

# The Funny Side of War: British Cartoons, Visual Humour and the Great War

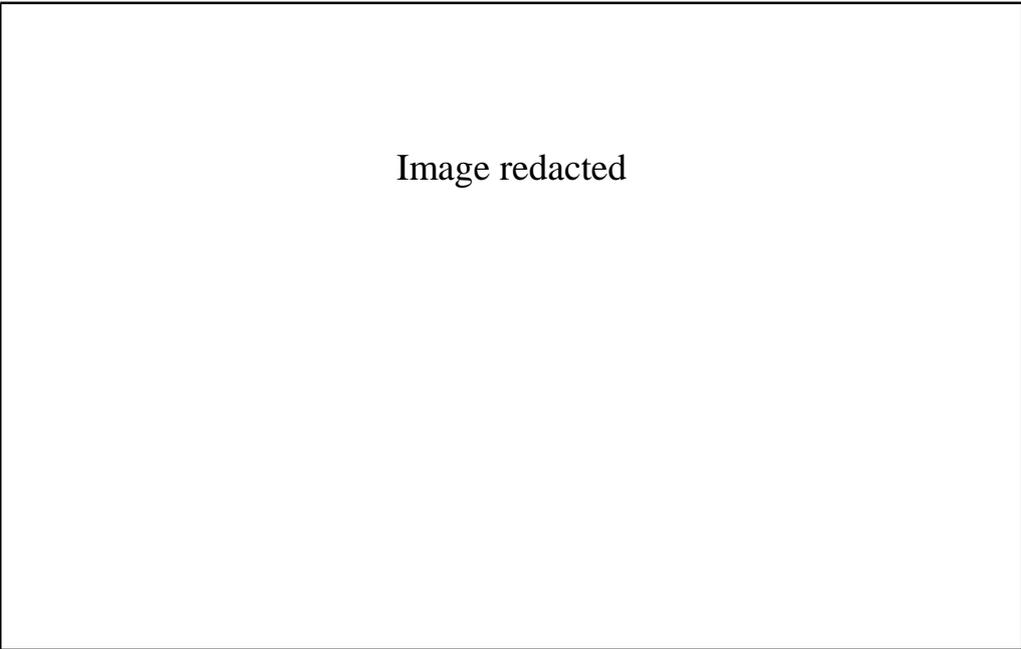


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This thesis is submitted in accordance with the regulations for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

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VOLUME 1

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Dear Reader,

be blind to the faults,  
which are many,  
and look with kind eye on the  
humour, if any.

The Artists<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>BCA, Uncatalogued, *Outbursts from Waterloo[se] House*, 1917.

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## Abstract

This thesis examines cartoons and the humour they express throughout the Great War of 1914-1918. Its aim is to highlight the relevance of visual material in an historical context, to draw upon humour as an insight to cultural moods and attitudes in wartime, and to bring an interdisciplinary approach to the cultural history of the Great War. To do this it will highlight the humour of different British cartoonists in selected newspapers and publications throughout the war and beyond. Primarily it will take a thematic and qualitative approach to visual topics expressed in cartoons analysing their connections to the rest of wartime society. Visual interpretations of public controls, entertainment, avoidance of social duty and comparisons between soldier and civilian responses to the war will be analysed. All of which will look to the use of humour in society relating to these topics in the context of war. Thereafter, the thesis will combine these themes into a formation of memory termed 'commercial' reflecting images and in turn memories sold to the public through cartoons.

The thesis crosses areas of historical inquiry generating a new dialogue with the cultural history of the Great War, developing ideas of humour, media studies and visual source investigation. War, humour and newspapers are consistent points of reference throughout, combined with a broader historiography as appropriate. Cartoon sources provide the visual basis of the investigation, alongside news articles and reference to official data where applicable. Overall, the interdisciplinary dialogue created between the historiographies of war, humour and visual media promote developing historical investigations, newly bound together in an understanding of the commercial memory of humorous wartime cartoons.

# Abbreviations

AIF = Australian Imperial Force

BCA = British Cartoon archive

PF = Percy Fearon, “Poy”

WD = Will Dyson

WH = William Haselden

BEF = British Expeditionary Force

BFI = British Film Institute

BL = British Library

CUP = Cambridge University Press

DORA = Defence of the Realm Act

HMSO = His/Her Majesty’s Stationary Office

IWM = Imperial War Museum

EPH = Ephemeral Material

PST = Poster Collection

WA = War Correspondence

JES = *Journal of European Studies*

MLA = Modern Language Association

MUP = Manchester University Press

NAM = National Army Museum

ODNB = *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

OUP = Oxford University Press

PB = Press Bureau

RUSI = *Royal United Services Institute Journal*

SC = Special Collections (Templeman library, Kent)

MEL = Melville Collection

TNA = The National Archives

CAB = Cabinet office

CO = Colonial Office

DEFE = Defence office

HC = House of Commons

HL = House of Lords

HO = Home Office

INF = Ministry of Information

MEPO = Metropolitan Police Office

MH = Ministry of health

MUN = Ministry of Munitions and Successors

WO = War Office

WFA = Western Front Association

WI = Women's Institute

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# Introduction

War and humour; seemingly incongruent, are nevertheless, ever-present features of society, which makes their mutual study so relevant. When combined with cartoons as an element of visual history, and a strong indicator for the humorous mentality of the time, a newer approach to their study can be investigated. Interdisciplinary approaches increasingly drive historians to use different source materials and methodologies in order to present new perspectives.<sup>1</sup> An analysis of cartoons and the humour they express therefore provides insight to contemporary feelings and attitudes. When these cartoons are located within a period of vast turmoil, the Great War, these insights are expanded further. This thesis seeks to broaden historical dialogues in the context of the Great War. To do this, it will touch on aspects of censorship and control, advertising and the theatre, social critique, military morale and civilian distance in war and the progress of memory and commemoration. By adhering to a developing tradition of investigation into humour and emotion, it also combines visual history with cultural approaches to war and media studies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> For history of emotion, see for example Peter Stearns and Carol Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *American Historical Review*, 90:4 (1985), pp. 813-36; Barbara Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *American Historical Review*, 107:3 (2002), pp. 821-45; 'Forum: History of Emotions', *German History*, 28:1 (2010), pp. 68-80.

Cartoons from the Great War present many layers of humour to contend with, which is where the interdisciplinary approach of this research becomes essential. A popular cartoon that encapsulates this approach, 'He Who Laughs Longest', shows an heroic British Tommy chasing the enemy who is behind a cloud that obscures all but his feet. Through this, a cultural perception of both sides of the conflict is illustrated in a dramatic media representation (figure 1.1). The visual humour of the situation of war is instantly apparent, with a British soldier striding forth to combat an apparently negligent enemy who runs away.<sup>3</sup> Here the enemy's theatrical invisibility creates opportunity for the viewer to embody him with traits of negligence as they see fit.<sup>4</sup> It allows them to laugh at his retreat with superiority, as the idealised British soldier would not run away in the same manner. Additionally, the accompanying texts highlight specific features of war, and are used as signposts to add clarity to the icons and themes visually presented.<sup>5</sup> Far more of the combined use of text and image and their inseparability in cartoon will become apparent through this thesis. Various links to public awareness can be inferred through the slight adaption of the recognisable caption 'he who laughs last, laughs longest'. The use of well-known proverbs connects the media to its audience through presumed understanding of the detail. Furthermore, instantly recognisable contemporary features are embedded where it speaks of the 'contemptible little army', a term superimposed on the Kaiser, and as such, jokes are made of these elements for the cartoon's audience.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Helen McCartney, 'Hero, Victim or Villain?: The Public Image of the British Soldier and its Implications for Defence Policy', *Defence and Security Analysis*, 27:1 (2011), pp. 43-54.

<sup>4</sup> Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994), pp. 29-33, 100-101.

<sup>5</sup> See James Hoopes, *Peirce on Signs: Writings on Semiotic by Charles Sanders Peirce* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

<sup>6</sup> See Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London and Oxford: OUP, 1975), p. 116.

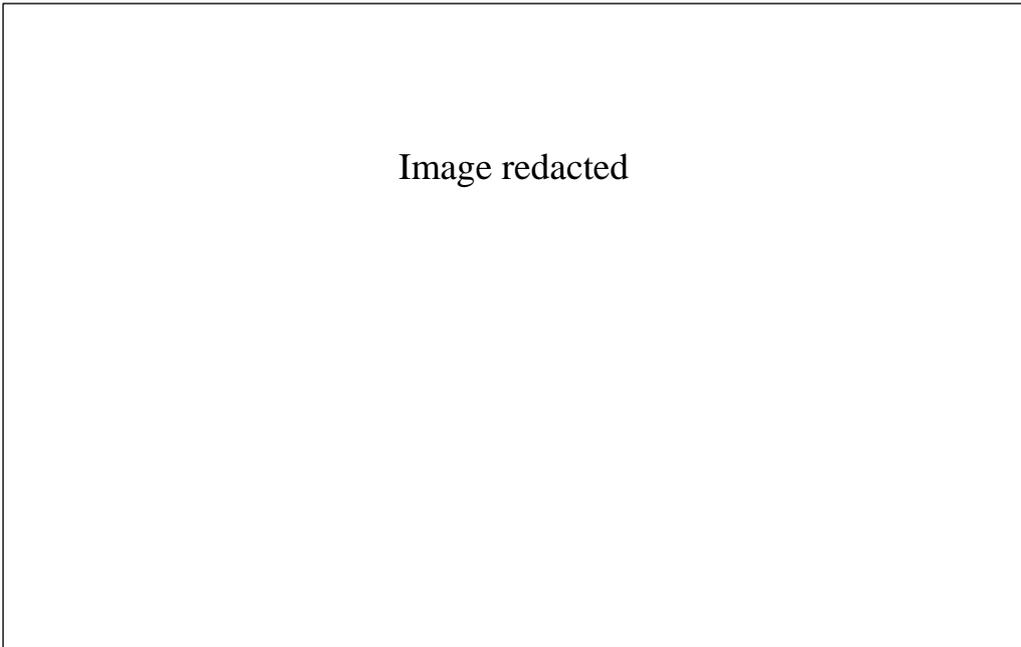


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**(Figure 1.1) Jack Walker, ‘He Laughs Longest who Laughs Last’, *Special War Cartoons*, 1914**

Taking such an approach to the material investigated requires engagement with the historiography on several different levels. A three-pronged approach will be taken throughout the thesis, the first of which is the vast historiography of the Great War itself. Secondly, an examination of the wider interdisciplinary literature of humour with an historical focus will be addressed. Much of this will also correspond with stage performance and theatrical comedy.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the literature of media studies and in particular the visual content of newspapers and their reception will be explored. Analysis of these strands of literature and the material they cover lie at the centre of this thesis’ investigation. Additional layers to the historiography reveal further thematic connections, which will inform the specific chapters that follow.

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<sup>7</sup> For more specific details of the theatre, see chapter 2.

Each of these three-pronged approaches to the overall historiography holds their own subdivisions. To begin with, the historiography of the Great War is vast and expansive, and one which has generally been seen to fall into three ‘formations’.<sup>8</sup> Of these, aspects that look to diplomatic and political histories of the war and the development of social history are of less significance to this thesis, but will be used at times for their relevance.<sup>9</sup> The third ‘formation’ originated in the 1990s with the ‘cultural turn’. Instigated by the release of more war-related documentation it has been embodied through newer developing historical journals.<sup>10</sup> Jay Winter and Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau were instrumental in promulgating this cultural turn and developing it further.<sup>11</sup> International perspectives were taken, beginning in the French *Annales* or *longue durée* tradition that provided views of collective ‘*mentalités*’ about the war over a longer duration.<sup>12</sup> This saw a movement away from social aspects of individuals towards cultural-theoretical approaches regarding people’s attitudes to the war in groups. Naturally, this style of analysis has faced considerable criticism, particularly (and perhaps ironically) from Carlo Ginzburg, who criticises its more ‘unfounded’

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<sup>8</sup> Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), pp. 6-33.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, Richard William Alan Onslow, *Sixty-Three Years: Diplomacy, the Great War and Politics* (London and New York: Hutchinson, 1945); James Edmonds and Henry Rudolph Davies, *Military Operations Italy, 1915-1919* (London: HMSO, 1949); Jean Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1986); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 1981).

<sup>10</sup> Adrian Gregory, *War of Peoples*, p. 183; also see *Twentieth Century British History*, (1990-2016); *Oral History Review*, (1973-2016); *German History*, (1984-2016).

<sup>11</sup> Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998); Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War, 1914-1918: National Sentiment and Trench Journalism in France during the First World War*, trans. Helen McPhail (Oxford: Berg, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006 ); Peter Burke, ‘Strengths and Weaknesses of the History of Mentalities’, *History of European Ideas*, 7:5 (1986), pp. 439-51; Michael Howard, ‘The Great War and the *Mentalité* of 1914’, *RUSI Journal*, 159:4 (2014), pp. 14-16.

subjective approach to wider populations.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, it continues to hold significant strength in the academic community.

The cultural approach to war history observes the culture of the time, constantly incorporating new sources, including contemporary ones and those made since through the commemoration of war. All new sources and their analysis serve to illustrate the cultural *mentalité* of the moment. Memory, and in particular collective and personal memories, became a key issue of this development, again taking its own three-stage subdivision of the historiography. Memories of war are vast, and continue to be made daily, however, the predominant approaches have looked to official documentation first, then to the people and finally towards the cultural significance of physical items that embody the memory of war.<sup>14</sup>

Modern studies of the First World War continue to mature, and in light of the centenary 2014-18, more interest has been directed towards it.<sup>15</sup> The historiography and methods incorporated today seek to combine aspects of the political, social and cultural depending on the particular focus undertaken. This builds upon an interdisciplinary approach, which is signified by calling it First World War studies rather than just history. Within the wider historiography of the Great War, humour, especially in relation to troop morale, has been the subject of investigation, although as a means of broader wartime interpretation, this is an area still very much in its infancy.<sup>16</sup> This work, therefore, through its extensive interdisciplinary engagement

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<sup>13</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths and the Historical Method* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), pp. vii-xiv.

<sup>14</sup> See Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; Modris Eksteins, *The Rites of Spring: The Great War and the British Modern Age* (London: Bantam, 1989); Winter, *Sites of Memory*.

<sup>15</sup> See *First World War Studies* (2010-2016).

<sup>16</sup> See John Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), pp. 144-48; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 115; Alexander Watson, *Enduring the Great War: Combat, Morale and Collapse in the German and British Armies, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), p. 7.

seeks to make a contribution toward recent developments of history and humour in relation to First World War studies.<sup>17</sup>

When looking at literature concerning humour, studies have again been vibrant and expansive, crossing disciplines from philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, politics, media studies, performance and drama.<sup>18</sup> In philosophical terms, there is the question of why we laugh, while psychology asks what purpose it serves more generally.<sup>19</sup> Then in recent years, an historical interest in humour has begun to develop more significantly.<sup>20</sup> Through philosophy and psychology, humour is looked at in terms of cognitive value and biological features, whereas in history, it sits across these divisions, and is illustrative of the time in which the humour was created, particularly when politically inspired.<sup>21</sup> Further to this, theatrical studies of humorous performance equally cross the separation between why and how audiences laugh. As such, they can clarify both practice and purpose in society demonstrating how humour was created for particular groups, equally providing insight to why

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<sup>17</sup> See ‘Special Edition: War in the Twentieth Century’, *JES*, 31 (2001); Clémentine Tholas-Disset and Karen A. Ritzenhoff (eds.), *Humour, Entertainment, and Popular Culture during World War I* (London: Palgrave, 2015); Jakub Kazecki, *Laughter in the Trenches: Humour and Front Experience in German First World War Narratives* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2012).

<sup>18</sup> See John Morreall (ed.), *Philosophy of Laughter and Humour* (New York: New York State University Press, 1986); Jeffery Goldstein and Paul McGhee, *The Psychology of Humour: Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Issue* (New York: Academic Press, 1972); Michael Billig, *Laughter and Ridicule: Towards a Social Critique of Humour* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005); Martina Kessel and Patrick Merziger (eds.), *The Politics of Humour: Laughter, Inclusion, and Exclusion in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2011); Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenberg (eds.), *A Cultural History of Humour: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Polity, 1997).

<sup>19</sup> Morreall, *Philosophy of Laughter*; Goldstein and McGhee, *Psychology of Humour*.

<sup>20</sup> See Mary Beard, *Laughter in Ancient Rome: On Joking, Tickling and Cracking Up* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Elisabeth Cheauré and Regine Noheji (eds.), *Humour and Laughter in History: Transcultural Perspectives* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2014); Barbara Korte and Doris Lechner (eds.), *History and Humour: British and American Perspectives* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2013); also see F. K. M. Hillenbrand, *Underground Humour in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> See A. A. Berger, ‘The Politics of Laughter’, in George Paton, Chris Powell and Stephen Wagg (eds.), *The Social Faces of Humour; Practices and Issues* (Aldershot: Arena, 1996), pp. 15-29.

humour was appropriate at these times, which will be demonstrated as this thesis progresses.

Humour is a vastly complex faculty of human life that is difficult to define precisely. Academic disciplines have explored many layers to its conception and reasons for its use. Humour is defined as the cause of laughter across these disciplines, even though the resulting degree can vary. Additionally, it combines other terms inside its sphere of definition. Wit, mockery, farce, comedy, hilarity, satire, mirth and joking all have varied purposes of expression. However, they are used interchangeably although some are more specific in their meaning, while humour remains the predominant collective term here.<sup>22</sup> Humour's creation is typically explained in one of three ways, through incongruity, superiority or relief.<sup>23</sup> Incongruity; when things appear out of place in a specific context, superiority; when humour makes one group appear, or feel superior to another, or relief to the tensions of a situation.<sup>24</sup>

The incongruity formation of humour is the most prevalent, with laughter coming from or leading towards some form of incongruence.<sup>25</sup> Previously, assumptions held that any single concept, idea or visual representation out of place could create incongruous humour for an observer. Recent debate has reconsidered the embodiment of simultaneous incongruities developed through television and film studies that show more than one thing out of place at a time.<sup>26</sup> Multiple incongruities in a single frame

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<sup>22</sup> For clarity of definitions, see John Young Thomas Greig, *The Psychology of Laughter and Comedy* (London: George Allen Unwin, 1923).

<sup>23</sup> Billig, *Laughter and Ridicule*, pp. 37-110; Simon Critchley, *On Humour* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 2-3.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Gulas and Marc Weinberger, *Humour in Advertising: A Comprehensive Analysis* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2006), pp. 22-3.

<sup>25</sup> Peter Berger, *Redeeming Laughter: The Comic Dimension of Human Experience* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), p. 208.

<sup>26</sup> James Williams, 'Keynote: Jolt, Flash, Tinge, and Oose', at 'Comedy and Critical Thought: Laughter as Resistance', University of Kent, Canterbury, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016; Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema* (London: Continuum, 2009).

are easily noted in visual cartoon humour and build on this idea. Superiority, by contrast, has distant origins through ancient speeches made to endorse or denounce political counterparts, and this historical strand is still visible through to the cartoons of the Great War.<sup>27</sup> There remains a visible sense of promotion or demotion of certain characters in cartoon for political or social reasons. Superiority can be inverted in cartoon adding an element of incongruity to the humour by demonstrating how people are not as important as they should be.<sup>28</sup> By making one element superior to another, a sense of the ‘other’ is created for one who is inferior. This can simultaneously be seen as a form of separation between ‘them’ and ‘us’, or as a binding factor for the groups on either side.<sup>29</sup>

Relief as the final major facet of humour is appropriate in the context of war as a way of relieving the tensions of conflict, indeed this is often how it has been presented in recent literature with a humorous focus.<sup>30</sup> It does suggest, however, more of an instantaneous break from the situation, which is sometimes harder to identify in a cartoon without rapid movement of any sort. Nonetheless, mobility can be identified in cartoons through additional symbols used to represent movement.<sup>31</sup> Relief ‘theory’ initially presented by sociologist Herbert Spencer and developed further by Sigmund

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<sup>27</sup> Billig, *Laughter and Ridicule*, pp. 40-45.

<sup>28</sup> Charles Press, *The Political Cartoon* (London and Toronto: Associate University Press, 1981), p. 227; Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith, *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture* (New York and London: Continuum, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> W. A. Elliott, *Us and Them: A Study of Group Consciousness* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986); Delia Chiaro, ‘Cultural Divide or Unifying Factory? Humorous Talk in the Interaction of Bilingual, Cross-Cultural Couples’, in Neal R. Norrick and Delia Chiaro (eds.), *Humour in Interaction* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2009), pp. 211-32.

<sup>30</sup> See Edward Madigan, “‘Sticking to a Hateful Task’: Resilience, Humour, and British Understandings of Combatant Courage, 1914-1918”, *War in History*, 20:1 (2013), pp. 76-98; Tim Cook, “‘I Will Meet the World with a Smile and a Joke’”, Canadian Soldiers’ Humour in the Great War’, *Canadian Military History*, 22:2 (2015), pp. 48-62; Linda Henman, ‘Humour as a Coping Mechanism: Lessons from POWs’, *Humour*, 14:1 (2001), pp. 83-94;

<sup>31</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 107-15; Duncan and Smith, *Power of Comics*, pp. 128-9.

Freud implies instantaneous relief found in humour.<sup>32</sup> Even so, Freud's analysis considers a slower response to stimuli too. As such, it can be something that offers comfort rather than rapid relief from war tensions, which is evident through, images by Bruce Bairnsfather an iconic cartoonist of both world wars.<sup>33</sup> This thesis, acknowledges that humour by being 'both playful and serious' at the same time, makes explicit definitions difficult to come by. However, challenges from this offer the historian greater insight to humour in different situations, illustrating both the good and the bad together.<sup>34</sup> This is perhaps most evident in explicitly humorous cartoons as these are visually evocative of both the positive and negative in society through their engagement with humour.

Drawing the historiography of war and humour literature together, scholars are beginning to look at this in more academic and less popular terms.<sup>35</sup> Some debate has developed surrounding wartime humour as a 'weapon of war', although much of this appears in one of two ways; as a weapon against the enemy, or a weapon against the self as a form of 'coping strategy'. Much of the discussion in a special issue of the *Journal of European Studies* in 2001 surrounds these ideas.<sup>36</sup> One of the authors, Christian Delporte identifies humour as a propaganda strategy while Andrew Robertshaw speaks of humour as an aid to survival, a theme also briefly addressed by Roger Chickering in his 2007 monograph on the urban home front.<sup>37</sup> Contrastingly,

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<sup>32</sup> See Herbert Spencer, 'The Physiology of Laughter', *Progress: Its Law and Cause with other Disquisitions* (New York: J. Fitzgerald, 1881), pp. 253-8; Sigmund Freud, 'Humour', *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 9 (1928), pp. 1-6.

<sup>33</sup> See Billig, *Laughter and Ridicule*, pp. 86-91.

<sup>34</sup> Henk Driessen, 'Humour, Laughter and the Field: Reflections from Anthropology', in Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenberg (eds.), *A Cultural History of Humour: from Antiquity to the Present Day* (Cambridge, Mass: Polity, 1997), p. 222.

<sup>35</sup> See Jan Rüger, 'Laughter and War in Berlin', *History Workshop Journal*, 67 (2009), pp. 23-43; Kessel and Merziger, *Politics of Humour* also see Keith Cameron, *Humour and History* (Oxford: Intellect, 1993).

<sup>36</sup> 'War in the Twentieth Century', *JES*, 31 (2001).

<sup>37</sup> Christian Delporte, 'Humour as a Strategy in Propaganda Film: the Case of a French Cartoon from 1914', *JES*, 31 (2001), pp. 367-77; Andrew Robertshaw, 'Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?'

others such as Christie Davies comment on how humour was not a strategy in war, and as such cannot be seen as a weapon at all.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Paul Fussell speaks of the humour of war in terms of it being innately ironic as war never goes as well as one might anticipate or hope for, although much of this is spoken of in terms of the memory of war.<sup>39</sup>

Humour ‘defuses tension’ in groups, and equally empowers the purveyor, as making others laugh gives them perceived power or agency regardless of the context, which many soldiers used for their own survival.<sup>40</sup> In the context of war, soldiers needed humour to maintain their social reality and sense of normalcy where humour served as a means of motivation.<sup>41</sup> Keeping happy and cheerful made the negative sides of war more manageable, things that simply could not be ignored, had to be contended with, and humour made this easier. Humour was therefore a benevolent weapon for soldiers to use on themselves, as a way of finding relief for the tension and drama of the situation.<sup>42</sup> When evaluating cartoon humour during the war, the benevolence for the viewer can be identified, and the relief or comfort of humour is visually insinuated for the audience, be they civilian or soldier.

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Humour as an Aid to Survival’, *JES*, 31 (2001), pp. 277-87; Roger Chickering, *The Great War and Urban Life in Germany: Freiburg, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p. 464.

<sup>38</sup> Christie Davies, ‘Humour is Not a Strategy in War’, *JES*, 31 (2001), pp. 395-412.

<sup>39</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 7-18. For ideas of representation, Fussell is very useful, in terms of military facts and details, more questions have been asked of his work. See Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, ‘Paul Fussell at War’, *War in History*, 1 (1994), pp. 63-80.

<sup>40</sup> Valerie Holman and Debra Kelly, ‘Introduction, War in the Twentieth Century: The Function of Humour in Cultural Representation’, *JES*, 31 (2001), p. 256.

<sup>41</sup> Jean-Yves Le Naour, ‘Laughter and Tears in the Great War: The Need for Laughter/the Guilt of Humour’, *JES*, 31 (2001), pp. 265-75; Alexander Watson, ‘Self-Deception and Survival: Mental Coping Strategies on the Western Front, 1914–1918’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41:2 (2006), pp. 247-268; also see Philip Percival, ‘Comic Normativity and the Ethics of Humour’, *The Monist*, 88:1 (2005), pp. 93-120.

<sup>42</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 8; Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, p. 281; Freud, ‘Humour’, pp. 1-6.

The final historiographical prong reviewed in this thesis then turns its attention toward the literature of media studies. Much of this is based in visual cartoon media from newspapers, but in order to understand these, a greater appreciation of the history of British newspapers is needed. The historiography identifies newspapers' political standing and approaches to society, to better comprehend the visual humour they present to their readers. Various scholars have shown interest in newspapers and journalism in recent times. Some of these seek to investigate the owners as can be seen through eminent studies of Lord Northcliffe.<sup>43</sup> Others by contrast look more closely at the papers themselves, their politics and location in society.<sup>44</sup> In recent years, additional studies have undertaken to look at less mainstream publications. These include 'trench journals', of particular interest in the advent of the Great War's centenary.<sup>45</sup> These studies highlight aspects of the humour of soldiers who produced such newspapers that catered for 'no tastes but [their] own'.<sup>46</sup> Following what John Fuller has termed a 'trench newspaper fever', almost every troop and battalion created papers adding layers through which they can be examined.<sup>47</sup> Even so, studies of trench journals still do not touch on the cartoons specifically as this thesis seeks to.

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<sup>43</sup> See Roland Pound and G. Harmsworth, *Northcliffe* (London: Cassell, 1959); Adrian Bingham, 'The Original Press Baron: The Role and Legacy of Lord Northcliffe', *Cengage Learning* (2013), pp. 1-7; Peter Catterall, Adrian Smith and Colin Seymour-Ure (eds.), *Northcliffe's Legacy: Aspects of British Popular Press, 1896-1996* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000)

<sup>44</sup> See George Lansbury, *The Miracle of Fleet Street: The Story of the Daily Herald* (London: Victoria House, 1925); Hugh Cudlipp, *Publish and be Damned!: The Astonishing Story of the Daily Mirror* (London: A. Dakers, 1953); David Ayerst, *Guardian: Biography of a Newspaper* (London: Collins, 1971); Dennis Griffiths, *Fleet Street: Five Hundred Years of the Press* (London: British Library, 2006).

<sup>45</sup> See Graham Seal, *The Soldiers' Press: Trench Journals of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); John Pegun, 'British Army Trench Journals and a Geography of Identity', in Mary Hammond and Shafquat Towheed (eds.), *Publishing in the First World War: Essays in Book History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 129-47; Robert Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers of the First World War* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011).

<sup>46</sup> *The Mudhook*, 63<sup>rd</sup> Royal Naval Division, British Expeditionary Force, 1917-18, September 1917, p. 2; also see Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, p. 15.

<sup>47</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, p. 7.

Cartoon and comic media has its own literary basis still intertwined with broader newspaper studies. Predominantly this is concerned with the distinctions between comics and cartoons that have developed from the late 1960s onwards. There has been an evolution in this literature, moving away from studies of nineteenth century caricaturists including Rowlandson and Gillray, through comic books, to televised animation with various diversions to the political cartoon, Japanese manga and graphic novels en route.<sup>48</sup> Of these looking at comics, cartoonist Will Eisner examined ‘sequential art’ and its meaning, that is to say the study of several images in sequence telling a story.<sup>49</sup> Building on Eisner’s work is that of Scott McCloud, who since his first volume, *Understanding Comics* in 1994, has become the standpoint from which others work to either agree or disagree with his theories about cartoons.<sup>50</sup> He considers how they are able to individually tell their own story, how specific aspects of images become recognisable icons for viewers, also how personal background knowledge for the audience alters the cartoon’s interpretation.<sup>51</sup>

Historical studies that focus on cartoons and visual source material are an interesting study in and of themselves. While most researchers use cartoons to support points, some look to the image to create a point. Thus, often images are used simply to describe what can be seen happening without deeper investigation.<sup>52</sup> In contrast, others look to the images to make the points, and substantiate these with additional

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<sup>48</sup> See William Feaver, *Masters of Caricature: From Hogarth and Gillray to Scarf and Levine* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1981); John Geipel, *The Cartoon: A Short History of Graphic Comedy and Satire* (London: David & Charles, 1972); Press, *Political Cartoon*; Roger Sabin, *Comics, Comix and Graphic Novels* (London: Phaidon, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> Will Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2008).

<sup>50</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*; Scott McCloud, *Reinventing Comics: Understanding Sequels* (New York: Paradox, 2000); Scott McCloud, *Making Comics: Story Telling Secrets of Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006).

<sup>51</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 24-59, 94-117.

<sup>52</sup> See Mark Bryant, *The World’s Greatest War Cartoonists and Caricaturists 1792-1945* (London: Grub Street, 2011); Mark Bryant, *World War I in Cartoons* (London: Grub Street, 2006); Mark Bryant, *Napoleonic Wars in Cartoons* (London: Grub Street, 2015).

evidence.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, more historians have begun to explore cartoons recognising their value as indicators, and even shapers of cultural climate and feeling.<sup>54</sup> Nonetheless, a lasting perception that these images are a superficial and ephemeral addition has left them as a visual support and little more for many.<sup>55</sup> In the last decade with scholars such as William Coupe and especially Richard Scully, cartoons have become sources of evidence in their own right.<sup>56</sup> Alongside their work, academic interest in comics is developing and new journals justify interest in the comic sources.<sup>57</sup> Close engagement with cartoons is, therefore, a feature of developing historical exploration that will be kept central to this research.

The use of cartoons as the grounding for argument is less common, but it is the approach taken throughout this thesis with images as the basis. Information about the war and newspaper reportage will be used to explore and substantiate humour in that cartoon evidence. Peter Burke looks in more depth at the value of visual historical sources, and rightly calls them ‘eyewitnesses’ to the events surrounding their production. However, his consideration looks more to classical art forms and modern photographs. Cartoons and caricature are only commented upon in passing for their

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<sup>53</sup> See Eberhard Demm, *Der Erste Weltkrieg in der Internationalen Karikatur* (Hannover: Fackelträger, 1991); Eberhard Demm, ‘Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28:1 (1993), pp. 163-192; Jean-Louis Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 104-132; Nicholas Hiley, ‘“A New and Vital Moral Factor”: Cartoon Book Publishing in Britain during the First World War’, in Mary Hammond and Shafquat Towheed (eds.), *Publishing in the First World War: Essays in Book History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 148-77.

<sup>54</sup> Roy Douglas, *Great Nations Still Enchained: The Cartoonist’s Vision of Empire, 1848-1914* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. vii.

<sup>55</sup> A. J. P. Taylor, *The First World War: An Illustrated History* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963); Clark McCauley, ‘More Aggressive Cartoons are Funnier’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44 (1984), pp. 817-23; Lucinda Gosling, *Brushes and Bayonets: Cartoons, Sketches and Paintings of World War I* (Oxford and New York: Osprey, 2008).

<sup>56</sup> See William Coupe, ‘German Cartoons of the First World War’, *History Today*, 42 (1992), pp. 23-30; Richard Scully, *British Images of Germany: Admiration, Antagonism and Ambivalence, 1860-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Richard Scully, ‘The Cartoon Emperor: The Impact of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte on European Comic Art, 1848-1870’, *European Comic Art*, 4:2 (2011), pp. 147-80.

<sup>57</sup> See *European Comic Art* (2008-16); *European Journal of Humour Research* (2012-16).

apparent manipulation and ‘demystification’ of politics. Yet he does rightly comment on how they can be used for that very purpose to highlight and reconstruct mentalities of the time, which would naturally be through their reception and the emotions they imbue upon their audiences.<sup>58</sup>

Stephen Badsey has advocated that when interpreting the war the historian should not under-estimate the media’s influence as there was ‘an intimate connection between the way in which the army fought and the way in which its actions were... understood through the mass media’.<sup>59</sup> Thus, what the media had to say about the military reflected positively or negatively on them almost instantly, and ultimately was able to have a lasting effect on the way in which they were perceived.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, studies of media in wartimes have recognised the impact that media had on society, not simply reflecting it, although it did this, but also shaping it.<sup>61</sup> Through this analysis, it becomes clear how media studies need to be incorporated alongside aspects of the war and cartoon humour to fully comprehend their impact.

Newspapers serve as an indication for the public mood during the war, mirroring attitudes, motivations, and generating them too, a feature about which Lord Northcliffe was particularly aware.<sup>62</sup> Many contemporary news articles look to the humour of the nation indicating a wider public interest, which again reflects national moods or press desires.<sup>63</sup> Nationally recognised newspapers such as *The Times* frequently reported the

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<sup>58</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>59</sup> Stephen Badsey, *The British Army in Battle and Its Image 1914-1918* (London: Continuum, 2009), p. xvi.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> See Mark Connelly and David Welch, *War and the Media: Reportage and Propaganda, 1900-2003* (London: Tauris, 2005); Ian Stewart and Susan Carruthers (eds.), *War, Culture and the Media: Representations of the Military in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain* (Bradford: Flicks Books, 1996).

<sup>62</sup> George Boyce, James Curran and Pauline Wingate (eds.), *Newspaper History: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London: Constable, 1978), p. 31; Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, p. 145.

<sup>63</sup> ‘British Soldier Humour’, *The Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 4; ‘On Laughter’, *The Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1915, p. 7; ‘Soldier Humour’, *The Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> January 1915, p. 9; John Corbin, ‘What is

humour and laughter of troops on the Western Front, for example. Indeed, the British press made a point of publishing articles throughout the war relating to humour, and making consistent references back to Victorian and Edwardian times, as well as highlighting differences between the combative nations and their humours.<sup>64</sup> Laughter in particular is discussed in terms of the right and wrong kinds of laughter, the right being that which inspires and comforts others, the wrong thereby being designed to make others feel less valuable.<sup>65</sup> Often these sought to contrast British and German humour to make the British troops appear superior to boost troop morale or alter public perceptions.<sup>66</sup> Entire speeches were offered by Sir Herbert Tree in 1915 to support the idea that Germany, and in particular the Kaiser, was lacking in the appropriate ‘sense of humour’ necessary to compete in war.<sup>67</sup>

Alongside articles about humour, the cartoons published in newspapers during the Great War provide a significant indication of the public mood, and can equally be seen to shape it. Cartoons have featured in newspapers since the early 1700s, and journalists and editors remain consistently and commercially aware of their appeal to audiences.<sup>68</sup> Cartoons were frequent and popular before, during and after the war, indicating a longevity of interest. In fact, even with paper shortages as the war progressed, when many publications reduced the number of pages, the cartoon remains a significant part

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English Humour?’, *New York Times*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 38; ‘Bairnsfather Humour’, *Aberdeen Journal*, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1919, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> ‘On Laughter’ *The Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1915, p. 7; ‘The Kaiser’s Want of Humour’ *The Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1915, p. 5; ‘British Soldier Humour’, *The Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 4; ‘Soldier humour’, *The Times*, 21<sup>st</sup> January 1915, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> ‘On Laughter’ *The Times*, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1915, p. 7; also see Donald Gray, ‘The Uses of Victorian Laughter’, *Victorian Studies*, 10:2 (1966), pp. 146-7.

<sup>66</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, p. 16; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 115.

<sup>67</sup> ‘The Kaiser’s Want of Humour’, *The Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1915, p. 5; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 25-6.

<sup>68</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*; Werner Hofmann, *Caricature from Leonardo to Picasso* (London: John Calder, 1957); William Hewison, *The Cartoon Connection: The Art of Pictorial Humour* (London: Elm Tree, 1977); Press, *Political Cartoon*.

of most papers.<sup>69</sup> In addition, many published cartoon books throughout the war providing the public with anthologies of their favourite characters, or collections of a particular artist's work.<sup>70</sup>

The press as a whole essentially provides a 'world view' for the modern historian. Publishing success depended on the interest they raised and the sales that resulted, and often the cartoon can be seen as a major contributing factor to the prevalence of sales.<sup>71</sup> Newspapers provide insights to not only the news of the day, but to theatrical entertainments, social and political campaigns, as well as illustrating the commercial advertising and product placement of the time. Studies that analyse cartoon media therefore are also able to demonstrate how these images can be seen to promote success for their publications. As such, cartoons have moved beyond being a mere 'ephemeral art form' to a point where they can be considered a significant source of cultural information.<sup>72</sup>

When considering the value of cartoons to the public throughout the war, it is worth noting the minutia of their size and location as well as distribution. These considerations provide insight to received value from readers. Furthermore, as newspapers reduced pages from 1917 in light of paper shortages, many aspects of domestic news were significantly altered. Features could be removed as editors felt

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<sup>69</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1 Minutes for Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1917.

<sup>70</sup> See William Haselden, *Daily Mirror Reflections*, 5 vols. (London: Daily Mirror, 1914-18); William Haselden, *The Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie during the First 6 Months of the Great War* (London: Fine Arts Society, 1915); Jack Walker, *Special War Cartoons*, vols. 1-7 (London: Daily Graphic, 1914-15); W. Heath Robinson, *Hunlikely!* (London: Duckworth, 1916); W. Heath Robinson, *The Sainly Hun: A Book of German Virtues* (London: Duckworth, 1917); Alfred Leete, *Schmidt the Spy and his Letters to Berlin* (London: Duckworth, 1916).

<sup>71</sup> Glenn Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War in Edwardian Newspapers, 1899-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 10; Chris Williams, "'Our War History in Cartoons is Unique": J. M. Staniforth, British Public Opinion and the South African War, 1899-1902', *War in History*, 20:4 (2013), p. 494.

<sup>72</sup> Jane Chapman, 'Comics Tap into the Real Emotions of the World Wars', BBC News, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014; Coupe, 'German Cartoons', pp. 23-30; Scully, 'The Cartoon Emperor', pp. 147-80.

appropriate, yet the cartoon remained. Priorities for most publications centred on editorial and lead articles based on the war and subjects relating to it. These were features that the cartoonist could also incorporate into their images to maintain relevance. As this thesis seeks to understand cartoon humour in relation to the war and its wider cultural context, it calls for introduction to certain cartoonists and their work, to help understand why the visual aspects remained in the news.

Cartoons by J. M. Staniforth the Welsh artist born in Glostershire, for example, remain on pages three or nine of the *Western Mail* taking up approximately one eighth of the page, or are cover images for the *News of the World*. His work was topical, with some local and international elements. *Evening News* cartoonist Percy Fearon known by the alias Poy, produced cartoons of a similar size to Staniforth, and these stay on the cover when they feature, usually in a top central position beneath the paper's title and date. His work also continues to appear regularly on page four of the *Daily Mail*, generally among a collection of photographs. William K. Haselden's cartoons are on pages five or seven of the *Daily Mirror* taking up the majority of the page whilst surrounded by letters to the editor, or important notations for the public.

The pages of the humourist journals *Punch* and the *Bystander* are filled with cartoons of various sizes and by a selection of artists throughout the war and after.<sup>73</sup> However, the *Bystander* was notably more welcoming of images by anonymous and amateur cartoonists in comparison to *Punch* and these often included soldier artists.<sup>74</sup> Indeed the only significant alteration of cartoon positioning, which actually predates the war, is that of Will Dyson, an Australian socialist cartoonist working in Britain. His full-page cartoon moves from the front cover to the back of the *Herald* in June 1914, which

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<sup>73</sup> *Punch or the London Charivari* (1914-1918); *Bystander* (1914-1918).

<sup>74</sup> For example, see the work on 'Reported Missing' in chapter 1.

it can only be assumed was part of its transition from a daily to weekly publication as no other reasons for the change are evident.<sup>75</sup>

The vast majority of the cartoon source material used for this study comes from the British Cartoon Archive (BCA) at the University of Kent. These are, therefore, cartoons published in newspapers, generally as single frame illustrations. The decision has been made to concentrate on images of this nature, avoiding other forms of cartoon illustration in postcard collections, which were another significant contribution to wartime illustration. Postcard studies are an area of growing interest, but as it has developed, the cartoons in newspapers have been left awaiting scholarly analysis, which this research will amend. Studies of propaganda and posters in particular are vast, and although this study falls alongside these works, little original contribution can be made towards them at this time.<sup>76</sup>

Looking to the sources specifically, most of the Poy images come from an anonymous collection of scrapbooks.<sup>77</sup> There is no sense of ownership for the scrapbooks, despite some unidentifiable handwritten details. Nevertheless, some awareness of the cartoons' value can be drawn out of their existence. Earlier collections are in clearly defined folders, which contain haphazardly cut out images from a variety of publications, one per page with a few additional cuttings tucked in. Later as the war progresses, the black scrapbook bindings become more simplistic,

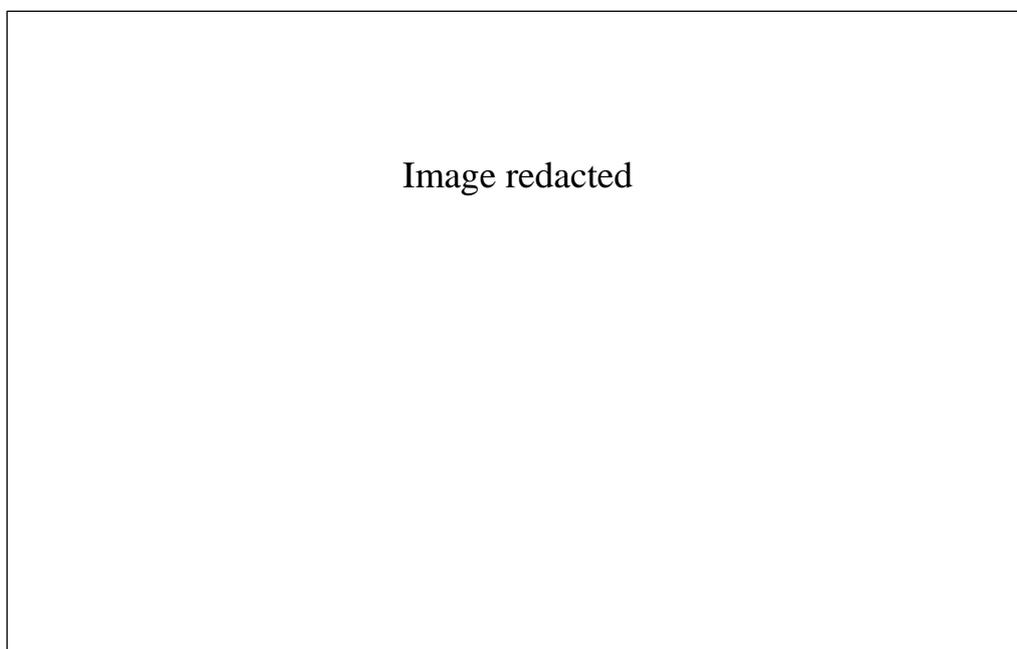
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<sup>75</sup> Nicholas Hiley, British Cartoon Archive (BCA), has corroborated this lack of evidence; see email 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

<sup>76</sup> See Nicholas Hiley, "'Kitchener Wants You' and 'Daddy What Did YOU Do in the Great War?'" The Myth of British Recruiting Posters', *Imperial War Review*, 11 (1997), pp. 40-58; James Aulich, *War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007); Maurice Rickards, *Posters of the First World War* (London: Evelyn, Adams & Mackay, 1968); James Thompson, 'Pictorial Lies? Posters and Politics in Britain c. 1880-1914', *Past & Present*, 197 (2007), pp. 177-210; John Fraser, 'Propaganda on the Picture Postcard', *Oxford Art Journal*, 3:2 (1980), pp. 39-48.

<sup>77</sup> BCA, PF0001-0842, uncatalogued Percy Fearon, 'Poy' *Cartoon Scrap Books*, 1913-19.

which could be a sign of limited reproduction facilities, or costing as the war progresses (figure 1.2). Nonetheless, far more care is taken over the manner in which the cartoons are mounted. By 1918, the images are saved without further details of the publications or dates. For the historian this creates an initial problem of identification, as publication dates cannot be guessed at from these other than through assumed chronological preservation and some iconographic hints. Even so, many can be matched to online digitisation projects to provide details of date and page references, which has been undertaken where possible here.<sup>78</sup>



**(Figure 1.2) Anonymous, *Evening News*, War Cartoons Scrapbooks, BCA, 1914-15 and 1918**

In addition to the uncatalogued Poy cartoon collections, the BCA has also provided Jack Walker collections, most of the Haselden and Dyson material, along with various

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<sup>78</sup> See British Newspaper Archive < <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/> > [Accessed from January 2014]; Newspaper Archive < <http://www.newspaperarchive.com> > [Accessed from July 2016].

miscellaneous cartoons.<sup>79</sup> These images were produced in abundance throughout the Great War, and although the BCA has a vast and important collection, it is not a definitive source for everything. Further material has come from online newspaper archives, including images by J. M. Staniforth from the *Western Mail* and *News of the World* taken from the 'Cartooning the First World War' project based in Cardiff. Through this project, images are combined with details of date and publication as well as a short passage about the image, written by local volunteer war enthusiasts, including members of the Cardiff section of the Western Front Association.<sup>80</sup>

Cartoons in this context are not animated, but are stationary images within the press as framed pictures that tell their own stories.<sup>81</sup> Animation was beginning to develop at this time on a small scale, but not significantly enough to warrant contribution to this study.<sup>82</sup> Cartoonists from the Victorian era had begun to think about moving pictures, embodied, to an extent in 'lighting sketches' that became a theatrical phenomenon at the start of the twentieth century.<sup>83</sup> These performances match well with the 'chalk and talk' work of Bruce Bairnsfather during and after the war, where artists would talk to the audience whilst producing rapidly drawn images expressing the story they were telling.<sup>84</sup> Animated cartoon films that followed out of this are not significant enough to affect this study, as they had greater influence following the war. The contemporary cartoon work of Bairnsfather, however, is far more significant, and particularly

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<sup>79</sup> Walker, *War Cartoons*; Haselden, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*; BCA, WH0001-5800, William K. Haselden, *Original Cartoons*, 1904-30; BCA, WD0001-0616, Will Dyson, *Original Cartoons*, 1912-38.

<sup>80</sup> See *Cartooning the First World War*, < <http://www.cartoonww1.org/> > [Accessed from June 2014].

<sup>81</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 30-1, 100-1, 156-7.

<sup>82</sup> See Unknown Artist, *First World War Cartoon, Joffre* (1915), BFI < <http://www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b6a420902> > and < <http://player.bfi.org.uk/film/watch-first-world-war-cartoon-joffre-1915/> > [Accessed from January 2014].

<sup>83</sup> Malcolm Cook, 'The Lightening Cartoon: Animation from Music Hall to Cinema', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 11:3 (2013), pp. 237-54.

<sup>84</sup> Tonie and Valmai Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole: A Biography of Captain Bruce Bairnsfather* (London: Pen & Sword, 2000), pp. 69-70, 161-70.

cartoons published in the *Bystander* and follow-up volumes.<sup>85</sup> These images provide insight to moods of the war, and are reported extensively for their contribution to wartime humour during and since the war.<sup>86</sup>

Many newspaper publications openly acknowledged political favour in one direction or another, and this can be seen represented visually in some of their cartoons as well. Therefore, it will be necessary to acknowledge such biases as indicators of meaning for cartoon content.<sup>87</sup> One significantly biased source for this thesis will be the work of Australian artist Will Dyson in the *Herald*, a strongly socialist paper. It was predominantly published by and for Labour Party supporters and was ‘financed from within the working class’.<sup>88</sup> The content in its regular twelve pages were textually and visually on the side of the working man, demonstrating a particularly leftist approach to society. Dyson himself came from a family of newspaper editors and cartoonists in Australia. He moved to England in 1909 to marry the daughter of another cartoonist, Norman Lindsay, and by 1912 had been employed by the *Daily Herald*. The paper recognised his heritage and ability and used many of his images from 1912 through to June 1914 as cover illustrations.<sup>89</sup> That year the paper went from daily publications to weekly sixteen page volumes, thereafter named simply the *Herald*, after which Dyson’s work was moved to the back page.<sup>90</sup> His value to the paper was consistently recognised, however, through the full-page spread he filled weekly at the start of the

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<sup>85</sup> Bruce Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets* (London: Bystander, 1916); Bruce Bairnsfather, *The Bystander’s Fragments from France* (London: Bystander, 1915-19); Bruce Bairnsfather, *From Mud to Mufti with Old Bill on all Fronts* (London: Grant Richards, 1919).

<sup>86</sup> See Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole*; Tonie and Valmai Holt, *The Best Fragments from France by Bruce Bairnsfather* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2009).

<sup>87</sup> See Huw Richards, ‘The Daily Herald, 1912-64’, *History Today*, 31:12 (1981), pp. 12-16.

<sup>88</sup> Boyce, Curran and Wingate, *Newspaper History*, p. 68.

<sup>89</sup> Mark Bryant, *Dictionary of Twentieth Century British Cartoonists and Caricaturists* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 64-5.

<sup>90</sup> See *Daily Herald*, April 1912- June 1914; *Herald*, 1914-22; *Daily Herald*, 1922-64; also see email from Nicholas Hiley (BCA), 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016

war, and acknowledgement of his cartoon page in the publications contents on the cover each week.

Dyson's idealised views were what originally appealed to the *Herald*, but as the war progressed, there was a growing public desire, less so for the 'penetrating' imagery produced by Dyson, and more for the realism and truth of what was happening in the war.<sup>91</sup> He contributed less regularly to the *Herald* following his enlistment as an official war artist to the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) who sent him to the front in mid-1915.<sup>92</sup> There he was twice wounded, but even so continued to produce cartoons, and not only for the *Herald*. As his notoriety grew so did requests for this work so that in time he was also contributing to the *Weekly Dispatch*, the *World*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily Sketch* and a selection of Australian newspapers.<sup>93</sup> Growing notoriety led to wider criticism of his work, however, as although initially for the *Herald* his socialist views and images had been appropriate, in time, critics began to comment on how his 'capitalists were too bloated, working men too idealised'. Eventually, the *Herald* was censoring his work and limiting the 'number of devils' that appeared.<sup>94</sup>

In Fleet Street, Alfred Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe, commissioned cartoons prolifically from the 1880s onwards and many images discussed here come from his newspapers.<sup>95</sup> Having taken over the *Evening News* and made a success of it, Harmsworth desired a daily paper, and this he achieved in May 1896 with the launch of the *Daily Mail*.<sup>96</sup> The publication was described as a 'busy man's paper'. It was a

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<sup>91</sup> Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 65; Sue Malvern, *Modern Art, Britain and the Great War: Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 37-8.

<sup>92</sup> Various dominion nations placed tighter restrictions on the work of official war artists, for more information, see chapter 1.

<sup>93</sup> Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 64.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 64-5.

<sup>95</sup> Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, p. 145.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 128-31.

concise quick read, and could be purchased in an instant by anyone. Many in Parliament criticised it as an ‘office boy’s paper’, but this was indeed its appeal, and what made it sell so rapidly and widely, so that by the end of the century it was selling in excess of a million copies daily around the world.<sup>97</sup> Harmsworth was consistently aware of his publications’ potential influence over the public, and following his knighthood when he was asked to take on a political role, he initially declined, but settled for a position as director of propaganda, potentially done with that sense of public influence in mind.<sup>98</sup>

Illustrations featured regularly through his papers, with cartoons by Poy on the front of the *Evening News*, and on page four of the *Daily Mail*. Poy notoriously produced these images over lunch for the evening press having read the morning news that day.<sup>99</sup> The nature of Poy’s cartoons suited this ‘busy man’s paper’ as they are easily identifiable in content and are visually humorous without the need for extensive captions or embedded text to explain their meaning. Poy settled at the *Evening News* in 1913, producing many of its front-page cartoons, and some additional volumes of images. He contributed to a number of other publications as well including the *Weekly Dispatch*, but his most regular cartoon contributions went to the *Evening News* and *Daily Mail*.<sup>100</sup>

Another Harmsworth publication, the *Daily Mirror*, started in 1903, was originally a ‘women’s newspaper’ with a predominantly female editorial board, although the success of this was short lived.<sup>101</sup> There was a rapid changeover to a male editorial

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, pp. 131-33.

<sup>98</sup> Boyce, Curran and Wingate (eds.), *Newspaper History*, p. 31.

<sup>99</sup> Mark Bryant, ‘Fearon, Percy Hutton [*pseud.* Poy] (1874–1948)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

<sup>100</sup> Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 72.

<sup>101</sup> Pound and Harmsworth, *Northcliffe*, p. 277; Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain*, vol. 2 (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1984), p. 1; Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, p. 143.

board, but the mildly conservative stance was maintained and the paper continued to project its advertising to women more strongly than to its male readership.<sup>102</sup> Added to this early changeover, Harmsworth was informed of advances in printing techniques in 1904, and having been made aware that the *Daily Graphic* was printing 10,000 copies an hour of illustrated press, he then sought to print at least double if not treble the amount. The *Daily Illustrated Mirror* was born of this ambition, demonstrating the clear commercial value that Northcliffe placed upon the image in print. The fact that they sold just as well as he anticipated suggests that the buying public were receptive of the illustrations too.<sup>103</sup>

During the war, the main cartoonist was William Haselden who produced the daily image for the paper. Haselden worked for the *Daily Mirror* almost from its inception as a self-taught cartoonist, and he became best known for his ‘strip cartoons’. Haselden also produced images for *Punch*, predominantly in the form of theatre illustrations for reviews, and these were something he continued to produce into his dotage, and after the loss of his hearing.<sup>104</sup> The styling and content of these images match well with his work for the *Daily Mirror* where he would reproduce aspects of daily social life. Once the war started, Haselden, already aged 41, was too old to sign up, so remained at the paper, where he stayed until almost ten years before his death in 1953.<sup>105</sup>

Under the guidance of newspaper proprietor George Holt Thomas, the *Bystander* was an illustrated weekly that appealed widely to a vast audience, hugely promoted by the advertising running throughout. Holt Thomas rapidly made a fortune with this paper,

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<sup>102</sup> Pound and Harmsworth, *Northcliffe*, p. 278.

<sup>103</sup> Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, p. 145.

<sup>104</sup> David James Little, ‘Haselden, William Kerridge (1872-1953)’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: OPU 2004).

<sup>105</sup> ‘Kindly Cartoonist’, *The Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> December 1953; Hiley. “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 148; Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 105.

under the editorial control of William Comyns Beaumont.<sup>106</sup> The paper was compiled of short story extracts, advertisements, theatrical reviews and cartoons giving it wider public appeal. Beaumont, its first and later editor was a vastly influential and eccentric contributor to the publication. His personal interests in mythology and folklore are reflected in the variety of text and iconography that appeared in the early editions. He was less influential in this respect in his other job as lead writer in the *Daily Mail*.<sup>107</sup> The publication was generally a lower middle- to working-class paper, but still appealed to upper class eccentrics and nationalists who shared Beaumont's ideas.<sup>108</sup> Regardless, the illustrative element appealed most strongly to the public. There were contributions from a variety of cartoonists before, during and after the war, whose work also featured in *Punch* and the *Daily Graphic*. Work by these artists helped the *Bystander* to become a recognisable and reliable brand for its readership.<sup>109</sup>

One of the most prolific contributors to this publication during the war was that of Captain Bruce Bairnsfather with his *Fragments from France*, which the *Bystander* later re-published in specific volumes of their own.<sup>110</sup> Bairnsfather sent a chance image to the publication in 1915 as he noted that his images were of a similar size and quality to many others in the publication.<sup>111</sup> Bairnsfather's cartoons rapidly gained popularity for their perceived realism in the light of war; after all, in his own words they were taken from 'first hand impressions'.<sup>112</sup> His regular grumbling characters of Bert, Alf

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<sup>106</sup> Vincent Orange, 'Thomas, George Holt (1870-1929)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: OPU 2004).

<sup>107</sup> Karl Shaw, *Curing Hiccups with Small Fires: A Delightful Miscellany of Great British Eccentrics* (London: Pan, 2010), p. 188.

<sup>108</sup> See John Mitchell, *Eccentric Lives and Peculiar Notions* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), pp. 136-43.

<sup>109</sup> There is little detail of the readership, sales statistics or wider dissemination for the *Bystander*, which offers a potential avenue for future research.

<sup>110</sup> Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bruce Bairnsfather, *More Fragments from France II* (London: Bystander, 1917); Bruce Bairnsfather, *Still More Fragments from France III* (London: Bystander, 1917-19).

<sup>111</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, p. 43.

<sup>112</sup> Cited in Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, p. 29; Hiley, "'A New and Vital Moral Factor'", p. 163.

and especially Old Bill, were personable characters that many at home among the working-class through to the middle and upper-classes could easily identify with. These characters appealed to the public, and rapidly became a new benchmark for wartime cartooning of the soldier. Although some artists still valorised the soldier as the impeccable hero, for Bairnsfather, he was everyman being a hero in their own small way.

Another inexhaustible producer of cartoon material in London was *Punch or the London Charivari*.<sup>113</sup> As a commercial magazine, it drew upon caricatures and their publication in France in the *Charivari*, for which the magazine was partially named.<sup>114</sup> With its first publication in 1841, *Punch* was a definitively Victorian publication, predominantly conservative and at times seemingly apolitical for its cartoons, although some of the text was more explicitly pro-Tory in tone. Much of its satire drew on attitudes of the previous Georgian era and its accompanying bitterness, but soon developed a more openly humorous Victorian edge.<sup>115</sup> For many it was indeed perceived to be a ‘bastion of upper-middle-class ideology’ for its establishment in society.<sup>116</sup> It presented itself as a ‘periodical built around a large satirical drawing’ that reflected on life, society and entertainment, which enjoyed widespread appeal.<sup>117</sup>

Much of *Punch’s* success was reputedly because of its avoidance of what other cartoon publications offered in the 1840s. Where most of Victorian society found humour in ‘smutty and puerile joking’, *Punch* sought to set itself boundaries of

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<sup>113</sup> Hereafter this publication is simply referred to as *Punch*.

<sup>114</sup> Hofmann, *Leonardo to Picasso*, p. 40; Richard Price, *A History of Punch* (London: Collins, 1957), p. 19.

<sup>115</sup> Price, *History of Punch*, p. 20.

<sup>116</sup> David Kunzle, ‘The First Ally Sloper: The Earliest Popular Cartoon Character as a Satire on the Victorian Work Ethic’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 8:1 (1985), p. 40.

<sup>117</sup> Price, *History of Punch*, p. 21.

respectability that set it apart in its imagery.<sup>118</sup> This popularity was then maintained throughout the later nineteenth century. Prior to the war, however, there was a perception that much of the humour in *Punch* had been lost under the editorship of Owen Seaman, and that the magazine as a whole was in decline.<sup>119</sup> Many of the links to the stage had been lost, and the focus of readership had been altered from general middle-class readers through closer links to universities and upper-class intellectuals, but this was to change again during the war.<sup>120</sup> Immediately prior to the war, the celebrated author A. A. Milne had taken control over the contributions to Seaman's *Punch*, and as a result, its popularity began to rise once more. There was a rapid increase in sales distribution 1913-15 with an increase from 113,000 to nearer 150,000. Further to this, it is believed that most volumes were shared on average up to 9 times making the total readership in excess of one million as the war progressed.<sup>121</sup>

Throughout the war, there were regular contributions from named and anonymous cartoonists including Bernard Partridge, Leonard Raven-Hill, Alfred and Edwin Morrow to name but a few.<sup>122</sup> Partridge consistently rendered minute detail in theatrical situations with his illustrations, while Raven-Hill's sometimes harsher pen strokes added poignancy and fervour to his work that had him noted for more ferocious depictions that he created rapidly.<sup>123</sup> These were all well-educated men, some of whom had family histories in cartooning, particularly Partridge, and equally they had tuition

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<sup>118</sup> Patrick Leary, *The Punch Brotherhood: Table Talk and Print Culture in Mid-Victorian London* (London: British Library, 2010), p. 39.

<sup>119</sup> Price, *History of Punch*, pp. 178-85.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, p. 182.

<sup>121</sup> See email correspondence with *Punch* ltd. October 2016.

<sup>122</sup> E. V. Knox, 'Partridge, Sir (John) Bernard (1861-1945)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OPU 2004); E. V. Knox, 'Hill, Leonard Raven- (1864-1942)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OPU 2004); Mark Bryant and Simon Henage, *Dictionary of British Cartoonists and Caricaturists 1730-1980* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994); Bryant, *Dictionary*.

<sup>123</sup> Knox, 'Partridge, Sir (John) Bernard (1861-1945)'; Knox, 'Hill, Leonard Raven- (1864-1942)'.

under John Hassell at his famed art college or worked alongside eminent artists including John Tenniel who had been highly praised in their day.<sup>124</sup>

Outside of London publications, the *Western Mail* was a Welsh daily based in Cardiff. As a regular eight to twelve-page paper, it mainly consisted of two pages of advertisements to open, then news articles throughout, with the main lead column on page five. The news was a mixture of local, national and international features depending on daily items of interest. Cartoons by J. M. Staniforth appeared most days on pages three or nine, maintaining a general size and styling. Staniforth also provided cartoons for the *News of the World*, many of which were replicated from the *Western Mail*. However, Staniforth's cartoons in the *News of the World*, reflected the day's international news, and as such generally featured on the cover of the newspaper.<sup>125</sup>

Although mass publication forms an important part of the evidence for this thesis, it also examines contributions from private and personal cartoon collections.<sup>126</sup> Images of this nature present more personal 'in' jokes, appropriate to a specific audience, analysis of which allows for added interpretations of the cartoons' cultural impact. Furthermore, many magazines and newspapers including what have come to be known as 'trench journals', are also examined as established important sources of wartime cartoons.<sup>127</sup> Soldiers generally compiled these magazines for other soldiers, although many were not published in the trenches *per se* but were sent home for publication and were returned for distribution.<sup>128</sup> It is through a combined analysis of cartoons in mass

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<sup>124</sup> 'The Cartoonist', *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1914; L. Perry Curtis, 'Tenniel, Sir John (1820-1914)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP 2004).

<sup>125</sup> See for example, J. M. Staniforth, 'A Call to Arms', *News of the World*, 16<sup>th</sup> August 1914, p. 1; J. M. Staniforth, 'Second Thoughts', *News of the World*, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1915, p. 1.

<sup>126</sup> BCA, Uncatalogued, 'Cartoons by Corporal George Harry Southgate of the 17<sup>th</sup> London Regiment', c. 1915-17; BCA, Uncatalogued, 'Cartoons Copied by W. J. Evans', c. 1914-15.

<sup>127</sup> Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*; Seal, *Soldiers' Press*; Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*.

<sup>128</sup> See *Skyscraper*, 1918; *Shell: A Magazine Written by and for the Garrisons of the Thames Section*, 1915; *C's Fire: Fortnightly Report*, 1915-17.

publications and those to be found in the trench journals, that this thesis demonstrates the importance of the visual studies to cultural history. Studies that look at the textual material within this body of work are a growing area of research interest for scholars.<sup>129</sup> However, by focusing more closely on the visual, this study offers new insights and interpretations of cartoons of the Great War, and the humour of society at that time.

Most trench journals created by soldiers, present unofficial strands of humour in some form or another similar to that found in the now well-known *Wipers Times*. Whereas, those created by military and naval authorities place greater emphasis on the regularity and order of the regiments with notices for drills and practice.<sup>130</sup> The admiralty and army orchestrated many of these official journals making their purposes clear through the magazine content. The general price of these papers was between one and six d providing a diversity of cost and quality, but making them available to most. The full extent of readership cannot be accounted for as sales statistics cannot illustrate how many times papers were passed on and shared. Of the papers, home-published volumes feature cartoons more prominently, unlike the trench-published ones where facilities for printing were far more limited.<sup>131</sup> Nonetheless, some trench journals including the *Gasper* and *Growler* do feature illustrations, more often as cover images, which suggest the perceived value of such images to audiences and editors alike.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> See Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*; Koenraad Du Pont, 'Nature and Function of Humour in Trench Newspapers (1914-1918)', in Clémentine Tholas-Disset and Karen A. Ritzenhoff (eds.), *Humour, Entertainment, and Popular Culture during World War I* (London: Palgrave, 2015), pp. 107-21; Seal, *Soldiers' Press*; Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*.

<sup>130</sup> *Birmingham Rifle Reserve Magazine*, 1915-16; *O. B. C. (Old Boys Corps) Magazine*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Battalion County of London Volunteer Regiment, 1915.

<sup>131</sup> See, *Khaki: A Monthly Magazine and Cabled News Sheet for the Over-Sea Soldier bringing Him as a Gift – News from Home*, 1915-17; *Mudhook*; 1915-16; *Skyscraper*, 1918.

<sup>132</sup> *Gasper*, Royal Fusiliers, 1915-16; *Growler: The Organ of the 16<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion*, Northumberland Fusiliers, Alnwick, 1915-17; *Hangar Herald*, 1915; *Oak Tree: The Magazine of the Cheshire Regiment*, 1915-16.

Cartoons in the context of this thesis are a combination of both text and image, which can be used to identify variable aspects of the history they depict. Many images use captions alongside the image to make the joke for the viewer and a particular contributor to this variety of cartoon style is the *London Mail*. The *London Mail* itself does not identify any particular reason for this style of cartooning. Consumers were largely conservative middle class, like so many other publications, whereas, the *Daily Mail* was seen to be the ‘busy man’s paper’, and as such, Poy’s predominantly visual humour was more appropriate. The style of cartooning with jokes in the text and alongside in captions in the *London Mail* suggest a paper to be read leisurely rather than at speed.<sup>133</sup> A potential implication for this preoccupation with textual cartoon humour in the *London Mail* could simply be editor’s preference. However, another possibility is the connections that that paper had with agents in Paris, for whom it would have been far simpler to alter text, rather than image content when it came to re-publishing in French, equally here the joke could be completely different.<sup>134</sup>

This study is divided into five thematic chapters that look at cartoon humour of the war from different perspectives. There are thousands of wartime cartoons available, and a quantitative account cannot be drawn fully, therefore, a qualitative approach has been taken looking to individual cartoon’s relevance to the topic being addressed. How cartoons used the different themes to create humour for their audiences will be analysed to identify deeper connections to the war overall. An interdisciplinary dialogue will develop at the centre of this exploration, with the cartoons and their humour in the context of war as the main basis. In the first chapter, the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) and the policing of cartoons and their humour through censorship

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<sup>133</sup> Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, pp. 131-33.

<sup>134</sup> See note at base of page, in ‘Bound Compilation’, *London Mail*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1914, p. 16.

will be examined. Many cartoonists drew upon the act, and personified it to create cartoon characters, during the war and after. These will be considered alongside the personified censor who was equally treated to the prestige of being cartooned. These characters will be assessed alongside the technicalities of the Defence of the Realm Act and what it demanded of the population on the home front. A final section of this chapter will analyse one particular cartoon, 'Reported Missing', that was deemed to be in violation of the act, and will evaluate the repercussions of its publication in the *Bystander*.

The second chapter will deliberate the crossovers of cartoon humour, and how it was employed through the advertising industry as it grew prior to and during the war. Further to this will be reflection on theatrical aspects of cartoon humour, and how the humour of the stage was frequently converted into the humour of cartoons. These transferences will serve to highlight the historicising of the cartoons and public entertainment throughout the war drawing on recent literature concerned with wartime theatre. The final aspect will touch on a particular cartoon 'One of Our Minor Wars' by Bruce Bairnsfather and how it was transformed in the reverse direction from cartoon into a stage production offering a performative edge to the original image. This aspect of the study will offer insight to public reception of wartime entertainments, through a focus on the moods of pathos and humour presented to the audience, and the attitudes presented in reviews.

A rhetoric of sacrifice surrounded the war, especially the earlier years of it, identifying the 'right' thing to be doing, which became a sense of duty for all soldiers and civilians in light of 'total war'.<sup>135</sup> The third chapter, therefore, seeks to consider

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<sup>135</sup> Ian Beckett, *The Great War 1914-1918* (London, New York, Boston, Sydney: Pearson Longman, 2007), p. 77; Hew Strachan, 'From Cabinet War to Total War', in Roger Chickering and Stig Förster

how cartoons were able to manipulate public perceptions and expose failings in perceived duty. Depictions of members of society who did not appear to be making the correct choices will be analysed in this chapter including the profiteer, the pacifist and the wealthy. The wealthy and profiteers can be linked to an extent in that their subversion of social duty generally revolves around money, but here there is a difference as well, since the wealthy had money before the war, and with it had become complacent and naïve about the rest of society around them. The portrayal of the profiteer in contrast was illustrated as ‘new money’ in that the profits they made came because of the war, often at the expense of others around them in society. Attitudes and behaviour of these characters strongly provide the humour in them, but this is dependent on the publication in which the cartoons appeared.

Another element to feature in this chapter is the personality of the pacifists who are grossly effeminised to negate any moral authority they might have held. Pacifists are stereotyped and criticised in cartoons and despite modern studies into their valid contributions towards the war effort, much of this perception remains. From a contemporary perspective however, it becomes much clearer that they were negatively perceived, but not to the same extent as the profiteer. One final aspect that will also be considered alongside the pacifist is the coward, and his embodiment through Poy’s character Cuthbert the rabbit.<sup>136</sup> This character in particular is a useful insight to the contemporary feeling towards cowards, and their lack of contribution to the war. Through this character, there is also some indication of criticism towards politicians as they use the ‘funkholes’ of Parliament to hide themselves in.

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(eds.), *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), p. 22; Dan Todman, *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2005), p. 18.

<sup>136</sup> See *Daily Mail* and *Evening News*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1916–October 1918.

Chapter four looks at the war and its representation through cartoons examining images of soldiers created by civilians at home as well as soldiers drawn by soldiers themselves. There will be comparison of illustrations in both civilian and troop newspapers.<sup>137</sup> A significant historiography speaks of similarities and differences between civilian and military populations during the war, and much of this is further reflected through this chapter. Older studies suggest ‘alienation’ between the two, while later works have highlighted greater continuity and communication, both of which can be identified in cartoon humour.<sup>138</sup> It is the contention here that despite some perceived distance between them, in humour the two are remarkably similar in their approaches they take to making the rest of society around them laugh. Another layer is also added through evaluation of the wounded soldier as a separate element no longer civilian, and no longer a soldier in the same active manner engaging with a historiography of war wounded.<sup>139</sup> Through cartooning, civilians depict merely superficial wounds while soldiers are more accepting of life changing deformities. This could simply be the embodiment of acceptance and denial, but will be looked at in terms of reported public responses to the wounded as well.

The final chapter takes a slightly different approach, rather than looking at cartoons under a specific theme, it ties aspects of the other thematic chapters together. Unification is established by studying the development of humour from the Victorian era through war and up to the modern day. Looking at humour’s development allows

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<sup>137</sup> See *Blighty: A Budget of Humour from Home, 1916-19; C’s Fire; Gasper; Khaki; Mudhook*.

<sup>138</sup> See Eric Leed, *No Man’s Land: Combat Identity in World War I* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981); Helen McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorials in the First World War* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005); Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War* (Manchester and New York: MUP, 2009).

<sup>139</sup> Seth Koven, ‘Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain’, *American Historical Review*, 99:4 (1994), pp. 1167-1202; Stephen McVeigh and Nicola Cooper (eds.), *Men After War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013); Jeffrey Reznick, *Healing the Nation: Soldiers and the Culture of Caregiving in Britain during the Great War* (Manchester and New York: MUP, 2004).

for an examination of memories of humour: professional memories of cartoonists who reuse older images, and commercial memories for the public who purchase these cartoons. All of this engages with a constantly widening historiography of war memory.<sup>140</sup> Throughout, continuity builds into memories of recognisable humour. ‘The Better ‘Ole’, or ‘One of Our Minor Wars’ by Bairnsfather will be returned to here as a case study of cartoonists requisitioning images that demonstrates professional and commercial memory as time progresses. The commercial edge of memory and humour will become clear through this study and in relation to war where cartoons were sold for that very purpose of being remembered, rather than simply as ephemeral data.

The historiography of war and in particular, the Great War has developed considerably in recent decades. Greater interest is being expressed currently in aspects of humour and emotion throughout history, which are key to this study. This has led to many investigations from interdisciplinary perspectives combining sources and methodologies. Building on that, this thesis combines aspects of legal history in the first chapter, entertainment and theatrical history in the second then sociological studies of groups who are inside or outside of the right action in the third. The fourth chapter has a focus on military history still combined with humour and visual representations, then the fifth chapter engages with ideas of the recent ‘memory boom’ in war history, and proposes another layer of commercial memory.<sup>141</sup> Throughout all of these chapters, there is a continuous approach to the cultural history of the Great War, and how it can be understood more fully through the media of cartoons and the

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<sup>140</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: OUP, 1990); Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919-1946* (Oxford: Berg, 1994); Winter, *Sites of Memory*.

<sup>141</sup> Jay Winter, ‘The Generation of Memory: Reflections on the “Memory Boom” in Contemporary Historical Studies’, *Canadian Military History*, 10:3 (2001), pp. 57-66; Jay Winter, ‘The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies’, *Modern Language Association*, 21:1 (2001), pp. 52-66.

humour that they express to their readers. This thesis will express a combined dialogue throughout looking to the war, humour and visual media. Furthermore, it will present new combinations of cartoons as expressions of control, cartoons taking on characterisations of the theatre, and cartoon images as a commercial sale of memory.

Throughout the war, elements of continuity connect back to what had been before, and humour is often used as a standpoint of normalcy to help make these connections.<sup>142</sup> Cartoons can then be seen as a feature of ephemeral culture, some element of the normal from home in the context of war, but deeper analysis into them and what they represent allows the historian insight to the time. This will develop current historiographies of representation of those not fulfilling their duty to war, and explore the divisions and similarities between soldiers and civilians in total war. However we may assume that military humour is different to civilian humour, it will become clear that this is not necessarily so. This thesis therefore, contends that humour is in fact multi-layered, and that this can be seen through cartoons, consultation of which alongside other humorous elements enables a deeper understanding of wartime culture and society.

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<sup>142</sup> See Percival, 'Comic Normativity', pp. 93-120.

# Chapter 1

## Policing Humour

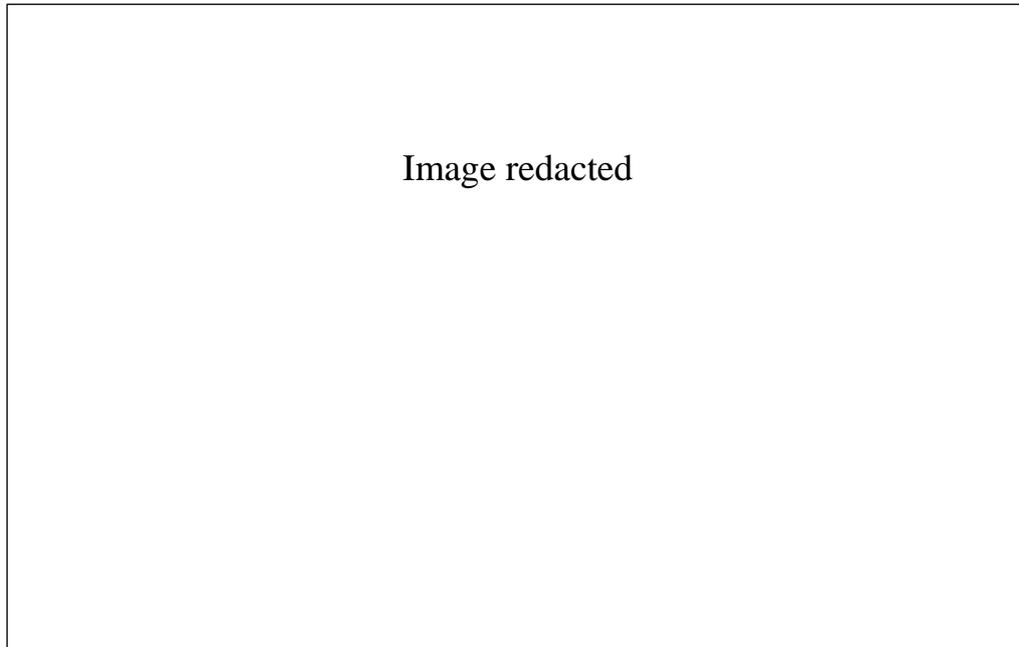
### DORA, Censorship and Taking Cartoons to Court

Discussion of censorship in the Great War is frequently reduced to letters with sections cast aside, the ‘field service postcard’ and press control notations.<sup>1</sup> The principal research questions that this chapter seeks to answer, however, are to what extent humorous representations of control and censorship can give insight to the wartime regulations enforced on the press. How did cartoonists respond to such social controls and to what extent did their images illustrate a culture of coercion or consent? Cartoons were able to highlight the vagaries of the rules. They exaggerate the foolish, but remain respectful of the necessity as Edwin Morrow’s ‘Passed by the Censor’ demonstrates. Here a collection of soldiers are fully obscured by their gas masks, even though they appear to still be communicating and acting normally (figure 2.1). The necessity for covering up is visually clear, as in a gas attack this was the safest way to

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<sup>1</sup> See Allyson Booth, *Postcards from the Trenches: Negotiating the Space between Modernism and the First World War* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1996), p. 14; Gary Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War* (Manchester and New York: MUP, 1992), p. 105; Lee Thompson, *Politicians, the Press and Propaganda: Lord Northcliffe and the Great War, 1914-1919* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1999), pp. 23-41.

be. Beyond this, however, the caption that accompanies it obscures their names, over emphasising the censor's actions to make a comedic point, which is reinforced through the title that states 'passed by the censor', even though no specific details are given anyway.



**(Figure 2.1) Edwin Morrow, 'Passed by the Censor', *Bystander*, 16<sup>th</sup> August 1916**

A core question of censorship throughout is what the term precisely means in relation to the war; did censorship define society, or was society defined by it?<sup>2</sup> The wider historiography of censorship suggests that it defines society in its own right, and that society is transmuted by it.<sup>3</sup> Ideas of censorship regulate society by panoptical means; if society knows it is being censored, it censors itself for fear of being caught outside

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Holquist, 'Corrupt Originals: The Paradox of Censorship', *Modern Language Association*, 109:1 (1994), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Post (ed.), *Censorship and Silencing: Practices of Cultural Regulation* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1998), p. 2.

those parameters.<sup>4</sup> Mostly it controls what is said about political, sovereign and military officials publically. Thereby, the definition centres around the controls placed upon what is made available. How censorship is understood, therefore, will revolve considerably around the time and place in which it is instituted. Michael Holquist speaks of censorship as a defining feature of society.<sup>5</sup> Elements of his work have been further discussed by Nicole Moore when she states quite simply that ‘censorship is’, even when it can be subdivided by other subjects to make more sense of it.<sup>6</sup> For the social and cultural theorist, however, there is no ‘consensus about what censorship is’ *per se*, as a result of the division in how it may be understood.<sup>7</sup> Similar to its divisions, yet equally relevant, is censorship’s need to control and prohibit whilst likewise needing the acknowledgement and inclusion of other thinkers to justify its being.<sup>8</sup> This element can be readily noted in cartoon depictions of the censor where their representation justifies their presence in society.

Sociology has revived interest in censorship over the last few decades following the fall of the iron curtain and this coincides with the cultural turn of historical studies in the early 1990s.<sup>9</sup> What was censored from the past for cultural and social historians does not appear to have garnered as much interest as might be expected. Works on the history of the war, are particularly limited in their discussion of censorship, however, much of this comes as a result of changing foci. An historiographical shift has occurred

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<sup>4</sup> Michael Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Allen Lane, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> Holquist, ‘Corrupt Originals’, pp. 14-25.

<sup>6</sup> Nicole Moore, ‘Censorship is’, *Australian Humanities Review*, 54 (2013), pp. 45-65.

<sup>7</sup> Sofia Rosenfeld, ‘Writing the history of Censorship in the Age of Enlightenment’, in Daniel Gordon (ed.), *Postmodernism and the Enlightenment: New Perspectives in Eighteenth-Century French Intellectual History* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 217.

<sup>8</sup> Holquist, ‘Corrupt Originals’, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Beate Müller, ‘Censorship and Cultural Regulation: Mapping the Territory’, in Beate Müller (ed.), *Censorship & Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age: Critical Studies*, 22 (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2004), p. 1. For aspects of the Cultural Turn see Winter, ‘Generation of Memory’, pp. 57-66; Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

which has moved studies from ideas of control and coercion towards public consent and acceptance when it come to the war.<sup>10</sup> The censor has thus become more obsolete in such studies.

General debates surrounding the comprehension of censorship divide it in terms of inclusive and exclusiveness, where control means being included or cast out from the overall knowledge.<sup>11</sup> During the war, however, the press, for the most part were included, and collaborated in its design. Moral, political and religious censorship, clearly seek to avoid sharing potentially disruptive information, making these controls exclusive for the public. For the cultural historian, however, inclusive insights to the information are desired to better comprehend the situation of the past. Here studies look to what was cut from society as well as what they were shown drawing on both the in- and exclusive elements of the control.

The seminal works on censorship during the Great War are limited to an article from 1970 and a 1982 PhD thesis. These are Deian Hopkin's article on domestic censorship alongside Colin Lovelace's thesis about press controls during the war that speak of how the censorship was utilised by the controlling governments.<sup>12</sup> Hopkin discusses changing attitudes to censorship from the Boer War through the First World War, but maintains its use as a form of manipulation.<sup>13</sup> Lovelace in contrast focuses more specifically on wartime censorship and its developing relationship with the press,

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<sup>10</sup> See Jay Winter and Blaine Baggett, *The Great War and the Shaping of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Penguin, 1996), p. 210; Stefan Goebel, 'Societies at War, 1914-1918', in Nicholas Doumanis (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of European History, 1914-1945* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Helen Freshwater, 'Towards a Redefinition of Censorship', in Beate Müller (ed.) *Censorship & Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age: Critical Studies*, vol. 22 (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2004), pp. 225-7.

<sup>12</sup> Deian Hopkin, 'Domestic Censorship in the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5:4 (1970), pp. 151-69; Colin John Lovelace, 'Control and Censorship of the Press during the First World War', PhD thesis, King's College London, 1982.

<sup>13</sup> Hopkin, 'Domestic Censorship'.

which at times was uncomfortable in settling and was seen by much of the press to be superfluous.<sup>14</sup> Both of these represent the coercive side of the debates about how the public were treated during the war, as they illustrate the ways in which control was enforced so that the public might comply. More recently, Eberhard Demm has explored censorship in the *International Encyclopaedia of the First World War*. He maintains a focus on the control and manipulation of the public through censorship, whilst considering how the censorship itself could also be manipulated. This article demonstrates some of the historical shift from coercion to apparent consent, although it is perhaps more grudging consent.<sup>15</sup> Otherwise, brief mentions are made to the censor across specialist war histories in terms of descriptions of what occurred.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, a few other scholars have looked to censorship, with a focus on what was lost or hidden.<sup>17</sup>

Within the wider historiography of the Great War, there are some comments on humour and its value, especially in relation to troop morale, but humour is not specifically addressed among censorship regulations or political statements as will be seen throughout this chapter.<sup>18</sup> However, related matters were censored more frequently and with simple reasoning and explanation as will be seen. Niall Ferguson speaks briefly of censorship in relation to the Great War in his study where censorship

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<sup>14</sup> Lovelace, 'Control and Censorship'.

<sup>15</sup> Eberhard Demm, 'Censorship', *1914-1918 Online: International Encyclopaedia of the First World War* < <http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/censorship/2015-09-10> > [Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016].

<sup>16</sup> See Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 305, 510; Hew Strachan, *The First World War: To Arms* (Oxford: OUP, 2001), p. 248.

<sup>17</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Censorship, Silence and Resistance: The *Annales* during the German Occupation of France', *Historical Reflections*, 24 (1998), pp. 351-74; Antoon De Baets, 'Censorship and History, 1914-1945: Historiography in the Service of Dictatorships', in Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca and Attila Pok (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing: 1800-1945* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), pp. 133-58; Bernard Lewis, *History Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton: University Press, 1975).

<sup>18</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, pp. 16, 144-48; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 115.

means the controls established in military communication.<sup>19</sup> The Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) promoted censorship rules for the press, as did the equivalent governmental rulings in other allied and enemy nations. These built slowly as the war developed with the intention of controlling the spread of details relating to troop movements, actions and locations.<sup>20</sup> Judith Butler speaks of a ‘performative contradiction’ that may be discussed in relation to how notices sent to the press were formulaically stipulated to be ‘private and confidential’ and as such could not be published.<sup>21</sup> More of this discussion will be related later when considering the controls implemented by DORA on the press.

Military censorship during the Great War is the most prevalent in these studies as opposed to press or entertainment censors, but it is not naturally inclined towards the control of humour or cartoons, which will be addressed in this thesis. There can potentially be the worry of dictatorial censorship being used to remove certain aspects of knowledge from the historians grasp, making analysis of it more difficult as exemplified by Nazi Germany of the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>22</sup> However, in the British case, this does not appear to have been in evidence to the same extent. Things that were censored will certainly no longer be available, but there is copious detail of decisions made and reasons for the censorship for the historian’s work rather than an obscuring of purpose.

The newspaper was a developing feature of nineteenth-century society, rapidly becoming available to wider audiences with publications for each of the social classes

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<sup>19</sup> Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (New York: Perseus Basics, 1999), pp. 219-22.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 219-21.

<sup>21</sup> Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 130.

<sup>22</sup> De Baets, ‘Censorship and History’, pp. 137-9.

by the twentieth.<sup>23</sup> Literacy levels had improved, and newspapers provided information for all, a large concern for censorial authorities. Furthermore, developing technologies of cable and wireless, could share information across the sea rapidly, implying wider access to public information, and information that could be disseminated to the public easily.<sup>24</sup> Regardless of the media's impact and how it was understood by authorities and the public alike, the fact remained that it was easier to share information with the world. In a time of war, this was something that needed to be controlled, and through it, humour would also be policed.

When exploring the nature of censorship, and the visual depictions thereof in cartoon, these two elements will need to combine throughout. How cartoons of 'DORA' were presented to the public need to be discussed in relation to the specifics of the Act itself and how it was utilised and understood by the press and public.<sup>25</sup> Humour in representations of DORA and censorship controls, therefore, will consistently be set upon a basis of the formal controls of 1914-18 and what they intended to achieve. To begin with, this chapter will outline the ideals and development of censorship prior to and during the Great War. There will be particular reference to media censorship and a focus on the newspaper industry and the impact that the war had upon them and publication discipline. A deeper history of wartime censorship will consider

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<sup>23</sup> Kevin Williams, *Read All About It! A History of the British Newspaper* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 125-50.

<sup>24</sup> Cherie Steele and Arthur Stein, 'Communications Revolutions and International Relations', in Juliann Emmons Allison (ed.), *Technology, Development and Democracy: International Conflict and Cooperation in the Information Age* (New York: New York State University Press, 2002), pp. 31-2; Marco Marsili, 'Propaganda and International Relations: An Outlook in Wartime', *Revista Científica Vozes dos Vales*, 4:7 (2015), pp. 6-11.

<sup>25</sup> See TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8, 'Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act', 1914; House of Commons, *Defence of the Realm Consolidation Bill* (London: HMSO, 1914); House of Commons, *Defence of the Realm Manual*, 5<sup>th</sup> edn. (London: HMSO, 1918).

governmental motivations, censorial relationships and practices of self-censorship for the press.

The censorship of art will also be explored, although, newspaper media and particularly cartoon depiction, was rarely commented upon for which reasons will be suggested. One problem with cartoons that needs to be acknowledged, and especially in relation to *Punch*, is those that can no longer be assessed. There are reports of the *Punch* editor Owen Seaman having received images from contributors, and them never being seen again. This is a form of unacknowledged self-censorship, but thus, anything deemed inappropriate may well have found its way to the editing room floor or bin and not have been used thereafter.<sup>26</sup>

Following on from a general overview of censorship, cartoons depicting ‘DORA’, the Defence of the Realm Act personified as a female character and the censor will be addressed. Analysis of these cartoons will redirect the focus slightly towards how humour was used to depict censorial controls. This will acknowledge humour’s use both for mockery, and as an acknowledgement of the fact; subverting the control implied, or assisting it. Cartoons of these personified characters will be placed into the context of when they were produced and how audiences may have interpreted them. Time and place will be relevant to the studies questioning why, for example, ‘DORA’ had far more prevalence by the end of the war, than when the Act was instigated at the beginning. Furthermore, it will address, the image of the woman as DORA, and the professional memory of cartoonists used to produce this image. The inspiration of what was used, when and where they were produced, and then cartoon consumption by audiences will all factor into the analysis of these characters.<sup>27</sup> By addressing

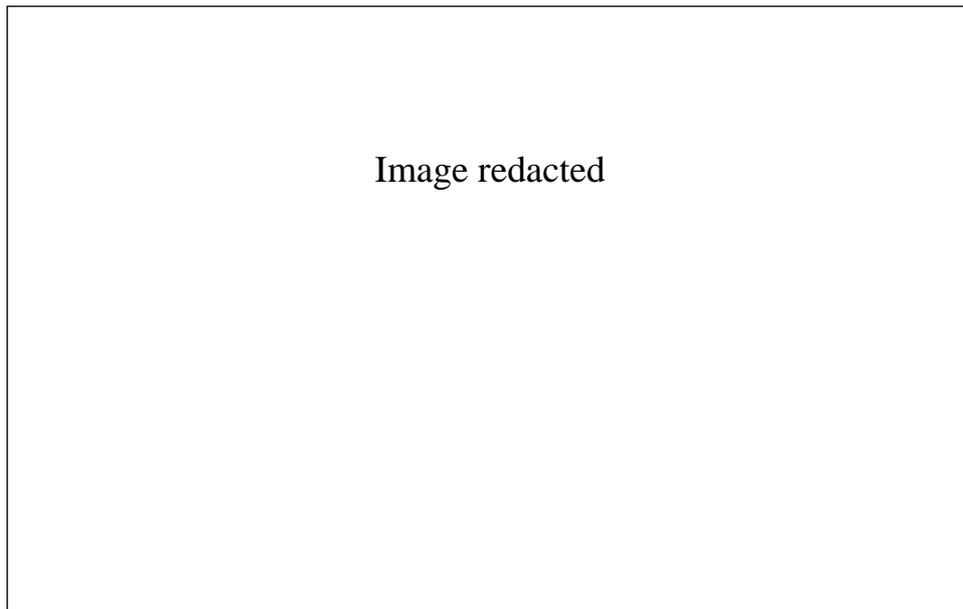
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<sup>26</sup> Price, *History of Punch* (London: Collins, 1957), p. 178.

<sup>27</sup> For discussion of cartoon and comic consumption see McCloud, *Making Comics*.

contextual material surrounding their depictions, deeper analysis of wartime culture may be reached.

The final section will examine a case study of ‘Reported Missing’; a cartoon by Officer C. E. B. Bernard that was published in the *Bystander* in January 1916. This image was taken to court for infringement of the dictates of the Defence of the Realm Act, (figure 2.2).<sup>28</sup> Such cartoons were seen to break out from what was expected in wartime having overstepped the boundaries of censorship. This particular court case will offer further contextual analysis of how cartoons and society interacted. For example, despite it being taken to court, no precedent is set by its hearing.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, responses to this case through the media will illustrate how highly the requisites of DORA were valued.



**(Figure 2.2) C. E. B. Bernard, ‘Reported Missing’, *Bystander*, 25<sup>th</sup> January**

**1916**

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<sup>28</sup> See ‘Costly Bit of Humour: Officer’s Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200’, *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8; ‘Reported Missing: Cartoon Prejudicial to Recruiting’, *Aberdeen Journal*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> Law historian Ben Watson, Templeman Library, confirmed this through conversation and follow up emails with Dr Gerry Rubin, University of Kent, 30<sup>th</sup> January-3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014.

### Wartime Censorship

Censorship has a long history of its own, much of which has been censored and can no longer be actively evaluated. Politically, however, Britain has implemented various laws across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to control aspects of society. These include secrets acts and questions of obscene publication as well as rulings less relevant to the press.<sup>30</sup> Despite the wide-ranging history, studies of Great War censorship often focus on amended correspondence between the home and battlefronts, altered to avoid compromising details of army movements. Yet throughout wartime, censorship was changing, discussed by the Joint Standing Committee started in 1912 of the Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee, and later the Air Force, but they too sought guidance from other political avenues including DORA.<sup>31</sup>

Adding broader national and social controls, DORA was passed on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1914. It was designed to help the government defend the British nation and Empire as well as allowing it to draw on all its available resources throughout the Dominions. The government was able to commandeer countryside and factories, requisitioning buildings for war purposes, particularly for creating munitions.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the army and navy rapidly gained additional recruitment powers through DORA.

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<sup>30</sup> See for example, Official Secrets Acts, 1889 and 1911; the Post Office Act, 1953; Children and Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act, 1955; Obscene Publications Acts, 1959 and 1964; as cited in Richard Findlater, *Comic Cuts: A Bedside Sampler of Censorship in Action* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1970), pp. 12-3.

<sup>31</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 1914-1918; TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 1912-1923; Charles Cook, *Defence of the Realm Manual* (London: HMSO, 1918).

<sup>32</sup> George Allardice Riddell, *Lord Riddell's War Diary 1914-18* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1933), p. 64; Cook, *Defence of the Realm Manual*.

Concerning the press in the United Kingdom, care was taken from the start of publication to ensure that the wrong information was not distributed to the wider populace. Newsprint was seen as an ‘impersonal façade’ that offered the reader straight facts and information, yet those who censored it were believed to be anything but impersonal about it.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, fears about what publicised information the enemy could see became a primary concern in wartime.<sup>34</sup> Before the twentieth century, correspondence took time to reach the appropriate recipient; therefore, subsequent publication was less of a worry. The enemy could only view it if they captured it, and with the time lapse, much lost its relevance. Far less information became public knowledge through newspapers and although some casual controls existed, they were never officially formalised. Hopkin suggests that during the Boer War the War Office and Home Office had considered press controls for fears that press expansion offered greater opportunity for the leakage of information. However, a less than impressed government negated censorial arguments and allowed the Boer War to proceed unhindered.<sup>35</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, press controls were deliberated more seriously following the Fashoda incident when rapidly expanding public consumption of newspapers began to worry the government.<sup>36</sup> Prime Minister Balfour prepared certain bills in the first years of the twentieth century, but many of these became overshadowed by the South African War and were side lined until 1904. That said, the formulation of a draft Bill was ‘kept in readiness for submission to Parliament when

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<sup>33</sup> Hopkin, ‘Domestic Censorship’, p. 151.

<sup>34</sup> Edward Cook, *The Press Censorship: Interview given to the Associated Press* (London: Burrup, Mathieson & Sprague, 1916), pp. 8-9.

<sup>35</sup> Hopkin, ‘Domestic Censorship’, p. 152; TNA, CAB 4/5 167, Minutes for Meetings of Committee of Imperial Defence, 1914.

<sup>36</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 1912-1939; Hopkin, ‘Domestic Censorship’, p. 152.

an emergency should arise'.<sup>37</sup> Later, details of the prepared bills were shared with the political opposition and leading newspaper proprietors to test their sentiments about press censorship. The response was predominantly positive with 200 replies that, 'favoured the proposed legislation' from notable London and provincial newspapers.<sup>38</sup> The War Office and Admiralty who would inform the government of military details and more specifically of those that were to be kept secret controlled the information. Press Secretary for the Press Association, Mr Robbins, was the first point of contact as soon as the War Office and Admiralty believed something should be withheld from public knowledge. Robbins would then pass details on to the press directly.

Although early in the war DORA did not feature as a cartoon character as she would come to later, the political guidance behind the Act certainly did. One cartoon depicting elements of the Act is Poy's "'Turned" to Good Use', which presents David Lloyd George in his newly created capacity as Minister of Munitions turning a factory on its side (figure 2.3). This action suggests his requisitioning of the building for war purposes, and thus, turning the building, it becomes cannon to fire munitions straight at the enemy in the second part of the diptych. The incongruity of actually being able to tip a factory creates the humour, but simultaneously there is no reprimand in that humour, it is an accepted feature, as was the proposition in the House of Commons that was passed 'without opposition'.<sup>39</sup> Interestingly here each of the cannon shells are labelled with letters 'for William', which reflects a military superstition that you would be hit by the bullet that had your name on it.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, Historical Review of the Development of the Press Committee, May 1923, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 1912-1939.

<sup>39</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1915, vol. 71, cc. 866-868; Berger, *Redeeming Laughter*, p. 208.

<sup>40</sup> Nicholas Saunders, *Trench Art: A Brief History and Guide, 1914-1939* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2011), p. 116; Astra Cielo, *Signs Omens and Superstitions* (New York: G. Sully, 1918), p. 60.

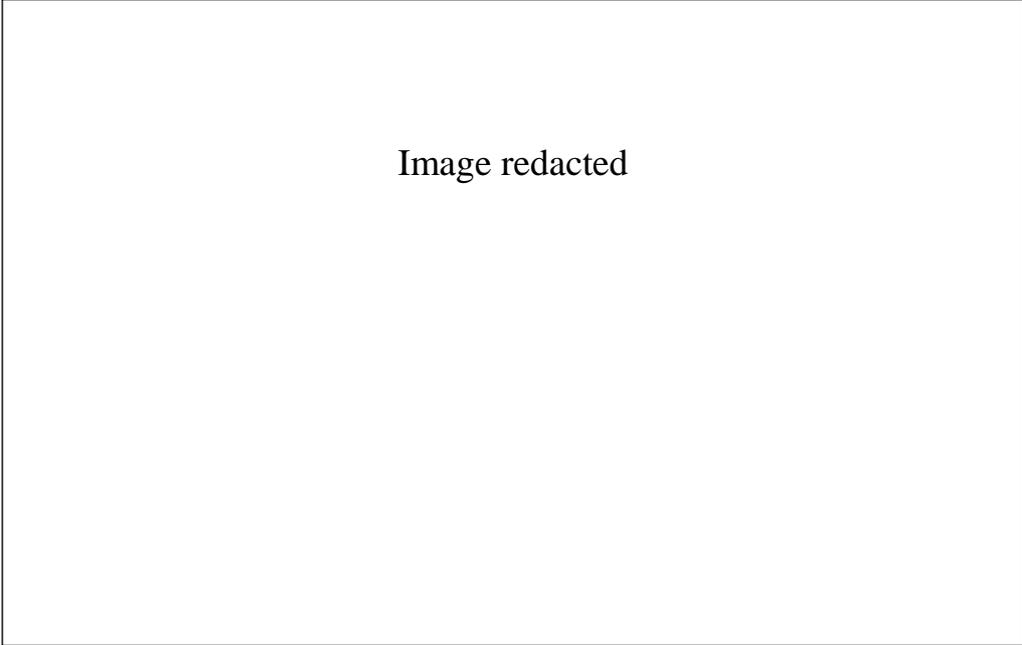


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**(Figure 2.3) Poy, ““Turned” to Good Use’, *Evening News*, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1915**

Press and publication, regulations were made to control the sharing of information that could fall into the hands of the enemy, and they were equally advised not to share ‘reports likely to cause disaffection or alarm’.<sup>41</sup> These statements were vague precisely so that different interpretations might ensue allowing the government room to punish and control public behaviours to suit the realm’s defence. The Admiralty and army were at liberty to decide what information they chose to share with the press, but this in turn was internally controlled.<sup>42</sup> Things the press could publish that might cause ‘disaffection or alarm’ were more open to interpretation. The Act was widely published, and despite its vagueness, there was little opportunity for the press to deny all knowledge, so many self-censored to maintain that control. When questioned about the rulings in the House of Commons, the Secretary of State, Reginald McKenna

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<sup>41</sup> TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8, ‘Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act’, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1914.

<sup>42</sup> TNA, CAB 4, ‘Committee of Imperial Defence: Miscellaneous Memoranda (B Series)’, 1903-39; TNA, CO 323/716/77, Minutes for Meeting, 1916; TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 1912-1918.

confirmed that they had been shared with the public through the *London Gazette* where official details like this were published for all.<sup>43</sup> This way, there could be relative certainty of public and publication awareness of the controls implementation and justification.<sup>44</sup>

The vague nature of censorship rulings in DORA, however, can explain the lack of detail about humour specifically within them. A nation confronting war would view it seriously and not consider humour as a relevant threat to be controlled. Nonetheless, Victorian approaches to humour suggest how the right sort of humour was essential for society, and much of this idea would have carried over and be understood.<sup>45</sup> Victorian ideals of humour will be discussed later when looking at the case study of ‘Reported Missing’, and again when considering commercial memories of cartoons. Yet during war, the British government seem to have assumed that humour was a natural faculty that did not need to be explicitly dissuaded.

The government was aware of potential risks of mass publication, including the involuntary sharing of vital information with the enemy, but again humour is not a feature of this worry. In August 1914, questions were asked about the controls over the press taken by the government, whether an appropriate Press Bureau had been established to maintain censorial controls. The Undersecretary of State for War, Harold Tennant, made it clear that in order to distribute news from the army and navy during war, a Press Bureau was to be set up. This bureau was to inform the press as to

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<sup>43</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1914, vol. 5: 66 cc. 121-260, Amendments to Regulations 38, 39 and 56; *London Gazette*, 4<sup>th</sup> June 1915, p. 58.

<sup>44</sup> See for example, ‘Table of Contents’, *London Gazette*, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1915, p. 6110.

<sup>45</sup> Gray, ‘The Uses of Victorian Laughter’, p. 147.

what was suitable for publication, and the press were similarly encouraged to consult with the bureau.<sup>46</sup>

Nonetheless, despite the political inference, the people who were left in charge of the bureau were predominantly civilian. Lord Kitchener instigated the Press Bureau with civilian control led by Frederick Edwin Smith from 7<sup>th</sup> August 1914.<sup>47</sup> Smith was a lawyer specialising in civil law called to the Barr in 1899, who took on the role as first director of the Press Bureau despite his uncertainties regarding the position, but was happily accepted by the other members of the committee.<sup>48</sup> His leadership was only short lived, however, as the realisation that he was the frontispiece of a protective shield for the Admiralty and War Office left him feeling unable to support the brunt of press complaints and dissatisfaction. Smith resigned and was succeeded by Sir Stanley Buckmaster who also ‘found the task a prickly one’ and resigned quickly.<sup>49</sup> By January 1915, however, leadership was transferred to Sir Frank A. Swettenham who dealt with more of the internal workings of the bureau, and Sir Edward T. Cook who took on the public role explaining and defending its work.<sup>50</sup> Under DORA’s guidance, the Press Bureau predominantly followed two key principles of control, which Cook outlined to the Associated Press of neutral countries. He stated that the censor sought to prevent the use of information that might ‘(a) disseminate information likely to be of use to the

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<sup>46</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1914, vol. 5: 65 cc. 2266-2272.

<sup>47</sup> Nigel Fountain, *When the lamps Went Out: Reporting the Great War 1914-1918* (London: Guardian Faber, 2014), p. 54; Lovelace, ‘Control and Censorship’, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 24<sup>th</sup> August 1914; Riddell, *Lord Riddell’s War Diary*, p. 9.

<sup>49</sup> Riddell, *Lord Riddell’s War Diary*, p. 16.

<sup>50</sup> H. S. Barlow, ‘Swettenham, Sir Frank Athelstane (1850-1946)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OPU 2004); Edward T. Cook, *The Press in War-Time: With Some Account of the Official Press Bureau* (London: Macmillan, 1920), p. v.

enemy, or (b) otherwise to give assistance to him', and effectively paraphrased the statements in DORA.<sup>51</sup>

The public continually harassed the press to provide more information about the war even with awareness of the censorship. By 1918, the desire for news had increased so much that Lord Beaverbrook, aware of the press' influence on politics, wrote reports outlining public desires for data and for the press to continue to provide such material.<sup>52</sup> There is acknowledgement of the difficulties of finding and sharing information so widely, nonetheless, he asks that a scheme be set up to provide 'more news and less rumours'.<sup>53</sup>

The government took risks throughout the war when censoring the press. Firstly, they relied on press honesty, a feature that could not always be completely trusted, particularly when different newspapers competed for readership, and thus, all sought to be the first with the story.<sup>54</sup> The government remained aware of this problem and discussed it through debates in the House of Commons particularly early in the war on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914 when issues were raised. These concerns related to the reporting of military matters, published by the *London Gazette* and the *Globe*, when the official report should have been submitted only to the *London Gazette*.<sup>55</sup> At other times, Lord Northcliffe spoke of potential problems of press honesty, but complained that not

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<sup>51</sup> Cook, *Press Censorship*, pp. 8-9; House of Commons, *Defence of the Realm Consolidation Bill* (London: HMSO, 1914).

<sup>52</sup> M. L. Sanders, 'Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 18:1 (1975), p. 128.

<sup>53</sup> TNA, CAB 24/52/12, Ministry of Information Memorandum on Increasing Quantity of Newsprint, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1918.

<sup>54</sup> Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, pp. 1-14; Williams, *Read All About It!*, p. 77.

<sup>55</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914, vol. 5:66 cc. 617-752.

enough trust was issued to them even though they were better able to control themselves than any governmental body would believe of them.<sup>56</sup>

The Press Bureau also encountered problems working with the Admiralty and War Office as the war progressed and paper shortages developed.<sup>57</sup> Added to this issue, military authorities could be easy or complicated to work with at different times. The press wanted to disseminate the most up-to-date information for their readership. However, the authorities were comparatively sluggish in presenting their intelligence for publication. The press found the dearth of information and then sudden explosions thereof disconcerting. Regardless, the Press Bureau also suffered problems of information distribution and reception from the War Office and Admiralty, but had to work with what they received.<sup>58</sup> As the war progressed, paper shortages meant limitations for newspaper publication and dispersion when, as far as the press were concerned, the public wanted to know everything they could about the war and its proceedings. Limitations were deemed necessary and had been acted upon; nonetheless, there are comments from David Lloyd George in 1917 acknowledging the need for papers and the news printed on them.<sup>59</sup> A memorandum from the Ministry of Information by Lord Beaverbrook similarly acknowledges that newspapers are not ‘a luxury but a necessity’ in times of war.<sup>60</sup>

The government never sought to take complete control of newspapers as the British press prided itself on maintaining ‘press freedom’. Nevertheless, guidance was consistently provided for them. Initially this guidance came in the form of what were

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<sup>56</sup> ‘The Press in Wartime’, *Manchester Guardian*, 9<sup>th</sup> November 1915.

<sup>57</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1 Minutes for Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1917.

<sup>58</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 12<sup>th</sup> October 1917.

<sup>59</sup> Riddell, *Lord Riddell’s War Diary*, pp. 150-2; TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1917.

<sup>60</sup> TNA, CAB 24/52/12, Ministry of Information Memorandum on Increasing Quantity of Newsprint, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1918.

termed ‘Parker’ notices; later renamed D-notices, as Notices of Defence.<sup>61</sup> Through these, Colin Lovelace suggests the Press Bureau never forced any legal precedents onto their controls, and as such, the British were left with an ‘intriguing phenomenon of a free yet censored press’.<sup>62</sup> What needed to be controlled changed constantly as the war developed, and notice of these changes came through the system regularly. Notices were distributed at regular intervals; however, they were all headed with the disclaimer that everything within them ought to be kept ‘private and confidential’.<sup>63</sup> The total volume of D-notices sent throughout the war, remains unclear as most were destroyed upon replacement, and those ‘officially’ remaining post-war were destroyed after February 1923, although some remain extant in private collections.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, clear indication of how details in D-notices were received by specific individuals cannot be evaluated, but the general compliance from the press suggests that for the most part regulations were followed.

The consistent replacement avoided what Judith Butler suggests is the problem of a ‘regulation that states what it does not want [which when stated]... thwarts its own desire’. By leaving the D-notices ‘private and confidential’ and calling for them not to be published, and better yet destroyed when new versions were produced, the Press Bureau was able to control this ‘performative contradiction’ by not allowing the specific statements the opportunity to become public knowledge.<sup>65</sup> In many ways, this became an advantage for the bureau, as it offered far more control for them where censorship was involved. The D-notice was able to control and to resolve some of the

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<sup>61</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, Historical Review of the Development of the Press Committee, May 1923, pp. 5-6; TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 12<sup>th</sup> October 1917.

<sup>62</sup> Lovelace, ‘Control and Censorship’, p. 40.

<sup>63</sup> TNA, HO 139, ‘Home Office: Official Press Bureau’, 1914-19.

<sup>64</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 28<sup>th</sup> November 1919; TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1923.

<sup>65</sup> Butler, *Excitable Speech*, p. 130.

issues outlined in a three-page report submitted in October 1915 about the bureau, which had issues with a lack of centrality, and consistence.<sup>66</sup>

Many artistic genres were censored for the public to a degree, and the response to such censorship is interesting to address. At first, artists, cartoonists, photographers and former war correspondents, who would have written about the conflict, were denied access to the front lines unless they were serving in some capacity.<sup>67</sup> This control meant certain limitations to correspondence for the public, and the awareness that they had of the war overall. In many ways, artists and the press at home were best able to construct the public perception of the army and the war from their seats on the home front.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, public acceptance and enthusiasm for the war are promoted through the press.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, to ensure that visual as well as textual controls were upheld, new amendments were consistently added to DORA. Some of these spoke indirectly of visual material, such as amendment 27c which provided controls over pamphlets.<sup>70</sup> Yet at the same time, certain pictures were censored under the military dictates of the Defence of the Realm, to notorious effect.

Work by Christopher Nevinson was the most notorious for its censorship. Two of his paintings were censored, while the newly established Imperial War Museum (IWM) bought a collection of others in 1918. This occurred just before Nevinson's second exhibition at the Leicester Galleries in London.<sup>71</sup> He was an official war artist,

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<sup>66</sup> TNA, CAB 37/136/34, Report on Censorship Failings and Advice for Reconciliation, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1915.

<sup>67</sup> Paul Fox, 'What's it Really Like at the Front? Censorship, Truth Claims and British Illustrated Weeklies, 1914-15', unpublished article, 2013, p. 5; Riddell, *Lord Riddell's War Diary*, p. 17.

<sup>68</sup> Badsey, *The British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>69</sup> Wilkinson, *Depictions and Images of War*, p. xi.

<sup>70</sup> 'Notice of Leaflets and Pamphlet Publication, Amendments to Regulations 27c of DORA', *London Gazette*, 20<sup>th</sup> November 1917, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Christopher Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice* (New York: Harcourt, 1938), pp.142-3; also see Michael Walsh, 'This Tumult in the Clouds' C. R. W. Nevinson and the Development of the 'Airscape'', *British Art Journal*, 5:1 (2004), p. 84.

appointed by Charles Masterman following an exhibition of his work in September 1916, after which they began a correspondence with Nevinson requesting permission to be instated as an ‘authorized war-artist’, which was granted, and this makes the censorship seem more unusual.<sup>72</sup> Nevinson had specifically asked to be an official artist, with support from his journalist father, and all of the correspondence suggests his desire to comply with censorial mandates. Of the two paintings, the control on ‘A Group of Soldiers’ was relieved after some discussion, as the censorship had been placed because the soldiers depicted were ‘not sufficiently good-looking’ nor were they, to the department’s censor, Major Lee, what was expected of a British soldier.<sup>73</sup> It was decided, that whether the human form was attractive or not, was a subjective decision and had no place in war art.<sup>74</sup>

‘Paths of Glory’ on the other hand was another matter. The painting was constructed out of Nevinson’s recollections of the war when he was a volunteer ambulance driver, and depicted what he called the simple reality of ‘dead men caught in wire’ (figure 2.4). This image was censored because there had been a ruling that no photographs of dead men were allowed. He argued, however, that it was by no means a photograph and, therefore, should not have been censored at all.<sup>75</sup> The controversy surrounding this image began in November 1917, prior to it being exhibited at the Leicester Galleries on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1918. However, the debates surrounding the image continue

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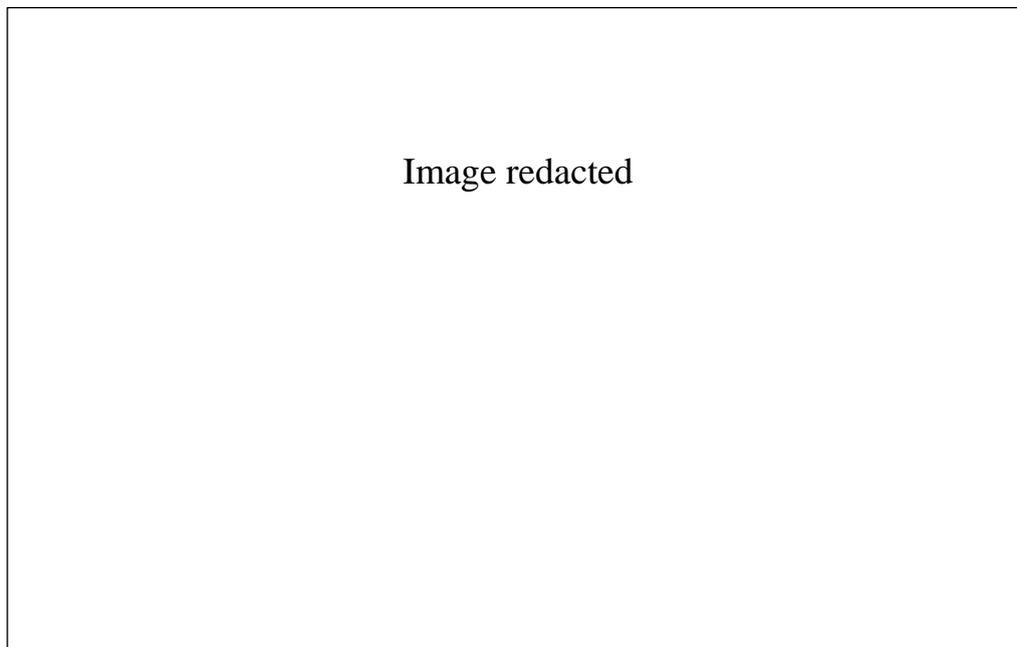
<sup>72</sup> IWM, WA1/291/1, C. R. W. Nevinson, ‘War Correspondence with the IWM’, 25<sup>th</sup> April 1917.

<sup>73</sup> Michael Walsh, ‘C. R. W. Nevinson: Conflict, Contrast and Controversy in Paintings of War’, *War in History*, 12:2 (2005), pp. 196-7; Susie Harries and Meirion Harries, *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth Century* (London: Michael Joseph; Imperial War Museum, 1983), pp. 44-5.

<sup>74</sup> Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, p. 143; Walsh, ‘Conflict, Contrast and Controversy’, p. 198.

<sup>75</sup> Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, p. 143

today, as having been castigated by the censors, Nevinson decided to present the image with a brown paper slogan stating ‘Censored’ diagonally across it.<sup>76</sup>



**(Figure 2.4) Christopher Nevinson, ‘Paths of Glory’, Imperial War Museum, 1917**

Why Nevinson did this remains unclear, as even in his autobiographical recollections twenty years later, he recalls merely that he believed the censor would change their minds and ‘pass it at the last moment’.<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, he was aware that as a formal ‘war artist’ all of his exhibited war work had to be within military regulations.<sup>78</sup> Regardless of its intention, the presentation of this image was a significant gesture as far as the Allied censors were concerned, and a major talking point for the British national press who reproduced the image in its censored form with the word ‘censor’

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<sup>76</sup> Christopher Nevinson, ‘When the Censor Censored “Censored”’, *British Legion Journal* (1932); Charles Doherty, ‘Nevinson’s Elegy: Paths of Glory’, *Art Journal*, 51:1 (1992), p. 67; Walsh, ‘Conflict, Contrast and Controversy’, p. 200.

<sup>77</sup> Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, p.148.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, p.142.

emblazoned across it.<sup>79</sup> Michael Walsh has argued that the censorship was implemented because of Nevinson's recollections of the war, which had previously been published in newspapers. For Walsh, the censorship was a criticism of these publications rather than the painting itself, although Nevinson's specific motivations cannot be identified.<sup>80</sup> The image was deemed inappropriate in its depiction of fallen soldiers, although Nevinson claims that it was merely the word 'censored' that resulted in his chastisement at the War Office as ironically under DORA, the word censored was forbidden.<sup>81</sup>

The Imperial War Museum (IWM) in London holds other artistic works that depict elements of fallen and deceased soldiers, which were not censored, as well as uncensored cartoon images by Louis Raemaekers, which again hold similarities, portraying death. Images of death serve to contradict the idea that Nevinson was censored for the content of his depiction alone, particularly when other images by the same artist such as 'La Patrie' show wounded soldiers in run-down, makeshift hospital beds that in their own right implicate death, were passed for the same exhibition (figure 2.5).<sup>82</sup> 'La Patrie' further highlights a sombre attitude to war; one of regret and futility that for scholars in the 1970s supported the ideas promoted by war poetry.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> See 'Censored', *Daily Mail*, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1918; 'Things We Want to Know' *Daily Mail*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1918.

<sup>80</sup> See Walsh, 'Conflict, Contrast and Controversy'.

<sup>81</sup> Nevinson, 'When the Censor Censored "Censored"'; Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, p.148.

<sup>82</sup> Christopher Nevinson, 'War Art Exhibition', Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1916.

<sup>83</sup> See John Terraine, *The Great War, 1914-1918* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*. For more on wartime memory see chapter 5.

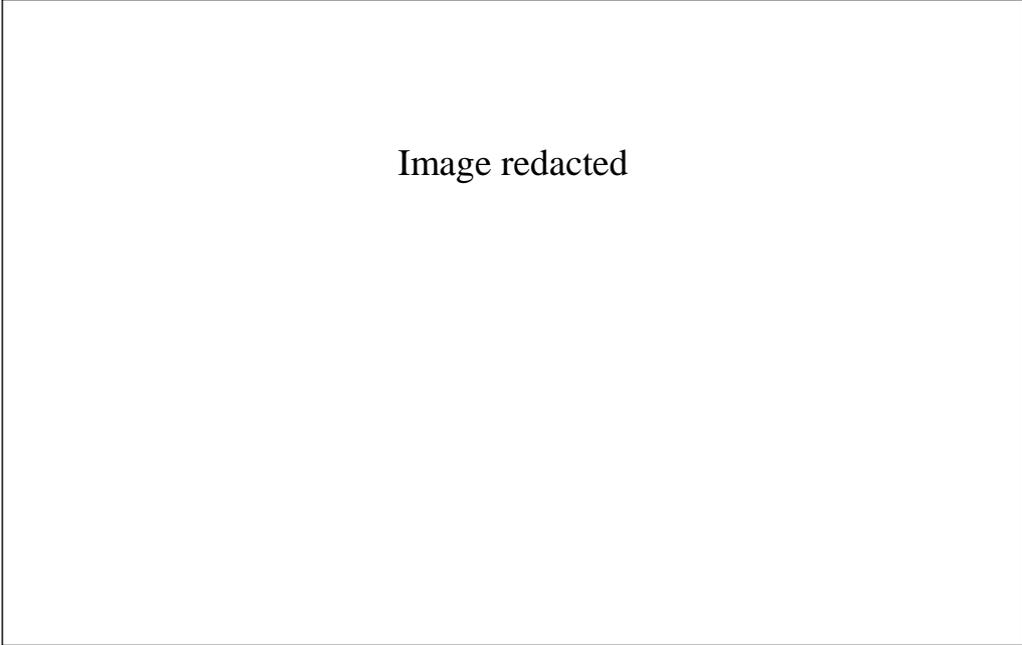


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**(Figure 2.5) Christopher Nevinson, ‘La Patrie’, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1916**

In contrast, the publishers *Land and Water* as well as the *Daily Mail* and *The Times* utilised cartoon work by Louis Raemaekers, all of which remained uncensored.<sup>84</sup> He produced cartoons that represented darker ideas and emotions than British cartoonists, but at the time, this was justified by the fact that he was Dutch. As such, he could not be expected to produce cartoons containing what might be termed ‘British humour’, but rather he made ‘international images’ that could be forgiven for being just that.<sup>85</sup> It was said that his work was produced not by pencil, but by the ‘spirit of outraged humanity itself’ for which the artist, as a neutral, was in a better position to embody.<sup>86</sup> British humour, in contrast was seen to be more restrained and stoic in nature reflecting

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<sup>84</sup> Louis Raemaekers, *History of the War: The First Twelve Months of War* (New York: The Century Co., 1918); Louis Raemaekers, *History of the War: The Second Twelve Months of War* (New York: The Century Co., 1919); Louis Raemaekers, *The Great War: A Neutral’s Indictment One Hundred Cartoons by Louis Raemaekers* (London: Fine Arts Society, 1916).

<sup>85</sup> Raemaekers, ‘A Disciple of Bernhardt’; ‘Seduction’; ‘A fact’; ‘Have Another Piece’, *Neutral’s Indictment*, pp. xv-xvi.

<sup>86</sup> Raemaekers, *Neutral’s Indictment*, p. xvii.

on earlier Victorian and Edwardian moral ideals.<sup>87</sup> Victorian humour based in mockery held the intension of moral correction through that humour.<sup>88</sup> Nonetheless, it must be remembered that Raemaekers' work was predominantly published inside of the first year of the war, or following newspaper headlines about atrocities.<sup>89</sup> This could account for less stringent censorship on his work and can justify some of his more divergent styles of art.

Raemaekers produced several images that portray death with more similarity to Nevinson's. These include 'Barbed Wire' where a selection of fallen soldiers are presented lying in deathly poses cast across barbed wire on the battle field (figure 2.6). What needs to be noted here, however, is that the fallen for Raemaekers are generally German. Other nationalities, including the allies could be close to death, yet many are depicted fighting on in some way. 'Liquid Fire', for example, presents Allied troops continuing despite the immanent suffering incurred by the German flame projectors (figure 2.7).<sup>90</sup> Yet still they have fists raised in opposition to the problem, and appear to continue through it. Part of the criticism for Nevinson's work was precisely the nationality of the fallen soldiers who were British, while Raemaekers felt less need to depict these soldiers after their deaths.

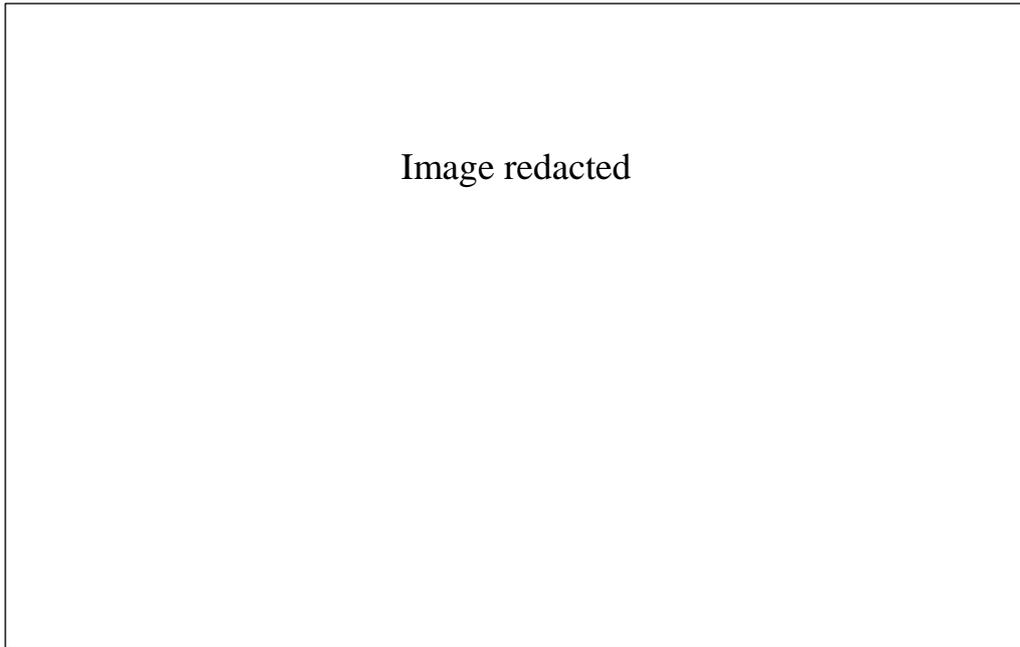
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<sup>87</sup> For more details of Victorian and Edwardian humour, see chapter 5.

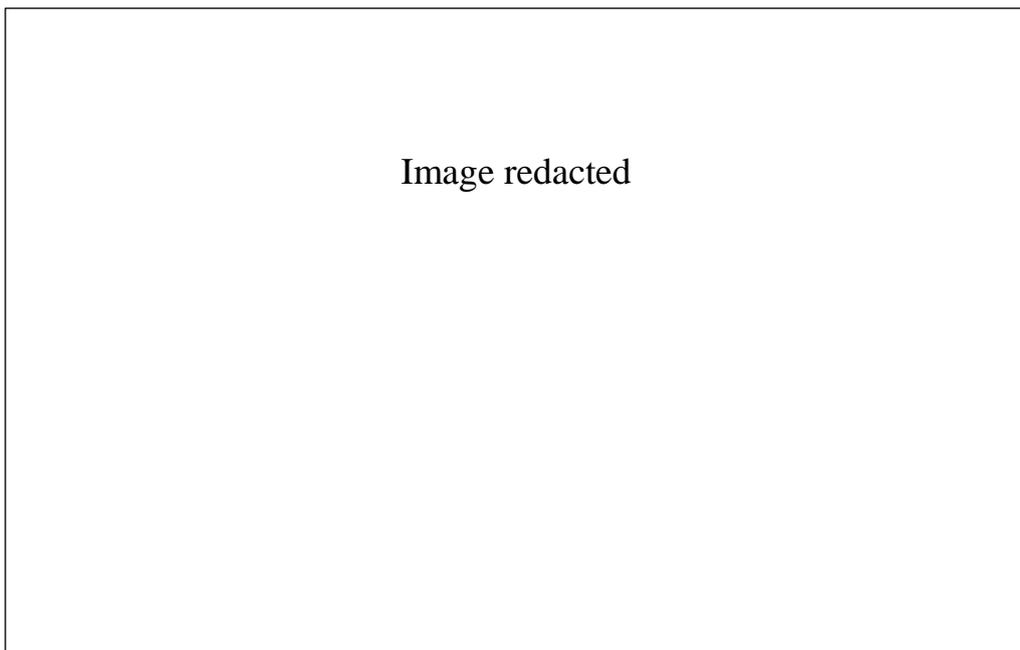
<sup>88</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.

<sup>89</sup> John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 297-300.

<sup>90</sup> Also see Raemaekers, 'The Gas Fiend'; 'Slow Asphyxiation'; 'Is it You, Mother?'; 'Serbia, Autumn 1915'; 'The Hostages', in *Neutral's Indictment*.



**(Figure 2.6) Louis Raemaekers, 'Barbed Wire', *A Neutral's Indictment*, 1915**



**(Figure 2.7) Louis Raemaekers, 'Liquid Fire', *A Neutral's Indictment*, 1915**

The art world was subject to the censor's rule when it came to visual depictions of war, albeit tenuously through the vague stipulations, but cartoons do not seem to suffer this fate to the same extent. Commissioned work would often be designed to hold a lasting position in society as memorials, far beyond photographic remembrance that was seen to be transitory, and as such, formal art was subject to the censor's demands.<sup>91</sup> Even so, the more personal appeal of photographs and the sense of instant truth that they presented appealed to viewers, and was something they sought in formal artistic works. Artists who had been at the front and could present their art with photographic memory and additional emotion appealed even more to the public.<sup>92</sup> The photograph was officially submitted to greater controls under DORA, but soldiers on the front conveniently ignored many of these.<sup>93</sup>

Cartoonists seemed to have more liberty with censorship in comparison to written documents and articles in the same newspapers. Evidence of which may be seen in the House of Commons Hansard papers, which detail specific debates regarding newspaper articles, but never mention visual material in the same context.<sup>94</sup> Cartoons are able to offer more than one side of an argument through their depictions and this makes the job of the censor far more difficult as they are then left with questions of which aspect should take priority and which should be censored if anything at all. There are very few occasions when censorial rulings specifically relate to cartoon material, although ideas about cartoons may be inferred from what is written. Traditionally though, the brevity of illustration and the simplicity of perceived ideas

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<sup>91</sup> A clear definition between the photograph and other artwork is made in Doherty, 'Nevinson's Elegy', p. 68.

<sup>92</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 12.

<sup>93</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 12<sup>th</sup> April 1918; Stefan Goebel, "'Intimate Pictures": British War Photography from the Western Front', in Jakob Volker and Stephan Sagurna (eds.), *The Great War in 3D* (Münster: LWL-Medienzentrum für Westfalen, 2014), p. 47.

<sup>94</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1914-24 July 1917, vol. 5 cc. 65-96.

was what gave cartoons their appeal, and helped them to avoid the censor. They may indicate a direction or location, but the images of signposts present no sense of direction or actuality that could be censored.

Studies of censorship suggest that the ‘need for explicit prohibitions, imposed and sanctioned by an institutionalised authority, diminishes as the mechanisms of internalisation take hold’.<sup>95</sup> That is to say, the more the ideas that have been enforced are assimilated by people, the less they need to be enforced. This is an exaggeration as rules and laws need to be reinforced regularly in order to consistently hold their same power. Regardless, there is the sense from the parliamentary reports and minutes from meetings that suggest, in this case, the press were particularly accommodating. They rapidly took on the requests of Parliament, and self-censored their publications following the guidelines of the ‘machinery’ that was set in motion at the start of the war. After the war, in 1922, the committee had ‘become a tax on the public’, which is discussed and Lord Riddell responds in its defence saying that ‘the Committee was formed for a certain purpose which still existed in full force’, and he worries about how it would be ‘lamentable if the committee were allowed to lapse’.<sup>96</sup> Thereby, he suggests that a continuation of the Press Committee and, therefore, the censorship as well is needed, but potentially to a lesser extent following the war’s end. Helen Freshwater asserts that the true measure of ‘censorship’s success is indicated by its apparent abolition’ and so perhaps to this effect the continuation of the Press Committee and others were a sign not of the censorship’s failure, but rather of political insecurities.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Freshwater, ‘Towards a Redefinition’, p. 230.

<sup>96</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1922.

<sup>97</sup> Freshwater, ‘Towards a Redefinition’, p. 231.

### Cartoon Representations of DORA and the Censor

Moving away from the vagaries and details of censorship and further into the realms of its representation, the first character to consider is ‘DORA’, the personification of the Defence of the Realm Act. ‘DORA’ was a gift to the cartoonist providing them with an instant female name, and character with which to caricature the law. This use of personification offers the historian insight into the way in which the law was perceived and some of the changing attitudes of the public and the press towards the Defence of the Realm and its stipulations. Today, ‘DORA’ is a less fashionable name, which is precisely how she was depicted during and after the war; however, to the contemporary audience it could be any female’s name. Some authors and artists before the Act’s inception had Dora characters in their work. She was usually young, flighty and childish in nature, yet this image does not seem to transpose into cartoons (figure 2.8).<sup>98</sup> The representation of the Act in cartoon is of a mothering sort who bustles the rest of society into order. The law commanding the public is transposed into a gendered role, generally conceived in a maternal fashion rather than the young, flighty and potentially irresponsible women of literature.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> See for example, Arthur E. Copping and Will Owen, *Jolly in Germany* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910); Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 1992).

<sup>99</sup> For Dora characters, see Dickens, *David Copperfield*; Sigmund Freud, *Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* (New York: Simon and Schuster Ltd., 1963).

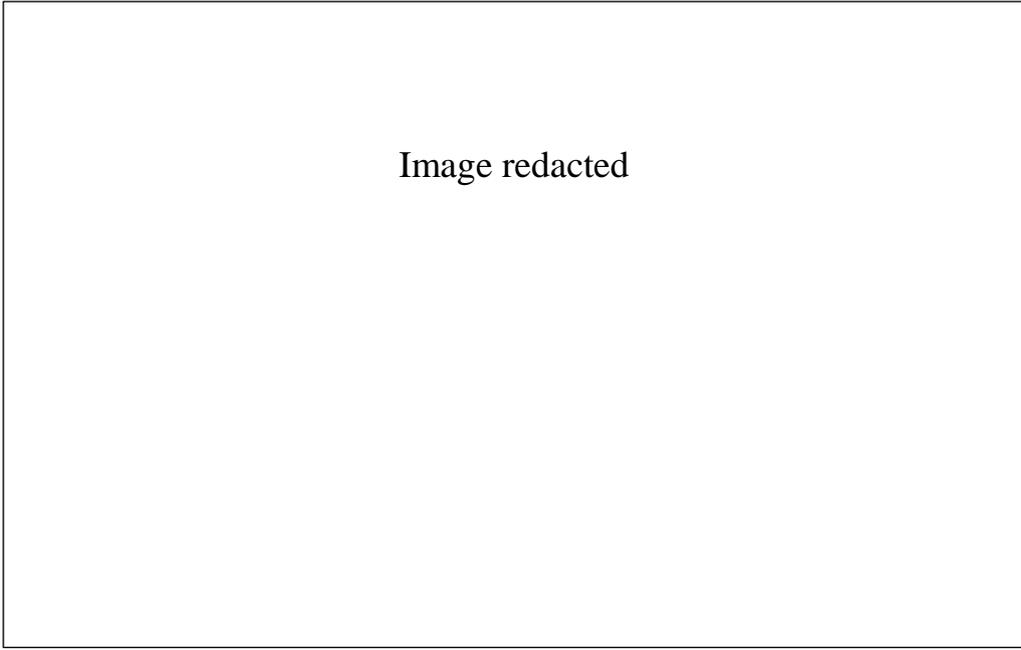


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**(Figure 2.8) Will Owen, ‘Dora’, *Jolly in Germany*, 1910**

For cartoonists choosing to use ‘DORA’ as a character, there was no reason for their depictions to be so similar, and yet they remarkably are suggesting a collective perception of the Act. A quick overview offers Poy’s grandmotherly rotund figure, Haselden’s bossy older woman, George Whitelaw’s ‘stayer’ who is aged and haggard or Bernard Partridge’s curmudgeon who is impossible to remove (figures 2.9, 2.12, 2.13 and 2.11). The matron is used prolifically by certain cartoonists; in particular, George Belcher in *Punch*, but she is represented less often than younger women are.<sup>100</sup> Generally, respect for cartoon matrons is minimal, they are depicted as foolish older women used by the cartoonist to play upon ideas of naivety and misunderstanding of the war. Often these characters are mocked for their ‘dumpy’ appearances, and general misunderstandings, yet it is always done in a light-hearted manner and is rarely

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<sup>100</sup> See Philippa Gregory, ‘War, Laughter and Women: Representations of Women and Humour during the First World War, through a Study of Cartoons’ MA dissertation, University of Kent, Canterbury, 2012.

vindictive.<sup>101</sup> In contrast, ‘DORA’ is a comforting character with clear maternal values despite following in the visual trope of the matron.

There is some variation in the character of ‘DORA’ for cartoonists across publications, but by the very acronym that is her name, she remained a gift to cartoonists. Between publications, there is little noticeable variation to her personification, but rather there is more alteration dependant on the period of the war in which she is depicted. Most commonly, she is a large woman of the middle to upper classes. She is middle-aged or older, and generally carries some additional weight. However, this weight is used to help enhance her character. The weight adds a friendly demeanour, making her the grandmotherly character of Poy who is comfortable and approachable whilst still maintaining her authority (figure 2.9). Yet post-war, if she continues to carry the weight she is mocked as being a drain on society. Whereas, once the weight is removed, she is presented as a continuing and persistent drain on society even though there is less of her to begin with (figure 2.13). In these circumstances, a more ‘witchlike’ personality is embedded in the image for the viewer.

The timing of ‘DORA’ illustrations is interesting to address, since she does not appear in cartoons until towards the end of the war itself, which is surprising as the Act was instigated right at the start of the war in August 1914.<sup>102</sup> This could be a reflection of later comfort with the Act, or earlier wariness towards it and its controls. Furthermore, earlier in the war, there were close reminiscences of potential gender conflicts that had been erupting in Britain through suffrage campaigns.<sup>103</sup> Features of the Act do appear in cartoons from 1915 onwards as seen in “‘Turned’ to Good Use’

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<sup>101</sup> See for example George Belcher, ‘Mrs Green to Mrs Jones’, *Punch*, June 1917, p. 161; George Belcher, ‘Kangaroo Feathers’, *Punch*, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1916, p. 91.

<sup>102</sup> TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8, ‘Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act’, 1914.

<sup>103</sup> Susan Kingsley Kent, *Making Peace: The Reconstruction of Gender in Interwar Britain* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 12-13.

(figure 2.3), although many of these reflect ironic grumbles about specific aspects of the legislation, and are generally portrayed soon after amendments have been made.<sup>104</sup> Another hypothesis that may help to explain 'DORA's' particular appearance following 1917 can be seen through a reflection of women in wartime cartoons. Excluding the flighty feminine image, women for the most part are allegorical and exuberant about the war at the start, readily making concessions to its benefit.<sup>105</sup> Later there is a far greater sense of loss and weariness reflected in the older, matronly image of 'DORA' offering comfort and support to the nation.

The image of an older woman offers a sense of nostalgia and comfort after 1917, rather than overt patriotism as she sends her sons away in 1914-15. She is returned to her normal status in society, and is no longer the rebel provoking conflict, but is the nurturing domesticated mother recognised from before the nineteenth century.<sup>106</sup> The grandmotherly appearance of 'DORA' also reflects on the tired nation moving towards the end of war, even though an official end was still unclear.<sup>107</sup> Nonetheless, when the mother is older (and perhaps wiser) she is better able to comfort the nation like children, such as in Poy's 'And so to Bed' where John Citizen (society) is taken away from his toys (figure 2.9). An older and seemingly world-weary nation towards the final year of the war is thus reflected in a way that does not leave the nation feeling defenceless and broken, but rather is comforted by the parental figure who nurtures. Humour is added through John's expression of surprise looking forlornly at the clock;

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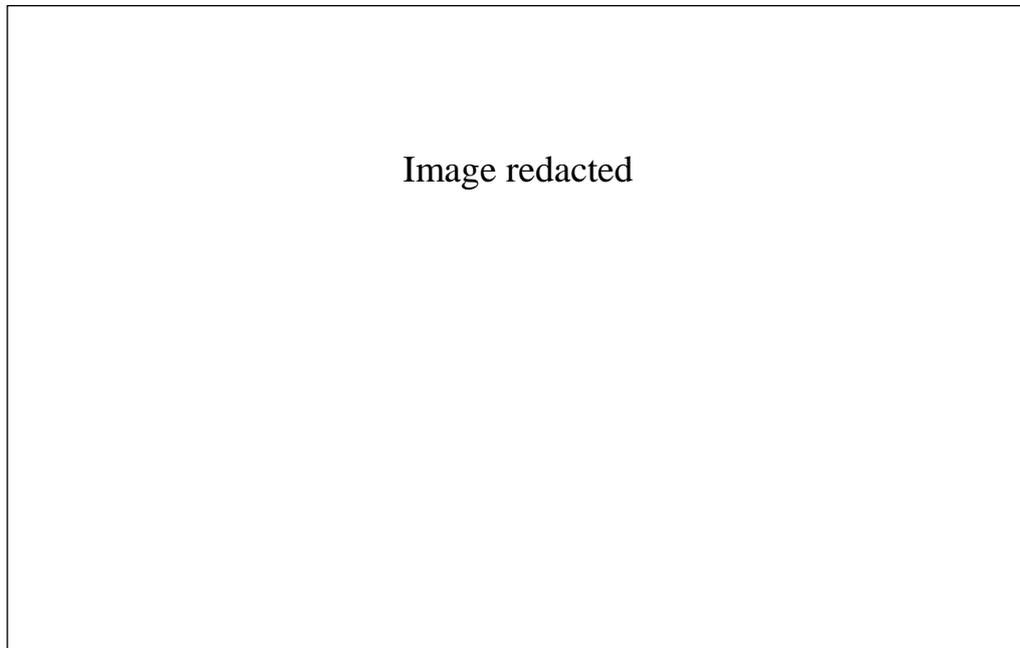
<sup>104</sup> See for example, M, 'People We Never Meet', *Punch* 13<sup>th</sup> October 1915; Ruth Cobb, 'Breaking the News to a Favourite Tea Pot', *Punch*, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1915; Leonard Raven-Hill, 'The Thing That Matters', *Punch*, 30<sup>th</sup> August 1916; Frank Reynolds, 'Frightfulness on the Allotment', *Punch*, 28<sup>th</sup> March 1917.

<sup>105</sup> Gregory, 'War, Laughter and Women'.

<sup>106</sup> Kingsley Kent, *Making Peace*, pp. 12-13; Nicoletta Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the Memory of the Great War', *Journal of British Studies*, 36:2 (1997), pp. 178-206.

<sup>107</sup> Doherty, 'Nevinson's Elegy', p. 67.

however, his frustration would be the instigator of humorous acceptance for more of the audience.



**(Figure 2.9) Poy, ‘And so to Bed’, *Daily Mail*, 1918**

There is, nonetheless, a lot of power behind this image of the mother character at a time when public on the home front were uncomfortable and could be described as feeling insecure because of the prevailing conflict and its repercussions.<sup>108</sup> By March 1918, morale was quite low throughout the British populace in the face of so much death and the seemingly never-ending nature of the prevailing war.<sup>109</sup> ‘DORA’ at this time in 1918 offers a comforting figure when for many years previously patriotic mothers had been sending their sons away to fight. ‘DORA’ serves as a counter character to Nicoletta Gullace’s idea of ‘Patriotic Motherhood’. Earlier in the war,

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<sup>108</sup> See Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of Our Sons: Men, Women and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship During the Great War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 53-69; Kingsley Kent, *Making Peace*, pp. 97-98; Susan Grayzel, *Women’s Identities at War: Gender, Motherhood and Politics in Britain and France during the First World War* (Chapel Hill, NC. and London: University of North Carolina, 1999), pp. 86-114.

<sup>109</sup> Doherty, ‘Nevinson’s Elegy’, p. 67.

women were not just ‘raising children, but sending them to die’ as well, and this patriotic drive through propaganda really pushed the vitriolic ideal.<sup>110</sup> In contrast, the light humour embodied in the matron serves to provide relief of tension, and allows for calmer acceptance and potential optimism for an end to the conflict. ‘DORA’ is then a universal mother for the nation with a capacity for comfort and care towards all, even when the citizen being taken to bed holds an expression of discomfort and surprise.

In the face of war, fighting and its repercussions, an allegorical patriotic mother figure encouraging the fight may have appeared less valid, and certainly less humorous. In this manner, militaristic adaptations of figureheads appeared more appropriate at the start, or in response to particular situations.<sup>111</sup> However, these characters are not ones that can be easily adapted to represent the realities of war fatigue, or something that is needed for its comfort. Thereby, ‘DORA’ and her growing representation in 1918 make more sense. ‘DORA’, who represented a more genial mother figure rather than the forthright, patriotic force of Britannia, refilled the maternal position even though the Act had affected the nation in a significant manner up to this point. ‘DORA’ also offers the artist greater opportunity to incorporate humour into the image of the older woman. She can offer comfort, but at the same time, these images present an ironic and humorous notion of grandmother government taking away society’s toys, and thereby the humour is reinstated (figure 2.9). Furthermore, ‘DORA’ as a ‘nanny’ can be identified in both senses of the word in

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<sup>110</sup> Gullace, *Blood of Our Sons*, p. 196; IWM, PST 2763, E. J. Kealy, ‘Women of Britain Say Go’, 1915; IWM, PST 5109, E. Kemp-Welch, ‘Remember Scarborough’, 1915.

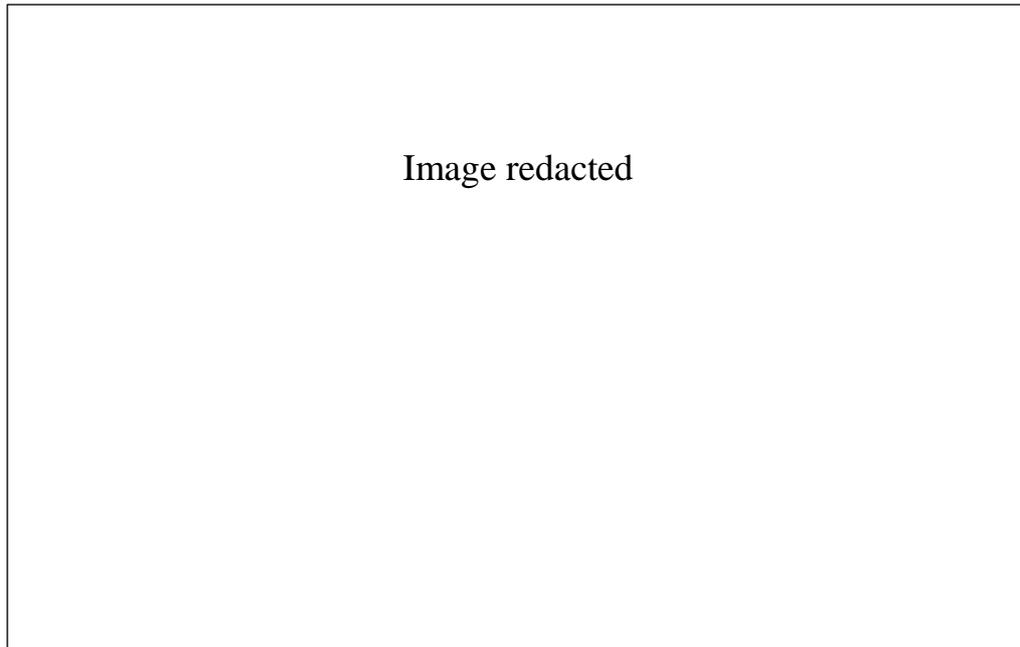
<sup>111</sup> See Raemaekers, ‘My Son Go and Fight for your Motherland’, in *Neutral’s Indictment*; IWM, PST 5109, Kemp-Welch, ‘Remember Scarborough’; Leonard Raven-Hill, ‘After One year’, in *Punch*, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1915.

images such as this. She can be seen as a grandmother or as a carer for children, albeit, the children of the nation, many of whom are adults in this context.

In the aftermath of the Armistice in November 1918, 'DORA' becomes harrowed and withdrawn for Poy who depicts her as a fallen sovereign abdicating her throne (figure 2.10). Nonetheless, as much as she abdicates, she does leave protective elements of herself (and clearly the Act) behind on her throne. She leaves 'muffled bell[s]', and 'Early bed order[s]' as she walks away.<sup>112</sup> This implies that although she no longer has the same power and authority, there are elements of the Act that remain in force as they are left on the 'Seat of the Mighty' suggesting an ongoing strength. Interestingly, the Act was never repealed completely, but rather was assimilated into the way society functioned overall, and features of it are still appreciated by the viewer today.

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<sup>112</sup> TNA, HO 45/10782/278944, 'Letter from Edward Henry to Home Office', 28<sup>th</sup> December 1914; John Clement Bird, 'Control of Enemy Alien Civilians in Great Britain, 1914-1918', PhD thesis, University of London, 1981, p. 222.



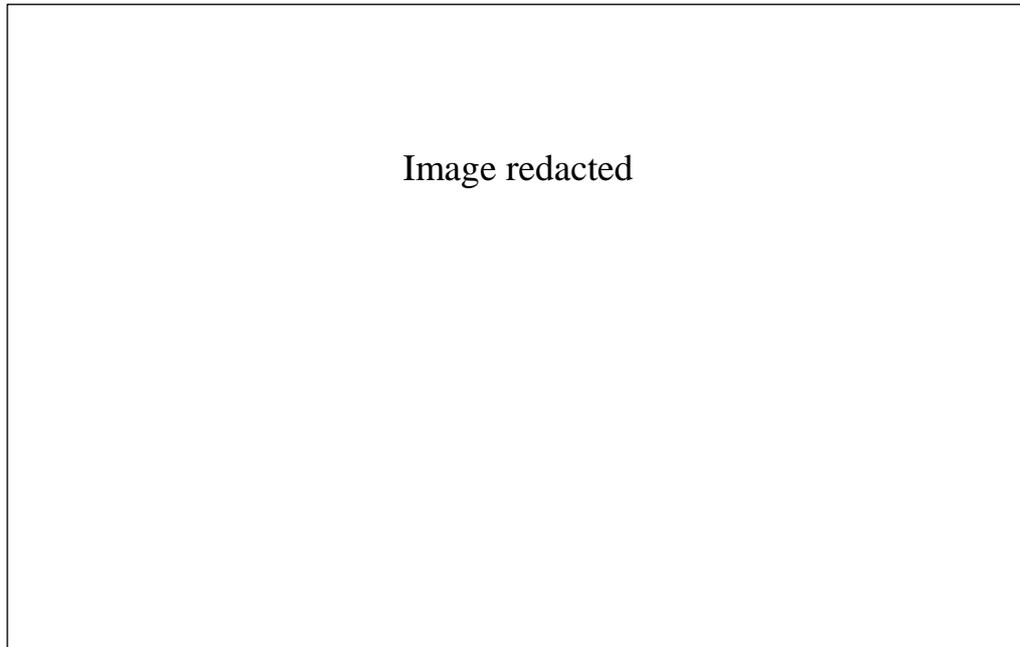
**(Figure 2.10) Poy, ‘DORA Abdicates’, *Daily Mail*, November 1918**

Despite having a changing character and persona, ‘DORA’ also maintains remarkable continuity between the illustrations of different cartoonists. Age is a consistent feature, albeit with varying purpose, and one that is frequently utilised to impose humour on the image, especially the later examples.<sup>113</sup> Sometimes it is meant to denote wisdom and authority; at others, it is to inspire ridicule. Following the war, the loving motherly approach is removed from cartoonists’ depictions in favour of open mockery. As the war falls into public memory, ‘DORA’ alters again and becomes the harridan of an old woman halting the progress of the British Lion (figure 2.11). Alterations are not instant, as there appears to be some settling time at the end of 1918 as seen through ‘DORA Abdicates’, but by 1919 changes are made abundantly clear. In *Punch* Bernard Partridge’s ‘DORA’ is a grumpy old woman who ‘cramps’ the British lion’s style by sitting on his back and looking stubbornly immovable. This

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<sup>113</sup> For further details of the elderly and old age in history, see Pat Thane, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

‘DORA’ highlights aspects of the war, patriotism and social identity that she embodies through her Union Jack flag. Yet simultaneously she represents public disillusion and difficulties in consumer industries in a post-war world.<sup>114</sup> It also reflects several poems, and odes to ‘DORA’ in *Punch* throughout 1919.<sup>115</sup>



**(Figure 2.11) Bernard Partridge, ‘Cramping his Style’, *Punch*, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1919**

She is seated in a fashion to suggest that she will not be moved, and has a remarkably masculine face along with male shoes beneath her skirt unlike earlier matronly images. ‘DORA’s’ face is similar to Henry Herbert Asquith’s, who brought the Act into being through his Parliament in 1914, although here he wears glasses, which is not usual for this politician. There is the possibility that it is simply an anonymous face, but there would appear to be more to the story reflecting on the duration of DORA in society post-war. Furthermore, the impression of weaponry illustrated in a whip or rifle with

<sup>114</sup> Martin Pugh, *We Danced All Night: A Social History of Britain between the Wars* (London: Vintage, 2009), p. viii.

<sup>115</sup> See for example, ‘In Memory of DORA’, *Punch*, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919.

a lance that holds her flag can be related to comments a few pages earlier in *Punch* when it speaks of the War Office considering re-issuing ‘rifles and equipment which were not so long ago called in’.<sup>116</sup>

The image was produced soon after the closure of the Press Bureau, so it might be assumed that ‘DORA’s’ face represents someone involved with this, but she does not match the visage of Cook or Swettenham. Equally, there is little connection to the Home Secretary in 1919, Edward Shortt. Nicholas Hiley suggests that although this face seems familiar, close enough similarities do not exist to any who might have been responsible at that time. He suggests that the male face simply implied Parliament, and that contemporaries would not have recognised the face either, nor would it have been important.<sup>117</sup>

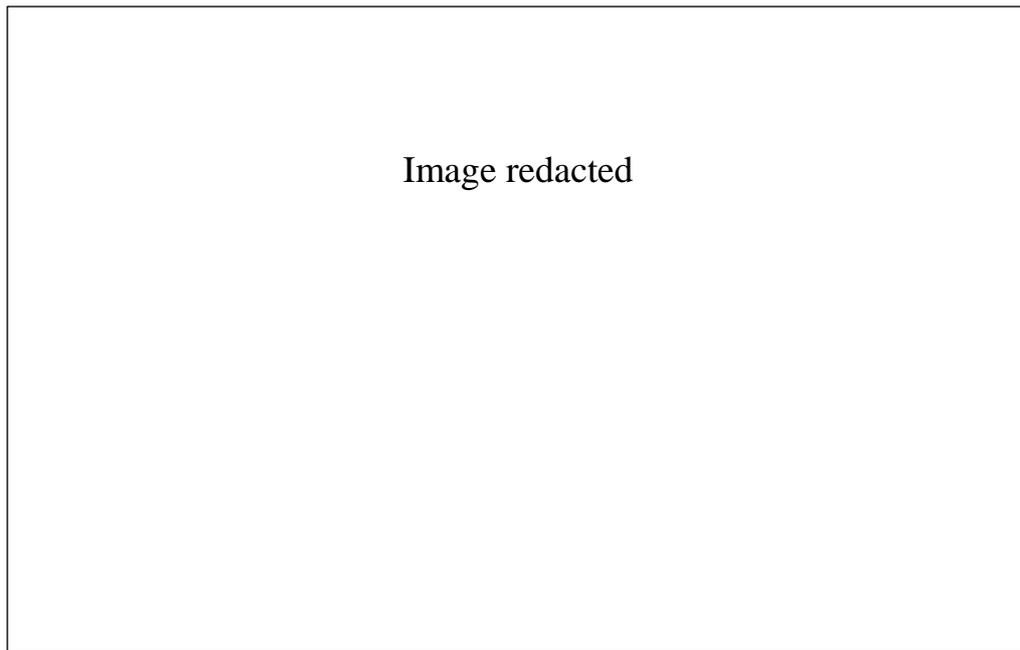
Haselden in the same year equally presents an image of the old woman who has outstayed her welcome and is being cast aside as she bustles into the room, but is instantly sent away (figure 2.12). Here, there is a reflection of her large and imposing figure in society, yet the less significant man who pushes her out as a thing that ‘need not continue in peace time’ removes her. For Haselden, by this time, ‘DORA’ is faceless rather than the harridan of Partridge’s image and by drawing her as such there is an implication of her redundancy at the end of war. Equally, this can be seen to reflect public opinion or that of the press. An article discussing the imminent peace conference accompanies the image illustrating a time of definitive change and plans being made for Versailles of which ‘DORA’ as a character is not part.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> *Punch Almanack*, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1919, p. 273.

<sup>117</sup> See discussion and email from Nicholas Hiley, (BCA), 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

<sup>118</sup> W. M., ‘Before the Peace Conference’, *Daily Mirror*, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1919, p. 5.

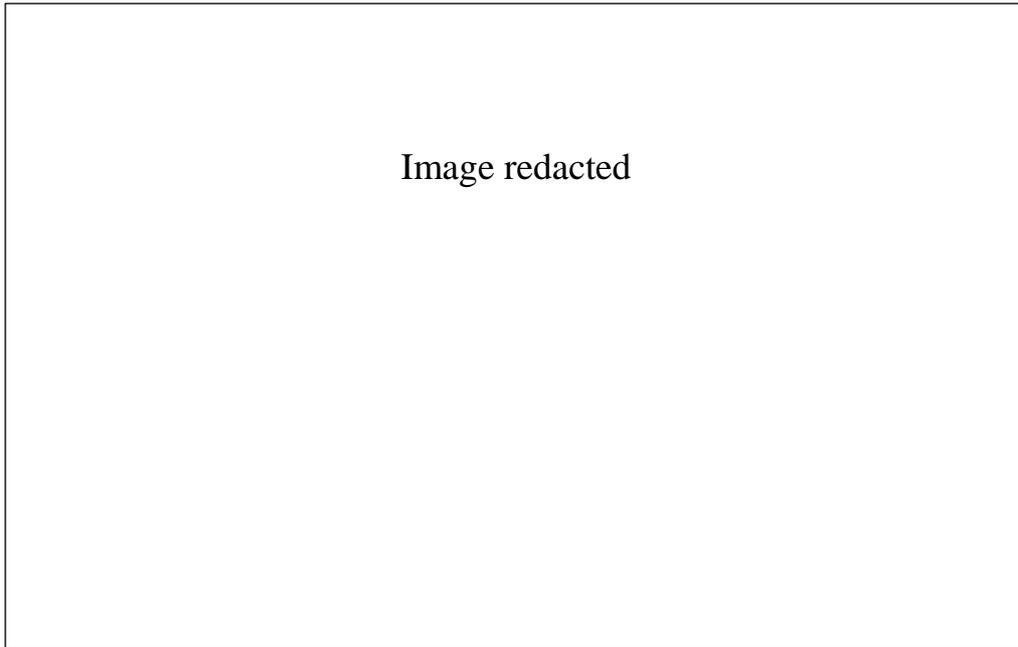


**(Figure 2.12) William Haselden, ‘Things that Need Not Continue in Peace Time’, *Daily Mirror*, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1919**

As the war progressed further into history, other cartoonists continued to use the ‘DORA’ icon sporadically. For example, in 1921 she is revived in the *Passing Show* that presents her as a ragged old woman who stands alongside Ernest Shackleton while a ‘plain man’ on his knees begs ‘Sir Ernest’ to take ‘DORA’ away as a cook on his expedition as ‘[s]he can stand anything – in fact, nothing can freeze her out!’ (figure 2.13). Shackleton’s polar expeditions were already famous in society by the start of the war, and in 1921 when this image was produced, he was a household name for many. The humour is created ironically by praising ‘DORA’ for her positive aspects, whilst simultaneously criticising her immovable nature. Elements of the wartime image remain, as she is still an older woman, but her age has been exaggerated, and is compounded by the expression on her face of almost sorrowful belligerence.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> For more discussion of the reuse of cartoon images, see chapter 5.

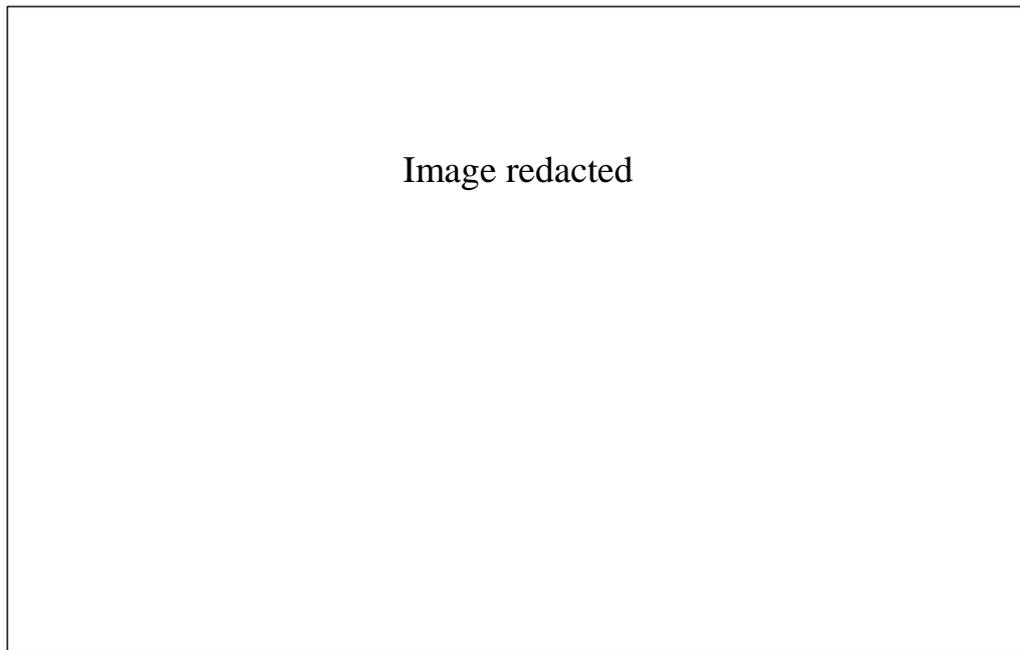


**(Figure 2.13) George Whitelaw, ‘The Stayer’, *Passing Show*, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1921**

Superiority humour was more readily available to cartoonists when the Act was seen less favourably. After the war, *Punch* versions of ‘DORA’ also focus on a loss of respect for government stipulations when Leonard Raven-Hill depicts her preening before a mirror following the relaxation of alcohol laws in 1921 (figure 2.14).<sup>120</sup> Once again, through this image, ‘DORA’ can now be ridiculed as the sodden woman who has suffered the repercussions of her controls. This is aided by the humour constructed around her worries that she may be mistaken for a Bacchante; follower of Bacchus the Roman god of wine and indulgence. Thereby, the implication that the government has overdone its controls is suggested, along with lasting resentment.

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<sup>120</sup> House of Lords, Hansard, HL Deb, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1921, vol. 43, cc. 519-44.



**(Figure 2.14) Leonard Raven-Hill, ‘A Little Licence’, *Punch*, 27<sup>th</sup> July 1921**

Susan Kingsley-Kent speaks of a post-war backlash for women, some of which can be identified in this image. Her work discusses women’s political and social advances during the war being reversed after it and less so the impact of political Acts being described as women. Even so, some parallels of feminine disparagement can be drawn, as it is clear that the character of ‘DORA’ is no longer seen favourably.<sup>121</sup> However, seeing the law itself suffering the repercussions of its over exuberance reduces the negative implication for the Act. Now that the legislation has been reduced, there is every possibility that the government will become drunk on it. Therefore, the viewer is placed in the position of superiority looking down on those being mocked, all of which is embodied through the character of ‘DORA’.

‘DORA’ is, of course, not the only aspect of censorship and publishing control to be depicted in cartoon during the war; another popular character for the cartoonists was

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<sup>121</sup> See Kingsley Kent, *Making Peace*, pp. 114-139.

the censor. He is the hidden man with the ‘arbitrary power to falsify, mutilate and destroy’.<sup>122</sup> People with this power are seen as an easy target for laughter and the joke. The censor remained obscured from view and thus become easy targets that are unable to defend themselves; a problem about which many of the early censors complained.<sup>123</sup> Here the cartoonist takes on a position whereby they can circumscribe the dictates and mock the censor and their arguably destructive work. Images of censorship were often created in response to new rulings about the definitive article in ‘What it is Coming to’ (figure 2.16), or responding to new rulings in 1917 for pamphlet censorship (figure 2.19).

The Defence of the Realm Act was in a constant state of development, particularly in the first couple of years of war whilst the Press Bureau was being established.<sup>124</sup> This development served to offer stimulus for artists depicting confused censors with their paper and pencils to hand (figure 2.15). Others were represented in a state of confusion whilst removing features of specific articles until little was left (figure 2.17). Nonetheless, even with the bureau established, further alterations were a constant feature that could be easily utilised by the cartoonist throughout the war. As a mark of continuity similar to ‘DORA’, censors in cartoon were old men with pencils and lots of screwed up papers around them, however, there is far more variance in the depictions available. This style of imagery is borrowed from other aspects of British and German media in cartoon. Screwed up pieces of paper when depicting the German chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, for example, came in light of his condemnation of the

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<sup>122</sup> Findlater, *Comic Cuts*, p. 7.

<sup>123</sup> See Riddell, *Lord Riddell's War Diary*, p. 16; Barlow, ‘Swettenham, Sir Frank Athelstane (1850-1946)’.

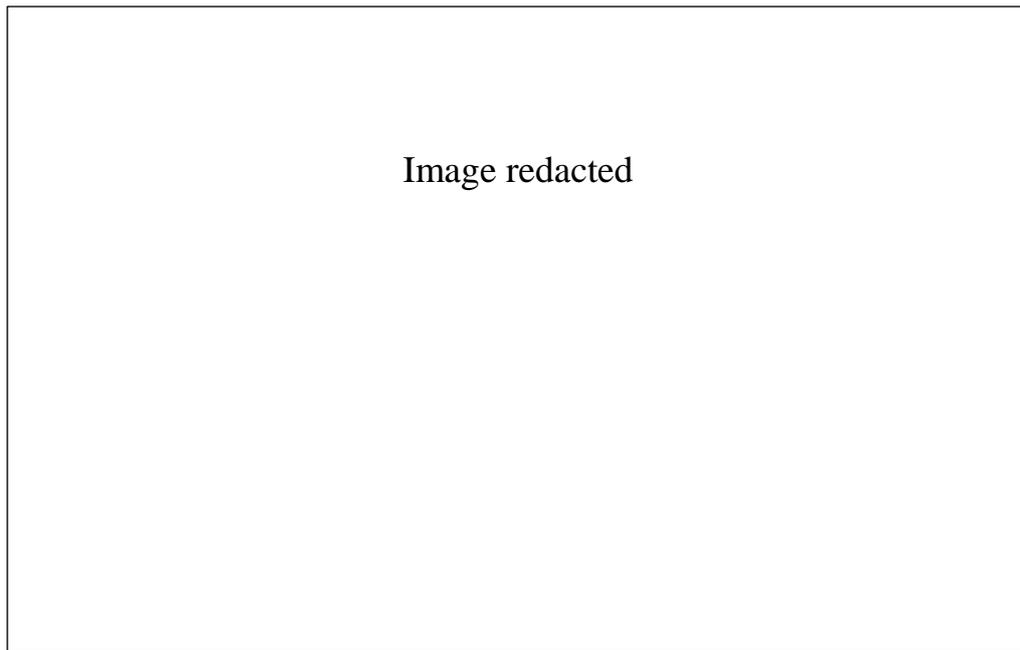
<sup>124</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1914, vol. 5:65 cc. 2266-2272; TNA, HO 139, ‘Home Office: Official Press Bureau’, 1914-19; TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8 ‘Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act’, 1914; TNA, WO 32/4893, ‘Defence of the Realm Acts: General (Code 5(A)): Draft Amendment to Facilitate Prosecution of Press Offences’, 1915; Riddell, *Lord Riddell's War Diary*, p. 9.

treaty and alliance with Belgium that he termed a mere 'scrap of paper' to be ignored. The censor is also represented by waste paper, but with a distinction of inkblots on the screwed up pieces.

Outside of the Press Bureau, censorship was seen as an 'unthinking system', which is reflected in cartoons despite the layers and the regulations from the War Office, Admiralty and government combined.<sup>125</sup> Various tropes feature in illustration of the censor, as well as regularly used icons of old men, paper and pencils, a further theme that was often reverted to were ideas of misunderstanding. The censor's work was, by its very nature secretive, or a means of keeping state secrets, but as such, misinterpretation was easy, and the artist and his audience played upon this idea in cartoon by making their work 'no joke' (figure 2.15). An element of seeming incompetence is applied to the confused looking censor, making the audience aware of their own superiority over that person, and embodying the humour that is present in so many of these images. Even though he has the authority to censor material, it is apparent from his expression that he does not seem to comprehend what he is looking at, implying mistakes being made which are not funny. Furthermore, the work he is editing appears to be predominantly image based, which could be an expression of their worries about or confidence over the censor.

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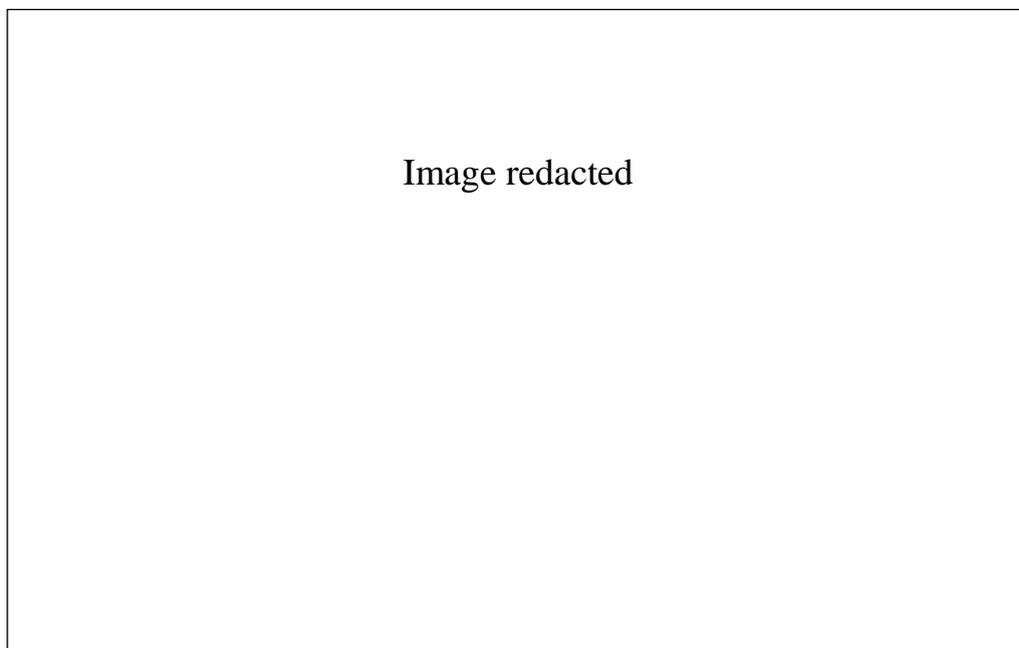
<sup>125</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 16<sup>th</sup> September 1914.



**(Figure 2.15) Frank Reynolds, 'No Joke', *Sketch*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1916**

Adding to representations of incompetence, and reflecting on changing rules in DORA, Poy depicts the censor in 'What it is Coming to' from late 1915. In this, the censor and his assistant are hard at work with pencils casting words out. The censors are situated alone in an office, surrounded by evidence of their work, where even part of the date on the calendar has been removed to comic effect. However, in this instance the chief censor holds a dictionary in his hand from which he is citing information about the 'definite article' that ought to be removed (figure 2.16). Further to this, beneath the image there are details of how there is a 'fear that something definite may inadvertently be allowed to slip through [which] continues to worry the poor overworked censors to a shadow'. Misunderstanding and general incompetence are rife in this image, and continue to make the audience the superior party when viewing it.

Even so, the cartoonist displays a sense of exasperation on the censors' faces because of the guidance they have to follow when cutting details out of prints. This could be an acknowledged empathy for how the censor suffers as he attempts to remove the 'definite article' since nothing definite is allowed to be expressed. Alternatively, it could be a mockery of the stupid nature of censorship. The censor becomes frustrated at having to remove everything through to the word 'the' when the ruling is taken literally (figure 2.16).<sup>126</sup> As such, understanding can be drawn not to the censor themselves, but more readily to the cartoonist's perception of a censor. Many cartoonists and certainly the publications through which their work was disseminated, often self-censored and so had deeper insight to the frustrations than they offered to the public through such images.<sup>127</sup> For the cartoonist, often humour was key, yet still acknowledgment and empathy is offered too.



**(Figure 2.16) Poy, 'What it is Coming To', *Evening News*, 19<sup>th</sup> October 1915**

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<sup>126</sup> See TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 8<sup>th</sup> January 1915.

<sup>127</sup> Price, *History of Punch*, p. 178.

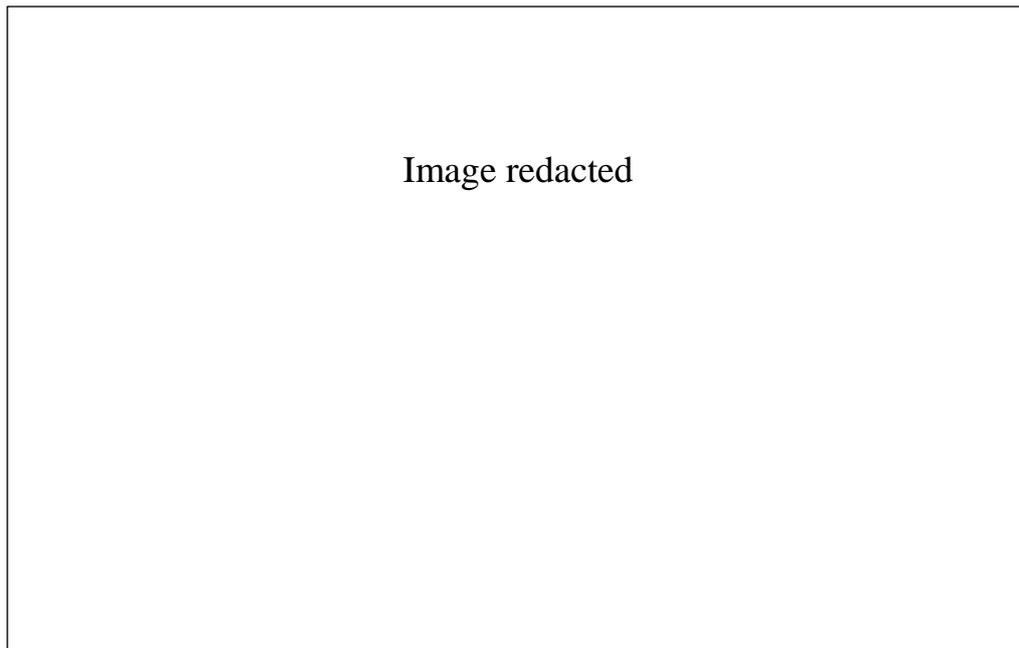
More layers of censorship are reflected in ‘Sense and Censorbility’. In this image, different censors remove different elements of the report offering ‘a study in the evolution of war news’. At each stage, more words are removed until the final article results in something that says nothing at all to the public at home, much less those abroad (Figure 2.17).<sup>128</sup> Depicting several censors with different foci, illustrates the layers of censorship through the War Office, army and navy with an element of truth, but this in turn adds to the humour overall. This may be seen as a reflection on what Annette Kuhn calls the ‘process’ of censorship, although her work looks more to film censorship specifically. It is not a practice undertaken by a single entity, but rather is the effect of ‘different censorious forces’, and their combined influence over the matter being censored.<sup>129</sup> The more the combined elements of censor remove different parts of the whole, the more the joke is created for the viewing audience based on an element of unavoidable truth. The incongruous humour of the perceived censor is clear in this manner, as all content is removed with separate elements of justification creating layers of humour.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 1915; William Haselden, ‘When the Government Runs Newspapers’, *Daily Mirror*, 10th December 1915.

<sup>129</sup> Annette Kuhn, *Cinema, Censorship and Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 131; Freshwater, ‘Towards a Redefinition’, p. 226.

<sup>130</sup> For more detail about the layering of incongruous humour, see chapter 5.

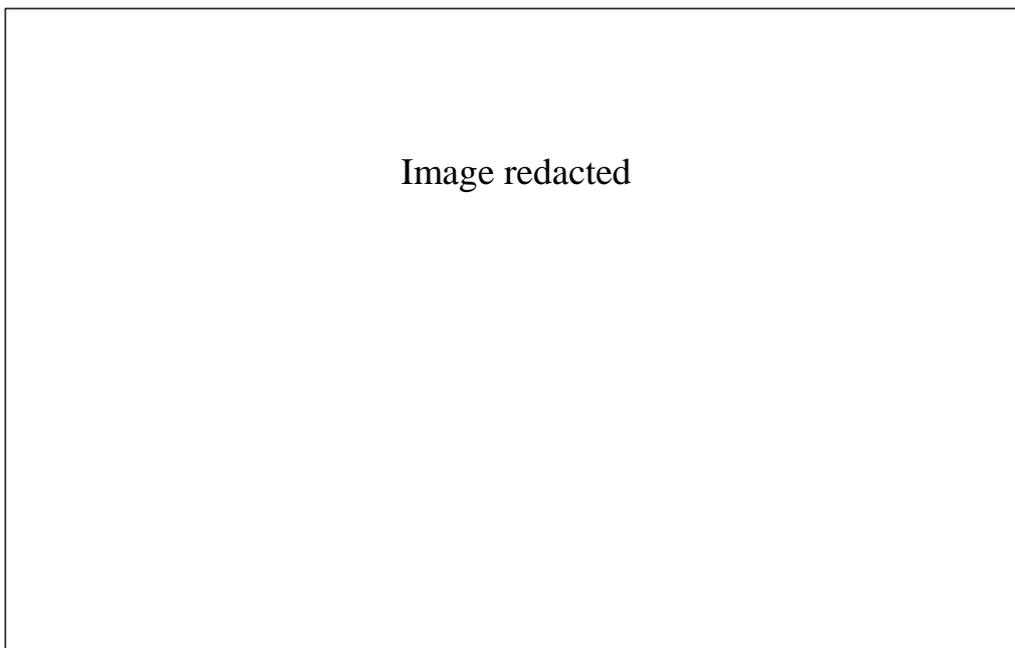


**(Figure 2.17) Poy, ‘Sense and Censorbility’, *Evening News*, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1914**

In contrast to the usual icon of old men, G. A. Steven’s offers the censor with a pencil for a head in *ABC for Little Willie*, a children’s book. The censor is instantly mocked visually through his appearance, and the pencil head almost suggests that he does not think precisely, but just crosses things out as he can be seen doing here (figure 2.18). There is a simplistic humour in the literal depiction of the pencil for a head removing the details, but still a deeper level of humour is applied for the adult audience also seeing the image, for whom incompetence and a certain mindlessness is apparent. Additionally in Britain, an appreciation of there being a ‘free press’ existed, but in a smaller image behind the main censor, this too is negated as the free press is attached to the gallows where it hangs.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Boyce, Curran and Wingate, *Newspaper History*, pp. 21-5.



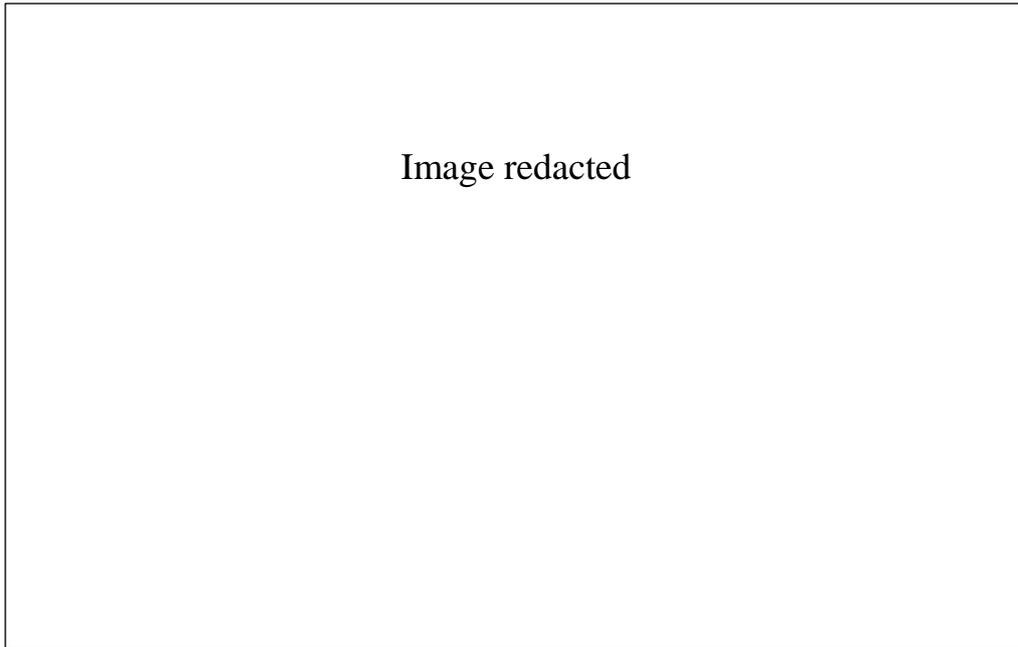
**(Figure 2.18) G. A. Stevens, 'C is the Censor', *An English A B C for Little Willie and Others*, 1914**

Public reception of such images is difficult to establish, but indicators within cartoons can help to suggest some insight. For example, with images like 'Sense and Censorability' it can be inferred that it was designed for a specific audience (figure 2.17). The manipulation of the title implies middle to upper class women who were likely to have read and comprehended the insights of the Austen works, although, there is no reason why male readers would not also know about Austen's novels. Equally, the measure of how much 'sense' is applied to the censorship of articles is openly queried through the title. Similarly, the intended audience is suggested through the literal interpretation of the censor, whilst still acknowledging adult readership in the details for Steven's (figure 2.18). There is again, however, far less indication of how the audience precisely understood such images or responded to them, as tallies of total readership are impossible to obtain.

In the 'Tragic Picture of Cartoonist Submitting' from 1917, Poy offers a juxtaposition of artist and censor in the same frame. Here, he as the artist submits his work for review by a panel of censors who are ironically depicted as the subject matter of the artist's work as well. There is the sense of his being worried as he hides behind his art whilst the panel look at and complain about the images that he has presented. It can be conceived through this image that the public and the censor had some issues with the content of the artist's work, or perhaps more so, that the cartoonist had their own worries about its reception. Nonetheless, despite Poy's apparent 'tremors', he presents more of a cynical representation of the censor. These people are unable to comprehend the jokes being made about themselves. They take offence over what the viewing audience would see as nothing. The laughter is what negates the importance of the censor's complaints, inverting them to create that humour (figure 2.19).<sup>132</sup> The censor is an easy target, and yet their use in cartoons is somewhat restrained in a similar way to the docile grandmotherly depictions of 'DORA', there is nothing vicious in the images, merely commentary. The misunderstanding of the censor's nature is again returned to through this image. Yet at the same time, depicting the artist hidden behind his work makes further links to the censors 'hidden' work as a man behind the affects and this further adds to the humour of the piece even though the artist is hiding here and not the censor specifically.

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<sup>132</sup> Findlater, *Comic Cuts*, p. 7; Press, *Political Cartoon*, p. 227.



**(Figure 2.19) Poy, ‘Tragic Picture of Cartoonist Submitting’, *Daily Mail*, 1917**

Similar to depictions of ‘DORA’, the timing of cartoons of censorship alters as the war progresses. Illustrations of ‘DORA’ were most popular in 1918 and again following the war’s end. In comparison, images related to censorship appear in two specific flurries, once in 1915 and again in 1917. To try to understand the first flurry, disruptions in setting up the Press Bureau and establishing its ideas need to be considered. Censorship was needed by 1914, and had been prior to the war, yet it was not enforced until the need really became prevalent. Along with this, the specific rules behind that censorship took time to confirm.<sup>133</sup> Nonetheless, censors were forced to make many subjective decisions and could not always follow a formalised pattern, which brought them up for ridicule at the cartoonists’ hands. There is also the fact that the press were partially consulted about censorship and in part were not, which led to

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<sup>133</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 1912-1939; Hopkin, ‘Domestic Censorship’, p. 152.

general dissatisfaction that spread out towards cartoonists as well and this is reflected in their work (figure 2.19).<sup>134</sup>

Between the flurries of interest in the censor, far more was specifically happening in the war to catch the cartoonists' attention. For instance, comments were passed on major battles, political leaders and the impact of the war on society across the media, and the cartoonists' arsenal was filled with this material too.<sup>135</sup> Aspects of political leadership and the changeover between Asquith and Lloyd George, for example, feature strongly in the contemporary representation of cartoon media in this period.<sup>136</sup> The next flurry of censor-related images appear in 1917, although these present the censor less directly and comment more on the influence and effects of censorship and how it impacted on society. DORA amendment 27c, for example, speaks about pamphleteering controls, and many cartoonists interpret this as relating to images specifically, and therefore pass comment on it in their cartoons (figure 2.19).<sup>137</sup>

As has been seen with so many images already, different aspects create humour through the same image.<sup>138</sup> The censor is not always alone when mocked in cartoons; other aspects of society also suffer. In *Punch*, an unknown artist, whose work looks remarkably similar to Leonard Raven-Hill, presents the war correspondent seated, tied up and gagged by 'Censorship' in front of a peer and MP. These men comment on how he should have stayed quiet or found a position such as theirs and then he could have said whatever he wanted (figure 2.20). Lesley Milne in her study of *Punch* in relation to other international wartime satirical magazines suggests that this image has more to

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<sup>134</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 1912-1923; TNA, CAB 37/136/34, Report on Censorship Failings and Advice for Reconciliation, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1915.

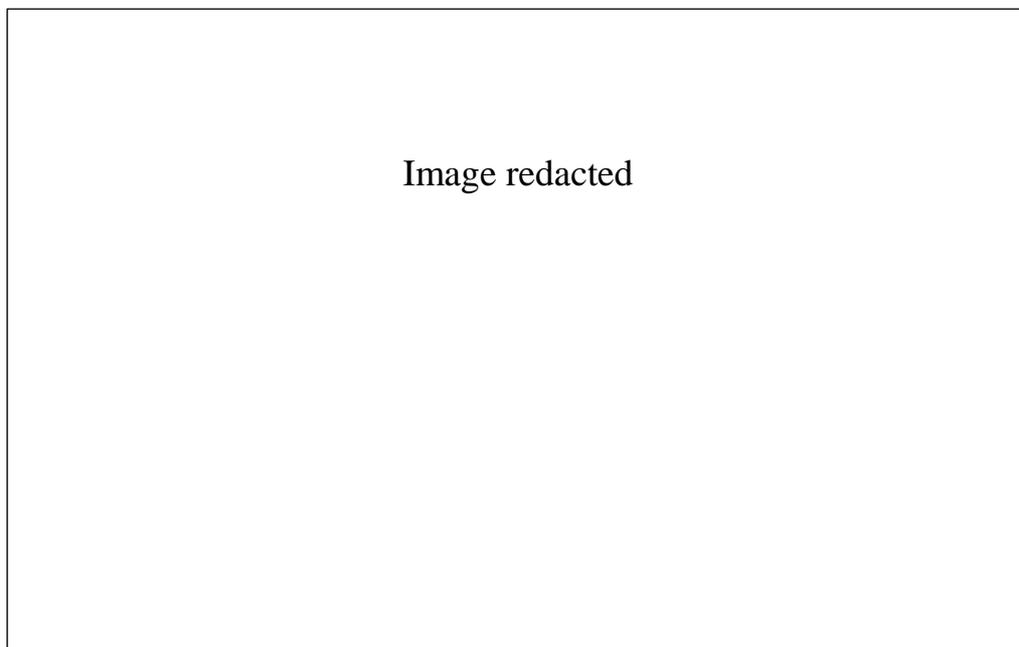
<sup>135</sup> Ernst Gombrich, 'The Cartoonist's Armoury', in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Phaidon, 1971), pp. 127-42.

<sup>136</sup> For details of leadership changes in cartoon, see chapter 5.

<sup>137</sup> *Defence of the Realm Manual*, part II.

<sup>138</sup> For more details of layering of humour, see chapter 5.

do with social criticism of the peerage and politicians, which can be identified here.<sup>139</sup> The fact that the peer and politician say that they are in a better place to be able to talk more freely, would have reinforced public opinion. Whether the frustration in this instance is directed towards the censor or the peer and MP is less clear, but regardless, each element adds to the humour constructed and how it may be received by its audience. This cartoon was published in December 1915 when calls for enlistment were strengthening again in light of the realisation that this was a ‘total war’, and discussions around conscription were starting in Parliament.<sup>140</sup>



**(Figure 2.20) Unknown Artist, ‘Privilege’, *Punch*, 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1915**

Not only are aspects of class and social frustrations layered upon certain cartoons to create humour, others draw upon earlier images to reinforce new ideas with old. A revealing example here is the unacknowledged ‘DORA Discomfited’ from *Punch* in

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<sup>139</sup> Lesley Milne, *Laughter and War: Humorous-Satirical Magazines in Britain, France, Germany and Russia 1914-1918* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), p. 27.

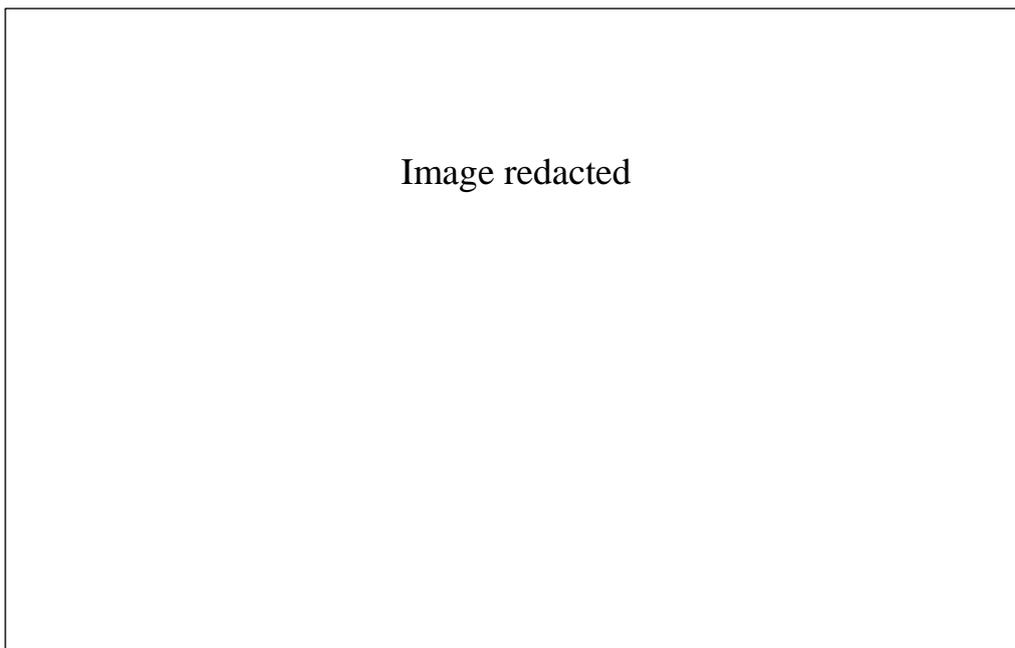
<sup>140</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, p. 77.

1919 (figure 2.21). This image shares a striking resemblance to Bernard Partridge's 1906 'Shrieking Sister', which was a reflection on the suffrage movement and its disturbances to society at the time.<sup>141</sup> 'DORA Discomfited' combines elements of the censor with DORA and some semblance of public and press ideas about them both. 'DORA', as the primary character in the image is presented in a distressed posture, similar to Partridge's 'Sister' image, as she views a poster on a wall detailing a 'Peace Conference Report', which happens to be 'uncensored'.

Once again, 'DORA' is constructed as an elderly matron, holding her handbag of 'legal authorities' and staring at the declaration on the wall. Published in January 1919, it is relatively soon after the end of the war, so it may be assumed that DORA's guidance was ingrained in society by this point, and to have a poster that had not been censored would have been quite unusual. Seeing the personification of the Act itself distressed over the situation would have been humorously reassuring for much of the public, as it reinforced a relaxation of the guidance, and at the same time suggests some discomfort for the government rather than the legislation itself.

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<sup>141</sup> Bernard Partridge, 'Shrieking Sister', *Punch*, 17<sup>th</sup> January 1906.



**(Figure 2.21) Unknown artist, ‘DORA Discomfited’, *Punch*, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1919**

As the Act took command of the British populace, there is the sense of who the ‘DORA’ character ought to be, which is reflected through depictions of mother or grandmother looking out for the care of the nation (figure 2.9). The censor is seen less sympathetically, but rather is portrayed as a nuisance for cutting out information that the public sought to know about. Nonetheless, the cartoonist was never ruthless with these characters. ‘DORA’ maintains caring characteristics in 1918, and maintains these even after the end of the war (figure 2.10). The censor, regardless of the activities he is doing, never really seems to be fully enjoying them but appears disillusioned and frustrated by his work (figure 2.16). In this way, there is a sense of acceptance, that the Defence of the Realm and the censorship are appreciated by the press despite any frustrations that they may cause.<sup>142</sup> With appreciation, there also comes respect, and as such, it is, therefore, understandable how few artists and their work really suffered

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<sup>142</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 1912-1939.

from the legislation or fought against it. Nevertheless, some artists did make mistakes and came up against the Act, as seen with Nevinson, and cartoonists were not separate from this potential as well.

### Cartoons in Court

One of the complaints outlined in the 1915 Press Bureau report was how punishments for crimes committed against the Defence of the Realm, or with the potential to cause it harm, in censorial terms, were unclear. Additionally, the rules that were clearer were not ‘followed through with equally’. The prosecution system was not seen to ‘affect the proprietor in the least’, while prison sentences and fines were given to specific reporters, thereby negating culpability for the publication overall.<sup>143</sup> Certain publications were suppressed for DORA infringements, such as the *Globe* in November 1915, but only as a temporary measure, as the paper rapidly returned to service, and the offences were quickly forgotten.<sup>144</sup>

The draft regulation of DORA from September 1915 states that anyone who publishes without lawful authority ‘shall be guilty of a summary offence against these regulations’, yet it does not outline the punishments for such actions.<sup>145</sup> Nonetheless, there is some indication as to how the guilty may remove that condemnation, if he is able to prove that the publication ‘cannot be useful to the enemy’, although how this may be proven remains unclear in the draft and formal documentation. The press

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<sup>143</sup> TNA, CAB 37/136/34, Report on Censorship Failings and Advice for Reconciliation, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1915.

<sup>144</sup> TNA, HO 45/10795/303412, ‘Press: Suppression of the “Globe” Newspaper’, 1915; House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914, vol. 5: 66 cc. 617-752; ‘The Suppression of a London Newspaper’, *Manchester Guardian*, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1915.

<sup>145</sup> TNA, WO 32/4893, DORA Draft Regulations, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1915.

collectively discuss censorship in articles, either in terms of what should be, or in terms of the repercussions of what has happened to them, so there are clear indications of awareness about it, and its relevance to them as a whole.<sup>146</sup> Equally, through their initial consultations with the Press Bureau, there is the ongoing sense of collaboration throughout the war between the press and the bureau.<sup>147</sup> Therefore, their inclusive responsibility as far as the censorship is concerned is constantly reinforced.

In terms of prosecution for mis-publication and wrongdoing in the press, there is much discussion of the problem of pacifist propaganda finding its way into mainstream publications and other similar issues throughout the war. The Press Bureau sought to deal with these, and the inadvertent sharing of military matters far more than anything else. Such papers that shared this material would need to be punished, as to not punish them would corrupt the integrity of the Press Bureau in the eyes of legitimate publications.<sup>148</sup> This was reinforced by the press when they emphasised how the 'loyal press' were put into a difficult position while other publications infringed upon the rulings. If others could disobey, then the temptation for all to do likewise was magnified, and this presented greater problems for the government.

It can be inferred, therefore, that the press were accepting of punishments when infractions were made, as if they were not punished, it reduced their own standing as 'loyal papers' in public and governmental eyes. This attitude of equality can be related to Foucauldian logic, where people who are seen to be punished for wrongdoing influence others who might also think about doing the wrong thing, thereby giving

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<sup>146</sup> TNA, HO 45/10795/ 303412, *The World* 20<sup>th</sup> July 1915; TNA, HO 45/10795/ 303412, Letters from July 1915.

<sup>147</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 1912-1939.

<sup>148</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, 'Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes', 18<sup>th</sup> December 1914; TNA, WO 32/4893, Minutes for Meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> July 1915.

them cause to self-censor and control their own actions.<sup>149</sup> In this way, the Press Bureau was better able to encourage the press to control itself once the initial complaints had been resolved. The D-notice system reinforced self-control by encouraging a shared awareness of the rules despite its ‘performative contradiction’ of stating precisely what it sought to omit.<sup>150</sup> Nonetheless, despite the regular notices given to the press, there are instances such as the *Globe* in 1915 when restrictions were ignored. These infractions particularly prompted the complaints of October 1915, which the Press Bureau sought to rectify.<sup>151</sup>

The *Globe* in 1915 was criticised for publishing details that should not have been shared by that means, and thus was suspended because of textual material. The press was not only criticised for written articles when they discussed aspects of the war. Visual material was also controlled to a degree, but there were some difficulties with this, as how an image might be read varied according to the audiences’ prior experiences.<sup>152</sup> Photography at the front, for example, was officially prohibited, but unofficially encouraged by the photographic industry although it was watched carefully.<sup>153</sup> Other especially graphic visual images were ill-advised as reported by Nevinson in response to the censorship of ‘Paths of Glory’ (figure 2.6).<sup>154</sup> Thereby it is clear that some visual controls were instigated.

Nevinson’s example became news compared to most other censorial directives that remained quietly obscured by design, for example anything relating to the D-notices.

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<sup>149</sup> Freshwater, ‘Towards a Redefinition’, pp. 229-30; Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*.

<sup>150</sup> Butler, *Excitable Speech*, p. 130.

<sup>151</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 10<sup>th</sup> September 1914, vol. 5: 66 cc. 617-752; TNA, HO 45/10795/303412, ‘Press: Suppression of the “Globe” Newspaper’, 1915.

<sup>152</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*, p. 2; Elisabeth El Refaie, ‘Multiliteracies: How Readers Interpret Political Cartoons’, *Visual Communication*, 8:2 (2009), p. 181.

<sup>153</sup> Stefan Goebel, “‘Intimate Pictures’”, p. 45.

<sup>154</sup> Nevinson, *Paint and Prejudice*, p.143.

However, the year before, in 1916, another element of censorship was highlighted through the cartoon ‘Reported Missing’. The image was reported several times in the British press as having been taken to court for breaching governmental restrictions.<sup>155</sup> First published on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1916, the image offers a private soldier ‘sodden with drink’ sitting in the sun with no war accoutrements, a ‘sun-helmet’ and bottle of rum in hand (figure 2.4).<sup>156</sup> To some it may appear a rest from the fighting. However, it remains clear that the soldier is just that and ought to be at service rather than resting with a large bottle of rum. There are many other images of soldiers not actively fighting, particularly among the works by Bruce Bairnsfather also published in the *Bystander*, but their presence as part of the war is still clear in comparison to this seemingly negligent pose.<sup>157</sup>

The expression on the soldier’s face is glum and not representative of a soldier at rest, as he is slumped next to a small tree. In this manner, he is unable to promote a positive image of the soldier at war. Representations of soldiers during the war alter as it progresses; valiant heroes sacrificing themselves for the nation are prevalent in home front propaganda. Later, these heroes are the everyman of Bairnsfather’s work that present a solid resilience in the face of distress and danger.<sup>158</sup> Additionally, this soldier is alone, and his solitary drunkenness suggests no part in the collective unity and camaraderie of the British Army promoted by Richard Haldane since 1906.<sup>159</sup>

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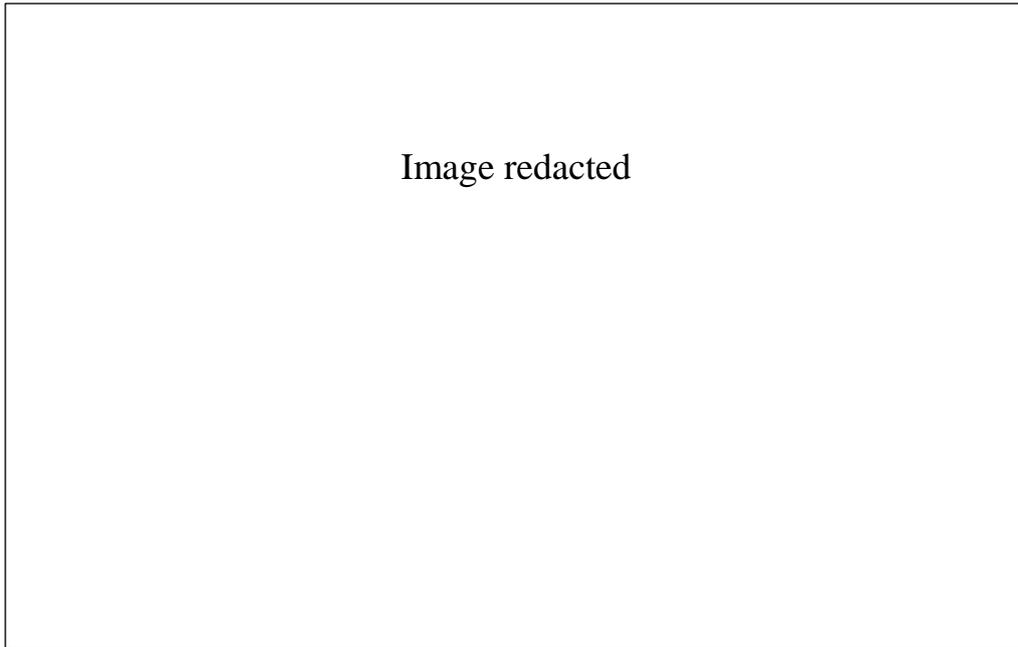
<sup>155</sup> ‘An Offensive Cartoon: The *Bystander* Fined’, *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 5; ‘Costly Bit of Humour: Officer’s Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200’, *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8; ‘London Newspaper Fined’, *The Press*, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1916, p. 3.

<sup>156</sup> ‘An Offensive Cartoon: The *Bystander* Fined’, *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 5.

<sup>157</sup> See Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*.

<sup>158</sup> Helen McCartney, ‘The First World War Soldier and his Contemporary Image in Britain’, *International Affairs*, 90:2 (2014), pp. 299-315; Madigan, “‘Sticking to a Hateful Task’”, pp. 76-98; Badsey, *British Army in Battle*.

<sup>159</sup> Edward Spiers, ‘The Regular Army in 1914’, in Ian Beckett and Keith Simpson (eds.), *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War* (Manchester: Pen and Sword, 1985), p. 38.



**(Figure 2.4) C. E. B. Bernard, ‘Reported Missing’, *Bystander*, 25<sup>th</sup> January 1916**

The cartoon ‘Reported Missing’ was a rare case of an image being taken to court during the war. Other media infringements of DORA were generally resolved with a tap on the wrist and were circuitously ignored.<sup>160</sup> In the case of this *Bystander* illustration, there was strong debate over the security of presenting a sodden soldier. The charges brought against it were in direct relation to the Defence of the Realm. The cartoon was seen to be libellous towards British soldiers fighting the war who were otherwise appreciated for their positive contributions, and valiant sacrifices.<sup>161</sup> Such an image of a regular soldier held the potential to ‘prejudice discipline’ by its very nature, but in addition it could also be seen to be detrimental to the artist and his fellow

<sup>160</sup> TNA, HO 45/10795/ 303412, see Letters from July 1915.

<sup>161</sup> See ‘A Soldier’s Sacrifice’, *Manchester Evening News*, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1916, p. 5; ‘Exmouth Soldier’s Sacrifice for a Comrade’, *Western Times*, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1915, p. 7; ‘Died in Brother’s Stead: Soldier’s Willing Sacrifice’, *Liverpool Daily Post*, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1917, p. 3; ‘A Soldier’s Fine Sacrifice’, *Hull Daily Mail*, 15<sup>th</sup> March 1917, p. 2.

officers as Charles Bernard was a second lieutenant himself.<sup>162</sup> This, however, may account for some of his misplaced action, in that as a soldier by trade, he was an external contributor to the publication, and as such, was outside of direct censorial perceptions ingrained in the *Bystander's* general staff.

The Foreign Office believed that this soldier's image was able to negatively influence the rest of the British public and could be seen to demoralise those acting on behalf of his majesty. There was also a concern that seeing this image, the enemy would believe this soldier was precisely a representation of how the British and allied armies behaved. Neither alternative was something that the British government wished to reinforce. The image of the army was a feature that the media was able to present instantly to positive or negative effect, and this was something of which the press were constantly aware as were the government.<sup>163</sup> To this effect, presenting an image that appears negligent and lazy on the part of the soldier, and by reflection the rest of the army, was not something that the recruitment drives sought to embody.

There are few indications of where this part of the war might be taking place as the image is devoid of scenery. Therefore, the artist illustrates some awareness of the DORA mandates and does not specifically identify the soldier's location, rank or situation, which might have informed the enemy.<sup>164</sup> Even so, there is some sense of it being a dry and rocky land, indicated by the cliff the soldier sits on and the bark of the tree behind him (figure 2.4). With its publication in January 1916, this could have made the public think about Gallipoli and the problems ensuing there in August

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<sup>162</sup> 'Costly Bit of Humour: Officer's Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200', *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8.

<sup>163</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>164</sup> TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8, 'Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act', 20<sup>th</sup> November 1914; Cook, *Press Censorship*, pp. 8-9.

1915.<sup>165</sup> Considering problems for allied troops would again serve to negate positive attitudes for the public and this could have led to accusations of futility for the war.

For ‘Reported Missing’, the defendants were the publishers Baines and Co., the editor, Vivian Carter, as well as the artist, Second Lieutenant Charles Bernard. Fines were charged as part of the judgement, resulting in a total sum of £200, the equivalent of £8600 today.<sup>166</sup> This significant fee was divided between the proprietors, editor and artist. Of those, the one to face the greater reprimand was Carter, the editor who was not only charged a fine of £50 personally, but also found himself redundant as the *Bystander*, prior to this trial, had chosen to dismiss him from their publication. It was believed that he ‘had some silly views about publishing’ visual materials and their content and he could not always be trusted to choose the correct sort of images to publish in a time of war.<sup>167</sup> This was an interesting pronouncement to be made, as Carter had also promoted any number of Bairnsfather images, which were praised for having helped morale.<sup>168</sup> However, it is also claimed that the decision to dismiss Carter ‘had nothing whatever to do with the picture... or any other... in the paper’ although this could in light of the trial and comments made throughout be seen as questionable.<sup>169</sup>

The Foreign Office had some serious concerns about ‘Reported Missing’ and its negative representations that it believed would demoralise the populace. *The Times* reported comments from the prosecutor who referred to the image as ‘gross libel’ on his majesty’s forces.<sup>170</sup> The Derby Scheme was no longer recruiting enough men to

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<sup>165</sup> ‘Reported Missing: Cartoon Prejudicial to Recruiting’, *Aberdeen Journal*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 6.

<sup>166</sup> ‘Costly Bit of Humour: Officer’s Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200’, *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8.

<sup>167</sup> ‘An Offensive Cartoon: The *Bystander* Fined’, *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 5.

<sup>168</sup> Gosling, *Brushes and Bayonets*, p. 100.

<sup>169</sup> ‘London Newspaper Fined’, *Press*, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1916, p. 3.

<sup>170</sup> ‘An Offensive Cartoon: The *Bystander* Fined’, *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 5.

serve Britain by 1916, and so discussion and the instigation of the Military Service Act from 2<sup>nd</sup> March began to take place.<sup>171</sup> In January 1916, when the *Bystander* published this image, other cartoon volumes like *Punch* had been strongly promoting the new conscription dictates of DORA aiming to aid the recruitment drive for the army.

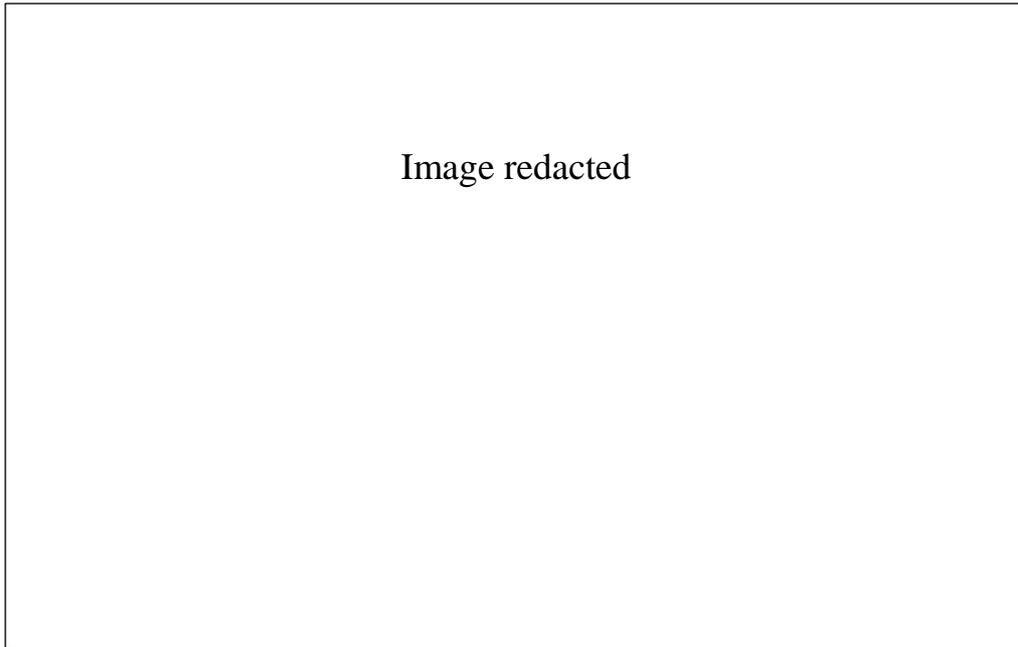
New Year's images in *Punch* such as 'The New Edge' had strongly promoted the ideas of compulsion in such a way that despite there being some innate criticism, this is only mild, and are not specifically highlighted in this image. For Bernard Partridge, Britannia sharpens the sword by adding a 'new edge' of compulsion for the child of the New Year with the expectation of it improving his prospects (figure 2.22). These allegorical personalities make no direct accusations, but at the same time embody the entire nation and prompt all to help.<sup>172</sup> 'Reported Missing' in contrast presented a sullen drunk, who as an established soldier was unlikely to have been forced, yet he appears to regret his decision, rather than celebrating the work he was doing for the allies. This visual lack of motivation was a further element of the cartoon that could not go unanswered whether it was explicit or merely implied. It was believed that images like this were likely to 'prejudice recruiting and discipline' and this was something that was fervently disallowed under the regulations of DORA.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> TNA, HL/PO/PU/1/1916/5&6G5c104, 'The Military Service Act', 1916; House of Commons, 'Military Service (No. 2) Bill', (London: HMSO, 1916); IWM, PST 5161, Roberts and Leete Ltd., 'Military Service Act Poster', 1916.

<sup>172</sup> For allegory and its humorous use see Gerald L. Bruns, 'Allegory and Satire: A Rhetorical Meditation', *New Literary History*, 11:1 (Virginia: Johns Hopkins University, 1979), pp. 121-32

<sup>173</sup> 'Costly Bit of Humour: Officer's Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200', *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8; TNA, MUN 5/19/ 221/8, 'Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act', 1914.



**(Figure 2.22) Bernard Partridge, ‘The New Edge’, *Punch*, 5th January 1916**

The court case reiterated that British newspapers were disseminated to British readers certainly, but that they could be seen by enemy nations too. As such, there could be no excuse for presenting a British soldier in this manner, and furthermore for compounding the offence with a title of ‘Reported Missing’. This title suggests that he has left without being granted the appropriate authority to do so which again was something that the army certainly did not wish to promote. The British military tradition was notorious for its stance on discipline, and recognised for such by the public more broadly.<sup>174</sup> Many recruits came from the working classes, and as such were trained and instilled with discipline by course.<sup>175</sup> Both the Allied and enemy armies were aware of the British rules concerning desertion; these were court martial

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<sup>174</sup> ‘Prepared to be Shot’, *Burnley News*, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1916, p. 5; ‘Submission to Discipline’, *Surrey Mirror*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1918, p. 7; Gerard Oram, *Military Executions during World War I* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 103-04.

<sup>175</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, p. 47.

resulting in death penalty.<sup>176</sup> Yet, this discipline is not visible in Bernard's cartoon; in fact, almost the diametric reverse is true, as this soldier is not clean, tidy, motivated or even aware of his surroundings as *The Times* had certainly advertised of British Tommys.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, there is no indication that he is aware or worried about the repercussions of his act.

This court case relating to the cartoon was newsworthy, and was retold in many national and parochial papers alike. The longer articles appear once in *The Times* and *Manchester Guardian*. Both accounts were published on the same day, and hold similar details.<sup>178</sup> A series of other articles relating to the story appeared across the local and regional press and these focus on the same key details of the case, in particular, the fines incurred.<sup>179</sup> In relation to DORA stipulations, the distinct lack of drive for conscription and standards of military discipline are clearly visible in Bernard's cartoon. With such an illustration of disillusion, it becomes clear why the Foreign Office and Military personnel sought to bring charges against the cartoon. However, the public response to the image and the articles reporting the trial are less evident. Several smaller articles in the news featured cartoons, but these are brief, and none relates to trials, but are more commentaries on exhibitions and thefts with little

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<sup>176</sup> Gary Sheffield *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 62-3.

<sup>177</sup> 'The Territorials Leisure', *The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914, p. 4.

<sup>178</sup> 'An Offensive Cartoon: the Bystander Fined', *The Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 5; 'Costly Bit of Humour: Officer's Cartoon Leads to Fines of £200', *Manchester Guardian*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 8.

<sup>179</sup> 'An Expensive Cartoon', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 4; 'An Officer's Cartoon', *Manchester Evening News*, 18<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 4; 'An Expensive Cartoon', *Western Daily Press*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 6; 'Expensive Cartoon', *Western Times*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 4; 'Reported Missing: Cartoon Prejudicial to Recruiting', *Aberdeen Journal*, 19<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 6; 'London Newspaper Fined', *Press*, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1916, p. 3.

to no passing reference to DORA.<sup>180</sup> As such, this was a trial that did not set a precedent for future publications, but almost certainly drew awareness in its time.<sup>181</sup>

### Conclusion

Controls were imposed upon the whole United Kingdom during the Great War, and through the press and cartoons, censorship as outlined by the Defence of the Realm Act becomes particularly relevant. Where censorial debates had been offered before the war, little formal implementation had occurred, but with the new 'total war', this needed to be revised and fully established for the nation's safety. As the war progressed, the regulations for the Defence of the Realm were debated and reconsidered, and any focus on publication was not separate to this. When it came to publishing and censorship, the rulings were incorporated into DORA.

Following some uncertainties at the start of the war, the vast majority of loyal newspapers shadowed these rulings across the nation. Papers undertook self-censoring roles for themselves as well as seeking guidance from the controlling bodies such as the newly developed Press Bureau. However, there remained a sense of cynicism and mockery towards the ideas of the censor even though the need for it was accepted and respected. Despite any and all of the complaints and penalties discussed that were applied to the press for wrong doing, the Press Bureau, War Office and Admiralty were in agreement by 1919 that the press had been compliant and had aided them dramatically in the progress of the war. This was something that had been similarly

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<sup>180</sup> 'History in Cartoon', *Hastings and St. Leonards Observer*, 26<sup>th</sup> February 1916, p. 7; 'Raemaekers Cartoon Refused', *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November 1916, p. 11.

<sup>181</sup> See conversations and emails from Ben Watson and Dr Gerry Rubin, Templeman Library and University of Kent, 30<sup>th</sup> January-3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014.

stated in anticipation through correspondence in 1914.<sup>182</sup> Nonetheless, there were some images and articles in the press that did ‘slip through’.

Cartoonists’ interpretations of the rules under which they were controlled have been expanded here looking to how the Defence of the Realm Act was transformed into the personified character of ‘DORA’. Through this character, controls of DORA were illustrated to highlight positive approaches for British civilians, or later to mock their lasting impact on the population. Any cynicism reflected in cartoons was used to highlight humorous approaches to the situations. Cartoonists had the ability to mock and satirise the situation for all to see. Where humour is created using characters of the censor and ‘DORA’, these are still inside the bounds of what censorship would allow, suggesting some self-mockery for the censor as well.

During the war, cartoonists seemed to have more liberty with censorship in comparison to textual articles in the same newspapers. Cartoons offered more than one side of an argument through their depictions making the censor’s job more difficult when considering which aspects should take priority and which should be censored if at all. Traditionally, the brevity of illustration and the simplicity of perceived ideas was what gave cartoons their appeal, and helped them to avoid the censor. The institutional authority behind the censor helped to sustain its abilities to control in a somewhat relaxed manner. Frequent notices were sent to publications, and were followed, as to not follow them cast aspersions upon all publications. Thus, a Foucaudian sense of control was established and followed, the measure of which is the fact that there was no need to relax the controls later.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1919.

<sup>183</sup> Freshwater, ‘Towards a Redefinition’, p. 231; Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment*.

Considering the open acceptance of the censorship by the press and the visual appropriation of its characters as 'DORA' and the censor in cartoon, there is a clear sense of consent embodied in these features. Although the image of 'DORA' alters after the war, within its confines, she remains a positive reflection of the laws, and after the war, she maintains many of the maternal positive qualities, thereby establishing acceptance, and not ridicule. An interesting comparison of the two characters of 'DORA' and the censor can be seen, in that the latter is critically depicted comically through the war, and rapidly forgotten at its end, whereas, the former, is more gently depicted with maternal qualities through the later war years, and becomes far more of a harridan post-war.

Through the images discussed here, sometimes grudging consent to the controls is visible. Acceptance can be inferred, particularly with the earlier images of 'DORA', but at the same time, her alteration in the depiction can suggest deeper frustrations for the public and artists alike as the war ended. These cartoon personalities can be used to reflect on the attitudes of the press and the public alike, as were the public not in agreement with the images to a degree, then they would not have been purchased in such volumes. Their illustration takes a newer approach to the historiography that speaks of censorship in terms of control.<sup>184</sup> Through these images, it does not control the visual to that same degree, and far more is allowed of the cartoonists. Through cartoons, the press is almost able to manipulate the censorial controls to their own advantage.<sup>185</sup> Nonetheless, certain cartoons were not accepted under the regulations, demonstrating a greater level of control when deemed necessary. It was a rare situation for cartoons to be taken to court, and the only one of any real relevance to this study is

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<sup>184</sup> See Hopkin, 'Domestic Censorship'; Lovelace, 'Control and Censorship'.

<sup>185</sup> See Demm, 'Censorship'.

that of the *Bystander* cartoon 'Reported Missing', but others were also made public knowledge through the press, suggesting an importance for such material to the viewing public.

The principle research questions of this chapter have asked to what extent can cartoon depictions of control, censorship and policing through humorous cartoon images give insight to the controls that were actually demanded. Specific details of the Defence of the Realm Act were considered first, in particular its impact on social censorship through the media. In line with this, by addressing the cartoonists' interpretation of the features personified in cartoon, it has been possible to suggest that respect was generally maintained for the government and its rulings as the war went on. As such, a level of consent is acknowledged through the visual beyond perceived coercion as discussed in earlier historiographies of wartime censor. The press were aware of the need for controls, and generally followed these controls after a few wobbles when they were first set out. Despite a lot of subjective interpretation of what the rulings precisely meant, there was little infringement of what was called for which makes it clear the security of the realm remained a national priority for all. However, as great a priority as it may be, it was not without its appeal for cartoonists and, therefore, was embodied in cartoon humour throughout the war.

## Chapter 2

### Stepping off the Page

#### Advertisements, Cartoons and Theatrical Performance

Humour can be seen in many lights from uproarious laughter to a wry snigger, but these can be provoked by different stimuli, two forms of which will be addressed here to evaluate where they align and how they divert from one another. The theatre is a recognised producer of dramatic as well as comical entertainment. It provokes laughter from the viewing audience through performed actions on a stage combining elements of movement along with spoken text and interaction both with other stage performers as well as with the audience. Likewise, the cartoon is recognisable medium that provokes humour for the viewing audience, yet without that performative aspect. The cartoonist produces an image, and so it remains with its visual jokes and textual inferences, but these are immobile.<sup>1</sup> In both forms, variation in the audience's understanding of the joke comes through the individual member's personal

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis is not consulting animated cartoons.

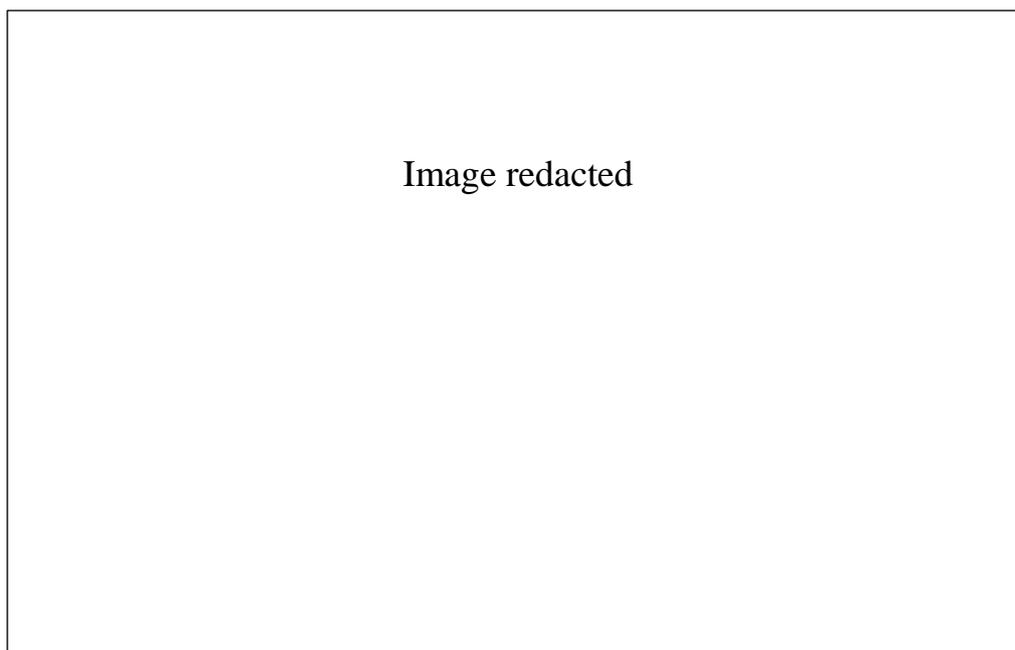
interpretation of what they see.<sup>2</sup> No two audiences can be predicted nor should they be assumed to be the same.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, both mediums of entertainment share an equal ability to express jokes for those audiences. Additionally, they share an element of professional memory when similar ideas are expressed for audience recognition.

The audience of both forms of entertainment held recognition for the other, and the crossover is most apparent when cartoons utilise theatrical features. The theatre can represent an expression of popular culture and life in the city, and its transmutation into cartoon continues this theme. The types of characters that move are variable from Shakespearean classics to well-known contemporary characters, each of which can demonstrate features of supposed audience, class anticipation, and social appreciation. As such, the intersection of theatrical ideas expressed in cartoons can be an indicator for how cartoons take on a life of their own. Stories through cartoons in this way have anticipated endings. Shakespeare is a consistent feature of characters that are transposed into cartoon forms. In Staniforth's 'Until the Crack of Doom', words from Macbeth are used in the title as a form of recognition, and then the witches are depicted, although in this situation they are adapted facially to represent Kitchener, Asquith and Lloyd George who face a cowering Kaiser (figure 3.1). Unlike the play, there is a vast regiment of soldiers marching past, labelled for the numbers thereof, although these could represent the spell the witches are casting. The audience, following the recognised story, anticipate the Kaiser's ultimate doom, even though this image was produced in September 1914.

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<sup>2</sup> See McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; El Refaie, 'Multiliteracies', p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Jim Davis and Victor Emeljnaw, 'Victorian and Edwardian Audiences', in Kerry Powell (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), p. 93.



**(Figure 3.1) J. M. Staniforth, ‘Until the Crack of Doom,’ *Western Mail*, 12<sup>th</sup> September 1914**

There were some restrictions to the theatre and the press implemented with the onset of war. Theatres, music halls and variety palladiums in Britain did not completely close during the war, and as has already been seen, newspaper censorship was only controlled to a limited degree.<sup>4</sup> For theatres, there were some alterations to opening hours throughout the war, particularly in line with daylight savings by 1916.<sup>5</sup> However, it would seem that the British sense of humour continued to seek refuge in theatrical productions throughout.<sup>6</sup> Many theatre owners continually sought to keep their premises open for the entertainment of the public, so much so that Bernard Weller in the *Stage Year Book* speaks of theatres staying open and ‘getting back to that

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<sup>4</sup> Lewis Baumer, ‘An Old Fashioned Play goer Visits a Modern Review’, *Punch*, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1916; A. Wallis-Mills, ‘Alf (Reading French News)’, *Punch*, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1914. For details on censorship, see chapter 1.

<sup>5</sup> See House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1916, vol. 82 cc. 1318-24.

<sup>6</sup> E. A. Baughan, ‘Drama of the Year’, in Lionel Carson (ed.), *The Stage Year Book* (London: The Stage, 1915), p. 1; H. M. Walbrook, ‘Drama of the Year’, in Lionel Carson (ed.), *The Stage Year Book* (London: The Stage, 1916), p. 1.

ordinary traffic of the stage'.<sup>7</sup> Theatres and the newly developing cinema maintained their popularity in Britain for the public generally in wartimes. Although at the same time, there were questions of their morality discussed, particularly by the Bishop of London. He saw such entertainment in times of war to be immoral, corrupting and misplaced. Through him came the suggestion to close these establishments down, but he was faced with distinct public opposition.<sup>8</sup>

The prevalence of theatrical productions from 1914-18 was limited by the same situations as many other features of life; namely, the war. The number of men who enlisted limited those available as players and stagehands identifying a few constraints. Additionally, there were no enlistment exceptions for theatrical occupations; therefore, all men working in the theatre could be called up by 1916.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, many productions continued to be performed from old classics of opera and Shakespeare through to new plays that were written, cast and directed throughout the war.<sup>10</sup> The same types of productions continued to show throughout each year of combat. At times, it may seem that more comedy appeared on the stage, or classical productions, but runs of themes can account for this occurring more often than any overall prevalence; fashions took command of bias at different times. For example, there is a natural influx of pantomime and fairy tale based stories coming to the stage between

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<sup>7</sup> Lionel Carson (ed.), *The Stage Year Book* (London: The Stage, 1916), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> 'Night Clubs', *The Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1915, p. 9; Jan Rüger, 'Entertainments', in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918, vol. II: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), pp. 109, 112-3.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Leask, 'Lena Ashwell: Touring Concert Parties and Arts Advocacy, 1914-1919', in Andrew Maunder (ed.), *British Theatre and the Great War, 1914-1919: New Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 253; B. W. Findon, *The Play Pictorial*, 32 (1918), p. 33; B. W. Findon, 'Bicentenary Supplement', *The Play Pictorial*, 33 (1919), p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> J. P. Wearing, *The London Stage 1910-1919: A Calendar of Plays and Players 1910-1916*, 2 vols. (London and New Jersey: Scarecrow, 1982).

November and January each year for the Christmas season, but in no particular year are these more prevalent than in any other.<sup>11</sup>

When it comes to discussions of theatre in wartime society, serious analytical studies are somewhat sparse.<sup>12</sup> The theatre, music hall and variety performances are often mentioned in passing relating to soldiers' entertainment, but otherwise it is not an aspect of the war that has, until recently, been looked into with any degree of certainty by British academics. The drama and uncertainty of war is well suited to performance where it is both 'horrifying and compelling'.<sup>13</sup> Yet this has been far more pronounced post-war, and especially through the development of the film industry.<sup>14</sup> Even so, the full body of works linking theatre and the Great War at present is condensed to just a few volumes.<sup>15</sup> More studies have been concerned with literature and poetry as exhibited by the voluminous supply considering Owen and Sassoon, and this in turn has progressed into film studies.<sup>16</sup> Theatrical endeavours, however, are only now with the war's centenary, becoming of academic interest.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Wearing, *London Stage*.

<sup>12</sup> In other languages see, Martin Baumeister, *Kriegstheater: Grossstadt, Front und Massenkultur 1914-1918* (Essen: Klartext, 2005); Eva Krivanec, *Kriegsbühnen: Theater im Ersten Weltkrieg. Berlin, Lissabon, Paris und Wien* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Reitz Mullenix (ed.), *Theatre History Studies 2014: Theatres of War* (Alabama: University of Alabama, 2014), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> See Jeffrey Richards, *Films and British National Identity: From Dickens to Dad's Army* (Manchester: MUP, 1997); Michael Isenberg, *War on Film: The American Cinema and World War I, 1914-1941* (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1981); Robert Eberwein, *The War Film* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005); David Williams, *Media Memory and the First World War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Larry Collins, *Theatre at War 1914-18* (London: Macmillan, 1998); Basil Dean, *The Theatre at War* (London, Toronto, Wellington and Sydney: George G. Harrap, 1956); Heinz Kosok, *The Theatre of War: The First World War in British and Irish Drama* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Gordon Williams, *British Theatre in the Great War: A Re-Evaluation* (London and New York: Continuum, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> See Stephen Badsey and Roger Smither, *Imperial War Museum Film Catalogue: The First World War Archive 1* (Trowbridge: Flicks Books, 1994); Isenberg, *War on Film*.

<sup>17</sup> Gateways to the First World War, 'Well Remembered Voices Workshop Day', Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014; Christopher Hart, 'World War I: Media, Entertainment and Popular Culture', University of Chester, Chester, 2-3<sup>rd</sup> July 2015; Gateways to the First World War, 'Pack up Your Troubles', University of Kent, Canterbury 23-5<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

Looking more specifically towards theatrical productions, Heinz Kosok in his 2007 monograph presents a detailed account of British and Irish theatre during the war addressing both home front and battle front theatre and its staging.<sup>18</sup> Along with this, he offers lists of plays that detail the form and genre of each to help better enlighten the reader, as does Larry Collins in his *Theatre at War 1914-18*.<sup>19</sup> Otherwise, the contributions towards this theme of wartime entertainment consist of Basil Dean's *The Theatre at War*, Gordon Williams' *British Theatre in the Great War*, and most recently, Andrew Maunder's *British Theatre and the Great War*, plus a few select reviews of interwar theatre.<sup>20</sup> This limited supply of secondary analysis, highlights a focus on genre and form addressing the types of theatrical productions that were available during the war. Much was also true of earlier scholarship with a focus on the music hall, variety or Edwardian theatre specifically.<sup>21</sup>

The content of performance on stage during the war had just as much variety on offer as before, and even then, the volume of productions did not decrease significantly. The theatre continued as it had previously, music hall gained popularity developing certain names among the industry's performers, and similarly variety performances gained public acceptance. Variety on stage amassed shows that were quick and short, and these were interspersed throughout music hall performances in the same way.<sup>22</sup> Pricewise, these particularly gained popularity for being less expensive and more

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<sup>18</sup> Kosok, *Theatre of War*.

<sup>19</sup> Collins, *Theatre at War*, p. 178.

<sup>20</sup> Dean, *Theatre at War*; Williams, *British Theatre in the Great War*; Andrew Maunder (ed.), *British Theatre and the Great War, 1914-1919: New Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Rex Pogson, *Theatre Between Wars (1919-1939)* (Clevedon: Triangle, 1947).

<sup>21</sup> See Steven Gerrard, 'The Great British Music Hall: Its Importance to British Culture and the "Trivial"', *Journal of Current Cultural Research*, 5 (2013), pp. 487-513.

<sup>22</sup> 'Drama and Variety', *Era*, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1913, p. 19; Simon Featherstone, 'The Epitome of National Life: Metropolitan Music Hall and Variety Theatre, 1913-1919', in Andrew Maunder (ed.), *British Theatre and the Great War, 1914-1919: New Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 180.

widely available to the masses. With war as a clear focus at this time, it is remarkable how often this was not incorporated into plays specifically. Those that did utilise the war theme were ‘popular spy-plays or ultra-patriotic recruitment plays’ which in the situation, was not surprising. That is not to say, however, that war did not feature implicitly in many other productions as well where references are made to war in some way.<sup>23</sup>

There is no overarching argument that unites modern theatre studies of the war, as most are concerned with offering surveys of what was available as the war progressed. Their manner of collection is chronological, although some do collate the material thematically. Nonetheless, overall, the purpose behind these volumes is far more demonstrative than analytical. One interesting aspect that is raised by Kosok, however, is that of the theatrical terminology used throughout the war. Even today, we speak often of ‘theatres of war’, raising the question of why this specific terminology is used.<sup>24</sup> The battlefield is described as a theatre, but is this in terms of it being a stage where drama is enacted, or are there alternative reasons for its use? Paul Fussell gives a chapter entitled the ‘Theatre of War’ and Hall Caine discusses the *Drama of Three Hundred and Sixty Five Days*; both use theatrical terminology and imagery for the war.<sup>25</sup> Caine specifically addresses ‘scenes’ in the three hundred and sixty five days that he discusses. Both authors demonstrate how war is described as a theatre and periods within the war may be described as scenes, but where the theatre has provided much of the imagery, terminology and metaphor used to explain and justify war, very little of the theatrical depictions of war have been equally addressed.

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<sup>23</sup> Kosok, *Theatre of War*, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 207-250; Hall Caine, *Drama of Three Hundred and Sixty Five Days: Scenes in the Great War* (London: William Heinemann, 1915).

The world of cartoon images does not hold the same emphasis of terminology; images are presented in frames rather than being staged, and yet description of character locations within an image can be seen in a similar manner to the theatre in the fore- or background.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, the terminology does not translate in quite the same manner, and the similar words are comprehended in a completely different way. Nevertheless, consistent distinctions between the forms of entertainment can be drawn, whilst elements can also be united in the context of war. Despite the seeming divergence between the terms used to describe cartoons and theatre, the former was prolifically used to advertise the latter. To this extent, the chapter will begin by discussing advertising and its use of cartoon humour and how that was effective through the war in the promotion of the theatre.

Deeper analysis of cartoon advertisements will be offered considering the types of cartoons used. Many of these are specific to the product or production being advertised, while others only tenuously connect with it. Advertisement at the start of the twentieth century was an acknowledged rapidly developing industry, and many product suppliers were growing more aware of the economic effect careful advertisement had.<sup>27</sup> It allowed manufacturers to sell products, or at least make the public more aware of them, and it was a procedure followed by the government when promoting specific war needs.<sup>28</sup> The theatre had long been using cartoons specifically in their advertising campaigns.<sup>29</sup> These cartoon advertisements, and the influence they

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<sup>26</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>27</sup> Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (New York: Doubleday, 1929), pp. 435, 438.

<sup>28</sup> See IWM, PST 4470, Watson Hazell and the Ministry of Food, 'Save the Wheat and Help the Fleet', 1917; IWM, PST 2763, Kealy, 'Women of Britain Say Go', 1915; IWM, PST 2712, Robert Baden-Powell and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, 'Are You In This?', 1915.

<sup>29</sup> SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.9, Andrew Melville, 'For England Home and Beauty' and 'When London Sleeps', *Newspaper Cuttings Scrap Book*, 1915.

had over the public will be considered in the first part of this chapter before discussing the implications of theatre and cartoons during the war.

Humour is a feature of society consistently open to transference across disciplines as a medium that is commonly recycled and reused in different genres. Following on from the use of cartoon humour in advertising, the rest of this chapter will focus more strongly on cartoons and theatre as a crossover of that humour. Thus, the humour, or indeed other content of theatrical performances can be transposed into cartoon images, and vice versa, cartoons can ‘step off the page’ and become theatrical performances in their own right.

Through this transmutability of humour, there are far more opportunities for it to be used politically and for other purposes across society. In this way, humour acquires agency through its multiple uses, particularly when commandeered for political motivation as well as for general public consumption. Public consumption of humour during the early twentieth century included the theatre, music hall, variety, literature and even advertisements across society. Different strata saw humour in theatres and how they reacted to it can be assessed through cartoons when they are linked to outside information about the audience and reception of material and productions alike. Such a study in turn will enable a deeper analysis into alternative uses of humour across the disciplines of theatre and cartoon.

### Cartoon Advertising

Advertising has long used a combination of words and images to help secure public awareness for products and services. Studies of advertisements and their impact on

society since the 1950s were first presented as scientific studies through psychology rather than addressing them as an art form. Many approaches have since altered, and revisions to the ideas behind advertising are constant.<sup>30</sup> Scholars still look at the affect advertising has on the public encouraged to consume by the advertisement they see.<sup>31</sup> Beyond this, studies into the material content of adverts and viewing them as an art form in their own right, has begun to develop in recent years and is now better recognised, particularly through the work of Joan Gibbons.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, from the early nineteenth century, cartoon images advertising products had become more commonplace in shop windows and through newspapers and magazines and they were accessible to the public with developing levels of literacy.<sup>33</sup>

Cartoonists often became involved with advertising, as a means of creating income from their work.<sup>34</sup> Bairnsfather, and artists like him were initially known through Lipton's tea and Beecham's tablets (figure 3.2) before he rose to fame with his wartime *Fragments* from 1915.<sup>35</sup> In a time when pictorial advertising was becoming more fashionable, employers acknowledged the use of familiar cartoonists and their command and influence over consumers.<sup>36</sup> When an image was instantly recognised, then the product was better recalled and although earlier studies suggest that the public

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<sup>30</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, p. 440; James Playsted Wood, *Story of Advertising*, p. 7; Paul Feldwick, *The Anatomy of Humbug: How to Think Differently about Advertising* (Leicester: Matador, 2015).

<sup>31</sup> See Jochim Hansen, Madelijn Strick, Rick Van Baaren, Mirjam Hooghuis and Daniel Wigboldus, 'Exploring Memory for Product Names Advertising with Humour', *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 8 (2009), pp. 135-48; Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements* (London: Marion Boyars, 1978).

<sup>32</sup> Joan Gibbons, *Art and Advertising* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005).

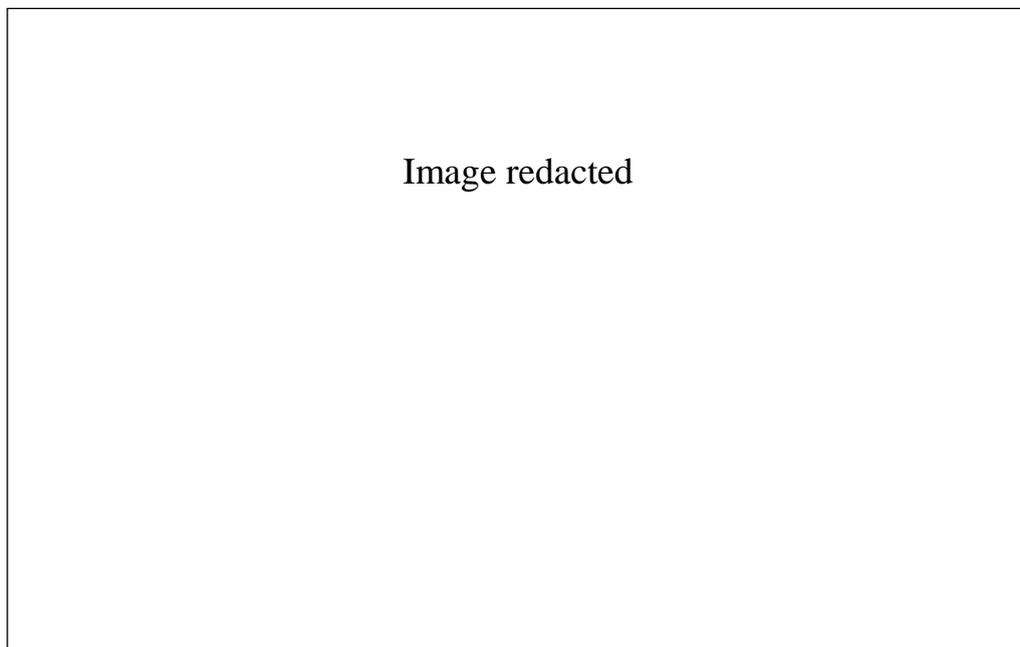
<sup>33</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, p. 145; Hiley, "'A New and Vital Moral Factor'", pp. 148-77.

<sup>34</sup> IWM, PST 10799, Bert Thomas, 'Arf a mo' Kaiser', 1914; Bruce Bairnsfather, Beecham's Pills Advert, 1915; IWM, PST 2733, Bruce Bairnsfather and Oxford Theatre, 'The Better 'Ole or the Romance of Old Bill', 1917; Edwin Morrow, 'John Walker Scotch Adverts', *Bystander*, 1915; B. Hickling, 'A Drop', *Bystander*, 1915.

<sup>35</sup> Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*.

<sup>36</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, p. 440.

had ‘perfect recall’, much of this has since been disproven.<sup>37</sup> Even so, the ‘human capacity’ for visual recall is strong in most people.<sup>38</sup> A continued sense of this is maintained, and certain images become associated with certain brands, providing instant awareness for consumers.<sup>39</sup> Although this was not something advertisers were necessarily aware of in the early twentieth century, they would certainly have noticed the effect continuity of characters or styles of work could have as a memory that was sold to the public.



**(Figure 3.2) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Beecham’s Pills’, *Bystander*, 1915**

It is interesting to note how cartoons are utilised to advertise so many different products. Moving into the twentieth century, advertising was adapting and more images were being used, many of which were photographs, but cartoons were balanced

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<sup>37</sup> See Hansen et al., ‘Exploring Memory’, pp. 135-48. Dipankar Chakravarti and Shanker Krishnan, ‘A Process Analysis of the Effects of Humorous Advertising Executions of Brand Claims Memory’, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13:3 (2003), pp. 230-45.

<sup>38</sup> Feldwick, *Anatomy of Humbug*, pp. 56-8.

<sup>39</sup> Phil Barden, *Decoded: The Science Behind Why We Buy* (London: John Wiley, 2013), pp. 4-5.

alongside in product placements.<sup>40</sup> Advertising infiltrated all areas of society from commerce to politics, and everything from soap and medication to chocolate, whisky, and cigarettes have been advertised using cartoons specifically produced for them. Often, advertisements in the media and the government are seen to be completely separate aspects of society, yet James Aulich argues that they combined forces during the war in their efforts to promote what was necessary.<sup>41</sup> It was understood in cities that people could read, and through this combined with cartoon images, there was a clear channel to the public consistently being enhanced.<sup>42</sup>

By the start of the Great War, the advertising industry was steadily gaining momentum and this is frequently reflected in publications of the era where there are often more advertising pages than articles.<sup>43</sup> The *Bystander* for example consisted of up to 20 pages simply of advertisements at the front and back before the main content filled the remaining pages in between. Such advertisements and posters were also becoming an established part of the complex fabric that was the city. As society urbanised advertisements wove themselves into the integral framework of how one lived in a city.<sup>44</sup> There were further advertisements in shop windows and on walls in the streets of London, around shops that were selling products. The use of cartoons for these adverts was consistent, and much of the style is similar through the simplification of design, making them quicker to produce as well as to share and recall. Despite an

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<sup>40</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, p. 440.

<sup>41</sup> James Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public in Britain during the First World War' in David Welch and Jo Fox (eds.), *Justifying War: Propaganda, Politics and the Modern Age* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 109.

<sup>42</sup> For urban readership, see Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1996).

<sup>43</sup> See for example volumes of the *Bystander*.

<sup>44</sup> Clemens Wischermann and Elliott Shore (eds.), *Advertising and the European City: Historical Perspectives* (Aldershot, Burlington, Singapore and Sydney: Ashgate, 2000); Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 111; Emmanuelle Cronier, 'The Street', in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p. 71; Wood, *Story of Advertising*, pp. 11-12

abundance of adverts in society collectively, it needs to be remembered that most would feature in urban situations rather than rural areas.<sup>45</sup> They clearly had some power and influence over those who viewed them otherwise the alternative was simply to remove them. For many, they were seen to be honest and respectable and as such, were happily accepted.<sup>46</sup>

The public recognised cartoon advertisements almost as well as they might today; the visual image took seconds to observe and far longer to remove from the conscience compared to textual information.<sup>47</sup> The added benefit of humour in so many of these advertising cartoons once again helped to promote their value and aid their recognition.<sup>48</sup> Once the brand had been established, then the comedy served to reinforce the value of the product and consumer desire to be part of it through purchase.<sup>49</sup> For example, as soon as customers saw the child Peter Walker sticking his head into the image, they knew there would be beer and gentlemen happily consuming it (figure 3.3).<sup>50</sup> These images also rapidly, from August 1914, depicted soldiers and sailors getting a drink with their shilling as they signed up.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Cronier, 'The Street', p. 71.

<sup>46</sup> Wood, *Story of Advertising*, p. 345

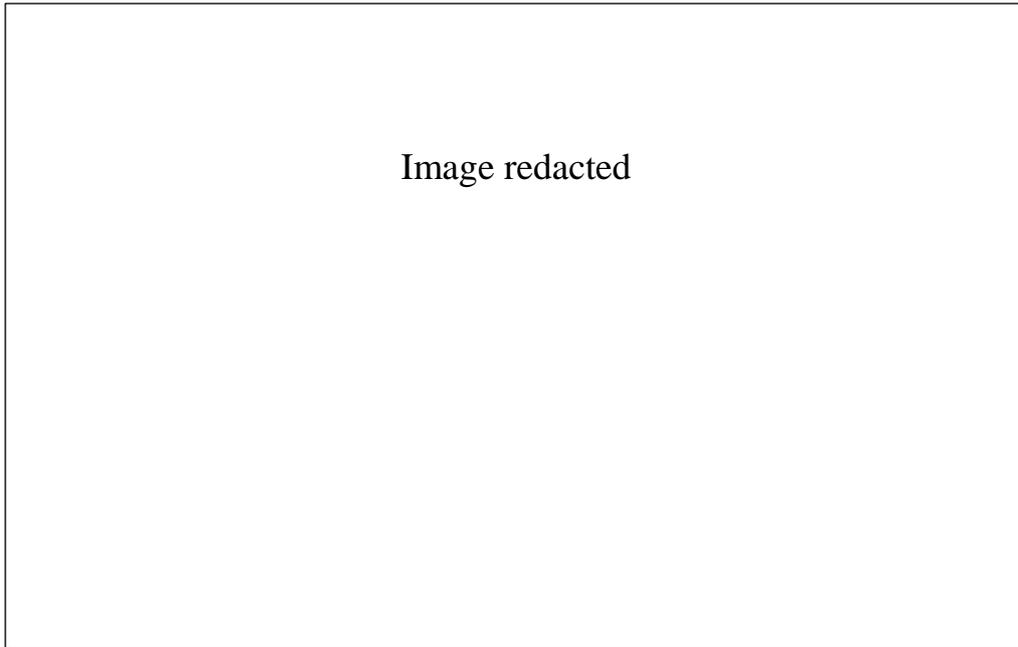
<sup>47</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*.

<sup>48</sup> Madelijn Strick, Rob Holland, Rick Van Baaren, Ad Van Knippenberg and Ap Dijksterhuis, 'Humour in Advertising: An Associative Processing Model', *European Review of Social Psychology*, 24:1 (2013), p. 33; Fred Beard, *Humour in the Advertising Business: Theory, Practice and Wit* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

<sup>49</sup> Barden, *Decoded*, pp. 4-5; Chakravarti and Krishnan, 'Process Analysis', p. 231.

<sup>50</sup> These advertisements regularly featured in the *Daily Mail* of 1914 and 1915, generally on page 6.

<sup>51</sup> Bert Thomas 'Little Peterisms', *Daily Mail*, 4<sup>th</sup> September 1914, p. 6



**(Figure 3.3) Bert Thomas, ‘Little Peterisms’, *Daily Mail*, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1914**

Propaganda posters promoting the army, and encouraging people to enlist were equally popular in the city. Both the poster and advertisements had become a recognised feature of society’s, ‘commercial imagery’ and military images were part of the formation of social identity.<sup>52</sup> Propagandists could see the poster’s value for drawing the viewing audience in and making a personal statement directly to them through the pointing finger and direct speech that so many utilised.<sup>53</sup> Many politicians saw the value of advertising the war through propaganda posters, as they had before the war even began. Twenty years previously, William Gladstone notoriously reflected

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<sup>52</sup> Aulich, ‘Advertising and the Public’, p. 114.

<sup>53</sup> IWM, PST 2734, Alfred Leete and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Britons wants you’, 1914; IWM, PST 2712, Baden-Powell, ‘Are You In This?’, 1915; Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 20-23; Jim Aulich and John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?: First World War Posters in Britain and Europe* (Manchester: University Press, 2007), p. 51.

on the adverts of Thomas Lipton in a speech made in Edinburgh, stating that advertisements were the ‘propelling power’ behind business.<sup>54</sup>

Later, moving into the twentieth century, Winston Churchill followed a similar rhetoric in relation to politics with advertising promoting its advance.<sup>55</sup> In 1913, Hedley Francis LeBas of the Caxton Printing Company reportedly informed the Secretary of State for War that in order for men to be recruited, he needed to sell the army just the same as ‘tea, soap or tobacco’.<sup>56</sup> Poster campaigning became a prominent part of the war under the private efforts of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee.<sup>57</sup> The success of military campaigning through posters was openly summarised in 1918 when the *Saturday Evening Post* ran an article commenting on how Hedley LeBas had given the British government guidance on the value of advertising.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, this is clear demonstration of what Aulich describes as the seamless movement of posters, and in turn, cartoon images likewise, ‘into civic spaces’.<sup>59</sup>

The commercial value of images could not be denied, as with recognition and added peer pressure associated with that recognition, a vast consumer base could easily develop.<sup>60</sup> *Punch* was a consistent promoter of its products claiming that ‘every soldier needed a laugh’.<sup>61</sup> This, it advertised using cartoon images of happy laughing soldiers on the front or in barracks socialising with cartoon magazines (figure 3.4). These

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<sup>54</sup> E. S. Turner, *The Shocking History of Advertising* (London: Michael Joseph, 1952), p. 160; also see Regina Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), p. 54.

<sup>55</sup> Wood, *Story of Advertising*, p. 13.

<sup>56</sup> Nicholas Hiley, ‘Sir Hedley LeBas and the Origins of Domestic Propaganda in Britain 1914-1917’, *European Journal of Marketing*, 21:8 (1987), pp. 30-46; Wood, *Story of Advertising*, p. 350; Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 52.

<sup>57</sup> See Aulich, *War Posters*; Aulich and Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?*; Rickards, *The Rise and Fall of the Poster*.

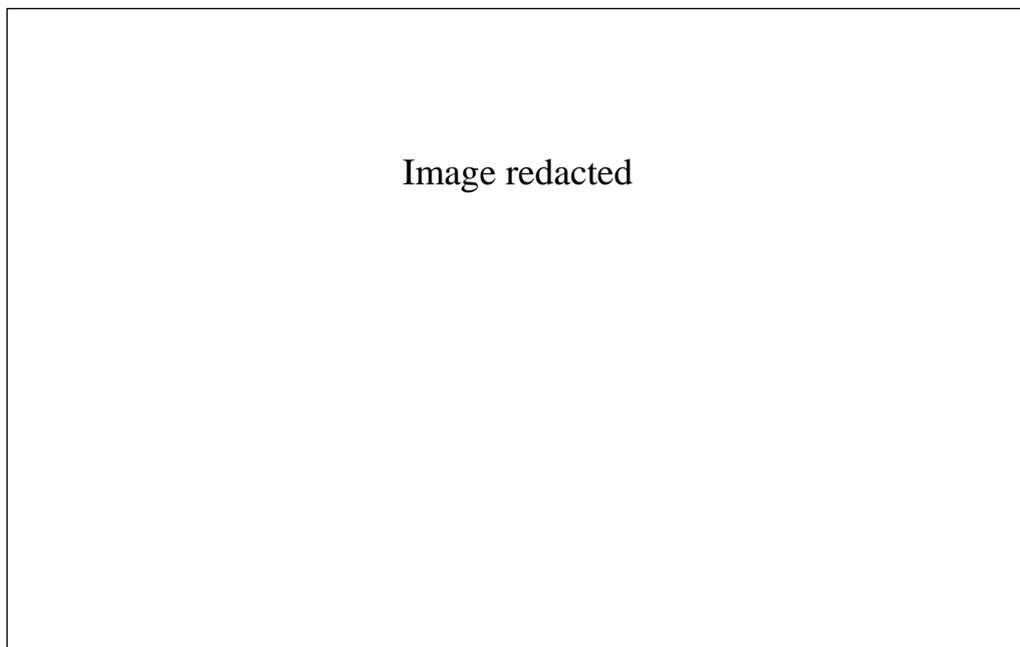
<sup>58</sup> Wood, *Story of Advertising*, p. 351,

<sup>59</sup> Aulich, ‘Advertising and the Public’, pp. 119-20.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 116-7.

<sup>61</sup> Unknown Artist, ‘Punch Advertisements’, *The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1914.

images and advertisements were placed into the local and national press offering strength to the governmental recruitment campaigns as well as to the popularity of cartoon magazines.<sup>62</sup> Statistics for sales and use of *Punch* in the trenches cannot be clearly offered, however, it may be inferred that their advertising added to the ongoing success of the journal. Sales statistics do suggest an increase during the war from 113,000 in 1913, to more than 150,000 in 1915, and their research suggests that most volumes were exchanged on average nine times, making total readership during the war more than one million.<sup>63</sup>



**(Figure 3.4) Unknown Artist, 'Punch Advertisements', *The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup>**

**December 1914**

Psychological research suggests that in terms of advertising, 'humour enhances the amount of attention paid', and so as such, if humour were applied to an image more

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<sup>62</sup> 'Punch', *The Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1917, p. 3; 'Punch', *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> See email correspondence with *Punch* Ltd. 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013, and October 2016. They have no details of wartime sales specifically for soldiers, and precise dissemination and exchange of the product is impossible to determine, but a reasonable average of times shared can be taken.

attention would be paid to its message, although much of this is subconscious.<sup>64</sup> The prevalence of humour within cartoons, therefore, makes sense of their prolific use in advertising. During the war, many advertisements still focused on the words over and above visual representation particularly in magazines, and not all featured cartoon images. Even so, advertisements flourished with the onset and after effects of war, recruiting men and selling war bonds equally.<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, interspersed within these wordy advertisements were many that featured illustrations, the most popular of which were soap advertisements. Soap was one of the first products to utilise visual advertising to great effect. Starting with a portrait of John Millais's grandson blowing bubbles, the portrait was sold for more than £2000, and Pears soap invested in its reproduction as early as the 1880s (figure 3.5).<sup>66</sup> During the war, Pears soap was advertised with women in mind following the pre-war tradition started with this image of a young boy. In contrast, Coal Tar soap was advertised for the soldier. Continuity is maintained in this gendered fashion for many advertisements throughout the war.

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<sup>64</sup> Strick et al., 'Humour in Advertising', p. 33.

<sup>65</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, pp. 565-6.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, p. 98.

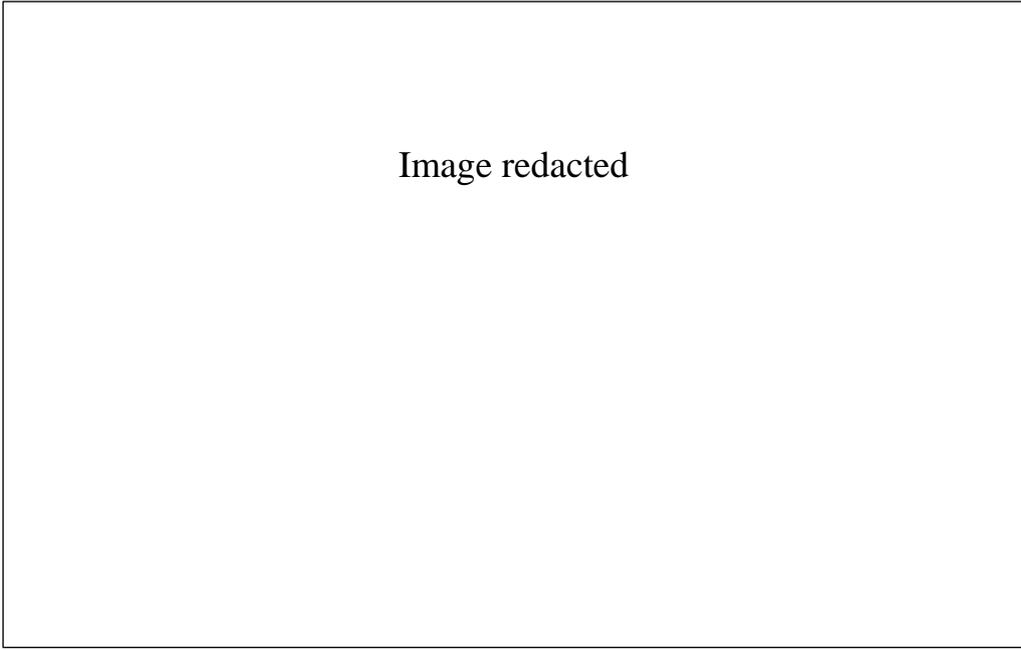


Image redacted

**(Figure 3.5) John Everett Millais, ‘Bubbles’, Lady Lever Art Gallery,  
Liverpool, 1886**

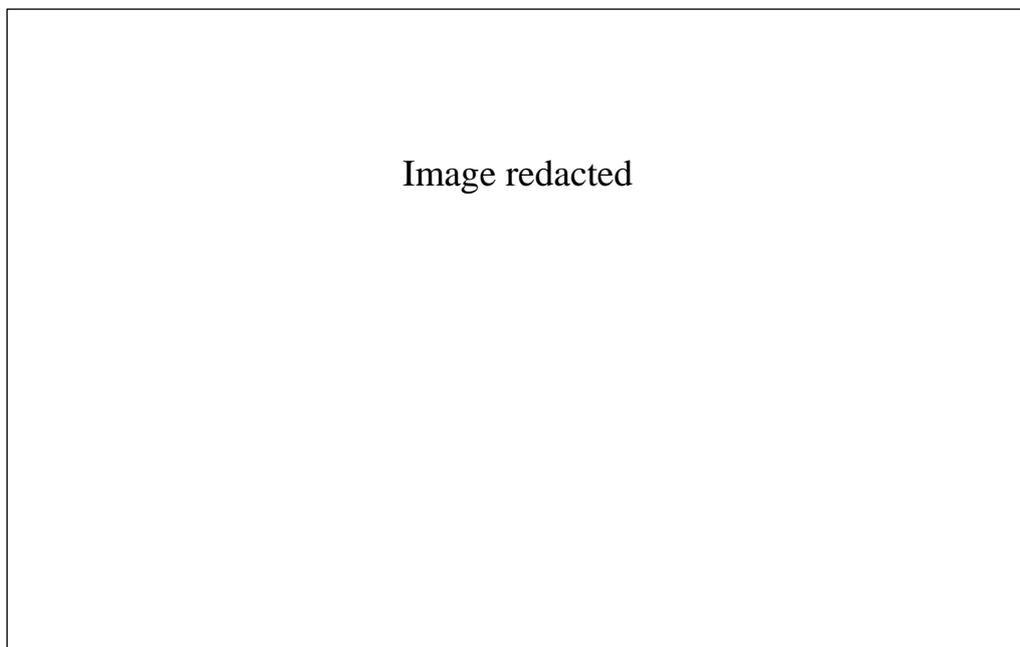
In the *Bystander* of 1917, a new advert for Coal Tar soap began to be used showing a single soldier with a towel held in front of him. Here he holds his towel and looks out at the viewing audience claiming ‘I’ve got a lovely bit of towel, now all I need is some soap’ encouraging viewers to purchase these soaps for their loved ones who are away fighting. Through the direct eye line, the soldier is able to speak to the viewing audience. The conversation is a personal one speaking to all potential audience members and making them accountable to his claim.<sup>67</sup> Cartoonists and advertisers alike adapted this style of direct address, as personal contact with the consumer audience rapidly became an effective approach.

Similarly, Wrights Coal Tar soap presents a collection of soldiers enviously watching a comrade and commenting on how he was a ‘lucky beggar’ for having the soap (figure

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<sup>67</sup> Ernst Gombrich, *The Image and the Eye: Further Studies in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), pp. 186-7.

3.6). Again, this calls on the viewer's conscience and asks them to provide more so that the men might be equal in their privileges. As it states, 'they've sent him some' and the inference is that some should be sent to them all applying an inclusive appeal to the reading public.<sup>68</sup> In many ways these cartoons would be the sort of material that military officials would be happy seeing publicised. It is clear that the soldiers are in a relaxed situation, but as such, they are clearly self-aware and seek to look after themselves and keep clean.<sup>69</sup>



**(Figure 3.6) Unknown Artist, 'Wright's Coal Tar Soap', *Bystander*, 1915**

Pear's soap was an interesting feature of wartime advertising as it continued to be directed towards women and children. These characters were depicted in happy, almost euphoric domestic manners in advert reproductions, and such continuity was also common with luxury products like chocolate throughout the war.<sup>70</sup> Potentially this

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<sup>68</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 109.

<sup>69</sup> 'The Territorials Leisure', *The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914, p. 4.

<sup>70</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, pp. 393-99.

was in an effort to maintain normalcy and avoid acknowledging problems of war. Soldiers less frequently advertised Pear's soaps, it was not soap for all and sundry, but was advertised with a specifically feminine ideal. However, this does not mean that it was completely separate from the cartoonists' adaption.

One earlier Pear's advert is particularly interesting as it offers a baby trying to climb out of a small bath to reach his soap, where 'he won't be happy 'til he gets it!' (figure 3.7). This advert was then re-mastered by G. A. Stevens, exchanging the baby for the Kaiser who appears to be equally uncomfortable and displeased with his situation. Although the soap remains in Stevens' image, adding to the audiences' recognition, this time it is renamed 'Paris' relating to the contemporary news of the German Army not reaching Paris as desired by the Kaiser.<sup>71</sup> Other cartoonists also played upon this feature illustrating failed attempts to reach Paris.<sup>72</sup> The original soap advertisement is not particularly humorous, yet when adapted, it serves to denigrate the Kaiser, as was traditional for British artists; stripping him of all but his iron glove and through this action, a mocking form of humour is fulfilled (figure 3.8). Although as a baby, he is a reasonable size, and there are no other characters for comparison, therefore, he is automatically demoted in status for the childlike representation. Similarly, being physically stripped of clothes adds to the emphasis of derision. The disdain offered for the Kaiser's character could be seen as a significant form of mockery, whilst at the same time maintaining a modicum of gentle farce as nothing derogatory is specifically illustrated.

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<sup>71</sup> 'German Aviators Fail to Reach Destination', *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 6; 'Zeppelin Failure', *Daily Mail*, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 8; 'Futile Attempt on Paris', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 30<sup>th</sup> August 1915, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup> See S. Lupton and G. A. Stevens, *An English A B C for Little Willie and Others* (London: Daily News, 1914); Walker, 'The Unexpected', *Special War Cartoons* (London: The *Daily Graphic*, 1914); Walker, 'A Lion in the Path', *Special War Cartoons* (London: The *Daily Graphic*, 1914); Leonard Raven-Hill, 'According to Plan', *Punch*, 28<sup>th</sup> August 1918.

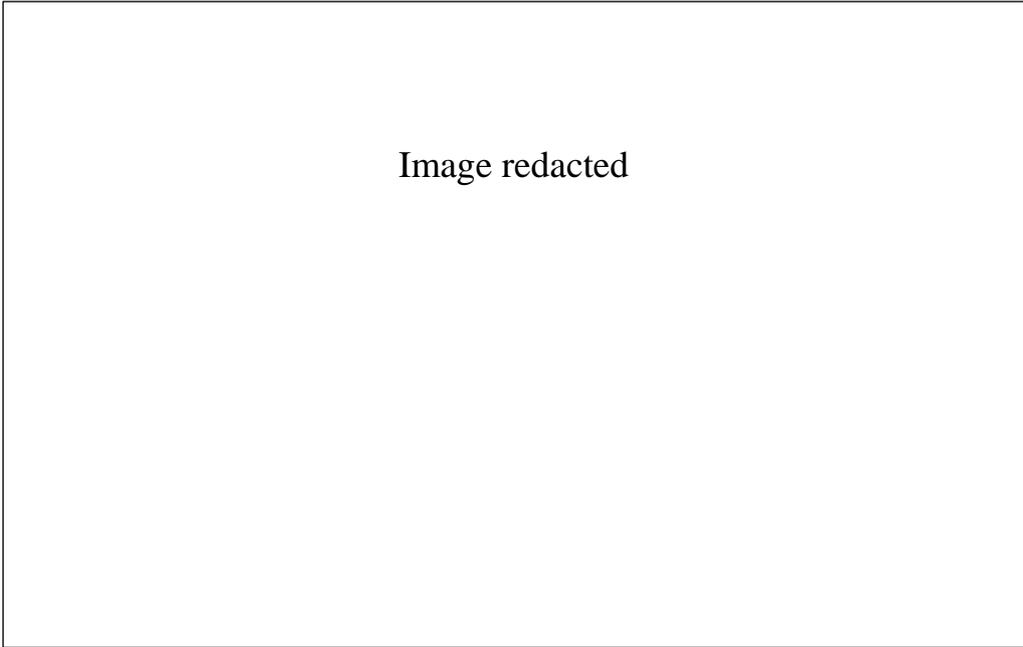


Image redacted

**(Figure 3.7) Unknown Artist, 'Pear's Soap', *Pears Cyclopaedia*, 1904**

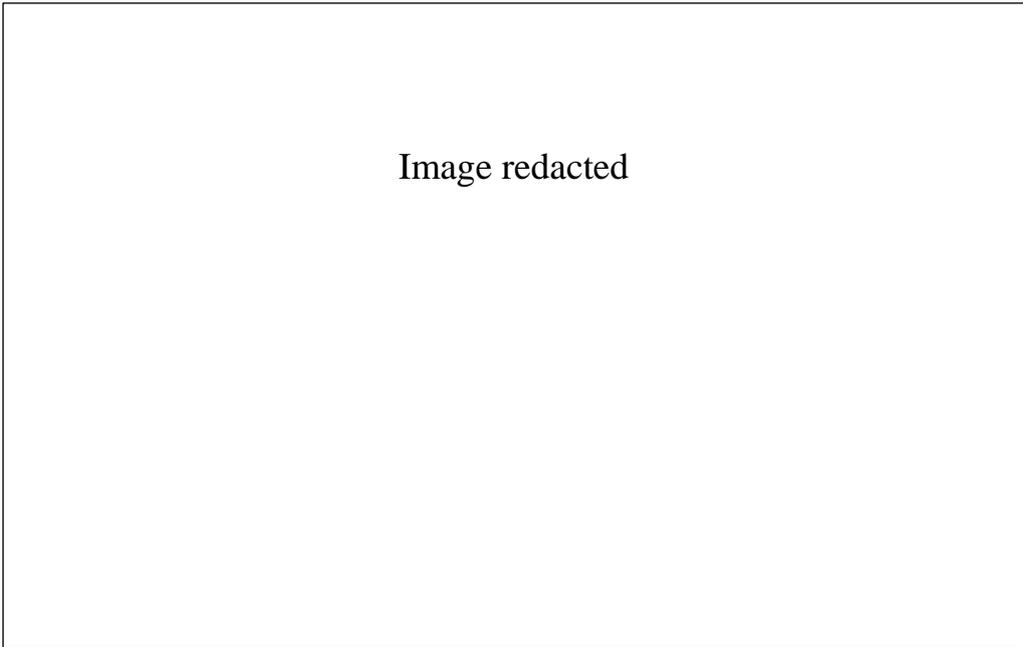
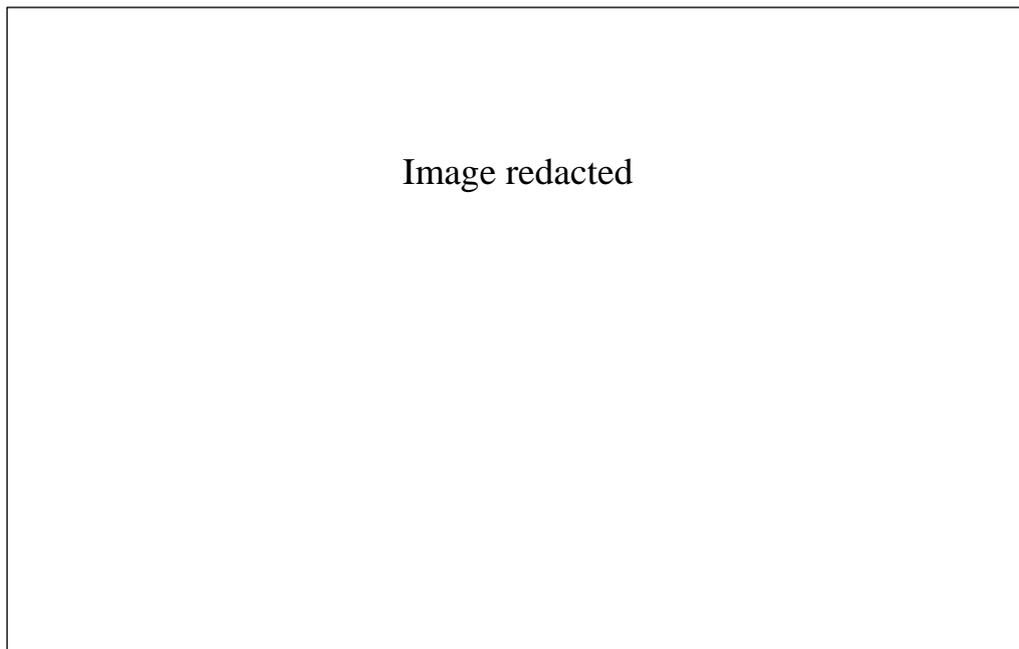


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**(Figure 3.8) G. A. Stevens, 'P is for Paris that Bill couldn't reach', *An English A B C for Little Willie and Others*, 1914**

Stevens was not the only artist to commandeer this particular cartoon during the war. Staniforth also remodelled it with the Kaiser stretching for 'British Reprisals'; again something he is unable to reach. This image appeared rapidly following reports of the British bombing German aerodrome space in 1917. The implication through this is that if the Kaiser reaches for it he will receive British reprisals in the form of an explosion. These will not necessarily be something he would want, but may be something he deserves. The site of the British bombing effort is also reinforced through the Zeppelin in the background, which is connected to the Kaiser's bath (figure 3.9). This suggests should he reach the shell he is reaching for, the reprisal will be an explosion, which will affect all he is connected to.



**(Figure 3.9) J. M. Staniforth, 'He Won't Be Happy 'til He Gets It', *Western***

***Mail*, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1917**

For Staniforth, the Kaiser is not reduced to being a child, but rather is allowed to remain adult. Nonetheless, he has his bath in this instance fully clothed, which adds to

the incongruity of the image and reinforces the foolish nature of the Kaiser promoted by this cartoon. Before the war, the Kaiser had begun to lose respectability in his representation, particularly through satirical British cartooning. More often, his authority as a leader was reduced to a joke in one form or another.<sup>73</sup> These various depictions of the Kaiser replacing the child in the Pear's soap bath filters into this demotion of authority, and inevitability provides incongruous humour.<sup>74</sup> They reinforce ideas that had been expressed to the public of the need to remain calm and endure for the sake of victory, and humour can be interpreted as a way of enduring. These ideas were particularly advertised from 1915 in relation to worries about Zeppelin raids, and the sense of reprisal for these is clear in Staniforth's image.<sup>75</sup>

Someone else is needed to complete the story that the cartoon advertisement is presenting. The original baby would have had assistance from a parental figure that would be available to aid him and make him 'happy'. This absent parent would complete the picture, and it is the consumer public who fulfil that role for the Pear's baby. Meaning is thus granted to the inanimate object that is being advertised, and the signifier of that meaning is the baby.<sup>76</sup> With the Kaiser, there is less a call for the audience to help so much as to watch and laugh without assisting. He still gives the soap significance and meaning, but it is more of a negligent one as his ownership of that product is removed, as he cannot reach it. There is equal implication in both images that the required aid is not present and that is what causes the cartoon character visible frustration. However, the soap advertisement instantly implies that the aid will

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<sup>73</sup> Scully, *British Images of Germany*, pp. 133-83.

<sup>74</sup> Berger, *Redeeming Laughter*, p. 208.

<sup>75</sup> See Susan Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire: Air Raids and Culture in Britain from the Great War to the Blitz* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 2012), pp. 49-50.

<sup>76</sup> Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements*, pp. 31-6, 78-81.

come, while the cartoon inverts that same implication through the morphing of the face, and labelling of the soap.

Soap was not the only product to utilise cartoon methods in their advertisements. Fry's and Cadbury sought to advertise their chocolate with cartoons, generally of children, while Whisky's such as Buchanan's used men in their adverts teemed with figures of national patriotic relevance including John Bull, as too did Peter's beer seen above (figure 3.3). Sometimes soldiers were used, although generally officers, for whisky, and beer for enlistees reinforcing the class standing in society and the army alike. Having men in advanced and respectable positions in society confers that same respectability upon the product linking it to a specific environment.<sup>77</sup> When officers drink whisky, authority is implied for the product. When soldiers drank beer before the war, it was a common man's drink, but now respectability is implied through changing attitudes towards soldiers generally; they were the new heroes in society.<sup>78</sup>

Most cartoons that were used for advertising are ones that represent people; couples, children or families dependant on the type of product being advertised, with the addition of soldiers and sailors as the war progresses. These people are traditional in form and are rarely distorted or adapted for comedic effect in contrast to the Kaiser's depiction in the reworking of the Pear's soap advert (figures 3.8 and 3.9). Men are young and strong in appearance, not demoted into the role of a child; women are young and beautiful; children are fresh faced and undaunted by society, and the elderly are also comely and placid. This style of representation dawned long before the war and was consistent with what the public had come to expect of pictorial advertisements,

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

<sup>78</sup> McCartney, 'Hero, Victim or Villain?', pp. 43-54.

and artistic depictions running throughout the Victorian era.<sup>79</sup> The placid and comely representations were something the public was used to seeing, but also something that the cartoonist was able to commandeer and render appropriate for humour as needed.

Theatres also used cartoon advertising posted in daily newspapers to promote the plays being performed. In theatrical circles, the production of cartoons became embedded in the way the theatre was viewed by the audience particularly from the onset of the war. Theatres offered regular cartoon images through newspapers along with the titles of forthcoming or current plays that were showing.<sup>80</sup> Earlier advertisement from the start of the twentieth century rotated around textual announcements, whereas, observing the promotion of 'For England Home and Beauty' offers far more visual material by 1915 compared with the 1908 production, even though the textual adverts continue to exist.<sup>81</sup>

The sheer volume of promotional materials available imply how advertising helped actors and theatre managers immensely. Certain newspapers offered more publicity for particular theatres, but many utilised the method nonetheless. The Melville brothers were theatre owners who frequently advertised their productions through the press, and cuttings from these demonstrate the effectiveness of their adverts, as had they not been effective, then their use would have rapidly stopped. The textual and pictorial cuttings are supported by the takings books from various years, which equally demonstrate consistent and building revenue for productions including 'For England Home and Beauty' along with 'On His Majesty's Service' which both showed in

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<sup>79</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', pp. 118-9.

<sup>80</sup> See for example 'For England Home and Beauty', *Evening News*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1915; 'For England Home and Beauty', *Star*, 8<sup>th</sup> June 1915.

<sup>81</sup> SC, MEL/CUT/ 9, 10, MISC, Andrew Melville, Scrap Book collection, 1906-29; SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.9, Andrew Melville, 'For England Home and Beauty' and 'When London Sleeps', *Newspaper Cuttings Scrap Book*, 1915.

1915.<sup>82</sup> Although the income for these productions cannot be explicitly referred to the cartoon adverts, there is some indication from the collated advertisements to suggest that weeks with greater visual advertising did bring in greater overall revenue.<sup>83</sup>

Cartoons used to advertise the theatre sometimes originated in other forms within the press, for example, advertisements for general products such as cigarettes were reused. Interestingly with these, the topic of the play advertised is not explicitly depicted, but rather is implied through the cartoons. Clear examples of this obscure advertising are among the images that promoted 'For England Home and Beauty'. Many cartoons used, indirectly suggest the 'beauty of England' and family life without the war drawing on features of traditional British society. These presented people with money at home preparing for balls, or at the horse races (figure 3.10).

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<sup>82</sup> SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.9, Andrew Melville, 'For England Home and Beauty' and 'When London Sleeps' *Newspaper Cuttings Scrap Book*, 1915; SC, MEL/THE/LDN/LYC. 5, Andrew Melville, *Takings Books for the London Lyceum*, 1907-39; SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.10 0599629, Andrew Melville, *Takings Books from the Prince's Theatre*, 1911-56; Cartoon adverts are mostly evident in the *Star* and *Evening News*, but other newspapers also offered theatrical comment including: *Daily Mail*, *Telegraph*, *Daily Express*, *Daily Chronicle*, *Daily* and *Evening Standard*, *Globe*, and various localised *Gazettes*.

<sup>83</sup> See SC, MEL/CUT/ 9, 10, MISC, Andrew Melville, Scrap Book collection, 1906-29; SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.10 0599629, Andrew Melville, *Takings Books from the Prince's Theatre*, 1911-56.

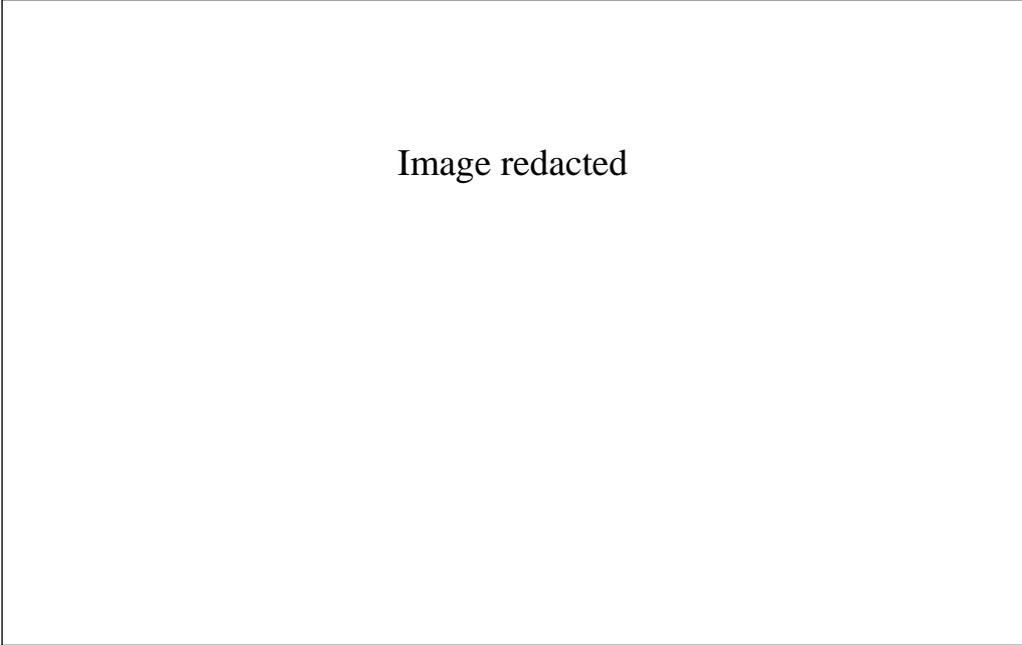


Image redacted

**(Figure 3.10) Unknown Artist, ‘For England Home and Beauty’, *Evening News*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1915**

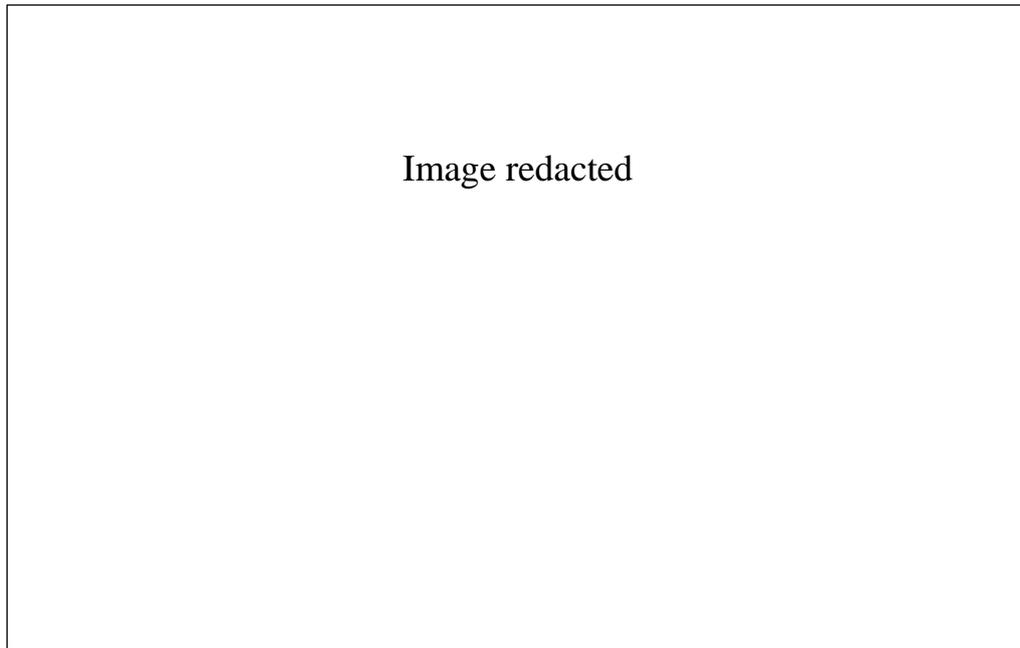
In contrast, others offer the implied destruction of war as a counter balance to England’s beauty and civilisation. Many of these present explosions, or wounded soldiers crawling forward, but the more subtle suggest the blind man aided by a soldier son (figure 3.11). Both styles are equally able to advertise the productions through the text and contemporary reviews suggest that they worked well even when the cartoons are not explicitly mentioned.<sup>84</sup> There is, nonetheless, the consistent repetition of the play title and theatre in which it is being offered, which serves as a ‘jingle’ almost to help the reader recall the details, an affect that had been used effectively in British advertising since the 1850s.<sup>85</sup> The disparate content of the cartoon to the text, however, indicates how there was less reason to have the cartoon in existence at all. Nonetheless,

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<sup>84</sup> SC, MEL/THE/LDN/PTS.9 Andrew Melville, ‘For England Home and Beauty’, *Newspaper Cuttings Scrap Book*, 1915; ‘War Melodramas, “For England Home and Beauty”’, *The Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1915, p. 9; ‘Melodrama at the Princes’, *Observer*, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1915, p. 11; ‘A New Play’, *Observer*, 17<sup>th</sup> May 1915; ‘England Home and Beauty’, *Stage*, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1915.

<sup>85</sup> Presbrey, *History and Development*, pp. 91-5.

the volume of cartoon based advertisements imply positive effect, as these images took up more space in publications and effectively cost more to produce.



**(Figure 3.11) Unknown Artist, ‘For England Home and Beauty’, *Star*, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1915**

Cartoons give the products they advertise agency and influence over consumers as well as allowing the cartoonist to feel they too had some influential prowess. Emotive ties were used throughout the war whenever soldiers or civilians were depicted, as can be seen with the blind father (figure 3.11) particularly if they were seen to be suffering. Those who complained of a lack of soap soon had the public sending it out to the troops (figure 3.6).<sup>86</sup> Publications suggesting that ‘soldiers needed a laugh’, encouraged copies of magazines and cartoon journals to be sent out to them (figure 3.4). It is impossible to trace the precise volume of *Punch* editions sent out to the front, but at

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<sup>86</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 96; Catherine Rollet, ‘The Home and Family Life’, in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), pp.331-35.

the same time, letters home complement information received such as a letter from ‘Dad’ that was accompanied by copies of the *London Mail* and *Punch*, both of which were ‘vastly welcomed’.<sup>87</sup> Cartoons advertised themselves and other aspects of entertainment consistently. In addition to the visual cartoon advertising, further textual material also served to make the advertisements relevant, and to state specific details such as price and means. Thus, text and image become part of the same thing and are both essential to its full comprehension.

Consumers of many products were used to seeing cartoons advertising whatever it was that they sought from chocolate to soap, as well as more large scale suppliers of products such as Boots, and this manner of advertising has remained and progressed to this day.<sup>88</sup> There was future potential for every cartoon that was transposed into advertisement, as in this way it could develop international renown or longevity once the image was identified with the brand, and many people today will still recognise specific cartoon adverts even from before their youth.<sup>89</sup> Recognition and acceptance are demonstrated through the cartoons that were used by the First World War cartoonists and advertisers alike. Many images offered recognition to the audience, which serves to settle and comfort, or return a sense of normalcy as demonstrated.

### Theatre into Cartoons

Advertisements were common features of society, and so too was the theatre. Naturally, in a classed society, theatrical presentations were graded, with the theatre at

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<sup>87</sup> ‘London Mail at the Front’, *London Mail*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914.

<sup>88</sup> See adverts such as Jack Walker’s Coal Tar Soap, various adverts in the *Bystander* for Whiskey, and adverts in the *Amateur Photographer*.

<sup>89</sup> Barden, *Decoded*, pp. 4-5.

the top showing operas and Shakespeare, working down through music hall towards variety performances at the lower and cheaper end. There was also the addition of rapidly developing cinemas again as a cheaper option. Linking to this perception of class and its theatrical embodiment, art was also seen as a medium through which to represent one's class status. Better art, was higher class. Yet, in the mid-eighteenth century, William Hogarth openly acknowledged the crossovers between his work in caricature and theatrical illustrations. He claimed to 'treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage, and men and women my players'.<sup>90</sup> Here caricature is no longer a feature of class, but merely a depiction in the same manner as an actor on a stage. In this way, artists such as Hogarth marginally reduced the layers of class, by showing how they can be irrelevant in artistic transfer.

Apparent class divides between these different theatrical establishments were never stringent before the war.<sup>91</sup> Regardless of any perceived differences, finance dictated external separation to start with, but once inside, class was essentially irrelevant, as was gender.<sup>92</sup> Whoever you were, the attraction of the city was, in the words of Ford Madox Ford, that the streets were 'filled with leisure'.<sup>93</sup> Theatrical depictions cross over between social classes, suggesting a readiness for all spheres of society to interact with the ideas and characters that these entertainments provided. As such, various reflections of the theatre and music hall including Shakespeare appear in cartoons across combatant countries.<sup>94</sup> Specific features of theatre in cartoon can identify the

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<sup>90</sup> William Hogarth quoted in Edward Lucie-Smith, *The Art of Caricature* (London: Orbis, 1981), p. 52.

<sup>91</sup> Jeffrey Richards, 'Culture Wars', *Sight and Sound*, 22:4 (2012), p. 96; Richard Anthony Baker, *British Music Hall: An Illustrated History* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2014), pp. 76-85.

<sup>92</sup> Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), pp. 72-3.

<sup>93</sup> Ford Madox Ford, *The Soul of London: A Survey of a Modern City* (London: Chiswick Press, 1905), p. 110; Rüger, 'Entertainments', p. 105.

<sup>94</sup> See for example *Kladderadatsch*; *Lustige Blätter*; *Simplicissimus*; *Canard Enchaîné*.

society anticipated as an audience. For example, more upper and middle class orientated publications like *Punch* depict Shakespeare or his characters with reasonable regularity, and anticipated recognition. While more left-wing socialist publications such as the *Herald*, more commonly presented social commentary in their cartoons, and when theatrical, this was more often aspects of music hall or variety. The same was true of the *Daily Mirror* as well.<sup>95</sup> Shakespeare featured across publications, but at times, these depictions are simple in form and assume less prior knowledge for the audience.

Shakespearean characters become commonplace, as for many, Shakespeare himself was a staple constituent of what it is to be British, and as such, his personality and plays were consistently used to help motivate the public in terms of war and national identity. With the progress into a ‘total war’, there was as John Horne suggests the need for mobilisation across society, and this included through public imagination, and ‘collective representation’ into which Shakespeare fits perfectly.<sup>96</sup> Many jingoistic performances constructed around patriotic monologues were used to inspire and motivate enlistment from the start.<sup>97</sup> Added to this, April 1916 coincided with the tercentenary of Shakespeare’s death offering another reason to present the bard in cartoons representing ‘Englishness’.<sup>98</sup> The use of Shakespeare and his plays has come to be termed ‘cultural motivation’ with hugely national emphasis as Shakespeare was used to represent the best of what was British and the identity of England emanates through him. Matthew Hendley pays particular attention to Shakespeare’s mobilisation

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<sup>95</sup> Hiley, “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 148

<sup>96</sup> John Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 1, 195-211.

<sup>97</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 73.

<sup>98</sup> Matthew Hendley, ‘Cultural Mobilization and British Responses to Cultural Transfer in Total War: the Shakespeare Tercentenary of 1916’, *First World War Studies*, 3:1 (2012), p. 25; Edmund King, “‘A Priceless Book to Have out Here’’: Soldiers Reading Shakespeare in the First World War’, *Shakespeare* 10:3 (2014), p. 230.

of British, and in turn, American troops, discussing the cultural transfer of identity through Shakespeare as a character or author. Hendley's study is embedded within scholarship revolving around literary critics predominantly, but nonetheless, he highlights the value of Shakespeare for the historian too.<sup>99</sup>

Shakespeare provides notable monologues and titles that resonate with the British public and his plays were noted for providing a combination of history, humour and tragedy throughout, all of which was easily aligned with wartime humour. Several of his plays connect with aspects of war, and serve as diversion from or justification for it. For example, in *Henry IV*, prince Hal is advised to 'busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels' to distract from other problems.<sup>100</sup> The humour implemented in these plays naturally crosses over with that of cartoons and their gentle social criticism. Cartoonists drew on these features prolifically, and certain characters feature strongly including Hamlet, Othello and the Henrys.

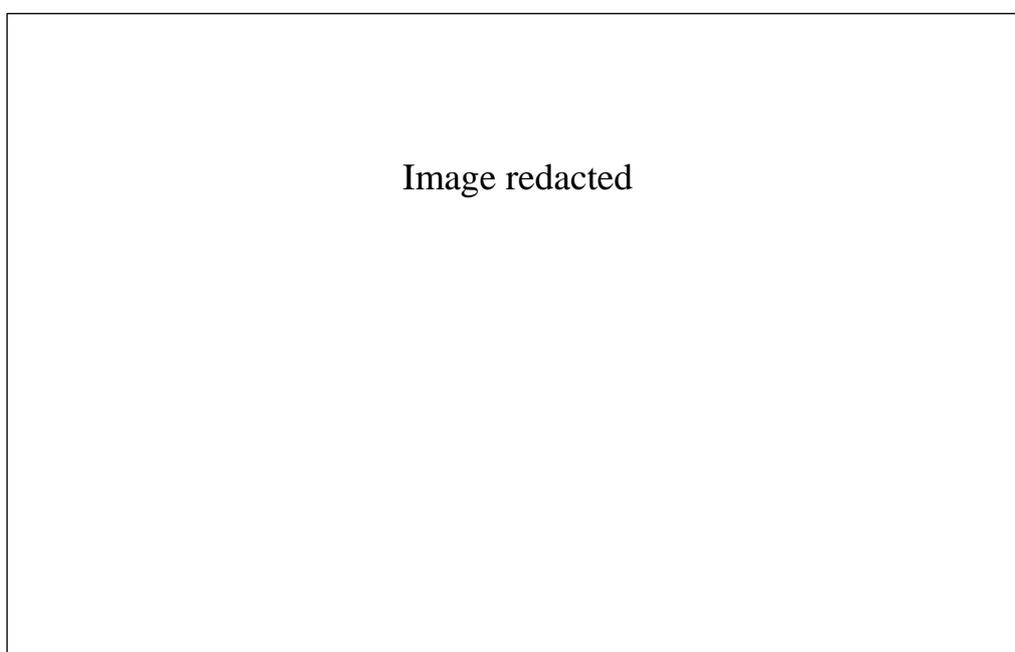
*Hamlet* is a regular feature for wartime cartoonists through links with battle and conflict used to set the atmosphere in Shakespeare's play. In 1917, however, the Kaiser, identified by a broad black moustache, is stood in Shakespearean costume, stroking his chin and looking at a platter of confections in his hands. War is not explicitly mentioned, however, the items on the platter include, margarine, pig food, nitro-glycerine, lard, soap and oil. Beneath the main image are the words 'alas poor Heinrich! I knew him well' (figure 3.12). The implication is, therefore, that Heinrich is the main ingredient in these products. By 1917, suspicions among the British public related to what was described as 'German barbarity', although predominantly this 'barbarism' was seen to be in relation to German tactics and leadership rather than a

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<sup>99</sup> See Hendley, 'Cultural Mobilization'.

<sup>100</sup> William Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part II* (London: Penguin, 2005), act 4, scene 3.

reflection on the entire civilian populace.<sup>101</sup> Even so, barbaric practices could be transposed in the mind. There were also reports in British newspapers of difficulties for the German public in getting basic supplies such as food and soap.<sup>102</sup> These combined with the Bryce report of 1915 that openly discussed German atrocities, helped to reinforce ideas that the German authorities behaved atrociously.<sup>103</sup> As such, these authorities were seen to be capable of stooping to a level that they might utilise anything they could for traditional products when everyday items were unavailable, including the remains of friends.<sup>104</sup>



**(Figure 3.12) Poy, 'If Hamlet had been German', *Evening News*, 1917**

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<sup>101</sup> Horne and Kramer, *German Atrocities*, p. 217.

<sup>102</sup> 'Germany's Food Problem', *Manchester Guardian*, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1916, p. 6; 'German Food Problems', *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1916, p. 3; 'German Food Problems', *Liverpool Daily Post*, 26<sup>th</sup> July 1917, p. 5; 'Scrambling for Food in Germany: Breakdown of Control', *Manchester Guardian*, 29<sup>th</sup> December 1917, p. 6. Also see Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 41-2; Siegfried Sassoon, *War Poems of Siegfried Sassoon* (New York: Dover Publications, 2004), p. 25.

<sup>103</sup> James Bryce, *Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages* (London: HMSO, 1915).

<sup>104</sup> See Trevor Wilson, 'Lord Bryce's Investigation into Alleged German Atrocities in Belgium, 1914-15', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 14:3 (1979), pp. 369-383.

In contradiction to *Hamlet*, *Henry V* is far less prevalent in British cartoon depictions. In the context of the Great War, this is a strange omission as it presents strong links to conflict surrounding the medieval Battle of Agincourt. There are also strong potential links to medieval gallantry and chivalry that inspired so many Victorian ideals before and after the war.<sup>105</sup> *Henry V* inspires a very ‘gung ho’ attitude to war, full of patriotism and enthusiasm that is suited to what Arthur Marwick describes as a jingoistic approach with ‘marked enthusiasm’ exhibited by men in August 1914.<sup>106</sup> That enthusiasm has since proven to be more of a myth fabricated by the press than reality.<sup>107</sup> Even so, it seems strange, that there are not more cartoons depicting military leaders calling soldiers forward for the kingdom and to arms as they march into battle. In 1915, Poy presents David Lloyd George in the place of Lord Wellington during the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars from 1815. This might have been an apt opportunity to call ‘once more unto the breach dear friends’, but instead Lloyd George states, ‘Up, Guards, and at ‘em!’ (figure 3.13); a quotation better known for its reputed use by Arthur Wellesley.<sup>108</sup> There is perhaps the natural problem of who that battle was against to consider in this context, as relating to a prior conflict with current allies may not have been politically sound.

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<sup>105</sup> Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), pp. 79, 168-9; Stefan Goebel, “‘The Spirit of the Crusaders’: Scottish Peculiarities, British Commonalities and European Convergences in the Memorialization of the Great War’, in Gill Plain (ed.), *Myth, Memory and the First World War in Scotland* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2017), forthcoming p. 133.

<sup>106</sup> Marwick, *Deluge*, p. 349.

<sup>107</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 9-11; also see Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

<sup>108</sup> William Shakespeare, *Henry V* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), act 3, scene 1; Paul Boller and John George, *They Never Said It: A Book of Fake Quotes, Misquotes and Misleading Attributions* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1989), p. 130.

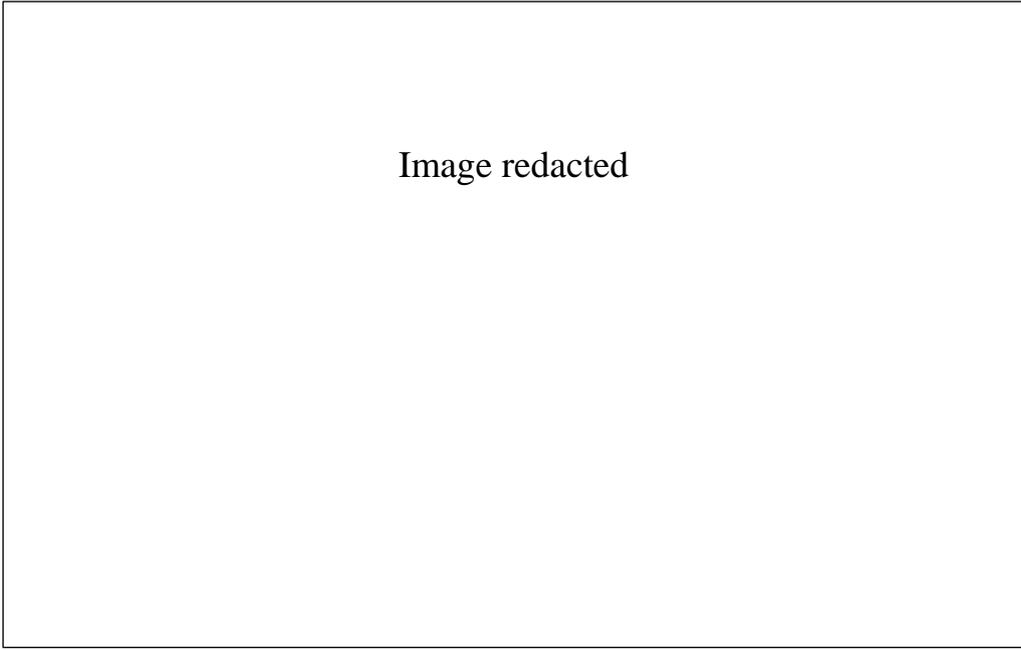


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**(Figure 3.13) Poy, ‘Up, Guards, and at ‘em!’, *Evening News*, 1915**

At the start of the 1914-18 war, it was unnecessary to promote ‘great wars’ in Shakespearean style, as it was, for many, expected to be over by Christmas.<sup>109</sup> Then as the war progressed, potentially theatre managers and cartoonists alike saw *Henry V* to be just that little bit too much. Drama publications such as the *Stage Yearbook*, *Play Pictorials* and *London Stage* at no point speak of *Henry V* being suppressed for particular war-related reasons, but this did not necessarily transfer over to cartoonists as well.<sup>110</sup> Press censorship and theatrical controls were completely separate by this point and were dictated through the Press Bureau and Lord Chamberlain respectively and there is no evidence of any need for them to cross confer.<sup>111</sup>

*Henry V* is made reference to in an alternative context two years later, however, when it is the Kaiser calling his ‘honourable corps of Bolos’ into the fight. In this context,

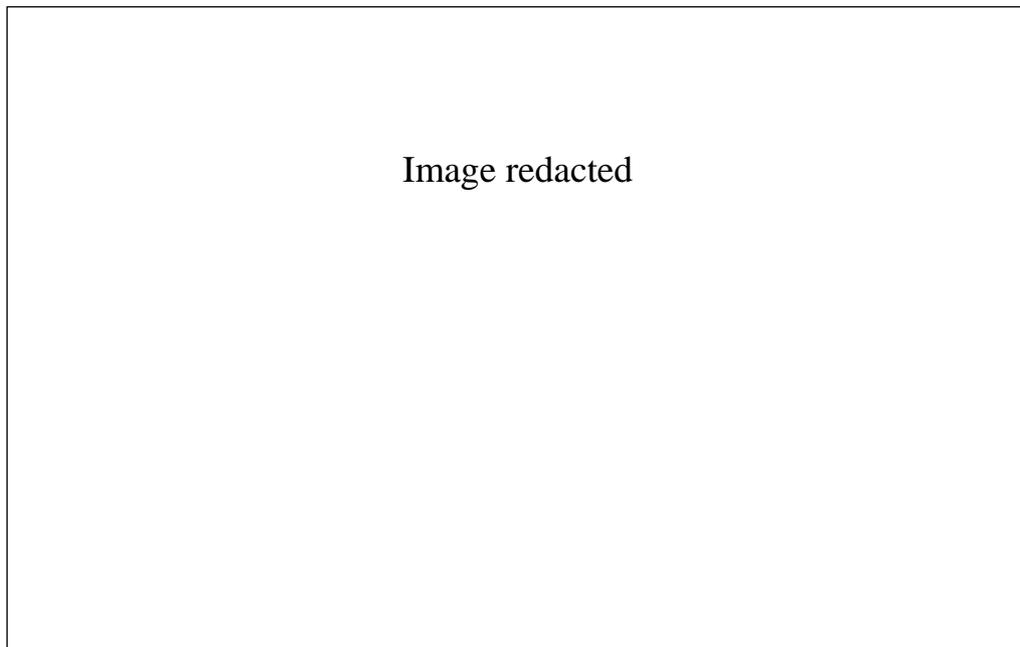
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<sup>109</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 75-113.

<sup>110</sup> See Carson, *Stage Year Book*; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 23-33 (1914-19); Wearing, *London Stage*.

<sup>111</sup> TNA, DEFE 53/1, ‘Admiralty, War Office and Press Committee: Minutes’, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1919;

the troops called forth are those of French spies, or rather one particular spy copied several times, who deceptively work for Germany and the gold they have been paid (figure 3.14).<sup>112</sup> Therefore, the emphasis is altered as it is the Germans being encouraged to attack the Allies, and yet, the forces the Kaiser has to hand are all French Bolos. This serves to explain some of their blank and unwilling expressions as Pasha Bolo was first discovered in 1917 and his actions condemned. American authorities throughout the year were seeking evidence against him, while Bolo himself initially denied all knowledge. Bolo's denials can be seen in this image through the blank expressions, which effectively contrast with the Kaiser's obvious enthusiasm. Therefore, the humour is once again of ridicule to the enemy Kaiser, and mockery of the incongruous inefficiency of enemy spies.



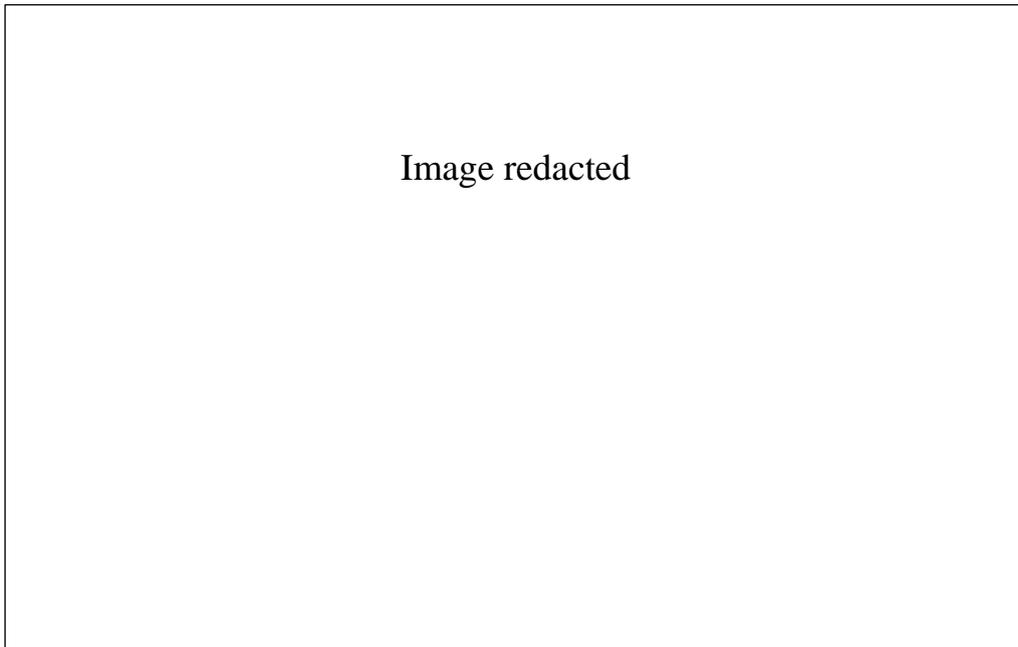
**(Figure 3.14) Poy, 'Once More into the Breach, Dear Friends!', *Daily Mail*,**

**1917**

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<sup>112</sup> 'Bolo's Denials', *Daily Record*, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 3; 'Bolo Revelations', *Western Times*, 9<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 3

Bruce Bairnsfather also played on the use of Shakespearean ideas. As an artist with a strong appreciation for the arts and theatre especially, Shakespeare was an interest that had been encouraged by his parents throughout his childhood. It is then unsurprising that several of his cartoons also utilise features of Shakespearean plays.<sup>113</sup> *Othello* features, as does the irrepressible *Hamlet*, but these are more subtle references to the script rather than directly to characters. Bairnsfather had his own staple characters of soldiers that were common to him from the war, but these characters were not averse to using Shakespearean dialogue or stylings in their discussions. ‘My Dug-Out’ notably offers its own ‘Lay of the Trenches’; a poem constructed in iambic pentameter in a Shakespearean style that surrounds the familiar character of Old Bill (figure 3.15).

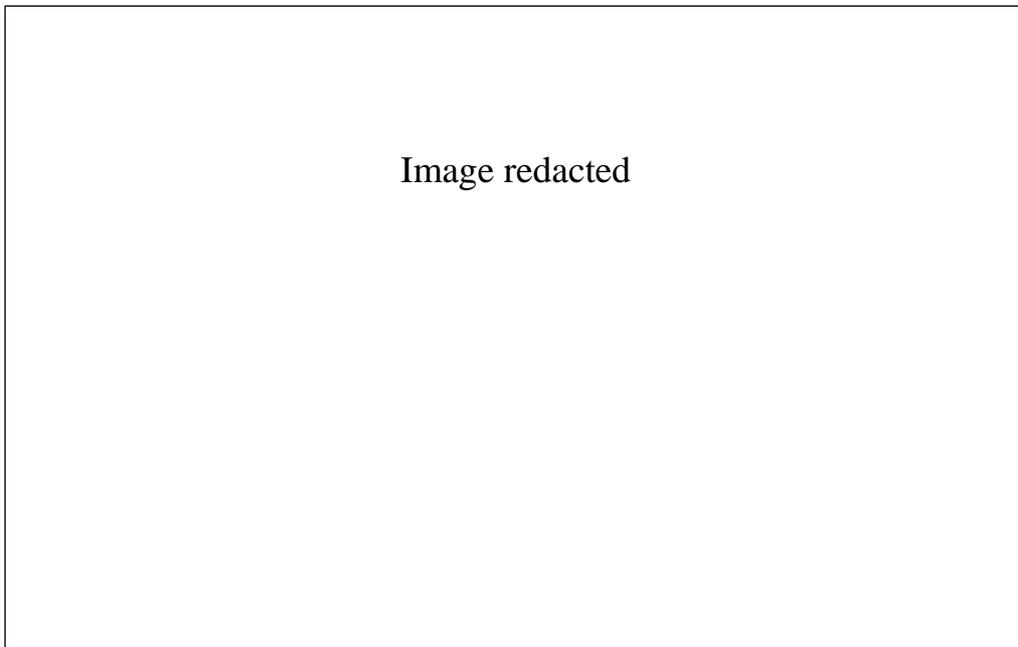


**(Figure 3.15) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘My Dug Out: A Lay of the Trenches’,  
*Fragments from France, 1918***

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<sup>113</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 28-31.

In his latter adolescent years, whilst still at school and then Art College, Bairnsfather would often spend his spare time at the theatre and music hall and these influences appear in his art.<sup>114</sup> Cartoons such as ‘Alas! Poor Herr Von Yorick!’ from July 1916 and ‘The Imminent, Deadly Breach’ both indicate knowledge of Shakespearean plays making reference to *Hamlet* and *Othello* (figures 3.16 and 3.17). Bairnsfather’s cartoons do not indicate a depth of Shakespearean knowledge, but this was not necessary, as the character implications were significant for most of his viewing audience. In his own writings, he continues to speak of the stage, describing battles as shows, demonstrating a greater appreciation for theatrical performance.<sup>115</sup>



**(Figure 3.16) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Alas! Poor Herr Von Yorick!’, *Bystander*,  
July 1916**

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid, pp. 18-19.

<sup>115</sup> Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*, p. 262.

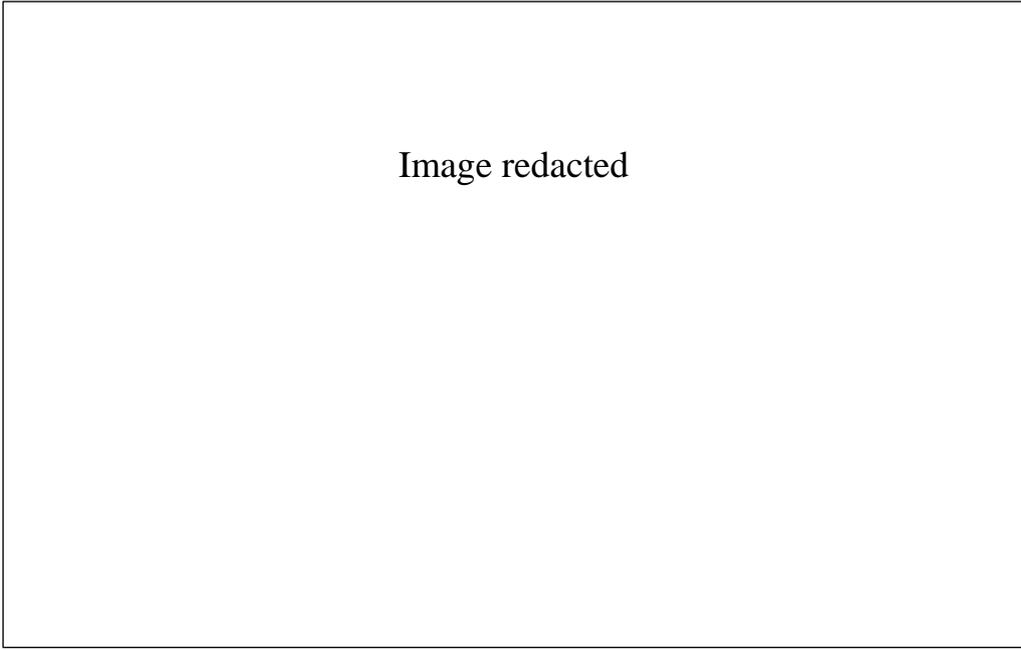


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**(Figure 3.17) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘The Imminent, Deadly Breach’, *Bystander*,  
9<sup>th</sup> August 1916**

Edmund King suggests that works by Shakespeare were important reading for soldiers, and volumes were presented to them with bookplates in 1917. King also reports mentions in diaries and letters that also support an awareness of Shakespeare for soldiers and civilians alike regardless of class or social status.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, Shakespeare was seen as a ‘proletariat hero’ whose works had been translated into local dialects for working men since the 1840s.<sup>117</sup> This information reinforces presumed recognition for Bairnsfather’s soldier audiences. His cartoons that incorporate Shakespearean themes, however, are directed towards creating humour out of those ideas more specifically.

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<sup>116</sup> King, “‘A Priceless Book’”, p. 230.

<sup>117</sup> Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 122-3.

Shakespeare himself is a character for some cartoonists, in one image by Bernard Partridge from *Punch*, he depicts Shakespeare and Martin Luther debating the issues of war and how the Germans have claimed Shakespeare as their own. For this reason, Luther suggests that Shakespeare should consider himself grateful that he is not actually German, unlike Luther who would happily deny it (figure 3.18). The national emphasis is clear through this image, it being created by a British artist and suggesting that the better parts of Britain are things that the Germans wish to commandeer.<sup>118</sup> Meanwhile, natural Germans such as Luther would rather disclaim their heritage. There is less theatrical emphasis or context in this image, they are not on a stage or acting. These are two notable men from history, who realistically have no reason to be discussing the current war, and yet they do. They might even be seen to be ghosts discussing the issues, which would lend them more of a theatrical emphasis in relation to Shakespeare's plays with ghosts in. Regardless of potential interpretations, there were added comments in *The Times* a year later when a French academic chastised German culture for claiming Shakespeare because of his superiority over their own historical authors.<sup>119</sup> Here another layer of potential humour for the cartoon is established through the perception of superiority that the British have over the Germans in this assumed context.

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<sup>118</sup> Steven Attridge, *Nationalism, Imperialism and Identity in Late Victorian Culture Civil and Military Worlds* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 83-4; Hendley, 'Cultural Mobilization', p. 26.

<sup>119</sup> 'The Ideal of France', *The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1916, p. 3

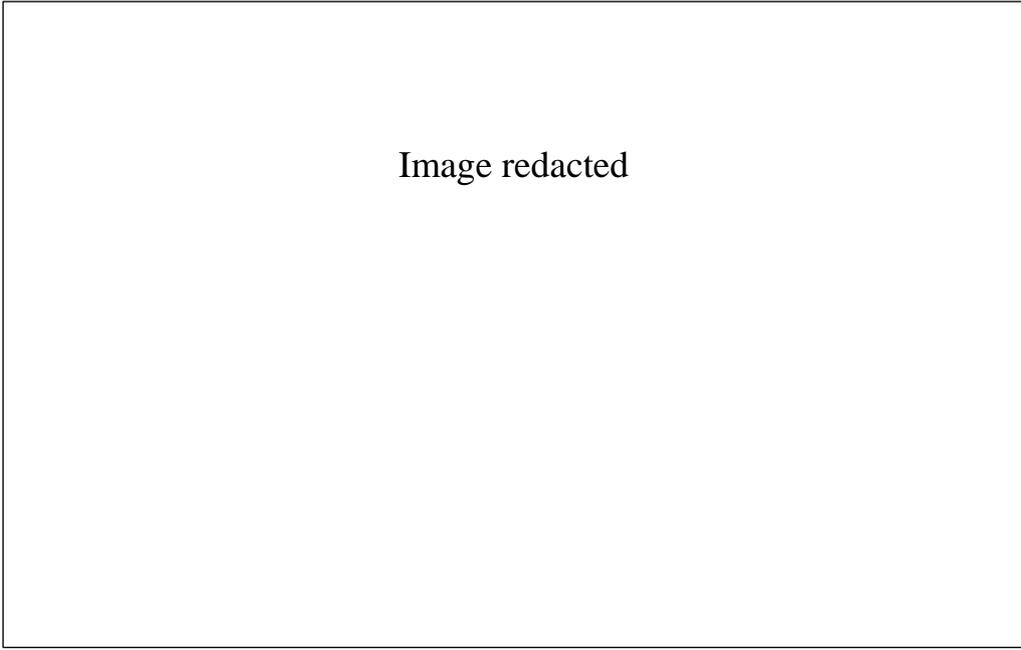


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**(Figure 3.18) Bernard Partridge, ‘The Repudiation’, *Punch*, 16<sup>th</sup> June 1915**

Shakespearean dialogue by the early twentieth century had fully infiltrated society including elements of the working classes.<sup>120</sup> Many passing terms in English held their origins in Shakespeare’s works, and everyone had some awareness of the text and costume stylings so that they could be recognised in cartoon form.<sup>121</sup> It is in this manner that the cartoonist drew on audience recognition to reinforce the humour and awareness of incongruity.<sup>122</sup> It is the reuse of ideas that had already be sold to the public. Keeping to this theme, most cartoonists used characters from the tragedies rather than Shakespeare’s comedy characters in the context of war cartoons. Using a tragic character in a comic position, once again instilled incongruity for the audience.

Bairnsfather provides a further incongruous use of Shakespeare in 1917, with ‘Two Bills’ where it is claimed that this is the only ‘authentic portrait’ of the bard with his

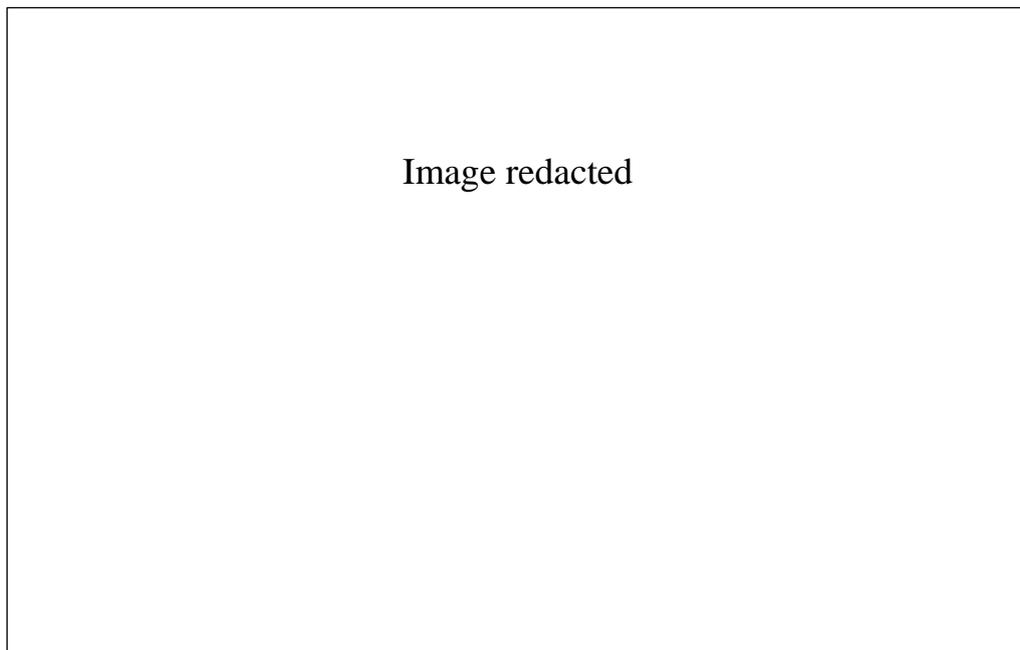
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<sup>120</sup> Hugh Craig, ‘Shakespeare’s Vocabulary: Myth and Reality’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 62:1 (2011), pp. 53-74.

<sup>121</sup> See Rose, *Intellectual Life*, pp. 122-5.

<sup>122</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*.

neighbour. Shakespeare sits relating a sonnet to Old Bill, despite a notable omission of 300 years between their creations (figure 3.19). The incongruity of the humour is created through the disparity in presumed birth dates, and the fact that Old Bill simply did not have one. Shakespeare was merely a character for Bairnsfather to utilise in his cartoons as the artist had notable theatrical experiences since childhood, which included Shakespearean plays.



**(Figure 3.19) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘The Two Bills’, *Bystander Annual*, 1917**

Moving away from Shakespeare in cartoon, there were many other contemporary plays that also featured throughout the war, and the public recognised many of these through the popularity of entertainment generally.<sup>123</sup> One such example is Harry Tate’s ‘Motoring Scene’, which was a popular production across different strata of society. In this scene, Tate is in the process of taking his son back to school when the car breaks down, and unable fix the problem, he humorously creates more problems every time a

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<sup>123</sup> Nicholas Hiley, ‘Ploughboys and Soldiers: The Folk Song and the Gramophone in the British Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918’, *Media History*, 4:1 (1998), p. 67.

passer-by tries to help him. Many theatregoers as well as music hall, vaudeville, variety and cinema attendees would have recognised this, since it was a variable production in its time.<sup>124</sup> Tate wrote ‘Motoring’ in 1906 and started performing it straight away, and then in 1912, it was filmed and shown in cinemas. Its transference across entertainment venues meant that it crossed class divides and would have been seen by the potential cartoon viewing public. The humour within it drew on Victorian ideals of highlighting the audience’s superiority so that they could perceivably correct his issues.<sup>125</sup>

Tate was still performing the ‘Motoring Scene’ when the war began along with a production called ‘GoodBye’ showing in many theatres.<sup>126</sup> Productions such as these and their revisions in cartoon are able to demonstrate continuities across Victorian and Edwardian culture and beyond it. Beyond the war, ‘Harry Tate’ continued to hold public interest when by 1932 his name was accepted to mean a ‘condition of nervous excitement or irritability’. It also became the cockney rhyming slang for ‘being in a state’, and these aspects of language reinforce the impact of the man and his work on society.<sup>127</sup> In newspaper reviews, ‘Motoring’ was commended for its comedy establishing its place in the public common knowledge.<sup>128</sup>

In the cartoons that represent the ‘Motoring Scene’, specific features tend to appear when portrayed by different artists, those being the car and its two occupants. The

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<sup>124</sup> ‘Adverts’, *Era*, 27<sup>th</sup> June 1903, p. 33; ‘Harry Tate Here’, *Variety*, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1906, p. 7; ‘Palace; Twice Nightly’, *Aberdeen Journal*, 11<sup>th</sup> December 1909, p. 1; David Goldie, ‘Tate, Harry (1872-1940)’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OPU 2004).

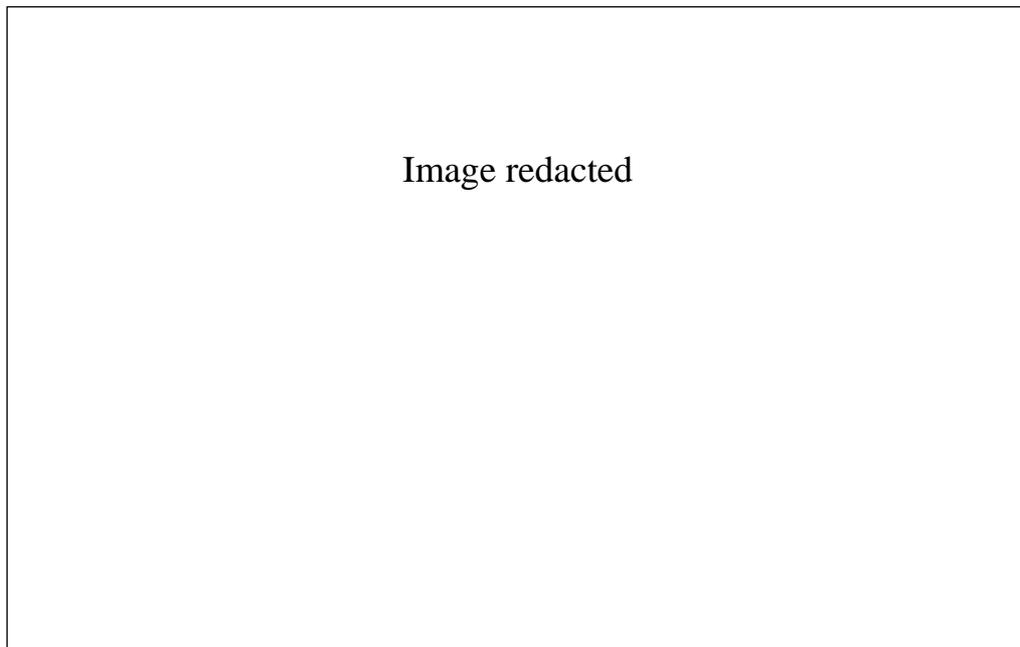
<sup>125</sup> Gray, ‘The Uses of Victorian Laughter’, pp. 146-7.

<sup>126</sup> See advertisements in *Liverpool Echo*, 17<sup>th</sup> February 1915, p. 6; *Era*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1916, p. 24; *Era*, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1916, p. 20; *Manchester Evening News*, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1917, p. 1; *Daily Record*, 13<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 2; *Liverpool Echo*, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1917, p. 1; Carson, *Stage Year Book*, p. xxvi.

<sup>127</sup> See John Ayto and John Simpson (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang* (Oxford: OUP, 2008).

<sup>128</sup> ‘The Theatres’, *Gloucester Citizen*, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1912, p. 3; ‘The Theatres’, *Gloucester Citizen*, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1913, p. 13; ‘Territorial Review’, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7<sup>th</sup> August 1913, p. 3; ‘The Theatres’, *Gloucester Citizen*, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1915, p. 8.

characters in or around the car are often the same regardless of the artist or their style of depiction even though they are not the original occupants. Traditionally during the war, the Kaiser and Crown Prince were supplemented for the original father and son duo and it is the Kaiser who is unable to get the car working again. For Poy, a 'Peace Car' has broken down (figure 3.20), whereas, Jack Walker offers a 'German War Machine' in both his first and sixth volumes of *Special War Cartoons* published in 1914-15 (figures 3.21 and 3.22). The sixth volume significantly exaggerates the extent to which the vehicle is broken down for Walker, where it only requires minor repairs for Poy. Yet with a peace car, perhaps there is less to rectify metaphorically, than with a war machine, also the sight of a thoroughly destroyed and irreparable war machine would have pleased a greater proportion of the British public at this time (figure 3.22).



**(Figure 3.19) Poy, 'Broken down', *Evening News*, 1916**

Settings also alter in small ways determined by the date of publication; Poy shows the Kaiser and son 1000 miles from anywhere, suggesting that by 1916 the war was

not progressing for them, as they might have desired (figure 3.20). alternatively, in mid-1916, there had been several reports in the press concerning 1000 miles of railway being laid, again suggesting that the Kaiser might have moved faster in that manner.<sup>129</sup> For Walker in 1914, in contrast, the sign towards Paris is simply facing the other direction to the car (figure 3.21). The sign in the reverse position was a common trope used by many cartoonists, and particularly in relation to the Kaiser's quest to reach and take over Paris, which cartoonists endlessly suggest he was unable to achieve as he was always going in the wrong direction or was unable to reach it (figure 3.8).<sup>130</sup>

There are aspects of 'metropolitan nostalgia' as discussed by Jay Winter that may be interpreted in this version of the signpost. The capital cities London, Berlin and indeed Paris were places of cultural significance for entertainment and political influence.<sup>131</sup> As such, they were places that became synonymous with the nation to which they belonged. Should the enemy conquer the capital, Paris, it holds a greater significance to the nation overall as Paris is the place that holds the greater nostalgic relevance from pre-war times.<sup>132</sup> Naturally, here humour is implemented in that the Kaiser is going in the wrong direction and, therefore, has no hope of actually achieving his implied goal.

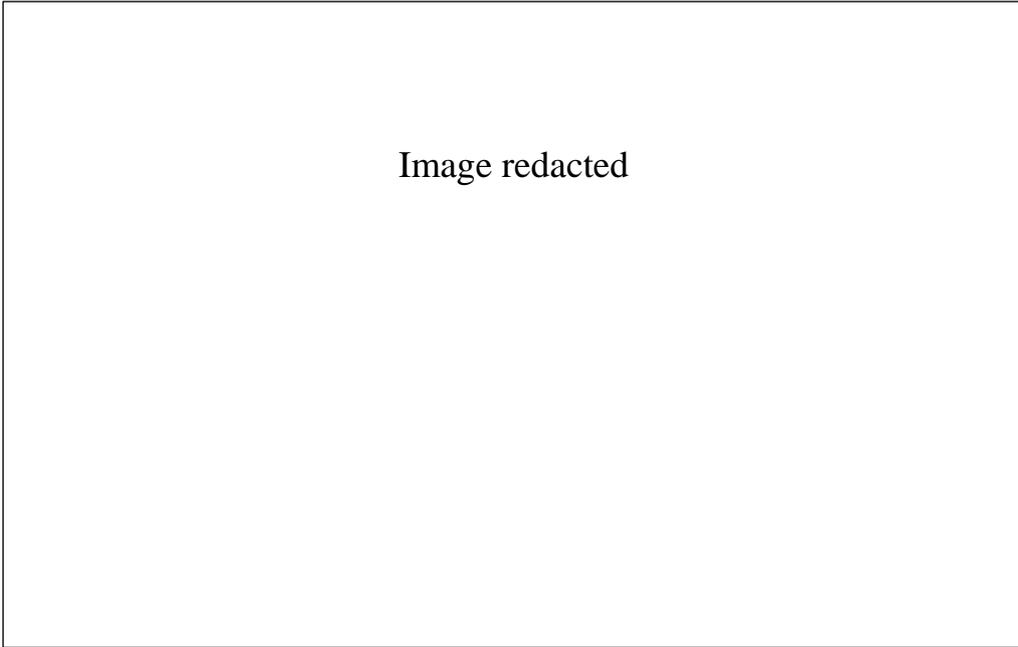
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<sup>129</sup> See '1000 Miles in Corea', *Sheffield Independent*, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1916, p. 6; 'Railways at the Front', *Daily Gazette for Middleburgh*, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1916, p. 4; '1000 Yards of Trench Captured', *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 7<sup>th</sup> July 1916, p. 6.

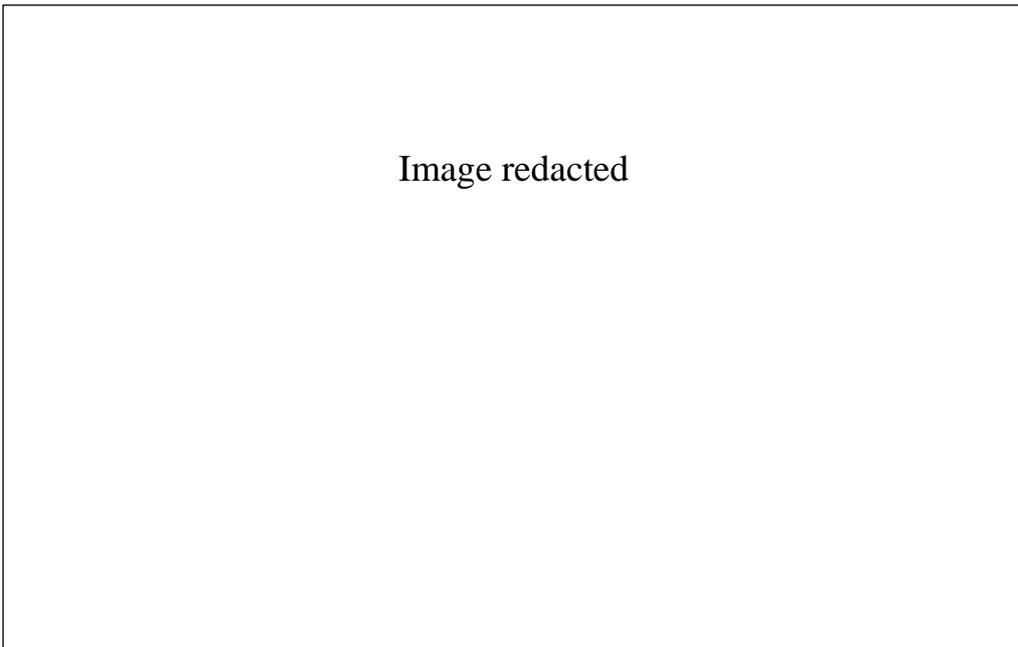
<sup>130</sup> Walker, 'The Unexpected', *Special War Cartoons* (London: The Daily Graphic, 1914); 'A Lion in the Path', *Special War Cartoons*, 3 (London: The Daily Graphic, 1914); Alick P. E. Ritchie, 'Ostend is so Bracing', *London Mail*, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1914, cover; Leonard Raven-Hill, 'According to Plan', *Punch*, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1918.

<sup>131</sup> Jon Lawrence, 'Public Space, Political Space', in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p. 280.

<sup>132</sup> Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), pp. 10-19.



**(Figure 3.21) Jack Walker, 'The Unexpected', *Special War Cartoons*, 1914**



**(Figure 3.22) Jack Walker, 'Bricks', *Special War Cartoons*, 1914**

Tate's productions were depicted in cartoons, but they had far greater influence on soldiers as has been noted by Jan Rüger. For some soldiers the entire British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was affectionately known as 'Harry Tate's Army', which was used in reference to the productions that had become so renowned further reinforcing the sense of Edwardian continuity for this styling of humour and entertainment.<sup>133</sup> There can be a negative or comedic slant to describing the army as Harry Tate's as his car religiously broke down, and was not seen to be moving anywhere, but then again, neither was the army on land most of the time. The question also needs to be considered of why the Kaiser specifically is depicted in this car and is not part of the battle in cartoons such as this. The British depiction of the Kaiser and his son suggests confused priorities on the German side. Effectively, the Kaiser and Crown Prince are misplaced through these cartoons, a decision that has purposely been made by the cartoonists to reduce the potential impact that the enemy could have on the British forces.

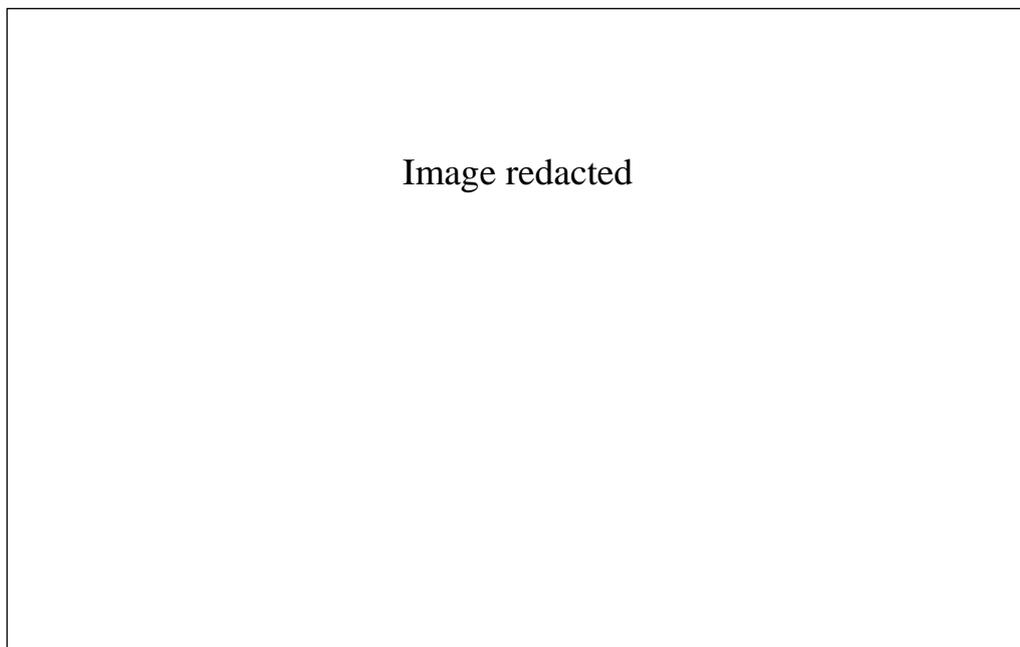
By being absent from the battle, ridicule is placed upon both German characters as it is implied that although their priorities ought to be alongside their countrymen fighting, they are clearly not. There had been worries about the Kaiser and his 'grandiose plans', although these related more closely to a naval fleet rather than land transportation. Even so it all came as part of the idea of there being a 'German war machine' for which worries are negated in these cartoons (figures 3.21 and 3.22).<sup>134</sup> Images of the German royals for British artists are variable before the war in the mid to later nineteenth century. There was reasonable apathy towards the Kaiser; he was

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<sup>133</sup> Rüger, 'Entertainments', pp. 119-20.

<sup>134</sup> For more details, see Daniel Pick, *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the modern Age* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale university Press, 1993), pp. 116-7.

foreign thereby an ‘outsider’ and potential joke in cartoon.<sup>135</sup> Equally, he was related to Queen Victoria, making him family.<sup>136</sup> Nonetheless, there was a perception of the Kaiser’s involvement in terms of planning and investigation along with a head for logistics in relation to war, but a certain amount of distance is still involved with this.<sup>137</sup> His distance from his troops is a point further reinforced in Haselden’s ‘The Willies to the Rescue’, where the pair are seen running back and forth between the eastern and western fronts, until they collide in the middle where no fighting is actually happening (figure 3.23).



**(Figure 3.23) William Haselden, ‘The Willies to the Rescue’, *The Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie during the First 6 Months of the Great War*, 1915**

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<sup>135</sup> See Elliott, *Us and Them*.

<sup>136</sup> Scully, *British Images of Germany*, p. 1

<sup>137</sup> John Röhl, *The Kaiser and his Court: Wilhelm II and the Government of Germany* (Cambridge: CUP, 1994), pp. 167-72.

Contemporary theatrical review also developed into cartoon through the Bing Boys, a play produced at the Alhambra Theatre in 1916. A moderate theatre inspired by Spanish circus influences the Alhambra had been rebuilt several times by 1912 and had a name for music hall entertainments that were popular across the classes.<sup>138</sup> ‘The Bing Boys’ is a story about two brothers, Lucifer and Oliver played by George Robey and Alfred Lester respectively. The first is more vibrant while the second is retiring with a ‘morbidly pensive train of thought’. They go about doing things in life in completely different ways, yet continue to assist one another.<sup>139</sup> The boys go to London leaving behind a broken-hearted Emma who later recovers and follows them where she marries a duke, and becomes an actress. With various complications, and an ‘immense amount of comedy’, this popular play, had a second version created in 1918 that also showed at the Alhambra and continued the theme and story of the brothers.<sup>140</sup> As can be seen by the second production and through the volume of theatre attendees and production showings, the public reception of these plays was impressive.<sup>141</sup>

Insights to contemporary society may be read throughout the play. The boys leave home for London, rather than war, but even so, Lucifer leaves a broken-hearted woman as so many enlisted soldiers did. His enthusiasm to depart and try something new reflects certain elements of society who enlisted for the sake of adventure. While in contrast, Oliver’s efforts suggest a follower who trails after this brother, but at the same time, he is willing to help when Lucifer needs to sing in order to win Emma back from the Duke. Such assistance would have resonated with soldiers who went to support

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<sup>138</sup> See Baker, *British Music Hall*.

<sup>139</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 28 (1916), p. 50

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 28, 32 (1916 and 1918).

<sup>141</sup> ‘The Wounded and the Bing Boys’, *Daily Mirror*, 13<sup>th</sup> July 1916; ‘Alhambra Futures’, *Era*, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1916, p. 14; ‘At the Alhambra’, *Era*, 6<sup>th</sup> June 1917, p. 12.

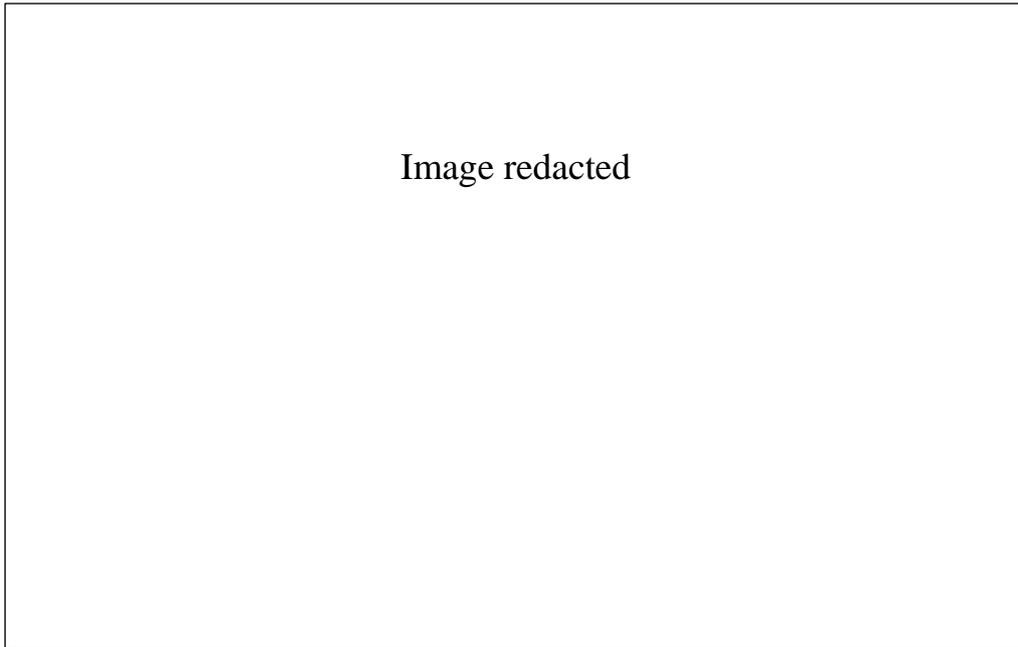
friends and colleagues, particularly in ‘pals’ brigades’ that are so well documented since the war.<sup>142</sup>

In light of these plays and potentially as a reflection on their reception, a new cartoon appeared in 1917, which links onto the character names (figure 3.24). These Byng boys are dressed in military uniform, and the spelling of their name is slightly altered, but the cartoon links to the original play with the title written on the paper that the German soldier holds: ‘The Byng Boys are here’. The second 1918 play, has less to do with the cartoon, but by then in reviews it is noted that Oliver is absent and has gone the way of so many others and is most likely ‘pushing up daisies in Flanders’.<sup>143</sup> This passing comment is one that would hold significance for the audience and would engender understanding along with contemporary pathos for the situation.

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<sup>142</sup> See Peter Simpkins, *Kitchener’s Army: The Raising of the New Armies, 1914-1916* (Manchester and New York: MUP, 1988), pp. 79, 82-3; Todman, *Myth and Memory*, p. 46; Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>143</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 32 (1918), p. 34.



**(Figure 3.24) Poy, 'Fritz's Letter Home', *Evening News*, 1917**

In this cartoon there is a stronger military element added than in the plays themselves even though there remains two soldiers visible, presumably the brothers. These soldiers are not designed to represent the performers Robey and Lester. Their faces are more mature, and hold an element of Americanised jovial stereotyping with rounded features and happy grins. Visually, humour is created through the Allied soldiers seated on a German who is writing a letter to inform potential senior politicians at home that 'der Byng boys are here'. In this action, he is crushed and unable to send his letter as one soldier sits on his head and the other on his knees. All of this is located on a moderately elevated 'Hindenburg Line' beneath them and in the background there are explosions, situating the whole within the war environment (figure 3.24).

A note of dedication for Sir Julian Byng accompanying the cartoon answers the question of the name, and the military emphasis in the cartoon where his 'gallant forces' are also commended. In 1917, General Byng was a Canadian commander who

had success at Arras with his troops on Vimy Ridge.<sup>144</sup> The crossover of ideas in the cartoon between the play and the General opened the joke up to deeper interpretation. Both senses of Bing and Byng by this point would be common knowledge to the viewing public of the *Daily Mail* and *Evening News*, where this image was published. The boys could just as easily be the theatrical brothers, or the General's troops. Furthermore, highlighting the Hindenburg Line would serve to offer recognition to audiences at home for the location or nature of Byng's successes. The Canadian's performance at Vimy may have been equated with the brother's antics in getting the girl in the play. For the brothers, one helps the other with naïve honesty to get the girl, while the Canadian allies assist the British in winning the war.

Each individual artist uses theatrical stimuli in cartoons in his own way; nonetheless, they fall into two categories, those that are true to the original performance in some way and those that adapt it. The second of these is naturally more common in cartoons. Alteration of ideas can revolve around changing the persona of specific characters into others from a different context as we have seen in the examples of *Hamlet* and many situations where the Kaiser has taken on a variety of different roles. Alternatively, the setting may be changed, or a character transposed into a completely different situation such as that of Old Bill with Shakespeare. Often this incongruity develops laughter in the viewing audience. Recognition of theatrical ideas expressed and adapted is aided by the incongruity of persona or position, which do not fit with the traditional concept. In this manner, the audience is able to complete the image with reference to their own theatrical or cartoon knowledge and the memories they might evoke.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> 'General Byng', *Daily Record*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1917, p. 3; E. K. G. Sixsmith, *British Generalship in the Twentieth Century* (London: Arms and Armour, 1970), pp. 100-1; Strachan, *First World War*, p. 289.

<sup>145</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*, p. 2.

### Cartoons into Theatre

Having addressed how cartoons take ideas from stage productions, the reverse transition from the page to the stage must follow. Cartoons have been ‘stepping off the page’ since the 1880s with ‘Lightening Cartoon’ acts, in theatres across Britain, France and America, and these are believed to have been part of the establishing features of later animated cartoons. ‘Lightening Cartoonists’ made their on stage productions out of drawing.<sup>146</sup> That is to say, they sketched at speed in front of a live audience, and although this had been happening for some time, the term is only realised from 1880 onwards.<sup>147</sup> During the war and after, many cartoonists performed like this, and especially Bairnsfather who became famous for his ‘chalk and talk’ productions post-war that drew in vast crowds, particularly at charity events.<sup>148</sup> The performance of others was filmed including Lancelot Speed’s popular patriotic *Bully Boy* series.<sup>149</sup> This style of performance can also be seen to represent the initial transitions from cartoons into theatrical productions. As Jacky Bratton suggests, the crossed genres of cartoon and theatre scripts made ‘connections between all kinds of theatre texts... and their users’ beyond what might be initially identified.<sup>150</sup> Cartoonists had already transported their products across other genres of material from advertisements to playing cards building on recollection for product consumers.<sup>151</sup> The theatre in its

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<sup>146</sup> ‘Advertisements’, *Era*, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1877, p. 10; ‘Advertisements’, *Era*, 13<sup>th</sup> April 1879, p. 11.

<sup>147</sup> Cook, ‘The Lightening Cartoon’, p. 238.

<sup>148</sup> See for example ‘Bruce’s “Chalk Talk”’, *Leeds Mercury*, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1923, p. 5; Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole*, pp. 69-70, 161-70.

<sup>149</sup> See Barbara Tapa Lupack and Alan Lupack, *Illustrating Camelot* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2008), pp. 166-80; Williams, *British Theatre in the Great War*, p. 227.

<sup>150</sup> Jacky Bratton, *New Readings in Theatre History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), p. 37.

<sup>151</sup> IWM, EPH 4378, Chas Goodhall & Son, ‘British Bystander Playing Cards’, [1915-18], n.d.; IWM, PST 13690, Baxter and White and Co, Finsbury, ‘Decca Gramophone Advertisement’, 1914; IWM, PST 13691, Unknown Artist, ‘Decca Gramophone Advertisement’, 1914; Aveil Roshwald and Richard Stites (eds.), *European Culture in the Great War: The Arts, Entertainment and Propaganda, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 333; Hiley, ‘Ploughboys and Soldiers’, pp. 61-76.

many guises was also consistently transformed into cartoon, and having established the extent to which theatre was transformed, the reverse can also be seen, and in certain situations such as ‘The Better ‘Ole’, cartoons became plays and parodies in their own right.

There are fewer examples of theatre being made out of cartoons. Nonetheless, one cartoon that did develop in this manner is that of Captain Bruce Bairnsfather’s ‘The Better ‘Ole’. This particular cartoon is a prime example of how ideas were able to transform across the genres of interest expressed by the artist himself. The original image was published by the *Bystander* in November 1915 and was later developed by Bairnsfather and Arthur Elliot first into a play in 1917 and then later a film starring Sydney Chaplin in 1926.<sup>152</sup> As a case study, ‘The Better ‘Ole’ is particularly interesting for exploring comparisons between static and performative visual humour during the war. There is evidence of development and continuity from the original. Equally, consultation of the contemporary reception of both products aids in building clarity when understanding the lasting impact of such work.

‘The Better ‘Ole’ is one of the best known cartoons from the war and certainly one of the most easily recognised following its consistent replication post-war.<sup>153</sup> Two slightly bedraggled soldiers are seated inside a shell hole on the open plains of battle, and these soldiers could represent anyone that had gone to fight the war (figure 3.25). A rifle lies on the floor before the men and they are surrounded by explosions in the air, represented by clouds and lines of impact, all of which is accompanied by the immortal line: ‘Well if you knows of a better ‘ole, go to it!’ These are the words spoken

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<sup>152</sup> This refers to the American version, which still exists on DVD, there was also a British version in 1918, but this is no longer available, and most details about it have been lost other than the cast names and dates via the BFI, *The Better ‘Ole, Or, The Romance of Old Bill* (1918) < <http://www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b6a5c5857> > [accessed from January 2016].

<sup>153</sup> For details of ‘The Better ‘Ole’ replicated in different ways, see chapter 5.

between the soldiers. Visually the danger of their position is clear; nonetheless, their faces express general annoyance rather than absolute despair, which might have been assumed of the situation.

Most in 1914-18 were not professional, but civilian soldiers doing their bit, and so the visual comparison for the public was strong.<sup>154</sup> Some later authorities have suggested that the man on the right looking grumpy is Old Bill, a regular character for Bairnsfather, but this is not expressly stipulated by the artist and may simply be hindsight.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, the text that goes with it is reminiscent of the humour and attitudes of Old Bill and indeed Bairnsfather himself through other cartoons. They accept their situation as much as they might grumble about it; a situation for which British soldiers became famous, even though little could be done to improve it.<sup>156</sup> Furthermore, there is the insinuation that the bombs are creating new holes. None of which would have been safe, or necessarily 'better' than the position they are already in, but the incongruous irony of suggesting that a better hole might be found in that situation is where the joke is created.

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<sup>154</sup> Samuel Lynn Hynes, *A Soldier's Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War* (London: Pimlico, 1998), p. 31.

<sup>155</sup> See Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 51-3.

<sup>156</sup> Jane Chapman and Dan Ellin, 'Dominion Cartoon Satire as Trench Culture Narratives: Complaints, Endurance and Stoicism', *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 103:2 (2014), p. 188; Robin Neillands, *The Old Contemptibles: The British Expeditionary Force, 1914* (London: John Murray, 2005).

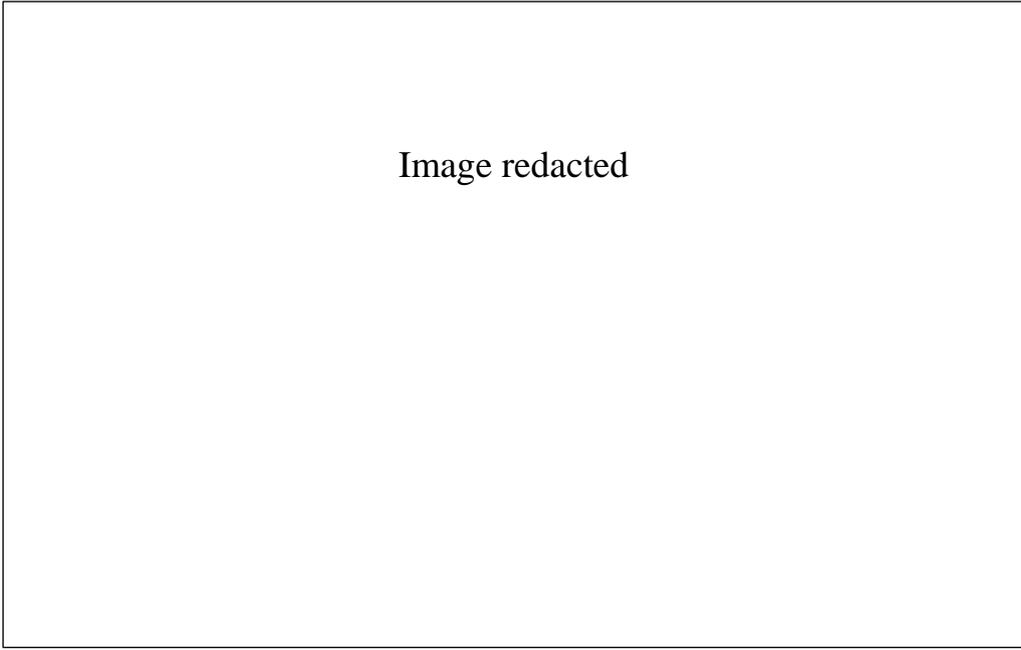


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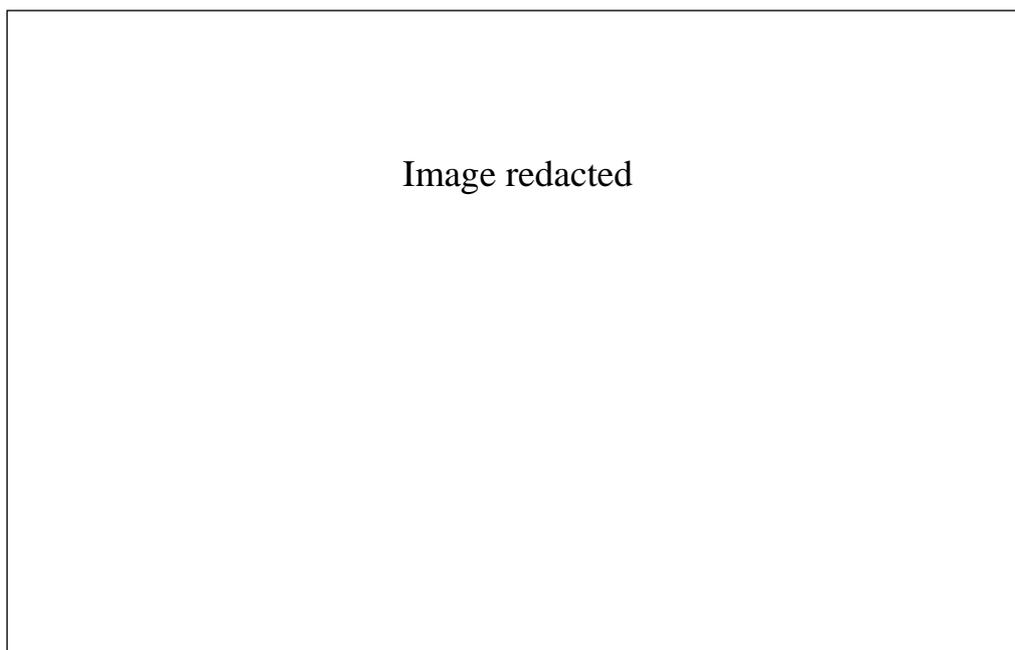
**(Figure 3.25) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘One of Our Minor Wars’, *Bystander*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1915**

Such sardonic humour is commonplace in the trench journals and other military sources during the war.<sup>157</sup> It is also a particularly regular feature of Bairnsfather’s work too, perhaps reflecting more directly on his personal war experiences. His first submission to the *Bystander* in January 1915 offers several soldiers looking out of the safety of their dugout and commenting ‘where did that one go to?’ (figure 3.26). This was a representation of a real event for Bairnsfather when he and a group of soldiers returned to the supposed safety of a barn only to have one of the doors blown away by shellfire. Anecdotal reports suggest all of the men questioned, where did that one go?<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Martin Taylor, ‘The Open Exhaust and Some Other Trench Journals of the First World War’, *Imperial War Museum Review* (1990), pp. 18-27; Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*. For more details of this humour, see chapter 4.

<sup>158</sup> Event reported in Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole*, p. 43.



**(Figure 3.26) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Where Did That One Go To?’, *Bystander*,  
January 1915**

For many on the home front there was a perception of soldiers having ‘cultural authority’ as they were the people in battles witnessing it first-hand. The press and literature had, as Samuel Hynes suggests, shaped public ‘ideas of reality’ about soldiers, but further truth could still be garnered from the originals themselves.<sup>159</sup> On this basis, by locating soldiers within the cartoon, there is the automatic association for those viewing the image that they were genuinely there, and that the environment in which they are placed is real.<sup>160</sup> Further to this, Bairnsfather was a soldier himself, and producing this image, he added to the cultural authority that the public assumed. It was understood that he had served and that these images must, therefore, be a reflection of his time in service.<sup>161</sup> In the foreword to *Bullets and Billets*, Bairnsfather comments

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<sup>159</sup> Hynes, *A Soldier’s Tale*, p. 50.

<sup>160</sup> See Burke, *Eyewitnessing*; Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 37.

<sup>161</sup> ‘Artists and the War’, *The Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1916.

that he has ‘made a record of [his] times out there, in the way that they appeared’ to him. There is no claim that he has seen things in a particular way or that he had any more authority than any other soldier did, merely that he recorded things as he saw them, yet this would appear as a statement of authority to the civilian at home.<sup>162</sup>

After Bairnsfather’s first instalment in the *Bystander*, the newspaper received letters and requests for further material from the same artist. The newspaper then wrote to Bairnsfather in France with a request for more sketches and sent with it a cheque for £2 appropriating his services. There is apparently no awareness in Bairnsfather’s notebooks, or in the recollections or diaries of his compatriots in war that he anticipated such a response from the *Bystander*.<sup>163</sup> Ironically, the story behind this cartoon specifically was that he had not thought particularly much of it. The image was created at speed with little thought, and was published on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1915 by the *Bystander* as part of their Christmas edition, a publication that sold out completely.<sup>164</sup> The consistent requests continued over the next few years, making Bairnsfather a popular attraction at charity events where he would sell his cartoons and later following his discharge, he became a lecturer and gave talks about them that were just as popular as his originals.<sup>165</sup> This feature of his life corresponds with the initial movement from the page to the stage through ‘Lightening Cartoons’ mentioned above.

Interest in images from *Fragments from France*, one of the re-publication series of originals from the *Bystander*, developed. So much so, that ‘cartoons from the field of battle’ grew in popularity.<sup>166</sup> Through these, and particularly the 1915 ‘Minor Wars’

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<sup>162</sup> Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*, foreword.

<sup>163</sup> See Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 43-5; Hiley, “A New and Vital Moral Factor”, p. 163.

<sup>164</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 51-3.

<sup>165</sup> See *ibid*, p. 70.

<sup>166</sup> Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*, p. 13; also see Hiley, “A New and Vital Moral Factor”, pp. 162-6.

image, Bairnsfather became a recognised artist, whose name and image were both published in the *Bystander* alongside his cartoons. Further to his images, he then went on to take the concept of ‘The Better ‘Ole’ further and reproduced it as a play with Arthur Elliot in 1917. This production followed on from the ‘Johnson ‘ole’ that was part of review performances earlier in the war.<sup>167</sup> Despite the new play taking its name from the cartoon’s caption, little else in it directly relates to that specific image. That said, however, there are clear links made throughout the play to other elements of Bairnsfather’s *Fragments*, where sections of the script relate to other cartoons.

There are, for instance, mentions of ‘leave’ being a figment of the soldier’s imagination in the play and references to this are made in cartoons and smaller sketches throughout Bairnsfather’s wartime career. In addition, one complete chapter in *Bullet’s and Billets* illustrates the difficulties surrounding getting leave and develops the soldier’s worries about it further.<sup>168</sup> These images are varied in the way that they speak of leave from service. Some simply depict the soldier already on leave holding a sweetheart. There is little added humour here, although irony is implied for other soldiers who know that ‘Fred’ will not get much time (figure 3.27).

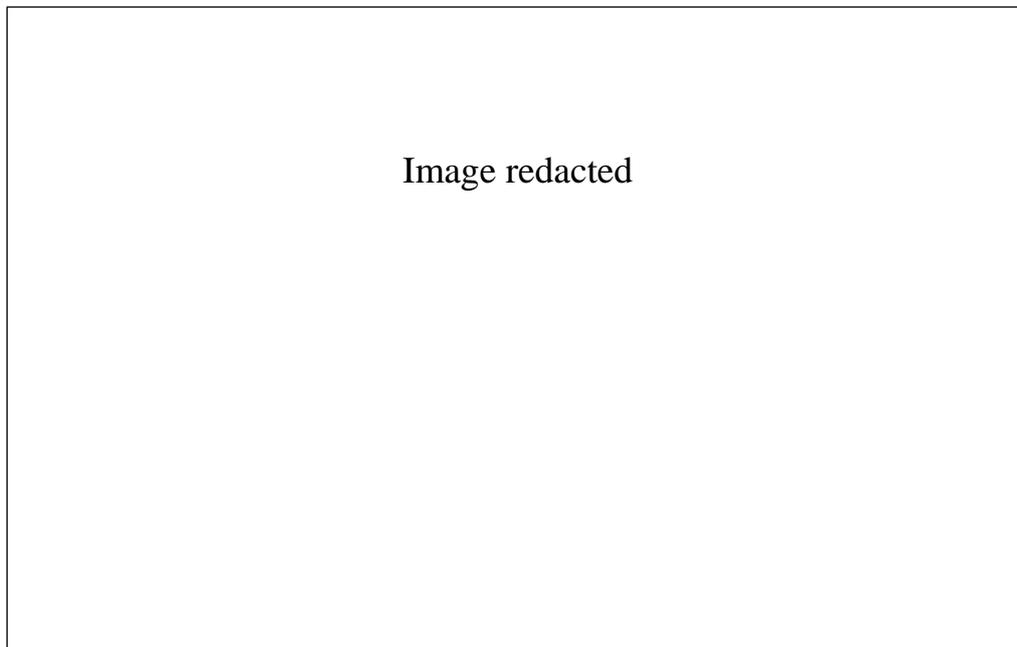
Some images play more upon the visual act of the soldier jumping for joy at receiving a leave of absence (figure 3.28), while others apply a more complex layering to the joke about the leave train and the aging of the soldier upon that train before he actually makes it home (figure 3.29). These all combine with what has become a growing interest in the historiography of wartime leave as addressed by Helen McCartney and others in the *Cambridge History of the First World War*. Although much of this

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<sup>167</sup> See ‘Humourist of the War’, *Tamworth Herald*, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1916, p. 8; ‘Variety Gossip’, *Era*, 9<sup>th</sup> August 1916, p. 12; Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 44.

<sup>168</sup> Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*, chapter XIX.

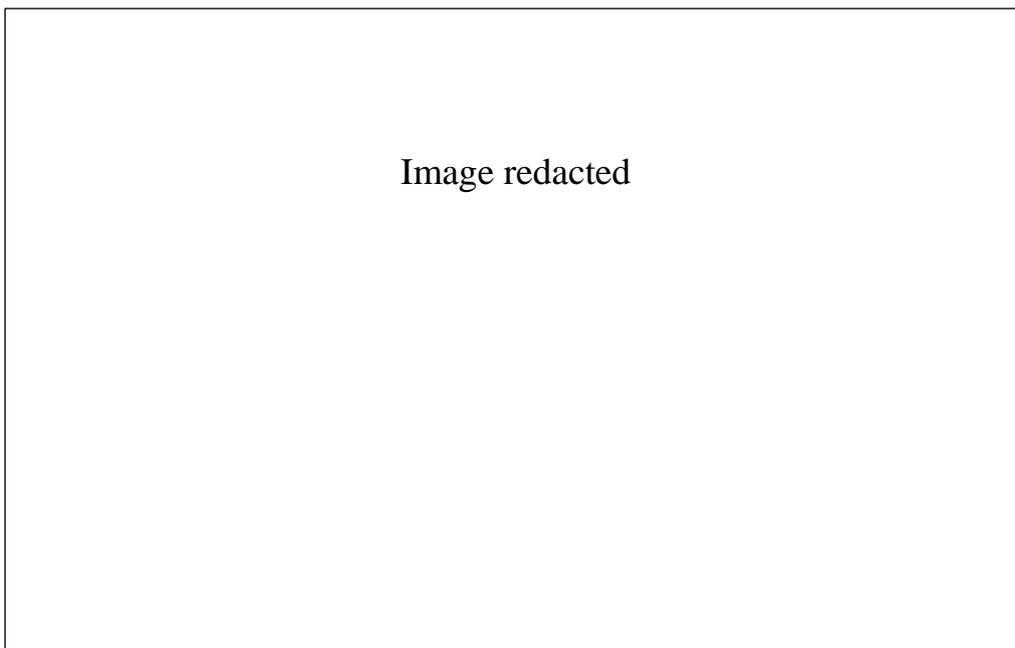
discussion focuses on the problems of ‘overstaying leave’, it remains clear that it was something vastly desired by men in combat.<sup>169</sup>



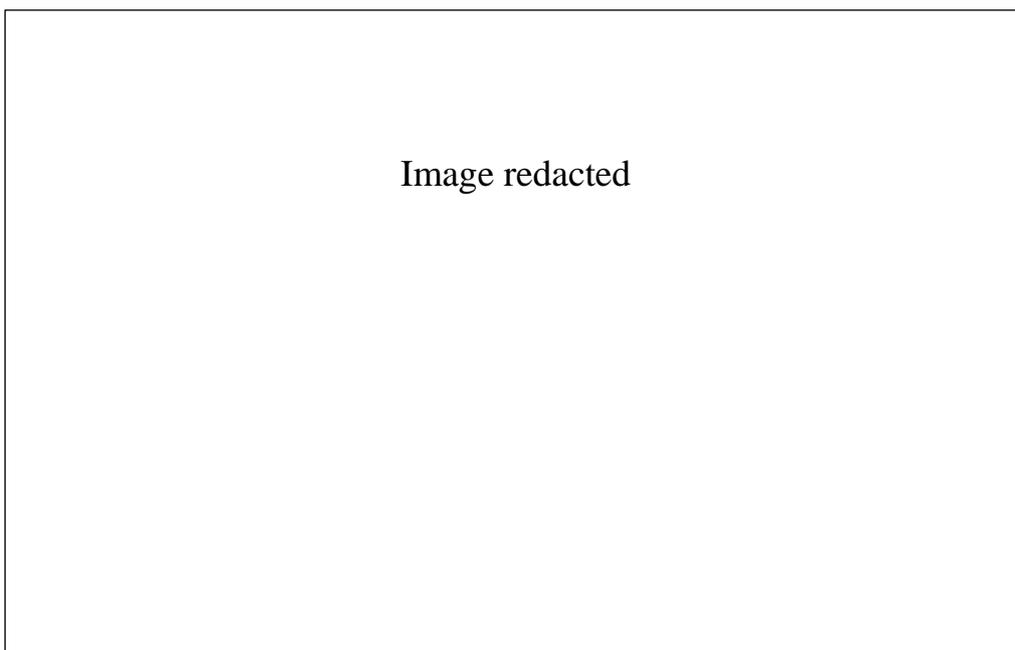
**(Figure 3.27) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Leave’, *More Fragments from France*, 1917**

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<sup>169</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 90-102; Alexander Watson, ‘Morale’, in Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), p. 180



**(Figure 3.28) Bruce Bairnsfather, 'Leave', *Bullets and Billets*, 1916**



**(Figure 3.29) Bruce Bairnsfather, 'That Leave Train', *Bystander*, 31<sup>st</sup> January**

**1917**

Additional illustrations from *Fragments* that feature in the play include two soldiers discussing the length of their enlistment with the army. At the start of splinter three, the first soldier asks ‘How long are you up for, Fred?’ to which the second responds ‘Seven years’, ‘Lucky Devil’ says the first ‘I’m duration!’ This little sketch is used within the play as merely a passing remark, but it was certainly one that the audience who had seen Bairnsfather’s cartoons and particularly ‘Nobbled’ would have been able to recognise (figure 3.30). There are subtle alterations between ‘Nobbled’ and the script, but these are minor, in the cartoon the person being asked about how long is Bill and not an anonymous Fred, but even so the implications remain the same. The potential anonymization suggests that Bill was too important a part of the play to have been participating in this opening dialogue, and if it had been him, it may have distracted from the play overall. Visiting soldiers or those on leave would have understood the joke as well since regular soldiers signed up for specific time periods of on average six years, whereas, once the war began many signed up without an end date stipulated.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> See Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 291-3; Marwick, *Deluge*, p. 309.

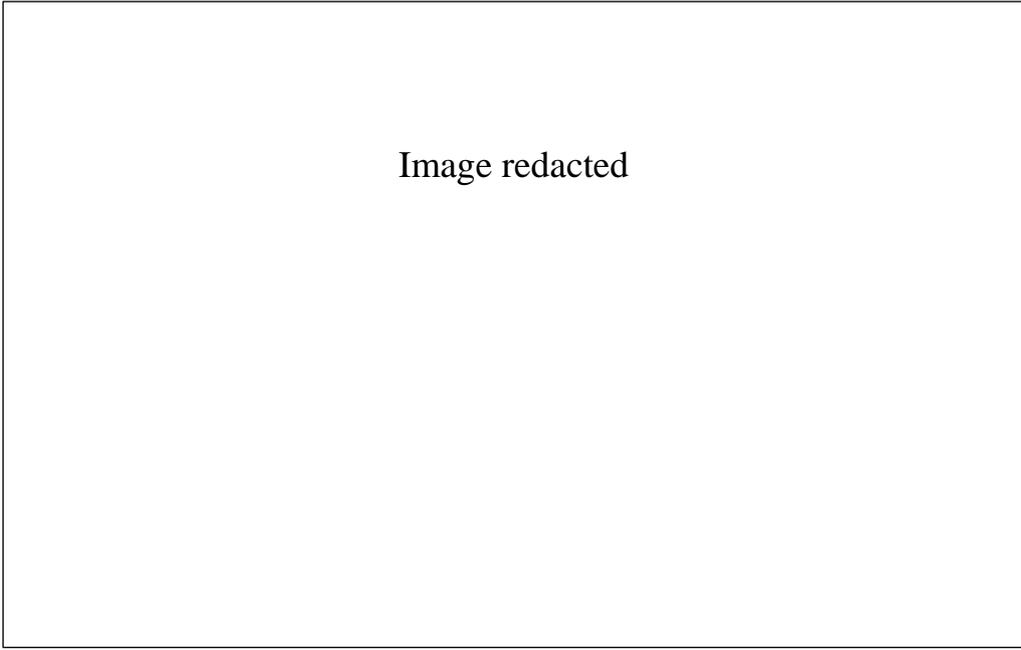


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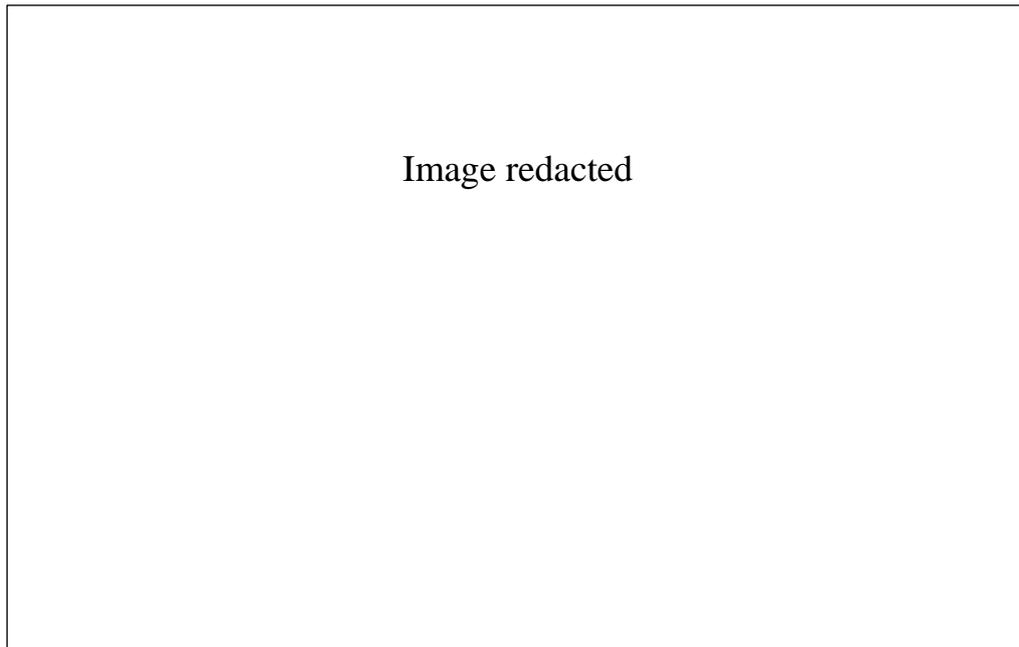
**(Figure 3.30) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Nobbled’, *More Fragments from France*,  
1917**

Other cartoons are used at different points in the play. An entire song is created out of the problem of plum and apple jam as depicted through Old Bill’s cover of the *Bystander* from September 1915. This little ditty is revisited at various stages in the second half of the play helping to reinforce the point that the average soldier regularly received apple and plum while ‘the A.S.C. gets strawberry jam and rations of rum’.<sup>171</sup> In the original ‘Eternal Question’ Old Bill is stood with a chunk of bread dipped into a pot of jam, asking ‘when the ‘ell is it goin’ to be strawberry?’ (figure 3.31). Old Bill is allegory for all genuine soldiers, relating problems suffered on the front line. Even so, there is no direct complaint about officers, merely irreverent grumbles about their jam consumption, which reinforces a strength of relationship between men and officers

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<sup>171</sup> Bruce Bairnsfather and Arthur Elliot, *The Better ‘Ole: A Fragment From France in Two Explosions and Seven Splinters and a Short Gas Attack* (London: Strand, 1917), Explosion II.

as suggested by Alexander Watson.<sup>172</sup> This particular cartoon had been on the front cover of the *Bystander* and was not tucked away inside an issue. As a cover illustration, it had the potential to be seen by a wider public beyond those who purchased the magazine specifically which serves to raise the general awareness of it prior to its placement in the play, and reinforces the humour it could imbue.



**(Figure 3.31) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘The Eternal Question’, *Bystander*, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1915**

Bairnsfather uses quotations from other artist’s work in addition to own cartoons, such as Bert Thomas’ famous ‘‘Arf a mo’ Kaiser’ cartoon that was used to sell tobacco and would have been instantly recognised by the smokers in the audience.<sup>173</sup> Thomas’ image in the *Weekly Dispatch*, according to Aulich simultaneously ‘broaden[ed] the *Weekly Dispatch*’s readership and... developed the market for tobacco’, which serves

<sup>172</sup> Alexander Watson, *Enduring the Great War: Combat, Morale and Collapse in the German and British Armies, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), p. 110.

<sup>173</sup> Davis and Emeljnaw, ‘Victorian and Edwardian Audiences’, p. 93

as an exemplar for the image's public reception as that particular tobacco campaign was vastly profitable.<sup>174</sup> Smoking was a sensible relief for soldiers, and cigarettes served as currency for the soldier and this advert promoted those ideas.<sup>175</sup> In 1917, the advertisement also filtered into 'The Better 'Ole' production on stage where there is a sketch at the start of the second half. Soldiers in pairs and threes troop across the stage carrying boxes of supplies. At one point, the Sergeant Major, appears, puts down his box, and lights a pipe as the sound of bombs can be heard in the background, to which he responds calling out 'Arf a mo' Kaiser', takes another puff and leaves the stage again (figure 3.32).<sup>176</sup>

The effective jingle of 'arf a mo' was one that held true across the public observing the play, and instantly drew to mind the brand of the *Weekly Dispatch* and its tobacco campaign.<sup>177</sup> Thomas' advertising campaign for tobacco ran consistently throughout the war and would have been recognised by British and international audiences alike through its abundant popularity where it sold 'an image of the people to the people.'<sup>178</sup> People, notably city-dwellers, subject to advertising as they were, held a constant awareness of this cartoon and its product regardless of their social status or gender, as it was sold to all. The image presented an element of 'Edwardian heroism', where the hero depicted could be everyman fighting, and such prolific use of the image and its slogan demonstrates Bairnsfather's social awareness of his audience as well as the active soldier, which further reinforces the cultural authority his cartoons held.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 116.

<sup>175</sup> See Matthew Hilton, *Smoking in British Popular Culture, 1800-2000: Perfect Pleasures* (Manchester and New York: MUP, 2000), p. 126.

<sup>176</sup> Bairnsfather and Elliot, *The Better 'Ole*, Explosion II, Splinter I.

<sup>177</sup> Barden, *Decoded*, pp. 4-5; Chakravarti and Shanker Krishnan, 'Process Analysis', p. 231.

<sup>178</sup> Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 47.

<sup>179</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 117.

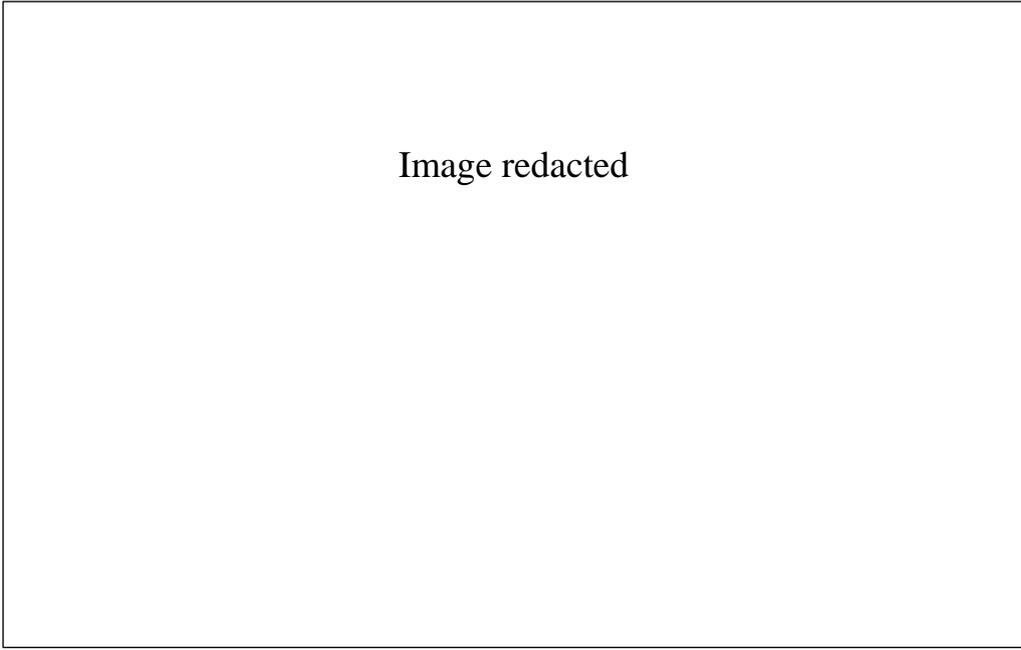


Image redacted

**(Figure 3.32) Bert Thomas, “Arf a mo’ Kaiser’, *Weekly Dispatch*, November 1914**

Overall, as a play, ‘The Better ‘Ole’ was seen to be a highly popular production showing at the Oxford Theatre in London for 817 performances where it remained for nearly two years before going on tour. It was one of the most popular war plays earning almost £3000 in its first week.<sup>180</sup> The tours that ensued took the play out to America, Australia and across Europe to many of the places that had called upon Bairnsfather for his sketching abilities recognising his value in terms of morale. The *New York Times* reviewed ‘The Better ‘Ole’ calling it ‘the real thing’ and complimenting its sincerity suggesting that Bairnsfather’s use of humour was offered ‘for the comfort of the soldiers’.<sup>181</sup> British reviews for the play were favourable too praising it extensively for its ‘broad tangible and magnificent... outline, [of] humour, and pathos’, although few commented further on the patrons in the audiences who called for encores and

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<sup>180</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole’*, pp. 72-3.

<sup>181</sup> ‘Artist Bairnsfather Tells Why he Drew ‘Em’, *New York Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1918.

stood cheering happily at any opportunity.<sup>182</sup> Nonetheless, ‘The Better ‘Ole’ was discussed extensively in the *Play Pictorial*.<sup>183</sup> This edition praised the play, and the authors for the manner in which they seamlessly incorporated so many cartoons.<sup>184</sup> It is said that the primary character, ‘Old Bill stands out with the vividness of a Shakespearean creation, as forcible as Falstaff, as quaint as Dogberry’. The play caught the public imagination, and its characters fulfilled traditional theatrical ideals.<sup>185</sup> The link made to the work of Bairnsfather and Elliot in relation to more classical Shakespearean works comparing the vivid capacity of their characters reinforces the sense of public awareness for this detail.

When thinking about public responses to the cartoons and their staging in the theatre, these can be considered by looking at both soldier and civilian patrons. Soldiers sought to visit theatre productions when on leave, but there were negative responses to civilian attendance at these simultaneously.<sup>186</sup> The pathos in ‘The Better ‘Ole’ is instilled without any malice or vindictiveness through the humour applied to it. In the play, soldiers interact with the French community at their local café’s and bars suggesting an element of what Sassoon called ‘Blighty Hunger’, and the desire for something normal from home.<sup>187</sup> There is no impropriety in this aspect of the play that would match with the work of Craig Gibson when he speaks of sexual relations between soldiers and French civilians.<sup>188</sup> A feeling of loss for entertainments is recognised overlaid by the French alternatives and thus, any bitterness is balanced with more

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<sup>182</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 32 (1918), p. 18; ‘Reviews’, *The Times*; *Manchester Guardian*; *Bystander*; *Punch*, 1913-18; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 23-33 (1914-19); Carson, *Stage Year Book*.

<sup>183</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 32 (1918), pp. 17-32.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, 32 (1918), p. 18.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, 32 (1918), p. 18.

<sup>186</sup> Rüger, ‘Entertainments’, p. 113; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 29 (1917), p. 17.

<sup>187</sup> Cited in Rüger, ‘Entertainments’, p. 122.

<sup>188</sup> Craig Gibson, *Behind the Front: British Soldiers and French Civilians, 1914-1918* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 2014), pp. 322-24.

lively and jovial enactments of soldier social life alongside the pastiche of sorrow and frustrations of war. This open acknowledgement for the needs of soldiers combines to relieve the tension of public criticism for theatre attendance at home.

Some military authorities suggested that theatre was the wrong thing to be doing in a time of war. Colonel Smith-Dorrien with the Bishop of London commented in 1916 on the negative moral values of the theatre in wartime, and its influence over working men turned soldiers. Such frivolous entertainment could corrupt and was not suitable 'in these crucial times'.<sup>189</sup> Victorian theatre audiences were known to have behaved poorly, and Smith-Dorrien's perception of soldier audiences reinforces this continued assumption.<sup>190</sup> With criticism like this, Bairnsfather faced an uphill battle moving his cartoons to the theatre. Even so, many plays continued to be produced and Bairnsfather continued to draw cartoons for the *Bystander*. To this effect, the production of theatre seemed to expand and indeed profit from the war. Furthermore, troops of performers went to the fields of battle to entertain under Lena Ashwell's initiatives, and seats were reserved for recovering soldiers at home.<sup>191</sup> Later in the war, the theatre was used to raise funds for wounded soldiers alongside their theatrical recuperation, while earlier it had been a place of recruitment through various patriotic performances.<sup>192</sup>

Civilians continued to attend entertainments throughout the war. Theatre was particularly popular among the middle and upper classes following a tradition established during the Victorian era. Comedy was welcomed in the theatre, but even more so in the music hall, variety and reviews. Played locally in town halls, these

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<sup>189</sup> 'Night Clubs', *The Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1915, p. 9; Rüger, 'Entertainments', p. 113; White, *Zeppelin Nights*, p. 64; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 29 (1917), p. 17.

<sup>190</sup> Michael Barrie Francis, 'Victorian Values and the Victorian Theatre', PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2013, p. 60.

<sup>191</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 28-33 (1916-19).

<sup>192</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 72; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 28-33 (1916-19).

establishments fulfilled a position for stage comedy throughout the war.<sup>193</sup> Theatrical reviews comment on how as the second year of war concludes, theatres remained open and successful despite some pronouncements at the start of war predicting their imminent failure.<sup>194</sup> Regardless of this anticipated decline, which according to *The Times* became evident in August 1915, there are reports that suggest a ‘steady [British] appetite’ for entertainment and a return to the Victorian pretence of ‘taking nothing seriously’.<sup>195</sup> Much of which was highly popular with the public, as for many, it was a means of escape from reality and for the recuperating soldiers as well.<sup>196</sup> The music hall in particular had grown out of community spirit and performances during the Victorian era. They had been completely unprofessional performances among friends, although by the early twentieth century more professionalism had developed, and they moved into specific theatres. Nonetheless, the original working-class community spirit was maintained.<sup>197</sup>

### Conclusion

An examination of the diverse uses of cartoons across genres and disciplines has exemplified comical cartoons in advertising, and then the movement of ideas between the theatre and newspapers consistently throughout the war. Overall, this has enabled

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<sup>193</sup> Maunder, *British Theatre and the Great War*, pp. 1-40; Andrew Horrell, *Popular Culture in London c. 1890-1918: The Transformation of Entertainment* (Manchester: MUP, 2001), pp. 9-10.

<sup>194</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 29 (1917), p. 1.

<sup>195</sup> ‘Theatre and Music Hall’, *The Times*, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1915, p. 11; Gray, ‘Uses of Victorian Laughter’, pp. 146-7.

<sup>196</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 27 onwards, (1916-19).

<sup>197</sup> Horrell, *Popular Culture in London*, pp. 1-2.

a clearer study of those crossovers through which humour features during the war. Humour can be promoted through advertisement, the theatre and cartoon as a common uniting feature that was consistently implemented for continuity as civilians went to war. Looking closely at advertising, highlights how product placement, using cartoons, was able to promote both the stage and cartoons within them drawing the three sections of this chapter together. Advertisements infiltrated society by the end of the Victorian period and moving into the Edwardian.<sup>198</sup> Cartoons and the theatre were advertised all over the cities, and to a degree, in more rural areas as well.<sup>199</sup> The advantage of using cartoons to advertise is that rapid recognition is created through the simplification of ideas. As much as cartoons can be a complex mixture of icons, in advertising, they were far simpler offering a product and generally a person to use it as well a story that was readily understood by the public.<sup>200</sup>

Humour was not always consistent through advertising, but at the same time, studies do promote the success of humour in advertising making products easier to recall and, therefore, sell.<sup>201</sup> Alternatively, humour was added to advertising images as with the Kaiser being inserted into the Pears soap advert (figures 3.8 and 3.9). An image that previously had little humour other than an unlikely baby in tears unable to reach the soap is transformed into the Kaiser who is diminutive and made to look a fool reaching for the unobtainable 'Paris' soap or 'British Reprisals. As much as humour is a traditional feature of the cartoon, it became clear in this section how it was not a necessary feature for advertising. Items could still be sold without humour being

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<sup>198</sup> Wischermann and Shore, *Advertising and the European City*; Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 111.

<sup>199</sup> Williams, *Read All About It!*, p. 145; Stefan Goebel, 'Cities', in Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), p. 369.

<sup>200</sup> El Refaie, 'Multiliteracies', p. 181, also see the discussion of Pear's soap adverts and the Kaiser's implementation within those adverts.

<sup>201</sup> See Strick et al., 'Humour in Advertising', p. 33; Beard, *Humour in the Advertising Business*; Gulas and Weinberger, *Humour in Advertising*.

applied to them, while at the same time that humour could also be inferred and was welcomed by the promoters and consumers alike.<sup>202</sup>

Nonetheless, humour was prevalent throughout the war years in printed visual forms such as cartoons, and in performative action on the stage in theatres, music hall and variety. Each had their value without doubt, and could seem quite distinct. However, the amount of theatrical characters that transposed into cartoon suggests a deeper public value, more consistent with the characters serving as part of the artist's 'armoury' of recognisable icons.<sup>203</sup> This may be true to an extent, but equally it demonstrates the connections between the various entertainments in wartime society. Certain characters held value for the artist as through these characters, half the story is already told, regardless of what that chosen story might be. If the play is recognisable, the audience can anticipate similar outcomes; positive or negative, and in such a way new politicians or allegorical representatives of a nation are transposed into that location. The artist's professional memory transposes the image, and the audience comprehend it through their commercial memories.<sup>204</sup>

Humour is created through the incongruity of seeing the wrong person in such a position, or seeing the wrong position surrounding a specific personality. When the play or music hall selection is already known, the conclusion is anticipated and thus the outcome preserved regardless of who might be transposed into it. If at times elements of the production are not known explicitly, then situations are set up to encourage humour without prior knowledge.<sup>205</sup> At times, a class bias evolves through theatrical productions chosen, but cartoonists often negate this through alteration.

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<sup>202</sup> Strick et al., 'Humour in Advertising', p. 33; Gulas and Weinberger, *Humour in Advertising*.

<sup>203</sup> Gombrich, 'The Cartoonist's Armoury', pp. 127-42

<sup>204</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33; Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*, p. 2.

<sup>205</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, p. 42.

Shakespeare for example is just a man, as too are his characters, and other personalities can filter into their positions.

As much as plays were transmitted into cartoons and the artist's armoury, they also transferred in the reverse direction as exhibited in productions such as 'The Better 'Ole' by Bairnsfather and Elliot.<sup>206</sup> In this circumstance, the theatre's humour was frozen and cartoon humour was performed, and both with equal and exaggerated value for the viewing public. Some background to the artist's work is needed to better understand his ability to transform cartoon ideas into performative ones, but nonetheless, Bairnsfather has conclusively managed it. Further to this he was able to develop these skills through his 'chalk and talk' tours after the war as well as other productions that he put on the stage using his standard character; Old Bill.<sup>207</sup>

The war itself, it would seem, had only minimal impact on the cartoons and theatre that continued regardless. There may have been some negative comments relating to the moral standing of theatrical aspects, but overall, it would seem that their boost to the army's and civilian morale, particularly in relation to the wounded, was welcomed.<sup>208</sup> There are comments on how despite the war, certain plays draw large crowds which is seen as a reflection on how the public in Britain recognised the value of entertainment and how 'such entertainment needed to be 'kept going''.<sup>209</sup> It may equally be assumed that other forms of amusement had similar powers to theatre as a necessity in times of war such as the daily cartoons that everyone saw. This, as has been shown, appears to have been true. Advertisements tie the theatre and cartoons together, providing significant links between the three aspects of this chapter which

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<sup>206</sup> Bairnsfather and Elliot, *The Better 'Ole*.

<sup>207</sup> See SC, MEL/THE/LDN/LYC, 50599620, London Lyceum Takings Books, 1907-39.

<sup>208</sup> 'Night Clubs', *The Times*, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1915, p. 9; Rürger, 'Entertainments', p. 113; White, *Zeppelin Nights*, p. 64; Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 29 (1917), p. 17.

<sup>209</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 24 (1918), p. 118.

when united are able to elucidate common underrepresented aspects of wartime society. It cannot be denied that the crossovers between the visual printed and performed aspects of humour are significant, and present a uniting feature in terms of the Great War. These were aspects openly available to the public at large and aided through advertisement that further unified the mediums. Insights to humour may be drawn forth from the cartoons in newspapers, commercial advertisements and from the stage alike, and this is what this chapter has sought to do, presenting a unified form of humour in relation to the war.

## Chapter 3

### Avoiding Obligations

#### Profiteers, Pacifists and the Wealthy

Subversion is a particularly common theme when looking at humour. Authorities can be destabilised, yet leaders also use humour to promote their ideas just as easily.<sup>1</sup> During the Great War, cartoons depicted the government or enemy leaders equally, and these images can be viewed for the ways in which their position is undermined through representations.<sup>2</sup> When looking for subversion in cartoon, the visual historian needs to be consistently aware of the political bias of publications and the potential motivations behind them before analysing the material directly. Therefore, one of the questions this chapter will address is how the content of subversive cartoons is altered by political bias throughout metropolitan life.<sup>3</sup> On a domestic level, many cartoons focus on certain civilian groups that are criticised for their subversion of civilian duties. Images of the profiteer, the pacifist and coward, through to the ridicule of the wealthy and irresponsible, will, therefore, be analysed here. Authority is not subverted directly

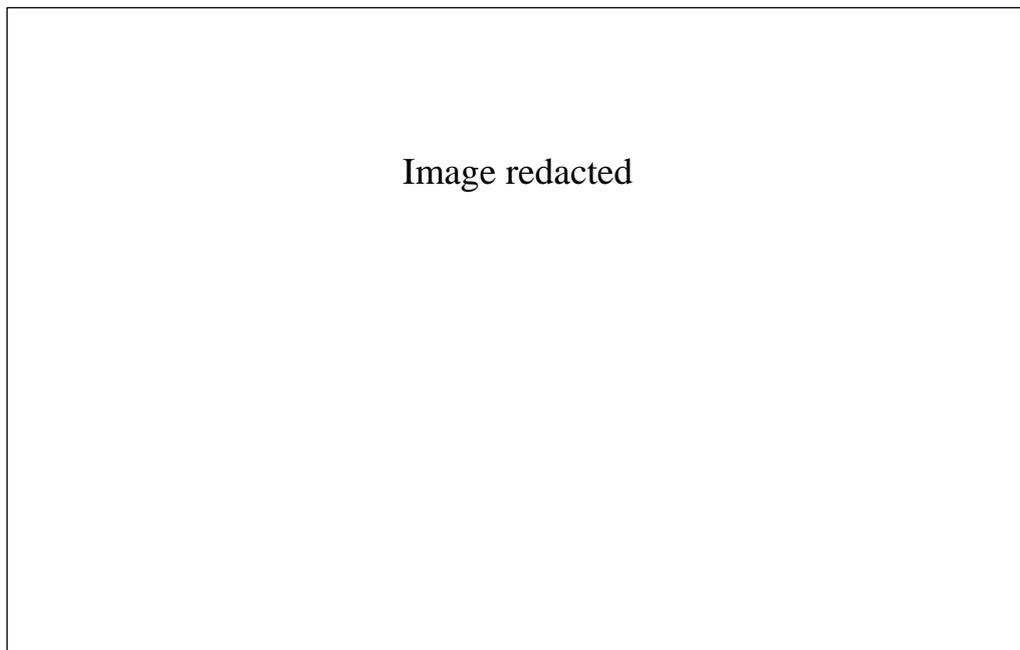
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<sup>1</sup> Hans Speier, 'Wit and Politics: An Essay on Laughter and Power', *American Journal of Sociology*, 103:5 (1998), pp. 1352-1401; Gulas and Weinberger, *Humour in Advertising*.

<sup>2</sup> For further cartoon development illustrating politicians in wartime, see chapter 5.

<sup>3</sup> Lawrence, 'Public Space, Political Space', p. 280.

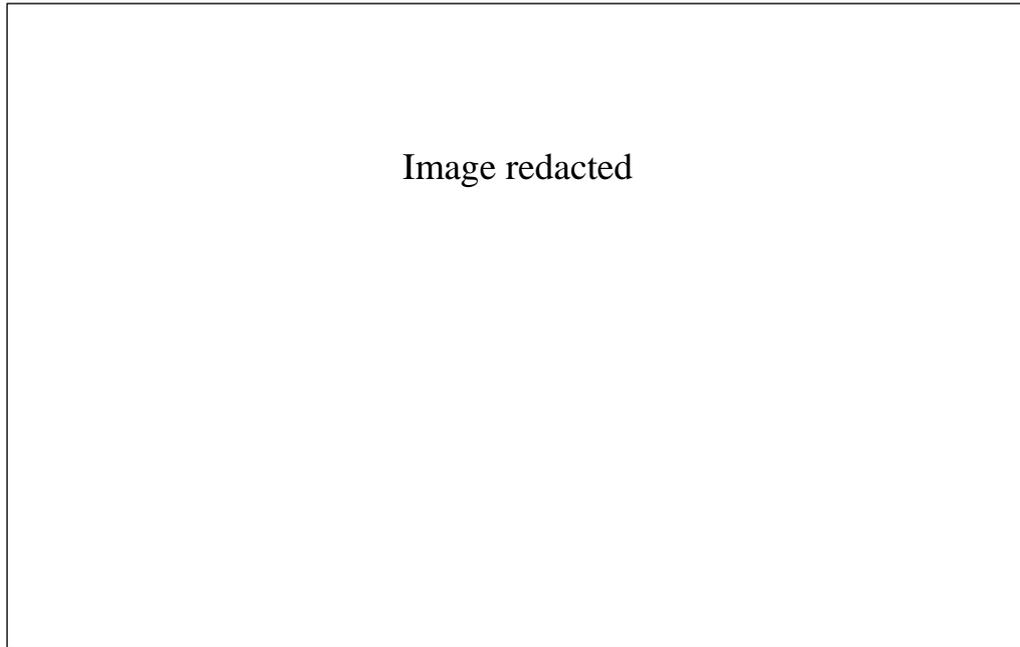
through these characters, but rather it is they who subvert its ideals. As such, these cartoons in Britain illustrate the *faux pas* of society, but can also reinforce positive instruction, and humour amplifies this when it is used to correct behaviours.<sup>4</sup> People are criticised for not ‘doing their bit’, with an unstated implication of how they should rectify that behaviour (figure 4.1). Moreover, in a society at war, not fulfilling your duty to the populace was the greatest crime imaginable (figure 4.2).



**(Figure 4.1) Lewis Baumer, ‘Doing Their Bit’, *Punch*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917**

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<sup>4</sup> Gray, ‘The Uses of Victorian Laughter’, pp. 146-7.



**(Figure 4.2) Poy, ‘Criminal Types of 1917’, *Evening News*, 1917**

Most cartoons, despite light forms of subversion that provoke humour of superiority over those depicted, do not generally cross the lines of authority.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps another way to view this is that the ‘British sense of humour’ allows a cartoonist to touch said lines without need for reprimand.<sup>6</sup> Newspaper publications during the war made a point of working alongside the government, and not specifically against them.<sup>7</sup> Through wartime cartooning, certain images when presenting material in a particular manner can influence the viewing public. Visual advertising can alter people’s perceptions and desires, and cartoons can be aligned with this but how attitudes are specifically altered through the visual will be considered in more detail here.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For an exception, see chapter 1, Cartoons in Court.

<sup>6</sup> A fuller analysis of national senses of humour cannot be engaged with at this time, but for wider perceptions of national humorous differences see Cedric Cullingford and Harald Husemann (eds.), *Anglo-German Attitudes* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995); Harold Nicholson, *The English Sense of Humour and Other Essays* (London: Constable, 1956); Max Eastman, *The Sense of Humour* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1921, reprint London: Forgotten Books, 2011); Willibald Ruch, *The Sense of Humour: Explorations of a Personality Characteristic* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998).

<sup>7</sup> For details of wartime press censorship, see chapter 1.

<sup>8</sup> Strick et al., ‘Humour in Advertising’, pp. 32-69; Gulas and Weinberger, *Humour in Advertising*.

Different aspects of the historiography will be consulted, returning to that of wartime humour and its presentation for the purposes of promotion and subversion. Jan R uger's ideas of how laughter can be used to support or subvert authority will be important, offering an entry point to humour when it is used as an agent in times of war. R uger discusses performance culture in Berlin, which is why his work is only a point of entry into this study, and not directly apropos. He considers how certain forms of humour were better able to promote or destabilise the public mood.<sup>9</sup> Open criticism he suggests was ill advised, whereas, silent impersonation could be interpreted differently by the various audiences watching, and thus created no directly negative stigmas. Community reception is a feature of R uger's work that connects with cartoon materials, and this will be linked to the historiography of advertising, which must be consulted again to address how visual material can be utilised for the promotion of ideas and attitudes. R uger also considers the type of laughter that is provoked and by whom so that the humour might be received well rather than being dismissed for its subversion. In the context of British subversive cartoons, the nature of the humour that is inspired by them will be more relevant, and particularly in relation to the works of Will Dyson in the *Herald*.

Specific sets of characters represented by cartoonists in Britain have been identified for this aspect of the study. Through them, the profiteer making money out of war or hoarding produce will be addressed. The wealthy and indiscrete, who continue to highlight mockery of Victorian class conflicts will be compared to the profiteer as money is at the heart of the problem for both of these characters, but in a different manner. Then finally, the pacifist and coward and how they are viewed to be negligent while everyone else draws together to fight will work alongside a perception of the

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<sup>9</sup> R uger, 'Laughter and War in Berlin', p. 29.

‘duty of sacrifice’ that the wider populace followed.<sup>10</sup> Each of these groups has their own historiography with which to engage. Nonetheless, collectively they represent an element of dissatisfaction for the public and cartoonists alike, and through these visual complaints, there is a reduction of the power for those depicted.

Each of these characters, the pacifist, profiteer and the wealthy who are indiscreet about it can be connected as representing the ‘enemy within’, that is to say, people at home creating problems for others.<sup>11</sup> Much of the scholarship about internal enemies holds a stronger focus on the interred alien; Germans who had lived and worked in Britain for some time.<sup>12</sup> These characters are less directly relevant here. However, the person who is not seen to be fulfilling their correct duty in a society at war can just as easily be classed as an internal or civilian enemy.<sup>13</sup> Maureen Healy’s work is particularly relevant where she considers the attitudes of women in Vienna and how seeing anyone with more food could label them as an enemy resulting from its general scarcity. The internal, civilian enemy does not contribute, and this is predominantly what is illustrated in cartoons about them. They stand in direct contrast to soldiers who had gone away to fight and sacrifice themselves to the war effort.<sup>14</sup> Even so, there are some sources, and in particular the images by Will Dyson in the *Herald*, where characters can be seen to be actively causing problems for society. As such, they represent a greater enemy to the state, and subversion of state authority.

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<sup>10</sup> Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, pp. 104-132; Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Hapsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), p. 38.

<sup>11</sup> Maarten Van Genderachter and Marnix Beyen, *Nationhood from Below: Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (New York: Macmillan, 2012), pp. 239-240.

<sup>12</sup> See Panikos Panayi, *The Enemy in Our Midst: Germans in Britain during the First World War* (New York: Berg, 1991); Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*.

<sup>13</sup> See Emily Crawford, *Identifying the Enemy: Civilian Participation in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: OUP, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*, p. 38.

In the wider historiography, ideas about profiteers and derision of the wealthy can be identified through the work of Jean-Louis Robert and Adrian Gregory.<sup>15</sup> Robert especially, focuses on how the profiteer was represented in cartoon and offers insights to a deeper public perception of these characters. He demonstrates how the images were manipulated so that the effective errors of the profiteer's ways are highlighted as a means of 'exaggeration for correction'.<sup>16</sup> For many cartoonists the wrongs of the world are depicted comically in this manner so that public censure might ensue.<sup>17</sup> In the case of profiteers, particular papers such as the *Herald*, a notable 'socialist and pacifist' publication, offer more images and many of these are far more accusatory about the profiteer's actions, which will be discussed. There was a clear sense for the public that these people, mostly men, had been abusing the situation of war, and having done such, mockery for these characters was prevalent.

Robert does not focus so much on the wealthy in society who are also depicted in cartoons, whereas, Gregory does speak of the public perceptions of them in terms of both wealth and class, and especially in response to reported military losses. As the war progressed, people developed grievances against those who had money when faced with 'declining living standards' and this is represented in so many cartoons.<sup>18</sup> Often wealthy women are seen in a negative fashion as they paraded their wealth and standing. Even so, there is less vitriol behind their illustration, mockery certainly, but less effort to fix their ways. Wealthy, upper class women are represented as being especially foolish having not understood the war, while wealthy men often appear ignorant of it entirely. At times, these characters represented shirkers or pacifists, but

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<sup>15</sup> Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', pp. 104-132; Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 112-51.

<sup>16</sup> See Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.

<sup>17</sup> Press, *Political Cartoon*, p. 62; Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.

<sup>18</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 245.

generally their money stands them apart in their physical form and attire. Looking to these characters in cartoon, the money they exhibit is not seen as a problem, so much as what they do with it. Their continued lack of aid for the wider populace is what provokes disdain from the audience, rather than the corrective elements that can be seen in the image of the profiteer.

Pacifists and cowards are similarly criticised in wartime cartoons for the perceived transgressions they make avoiding going to war. Public censure is instilled in society through these cartoon characters and their visual behaviour. Humourists synonymised the two in oral and written details also, where they would happily locate the apparent coward next to a story of recruitment or bravery.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, visually icons of peace surround the pacifist, while the coward has less to recommend him, especially when peaceful symbols are inverted. Recent studies of pacifists have begun to draw away from traditional cowardly stereotypes, and highlight more of the positive work done especially by Quakers through the ambulance service.<sup>20</sup> These modern studies consider the people sent to jail who suffered lasting public ridicule for refusing to fight, and the limited central tribunal data for evidence about conscientious objectors.<sup>21</sup> Brock Millman also suggests that the government had a tighter control on these idealists than might be assumed. As such, the visual representation for correction works better

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<sup>19</sup> See Finden, 'The Man Who Stayed at Home', *Play Pictorial*, 25 (1915), pp. 53-68; Anonymous, 'Nutshell Novel: The Model', *London Mail*, 9<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 14; followed by 'Her Recruit', 9<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> See Karyn Burnham, *The Courage of Cowards: The Untold Stories of the First World War Conscientious Objectors* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2014); Andrew Kerr-Wilson, 'The Sword and the Light: The Evolution of the Peace Testimony of the British Society of Friends 1914-1918', MA dissertation, McMaster University, Ontario, 1984.

<sup>21</sup> Ann Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors of the First World War: A Determined Resistance* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2014); Ann Kramer, *Conchies: Conscientious Objectors of the First World War* (Danbury, CT.: Franklin Watts, 2013); Adrian Gregory, 'Military Service Tribunals: Civil Society in Action, 1916-1918', in José Harris (ed.), *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), pp. 177-8.

alongside governmental purposes, and does not subvert their authority when illustrating pacifists.<sup>22</sup>

When the coward or pacifist is drawn, there is a sense that cartoonists through their depictions hold agency, and are able to promote an attitude for their audience. The humour instilled in images adds to this making it mockingly clear what the public should not be doing, and therefore, they serve as correction.<sup>23</sup> In most publications, there is no clear indication of whether the subject matter of pacifists, profiteers, cowards or the wealthy are by the cartoonist's design or the newspaper's preference. At times, articles in the press will suggest connections, and in examples such as the *Herald*, the paper's political stance guided its artists. Nonetheless, most cartoonists privately drew cartoons for newspapers, and few were specifically commissioned. Requests are difficult to trace, as academics including Nicholas Hiley believe that any records of cartoon commissions for newspapers surviving today would only exist in artist's private family archives if at all. Most newspapers discarded such information after a few years.<sup>24</sup>

Poy's character Cuthbert the rabbit will feature in this section as the representation of the coward or shirker. This rabbit came to represent cowards for being young and actively not fighting. Rather he sends his father, grandfather or children away while he hides in 'funk holes' (figures 4.16 and 4.15). 'Cuthbert' as a term in its own right became one that was synonymous with the ideas of cowardice by the end of the war. Ironically, at the same time, he is a character that was merchandised for children when in October 1917 two different size Cuthberts were sold and it was hoped they would

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<sup>22</sup> Brock Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain, 1914-1918* (London and Portland, OR.: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 176-78.

<sup>23</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.

<sup>24</sup> Details from conversation and email correspondence with Nicholas Hiley, BCA, 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015.

become more popular than the Teddy Bear.<sup>25</sup> These toys became a temporary tradition as the Women's Institute made many of them, for sale or simply for the comfort of children.<sup>26</sup>

For each of these characters, profiteer, wealthy and pacifist, there is a common sense of how they are depicted behaving in a fashion that was not acceptable under the circumstances of war. A corrective feature of their representation in cartoon is the humour that runs throughout, which is used to exaggerate and correct their *faux pas*. In relation to the existing historiography, Rüger will be consulted for the humour expressed in the cartoons. The chapter will draw strongly upon ideas from Robert about the representation of the Profiteer, but will expand these to consider the wealthy as similar yet different characters. Finally, the pacifist will add another element to societal disapproval and its representation in cartoon.

### Profiteers

On the home front, certain characters in society were easy to ridicule in cartoon depictions. One such example is that of the profiteer throughout the war, but particularly towards its end. The 'economies of sacrifice' became stronger among the public, everyone had to give things up, including life itself when it came to military losses. In response to attitudes of sacrifice, anyone appearing to profit from others' loss was rapidly seen as a public enemy to be disparaged, and particularly moving into 1917-18.<sup>27</sup> These characters were a worry broadly across society, and were often

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<sup>25</sup> "'Cuthbert" in Toyland', *Evening Express*, 29 October 1917.

<sup>26</sup> My thanks to Louise Jennings, Hattie Parish and Clare Spender, Women's Institute (WI), Surrey, for their searches for information on Cuthbert toys elaborated via emails, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

<sup>27</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 112-51.

brought up in debates in Parliament.<sup>28</sup> Jean-Louis Robert in his study of the image of the profiteer highlights the value of sacrifice across nations at war, as anticipated duty.<sup>29</sup> The profiteer, in contrast, was the character that made more of the war for themselves rather than giving up their personal attributes for the good of all.<sup>30</sup> This character is particularly prevalent in the *Herald* and *John Bull*, and especially following 1917, which supports the analysis through this chapter, of a greater pervasiveness later in the war.<sup>31</sup> The profiteer as a character was not only a feature for British cartoonists, but appeared in different satirical volumes across combatant nations, and throughout the war, so at no point should they be seen as a solely British issue.<sup>32</sup>

The most consistent feature of the profiteer throughout the war is that of their physical form. Where soldiers are lithe, fit and ready for action regardless of their origins, the profiteer in contrast is wealthy, obese and often lethargic. For the most part, profiteers were portly men, oblivious of the suffering of others, and taking advantage of consumers the world over. There is a division of sorts through their portrayal in British newspapers however. Early on in publications such as *Punch* they are implied, but do not appear personally. The *nouveaux riches* in particular are seen to benefit consistently, and their prosperity is depicted more commonly earlier in the war again with less direct relation to the personality of a profiteer specifically. These,

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<sup>28</sup> See for example House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 25<sup>th</sup> July 1917, vol. 5:96 cc. 1290-1300; House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1918, vol. 5:105, cc. 1900-30; House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 17<sup>th</sup> December 1917, vol. 5:100 cc. 1720-47.

<sup>29</sup> Also see Madigan, “Sticking to a Hateful Task”, pp. 76-98.

<sup>30</sup> Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, p. 104.

<sup>31</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 138.

<sup>32</sup> For examples of British, French and German profiteers in cartoon throughout the war, see Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’; for German images *Kladderadatsch*; *Simplicissimus*; for British profiteers *Daily Herald*.

often wealthy characters, will be further discussed in relation to the wealthy and inconsiderate elements of cartoons.<sup>33</sup>

The more widespread image of the profiteer as over-inflated in physical size appears most consistently through 1917 and beyond, although they do exist sporadically before this time. The profiteer in 'Inflated' for example, illustrates this size exaggeration well, but is an earlier image from February 1915. Two men are illustrated, the average man on the floor, and the oversized profiteer above. Indeed, the profiteer is inflated so much that he has become a hot air balloon floating above the consumer who is unable to reach the produce (figure 4.3). The text that accompanies this image describes discussions in the House of Commons about food prices.<sup>34</sup> These foods are then literally raised above the consumer's reach. The public perception of who will make profits from the elevated prices is clear in the image and it is not the nation as a whole. There are queries in the text about who is rising out of the war, where Bellona a Roman goddess of war, is mentioned, and then the name is altered to 'Balloon-a'. Where Bellona would usually be the consort of Mars, there are touches to the iconography of the goddess. Her trumpet is incongruously exchanged for a cigar, and helmet for top hat to suit the profiteering character, who is named for the goddess.

The *Evening News*, where this cartoon is published, similar to other papers under the control of the Harmsworth brothers, was prominently a Conservative paper, yet this image appears to be offering a more socialist stance on such actions. This can be identified through the costume each man is wearing, and the physical position of the characters as further indication of their social status.<sup>35</sup> Through this, it is clear that the

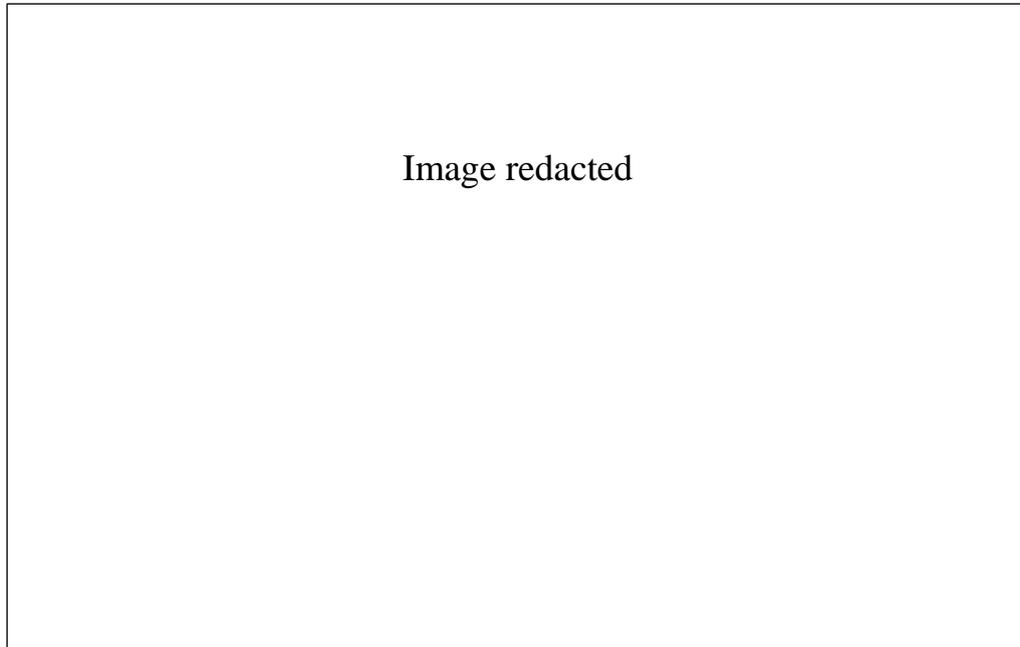
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<sup>33</sup> See chapter 3, Wealthy or Irresponsible.

<sup>34</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1915, vol. 69:5 cc.707-791.

<sup>35</sup> Hofmann, *Leonardo to Picasso*, p. 38.

wealthy, inflated ‘food speculator’ is demonstrating his money through his clothes as well as the cigar he smokes and the manner in which he looks down his nose at the consumer on the ground. Their positions in society clearly revolve around that money, and the way they each use what they have, exploiting it, or incapable of spending it.



**(Figure 4.3) Poy, ‘Inflated’, *Evening News*, February 1915**

The physical depiction of larger men is returned to frequently for instant visual recognition of profiteers, and is often supplemented by the embedded text or an accompanying caption. Following the emaciation and poor health of men during the Boer wars, healthy men 1914-18 were of an average, comfortable build.<sup>36</sup> Excess was not the ‘British way’, and became more dishonourable in light of social sacrifice in

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<sup>36</sup> See Rex Pope, *War and Society in Britain, 1899-1948* (London and New York: Longman, 1991), pp. 15-18; Jay Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 6-20; Andrew Risio, ‘Building the Old Contemptibles: British Military Transformation and Tactical Development from the Boer War to the Great War 1899-1914’, MSc Dissertation, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, 1991.

war.<sup>37</sup> Another early example is ‘The Need for War Profits’, where two rotund men are depicted smoking and talking (figure 4.4). There is the sense that these men would be impractical if serving their country in battle due to their physical size, and the possibility of their avoiding service is reinforced by the costumes they wear offering a formal edge to their representation. Dressing them as such suggests aspects of class wars between perceived ‘old and new money’ to add to the humour of the image. Where many aristocrats and peers would wear military uniform highlighting their influence in the war, these men wear poorly fitted white tie outfits making assumptions about grandeur, and money over class.<sup>38</sup>

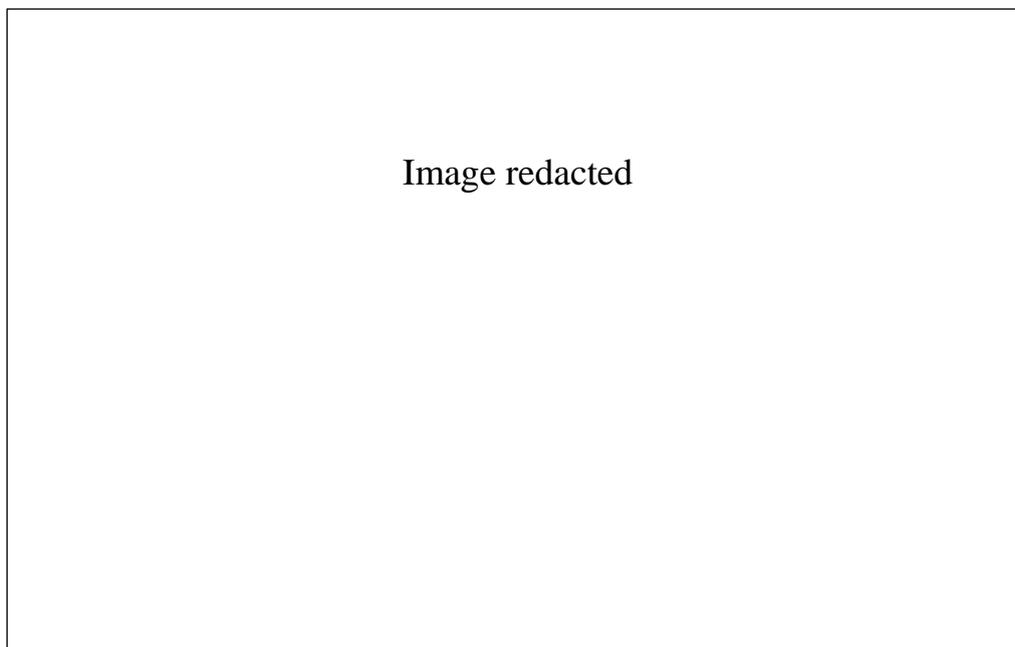
Their accompanying discussion specifically marks them out as self-identified ‘war profiteers’, as it is clear that, to them, war is an opportunity, and one that should necessarily be utilised for profit. So far as they are concerned, regardless of the ‘vulgar Demagogues’ and other political leaders who might ‘shriek about war profits’ in a negative manner, the profiteers are a necessary part of society, as they will fill the new positions that titled men vacate as they die through the war. They clearly seek personal profit added to whatever they have already gained from the war. The over-emphasis of their anticipated success through their dialogue, humorously suggests the exact opposite might rather be true, and that they are probably not going to be needed to fulfil the role they would hope to seek as the war ends. It is also interesting to notice their perceived station in society. As new money they believe that they will be first to fill the empty spaces left by deceased or missing aristocracy, and yet by 1914 it has

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<sup>37</sup> Kelly Boyd and Rohan McWilliam (eds.), *The Victorian Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 6-12; Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*, p. 38.

<sup>38</sup> See Christopher Breward, ‘Clothing the Middle-Class Male’, in Kelly Boyd and Rohan McWilliam (eds.), *The Victorian Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 110-25.

already been noted how the wealthy middle-class, and lower aristocracy were merging, albeit at times begrudgingly.<sup>39</sup>



**(Figure 4.4) Will Dyson, ‘The Need for War Profits’, *Herald*, 1<sup>st</sup> May 1915**

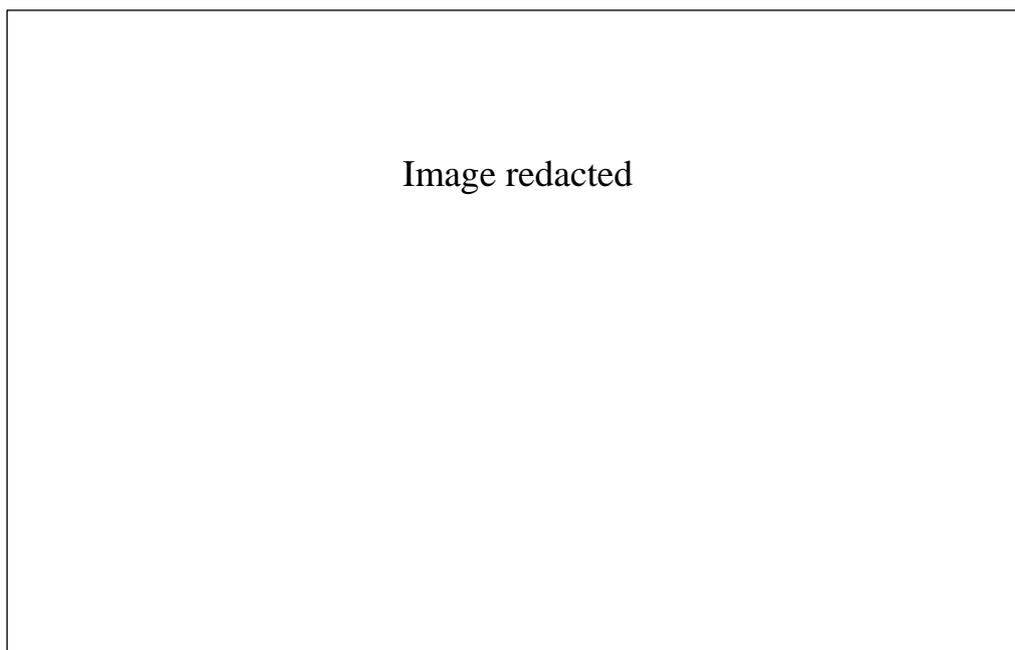
Before the war even began, the *Daily Herald*, prior to its conversion to a weekly volume, had already passed comment on the profiteer through Will Dyson’s cartoons. In January 1914, there is discussion of the unremarked death of capitalism, highlighted by a gravestone, although more specifically this is the capitalism placed upon South Africa, rather than Britain, and its death reflects the Boer Wars more than a decade previous.<sup>40</sup> Little more is specifically identified about profiteers through 1914 in cartoon. By 1<sup>st</sup> August, however, the ‘clouds of war’ roll in and it is clear to the artist by this point that they will not be bad news for everyone. The profiteer benefits as he looks up to the clouds with praise and gratification. The war news had already stated that ‘prices had advanced enormously before a shot was fired’ and it is in response to

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<sup>39</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 281.

<sup>40</sup> See Will Dyson, ‘Botha’s Victory’, *Daily Herald*, 20<sup>th</sup> January 1914, p. 1.

this that Dyson produced the image for the *Herald*, offering the ‘silver lining’ for the profiteer (figure 4.5).<sup>41</sup> Once the war had started, Dyson continues to offer images of profiteers, directly and indirectly. The notion of someone profiting from everyone else at such a time was abhorrent, which becomes clear through his cartoons and the sometimes-vicious humour applied to them.



**(Figure 4.5) Will Dyson, ‘War Clouds’, *Herald*, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1914**

Profiteers become more of a physical presence in the public mind as the war progresses, and are remarked upon in contrast to or in connection with rationing and other general hardships that are being suffered by the wider population.<sup>42</sup> The *Herald* notably comments frequently on how profits were being made throughout the war by ‘profit pirates’ many of whom the *Herald* sees as being in the government.<sup>43</sup> Yet this

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<sup>41</sup> See *Daily Herald*, 1<sup>st</sup> August 1914, p. 12; ‘Enormous Prices in Leeds’, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization*, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> ‘The Plunder of the Poor’, *Herald*, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1917, p. 2; ‘The Growing Discontent’, *Herald*, 1<sup>st</sup> December 1917, p. 3; also see Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 138.

is not to say that the entire population felt this way, letters to editors at the *Saturday Review* speak of the ‘extortions of incompetent servants’ being the greatest profiteering risk.<sup>44</sup> The different attitudes demonstrated by these newspapers can be marked by their political and social persuasion in both instances. The *Herald* supporting socialist ideals would happily present the profiteer as the enemy, albeit an internal one, to society in Britain. In contrast, the *Saturday Review* or the *Telegraph* and other more conservative publications aimed at wealthy and high ranking audiences inverted the criticism to direct it towards society beneath them.

By 1917-18, a further sub-division of profiteers is visible in cartoon; while many prosper because of the war and sales they can make, there are those who hoard products for themselves, and those who actively benefit from what others do not have. Here the juxtaposition of good and poor choices is highlighted thus. As Robert argues, at the start of the war, sacrifice is key, and it is presented through soldiers giving up their lives and going away while those left behind suffer in their absence. The public can make these good choices. In contrast, those who make money out of the war may be doing it by justified means, but their prosperity is seen far more negatively as a bad choice.<sup>45</sup>

Sacrifice is not synonymous with the profiteer shown hoarding goods and preserving their own wealth and status at the expense of others around them. This is further reinforced when the hoarder and profiteer are seen actively taking from the public who uphold the restraints enforced by the government. Even so, this type of man who will rob from the poor to feed himself features strongly in the *Herald* throughout 1914 and before while other publications draw on the profiteering icon more from mid-1916

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<sup>44</sup> ‘Profiteers’, *Saturday Review*, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1918, p. 254.

<sup>45</sup> Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, p. 104.

onwards. For Dyson, the 'Food Hog' can be seen taking directly from a poor family's table. The image is visibly critical of the fat man's actions as the emaciated family are left cowering in the corner (figure 4.6). Added to this is a perception that he has already conducted this act in other homes, as indicated by the large sack he carries over his shoulder. Profiteering was an issue in Britain as commented upon by many newspaper articles, and was even a feature denied and actively sought to repute through various advertising campaigns.<sup>46</sup> However, it was not a solely Anglo-centric issue. Images like this drew on ideas about Germany and reports of profiteers taking control of the black market where they could inflate prices to the detriment of consumers by 1915, making it a broader issue across nationalities and media outputs.<sup>47</sup>

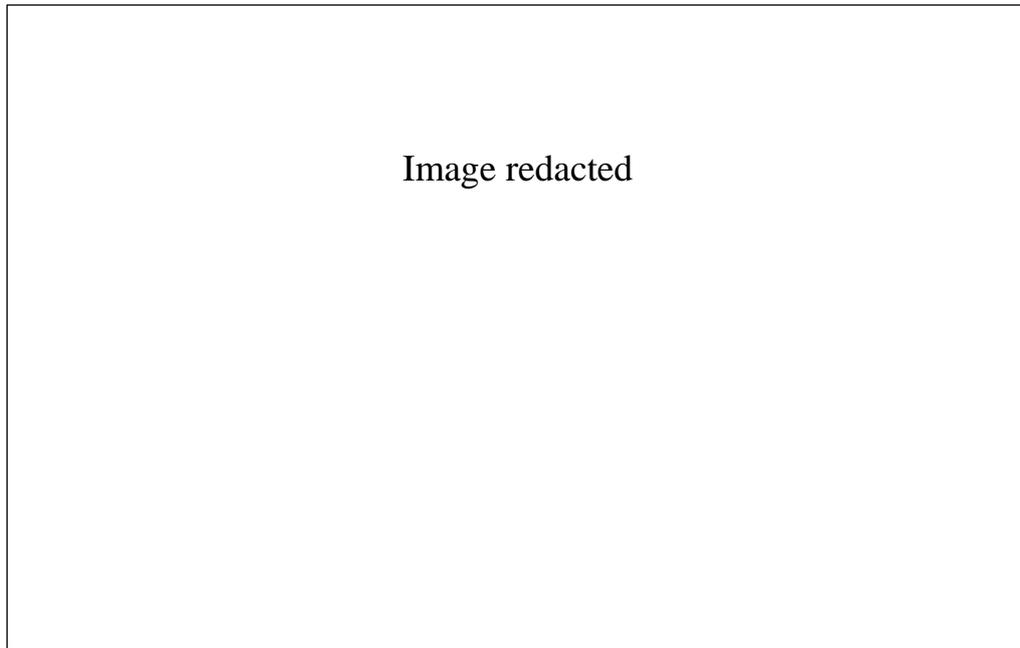
These darker images use humour to ridicule or create relief and empathy for the poor rather than full hilarity. Derision is directed at the profiteer for his bad behaviour, which is compounded by the family's suffering. Furthermore, there is an element of humorous relief inspired by the image for those viewing it, in that they are not in the same position as the poor family. Some reassurance is provided for viewers through the title stating that the food hog needs to be 'squashed', yet there is little sense of this actually happening. Despite the potential relief humour that some viewers will acquire from this image, generally less laughter can be provoked by it because of the political charge applied to it. This is where Dyson's images most commonly differ to other artists such as Poy or Haselden as they will illustrate more evidence of problems being resolved to create the relief of humour even when politics is embedded in their images. For Dyson, an ironic sense of humour is better created through the accompanying text,

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<sup>46</sup> See 'No Profiteering at the Beehive', *Birmingham Mail*, 10<sup>th</sup> May 1918, p. 2; 'Allen's Daily System Wires', *Leeds Mercury*, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1916, p. 5; 'Profiteering', *Liverpool Echo*, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1918, p. 2.

<sup>47</sup> Goebel, 'Cities', p. 364.

that identifies how ‘her men are fighting foes abroad’ while she fights the ‘friend at home’.



**(Figure 4.6) Will Dyson, ‘The Food Speculator Must be Squashed’, *Daily Herald*, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1914**

Many cartoonists identify their profiteers as ‘hoarders’ who keep supplies for themselves and do not share. The hoarders maintain the image of the obese male character, but more specifically, their lazy persona is reinforced by images of them contenting themselves by sitting on top of things that the rest of the public would need in wartime. ‘Swat that Fly’ presents a large man casually seated upon a mountain of resources including tea, sugar and flour. These were all things that were being rationed extensively by early 1918, so that they were no longer available to the general public, and certainly not to the degree that is presented here (figure 4.7).<sup>48</sup> His hoarding specifically focuses on the lack of food available to all, which is reemphasised by his

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<sup>48</sup> See House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 11<sup>th</sup> October 1916, vol. 5:86 cc. 91-2; House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 6<sup>th</sup> June 1918, vol. 5:106 cc. 1761-1814.

corpulence, and was a feature of society that many report concerns about.<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless, there is instilled in this image far greater visual humour, he may be rotund and hoarding public goods as many of Dyson's profiteers do, but he is not seen directly stealing them from the impoverished.

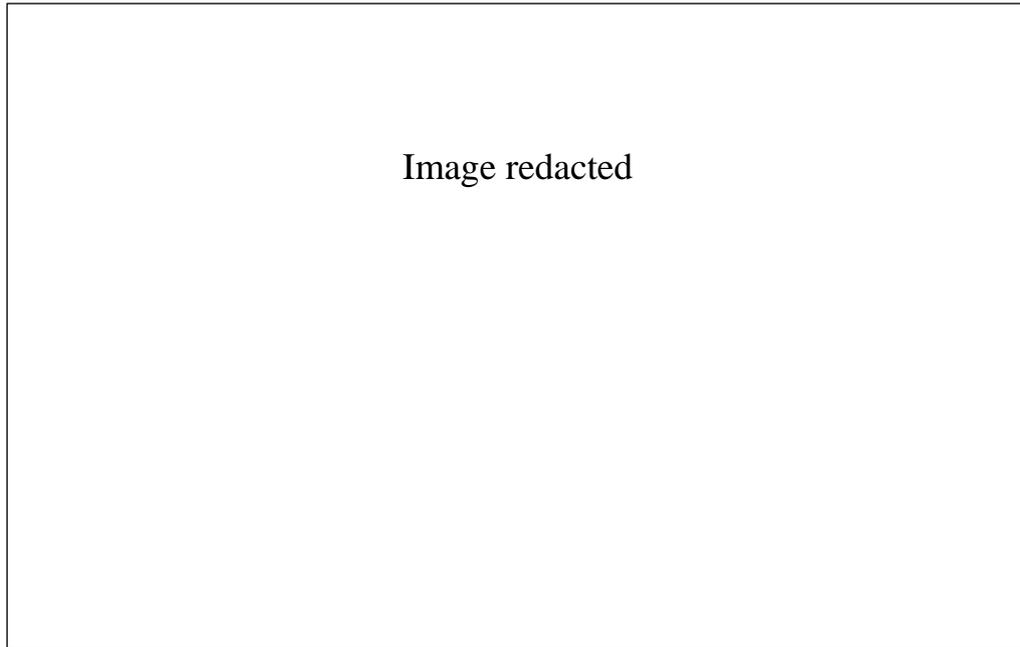
The idea of calling him a fly that needs to be swatted adds to the humorous entertainment made available through the image. Comical insult is added to the image, where his wings identify him. There is the ironic implication of a fly being a small creature, which he is visibly not in this image. Also, flies damage provisions which when in short supply was an undesirable outcome. Furthermore, this humour is reinforced through public awareness of the problem of flies in the trenches connecting this image to soldiers fighting abroad. Added to this, almost every viewer would be able to complete the mental picture of swatting a fly, along with the difficulty of managing to actually hit the beast.<sup>50</sup> Even so, knowing that it could be done, and perhaps even with the newspaper they were reading reinforces the relief of humour. Thereby the image utilises the incongruity of the man holding substantial provisions that were not available to most, adding the ironic statement of 'Swat That Fly'. Further to this, the image is demonstrably emphasising how people should not live and behave in light of war.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> See Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 214-15.

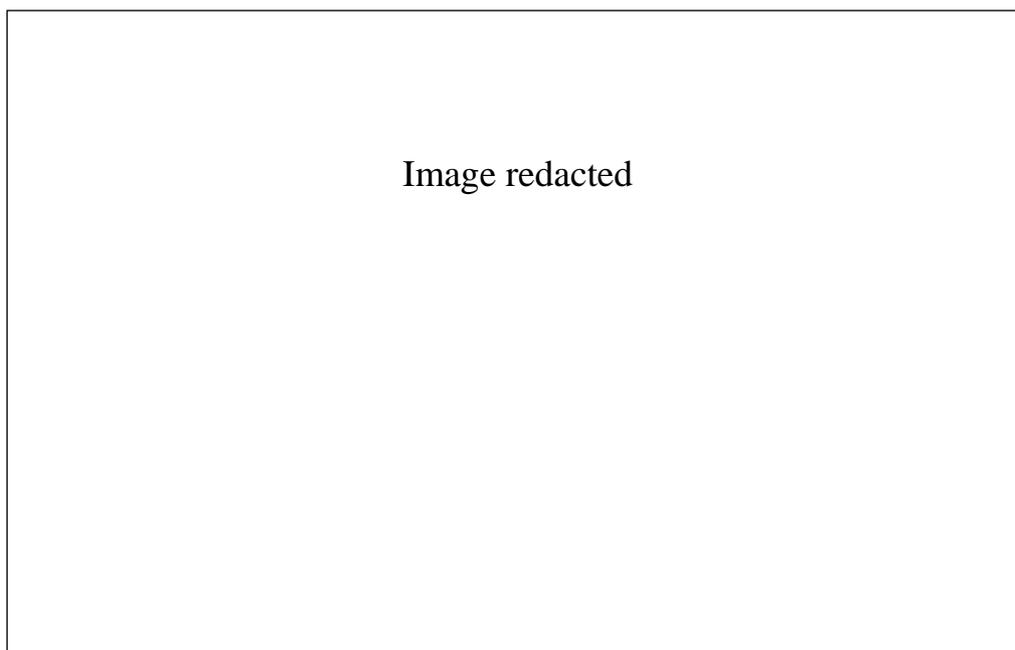
<sup>50</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33, 88-9.

<sup>51</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.



**(Figure 4.7) Poy, 'Swat that Fly', *Daily Mail*, 1918**

The hoarder above has, to a degree, made his money, and kept his items to the loss of other people around him, and this helps to demonstrate a further sub-division of profiteering images. Many cartoons use the icon of the profiteer to emphasise how profits were made, less so out of the war specifically, but out of ordinary people who are suffering because of it. Poy accentuates this feature through 'Carry On' where John Citizen is forced to carry the profiteer over the painfully rocky 'war road' when the man, despite his obesity, could walk that road for himself (figure 4.8). The journey would be much easier were the profiteer's bags of gold divided between the men evenly, and this can be seen as a metaphor for the greater population at that time. There is visual criticism of the profiteer's actions, but taken to humorous effect in order to correct it. Even so, there is clear implication that this correction is not actually happening, and that it should be encouraged.



**(Figure 4.8) Poy, 'Carry On', *Daily Mail*, 1918**

Another image, by Dyson from the *Herald*, in 1915 reinforces this sense of profits being made out of the poor, and often those who were unable to help themselves.<sup>52</sup> 'Rent and Duty' presents the impoverished woman with her child huddled by a fireplace while a profiteering landlord who is more than double her size looms over them and professes that 'patriotism demands that we shall raise your rent!' (figure 4.8). Landlords already knew their advantage over their tenants, and by 1918 it had particularly reached a peak of excess with tenants being consistently 'persuaded' to 'accept rent increases'.<sup>53</sup> Dyson's method of illustration strongly reinforces the concept of them and us, with the outsider being the profiteer. However, the intention behind this depiction, as with so many others of Dyson's can be seen to hold more malicious intent. This artist particularly fits well into Ronald De Sousa's interpretation

<sup>52</sup> Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', p. 115.

<sup>53</sup> Susanna Magri, 'Housing', in Jay Winter, and Jean-Louis Robert, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 396-8.

of the 'them' and 'us' divide when used for humorous purposes.<sup>54</sup> De Sousa sees malicious intention towards the 'outsider' which he speaks of in terms of being phthonic through his analysis more so than other interpretations.

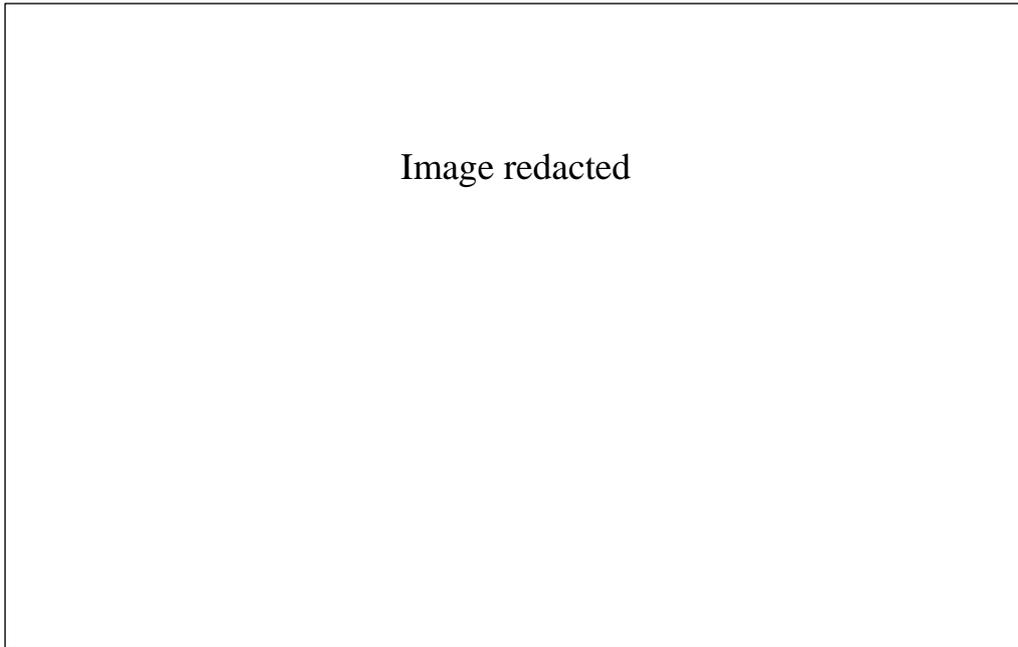
Such images helped to reinforce the public perception of profiteers as internal enemies to the state, men who were harsh and cared little for the ordinary people.<sup>55</sup> They are depicted with oppressive powers out of the ordinary, and their size is used to reinforce their physical potency over others or their metaphysical oppression of them. This is a nature reflected in so many cartoons of the time, and is commented on in *John Bull*, where the profiteer remarks 'here's to the war that is making us rich, while it takes the last copper from others'.<sup>56</sup> Once again though, in Dyson's image, despite the textually ironic humour of the landlord having to 'raise your rent' for patriotism, there remains more of a moralistic didacticism where the public are being taught that this action is morally reprehensible. A feature that is embodied within the tenant's face as she looks at the landlord in apparent disbelief.

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<sup>54</sup> Ronald De Sousa, *The Rationality of Emotion* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), p. 293.

<sup>55</sup> Ginderachter, and Beyen, *Nationhood from Below*, pp. 239-240; Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*, p. 38.

<sup>56</sup> *John Bull*, 27<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p. 5; Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 138



**(Figure 4.9) Will Dyson, 'Rent and Duty', *Herald*, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1915**

The depiction of the profiteer in cartoon at times can seem more malicious than that of other unsavoury characters. In many ways, the profiteer suffered more at the hands of the cartoonist than even the enemy did. The enemy was mocked for their silliness and inability to perform in opposition to British and allied troops, whereas, the profiteer was contrasted more succinctly with the British Tommy, who for many was the ultimate depiction of moral fortitude and sacrifice.<sup>57</sup> In this way, through the contrasting depictions, the profiteer was negatively stigmatised for a purpose. These images use inversion for its corrective agency. They show what someone should not do by over-emphasising how they are doing that thing. Such over emphasis can be seen in Poy's 'Carry On' as well as Dyson's 'Rent and Duty' even though it is significantly different for the styling of the images (figures 4.8 and 4.9).

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<sup>57</sup> Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', p. 110.

### The Wealthy or Irresponsible

Building upon the image of the profiteer and taking it further, the otherwise wealthy and irresponsible also need to be considered. These characters are also mocked mercilessly for their behaviour during the war years. Many of these characters demonstrate links to profiteers, although more often the distinguishing factor is their wealth and social standing rather than their attitudes to the rest of society. More of these characters are demonstrative of having established money, rather than newly acquired. The reason for their mockery is their approach to life and the war more generally. Many of these characters will appear to be resting on their laurels, and do not seem to participate to the correct level anticipated of them and the rest of society. These characters can be seen throughout the war, and particularly in times of greater distress for all in a similar manner to the profiteers. Although, where they make a profit out of society's problems, these characters, more often, observe it from a distance and do not participate in the problems or help to resolve them.

When possible, the wealthy and indiscreet encapsulate the upper classes and aristocracy, a group in society who are mocked pre-war by the press for their oblivious and over indulgent natures. They are easy targets who serve as a distraction for the wider public before, during and after the war.<sup>58</sup> The cartoonist further established and reinforced their indulgence when compared to the notions of sacrifice that had been established for the rest of the British nation. Those who made consistent sacrifice in the name of the war sought justification for it; reason to substantiate its purpose.<sup>59</sup> If it was justified, then it was worth doing, yet those who did not make the same sacrifices were mocked for not following suit with the notion of the day, thereby illustrating good

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<sup>58</sup> For details of Victorian class mockery, see chapter 5, Victorian and Edwardian Humour.

<sup>59</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 245.

and bad choices.<sup>60</sup> Correction is made of these characters through over exaggeration resulting in the humour of superiority where the viewing audience are encouraged to feel better about themselves for having clearer understanding of the situation. Noting such disparity reinforced the correct action to be taken.<sup>61</sup>

For the wealthy and indiscrete in society, cartoons depicting them often sought to sabotage their status through ridicule and subversion of authority. The wealthy were mocked for their privileges, and at times cartoons suggest they are not able to fulfil their societal roles. There is a sense that these people should have been in positions of authority, and yet that authority is something that they are seen to visibly abuse in cartoon form.<sup>62</sup> Any authority they might have had, therefore, is subverted through their actions and attitudes. They either misrepresent the ideas and notions of sacrifice or are visibly seen to indulge in the advantages that they would have had before the war even began. This is then a good time to return to Lewis Baumer's image of 'Doing their Bit', which is so often used to represent elements of upper class society not fulfilling their roles in a time of war. Here the occupants of the car are seen to be abusing their pre-war privileges, which combine abuse of privilege with a misinterpreted sense of duty. This visually contradicts notions that suggest the war was a success for the working classes, as here in their representation they remain emaciated and impoverished.<sup>63</sup>

By 1915, the middle to lower classes had experienced some success enlisting and the upper classes equally. Indeed, the upper classes generally held fewer rejections on a

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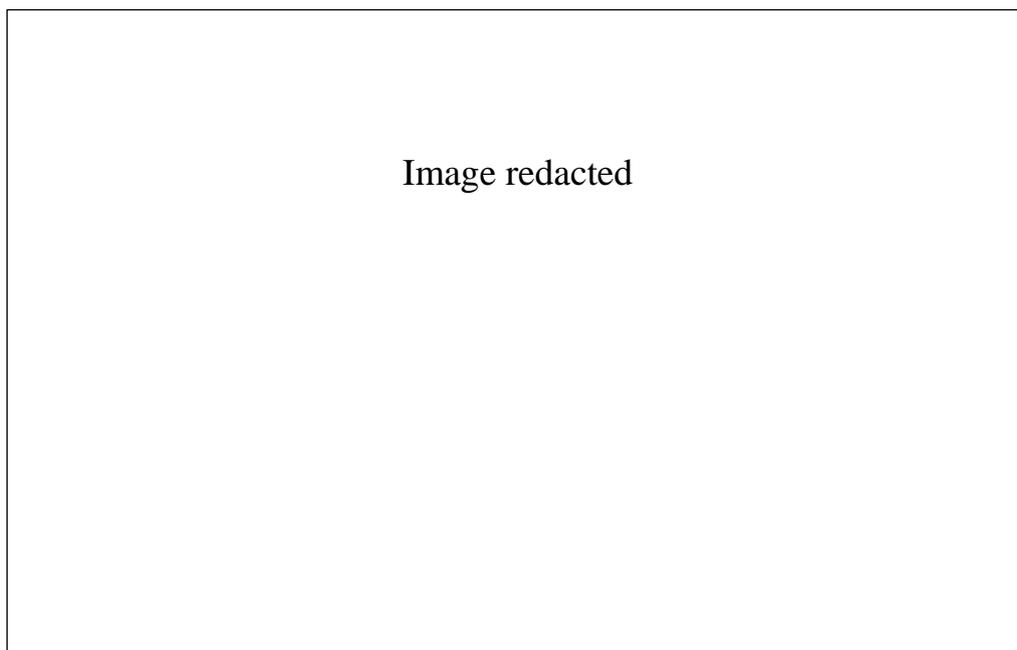
<sup>60</sup> Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', p. 104.

<sup>61</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7; Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*, pp. 21-3.

<sup>62</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*, p. 95; Hofmann, *Leonardo to Picasso*, p. 36.

<sup>63</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 282.

basis of health and ability, making them more prominent among recruits.<sup>64</sup> This in turn, reinforced criticism for those who were not contributing as they should which continued throughout the following years. For Baumer in 1917, ironic humour is used to subvert any authority that the couple in the car might have believed they had. It is clear to the viewer that this couple have excess wealth, and yet they are promoting the idea of not eating bread to help save money for the war. This they promote to an underprivileged community who could not potentially have afforded to buy bread anyway (figure 4.1). The irony of their statement, even though it was a common one, is over-exaggerated to add emphasis to the point.<sup>65</sup> The wealthy may seem to be ‘doing their bit’, but equally, how their personal advantages have helped them to misread the situation completely is clear.



**(Figure 4.1) Lewis Baumer, ‘Doing Their Bit’, *Punch*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917**

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<sup>64</sup> David Silbey, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), p. 45.

<sup>65</sup> See IWM, PST 4470, Watson Hazell and the Ministry of Food, ‘Save the Wheat and Help the Fleet’, 1917; IWM, PST 13354, Unknown Artist and the Ministry of Food, ‘Don’t Waste Bread’, 1917.

The Board of Trade had advised the public about using vehicles in relation to food, in January, July and August of 1917, which adds another layer to the interpretation of this image.<sup>66</sup> For the Board of Trade, it was more that they could commandeer vehicles for their own purposes in order to transport food produce. Perhaps the couple here are trying to avoid that happenstance by using their vehicle to promote restraint. If people eat less, then less needs to be transported, and fewer vehicles would be needed. Throughout this image, there is an awareness that money needs to be saved, although different characters can be identified with different readings of how that should be understood. Transport could be commandeered, but not if it is already being used positively. Eating less bread was promoted nationally through various poster campaigns, so it seems reasonable for the couple to advertise this also.<sup>67</sup> Throughout though, ironic and corrective humour of superiority is clear as the cartoon is designed to inspire emotions of guilt and care for the nation from its audience.

At the start of the war in Britain, more images of the wealthy are present in satirical publications and newspapers alike. Many of these present women in particular as wealthy characters who disregard others around them. Dyson's 'Sacrifice' from 1914, uses ironic humour and such women to make this point. These women remark on the efforts they have made to provide the dogs with the same food as their servants believing this is 'doing their bit' (figure 4.20). The intention is for any viewer who worked for such people to imbue distain upon the pair, for equating domestic service with pets. Those struggling in particular would perceive this as waste.<sup>68</sup> The *Herald*, where the cartoon was published, was a socialist paper and more likely to have been

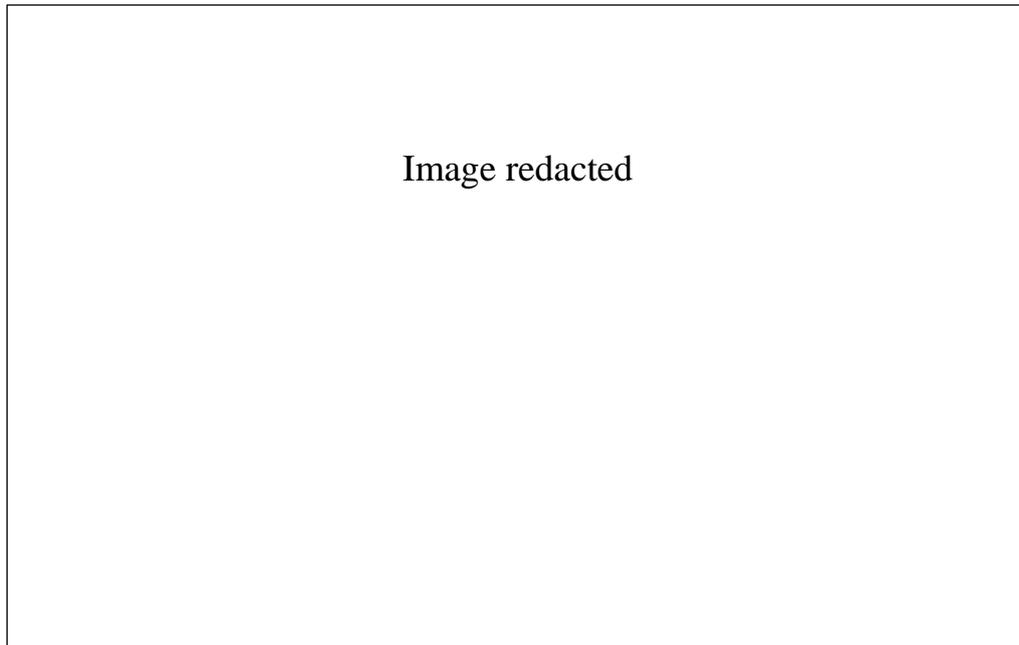
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<sup>66</sup> Cook, *Defence of the Realm Manual*, pp. 55, 77.

<sup>67</sup> See IWM, PST 4470, Hazell, 'Save the Wheat and Help the Fleet', 1917; IWM, PST 13354, Unknown Artist, 'Don't Waste Bread', 1917

<sup>68</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 215.

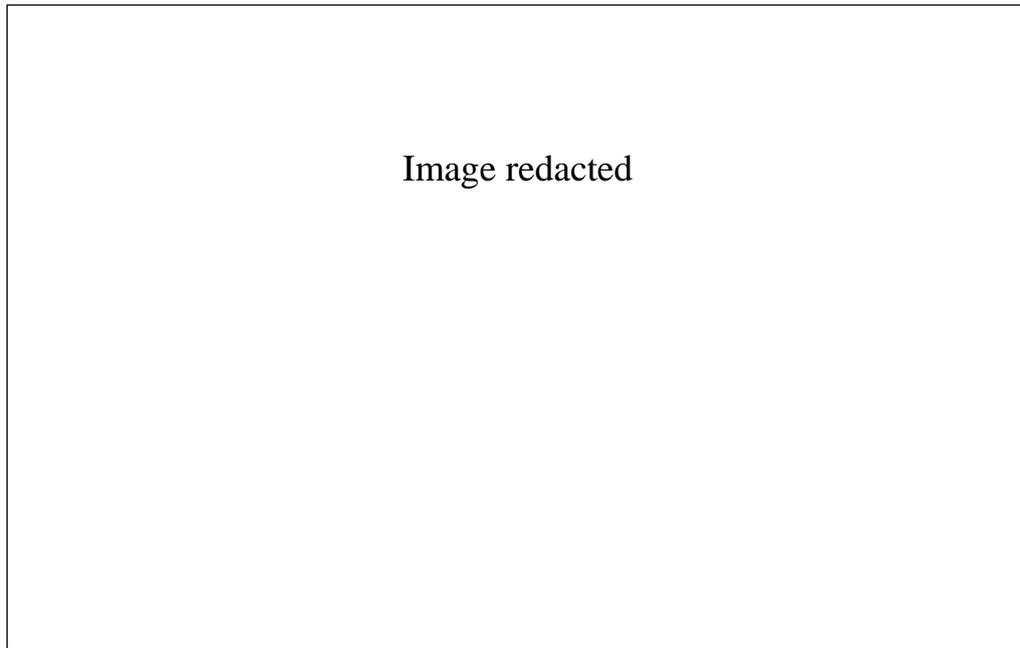
viewed by the workers rather than the wealthy, thereby reinforcing the humour of ridicule this image provides.



**(Figure 4.10) Will Dyson, 'Sacrifice', *Herald*, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1914**

Nonetheless, as the war progressed other publications also utilised similar depictions of wealthy women. *Punch* in early 1918 offers two women again seated discussing their own efforts towards the war. Whilst well dressed and in a comfortable sitting area, these women appear to be outraged that they had been asked what they were doing for the war effort. 'She actually asked me if I didn't think I might be doing something! Me? And I haven't missed a charity matinée for the last three months' (figure 4.21). Once again, the cartoon inspires ridicule for the women, and it offers a corrective lesson intended for that class so that others might not follow suit. Time spent at the matinée in the context of war, even if it is for charity, is deemed an over indulgence, and a pointless activity. Theatrical matinées had their purposes, and many were complimented by and for wounded soldiers in 1918. However, these women are

neither soldier's, nor wounded, therefore their attendance is seen to be ineffectual as a means of helping the war effort.<sup>69</sup>



**(Figure 4.11) Lewis Baumer, 'Indignant War Worker', *Punch*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1918**

Both images without the captions to accompany them do not present humour overtly as in each there are simply two women seated and presumably talking. Class is illustrated through the clothes that define their figures, and are accompanied by decorative jewels and headdresses.<sup>70</sup> Although they are thin, this is seen as a demonstration of their status and personal awareness, and is not an indicator of emaciation as shown for lower class characters. Their postures leaning towards one another indicate speech, or more commonly when women are depicted, implies gossip

<sup>69</sup> Findon, *The Play Pictorial*, 28-33 (1916-19); also see Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 72.

<sup>70</sup> See Frank Hart, 'Goodness Me', *Punch*, October 1914; Will Dyson, 'No More Perversity of the Lower Orders', *Herald*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1915; Starr W, 'How do You Manage to Keep Your Servants So Splendidly?', *London Mail*, 19<sup>th</sup> October 1914.

between the pair.<sup>71</sup> Then finally, their location, although remarkably non-descript, does not suggest a particular place in either image. Nonetheless, it maintains a semblance of their status in society of lush surroundings and comfortable seating. The combination of all of these features within the context of war, and explanations for their presence through added captions are what instil the humour in the image for the viewer to feel superior.

As cartoon images go, these are subtle using the text far more than the image to instigate the ridicule and humour. Other images of wealthy and indiscrete personalities present more visual humour such as ‘Two in Family, Seven Serving’ where the elderly couple are seated at opposite ends of the table with a collection of servants and footmen around them (figure 4.21). Many things can be read into this image, and several layers to the humour. Firstly, the couple depicted are elderly, as are their servants with white hair and protruding stomachs, and so by 1917 they were unlikely to have been called for service in the army. This is even despite the conscription bills of 1916 that called up older men.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, no direct comparison to soldiers can be made, although reference may be drawn to their lack of sacrifice in wartime.<sup>73</sup> A single couple would not have needed three and a half servants each for a meal, and these men do not appear to be fulfilling any significant role.

The humour is apparent in layers, through the over-emphasis of the couple having seven servants which draws instant ridicule. Further to this, the servants are presented with an air of arrogance through their upturned noses and self-important stature. As such, the audience is asked to see the incongruity of the situation of having so many

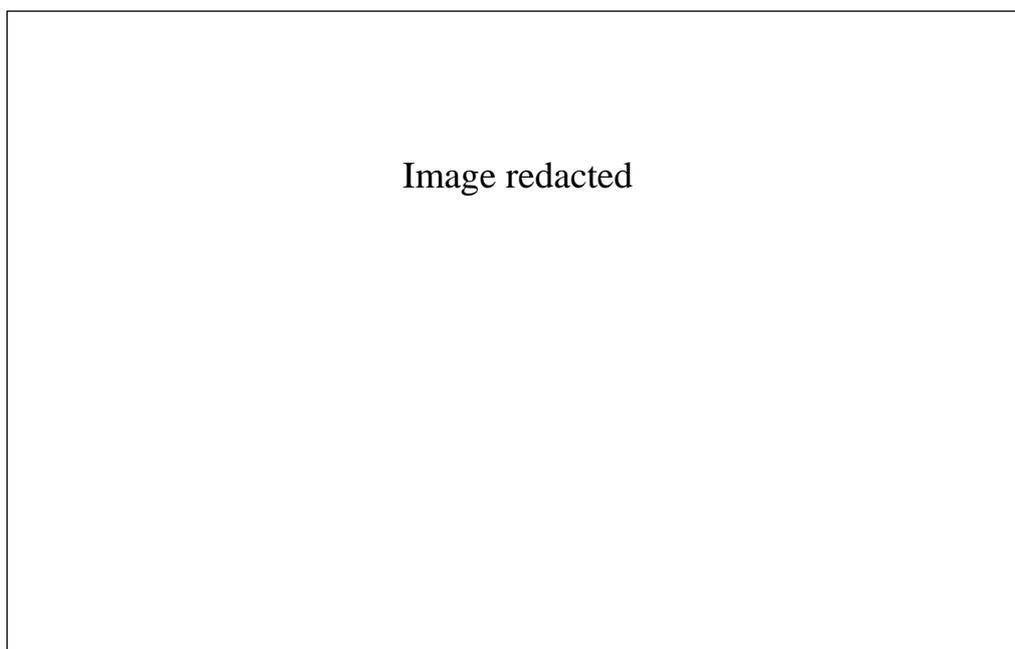
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<sup>71</sup> Gregory, ‘War, Laughter and Women’.

<sup>72</sup> See Keith Grieves, *The Politics of Manpower, 1914-1918* (Manchester: MUP, 1988), pp. 166-7; House of Commons, ‘Military Service (No. 2) Bill’, (London: HMSO, 1916).

<sup>73</sup> Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, pp. 104-132; Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*, p. 38.

servants in wartime, which is not necessary, and are encouraged to ridicule the wealthy couple for their visible excess. This image was created in response to what was publically seen as a ‘scandal of inflated domestic staffs’ that had ‘continued unabated’ despite the onset and progression of war.<sup>74</sup> The perception of the wealthy who continued to employ more servants than they needed is exaggerated within the cartoon offering insight to public opinions and civilian issues. For some being employed would certainly have been useful, whereas for others, such excess was simply abhorrent.



**(Figure 4.12) Poy, ‘Two in Family Seven Serving’, *Evening News*, 1917**

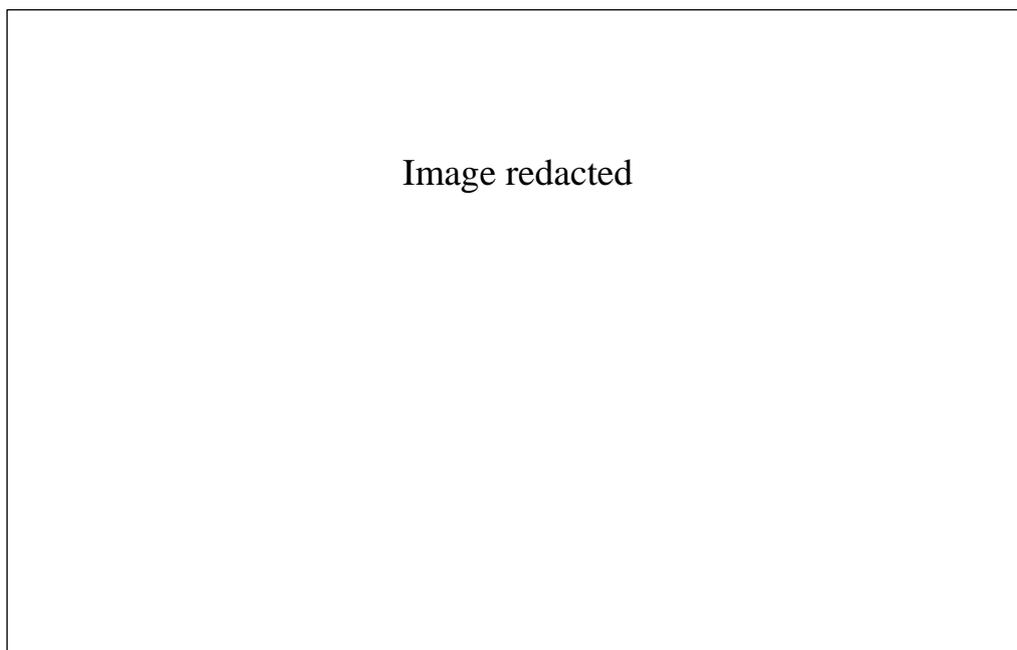
Haselden also presents instantly visual humour when he discusses the differences of before and after the war. In ‘At the Theatre Then and Now’, there is a clear sense of class distinction and how these matters had significantly altered with the progression of the war.<sup>75</sup> In the first image there is a collection of men and women of the upper classes settled at the theatre waiting for something to happen, and commenting on the

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<sup>74</sup> ‘Profiteers’, *Saturday Review*, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1918, p. 254

<sup>75</sup> Hofmann, *Leonardo to Picasso*, p. 38.

one man who does not appear as formally dressed as the rest. Then in the second part of the diptych, there is a complete reverse, with full variety of class and position in the audience. These include nurses, soldiers, and men in slightly tacky suits and the one man to appear in black tie is commented upon (figure 4.22). The comparisons for costume are instantly visible, and play on the element of class distinctions and formality, using incongruity of the ‘odd man out’ to create the humour. In the second part of the image, there is a distinct sense of society becoming more varied as the war progresses, which almost balance the classes out. In conjunction with this, many aspects of trade and the distribution of wealth in society was altering significantly.<sup>76</sup> Yet, even so, mockery of class and superiority is instilled in the characters represented for their criticisms of any man wearing the wrong outfit.



**(Figure 4.13) William Haselden, ‘At the theatre Then and Now’, *Daily Mirror*,  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 1918**

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<sup>76</sup> See Martin Daunton, *Wealth and Welfare: An Economic and Social History of Britain, 1851-1951* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 2007), pp. 232-33.

There are subtle distinctions between the wealthy and the profiteer, both of whom have money, but much of the discrepancy is represented through their style of dress and posture, which carries over from Victorian ideals.<sup>77</sup> The wealthy, are effectually the established money of society, and those who have had it for longer, whereas, the profiteer is generally ‘new money’. To generalise, this is represented through their visual intelligence, old money, can be large and lethargic, but still hold an awareness of duty even when they do not fulfil it as seen in Baumer’s ‘Doing their Bit’ (figure 4.1). Some might say that having had money for so long they were so far detached from the rest of society that there was no way that they could demonstrably assist, which follows many of the ideas promoted by Oscar Wilde through his literary depictions of his ‘contemporaries’.<sup>78</sup> In contrast, the profiteer’s intelligence is more underhand and manipulative, these characters are happy to harm others in favour of their own prospects such as Dyson’s ‘Rent and Duty’ (figure 4.9). Physically the difference is lethargy compared to an agile mind, and a rotund size, in comparison to a more commonly taller person wearing darker, sombre clothing.

### Pacifists and Cowards

One further set of characters who are visibly seen doing the wrong thing in wartime cartoons are the pacifists and cowards. The term ‘pacifist’ was one generally applied to such people by the press, as few would have used it themselves. More often people with a pacifist outlook referred to themselves as conscientious objectors, which was also denigrated by the press and public into ‘conchies’. In cartoon, they are also created

<sup>77</sup> See Breward, ‘Clothing the Middle-Class Male’, pp. 110-25.

<sup>78</sup> Boyd and McWilliam (eds.), ‘Introduction’, in *Victorian Studies Reader*, p. 6.

through use of over-emphasis of visual icons for didactic purposes. The pacifist was commonly viewed with derision in contrast to the gallant soldier. Where, for the public, the soldier sacrificed all to fight, the pacifist avoided that sacrifice in favour of self-preservation. Most pacifists were created out of moral or conscientious objections to conflict be that because of faith, or design. Many were Quakers, yet these men despite their objections to fighting would often contribute toward the war in other ways as ambulance drivers or care workers wherever possible, and the press openly recognised this.<sup>79</sup> At the start of the war, there was the suggestion that the majority of the populace moved ‘from passivity, through pacifism to patriotism’.<sup>80</sup> Alongside this, many born Quakers enlisted along with the rest of the youthful male populace.<sup>81</sup> Those, whose beliefs outweighed the need for combat absolutely, were often placed in jail, and it is from these irregular events that much of the modern perception about pacifists is created.<sup>82</sup>

Lasting Victorian and Edwardian ideas about men were synonymous with strength, prestige and power. Different images of manliness were combined behind an almost violent front depicting that power, and this continued into the war years.<sup>83</sup> When shown in propaganda posters and early war cartoons, soldiers have strength and

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<sup>79</sup> ‘Quakers and the War’, *Birmingham Mail*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914, p. 3; ‘Quakers at the Front’, *Western Daily Press*, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p. 5; ‘Outspoken Quaker’, *Liverpool Echo*, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1915, p. 6; ‘The Quakers’, *Manchester Evening News*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1916, p. 5.

<sup>80</sup> Ian Beckett, ‘The Nation in Arms’, in Ian Beckett and Keith Simpson (eds.), *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War* (Manchester: Pen and Sword, 1985), p. 7; also see L. L. Farrar, ‘Reluctant Warriors: Public Opinion on War during the July Crisis 1914’, *East European Quarterly*, 16:4 (1983), pp. 417-446.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas C. Kennedy, *British Quakerism, 1860-1920: The Transformation of a Religious Community* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 2001), p. 313.

<sup>82</sup> Rebecca Wynter, “‘Go Anywhere, Do Anything’: The Friends Ambulance Unit, 1914-1919”, at Gateways to the First World War, ‘Gateways to Civilian Service’, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Chatham, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015; Cyril Pearce, ‘Rethinking the British Anti-War Movement 1914-1918: Notes from a Local Study’, *Quaker Studies*, 7:1 (2002), pp. 52-3.

<sup>83</sup> Joe Maguire, ‘Images of Manliness and Competing Ways of Living in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain’, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3:3 (1986), p. 265.

courage as part of the fighting forces or general war effort.<sup>84</sup> The pacifist, in contrast is a thin man with bowed legs who has either a feather, a dove or, more commonly, a flower in his hat emasculating him. He is often badly dressed, with ill-fitting clothes that highlight his diminutive form. Cartoonists often depict them as fops and fools, men who are weak and clearly inferior to the rest of society. An image designed specifically to negate ideals of power and strength for these characters.

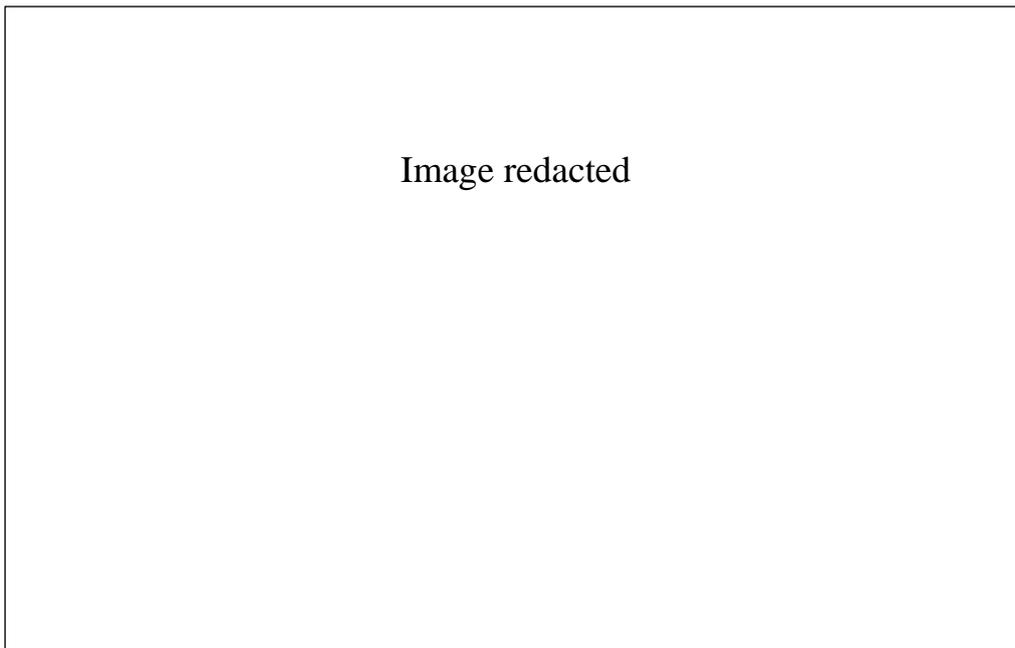
This is particularly true of the young pacifist who is able to fight, while older men are also pacifists with particularly long beards, to disguise their features and create anonymity (see figure 4.14). They are often positioned in innocuous places such as on a bus or train, but even when the visual iconography does not identify them, the textual accompaniment generally does.<sup>85</sup> Further to this, through these depictions of pacifists as weak and effeminate characters, humour is added constantly to their portrayal so that they and their moral concerns could not be taken seriously. Such humorous representation in cartoons helped to reinforce the developing idea of weakness, as when humour is added, it 'enhances the amount of attention paid' to that character or idea.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> IWM, PST 0314, unknown artist and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, 'Who's Absent?', 1915; for more details about the progress of soldiers in cartoons through the war, see chapter 4.

<sup>85</sup> See Unknown Artist, 'I Should Think Last Night's Raid Was the Worst We've Had Yet', *Punch*, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1918, p. 124.

<sup>86</sup> Strick et al., 'Humour in Advertising', p. 33.



**(Figure 4.14) Poy, ‘The Pacifists and the Pup’, *Daily Mail*, 1917**

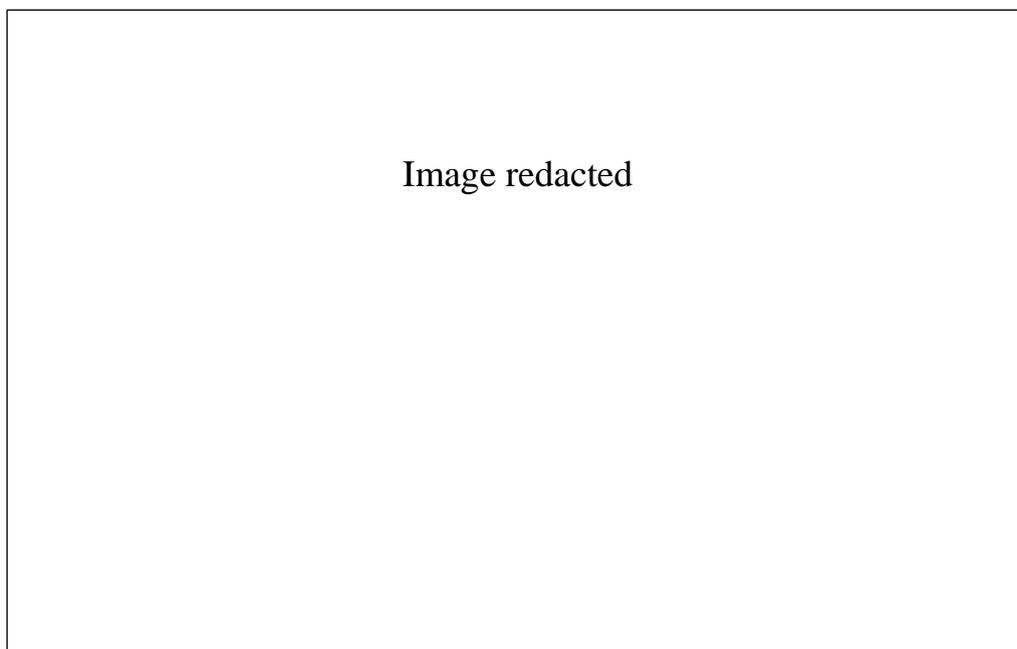
Another form of emasculation is offered when presenting pacifists described as ‘Social Lepers’, a term applied by Cardiff City Alderman, Illyd Thomas at a meeting for the Cardiff Secondary Schools Committee in 1916 which is captioned alongside the image.<sup>87</sup> In this cartoon, the man is physically capable of becoming a soldier, but there is open accusation from the public around him, denouncing his position (figure 4.16). The young boy behind him describes him as a ‘conshus ejecter’, comically misinterpreting the term ‘conscientious objector’, while the older man looking back at him from the right of the image remarks that he ‘ought to be hanged’. The boy may have it aright that he conscientiously objects to war but the response of the other man seems extreme, although it could be from an unacknowledged source.

The ridicule felt by the man in the centre of the image is presented through his stance most specifically. He wears a suit and fur coat that might ordinarily suggest some

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<sup>87</sup> See *Western Mail*, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1916.

wealth behind him and call for respect, yet this is negated by his hunched posture. The styling of his clothes in contrast to others in the image would suggest bad taste or a lack of breeding for the character, which instantly results in superiority humour for the audience. The sense that he feels he may be doing something wrong is expressed through the guilty expression on his face reaffirming his physical stance. Although that could simply be a response to being consistently harangued by others around him. This denigration is further reinforced by the advertisement in the background of the image calling for an ‘assistant master’ at the school, where ‘conscientious objectors need not apply’.



**(Figure 4.16) J. M. Staniforth, ‘The Social Leper’, *Western Mail*, 7<sup>th</sup> October**

**1916**

Alongside pacifist representations, many traditional icons are used to identify these characters. Taken from biblical and Christian ideals, this explains the common use of the dove and olive leaf most clearly. Icons of peace were regular features in a

predominantly Church of England society, and their meaning was established in that community.<sup>88</sup> Vast proportions of literate Victorian society had learnt to read using the Bible, so its icons and metaphors were easily comprehended in the early twentieth century when transposed into cartoon.<sup>89</sup> The dove, for example, was synonymous with peace and the Christian faith, as such; all members of society regardless of class or their chosen denomination could recognise it.<sup>90</sup>

Pacifists are frequently depicted with doves of peace and in this way, the icon is moralised, and yet just as easily, the accompanying character has their meaning inverted. The concept of war, for most Christians was a feature of evil within society, or at the very least, was caused by a malevolent foe.<sup>91</sup> Christianity obliged most to aid the nation, and offer what they could to help everyone combat that enemy.<sup>92</sup> However, when the dove that would usually represent a peaceful resolution was identified with the pacifist, the meaning of it becomes altered. It is no longer a comfort, but rather a sign of waste as pacifists were ‘seen’ to be campaigning against conflict, in the public, and press mind.

The cartoonist only has the potential to alter public perceptions if their cartoons are understood as they intend them to be, which can rarely be assessed definitively.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> John Wolffe, *God and Greater Britain: Religion and National Life in Britain and Ireland, 1843-1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 64.

<sup>89</sup> Timothy Larsen, *A People of One Book: The Bible and the Victorians* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), p. 4.

<sup>90</sup> George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 1959), p. 15; Janina Ramirez, ‘The Symbolic Life of Birds in Anglo-Saxon England’, PhD thesis, University of York, 2006, pp. 25-60.

<sup>91</sup> ‘Christian Ethics and War’, *Manchester Guardian*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914, p. 3; Hunt Tooley, *The Great War: Western Front and Home Front*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 57.

<sup>92</sup> ‘Nonconformists Enlist! A Call by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll’, *Daily Record*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup> Lachlan Moyle, ‘Drawing Conclusions: An Imagological Survey of Britain and the British and Germany and the Germans in German and British Cartoons and Caricatures, 1945-2000’, PhD thesis, Universität Osnabrück, Osnabrück, 2004, p. 69; Christopher Wilson, *Jokes: Form, Content, Use and Function* (London and New York: Psychological Academic Press, 1979), p. 201.

Charles Press suggests that '[s]ymbols have only the content that artists put into them', however, they also have received content and value from the audience and society in which they are viewed.<sup>94</sup> Thus, the audience applies their own contextual knowledge to the images they see. Where the non-fulfilment of social duty has been observed in pacifists, this idea is then applied to the cartoonist's image. Therefore, where icons such as the dove may traditionally be a peaceful Christian symbol, in the context of war, many audience members will invert its meaning. It can be seen as an ironic statement, regardless of the artist's intention as the audience will associate their own meanings with the icon.<sup>95</sup>

Another icon related to the dove, and used to represent the pacifist, or more commonly the coward in society, was the feather. A peaceful feather when white served to imply cowardice. It was used through white feather campaigns provoked mainly by women under the instruction of military personnel during the war.<sup>96</sup> Most of the campaigns that can be traced were begun early in the war, such as that implemented by Admiral Penrose Fitzgerald in Folkestone.<sup>97</sup> However, ideas of white feathers have become exaggerated since the war. To some extent, this is because they featured in the memoirs collated by the BBC in 1964.<sup>98</sup> Memories of the White Feather Brigade and Order of the White Feather, therefore, need to be considered carefully as Nicoletta Gullace has done.<sup>99</sup> The idea of the feather as an icon of pacifism, and more so, of cowardice, remains regardless of the actuality of its use.

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<sup>94</sup> Press, *Political Cartoon*, p. 227.

<sup>95</sup> See Ramirez, 'Symbolic Life of Birds', pp. 25-60; Lawrence Streicher, 'On a Theory of Political Caricature', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 9:4 (1967), p. 429.

<sup>96</sup> See Gullace, *Blood of Our Sons*, pp. 73-98; Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men', pp. 178-206; Marwick, *Deluge*, p. 90.

<sup>97</sup> 'Women's War: White Feathers for "Slackers"', *Daily Mail*, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1914, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> BBC, 'The Great War: BBC Series' (1964).

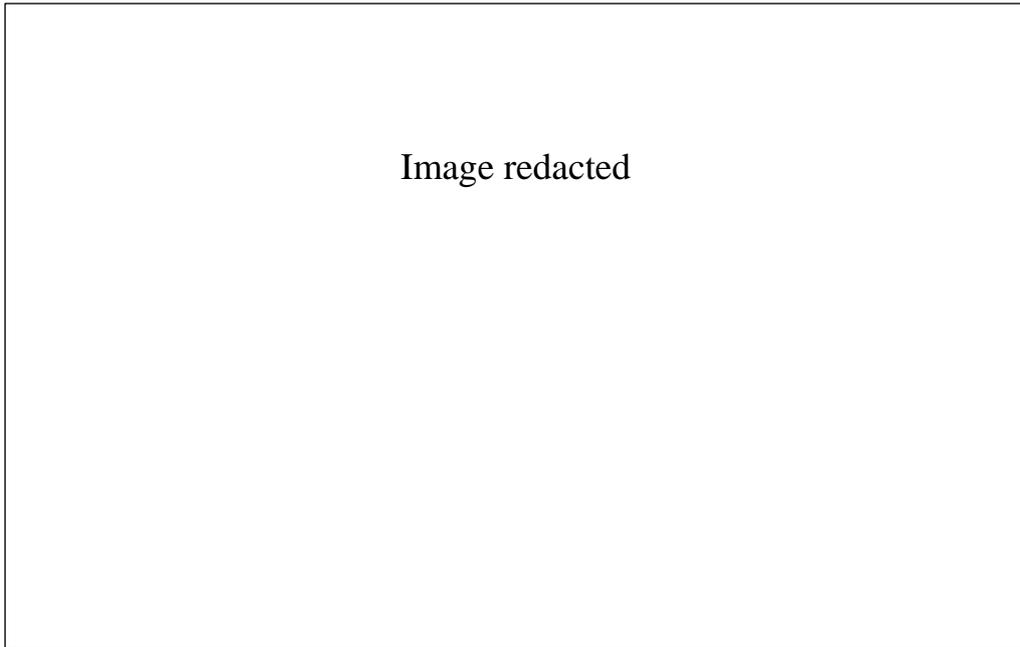
<sup>99</sup> Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men', pp. 178-206.

In cartoon images, its use is limited, suggesting that it had far less prevalence for the media than might be assumed. Several images offer feathers as symbolic icons when worn in pacifists' hats, but these are subtle identification. They are not used to reinforce ideas of cowardice, but merely to hint at it. For cartoonists like Haselden, the white feather is discussed in some of his cartoons, such as 'Looks and Age', or 'Why are You Not in Khaki?' In these images, rather than it becoming a large and direct icon, the male characters discuss the feather itself. Haselden was notorious for commenting on the passing fancies of the day rather than becoming embroiled in politics specifically, and these images can be seen as a reflection on that nature.<sup>100</sup> Even though the feather is the leading contingent of the stories presented in both image series, it is not an enlarged physical feature, but remains subtle, mostly through the embedded text.

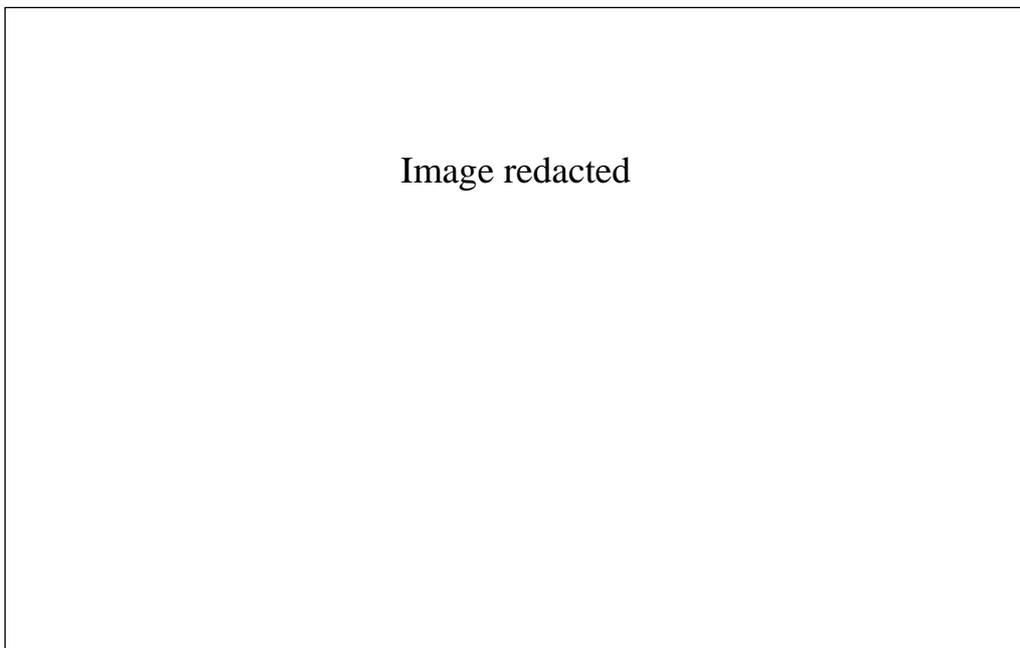
The inference in both images is that the contemporary viewer would have identified the relevance of such an icon, and that little more needed to be said of it in order to create the joke. Commercial memories created through the sales of newspapers and cartoon images within them would aid that recognition and public understanding of the implications about the white feather and its contemporary value. Both of these images offer men not being accused of cowardice, and they appear to be unhappy about it, because the public has misidentified their age or marital status (figures 4.17 and 4.18). The feather is always associated with a patriotic female character that misidentifies them. Nonetheless, the man's age and vanity are the main causes of misidentification and, therefore, create the incongruous humour.

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<sup>100</sup> Hiley, "'A New and Vital Moral Factor'", p. 148; BCA, *William Kerridge Haselden Biography* < <http://www.cartoons.ac.uk/artists/william-kerridgehaselden/biography> > [Accessed from 01/2012].

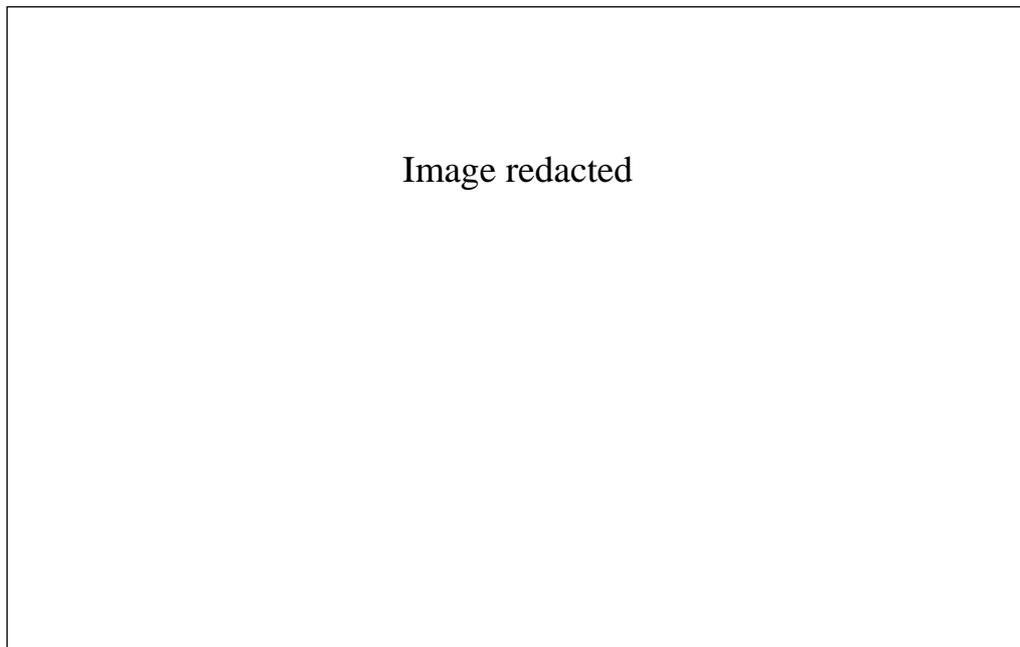


**(Figure 4.17) William Haselden, 'Looks and Age, A recruiting dilemma', *Daily Mirror*, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1915**



**(Figure 4.18) William Haselden, 'Why are You Not in Khaki?', *Daily Mirror*, 8<sup>th</sup> August 1918**

Finally, the pacifist also needs to be considered for the impression the public had of them towards the end of war. Poy depicts a collection of pacifists surrounding some graffiti advertising peace in 1918. These pacifists fit with traditional stereotypes seen in other war cartoons of the effeminate men with ill-fitting clothes, and flowers in their hats. Each of them are labelled to ensure rapid recognition for the reader (figure 4.19). The most interesting feature of this cartoon, however, is its perception of public feeling. The writing on the wall is clearly graffiti, not framed within a formal announcement poster, but roughly scribbled. Additionally, the caption defines this text as the writing of 'rude boys'. The implication is that although this might be a public desire, it is seen here as a taunt rather than a definitive thing. As such, it mocks the pacifists, potentially reflecting on public feeling towards them.



**(Figure 4.19) Poy, 'Rude Boys' Writings', *Daily Mail*, 1918**

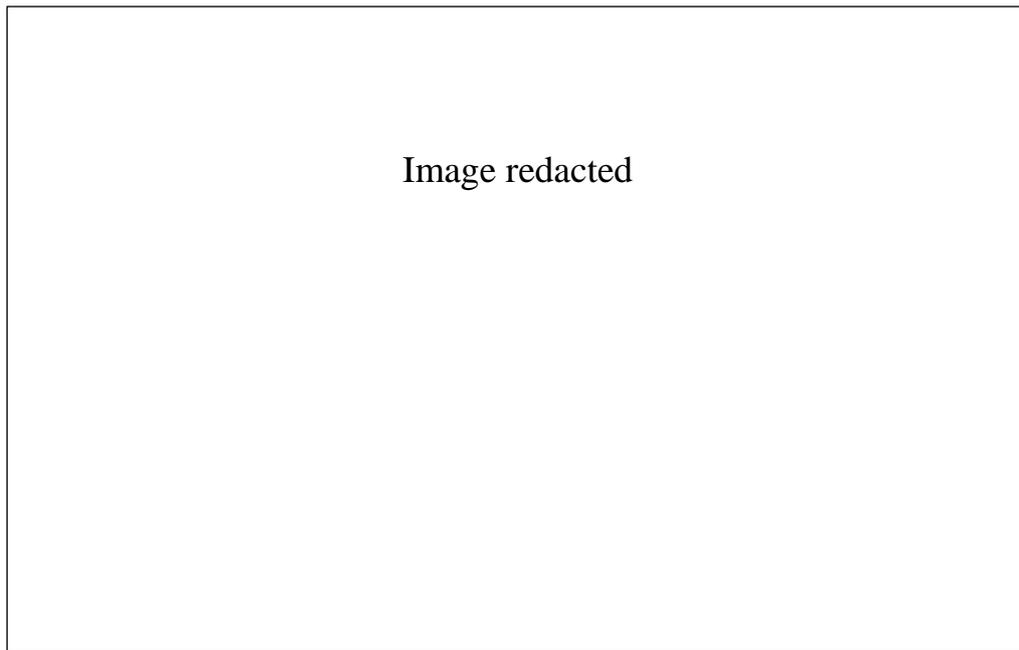
Another character in cartoon that became tantamount to being a coward was that of Poy's Cuthbert the rabbit who as the war progresses becomes a depiction of anyone

not playing their part appropriately.<sup>101</sup> The first illustration of Cuthbert featured in the *Evening News* on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 1916. Thereafter he became a consistent character in both the *Evening News* and *Daily Mail* throughout 1917. His first appearance is in a map of London's 'funk holes' that a number of rabbits can be seen diving into (figure 4.20). These rabbits are not identified specifically as Cuthbert at this stage, but later replications of the character by the same artist make his presence among this number clear. Cowardice rapidly becomes equated with Cuthbert. In this image, each of the 'funk holes' identified are important places such as the Houses of Commons and War Office, where the rabbits jumping into them are labelled as being 'eligible' for service. One might assume that is precisely from what they are hiding. An association is also made with those who sought safety in Parliament rather than going to war, although it would seem to disregard the average age of politicians. However, by October 1916, conscription had made it possible for older men to be called to service, yet exemptions still happened, particularly for those in Parliament.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Bryant, 'Fearon, Percy Hutton [*pseud.* Poy] (1874–1948)'; BCA, PF0001-0842, uncatalogued Percy Fearon, '*Poy*' *Cartoon Scrap Book*, 1916-17, 'Do you Know of a Better 'Ole?', 1917; Poy, 'The Foundlings', 1917; Poy, 'The Great Roundup', *Evening News*, 1917.

<sup>102</sup> See House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 25<sup>th</sup> April 1918, vol. 105 cc. 1135w; House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1918, vol. 105 cc. 20-2.



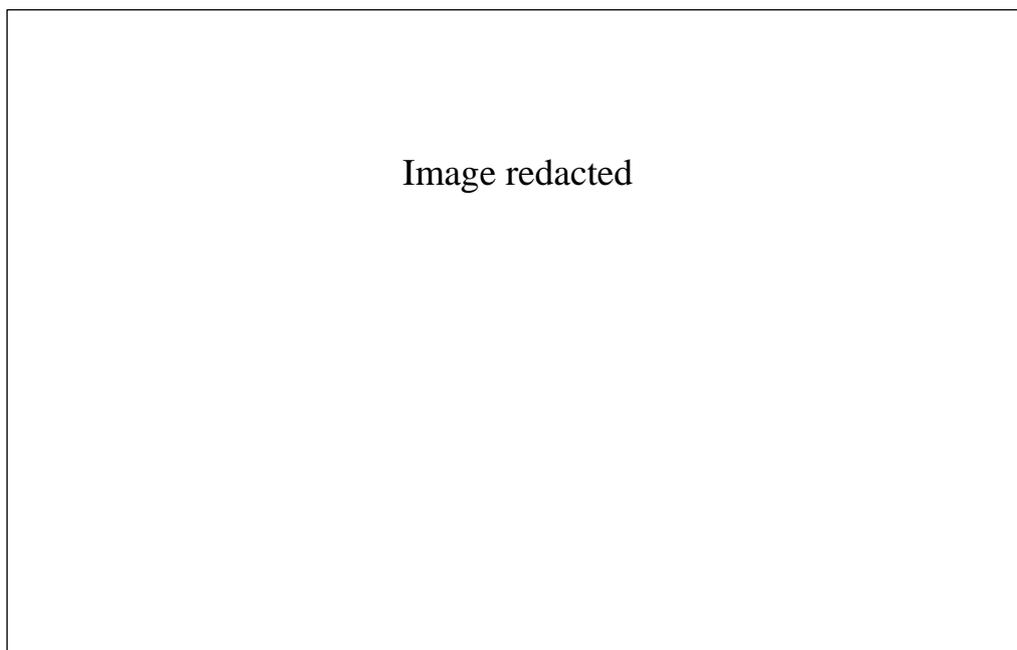
**(Figure 4.20) Poy, ‘Sketch Map of the Funk Hole of London’, *Evening News*,  
27<sup>th</sup> October 1916**

Cuthbert appears frequently throughout 1917 sometimes, hiding in forests, burrows beneath the ground and even in shops.<sup>103</sup> His cowardice is reinforced as he deposits a collection of young rabbits on the door of the ‘recruiting office’ while he sneaks away (figure 4.21). This image was published in conjunction with conscription and particularly when exemptions were restricted. There is a sense of the public as further rabbits in the background complimenting his actions and how ‘that ought to satisfy them!’, “them” being the authorities. The over-exaggeration of the action reaffirms moral misdemeanour in giving children away, yet at the same time the age labels they wear contradict it. Furthermore, it corresponds to the situation of war where many civilians would identify with this action of giving their children away.

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<sup>103</sup> BCA, PF0001-0842, Percy Fearon, *‘Poy’ Cartoon Scrap Book*, 1916-17, Poy, ‘The Enchanted Wood’, 1917; Poy, ‘Do You Know of a Better ‘Ole’, 1917; Poy, ‘Tramp Tramp Tramp the Boys are Marching’, 1917; Poy, ‘Calling alphabetically’, 1917; Poy, ‘At the Cross roads’, 1917; Poy, ‘Those one-and-nine Rabbits’ 1917.

The rabbits left at the recruiting office are notably smaller than Cuthbert running away, and in such a manner, his cowardice is reaffirmed as he performs an action that for most would be reprehensible. Yet the character can get away with it, he is not human, and as such, his actions do not demand the same moral obligations as human characters would. As a counter to this, however, Cuthbert leaving his ‘children’ at the office aligns with the notion of ‘patriotic motherhood’ that was rampant at the start of the war, where mothers would actively send their son’s away to fight.<sup>104</sup> In addition, all of these ‘children’ are of age, whether they appear to be so or not. By 1917, this image of ‘patriotic motherhood’, however, was less prevalent, and potentially leaves a question about Cuthbert’s motives for the viewer, which can be answered with the humour, or ridicule of calling him a coward.



**(Figure 4.21) Poy, ‘The Foundlings’, *Evening News*, 1917**

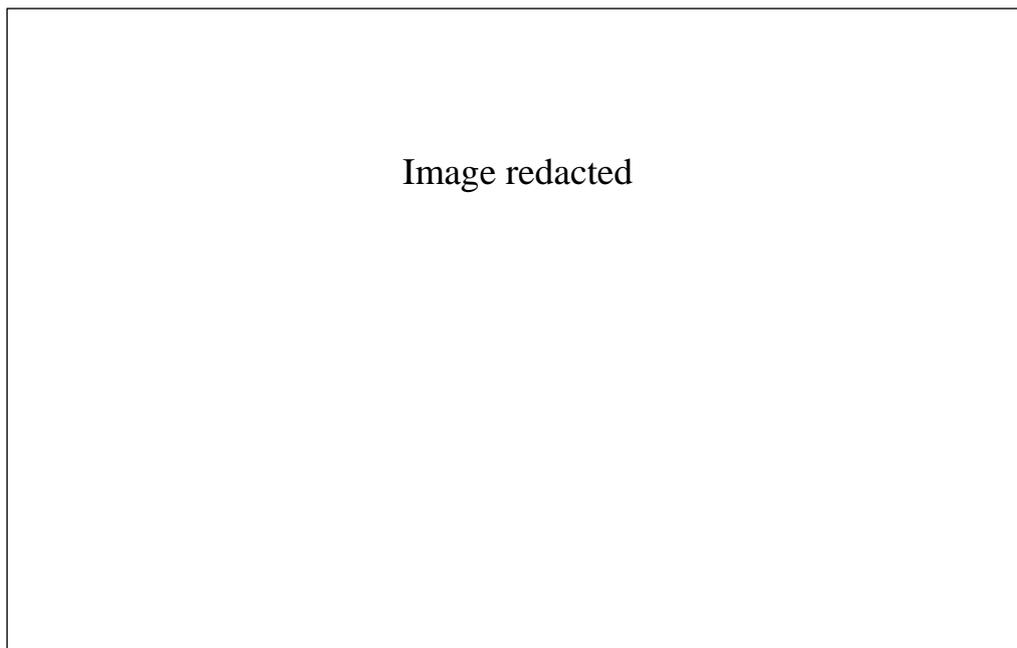
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<sup>104</sup> Gullace, *Blood of Our Sons*, p. 196; IWM, PST 2763, Kealy. ‘Women of Britain Say Go’, 1915; IWM, PST 5109, Kemp-Welch, ‘Remember Scarborough’, 1915.

Later depictions of Cuthbert show him growing in confidence. ‘The Foundlings’ presents a marginally uncertain Cuthbert looking back over his shoulders which are hunched as he leaves the children behind, yet later images such as ‘By Jove’, ‘I Love It!’, and ‘How’s Your Father?’ from the *Evening News* present a far more confident character seated comfortably in positions of authority. In ‘I Love It!’ a highly contented Cuthbert is seated in an oversized armchair labelled ‘Civil Service’ where he comfortably rests with his eyes closed while two older men walk past his window (figure 4.22). These men are identified in other Cuthbert images as uncle, daddy or grandpa reinforcing the Military Service Act allowing opportunity for older and married men.<sup>105</sup> He merrily comments on how no one would chide him ‘for loving that old arm-chair’ presenting an incongruity of the older men not being allowed to rest in said armchair but being sent away to war. Once again through this image the over-exaggeration is what develops the humour, but it is once more done with an element of pathos as the audience is encouraged to feel sympathy for those who are being sent away to fight either as youngsters in the ‘Foundlings’ or here as older men. There is a clear reflection on 1917 society in the midst of conscription demands in these images. The instigation of conscription that called upon young and old alike meant that the population was rapidly diminishing.

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<sup>105</sup> See Beckett, ‘Nation in Arms’, p. 14.



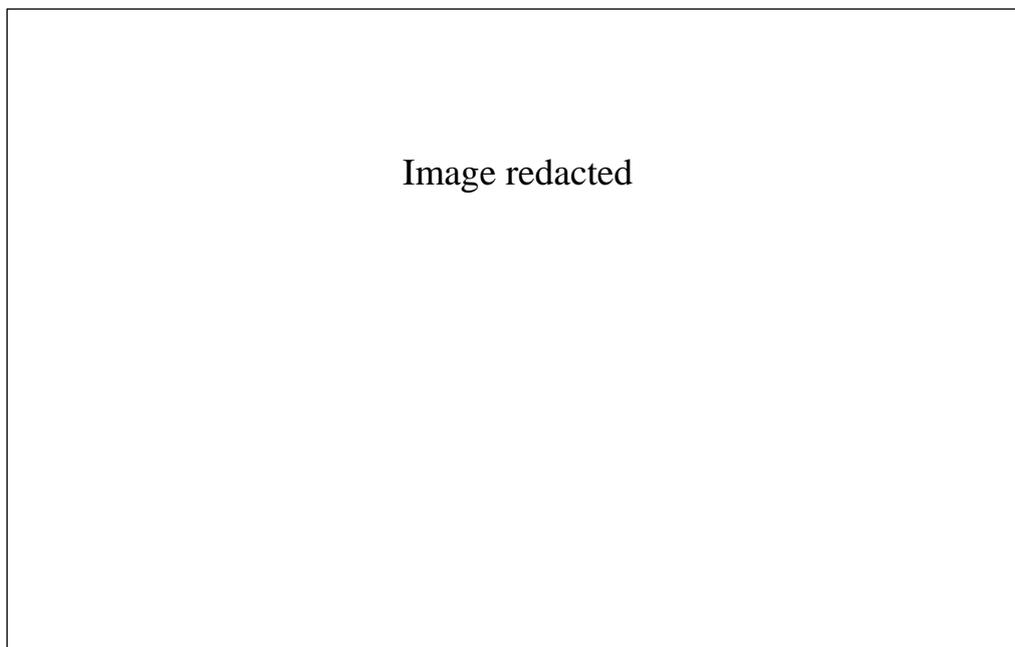
**(Figure 4.22) Poy, 'I Love It!', *Evening News*, 1917**

Cuthbert taking advantage of his position is further reinforced when he is depicted sharing a boiled egg with Douglas Haig (figure 4.23). Here again the question of age is raised to demonstrate how Cuthbert should be criticised. In earlier examples, he is often presented wearing a label to indicate his age in the mid-twenties, whereas, in 'His War Rations' the age label is on the egg that they are sharing. This egg is '45 years old', and by this time Poy speaks of his character as all men within the 'Cuthbert school' who believe that some 'p- p- parts of it are excellent'. Thereby, the problem of manpower should be resolved by raising 'the age limit' again. The use of Haig in this position was intentional, as he had continued to call for more men throughout the war, and believed that by May 1917, their continued presence had a 'wearing down character' upon the enemy.<sup>106</sup> As such, it is not unreasonable to see the general here discussing the issue of manpower and considering raising the age limit at this time.

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<sup>106</sup> See Grievess, *Politics of Manpower*, pp. 158-9.

Although it must be observed how the age was not specifically raised until April 1918.<sup>107</sup>



**(Figure 4.23) Poy, 'His War Rations', *Evening News*, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1917**

Although images such as these do not specifically subvert the authorities that called for conscription, they can appear critical of them to a degree, and certainly encourage the viewer to reconsider the situations for themselves. Criticism is open to interpretation by different audiences through these images. Sometimes it can appear that criticism is directed solely at Cuthbert and his ability to hide and avoid participation in the war. Alternatively, readings of the full collection of these images can direct criticism towards government authorities for implementing the need for conscription. Another reading might criticise the manner in which the legislation has been written allowing for so many loopholes that have allowed Cuthbert to essentially avoid the war.

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<sup>107</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, p. 294.

Despite his less than conspicuous start, and his process into the realms of notoriety as a coward, Cuthbert became a popular favourite with Poy, as can be seen through his frequent use of the character in variable situations. He was a character that rapidly adapted back and forth into one that the public might comprehend and sympathise with one day (figure 4.21) to a character that was far more politically influenced and designed to be mistrusted the next (figure 4.22). In both situations, he frequently held a corrective position through the humour he inspired by informing the public of what they were advised not to do. Nonetheless, he was also popular with the public as following the Great War ‘Cuthbert’ found its way into the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a slang term meaning ‘a government employee or officer shirking military service’.<sup>108</sup>

There are also reports of Cuthbert going on sale in London as a toy highly anticipated by children in 1917 that would potentially ‘surpass the popularity of the Teddy bear’.<sup>109</sup> The idea of there being a ‘Cuthbert’ toy as described by the *Aberdeen Evening Express*, may simply have been a joke about a comical character. However, there is further evidence, on a less commercial scale, to suggest that many of these toys were made, and were indeed popular. The Women’s Institute (WI) in Sussex made the toys enthusiastically as reported in the *Spectator*.<sup>110</sup> Although sales revenues are not explicit here, and often the WI would make toys for children’s comfort and not for sale. It would seem from this article that the toys were immensely widespread. However, reasons why this character specifically was turned into a toy are unclear.

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<sup>108</sup> Bryant, ‘Fearon, Percy Hutton [*pseud.* Poy] (1874–1948)’.

<sup>109</sup> ‘Sidelights on the War: “Cuthbert” in Toyland’, *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1917, p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> ‘Sussex Soft Toys’, *Spectator*, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1917, pp. 9-10.

Cuthbert was initially the slacker, and surely not something a mother would want to encourage her child to be, and particularly not during the war, and in light of ‘patriotic motherhood’.<sup>111</sup> It was reported that the WI also made other toy animals, and thereby a rabbit is effectively just given a name regardless of the implications behind it. Yet this rabbit was advertised publically as Cuthbert, and there is indication that he sold as such too. Nonetheless, despite WI archives of patterns and reports, few actual rabbits still exist today suggesting that he was not the success anticipated as a toy.<sup>112</sup> There were unsubstantiated reports among the WI that a particular lady took offence to Cuthbert and rounded up and destroyed as many of the toys as possible. Even so, that the news speaks of him in such terms suggests something of the public response to this character more generally. In terms of humour, making him into a toy for children may have initially been a joke, but it seems that somewhere along the way the punch line was obscured.

The pacifist image, alike to the profiteer fits into what in 1923 John Greig, called a ‘truism’ of parody, where exaggeration can go one of two ways, ‘upwards or downwards’, making a thing look better or worse than it really is. It is also part of this truism that ‘it is only the latter, which excites laughter’; things are only funny when they are made to look worse than they are, through a downward exaggeration of specific features.<sup>113</sup> Both the profiteer and pacifist are made to appear far worse than they might naturally be. An over-emphasis of size is used for both characters, although to opposing extremes and further icons of profit or peace are located on or around these characters reinforce their actions and guide the viewer’s response.<sup>114</sup> Other characters

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<sup>111</sup> Gullace, *Blood of Our Sons*, p. 196.

<sup>112</sup> See email correspondence with Louise Jennings, Hattie Parish and Clare Spender, (WI, Surrey), 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

<sup>113</sup> Greig, *Psychology of Laughter*, pp. 181-2.

<sup>114</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 26-7.

within images further reinforce pacifist or profiteering natures for the viewer, and exaggerate them negatively for the sake of humour.<sup>115</sup>

### Conclusion

By focusing on a few specific groups of easy targets in the context of war, it has been demonstrated how cartoon humour was consistently used to subvert perceived authorities as the war progressed. The wealthy are seen to hold authority through money and their innate class in society, and authority was given to those who had made money in the run up to the war as well. Pacifists equally held a semblance of moral authority in a Christian nation. However, each of these ideas of authority are simultaneously criticised and negated through cartoon illustrations in the context of war. There were artists such as Haselden, working for the *Daily Mirror*, who were happy to stay out of political motivations, but he still observed the fluctuations of life and classes around him and these feature in his work (figure 4.13).<sup>116</sup> While others, motivated by the political standpoint of the papers they worked for, demonstrate that bias through their cartoons such as the deeply socialist *Herald* and Will Dyson's work (figure 4.9).

Regardless of any political motivations, cartoonists have manipulated profiteers, the wealthy, pacifists and cowards as a reflection on society's worries about these people. Although, the degree of reflection or potential influence cannot be regulated. These characters were easy targets, and this is visible before the war, but features most prominently during it. Such cartoons can offer lessons and warnings to people

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<sup>115</sup> Greig, *Psychology of Laughter*, pp. 182.

<sup>116</sup> Hiley, "A New and Vital Moral Factor", p. 148.

behaving inappropriately, which was the nature of moralistic humour taken from the Victorian era. Throughout the war, though, many of these characters, and the ways in which they are manipulated in cartoon, enhance the cartoonist's humour and agency over their public. Awareness must remain of times when political sway held more influence than the humour cartoons exhibit as in the case of profiteering images by Dyson. This cartoonist's illustrations serve to moralise their viewers, but less so with humour. He exhibits large, rough men taking advantage of far smaller people, particularly women and children (figure 4.6).

The profiteer and the wealthy were equally easy groups of characters to manipulate and mock. Yet their representation in cartoon is designed to inspire ridicule for different purposes. In a society surrounded by a rhetoric of sacrifice, the profiteer gained financial wealth from the situation of war, sacrificing nothing of themselves, while the already wealthy are seen to bask in what they had before the war and appear to have missed the purpose of sacrifice.<sup>117</sup> The behaviours of these characters are over-exaggerated in cartoon to highlight their faults, and the overbearing scar that they could leave on the rest of society. These images seek to subvert the characters social standing regardless of whether it was gained justly through the passage of time, or by manipulative means.

The wealthy are irresponsible, and earlier in the war, their behaviour can be seen as the start of profiteering, before the profiteers and hoarders become more prominent. Cartoonists maintain disregard for such characters by continually subverting any authority they might have held before the war. These people are foolish, and their actions irresponsible (figure 4.12). Nonetheless, many images representing this class

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<sup>117</sup> Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', p. 110.

of citizen, still maintain some awareness of duty and what ought to be done during war even when they do not actually manage it in a convincing manner (figure 4.1). These characters are exaggerated negatively in order to provoke humour for the audience.<sup>118</sup>

The differentiating features between the profiteer and established wealth are their money and attitudes to others around them. ‘Old money’ can be seen in an instant through formal dress, even when it is contextually out of place and through their good intentions even when they are utterly misplaced (figure 4.1). Many of these people are passively ignorant of what is occurring, but do not intentionally mean to create problems. In contrast, the profiteer visually is without class, frequently depicted in ill-fitting clothes trying to look good but failing, as little seems to actively fit these gargantuan men (figure 4.4). The profiteer’s behaviour is also adapted to separate them from the inherently wealthy. These men can be seen rising above others and leaving them behind, or actively in the process of taking from those who need it more (figures 4.3 and 4.6).

Jean-Louis Robert has discussed the profiteers and the manner in which they are shown in cartoons to subvert their authority.<sup>119</sup> However, he does not touch on the innately wealthy, as has been done here. In a society at war, although both sets of characters can be seen to ‘misbehave’ and go against public designs, this is done in different ways. Some respect is maintained for the wealthy whereas the profiteer is virtually demonised, especially in the work of Dyson. Both are seen to avoid contributing towards the duty of sacrifice embodied by the rest of society.<sup>120</sup> However, the moral lines are different. Profiteers avoid duty for their own promotion, while the

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<sup>118</sup> Greig, *Psychology of Laughter*, pp. 181-2.

<sup>119</sup> Robert, ‘Image of the Profiteer’, pp. 104-32.

<sup>120</sup> Robert, ‘Image of the Profiteer’, pp. 104; Healy, *Vienna and the Fall*, p. 38.

upper classes who were already wealthy, simply miss the purpose of that sacrifice in cartoons.

The pacifist was equally exaggerated, although often to the reverse effect in physical size. These foppish fools as they are depicted, once again reflect the reverse of the staunch, pragmatic Tommy, who sacrificed all for war. Humour is created through these characters and the exaggeration of their behaviour, which was not desired, and is almost used to make them seem freakish and unnatural.<sup>121</sup> The cartoons of pacifists present a biased overview as pathetic shirkers who are to be mocked and publically humiliated regardless of anything else they might be able to do (figure 4.16). In terms of subversion, their morality suffers the most in cartoon through this general bias that leaves little room for conscientious objections to war. As much as recent works looking at the conscientious objector are far more considerate of the good work that they did during the war, none of this is actively visible in contemporary cartoons that mock them.<sup>122</sup>

The pacifist has also been identified synonymously with the coward, and in many images there is no clear distinction between them. However, Poy's Cuthbert rabbit from late 1916 came to thoroughly embody the public perceptions of what a coward and shirker was during the war. Allowances are made for Cuthbert, who as a rabbit, can avoid elements of human morality (figure 4.21), but still he represents the war shy shirker avoiding fighting while others did willingly. His escape into underground 'funkholes' reflected a desire for so many, but at the same time was able to highlight the poor choices of such actions. Through him there is active criticism of some

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<sup>121</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*, pp. 21-3.

<sup>122</sup> See Burnham, *Courage of Cowards*; Kramer, *Conchies*.

government officials who find their own 'funkholes' in Parliament, or are content to sit back and relax while others go away to do the work of war (figures 4.20 and 4.22).

Each of these characters are presented effectively using specific icons to identify them and their nature. Physical size is exaggerated as can be seen correspondingly with the profiteer and the pacifist alike, although to different effects, and this exaggeration is designed to mock them with humour. Other features of occupation or persuasion are highlighted, offering money and goods for the profiteer or the dove and foppish flowers for the pacifist. Once they have been identified, their position, locale or company within cartoons are what offer the subversive humour in a variety of forms. Humour for profiteers is created through their subverting of common people and their property. When the profiteer has gained from someone else's loss, the nature of their subversion of the nation as a whole is highlighted. Some of these images make open hilarity out of the profiteer and his misdeeds, while other artists such as Dyson present a more moralistic approach. Regardless, both forms of cartoon are used to teach the public what not to do as a form of humorous correction taking from Victorian ideals.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7.

# The Funny Side of War: British Cartoons, Visual Humour and the Great War

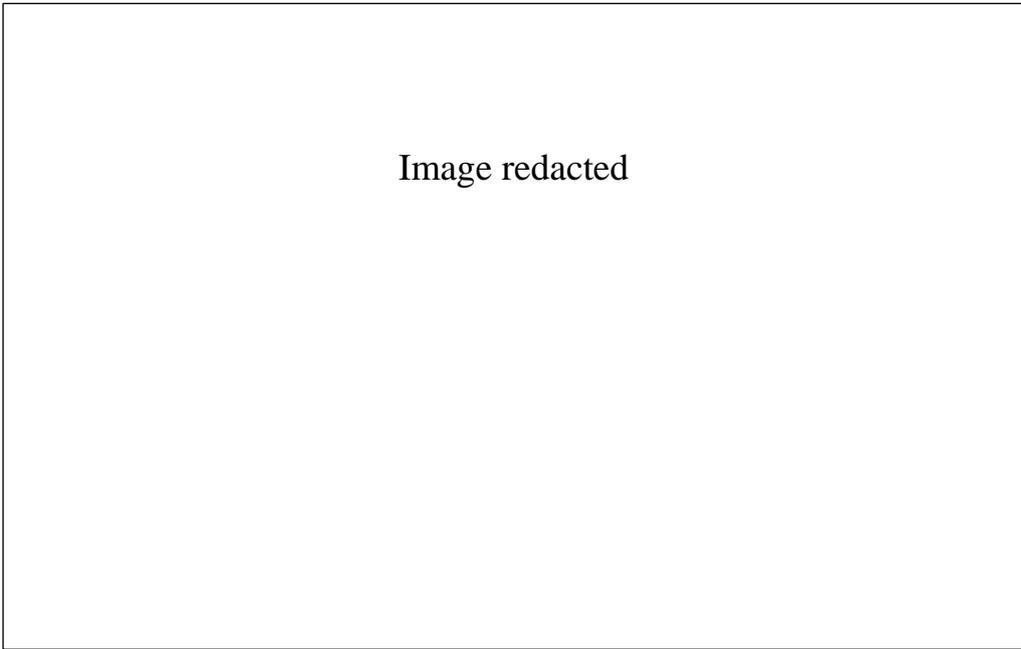


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This thesis is submitted in accordance with the regulations for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

Philippa Gregory

October 2016

VOLUME 2

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## Chapter 4

### Blurring the Lines

#### Humour between Frontline and Home Front

There is an extensive historiography focused on the Great War and advent of ‘total wars’ thereafter. ‘Total’ is used as a term relating to everyone involved in the war.<sup>1</sup> It was no longer simply for soldiers and politicians to conduct, but now civilians were participating, and sometimes involuntarily. Members of the public and their sense of duty to the war have been considered, and more specifically, those who did not conform and failed to live up to their social duties in wartime.<sup>2</sup> Now the conception of the soldier in the public mind and their representation in cartoons will be compared with self-representation of soldiers by soldiers. This will be done to analyse how humour contributed to the apparent distance or continuity of ideas between soldiers and civilians.

Looking at representations of soldiers in the press, Stephen Badsey has stressed an ‘intimate connection’ between the military ‘and the way in which its actions were perceived and understood through the mass media’, which must be considered

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<sup>1</sup> Strachan, ‘From Cabinet War to Total War’, pp. 22-4.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter 3.

essential throughout this chapter.<sup>3</sup> To understand fully how cartoons represent soldiers, there needs to be some consideration of public reception of these images as well. Cartoon sources in this chapter, therefore, will come from across domestic newspapers, as well as from ‘trench journals’ and, where possible, letters home from the forces. In terms of the soldier’s image, historians have identified different perspectives illustrating the hero, victim and villain at various times.<sup>4</sup> However, many of these representations find themselves aligned with middle-class art and literature, as this has been the most preponderant source of information for historians outside of specifically visual imagery.<sup>5</sup>

The history of the relationship between home and battlefronts during the First World War is extensive. Scholars have examined how troops kept morale in difficult situations, how the public at home adapted to the new challenges of war and the lasting impact it had moving through the century.<sup>6</sup> Further to this, there is also strong evaluation of the ‘civilian soldier’ as so many were during this war.<sup>7</sup> Diplomatic histories of the war identify specific battles, and particular leaders, some of which become relevant to the relationships between home and front.<sup>8</sup> Even so,

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<sup>3</sup> Badsey, *The British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>4</sup> McCartney ‘Hero, Victim or Villain?’, pp. 43-54.

<sup>5</sup> John Bourne, ‘The British Working Man in Arms’, in Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle (eds.), *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced* (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 1996), p. 336-7; Helen Tripp, ‘Mr Punch and Tommy Aitkins: British Soldier’s Social Identity during the First World War’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4 (2002), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See Pierre Purseigle, ‘Home Fronts: The Mobilization of Resources for Total War’, in Roger Chickering, Dennis Showalter and Hans van de Ven (eds.), *The Cambridge History of War: War and the Modern World* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), pp. 257-284; Laura Ugolini, *Civvies: Middle-Class Men on the English Home Front 1914-18* (Manchester: MUP, 2013); Matthew Stibbe, ‘A Community at War: British Civilian Internees at the Ruhleben Camp in Germany, 1914-1918’, in Jenny McLeod and Pierre Purseigle (eds.), *Uncovered Fields: Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 79-94.

<sup>7</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*; Tammy Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War, 1914–1918* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Susan Grayzel, ‘“The Souls of Soldiers”: Civilians under Fire in First World War France’, *Journal of Modern History*, 78:3 (2006), pp. 588-622.

<sup>8</sup> See for example, Robin Neillands, *The Great War Generals of the Western Front 1914-1918* (London: Endeavour, 1999); Jim Beach, *Haig’s Intelligence* (Cambridge: CUP, 2015); Robin Prior, *The Somme* (New York: Yale University Press, 2006); Nigel Steel and Peter Hart, *Passchendaele: The Sacrificial Ground* (London: Cassell, 2000).

historiographies of the war from the 1970s onwards addressing soldier and civilian contributions sought to separate the two groups and highlight distance between them. This approach developed into a theory of ‘alienation’ that on reflection also became apparent in the earliest memoirs from war veterans.<sup>9</sup> ‘Alienation’ suggests how civilian soldiers no longer felt part of society as they had before. Separation and distance became the norm when describing soldiers and much of this was reinforced drawing upon the prevalence of futility in war memoirs and poetry from the 1960s onward.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, later interpretations have drawn on communications between the battlefield and home.<sup>11</sup> These studies are thereby able to highlight a closeness that contradicts many of the ideas of alienation. This new approach was taken as more archival sources were released, and additional contemporary letters and diaries began to be published. There is acknowledgement of a perceived distancing in these sources. However, the studies draw far more strongly on the visible connections that were maintained in families during war. Civilian soldiers are an aspect particularly focused upon through this approach.<sup>12</sup> These look at how civilians responded to changing circumstances and their continued connections to home. Helen McCartney has examined letters between soldiers and their families in her study of the Liverpool territorial forces. Here she highlights the receipt of gifts and soldiers making requests for other necessities unavailable to them directly in the trenches. These letters clearly demonstrate a familial closeness, particularly when family members at home go to extraordinary lengths to fulfil soldiers’ requests.<sup>13</sup> However, few of these studies have

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<sup>9</sup> Leed, *No Man’s Land*, pp. 105-9.

<sup>10</sup> See Terraine, *Great War*; Correlli Barnett, *The Great War* (New York: Putnam, 1979); Basil Henry Liddle Hart, *The Real War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1963); Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*. Also, see C. Day Lewis and Edmund Blunden, *Collected Poems* (New York: New Directions, 1963).

<sup>11</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 89; Grayzel, “‘The Souls of Soldiers’”, pp. 590, 615; Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men’s Bodies and the Great War* (London: Reaktion, 1996), p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> See Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War*; Ugolini, *Civvies*.

<sup>13</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 91-7.

looked specifically at cartoons as this study does to help shed light on how close or separate soldiers and civilians were in their approaches to humour.

McCartney has openly challenged traditional views of the First World War soldier as victim in a futile conflict, which she has demonstrated through modern family histories. Thereby, she contrasts that idea with contemporary political designs of the chivalrous hero.<sup>14</sup> Edward Madigan similarly draws on contemporary evidence to show how courage was reinvented moving away from medieval ideals of the knight into a soldier ‘sticking it out’ in the toughest circumstances.<sup>15</sup> This approach to the soldier looks at how everyman changed once faced with war. Traditional images of soldiers provide ‘public school’ ideas of leadership taken from literary descriptions and portraits of nobility.<sup>16</sup> These images and descriptions translate into officers, whereas, the everyday civilian as a soldier is less apparent in contemporary literature. It can, therefore, be assumed that these images are created out of contemporary experiences for the artists. Nonetheless, both are used in representations of soldiers and particularly when their image is used to give comedy to the audience.<sup>17</sup>

The soldier’s image will be seen from divergent perspectives, firstly from the home front and secondly from the battlefield. The chapter, therefore, will consider the humour applied to the soldier’s character in cartoon by domestic cartoonists. It will connect this to visual comedy created in images of the enemy by those artists too. As necessary, examination of cartoon soldiers will be made compared to governmental

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<sup>14</sup> McCartney, ‘The First World War Soldier’, pp. 299-315.

<sup>15</sup> Madigan, “Sticking to a Hateful Task”, p. 89.

<sup>16</sup> Jessica Meyer, ‘The Tuition of Manhood: ‘Sapper’s’ War Stories and the Literature of War’, in Mary Hammond and Shafquat Towheed (eds.), *Publishing in the First World War: Essays in Book History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 116-7; Michael Paris, *Over the Top: The Great War and Juvenile Literature in Britain* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Bourne, ‘British Working Man’, p. 336.

propagandistic images used for recruitment purposes.<sup>18</sup> There will be acknowledgement of changing public opinions about these soldiers, and how they can be identified in cartoon images reflecting upon the debates of McCartney and Madigan outlined above.<sup>19</sup> Ideas that soldiers needed humour sent to them have already been discussed, but these will be explored further in conjunction with reports of newspaper cuttings sent by civilians at home.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, there will be investigation of the content of magazines such as *Blighty*; ‘a free paper for our fighting forces’ produced by civilians at home.<sup>21</sup>

Connecting this section of domestic representation to the next will be analysis of the images of the wounded produced by artists in both situations. This will consider how jokes were made through cartoons of wounded soldiers and the types of images specifically produced. In much of the historiography about the wounded, these men were seen as soldiers apart from the rest because of their wounds.<sup>22</sup> Large divides could be created between soldiers through injury; divides between soldiers themselves, as well as between the military and civilians at home. Yet in cartoon, there is far less visible division, wounds are predominantly manageable and impermanent contrasting with growing public knowledge of ‘severe facial disfigurement’ and loss of limbs

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<sup>18</sup> IWM, PST 0314, Unknown Artist and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Who’s Absent?’, 1915; IWM, PST 0318, Unknown Artist and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Step into Your Place’, 1915; IWM, PST 2712, Robert Baden-Powell and the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Are You in This?’, 1915.

<sup>19</sup> McCartney, ‘The First World War Soldier’, pp. 299-315; McCartney, ‘Hero, Victim or Villain?’, pp. 43-54; Madigan, “‘Sticking to a Hateful Task’”, pp. 76-98.

<sup>20</sup> See ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1917, p. 3; ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, p. 4; ‘London Mail at the Front’, *London Mail*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914.

<sup>21</sup> *Blighty: A Budget of Humour from Home, 1916-19; Blighty Xmas: Pictures and Humour from our Men at the Front*, 1917.

<sup>22</sup> See Julie Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: "Soul of a Nation"* (Manchester: MUP, 2011); Julie Anderson and Heather R. Perry, ‘Rehabilitation and Restoration: Orthopaedics and Disabled Soldiers in Germany and Britain in the First World War’, *Medicine Conflict and Survival*, 30:4 (2014), pp. 227-51; McVeigh and Cooper (eds.), *Men After War*; Reznick, *Healing the Nation*.

which were reported, particularly in relation to pensions.<sup>23</sup> Moving into the second section there will be opportunity to look at how soldiers represented their own wounded as well. Soldier illustrations also depict little evidence of vast disfigurement, particularly around the face. Whereas, in contrast to domestic cartoonists, the military appear more willing to illustrate permanent irrecoverable wounds such as missing limbs, but these are still combined with an element of humour, which will be considered more closely.

The second section, will examine how the military portrayed themselves through cartoons and other aspects of humour that were available. Popular histories of military humour suggest a darker element to it, although much of this is not apparent in the cartoons of soldiers.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, there is an element of acceptance of the realities of war, which can appear somewhat darker than civilian cartoon humour, but even here, there remains an element of continuity between them both.<sup>25</sup> The war was by its very nature a system of mass death and destruction, nonetheless, in this situation, soldiers consistently strengthened themselves with humour. This is prevalent throughout the trench journals and academic studies thereof.<sup>26</sup>

The primary evidence for this section will predominantly be taken from trench journals and the cartoons within them. The limitations of this will be acknowledged,

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<sup>23</sup> See news articles 'To-day's Pension Point', *Evening Dispatch*, 17<sup>th</sup> May 1917, p. 3; 'Pensions Bureau', *Evening Dispatch*, 18<sup>th</sup> May 1917, p. 3; 'Pensions for Disabled heroes', *Dundee Courier*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1917, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> See for example George Korankye, *Die Laughing: War Humour from WWI to the Present Day* (Peterborough: Mirage, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> See for example Alan Weeks, *A Bloody Picnic: Tommy's Humour 1914-1918* (Stroud: History Press, 2010); Peter Doyle and Julian Walker, *Trench Talk: Words of the First World War* (Stroud: History Press, 2012); Martin Pegler, *Soldiers' Songs and Slang of the Great War* (Oxford: Osprey, 2014); Max Arthur, *Forgotten Voices of The Great War: A History of World War I in the Words of the Men and Women Who Were There* (Guilford Conn.: Lyons Press, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> Du Pont, 'Nature and Function of Humour', pp. 107-21; Cook, "'I Will Meet the World with a Smile'", pp. 48-62; Delporte, 'Humour as a Strategy', pp. 367-77.

as many journals are without illustration, but still contain other humorous features.<sup>27</sup> There needs to be deliberation of images created by soldiers in letters and diaries as well, which will address how soldiers represented themselves for their families at home. In this way, shared family jokes that civilians at home could better understand can be separated from ‘internalised’ jokes that only make sense in the shared circumstances of the trenches and military.

The unifying factor between the home and battlefronts and their depictions of the military is that of humour. For many, this joking often becomes a reflection of the ‘us and them’ nature of cartooning humour where the viewer is either part of the group or not and that is what provokes the humour of the image.<sup>28</sup> In British cartooning the enemy are natural outsiders; ‘them’ not ‘us’ due to the unavoidable bias of the sides on which they are fighting.<sup>29</sup> For the military themselves, however, the divides are more about who is there with them and who is at home in the strongest sense, as well as, to a lesser degree, the divides of station and ranking. A more analytical discussion of the humour presented will be able to provide deeper insight of the entire situation of war illustrations in this section. This will illustrate how humour is used to establish the groups of ‘them’ and ‘us’ throughout the war.

By addressing the home and battlefronts, humorous consistency visibly states itself in cartoons breaking down many of the perceptions of social divides and ‘alienation’.<sup>30</sup> Humour offers continuity for the war whilst still being variable. It must be remembered

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<sup>27</sup> See *Birmingham Rifle Reserve Magazine*, 1915-16; *C. B.: Being the Christmas Bulletin of the 2/6<sup>th</sup> Cyclist Battalion*, The Suffolk Regiment, 1915; *C’s Fire*, 1915; *O. B. C. (Old Boys Corps) Magazine*, 1915.

<sup>28</sup> Holman and Kelly, ‘Introduction, War in the Twentieth Century’, p. 262; Lynette McCullough and Ronald Taylor, ‘Humour in America, British and German Ads’, *Industrial Marketing Management*, 22 (1993), p. 19; Berys Gaut, ‘Just Joking: The Ethics and Ascetics of Humour’, *Philosophy and Literature*, 22:1 (1998), p. 53; De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion*, p. 290.

<sup>29</sup> Elliot, *Us and Them*, pp. 6-10.

<sup>30</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi; Leed, *No Man’s Land*, pp. 105-9.

throughout this study that the connection between how the military behaved, and how it was perceived by the civilian public was an intimate one predominantly led by the media's interpretation. Thus, civilian understandings of the military were inspired by media depictions and, therefore, what the media had to say about the army and navy reflected positively or negatively on them almost instantly. This then had lasting effects on how the public understood the formulation of the war overall.<sup>31</sup> It is the contention of this chapter that despite some perceived distance, in humour the two locations of war are remarkably similar in their approaches to making the rest of society around them laugh. Many connections can be drawn between civilian and military humour as represented through the cartoons in their publications. Additionally, elements of trench journals often replicate newspapers from home. The primary target, therefore, in this chapter is that of the continuity that humour can provide throughout the war joining the soldiers in battle and civilians at home together.

### Images of the Military from Home

The first and largest aspect of the military in cartoon depiction comes from domestic cartoonists at home. In times of war, soldiers and sailors from various Allied and dominion contingents were available for cartoonists' portrayals. These men were everywhere, and with the aid of the press, deeper aspects of what was happening to them could be obtained. These were all within the parameters of censorship, but even so, a sense of what it was like is illustrated through domestic cartooning.<sup>32</sup> The starting point for this section of the chapter, however, will address government propaganda,

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<sup>31</sup> Madigan, "Sticking to a Hateful Task", pp. 78-83; Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>32</sup> For more analysis of censorship and its representation in cartoon humour, see chapter 2.

which furnished many images and ideas of what the military was like for the public.<sup>33</sup> Propaganda used flattery and manipulation to inspire the viewer to participate or feel guilty for not taking part. These images allow the public mentally to place themselves within the complimentary image of strong willing men.<sup>34</sup>

Recruitment campaigns illustrated a predominance of young men preparing for war that matched with *The Times* promotion of ‘clean-looking fellows’ from September 1914.<sup>35</sup> These poster images assumed that all young men would want to contribute, and that to be the one left out, was undesirable.<sup>36</sup> An instant sense of ‘them’ and ‘us’ attitudes were created through these images, a feature that carries over into the humour of cartoons equally well which will be discussed in more depth later. There was anticipation that everyman would take part and not sit on the outside with ‘them’ who were not aiding. Through ‘Step into Your Place’, much of this is highlighted as there are regimented groups of recruits who all march as ‘us’ further down the line when they become uniformed soldiers (figure 5.1).<sup>37</sup> This image serves to illustrate perceived regularity assumed of the army, and unification of individuals regardless of differing ‘starting positions’ in society; it is a flattering image to the whole of society.<sup>38</sup> The fact that the men walk towards being soldiers all in identical uniforms, presents an icon of homogeneity, and a representation of authority; they are united by their uniforms and become empowered in this way.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, pp. 163-83.

<sup>34</sup> Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 12-3.

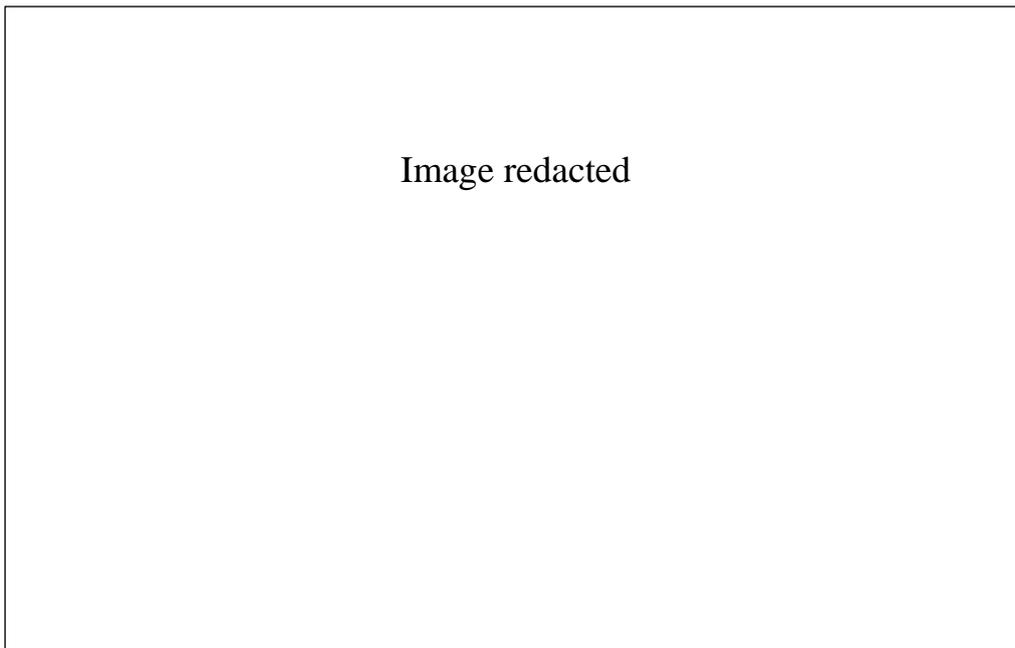
<sup>35</sup> ‘The Territorials Leisure’, *The Times*, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 50; IWM, PST 2734, Leete, ‘Britons Wants You’ 1914; IWM, PST 0314, Unknown Artist, ‘Who’s Absent?’, 1915; IWM, PST 2712, Baden-Powell, ‘Are You in This?’, 1915.

<sup>37</sup> For more details, see Bourne, ‘British Working Man’, p. 337.

<sup>38</sup> Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 12-3.

<sup>39</sup> Jason Stanley, *How Propaganda Works* (Oxford and New Jersey: Princeton University press, 2015), pp. 1-2.



**(Figure 5.1) Unknown Artist, Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Step into Your Place’, Imperial War Museum, 1915**

There is an advertising trope of unity, strength and perseverance with these soldiers. The length of the line represents lasting military influence, and the regularity of Edwardian life is demonstrated through its form. Moreover, embodied within the troops in such a formation are the manners and morals of British Victorian and Edwardian society.<sup>40</sup> How the public at home interpret and understand cartoon soldiers takes its starting role here, at least their media representation to the public does. Everyone was fit and healthy, clean and tidy and ready for war in such images. This was a startling contradiction to the health of men enlisting for the Boer Wars noted in previous decades.<sup>41</sup> However, much of this advertising campaign resulted from ideas inspired by Hedley LeBas who recommended that the war be sold as tea or tobacco

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<sup>40</sup> See for example, Marjorie Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class in England, 1774-1858* (London: Macmillan, 1994).

<sup>41</sup> John Gooch, *The Boer War: Direction, Experience and Image* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 206-7; Brian Bond, *Victorian Military Campaigns* (London: Hutchinson, 1967); Jay Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 6.

was.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, an appealing image was needed, but at the same time, Charles Masterman brought in principles of ‘truth’ for propaganda early in the war where he believed that propaganda should be factually based, selective in its distribution, and should keep its origins secret.<sup>43</sup> Following on from such characteristic campaigns, many soldiers in cartoons equally represent this trope of regularity, uniformity and actuality in the early stages of the Great War.<sup>44</sup>

However, with the comedic nature of cartoon images, many of these played upon the ideas of regulation and mocked them through adaption in order to create humour for newspaper readers at home. Jokes could be made of soldiering *faux pas*, particularly reflecting on the fact that the wartime army was not a professional one, but civilians with a couple of months training.<sup>45</sup> One of the few images by Laurie Taylor, plays upon the new complexities of the war previously unknown to most civilian men. In ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’, a man is tied up, perhaps in bandages, but not comfortably as though wounded. His hat has fallen to the side, and these assumed bandages have blindfolded him (figure 5.2). When the accompanying caption is read, however, it becomes clear that this man is not wounded, nor is he being captured as might be an alternative reading, but rather he has had difficulties winding his ‘putties for the first time’. Awareness that this is a new recruit is instantly applied; he is a civilian soldier who would be recognised by other civilians viewing the cartoon. The humour is multi-layered through the different readings that can be applied, a wounded soldier might be pitied, a captured soldier likewise, both of which situations provoke sorrow and

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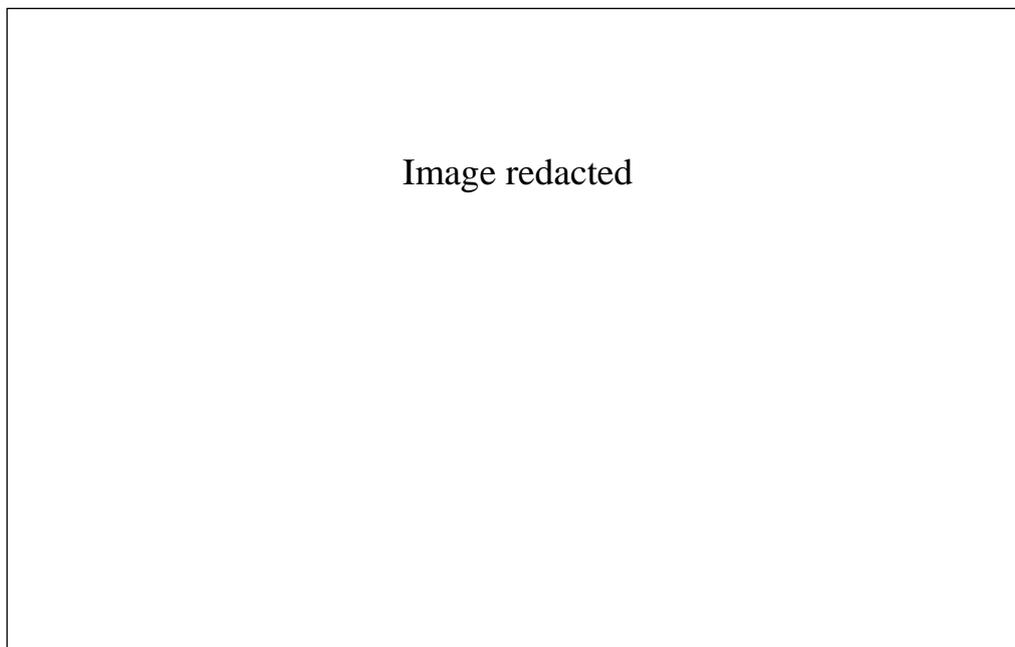
<sup>42</sup> Wood, *The Story of Advertising*, pp. 350-51; Hiley, ‘Sir Hedley LeBas’, pp. 30-46.

<sup>43</sup> Stewart and Carruthers (eds.), *War, Culture and the Media*, pp. 25-6.

<sup>44</sup> Poy, ‘Crowned’, *Evening News*, September 1914; Unknown Artist, ‘The Bull-Dog breed’, *Punch*, October 1914; Leonard Raven-Hill, ‘Well Met’, *Punch*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1914; Leonard Raven-Hill, ‘To Arms’, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914.

<sup>45</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 230, 303; Grayzel, “‘The Souls of Soldiers’”, pp. 588-622.

empathy in the reader.<sup>46</sup> However, the knowledge that this soldier is neither wounded nor captured, but is merely unable to dress himself provides the release of humour on which this cartoon draws.



**(Figure 5.2) Laurie Taylor, ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’, *London Mail*, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1915**

Many other types of soldier also filter into cartoon portrayals. This ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’ is clearly a civilian who has struggled; however, many others appear as heroes, potential saviours and professionals from the start of the war. Who the soldier was, depended on many features, for Madigan this was because of their identified courage, while for others there was a greater sense of historical distinction among soldiers.<sup>47</sup> Soldiers of the past had been knights through the Middle Ages, and a Victorian interest in this period continued to hold strong, moving through Edwardian

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<sup>46</sup> For more details of layered humour, see chapter 5.

<sup>47</sup> Madigan, “Sticking to a Hateful Task”, pp. 76-98; McCartney, ‘Hero, Victim or Villain?’, pp. 43-54.

times up to the war starting in 1914. Here soldiers embodied the strength, bravery and chivalry of the past, and this was consistently reinforced through literature and visual media.<sup>48</sup> At the start of war, the perception of the Tommy was on equal footing with medieval knights and aspects of chivalry in both combatant countries, although with differing approaches.<sup>49</sup> They were strong men with a purpose, who had a filial relationship with the Church and king and, therefore, the nation too.<sup>50</sup>

Staniforth's image of Lloyd George in 'God-Speed' of 1915 illustrates many of these medieval tropes, despite Lloyd George himself not actually being a soldier (figure 5.3). Drawing on the 1900 image of the same name by Edmund Blair Leighton, Staniforth presents the chancellor as a knight leaving the castle, the exit of which is labelled 'to France', towards 'Kitchener's Army' outside who are preparing to leave. Additionally, he looks up into the face of the medieval maiden 'Wales' whom he would be saving, but for the moment is leaving behind in the castle. These traditional representations of war served to motivate those at home at a time when in May 1915, it had become clear that this was no longer a 'traditional war', and that a stalemate had been reached.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, Kitchener's call for more recruits was in the public awareness, and this image demonstrates Wales' commitment to that call. At the same time, there is the reassurance of the maiden tying her favour to Lloyd George's arm. Women in the Middle Ages gave knights their 'favours', generally a ribbon, as a semi-superstitious

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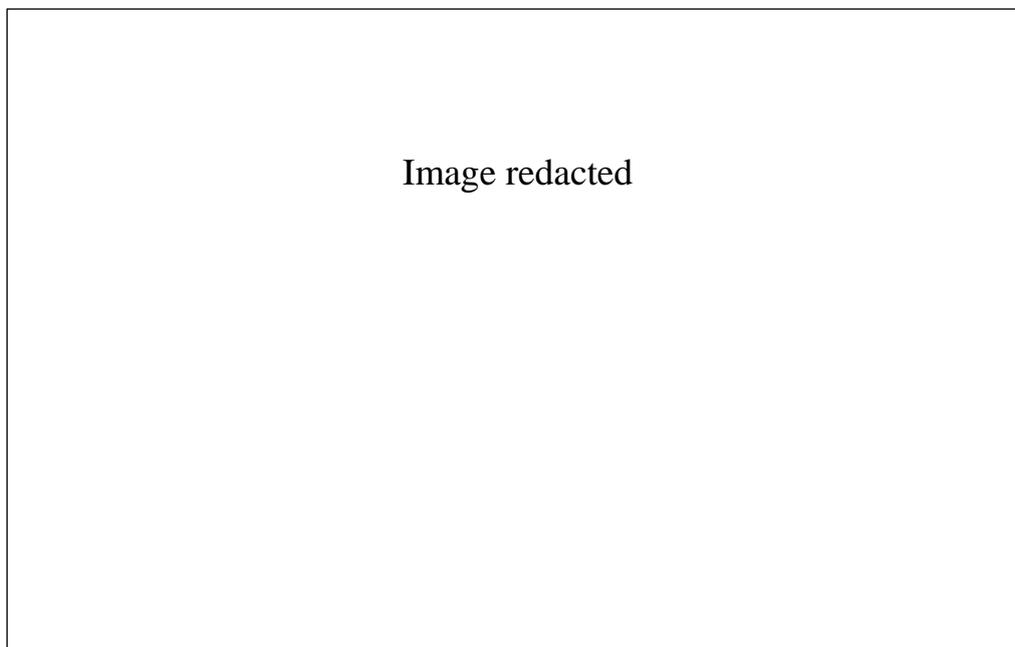
<sup>48</sup> Stefan Goebel, 'Chivalrous Knights versus Iron Warriors: Representations of the Battle of *Matériel* and Slaughter in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940', in Pearl James (ed.), *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), p. 79; Allen Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice and the Great War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

<sup>49</sup> Madigan, "'Sticking to a Hateful Task'", pp. 80-3; Goebel, "'The Spirit of the Crusaders'", forthcoming, p. 132.

<sup>50</sup> Hans Delbrück, *History of the Art of War, vol. 3: Medieval Warfare* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), pp. 230-32.

<sup>51</sup> Goebel, 'Chivalrous Knights versus Iron Warriors', p. 79; Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 77, 344-7; 'Danger of Stalemate', *Western Daily Press*, 18<sup>th</sup> August 1915, p. 8; 'Stalemate in the West', *Aberdeen Journal*, 29<sup>th</sup> December 1915, p. 6.

token to reassure the knight whilst away, and to ensure their safe return. Even so, awareness of this would still have held resonance for the soldier and civilian of 1915.<sup>52</sup>



**(Figure 5.3) J. M. Staniforth, ‘God-Speed’, *Western Mail*, 25<sup>th</sup> May 1915**

Each artist had their own way of depicting the ‘generic’ British or Allied soldier, and these images feature repeatedly for particular cartoonists such as Poy, Staniforth, Walker or even Haselden. Allied soldiers, especially at the start of the war when seen collectively, come in upright positions, depicted with strength and authority marching to the front.<sup>53</sup> Another form that soldiers took was that of the youth in cartoon. Many of these soldiers were sent to war by their mothers, or by the mother of the nation;

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<sup>52</sup> Jennifer Wollock, *Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2011), p. 23; Joachim Bumke, *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 318-19; Katie Stevenson, *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland, 1424-1513* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), p. 63.

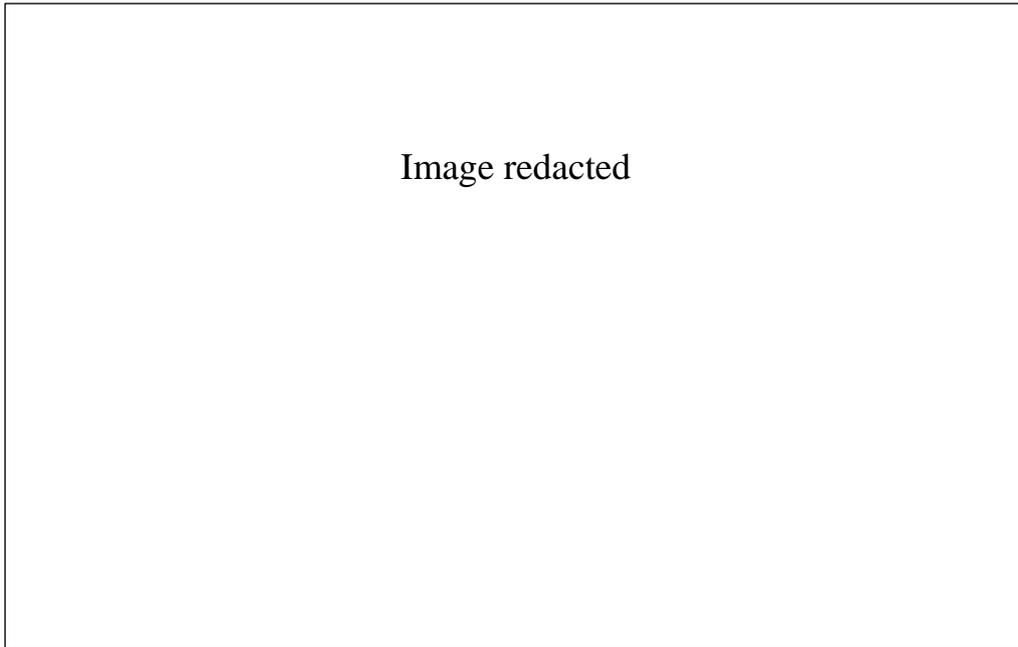
<sup>53</sup> See William Haselden’s soldiers in the *Daily Mirror*, 1914-1918; Poy images in the *Daily Mail* and *Evening News*, 1914-1918; J. M. Staniforth soldier cartoons in the *Western Mail* and *News of the World*, 1899-1918; Walker *Special War Cartoons*, vols. 1-7 (London: Daily Graphic, 1914-15).

Britannia, and in most cases, with varying degrees of reluctance and pride.<sup>54</sup> There is a resigned form of humour applied to these images, reinforced through captions. Alternatively, the mother can be a humorously bullying sort pushing their sons away. Regardless, frequently captions are applied to these images asking soldiers to remember them, or with reminders to make sure ‘that the sheets are properly aired before going to bed each night’ (figure 5.4). Comments such as this gain additional humour with hindsight and the knowledge that trenches were damp, dirty places and accommodation was poor. Even so, the image would still have held humour for observers of the son leaving home for the first time, branching out on his own. The relationship between the mother and son is visually apparent in these cartoons, identifying pride in their appearance and intentions, a feature that would resonate with mothers at home.<sup>55</sup> Maintaining such relations within the cartoons often means that many of them are not visually humorous, but the textual addition is what provides the humour.

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<sup>54</sup> See images in *Punch*, 1914-15; Raemaekers, *Neutral's Indictment*; Louis Raemaekers, *Raemaekers Cartoons with Accompanying Notes by Well-Known English Writers* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1916).

<sup>55</sup> Gullace, *Blood of Our Sons*, p. 196.

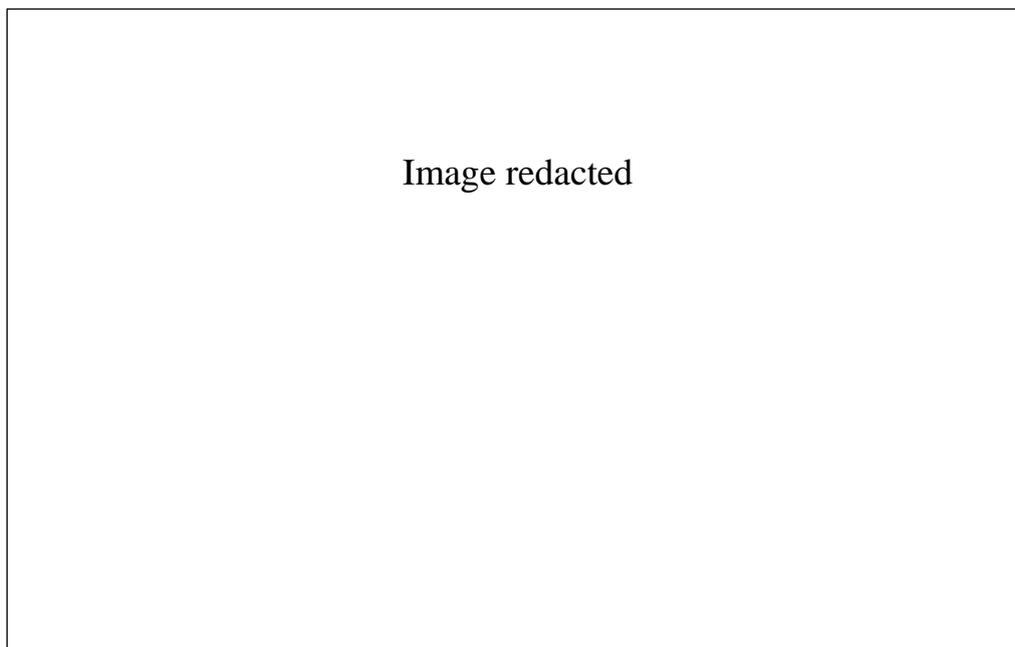


**(Figure 5.4) Unknown Artist, ‘Off to the Trenches’, *London Mail*, 13<sup>th</sup>**

**February 1915**

As mentioned in chapter 2, there was a strong sense among the public of a need for humour in the trenches. To this extent, numerous adverts for *Punch* and similar purchasable cartoon journals featured regularly in the press. The public could then buy and send these to troops in the trenches (Figure 5.5). Sending out journals could serve as tokens or mementoes of loved ones at home, similar to Staniforth’s medieval maiden trying her ribbon to Lloyd George (figure 5.3). Alternatively, they served as a memory of home through gentle mockery of a mother’s love and the reminder for her son to air the sheets (figure 5.4). All advertisements selling *Punch* for soldiers featured in national and localised newspapers as well as on inside covers for more specific cartoon books. *Punch* was promoted in *The Times* repetitively highlighting either a genuine

belief in their efficacy in the trenches for raising morale, or a particularly effective advertising campaign (figure 5.5).<sup>56</sup>



**(Figure 5.5) Unknown Artist, ‘Punch Advertisements’, *The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup>**

**December 1914**

Another publication, sent out to the trenches consistently from the home front was *Blighty*. First published in 1916, it continued to the end of the war with regular weekly editions and further Christmas specials all advertised as ‘a budget of humour from home’. Cartoons swamped each edition along with adverts and short sketches and stories designed to entertain soldiers and remind them of home.<sup>57</sup> In many ways, *Blighty* was the equivalent of *Punch* where both provided the same variety of cartoon relief often indeed the same cartoons exactly. In *Blighty*, many images are borrowed, with permission, from publications including *Punch*, the *Observer*, *London Opinion*,

<sup>56</sup> See for example, ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p. 6; ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1917, p. 3; ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, p. 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Blighty*, 1916-19; *Blighty Xmas*, 1917.

*Weekly Telegraph*, the *Bystander*, and *Puck* to name but a few, and then in accompaniment are a selection of cartoons by soldiers which will be discussed later.<sup>58</sup> Soldiers represented within this publication are understandably similar to those of other British papers, and as with *Punch*, it is impossible to determine definitive numbers of volumes sent out.<sup>59</sup>

*Blighty* is a particularly interesting source, as it was a free publication to the Royal Navy and British Expeditionary Forces (BEF). In addition, it claimed the patronage of Field Marshal Lord French, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe and Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty indicating military acceptance of the publication.<sup>60</sup> A perception of what civilians felt soldiers needed to know can also be identified as it was designed at home for those on the front. There are, for example, advertisements of merchandise for soldiers, predominantly tobacco products, from a selection of promoters. There are adverts for music through gramophone records from Columbia and Aeolian Hall, alongside food products including Quaker Oats, Freeman's lemonade, Sharp's Toffees and Lipton tea.<sup>61</sup> All of these products intend to make things easier for the Tommy at war.<sup>62</sup>

There is merchandise directed towards officers highlighting presumed vanity in terms of attractive watches by Ingersoll and Target, service kits from the Moss Bros and Hair creams by Anzora. Advertisements exist for military badges and broaches for the average soldier and their supporters at home, alongside second hand items including furniture. These all provide continuity from home for the average soldier viewing the

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<sup>58</sup> For discussion of soldiers cartoons, see chapter 4, Military Images from the Front.

<sup>59</sup> See email correspondence with Punch Ltd., 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and October 2016. Also see, Richard Altick, *Punch: The Lively Youth of a British Institution, 1841-1851* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997).

<sup>60</sup> *Blighty*, 1916-19, pp. 1-3.

<sup>61</sup> *Blighty*, 1916-19; *Blighty Xmas*, 1917.

<sup>62</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', pp. 114-5.

magazine. Through these advertisements alone, there is a sense of unification and equality, in that all people reading the magazine should be advertised to, albeit, with specific direction for products still highlighting elements of class provenance. It must be remembered, that at no point was war experience a truly universalised thing, nonetheless, the perception remains through these images and advertisements.<sup>63</sup>

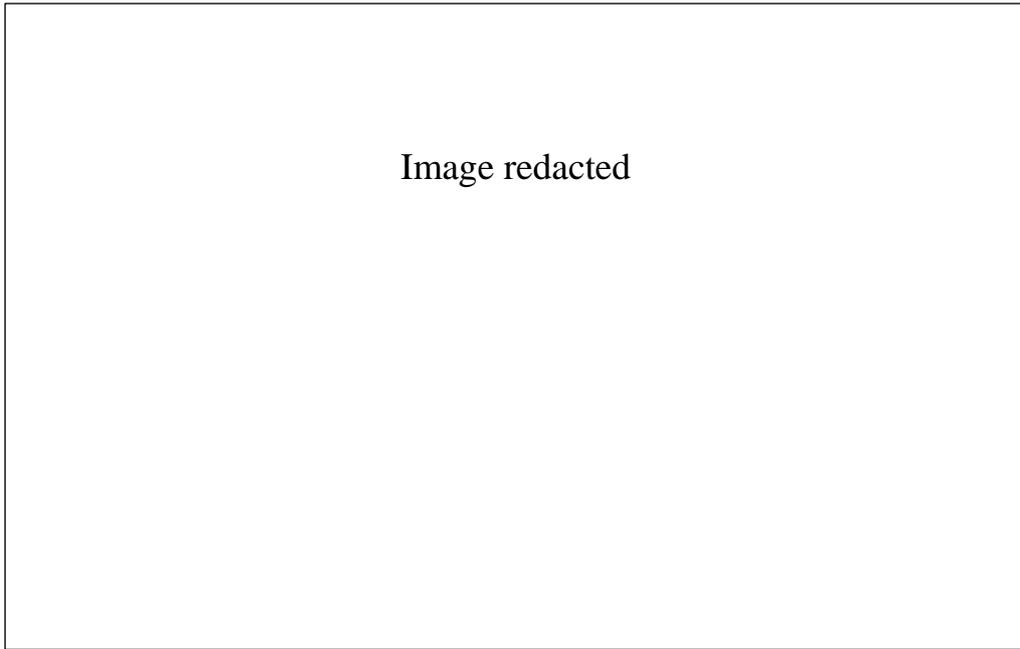
The humour around soldiers in cartoons is presented under several different guises. Many cartoons play on the idea of uniform and matching identities that appear similar to propaganda posters. Although, in cartoon this is often inverted through the character to be laughed at who does not fit the uniformity. Many cartoonists do present soldiers in a similar way demonstrating a uniform idea of what a soldier is, which fits with Badsey's idea of shared societal views.<sup>64</sup> British soldiers are generally young, a little rough around the edges, but at the same time, smart, busy, active men participating in war at whatever level in cartoons.<sup>65</sup> This establishes the public conscience and awareness of attributed authority to these men, in much the same way as the soldier in official propaganda aimed to do. Many posters depict soldiers in the background, but the similarities of these men are undeniable. They all wear matching khaki uniforms, and are seen to be busy marching away (figures 5.6 and 5.1), or actively aiding the war effort (figures 5.7 and 5.8).

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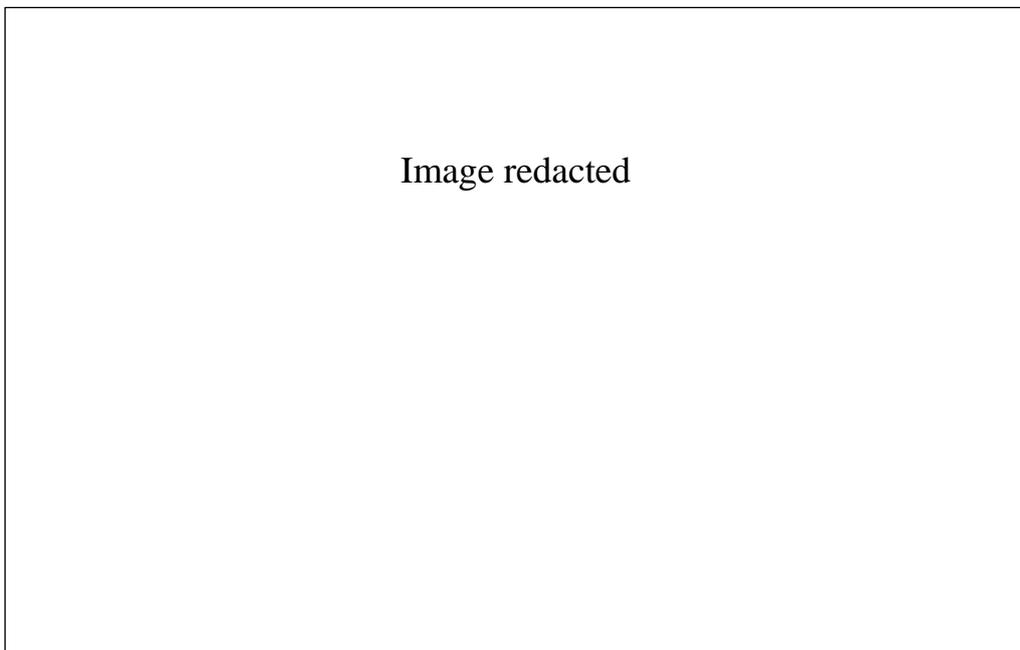
<sup>63</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, p. 299.

<sup>64</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

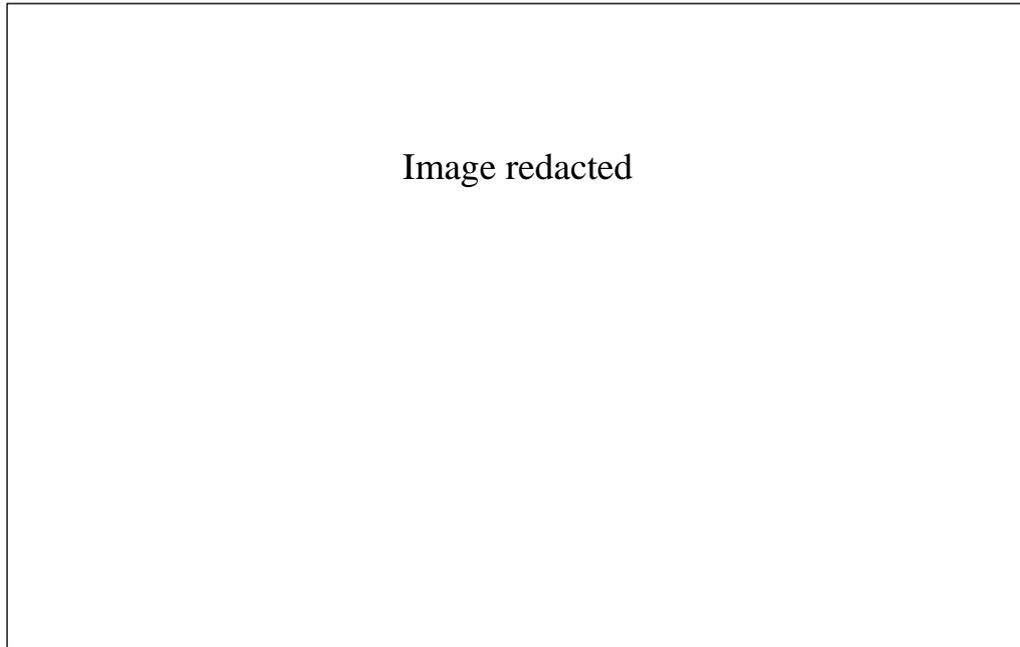
<sup>65</sup> See images in *Punch*, 1914-15; Raemaekers, *Neutral's Indictment*.



**(Figure 5.6) E. J. Keeley, 'Women of Britain Say Go!', Imperial War Museum, 1915**



**(Figure 5.7) Unknown Artist, 'She Helps Her Boy to Victory', Imperial War Museum, 1917**



**(Figure 5.8) Robert Baden-Powell, ‘Are You in This?’, Imperial War Museum, 1915**

These images can be matched with high art of the century before the war, which embodied ‘fierce aggressiveness and nationalism’ in illustrations of soldiers.<sup>66</sup> This idea carried over from the Victorian period offering uniform representation of the military. Equally, it drew on what Masterman had sought to demonstrate as a ‘truth’ for the army in his propaganda efforts.<sup>67</sup> When transposed into cartoon, the humour in many of these images is created through visual replication of what was ‘known’ with additional commentary to alter the meaning. Alternatively, there is use of individual soldiers as anomalies who had broken out of the uniformity of the military thereby creating the incongruity of humour. Thus, recognition of the commercial memory is necessary, and breaks from it create humour.

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<sup>66</sup> Edward Lucie-Smith, ‘The Other Artists’, in Charles B. Cox and Anthony E. Dyson (eds.), *The Twentieth-Century Mind: History, Ideas and Literature in Britain, 1900-1918* (Oxford: OUP, 1972), p. 497.

<sup>67</sup> Stewart and Carruthers (eds.), *War, Culture and the Media*, pp. 25-6.

Early war representations identified in the work of cartoonists such as Haselden, combine the war with a society unready for it. In 'The Holiday Maker's Dream', society is broken up and disrupted by war. Soldiers fight throughout the image, and ultimately topple the 'stock exchange' while the conflict ensues (Figure 5.9). In some ways, this image can be seen as prophetic, as although the stock exchange was not toppled at this point, there were added efforts made in relation to war bonds and national finance later.<sup>68</sup> Equally, the small family looking into the shop window at bread could certainly represent rationing and wheat controls from 1917.<sup>69</sup> This representation comments on unpreparedness, and mocks the damages and strangeness of war compared with normal life. At the same time as this humour, there remains some semblance of worry reflected through the image almost asking a question of what should we do if this happens. The image is particularly busy, and does not tell a story in regulated portions as so many of Haselden's cartoons do, but rather the mass of activity tells its own story of worry, triumph, and disruption in a purposely manic fashion that diverts the tension of the ideas expressed.

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<sup>68</sup> Stephen Broadberry and Peter Howlett, 'The United Kingdom during World War I: Business as Usual?', in Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (eds.), *The Economics of World War I* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 2005), pp. 206-34.

<sup>69</sup> IWM, PST 4470, Watson Hazell and the Ministry of Food, 'Save the Wheat and Help the Fleet', 1917; IWM, PST 6545, Unknown Artist, Food Controller and the Ministry of Food, 'Don't Waste Bread', 1917; IWM, PST 6570, Unknown Artist and the League of National Safety, 'She Helps Her Boy to Victory', 1917; IWM, PST 13354, Unknown Artist and the Ministry of Food, 'Don't Waste Bread', 1917.

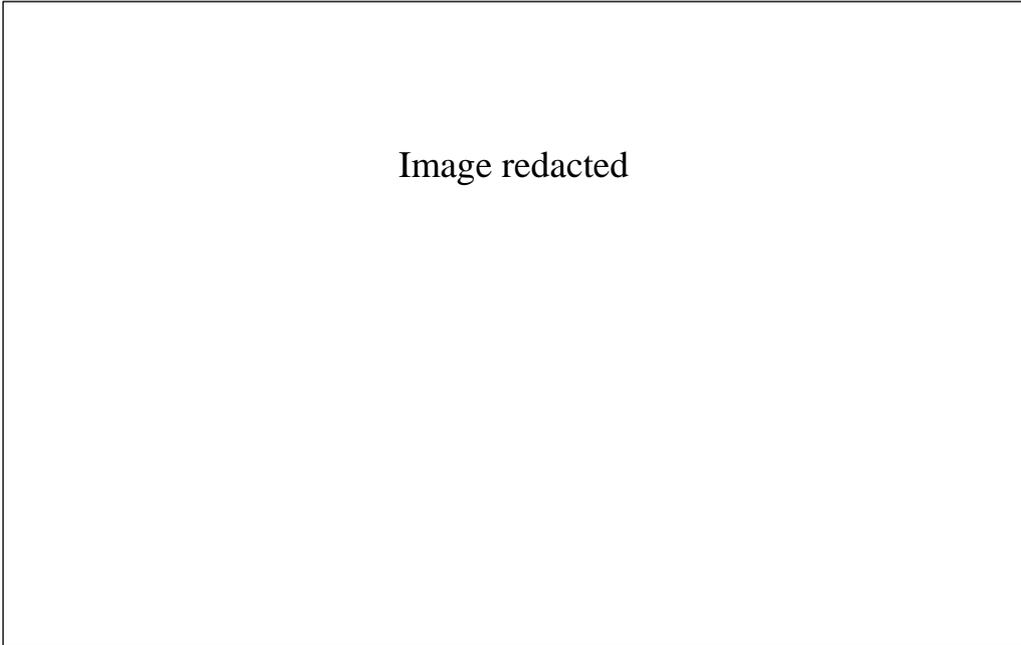


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**(Figure 5.9) William Haselden, ‘The Holiday Maker’s Dream this August’,  
*Daily Mirror*, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1914**

Military men depicted at home take on different forms, those who already are soldiers, those who want to be soldiers and those who have been soldiers, including the wounded who will be discussed below. Early in the war, the desire to participate teamed with the propaganda campaigns calling men to enlist, was reinforced by cartoons. Many men at home, influenced by the rhetoric of sacrifice and its prevalence in society, expressed desires to be a part of the conflict and do their bit to help.<sup>70</sup> Cartoons then, apply humour to an expected civilian desire to become soldiers, although evidence of enlistment would suggest rather that enthusiasm came in waves.<sup>71</sup>

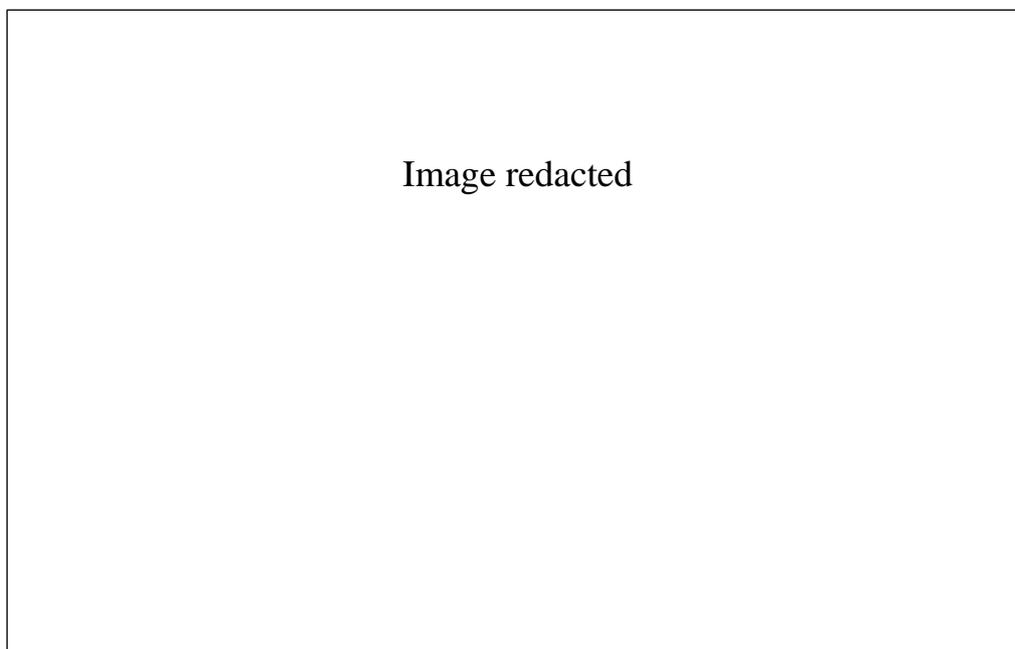
Staniforth offers a ‘Chance in a Lifetime’, in September 1914, which in the context of war is the chance to become a soldier continuing ideas of anticipated enthusiasm. Although, this is a particularly early cartoon, just one month after the start of the war,

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<sup>70</sup> Robert, ‘The Image of the Profiteer’, p. 110; Todman, *Myth and Memory*, p. 18.

<sup>71</sup> See Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 30-31.

and published within the most effective period of British voluntary enlistment for the whole war.<sup>72</sup> As such, this image can seem a part of the recruitment drive from the bottom up, as Staniforth was never commissioned by the government to produce any such images.<sup>73</sup> In this image, there is a daydreaming office worker to the left, although his specific occupation is unclear. This is a man who is interested in war and adventure as indicated by the book on the floor ‘Under Two Flags’, a popular 1867 ‘boys own’ story by Ouida.<sup>74</sup> In the second part of the diptych, his imagination is illustrated wearing a uniform and fighting, depicting him as a successful soldier, and man of action and authority (figure 5.10).



**(Figure 5.10) J. M. Staniforth, ‘The Chance of a Lifetime’, *Western Mail*, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1914**

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<sup>72</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, p. 291; Grievies, *Politics of Manpower*, pp. 80-81; Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 30-32.

<sup>73</sup> Chris Williams, ‘Staniforth, Joseph Morewood (1863–1921)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p. 4.

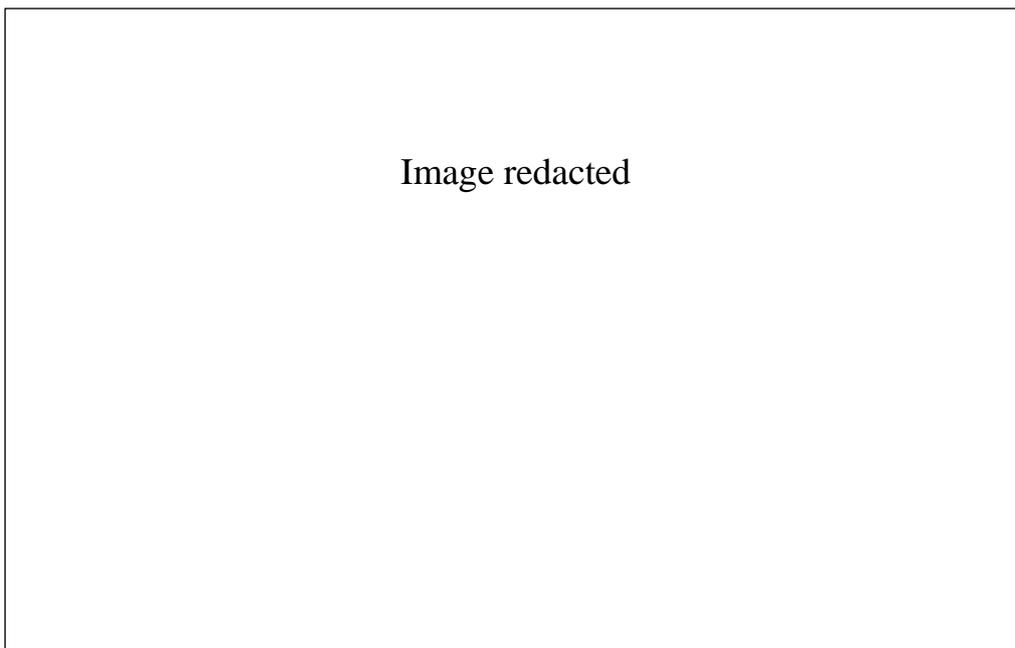
<sup>74</sup> Ouida, *Under Two Flags: A Novel* (New York: Stein and Day, 1967).

Once a man becomes a soldier, in cartoon his image alters and is used in comparison to those who were not soldiers. Diptych formations highlight this change through enlistment where comparisons of before and after are made. The *London Mail* was a particular contributor to this form of illustration with many images presenting the boy and then the soldier. The prevalence of such images and styling could be related to the artists who contributed to this publication. However, many including Alick F. C. Ritchie and Edwin Morrow were frequent contributors to *Punch* as well, where this prevalence is not so apparent. Another alternative is that it could be editorial preference, although this is far more difficult to substantiate.<sup>75</sup>

Halliday's depiction of 'Simpkins the Office Boy' particularly highlights this alteration of public attitudes well (figure 5.11). In the first part of the image, Simpkins is visibly half the size of his employer who takes his resignation sending him out to serve with the forces. Although dressed in a suit, Simpkins' is white suggesting a childish lack of power or innocence in the situation, and he has particularly juvenile features. Added to this he does not look his employer directly in the eye, but rather has his head turned down and looks up through his eyelashes at the frustrated employer. The second part of the diptych presents the same characters, but in reversed positions. The young Simpkins is now the soldier in uniform three times the size of his employer who is significantly smaller and looks up at Simpkins in awe and reverence. The captions added to this two part image serve to reinforce the notion of alteration as it describes 'how the Simpkins the office-boy had always appeared to his employer, until' and instant visible recognition of this change is apparent.

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<sup>75</sup> See Laurel Brake and Julie F. Codell, *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).



**(Figure 5.11) Weldon Halliday, ‘Simpkins the Office Boy’, *London Mail*, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1915**

The soldier’s status in society is elevated in these cartoons. What was previously a skinny youth has developed into a slender young man who is clearly fit for service unlike his former employer. Soldiers in society are given a sense of trustworthiness, for their moral aptitude that has taken them away to war, and this makes them a justifiably common feature of wartime cartooning. He is no longer the ‘scum of the earth’ of one hundred years prior, but has gained authority and recognition in society.<sup>76</sup> When soldiers return there are a number of people to whom they present themselves with more authority. As above with Simpkins, he visits his former employer, whereas, others return to visit girlfriends.<sup>77</sup>

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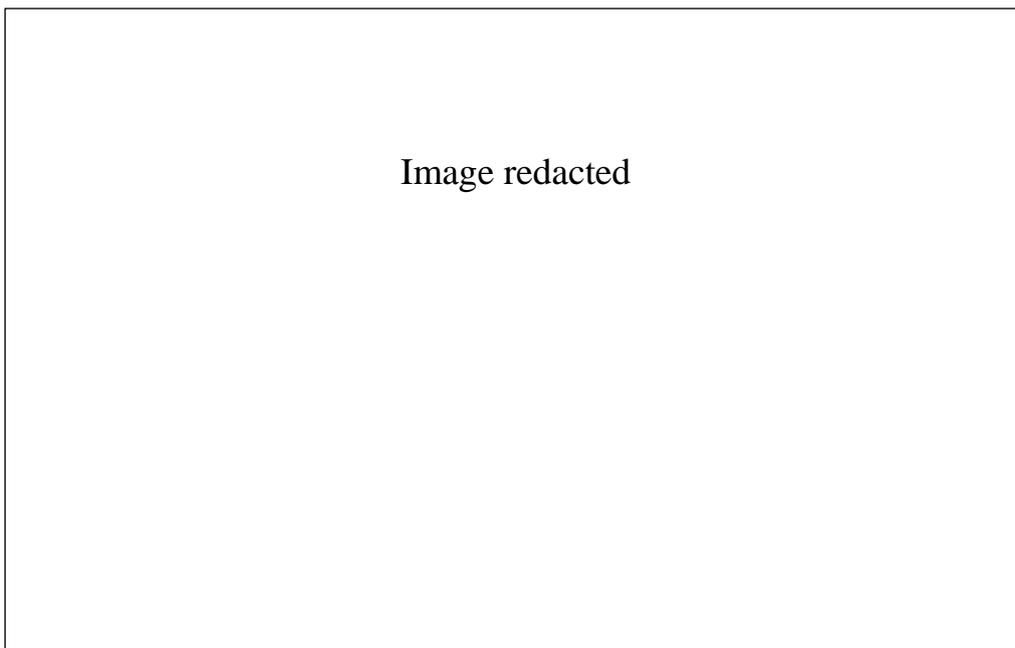
<sup>76</sup> See Michael Paris, *Warrior Nation: Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850-2000* (London: Reaktion, 2000); Maguire, ‘Images of Manliness’, pp. 265-87; McCartney, ‘Hero, Victim or Villain?’, pp. 43-54.

<sup>77</sup> See J. M. Staniforth, ‘The New Life’, *Western Mail*, 11<sup>th</sup> June 1918; F. H. Townsend, ‘Newly Gazetted Subaltern’, *Punch*, 30<sup>th</sup> September 1914; Murdock Simpson, ‘By Jove’, *London Mail*, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1914.

In cases such as Weldon Halliday's 'Before Enlistment, After Enlistment', there is again the visible sizing difference, although perhaps not to the same exaggeration as with Simpkins. Following on from this, is the manner in which the soldier stands to receive his greeting. Many of these soldiers leave in a position of submission, or in this case desperation, yet return with greater authority in their stance, even when their girlfriend remains taller than them (figure 5.12).<sup>78</sup> In 'Before Enlistment, After Enlistment', the greatest alteration is that of the girlfriend's response to her soldier. Before she is apathetic toward him, while after she leans in far closer. This particular soldier in the second part appears unmoved by the girl's application of herself. He merely stands to attention as determined by his rigid stance and arms. Where before he is on bended knee looking at her imploringly, by the second part he appears to look straight through her without visible emotion.

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<sup>78</sup> Leed, *No Man's Land*, pp. 1-12; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, p. 13.



**(Figure 5.12) Weldon Halliday, ‘Before Enlistment, After Enlistment’, *London Mail*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1914**

There are many cartoons that follow this same basic format whereby the man becoming a soldier is the main instigator of changing attitudes in the scene depicted. The change is normally represented by his physical appearance, but the alteration can also be seen through the girlfriend’s response (figure 5.12). These images are highly prevalent in terms of the diptych that illustrates before and during the war. Very occasionally there are images representing after the war but these are far less common. Most cartoonists preferred to remain in the moment rather than presupposing its end.<sup>79</sup> Regardless of the approach taken, there is a clear sense of changing attitudes to the soldier and his presence in the world. Soldiers have authority in visual images and not just the cartoon, higher art forms also considered the soldier a viable representation of authority beyond the military leader, as too did the representations of

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<sup>79</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 12; Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 157-8.

soldiers in propaganda images.<sup>80</sup> Soldiers were often represented in cartoons and photographs, and not merely those wearing officers uniforms.

Collective armies for the cartoonist, produced opportunity for contrasts to be highlighted through the stereotyping of nationalities. The Allies, for example, were doing the best they could regardless of any negative reports in the media.<sup>81</sup> Comparatively, enemy armies or individuals were deceitful and underhand in their actions.<sup>82</sup> Even so, the public was anticipated to view the armies in specific ways and although Haselden was not one for strictly political or propagandistic cartooning, the sense of who is right and will win is still visible through his work.<sup>83</sup> The Kaiser and Crown Prince highlight these differences often with the German royalty representing the nation as a whole. In Haselden's 'Sad Experiences No. 4', the Willies attempt to push the allied forces off the world (figure 5.13).

There is a sense through the discussion between the Willies, that the Allies 'don't play the game properly'. Yet suggesting this instantly implies the reverse to the British audience, in that they are not being fair in their actions. Images such as this serve as an analogy for the development of perceptions of the war and the capabilities of both armies. Simultaneously, as many saw war as a game to some extent, it adds a humorous edge to the cartoon.<sup>84</sup> The idea of 'playing a game' was consistent in wartime literature and popular culture. It was something that the contemporary audience would have recognised as a common feature of newspapers and literature.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, sport was used

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<sup>80</sup> Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 52.

<sup>81</sup> See for example news about Gallipoli starting in April 1915 through to January 1916.

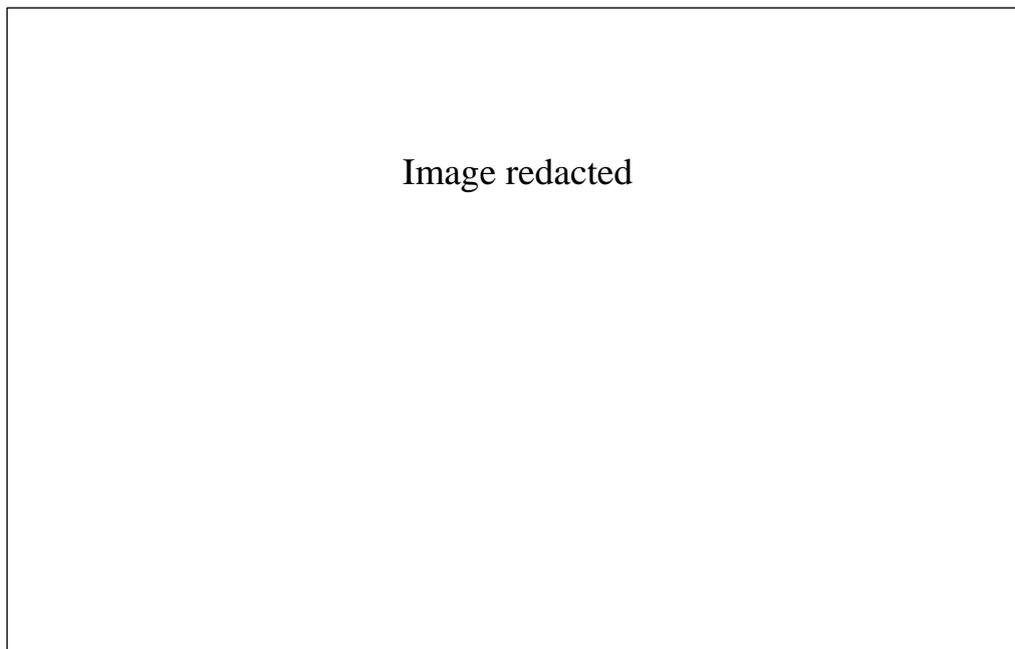
<sup>82</sup> Madigan, "'Sticking to a Hateful Task'", pp. 79-80;

<sup>83</sup> Hiley "'A New and Vital Moral Factor'", p. 148

<sup>84</sup> Edward Hardy, *The British Soldier, His Courage and Humour* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1915), pp. 158-63.

<sup>85</sup> See Henry Newbolt, Vitaï Lampada, 1892; 'Sports', *Middlesex Chronicle*, 6<sup>th</sup> November 1915, p. 2; 'Sporting', *Newcastle Daily Journal*, 21<sup>st</sup> November 1917, p. 7; IWM PST 7806, Unknown Artist,

as a recruiting tool throughout the war.<sup>86</sup> Playing a game and maintaining ‘sportsmanship’ was consistent through training and into battle for the British. However, it also came with the consistent sense of the enemy not playing the game and not being sporting in their actions as demonstrated by the Willies here.<sup>87</sup>



**(Figure 5.13) William Haselden, ‘Sad Experiences of Big and Little Willie, No. 4’, *Daily Mirror*, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1914**

Looking at the enemy and how they are represented in cartoon presents clear opportunity to view cartoonists’ diverse styles in representation. It also provides the potential to highlight repeated features and icons incorporated with mocking humour. German soldiers are equally similar to one another as British or allied soldiers are, although in a reverse manner. Stereotypes of short, rounded soldiers, often older than

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‘Rugby Union Footballers are Doing Their Duty’, 1914; IWM PST 7686, Graham Simmons, ‘The Army Isn’t All Work’, 1919.

<sup>86</sup> See for example IWM PST 1057, Unknown Artist, ‘An Appeal to Good Sportsmen’, 1914;

<sup>87</sup> See Tony Mason and Eliza Riedi, *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880-1960* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 2010), pp. 80-111; Antony Bateman, *Cricket, Literature and Culture: Symbolising the Nation, Destabilising Empire* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

is practical for war are present and exaggerated in cartoons. Many of these men are hunched in defeat, implying a lack of military rigour and capability, the complete reverse of traditional views of German soldiers before the war.<sup>88</sup> These stereotypes especially contrast to the taller, stronger, upright offerings from the British and allied forces.<sup>89</sup>

German soldiers are often matched with the Kaiser, who is incidentally in a stronger position, as a more physically fit character. His presence, however, is able to highlight the perceived character flaws of the German soldiers as in ‘The Zeppelin Crew’, where the Kaiser is busy rewarding some of his soldiers, and has sent others ‘to the dungeon’ (figure 5.14). Each soldier holds a label to indicate what they have done, and those who are rewarded have killed old women and babies, while those being punished have missed their targets. There is a humour of incongruity for the misplacing of the rewards and punishments, and equally an element of superiority to be felt by British audience, who would not reward such amoral actions. Despite the visibly aged stereotype in cartooning of the enemy, there are some reports that suggest many German soldiers were young rather than elderly.<sup>90</sup> However, the British perception of Victorian and Edwardian Prussian militarism is what filtered into the personification of these soldiers in cartoon, to have been militarily strong, they had to have age and experience.<sup>91</sup> Age is maintained as many wear glasses, but experience is inverted as these cartoons presuppose older soldiers’ inabilities. Yet at the same time, many also wear iron

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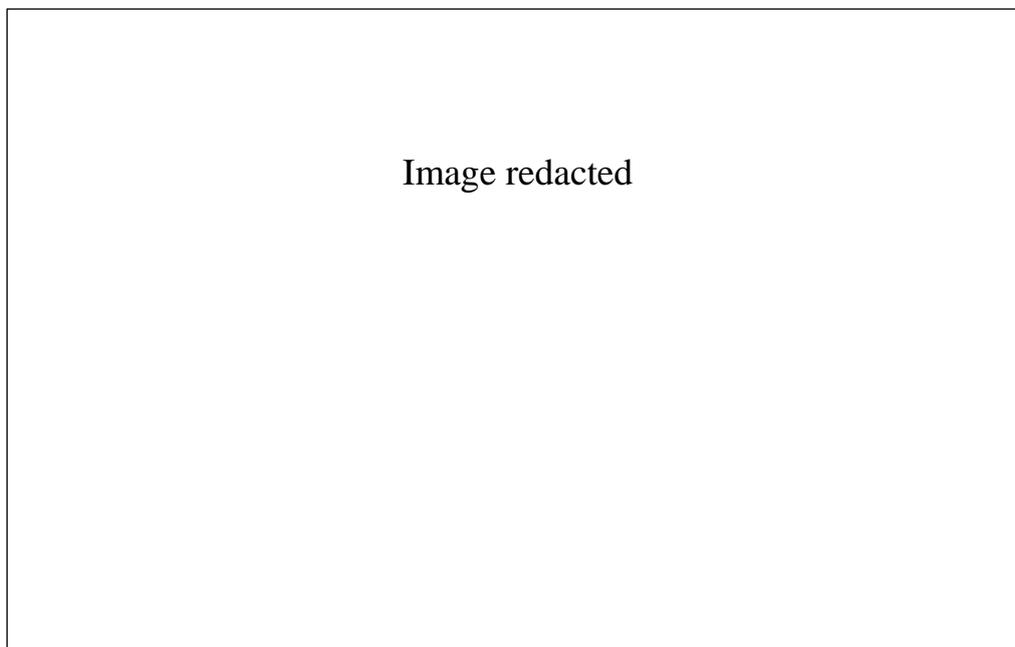
<sup>88</sup> T. C. W. Blanning (ed.), *The Nineteenth Century: Europe 1789-1914* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. 41-2

<sup>89</sup> Demm, ‘Propaganda and Caricature’, p. 165; Hiley, ‘“A New and Vital Moral Factor”’, p. 164.

<sup>90</sup> See for example ‘Young German Soldiers’, *Southern Reporter*, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1914, p. p.6.

<sup>91</sup> See Richard Van Emden, *Boy Soldiers of the Great War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Blanning, *Nineteenth Century*, pp. 8-9, 41.

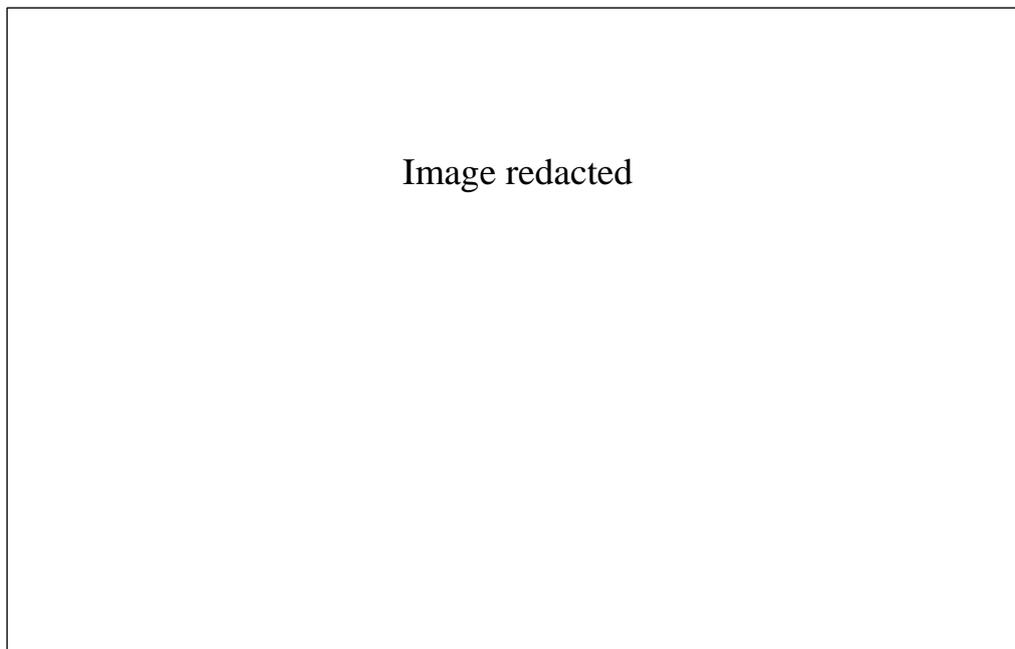
crosses denoting their bravery and success in the army, which can seem a complete contradiction in terms.



**(Figure 5.14) Poy, 'The Zeppelin Crew', *Evening News*, January 1915**

Halliday demonstrates British ideas about the representation of German soldiers in 1915 where a German father sends his son away to be a soldier reminding him to behave as the Crown Prince does. This soldier is younger than the stereotypes used by Poy, but embodies arrogance and confidence that was another perceived attribute to the German character (figure 5.15). The humour in this image is evoked in a number of ways; firstly, there is the recognition of characters sending sons away to war in British cartoons (figure 5.4). As much as this may be a recognised feature, apparently unifying the combatant nations, it is then inverted by making this a father figure sending his son away and not the traditional mother. Some humour is invoked by the father son relationship illustrated here, which can be linked to the Kaiser and Crown

Prince in cartoons.<sup>92</sup> A further layer is applied, using inversion humour. British perceptions of the Crown Prince who by September 1915 was ‘notorious’ for his wartime behaviour, is recommended to the young soldier providing that humour of inversion where the Prince should be seen as ‘an example’ to follow.<sup>93</sup>



**(Figure 5.15) Weldon Halliday, ‘Take your Brave Prince as an Example’,  
*London Mail*, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1915**

When cartoonists present the enemy soldier fighting, more commonly he is running away from the fight. Several cartoonists use this style of depiction in stark contrast to the German publicised image, where strength and confidence are reinforced.<sup>94</sup> The British press and literature informed the public of a strongly militaristic German

<sup>92</sup> See Haselden, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*; ‘No Caricatures of the Kaiser or the Crown Prince’, *Birmingham Mail*, 4<sup>th</sup> December 1914, p. 5.

<sup>93</sup> ‘The Crown Prince: An Illuminating Pre-War Discussion’, *Western Mail*, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1915, p. 8.

<sup>94</sup> For this see German cartoon publications including *Fliegende Blätter*, 1914-1918; *Kladderadatsch*, 1914-1918; *Lustige Blätter*, 1917-1918; *Simplicissimus*, 1914-1918; *Ulk*, 1914-1918; *Der Wahre Jakob*, 1914-1918.

society, and this in turn implied strength and courage for its soldiers.<sup>95</sup> Added to this were memories of Franco-Prussian wars and early twentieth century conflicts involving the German army who had developed a name for themselves.<sup>96</sup> Yet the British cartoonist sought to reverse this feature entirely; the German soldier was a wimp running away from the slightest hint of trouble. Starr W. and Jack Walker illustrate this in 1914, presenting terrified German soldiers running away from the fighting (figures 5.16 and 5.17).

In Starr W.'s image, the Germans are small, almost childlike figures, each with short-cropped hair, ill-fitting uniforms, and rounded faces of the unfit. These three soldiers run off the image to the left while the British soldier at the bottom right stands solidly presenting his bayoneted rifle to their retreating forms (figure 5.16). Speed is added to the image through the direction of flow in the hair of the German characters, and through additional swipes of the artist's pen across the page moving away from the German figures. The implication of fear is reinforced through several of the soldier's accoutrements, including a sword and hat that fly through the air as they run. The humour in this cartoon is visually instant of the scared Germans running from a single Tommy. Then to compound the humour, the added caption speaks of the British Army being contemptible and little, an army that could be easily 'walked over' by the Kaiser's soldiers, which ironically is the complete reverse of what happens.

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<sup>95</sup> See stories of German barbarism in the press; Wilson, 'Lord Bryce's Investigation', pp. 369-383.

<sup>96</sup> Blanning, *Nineteenth Century*, pp. 41-2.

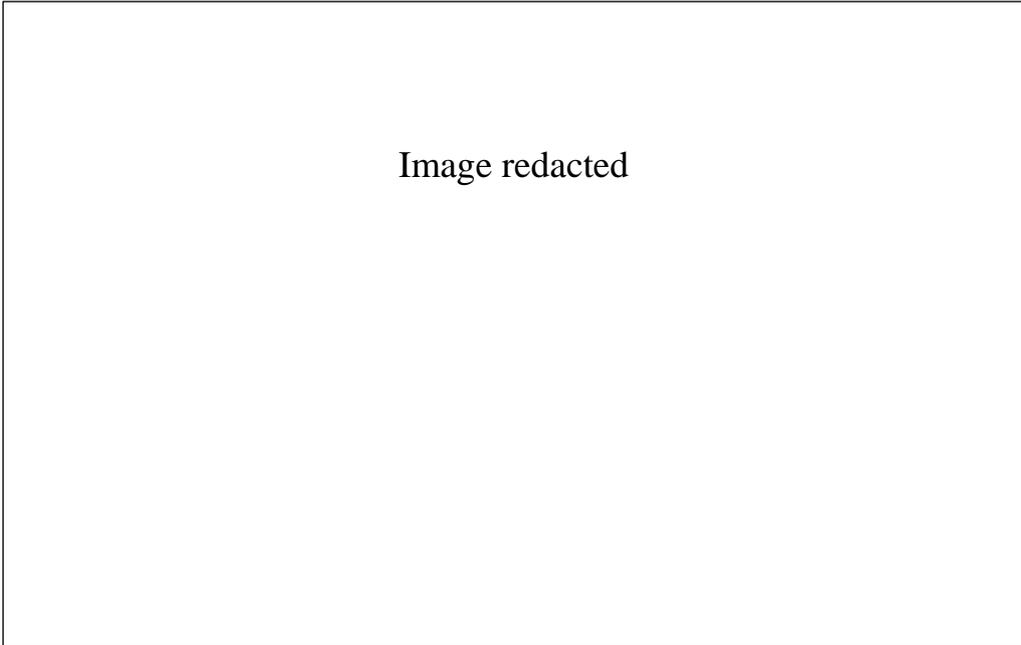


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**(Figure 5.16) Starr W, ‘How the Kaiser’s Soldiers Walked Over the Contemptible Little British Army!’, *London Mail*, 31<sup>st</sup> October 1914**

Jack Walker’s contribution to depictions of the enemy again present the confident British Tommy chasing the Germans away. There is a ‘retreating German behind cloud of dust’, indicating a hasty retreat illustrated with an arrow and caption. Walker constructs the humour in his image visually, but reinforces it with additional comments and labels in the cartoon. ‘The point’ of the Tommy’s bayonet is highlighted with an arrow, the German Army is indicated behind the cloud, a signpost shows the direction back ‘to the Fatherland’, and furthermore, the Tommy speaks, exclaiming about how the British Army is seen to be ‘contemptible’ in line with Starr’s image (figure 5.17). The final point is the contradiction in terms, as more often the British Army referred to themselves as contemptible in jest, and it was a point that was maintained by so many in the BEF throughout the war.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Neillands, *Old Contemptibles*.

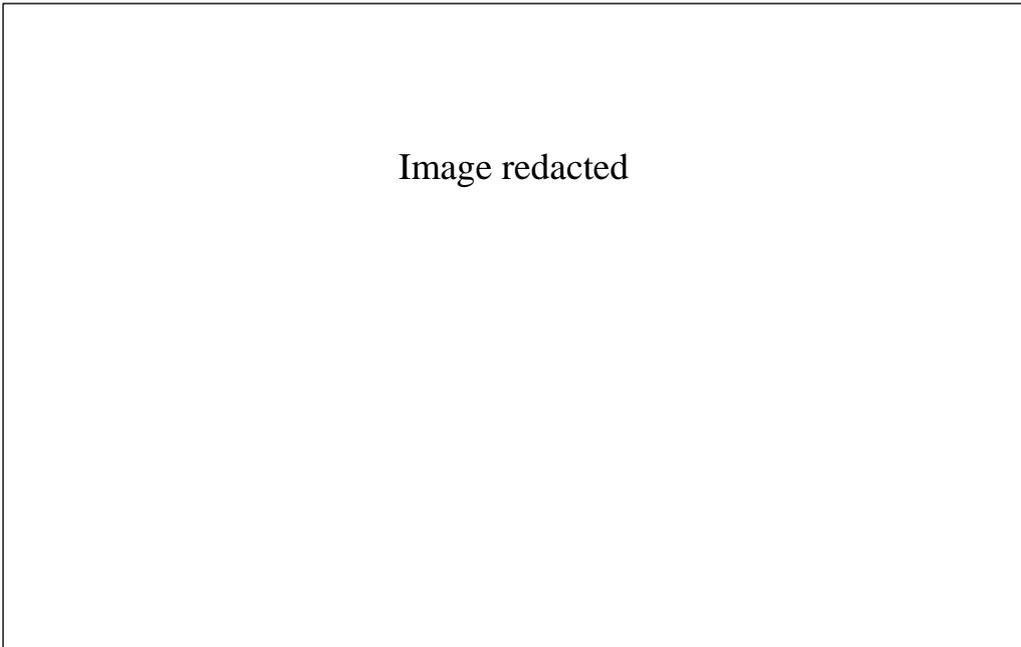


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**(Figure 5.17) Jack Walker, ‘He Laughs Longest who Laughs Last’, *Special War Cartoons*, 1914**

The comments about the British Army being small and contemptible came from the work of Frederick Maurice in the War Office. As Fussell reports, Maurice devised the phrase, and through gossip and hearsay ‘fathered [it] upon the Kaiser’.<sup>98</sup> In this manner, the army as a whole took it up with the BEF referring to themselves comically as the ‘old contemptibles’.<sup>99</sup> For Maurice, it was an incisive tactic to motivate and inspire the British troops and give them something to fight against and rally behind.

The notion of the wounded soldier also combines the home and battlefronts in cartoons. Having returned home to recuperate, many of these men attempted to resume life on the home front as cripples, wounded in multiple ways, although through cartoon the full extent of these wounds are not necessarily visible. Soldiers were physically and mentally battle scarred as a result of what became known as ‘shell shock’, which

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<sup>98</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 116.

<sup>99</sup> Neillands, *Old Contemptibles*.

for many was an invisible scar of war. It was a new term, used during the war following derogatory perceptions of male hysteria that were renamed.<sup>100</sup> In the historiography of the war wounded, shell shock features prolifically, but it is not an aspect that is depicted in cartoons due to it being a predominantly mental state.<sup>101</sup>

There is evidence of cartoons being given to wounded soldiers in hospitals in France, but many of these do not feature the explicitly wounded beyond soldiers in blue hospital uniforms.<sup>102</sup> Many modern studies, indeed, look to the addition of such journals as a way of offering humour to assist health and recuperation, and so major wound are understandably not included.<sup>103</sup> Photographs of the wounded are abundant, and for classically trained artists, death and wounding is equally apparent. The most well known in artistic terms, is that of the blindness resulting from mustard gas as depicted by John Singer Sargent in 1919 (figure 5.18). However, war wounds such as this did not naturally provoke humour for the cartoonist. They touched too closely on melancholic aspects of society that are difficult to laugh at despite the revaluations of these wounded men and how they were represented in society.<sup>104</sup> It is for this reason that the predominant 'wounds' shown in cartoon are those of a more temporary nature. The bandaged arm or leg can be joked about, and bandages can even be placed around

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<sup>100</sup> Jay Winter, 'Shell-Shock and the Cultural History of the Great War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35:1 (2000), pp. 7-11.

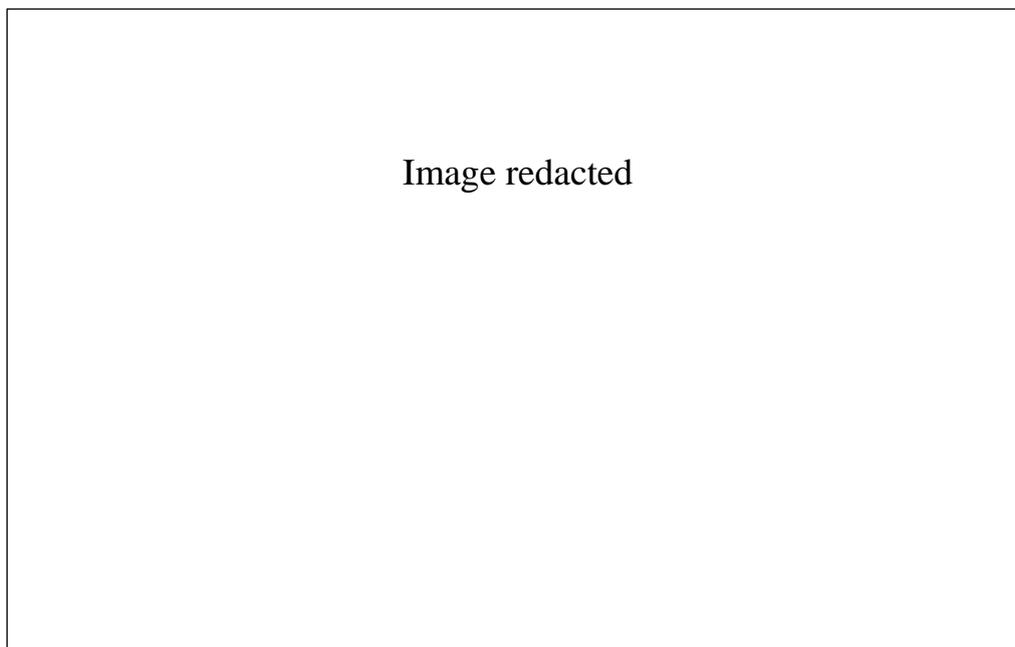
<sup>101</sup> See Joanna Bourke, 'Effeminacy, Ethnicity and the End of Trauma: The Sufferings of 'Shell-Shocked' Men in Great Britain and Ireland, 1914-39', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35:1 (2000), pp. 57-6; George Mosse, 'Shell-Shock as a Social Disease', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35:1 (2000), pp. 101-8; Fiona Reid, *Broken Men Shell Shock Treatment and Recovery in Britain, 1914-1930* (London: Continuum, 2010); Peter Leese, *Shell Shock: Traumatic Neurosis and the British Soldiers of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Anthony Babington, *Shell-Shock: A History of the Changing Attitudes to War Neurosis* (London: Leo Cooper, 1997).

<sup>102</sup> H. Pearl Adam, *International Cartoons of the War* (New York: E. P. Dutton, n.d., [c. 1919-20]), p. ix; Reznick, *Healing the Nation*, p. 111.

<sup>103</sup> See Rod Martin, 'Sense of Humour and Physical Health: Theoretical Issues, Recent Findings and Future Directions', *National Journal of Humour Research*, 17:1-2 (2006), pp. 1-19.

<sup>104</sup> Julie Anderson, 'Stoics: Creating Identities at St. Dunstan's 1911-1920', in Stephen McVeigh and Nicola Cooper (eds.), *Men After War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 79-91.

the head for the sake of a joke, but there is no sense of permanence within these humorous depictions.



**(Figure 5.18) John Singer Sergeant, 'Gassed', Imperial War Museum, 1919**

Soldiers who returned home wounded, as so many did, had become soldiers apart from others through their new wounded identity. Studies have shown how this identity was applied by society, but it was all dependent on the type of wound accommodated.<sup>105</sup> Blindness, for example, as Julie Anderson suggests, was often an unseen wound, but one that was appropriated during the war by aspects of sacrifice that blindness had not formerly had.<sup>106</sup> The blind man was no longer the beggar nuisance on the street, but transformed into a hero having sacrificed something vital; a trait that was to be praised. At the same time, there was a predominant feeling in

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<sup>105</sup> See for example Koven, 'Remembering and Dismemberment:', pp. 1167-1202; Ana Carden-Coyne, 'Ungrateful Bodies: Rehabilitation, Resistance and Disabled American Veterans of the First World War', *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire*, 14:4 (2007), pp. 543-65; Deborah Cohen, *War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>106</sup> Anderson, 'Stoics: Creating Identities', pp. 79-85

most metropolitan hospitals that the visibility of the wounded ought to be limited.<sup>107</sup> In time, elements of war wounded and newly disabled soldiers were transformed, slowly at first, into heroes, and this is a trait that has continued to develop through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.<sup>108</sup>

When the wounded appear in cartoons, these men are often not valorised heroes, but in contrast, they appear as fools for their actions. Although the degree of foolishness often relates to the date of publication. The effects of the war altered the way the public understood the disabled significantly. In Stimpson's image from October 1914, a healthy woman accuses the man with the peg leg of being a shirker. Many women saw non-combatant men in this way as demonstrated by so many of the white feather campaigns.<sup>109</sup> Naturally, he cannot be a shirker, but public perception was that anyone not enlisting must have been avoiding their duty regardless of any disability that could be 'ignored' (figure 5.19). The humour in this image is predominantly textual as initially the leg is not clear without close inspection. Although, it can be seen, and thus, the humour is reaffirmed, criticising the woman for her lack of observation and assumption rather than the cartoon viewer.

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<sup>107</sup> Jay Winter, 'Hospitals', in Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1918 vol. 2: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p. 357.

<sup>108</sup> McCartney, 'Hero, Victim or Villain?', pp. 43-54.

<sup>109</sup> Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men', pp. 178-206; Marwick, *Deluge*, p. 90; 'Women's War: White Feathers for "Slackers"', *Daily Mail*, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1914, p. 3.

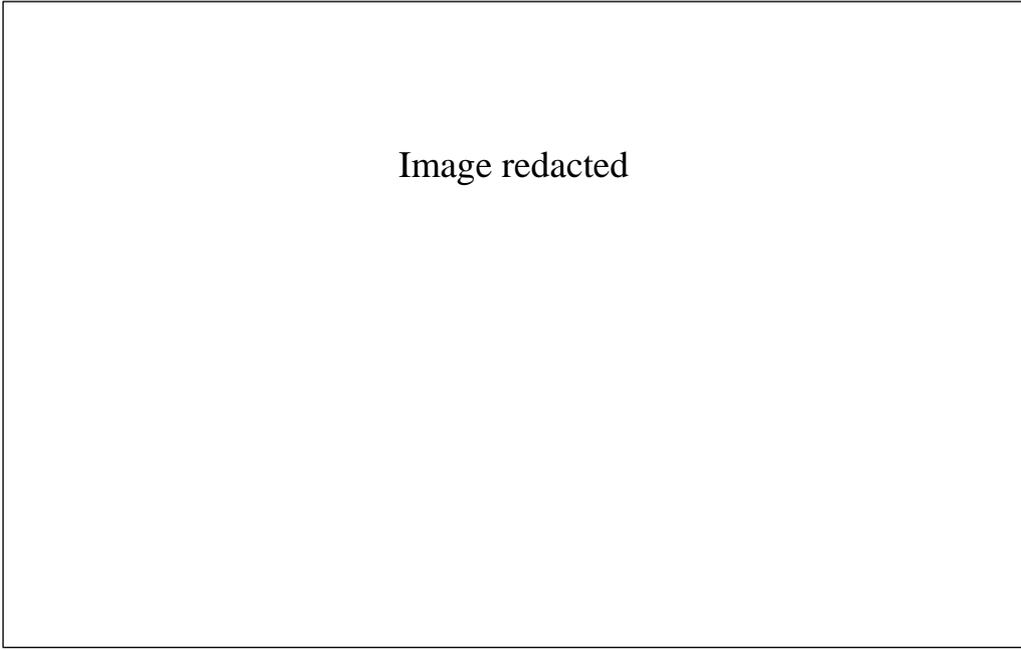
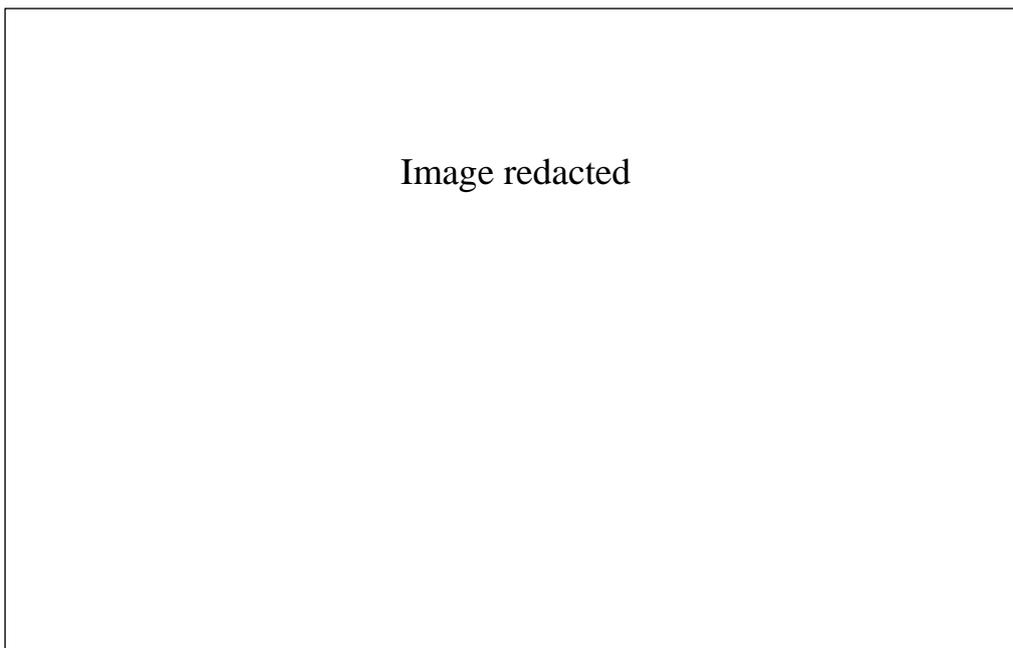


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**(Figure 5.19) Stimpson, ‘Assistance!’, *London Mail*, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1914**

As the war progresses, even just five months later, when ‘Sandy’ is asked how it happened, in the *London Mail*, the intended assumption as he is in uniform is that he was wounded whilst serving. Yet, as it turns out, the accompanying text informs the viewer that he had been in a fight with Douglas over a shirt (figure 5.20). There is no attempt to reduce the authority of serving men here, but at the same time, it does serve to imply that they remain, just men, and that usual squabbles still happened in the army. The understanding of the superficiality of the reason for this wound applies the image’s humour, which allows the text to alter the way the cartoon is understood. The wounded soldier in this instance is to be laughed at, as well as with, providing unity for the audience and character who are both accepted as part of the group.



**(Figure 5.20) Unknown Artist, ‘How Did it Happen Sandy?’, *London Mail*, 13<sup>th</sup> March 1915**

On another level, there are cartoons that reflect civilian interaction with the wounded. Many soldiers returned home sporting wounds, and there was a lot of activity among the civilian populace working to aid the situation. Theatres set seats aside for recuperating soldiers, to help raise their morale, although soldiers on leave were treated to priority seats too.<sup>110</sup> When translated into cartoon, Joy Flapperton, one of Haselden’s stock characters of 1915-16, illustrates how civilians at home treated the wounded. In the series ‘Trials of a Wounded Tommy’, Flapperton, does her bit to transport the war wounded around, unfortunately, her father’s car is broken and so she has to ride with them in a sidecar on a motor bike. In his traditional fashion, Haselden provides stages to the story from collection of the Tommys through to their resting again in hospital beds (figure 5.21).

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<sup>110</sup> Findon, *Play Pictorial*, 23-33 (London: Stage Pictorial Publishing, 1914-19).

There is a constant sense of speed in this cartoon, several near misses of chickens and pigs through to a collision with a wall. All of which is accompanied by reassurances from Flapperton that it is all right, as ‘you can’t hurt a pig even if you try!’ The images and the text equally provide humour, and then at the end is the final humorous onslaught as the soldiers consider how they think they ‘were safer in France’. There is a sense of Flapperton’s good ‘middle-class’ feminine intentions to help reinforced throughout the cartoon. She is represented as a character who means well but generally misses the mark to society’s satisfaction in a similar manner to the wealthy above.<sup>111</sup> Haselden also links this to her actions in other illustrations in 1915 where she does her bit even though it appears negligible to the audience.<sup>112</sup> The images of the wounded Tommys reinforce the ‘old contemptible’ edge of stoicism and sheer gumption to get on and do what they must.<sup>113</sup> Separated as they are from the war directly, the attitudes of perseverance stay with them.

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<sup>111</sup> For details of the wealthy and irresponsible, see chapter 3.

<sup>112</sup> See Haselden, *Daily Mirror*, July-October 1915, p. 8.

<sup>113</sup> McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 2; Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 141-48.

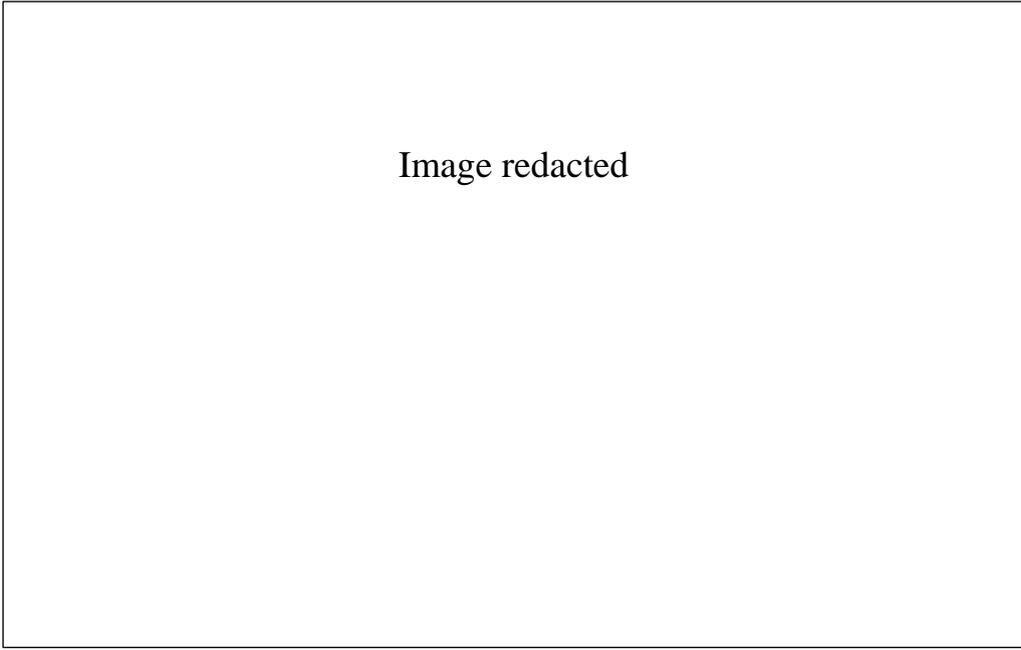


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**(Figure 5.21) William Haselden, ‘Trials of a Wounded Tommy No.3’, *Daily Mirror*, 10 November 1916**

Wounds of a temporary nature are far more common in cartoon as they represent a feature that will not disrupt the soldier’s performance and abilities in battle for long. For the domestic audience, these temporary wounds can be reassuring. There is no sense of them having ‘blighty wounds’ that would service a discharge for the soldier, nor is there the sense that that was desired.<sup>114</sup> Rather they are temporary acknowledgements of what the war could do, but with no sense of irreparability or lasting impact. These wounds thereby reaffirm the soldier’s heroic persona for their audience; these images are merely the representation of battle scars that demonstrate a positive contribution to active service.

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<sup>114</sup> Kingsley Martin, *Father Figures* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), pp. 80-1; Guy Chapman, *A Passionate Prodigality: Fragments of Autobiography*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1965), p. 80; Reznick, *Healing the Nation*, p. 2.

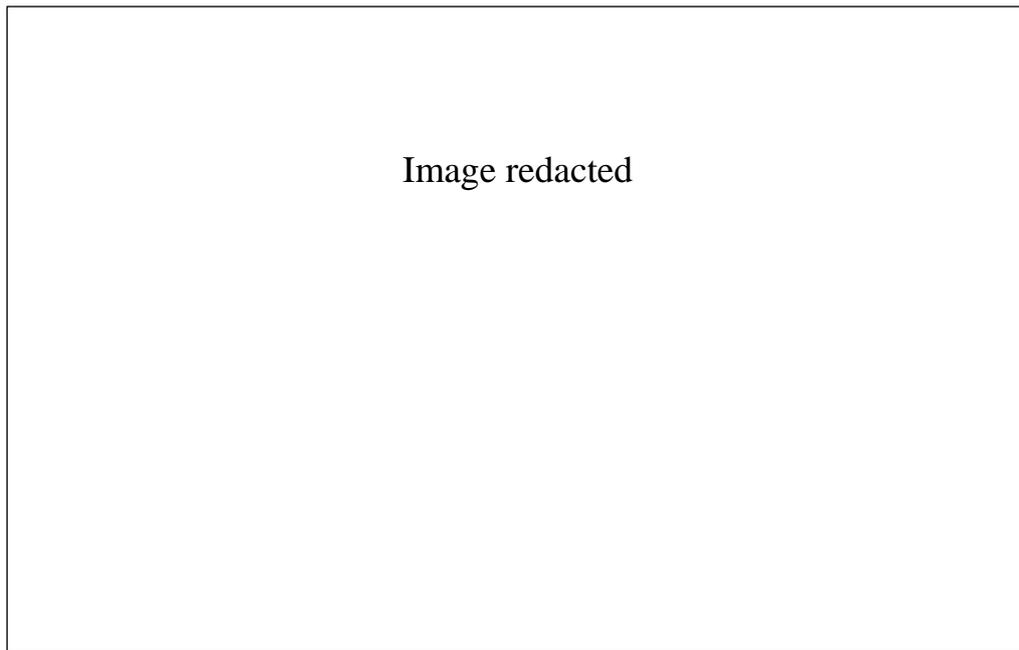
### Military Images from the Front

Soldiers themselves also portray the wounded in cartoon as can be seen through Corporal George Harry Southgate's images that present 'The Visitor' and 'What! You Don't Know Me?'<sup>115</sup> Both of these images, come from a small collection preserved by his family, and are taken from a scrapbook of sketches made in Northern France during his service there in 1915.<sup>116</sup> The cartoons offer wounded soldiers, among other less military related pictures, and the destined audience remains unclear, although, there can be some assumption that many were created for the corporal himself. The first discussed here gives a glum looking bandaged soldier being told by his civilian visitor that they are pleased to see him 'looking happy' (figure 5.22). There is the ironic humour of the visual contrasting with the textual comments; however, there is also an idea that reality plays a part in this image. There is an impression of how unpleasant the wounds can be illustrated through the bandages around his head and the soldier's expression. Although a couple of small wounds have been added to his face, they do not appear to be irreparable, and could even be mistaken simply for dirt. The humour of this image is distinctly incongruous and ironic, as it remains apparent that the soldier himself does not feel any humour in the situation as demonstrated through his facial expression.

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<sup>115</sup> BCA, Uncatalogued, 'Cartoons by Corporal George Harry Southgate of the 17<sup>th</sup> London Regiment', c. 1915-17.

<sup>116</sup> Little more can be traced of this Corporal through Forces War Records or the National Archives beyond the information provided by the family that accompany the cartoon collection.



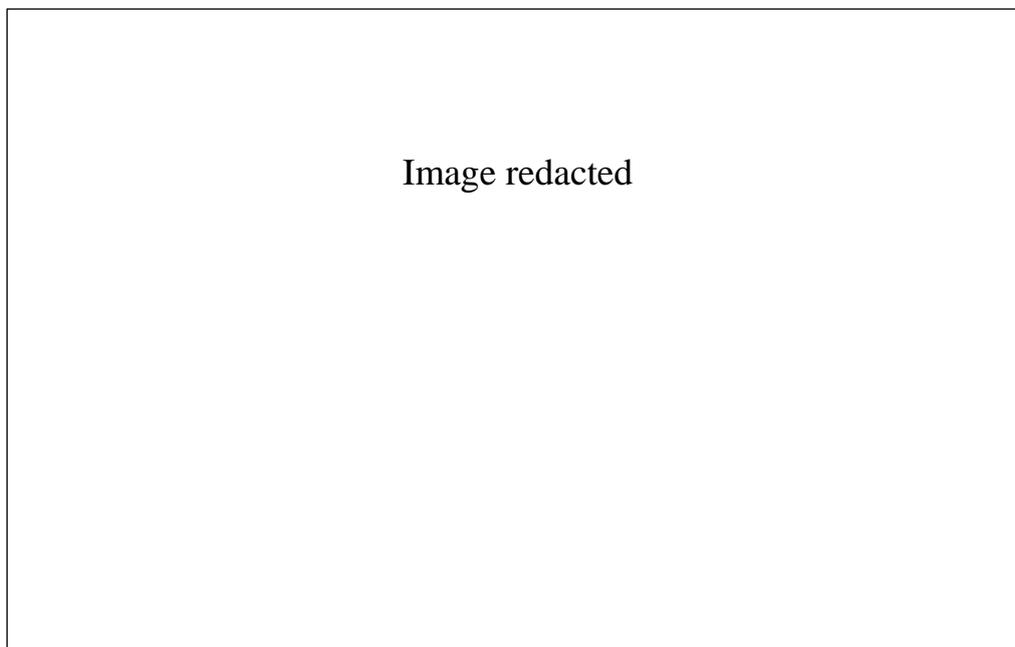
**(Figure 5.22) George Harry Southgate, ‘The Visitor’, British Cartoon Archive, 1915**

The second image takes a more openly humorous approach where the wounded soldier, who appears to have missing fingers and head bandaged, holds out his hand to the second man, and comments with surprise that he has not been recognised (figure 5.23). In this instance, it is interesting to note that the man who is healthy is clearly denoted through uniform and greatcoat as a soldier. The wounded man, in contrast, only wears what might be construed to be the blue uniform of the wounded soldier in army hospital.<sup>117</sup> Without colour to clarify, this can only be supposition. The wounded man still wears the same hat to reinforce the presumed recognition. There is an element of ambiguity about this image and the devastation of the soldier’s wounds. Perhaps the bandage around the head is only temporary, and the hand has only been drawn at speed.

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<sup>117</sup> Reznick, *Healing the Nation*, p. 102; Winter, ‘Hospitals’, pp. 361-64.

The cheerful captioned joke would seem to reinforce this perception, but the cartoon alone cannot provide a clear sense of its inspiration.



**(Figure 5.23) George Harry Southgate, 'What! You Don't Know Me', British Cartoon Archive, 1915**

In both of these images, there is the notable illustration of potential facial wounds, which do not feature, with any regularity in domestic cartooning. The historiography of the war wounded from a British perspective, also avoids this area to an extent, although there is acknowledgement of pioneering medical advances that started in the Great War.<sup>118</sup> In contrast, the French took a very different approach to facial wounds, and indeed created their own word about it. For them, the *gueules cassées* came to mean the 'broken faces' of the wounded, which has been studied in more depth by

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<sup>118</sup> See Kerry Neale, 'Scarred by War: Medical Responses to Facially Disfigured Soldiers in the Great War' in Ashley Ekins and Elizabeth Stewart (eds.), *War Wounds: Medicine and the Trauma of Conflict* (Auckland: Exisle, 2011), pp. 60-73.

Sophie Delaporte.<sup>119</sup> Through this easier acceptance, more can be seen of facial wounds in the work of French cartoonists, but once again, they are of less relevance here.

Images in trench journals of wounded soldiers feature regularly, and illustrate far more acceptance in visualising lasting wounds on soldiers when compared to the wounded drawn by home front artists. These images do not lose their humour, but continue to use it in much the same way. They openly acknowledge the problems of war, and simultaneously reduce its impact through the humour applied to them.<sup>120</sup> A. E. J. in the magazine *Khaki* demonstrates this quite clearly through his illustrations of ‘Why Don’t You Drive a Pair like a Gentleman?’ and ‘Did You Lose Your Legs by Bullets or Shells’. In both of these images, there is a clear loss of a significant limb.

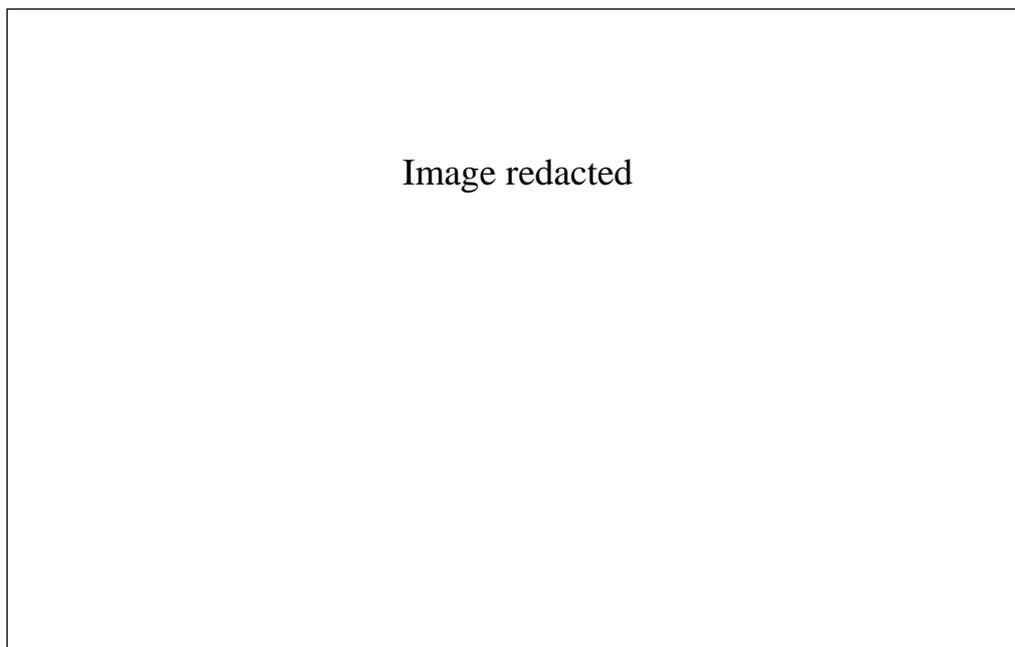
In the first of these images, both soldiers who are talking are visibly wounded and lean on crutches. However, the man on two crutches has clearly lost the lower part of one leg. It is then he who asks the other man why he is not ‘driving’ two crutches like a gentleman? This image layers humour using both the visual and textual elements of the cartoon. There is instantly the slight incongruity of the two wounded men appearing content and cheerful. Then through the comment, there are aspects of wealth and class layered upon the visual. Driving implies a vehicle, be that car or horse and trap, both of which indicate wealth and potentially class. Furthermore, it is implied that driving ‘a pair’ would be the actions of a gentleman offering an element of superiority. However, here the pair is related to the number of crutches the man has,

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<sup>119</sup> Sophie Delaporte and Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Les Gueules Cassées: Les Blessés de la Face de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Éd Noësis, 1996); also see Leonard Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Anette Becker, *France and the Great War 1914-1918* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003).

<sup>120</sup> Hardy, *British Soldier*, pp. 132-3, 142-4; Henman, ‘Humour as a Coping Mechanism:’, pp. 83-94; Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, pp. 277-87.

while it is visibly obvious that the second man, only needs one anyway, once again providing an element of incongruity (figure 5.24).



**(Figure 5.24) A. E. J., ‘Why Don’t You Drive a Pair like a Gentleman?’, *Khaki*,  
1915**

The second image has less visual humour with the man in the wheelchair who is seated next to a standing soldier. There is also a policeman in the background who looks on and observes the pair. It appears a casual conversation; however, the captions added apply the humour where the standing soldier asks whether bullets or shells took the man’s legs. The seated man then responds that he wishes that had been the case but instead he was hit by a tram (figure 5.25). The improbability of the situation and its casual acceptance aligned with the idea of war wounds matches with the domestic image of Sandy fighting with his friend over a shirt. This is also an early image from 1915, and so its improbable humour matches well with domestic attitudes to the war wounded at this point in the conflict.

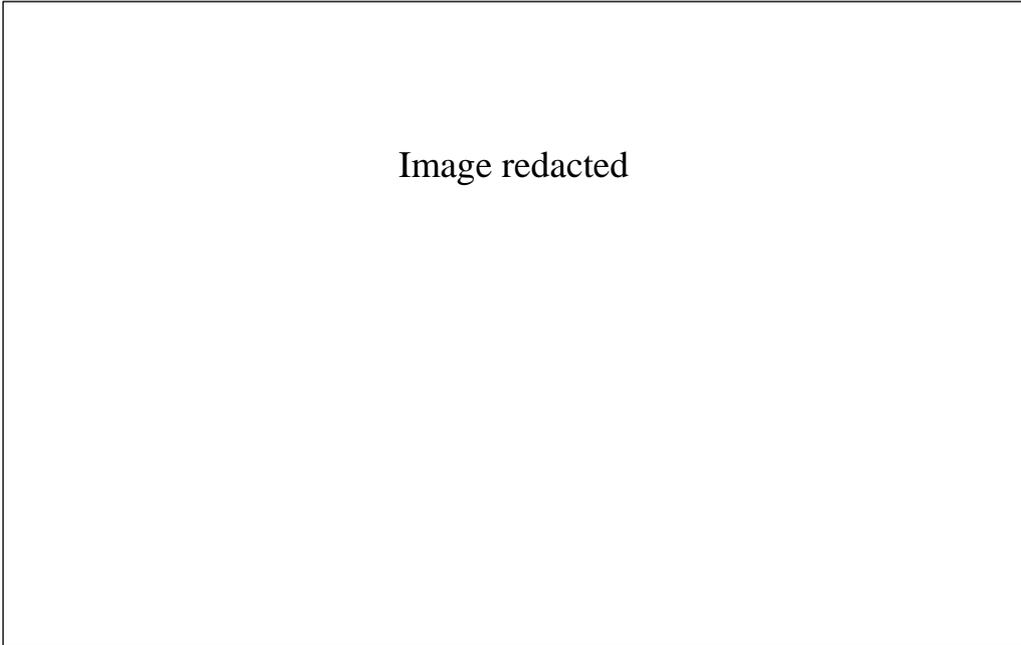


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**(Figure 5.25) A. E. J., ‘Did You Lose Your Legs by Bullets or Shells’, *Khaki*, 1915**

*Khaki*, in which these two images are present, was a journal that came out of a domestic philanthropy, and was not created with an ‘emphasis of commercialism’. Published by Imperial House, London, the purpose, as the paper itself reiterates, was to serve, encourage, cheer and be a companion to the fighting forces.<sup>121</sup> With this intention behind it, the encouragement through the humour becomes more apparent from these images and the potential to find laughter where it might not otherwise be. As such, the need for humour to support the soldiers becomes highly prominent especially in terms of morale. Even so, soldiers’ abilities to provide that humour for themselves also becomes clear as so many of these trench journals were internally written, edited and indeed published when facilities allowed.<sup>122</sup> Almost every troop

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<sup>121</sup> *Khaki*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1915, p. 43.

<sup>122</sup> *Khaki Opinion: An Illustrated Magazine for all in Khaki*, 4<sup>th</sup> Buffs Regiment, 1917-18; *The Whizz-Bang: A Monthly Journal from the Front, Written and Edited in the Trenches*, Sixth battalion Durham Light Infantry, 1916; *Wipers Times*, 1916-18.

had their own journal by the end of the war. Of these, soldiers made some and battalion authorities made others for them.

When addressing soldiers views of themselves, it might seem that fewer cartoons are going to be specifically available as there were many predominantly text based publications on the battlefronts due to various printing limitations.<sup>123</sup> This did not hold true to all trench journals, and many French journals in particular were full of cartoons, as a lot of these could be published more locally to the trenches.<sup>124</sup> Many British and dominion journals incorporate cartoons as well, and while some like the *Wipers Times* only sported a few, others were more prolific.<sup>125</sup> A lot of these were hospital journals, or those that were sent home for publication making the printing of images far easier.<sup>126</sup>

Text based journals continue to be useful in this thesis as they provide evidence of what has been termed ‘trench humour’ by Graham Seal and others.<sup>127</sup> There is an idea today of what soldiers’ war humour was like, although much of this has come from twentieth century television and film productions, and the historian needs to be aware of this and how much of it is a predominantly British approach.<sup>128</sup> This war humour is seen to be darker, making laughter out of everything and especially unpleasant situations; often as Fussell suggests, the worse it was the more they laughed.<sup>129</sup> Even so, contemporary newspapers and cartoon journals can be strong indicators for where

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<sup>123</sup> See for example *The Con Camp Courier*, No. 11 Convalescence Depot, Royal Army Medical Corps, 1916-18; *Wipers Times*, 1916-18; *Mudhook*, 1917.

<sup>124</sup> *Wipers Times*, 1916-18; *Le Canard des Poilus*, 23<sup>rd</sup> Company 346<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, French Army, 1915-19; *La Bourguignotte*, 227<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, French Army, 1915-19; *Les Bégonias: Organe de Défense Contra la Neurasthenie*, French Army, 1916.

<sup>125</sup> *The B. R. O. Sufficient Unto the Day*, Cavalry Corps, 1915; *Gasper*, 1915-16; *Khaki*, 1915-17; *Mudhook*, 1917-18; *The Outpost: Magazine of the 17<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion Highland Light Infantry*, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, 1915-16.

<sup>126</sup> See for example *The Return*, Journal of the King’s Lancashire Military Convalescent Hospital, 1917-18; *Craighleith Hospital Chronicle*, 1915-16; *Skyscraper*, 1918.

<sup>127</sup> Seal, *Soldiers’ Press*; Graham Seal, “‘We’re Here because We’re Here’: Trench Culture of the Great War”, *Folklore*, 124:2 (2013), pp. 178–199.

<sup>128</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. 3.

<sup>129</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 8.

these ideas about war humour come from, including those written for the trenches.<sup>130</sup> Contemporary officers even acknowledged front line humour and its prevalence among British troops beyond other nationalities.<sup>131</sup>

It has been suggested that humour whilst in the trenches was a means of distancing and separating oneself from the unpleasant realities of warfare, and often similarities to home front cartoons can illustrate this distancing.<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, as Andrew Robertshaw has observed, there is a sense of especially cockney soldiers believing that it was ‘only us keepin’ so ruddy cheerful as pulls us through’.<sup>133</sup> Cartoon imagery produced by soldiers themselves serves as witness to much of this humour and resilience as well. Soldiers’ humour forms the main body of journals and magazines for various troops and battalions across the army. With hours of endless monotony ahead of them, numerous soldiers turned to poetry, and column writing for their troop newspaper purely to keep themselves amused through endless days of waiting.<sup>134</sup> Much of this humour as Robert Nelson has identified, revolves around features of sport and music hall entertainment, and attempts to justify and maintain a sense of the ‘British way of life’ for soldiers in France.<sup>135</sup>

Even so, these magazines and journals fostered soldier humour built on the endless supply of myth and rumour prevalent in the trenches where boredom and a general lack of information could inspire the ‘human impulse to make fictions’.<sup>136</sup> The papers

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<sup>130</sup> ‘The Laughing Army’, *Khaki Opinion*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1917, p. 112; ‘Khaki Humour’, *Khaki Opinion*, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1917, p. 122.

<sup>131</sup> Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, p. 281.

<sup>132</sup> Le Naour, ‘Laughter and Tears’, p. 268.

<sup>133</sup> Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, p. 279.

<sup>134</sup> See Strachan, *First World War*, p. 279; Beckett, *Great War*, p. 303.

<sup>135</sup> Robert Nelson, ‘Soldier Newspapers: A Useful Source in the Social and Cultural History of the First World and Beyond’, *War in History*, 17:2 (2010), p. 169; Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*.

<sup>136</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 115; Seal, ‘We’re Here because We’re Here’, pp. 178–199; Strachan, *First World War*, p. 279; Beckett, *Great War*, p. 303.

were made by soldiers and for soldiers, and as such, serve as a source to lay out the ‘mental landscape’ of soldiers’ minds and thoughts.<sup>137</sup> Additionally, many served specific regiments, which altered the humour marginally to suit. A shared ‘war experience’ between officers and the ranks can be identified in places, but at the same time, this shared experience served to separate specific regiments’ humour.<sup>138</sup> Jokes about horses would not serve in an infantry or artillery paper, whereas, jokes about the cavalry certainly would. Once again, through these jokes, there is an ongoing sense of ‘them’ and ‘us’ identified in the cartoons’ humour. Moreover, producing material to be published in journals and magazines of this nature served as a relief for countless soldiers. The writing of ideas and the transmission of humour became a cathartic experience, one undertaken by so many.<sup>139</sup> These documents were not only therapeutic in their manufacture for individuals, but their dissemination could also bolster morale and serve as a unifying factor for entire regiments.<sup>140</sup>

Through trench journals and their cartoons, some sense of identity for the soldiers represented there can be determined. Soldiers are frequently present in these images, and are placed in incongruous situations to create the laughter, yet at the same time, there is an element of familiarity that can be empathised with by other viewing soldiers. One unidentified artist in *Mudhook* for example presents an image of a soldier unclothed, whom two young Dutch girls observe. The image is titled ‘Suitably Camouflaged’, and the humour is clearly designed to play on the incongruity of the camouflage underwear that the soldier wears (figure 5.26). Soldiers viewing this image

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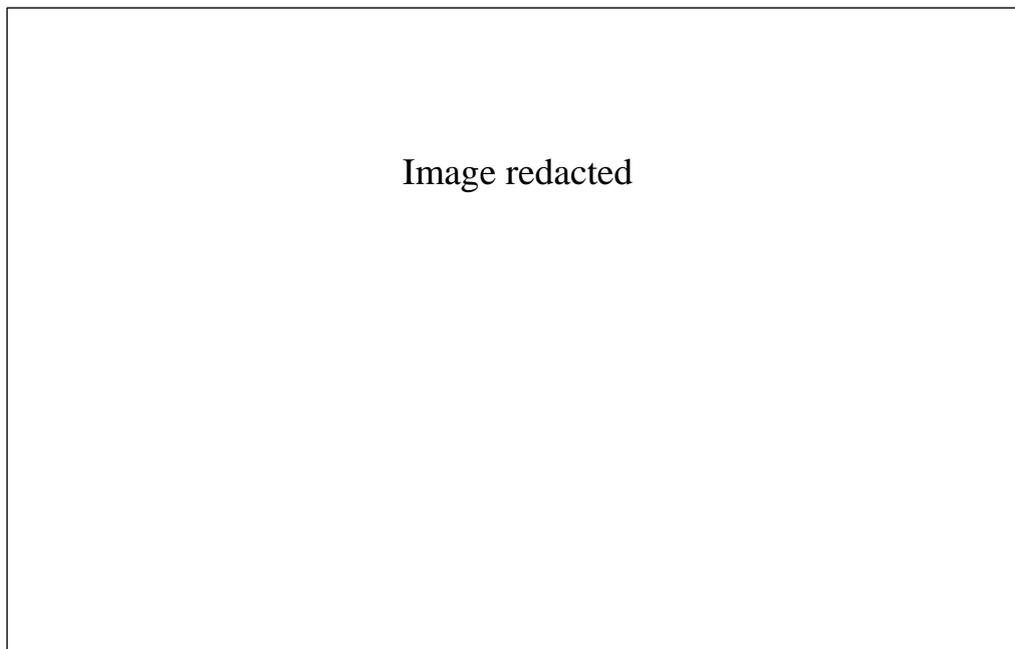
<sup>137</sup> Nelson, ‘Soldier Newspapers’, p. 168.

<sup>138</sup> See Gary Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 126.

<sup>139</sup> See soldier’s articles in *C. B.*, 1915; *Con Camp Courier*, 1916-18; *Growler*, 1915-17; *The Lead Swinger: The Bivouac Journal of the 1/3 West Riding Field Ambulance*, 1916-17.

<sup>140</sup> See Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*; Seal, *Soldiers’ Press*, p. 2.

are encouraged to feel superiority over the man caught in his state of undress. Even so, they might have empathy for being in a different country, and out of the comforts of normality. This sympathy as much as the superiority and incongruity of the image all contribute to the humour embodied within it.



**(Figure 5.26) Unknown Artist, ‘Suitably Camouflaged’, *Mudhook*, 1<sup>st</sup> September 1917**

A lot of new recruits to the army came from working-class stock, and these men brought their own ‘working-class humour’ into the trenches with them which transferred to other civilian soldiers.<sup>141</sup> Through this, another level of identity can be discerned, and often it comes through in the humour of their journals and the cartoons in them. Pipsqueak in the *Lead Swinger* of 1916 presents a collection of images on his page in the journal, which illustrates a variety of jokes about the army and society at home. He illustrates queries rather than simply asking the questions as other

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<sup>141</sup> Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, p. 278; Bourne, ‘British Working Man’, pp. 336-52.

publications do.<sup>142</sup> That said, his page of cartoons do follow three pages of ‘Tell us’ questions by Periscope, although none of those questions are replicated.<sup>143</sup>

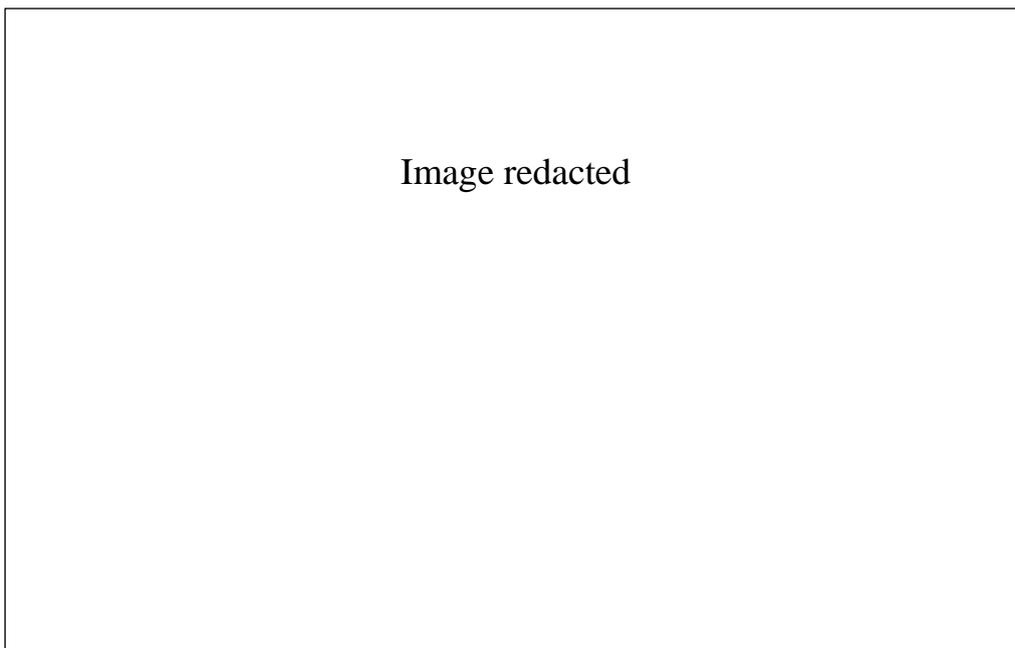
Nonetheless, his visual queries ask questions of society at home as well as about the soldiers reading the paper. ‘How does 14 become 44’ asks about the aging and development of women at home. This version may be taken to excess, but at times boredom in the trenches would have felt like a thirty-year stint (figure 5.27). Alternatively, he asks how a particular harness is supposed to be worn matching with other problems soldiers faced with their uniforms as discussed by Laurie Taylor in ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’ (figure 5.2). In his page of cartoons, Pipsqueak also illustrates more soldiers specifically, and identifies them less so as soldiers, despite the uniforms, and more as men of initiative in difficult situations. In this way he acknowledges working-class hands on abilities, and general soldierly gumption for making the most.<sup>144</sup> One soldier’s initiative is illustrated as he uses Red Cross water supplies to defend the machine guns. Another group are seen taking a potential bath of water to an upturned howitzer to warm the water, and then finally, ‘Top’ is shown standing proudly next to a makeshift hammock in the home he built.

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<sup>142</sup> ‘Is It True’, *Open Exhaust*, 1916, p. 25; ‘Things We Want to Know’, *Wipers Times*, 1916-18, p. 5; ‘Things We Want to Know’, *London Mail*, 1914-15, pp. 8-9.

<sup>143</sup> Periscope, ‘Tell Us’, *Lead Swinger*, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1916, pp. 52-4.

<sup>144</sup> See Aulich and Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?*, pp. 34-62.



**(Figure 5.27) Pipsqueak, ‘Pipsqueak’s Page’, *Lead Swinger*, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1916**

Adrian Gregory suggests that the war was the salvation of the working classes who can be seen depicted in many of these cartoons. The types of work they executed at home was in higher demand on the western and home fronts alike. There was a constant desire for miners and skilled workers for war purposes in both locations. Both jobs that required a certain amount of ingenuity and initiative when working manually. Among these skilled workers, many saw the war in a different way to those who entered it from privileged backgrounds. War kept these men one-step away from death as working down the mines had, or work in factories to a lesser extent.<sup>145</sup> Even so, their salvation came from being needed, and being given purpose and social standing as the war progressed. Humour is not instantly obvious through the growing requirement for these workers, yet elements of their humour can be seen reflected in cartoons like those by Pipsqueak (figure 5.27).

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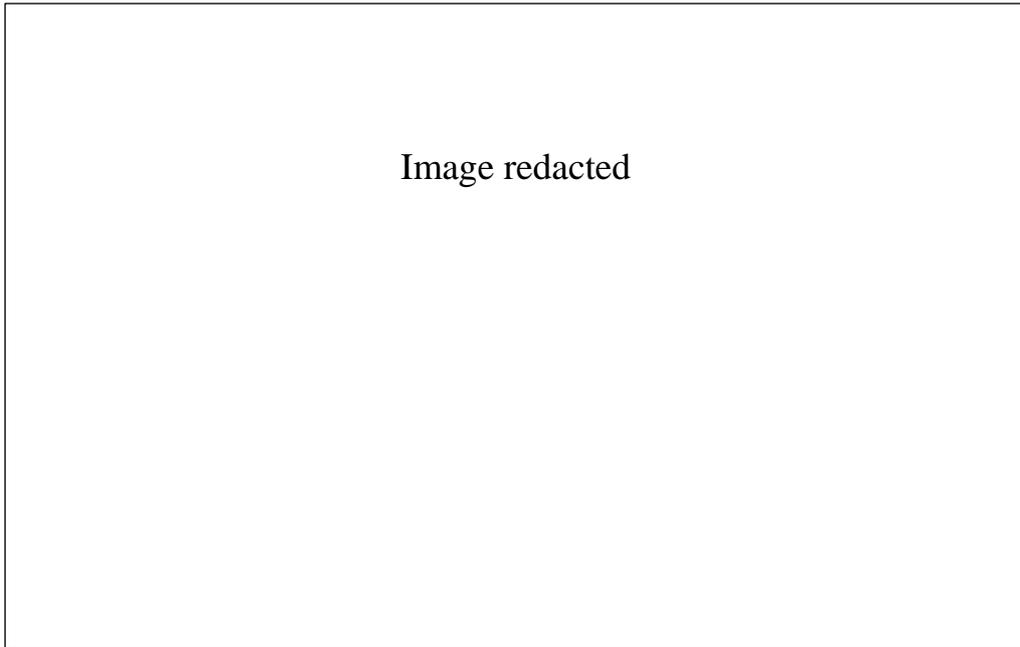
<sup>145</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 282.

More of soldiers' humorous attitudes to war can be identified in the cartoons they sent home in letters to loved ones, although the humour here is again altered to suit the viewing audience. Letters home were censored, many of which were formulated around specific set rotes that were copied or deleted to suit situations.<sup>146</sup> Even so, many men would write more freely, and among these, several have hand drawn illustrations within their letters. Corporal Southgate of the 17<sup>th</sup> London Regiment provided original cartoons, some of which discussed above concerned wounded soldiers, while others show remembered things from home.<sup>147</sup> In this small collection Southgate's cartoons taken from letters sent from the trenches include 'Bowled Over' and 'The Scorcher'. The first offers a man who has come off his bicycle and lays sprawled over the pavement, whilst 'The Scorcher' presents another man in the distance cycling past a woman at speed (figures 5.28 and 5.29).

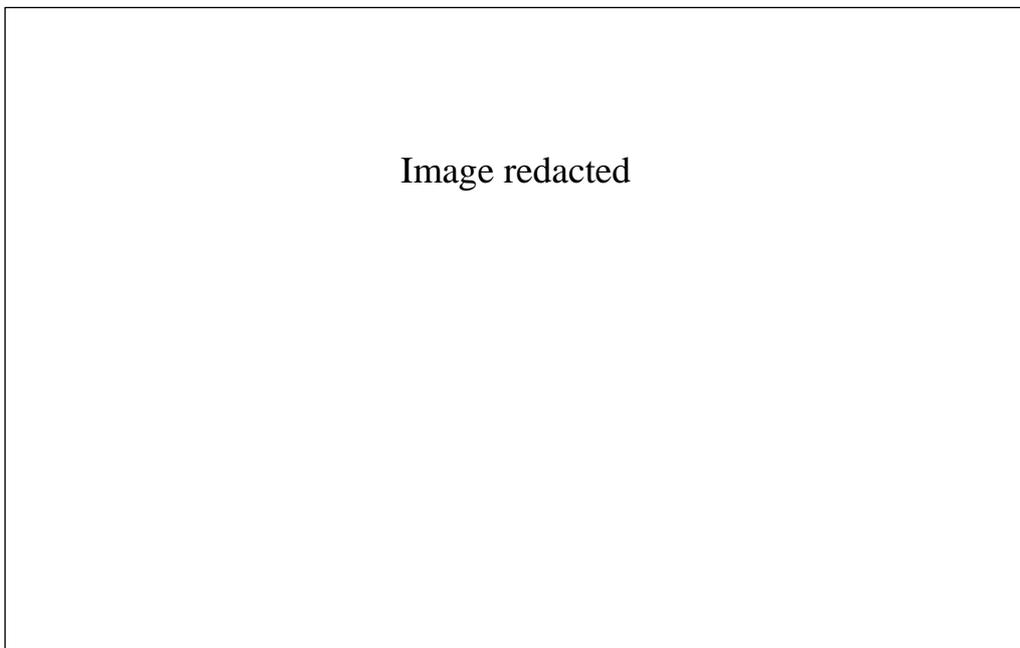
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<sup>146</sup> See Theodor Wesley Koch, *British Censorship and Enemy Publications* (Widener, S. N.: Library of Congress, 1917), p. 1.

<sup>147</sup> BCA, 'Cartoons by Corporal George Harry Southgate', c. 1915-17.



**(Figure 5.28) George Harry Southgate, 'Bowled Over', British Cartoon Archive, 1915**



**(Figure 5.29) George Harry Southgate, 'The Scorcher', British Cartoon Archive, 1915**

Images like this can appear to demonstrate more about the home front than trench life specifically, although they can also be interpreted as illustrations of a soldier's thoughts and memories of home. Cartoons thereby provide a link of continuity bridging the gap between life as a civilian and life as a soldier. Soldiers continued to depict features of home whilst away from it, and this reinforces that idea of continuity. There is a clear sense that this is only a rough sketch, and not constructed by a professional as indicated through the quality of paper, and the seemingly haphazard depictions on it. Even so, this amateur artist does not appear to have corrected as he drew, suggesting some confidence in drawing ability and its presentation on the page. The indication that a soldier has drawn before, similarly places cartoons within the soldier's leisure time. It was something they recognised and enjoyed.

The anticipated audience and more specifically the family at home help to explain some of the cartoons content in terms of continuity. The presence of the bicycle in both images may be linked to other family members. Its illustration could be in response to incoming letters from friends or family. Unfortunately, evidence for this is unobtainable, as reciprocal letters no longer exist within the same archive. Although, it is equally possible that the bicycles represent connections to the London 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, the cyclist battalion of the rifle volunteers, since Corporal Southgate belonged to the 17<sup>th</sup> Regiment.<sup>148</sup>

Other cartoons by soldiers include a number of newspaper images that appear to have been traced and adapted by soldiers. This suggests a strength of presence for cartoons in the soldier's life. They had to be available to the soldier for them to have been replicated through either tracing or copying. Evidence such as this can support the

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<sup>148</sup> Chris Baker, 'The London Regiment: Battalions of the Territorial Force', *Milverton Associates Ltd*, 1996 < <http://www.1914-1918.net/london.htm> > [Accessed 06/05/2016]

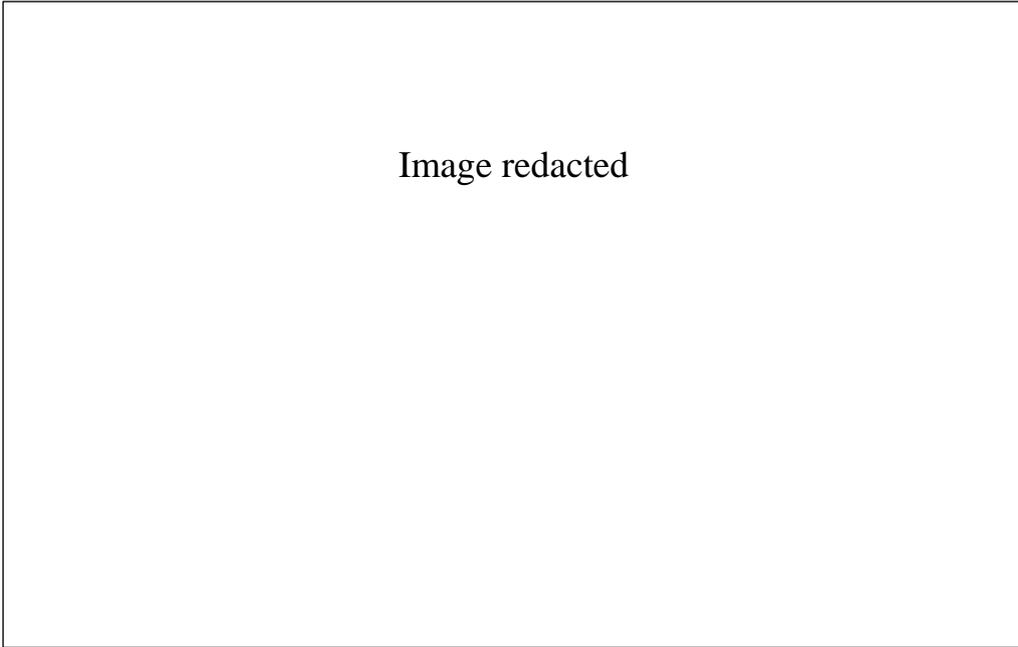
sending of cartoon material from home as demonstrated through the production of *Blighty* and advertisements for *Punch* to be ‘sent to the soldiers’.<sup>149</sup> Soldier cartoonist W. J. Evans predominantly replicated images by Jack Walker, and others including Frank Hornsby from the navy replicated a number of Bairnsfather cartoons.<sup>150</sup> Evans’ work includes ‘The Cure’ from 1914, and this replication of broadly published cartoons by the *Daily Graphic*, indicates connections between the home and front and the types of humour appreciated by both (figures 5.30 and 5.31).<sup>151</sup> Evan’s images completely parallel Walker’s all bar the signature, even the size is a match, perhaps suggesting a more likely tracing effect from the original. However, the suggestion they were traced reinforces the notion of a unified sense of humour, and appeal for these cartoons.

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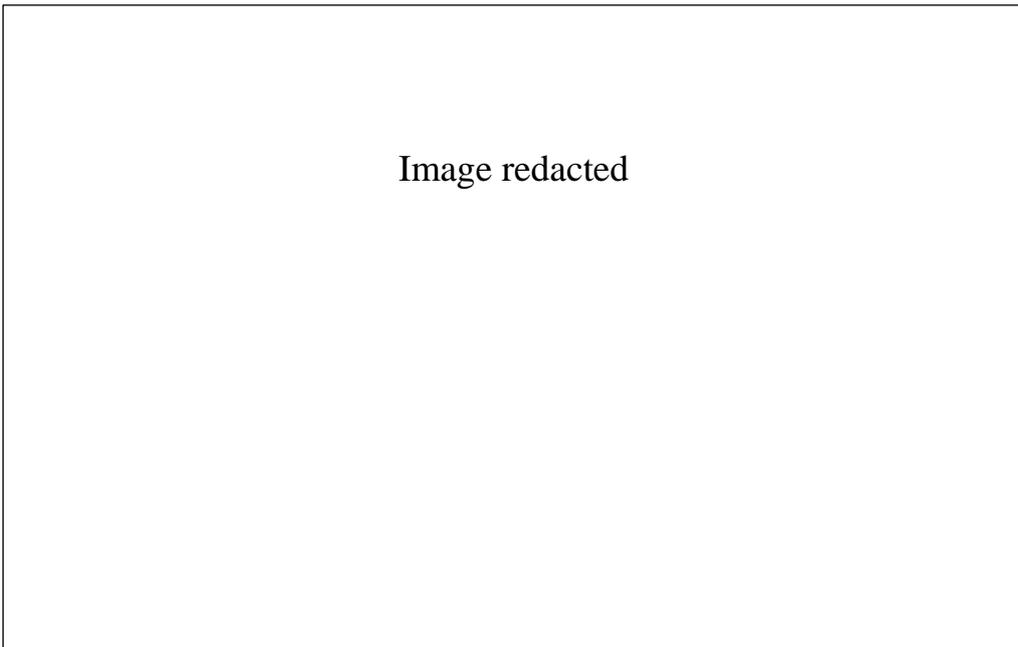
<sup>149</sup> ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1917, p. 3; ‘Punch’, *The Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917, p. 4.

<sup>150</sup> Hiley, “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 163.

<sup>151</sup> There is little evidence with these images to suggest who Evans was, and searches through the War Records Office suggest no artistic connection to anyone with the initials W. J. Evans to help understand his artistic motivations or ability.



**(Figure 5.30) Jack Walker, 'The Cure' *Special War Cartoons*, 1914**



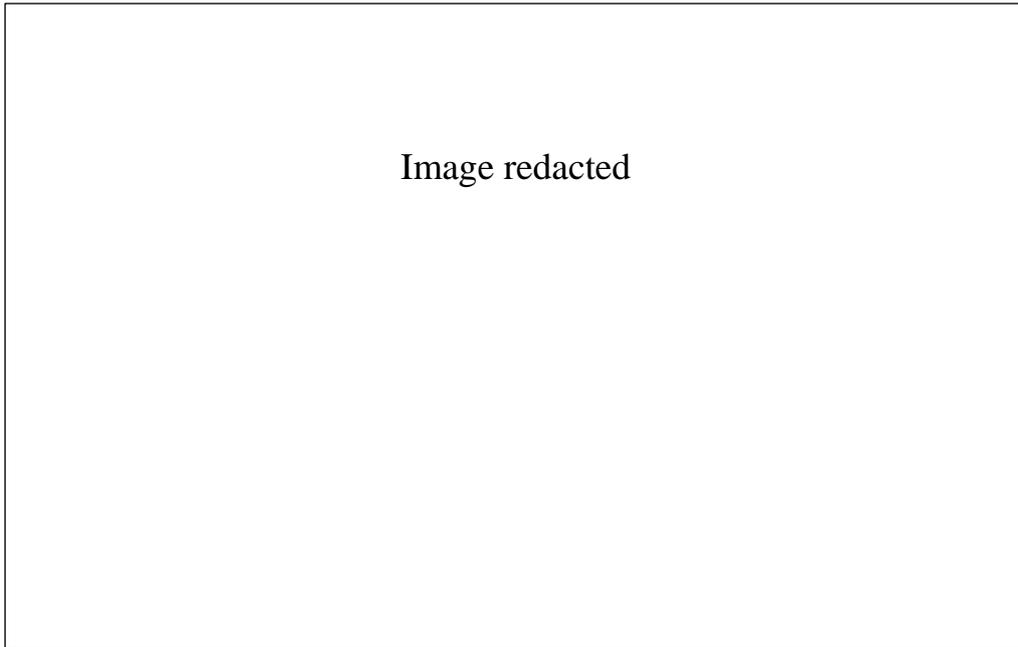
**(Figure 5.31) W. J. Evans, 'The Cure', British Cartoon Archive, October 1914**

Soldiers' diaries and letters highlight personal aspects of life in the trenches, and these sometimes used cartoon imagery, although many also feature more topographical details and maps rather than humorous illustration. Often these images depersonalise life, returning to the ideas of distancing.<sup>152</sup> People do not have facial details or expression, more often there is simply a mass of people. Alternatively, there are no people at all and the images represent the soldier's own interpretation of what he can see before him on the field of battle, much of which is labelled for clarity. There is no humour in these images, and many of them have the potential of simply being used as personal reminders in diaries, or as information for superiors should they be needed as such.<sup>153</sup> Among them, there are elements of humour, often far less explicit. Cannon Lomax for example, depicts soldiers in relaxed situations and not in battle, where although laughter is not apparent, camaraderie certainly is (figure 5.32).

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<sup>152</sup> Seal, "We're Here Because We're Here", p. 190.

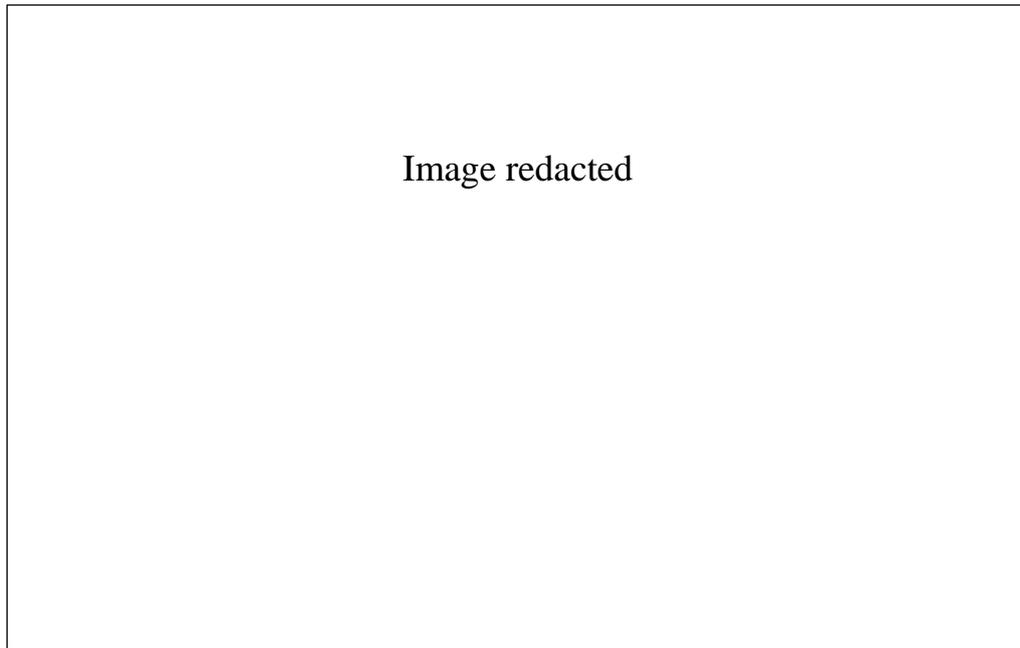
<sup>153</sup> For examples of these see IWM, Documents 1289, Cyril Lomax, 'Private Papers of Canon C Lomax', 1916-17; IWM, Documents 5174, Henry Lamb, 'Illustrated Letters of Capt. Henry Lamb', 1918; F. C. Hitchcock, "*Stand To*": *A Diary of the Trenches, 1915-1918* (Eastbourne: Naval Military Press, 1936), pp. 27, 35, 51.



**(Figure 5.32) Cyril Lomax, 'Private Papers of Canon C Lomax', Imperial War Museum, 1916-17**

In contrast, letters from Captain Henry Lamb have humour illustrated throughout. It is worth noting in this example that his letters are written to a nephew rather than to a friend at home. This can justify stronger prevalence of humour in the image for a child. The soldier depicted is squatting to read his letter whilst bombs continue to explode around him, and his facial expression suggests both annoyance and acceptance (figure 5.33). In this image, Lamb's facial expression, as it can only be assumed that it is a self-portrait, conveys an image of general disgruntlement at having his leisure time disrupted. In his letter, Lamb thanks his nephew for the letter sent to him, which reinforces his own presence in the image. Additionally, Lamb was serving as Battalion Medical Officer at the time, and his humour is reinforced through his grumbles in the

letter about having no trenches and having to ‘feel as comfortable as one can behind any old bank’.<sup>154</sup>



**(Figure 5.33) Henry Lamb, ‘Illustrated Letters of Capt. Henry Lamb’,  
Imperial War Museum, 1918**

### The Unifying Factor

It is sometimes easy to forget just how close, geographically at least, the United Kingdom was to the battlefields of the Western Front. From Kent, there was a mere 70 miles approximately separating the soldiers and civilians in war. Many scholars have seen this gap as being far broader psychologically, and Eric Leed’s ‘alienation thesis’

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<sup>154</sup> IWM, Documents 5174, ‘Illustrated Letters of Capt. Henry Lamb’, 1918.

reinforces this figurative divide.<sup>155</sup> Regardless of geographical proximity, nothing was really that far away. The attitudes and opinions of so many civilians were shared with soldiers through regular correspondence. There were constant connections between the two fronts on emotional, physical and psychological levels resulting from the new ‘total’ nature of war.<sup>156</sup> The trenches notably change men who lived there for however long. Fussell speaks of soldiers who described their experience in the trenches as transmuted in terms of rebirth or religious conversion. In this regard, their civilian selves who went out to fight often did not come back as the same men.<sup>157</sup> Whether looking at cartoons by soldiers or civilians it becomes clear that regardless of the stereotypes used and the situations depicted, the unifying factor that translates across these images, is humour. Distinctions could still be identified between the home and front and the nature of the humour, but many of these were minor, and often, the crossovers were more significant than the perceived distances.

There is a sense of divergence between cartoons of soldiers produced at home and from active soldiers like Bairnsfather on the battlefronts despite the publication of the *Bystander* being London based. *Blighty*, as mentioned above, was produced at home to be sent to the front. However, Christmas editions made more effort to reverse the effect and to utilise cartoons from serving soldiers. Between these, there is little difference in the nature or tone of the humour and cartoons presented. Many of those images produced at home, certainly have an alternative origin through other publications including *Punch* and a variety of newspapers, but these images represent

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<sup>155</sup> Leed, *No Man's Land*.

<sup>156</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 344-7.

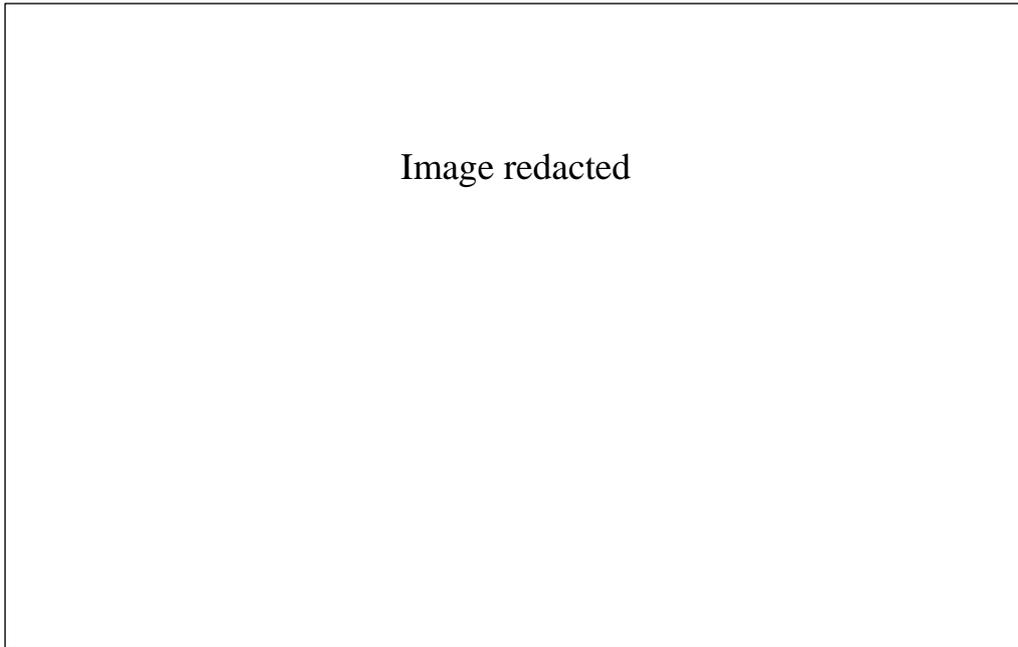
<sup>157</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 114-15

continuity for many soldiers, and their own images draw on much the same emphasis and motivation of depiction.

One example of a soldier's cartoon appears 18<sup>th</sup> October 1916, where there is a double page spread of comments 'from the fleet and the trenches'; a regular feature for *Blighty*, which includes a cartoon by Sgt. R. S. Reid. This image presents a troop of soldiers being criticised by their sergeant as one of them has not shaved that morning. His excuse is that he was on duty and did not have time, to which the sergeant responds that he should 'never let yer dooty hinterfere with yer personality' (figure 5.34). The background troop appears smartly turned out in their Australian uniforms, albeit with one unshaven, and yet their faces demonstrate expressions of uncertainty. The cartoon responds to comments from an unnamed 'military critic' stating that 'personality is one of the most important qualifications for an officer'. In comparison to the troop, the sergeant's uniform appears to fit him less well, and he seems more unkempt than the rest providing the visual incongruity.<sup>158</sup> He is not an officer himself, but he is using their example to make his point, while he himself appears the least well turned out of the entire group.

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<sup>158</sup> Berger, *Redeeming Laughter*, p. 208.



**(Figure 5.34) Sgt. R. S. Reid, ‘Hinterfere with Yer Personality’, *Blighty*, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1916**

With *Blighty*, there is more evidence of humour from soldiers and civilians. Bigger issues of policy are discussed alongside the minutiae of details such as shaving demonstrating one’s personality. Through this, endless farce is illustrated for both audiences. Most of the humour comes through the captioned conversation, which builds on the ideas of the initial visual content. The humour in these terms is similar to that expressed in British press cartoons visually drawing on incongruity reinforced textually with the captions. Regardless of the soldiers being Australian, the incongruity is clear to a British or Dominion allied audience. Furthermore, as so many cartoons transpose directly from British newspaper sources, once again this adds the element of continuity and recognition for the reader.

One of the strongest attitudes for the humour undertaken at home and on the front was that of grouping. So many jokes identified ‘them’ and ‘us’, and often it is the

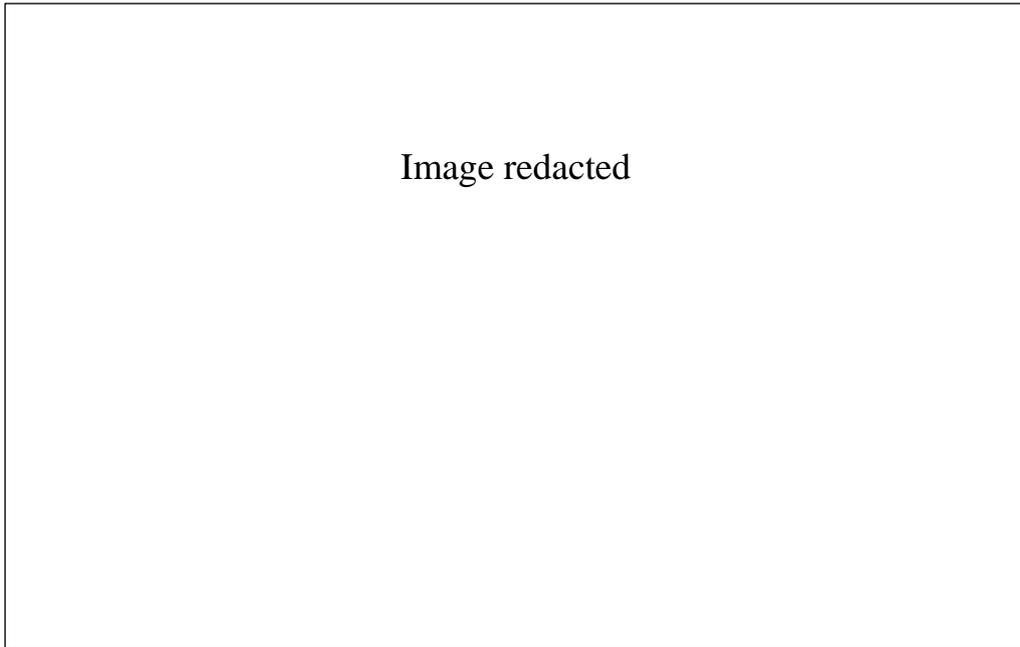
contradiction between the two groups that particularly brings the humour to the fore.<sup>159</sup> Naturally, ‘them’ and ‘us’ can be identified between enemy and allied soldiers, and this is a feature that is particularly played upon by cartoonists on the home front. Beyond this, several other aspects draw these distinctions together to create humour within images between officers and the ranks, or between specific regiments, highlighting rivalries through their differences that were never overcome completely by shared trench experiences.<sup>160</sup> Images such as ‘Hinterfere with Yer Personality’, by Sergeant Reid, for example, demonstrates contrasts between the sergeant and his men, let alone differences between them and officers. The blatant demonstration of differences creates the humour in this image, while recruitment posters such as ‘Step into Your Place’ sought to establish a lack of difference, which was used to propagate the ideas of recruitment (figure 5.1).<sup>161</sup> In turn, many cartoonists adapted these perceptions by making the idea of everyone being alike seem ridiculous. This was done by highlighting issues that can come out of assumptions of uniformity represented in ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’ and his inability to tie his putties correctly (figure 5.2).

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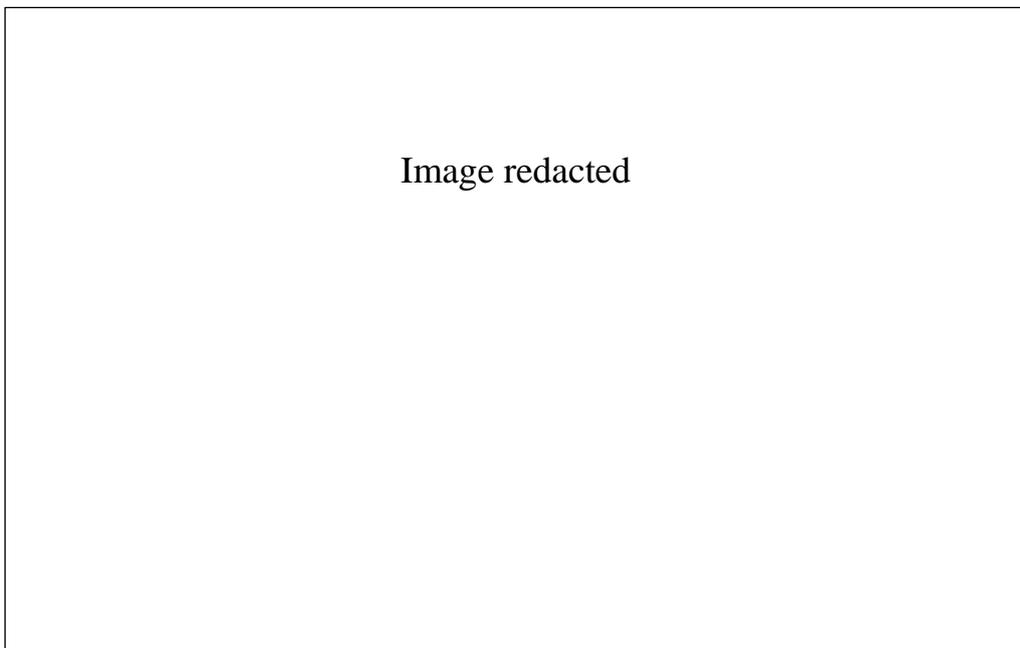
<sup>159</sup> Holman and Kelly, ‘Introduction, War in the Twentieth Century’, p. 262; De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion*, p. 290; Gaut, ‘Just Joking’, p. 53.

<sup>160</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 299-300.

<sup>161</sup> Bourne, ‘British Working Man’, p. 337.



**(Figure 5.1) Unknown Artist, Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, ‘Step into Your Place’, Imperial War Museum, 1915**



**(Figure 5.2) Laurie Taylor, ‘Not a Wounded Soldier’, *London Mail*, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1915**

For domestic artists, the enemy was a natural ‘outsider’ used to create humour particularly when demonstrating aspects of German implausibility and stupidity, as emphasised through illustrations of the Kaiser and his son or inept spies.<sup>162</sup> These images were seen to be a clear representation of British humour about the enemy characterised by lightness and general ‘good humour’.<sup>163</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that far fewer allied soldiers separate ‘them’ and ‘us’ of the enemy and allies in their own cartoons.<sup>164</sup> Indeed, between soldiers on both sides, there are almost reports of camaraderie through shared war experience. Haselden’s ‘Big and Little Willie’ images were particularly popular with soldiers, and the *Daily Mirror* reported that British soldiers had thrown copies into opposing trenches.<sup>165</sup> Sometimes this was done to annoy the enemy, but more often it was at the enemy’s request following the live and let live tradition.<sup>166</sup> Scholars such as Nicholas Hiley have even suggested that this could have been because for German soldiers it was often the closest they came to their seemingly absent governing monarchy in the light of war.<sup>167</sup>

Even with the sense of camaraderie between the conflicting forces, there remains awareness of the enemy being just that, a separate entity as reflected through other cartoon exchanges between trenches. Allied soldiers also threw across cartoons of Schmidt the spy to infuriate the enemy.<sup>168</sup> Nevertheless, it is noted by contemporaries that the British may laugh at the enemy, but more so they laugh at themselves.<sup>169</sup> This

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<sup>162</sup> See Haselden, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*; Leete, *Schmidt the Spy*.

<sup>163</sup> Adam, *International Cartoons*, p. x.

<sup>164</sup> Elliot, *Us and Them*, pp. 80-1.

<sup>165</sup> Haselden, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*, p. iii; ‘This Morning’s Gossip’, *Daily Mirror*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1915, p.10.

<sup>166</sup> See Anthony Ashworth, *Trench Warfare, 1914-1918: The Live and Let Live System* (London: Macmillan, 1980).

<sup>167</sup> Nicholas Hiley, ‘The Wartime Work of W. K. Haselden’, conference paper at ‘The Visual Culture of the First World War’, National Waterfront Museum, Swansea, 13-14<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

<sup>168</sup> See Hiley, “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 157.

<sup>169</sup> Adam, *International Cartoons*, p. xi

awareness of contrast remained strong for men at home or on the front, as had the differences between British and Irish troops, or protestant and catholic society before the war and through the Victorian era. Contrast is a feature of society that has always aided in union and divisions among children and adults alike as noted by W. A. Elliot in his commentary on group consciousness.<sup>170</sup> Predominantly he discusses how this effectively inspires mergers and conflict in groups of people, and less so humour, but regardless, the latter can be seen through the contrasts of groups that appear to be separate in any way. He speaks of an '*esprit de corps*' which is the predominant unifying factor when it comes to 'military group consciousness' in wartime when ethnic links or distinctions are highlighted to draw the groups together or separate them.<sup>171</sup>

Despite apparent military divides, which are highlighted in cartoons such as 'Hinterfere with Yer Personality', there was a definitive *esprit de corps* among the British troops in wartime. Indeed, it could be argued that a similar collective spirit was embodied throughout British society 1914-18 as they drew together to face a common enemy.<sup>172</sup> Beyond this 'conscious attachment' as Elliot would describe it, for many of the troops in trenches a further unifying spirit was aroused, almost artificially, which overrode opposition and amalgamated them through the location of war and distance from home with the enemy.<sup>173</sup> Soldiers apparently not making fun of the enemy in their cartoons can be justified in this manner. It could be said that there appears to be a greater divide between the home and front in terms of understanding for

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<sup>170</sup> Elliot, *Us and Them*.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 79-109.

<sup>172</sup> See McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 57-88.

<sup>173</sup> Elliot, *Us and Them*, pp. 80-1.

contemporaries, which is a position held by those promoting a thesis of alienation.<sup>174</sup> Empathy inspired by distance, becomes apparent when looking to the changes that overcame soldiers going to war at this time.<sup>175</sup>

Ethnographer, Arnold Van Gennep speaks of the *Rites of Passage* extensively in his book; many layers of which can be applied to going to war. There are aspects of what he would call ‘rites of transition’ as soldiers left to join the army, followed by ‘rites of incorporation’ as they grew to understand their new roles and positions in wartime. Additionally, there are strong elements of ‘rites of separation’ encumbered by the soldier as he leaves what he has known as a civilian behind.<sup>176</sup> Much of this can be equated with funeral rites as death is a large part of war, but at the same time, comparisons need to be drawn when speaking of the separation between civilian and soldier groups during war.<sup>177</sup> This form of separation is familiar to all wars, but with the Great War, it was altered to a degree where seemingly ‘estranged’ soldiers were able to return home on leave, without, going through the rites of social reintegration, which would normally come at the end of the conflict. In this respect, complete separation and formal reintegration often never happened. This is partly why so much of the humour of war is matched in home and battlefronts.

Looking at cartoons of soldiers as the war progresses, there is a notable change from ideals of strength, formality and unification furnished by official propaganda (figure

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<sup>174</sup> See Leed, *No Man's Land*, p. 193; Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, p.31; Phillip Knightly, *The First Casualty: From the Crimea to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist and Myth Maker* (London: Quartet Books, 1978).

<sup>175</sup> See Laurence Housman (ed.), *War Letters of Fallen Englishmen* (New York: E. P. Dutton & CO., 1930), pp. 5-8.

<sup>176</sup> Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, Trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 11.

<sup>177</sup> Gennep, *Rites of Passage*.

5.1), to a relative cultural authority of realism creating the soldier's identity.<sup>178</sup> Later allied soldiers in cartoons from many artists, appear with less formality, but still with equal gumption and drive illustrated in their characters, reflecting the addition of works by Bairnsfather after 1915.<sup>179</sup> Although Bairnsfather's cartoons were produced by a soldier, and are seen to be authentic works from the front as such. Many of his illustrations were in fact produced whilst at home or in military hospitals, and not at the front itself even though this remains their inspiration.<sup>180</sup>

Bairnsfather consistently produced images of the soldier on active service, openly recognising the potential of boredom combined with moments of deadly excitement. At home, his images were appreciated from 1916 onwards as direct sources that were the only way to truly comprehend the situation.<sup>181</sup> In these images, the viewing public could identify features they recognised from some of the more open letters they received. The 'Innocent Abroad' combines satirical humour with these ideas of boredom, discomfort and the unknown, which are normalised through his cartoons.<sup>182</sup> Here the humour takes over as the novice merrily comments that it was an 'alright' night, but also that he "ad to get out and rest a bit now and again" discussing his situation almost as a vacation rather than duty (figure 5.35). There is negation of the direness of the situation through this almost negligent statement, despite him effectively sitting in a box in the rain. Other armies particularly noted the British for

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<sup>178</sup> See Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 12-3, 52; Meyer, 'The Tuition of Manhood', pp. 116-7; Franz Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1995), p. xviii.

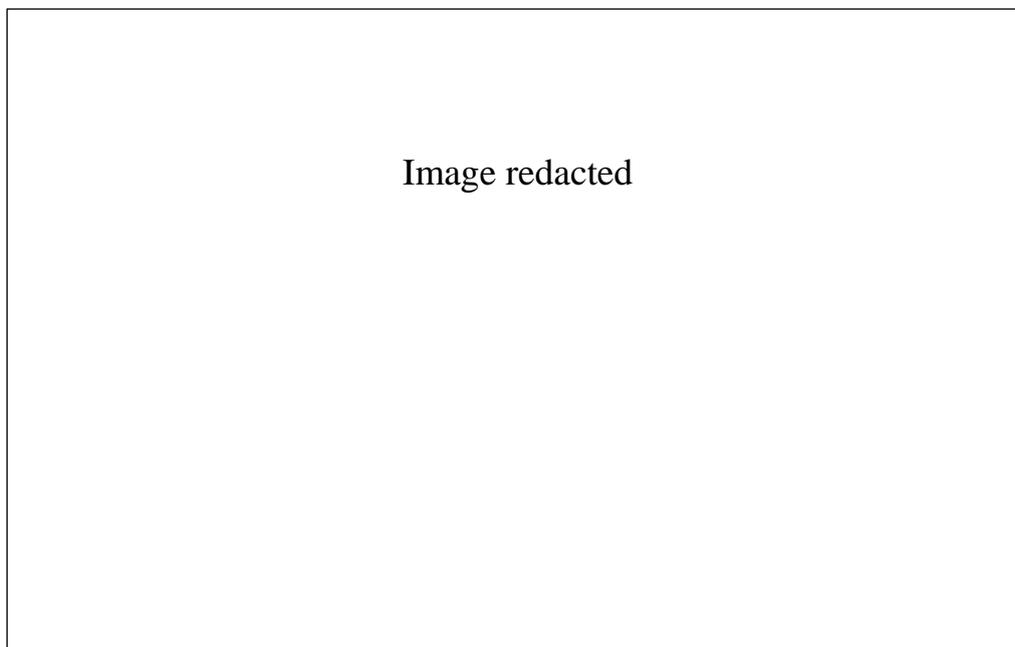
<sup>179</sup> Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*; Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bairnsfather, *Mud to Mufti*.

<sup>180</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 44-5, 58.

<sup>181</sup> Hiley, "'A New and Vital Moral Factor'", p. 162.

<sup>182</sup> Hardy, *British Soldier*, pp. 132-41.

their almost casually ironic humour that served to distance them from the situation for which this is a perfect example.<sup>183</sup>



**(Figure 5.35) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘The Innocent Abroad’, *Fragments from France, 1915***

Many ideas about soldiers held true for the viewing public despite the notable visual change predominantly inspired by cartoonists such as Bairnsfather and his Old Bill, Alf and Bert characters. Where soldiers had been a uniformed and formalised aspect of humanity, seen to be emotionless, and almost robotic, Bairnsfather’s characters allowed these men to become human again in visual representation. Regardless of this, soldiers were the men doing the fighting. Visually they altered from being an elevated public school officer species as described in literature to the ‘boy next door’ everyman who had taken on a new role.<sup>184</sup> Later cartoon soldiers appear content to be idle when the opportunity presents itself. These are the sorts of characters most commonly

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<sup>183</sup> Seal, “We’re Here Because We’re Here”, p. 190

<sup>184</sup> Meyer, ‘The Tuition of Manhood’, pp. 116-7; Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, p. 6.

associated with Bairnsfather.<sup>185</sup> Yet suggesting they are idle can be a misnomer in the situation of trench warfare, as hours were spent waiting around in unpleasant situations rather than appearing active.<sup>186</sup> Often, the public accepted these characters more readily for their realism and for knowing precisely what they were talking about as they have ‘cultural authority’ granted to them from the battlefield by taking on the identity of active soldiers.<sup>187</sup> These fighting soldiers were distinctly different from those on leave or at home recuperating.<sup>188</sup>

Such realism is what so strongly appealed to the domestic public.<sup>189</sup> These men are at times in visibly uncomfortable positions, yet their resilience shines through with the humour and character that they express through the dialogue in the captions. A similar styling is consistent throughout Bairnsfather’s work, and in this respect, his soldiers seem separate from the works of early cartoonists working on the home front who focus more on the military standing of soldiers.<sup>190</sup> It remains clear that Bairnsfather depicts his soldiers in active service, even when action is impossible, and through this, they are depicted as a study of ‘old contemptibles’ that the British Army was known for.<sup>191</sup> The activity embodied in such images further reinforces the perception of realism for the audience. Many soldiers on leave in domestic cartoons are enjoying themselves, while Bairnsfather’s soldiers, remain predominantly in the trenches or in the midst of battle, and only long for leave rather than acquiring it (figures 3.27, 3.28

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<sup>185</sup> Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*; Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bairnsfather, *Mud to Mufti*.

<sup>186</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, pp. 60, 92; Ashworth, *Trench Warfare*, p. 17; Beckett, *Great War*, p. 303.

<sup>187</sup> Coetzee and Coetzee, *Authority, Identity and Social History*, p. xviii.

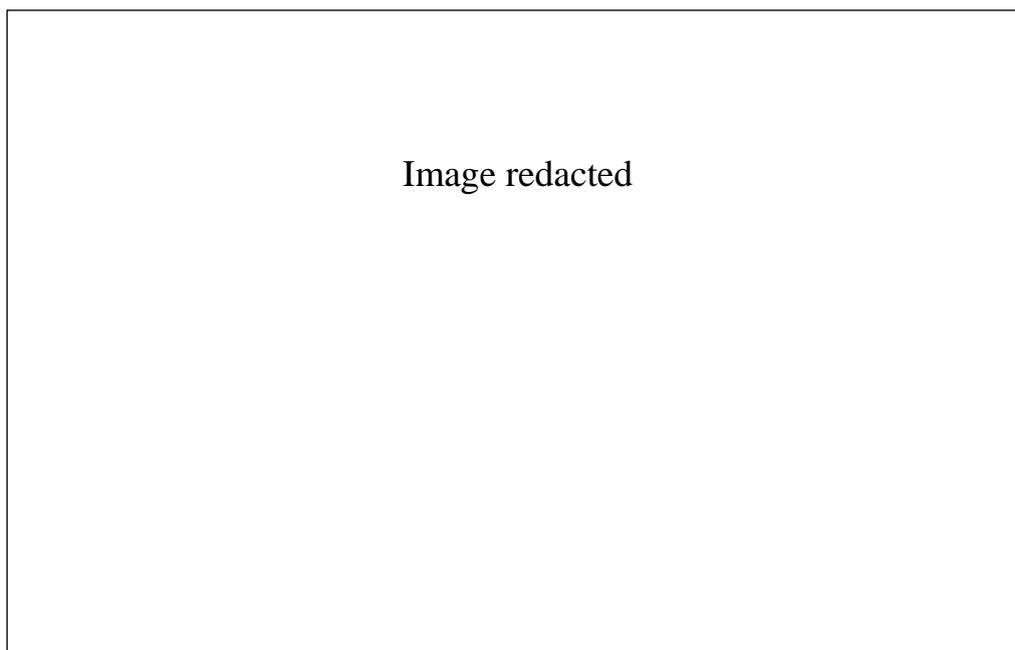
<sup>188</sup> For example see Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*; Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bairnsfather, *Mud to Mufti*.

<sup>189</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, pp. 5-13.

<sup>190</sup> See for example, Poy, ‘Crowned’, *Evening News*, September 1914; Unknown Artist, ‘The Bull-Dog breed’, *Punch*, October 1914; Leonard Raven-Hill, ‘Well Met’, *Punch*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1914; Raven-Hill, ‘To Arms’, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914.

<sup>191</sup> Neillands, *Old Contemptibles*, p. 2; Hardy, *British Soldier*, pp. 213-27; Mark Connelly and Stefan Goebel, *Ypres: Great Battles* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), forthcoming, chapter 2.

and 3.29). Nevertheless, they can still be seen enjoying themselves, in perhaps less conventional manners as for example through observing the enemy all of which entertainment can be read from their facial expressions (figure 5.36). Indeed, Bairnsfather's soldiers watch the enemy to see what they are eating rather than how they could be preparing for battle.<sup>192</sup>



**(Figure 5.36) Bruce Bairnsfather, 'Observation, *Fragments from France*, 1916**

Even so, there remains a less physical sense of separation, reported by many soldiers upon their return from service, and in later memoirs.<sup>193</sup> These soldiers speak of false empathy and a distinct lack of understanding from the civilian public who could not understand a soldier's perception of the war's impact. Often humour was misunderstood in this manner also. For many soldiers, one of the few ways that distance between soldiers and civilians could be understood was through plays like 'The Better 'Ole'. Seeing plays like this, helped domestic civilians to understand what

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<sup>192</sup> Hiley, "A New and Vital Moral Factor", p. 163.

<sup>193</sup> See Housman, *War Letters of Fallen Englishmen*.

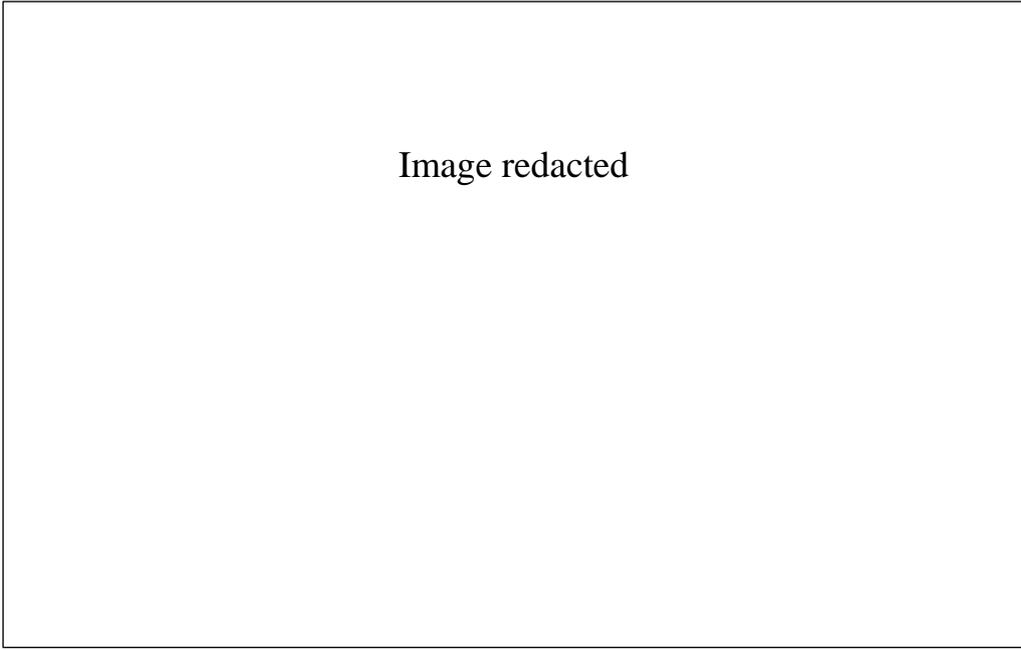
it was like ‘out there’ or the humour soldiers applied to that life.<sup>194</sup> As much as ‘The Better ‘Ole’ was seen to be a unique play in this respect, other cartoons by Bairnsfather equally balanced that divide between soldiers and civilians rather than leaving them to respond only to hearsay and assumptions.

Bairnsfather consistently reflected on the situations he had found himself in and related anecdotes from soldiers in his company.<sup>195</sup> Equally, he drew on aspects of home and created humour around them by placing them in unnatural positions; he was able to help explain wartime humour better that way. An image such as a ‘Coiffure in the Trenches’ relates the simplicity of normal homely things that can be recognised by all viewers. However, in this situation, they are not normal when surrounded by sandbags and a mortar shell flying overhead (figure 5.37). Even so, the placid calmness with which the man having his hair cut sits, identifies boldness of British soldiers for audiences at home, while the comment from the hair dresser telling the seated Tommy to ‘keep yer ‘ead still, or I’ll ‘ave yer blinkin’ ear off’ applies humour to the cartoon overall. Visually there is natural incongruity, which is built upon by the second soldier’s disclaimer.

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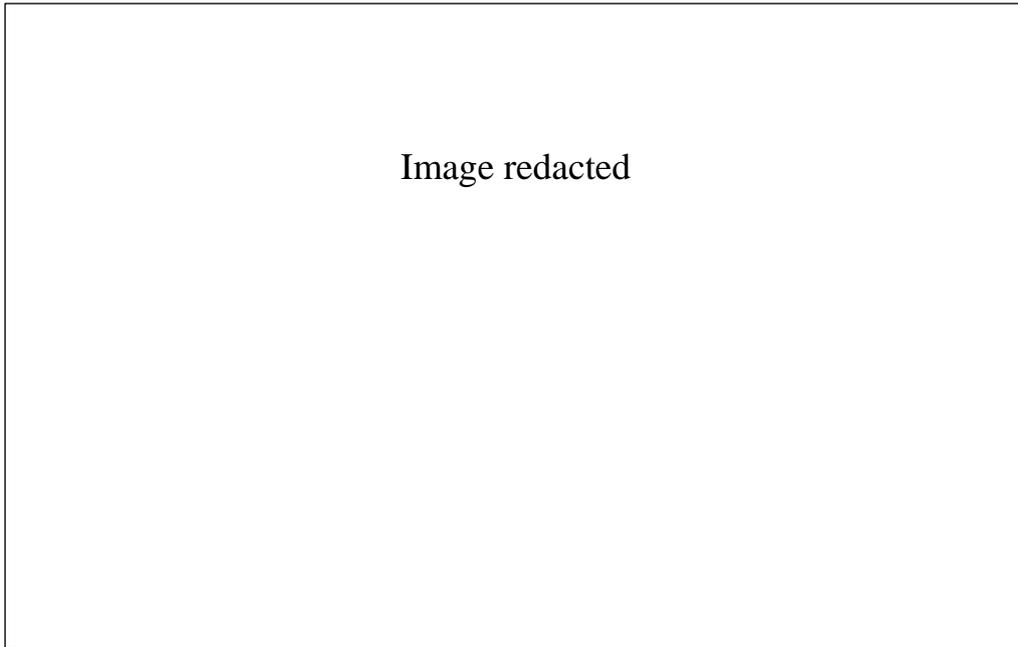
<sup>194</sup> For more information about Bairnsfather and Elliot, ‘The Better ‘Ole’ play, see chapter 2.

<sup>195</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole*, pp. 43-7; Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*, pp. 8, 31.

A large rectangular box with a thin black border, centered on the page. Inside the box, the text "Image redacted" is written in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

**(Figure 5.37) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Coiffure in the Trenches’, *Fragments from France, 1916***

Images such as ‘Getting the local Colour’ also served to unite the home and battlefronts through humour. In this image, Bairnsfather presents the soldier reading a book seated beneath a shelter of poor quality and to get the sense of being in the trenches there are people around him providing wind, rain and the sound of bombs dropping to help him acclimatise (figure 5.38). It is clearly apparent, however, that the bombs are a drum, the rain comes directly from the hosepipe and bellows provide the wind. All of these features provide humour for the audience at home through their incongruity in the situation, whilst the environment is reasonably empty to help situate the image for soldiers. To add to the humour, the gardener with his hosepipe maintains an expression of boredom, and this is equally reflected in the children’s faces too. Furthermore, Bairnsfather accompanies this image by stating that when on leave it remains ‘necessary to reconstruct the “Atmosphere”’ so that a good *Fragment* can be created.



**(Figure 5.38) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘Getting the local Colour’, *Fragments from France, 1916***

Images such as this, despite the incongruity they draw upon to create their humour, also present an element of continuity for the audience. Bairnsfather identifies consistent features of home in so many of his cartoons, but other soldier artists equally draw on what they knew and humour is developed around this.<sup>196</sup> For soldiers in the trenches, another form of consistency can be identified through soldier writings and the prevalence of myths within them. Myth making occurred when truth was unavailable. During the war, making myths was an easy form of trench entertainment, particularly when truth and news was not forthcoming.<sup>197</sup> The myths made by soldiers and civilians transposed themselves to the other by way of letters, and through the press, and as such became a common medium.

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<sup>196</sup> See BCA, ‘Cartoons by Corporal George Harry Southgate’, c. 1915-17; BCA Uncatalogued, ‘Cartoon Copied by W. J. Evans’, c. 1914-15; IWM, Documents 1289, ‘Private Papers of Canon C Lomax’, 1916-17; IWM, Documents 5174, ‘Illustrated Letters of Capt. Henry Lamb’, 1918.

<sup>197</sup> Seal, “We’re Here because We’re Here”, pp. 178–199.

Particularly good myths were most prominent and became synthesised with public perceptions as for example Maurice's ideas of the little contemptible army was.<sup>198</sup> In turn, these could then be used as a means of developing recognisable humour in cartoons especially. Myths of German atrocities and barbarism feature strongly in cartoons by certain artists such as Louis Raemaekers, although there is less humour in myths of this nature.<sup>199</sup> Other cartoons, however, draw upon fears of the bullet with a soldier's name on it, which is often spoken of in memoirs and literature about the war.<sup>200</sup> 'My Dream for Years to Come' reflects this fear with the sleeping soldier dreaming about the shell heading directly towards him (figure 5.39). This image would have resonated strongly with soldiers, but it serves to make light of such worries that could become a genuine issue for so many.<sup>201</sup>

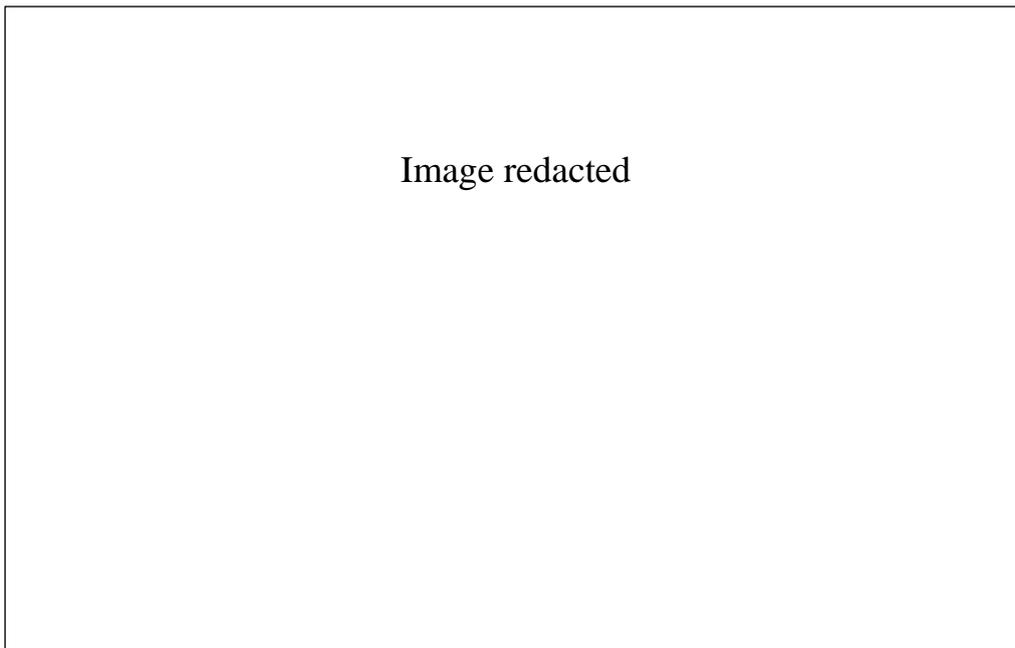
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<sup>198</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, p. 116.

<sup>199</sup> Raemaekers, *Neutral's Indictment*.

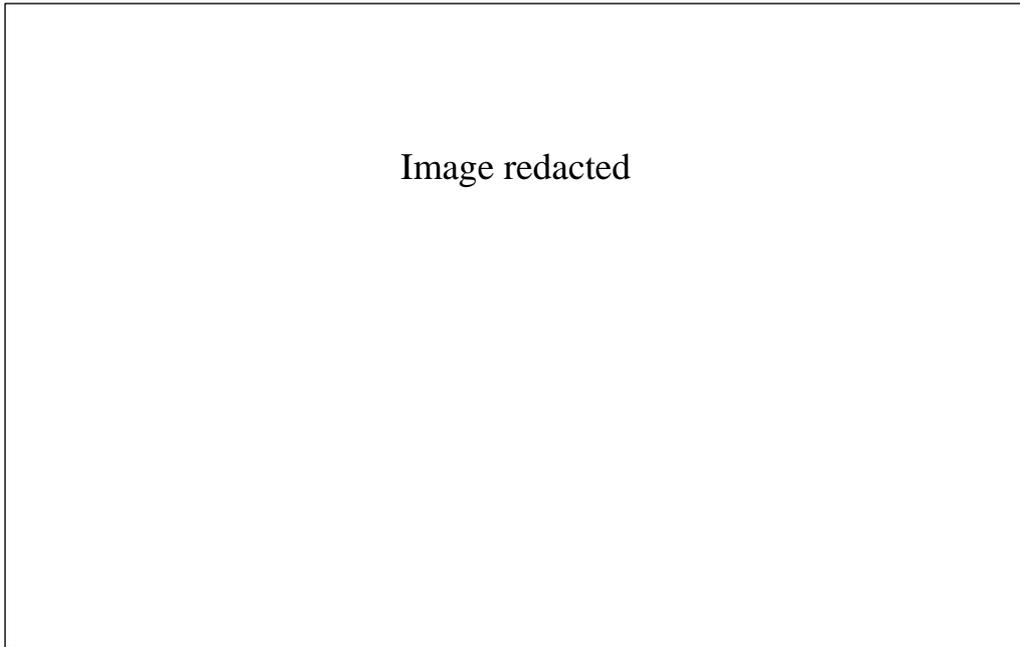
<sup>200</sup> Seal, "We're Here because We're Here", p. 60.

<sup>201</sup> Saunders, *Trench Art*, p. 116.

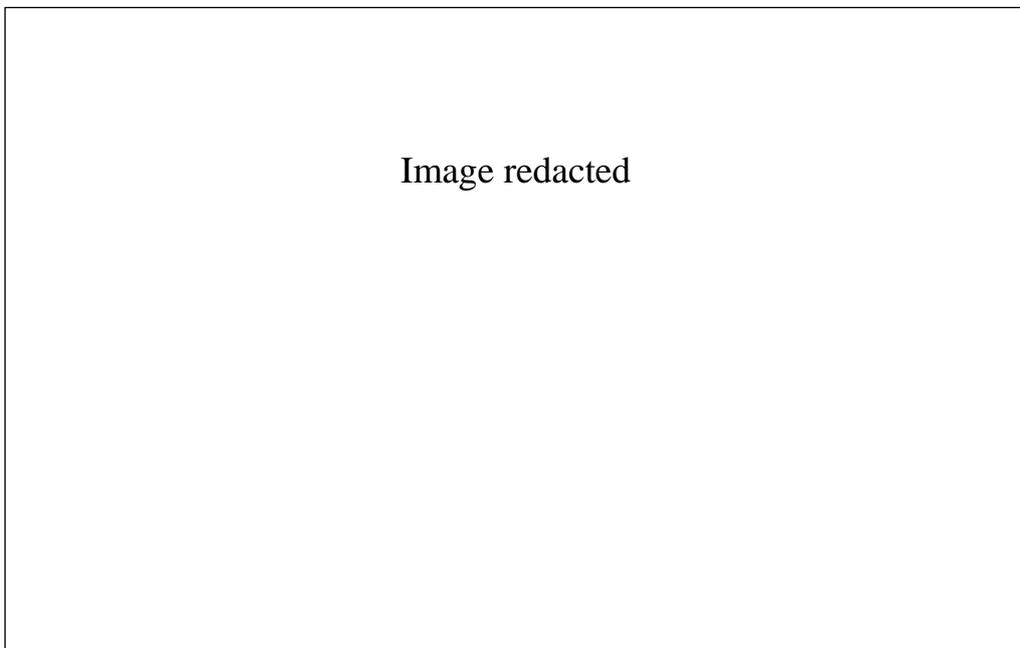


**(Figure 5.39) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘My Dream for Years to Come’, *Fragments from France*, 1916**

Other cartoonists working from home used the same ideas and inverted them to a degree. For Jack Walker, his ‘All-Highest new Super-Gun’ presents cannon balls with words on them, but none of these are soldiers’ potential names, nor are they specifically directed towards particular regiments. Instead, these cannon balls are labelled as spite, hate, malice, spleen and envy, which cast a completely different image upon these weapons (figure 5.40). The Kaiser fires them out towards England, which is small in the distance. The words in this manner are negated of their effect, as they do not appear designed to actually hit anything. Effectively then, the Kaiser’s hate and malice are poor weapons that hold up to nothing, particularly being fired from a cannon made of rolled up song lyrics. The same tactic is also used by Poy when he labels shells with letters of the Kaiser’s name in “‘Turned’ to Good Use’ (figure 5.41). Once again, there is no destination visible, but the inference is reversed as a name is labelled upon these shells of an intended victim.



**(Figure 5.40) Jack Walker, ‘The All-Highest new Super-Gun Makes No End of a Noise, But Does Very Little Damage’, *Special War Cartoons*, 1915**



**(Figure 5.41) Poy, “‘Turned’ to Good Use’, *Evening News*, 11<sup>th</sup> March 1915**

## Conclusion

The war has inspired cartoonists at home and in the trenches. They have influenced one another and not just through the media image of the military, that Badsey speaks of, but to a more balanced and at times personal level reflecting back and forth.<sup>202</sup> How the allied and enemy military behaved, or were perceived to be behaving is illustrated through cartoons as the war progressed. It could be argued that more of the civilian perspective is illustrated through these cartoons, as the media at home who depicted the military from a civilian perspective were the main providers of civilian understandings of the military.<sup>203</sup> Nonetheless, the sheer volume of trench journals and cartoon material within them demonstrates some subtleties of difference, particularly in relation to the representation of wounded men.

Looking first to how the civilian populace represented the military in cartoon it became clear that there was an ingrained message taken from governmental propaganda and this in turn was surreptitiously inverted by many cartoonists, while others traced ideas alongside it.<sup>204</sup> Additionally, there are dreams of becoming a soldier (figure 5.10), and equally perceptions of the problems that war could bring (figure 5.9), but each of these are balanced through the humour that is expressed within them. Furthermore, the domestic cartoonist was able to highlight how perceptions of men becoming soldiers were going to change from very early on (figure 5.11). Humour is used to highlight positive adaption and authority granted to new recruits as they assimilate with the army, and particularly when they return home on leave.

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<sup>202</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>203</sup> Madigan, “‘Sticking to a Hateful Task’”, pp. 78-83; Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, p. xvi.

<sup>204</sup> IWM, PST 2734, Leete, ‘Britons Wants You’ 1914; IWM, PST 0314, Unknown Artist, ‘Who’s Absent?’, 1915; IWM, PST 2712, Baden-Powell, ‘Are You in This?’, 1915; Poy, ‘Crowned’, *Evening News*, September 1914; Unknown Artist, ‘The Bull-Dog breed’, *Punch*, October 1914; Raven-Hill, ‘Well Met’, *Punch*, 19<sup>th</sup> August 1914; Raven-Hill, ‘To Arms’, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914.

Within trench journals and soldier's letters that have also been consulted for their cartoon humour, distinctions of separation and 'us' and 'them' disparities were particularly noted.<sup>205</sup> However, through this there remains an element of continuity of expression, much of which can be related to the simple fact that so many soldiers were still civilians, newly trained during the Great War, and were not professional military men.<sup>206</sup> Among these images it is interesting to note the separation of 'them' and 'us' holds far less focus on the enemy as a target of humour and contradiction unlike in domestic cartoons on the home front. Many soldiers also draw on aspects of continuity and what might be perceived as the normal from home as a form of comfort and support whilst out of natural habitats.

The addition of war wounded in cartoon has equally reinforced that image of a united military front as despite numerous photographs that illustrated the vastly distorted nature of war wounds. Cartoon humour when addressing the wounded from a domestic perspective does not draw upon permanent wounds, most depicted by home front cartoonists are temporary, and are often not even caused by war itself (figure 5.20). For soldiers' representations of the wounded, there is more allowance for permanent handicaps with soldiers represented with missing limbs (figure 5.24). Nonetheless, these handicaps are accepted through humour added to images by way of captions to alleviate the trauma. Predominantly wounds in cartoon are simple and transitory, not long lasting and debilitating, unless it serves the purpose of the joke being made (figure 5.23). At the same time, even though there was a developing public perception of far more critical wound that left lasting impressions, although missing limbs are accepted

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<sup>205</sup> Elliott, *Us and Them*.

<sup>206</sup> Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War*; McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*.

in cartoon, there is no evidence of facial disfigurement suggesting perhaps that this form of wound was beyond a joke.

Across military and civilian cartooning of soldiers, and war related ideas, there has been a consistent strength of dividing 'them' and 'us' in cartoons to create humour of division, but the question still remains of why the humour was so prominent throughout. There is humour made out of continuity and contrast, links are made and diverted from, but overall, there remains a general element of humour holding things together. This chapter has implicitly reinforced the sense of humour as succour and relief. Making links to home provides continuity and comfort, whilst highlighting differences to make fun of them can be seen to make them easier to manage for the military and civilian populations alike.

## Chapter 5

### Reconfiguring Humour

#### Cartoon Memories Before, During and After War

As has already been outlined through this thesis, the philosophical and psychological worlds of academia have addressed humour and studied it in terms of why and how people respond to things that make them laugh. Laughter is predominantly the purpose of their studies whereas in terms of history far less has been analysed until very recently, and the laughter that is provoked is less often the most relevant aspect of such hilarity.<sup>1</sup> Humour has become of greater interest in the last decade with a selection of publications addressing the matter historically.<sup>2</sup> These include works studying the ancient world through to more modern history.<sup>3</sup> Further to this, other emotions have also been considered, and humour more specifically in relation to war.<sup>4</sup> Humour is, however, historically, a feature of society that naturally adapts as time progresses.

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<sup>1</sup> See 'Special Edition: War in the Twentieth Century', *JES*, 31 (2001); 'Forum: Humour', *German History*, 33:4 (2015), pp. 609-623.

<sup>2</sup> Kessel and Merziger (eds.), *Politics of Humour*; Dennis Bos (ed.), *Humour and Social Protest* (Cambridge and New York: CUP, 2007); Cheauré and Noheji (eds.), *Humour and Laughter in History*.

<sup>3</sup> See Beard, *Laughter in Ancient Rome*; Malcolm Andrews, *Dickensian Laughter: Essays on Dickens and Humour* (Oxford and New York: OUP, 2015); Tholas-Disset and Ritzenhoff (eds.).

<sup>4</sup> See Roper, *Secret Battle*; André Loez, 'Tears in the Trenches: A History of Emotions and the Experience of War', in Jenny McLeod and Pierre Purseigle (eds.), *Uncovered Fields: Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), pp. 211-26.

What was funny yesterday may no longer be amusing today. Although the development of humour is rarely that rapid, periods of time and political and social changes are all able to alter the path that humour can take. Whilst at the same time, the predominant functionality of humour and how it is presented, as defined by many philosophers, remains for the most part consistent drawing upon relief, superiority and incongruence.<sup>5</sup>

Recent studies of the Great War have turned their interest towards aspects of memory and memorial, particularly in the last two decades. Such studies suggest that often our means of recollection and commemoration are instilled within monuments and physical representations, many of which depict aspects of the wars they commemorate directly. The historiography can be summarised, to a degree, in terms of three predominant formations, looking at political memory, commemoration and the development of shared cultural grief, followed by newer interpretations of memory that celebrates the past. This work will then add another element building on the celebratory and commemorative discussions, in what will be termed ‘commercial memory’ addressing cartoons and their humour and the manner in which these images were sold to the consumer public having been made purposely to be remembered.

Firstly, work by George Mosse in the 1990s has looked at memory in political terms, considering the manipulation from above of a constructed memory that developed quickly following the armistice in November 1918. Much of his work follows traditional early paths of Great War historiography looking to the military statistics to provide information about ‘fallen soldiers’ and how they were remembered politically

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<sup>5</sup> Morreall, *Philosophy of Laughter*; Critchley, *On Humour*; Michael Joseph Mulkay, *On Humour: Its Nature and Its Place in Modern Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988).

following the war.<sup>6</sup> Most of these memories were embodied in memorials created within a few years of the war along with the empty tomb of the Cenotaph in London designed as a place of memory for all.<sup>7</sup> Each of the memorials were designed, and have been studied as places of recollection and commemoration, some with religious inspiration others social.

Developing this socio-political memory further, Jay Winter has described the later twentieth century as having a 'memory boom' that rapidly developed perceptions of a collective social duty to remember the war.<sup>8</sup> This form of memory could be described as a failsafe to stop people forgetting by highlighting aspects of commemoration and grief associated with the war.<sup>9</sup> The 'memory boom' developed in the 1990s in light of the 'cultural turn' of historical studies. It also drew on the memory of perceived futility in this war inspired by veteran's memoirs and poetry.<sup>10</sup> Winter openly acknowledges the growing interest in memory, and the potential misrepresentation of different authors using the same terms for 'collective memory' through its 'boom' of interest.<sup>11</sup> Many elements of private family histories have also developed within this description of collective memory.

Social approaches to memory include Paul Fussell's *Modern Memory* contrasted with Modris Ekstein's *Rites of Spring*.<sup>12</sup> Their studies look to whether the memory of war made modernity, or modernity made the war memory. Fussell is of particular relevance

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<sup>6</sup> Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*; T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper (eds.), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemorations* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> Mark Connelly, 'The Cenotaph' in David Musgrove, *100 Places that Made Britain* (London: BBC, 2011), pp. 367-70.

<sup>8</sup> Winter, 'Memory Boom', pp. 52-66.

<sup>9</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford: Berg, 1998)

<sup>10</sup> See Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*.

<sup>11</sup> Jay Winter and Emmanuel Silvan, *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; Eksteins, *Rites of Spring*.

here as his 'mode of memory' comes through the irony of war, and how that is remembered. Irony can then be equated with humour to a degree, giving him particular relevance to this study. Alongside these works, Samuel Hynes identifies a veritable clash of cultures and social class standing through his work, which addresses how different groups perceived the war.<sup>13</sup> Further to these formations of memory, there are additional elements of the historiography that examine myths and how these alter the perception of society and culture at particular times through the twentieth century.<sup>14</sup> Both the social and cultural approaches to the historiography of the war and its memory incorporate aspects of myth, for its adaption of the understanding overall.

More recent memory studies have begun to look at celebration rather than the grief of war or potential problems with the memories available. These studies break away from the perception of futility embodied in works by Fussell, Ekstein and Hynes.<sup>15</sup> Adrian Gregory in particular, highlights the tensions that have developed between celebrations in contrast to commemoration when looking back to the war. Many veterans, sought to celebrate survival, and this conflicted with those who sought to remember the deceased solemnly. Through the continued production of monuments to the dead, there is a widespread acknowledgement of that grief. The yearly return of armistice commemorations often become combined with celebrations and here again follows a tension of sorts, similar to what might be observed through cartoons.<sup>16</sup> The studies that think of memory as a celebration of the past incorporate far broader ways of remembering linking political, social and cultural methods from each of the earlier

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<sup>13</sup> Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (London: Pimlico, 1992).

<sup>14</sup> Todman, *Myth and Memory*; John Hayward, *Myths and Legends of the First World War* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002); Gary Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory: The First World War, Myths and Realities* (London: Headline, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> Gregory, *Last Great War*; Gregory, *Silence of Memory*; Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*.

<sup>16</sup> Gregory, *Silence of Memory*.

formations. Different sources are incorporated into the memories including cartoons as utilised throughout this thesis. Additionally, modern films and documentaries construct new forms of memory alongside older versions, and these are beginning to be considered more seriously.<sup>17</sup>

Building on these developments and advances, this chapter seeks to analyse a commercialisation of memory as well. Nicholas Saunders has already highlighted some of this through his studies of *Trench Art*.<sup>18</sup> Following the armistice, many families moved back to homes in war-torn France and Flanders where they would collect shrapnel and other left over materials from the battlefields to sell to potential ‘war tourists’.<sup>19</sup> When looking at cartoons, however, it is apparent that these are less so the ‘contested objects’ that Saunders speaks of as they were designed for the purpose of sale. The entire newspaper industry had seen a boost in sales through 1914, and with the development of war in August, W. H. Smith reported further increases in finances gained from newspapers.<sup>20</sup> As such, within those newspapers, cartoons were also produced to help boost revenue; some papers located their main cartoon on the front page at the top centre to help inspire sales.<sup>21</sup> Then when sold, there was potential for them to be saved and preserved in scrapbooks as the private collections held at the

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<sup>17</sup> Films cannot be investigated to any depth here due to wording constraints, however, for more information on films of the war, see Nicholas Reeves, *Official British Film Propaganda during the First World War* (London: Croom Helm, 1986); Eberwein, *The War Film*; Isenberg, *War on Film*; Richards, *Films and British National Identity*.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Saunders, *Trench Art: Materialities and Memoirs of War* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Saunders and Paul Cornish (eds.), *Contested Objects: Material Memories of the Great War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 251; Caroline Winter, ‘Celebrating Peace and Commemorating War in the City of Ieper’, in Kier Reeves (ed.), *Battlefield Events: Landscape, Commemoration and Heritage* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), p. 84.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Colclough, ‘No Such Bookselling Has Ever Before Taken Place in This Country’: Propaganda and the Wartime Distribution Practices of W. H. Smith & Son’, in Mary Hammond and Shafquat Towheed (eds.), *Publishing in the First World War: Essays in Book History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> See for example, *News of the World*; *Evening News*.

BCA demonstrate.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, many publications also sought to sell additional cartoon volumes, and advertised them broadly.<sup>23</sup>

Winter discusses the universality of cultural motifs of bereavement; easily recognised icons throughout literature and art that are repeated in different contexts and are recognised.<sup>24</sup> Such icons can equally be projected into W. J. T. Mitchell's ideas of the recognisable that he reads more widely in his thesis of iconology in art.<sup>25</sup> In this way, common motifs and icons are continuously recognised, but the continuity here offers more relevance in relation to historical memory. Many cultural motifs, such as the cross or grave, relate back to earlier times, and are remembered as parts of that history. They represent classical or religious icons that become engrained in social consciousness as representative of loss and bereavement.<sup>26</sup> These icons still feature in cartoonists' work, as with other artists, and can be seen as a form of professional memory transferring forward and being requisitioned for the cartoonist's purpose.

The historiography of memory and commemoration does not particularly touch on cartoon or humour as a means of creating or substantiating that memory. Most studies take a solemn approach, looking to find the sacred in the memories that are established.<sup>27</sup> Many of these draw upon the established sense of futility that developed through televised memories of the war.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, jokes and comments made

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<sup>22</sup> Saunders and Cornish, *Contested Objects*; BCA, PF0001-0842, uncatalogued Percy Fearon, 'Poy' *Cartoon Scrap Books*, 1913-19; BCA, WH5801 uncatalogued, William K. Haselden *Cartoon Cuttings Book*, 1914-22; Canterbury Heritage Museum, Aitkin Collection, 1914-18.

<sup>23</sup> See back pages of W. Heath Robinson, *The Sainly Hun: A Book of German Virtues* (London: Duckworth, 1917).

<sup>24</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*, pp. vi-vii.

<sup>25</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (London, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986); Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, chapter 2.

<sup>26</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 5 and chapter 6.

<sup>27</sup> See Winter, *Sites of Memory*.

<sup>28</sup> BBC, 'The Great War: BBC Series' (1964); Emma Hanna, 'A Small Screen Alternative to Sone and Bronze: The Great War Series and British Television', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10:1 (2007), pp. 93-4; Dan Todman, 'The Reception of the Great War in the 1960s', *Historical Journal of Film Radio and Television*, 22:1 (2002), pp. 29-36.

during wartime are recalled in memoirs and occasionally through documentary interviews.<sup>29</sup> Thus, humour can be seen as a catalyst for war recollection. However, as a form of commemoration, it appears crass in contrast to memories embodied in statues of the sacred valorised war hero. Humour and cartoons are, therefore, aspects of historical memory that have not been assessed, most likely due to their subjective and seemingly profane nature. Even so, cartoons will serve as the visual historical sources of memory here. It is the proposal of this chapter to suggest that more of the memory inspired by cartoons is a commercial one. Motivated by the sellers of media, cartoons were sold voraciously throughout the war even through times of paper shortages. Some of the reasoning for the lack of earlier study may simply be that humour is a difficult feature to evaluate in any sort of qualitative form. However, quantity may be offered through the vast numbers of cartoons that pervaded society throughout the Great War and from this, quality of analysis may be developed.

The cartoon image can be seen as a store of memory for people viewing them today. The simple fact that so many cartoons have been stored as wartime ephemera suggests a memorial value for those who collected them if nothing else.<sup>30</sup> To develop these ideas, this chapter will focus on origins of cartoon humour through Victorian caricature, and press developments of cartoon journals including *Punch*.<sup>31</sup> The types of humour in Victorian cartoons serve as a ‘professional memory’ for many cartoonists as will be shown through the wartime cartoon humour that is developed out of this. In the same way that icons and images are reused, so too is the styling of the humour in

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<sup>29</sup> Ernest Dunlop Swinton, *Eyewitness: Being Personal Reminiscences of Certain Phases of the Great War Including the Genesis of the Tank* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932); Michael Roper, ‘Remembering the Soldier Hero: The Psychic and Social Construction of Memory in Personal Narratives of the Great War’, *History Workshop Journal*, 50 (2000), pp. 181–204.

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Canterbury Heritage Museum, Aitkin Collection, 1914-18.

<sup>31</sup> See *Punch*, 1848-1920; *Judy*, 1867-1907; *Ally Sloper’s Half Holiday*, 1884-1916; *Fun*, 1861-1901; *John Bull*, 1820-1968; *Moonshine*, 1879-1902.

cartoons. There will be a deeper analysis of alterations in the understanding of cartoons and their humour. Drawing on Victorian art and humour, wartime cartoons that use these as their inspiration will be considered. This will include works by Poy that reflect on the art of Paul Chabas and John Everett Millais, established Victorian artists.

Moving out of Victoriana and into the twentieth century, cartoon humour will be examined more closely looking to adaption and how memories are reused and reshaped. This will use politicians in cartoon to reflect on changing public moods that can be identified within the images. As the war more specifically is addressed, this will look to how humour develops at this time and the purposes for which it is used as relief, and encouragement. There will be reflection on memorial and how cartoons could be sold for their humour and their commemorative reflections equally. Although, many of these notions are applied later, this can be seen as ‘commercial memory’ being created by the cartoonists specifically. This section will continue the theme of requisitioning other artist’s work throughout the war, and will look at how this builds on memories and comprehension for the audience, and for newer audiences.

Beyond the war, the final section of this chapter will consider the layering of humour as memories build and change with the progress of time. It will address how later audiences without the contemporary knowledge to assist them can reinterpret images from the war. Added to this there will be a more significant analysis of requisitioned cartoons focusing on Bairnsfather’s ‘One of Our Minor Wars’, which following his own personal replication continued to be used as inspiration for many other cartoonists moving the ‘ole’ to the moon and beyond.<sup>32</sup> This image will be of particular relevance for analysing how humour has adapted and changed since the war. Addressing changes

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<sup>32</sup> For details of ‘The Better ‘Ole’ in the theatre, see chapter 2, Cartoons into Theatre.

of perspective through hindsight relating to new jokes layered on top of old, this section looks at the manner in which the memory of cartoons goes on and becomes a form of remembrance. Collectively all of this replication and reuse will be used to highlight the building of commercial memories for every new generation. Humour in its own right will be seen as a form of remembrance more so than as a mere memory. The ephemeral nature of cartoons can indeed make them appear momentary and transient as individual memories, but here they are considered markers of memory's longevity.<sup>33</sup>

### Victorian and Edwardian Humour

Modern ideas about of the Victorians and Edwardians suggest a particularly straight-laced society that was not prone to utilising humour extensively. Yet this could not be further from the truth, at every layer of society throughout the Victorian period there was humour, much of which embodied a sense of the frivolous and ridiculous. Literature is littered with it and artwork likewise. Charles Dickens describes images of dark squalid conditions in London but continues to highlight humour in his novels as well and certainly used it in response to his critics.<sup>34</sup> He offers eccentric characters in ironic positions in society who act out their lives whimsically and with, at times, complete disregard for others around them. Critics saw his novels as 'reforming with a grin', but he openly responded through the press discussing who novels were written for and their purpose whilst reminding his critics that the 'strangulation of

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<sup>33</sup> Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Gray, 'The Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 145, 158.

complainers' should be left to the review newspapers and should not feed into his novels.<sup>35</sup>

Beyond literature, humour was vastly appreciated in theatres, music hall and at variety performances, which were rapidly gaining popularity across the classes.<sup>36</sup> Stage names became more popular with the public consistently returning to see the likes of Little Titch with his variety act and oversized shoes and John Lawrence Toole who notoriously impersonated the Queen, and was surreptitiously informed by her Majesty that it was 'very very funny', but also that he was not to do it again.<sup>37</sup> Even so, Toole openly admits in his *Reminiscences* that the audience enjoys a 'rollicking farce' and that he is carried away by it and enjoys laughing with them.<sup>38</sup> Many of the acts put on stage used aspects of frivolity and music to promote their work, throughout which humour was undeniable. Public entertainment drew consistently on humour and silliness across the nineteenth century, and this continues into the Edwardian era and towards 1914 and the Great War.

Connecting literature and theatre, both Dickens and Toole were seen to be caricaturists in their manners, and through this caricaturing, they provided humour and entertainment for their audiences. Also seen to be on parallel lines of caricature, although perhaps in a more literal sense were George Cruikshank, James Gillray and others.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, as far back as William Hogarth in the mid-eighteenth century, he spoke of connections between his artwork and the stage. He 'treat[ed his] subjects as

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<sup>35</sup> Stephen Fitzjames, 'The Licence of modern Novelists', *Edinburgh Review* (1857), pp. 124-56; Charles Dickens, 'Curious Misprint in the 'Edinburgh Review'', *Edinburgh Review* (1857).

<sup>36</sup> Baker, *British Music Hall*.

<sup>37</sup> Clifford Musgrave, *Life in Brighton* (London: Faber & Faber, 1970).

<sup>38</sup> John Lawrence Toole, *Reminiscences of J. L. Toole: Related by Himself and Chronicled by Joseph Hatton* (London: Routledge, 1892), p. 134.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Read, 'Toole, John Lawrence (1830-1906)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: OUP, 2004).

a dramatic writer', and for him caricature was a constant of both worlds where 'my picture is my stage, and men and women my players'.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, returning to the page specifically, this combines the more enduring forms of public comedy provided through the development of caricature into cartoons. Via French inspirations from Honoré Daumier, caricature came to Britain and ran rampage through society. The Victorian and Edwardian periods saw the progress of notable caricaturists from Gillray to Cruikshank, and the development of cartoon publications from *Vanity Fair* through to the better-known *Punch* published from 1841.<sup>41</sup> These artworks combined the visual and the comedic, serving as the basis for much of the cartooning humour discussed from the Great War. Their works are also a feature engrained in public memory through school examination of these images.<sup>42</sup>

Cartoons were popular in Britain across class divides through the developing press where they were a regular feature of most publications. The exaggeration of specific characteristics enabled anyone to be gently taunted or openly ridiculed dependant on the purpose and situation through caricature.<sup>43</sup> Vastly critical caricaturing, for example, was present through depictions of the Irish as conflicts arose and expanded in the nineteenth century. The Irish population became negatively synonymous with simian traits in caricature, while the same iconography was used to depict Charles Darwin from 1859.<sup>44</sup> With all of these depictions, they could be seen humorously or not depending on the audience's perspective.<sup>45</sup> For those in the group making the jokes

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<sup>40</sup> William Hogarth quoted in Lucie-Smith, *Art of Caricature*, p. 52.

<sup>41</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*; Lucie-Smith, *Art of Caricature*; Brian Maidment, *Comedy, Caricature and the Social Order 1820-1850* (Manchester: MUP, 2013); Alan Tomkins, 'Art and Cultural Production: With Special Reference to Cartoon and Caricature', PhD thesis, Institute of Education, University of London, 1983.

<sup>42</sup> See GCSE specimen and exam papers from Edexcel, AQA and OCR for History (2011-2016).

<sup>43</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*, pp. 21-3.

<sup>44</sup> L. Perry Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971).

<sup>45</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 35-7.

then the humour was clear, whereas for those outside, there was only insult. Nonetheless, the icons and motifs replicated across such images are still clear in public consciousness today, perhaps not to the same extent, but certainly on the fringes.<sup>46</sup>

Many of the images created by the great names of caricature, Gillray, Rowlandson, Cruikshank and Beerbohm were vastly political in their approach to society, and through this, they could be critical often with a purpose of correction. Comic drawing and cartoons became a staple of British Victorian society, transposed from European publications, and revived with an ‘English sense of humour’.<sup>47</sup> Such images, particularly for the middle to upper classes, represented an element of societal recognition seen in the style of illustration, but with an element of adaption for the appropriate humour. These sought to highlight the faults of the ‘well to do’ and illustrated what ultimately should not be done in society, which was a popular use for Victorian humour, ridiculing to correct.<sup>48</sup>

Numerous prints dating back to the late eighteenth century, for example, depict the wealthy on vacation in Bath, which had long been ‘Satan’s throne’ since the Wesley brothers named it such with the establishment of Methodism in Britain.<sup>49</sup> These images depicted the unorthodox behaviours and lax social morals that occurred there (figure 6.1). Buxom women, peers and paupers were equally highlighted in the baths and were ridiculed with laughter to correct their societal behaviours. The water is unclean, as are the people, few appear to be happily bathing, but rather all scramble to hold on to the buildings whilst in the dirty waters. Most have red cheeks and noses suggesting

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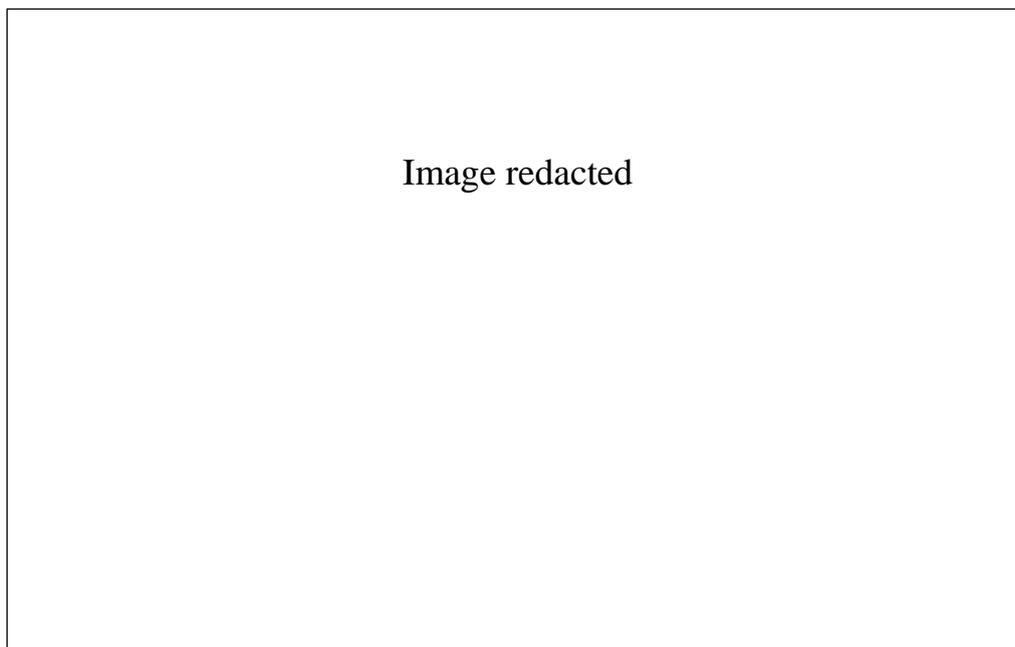
<sup>46</sup> See for example Peter Brooks, ‘Bananas’, *The Times*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009; Brooks, ‘Brassed Off Monkey’, *The Times*, 7th December 2012, also see Anthony Dyson, *Pictures to Print: The Nineteenth Century Engraving Trade* (London: Farrand, 1984).

<sup>47</sup> Leonard Russell and Nicholas Bentley, *The English Comic Album: A Century of Pictorial Wit and Humour* (London: Michael Joseph, 1948), p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> Gray, ‘Uses of Victorian Laughter’, pp. 146-7.

<sup>49</sup> Penelope Corfield, ‘Georgian Bath: The Magical Meeting Place’, *History Today*, 40:11 (1990), p. 29.

alcoholic excess and the mass of generally obese bodies again exaggerate this sense of over indulgence to correct it.



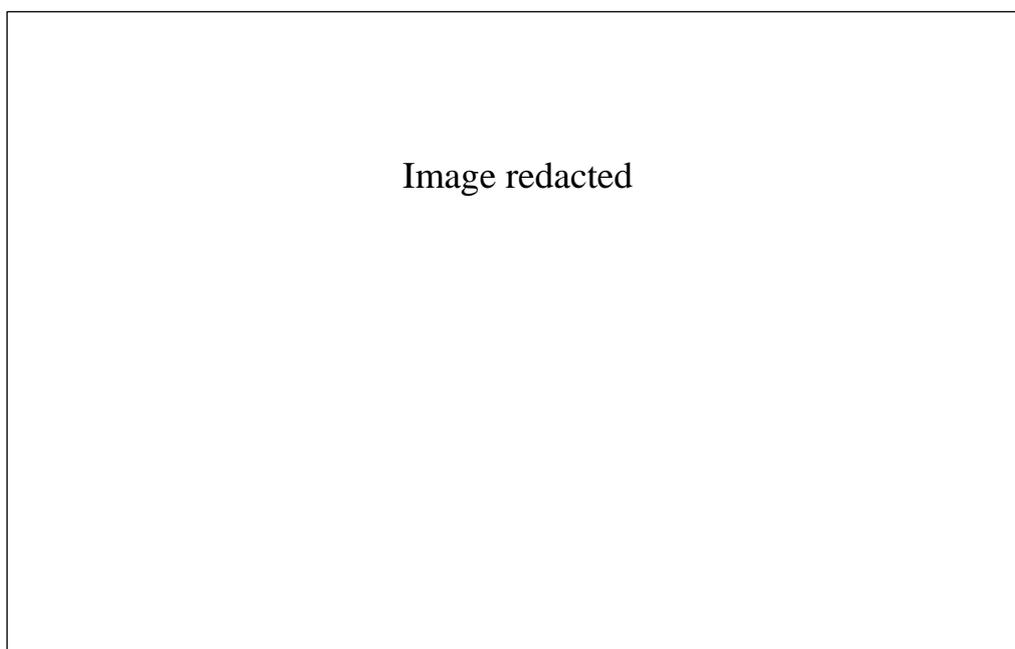
**(Figure 6.1) Thomas Rowlandson, ‘Comforts of Bath – View inside the King’s Bath’, Victoria Art Gallery, 1798**

James Gillray was a particular favourite for his illustrations in the nineteenth century and particularly those of the enemy in wartime. Demonization is highlighted through much of his print work, but he dehumanised Napoleon in particular. He was made visually small, and childish, which was often teemed with textual comment seeking to ridicule and make him appear petulant in his desires (figure 6.2).<sup>50</sup> This style of mockery and debasing of the enemy is what can be understood in so many images of the First World War German soldier. Although most are not made to appear juvenile

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<sup>50</sup> Christiane Banerji and Diane Donald (trans.), *Gillray Observed: The Earliest Account of his Caricatures in London and Paris* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999); Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*; Draper Hill (ed.), *The Satirical Etchings of James Gillray* (New York: Dover Publications, 1977); Tim Clayton and Sheila O’Connell, *Bonaparte and the British: Prints and Propaganda in the Age of Napoleon* (London: British Museum, 2015).

as Napoleon is, the reverse is true, they become older and unfit for service. Alternatively, they are represented collectively under the figurehead of the Kaiser or his son, who behave as petulant children.<sup>51</sup> Out of these robust print images, some were stark in their caricatures, others far more complex. New public desires for visual material that sought to mock and humiliate developed, and particularly in times of war which can be seen through artists' publication collections when depicting the enemy.<sup>52</sup>



**(Figure 6.2) James Gillray, 'Manic Ravings of Little Boney', British Museum, 1803**

Some of the earliest and most notable examples of cartooning for the purpose of mockery were provided for *Punch* and other satirical cartoon volumes through the nineteenth century.<sup>53</sup> These publications were social commentary magazines

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<sup>51</sup> See Haselden, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*.

<sup>52</sup> See Archie Gilkison, *War Cartoons* (Glasgow: William Hodge, 1917); Raemaekers, *Neutral's Indictment*; Robinson, *Hunlikely!*; Robinson, *The Sainly Hun*; Bryant, *World's Greatest War Cartoonists*; Alexandra Franklin and Mark Philip, *Napoleon and the Invasion of Britain* (Oxford: Bodleian Libraries, 2003).

<sup>53</sup> See *Punch*, 1841-1900; *Fun*, 1861-1901; *Judy*, 1867-1907.

throughout, but they took alternative approaches to their views about satire. *Punch* took a reasonably conservative position politically being held as a ‘bastion of upper-middle-class ideology’ once it became established through weekly offerings.<sup>54</sup> It first started publishing in 1841, taking its name from a joke made about one of its editors, Mark Lemon; a feature always necessary in a glass of punch. Further to this, *Fun* was another magazine that promoted itself as being cheaper than *Punch* at 2d rather than 3d, and was established from 1861.<sup>55</sup> Then as an additional response, *Judy* was founded and aimed at the lower middle class rather than the upper end, and reputedly had a greater female readership.<sup>56</sup> Where *Judy* was relatively complacent about politics, despite being ‘avowedly conservative’, *Fun* took a bitter, almost radically liberal approach, which may have contributed to its shorter run.<sup>57</sup> Collectively though, they all promoted visual satire for the public and were remarkably popular as a satire that helped to build on the humour of the age along with a variety of other publications.<sup>58</sup>

The character Ally Sloper was created through *Judy*, initially drawn by a female artist, Marie Duval; he was the naughty reprehensible embodiment of the lower middle classes and a perpetual cheat.<sup>59</sup> His name stood for the man who would ‘slope away’ down an alley to avoid being useful.<sup>60</sup> Sloper was a reflection of growing capitalism in society for the middle classes, and the assurance in the 1880s of more leisure time and ultimate freedom.<sup>61</sup> However, the character also drew on perceived social

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<sup>54</sup> Kunzle, ‘The First Ally Sloper’, p. 40.

<sup>55</sup> See *Fun*, 1861-1901.

<sup>56</sup> See *Judy*, 1867-1907.

<sup>57</sup> Kunzle, ‘The First Ally Sloper’, pp. 40-41; Scully, *British Images of Germany*, p. 136.

<sup>58</sup> See *John Bull*, 1820-1968; *Moonshine*, 1879-1902; *Figaro in London*, 1831-38; *Illustrated Police News*, 1864-1939.

<sup>59</sup> David Kunzle, ‘Marie Duval and Ally Sloper’, *History Workshop Journal*, 21:1 (1986), pp. 133-140.

<sup>60</sup> Roger Sabin, ‘Ally Sloper: The First Comics Superstar’, *Image and Narrative*, 7 (2003).

<sup>61</sup> Peter Bailey, ‘Ally Sloper’s Half Holiday: Comic Art in the 1880s’, *History Workshop Journal*, 16:1 (1983), pp. 5-6, 9.

stereotypes highlighting faults in a humorous manner in order for society to correct them. He could get away with doing so much, or more often, so little, and his methods of avoidance appealed to the public for their often erratic and reprehensible composition. Sloper rapidly gained popularity, and by 1884, he had gained his own publication in *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday*, through which he also began a scheme of self-promotion selling everything from pipes to watches with his name and face on them, but above all, he sought to sell his paper.<sup>62</sup> Sloper himself was a satire of journalistic tendency to be laughed at, yet still he drew the public in to see what he would do next. In a similar manner to Old Bill during and after the Great War, his personality developed so that many believed him to be real in the same way as Sherlock Holmes to take a comparative Victorian character.<sup>63</sup> Thus, memories of him were established through repetition in the public consciousness.

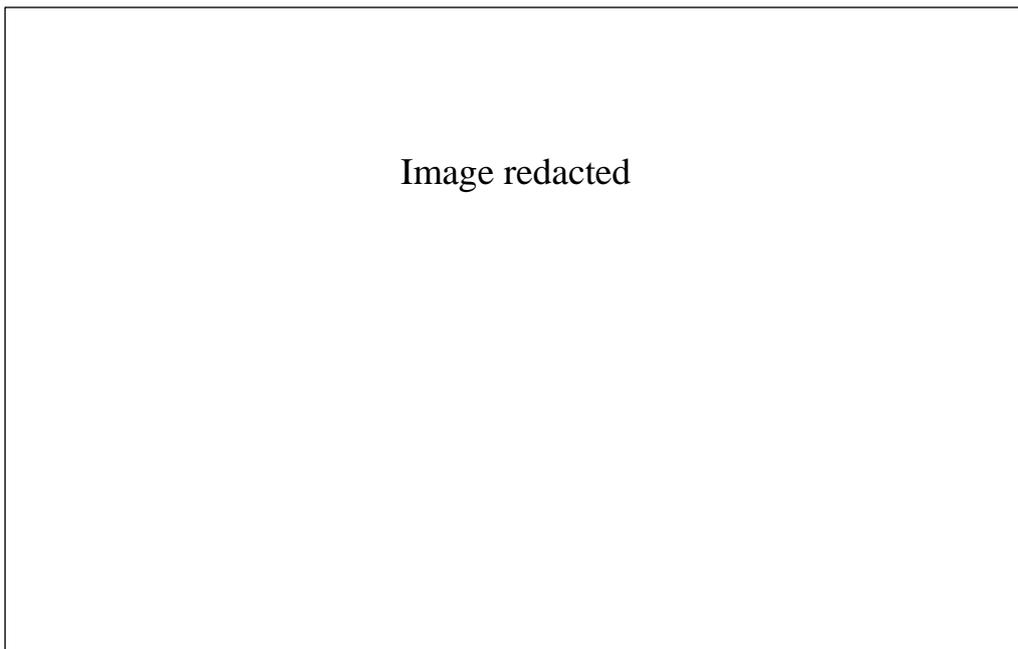
In comparison to Old Bill, Sloper was a negligent part of society. He had his own connections with war, working as a correspondent during the Franco-Prussian conflict, although his actions were humorous because of his lack of validity unlike Bill. As a war correspondent, Sloper notoriously wrote all of his reports from the comfort of a pub bar, which was better in keeping with his avoidance strategies depicted in *Judy*. By employing Sloper as a journalist, and particularly as a war correspondent, the publication was able to express its editors' feelings about war and other political matters with more freedom. In this double page spread originally from 1870, Sloper dreams of the work he could do, whilst maintaining his position in bed (figure 6.3). He never went to war, and so there was a certain obscurity to any of his reports and imaginings, that hinted at assumptions and played upon them.

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<sup>62</sup> Kunzle, 'The First Ally Sloper', p. 42; Bailey, 'Ally Sloper's Half Holiday', p. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Bailey, 'Ally Sloper's Half Holiday', p. 4; Kunzle, 'The First Ally Sloper', p. 46.

Much of this wartime satire built on his early depictions in *Judy* and reflected on the earlier works of Gillray and Cruickshank, presenting Sloper as a low-life trickster, the antithesis of conservative ideals, yet still this made him appeal in conjunction with bad guys in Dickensian novels.<sup>64</sup> This spread of images was reproduced in *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday* in 1885, fifteen years after the original. The specifics of war had altered, but still the publication maintains its view by reusing the same motif of images. Through this, the publication's perceived agency for Sloper's character is reinforced for the public. Although there has been a significant time gap, some of the audience would have been the same, and held similar memories of the Franco-Prussian war and its political significance, which would be remembered through the image.



**(Figure 6.3) Marie Duval, 'Ally Sloper off to the War', *Judy*, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1870;  
reprint *Ally Sloper's Half-Holiday*, February 1885**

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<sup>64</sup> Bailey, 'Ally Sloper's Half Holiday', p. 11.

Later wars were not seen in the same way, as demonstrated by the appeal of Old Bill who is the hero rather than a tenuous villain. Humour nonetheless, follows many of the same paths. Laughter was a means of creating relief for the Victorians, and many people enjoyed incongruous humour when things seemed out of place such as Sloper in bed dreaming of being useful (figure 6.3). However, the most popular form of Victorian humour was that of the frivolous.<sup>65</sup> The open silliness of Ally Sloper appealed in this manner, while Old Bill presents a more scathing view of such frivolity through the serious undertones applied to much of his wartime humour. Even so, the element of humour as relief is particularly apparent through Bairnsfather's Old Bill cartoons, and was certainly recognised by other armies including the French and American as a means of developing stronger morale among the troops.<sup>66</sup>

For the most part, there was no judgement placed upon humour for the Victorians, and much of this attitude appears to hold true moving into the early twentieth century. Making fun of the serious was expected, so long as it was not spiteful, but if no fun was made then it was seen to be a waste of time.<sup>67</sup> Analysis of humour in the Victorian period suggests a dialogue expressed across culture that allows humour in every facet of society.<sup>68</sup> Even so, some controls were implemented informally, jokes were not made about cannibalism or other things deemed improper or inhuman. There was regret expressed for obscenity, reprimand directed towards rude practical jokes, and laughter was directed away from important topics such as religion.<sup>69</sup> As the war encroached in 1914, many of the class divides that had implemented these unwritten

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<sup>65</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 145-76.

<sup>66</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, p. 45.

<sup>67</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', p. 147.

<sup>68</sup> Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor (ed.), *The Victorian Comic Spirit: New Perspectives* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. xvi.

<sup>69</sup> Gray, 'Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 154-7.

rules of humour were broken in the trenches. The grotesque could be laughed about now; rude practical jokes kept men on their feet, and became far more commonplace among the troops.

Turning to art more specifically, much of the formal artwork of the nineteenth century had not been designed for laughter, other than the caricature work mentioned above. Even so, artists had a tradition of requisitioning the work of others to better their own. Such borrowing and reusing of material started early on with classical art modes, but these were similarly transferred into cartoons. Copying, transferring and reusing icons within images came to be represented as the ‘armoury’ of motifs that appear repeatedly throughout art, and specifically in cartoon.<sup>70</sup> Artists knew that audiences recognised similar images, and as such, the viewer mentally completed stories surrounding such motifs or icons. Those icons serve as signposts to the rest of the image that is missing.<sup>71</sup> Not only were aspects of art used, but contemporary literature also transferred recognisable themes into cartoons as well, all of which was used for rapid recognition and for the application of humour to the images. Memory was instantly provoked through recognisable features, and stories are thereby completed.

It makes sense for cartoonists to use and replicate things that have already been seen, especially when aiming to offer more significance to their own work. The caricature nature of exaggeration and simplification meant that having instantly recognisable features aids the understanding for contemporary audiences. Cartoonists readily manipulated high art adding humour to such images for this very purpose whilst also

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<sup>70</sup> Gombrich, ‘The Cartoonist’s Armoury’, pp. 127-42

<sup>71</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33, Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements*, pp. 78-81.

altering the way they were read throughout the war.<sup>72</sup> It could often be said that the requisitioning of material that was already available, helped to locate new cartoons within the viewer's mind. For the historian, this use of adaption provides insight to anticipated audiences, as the types of material reproduced or requisitioned would have suited certain aspects of society more prominently. Poy, for example, reproduced images by Paul Chabas and John Ernest Millais, both respected artists before and during the war. Cartoonists generally replicated images with apologies or thanks for the inspiration, which indicates acknowledgement of the original artist's work, even when this is manipulated to create humour.

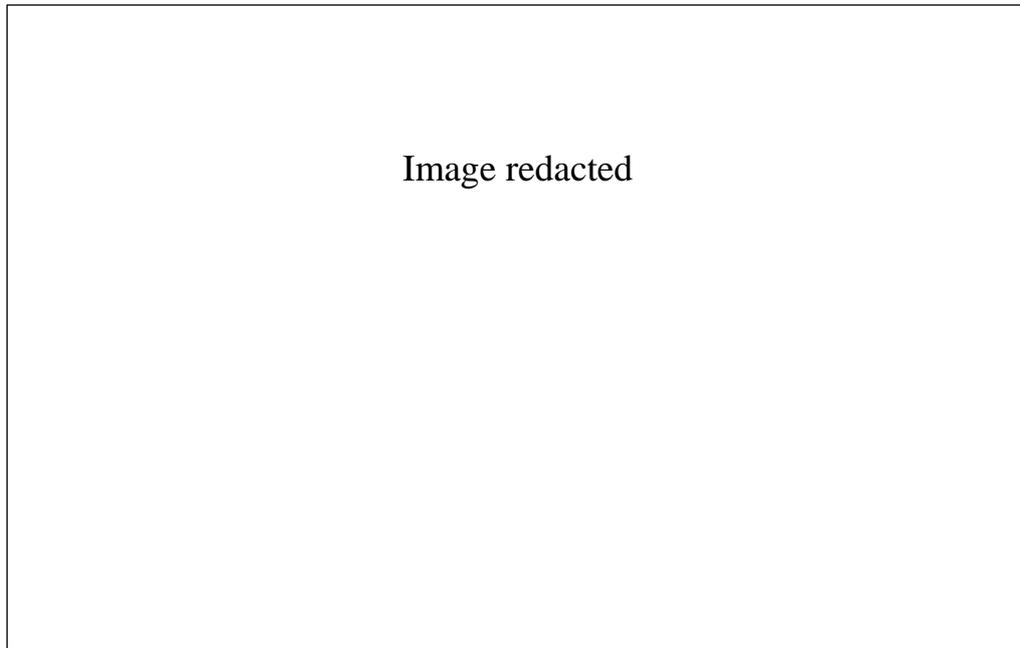
Looking first to Chabas's work 'September Morn', this is an image twice replicated by Poy in different manners a year apart during the war. Originally painted in oil on canvas in 1911, 'September Morn' depicts a naked woman in a lake looking off into the distance. It was a highly disputed image and debates revolved around whether the woman illustrated was a depiction of innocence or might have been offering herself more favourably for the sexual intents of the male public. Evidence suggests that this image was discussed in men's clubs and circles of women equally offering little emphasis on a gender bias. Nonetheless, the debate was more prominent among upper and middle class public suggesting a class divide to its perception. Either the lower classes had no interest in it, or simply saw it as a picture of a girl, or her sexuality was irrelevant to their appreciation (figure 6.4).<sup>73</sup> There are, however, also reports of the debate's ongoing nature through replications of the original such as in America in 1913 when exhibited in the window of a photography shop. Soon after its display, the local constabulary requisitioned the photograph and designated it, with the Mayor's support,

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<sup>72</sup> Feaver, *Masters of Caricature*, pp. 21-3.

<sup>73</sup> James William Pattison, 'Public Censorship of Art', *Fine Arts Journal*, 28:4 (1913), p. 244.

as being inappropriate for display in such a fashion as it could be negatively influential to younger viewers.<sup>74</sup>



**(Figure 6.4) Paul Chabas, 'September Morn', Philadelphia Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1911**

Numerous reproductions developed and provoked further debate among critics and artists alike. For his part, Poy reuses this image first in September 1915, when a Zeppelin replaces the woman and again in September 1916 when it is Count Friedreich von Zeppelin himself, and although he is not naked, he is certainly in a state of disarray and is not fully dressed (figures 6.5 and 6.6). The Zeppelin and its creator feature strongly in the atrocity literature that was developing through the Bryce report and across the press.<sup>75</sup> For Poy, depicting the Zeppelin and its designer in this humorously derogatory manner served to relieve tension related to both aspects.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> See Horne and Kramer, *German Atrocities*.

<sup>76</sup> Bryce, *Report on Alleged German Outrages*; Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 46.

When making comparisons between formal artwork and cartoons that reinterpret them, the humour is often a clear addition for the cartoon versions. This happens whether it is through adaption of the image in a visual form, or through added textual commentary. Poy offers elements of both adaptations in his renditions of ‘September Morn’. No longer do we see a naked woman, but rather a Zeppelin or its inventor derisively portrayed in less than formal attire. The textual addition is the alteration of the title September to ‘Zeptember’ in both situations. Even so with the change in the single word the inference of the title along with embedded text in the image alter the meaning implied behind it all. In the first there is an ironic humour played upon the Zeppelin who cries ‘crocodile tears’ while standing in a sea of ‘cold crime’ all of which is described as ‘Innocence’ (figure 6.5). The idea of innocence connects to Chabas’s female portrayal and the debate surrounding it of whether she was innocent or promiscuous. The debate then is negated by the location where the Zeppelin is standing, along with the ‘crocodile tears’ and sword labelled ‘baby shticker’ tucked in to the Zeppelin’s waistband. The second image, in contrast, makes no direct connection to this innocence debate, but the moral validity of the count’s invention certainly raises similar issues.

Despite consistent worries about German aerial threats throughout both years, September was the appropriate month for Poy to create these images.<sup>77</sup> It is clear that the public were aware of Zeppelin raids and their potential impact on Britain.<sup>78</sup> Then this feature is equally represented through Poy’s images. In both he is able to suggest irreverence towards the Zeppelin worry, and is able to belittle Count von Zeppelin as

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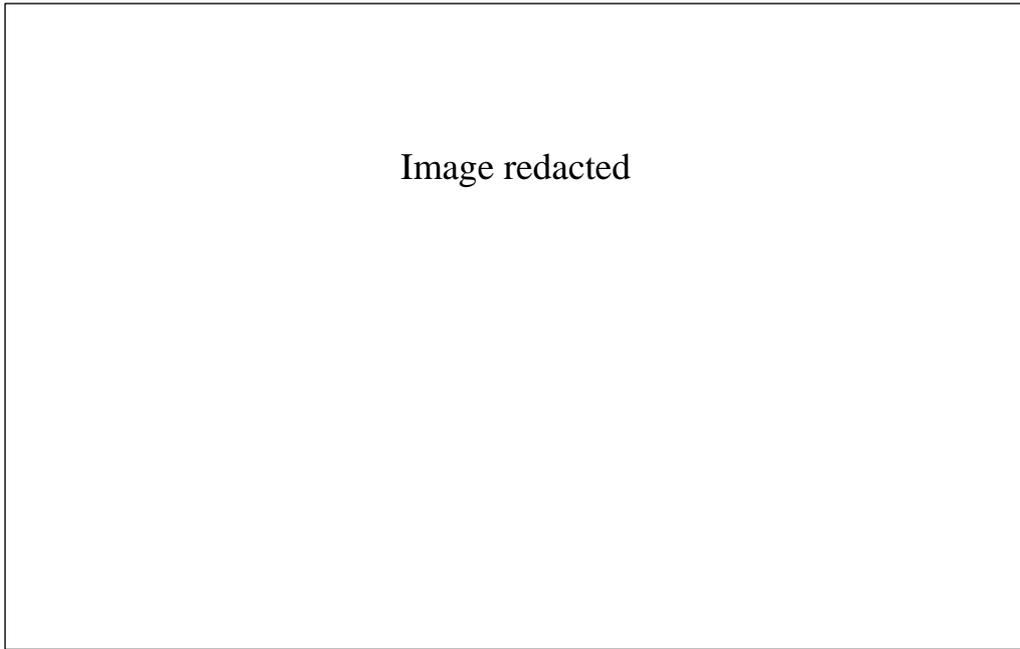
<sup>77</sup> ‘Are the Zeppelins Coming?’, *Surrey Mirror*, 14<sup>th</sup> April 1914, p. 6; ‘Zeppelin Victims’, *Liverpool Daily Post*, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1915, p. 6; ‘Worried by Zeppelins’, *Daily Gazette for Middleburgh*, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1916, p. 6; also see Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 60-2; Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire*.

<sup>78</sup> Grayzel, *At Home and Under Fire*, p. 20.

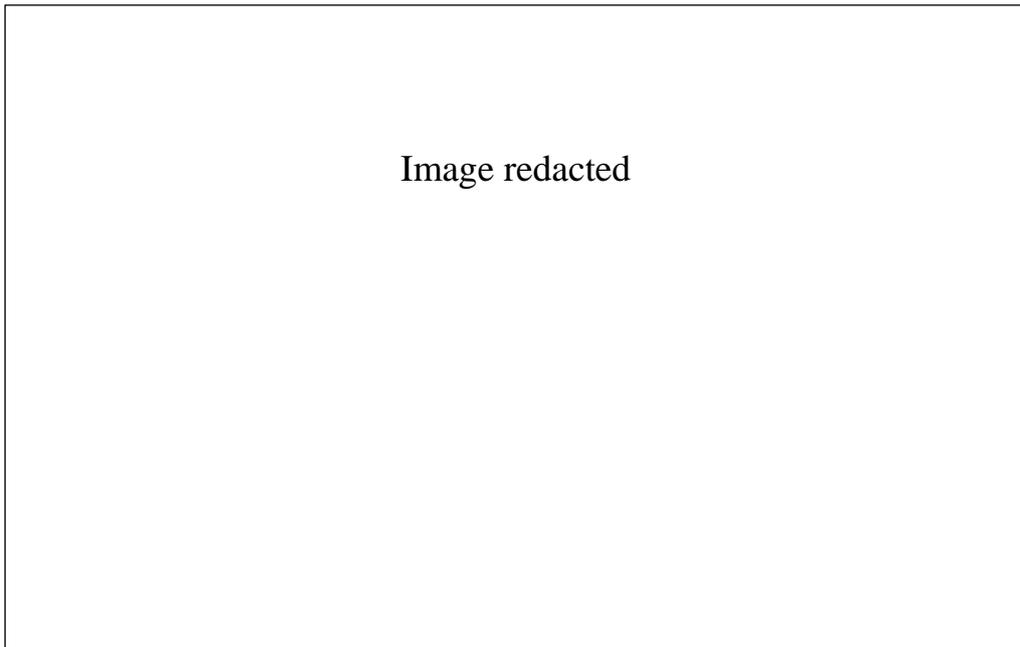
easily as his creation (figure 6.6). The lack of formal attire offered in both cases puts the character depicted at a disadvantage against their viewer. Added to this is the stranded nature of the image and their solitary representation alone in water as they cry. The perception of a Zeppelin raid was of many rather than individual air balloons and so depicting them alone reversed this worry incongruously for the viewer. Added to this is that the Count is seen to be reading the news which details '2 Zepps down in Essex' reaffirming British strength over and above that of the German Zeppelin, and therefore, he rather than the British, mourns (figure 6.6). In addition to this, in September 1916 there had been a spate of articles about Zeppelins, and in particular their demise, over English soils which regular readers of the *Evening News* would have recognised readily.<sup>79</sup> Through this media interpretation the Zeppelins are again portrayed as incompetent failures that keep trying, but consistently miss their targets.

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<sup>79</sup> See 'The Wrecked Zepp', *Evening News*, 4<sup>th</sup> September 1916, p. 1; 'Talk on Zepps by Lord Montague', *Evening News*, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1916, p. 6; 'Last Night's Zepps Avoid London', *Evening News*, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1916, p. 1.



**(Figure 6.5) Poy, 'Zeptember Mourne', *Evening News*, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915**



**(Figure 6.6) Poy, 'Zeptember Mourn', *Evening News*, September 1916**

Yet another example of how Poy in particular involves the visual memory of classical works of art for his own cartooning can be seen through ‘The Flood’, a mock-up of the work by John Millais from 1870 (figure 6.7). Once again, subtle alterations are made to the original image in order to alter its purpose. A baby and cat no longer feature in the basket floating on the water, yet there remain concessions towards the houses in the background. The recruiting sergeant settled in Poy’s basket seems to be far more uncomfortable about his position than the baby might have been and calls for ‘help’. Nonetheless, the image offers the viewer visual continuity of features that are recognisable, but the emphasis is completely altered (figure 6.8). Where the child may have found being afloat a bit of good luck within misfortune, the Sergeant finds his misfortune floating upon the good luck of so many forthcoming recruits in October 1914.

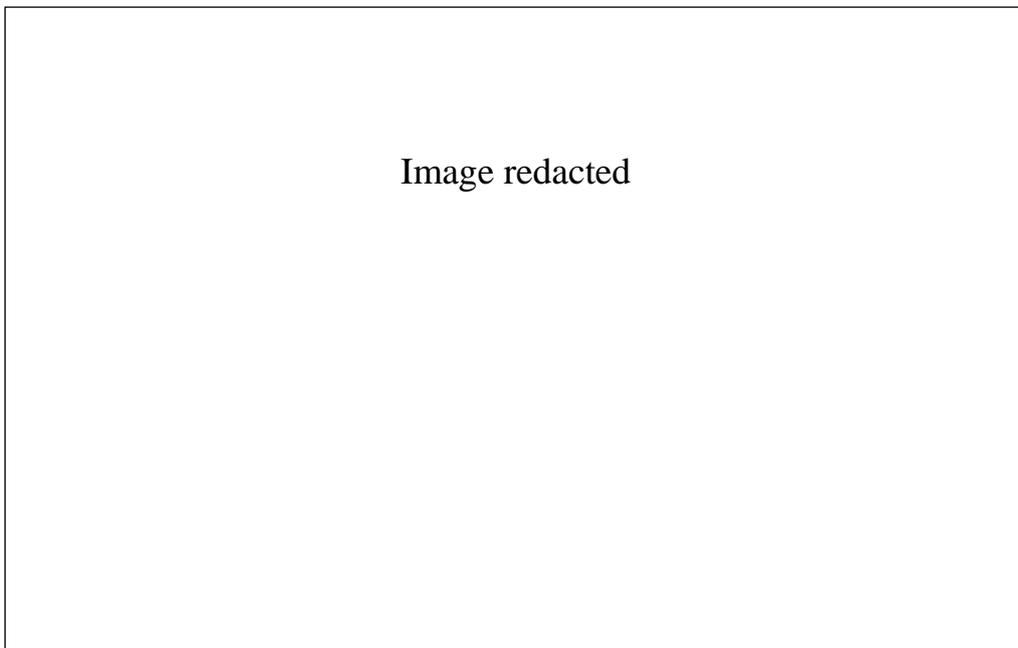
Poy’s image is particularly subtle in its alterations, yet blatant in its intention. The alterations are minimal, even down to the perception of rippling water, although Poy’s water is contrived of a mass of expressionless faces. There is intentional clarity, reflecting the volume of recruits. Yet simultaneously, Poy is criticising the administration organising them.<sup>80</sup> The sergeant looks aloft with hands held in supplication offering the religious iconography as a call for help, which is reinforced by the embedded word as a traditional religious motif that could today be aligned with perceptions of commemoration.<sup>81</sup> The sergeant appearing so passively in supplication and distress suggests no criticism of the army itself, and removes military culpability for the disorganisation. Instead, blame is allocated to a disembodied, element of society that is not visible, but has seemingly not done as it should have by leaving the

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<sup>80</sup> Numerous reports in the news and otherwise speak of the number of recruits gathered, for details of too many recruits see ‘The Social Welfare of Recruits’ *The Times*, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1914, p. 9.

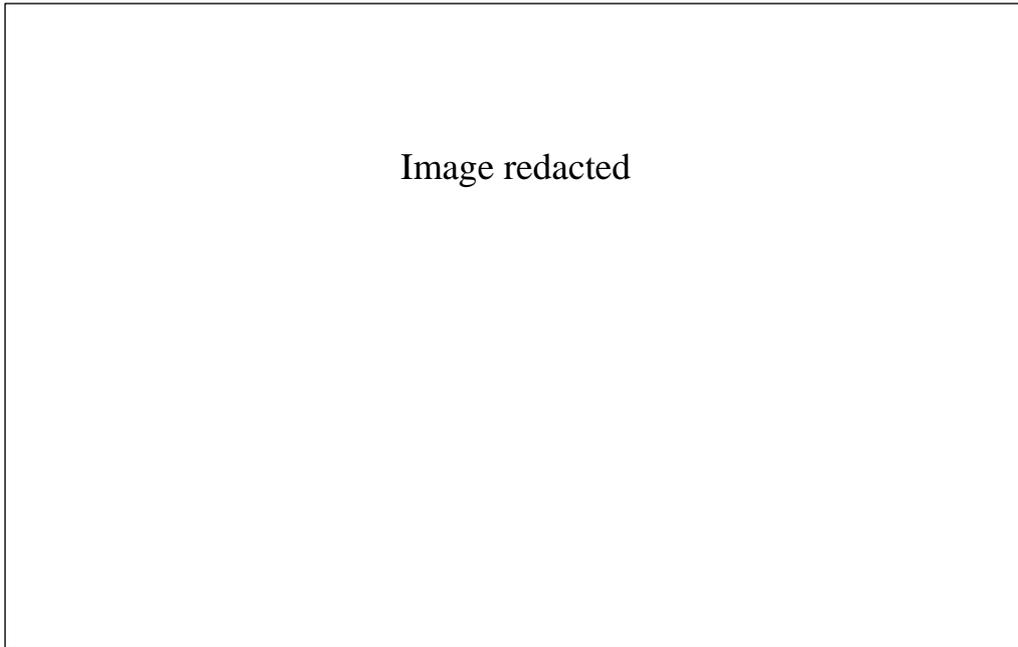
<sup>81</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 5 and chapter 6.

sergeant in such a position. Subtle social criticism is often implemented through the reuse of particular images. In this case, the innocence of the child and cat in the basket are reflected onto the recruiting sergeant, as there is little he can do about his situation (figure 6.8). The addition of humour though, is able to relieve some of that criticism. The incongruity of the sergeant left in the basket creates humour over a positive, yet ironically awkward position, which relieves the tension of the situation and suggests an ultimately positive resolution.



**(Figure 6.7) John Everett Millais, 'A Flood', Manchester City Art Gallery, c.**

**1870**



**(Figure 6.8) Poy, 'The Flood', *Evening News*, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1914**

Through the reuse of each of these images, and so many others by other cartoonist during the war, a consistent sense of memory is embodied for artist and viewer alike. Certain works of art would have held greater relevance for particular groups of readers in newspapers, but regardless, the reinterpretation of such images serves as a commercialising of the product for sale, with recollection as one of its main selling points. In reusing images though, the artists, as Peter Burke suggests, almost make a historian of themselves, replicating and demonstrating memories of the past.<sup>82</sup> Added to that, the people who knew of Millais and Chabas' work would more readily have recognised Poy's images and appreciated them as such. These were expensive pieces of art, and although some may have seen the requisitioning of them negatively, most who knew the *Evening News* and Poy's cartoons would have readily appreciated having an element of that art. The *Evening News* similar to the *Daily Mail* were seen

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<sup>82</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 157-68.

to be quick reads as the ‘busy man’s paper’.<sup>83</sup> Having images that are so readily recognised in this manner would have helped their overall comprehension for the audience.

### Wartime development

Moving away from the Victorian era, into the Edwardian and towards war at the start of the twentieth century, war had advanced as highlighted by the development of what is now termed a ‘total’ warfare by the first and second world wars.<sup>84</sup> The sale of newspaper media had developed strongly into the twentieth century, and the war promoted the sale of such products and propaganda like never before.<sup>85</sup> Humour had advanced as well holding a strong position in cartoon media. The addition of war altered some of the humour and the direction in which it shared ideas. The ‘them’ and ‘us’ of sections of society who were joked about altered vastly whilst simultaneously remaining consistent.<sup>86</sup> Men and women were separated undertaking different roles in cartoon as they did in society, and likewise foreigners remained ‘them’ for the most part, but not all.<sup>87</sup> Where Napoleon had been the separate ‘them’ of enemy, the French were now allies, while the Germans were distinctly the adversary. Yet, as has been demonstrated, once in the trenches, this definition changed again, and ‘they’ were those at home compared to ‘us’ in the conflict directly.<sup>88</sup> Humour also altered at home through political developments that change public thought and principles, and this

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<sup>83</sup> Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, pp. 131-33

<sup>84</sup> Beckett, *Great War*, pp. 344-7; Strachan, ‘From Cabinet War to Total War’, pp. 22-4.

<sup>85</sup> Colclough, ‘No Such Bookselling’, p. 27.

<sup>86</sup> See Elliott, *Us and Them*.

<sup>87</sup> For aspects of gender developments, see Marwick, *Deluge*; Susan Grayzel, *Women and the First World War* (Harlow: Longman, 2002).

<sup>88</sup> For more details of trench camaraderie, see chapter 4, Military Images from the Front; McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*.

became present in cartoons. Other events as the war progressed naturally modified the way in which cartoons depicted their humour for the civilian population, as will be discussed.

Throughout this thesis, changes in cartoons and their style and depiction are illustrated in relation to specific topics through the war. Many alter because of particular events, or gradually as the war progresses; however, the humour that draws them all together continues to follow three traditional paths of incongruity, superiority or relief, and at times combinations of these three. Things can be depicted out of their traditional position to create incongruity, contrasts between class, and levels of authority in war provide aspects of superiority, and then relief, although less instant in cartoon, is also present making light of dire wartime situations. Many of the humorous alterations made in relation to war can be seen most clearly through a focus on politics and political cartoons, which will be discussed shortly. Nonetheless, some see humour in wartime as a survival strategy, however, whether it is seen to fit this category or not, there is value in the consideration of the humour in cartoons from the Great War as a morale booster.<sup>89</sup> Whether boosting morale counts as a form of military strategy can be further debated, but there is definitely the sense that many soldiers saw cartoons positively as a means of fighting on using the humour as a support feature as can be seen through works by Bairnsfather.<sup>90</sup> This particular artist held longstanding value as a morale booster being called up again for the second world war and promoted to a specific new role as ‘officer cartoonist’ once again highlighting his cultural value and authority.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Davies, ‘Humour is Not a Strategy in War’, pp. 395-412; Delporte, ‘Humour as a Strategy’, pp. 367-77.

<sup>90</sup> See Housman (ed.), *War Letters of Fallen Englishmen*; ‘London Mail at the Front’ *London Mail*, 6:137, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1914.

<sup>91</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better ‘Ole*, pp. 59-68.

At the start, little humour is made of the war itself, there is far more emphasis on the recruitment of soldiers through official propaganda, and asking the question of what people were doing when they should be doing their bit to help.<sup>92</sup> This translated across cartoons as well, and many of those depicted in *Punch* or through the work of Raemaekers appeared to lose their humour (figure 6.9). There was far more strength of patriotism and valiantly sending soldiers away depicted using allegorical figureheads. Winter utilises the visual to support his arguments about the memory and commemoration of war, much of which draws upon religious allegory combined with photograph sources.<sup>93</sup> He does not specifically address cartoons as a ‘site of memory’ or mourning, yet the perception transfers just as easily. Images representing the soldier departing to war from 1914 onwards offer a commemoration of war combined with the sorrow of departure, an acknowledgement to all those left behind.

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<sup>92</sup> For more details of how soldiers were represented at this time, see chapter 4, Images of the Military from Home

<sup>93</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*, pp. vi-vii, 5.

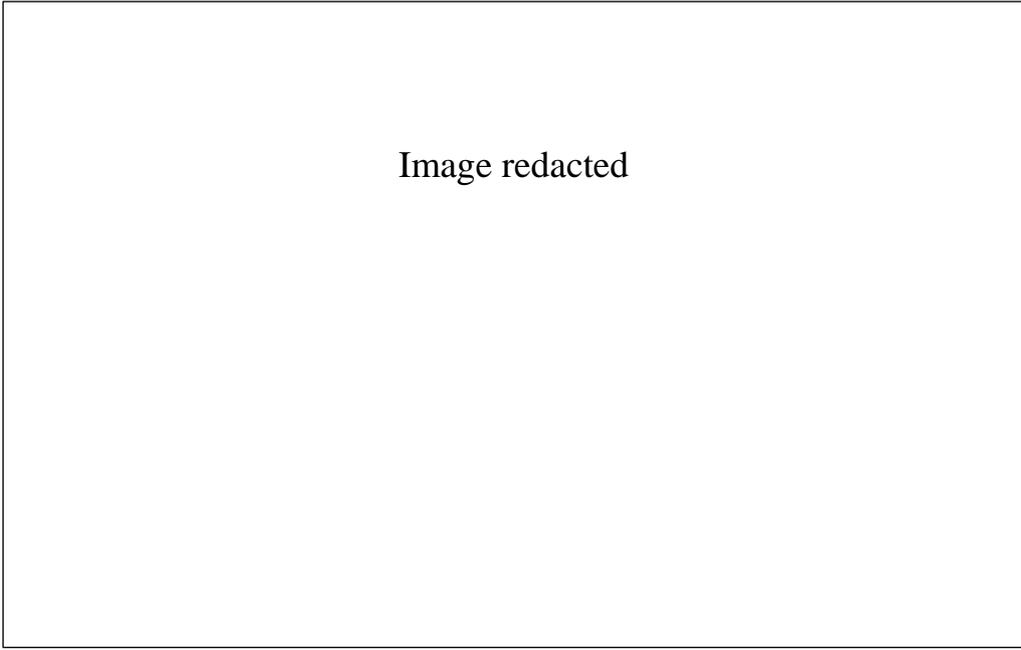


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**(Figure 6.9) Louis Raemaekers, ‘My Son go and Fight for your Motherland’, A  
*Neutral’s Indictment*, 1914**

Later as the war progressed, however, there was more opportunity to create humour out of situations of war, which was particularly emphasised by Bairnsfather and his illustrations of survival in the worst of circumstances. By 1917, attitudes towards enlistment following the addition of conscription had changed, additionally; cartoons of soldiers such as ‘The New Submarine Danger’ drew on worries that were more specific. Bairnsfather depicts his soldiers, for example, in the flooded trench and entitles it in relation to submarine scares combining a mixture of incongruity and relief humour (figure 6.10). There is relief that they are still alive despite the visual situation, and incongruity of being situated in it in the first place surrounded by water. Added to this is the mention of the submarine that would have no means of getting into such trenches adding to the incongruity.

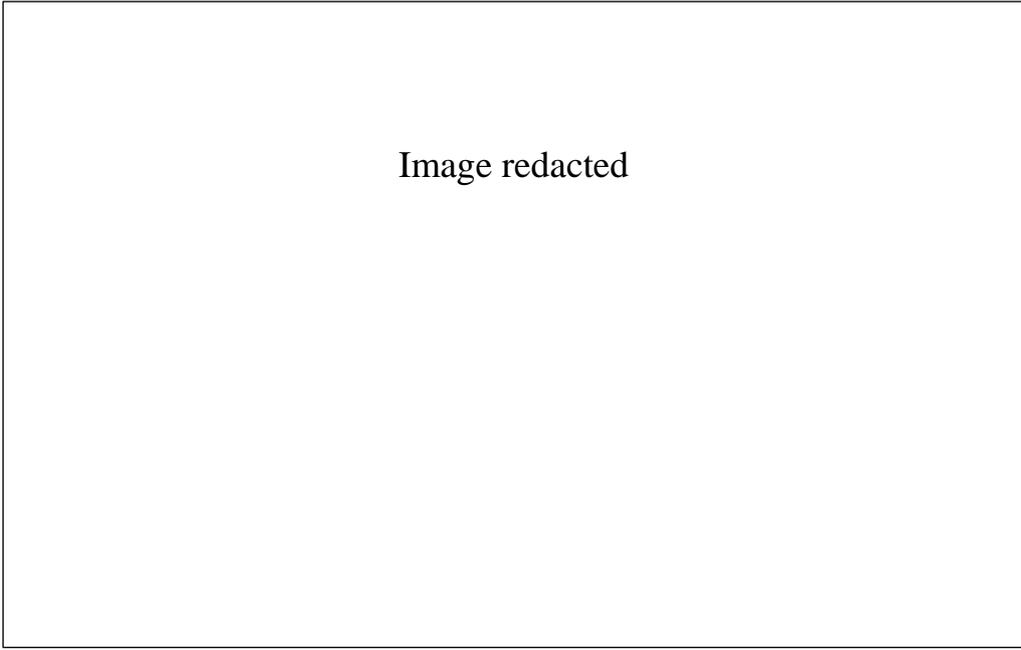


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**(Figure 6.10) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘The New Submarine Danger’, *Fragments from France*, 1916**

Many scholars of humour in the context of war have highlighted its use as a strategy or weapon.<sup>94</sup> In comparison with the technological developments of guns and tanks, humour can seem a far more artificial ‘weapon’ that does not have the same destructive capabilities. Even so, cartoon and caricature could symbolically kill by highlighting the absurdity of a situation. Killing the fear was equally able to strengthen the memory in a positive manner. Looking back, soldiers were able to consider the humour of the situation ironically, rather than focusing on the dread of such situations.

The power of soldiers and leaders alike are minimised by placing them into situations that highlight a derision of their prowess. This corresponds with the images of social

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<sup>94</sup> Holman and Kelly, ‘Introduction, War in the Twentieth Century’, pp. 247-263; Robertshaw, ‘Irrepressible Chirpy Cockney Chappies?’, pp. 277-87; Ariane De Ranitz, ‘With a Pen and a Pencil as Weapons: Louis Raemaekers (1869-1956), Sketch of a Political Cartoonist’, PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, 1989.

subterfuge as seen through the study of profiteers and pacifists.<sup>95</sup> Take away their power comically and visually and they are left with nothing. For British audiences, this happens with remarkable regularity when depicting the Kaiser. As the leader of the enemy, in cartoon he could signify himself alone or be used as a representation of the entire German Army. Whichever path is taken though, by making him appear foolish, any power he might have had is negated in cartoon.

When located in difficult or improbable situations, fear of the enemy was instantly reduced in cartoon drawing upon the manipulation of recognisable icons and motifs. In the 'Nailed Fist', Poy is able to use this form of humour to present the Kaiser. The nailed fist was a recognised icon of illustration for the Germans in British cartooning taking ideas from Goethe about the iron hand of the 'Reich knight' that could demolish Germany's enemies.<sup>96</sup> In this image, it is clear what the Kaiser's intentions are from the conversation with the Crown Prince, however, the literal 'allies' nail in his 'iron fist' removes any possibility of its fulfilment (figure 6.11). The ambiguity of the iron fist is added to through inversion in this image. There is little question of it representing 'steadfast endurance or ruthless destruction', as here it has been made visually incapable.<sup>97</sup> Once a thing is depicted in a manner that is completely absurd like this, it loses its sense of reality and therefore its agency to negatively manipulate its viewer, therefore, the ruthlessness of Germany is undermined and removed. However, this can only be done through the use of recognised icons and the professional memory that the cartoonists uses.

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<sup>95</sup> For this aspect of the study, see chapter 3.

<sup>96</sup> Goebel, *Great War and Medieval Memory*, p. 156.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, p. 157.

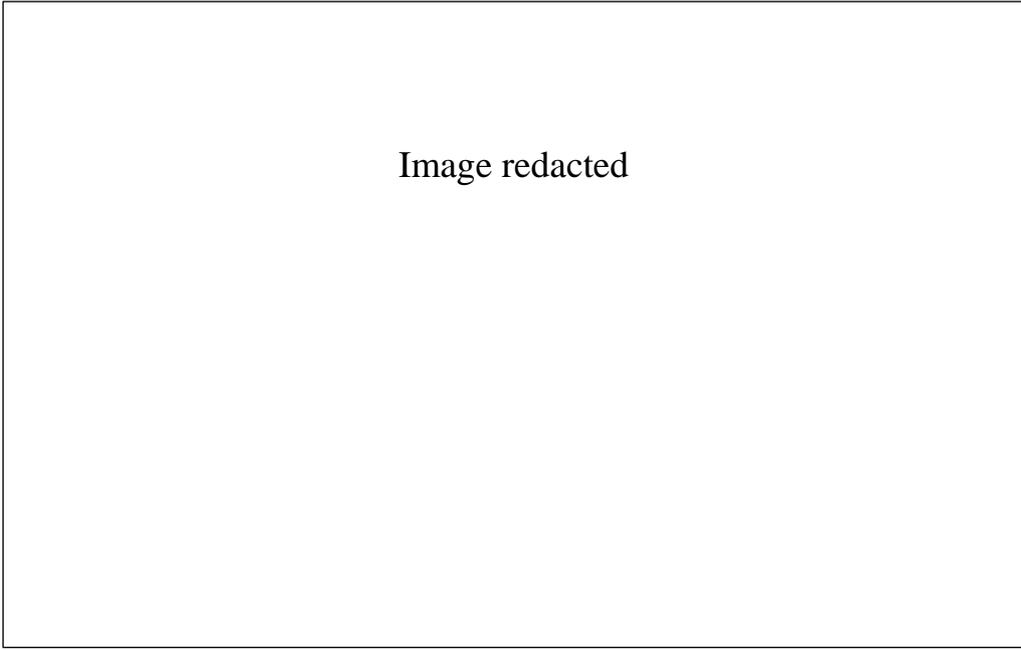


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**(Figure 6.11) Poy, ‘The “Nailed” Fist’, *Evening News*, 1915**

The public consistently received comedy during the war through local and national newspapers. The home nurtured cartoonist had much closer access to the politics of the day and used it for their own satirical depictions. Poy notoriously received daily newspapers in the morning and produced his cartoon ready by lunchtime to go into the *Evening News* and other publications.<sup>98</sup> In this manner, political figures were regularly transformed one way or another to create humour around their personalities and politics alike. Much wartime humour is embodied, therefore, in illustrations of political characters. Satire was popular among the public drawing upon established Victorian mockery that was safe to observe and unrestrained.<sup>99</sup> Here again is a semblance of ‘professional memory’ being used by cartoonists and the use and reuse of the same characters consistently making new jokes out of older ones.

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<sup>98</sup> BCA *Percy Fearon ‘Poy’ Biography* < <http://www.cartoons.ac.uk/artists/percyfearon/biography> > [Accessed from January 2012].

<sup>99</sup> Hiley, “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 148.

For other cartoonists at home, politicians and political topics were ready fodder to utilise throughout the war, as they remain today indicating this lasting memory of political satire in cartooning. The politician and his policies for the cartoonist are what Ernst Gombrich would have termed part of his ‘armoury’, that is to say the visual tools with which he fought and oft annihilated politicians and public alike.<sup>100</sup> The public are able to identify the characters given, and make links between them, their parties, backgrounds and additional links to other external media. All of these features are what the cartoonist is able to play upon when creating his illustrations.

In these terms, cartoonists used icons of politics or politicians as a focus for their art and satire either explicitly or implicitly. Meanwhile, others like William Haselden endeavoured more often to avoid political content.<sup>101</sup> Despite the potential avoidance by artists such as Haselden on the home front and the natural distance from domestic affairs suffered by cartoonists like Bruce Bairnsfather on the front line, at times elements of the political can still be seen within their work.<sup>102</sup> Most other cartoonist fell somewhere between the two extremes offering political commentary as it seemed appropriate to them. It remains clear that the armoury of icons continue to be used as a platform of professional memory and recognition for all artists with variable application.<sup>103</sup> Often through artists such as Poy or Staniforth, their adaptations of humour as the war progressed in relation to specific politicians can be seen more clearly. The public was developing a sense of how politicians appeared through photographs in the press, and cartoonists implemented and adapted these images further to create humour around them.

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<sup>100</sup> Gombrich, ‘The Cartoonist’s Armoury’, pp. 127-42.

<sup>101</sup> Hiley, “‘A New and Vital Moral Factor’”, p. 148; BCA, *William Haselden Biography*.

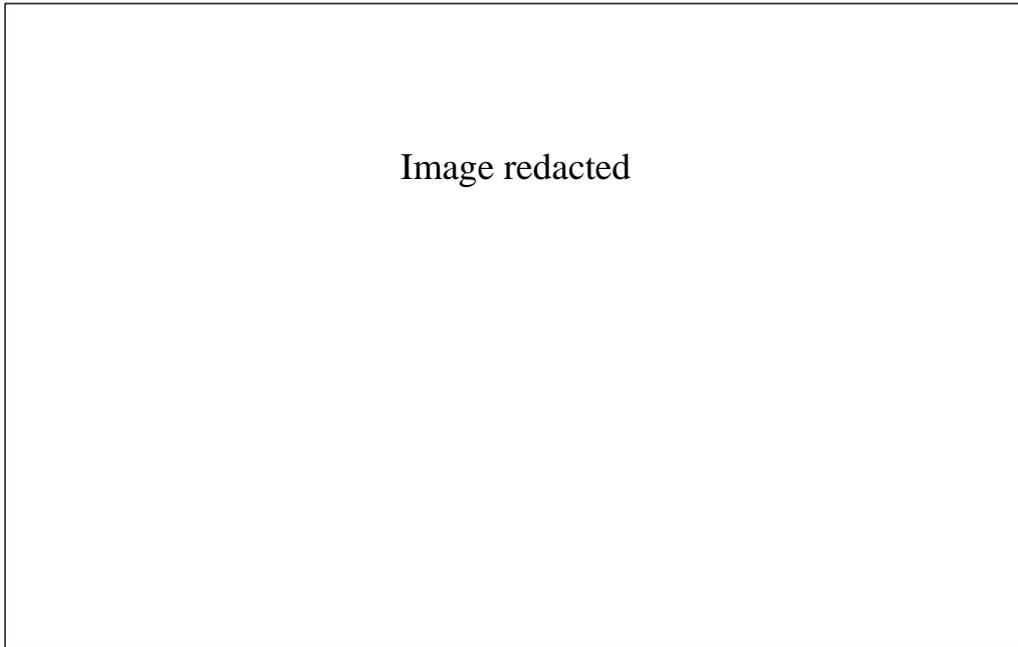
<sup>102</sup> See Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*; Bairnsfather, *Mud to Mufti*.

<sup>103</sup> Gombrich, ‘The Cartoonist’s Armoury’, pp. 127-42

One aspect of political development and its incorporation into cartoon that can be particularly highlighted is that of changes in governmental between 1916-17 as the coalition developed and the premiership altered from Herbert Henry Asquith to David Lloyd George. Through these political changes, politicians in cartoons undertook many transformations being frequently equated with animals, or modified into inanimate features.<sup>104</sup> The first Prime Minister of the war, Henry Herbert Asquith, serves to demonstrate quite clearly how cartoonists and in turn public interpretations of a man can be altered as time progresses. Public spirit and attitude can be interpreted through these cartoons when Asquith before and near the start of the war, although a relatively old man in depiction was of an average size with comparative characters. In May 1915, he can be seen carrying the 'burden of war' alone. Visually the audience is encouraged to praise him for his hard work and castigate the opposition, whereas textually, there is the question of why Asquith is not accepting the offered help and assistance from the opposition Andrew Bonar Law (figure 6.12). Regardless of the assistance being offered, Asquith appears to still be a full sized man who will undertake the burden, as he must. Even so, the incongruity of conflicting ideas is used to create the cartoon's humour.

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<sup>104</sup> J. M. Staniforth, 'Resigned to Fate', *Western Mail*, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1915; Staniforth, 'Harnessing the Team', *Western Mail*, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1915; Walker, 'Moths', *Daily Graphic War Cartoons*, 1914; Raemaekers, 'U'S', *Neutral's Indictment*.



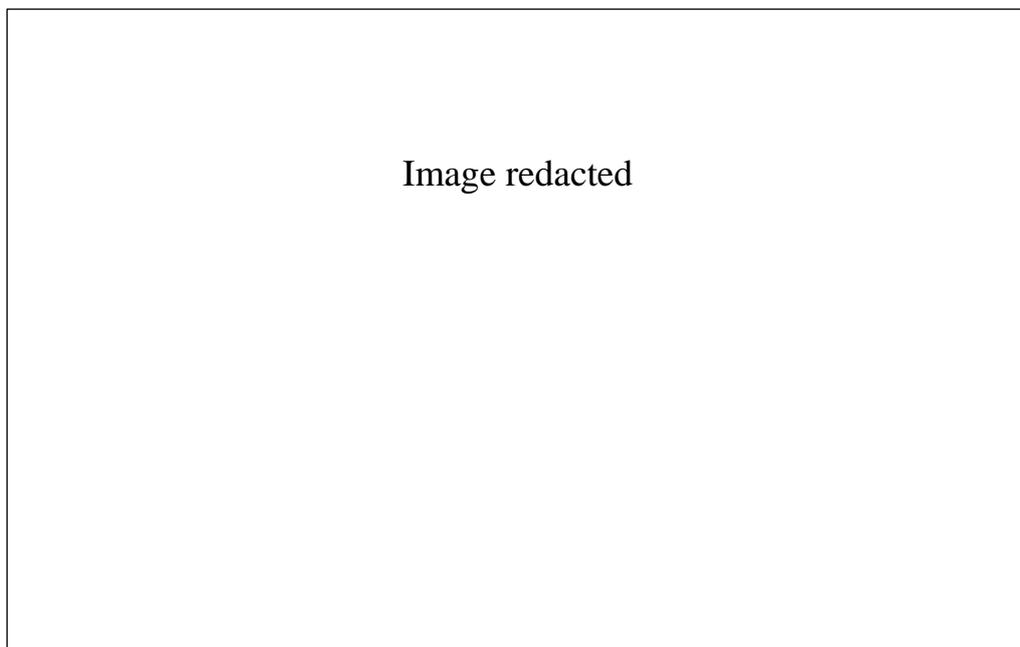
**(Figure 6.12) Poy, ‘Share the Burden’, *Evening News*, May 1915**

By 1916, in contrast, the war is beginning to be too much for Asquith, and he is seen dragged by a soldier suggesting, quite literally, that the war is running away with him. The soldier here is considerably larger than Asquith, and shrinking the Prime Minister serves to allocate derision towards him by both the artist and his viewers alike (figure 6.13).<sup>105</sup> Asquith is not specifically named in this image, but rather his situation is offered through the label on his hat indicating that he is a representative of the government as a whole. Public recognition of his face, however, would identify him personally for the viewing audience. It is not only the war and specifically the army that are related here, however, the artist also utilises another of his tools by labelling the ground that they are running over indicating the other features of society that Asquith no longer seems to have control of such as organisation, energy efficiency and effort. The pair runs in the direction of ‘victory in the end’ as indicated by the signpost

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<sup>105</sup> For the effects of size see, Lucie-Smith, *Art of Caricature*, p. 25.

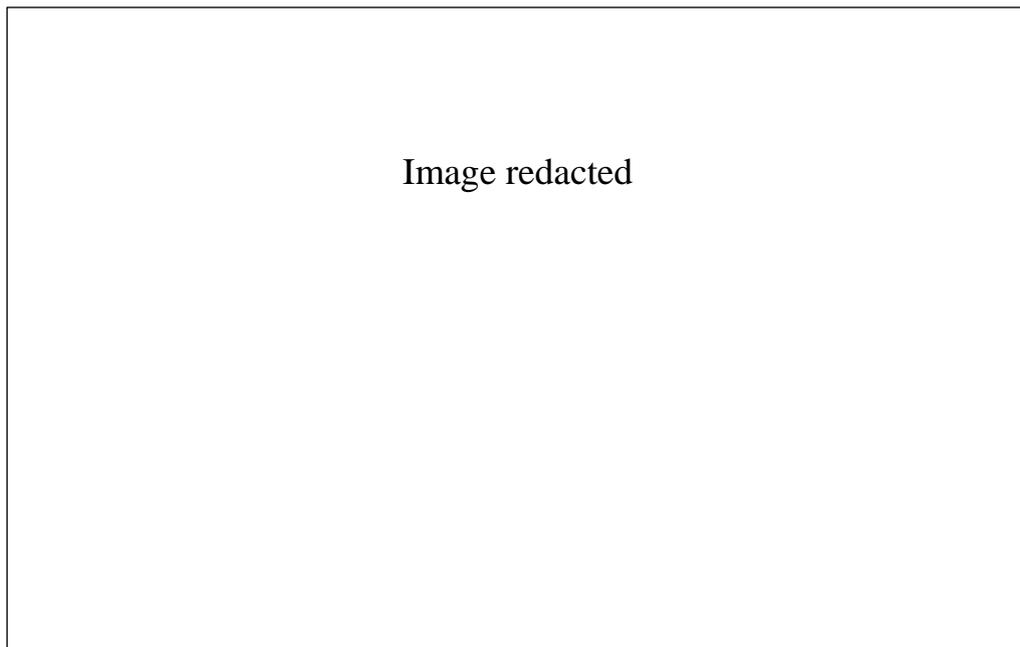
in the background, another common icon in cartoon. The sign is often used to invert perceptions of direction in cartoons, although with the British running towards it the sense of ultimate victory is still implied. Were this the Kaiser being dragged ‘to victory in the end’, the implication would be reversed for a British audience. Therefore, the implication here is that by January 1916 Asquith has shrunken in popularity, and appears to have lost some of his integrity as a politician to judge by the manner in which he no longer controls the situation he is placed in.



**(Figure 6.13) Poy, ‘So Hard to Keep Up With Him’, *Daily Mail*, January 1916**

By 1918, the public were fully aware of David Lloyd George having taken over as Prime Minister at the start of 1917. Reflecting on this through cartoon, Asquith had begun to shrink quite significantly, and the derision and mockery became heightened. Neither politician is named in ‘Some Cromwell’; however, their policies are identified through the text on Lloyd George’s sash, and Asquith’s feather in his hat (figure 6.14). There are clear distinctions between their political slogans of ‘Wait and See’ for

Asquith and his followers contrasting with the ‘Will to Win’ of the Liberals under Lloyd George. There are further implications of public views of these two politicians reflected in the angle at which they stand the manner in which they are dressed and, particularly for Asquith, in the mode in which he speaks. Lloyd George faces the audience directly with arms folded standing straight and tall in contemporary costume compared with Asquith dressed in Cromwellian flounces, shrunken in size with a stutter and turned away from both the audience and his adversary, which defies the image he is trying to create, and reinforces its failure.<sup>106</sup> Asquith is no longer a politician of significance, but is transformed into a diminutive fool, particularly in contrast with the respectable Lloyd George.



**(Figure 6.14) Poy, ‘Some Cromwell!’, *Daily Mail*, 1918**

Images such as this that blatantly utilise the disparate political slogans of the comparative leaders, help to reinforce what for some has become a sense of political

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<sup>106</sup> For discussion of the mapping of a face and its orientation through the direction of the eyes, see Gombrich, *Image and the Eye*, pp. 186-7.

discontinuity for the war.<sup>107</sup> In many ways, this is a myth that has resulted from the war, and alters remembered perceptions of it. Cartoons such as ‘Some Cromwell’ are able to reinforce the ideas behind the myths of discontinuity with total disregard for greater clarity. The war and attitudes towards it are embodied in the slogans with Lloyd George’s ‘Will to Win’ seeming a better representative of the public in wartime. Equally, Asquith’s ‘Wait and See’ implies a sense of futility reinforced by the 1960’s memoirs and developing historiography of the war.<sup>108</sup> Specific details are not needed when creating jokes for the wider public and as such, the sense of discontinuity can be happily reinforced when it is already relevant to the public for whom the cartoon image is being published.

Not only did cartoonists replicate aspects of high art as demonstrated in the first section of this chapter, they also replicated their own work or that of other cartoonists as well. Poy’s efforts have already been noted for his political cartooning, which makes it once again useful to call upon this artist when addressing how they could reuse their own work. Therefore, returning to depictions of Lloyd George in cartoon, at different times, he could be shown as a master of munitions, a bulldog guardian of national utilities, or merely as a man in the mirror appreciating his own value.<sup>109</sup> Small adaptations of the adjoining text can also be used to revise the purpose and intent of an image rapidly. One particular image of Lloyd George was used once in early 1915 and again in December 1916 as he became Prime Minister, but regardless of the context,

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<sup>107</sup> Grieves, *Politics of Manpower*, pp. 4-5; A J P Taylor, *British History 1914-45* (London: Pelican, 1970), p. 109.

<sup>108</sup> BBC, ‘The Great War: BBC Series’, (1964); Hanna, ‘Small Screen Alternative’, pp. 93-4; Terraine, *Great War*; Barnett, *The Great War*; Liddle Hart, *The Real War*.

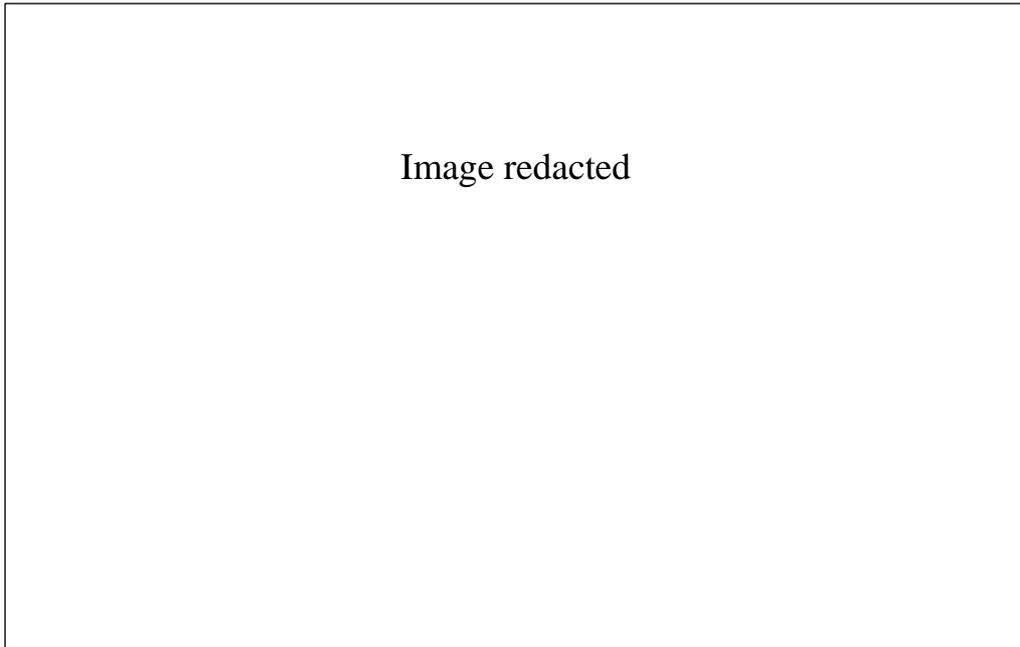
<sup>109</sup> Poy ‘The Watch on the Rhino’ *Evening News*, 1915; ‘”Turned” to Good Use’, *Evening News*, 11 March 1915; J. M. Staniforth ‘Oiling the Machine’ *Western Mail*, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1915.

the emphasis is clear that he believed himself the right man for the job (Figures 6.15 and 6.16).

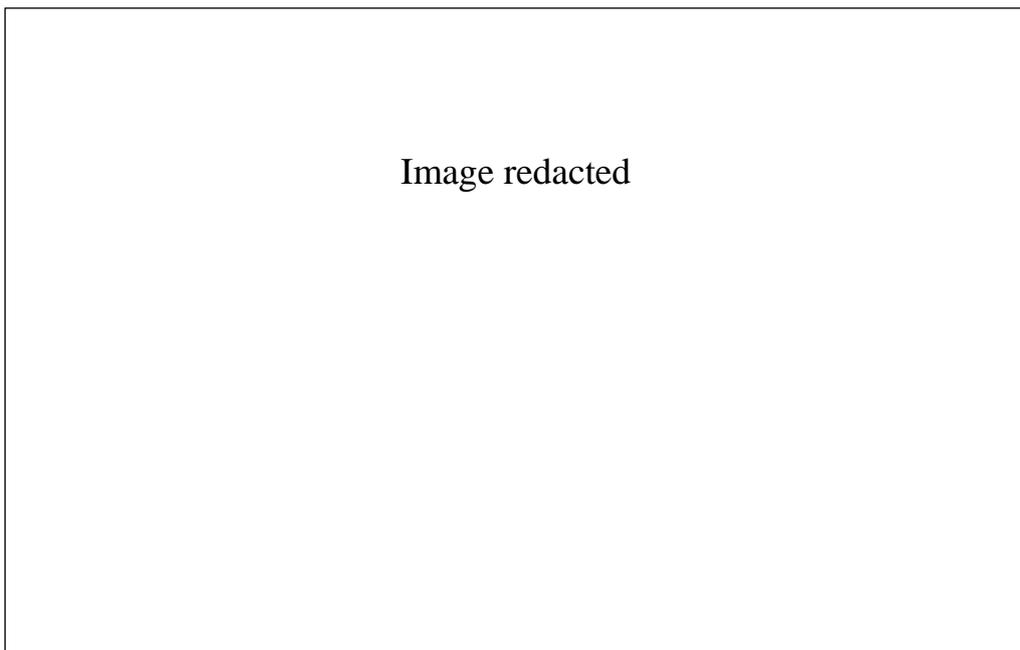
At times such as these, it is the captions and text encrypted within the image that aid the viewer's identification. Lloyd George's confident personality and attributes for the war are represented by looking at himself in the mirror and identifying the right man facing him. All narcissism aside, this could be seen as a positive and complimentary view of the Prime Minister. The use of Lloyd George in this manner and through cartoon replication suggests an element of comfort for the Prime Minister with the press. Comfort reinforced by his welcome acceptance and promotion of the Department (later Ministry) of Information.<sup>110</sup> That perceived narcissism is what in both images serves to create the humour in terms of using a superiority factor, in that Lloyd George always found himself to be the better man for the job highlighting his superiority over all others. Added to this is the incongruity of him being alone and the only person to realise his value visually in the mirror.

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<sup>110</sup> Griffiths, *Fleet Street*, p. 199.



**(Figure 6.15) Poy, 'The Push and Go Man', *Evening News*, 1915**



**(Figure 6.16) Poy, 'Found Him at Last', *Evening News*, 8<sup>th</sup> December 1916**

The undercurrent of narcissism in this cartoon suggests arrogance rather than confidence in Lloyd George, and he clearly keeps the ‘Chairman’ or ‘Premiership’ paperwork to hand. Despite that undercurrent though, it is clear that the same image holds validity once again for Lloyd George’s ability to step into a potential breach. As such, there is another suggestion of compliment, reinforced through the reuse of the image. Regular subscribers to these publications would have recognised the images and appreciated what is suggested about this politician. Moreover, appreciation of the recognised image can be seen when looking at the Poy collection at the BCA where the first image is fixed into the scrapbook while the second is not attached. The collector has located the second image alongside the first despite it being published more than a year later.<sup>111</sup> This indicates how the self-referential nature of the image has become clear to the collector as well.

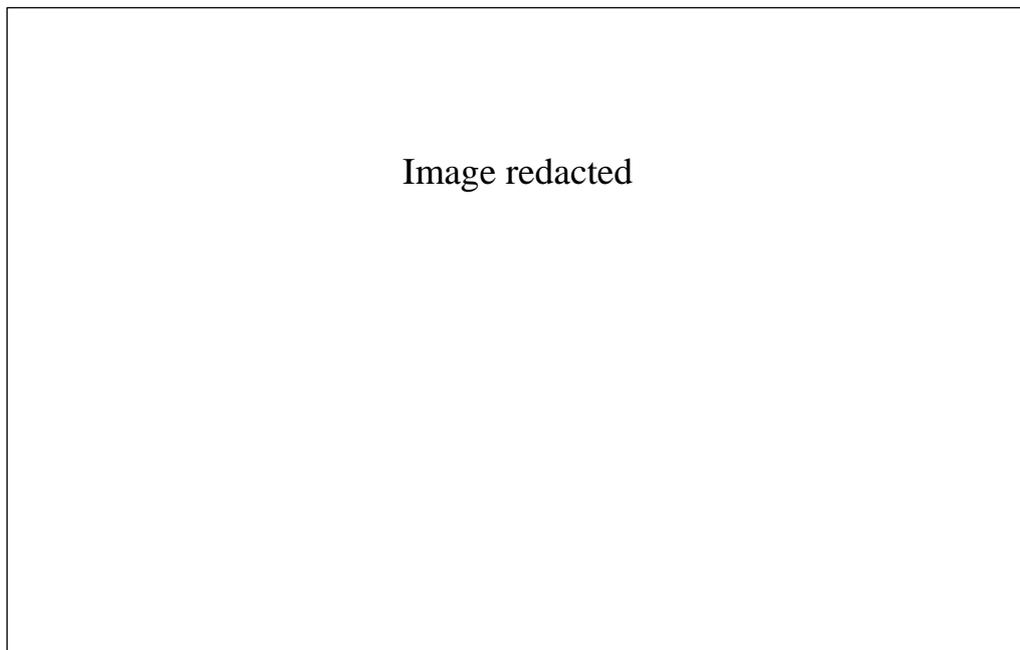
Cartoonists such as Poy and Bairnsfather both reproduced their own images with slight alterations as can be seen through the image of Lloyd George above, and will be noted in Bairnsfather’s ‘One of Our Minor Wars’ later. Otherwise, cartoonists were not averse to replicating other cartoonists’ work as well. Asquith’s depiction in ‘‘Arf ANOTHER Mo’ Kaiser’ makes many connections to Bert Thomas’ work whilst altering its meaning completely. Asquith stands in army fatigues smoking a pipe and calling for ‘more smoke’ and another moment (figure 6.17). Poy offers an apology to Thomas acknowledging that the concept and idea behind the image was originally his. However, the specifics are subtly altered. Politicians were exempt from enlistment, partially because of the work they did and to a degree linked to their comparative age.<sup>112</sup> Presenting a politician, and no less, the Prime Minister, as an average soldier

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<sup>111</sup> BCA, PF0001-0842, ‘*Poy*’ *Cartoon Scrap Books*, 1914-15.

<sup>112</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 25<sup>th</sup> April 1918, vol. 105 cc. 1135.

reduced his visual status for the audience; he is just another man in this image, and one who is not explicitly fighting at this moment of depiction. Furthermore, this cartoon appears in conjunction with the introduction of conscription, which also reinforces the negative appeal of Asquith at this time. An alternative reading could suggest that Asquith is just another soldier, fighting alongside the rest, but the stronger inferences in the image are of a negative representation.



**(Figure 6.17) Poy, “‘Arf Another mo’ Kaiser’, *Daily Mail*, 1916**

The image would have been readily accepted by the contemporary audience, as the original was in circulation as part of the *Weekly Dispatch*'s tobacco fund where every 6d spent could 'keep a hero happy' (figure 6.18).<sup>113</sup> It was a fantastically successful campaign raising over £250,000 throughout the war, and one that was seen positively by the public who contributed to the funds by buying tobacco. The image plays on the idea of a common soldier just calling for a small break of half a moment, enough to

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<sup>113</sup> Aulich, 'Advertising and the Public', p. 116.

smoke a pipe during the fighting, which could be seen as a perfectly reasonable request by audiences on the home front.

The traditional advertising jingle of “Arf a mo” is altered by Poy, making the audience consider its value further.<sup>114</sup> Asquith calls for ‘another’ moment and ‘more smoke’, in Poy’s cartoon, and these may be seen by contemporary audiences as him needing time to think and somewhere to hide as the war progresses around him. As such, the audience could have been encouraged to take on a sense of mistrust for the Prime Minister that comes through the wording, yet at the same time it is dissipated somewhat by the value of the recognised image and slogan.<sup>115</sup> Nonetheless, the memory of the image that had been continuously sold to the public would have been reinforced, along with its implications for the contemporary audience. For many, any soldier in that position was deserving of the momentary break, yet for the Prime Minister, he had other obligations for the running of a nation at war.

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<sup>114</sup> Barden, *Decoded*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

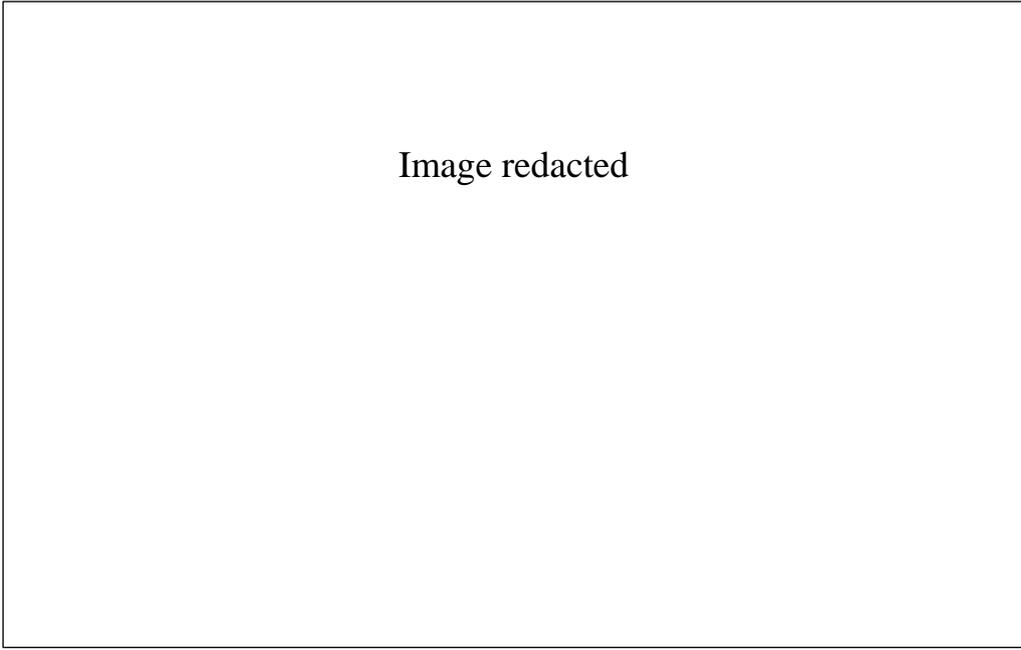


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**(Figure 6.18) Bert Thomas, “Arf a mo’ Kaiser’, *Weekly Dispatch*, November 1914**

### Post-War Memories

So far, this chapter has demonstrated cartoon and caricature groundings through the Victorian period, and humorous adaption to suit the time or events that society faced all of which combine aspects of memory from times before. War made humour more relevant to society as a whole, changing the direction of ‘them’ and ‘us’ and who was being laughed at, how and why, whilst maintaining the predominant three uses of humour.<sup>116</sup> Hilarity changes further as the war is left behind and the rest of the century moves on, it evolves out of Victorian influences, through two world wars, and further

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<sup>116</sup> Le Naour, ‘Laughter and Tears’, p. 266; Pierre Purseigle, ‘Mirroring Societies at War: Pictorial Humour in the British and French Popular Press during the First World War’, *JES*, 31 (2001), p. 288.

into the modern age. The laughter and silliness for correction of the Victorians is adapted into greater use of humour for relief or justification in conflict.

Following this, aspects of nostalgia and recollection draw greater humour from cartoons moving on, and particularly as things are misremembered. The professional memories of the cartoonists that reuse icons to develop audience understanding have been seen. Added to this, new memories are gained as time passes, and interpretations of humour are adapted.<sup>117</sup> Cartoons are seen in different ways to their original intention in light of new developments and as such these need to be readdressed. Often interpretations can be linked to myths surrounding the war, and jokes made out of false recollections. Alternatively, newer perceptions are applied to the material completely changing the context of the humour provided. Nonetheless, throughout all of these developments, much of the original humour sold to the public through the images is maintained as a commercial memory.

Memories of humour continue to relieve tensions beyond the specific catalyst of their creation. However, it is this chapter's contention, that cartoons are a commercial sale of memory before the memory is even created. Cartoons are ephemeral, yet so many were stored and saved for posterity, and indeed, for the humour they provided. Newspapers even sold named scrapbooks for the collation of potential cartoons and news articles as demonstrated by the early collections of Poy's images held in the BCA (figure 6.19). That said, however, there is no record of sale, so that collector may have purposefully embossed the file for themselves, nonetheless, their purpose for its use remains clear.

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<sup>117</sup> Holman and Kelly, 'Introduction, War in the Twentieth Century', p. 247.

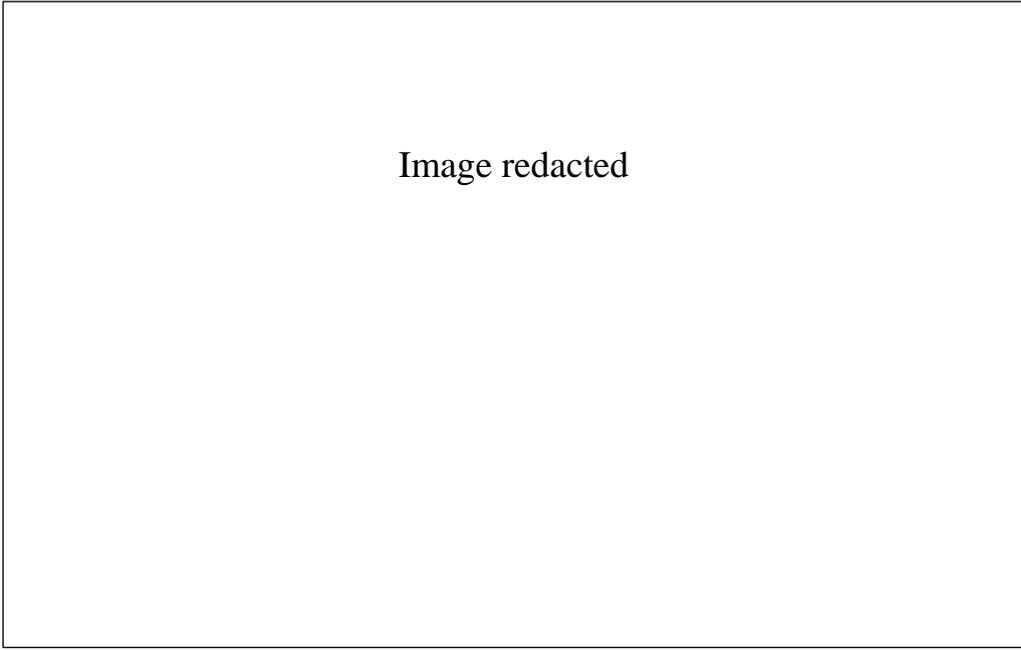


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**(Figure 6.19) *Evening News*, War Cartoons Scrapbook, 1914-15**

In their own right, cartoons offer the visual essence of a moment; many are designed for a purpose, be that criticism of another, or for social entertainment, but either way, there is generally an element of humour within them.<sup>118</sup> Humour is a feature which, when united with visual aspects, can also link into the memory of that moment being illustrated as emotions can often be seen to rationalise or validate memories.<sup>119</sup> Humour, as an emotion, therefore, represents a form of remembrance just as well as the cartoon. One must remain aware of the potential problems that exist with memory as outlined by Daniel Schacter when he discusses transient memory that diminishes with the passage of time. Memories that are misattributed or modern biases that alter remembered details can change the perceived validity of that memory.<sup>120</sup> Nonetheless, with the visual emphasis of cartoons, as much as personal memories are distorted, the

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<sup>118</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>119</sup> De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion*, p. 27.

<sup>120</sup> Daniel Schacter, Joan Chiao and Jason Mitchell, 'The Seven Sins of Memory: Implications for Self', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1001:1 (2003), p. 228.

physical object will remain as it was originally sold. The remembrance obtained from a cartoon, will always be a personal one, and as such, the element of distortion becomes less relevant.<sup>121</sup> That said, some features would offer more collective memories for larger groups as will be discussed through the Bairnsfather image below. The commercial memory of the product will remain, albeit remodelled, with time and context.

Humour is created through ideas of relief, superiority and incongruity which remains true of the cartoon images assessed here. Traditionally, the latter involves one difference to provide the humour, where a surprise of sorts breaks from the recognised.<sup>122</sup> In cartoons, different people can see many differences, at the same time building the layers of humour applied to images. James Williams, in the keynote speaker at a conference about humour reflected that a single diversion to create incongruity is more often, not, what actually happens, but that incongruity can be provided by crossovers in several directions.<sup>123</sup> Much of this work contrasts traditional philosophical views of humour outlined by John Morreall and Simon Critchley of a single divertive element that appears out of place. Williams established his ideas of multiple incongruity through a more film-oriented study by Gilles Deleuze.<sup>124</sup> Deleuze allows for more crossovers to create the humour embodied in film. For him a single image can present endless humorous diversions providing ‘unbound variety’.<sup>125</sup>

When looking to the history of how cartoons develop over time, multiplied crossovers that provide different forms of humour to different individuals can be seen

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<sup>121</sup> Susan Crane, ‘Memory, Distortion and History in the Museum’, *History and Theory*, 36:4, (1997), p. 60.

<sup>122</sup> De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion*, p. 297.

<sup>123</sup> Williams, ‘Keynote: Jolt, Flash, Tinge, and Oose’.

<sup>124</sup> Morreall, *Philosophy of Laughter*; Deleuze, *Cinema*.

<sup>125</sup> Deleuze, *Cinema*, p. 85.

through the multitude of interpretations that can be placed upon a single image. New viewers apply new interpretations, but the memory of the original remains, and incongruity is layered through these interpretations. The sources thus, become historicised through new interpretations offering a much wider reading and explanation, which gives them a stronger position as valid sources for the comprehension of the war as a whole.<sup>126</sup>

As has been seen through reused Victorian images above, this was, and is a particularly common factor when looking at cartoons. To borrow and reuse ideas is generally a compliment rather than an aspect of plagiarism, although this requisitioning can become so divergent from the original that the meaning of the original is altered too vastly.<sup>127</sup> Many images were reused during the war, and often by the same artist before others started to borrow them. Bairnsfather, for one, consistently reused ideas and images. His characters were consistently returned to, and especially Old Bill, who in time became synonymous with the artist himself. Between wars, and into the Second World War, Bairnsfather wrote articles for newspapers and magazines that he would sign 'Old Bill', removing himself from the ideas expressed there.<sup>128</sup> As perhaps his most well-known image, 'The Better 'Ole' is also the most reused, and initially by the artist himself (Figure 6.21). He reproduced this cartoon several times throughout the war, and indeed turned it into a play in 1917 with Arthur

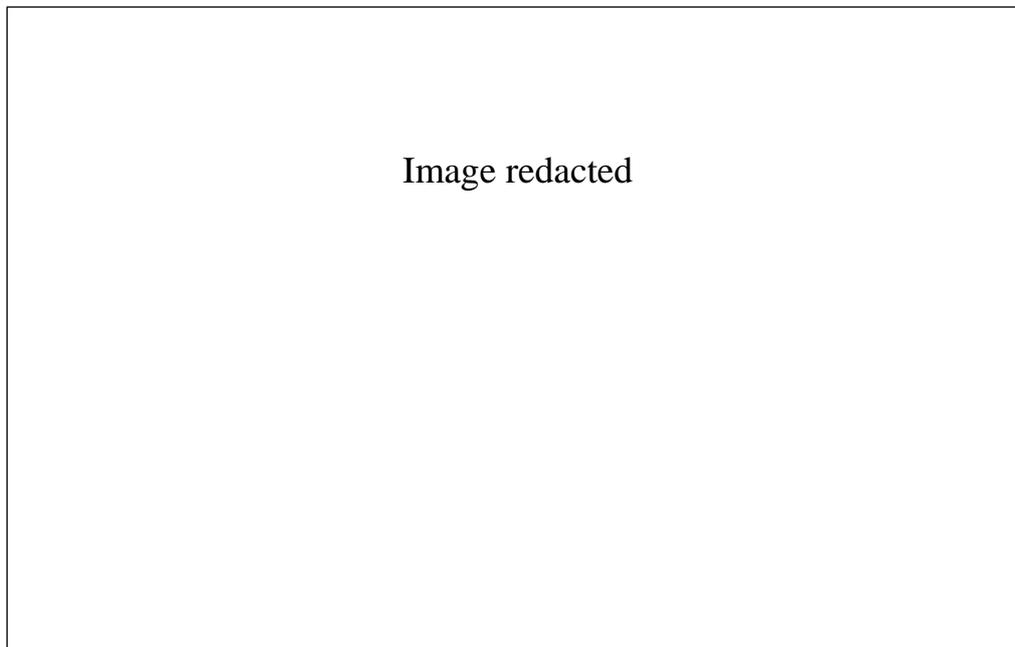
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<sup>126</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 9.

<sup>127</sup> For problems with this aspect of reuse and requisitioning, see, Steerpike, 'Wallace and Gromit Creator not Happy about Ed Miliband Cartoons', *Spectator*, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

<sup>128</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 95, 118, 195.

Elliot.<sup>129</sup> Further to this, it became a British film in 1918, although it no longer exists, and in 1926 was adapted again into an American movie starring Syd Chaplin.<sup>130</sup>



**(Figure 6.21) Bruce Bairnsfather, ‘One of Our Minor Wars’, *Bystander*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 1915**

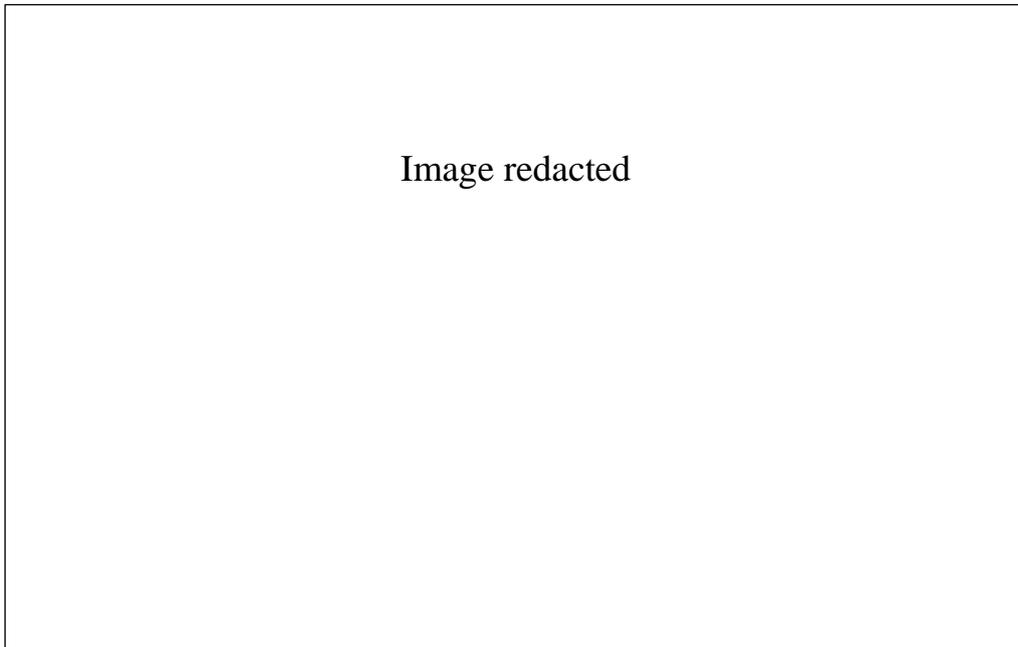
Each reproduction alters the content marginally, exchanging the original Tommies in the hole with, for example, British and American soldiers. This came as a response to Bairnsfather being called out to meet American troops and having found them all to be ‘jolly good men’.<sup>131</sup> Thus, he offered the same image with less background and set closer to the viewer; Old Bill remains to the right and an American soldier takes up position on the left. They have no rifle as it is replaced with a bottle in the mud, but it

<sup>129</sup> For more details of this play, see chapter 2, Cartoons into Theatre; Bairnsfather and Elliot, *The Better ‘Ole*.

<sup>130</sup> See BFI, *The Better ‘Ole, Or, The Romance of Old Bill* (1918) < <http://www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b6a5c5857> > [Accessed from January 2016]; BFI, *The Better ‘Ole* (1926) < <http://www.bfi.org.uk/films-tv-people/4ce2b6a5c5e29> > [Accessed from January 2016].

<sup>131</sup> Holt, *Best of Fragments from France*, p. 132.

is made clear that they are ‘both in the same ‘ole now!’<sup>132</sup> Further to this, Bairnsfather offers several other images of a similar motif including the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘Point of View’ from 1918 in volumes of *Fragments from France*. In each of these, soldiers of different nationalities join Old Bill or other soldiers in the hole and share a cigarette or a mere rolling of the eyes to suit the situation while things continue to explode in the background (figures 6.22 and 6.23).



**(Figures 6.22) Bairnsfather, ‘Anglo-Saxon’, *Fragments from France*, 1918**

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

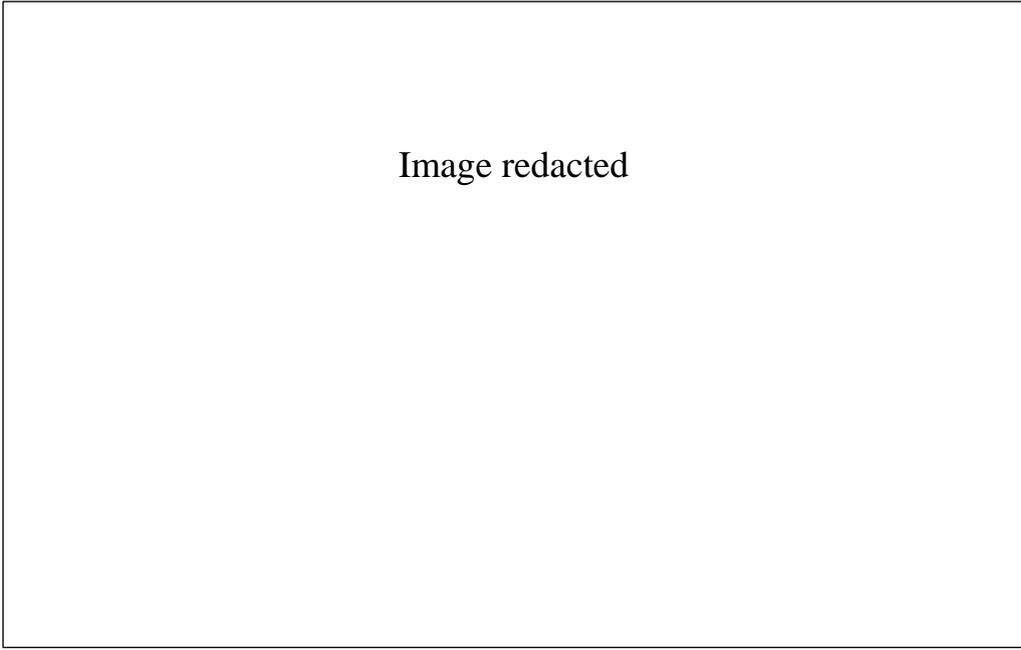
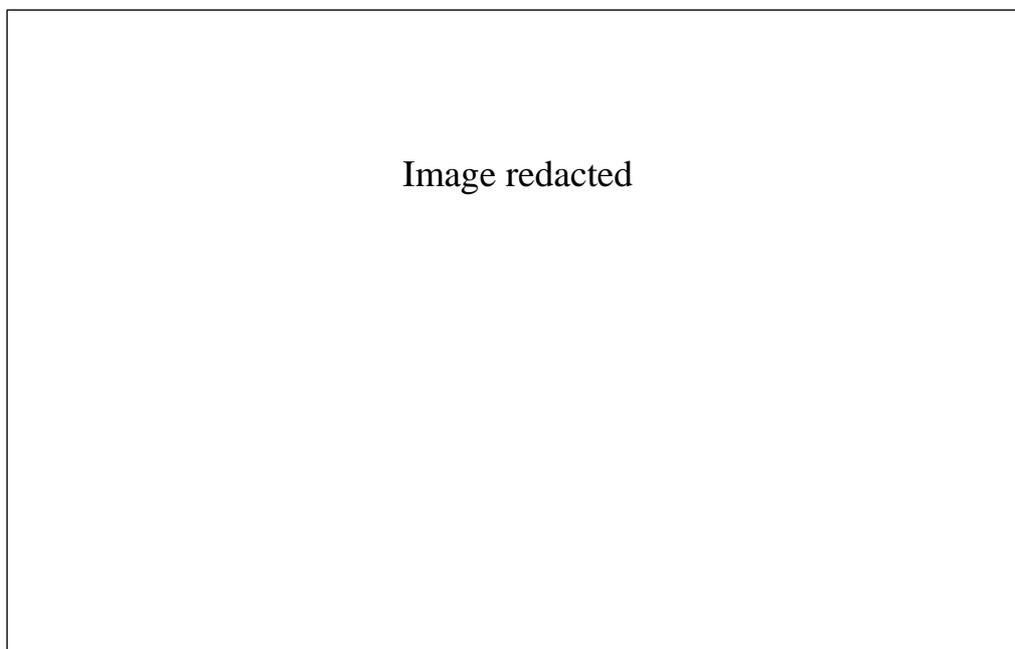


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**(Figures 6.23) Bairnsfather, 'The Point of View', *Fragments from France*,  
1918**

Within these images, there is a consistency of style and content. It is clear that the same artist creates them all, even when the implication behind the image is altered. There are always two men in the hole, and there are clear explosions in the background continuing the self-referential memory of the original. Old Bill is generally featured, although not always, and the mood of the image and emotion depicted within them are all present resignation. Bill maintains his gruff sense of everything being alright, and his ability to do what needs to be done, while other characters that join him are either more fearful of the situation (figure 6.22), or appear arrogant dependant on the impression he is trying to present of them (figure 6.23). Nonetheless, the personality of Old Bill remains true to its original, a feature that for many would have been carried away from the cartoon as its upholding memory. They are not in a good place, but there are certainly worse situations around them.

During the war, other artists replicated the ideas of ‘The Better ‘Ole’, or adapted them to suit their own purposes. Poy shows Cuthbert and his family in their underground ‘funk hole’ while a farmer on the surface combs the land for recruits (figure 6.24). There are many ideas at play in this image, firstly Cuthbert as the innate coward that he came to represent, and his family are located in beds labelled ‘Whitehall’ and the ‘Civil Service’.<sup>133</sup> This in turn identifies criticism of the government who have managed to escape enlistment. There is also the recollection of conscription imposed on the public despite many political authorities having an aversion to taking up that call anticipating compulsion to ‘have the opposite effect’.<sup>134</sup>



**(Figure 6.24) Poy, ‘Do You Know of a Better ‘Ole?’, *Evening News*, 1917**

As the twentieth century progressed, ‘The Better ‘Ole’ became a staple design utilised by many artists who each alternated the location of the hole or the people in

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<sup>133</sup> For more detail on these characters, see chapter 3, Pacifists and Cowards.

<sup>134</sup> House of Commons, Hansard, HC Deb, 21<sup>st</sup> December 1915, vol. 5:77, cc. 222-225.

it.<sup>135</sup> The ‘ole’ became part of the cartoonist’s armoury, providing a war related situation that was easily recognised. As such, it became a professional memory, where cartoonists who knew of the original, would reuse it to suit their own purposes. Artists included well-known names such as David Low, Joseph Lee and Sydney Strube through to Nicholas Garland, Dave Brown and Martin Rawson. The ‘ole was placed on the moon by Leslie Illingworth in 1967 (figure 6.25), converted into a pole with bears and has contained political figures from Max Beaverbrook and Nevil Chamberlain through to Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan (figure 6.26).

With an image such as this, there is a sense of the commercial memory being reformulated consistently by every new use of the motif idea. An ongoing memory is clear within the idea of having (or not having more often) a better hole or place to go that it is reused time and again. However, every new image that utilises the idea recreates the memory for a new audience and with a new purpose. In terms of the Great War, often memories are seen to be reshaped and remodelled in a slightly different fashion, which has been commented upon in terms of the myth building that has surrounded the media of war and its representation of ‘war experience’.<sup>136</sup> In contrast, with the commercial memory that is created through cartoons, it is completely redesigned whilst still maintaining its original content and memory, albeit for a different purpose.

It is clear when ‘The Better ‘Ole’ is located on the moon, that the situation of war is no longer directly relevant visually to the image or its humour. Even so, there was discussion in 1967 of there being no armaments put in space, yet the equipment

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<sup>135</sup> Additionally see Holt, *Best of Fragments from France*, pp. 155-9.

<sup>136</sup> Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, p. 7; also see Hayward, *Myths and Legends*; Todman, *Great War: Myth and Memory*.

depicted by Illingworth represents the Surveyor 3, which was a space probe, and armament in its own right, suggesting that war was moving to the moon as well. As such, war myths are reshaped around the ideas presented (figure 6.25). Yet at the same time, there is a remembered sense of more traditional conflict; there is recollection of the resignation imbued within the concept of not having a better place to go to, and to a degree, reminiscences are maintained of being stranded. When on the moon there is nowhere else to go, and so the idea of not having a better hole to go to is enforced. Mosse might suggest that the cartoon along with other social media trivialise the war experience, and as such, this makes the memory of war experience less valid. Yet the war memory is no longer explicitly relevant here, and is only implied in such a way that the newer commercial memory becomes a better focus.<sup>137</sup> That is to say, the sale of the image, and the comfort of it embodying something that can be recalled holds greater significance than any earlier memory it might overrule.

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<sup>137</sup> Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, pp. 219-20.

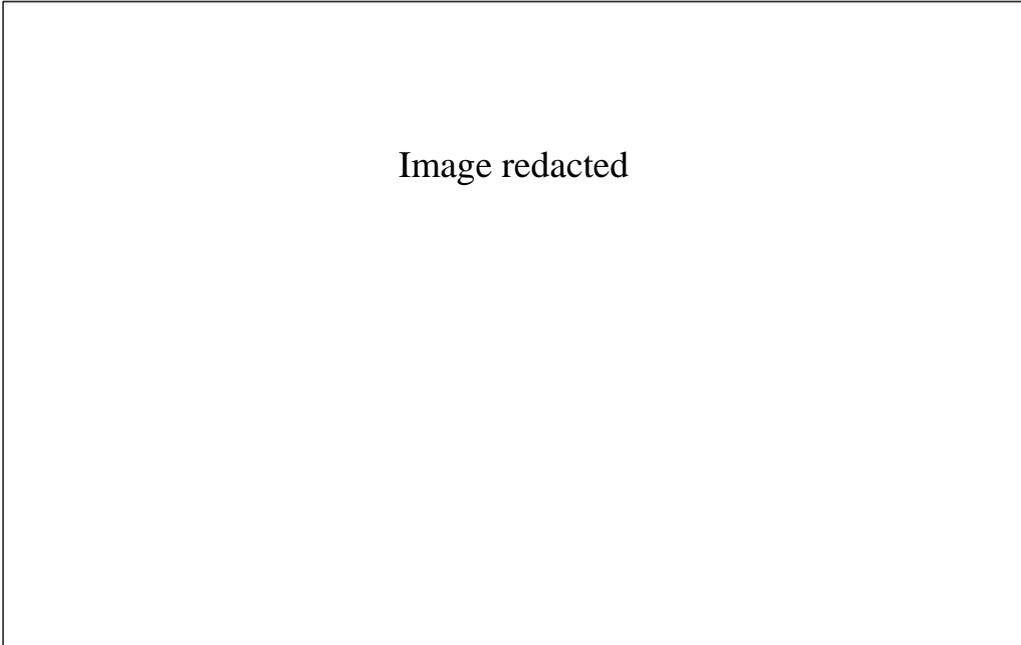


Image redacted

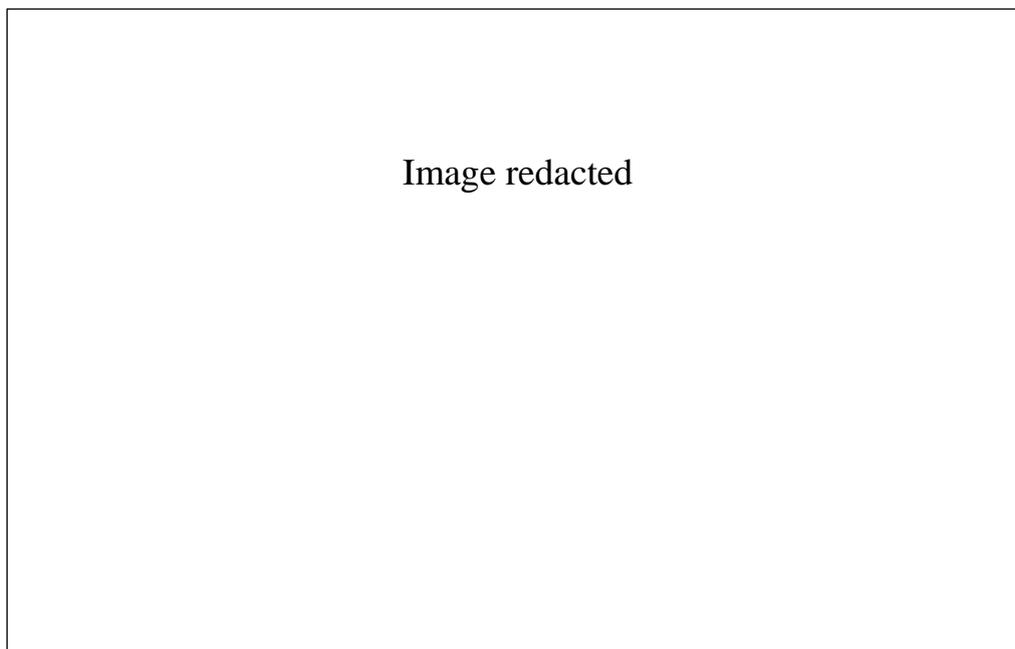
**(Figure 6.25) Leslie Illingworth, ‘U. S. Moon Party’, *Daily Mail*, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1967**

When war is still explicitly implied, for example, in Peter Brookes’ 1984 version, it is clear that this is a different war. The personalities placed into the hole are no longer those of First World War Tommies, but rather are Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. In this, even though they appear to have been placed within the context of the First World War, there is little sense that they could actually be there (figure 6.26). Their dress, style and manner do not match with the Old Contemptable style of resilience, and there is a sense that they potentially would not have coped as well at that time reflected in their costumes.<sup>138</sup> The background is specifically stark and unidentifiable serving to suggest simply that they are not in the right place. This creates the incongruity of humour for the situation, in that anywhere else might be better for them. The better hole for them may well have been the First World War as opposed to

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<sup>138</sup> Neillands, *Old Contemptibles*, p. 7.

that of the Lebanon Mountain War in which they are located, but again this is not explicitly stated, but rather is left for the viewer to complete in their own way.<sup>139</sup>



**(Figure 6.26) Peter Brookes, ‘Well, If You Knows of a Better ‘ole, Go To It!’,  
*The Times*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1984**

The layering of humour in cartoons can be seen more directly through images presented with accompanying text or slogans, particularly ones that are then developed with the addition or re-use of similar themes and images in subsequent years. Most cartoons are seen to be ephemeral and temporary, yet images such as ‘The Better ‘Ole’ have had far greater influence on society than might initially be realised. Bairnsfather’s instant success in 1915 resulted in many collection publications of *Fragments from France*, as well as biographical and autobiographical works that all included his sketches.<sup>140</sup> Further to the additional cartoon books, throughout the 1920s and 30s vast

<sup>139</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 29-33.

<sup>140</sup> See Bairnsfather, *Bullets and Billets*; Bairnsfather, *Fragments from France*; Bairnsfather, *Mud to Mufti*; Vivian Carter *Bairnsfather: A Few Fragments from his Life Collected by a Friend* (London, Toronto and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1917); W. A Mutch, *The Bairnsfather Case as Tried*

amounts of crockery with cartoons on were also made to offer further publicity accompanied by Old Bill toys, car hood ornaments and playing cards (figures 6.27 and 6.28).<sup>141</sup> A remarkable amount of crockery is still in service today, or is held by museums and collectors alike. Catalogues of sale prices for these items from the 1920s indicate many different prices making them available to everyone ranging from a few pennies up to 24 shillings for larger collections.<sup>142</sup> All of these plates and sundry sported a Bairnsfather signature and statements of being ‘A Souvenir of the Great War’ on the back reinforcing the sense of longevity and remembrance imbued within the items. Entitling these products ‘souvenirs’ instantly suggested another layer of the commercial memory being sold to the public; these were to be purchased and kept as reminders.

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*before Mr. Justice Busby* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam, 1920); Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*; Holt, *Best Fragments from France*.

<sup>141</sup> IWM, EPH 9426, Louis Lejeune, ‘Mascot Vehicle, ‘Old Bill’’, [c. 1918], n.d; IWM, EPH 4378, Chas Goodhall & Son, ‘British Bystander Playing Cards’, [1915-18], n.d; IWM, EPH 2922, Unknown, ‘Bruce Bairnsfather Playing Cards’, [1915-18], n.d.

<sup>142</sup> See Mark Warby, ‘Grimwades Bairnsfather Ware’, *Bruce Bairnsfather* < [http://www.brucebairnsfather.org.uk/index\\_files/page0006.htm](http://www.brucebairnsfather.org.uk/index_files/page0006.htm) > [Accessed from February 2012].

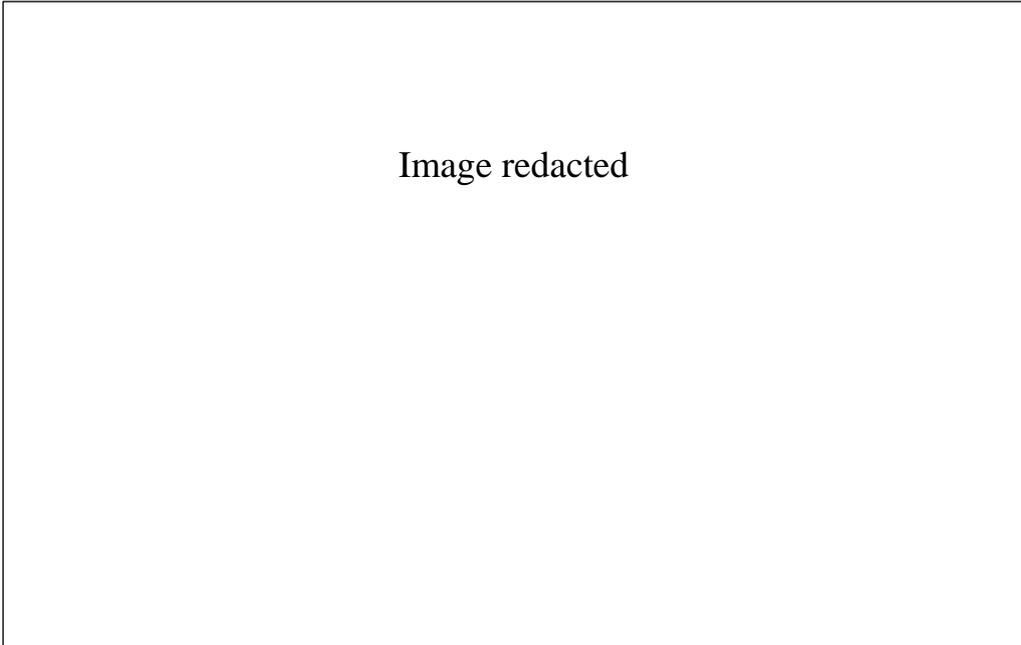


Image redacted

**(Figure 6.27) Grimwade, 'A Souvenir of the Great War', 1919**

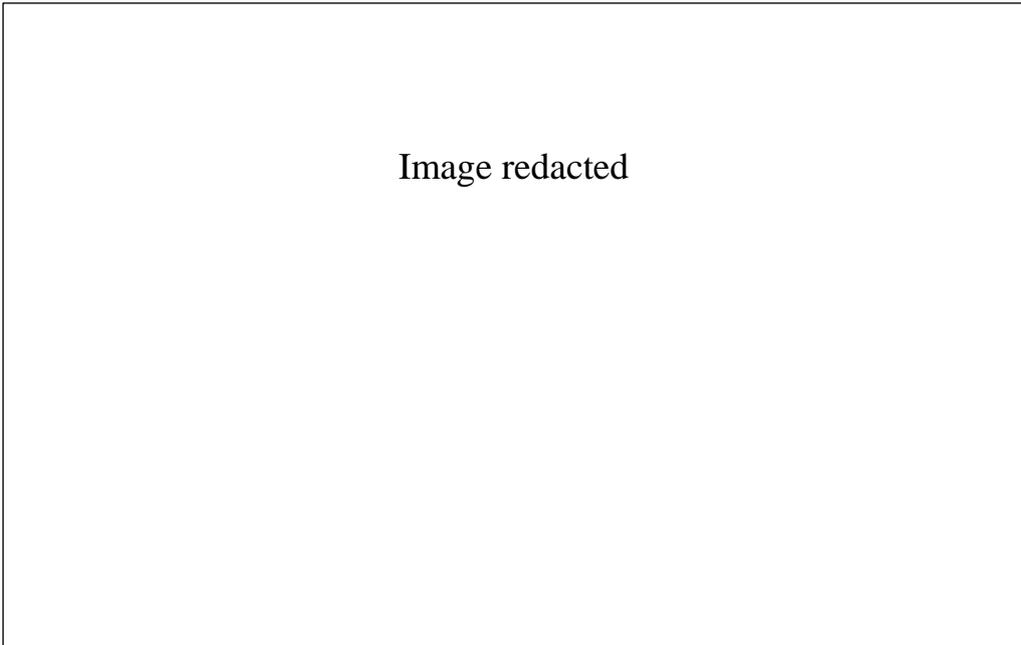


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**(Figure 6.28) Louis Lejeune, 'Mascot Vehicle, 'Old Bill'', Imperial War  
Museum n.d., [c. 1918]**

The 'souvenirs' were designed to be collected and preserved for posterity, potentially for a lifetime and beyond. In many ways the crockery, be it a pot, plate or bowl, was a piece of the war to maintain. Souvenirs like this, have the semblance of commemoration within them automatically, they were things specifically designed to be saved and remembered. To a degree, this is similar to so much of the memorabilia found on the battlefield that was sold to tourists, although where that may otherwise have been seen as junk, these products were specifically designed for the commerce of sale and recollection.<sup>143</sup> Not only is the item to be kept, but the visual content suggests a wider memory of the war and of soldiers who were everywhere. Bairnsfather's cartoons depicted real people in real places despite so many of them being unnamed, and these particularly appealed to the public at home with a sense of empirical certainty.<sup>144</sup> Added to this, the crockery was advertised within Bairnsfather's publications, after the owner of Grimwades negotiated a deal with him and the *Bystander*, which also advertised them further reinforcing the establishment of a commercial memory for the war.<sup>145</sup>

Through the purchase of these commercialised souvenirs, every viewer was able to imagine his or her own father, son, brother or husband in that position, remembered fondly. Many of these images also offer a collective sense of memory, as all members of the public were able to situate their own friend or family member within them. This may seem to be an individual form of memory, but as all of the public were collectively doing the same thing, it then becomes a collective memory for the majority.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Saunders and Cornish, *Contested Objects*.

<sup>144</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 5.

<sup>145</sup> Warby, 'Grimwades'.

<sup>146</sup> Winter, *Sites of Memory*, p. 79; Alon Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *American Historical Review*, 102:5 (1997), pp. 1386-1403; Annette Becker, 'Memory Gaps: Maurice Halbwachs, Memory and the Great War', *JES*, 35 (2005), pp. 102-13.

Collective memories for larger groups when related to monuments are often seen in much the same way. Every individual has their own personal link to the monument or the things that they individually remember when they see it, but collectively all people see something in the image or monument.<sup>147</sup> Similarly, with cartoons, certain images and motifs serve as reminders for all viewers.

The lasting impact of humour in a time of war is often evaluated today through monuments, and literature designed for commemoration. With cartoons, these were not explicitly designed to last and continue understanding and recollection for the period. Yet so many have been kept, even during the war, and their ongoing impact is thereby implied. During the Victorian period, Ally Sloper was believed to be ‘real’, and in the same manner, Old Bill’s perceived ‘reality’ must be noted.<sup>148</sup> Old Bill was used throughout the war as means of morale boosting for many allied nations. Following the war, this resemblance continued, and he was even transformed into a wax work character at Madame Tussaud’s entitled, ‘The Man Who Won the War’ (Figure 6.29). Within the exhibition catalogue, the waxwork is described as being ‘A tribute to countless obscure heroes of the trenches who “stuck it out.”’ There is a sense with this example that certainly by 1930, many soldiers were lost but not forgotten. The waxwork served to represent so many ‘heroes’ who cheerfully ‘joked in the face of death’ and sang their way to victory as the characters in the play and cartoons do.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> See Antoine Prost, ‘Monuments to the Dead’, in Lawrence D. Kritzman, *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 307-30.

<sup>148</sup> See 5, Victorian and Edwardian Humour; Bailey, ‘Ally Sloper’s Half Holiday’, p. 4.

<sup>149</sup> Madame Tussaud’s, *Official Guide and Catalogue*, (London: Tussaud & Son, 1932).

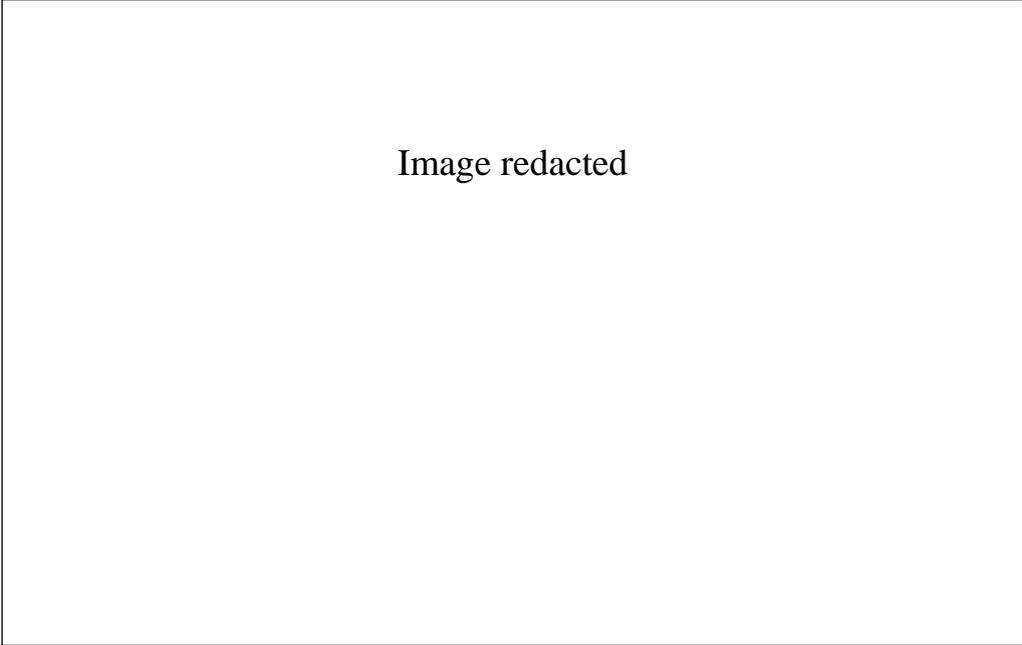
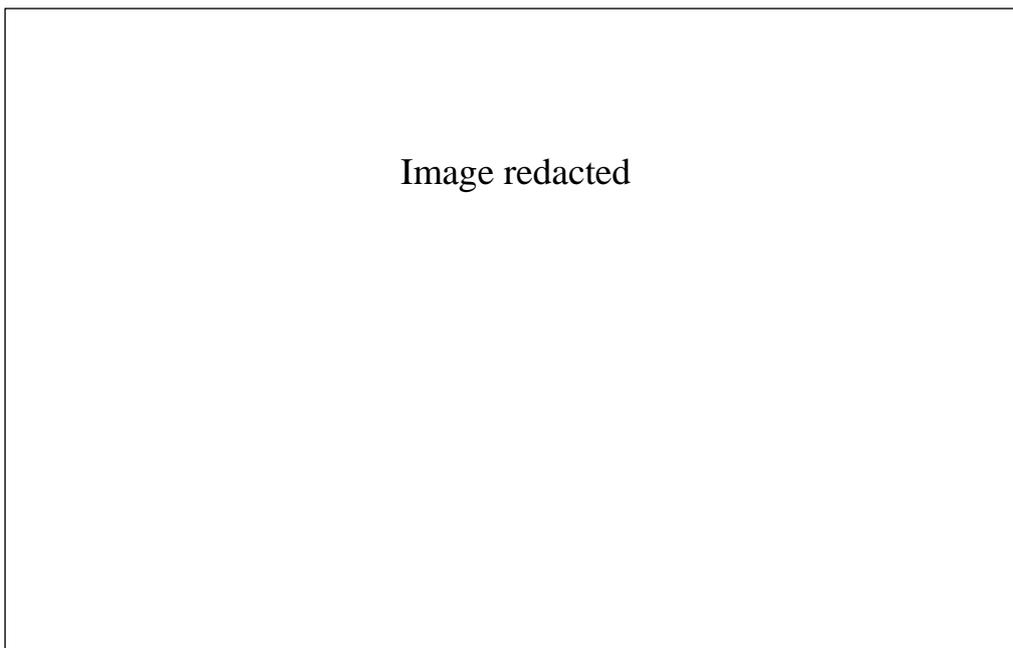


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**(Figure 6.29) Madame Tussaud's, 'The Man Who Won the War', 1932**

Old Bill's lasting influence can be seen located in Ypres, Belgium, where there is still a pub named for the character at which many 'war tourists' gather before visiting sites and monuments. The public house is located in the near vicinity of the Menin Gate where commemorations are held every evening. Its simple existence represents a deeper international influence for Bairnsfather and his characters on those who seek to remember the war. Furthermore, it is accepted, as a lasting memory and representation of what the war was through the character of Old Bill.



**(Figure 6.30) 'The Old Bill Pub', Ypres, 2015**

Some question of the transience of memory needs to be considered, as many elements will not remain precisely as they were. Constant reuse of similar images as has been shown, can alter the manner in which they are remembered, and this naturally falls in line with Schacter's concessions for memory when things are not recalled in the full detail that they might have originally been displayed.<sup>150</sup> Transience for Schacter may be more of a personal feature of memory, but in collective terms, the things that people forget can be magnified dependent on the relevance seen within them. However, this transience and adaptive nature in cartoons, will often add to the layers of humour that they personify, building upon the original even though some elements of it may in turn be negated. New memories are sold to the public every time a cartoon image is reused, and as such, there is far less problem with transience for the original memory, as new memories are sold combined with the original.

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<sup>150</sup> Schacter, Chiao, and Mitchell, 'The Seven Sins of Memory', pp. 227-8.

Bairnsfather's cartoons are still looked at today with a mind to representing more of the 'truth' of trench warfare, and what has come to be recognised as war humour and resilience. They are seen to have some element of accuracy in the face of developing knowledge that the public have in relation to front line battles, and as such, the visions offered by Bairnsfather are seen to have more truth and integrity about them.<sup>151</sup> This understanding of the images was established during the war, and continues to be the way in which Bairnsfather's cartoons are still seen today, regardless of the futility element that was absorbed into Great War memories through the 1960s.<sup>152</sup> The 'truth' of them corresponds with the elements of memory that they offer. If that is how it actually was, then as such, that is how it ought to be remembered, and in many ways this is easier to see that the perceived truth of much of the propaganda of the time.<sup>153</sup> It is reported that there were those who loved and those who despised his work, particularly among the military, but generally, they were appreciative of his abilities, and merely complained about his particular choice of content at a time when other ideas were trying to be promoted by the army itself.<sup>154</sup> For some, Bairnsfather's art has become more obscured as the century wore on, yet at the same time, it has remained consistently available and steadily reproduced as an understood medium within the cartoonist community.

Memory was, however, prevalent during and directly after the war as has been noted by a vast historiography, and the 'memory boom' can also be seen to follow in cartoons.<sup>155</sup> Bairnsfather's 'Once Upon a Time' from 1918 particularly highlights this

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<sup>151</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 37; Stanley, *How Propaganda Works*, p. 189; Timothy Williamson, *Knowledge and its Limits* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

<sup>152</sup> See Terraine, *Great War*; Barnett, *Great War*; Liddle Hart, *The Real War*; Marwick, *Deluge*; Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; BBC, 'The Great War: BBC Series' (1964); Hanna, 'Small Screen Alternative', pp. 93-4.

<sup>153</sup> Badsey, *British Army in Battle*, pp. 163-83.

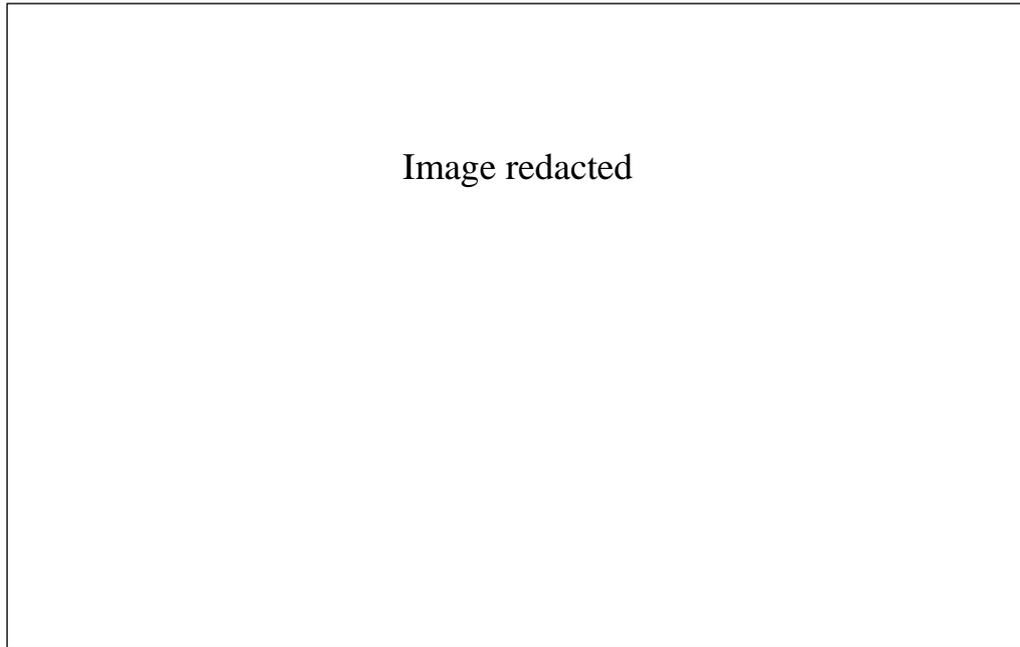
<sup>154</sup> Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, pp. 50, 65.

<sup>155</sup> Winter, 'Memory Boom', pp. 52-66.

desire and almost a need for memory as he is seated after the war in an armchair with a cup of tea and memories also depicted next to him of time in the trenches (Figure 6.31). The humour is maintained through the memories that Bill has and are depicted, but at the same time, these are provided with more pathos, and almost sadness. Where he might once have been at risk in the trench, there remains a distanced vulnerability about the character seated in the chair, which would be reflected in so many returned soldiers.<sup>156</sup> Bill rarely smiles throughout the war, but more commonly appears a curmudgeon, and this feature is maintained. He is seated alone, without anyone to roll his eyes at in his living room, which alters the emphasis behind the image. It is clear through this that both the humour of Old Bill is altered, and likewise the memory of war. It is not all looked back upon with happy memories, but continues to be seen with resignation and resilience.

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<sup>156</sup> Gosling, *Brushes and Bayonets*, p. 189.



**(Figure 6.31) Bruce Bairnsfather, 'Once Upon a Time', *Bystander*, 25<sup>th</sup>**

**December 1918**

### Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has sought to address the changing nature of humour, and how that illustrates a continuity of memory constructed around humour and cartoons consistently from the Victorian times, throughout the Great War and beyond it. Memory is consistent, and the historiography broadly discusses this, but different elements of memory that differ from traditional war memories can be established through the study of the cartoons and their humour. While aspects of collective memory have been incorporated, a newer element of commercial memory has also been established through the sale of memories in cartoon memorabilia.<sup>157</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>157</sup> For collective memory, see Winter, *Sites of Memory*; Confino, 'Collective Memory', pp. 1386-1403; Becker, 'Memory Gaps', pp. 102-13; Susan Crane, 'Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory', *American Historical Review*, 102:5 (1997), pp. 1372-85.

these cartoons are often built upon older memories of times before as noted by the professional memory for cartoonists when producing images and developing recognised works of art.<sup>158</sup>

In each period, there are consistent small alterations, but so many of these are small enough to almost seem insignificant. The Victorians used humour as a corrective, and particularly through the cartoons of Gillray and Cruikshank, while the war focused on ironies of situation. Victorian humour is an element that in much of the modern historiography about the Victorians has been forgotten, while at the same time, descriptions of caricature are far more prevalent and are appreciated precisely for their humour. Nonetheless, aspects of Victorian humour do cross over and provide continuity moving into the twentieth century and the Great War. There are still instances of highlighting faults in order to improve them, and there are certainly specific characters that hold the public attention to the point of being mistaken for real people.<sup>159</sup>

Moving into the war, sizes of politicians were altered within new situations to reflect on their impact, often with a desire to correct their faults, but more commonly to ridicule those very faults. Soldiers in contrast, found themselves in uncomfortable situations such as trenches, and yet they were always sardonically optimistic suggesting that if they did not like it there was always another hole to go to. Humour here highlights resilience and continuity whilst remaining aware that there are issues that at that time could not be tackled. Memories in this manner were established

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<sup>158</sup> See Gombrich, 'The Cartoonist's Armoury', pp. 127-42.

<sup>159</sup> Bailey, 'Ally Sloper's Half Holiday', p. 4; Holt, *In Search of a Better 'Ole*, p. 76.

through the characters and their cartoon representations with characters that represented what the public perceived to be ‘real’.<sup>160</sup>

Moving through the rest of the twentieth century, so many of these images and ideas were returned to, be that for nostalgia, or merely as it suited new situations. Memories were created through humour and cartoons alike. When other artists requisitioned cartoons, the memory of the original remains true, yet the alteration and newer amendments made to it provide deeper layers to the overall humour of the image. New interpretations are sold to the audience based on their personal cultural influences, and although these cannot be predetermined when the new images are made, cultural influence certainly makes itself apparent.

This chapter has demonstrated how wartime cartoons and their humour serve as witnesses to the events of war. Similarly, it has demonstrated how human recollection has been influenced by these cartoons, their use, and the replication of motifs and select icons within them. Old Bill as a character has been maintained throughout the century and beyond through his consistent reproduction across media.<sup>161</sup> In terms of memory, they serve as ephemeral sites of recollection that embody the moods and motivations of the period, which have been expanded upon when contextually analysed using the cartoons as valid sources of information in their own right alongside physical memorials and written memoirs.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, evidence has been offered to assess the adaption of cartoon humour, and how that humour is layered as time progresses, and new interpretations are offered.

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<sup>160</sup> Malvern, *Witnessing, Testimony and Remembrance*, p. 55.

<sup>161</sup> Tussaud's, *Guide and Catalogue*; IWM, EPH 4378, Goodhall & Son, ‘British Bystander Playing Cards’, [1915-18], n.d; IWM, EPH 2922, Unknown, ‘Bruce Bairnsfather Playing Cards’, [1915-18], n.d; IWM, EPH 9426, Lejeune, ‘Mascot Vehicle, ‘Old Bill’’, [c. 1918], n.d.

<sup>162</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 9-19.

The newest element to this chapter has been the discussion of wartime memory and remembrance, which has diverted away from memory through traditional monuments as commemoration or mourning for those lost. In contrast, the cartoon sources utilised in this chapter have been able to demonstrate what has been termed ‘commercial memory’, a feature of war memory that is not specifically addressed within the historiography. Memories that were created to be sold within press publications. Furthermore, as time progresses onwards and images are consistently reused in different manners, new layers of humour, understanding develop this commercial memory and the humour that is used to create it. Memory is associated with the cartoons and their descendants all of which add to the overall redevelopment of that commercial memory that is sold to the public.

## Conclusion

With a primary basis in a study of cartoons and the humour they represented during the Great War, this thesis has brought a new and interdisciplinary dialogue forward. The cultural history of that war is combined with media, visual and emotional studies, holding a particular focus on humour as its central emotion. Many elements of the study begin in developing and established areas of research, but have added information to these significantly from different directions through the use of cartoon source evidence. A three-pronged approach to the wider historiography has been consistent throughout the thesis, consulting the vast historiography of the Great War itself, examining interdisciplinary literature of humour and media studies particularly the visual content of newspapers and their reception. Analysis of these historiographical strands and the material they cover lie at the centre of this thesis' investigation and the results it has provided.

Historical interest in humour and emotion are rapidly developing, as is discussion about visual material.<sup>1</sup> This thesis has, therefore, drawn upon these developing research areas and added to them with an investigation into the nature and value of humour through wartime cartoon media. The cultural history of the Great War is established, but consistently changing as new sources of information become

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<sup>1</sup> See De Sousa, *Rationality of Emotion*; 'Special Edition: War in the Twentieth Century', *JES*, 31 (2001); Burke, *Eyewitnessing*; Scully, *British Images of Germany*.

available.<sup>2</sup> The addition of deeper analysis into cartoon interpretation of the war is significant as previously cartoons have not been the initial basis of investigation or argument but simply used as support. This study takes an alternative approach leading with the images and investigating the humour they express, and its reception and how this can lead to a broader overall understanding of the emotions of war.

Therefore, turning to the sources, qualitative examples have been selected to suit specific topical areas of discussion throughout. They provide the starting point for all of the investigation identifying their position in the war, and making connections between the cartoons and the political and social details of the time. Images have been taken from predominantly British national publications, but articles from international, national and parochial press sources have aided their analysis. This demonstrates the interdisciplinary use of the media alongside the historical study of the wartime cartoon culture. Most cartoons come from the BCA at Kent University, but this is not an exhaustive resource, and so others have been widely accessed from a variety of online archives.<sup>3</sup>

Returning to the cover image for this thesis, of Poy's 'War Cartoons' publication created by the *Evening News*, there are various interdisciplinary avenues of investigation that can be taken. The image was used as a cover for Poy's cartoons separate to the newspaper of their original publication, and was used to advertise that booklet of cartoon material too. As such, the image holds implied significant meaning,

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<sup>2</sup> See Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Cambridge: Polity, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Cartooning the First World War, < <http://www.cartoonww1.org/> > [Accessed from June 2014]; British Newspaper Archive < <http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/> > [Accessed from January 2014]; Newspaper Archive < <http://www.newspaperarchive.com> > [Accessed from July 2016]; Digitization and Subject cataloguing of Illustrated Art and Satire Periodicals of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Heidelberg University, < <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/Englisch/helios/fachinfo/www/kunst/digilit/artjournals/Welcome.html> > [Accessed from January 2013].

and would have been received well by its audience, otherwise sales would not have resulted from the publication.<sup>4</sup> The nature of what it is advertising is clear from the text as well as the image with the two becoming inseparable from the information they provide to consumers.<sup>5</sup> However, the context of publication in war is also highlighted visually. The artist's quill drips ink like rain onto the disgruntled looking Kaiser who hides beneath a stereotypically British umbrella. The quill itself is elevated in the image, being carried by a small zeppelin embossed with the artist's name in possessive terms (figure 7.1). Thus, worries about the zeppelins are reduced through the reversal of prominence designed by the image; the big looming zeppelin is renamed Poy, and becomes diminutive, and as such is no longer an active threat to the public. Furthermore, the Kaiser suffers the cartoonists 'rain of ink' creating comedy of incongruity by using the Kaiser's image and the stereotypes of Britain to negate his position as the enemy leader.

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<sup>4</sup> Total viewer statistics remain impossible to calculate through shared reading of cartoons

<sup>5</sup> McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 154-7.

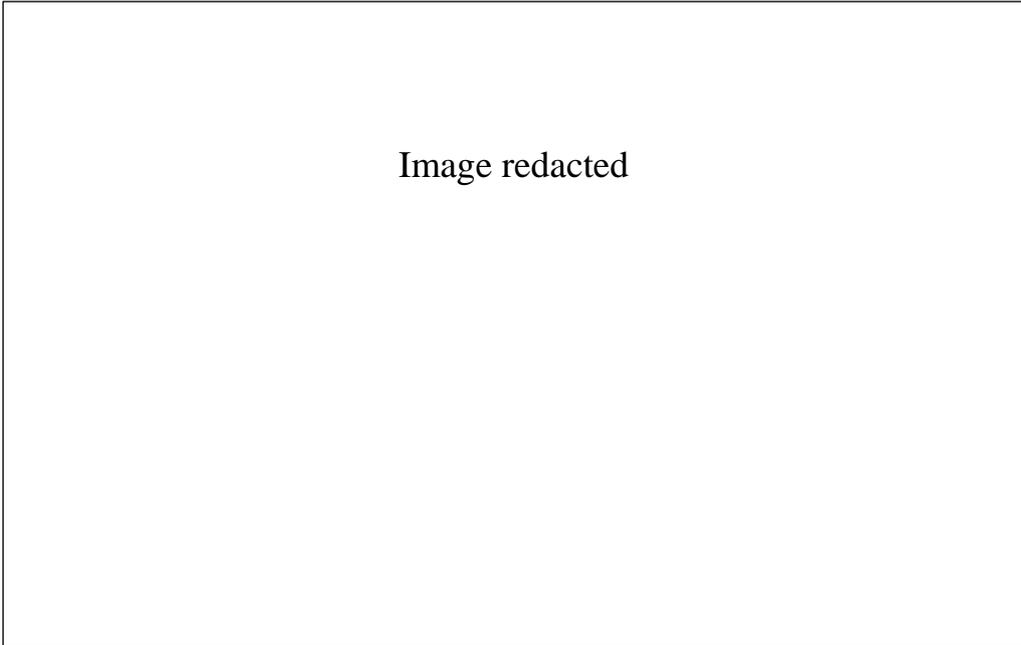


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**(Figure 7.1) Poy, ‘War Cartoons’, *War Cartoons from the Evening News, 1914***

Investigation of the humour in images like this can be connected to the time of publication; first drawn in August 1914, it was rapidly used to illustrate the volume of cartoons, and was used again in 1915 demonstrating replication and consumer memory. The use of the Kaiser’s image can be connected to that of his appearance before and during the war, where his authority as a leader has been demoted to farcical illustration being rained upon, and no longer reigning in his own right.<sup>6</sup> Connected to other images of the Kaiser, his position can be investigated further. Simultaneously, this can be connected with his activities during the war offering positive or negative criticism of his leadership.<sup>7</sup> This is a pattern of investigation that has been used throughout this thesis drawing connections from the images to other situations of war and their representation in newspapers and reception by audiences. Humour is used to

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<sup>6</sup> Scully, *British Images of Germany*, pp. 133-83.

<sup>7</sup> See for example William Haselden, ‘The Willies to the Rescue’, *Sad Adventures of Big and Little Willie*.

alter the reading of cartoons, and to negate power and influence as it became appropriate to do so and reduce public worries.

Through this investigation of cartoon humour and all the additional avenues of that can be derived from it, a thematic approach has been taken with interdisciplinary oversight to form a dialogue, which has resulted in a new approach to war memory through the cartoons specifically. As the thesis built towards an appreciation of what has been termed 'commercial memory', many of the cartoon sources come from personal, albeit anonymous collections. Therefore, the preservation of such material demonstrates confirmation for their perceived value and relevance to the memory of war. In relation to collective memories about the war, those taken through cartoon collections are both personal and publically collective as a result of the preservation of images from initial purchase during the war. This is something that has been developed further through this study and its interdisciplinary approach.

Personal collections of cartoons such as those of the anonymous Poy scrapbook collections from the BCA illustrate the relevance of cartoons for civilians at home, while other stores of trench journals and analysis of the cartoons within these provide comparative illustrations of soldier cartoons and humour.<sup>8</sup> It is through a combined analysis of cartoons in mass publications and those to be found in the trench journals, that this thesis demonstrates the importance of the visual studies to cultural history. Taking an irrevocably interdisciplinary approach to the study has allowed development of the cultural analysis of war and its memory. Visual interpretations of public controls, entertainment, avoidance of social duty and comparison between civilians

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<sup>8</sup> Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War*; Seal, *Soldiers' Press*; Nelson, 'Soldier Newspapers', pp. 167-191.

and soldiers representations of the army are all analysed through their thematic strands, but are then brought together in a reflection on memory.

Looking at humour's development through the thematic topics investigated here allows for an examination of memories of humour within the wartime context. Professional memories of cartoonists who reuse older images, and commercial memories for the public who purchase these cartoons become most prevalent in this way. All of this engages with a widening historiography of war memory already in existence.<sup>9</sup> Taking a multidisciplinary approach, it has incorporated aspects of legal history in the first chapter, entertainment and theatrical studies in the second and sociological approaches to groups inside or outside of the right action in the third. The fourth chapter has focused on military history still combined with humour and visual representations, then the fifth chapter drew these aspects together engaging with ideas of the 'memory boom' in war history specifically, and proposes another layer of commercial memory.<sup>10</sup>

By tackling this multidisciplinary approach, several newer aspects of the wider historiography have developed. Laughter in particular is discussed in terms of the right and wrong kinds of laughter, the right being that which inspires and comforts others, the wrong thereby being designed to make others feel less valuable starting in Victorian ideals of humour.<sup>11</sup> This has become prevalent where cartoons use humour as a means of correction, or to highlight false duty in society, by making others look bad so that the audience can feel good about themselves. Therefore, it is particularly relevant to the discussion of civil disobedience highlighted through images of the

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<sup>9</sup> Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*; Gregory, *Silence of Memory*; Winter, *Sites of Memory*.

<sup>10</sup> Winter, 'Memory Boom', pp. 52-66; Winter, 'Generation of Memory', pp. 57-66.

<sup>11</sup> See Gray, 'The Uses of Victorian Laughter', pp. 146-7; Rüger, 'Laughter and War in Berlin', pp. 23-43.

pacifist, profiteer, coward and wealthy citizens. Previous studies such as that by Jean-Louis Robert focused on a single element of the 'enemy within', the profiteer. He highlighted how these profiteering characters fell outside of a duty of sacrifice felt by all during the war.<sup>12</sup> Here there has been wider opportunity to analyse the profiteer in comparison with wealthy civilians, and other offenders against society in the form of pacifists and cowards.

When looking to the image of the army, this aspect of the investigation drew on what John Fuller termed 'trench newspaper fever', acknowledging how almost every troop and battalion created their own papers to be examined.<sup>13</sup> Even so, developing studies of trench journals did not previously touch on the cartoons specifically as this thesis has done. Modern studies look at the text in trench journals, and even the humour expressed there.<sup>14</sup> However, by focusing more closely on the visual, this study offers new insights and interpretations to the humour of society at that time. Added to this, it has been able to engage in the developing debate concerning the differences between civilians at home and soldiers in battle. Initial readings through Eric Leed's work and others suggest mental and physical distance was insurmountable while, recent literature by Helen McCartney has started to close that gap by looking at soldier and civilian correspondence during war.<sup>15</sup> It has become clear in this study that humour is only subtly different, and continues to maintain a comparative edge linking joining the groups. Much of this links back to memories of times and humour from before the war, and most specifically to Victorian and Edwardian humour. Therefore, the distance between the groups is again reduced on the psychological landscape, and their physical

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<sup>12</sup> See Robert, 'The Image of the Profiteer', pp. 104-132.

<sup>13</sup> Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture*, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> See Seal, *Soldiers' Press*; Nelson, 'Soldier Newspapers'; Nelson, *German Soldier Newspapers*.

<sup>15</sup> See Leed, *No Man's Land*; McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*

connection through cartoons is apparent when looking at both domestic and soldier publications.

Recent debate has reconsidered the embodiment incongruous humour, which previously looked for a single feature out of place to create it. Now ideas of simultaneous incongruities have developed through television and film studies, and these show how more than one thing can be out of place to create overall humour.<sup>16</sup> Multiple incongruities in a single frame are easily noted in cartoons and build on this idea. Where commercial memories have been consulted here, this feature of multiple incongruities has been expanded further. Memories sold to the public are where this development begins, but as time passes and cartoons are recognised, and requisitioned to create new jokes, layers are added to the incongruity supporting this sense of multiple causes of laughter, which combine to create new commercial memories for the public.

This thesis has sought to broaden interdisciplinary historical dialogues in the context of the Great War. Throughout the chapters, there is a continuous approach to the cultural history of the Great War, and how it can be understood more fully through the media of cartoons and the humour that they express to their readers. Overall, the interdisciplinary dialogue created between the historiographies of war, humour and visual media promote developing historical investigations, newly bound together in an understanding of the ‘commercial memory’ of humorous wartime cartoons. That is a memory that was once unwittingly sold to consumers, but through multiple sales, recognition occurred, and new memories were created. These memories continue to be

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<sup>16</sup> Williams, ‘Keynote: Jolt, Flash, Tinge, and Oose’; Deleuze, *Cinema*.

created as every new generation brings their own personal interpretation to the memories that were once unwittingly sold to the public.<sup>17</sup>

Overall, the intention of this thesis has been to highlight reflections of wartime society through the humour they expressed in the media of cartoons. Humour was, and still is an essential part of the military, and indeed war. However, as much as we may assume that this humour is different to civilian humour, it has become clear that this is not necessarily so. Throughout the war an element of continuity draws on what had been before, and humour was so often used as a mark of normalcy, even when that might not be directly found. Cartoons can be seen as ephemeral culture, but deeper analysis into them and what they represent, opens up historical dialogues with humour and visual media extensively taking the sources as the origin of points made. This thesis is able to draw far more out of how a society can be understood and remembered. Looking to the cultural ephemera of the day through cartoons, visual humour is endlessly apparent, drawing on ideas from its contemporary past. Building on this, memories can be established that were once sold as temporary amusement. These memories are emotive for viewers then and now, and their study enables a deeper understanding of the war overall.

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<sup>17</sup> See McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pp. 88-93.

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### **Exhibitions**

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- British Library 'Enduring War: Grief, Grit and Humour', British Library, London, 19<sup>th</sup> June – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
- Dunning, John Harris and Paul Gravett, 'Comics Unmasked: Art and Anarchy in the UK', British Library, London, 2<sup>nd</sup> May – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- Hiley, Nicholas, and the British Cartoon Archive, "*The Bullet is Stronger than the Ballot*": Assassination in British Political Cartoons', The Gallery, Templeman library, University of Kent, Canterbury, 28<sup>th</sup> January – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

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