown authority is weakened.[212] Brunicardi agrees with this analysis when writing that the Irish people had collaborated for over two hundred years in what he best described as, 'the Irish were 'independent' when it suited but 'British' when that was advantageous'.[213] This is partly confirmed by the numbers who gave their services to the British military during the Boer war. Over 55,000 men from Ireland volunteered to join Britain's military and of those who enlisted approximately 61% were Catholic drawn mainly from the southern counties. From the known records 1,809 were killed, died of their wounds or disease and another 4,879 were wounded.[214] There is additionally some question of the actual total of the number of Irish killed and wounded because the compiled records and the army's documentation only related to Irish regiments; men from Ireland who enlisted in other regiments were not recorded in the Irish statistics.[215]

Rarely did serving soldiers in South Africa have knowledge of the unfolding events in Ireland. Even if they did what influence could they have on events. They were in a war and they simply did their duty as soldiers. Colonel Mills wrote to the *Times* stating

> 'I cannot say how proud I am at having the honour to command men who have proved themselves so worthy… though not an Irishman by birth I am one at heart, and I am delighted to think that the way in which Irish regiments have behaved during this war will prove to the world that Her Majesty has no more loyal and true soldiers than those in her Irish regiments.'[216]

The knowledge of the bravery and sacrifice of the many Irish men who gave their lives during the South African conflict has also almost been lost because of its close proximity to the Great War.[217] Irish regiments participated in every major operation during this engagement but there is a dearth of information on their contribution. No politician or political party in the aftermath of Irish independence wanted to reference participation in an Imperial war. Irishmen who fought with the British forces have remained in a political limbo, with the history of events sanitised, distancing any involvement or participation with British Imperialism. Even in 1983 the consternation amongst some Nationalists was voiced at a Remembrance Day ceremony in Dublin. Olivia O'Leary writing in *The Spectator* commented upon an

> 'unholy row which has broken out in the Republic over an Irish Army presence at the Remembrance Day ceremony in Dublin. Remembering dead heroes has always been a lively political occupation in Ireland, but the Irish dead of the two World Wars have not yet been granted an official position in Ireland's Hall of Heroes. Ireland was busy with the revolution during the first world war,

and busy being neutral in the second. To honour them was to honour their cause, and their cause, however worthy, was fought under the despised shadow of the Union Jack.'[218]

Wallace comments further that it did not fit the Irish psyche to be seen as supporting the British Imperialistic crown and generations of school children have seen Irish participation excluded from their education. He then elaborates by explaining that:

'the Boer War has not been taken from the attic of the public because of its political, diplomatic or social reason to do so. It is so far back in time that there is no personal reason. More importantly, there is a heavy cost involved in remembering Irish involvement in the South African War. It has long been a part of the diplomatic image projected by independent Ireland, especially in the developing world, that the Irish were never invaders or colonizers. Ireland presents itself, quite successfully, in the post-colonial world as a victim of colonization. It is that rare thing - a western country that can empathize with the experience of many African, Asian and South American states. The rhetoric of remembering, praising the bravery of the ordinary Dublin Fusilier while disagreeing with the war aims, would not work in this context. It does not fit Ireland's official self-image, or the sense of identity of the Irish citizen, to recall the significant contribution made by Irish administrators, civil servants, police and soldiers to creating colonies and maintaining the Empire.'[219]

With the British victory in South Africa in 1902 and the war's cessation the returning soldiers faced an uncertain future. While the troops and country celebrated with

parades in both Belfast and Dublin, for many parts of Ireland the end of the war would see families lose both their incomes and their homes; rural Ireland had seen no change or prosperity during the three years of war. The economic boom of wartime orders, particularly in the textile industry, was now over. The euphoria of victory was short lived as many of the men returned home to poverty and deprivation, particularly in rural Ireland, having to cope with unemployment and the loss and regularity of their army pay.

For the widows and orphans of those who were married, and on-the-strength before their spouse was deployed but failed to return from South Africa a means tested pension was introduced in 1901.[220] If women worked or their character was questioned they lost their pension. However, the state widows' pension only came into effect towards the end of the war. Prior to this all widows were completely reliant on either obtaining work or appealing for aid from relief funds, the two largest being either the Royal Patriot Fund or the Irish branch of the SSFA.[221] Alternatively, most of the Irish regiments involved had a regimental welfare system but with the significant numbers who died, the available funds were often stretched to provide a very limited amount to each applicant. Additionally, application could be made to the Irish Regiment's Widows' and Orphans' Fund, the Mafeking Relief Fund, the Transvaal Relief Fund and the Daily Telegraph Shilling Fund.[222] However as the war progressed the demands of supporting claimants over income received caused some funds to close. There was also the peculiarity and bias towards mainland claimants within the relief system. The widows in Ireland were excluded from applying to all of the wealthier

mainland funds such as the Lord Mayor of London's Relief Fund, which had raised in excess of £668,000 in 1900; equivalent to £258,100,000 in 2018, because they were based in Ireland.[223] Many of the funds did not have offices or officers in Ireland to handle claims or the funds simply excluded those outside mainland Britain.

There was a firm belief that each home country should look after their own. This discriminatory restriction was criticised particularly as Ireland's wealth was mainly held by absentee landlords and raising money from those already struggling to survive was problematic. This matter was raised in Parliament by the member for Cork East, Captain Donelan, when he asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether relief for Irish Soldiers could be obtained:

> 'I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the comments made at a recent meeting of the Cork Board of Guardians upon an application for out-door relief by the wife and children of a wounded soldier in South Africa; and whether, with a view to remedy the hardship of taxing Irish ratepayers for the support of soldiers' widows, wives, and children, as well as for the cost of the war, he will suggest to the committees of the various charitable war funds the desirability of transmitting a reasonable proportion of these funds for distribution in Ireland.'[224]

The Under Secretary replied that it was the responsibility of the individual relief funds to distribute their monies where the government could not intervene. The raising of funds internally in Ireland was fraught with difficulty and created a sense of injustice as

the main funds in England were raising vast sums from a much larger population, whereas Ireland was limited in its fund-raising capability. Dublin had a population of 290,000 in 1900, where more than 30% resided in multi-occupancy dilapidated tenement buildings and was considered to have the worst slums in Europe.[225] Belfast had a near equivalent in population and again had a large low income working populace which also restricted the funds available. These two cities could not match the millions in England's metropolitan cities.[226] Dublin's poverty was closely linked to the city's, and all of Ireland's, ability to match funds raised in London which had significantly greater population, exceeding 6.5 million in 1901, giving it a populace twenty times the size of Dublin upon which to call.

During the course of the war mainland charities raised more than £5.6 million (equivalent to between £6 billion to £69 billion in 2018) but very little of this money was allocated to Ireland.[227] The result of this was poverty and destitution in Ireland for not only the wives of soldiers on active service but also the widows. Many of the wives would end up in the workhouse unable to live on the army separation on-the-strength allowance of 8d. per day with 4d. per day for each child.[228] The MP for Limerick Michael Joyce raised the question in Parliament;

> 'I beg to ask Secretary of State for War whether, in the event of women whose husbands are in the Army becoming inmates of poor law unions in Ireland, he will direct that any money which may accrue to them through their husbands, be sent in the first instance to the union of which they are inmates, so that

such unions may be in a position to recoup the ratepayers to some extent, as is the case with Army pensioners who become inmates.'[229]

He received the reply that it would be brought to the notice of the War Office. The fact that it was acceptable that dependants of soldiers on active service could be sojourned into workhouses or supported by the poor law was not seen as unacceptable. Joyce also questioned the value of the separation allowance paid to dependent wives, which was significantly below the average earnings a soldier could have enjoyed as a civilian and hence why women were becoming destitute. Another example was that of Mrs. M. M'Knight, a resident of Limerick. In the early months of the war her husband and seven sons joined the Army; three of whom were married. Very soon after their enlistment her husband was killed and during the following months two of her sons were also killed, one leaving a widow. The M'Knight house now contained a total of three women, none of which could find work, and six young children. The family received no support from the government, as their spouses' pay was stopped after 36 days, and totally reliant on a 6-shilling allowance from the SSFA. Mrs M'Knight plight was not uncommon as hundreds of women in Ireland were forced into workhouses because the government either failed to pay what was due or the system lacked any protection for the bereaved families. This question was asked in Parliament as to 'how can a government ask men to join the Army and fail to support their families?'[230] For many returning soldiers coming home to anti-British propaganda, and being left to fend for themselves, this war appeared a very 'English Affair' with the soldiers of Ireland abandoned and left to suffer when they were no longer needed. The incorporated report of Ireland's Soldiers' and Sailors' Help Society

published in 1927 noted that there were endless applications for assistance from Boer war veterans, 'Week by week we receive piteous appeals from those who, owing to age or infirmity, were rejected for service in the Great War, and are now severely handicapped by the high cost of living as compared with pre-war days and are unable to obtain help from other sources.'[231]

This problem continued for those soldiers who were injured or who may have suffered what is now defined as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Of these, a growing number entered the poor relief system or the workhouses as their families could not support them and they were left to become vagrants or beggars. The issue of these mens' plight became lost because they were romanticised and fictionalised by Edwardian novelists such as James Joyce, who portrayed them as happy fun-loving scoundrels of the road.[232] Loeber lays the blame for this in the fact that six out of ten Irish novelists died outside of Ireland and their fictional tales had as much to do with home-sickness as any factual reference but their works had significant influence on how Irish vagrants were viewed.[233] Following a period of intense argument in Parliament the relief of the poor in Ireland was reviewed and a Poor Law Review Commission for Ireland was established in late 1903; the first major review since 1834. This Commission reported in October 1906 and amongst its findings it reported that there were increasing numbers of militia or ex-servicemen entering the workhouses. Section 222 of the report commented that

> 'There is another rather numerous class of able-bodied men who frequent workhouses, many of whom stay therein for the greater part

of the year while others are vagrants during the fine weather, and in some cases all the year round. We refer to soldiers and ex-soldiers, including militia men.' [234]

The report also recorded that during January 1906 of the 1,883 men admitted to Irish workhouses 1,597 were either militiamen or ex-servicemen. The plight of ex-servicemen continued to deteriorate as a vast number were labelled either vagrants or tramps as they moved seeking work and the Commission received evidence that there were two distinct type of vagrant, the idle and those transient workers that were moving to obtain work, of which the ex-servicemen were part. The Commission noted that these were significantly increasing in number putting greater stress on the available funding.[235] One of the main points determined from the evidence given was that the difficulty in Ireland 'is not to make these able-bodied vagrants look for employment but to find it for the many that profitably seek it'.[236] In January 1906 it was recorded that 1,883 men received shelter at 39 of the 159 Poor Law unions located in Ireland.[237] The remaining 125 unions either did not record the fact that the men were ex-military or the men themselves declined to offer this information. The Commission noted that on any one day 4,316 able bodied men were in the workhouse and 6,742 sick or disabled and from these approximately 7,677 were former military personnel.[238] A clear comparison with England and Wales is not possible as the Guardians of the Poor did not record if those receiving relief had previous military service.

The Boer War, while not forgotten, was lost in the politics of Home Rule. In the period from 1905 to the commencement of hostilities with Germany in 1914 Home Rule dominated, as both the nationalist and unionist jostled to consolidate both their political and para-military forces. The third Home Rule Bill twice passed through the Commons and was twice defeated in the Lords. In 1911 the Lord's veto over any House of Commons legislation was removed and Home Rule for Ireland legislation reintroduced. Bitterly opposed by the Protestants, in 1912 the Ulster Unionists created a covenant which was signed by 237,368 men and 234,046 women pledging opposition to Home Rule.[239] In 1913 the Ulster Unionist Council, in the event the Home Rule bill passed, voted to establish a provisional Irish Government, located in Belfast, which would recognise the crown but be independent of Westminster.[240] The escalating tensions between both sides led to their formally establishing military wings: for the Protestants the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and for the Catholics the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers; in 1919 the latter two would merge to form the IRA. Men openly paraded fully armed through the streets in the north and south challenging the British forces to take action. While the nationalists boasted an army of 118,000 and the unionists 60,000, the unionist were far better armed than their opponents.[241] A diplomatic row had developed between Britain and Germany after a large quantity of arms and ammunition, destined for the unionists, were landed in Larne in April 1914.[242] The Irish Volunteers followed suit by also procuring arms from Germany but the majority of these were intercepted; very few of the UVF's arms were intercepted. On 4th August 1914 war was declared on Germany and only a few weeks later the Government of Ireland Act 1914 (Home Rule) was given Royal assent. But,

and much to nationalist angst, the Act was immediately suspended because of the commencement of hostilities.[243] Curtis writes that the suspension was a disaster as the Home Rule bill was a compromise between moderate Nationalist and Unionists politicians and its suspension 'marked not only an ending but the beginning of several new departures in Ireland that would eventually lead to insurrection and civil war'.[244] Against the backdrop of mounting tension in Ireland, now on the brink of civil war, and with increasing numbers of soldiers being sent to maintain peace, Britain entered WW1 seeking volunteers to fight in France.

2.2 Ireland and the Effect of the Great War

In 1914 58,000 Irish soldiers were mobilised: these included 21,000 Irishmen already serving with the British Army and another 30,000 front line reserves plus an additional 5,000 naval reservists.[245] Approximately 190,000 Irishmen would eventually serve, with more than 49,434 dying, in the British forces, all of them volunteers as Ireland, later in the war, was excluded from the 1916 Conscription Act.[246] Why did an Irish Catholic voluntarily enlist and serve in the British army? Their enlistment was driven by the opportunity to end British rule and many were persuaded by the nationalist's rallying cry 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity'. John Redmond, leader of the nationalist Irish Parliamentary Party, pledged his party's support to the governing Liberal Party in return for the passing of the Home Rule Bill. On the eve of war John Redmond rose in the House and pledged his support,

> 'to the Government that they may to-morrow withdraw every one of their troops from Ireland. I say that the coast of Ireland will be defended from

> foreign invasion by her armed sons, and for this purpose armed Nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with the armed Protestant Ulstermen in the North. Is it too much to hope that out of this situation there may spring a result which will be good not merely for the Empire, but good for the future welfare and integrity of the Irish nation?'[247]

This speech was reported throughout Ireland and had a twofold effect. The nationalists saw in this the promise of a free Ireland if they supported the war and for many this was a betrayal which would lead eventually to the 1916 uprising and Sinn Fein becoming the dominant political party. Despite the continued republican anti-war rhetoric, and many within the nationalist parties who were unsure of their support for a war with Germany, there was significant support for those who had enlisted. Many felt it their duty to support the war against the German aggressors and this is shown by their continued support of the Irish troops heading for France. In 1914 Thomas Moylan recorded in his diary that over 50,000 cheering flag wavers lined the streets of Dublin as men marched towards the ships taking them to France.[248] This diary somewhat debunks the official Republican history of Ireland which proffers a complete and persistent opposition to the war.

Of those who joined Britain's fight, many were drawn from the slums of England, where they had migrated seeking work, as well as the dilapidated tenements in Belfast and Dublin. Some chose to leave home because their friends had enlisted together forming 'pals' battalions, such as the Catholic Dublin Rugby Club, or to escape

subsistence life in rural Ireland.[249] Whatever their religion, Catholic or Protestant, so long as they accepted the 'King's shilling' they became part of the Army and a blur within it as their religious identities were quickly lost in the 'Killing Fields of France'.[250] Religion was important when the men were in the norms of their home environment but as Grayson argues 'the men's views, loyalties or religion, once they donned the khaki and faced a common foe' ended. The sectarian division, which had been so strong to separate them, was forgotten as they fought and died side by side.[251] However, this view, while noble, ignores the problems families still had at home. The loved ones would not write to their partners of the struggle or intimidation knowing that survival in France was their first priority. While their men were away fighting, republican opposition to the war grew even stronger and the intensity of the hatred directed towards the British directly influenced the lives of their families, with intimidation commonplace, particularly in republican strongholds.[252] Jeffery writes, quoting Martin, that it was 'difficult to find men and women who will acknowledge that they are children of the men who were serving during 1916 in the British army'.[253] Fitzpatrick acknowledges this when he writes 'The southerners who had answered "Ireland's call" after August 1914 were mainly Catholic supporters of Home Rule within the British Empire, but by 1918 Sinn Fein's ascendancy had prompted most Nationalists to repudiate Irish participation and vilify those who had betrayed their patrimony by accepting the King's shilling.' He continues this by commenting that the 'fate of Ireland's war veterans is one of the least understood and most understudied stories of modern Irish history'.[254]

Research into the contribution of Ireland's soldiers in WW1 has been hampered because so few service records of Irish soldiers survived the German Blitz of 1940. More than 80 % of the records were destroyed in the Public Records Office incendiary fire. Of those records that have survived there is a clear pattern amongst them highlighting that many enlisting Irish Catholics discreetly snubbed the oath of loyalty. Byrne, researching the charred papers, has discovered that many of the men appear to have upheld their nationalist beliefs by deliberately ignoring the oath by either failing to sign the document or by signing with an incorrect first or surname. This was not a matter of literacy as correctly spelt signatures or names were found recorded on their pay records.[255] Joining the war was their way of supporting Ireland's desire for Home Rule and the change, for good, that they hoped this would achieve by participation. Even when the Proclamation of Independence was being read on the steps of the Dublin General Post Office during the April 1916 Easter Uprising, few in France were aware of this event until well after the fact. When the men in France became aware of the events in Dublin their anger was directed towards the Germans who were taunting them with signs such as 'Dubliners shot by British Troops'. The men had fought for two years and now felt betrayed by those who were supposedly fighting for Home Rule albeit in the relative comfort of southern Irish homes.[256] Roberts believes that this event would have been of less significant and influence in the history of Ireland had the British not created martyrs when he writes that 'the Rising itself did little to sway the hearts and minds of most Irish people, but the tide of Irish political opinion turned decisively when in the wake of the rising the British executed its captured leaders'.[257]

The 1916 Spring offensive at Loos and Ypres followed by the six month long battle of the Somme involved almost all of the Irish regiments and left thousands dead or wounded. Of the 11,000 men who formed the 16th Irish Division over 7,000 were killed or wounded in that offensive.[258] This was in addition to the 4,500 that would be killed in September fighting at Guillemont.[259] Between the 1st – 10th September 1916 the 16th Division lost over 4600 men or 50% of its entity.[260] In less than one year from October 1915 to September 1916 Irish regiments lost close to 40,000 men either killed or wounded; almost every family in Ulster lost a relation in the six month long Battle of the Somme. The final German offensive began on March 21st 1918 and succeeded in driving the British and French lines back over a 125 mile front. During the first day of this offensive 38,000 British casualties were recorded, the second highest in the entire war, with the Irish divisions sustaining devastating losses. The 16th and 36th Divisions bore the brunt of the German attack and were effectively destroyed as fighting units. In the first ten days the 16th sustained 7,149 casualties and the 36th had 6,109, more than 70% of their totals, with the remaining men were merged into the 29th and 31st Divisions.[261] These amalgamated Divisions spearheaded the counter attack which would see the last remaining Irish regiments, the 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers and 1st and 2nd Dublin's, effectively disappear due to their losses.

2.3 The End of War and the Formation of the Free State

The end of the war in 1918 was a great relief to many soldiers but for those returning to southern Ireland the hardship endured would continue. For many Ireland was

unrecognisable from that they had left four years earlier. In the North the returning men were treated as heroes, defenders of Ulster and all thing British. Memorials were planned to commemorate those who failed to return with the Belfast Cenotaph completed in 1929. Over 90 memorials would be constructed in Ulster in the post-war period but very few were created in the south.[262] Those that were erected were mainly located within church buildings to prevent any retaliation and destruction. The few that were located in public places were regularly vandalised and defaced as noted in an Irish parliamentary debate.[263] The *Irish Times* in 2015 reported that 'For decades, the subject was taboo, but these days… memorials to the fallen in Catholic churches in Dublin have become less hidden away'.[264] In the south Sinn Fein and the Nationalists proceeded to erase the war and particularly any reference to Irish involvement. There was no 'land fit for heroes' and amongst those who suffered the most were the returning 'traitor' soldiers as the battle between the Nationalists and the British intensified. By late 1919 over 30,000 ex-servicemen were claiming benefits and if they tried to obtain work, particularly in the south, they were discriminated against because of their service to the Crown.[265]

Sinn Fein's sweeping electoral victory in December 1918, winning 73 of 105 available seats, signalled the death of Home Rule and set in motion a series of events that would alter Ireland's political, social and economic status.[266] Rather than attend Westminster, Sinn Fein immediately declared independence and the formation of an Irish republic with the first Parliament (Dail) located at Mansion House in Dublin. From this Ireland quickly moved into its war of independence with Britain. For all of Sinn

Fein's anti-British rhetoric they would not have won this election if Britain, and so many Irish Nationalists, had not participated in a war that destroyed the old European order and who came home trained for war and expecting to have a voice in their future destiny. Having been trained to fight, many quickly and easily became embroiled in the politics of guerrilla warfare. While support for the Nationalists was spasmodic no one felt safe openly supporting the Crown outside of Ulster. This war of independence eroded the distinction between civilian and soldier as in republican eyes everyone was a soldier and everyone was required to be for independence. Eichenberg argues that civilians now bore the brunt of any opposition to the British rule in southern Ireland, 'the tactics of the war of independence and the following civil war eroded the traditional distinction between solder and civilian'.[267] Likewise the loyalties of the ex-servicemen were spilt, as while many ex-servicemen joined the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), others went on to join the IRA thereby giving both sides men not afraid of death and more importantly used to it.

In the period between 1918 and the formation of the Irish Free State in December 1921 many former soldiers were killed and many atrocities were enacted by those employed by the British Army, namely the notorious "Black and Tan" auxiliary brigades and the RIC's 'G Division'.[268] Over 10,000 British ex-servicemen were recruited to quell the republican movement in Ireland but their work did far more to alienate the population than gain support for the Crown.[269] The IRA continued its campaign by concentrating its attacks on rural police stations which caused the RIC to withdraw into fortified barracks in towns. To symbolise the loss of control by the RIC, the IRA

organised a coordinated burning of the abandoned posts on the night of Easter Sunday 1920. The escalation, attrition and growing ascendancy of the IRA caused 3,391 RIC police offices to resign, with many leaving Ireland.[270] The war for independence became a paramilitary guerrilla war characterised by atrocity, ambush, terror and counter terror leaving those on both sides with a hatred that was not easily dispelled.[271] Over 2,100 soldiers and policemen were killed alongside 600 Nationalists and another 900 civilians.[272] Many of the victims had no involvement in the independence movement but were treated as pariahs for the failure to become involved. Alongside this, the fear of being suspected as a collaborator or informant was a constant threat as the IRA would take swift retribution. Historians are now debating these issues and Taylor writes, quoting Hart, that whenever executions took place 'IRA officers routinely insisted those executed were proven traitors, though in reality they acted on their suspicions and without any evidence'.[273] This created an aura of fear which the IRA relied upon to maintain control of the populace. Shunned and shamed in the land of their birth simply because they had served in the British military, those that could departed for mainland Britain. O'Halpin contributes to the debate in his research which estimates that almost half (47%) of all those killed by the IRA were ex-servicemen as they were a specifically targeted group because of their connection to Britain.[274] Leonard also supports this affirmation and in her research identifies a clear pattern of intimidation directly aimed at ex-servicemen in the period from 1918.[275] Her research ends with the formation of the new State in 1921 but is continued by Hughes who argues that from 1918 until 1939 to be a former member of any part of the British military was to be considered a threat to the IRA. Hughes also

notes that in the period from 1921 to 1939 no ex-serviceman lost his life in the six counties forming Northern Ireland through sectarian violence.[276] However not all academics agree with these arguments, as Taylor note in his work, arguing that both Leonard and O'Halpin have overestimated the threat from the IRA to ex-servicemen and that their status as victims should be marginalised. This breakdown of the causal factors of victimisation given by Taylor is too simplistic as, unlike O'Halpin, he fails to offer and use any statistical analysis to justify his arguments.[277] Officially the war of independence lasted from 1919 until 1921 but as already described intimidation and violence both preceded and post-dated its conclusion. Of the 188 civilians shot after 1922 by the IRA over 25% were ex-servicemen who paid with their lives for perceived loyalty to the Crown.[278] While many saw this as a war in the southern counties, it had the converse effect in the north where the Catholics were targeted and suffered intimidation by Protestants. If the divided lines of sectarian hatred in the north were not deeply ingrained before this point, they were now firmly established. The problem for Ireland and its history is that within this political melee, as the new Irish State was formed, the 37,000 Irish soldiers who returned home injured from the war were simply another casualty in this battle for independence.[279]

In late 1919 members of the Discharged Soldier's and Sailor's Federation (DSSF), the forerunner of The Royal British legion, lined the streets of Dublin and Belfast with placards which simply asked 'Don't pity us, give us work'.[280] For those that struggled to find work and lived off benefit, the Ministry of Pensions had a defined structure of payments for those who had lost limbs with payments linked to the degree of their

disability. The benefits payable ranged from 8s 6d per week for lost fingers to 27s 6d if categorised as a paraplegic with a range difference in between classifying the loss of half a leg or more at 13s 9d and the whole leg, but not paraplegic, 22s.[281] These payments were never enough to live on, rarely gaining any significant increase, and for those seriously disabled it meant a life linked to charity. In the depression of the post-war economy disabled ex-servicemen, along with their civilian disabled colleagues, wanted constructive training, employment and housing rather than charity and turned to collective action to achieve it.[282] Out of desperation, and against the backdrop of the perceived shame at receiving money from charity, many within the DSSF took to protesting in the streets to publicise their plight. But unlike mainland Britain those in Ireland had to balance sectarian retribution against political clashes and the demonstrations soon petered out. Disabled ex-servicemen constantly struggled to survive on their benefits, something which has not changed in the 21st century.

From 1922, with the passing of the Irish Free State (Agreement) Act which formally established the independent state, until the beginning of WW2, Ireland slowly removed the remnants of British control. Many of the responsibilities for veterans were transferred to the new Government with a phased handover of financial responsibility. The British Government agreed to continue financing the war pensions of those bereaved families for a period of 25 years. They also agreed to accept responsibility for a period of seven years from 1918 of any family whose partner died as a result of war wounds inflicted during the conflict. The Royal Hospital Kilmainham, which was Ireland's equivalent of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, was transferred to the

Irish Government in 1922 and the remaining servicemen moved to London by 1929.[283] This was a severe blow to the disabled veterans, as this had been a respite for those injured in war since 1722. The problem with the transfer of responsibility to the new government was that it could not afford to support these men, it simply did not have the financial ability to administer claims and appeals for the thousands claiming benefit, despite the money it received from the British Government. The cost of administration was not covered in any agreement with Britain. Nor did many in the new administration have any sympathy for the plight of these men. Not just because they had fought for the British but because they were wanting and accepting charity; deemed the worst of all evils. This attitude is noted by Kelly who writes, 'the government's general attitude and approach to the maintenance and development of social security policies…were viewed at best as a necessary evil, an economic burden largely necessary due to poor financial management by the recipients.'[284] This point is supported by Murphy who writes that ' The number of Irish veterans who ended their lives as charity cases is far too numerous to mention but is a sad fact that many men , who had been lauded for their bravery in the war, ended their lives living in dire poverty.'[285]

The government was effectively blaming the widows, disabled veterans and the poor for being poor and critical of how they spent what little income thy received. By early 1927 many of disabled ex-servicemen were in limbo as to who they should seek redress for payment of their pensions or disability benefit. The British Government was clear that funds were being provided to the Irish government and it was their

responsibility to pay the ex-servicemen. However, many of the soldiers were failing to receive money and the matter was highlighted by Teachtaí Dála (TD) William Redmond, a former Captain in the Irish Guards, in the Dàil but received little constructive response. In in an earlier debate on unemployment in 1926, Thomas Johnson, a Senator for Dublin County, confirmed that there were 186,000 British ex-servicemen residing in Ireland of these between 50-60,000 were unemployed, many of whom were skilled tradesmen. All of these men were outside of the employment insurance having been unemployed for more than 12 months leaving them and their families destitute. [286] The issue of discrimination against British ex-servicemen was again raised in late 1927 by Redmond pointing out that not only did these men suffer from low pay but they could work as they were denied access to their skilled trades in preference to men who had fought in the National Army against the British. This discrimination crossed over to housing where their service to Britain again left them ineligible to be housed in any of the new estates being built . He pointed out that his countrymen had forgotten that even though these men had served in the British military, they were still Irishmen.

> 'When I say British ex-servicemen, I mean Irishmen who have served in the British forces. There is no other means very well of expressing that position. When it is remembered that there are, as has been stated many times, from 150,000 to 200,000 British ex-servicemen in Ireland, and when one realises that their dependents, taking the dependents on a very low plane as three, would make the total sum of citizens of this

country involved in this motion in or about half a million, I think that the House will recognise its gravity.'[287]

The number of those affected equalled a quarter of the Irish population at this time and despite this issue being raised and debated many times he failed to obtain any active support from his fellow TDs.[288] Part of the fault for these issues lay with those who had agreed the transfer of responsibility when the new country was established. Information supplied by the British Exchequer in 1924, and which became a basis of settlement for the support of ex-servicemen's families, was found to be out of date and highly inaccurate. A sum of £1.5m had been transferred to the new government for the Poor Relief but this money was quickly used up by the Irish Congested Districts Board who were responsible for distributing poor relief.[289] However not everyone agreed that the Irish veterans were struggling. While the majority of historians have argued that veterans and widows achieve negative State support, Robinson opposes this viewpoint reasoning that the majority of veterans were well accommodated and writes that 'Great War veterans in the Free State had benevolent support from the Ministry of Pensions, funded by the British Treasury, who continued to provide a monetary pension and medical treatment on a scale more generous than was afforded to their ex-comrades in Britain.'[290] However, Robinson, as detailed earlier, is not allowing for the cost in administering the benefits system in reaching his conclusion nor is he accurately portraying the level of bureaucracy which resisted paying the Irish ex-servicemen, particularly the disabled, their defined rights. The system hindered any claimant and very few of those entitled to military benefits could afford the cost of

communication to argue their claim. The cost of posting an airmail letter from Dublin to London in 1927 was 5d with a telephone call costing 7s 9d, both of these were far outside the means of anyone trying to support his family on charity or the meagre unemployment insurance.[291] Robertson is not the first to proffer a positive view of the support for veterans but few have looked at the resistant bureaucracy or the ongoing administrative costs in proffering this viewpoint.

2.4 Ireland and the Second Global Conflict

In the years before WW2 the plight of Irish veterans did not improve and if they struggled in the interwar period, they struggled even further with the outbreak of war as rationing and escalating prices severely restricted their available spending power. In 1939, Ireland was a de facto Dominion within the British Empire but unlike WW1 the 1931 Statute of Westminster removed the requirement for Dominions to support Britain in any conflict.[292] With the approach of WW2 the Irish government became entrenched in its objective to remain neutral and most importantly to be considered a neutral by Germany. At the core of this policy decision was the threat that if Ireland appeared overtly pro-British the political parties would fracture and repeat the 1922 civil war.[293] Ireland could offer little in the way of economic or material support, being totally dependent on Britain for imports and exports, and by openly supporting the British war effort it could have met with the wrath of Germany. Ireland had a very limited military with just 7,000 soldiers forming its defence force which would have been unable to counter any invasion without British support and this would have been an anathema to many Nationalists. While Ireland's neutrality was popular, there were

many who felt the need to support Britain but De Valera's government created a number of laws which were designed to prevent Ireland's young men from leaving to assist Britain. One of the first required any male under the age of 22 to have permission to leave the country.[294] This law was impossible to enforce as many of the 78,826 who left the South to join Britain's military simply crossed the Border into the North to enlist in Belfast; alongside the South, Northern Ireland would provide another 52,174 volunteers; of these 4,543 would lose their lives in this conflict.[295] Those that went to Britain did so for a number of reasons, including a sense of adventure, with others volunteering because of a desire for employment, money, family tradition or a sense of patriotic duty. Whatever their reasons they became a valuable part of Britain's military. Ireland not only bolstered Britain's military but would also provide a manpower boost to the country's wartime industry as approximately another 200,000 men and women travelled to Britain seeking work, ignoring the possible war time perils that accompanied this decision.

One of these was Michael McLaughlin, who together with and his three brothers left Dublin to enlist in the Royal Navy in 1941. One of his brothers was a member of Ireland's defence force so his enlistment was classified as desertion: he was arrested for desertion upon his return to Ireland in 1946, bailed and seven days later left the country via Belfast for England, with his fiancée, never to return. Michael survived the war, having served in submarines, and was involved in a number of major actions including the sinking of the Italian cruiser *Trieste* in 1943. Michael, a nationalist at heart, always stated that he never fought for Britain but he fought with Britain for

Ireland, a sentiment expressed by many who left Ireland at this time. He strongly believed that if Britain fell to the Germans it would be a very short time before they then attacked Ireland and that Ireland's neutrality, as with Holland, would be ignored.[296] The McLaughlins, like many of his fellow countrymen, had been severely affected by the war. The lack of employment and the austerity of rationing had forced them to look to the war for employment. Michael's beliefs were echoed by Clair Wills who writes of her maternal grandfather, who fought the British as a Republican, that he would enter into a depressive bad mood at the news of any British setback announced on the radio. It was almost as if the Irish had the right to attack the British but if anyone else did then it was if they were attacking a brother and this upset many in Ireland.[297] It was the same for Jack Harte who was born into Dublin tenement poverty but came from a family with a deep tradition of military service. Aged 16 he left Ireland joining the British army's Royal Irish Fusiliers in 1935. During the war he was selected to serve in the newly created Special Boat Section, later becoming part of 1st SAS regiment, and during a raid on the Greek island of Leros in 1943 was captured, spending the war as a Prisoner of War (POW). Harte when asked about his war service stated that 'it was his duty to defend Ireland even if Ireland was unwilling to defend herself.'[298] Michael D'alton is another who chose to fight alongside British forces. He was born and raised in Dalkey, County Dublin and was instrumental in guiding Sherman tanks on Omaha beach on D-Day June 5th 1944. D'alton joined the Royal Navy in 1943, leaving a comfortable life as a Quantity Surveyor based in Dublin, because he believed that Germany posed a threat to every nation, 'I went because Hitler had to be stopped, he was the greatest menace on the earth at the time. I think

there was a duty bound on every man, woman and child to assist.'[299] Romie Lambkin volunteered for the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1941, she, along with thousands of other Irish women, made the conscious decision to leave the Republic and join the fight against German aggression. Writing in her memoirs she records: 'Even if Éire is staying neutral I am not. I don't want to be left out of world-shaking events - the Battle of Britain decided me on that - and I do want to be in uniform and driving all sorts of exciting people instead of being cooped up in a ghastly boring office behind the Four Courts.'[300]

These men and women represent the thousands from the Republic who participated in WW2. They went to protect Ireland and having defeated Hitler, believed Ireland would appreciate their sacrifice. For those that returned home their lives would change for ever, and not for the better. The government would restrict the right of those who returned for fear of the influence they might have on Irish society. The Republican government did not want men and women expressing pro-British views and encouraging others to associate with an ideology they had fought against some 25 years earlier. There would also be the pressing issue of employment. Girvin notes that this issue was already under discussion in 1942 and by 1945 it was even more pertinent when he writes that 'in July 1942 de Valera wrote to Seán T. O'Kelly that he expected up to a quarter of a million Irish people in the UK to return to Ireland at the end of the hostilities, adding rather ominously that they would be looking for work.'[301] Both these factors would lead to legislation severely restricting the available employment to those veterans returning to Ireland and forcing many to leave as

quickly as they returned. Ideology began to dominate post-war Ireland as the pre-war attitudes and loathing of all things British again took hold in government.[302] The sacrifice of service was quickly forgotten as the Republic firstly became embroiled in a propaganda battle with Britain over how Irish men and women helped save Europe. De Valera, the Irish Prime Minister, had already created consternation by signing the book of condolence at the German Embassy in May 1945 after Hitler's suicide, now banned all those Irish citizens returning to the republic from wearing their British military uniforms in public; though in true Irish tradition many ignored this decree.[303] This was an adjunct to the newspaper ban imposed after the *Irish Independent* newspaper published a picture of a Victoria Cross recipient in 1943.[304] The Irish government deemed all those who were in British uniform as 'volunteers of a foreign power'.[305] The attitude of De Valera's government was encapsulated by Thomas Coyne, Director of Censorship, who described those who joined Britain's military as 'mercenaries'.[306]

Approximately 6,000 men deserted, defined as being absent for more than 180 days, from the Irish Defence Force (IDF) during WW2. In March 1946 De Valera used an Emergency Powers Act Order to punish these men, all of whom were summarily convicted and barred from employment in any government funded body for a period of seven years.[307] Conversely those who had deserted but stayed in Ireland received no punishment save the stopping of pay for the period of desertion. This was a deliberate policy by De Valera of punishing those who had gone to fight as opposed to those who deserted to avoid the conflict altogether. This Emergency Order had a

twofold effect in that it saved the government the protracted expense of court-martialling 6,000 men as well as the expense of providing unemployment benefit to all those affected.[308] In order to receive unemployment benefit the individual needed a good conduct military discharge and the Irish government defined all those who had had been part of the IDF as being of 'without good character', despite their British discharge papers being to the contrary. The government then continued its policy towards all other returnees by banning all outward displays or celebrations linked to the returning personnel or commemorations of the previous war. The annual British Legion (Ireland) march to the Irish National War Memorial Gardens in Dublin, frequently confused by many academics with the Garden of Remembrance's Republican dead, was amongst the first casualties, being banned in 1945 as a threat to public order. The returning veterans also faced the prospect of no unemployment benefit from Britain if they had chosen to be de-mobilised into the South and then left the Republic to return back to the mainland.[309] The rules in place denied them any benefits as they had been discharged into another country; this was the same for any of the Empire or Dominion soldiers. Many veterans would choose to leave the Republic, taking their families with them, because of the new stringent employment rules and emigration accelerated with over 150,000 ex-servicemen and widows leaving in the period from 1948-1960.[310]

In 1948 the Irish government severed all of the formal colonial ties with Britain, as defined by the 1921 Anglo-Irish agreement, and established itself as a Republic by enacting The Republic of Ireland Act.[311] All responsibility for WW1 veterans, with the

exception of pensions, was transferred to the Republic. This left many veterans in limbo. No longer able to look at British charities for relief many disabled, and able though mentally unfit, lost a major route to financial support. Ireland, struggling to recover from years of low employment and a stagnated economy because of the wartime conflict, was unable to provide anything other than the most basic support to these individuals. The situation for these veterans was a complete repeat of the period after WW1 with the exception that this time they did not have the British government or British charities to fall back on. It was also a period of intense victimisation aimed at veterans of WW2.[312] During the next forty years those who participated in WW2, and acknowledged their participation, would be shunned, threatened or intimidated. Few memorials would be created to commemorate those who died in a cause not recognised by the Irish government. Martin defines the period from Independence to the end of WW2 as one of 'national amnesia' as the Irish Government sought to distance itself from both Britain and those who had any connection to it.[313] The Irish National War Memorial Gardens, built originally to commemorate those who died in WW1, was attacked by the IRA with the main granite memorial twice withstanding bomb blasts in 1956 and 1958. The Memorial also suffered from total neglect and becoming an Irish traveller community site combined with Dublin City Corporation using it as a refuse site for the city's waste.

In the mid 1980's a change in attitude towards those who had served in the previous two World Wars began to develop in the Republic. A refurbishment of the War Memorial Gardens was initiated in 1986 with the city's rubbish dump and the traveller

caravans removed, being officially re-opened in September 1988; some 50 years after its construction. Even then the remembrance of the fallen did not come easily having been for so long discouraged and considered a taboo subject.[314] Ann Rigney writes that 'her father would regularly attend the Gardens on the 11th November, having a personal association with shell-shocked veterans in his home town, and had often found himself standing alone at 11:00 am'.[315] The Republic had followed its own distinctive path in ignoring these wars as opposed to Northern Ireland where service in Britain's military was construed as a demonstration of true Loyalism. In the South, to commemorate the dead of these two wars was akin to commemorate the suppression of the Irish people and the defining symbol of this imperialism was wearing the Royal British Legion poppy; particularly when worn by thousands of Union Jack waving WW1 ex-servicemen. The poppy has been rarely worn in Ireland for nearly 70 years and the reasons for this originates in the insecurity of a new Republic and the overtly visual demonstrations of veterans wanting to commemorate their service by public marches and fund raising using the symbolism of John McCrae's Flanders's Field poppy.[316]

2.5 The Poppy and Irish Independence

Post WW1 the commemorative marches were seen as confrontational by the IRA and the poppy considered a direct link to British imperialism. Following independence the IRA, still insecure at its success, made a practice of disrupting Armistice Day, later Remembrance Sunday, commemorations in Dublin by attacking poppy sellers and destroying any Union Jack flags. The IRA commanders argued that they were not against veterans commemorating the fallen but opposed to those who would use it to

promote 'imperialism' in Ireland.[317] The escalating sales of poppies in the weeks before Armistice Day, alongside the event itself, in the years between 1921-5, enraged Nationalists who believed that it represented far more than Remembrance. A number of Republican MP's, apprehensive of the growing numbers of veterans participating, construed that this event was becoming politicised.[318] The sight of thousands of men walking through Dublin waving Union Jacks and singing God Save the King was viewed as a clear threat to Ireland's fledgling government. In 1925 Patrick Little wrote in *An Phoblacht (The Republic)*, the official newspaper of the IRA,

> 'no republican wishes to mar the solemnity of their commemoration. We too know what it is to lose well-loved comrades who fought by our side…but there is another side to this story, there is a small but noisy section of the British garrison which seeks to turn each Armistice day into an occasion of imperialist propaganda'.[319]

Cooney's research complements this where she points out that, 'To wear a poppy on the streets of Dublin is as noticeable as not wearing shoes. It is an instant identifier, an immediate association with Britain and for the time someone wears one, it sets them apart from all those who don't…'to wear, or not to wear', has been one we could ignore, confident in the south at least that it didn't have much to do with us.'[320]

The demise of poppy wearing began in 1927 after a meeting at College Green, Dublin, organised as a 'protest of the Nationalist people of Dublin against the repetition of displays of British Imperialist sentiment that are insulting to the Irish people'. Amongst the main speakers was Eamon De Valera, leader of the Fianna Fail party, who

addressed the audience and 'protested about the carrying of the Union Jack by ex-Service men in Armistice Day parades. It was an insult to the Irish sentiment and should be stopped.' Sean O'Kelly, a member of the Irish parliament, reiterated this condemnation in that 'they were not going to allow their national principles to be misrepresented by any waving of the Union Jack or any other imperial flag or emblem.' Eamon De Valera also commented, stating that 'nothing was more natural than that men should seek to commemorate the memory of comrades who fought by their side in battle' but the 'misuse of the celebration' could and should be stopped by the police and by citizens 'making it quite clear that they would not tolerate its continuance'.[321]

In 1924 the Royal British Legion announced that it had sold 500,000 poppies in Ireland raising £3,645.[322] A year later the *Irish Times* proudly reported that 250,000 poppies had been sold in Dublin whereas loyalist Belfast could only achieve sales of 100,000.[323] These headlines did not impress staunch Nationalists as an *Irish Times* article headlined 'British Imperialism' decried any support for the event and again highlighted the opposition to allowing the Union Jack to be flown. The article also underlined that Nationalists viewed the sale of poppies as money being given to an imperialist charity despite the funds being solely used for the welfare of Irish veterans.[324] In the period from 1927 up to 1932, when Fianna Fail came to power with De Valera as the new Prime Minister, violence and public disorder intensified in the weeks prior to Armistice Day. On 9th November 1927 a Royal British Legion meeting hall at Inchicore was completely destroyed by arsonists; the perpetrators were never arrested.[325] In 1928

the IRA laid explosives at a number of prominent statues of British monarchs, destroying two. There were also subsequent attacks on various British Legion distribution and collection points in an attempt to hinder poppy deliveries.[326]

Many of these attacks were known to the police prior to their occurrence but no arrests or action was taken against the perpetrators. The subsequent Garda investigation determined that these acts were unplanned but never answered the question how could repeated acts be unplanned.[327] The assaults and intimidation by the IRA were undoubtedly successful as the number participating in the marches declined from 40,000 in 1923 to less than 9,000 in 1929 and falling even lower to 5,000 in 1932.[328] The final setback to the poppy came from the newly appointed Garda commissioner Ned Broy who believed that all Armistice and Remembrance parades should be banned. On the 18th October 1933 he wrote to the Justice Department requesting the authority to 'curtail all marches' as they were likely to 'cause a breach of the peace'. He also wrote that he had no objection to church services or the sale of poppies therein but if both were allowed to continue so would the increasing violence.[329] Following a meeting of the government's Executive Council on 24th October 1933 an order was issued to the Garda instructing that no Union Jack flags would be permitted at any commemorative marches and that while poppies could be sold, their sale was restricted to certain designated locations.[330] Poppy wearing was further restricted when the government also banned all government or council employees from wearing the emblems while engaged in their official duties.[331] The Remembrance marches continued in some form until the early 1950's but opposition

from successive governments, and the stringent regulations imposed, led to their decline and demise.

Almost as the Republic was finally coming to grips with accepting Remembrance the Provisional IRA (PIRA), who had split from the IRA in 1969, exploded a bomb on Sunday 8th November 1987 at Northern Ireland's Enniskillen War Memorial killing 11 and seriously injuring 63, including 13 children. This was one of the worst atrocities of '*The Troubles*' and could have been far greater had the second, much larger, device placed at Tullyhommon, where over 200 scouts were assembled waiting to join the parade, not failed to detonate.[332] Overnight the PIRA saw its support in the Republic fade as pictures of children's disfigured bodies were broadcast around the world. One of the most poignant stories from this atrocity was that of Gordon Wilson who, trapped in rubble, held his daughter's hand as she died. After being rescued and interviewed about the tragedy he said of his daughter's death, 'I have lost a daughter and I will miss her…I bear no ill will, I bear no grudge towards those who have committed this act.[333] Loyalists were intent on retribution but these comments and the unreserved condemnation of this act throughout Ireland dissuaded vengeance. The PIRA bombing had the complete opposite to its intended effect: rather than demoralising it reignited the political peace process which eventually led to the cessation of violence and the Good Friday Agreement. A wave of sympathy after this bombing swept through the Republic regenerating poppy sales as people sought an avenue to contribute to those who had lost their lives. The last poppy had been sold in the Republic in 1971, with very limited sales in the previous ten years; in the immediate aftermath of Enniskillen

45,000 poppies were sold in in the Republic and sales have continued to rise each year since.[334]

It was to take another 24 years before Irish involvement with the British forces began to be reconciled and achieve recognition within the Irish government. Taoiseach John Bruton spoke at the Irish National War Memorial Park, Islandbridge, Dublin, on 28 April 1995 of the

> '150,000 Irish people from North and South who volunteered to fight the Nazis. He pointed out that 10,000 had died while serving in the British forces. This had a particular significance he maintained: In recalling their bravery, we are recalling a shared experience of Irish and British people…We remember a British part of the inheritance of all who live in Ireland.'[335]

While Burton's sentiments did not represent all Nationalists the significance of the Irish Prime Minister's speech was recognised by political parties on both sides of the Irish border and whose representatives were present at the Remembrance ceremony. It was the first time that a politician spoke openly of the importance of remembering Ireland's fallen heroes and was a major step in removing the divisions in Irish society by recognising that those who volunteered to fight for the Allied forces in WW2 did so for honourable reasons.[336] Burton was also not alone in expressing the change in attitude towards veterans and those who died in the two World Wars. Canon David Oxley, Prebendary of Dublin Cathedral, addressing his congregation noted that,

> 'Whatever about the politics of national neutrality, from the moral point of view it was hardly possible to remain neutral in the face of the kind of evil

represented by fascism. Many individual Irish men and women did in fact take sides and volunteered to oppose Nazism in arms, and we commemorate their sacrifice.'[337]

In the next 10 years Ireland's partial rehabilitating in accepting that it had military dead, and that there was a need to honour these individuals, was slowly cultivated in the minds of both politicians and the general public. This process was solidified when the first State visit of a British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, took place during May 2011; the first since George V in 1911. There was opposition to this visit from extremist Nationalists, with several unexploded bombs being found, but her wreath laying at the Memorial Gardens initiated a fundamental shift in how modern Ireland viewed those who had fought in the two World Wars.[338] In 2013, possibly as the 100th anniversary of the start of WW1 neared, the Irish government finally pardoned all the Irish soldiers that had deserted the IDF between 1939-45 to join Britain's military and participate in WW2. Alan Shatter, the Irish Justice Minister, issued a formal apology to those who had served with the Allies.[339] Unfortunately, many of the men and their families were no longer alive to receive this pardon or the accompanying accolade. During 2016 a national centenary commemoration took place to honour the men of Ireland killed in the 1916 Battle of the Somme which commenced in July 1916 and ended six months later. This was the first time that the current President, his two predecessors and the Irish Prime Minister had attended an event together laying wreaths to honour Ireland's British Empire war dead.[340] Another taboo ended when Ireland's Prime Minster Leo Varadkar appeared in the Dublin Dail wearing a shamrock

poppy in the run-up to Remembrance Sunday.[341] The first time a Irish Prime Minister had worn a symbol of remembrance, so associated with Britain, since the creation of the Irish Free State. Ireland may not yet fully accept the role its citizens took in the two World Wars but the path to rehabilitation has at least begun.

Chapter 3.

Northern Ireland: Military Widows and Ex-service personnel: Britain's thirty-eight year war and those who lived through it.

The question of Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom became, and still remains to many, one of the most contentious issues in British history. An issue that has dogged the British monarchy and Governments since the first English settlements were established in 1167. The division of Ireland, and the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, simply supressed the inherent problems which violently resurfaced in the late 1960's. Ireland's struggle against British authority is well documented but the disparate relationship between the industrial six northern counties and the rural south is frequently neglected.[342] When the issue came to the forefront in August 1969, no one could have conceived that the British Army would be deployed for 38 years in a part of the United Kingdom in a role to which they were particularly unsuited.[343] Nor could it have been understood how this would affect both the service personnel who would be stationed there and the populace. In the beginning the conflict brought headlines and took precedence over other news. Nightly reports about Northern Ireland were initially documented in great detail but like all repetitive news, the reports of bombings and rioting 'dragged on' quickly losing its appeal. Mainland Britain slowly came to view the conflict as if in another country but for all those who served, or the residents who endured this conflict, their suffering would last far beyond any peace agreements.[344]

For those who were deployed to the Province, initiation into what to expect began after two weeks of intense urban warfare training at a mocked-up representation of Belfast. The men were then transited to Northern Ireland to begin their tours of duty where their lifestyle would radically alter. Within mainland Britain the men enjoyed complete freedom of movement but their arrival in Ulster removed this freedom. Many of the men, when off duty, would be locked up in guarded fortresses behind high walls, effectively imprisoned and isolated from mainstream society for long periods. They were banned from socialising or venturing beyond the safety of their barracks less they never returned. Research published in the *British Medical Journal* highlighted the problems military personnel faced in isolation facing many of the psychological problems of those incarcerated but with the intense pressure of their occupation. This research acknowledged that:

> 'On tour, soldiers live in cramped conditions and are separated from their home life, in common with many people who work and live away from home. 'Squaddies' also experience long periods of inactivity interspersed with sporadic episodes of exposure to potentially dangerous situations'.[345]

While on duty, outside of these fortresses, the men had to venture into IRA strongholds such as South Armagh; described by Merlyn Rees, then Northern Ireland Secretary, as 'bandit country'.[346] When not patrolling the countryside soldiers were under immense pressure walking the streets of the major conurbations; trying to protect themselves from death or injury; hoping to survive their four month tour and

at the same time expected to prevent bloodshed in communities driven by religious hatred and prone to violence. John Lindsay notes this when writing:

> 'Thousands of young British men spent long periods of their youth walking the streets of Belfast and Derry and the country lanes of Fermanagh, Tyrone and South Armagh armed with lethal weapons. Occasionally they were welcomed, more often, they were spat at, pelted with missiles, shot at or ignored. They were here to 'keep the peace', to 'assist the civil powers' and to 'fight terrorism'. On their return to Britain there were no street parties or victory parades to welcome them home.'[347]

The latent effect this stress would have on the men and women who served there, in some cases, took years to manifest but an effect it would and did have. However, it is difficult to offer a definitive argument because of the lack of qualified research. The Government, in particular, have resisted any intensive investigation for fear of litigation. This point is acknowledged by Hunt who writes that documenting comparative analysis is difficult because so 'little research into the mental health of serving members or veterans of the UK Armed Forces was undertaken between 1945 and 1995.'[348] In 2018, two charities independently reported that at least 17,000 veterans were suffering PTSD and that society has forgotten the sacrifice these individuals made to help bring peace to the Province.[349] The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has started to maintain a record of those discharged due to mental incapacity and found that during the peak years of involvement with the Afghanistan conflict (2001-2014) discharge rates increased from 1.5% to 3.1% (3,119 to 5,147) and it is

possible to assume that rates were not dissimilar, if not higher, in the period 1969-89, had detailed records for such discharges been recorded.[350] Records identifying mental health issues commenced in 2007, prior to this there was possibly a willingness within the military to protect soldiers from the associated stigma linked to mental illness, and their discharge recorded for other reasons.[351] In doing so the MOD created a latent problem but not one which it would have to deal with, shifting the issue to the National Health Service (NHS). This is also quantified in a report issue in July 2018 which stated,

> 'UK Government statistics report only those who seek help and may therefore be significantly underestimating how many serving personnel and veterans have mental health conditions. The Ministry of Defence acknowledges that its statistics may not be representative of the overall veteran population. Current research suggests that the number of veterans with mental health conditions that require professional help could be up to three times higher than official statistics, at around 10%.'[352]

This postulation can be related to evidence from the United States where the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, spanning 2005 to 2011, noted that suicides amongst veterans, who had engaged in military operations between 1991 and 2001, were more than double the national average at 30 per 100,000 as opposed to civilian 14 per 100,000.[353] The survey also noted that for those that had repeated and sustained deployment to conflict zones, and were later discharged into civilian life,

were exponentially more likely to have higher incidents of mental health issues and suicide. Earlier research on Vietnam veterans indicates that of the 450,000 who served in this conflict more than 9,000 committed suicide.[354] This research is supported by a 1987 US Centres for Disease control study which also determined that suicide rates amongst veterans was 45% higher than that recorded for non-military personnel.[355] In March 2018 the Ministry of Defence published a report detailing the 'Suicide and Open Verdict Deaths in the UK Regular Armed Forces. The conclusion reached was that the suicide rate amongst active military personnel was considerably lower being '8 per 100,000 compared to a non-military rate of 18 per 100,000'.[356] The final analysis of this report is flawed as it does not extract within the civilian population statistics of any veterans who committed suicide within the civilian statistics in achieving its comparison. The results of a co-operative study by two Australian universities into PTSD amongst veterans of the 1991 Gulf War noted that of the 1,456 veterans surveyed 7.2% had suffered from mental health problems following their involvement in the conflict.[357] If these analyses are used and extrapolated onto the service personnel who served in Northern Ireland, it can be suggested that at least 21,600 individuals suffered some form of PTSD and that it is possible that in excess of 6,000 committed suicide. Since there has been very limited research into the mental health of British veterans there is no means of validating this hypothesis, particularly as those committing suicide do not have any military service noted or recorded by the coroner.

'The Troubles', as the conflict became known, would also have a devastating effect on the communities within Northern Ireland and the people who lived through the death and destruction. As the violence evolved, each community had to cope with the intensity of the surrounding hatred which would leave over 40,000 civilians injured and 3,600 killed.[358] The fighting and rioting would leave many in this society physically, mentally and visually scarred by the sight and cruelty of death with the repeated violence and destruction altering their lives forever.[359] Combining this with the intensity of fear which surrounded daily life, never knowing if you would be targeted by either side only added to the stress. This is reflected in the words of an anonymous writer recording his father's life in Belfast,

> 'People threw petrol bombs over fences into houses and it got so bad that they built massive Peace Walls through the city so the two religions couldn't come into contact with each other. My father lived in constant fear that he would get shot just for walking a few metres in the wrong direction, so he and his schoolmates were escorted by British soldiers to school. Imagine not being able to leave your area of town for fear of being shot.'[360]

This is supported by Father Matthew Wallace, who served a West Belfast parish, describing life in the 1970's and when quoted as saying 'I think death and injury is a normal thing, it is not a significant event in their lives.' Father Wallace would finally succumb to the pressure of working in this community, committing suicide in 2013.[361] Ben Kelly, who grew up in the latter stages of the conflict, writes:

> ‘out of nowhere – the Omagh bombing, the first thing that ever truly frightened me. As children in the playground, we wondered if it could happen to us next. I was just eight years old.’[362]

Shauneen Armstrong, a young school girl at the height of the Troubles vividly remembers one of her schooldays:

> ‘Once while in school we heard a bomb go off and the teacher stopped the class and asked us to pray that no one would be hurt. As we were praying we realised the teacher was crying…She told us how she was so sad for us because being born in the early 1970s, we never knew the wonderful Belfast before the Troubles. That was something we heard a lot growing up.’[363]

The long term effect on the population living through this period has been identified in three reports, sponsored by the Northern Ireland government, which concluded that in the age range 45-64 23% of the population have been seriously traumatised by the Troubles.[364] Other studies have concluded that levels of psychiatric morbidity are significantly higher for those who lived and worked through the Troubles.[365] Research by Hasanović and Pajević in Bosnia-Herzegovina has identified that religious and spiritual association in close and closed communities reduced the levels of PTSD. Religion became a ‘safe haven’ by which members of the community were protected by their faith ‘overcoming post-war psychosocial problems and socialization of the personality, leading to the improvement in mental health.’[366] The community and its associated religious and social integration undoubtedly lowered the levels of civilian PTSD. It is not easily determined to what extent the military personnel have

benefitted from any reduction due to their religious beliefs, despite the close bonds formed within Army units, particularly as religious affiliation is anonymous. It must therefore be extrapolated, with no British clinical case studies yet available, that military personnel who served would have similar, if not higher, rates of morbidity. Reginald Maudling, then Home Secretary, acknowledged the stress being felt in the Province noting that 'The psychological pressure, therefore, on everyone in Northern Ireland… we in this House have a clear duty to recognise that in all that we say and do about Northern Ireland.'[367] Despite attempts to quantify the effects of such stress no government records or statistics were, or are, compiled identifying ex-military personnel who develop any form of psychiatric syndrome.[368] No one who lived within or served in the Province during this period was left unscathed but how each individual has been affected may never be fully quantified. While the government has been more than willing to address the problems within the Province, those outside, and particularly ex-servicemen, are left to the NHS system or military charities; for some this is often too late; reaching breaking point and sacrificing their lives to end their suffering. Recent studies have identified that residents of Northern Ireland, alongside the groups of ex-servicemen who had served, have much higher rates of suicide than other parts of the UK and currently 150% higher than 1980.[369] Despite these statistics less resources are being channelled to cope with the long term stress being endured by so many.[370]

The use of soldiers on the streets of Belfast was debated by all parties prior to their deployment and it is clearly evident in the correspondence between Stormont,

Northern Ireland's seat of Government, and the Home Office that any military involvement was expect to last days not years.[371] Nor was it initially understood by any of the parties involved what the ramifications of introducing the Army into the streets of Belfast were but the politicians were desperate to regain control. Unlike the police, who worked within civil law, the utilisation of the military introduced a different set of rules as laid down in the *Manual of Military Law* and a completely different path of culpability.[372] This operational criteria is detailed by a former police officer who served in Belfast, 'the basic duty of the infantry soldier is to seek out the enemy and destroy him. From the day he joins he has the offensive spirit drummed into him. "Law", as far as he is concerned, is a matter of army regulations.[373] Burke also writes that 'it took key senior officers a considerable time to adjust to the operational limitations of war at home in the UK… Discord between the military and civilian leaders led to an inconsistent approach by the Army in Northern Ireland. Soldiers found that military operations were open to unprecedented scrutiny and criticism.'[374] The lack of guidance and the individual interpretation of these rules, and their subsequent public examination, would cause discontent for both the troops and civilians, eventually bringing some of the 300,000 personnel who served in the Province under 'Operation Banner', the code name for military involvement, to have their actions investigated by the MOD from 2015.[375]

For the average soldier in the late 1960's religion was no longer a requisite element in their service. Military personnel were allowed to pursue their own religious beliefs as formal church parades ended in the mid-1950's. Life in mainland Britain was also

changing with church attendance declining as the sexual revolution of the 1960's radically altered social values. However much of this revolution was suppressed in Northern Ireland where the Church and its values still dominated. Long before the troops arrived the North had become a closed society where existence within the community was defined by religious membership at birth rather than practice; albeit church attendance was almost twice that compared to the rest of the UK.[376] This is quantified by Julian Lewis, Conservative MP for New Forrest East, who, when studying at Oxford with a Belfast scholar Martin Sieff, tried to explain the depth of division between the communities in Northern Ireland, 'On one occasion when I found myself cornered by a gang on the street. "They asked me that age-old question: are you a Protestant or a Catholic?" Martin thought he had the perfect, truthful answer; he said, "I am a Jew." They said, "Yes, but are you a Protestant Jew or a Catholic Jew?"'[377] Religion, in the majority of cases, became a mask of allegiance setting the dividing lines at birth, defining the individual as either a pro-British Unionist or an independence-seeking Sinn Fein supporter.[378] In the post-war period these organisations evolved to neither truly represent the actual history of their struggle but more to evolve an identity related to what they interpreted as their "cause" along with the methodology necessary to achieve their objectives. The reality of history often fades, with a new fictional definition taking precedence, replacing fact and becoming the 'new' tradition or as Jarman writes 'tradition is one of the most over used words in contemporary Northern Ireland'.[379] The new tradition stimulated the growth in quasi-military commemorative parades such that, and as Walker describes, by the 1960's parades commemorated the idealism of tradition rather than the fact.[380] The number,

frequency and size of parades escalated, reaching over 3,500 annually, all of which, driven by each sides' political wings, came to epitomise Ireland for either the Protestant Orange Order or the Catholic Sinn Fein.[381] The parades also became a clear representation of the political and religious divide between the two sides and the distrust the minority Catholic population, approximately 32%, had in the government of the Province.[382]

The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) had held power since 1921 and were committed to remain part of the United Kingdom. This was opposed by the republican Nationalists whose objective was to achieve unification with the Republic. Sectarian violence escalated in the mid-1960's, driven by young republican Nationalists determined to achieve change and were countered by Unionists equally determined to stop unification. The Nationalists wanted equality and were no longer prepared to work within a prejudiced system that promoted institutionalised discrimination or as Bourke quantifies 'republican militancy was reborn amid a hunger for security in an atmosphere which continually bred mistrust.'[383] Richard Mapstone, who has researched extensively within the Province, writes, 'In Northern Ireland social identity is about religion, social class, friendship patterns, and neighbourhood. These are the factors that interact to produce a culturally and politically divided society.'[384] The ingrained economic disparity between Protestants and Catholics gave rise to violence and the Province, while not ignored by London, was not an issue while the status-quo was prevalent. This changed in January 1967 with the establishment of the 'Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association' (NICRA). Inspired by both the Cuban revolution, with

Nationalists wanting their 'Irish Cuba', and Martin Luther King's civil rights movement in North America, this movement called for wide ranging reforms in the Province's government and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). It also sought the repeal of the 1922 Special Powers Act (SPA) which allowed internment without trial.[385]

3.1 The British Army - A Domestic Police Force

The 'Troubles' are deemed to have commenced on 5th October 1968 when a civil rights march in Londonderry was halted by the RUC. The marchers, including several Westminster and Stormont MPs, were dispersed by a RUC baton-charge.[386] Immediately after the march, and protesting against the injuries, two days of serious rioting took place in Derry between Catholics and the RUC.[387] In a very short period violence and unrest escalated culminating in the infamous 'Battle of Bogside' on 12 August 1969 which left 8 dead, 697 injured and 1,800 homes destroyed. In an attempt to restore order Stormont requested Army personnel to quell the continued violent rioting.[388] On the 19th August 1969 Downing Street announced that the General Officer Commanding (GOC) Northern Ireland would assume overall responsibility for security operations.'[389] By the time the army entered the streets of Belfast, the RUC had effectively lost control of both Catholic and Protestant agitators. The first troops arrived onto the streets of Belfast in late August and their deployment went from welcome to hatred in a matter of days.[390] In December a disaffected faction of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) formed the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) which would become the leading protagonist and architect of violence as the Nationalists viewed the troops as supporting British imperialism.[391] The PIRA attacks on military

personnel and installations during the conflict would leave both soldiers and civilians with a lasting psychological trauma the effects of which are only just undergoing epidemiologic research.

The problem for the military and therein the soldier, more used to dealing with colonial issues, was the need to adapt quickly to a domestic problem. They also faced the issue of time and scale: time, as it became quickly obvious that their involvement demanded more troops to achieve rapid success and scale, in that they were attempting to adapt to an expanding and very different scenario to their overseas deployments without fully understanding the context of the problems being faced. A large number of the first troops arriving were experienced and seasoned veterans of Aden or Borneo but had never encountered a situation of intense urban guerrilla warfare, and particularly one on British soil; against a perceived enemy which was the equivalent of their next door neighbour. This issue is identified by Edwards when quoting Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Tuzo (GOC) Northern Ireland,

> 'in colonial outposts the Army knew who the enemy was, why he was the enemy, and above all how to apply the right amount of military force in order to defeat him. In Belfast and Derry/Londonderry the centre of gravity had shifted and it was proving infinitely more difficult to win over the 'hearts and minds' of the local Catholic population, especially when it was so utterly opposed to the Unionist administration.'[392]

For the average squaddie attempting to differentiate between service in the Province and an overseas colony was impossible. For most, Ireland was as far away as Aden or

Kenya, as many had never crossed the Irish sea or dealt with anything Irish other than Guinness or rugby. This was also prevalent in their actions, as previously noted, the unlimited use of force to achieve their objective had been the norm. In the Province this was difficult because the media were ever present and, after all, these were British subjects they were attempting to control. The problems these issues created is addressed by Patterson where he tries to quantify the difficulties troops faced, 'Here "colonial" is identified with the repressive use of military power. However, the role of force in Northern Ireland could never be as clear, straightforward and expedient as it had been in actual colonial and decolonising situations'.[393] This left most soldiers confused as to how to achieve their objective and this lack of understanding would result in the Army being far less effective in stemming the increasing violence.

The Army also continually struggled with Westminster's interpretation of how to use the troops effectively to restore order as the problems being encountered in the Province were seen by Westminster as nothing more than a local disturbance, rather than an uprising similar to Dublin in 1916.[394] It was a huge error on the part of politicians to present the military with a problem without fully understanding or appreciating the ingrained cultural divide.[395] Politicians misunderstood the complexity of the problems which the Army faced and initially repeated the mistakes which led to the formation of the Irish Free state.[396] This problem was a direct result of the 1920 Government of Ireland Act which gave Stormont autonomous control of the Province.[397] By the time the Army arrived to assist the situation had intensified beyond a point where politics or the police could maintain order. The Army expected

only to be in the North for a few weeks and critical mistakes were made in the first six months which would later impinge on the military personnel's health and mental status.

The problems the Army faced in 1969 would be unchanged for more than twenty years and it was the soldiers on the streets who had to deal with these problems; initially with little or no training, as it would take the Army more than three years to take the problem seriously.[398] Nor was there the political will or understanding to achieve a solution as each new administration promulgated divergent solutions without comprehending that the problems were not just those of administrative control. This is exemplified when, twelve years later, Margaret Thatcher's spoke on the 'common interest' needed to overcome the violent minority and return prosperity to the Province.[399] It is clear that in the first twelve years politicians had failed to understand the problems of the previous 200 years and were unable to offer any solution which would lead to the withdrawal of troops. This point is highlighted by Peter Naumann when he comments on the British political process:

> 'It is not difficult to identify the principal tenets of British political culture in London's thinking about how to bring about a political solution of the Northern Ireland conflict. In fact, the government's political ideas were firmly based on the British ideal, and even though London gradually recognised that the reality of the Northern Ireland situation was different from Great Britain, it thought of British political norms as something that people in Northern Ireland had to be educated towards.'[400]

3.2 Bloody Sunday and Internment

The increasing scale of the civil disobedience and disorder, orchestrated by both the civil rights movement, the PIRA and the Protestant militia, led to escalating use of internment without trial. In August 1971, under the code name 'Operation Demetrius', the expansion of internment had resulted in 12,387 recorded shooting incidents accompanied by 472 military and civilian deaths in the period 1971 -72.[401] Since internment was administered by the RUC but enforced by the army, it was the military which bore the brunt of both Catholic and Protestant hatred; a common misconception being that internment was directed solely at the Catholic community.[402] With increasing numbers being interned the PIRA's resolve to cause as much destruction and mayhem became even more entrenched as they sought to alter public perception of the conflict. In the subsequent months both Catholics and Protestants took to the streets with each of their demonstrations being followed by violent rioting. On 30th January 1972 NICRA organised an anti-internment march which had been banned by the RUC but was ignored by the demonstrators. This protest, now known as 'Bloody Sunday', would end with 13 marchers dead and 15 seriously wounded. The Army blamed the PIRA and NICRA blamed the Army with both offering alternative accounts of the events which took place. To placate the public outcry the government ordered an inquiry to establish who was to blame.

The first inquiry, conducted by Lord Widgery, into the events surrounding 'Bloody Sunday' reported in April 1972 exonerating the soldiers' actions.[403] A second enquiry conducted by Lord Saville which commenced in 1998 and concluded, with a report

being published in 2010, that the Army should be held accountable for the deaths. The report did note that 'in 1972 we were in the middle of an intense insurrection, which had every intention of toppling the structure of government, with no-go areas, massive destruction of property and numerous assassinations of security forces personnel and civilians to give expression to that policy.'[404] The report also concluded that the Army personnel involved were outside of their intended theatre of operation and that 'the position taken by Army in support of the RUC was a slightly unnatural action for an army to have to take; it was training the Army to behave in a somewhat different way from that in which armies normally operate.'[405] This report makes great effort to identify the events prior to and after the shootings but fails to take into account the stress that many soldiers endured. However, the conclusion achieved in the report met with approval of the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, who stated in parliament, 'While in no way justifying the events of 30 January 1972, we should acknowledge the background to the events of Bloody Sunday. After 1969, the security situation in Northern Ireland had been declining significantly.'[406] But did David Cameron understand or really acknowledge the role of the military particularly as his comments were historical hindsight. He appears to have failed to understand that if you place a soldier in an environment which threatens 'his society', the men forming his platoon or regiment, he will react to his training and Army regulation. Colonel Dodd, who served in the Province and was responsible for training noted that troops were under constant pressure from their date of deployment and even with the most comprehensive preparation, 'men being posted to Ireland had to swiftly adapt as it

quickly became apparent that the situation was deadly serious...the consequence of failure (to adapt) meant death, injury and always an escalating situation.[407]

Despite both Cameron and Saville stating that the security situation had to be understood and publicly supporting the military, they would then ignore their own statements and initiate a prosecutorial investigation into many of those who served in Northern Ireland. It is also forgotten that many Army personnel had been locally recruited as both full-time and part-time members of either Ulster Defence Regiment or the Royal Irish Regiment. Over 40,000 veterans were drawn from the Province and served in these regiments, under Operations Banner and Motorman, as well as working and supporting their local communities. All of these men would be included in the investigation process. This would not affect the members of the PIRA and other nationalist para-military members who had previously received an amnesty for all their crimes.[408] While there may have been an attempt in the 1970's to absolve the soldiers involved, by 2010 government policy had significantly reversed.[409]

With hindsight a substantial part of the blame can be placed on the actions taken by the military on Bloody Sunday. The mind-set of the soldiers actions on the day can be determined from Lt. Col. Wilford, who commanded the 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment responsible for the shootings, and stated after the event

> 'In my view, this was a war. If people are shooting at you, they're shooting not to wound but to kill you. Therefore we had to behave accordingly… I

wanted my soldiers to stay alive and I actually said to them "you will not get killed".'

The IRA evidence was that these were innocent civilians shot without cause but the enquiry did confirm that the soldiers had been attacked and fired upon.[410] However, to fully comprehend the stresses that the soldiers were under, and it is easily forgotten, that while these are trained soldiers they were in an unfamiliar policing role and each individual would react differently when confronted with danger; the backdrop to this event also has to be clearly understood and how it would influence the state of mind of each soldier as they approached their duties on this day. The previous weekend a protest march to Magilligan Internment Camp had ended in all out rioting with the soldiers having to engage in hand-to-hand combat to restore order.[411] This protest march deepened the loathing aimed at the Army and would set the scene for Bloody Sunday. Internment had also intensified the hatred of all things British and the soldiers, along with the RUC, were the focal point of this. In the months prior to the demonstration, between October 1971 and January 1972, the indifference by the para-military groups to life had accelerated with all parties trying to achieve dominance by increased killing or maiming of civilians.

In December 1971 the Protestant UVF exploded a car bomb outside a Belfast Bar frequented by Catholics killing 15 .[412] In the same period six soldiers were killed and 1,010 rounds were fired at military personnel as well as over 450 explosive devices detonated out a total of 1,515 detonations in the full year.[413] In the days before the NICRA march three RUC officers had been killed in two separate ambushes, the last of

which had involved a two hour fire-fight with IRA gunmen where over 2,000 rounds of ammunition were used. On the day before Bloody Sunday, Saturday 29th January, a civil rights rally at Dungannon had deteriorated into violence requiring several thousand troops to contain the demonstration.[414] These incidents were noted in Lord Saville's report 'The armed violence had led to many casualties. There had been numerous clashes between the security forces and the IRA in which firearms had been used on both sides and in which the IRA had thrown nail and petrol bombs.'[415] Lord Saville illustrates the constant threat of violent disorder that the soldiers faced each day but it is difficult, forty years after the event, to recollect the actual events with accuracy and to reproduce them in the environment in which the soldiers' actions originally took place.[416] Without the ability to take a snapshot in time the ability to analyse and understand the incident is constrained. The British soldiers were then left in the middle, friend to neither and enemy to both. The way that the military approached the demonstrators on 'Bloody Sunday' highlighted the fragile line between the troops being considered defenders and peace keepers to all of Northern Ireland or part of an army of occupation there only to supress the rights of Catholics. After Bloody Sunday the PIRA accelerated its bombings and shootings: by the end of 1972 the death toll was 128 soldiers, 17 police officers, and 322 civilians killed.[417] In addition there were 10,631 shooting incidents and 1,853 bombings requiring the total number of frontline military personnel being deployed increasing to 27,000.[418] All of these incidents had to be dealt with by the security forces who constantly lived with death or the threat of death. Many questions have been asked with little hope of

answers but there is one absolute fact in that this event became a watershed moment in Northern Ireland's history.

For those who took part in the march these traumatic effects that this incident had on the populace can be summed up by the words of John Kelly whose seventeen year old brother was shot and killed. John's memory of his brother is with him every day and he cannot forget that fateful day,

> 'It's embedded in my mind, embedded. Everything which happened in those two or three hours is embedded in my memory. It will never go away, never. It changed everything. For me, there was before Bloody Sunday, and then, there was afterwards.' [419]

John is not alone in his abhorrence of the actions taken by the British Army and public opinion in the Province, and the outside world, in particular the USA, gave the PIRA its biggest success of the conflict. How could 13 unarmed civilians be killed unless the Army had orders from the Government to teach the people in the no-go areas a lesson? This was partly confirmed in Lord Widgery's report from the evidence given by Lt. Col. Wilford who stated:

> 'my troop behaved magnificently and I don't say this to in any way to protect my troops who did the job for which they were trained and which I expected. We were put into an arrest operation which I don't think the implications of which had not been thoroughly thought out, it smacked of it's time we taught these people a lesson'. [420]

The news of the killings became front page headlines in every paper and was actively reported on by all the television channels in mainland Britain. But this was newsworthy for only a few days with interest quickly waning on the part of the media and Government.[421] It has to be understood that when the Army was first deployed to Northern Ireland its news worthiness was constrained because it was largely overshadowed by a more dramatic conflict, the Vietnam War, which was at its height. The intensity of this war, and its coverage in British newspapers and television reports, which included live executions such as that of VietCong Captain Bảy Lốp by General Loan, took precedence over what was at the time considered a local issue.

3.3 Britain forgets the Irish Problem

With so many other stories dominating the news such as Watergate and the Munich Olympics, the British press began to ignore the conflict. Roy Greenslade who worked for the *Daily Mail* from 1968 reflected that

> 'In those days, Northern Ireland was "covered", if at all, by the northern offices of national newspapers. Most of them had correspondents in Belfast, a largely cushy posting that involved a great deal of drinking and very little filing of copy.'[422]

Historians are debating the importance of media coverage in the Province with Brian Hamilton-Tweedale noting in his case study that: 'a progressive tightening of editorial control within the British media… significantly reduced the political space in which journalists are able to address events in the North'.[423] Very few really understood what was happening and this disinterest was reflected in the media. The lack of

knowledge about the problems in Belfast led to the British public becoming bored with news reporting from the Province. Conroy, quoting *Guardian* reporter Anne McHardy, notes this problem when writing: 'It's not that they seem to be just bored by it. It seems most people have a will not to know about it. They refuse to read about Northern Ireland, and when you talk to them about it, they greet you with stares of total disbelief.'[424] Schlesinger comments that many now considered reporting from the Province,' had become a routine story. Tragic certainly, but now somewhat boring'.[425] These viewpoints are countered by Bairner who offers an alternative analysis that manipulation of the media had little impact on those within the Province. He argues that in general, military personnel were only deployed for short periods and were not influenced by either the local or national media.[426] However, Bairner's analysis does not include an appreciation for the thousands of soldiers whose residential tour exceeded two years. For many of the serving soldiers, the media disregarded and ignored their daily life serving in constant danger alongside bombings and shootings, deeming their work forgotten unless they were injured or killed. Even in America, where support for the IRA was appreciably bolstered by the images from Belfast, both the press and politicians had their interest quickly diverted, becoming preoccupied with the increasing death toll in the Vietnam War which had particularly deteriorated following the 1972 'Easter Offensive'.[427]

The respect for the military that had been present in the aftermath of the previous two World Wars diminished significantly in the late 1960's as people sought greater autonomy.[428] Society's mind-set changed fundamentally away from any military

conflicts. The daily broadcasts of American soldiers fighting and dying in a distant 'Asian War' contributed to this perception, particularly amongst those aged 16-24, who began to demand 'peace not war'. The rebellion against authority, synonymous with the 1960's, fuelled anti-war demonstrations overshadowing the newsworthiness of the events in Northern Ireland. The Vietnam War cast a shadow over all military personnel and every atrocity or revelation in Asia diminished the respect society had for those required to defend it. Bloody Sunday and the continue rioting, graphically portrayed in the media of armed soldiers charging unarmed rioters, supported the continued erosion of confidence and respect. Alongside this deterioration there was also a distinct paradoxical contradiction in those who sought peace in Asia. Many of the protestors who marched and demonstrated against the Vietnam War would simply disregard the importance of the 'Irish Problem'. Why a war being contested 3,000 miles away would have more importance than one in a part of Britain is difficult to understand. Les Twentyman tried to summarise this dichotomy writing that:

> 'The British have always had a blind spot for Ireland, even amongst kids in England - kids who marched and raised their fists in the streets to protest the Vietnam War - there was no sense of an appalling injustice going down in Northern Ireland.'[429]

There had been considerable support from the British public in deploying troops but this changed with many believing it was time for a united Ireland. After a spate of mainland bombings initiated by the PIRA, support further diminished. In a poll conducted at the time, 45% thought that the Government should encourage Irish

unification.[430] A separate poll carried out by the Daily Mail found that 59% wanted British troops withdrawn from the Province.[431] The Government wanted a solution to the insurgency issue and to return power back to Stormont. However, because the PIRA had established self-styled independent 'no-go' areas in large parts of Belfast and towns within the six counties in August 1971 as retaliation for internment, and as the Government was also negotiating a ceasefire, the Army was prevented from entering or removing these areas.[432] For over twelve months Westminster ignored the issue and the symbolism of defiance that these areas fostered, until negotiations broke down and the government allowed the Army to take action.[433] In a co-ordinated manoeuvre across the six counties on 31st July 1972, under the code name 'Operation Motorman', the largest military undertaking by the British Army outside of the Korean War, involving almost 28,000 troops and including two armoured battalions, successfully removed the barricades, bringing the no-go areas back under Army and RUC control.[434] This was in some respects a turning point as the Army, allowed to function without political influence, achieved a significant success with only limited loss of life: the British Army shot four people, killing a 15-year-old boy and a unarmed PIRA member.

In conjunction with this undertaking, the Army's 123 Intelligence Section mounted a series of operations which provided significant information leading to the arrest of 4 PIRA brigade commanders and 106 officers; with an estimated 52 on the run from security forces.[435] Within 24 months of Operation Motorman the PIRA was so weakened that its ability to progress its insurgency in the Province faltered, halving the

number of bombings and shootings from the peak of 11,000 in 1972 declining to 3,000 by 1974. The successes of 1972 are significant in that Westminster allowed the military to function as intended and in doing so the PIRA's activities were severely constrained. Sir Frank King, GOC Northern Ireland, in a speech delivered in Nottingham on 12 April, told his audience that 'he and his men would have beaten the 'Provos' in a matter of months were it not for political interference from Whitehall.'[436] The success gave the average soldier hope that they would live through their tours of duty but even with this understanding the insurgency, for the average soldier, was a long way from concluding.[437] The Army's successes in the North caused a significant shift in the PIRA's policies and their route to achieve their objectives.[438] During the next two years as the politicians dithered, seeking the best policies needed to achieve a solution acceptable to both sides, the PIRA regrouped and in early 1974 began a mainland bombing campaign.[439] By the end of the year 40 people were dead and 214 injured, the majority many being military personnel and their families, for the PIRA families of servicemen were legitimate targets. A limited number when compared to those killed in the Province but the difference was that this was on the mainland and for the first time the general public took notice and became scathing of the Government and the military. Between 1970-1978 the Government introduced a series of draconian and repressive measures based on their colonial experience as well as that of France in Algeria and America in Vietnam.[440] This legislation significantly impinged on the PIRA's ability to move money and purchase arms. In 1975 a cease fire was agreed with PIRA, albeit lasting only six weeks, but it did reduce the number of daily incidents to an average of one bombing, one explosive device neutralised and

four shootings per day. During the next four years the number of shootings and bombings would fall to 7% of their peak.

Between 1975 and 1979 the military plan to subdue the insurgents intensified achieving significant successes through the use of electronic surveillance and undercover operatives.[441] The counter-intelligence units expanded rapidly and their work assisted in subduing the PIRA operations leading to over 25 tonnes of explosives being confiscated. The work that was undertaken stopped Northern Ireland unravelling and allowed those within to maintain some semblance of order.[442] Any elation at the achievements was short lived when in August 1979 two bombs were detonated at Warren Point killing eighteen soldiers. This was the largest single loss of military personnel since the Korean War and finally brought the issue of Northern Ireland to a head. At the same time Lord Mountbatten, his wife, grandson and a young boat boy were killed when a bomb exploded on their boat at Mullaghmore, county Sligo. These victories highlighted how the PIRA could still attack and that the previous successes may have encouraged a sense of apathy. The death of a beloved wartime figure and the last Viceroy of India was a shock to the nation, but his death completely overshadowed the 18 soldiers who lost their lives. Pages of press coverage were dedicated to Lord Mountbatten but the soldiers became a by-line lost in the rhetoric devoted to the royal death. In a commemorative article in the Irish Times Jaki McCarri recalled that 'I do remember this event being on the news: in terms of media attention the deaths of the soldiers had been completely overshadowed by the death of a British royal.'[443] In evaluating the top nine British newspapers 87% of the coverage in August

1979 was dedicated to Lord Mountbatten. The deaths of the soldiers was forgotten then and, like so many who served in the Province, remained forgotten. No soldier killed in Northern Ireland has had his name inscribed on the Cenotaph in London and unlike almost every other conflict there was no memorial to those killed in Ireland until the opening of the National Memorial Arboretum in 1997.

3.4 Media Coverage and Military Personnel.

While there has been some historical analysis by Aughey, Morrow, Spencer, McLaughlin and Baker on the importance of how the media influenced and represented Northern Ireland during the Troubles this subject has been generally been overlooked.[444] From 1979 until the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1989 the Province went through a process of 'Ulsterisation'. The British Government was persuaded by the military that they had to use the same tactics as if this was an overseas colony; the same process that had been so effective in India, Kenya and almost all the countries that had formed the Empire. The policy was to move the responsibility of governing and policing back onto the RUC, Stormont's politicians and the Republic of Ireland. The policy dictated that the RUC had to be responsible for security, but it was unable to achieve this without Army personnel. The RUC became the face of this new policy but it was Army personnel which would implement the strategy; something that is frequently forgotten or dismissed in academic analysis. By shifting responsibility, on paper, and allowing Ireland to solve its problems internally it attempted to reduce the criticism directed at Westminster; essentially giving back an 'Irish problem' to the Irish.[445] This relieved the Government on any pressure being

asked - why did we become involved in the North, why were our troops still there? In a very short period the Ulsterisation counterinsurgency policy achieved notable successes heavily curtailing the PIRA's activities by enacting the harshest regime of targeting, detaining and imprisoning any republican group. This in turn reduced the number of shootings as well as, most importantly, the number of soldiers killed and injured. To counter the Army successes the PIRA moved their campaign to mainland Britain, in another attempt to shock and sicken the British public and to hit back at the military , with the July 1982 Hyde Park bombings killing 11 soldiers and injuring another 50.[446] In December of the same year, a bomb was exploded at Droppin Well Bar in Ballykelly, regularly frequented by off duty military personnel, killing 11 soldiers as well as 6 civilians. Both these events received significant media coverage but reporting on the bombings was quickly overtaken, often within one day, by domestic political reporting. It was recognised in the media that the British public had little appetite for repeated front page coverage of death and destruction related to Northern Ireland. This problem had been recognised in May 1973 during a parliamentary debate by Mr Brynmor John who commented:

> 'Unfortunately, as is the way of life, in many instances death in Northern Ireland no longer makes front page news but as reported appears on later pages. The message that I hope our forces will take from this debate is that although they may have slipped in news value, they have not slipped in the genuine admiration of this House for their dignity and courage, nor has our sympathy for the

> dependants lessened in any way. They are doing what is primarily a temporary job because of the need to find a political solution.'[447]

The temporary job was still being undertaken ten years later and the issues for all military personnel had not changed in neither the media or Parliament. While both offered verbal and written sympathy, both did little for the military personnel involved in the conflict or for their families after discharge. Parliament would not begin the process of recognising the plight of those who served in Ulster until 1994 as is noted by Mr Alf Morris when commenting in the 'Ex-Service People' debate:

> 'How many of us in this House appreciate how difficult it can be for people now leaving the forces to readjust to civilian life, perhaps years earlier than they expected to be doing? Unlike their civilian counterparts, they have no territorial rights and no place on local authority housing lists. The days have long gone when ex-service people, on demobilisation or discharge, had priority for local authority housing… Ex-service people, on demobilisation or discharge, used to have a priority. That is not so today. Nor is retraining needed for employment in civilian life readily available. When civilians lose their jobs, most have a home and friends in their community to help them. Their wives or husbands have jobs to support the family and their children will be at the local school. This is not so in the case of a service man who, if not from overseas, will be coming from another part of the country. Often both partners will have to look for a job, to find a home and a school and to put down roots in a community. All these problems

> involve different Government Departments and local authorities. It is for that reason that a specialised and co-ordinating Minister, with a staff who understand the whole range of the ex-service community's problems, is now so essential.'[448]

Despite the many requests in parliament no ministerial department was allocated to facilitate ex-service personnel nor did this projected policy gain a foothold of support in the media.

On 12th October 1984 a bomb exploded at the Grand Hotel, Brighton during the Conservative Party conference killing 5 and injuring 34. This was a significant event of the conflict because the attack was directed at Prime Minister Margret Thatcher. But in terms of analysing this event and the dedicated coverage by the media in comparison to that given to the military personnel, more editorial and media coverage was given to this attack than the combined coverage of all bombings and shootings in the fifteen years of violence since 1968. *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *Independent* and *Guardian* dedicated front page columns, along with inner page articles, to the Brighton bombing on each day until 14th November 1984. A total of 33 days continuous coverage when in contrast the issues of Northern Ireland rarely, if ever, enjoyed such coverage.[449] The BBC estimate that in the seven days after the explosion 115 hours of television and radio airtime, across all national and regional outlets, aired presenting this event.[450] No statistics detailing the total number of hours of coverage are available from the independent television channels or the international coverage that was dedicated to this event but it can be reasoned that it was at least equal to the BBC

if not greater since there were substantially more independent broadcasters. Whereas in the previous seven months a total of 52 minutes of BBC airtime was given to the deaths of the soldiers and the RUC officers.[451] When you compare the coverage of the Brighton bombing to the previous events which occurred in the same year, and note the attention given to each event, a clear pattern is identified that by 1984 the press were completely disinterested in Northern Ireland. In the six months prior to the Grand Hotel explosion, 7 soldiers, 6 RUC offices and 7 civilians had died.[452] The reporting of these deaths was, in the majority of cases, confined to inner pages of the national daily's or a very limited presentation on the front page.

What coverage of incidents was allowed and the accuracy of reporting has been the subject of debate amongst some academics including Comac, Legg, Hennessey Rolston and Miller. How much information was manipulated by the military and Westminster during the period of the Troubles, as documents are released under the Government's restricted access '30 year rule', has only increased or fuelled this speculation.[453] This debate centres on how effective or ineffective covert misinformation was, what were its achievements, if any, and how significant an influence it had in stopping the media from determining exactly what was, and had, happened in northern Ireland. This misinformation or disinformation policy formed part of the classic well tried 'Four Principles of British Counter-Insurgency Theory' and was directly aimed at lessening the impact on British society of the events taking place in the Province.[454] This theory basically states that 'it is held that to defeat an insurgency a nation cannot rely solely on brute force, which is the essence of a counterterrorism (CT) campaign, but must

also win the hearts and minds of the affected population.'[455] The 1970's was a period of social unrest with militancy spreading through the economy and the Government feared that if succinct accurate reporting of events were transmitted throughout mainland Britain this could fuel the militancy leading to civil unrest. A policy of mitigation was used to emphasise the achievements and extenuating the benefits in using the military. By giving the impression that the Army was successfully subduing the insurgents, it hoped a message would be transmitted to mainland militants that any form of civil unrest would not be countenanced. It also projected a representation that the work undertaken by the soldiers contributed to the maintenance of order and was welcomed by those being protected.[456]

Within these principles is the extensive use of psychological warfare aimed at undermining the support base of the insurgents.[457] The Army's Military intelligence sections, taking over from the RUC in the early 1970s, actively worked on psychological disinformation to achieve its objectives, which achieved success in supressing information.[458] To maintain and promote the misinformation the government frequently used D-Notices (Defence Notice), after 1993 a DA Notice (Defence Advisory Notice), which were official requests not to publish information which they believed would threaten national security. What information that was released by the military was directly aimed at psychologically separating those committing violence from those in receipt, achieving this objective by feeding the media news information using key words to influence public opinion aimed at ensuring that the PIRA were viewed as terrorists and criminals rather than freedom fighters.[459] If journalists became too

interested in a particular topic they would find the information restricted and frequently 'found themselves at loggerheads with the politicians'.[460] The reporting through the media, or lack thereof, eventually reflected in the treatment of all ex-service personnel.

The work of those historians already noted is complemented by Curren, Butler and Curtis, who argue that the British government had a far greater influence over what was reported and who was reporting the news. Editors were pressured by Government departments to 'toe-the line' by ensuring that reporting of events in the Province was by generalisation rather than specific commentary and analysis.[461] For example no newspaper during this period would have debated should there be a united Ireland or whether the deployment of troops was justified. Should they not conform then they would find that their access to government or military briefings was removed. It was common for the Northern Ireland office or the Army's PR branch to telephone editors warning them that certain reporters were irresponsible and could not be trusted directly; challenging their independence and inferring political bias. The media wanted to support the Army and all things British but then also wanted to report the news. Max Pettigrew writes that 'In essence, British Media reporting of Northern Ireland oscillated between media silence, compliance and resistance. Following partition, the BBC monopolised broadcasting in Northern Ireland and worked in the interests of Westminster and Stormont which meant avoiding certain subjects.'[462] Viera comments that, whenever the BBC strayed from the government's policies and interviewed members of the IRA the Corporation's staff was threatened

with the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1974.[463] The policies of misinformation, D-notices and the control of the media were a throwback to WW2 when the media were severely restricted in what could be reported. The government necessitated using these tactics because at many points in this period the PIRA were winning the publicity war as well as succeeding in undermining the economic and political structure within the six counties.[464]

The Government's extensive use of covert misinformation and disinformation stifled the flow of accurate reporting from the Province; effectively achieving the goal of manipulating or altering public perception of the conflict. In achieving their goal, the true nature of military activities was removed from public view hindering both the peace process and those affected by the conflict. For the majority the Army's role was a mystery and a true picture of the Province was never disseminated to the general public, who were blinded to the causal factors at play and their lasting effects on both the population and the troops. The lack of accurate reporting, often without realising its inaccuracy, clouded the perception of both the problems and issues military personnel faced during their deployment in the Province. For the men who served in the Province the misinformation changed the perception of the role played and the effects that were and would be endured.

Over 30% of the Northern Ireland Government Central Secretariat files which have been released are heavily redacted severely restricting research along with another 20% withheld for publication due to security restrictions.[465] This continued censorship

of information detailing the actual duties undertaken by military personnel denies the public clarity of the working activities of their military and possibly a deeper appreciation of what these individuals endured.[466] In the Troubles, the six counties became a news bubble where everyday events had life changing influence on every one who lived or served there but outside of the Province the substance or relevance was lost. To this effect, how could a government use strategic psychological warfare and suppress the media, frequently denying the advances made by the PIRA, and then initiate a wide range of procedures and policies aimed at alleviating the problems faced by of all ex-service personnel and their families? By ignoring former military personnel the Government successfully suppressed the realities and cost of policing the six counties.

3.5 Good Friday Agreement

Over the next ten years the number of shootings and bombings declined significantly, being less than 5% of 1972. By 1996 all sides sought a solution to peace which was officially agreed in 1998 with the signing of the Belfast Agreement, more commonly known as the 'Good Friday Agreement'. The PIRA and the Ulster Unionists in theory ended the conflict but it would be another ten years before this could be actually stated. In 2007 the majority of troops were withdrawn bringing an end to 'Operation Banner'. During the 30 years of the conflict over 1,000 soldiers were killed and 6,116 injured.[467] For many who were deployed their lives would be unaffected but for thousands of others there was no peace after 1998. Jimmy Nesbitt writing the foreword to the 2018 Wave Trauma Centre's annual report noted

> 'No books have been written about the injured, you will not find their details published. The injured continue to suffer - not just from the physical manifestation of their injury but also in the way that they have been treated by some Government Departments and others in society. In truth, they feel largely forgotten about, ignored and their suffering unrecognised. For many men and women what happened to them is not consigned to the past but is in the here and now. All their injuries are life changing and permanent.'[468]

A large number of veterans are cynical and feeling embittered believing that they are forgotten by society, lacking any support from a country that asked them to serve and then deprived them of many of the benefits given to those in a declared war zone. Nor do they feel that society appreciates the task they engaged in or that the physical and mental cost in doing so has taken an enormous toll. The Government's statutory Northern Ireland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee reported that 'Our concern is the apparent lack of Political interest to either allay these fears or to actively address the issues facing veterans' and it also stated that 'We believe that the Veterans and Armed Forces Community in Northern Ireland are disadvantaged compared to their counterparts in the rest of the UK.'[469] It is not just that these veterans feel forgotten; it is that they also feel society holds them accountable for the problems in Northern Ireland. A report published In 2017 stated that 'Many veterans of Operation Banner feel they have been 'demonized' and 'criticised' and believe they do not receive adequate recognition for their service.'[470] This accountability has developed as the 'Peace Process' seeks to attribute blame and obtain justice from the

British Government for those outside of the military deemed to have been wronged. But how far back does society go in trying to prove cause and lay blame on its service personnel while at the same time pardoning convicted terrorists. This direction creates a high level of insecurity, with individuals never knowing if their actions could lead to prosecution. However, there are some in Parliament who argue that the investigation into actions taken by veterans during the Troubles should cease. Jim Shannon, the MP for Strangford, has repeatedly challenged the Government's case and argued in 2016 that:

> 'I congratulate the honourable Gentleman on securing this debate. He clearly outlined the case for British soldiers who courageously, energetically and within the law did their job to an exemplary standard. Does he share my concern, as many people in Northern Ireland do, that at 60 or 70 years old, these men are thrown to the wolves? Does he think that should happen? *Sir Henry Bellingham, Chair of Northern Ireland Affairs Committee*, replied 'Dragging veterans—people in their 70s and 80s—out of their retirement to face trial when most of the evidence has long since disappeared is a fundamental breach of the military covenant.'[471]

Despite these reassurances soldiers are still being investigated and charges laid as exemplified by the case of former Corporal Major Dennis Hutchings who has twice stood trial, and been cleared, yet at 79 faces a third charge linked to a 47 year old incident.[472] Soldiers who served in Northern Ireland want the same security given by Tony Blair in 1998 when 500 PIRA members and the 300

suspected terrorists were given amnesty from prosecution under the 'Good Friday Agreement'.

In September 1986 the perpetrator of the Brighton Bombing, Patrick Magee, was sentence to eight terms of life imprisonment but in 1998 he was released after serving only 13 years under the terms of the Belfast Agreement. Likewise John Downey who was noted by the British High Court as an 'Active Participant' in the Hyde Park bombing avoided imprisonment at his murder trial in 2014 because he had received a guarantee against prosecution issued by the British government, known as an 'on-the-run' letter.[473] For the families of those servicemen who had served, been injured or died in the Province these were not events to be celebrated.[474] Whilst active and former active IRA and PIRA members received an amnesty from prosecution under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement it does not mean they were dissuaded from continuing to violently oppose British rule. There are many veterans still living within the Province who have their daily lives regularly threatened by the PIRA and, in order to survive, enact the same precautionary security measures to protect their families as if at the height of the troubles; for these men and women the conflict still continues.[475]. British society, for whatever reason, appears to want to cleanse any wrong doing and absolve those who have committed acts of terrorism to be vindicated, whereas the men of its armed services are deemed to require some form of punishment. The British Government appears to have succumbed to the benefits of retrospective historical social analysis to determine blame in order to set a path

to peace, achieve and then maintain the peace accord but at a huge financial cost to the taxpayer. Northern Ireland is subsidised by over £10 billion annually which is 20 times more than it pays in benefits to veterans of this conflict.[476] The question remains why does society feel it must achieve vindication by seeking to prosecute men, who enlisted and risked their lives in service of their country, when they enacted policies at a time deemed valid and then fifty years later see their actions re-evaluated in a different consensus and within a different base line of morality? These policies could explain why Britain's military has struggled with recruitment for the last 20 years.

The lasting effects on those who served in Northern Ireland were not taken seriously until 2007; even then the resources dedicated to understanding the problems faced by discharged veterans were limited or non-existent. In 2017 the MOD published its first serious examination into the health and welfare of veterans. This was the first attempt by the MOD to understand the consequences of military service on civilian life and it concluded that significant additional research was needed to fully evaluate the long term issues faced by discharged military personnel. It noted the lack of research which was hindering the MOD's ability to define a programme but it did comment that two key changes should assist future research. In 2015 it was previously agreed that future coroner reports on suicide victims would record if the individual had previous military service and from 2021 the National Census would request information on an individual's military service. This information will form the

basis of analysis to determine if military service was a causal factor for individuals suffering mental health issues. This report was followed in January 2018 when the House of Commons Defence Committee announced a new inquiry into Armed Forces and Veterans Mental Health. The committee has yet to report but had noted in its guidelines that the lack of serious clinical studies, as opposed to academic, was hindering the ability to reach a definitive conclusion.[477] One of the reasons that clinical studies have been limited is cost. The annual US Department of Defense report into military suicides cost in excess of $1.3million and it is estimated that a full clinical study in the UK would cost in excess of £4 million.[478] Such a cost is deemed prohibitive since any palliative care is lost in the general NHS budget and masks the associated retrograde problems of post-military service. For many who served in Northern Ireland the lack of research, either clinical or academic, may be too late as it is more than twenty years since the 'Good Friday Agreement' and nearly fifty years since 'the Troubles' commenced.

Conclusion

In every year of every decade since 1900 military widows, ex-servicemen and disabled veterans have been ignored by both Government and society. That is not to say that those who served before this date were treated differently, as they were not. But as we progressed through the age of Victorian and Edwardian philanthropic social legislation which introduced care for civilian working injured and the elderly, the military injured and widowed were not even included, or considered to be included in these statues. In many cases the military's men and women would sacrifice everything for their country and this should have entitled them to more than just being respected when lives were lost. While this respect was visually portrayed in a vast array of statues and memorials placed throughout Britain to honour "the glorious dead" it did nothing to elevate the plight of so many. There is nothing glorious about death which leaves a soldier's wife and children destitute with the State effectively ignoring their plight in the post-war years. While most felt pride in their, or their family's, contribution, that pride was not reflected in financial appreciation in the actions of a grateful nation. To the contrary, the actions of the Government in post WW1 and WW2 was to look not at the physical, mental and emotional cost of war but to value the service of its military in terms of paying the war debt. The treatment of Britain's military widows and disabled can only be considered as shameful. Both have had their lives dictated by governments seeking to quantify their loss within a financial framework geared to limit compensation and to ensure that they were forced to seek employment even when there was no work available. Angelia Smith writes that the

> 'war widows' pension (Under the Royal Warrant of 1916) was devised to confine the woman to the domestic role of idealised mother whilst refusing to pay her sufficient money to keep her within the home. At around half the "minimum wage" of £1 a week, the payment was more of a token gesture.'[479]

All societies struggle with the concept of death and the fact that veterans and widows lived amongst those who never went to war was a constant reminder of the emotional trauma of war. It was not their fault that they were widowed but society became uncomfortable, particularly after the first global conflict, having so many widows to a point where women were embarrassed by their widowhood, avoiding the disclosure to save embarrassment.[480] Widows became marginalised, supressing any outward appearance of widowhood and hiding the fact that they had lost their partners.[481] In doing so widows allowed the government to effectively side-line support at a time when it was most needed. Women unwittingly abetted the government by condemning those who sought to work after their husbands had returned home. In the *Daily Herald* of October 1919 Mrs Pazzey wrote "no decent man would allow his wife to work, and no decent woman would do it if she knew the harm she was doing to the widows and single girls who are looking for work'.[482] Without a consolidated voice women lost the concerted path to achieving a pension that equitably valued their loss. Disabled veterans also face similar issues of acceptance, as the concept and fact of disability frightens the able bodied in society. People avoid looking at or making contact with the disabled, afraid that the 'disease' may be contagious or embarrassed

at the individual's plight.[483] The fact that so many returned home disabled after WW1 should have made society more comfortable with the issue but in fact it became more awkward in its handling of disabled veterans. The issue has not disappeared as those who have returned home from almost all of the post-WW2 conflicts have expressed their frustration at how their disability is perceived and received by the society they went to war to protect.

In the early years, and at a time when many most needed the income, the system was slow to react because of the mounting death toll. On 10th September 1918 Florence Watson sought assistance from the King's Own Scottish Borderers Widows and Orphan Fund (KOBF) seeking assistance from penury writing 'You asked in your letter did I ever receive a photograph of his grave and his effects, no. I have received nothing at all, they sent me 26/4 ½ his back pay that was all the money I got'.[484] Her husband had died of wounds in September 1916 but because the files detailing his death lack clarity as to the actual cause of death, her claim for a pension was delayed and then lost in the changeover to the Ministry of Pensions. With the KOBF's assistance her pension claim was finally resolved in January 1919 by which time she had lost her rented accommodation and Florence, along with her daughter were living in one room at her parent's house. This is just one example of the many thousands available detailing the treatment of women by bureaucracy and whose lives were altered by the death of their partner; a situation which would be repeated both during and after WW2.

It was the same for those diagnosed with a disability. Prior to being considered for a pension they to be medically assessed which could take a minimum of four months. Families needed a rapid response but then had to wait months for the assessment to validated by the Ministry. Even then to receive a full pension both arms and legs had to have been lost with all other injuries starting on a scale from 10% which included the loss or loss of use of a hand; this injury equated to a pension of just 2s per week. For all those deemed disabled the availability of work was extremely limited but they were still expected to actively seek employment. The decisions made by the Medical Assessment Board were always biased in the government favour as the rules laid down were based on getting all men back to work but often without the means to achieve this. For the men who returned having been diagnosed with Shell Shock their route to gaining a pension was even more difficult. Of 6,276 who were diagnosed with this disorder in 1916 and whose families applied to receive a pension only five men were successful.[485] There are no records of how many of these men would eventually commit suicide as local coroners did not always record the true reason for death. In their research Linsley, Schapira and Kelly have determined that between 1920 and 1930 75% of deaths recorded as accidental or undetermined were suicides.[486]

It took 27 years for the first major pension review to be undertaken and that was only to establish the new pensions and allowances after WW2 ended; no criteria within this review allowed for revision or restructuring of WW1 pensions. Those who had suffered from the previous global conflict were effectively ignored. It then took a further 22 years, a total of 49 years, to raise the pension of a WW1 British soldier's

childless widow by 10s. In 1919 the widows pension was equal to 2/3rds of the average weekly wage but by 1967 the value was meaningless, worth less than 1/35 of the average weekly wage; even less in defined real purchasing power. Kriner and Shen describe this as the 'invisible inequality of military service' determining that individuals commit their careers, often sacrificing their bodies or lives, to the armed forces but this is then not reciprocated when death and disability occurs.[487] Widows were part of the forgotten masses and Mrs. Willis quantifies this when writing about her family,

> 'My father, a petty officer, died on the Russia convoys (7.1.1943) and my mother was left with three young children. We became poor as the first week after losing my father, as he died on Friday and did not live a full pay week, my mother received 19 shillings and after this my mother received £2.12s to keep her and four children. After our father died our lives changed and mother was bitter as we had to do without. My mother died in 2002 and she never forgot the feeling of abandonment when she needed help. She felt she was of no importance'.[488]

When and where pensions were eventually granted, as women often had to fight to receive them, their value effectively became frozen in time linked to the date of implementation. Each successive government supplemented their meagre pension with minimal increases designed, not to relieve their suffering, but to ensure those in receipt achieved employment at the earliest opportunity. Should they then find work the pension was taxed at the highest rate and any received benefit was effectively removed. This issue was debated seven times before the start of WW2 and on each

occasion the issue was lost because the Government felt it would be unpopular that war widows were given "Free Money".[489] This issue has been the subject of some academic debate with Holden arguing that pensions granted to war widows were envied by the rest of society but there is little substantive evidence to support this proposition. To the contrary there are numerous comments in the letters held in the archives, noted in the introduction, to counter this argument. Smith, using Holdens analysis, comments that the war widows' pension became the stimulus for the campaign to a gain a single women's pension scheme during the inter-war years. While Holden's viewpoint could be somewhat substantiated this issue was first raised in 1909 by Winston Churchill and again debated prior to the outbreak of war in 1914. Undoubtedly a number of women's groups took inspiration from the war widows' pension; it is not sufficient to conclude that these groups were able to bring sufficient pressure on the Government had the issue not already been debated. Smith's conclusion appears to ignore the already documented points within her work, including the hardship many widows underwent and the morality clauses linked to the war payment. None of these restrictive measures were included in the pension granted to women in 1925. What both these historians also fail to note is the taxation policy of the Treasury, in treating a war widows' pension as unearned income, the lack of regular annual increases or allowing for its declining monetary purchase value during the inter-war years, particularly in the Great Depression.[490]

By 1930 almost half of the 1.6 million WW1 disabled veterans had died as a result of sustained wartime injuries saving the exchequer over £75 million per year.[491] The levy

of Income Tax on war pensions would be finally removed in April 1979 but far too late for so many who contributed so much to the defence of Great Britain. In the same vein all governments since 1918 have set a military pension specific to a conflict. Those in receipt of a WW1 pension were paid half of those granted after WW2 and a quarter of those who served in Korea and between a thirty-sixth and a fiftieth of those who served in Northern Ireland.[492] Even after WW2, when the Government introduced a special allowance in 1949 for war widows, the Minister of Pensions admitted in a Parliamentary debate that only one in thirty had claimed because of the lack of information being distributed by his department.[493] Following this admission the Ministry did nothing to rectify this oversight to the detriment of those entitled and there are no clear records as to how many widows actually received the special allowance.

What is also difficult to understand is why the social impact that widows, disabled ex-service men and unmarried women had on society during the inter-war and post WW2 period has not been included in mainstream historical analyses. It appears somewhat surprising that the economic impact of over two million adults could, and has, been generally ignored. In the myriad of works on 20th Century warfare it is a rarity for the word 'widow' or 'veteran' to be included in the discourse. The social and economic issues of both World Wars, and their aftermath, have been systematically analysed by historians. However, they have somehow forgotten the participation of those who remained at home or the many disabled veterans, treating contribution from any of these groups as of little importance almost as if they too died on the battlefield and

should be remembered only at commemorations. Over 1 million women would never marry in the period 1920-1939. The word “spinster” came into common usage to define a class of women who were unable to marry simply because their potential husbands had died. We also think of widows only as having been generated in wartime but more than 200,000 widows lost their husbands post-war. Many of these were excluded from applying for a pension because their husbands lived beyond the seven year eligibility limit.

The question should we support widows and veteran soldiers has to be clearly answered by society. Before, during and after every conflict young men and women are employed in the armed services but when those individuals are injured or killed society appears to have little use for them or their dependents. Should they return home we shower them with medals, arrange parades, if victorious, and erect memorials to honour those that have not returned. We momentarily honour their death but then become oblivious to their sacrifice. But how does society cope with those that have returned home who are less than able bodied or whose partners have not arrived home at all? While this point has been debated, some historians, including Bodenner, point out that we fail to comprehend widowhood and that ‘widowed people are invisible in this society’; to his notation, and within this context, could be added the disabled.[494] This is effectively how society treats its military widows and disabled. Once a notification of death has been issued or had their disability assessed by society then the military is effectively finished with that individual. Bradburn, Gorer, and Parkes would extend this argument by noting that widows are more likely

to suffer extensive emotional isolation suffering from supressed psychological trauma which often goes untreated.[495] Bankhoff also comments that while widows with children, as opposed to childless, overcome the psychological trauma of widowhood more rapidly, they have a 'higher tendancy to struggle financially and become poverty stricken' when compared 'to their married or never-married peers'.[496]

The British Army used to use the notation of its pay records DD referring to 'Discharge by Death'.[497] Society had previously accepted that a soldier should be buried in the country of his death arguing why should it be responsible for the individual or their family after death? It was also the case that families never had the chance to bury their relations as traditionally those who died in combat are buried on the battlefield or at sea. This left widows no physical or identifiable location where to grieve, further extending their experience of isolation. It was not until the Falkland's War of 1981 that families, after an extensive campaign in the press and Parliament, were offered the opportunity of repatriation and burial in Britain. This policy was adhered to because when death occurs while on active service the soldier was no longer considered the responsibility of the government; there was also the massive cost incurred if all soldiers were to be repatriated. Throughout the last 100 years there has been a cost to enter war and an even greater cost exiting. Whether society will learn from the lessons of history is unknown but what is almost certain is that war veterans and their widows will still be treated with disrespect both financially and in the esteem that society wants to give but fails so often to do.

For the Irish veterans, widows and the disabled their plight would be a struggle against sectarianism, republicanism and hunger. Men returned home to find Ireland heading for independence and their service in the Great War deemed in support of an Imperial power. The men were then divided into two groups, those who would and did fight for independence and those that did not. The bitterness and hatred which was generated through these divisions would not easily be forgotten. De Valera, a staunch opponent of all things English and who became Prime Minister several times, passed numerous laws prohibiting any support for the British either before, during or after WW2. This hatred would become ingrained in Irish politics becoming a determining fact in its dealings with Britain and those who had served in Britain's armed forces for more than a generation. This particularly manifested in the treatment of both able and disabled ex-servicemen after WW2. History would again be repeated when those who had fought with Britain to defeat Hitler would be ostracised as those who had fought in the previous war. The Government banned any outward display of their association with British military and imposed an employment ban such that men were refused any municipal or government service despite exemplary war records. Many in the Irish government sustained an animosity not easily overcome particularly as the British still ruled in the northern six counties, manifesting in its undeclared support for those who sought to unify Ireland after 1968. In Protestant Belfast the reverse would see sectarian violence, fuelled by legitimate claims of discrimination, eventually leading to the British Army being deployed for 38 years. British and Irish men would serve in the Provinces, alongside each other, trying to establish and maintain peace in a conflict which left thousands killed, injured or widowed. After the conflict those who fought

British rule were pardoned whereas no pardon was given to those who served in the Armed Forces. For those who were members of the PIRA their lives have changed only because time passes and young men grow old understanding that violence does not solve all problems. For the many thousands of ex-servicemen the issues in Ireland have never really been solved as investigations on the role of the military are still ongoing. But for the widows and disabled of this conflict the passing of time does not offer any release only a constant reminder that their service has been forgotten.

The early work of Janis Lomas, and all of the historians noted in this thesis, initiated the quest towards a better understanding of society's approach to military widows and the military disabled. Within the context of their research, and this thesis, one of the most challenging aspects has been sourcing academic research which offers an alternative or contradictive critical analysis of the treatment of war widows and military disabled; who would feel able to criticise bereaved widows or those who had been seriously injured during a conflict? This sensitivity has left the subject being effectively overlooked by many academic historians and as such the subject of military widows and disabled veterans has seen little research until the beginning of the 21tst Century. It is impossible to quantify why there has been a lack of research and it can only be hoped that this will change in the coming decades. Perhaps the lack of research can be best summed up by Chris Hedges who writes that 'the peace and prosperity of the last 62 years has left us without thought for the victims of war or those that suffer in its aftermath'..[498]

Appendix 1.

Additional Notes on International Widows and Veterans

With so many countries involved in the conflicts of the 20th Century it is important to have a comparative understanding of how all countries treat military widows and disabled personnel. This appendix offers an international perspective to allow a clearer understanding that Britain was not alone in the treatment of its military widows and ex-servicemen and that throughout the world very few countries recognise that these groups existed either during or at the end of a conflict.

Between 1900 and 2018 there have been forty-two major conflicts and two World Wars, all of which involved Britain and its NATO allies. Alongside this Britain has dealt with numerous colonial conflicts and Irish Independence almost all of which have required military intervention. In addition since 1945 over 500,000 people have been killed and 1,000,000 wounded in the more than thirty localised wars fought each year throughout the world.[499] During the last 100 years the press, historians and many of the individuals recounting their participation have recorded almost every incident of the conflicts but rarely within these testaments are the more than 187 million deaths clearly quantified or documented.[500] Almost all of those killed were innocent non-combatant victims whose deaths were caused by unquantifiable religious hatred, covetous ambition or arrogant pride.[501]

The Treaty of Versailles defined that the responsibility for compensating invalid veterans and the widows lay with each of the Allied or Central Power Governments.[502] When the first global industrial conflict ended in 1918 some 65,000,000 men had been mobilised, leaving over nineteen million widows and disabled soldiers to have their loss or service defined and valued in monetary terms by their respective governments.[503] While the £26 billion incurred in Allied military expenditure between 1914-18 was definable, the cost of supporting war widows and the disabled was indeterminate and of great long term concern. This debt would significantly influence the value attributed to disabled veterans and widows. The payments made were dependent on which country they resided in and whether they were victors or vanquished. This issue was to repeat after WW2, and then after almost every other conflict, when both veterans and widows would see their contribution valued, not in terms of their sacrifice, but in a monetary value established by their nation. In almost every country engaged in the two global conflicts of the 20th Century, the sacrifice of disabled servicemen and the widowed was quickly forgotten within the increasing social burdens of the post-war State, where governments concentrated on the demands of the living who were ultimately financing reconstruction. John Todd argues that a war pension should 'compensate individuals for their participation' but this assumes that 'there is a societal acceptance of the long-term financial implications of such a policy'.[504] For those that return from a conflict, the State often has the desirous intention to reward or compensate those who participated. If victorious, that desire is immediate but may not actually be achieved in reality. Public opinion is often roused to pressurise governments into ensuring that the men and women returning

from battle have their service recognised but this acknowledgement rarely translates into actual monetary appreciation for the veterans or their families. Paul Taylor writes that 'The public just doesn't understand the military. Seven-in-ten veterans say the public has an incomplete appreciation of the rewards and benefits of military service.' Luhr also quantifies this when writing about the defeated post-WW2 German veterans 'there is no public adulation only embarrassment at the humiliation of losing. No parades are there to welcome them; no one even seems to notice them or welcome their sacrifice.'[505]

Russia, which would evolve into the Soviet Union, would twice see its homeland devastated by German invasion. The fall of the Tsar in 1917 brought Russia's participation in WW1 to an end leaving more than 5 million dead or wounded. The new Soviet government refused to recognise Tsarist military service which meant no income for any of the widows or disabled veterans.[506] The global conflict was then replaced by four years of civil war which absorbed another 8 million lives as well as adding another two million widows and an unknown number of disabled. With the dawning of the second great conflict the Soviet Union's initial alliance with Germany, in the 1939 invasion of Poland, was reversed when Hitler's armies marched into Russia in 1941. The ethnic cleansing of Slavs and Jews would see between 15 and 20 million die alongside some 10 million military personnel.[507] The ending of war left over 2 million widows and 3.5 million disabled veterans all of whom were dependent on the State.[508] Stalin guaranteed paternalistic care for all those who defended the motherland but the euphoria promising of a welfare policy, that did not exclude the

weakest groups in society simply because they were less productive or unproductive, was short lived.[509] The voices of widows and disabled veterans were lost as the post-war economy sought to combat food shortages and official's lives were even more dependent on meeting production targets.[510] This attitude was again reflected during and after the ten year Soviet-Afghan war, which commenced in 1979, and its attempt to both distance itself from the war and hide the number killed. The Soviet government announced in 1988 that the war had cost 13,310 dead and 35,478 wounded but it is strongly believed that this figure has been deflated and the true death toll has been over 100,000 killed and 400,000 wounded.[511] Alongside the Soviet forces rarely is mention made of the Afghan men who died either fighting the Soviet forces or the Taliban. In 2001 the Afghan Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, estimated that there are more than 500,000 military widows in Afghanistan. None of these widows receives any payment from the Afghan government, their survival is totally dependent on family or external support. Afghanistan has the highest number of war widows, proportionate to population, in the world.[512]

At the end of WW2 Japan had in excess of 1.2 million military widows; none of whom received any benefit from the Japanese government, their pensions having been suspended after defeat in September 1945 and were not reintroduced until 1952.[513] These women relied solely on their families to survive, if they had that support structure to fall back upon. In the first four post-war years over 400,000 widows died either from malnutrition, disease or chose suicide rather than face the humiliation and

shame of surviving after the death of their spouse.[514] Alongside the widows, many disabled soldiers committed 'Seppuku' rather than live with the shame that they had failed to die in battle.[515] In 1952 the War Widows of Japan charity was established to assist the country's remaining widows but it would be another ten years, despite the reintroduction of military pensions, before Japan fully recognised the problem facing war widows and their families.[516] Society's remuneration to a widow or disabled veteran was and is significantly less than that achievable if the individual was able-bodied or if their spouse had survived.

In many Muslim countries which formed the Ottoman Empire widows were shunned and disowned even amongst their own families. To maintain their honour they were often forced to marry any available man, whatever his age to preserve the honour of their name. Women were given absolutely no say in the choice of partners. Even after the formation of Turkey in 1923, the situation for widows was bleak. There has been very little research on the number of casualties both during and after WW1, but is estimated that, including civilians deaths, the Empire suffered approximately 5 million casualties which created more than 1 million widows. These women had to first survive the global war and then a post-conflict country stricken with unrest and civil war. Estimates put the number of women who died from disease and malnutrition in the period 1919 to 1925 at greater than 800,000. How many of these were war widows is unknown.

For those men of the Indian Subcontinent who served and died in both global wars society would treat widows even more severely. Childless Hindu women were taken to the nearest river, their vermilion mark removed and a new husband sought on the day that the death notification was received.[517] The problem for widows with children posed even greater difficulty on three fronts. Firstly the caste system limited available suitors with single virginal women favoured over all others. Secondly, some castes prohibited remarriage despite the 1856 Hindu Marriage Act giving them the right to do so (having a law does no necessarily make it enforceable) and finally the concept that the death of the husband was the result of the sins incurred in a previous life deterred any possible suitors. Lucy Carrol writes that 'The widow was doomed to a life of prayer, fasting, and drudgery, unwelcome at the celebrations and auspicious occasions that are so much a part of Hindu family and community life, her lot was scarcely to be envied.'[518] For the disabled ex-servicemen the situation was unimaginable as there was no institutional care with the first home to cater for the handicapped not being built until 1946; even then this home could only accommodate 75 men. Hindu society had little compassion for the disabled with many unmarried men forced into begging to survive.

In Japan a woman's status was defined by her husband. On death that status was lost with widows both pilloried and stigmatised, forced to undertake the most menial and degrading occupations to survive.[519] Irene Taeuber quantifies when writing that within Japanese society's hierarchical structure, 'economic activity and social role were products of marital status rather than determinants of it.'[520] Diels also notes a similar

attitude in Germany when analysing the treatment of veterans and war widows in the inter-war period. Between 1919 and 1923 the Weimar Government took control of veteran's affairs which were initially generous but once hyperinflation took over these were devalued.[521] It was left to the various neo-political charities to provide for the veteran and widows.[522] After 1924 both these groups were effectively forgotten until the rise of the Nazi party in 1930 who then sought their votes 'claiming that it (Germany) had victimized the heroes of the war by robbing them of victory then stabbing them in the back and treating them as second-class citizens'.[523] The National Socialist Government provided veterans with a new generous pension structure but the veterans and widows then became a target of hatred as 'people resented the veterans and looked at them as greedy or self-absorbed due to their pension plans'.[524]

In France, war widows were left to fend for themselves or be buried in a bureaucracy unwilling to accept the consequence of the war other than blaming Germany. The legislation of March 1919, which laid the foundations by which disabled veterans were compensated, was characterised as 'a law of public solidarity, ensuring the support of the nation to the disabled, the widowed, and the orphaned of the most deadly war in history.'[525] But this legislation, 'was so complex as to be incomprehensible even to the bureaucrats who administered it'.[526] Bartov writes that in desperation war widows who had been ignored by the administration were turning to violence against bureaucrats because of the time taken to process claims, which was particularly prevalent where men died in the interwar period from injuries sustained during the War.[527]

Even the United States which had passed 19 Acts of Congress at the end of the war significantly increasing medical aid and benefits for the living, disabled and widowed also started to forget those who had gone to war. The American Legion at their 2015 conference on America's participation in WW1 noted that 'The war created 4.7 million veterans and many later suffered suicide, homelessness, unemployment and drug addiction – these things all kept happening'.[528] This problem had been noted earlier in a 1918 Ohio Newspaper,

> 'veterans have not received the care and assistance they need to reintegrate into society and gain financial stability for their families. Unfortunately, unemployment and poor housing conditions are realities for many veterans'[529]

In parallel to Britain, American charity organisations took the lead in assisting disabled veterans. The rehabilitation programmes introduced by the American Red Cross, Disabled Veterans of the World War, The Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men and the American Legion would retrain 330,000 men, offering them a chance of employment which they might otherwise have been denied.[530] The Government's policy towards veterans was initially limited to a nationwide poster campaign asking veterans to behave in civilian life after their discharge and to seek employment which would allow them to continue to contribute to their nation. All the military personnel and widows became the 'forgotten heroes of WW1' in a society which prides success on achieving the 'American

Dream'.[531] For the disabled veterans they were left with too little time to achieve this. Many were lucky to survive the average post-war life expectancy of just seven years, frequently seeing this shortened by a life of poverty and despair.

Appendix 2.

War Memorial	Attendance at War Memorials on Remembrance Sunday 2014-2019					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Aldershot	350	500	700	500	1200	350
Banstead	90	70	120	150	400	80
Bookham	60	110	170	160	650	70
Buckland	30	40	70	60	190	40
Capel	42	40	85	60	400	50
Camberley	110	150	240	200	700	90
Dorking	200	180	320	250	800	200
Epsom	290	260	380	240	750	260
Kingston	300	260	400	400	900	280
Oxshott	50	50	80	60	250	40
Surbiton	120	120	200	150	700	100

Over 40 Royal British Legion Branches were contacted to provide information on attendance at Remembrance Sunday. Only the above provided data.

Appendix 3 WW1 Casualties

The Following charts independently detail information on WW1 casualties.

Country	Total Mobilized Forces	Killed and Died	Wounded	Missing	total casualties	percentage of mobilized force
Allied Powers						
Russia	12,000,000	1,700,000	4,950,000	2,500,000	9,150,000	76
British Empire	8,904,467	908,371	2,090,212	191,652	3,190,235	36
France	8,410,000	1,357,800	4,266,000	537,000	6,160,800	73
Italy	5,615,000	650,000	947,000	600,000	2,197,000	39
United States	4,355,000	116,516	204,002	4,500	323,018	8
Japan	800,000	300	907	3	1,210	0
Romania	750,000	335,706	120,000	80,000	535,706	71
Serbia	707,343	45,000	133,148	152,958	331,106	47
Belgium	267,000	13,716	44,686	34,659	93,061	35
Greece	230,000	5,000	21,000	1,000	27,000	12
Portugal	100,000	7,222	13,751	12,318	33,291	33
Montenegro	50,000	3,000	10,000	7,000	20,000	40
total	42,188,810	5,142,631	12,800,706	4,121,090	22,064,427	52
Central Powers						
Germany	11,000,000	1,773,700	4,216,058	1,152,800	7,142,558	65
Austria-Hungary	7,800,000	1,200,000	3,620,000	2,200,000	7,020,000	90
Ottoman Empire	2,850,000	325,000	400,000	250,000	975,000	34
Bulgaria	1,200,000	87,500	152,390	27,029	266,919	22
total	22,850,000	3,386,200	8,388,448	3,629,829	15,404,477	67
Grand total	65,038,810	8,528,831	21,189,154	7,750,919	37,468,904	58

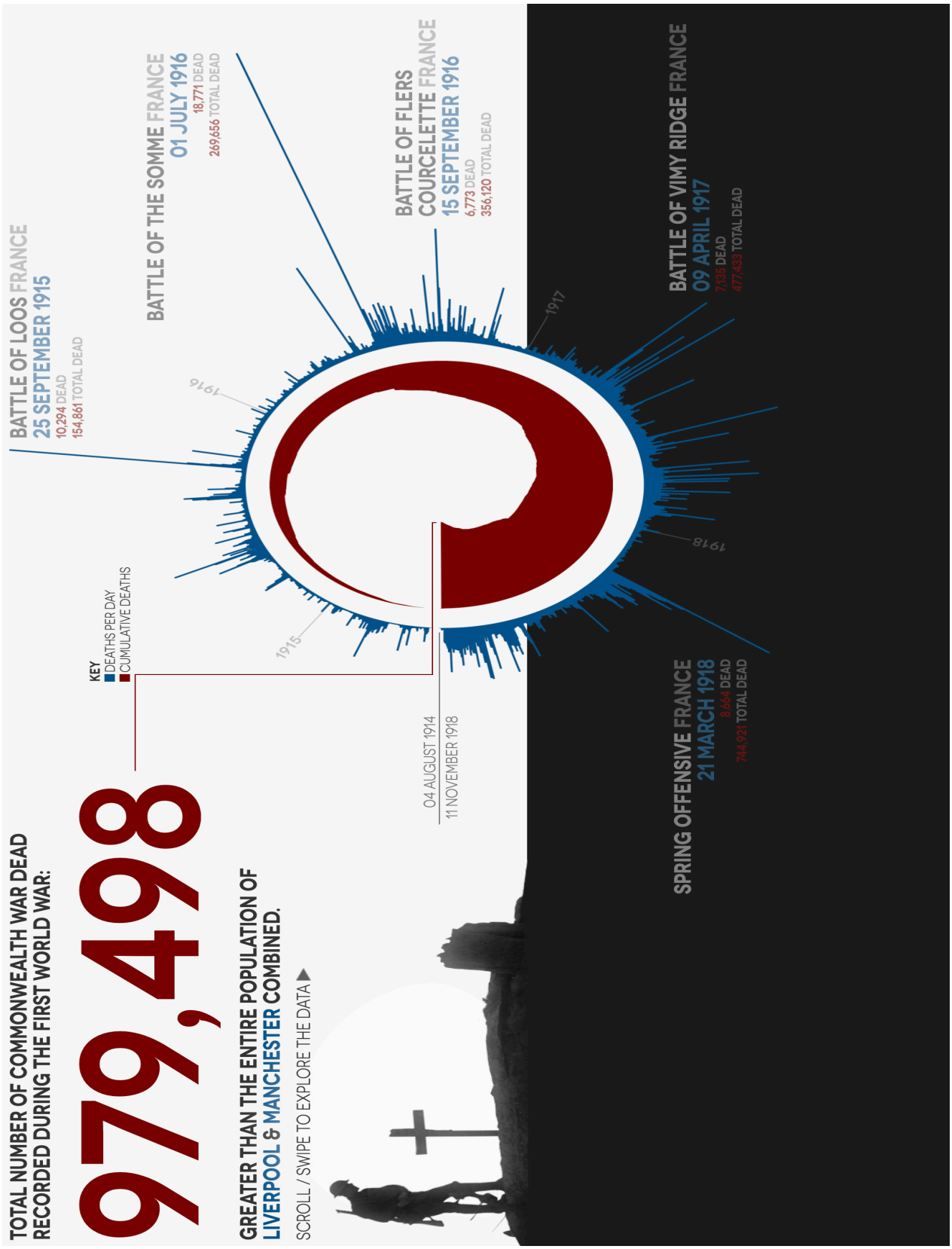
As reported by the U.S. War Department in February 1924. U.S. casualties as amended by the Statistical Services Center, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Nov. 7, 1957.

https://www.britannica.com/event/World-War-I/Killed-wounded-and-missing

Country	Troops	Deaths	Casualty	Civilian Dead	Widows	Orphans
Germany and Allies						
Austria-Hungary	7,800,000	922,500	3,620,000	300,000	260,000	
Bulgaria	1,200,000	101,344	152,390	275,000		
Germany	11,000,000	1,808,546	4,247,143	760,000	525,000	1,130,000
Ottoman Empire	2,850,000	325,000	400,000	2,150,000		
Total	22,850,000	3,157,390	8,419,533	3,485,000		

Country	Troops	Military KIA	Military WIA	Civilian Dead		
America	4,743,826	120,144	198,059	---	33,000	
Belgium	267,000	13,715	44,686	30,000		
British Empire1	8,904,467	908,371	2,090,212	30,633	240,000 BRITAIN ONLY	
France	8,410,000	1,365,735	4,266,000	40,000	720,000	1,100,000
Greece	230,000	5,000	21,000	132,000		
Italy	5,615,000	462,391	953,886	---	200,000	
Japan	800,000	300	907	---		
Montenegro	50,000	3,000	10,000	---		
Portugal	65,166	7,222	13,751	---		
Romania	750,000	335,706	120,000	275,000		
Russia	12,000,000	1,700,000	4,950,000	2,000,000		
Serbia	707,343	125,000	133,148	650,000		
Total	42,542,802	5,046,584	12,801,649	3,157,633		
Combined Total	65,392,802	8,203,974	21,221,182	6,642,633	0	0

Appendix 4 **Total Commonwealth War Dead**



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