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Special Issue Reprint

Ford Madox Ford's War Writing

Edited by
Sara Haslam, Fiona Houston and Nur Karatas

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About the Editors

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Sara Haslam is a Professor of Twentieth-Century Literature at the Open University. She is the author of a monograph and multiple essays and book chapters on Ford, and (co-)editor of four collections of criticism, most recently *The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* (2019). She has edited Ford's fiction and cultural criticism, including *A Man Could Stand Up-*, vol. 3 of the first scholarly edition of *Parade's End* (1924–28; 2010). Recent research examines what she has termed 'literary caregiving' during the First World War and also life writing in the form of diary texts by Elsie Martindale, with whom Ford eloped in 1894 (work published in the *Conradian* (2022) and *Last Post* (2022)). Co-General Editor of a new series in preparation, *The Complete Works of Ford Madox Ford* (Oxford University Press), her current focus is Ford's letters; she is Co-Editor of volume 1 (forthcoming from OUP).

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Preface

Around one hundred years after the publication of vol. 1 of *Parade's End*, *Some Do Not…* (1924), Ford Madox Ford's First World War tetralogy is considered to be pre-eminent among fictional treatments of the conflict. This Special Issue offers new engagement with Ford's literary responses to the war. Contributions focus on lesser-known examples of his output as well as those now considered to be canonical, enabling broader appreciation and contextualization of this important writer and his work.

Sara Haslam, Fiona Houston, and Nur Karatas
Guest Editors

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Editorial

Introduction: Ford Madox Ford's War Writing

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Ford Madox Ford's ground-breaking novel, *Some Do Not*. . ., one of the earliest fictional attempts at charting the cataclysmic impact of the First World War, was published in 1924.

It was only the first part of the story. We will probably never know whether Ford intended a sequel when *Some Do Not*. . . was published, but the novel would be followed by three more (*No More Parades*, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, *Last Post*), forming a series named *Parade's End* in the US edition brought out by Knopf in 1950. Initially published by Duckworth & Co, *Some Do Not*. . . launched an outstanding example of First World War fiction with both popular and critical acclaim. Malcolm Bradbury and Samuel Hynes have declared it peerless from both sides of the Atlantic, as war fiction but also as 'charting twentieth-century change', and as a 'central Modernist novel of the 1920s, in which it is exemplary' (Hynes 1990; Bradbury 1992). At the time, while some reviewers objected to *Some Do Not*. . .'s 'profanity', it was also lauded as 'brilliantly written' and of 'outstanding interest'. The Manchester *Guardian*'s reviewer remarked that Christopher Tietjens 'would furnish enough virility for about twenty ordinary novels', going on to reassure readers that there was 'no need to worry about the state of the English novel while books like this are being produced' (Harvey 1962).

The essays contained in this Special Issue of the *Humanities* journal were therefore published on a significant anniversary. Ford's tetralogy has had an extraordinarily productive life in the last 100 years, generating enthusiasm and interest in readers, students, and scholars—as well as playwrights and film companies. The five-part television adaptation of *Parade's End*, dramatized by Tom Stoppard for the BBC/HBO and directed by Susanna White, was broadcast worldwide in 2012 and 2013 to excellent reviews. Stoppard later wrote of his work that 'many of those who had read it cleaved to it as a favorite novel and a masterpiece', noting more personally that 'for a writer in television drama *Parade's End* was the best of times' (Stoppard 2012). The adaptation introduced Ford's work to millions of viewers, and it followed hard on the heels of the first full annotated critical edition, produced in four volumes by Carcanet Press in 2010–11 and described by Kate McLoughlin (2019 [2011]) as a 'model edition' in 'Ford's Reception History' (Steffens and Wiesenfarth 2019, p. 54 in Haslam et al. 2019). Between them, these interventions produced a new flourishing of engagement, study (*Parade's End* became increasingly native to university syllabi), and criticism.

This Special Issue demonstrates that there is more to learn and to say about Ford's 1920s masterpiece, in ways that develop and perhaps complicate or challenge the wide range of scholarship on the tetralogy which has been published over the last 100 years and which we briefly chart here. The Issue also speaks well to the new era in Ford studies

inaugurated when in 2023 Oxford University Press announced a new edition of his works. With an early focus on Ford's letters, most of which are as yet unpublished, one of the clearest rewards of that project to date is the discovery of the extent to which the threads of Ford's interests, preoccupations, and literary ambitions, not to mention the views of his life and times, can be seen to weave throughout his output. The edition will also enable the publication of further First World War-focused fiction for the first time. But, as one critic featured here, Isabelle Brasme, has recently argued, Ford's war needs to be seen both very close up and in cross-generic form, from periodicals through letters and into the fiction that would cement his post-war reputation, in order that the shape and scale of his contribution can be more completely known (Brasme 2023).

1. An Overview of War Scholarship on Ford

Frayn and Houston note that it is a 'critical commonplace' that there was a ten-year publication gap after the cessation of fighting in 1918 and the commencement of a so-called 'War Books Boom' influenced, in part, by the success of Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues* and the first performance of R. C. Sheriff's *Journey's End* in 1928 (Frayn and Houston 2022). Ford, however, wrote prolifically during the war and published comparatively swiftly after it. 'Arms and the Mind' was written in Ypres in 1916; *No Enemy* was written some time between 1915 and 1919; and *The Marsden Case* was published in 1923. And as noted at the head of this Introduction, *Some Do Not* . . . (1924), the first part of *Parade's End*, was published in 1924—well before the boom. All of this demonstrates the extent of Ford's innovative creative energies in ways which feature in the scholarship, while at the same time flagging important questions about the relationship between writing, recovery, and catharsis in Ford, whether or not work was published immediately, and alongside what was also a very real experience of writer's block.

Much related discussion, also demonstrating the range and history of scholarship on Ford's war writing, can be seen in the two critical volumes that emerged from the 2012 London conference on *Parade's End* (*Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End* (*IFMFS*, vol. 13) and Chantler and Hawkes' *War and the Mind: Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End, Modernism and Psychology* (2015)); further relevant work can be found elsewhere in the *International Ford Madox Ford Studies* series, as well as *Last Post: A Literary Journal from the Ford Madox Ford Society*. Furthermore, biographers have devoted key chapters to Ford's war experience and war writing, especially Max Saunders in *Ford Madox Ford A Dual Life* (Saunders 1996), and Saunders' *War Prose* (Saunders 1999, p. 2) which remains an essential collection of Ford's writing on the war. The continuing vibrancy of the field is evidenced by the bibliography of periodical writing since 2000 on the Ford Society website <available online: https://www.fordmadoxford.org/critical-writing-on-ford.html, accessed on 3 March 2024>. PhD theses have been written on Ford's war, and the approaching anniversary of the First World War galvanised other media interest additional to the BBC/HBO adaptation—BBC's Culture Show Special (Yentob 2012), for example.

In their 'Introduction' to *War and the Mind*, Chantler and Hawkes stress the ways in which modernist writing amplified psychological matters, demonstrating how the mind works and that pain is inflicted upon both body and mind (p. 4). As they assert in their Introduction, the 'inward turn' of the age became central to Ford's writing (p. 6). Chantler and Hawkes also argue that Ford's recovery from the war depended heavily on his ability to be able to write about it (p. 5). Living as we do today in times of collective anxiety caused by global crises, Ford's focus on the 'wound of the mind' seems especially prescient, highlighting the potential rewards of re-reading his wartime work alongside modern

theories of trauma and explorations of coping, healing, sanity, and insanity in today's mental health discussions.

For Ford, madness is repeatedly shown to be an inevitable consequence of the war. In '"Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous": Ford Madox Ford's Parade's End *Tetralogy*', referring to the characters in *Parade's End* as a 'nervous bunch', Trevor Dodman examines their ongoing struggle, caught between sanity and madness (Dodman 2015, p. 58). He argues that this battle over rationality leads them, especially Tietjens, into confusion over what kinds of methods they can develop to deal 'with others and selves—and even other selves' which are 'shifting, infirm, unstable, and even unknowable'. Thus, he diagnoses a struggle over 'naming and knowing' their mental states and troubles (Dodman 2015, p. 58). Max Saunders takes madness in *Parade's End* as his theme in '"Sex ferocity" and "the sadic lusts of certain novelists": Sexuality, Sadomasochism, and Suppression in *Parade's End*', his chapter in Chantler and Hawkes (2015). Saunders investigates Ford's handling of sexuality and the ways in which he links this to madness and violence (p. 18).

Andrew Frayn underscores in his chapter 'Ford Madox Ford and the First World War' in the *Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford* how Ford's depiction of war is less about the battle itself and more about its lasting impact on the human psyche and society. In *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), Judith Lewis Herman discusses the devastation of an individual's defence mechanism and argues that traumatic events disrupt the usual support systems that help individuals feel in control, connected, and to find meaning in life (Herman 1992, p. 33). In an extension of this argument, in his essay in this Special Issue Saunders focuses on the metaphorical and psychological importance of 'images of houses' or 'house-like structures' as a defence for the human subject amidst otherwise overwhelming levels of destruction.

Some relatively recent scholarship on Ford and war has focused on investigating the relationship between nature, sound, and war experience. In 'The Sound of Ford Madox Ford: War-Time, Impressionism, and Narrative Form' (Kyne 2020), Rachel Kyne explores how Ford's writing directly reflects a 'sonic consciousness', further emphasising the psychological over the physical. In 'Nature's Sonic Order on the Western Front' (Guida 2020), Michael Guida analyses soldiers' sensory experience on the battlefield, juxtaposing the calming sounds of nature, such as the sound of birds singing, with the roaring mechanical noises of machinery and artillery. Paul Skinner's article in this Special Issue develops this work, in part, as he comments on the treatment and effect of the dual presence of birds and warplanes in the sky above the soldier-writer.

The significance of Ford's use of ellipsis features in past and more current scholarship, inflected differently according to context. Ford employs 'a series of erasures, defacements, and ellipses', as Sorum explores in 'Mourning and Moving On: Life After War in Ford Madox Ford's *The Last Post*' (Sorum 2007), to write his way around things that are too painful to express directly (p. 158). In the tetralogy, Ford represents this double-sided process of remembering and forgetting by narrating the war as a series of erasures, defacements, and ellipses. James Dutton has built on this idea, proposing that Ford's ellipses invite readers to fill in the blanks, actively engaging with the text's 'imaginative possibilities' in 'Cutting, Reading, Re-Membering *Parade's End*'s Elliptical History' (Dutton 2021, p. 265). In this Special Issue, in which he brings welcome scholarly attention to Ford's short stories, Frayn extends the analysis to *Pink Flannels*, where he interprets Ford's ellipses as 'pointing to the gap between the home front and the Western front' (p. 11).

2. The Essays in This Special Issue

The Routledge Research Companion to Ford Madox Ford (2019) serves, as Houston has previously argued, as an 'essential tool for those who are new to Ford studies'; 'it offers an overview of existing Ford scholarship while suggesting new directions Ford studies could be taken in the future' (Houston 2019). This Special Issue is one such new direction, reflecting on the broad range of Ford's war writing and bringing together the work of early career researchers and established scholars. And while, as the previous section demonstrated, there is a long history of scholarship on Ford's war writing, including monographs with a particular focus on Ford's subject matter, style, and the impact of war (see, for instance, Haslam's *Fragmenting Modernism: Ford Madox Ford, the novel and the Great War* (Haslam 2002)), a considerable gap remains with regard to analysis of Ford's short stories, memoirs, and lesser-known writing in relation to the war. This Special Issue begins to address this gap, communicating and narrating a more expansive Ford, and providing new windows into both Ford Madox Ford studies and First World War studies more generally.

Gill Gustar's essay, for instance, focuses on *The Marsden Case* (1923), a relatively neglected novel. Gustar argues for an interpretation of the work as a reflection of the narrator's psyche as she examines the novel through the lens of madness. In contrast to this treatment of a lesser-known text of Ford's, Molly Porter's chapter reveals the depth of Ford's engagement with seventeenth-century literature in one of his most famous works, *Parade's End.* Original in her outlook, Porter brings together two cultural monuments of early modern and modernist literature, commenting on the intertextuality of the tetralogy and the metaphysical poets referred to in the text, and demonstrating that even a well-known text can generate innovative lines of enquiry.

Max Saunders and Nur Karatas also take *Parade's End* as a focus. Karatas examines trauma in both *Parade's End* and Ford's own life via the lens of 'worry', showcasing an untraditional approach as the focus of the trauma in the text shifts to the anticipation of future sufferings rather than past experiences to demonstrate the ways in which the First World War extends beyond the battlefield into society. Saunders, meanwhile, avoids the standard image of trench soldiers and focuses instead on the powerful image of houses and house-like shelters in *Parade's End.* While Ford's war tetralogy remains a significant part of his discussion, Saunders connects the novel to the post-war poem 'A House' and Ford's memoirs *It Was the Nightingale* and *No Enemy* to explore Ford's use of repression and object relations theory.

Paul Skinner traces Ford's references to flight in his writing, engaging with a range of key Fordian texts including *No Enemy, Return to Yesterday,* the two propaganda texts *Between St Dennis and St George* and *When Blood is Their Argument,* and *Parade's End*. The chapter maps Ford's responses to the aeroplane and the use of aviation as a weapon of war as overlooked thematic aspects of the early modernist period. In contrast to the mechanisation of wartime aviation, Eve Sorum's chapter offers an ecocritical reading of Ford's wartime essays, exploring Ford's highlighting of humility in his presentation of perspective. In particular, she addresses ecological humility, arguing for its importance in 'reorienting human relationships with the natural world'.

While several of the contributions to this Special Issue offer fresh insight into *Parade's End,* Andrew Frayn and Isabelle Brasme forge new ground in their choice of both texts and subject matter. Brasme's essay builds on her chapter from *Writers of War* (2023), exploring Ford's use of shifting pronouns as a key facet of his characteristic impressionism. While time is spent analysing Ford's trajectory from *The Good Soldier* to *Parade's End,* Brasme also devotes attention to his essays, including 'Arms and the Mind' and 'Trois Jours de

Permission', which have received much less critical attention. Noting that short stories are under-discussed in Ford studies, Frayn turns to contemporary periodical publications in his examination of Ford's short stories. His chapter brings together Ford's short stories about the First World War, analysing them together for the first time to argue that his characteristic but also generically nuanced impressionism is significant as a response to war, trauma, and neurosis.

3. Conclusions: Future Ford

In 'Looking Back at the International Ford Madox Ford Studies Series: Impressions of a Relatively New Reader' (Bruen 2020), Garrett Bruen also questions how the future of Fordian studies might unfold. We hope as one result of this Special Issue that readers will turn, or return, to Ford's short stories or *The Marsden Case*, or extrapolate from its ideas to approach his poetry or letters. Moreover, the essays and periodical publications cited and explored in this Special Issue are fertile ground, we hope, for new research on Ford. How might methodologies help? While acknowledging Ford's now well-established place in the literary canon, Andrew Frayn (2019 in Haslam et al. 2019) highlights the limited work to date on digital humanities and Ford. Growth in this area, allowing scholars to digitally cross-reference Ford's war writing, would enable its undeniably rich linguistic, stylistic, and thematic qualities to be more fully realised and interrogated in future research.

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Article

The First World War, Madness, and Reading between the Lines of *The Marsden Case*

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Abstract: *The Marsden Case*, Ford's first published novel after the First World War, has received relatively little critical attention. This paper aims to redress the balance by offering a sustained reading which illustrates how the context of the First World War interacts with a major theme in Ford's oeuvre, madness. It follows Ford's maxim that the novel was a place for inquiry and illustrates how Ford's narrator explores the questions of who succumbs to madness and why. It highlights a debate at work in the novel on the role of talk in creating or curing nervous breakdowns. The novel's opacity is part of a challenge to the wisdom of directly confronting or revisiting painful experiences, which speaks not only to the effects of the war but to the value of emerging Freudian psychotherapy.

Keywords: First World War; war fiction; madness; shell shock; Freud

1. Introduction

The Marsden Case (1923) (Ford 1923) occupies a precarious position in Ford's oeuvre and has received relatively 'little critical attention' (Frayn 2021, p. 187). Max Saunders highlights a central issue as its 'problematic' relationship to the First World War (Saunders 2012b, p. 110), with contemporary reviewers judging it 'effective' despite obvious plot absurdities, but later critics finding its obliqueness about the war 'false' (Saunders 2012b, p. 111). A secondary but related issue is that it has been overshadowed by the two novels between which it falls, *The Good Soldier* (1915) and *Some Do Not*. . .. (1924). This is best illustrated by Thomas Moser's assessment of it as containing 'only one memorable paragraph and one brilliantly conceived' scene comparable to *The Good Soldier* and finding it as 'plausible preparation' for *Parade's End* (Moser 1980, p. 209). Ann Barr Snitow argues for its 'unstable fluctuations' as characteristic of 'Ford's rehearsal novels', and places it as a 'weaker' version of *Parade's End* (Snitow 1984, pp. 202–3). Such framing has led to the novel being most often discussed in comparison to Ford's other novels. Saunders, for instance, briefly aligns it with *Mr. Fleight* (1913) and *That Same Poor Man*[1] in its tendency to extrapolate from a character's personal experiences to the broader social context (Saunders 2002, p. 134). Moreover, it has generally been read as part of Ford's war writing because, as Andrew Frayn observes, it might elide 'combatant experience' but it deals with the impact of war (Frayn 2015, p. 128). Its obliqueness about war is sometimes interpreted as a psychological avoidance. Saunders reads it as a mind 'needing—to write about something else in order to regain sanity' (Saunders 2012b, p. 110), and Frayn argues for it as indicative of Ford's inability to 'face directly the impact of war' (Frayn 2021, p. 187).

However, there are reasons to step aside from Ford or the war as the primary explanations for the mental disturbance depicted in the novel. In a letter to Edgar Jepson, Ford claimed it as the 'story of [W.R.S.] Ralston, the first translator of Turgenev' (Ford 1965, p. 149). Ralston, whose father was in litigation for many years over a claim to the Ralston estates, suffered depression in later life and was found dead with 'a gutta percha sheet over his head and a bottle of chloroform in his hand'.(Waddington 2007)[2] His life seems to have 'suggested' to Ford elements of the plight and attempted suicide of 'Marsden' of

the novel's title (Ford 1965, p. 149). If this was Ford's intended subject, then the war is a context which gives it resonance rather than its primary focus. Additionally, Saunders' suggestion that it depicts a mind losing touch with sanity allies *The Marsden Case* with the broader theme of insanity found throughout Ford's oeuvre (Saunders 2012a, p. 105). Ford's biographers have extensively discussed the origins of his preoccupation with insanity and what it suggests about him and his writing.[3] It is not the intention here to reprise or extend this narrative. Instead, this paper will illustrate the value of *The Marsden Case* in its own right by offering a sustained reading focused not on what it reveals about Ford, but what it has to say about madness.[4]

This shift from the term 'insanity' to 'madness' reflects the fact that the latter is used much more extensively by Ford.[5] Madness has a long history predating its medicalization. Andrew Scull, in tracing this history, argues for madness as a 'phenomenon [. . .] found in all known societies' and as a common-sense term which has stood the test of time (Scull 2015, p. 11). The categories of those regarded as 'mad' range from the melancholic or manic to those 'who do not share the common-sense reality most of us perceive' or are delusional, people who refuse to conform to the standards of their culture through to the those who might be deemed demented (Ibid). Madness, therefore, is a term which captures a wide range of psychological disturbances, and it is in this sense that it is used in the discussion which follows. Roy Porter's history of madness concludes that madness has been conceptualised and responded to differently over time, with conflicting opinions on whether it is a 'reality, convention, or illusion' (Porter 2002, p. 4). Early 20th century medical culture is best characterised as in transition, undergoing what Philip Kuhn describes as a 'profound process of change' (Kuhn 2016, p. xiv).

As Ford held that a novelist should be a 'historian of his own time' (Stang 1989, p. xvi) and that the novel was a means to 'inquire into every department of life' (Ford 1924, p. 208), his depictions of madness reflect the stance and debates of the time in which they are set. Seamus O' Malley positions Ford's writing as parallel to a generally accepted 'modernist period' and responsive to its concerns, such as 'the emergence of psychoanalysis' (O'Malley 2015, p. 51). *The Marsden Case* is notable as the first novel in which Ford names Sigmund Freud, and its content displays a questioning stance on psychoanalytic therapy. More generally it encapsulates the transition for which Kuhn argues, depicting competing approaches to nervous illness with a distinction between curative approaches which privileged physical or organic causes and those based in belief in the power of the mind to effect healing.[6] Whilst it is not irrelevant that *The Marsden Case* is, as Frayn argues, a 'necessary step' towards his 'creative interpretation' of the war (Frayn 2021, p. 187), this framing can overwhelm the intersection with the theme of madness. As Saunders points out, the novel 'forms a diptych, with the war falling between the two halves' (Saunders 2002, p. 135). In other words, the war happens off the page and is refracted through the narrator's story. It helps to view war as adjacent to madness rather than as the container for it because as this paper will show, Ford surfaces a broader range of causal factors for mental disturbance. Most significant of these is the way in which language, spoken or written, expressed or withheld, can damage or restore someone's equilibrium. This is central to the inquiry Ford conducts into Freudian approaches.

The 'Case' in Question

As with *The Good Soldier*, Ford creates a narrator to conduct his inquiry: Ernest Jessop, an author who had previously been a barrister, a man used to the language of cases. What then is the 'Marsden Case'? The ostensible story concerns the fortunes of George Heimann,[7] a young man Jessop meets 'three weeks before the outbreak of the war' (Ford 1923, p. 1) in his publisher's office. Part 1 of the novel, covering a single day, begins with an altercation between George and the unscrupulous publisher Mr. Podd, witnessed by Jessop. This entangles Jessop in the life of someone who, until then, had been a stranger. This one day exposes him to tensions between George and his sister, Marie Elizabeth,[8] on the question of whether to pursue claims of legitimacy as the children of Earl Marsden. He meets their

companion and adviser, Miss Jeaffreson,[9] and the German poet whose work is the subject of the dispute with Podd. He gives a lecture at a literary gathering, stages a shadow play in a nightclub, brings together George and Clarice Honeywill, a woman with whom they both fall in love, and learns about Freud's theories from Miss Jeaffreson. The second part of the novel deals with George's war time attempts to acquire legal proof of his legitimacy, his father's suicide, his detainment by German officials, his release secured by the German poet, the suspicion with which he is treated on his return to England, his treatment for nervous complaints and a failed suicide attempt.

Though the novel's title makes George its subject, John Meixener argues for 'two stories' at work with Jessop's own 'more interesting and deeply felt' (Meixener 1962, pp. 193 and 194, respectively). Presenting the novel as a case signals this duality, for Saunders has shown it to be a word Ford uses with nuance and to specific effect (Saunders 2015). Here, it hints at the legal and medical proceedings central to George's story, in the language of the novel's narrator, himself also a medical case. This reading, therefore, considers both stories rather than simply the 'Case' Jessop offers up. The importance of Jessop's language is intimated by foregrounding his status as a professional writer. The opening scenes take place in his publisher's office and his new relationships are shaped by literary connections. For instance, George has translated the epic poem of the 'preposterously important German poet' (Ford 1923, p. 5), Professor Edouard Curtius, and his sister funded its publication. Miss Jeaffreson cultivates both Podd and Jessop in the hope of finding a publisher for her book, 'a *Child's Guide to Nietzsche*' (Ford 1923, p. 19). Yet, contrary to the suggestion of another claustrophobic small circle like those which dominated Ford's pre-war writing, *The Marsden Case* has a 'clamorous cast of characters' (Meixener 1962, p. 194). Around forty characters are introduced in Part 1, ranging from family members and friends attached to George, Jessop or Clarice, Jessop's professional contacts, German and British officials, and, characters who appear briefly, like bit part actors in a play. Part 1 creates the impression, therefore, of an overwhelmingly crowded day through which George and Jessop must navigate. That some characters have pseudonyms, others disguise their identity, and some are routinely misnamed by fellow characters creates an environment of uncertainty and confusion. It serves Jessop's aim of showing in that 'season of 1914', that the tone of interpersonal relationships was strained, and the 'world…. was mad' (Ford 1923, p. 13). It is against this backcloth that George's story unfolds. Jessop's commitment is to tell it in such a way that readers 'get the feeling of the world into which poor Heimann had got', and so 'better understand the pressure to which his poor brain was subjected'[10] (Ford 1923, p. 13).

2. Two Stories of Madness

2.1. The "Poor Boy"

The story Jessop purports to tell is of how 'that harassed boy' (Ford 1923, p. 17) came to attempt suicide, yet his own story is always present, told obliquely, through his account of the 'Marsden Case'. It is useful to first consider the overt story before examining what it reveals of Jessops' own. Jessop's narrative is packed with people, incidents, misunderstandings, miscommunications, and missed opportunities. Yet, beneath the surface action is a maelstrom of emotion, distress, and desperation. It is a story of a mind disintegrating under pressure. At least this is the way Jessop elects to tell George's story. The early reference to George as harassed sets the tone for the account of 'trials' (Ford 1923, p. 17) to which he is subjected. Central to these is the court case resulting from the row between George and Podd. Jessop describes their argument as 'one of the most repulsive' (Ford 1923, p. 1) he ever witnessed. Repulsive is a strikingly strong word with connotations of the need to drive back an attack, and of deep disgust sufficient to make one ill. It is an early hint of Jessop's own mental state for he, after all, is not the person under attack. The quarrel between Podd and George is conducted mainly in personal slurs, anticipating the way in which Sylvia Tietjens undermines the reputation of her husband in *Parade's End*. George accuses Podd of having defrauded Professor Curtius and Marie Elizabeth in the arrangements for publishing the poem. Podd retaliates by labelling George and his sister a

'pair of bastards. With an escaped criminal for a father' (Ford 1923, p. 13). Jessop says he was later strenuously cross-examined at the trial 'as to the exact words' (Ford 1923, p. 10) exchanged. It is a subtle claim from an ex-barrister, now author, that his account can be trusted. Words matter to Jessop, and they betray his sympathies. Podd, for instance, is 'no philanthropist', and 'honeyed' only when attempting to 'swindle you' (Ford 1923, p. 2). George, in contrast, has 'so little' of his heart in the dispute that when he put his hands around Podd's throat, it was 'no more than a reflex action', which anyone might have (Ford 1923, p. 14). It seems an odd defence of violent behaviour. At a narrative level the scene is arguably a dramatization, the inciting incident for the train of events which befall Jessop's central character, George. However, as discussed later, Jessop's own story reveals it to have deeper significance

The ostensible story primarily addresses the question of why George attempted suicide and Jessop proffers a range of reasons. For instance, George is positioned as pre-disposed by family background. His father is introduced as 'alarmingly ill—mentally, rather than physically' (Ford 1923, p. 48) and 'subject to violent, sudden and incomprehensible fits of rage' (Ford 1923, p. 55). George himself describes his father as 'over sensitive' with a 'violent brooding nature' (Ford 1923, p. 156). Jessop's observation that George 'dwelt' on issues and had a natural courage which would not allow him to 'run away from his own thoughts' (MC, p. 24), allies him with this father, implying that George has inherited characteristics which make him vulnerable to the same mental instability. Hereditary madness is an explanation for psychological disturbance found in Ford's early novels, such as *The Benefactor* (1905), where the brooding Reverend Mr. Brede ends up in an asylum. Reading across Ford's novels in this way surfaces the sense of war as a new context which might generate different forms of madness but not replace those already existent in society. Here, the intertextuality acts as a hint that George, like Brede, may act in ways which prove detrimental to him.

Yet, Jessop holds others more accountable. He explicitly places blame on those closest to George. Just as Dowell in *The Good Soldier* blames Edward Ashburnham's suffering on the incessant talk of Leonora and Nancy, Jessop refers to Miss Jeaffreson and Marie Elizabeth as 'vampires' who are 'clawing all over George' (Ford 1923, pp. 63 and 78). They are part of the 'pack' whose talk drove George to almost 'the same end as his father', suicide (Ford 1923, p. 273). This complicates the suggestion that George's heritage alone accounts for his suicide attempt. Miss Jeaffreson is singled out as 'the villainess' in the early stages of George's problems (Ford 1923, p. 17). Jessop describes her mode of talking as never 'crudely definite' but as cloaking her intended meaning in hints obvious to him but which would not stand up to scrutiny in a 'libel suit' (Ford 1923, p. 31). It was in this way, he suggests, that a plain young woman seeking publication might share over lunch with an 'obscure Don Juan' like Podd, 'salacious details' about her friends (Ford 1923, p. 35). Specifically, he proposes, Miss Jeaffreson had supplied Podd with the 'hideous' information he had 'hurled' at George that morning, betraying her friends in self-interest (Ford 1923, p. 35). She is not the only character to sacrifice George's interests to her own, but her significance lies in illustrating the power of talk and terminology. It is not accidental that she is the character intellectually attached to the ideas of 'a professor called Freud' (Ford 1923, p. 31). Indeed, Jessop believes the 'steely fervour' (Ford 1923, p. 40) with which she pursued these 'new' (Ford 1923, p. 37) ideas was instrumental in what he refers to as the 'ultimate catastrophe of George Heimann' (Ford 1923, p. 40). Notice the repeated elision by Jessop of the word suicide, a feature characteristic of his narrative, discussed later. Here, he focuses his narrative on making the case against Miss Jeaffreson. Her determination to make him, a 'comparative stranger', into a 'distinguished convert. . .. . .. of the complex' is offered as illustrative of the fervour he claimed proved detrimental to George (Ford 1923, p. 40). The word 'convert', with its religious undertones, positions belief in psychoanalysis almost as an act of faith. This is certainly Jessop's stance on Miss Jeaffreson, whose belief is unswerving. On an occasion when he told her that George was in 'a highly nervous condition' and so best left alone, she reacted with 'hungry and dangerous'

eyes and pronounced it 'a remorse complex' (Ford 1923, p. 102/3). She clings firmly to this view, to the extent of offending Marie Elizabeth with suggestions that a 'girl in Berlin' with whom George might not have 'behaved quite. . .' makes it certain that his complex was 'the Remorse one!' (Ford 1923, p. 104) As Barbara Farnworth points out, Freudian terms were accessible to the public, if not fully understood, in the war years (Farnworth 2015, p. 86). Ford could, therefore, assume that contemporary readers understood the 'eclectic, diluted'[11] versions of Freudian theory in circulation and would have recognized that, as Jessop makes clear, Miss Jeaffreson's confident assertions were no guarantee of expertise.

Jessop labels her 'an Intellectual' whose discipline he never discovered and who he suspects of being merely an 'appreciative audience to whoever was on the most advanced fringe of thought' (Ford 1923, p. 31). In effect, he makes exactly the kind of insinuation of which he accuses Miss Jeaffreson, seeding doubt about her competence to make such judgements. Yet his own judgements are often based on little more than inference. In the example above, for instance, he extrapolates from his own reactions to Miss Jeaffreson to her impact on George. It is significant, therefore, that he says that her capacity to talk 'a great deal more' than he recounts, would leave him 'all of a dither' as he tried not to listen (Ford 1923, p. 40). As to be 'all of a dither' means to be agitated, Jessop's claim here is that relentless talk of itself is mentally disturbing. It is an oblique challenge to the therapy to which Miss Jeaffreson is so attached, which became known as the 'talking cure', a phrase coined by Breuer's patient, Anna O, who also described it as '"chimney sweeping."' (Breuer and Freud 1937, p. 20). Of course, Breuer's therapy and Freud's own approach rested on the patient doing the talking rather than being subjected to it, but the intimation that talk, of itself, might disturb recurs later in the novel. At this point Jessop uses it to make Miss Jeaffreson dangerous on two levels, her insistence on the value of talking, and her determined use of a language which 'tabulated' the subtleties of human relationships (Ford 1923, p. 31). Her account of a professor inferring Jessop's views on the relationships between the sexes from his writing leaves him appalled. In part, this is because he sees that it gives him the kind of cachet which motivates Miss Jeaffreson to attempt to cast personal and literary 'snares' around him (Ford 1923, p. 32). It is more than a personal criticism, however, because Jessop's claim to be interested in human relationships but not in reducing them to categories is an assertion that his narrative offers a more holistic understanding of the 'Marsden Case' than such psychological theories. This is not new territory for Ford. His Edwardian novels, such as *Mr. Apollo* (1908), engage in the contemporary debate about the limits of scientific rationalism (Mizener 1971, p. 140). Freud, originally a neurologist and allied to the medical profession, can be read as representative of the authority of Science. Jessop, with his attentiveness to language, stands for Literature, and the challenge it offers to the kind of categorization on which Science depends. This matters because, in Miss Jeaffreson's hands, Freud's theories become labels applied to people. Jessops' narrative shows the damage that this can do.

The narrative which Jessop offers is designed to show how successive conflicts layer up George's problems over time, with language and talk central to this process. Podd attaches the word 'bastard' to George, Miss Jeaffreson the term 'complexes' and Clarice's father, Dr. Robins, a general practitioner who studies '"Nerves"' as a 'hobby' (Ford 1923, p. 164), worries that George might become a 'neurasthenic husband' to his daughter (Ford 1923, p. 260). This is worth pause for its intertextuality with an extract from an unpublished piece of Ford's war writing, *That Same Poor Man*, in which a young man who had served in the war consults a mind specialist as to whether he 'dare propose to marry'(Ford 1999b, p. 266). The ex-soldier worries that he is going mad because he could not bear to hear 'vivid words concerning the late war' (Ibid). After laying 'bare his mind' to 'The Specialist' he is simply advised to avoid such words, to marry, have a family and live with his 'dreads for a year or two' (Ibid). Its parallel in *The Marsden Case*, is Dr. Robins' speculation that George's brain has been affected by two years of 'silent worrying' about his illegitimacy and 'six months of disturbed hell!' at the hands of 'that infernal Jeaffreson woman'.(Ford 1923, p. 164) Much as the mind specialist advised the young soldier to avoid 'vivid words', so

Dr. Robins argues that George needs to escape such pressure or he will have a worse time than anyone 'before these days' could imagine, from 'sheer gnawing of the mind' (Ford 1923, p. 164). The reference to 'these days' constitutes a claim to modern knowledge, to an acceptance of psychological factors in nervous illness.[12] Yet, in labelling Miss Jeafferson 'infernal' he distances himself from her, as if drawing the line at Freudian theory. However, though his prognoses imply specialist knowledge, he is a general practitioner whose work is mostly midwifery. In practice, therefore, he shares with Miss Jeaffreson an amateur status in relationship to nervous illness and a personal agenda. His desire to protect his daughter makes him quick to leap to examination and diagnosis of George's frenetic behaviour when they first meet. George was not technically his patient and he was no more entitled to diagnose than Miss Jeaffreson, but he did, leaving Jessop to later reflect that it had not been 'perhaps very good for George' because he 'put into the boy's head ideas of nervous symptoms that would have been just as well not there' (Ford 1923, p. 257). Saunders points out that it is an 'alarming psychological truth' that mental illness can be produced in this way (Saunders 2002, p. 145). In Jessop's narrative it is a suggestion that George was damaged by Robins, effectively adding another reason to those he had already offered as causal in George's eventual suicide attempt. Alongside hereditary predisposition, uncertainty of origin, and interpersonal tensions is the power of language. Sara Haslam's observation that, post-war, Ford lost belief in 'the power of words to induce comfort and happiness', is supported by *The Marsden Case* (Haslam 2002, p. 84). In Jessop's story words are presented as more likely to hurt than to heal.

It is important to note that the range of reasons Jessop proposes for George's despair do not arise from his war service but predate or are adjacent to it, unlike the character in *That Same Poor Man* whose problems arise directly from his soldiering. However, the war itself magnifies some of George's problems, notably national origin. For instance, when war breaks out, George is told by Clarice that he will need to prove that he is not 'a German spy' (Ford 1923, p. 152). Whilst Jessop initially dismisses the suggestion as 'melodramatic' (Ford 1923, p. 152), he quickly concedes that, in the strained season of 1914, even singing German songs in a night club would necessitate such proof. Lucinda Borkett Jones reads the novel as inherently concerned with 'identity politics' and reflective of Ford's 'own experience of wartime anti-German hatred in Britain' (Borkett-Jones 2019, p. 165). Certainly, in Part 2, George's inability to prove his legitimacy as the son of an English peer drives the plot. This, and the potential threat of internment facing Marie Elizabeth, leads Jessop and his brother to insist that it is George's 'plain duty' to go and 'fetch' his father from Germany (Ford 1923, p. 158). It is an interesting development, not least because George has a letter from his father stating that 'on no account in the world' should he go to him if war broke out (Ford 1923, p. 152/3). It is a letter Jessop claims that he was unable to read because his 'mind would not stick to the longer sentences' (Ford 1923, p. 152/3), constituting another hint that Jessop's own story is not straightforward. Jessop's first meeting with George was only three weeks before the outbreak of war. The almost coercive influence he and his brother exert over George conveys the precariousness of his uncertain nationality. It certainly persuades him to travel to Germany, contrary to the instructions of the father of whom George says that if 'anything happened to him' he would 'go out of (his) mind' (Ford 1923, p. 157).

Once there, he learns that his father has hung himself and is prevented from either seeing the body or attending a funeral. As a result, Jessop says, George developed a 'terrible and powerful obsession' with the image of his father hanging from a 'great height, with pigs rooting in the leaves underneath' (Ford 1923, p. 211). It became a persistent obsession which eventually, 'by its very wrongness' saved George's life (Ford 1923, p. 211). Despite this obviously difficult bereavement, Jessop's narrative focuses on the mental stress caused by the German officials who detained George. His bereavement is barely mentioned other than by reference to George's comment that it had been 'hell!' to be alone with the knowledge of his father's death and the thought that he might have prevented it had he gone a day earlier (Ford 1923, p. 216). Instead Jessop concentrates on the feeling of 'near suffocation' generated by the 'impression of overwhelming power' that the officials created

in George (Ford 1923, p. 216). He feared both that he might never escape and that he might 'unconsciously' attack a man he refers to as 'the Assessor' and come to himself to find him 'choked at his feet!' (Ford 1923, p. 217). This, rather than bereavement or the 'impression' that he was captive is what George experienced as the 'most ghastly feeling of his life' (Ford 1923, p. 217). George's 'hell' lies in the conflict he experiences. His sense of being caught between not wanting to assault the man and fearing that he might is presented as a battle between his 'intellect' and an 'impulse' which, were he to 'give way to' it, would signal that he had 'gone mad' (Ford 1923, p. 217).

It would be perverse to claim that this representation does not carry undertones of Freudian concepts, but it is useful to hold open other possibilities. After all, the notion of a shadow self which might elude control has literary heritage in, for instance, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Stevenson, or in the doppelganger, a figure which features in Ford's later *When the Wicked Man* (1931). Equally, Dowell's claim in *The Good Soldier* that 'the passionate, the headstrong, and the too-truthful are condemned to suicide and to madness' resonates with the way Jessop positions George (Ford 2012, p. 167). Jessop's focus on captivity, foreign officials, and intimations of violence all hint at the war in the oblique style for which the novel is noted. Yet, the tension between wanting and not wanting to kill also carries literary import. Borkett Jones records the ambivalence to the hostilities felt by authors steeped in prewar German culture and literature, including Ford (Borkett-Jones 2019, pp. 109–13). George, whose dispute with Podd arose from his affiliation with Curtius, a German Professor of English Literature, represents such figures. Much like authors who 'hated the German military machine' but could not bring themselves to hate the 'German people' (Borkett-Jones 2019, p. 109), when his release is arranged by Curtius, George does 'not really doubt' the humanity which the poet is at pains to claim for his compatriots (Ford 1923, p. 224). Although George will ultimately enlist to fight against the country which betrayed his father's belief in its 'honour' by crossing the Belgian Border, he is more associated with the literary and words than with soldiering and weapons (Ford 1923, p. 223).

It matters, therefore, that Dr. Robins told him that the mental dissonance he had experienced had a 'definite scientific name amongst mad doctors' one denoting that he had been 'pretty near either suicidal or murderous mania' (Ford 1923, p. 218). George's inability to recall the precise term is less relevant than the doctor seeding the idea of his susceptibility to a mania in which he might kill someone else, or himself. Jessop's accusation that Dr. Robins put ideas in George's head carries force here. It is part of the case Jessop is making, that George's attempted suicide was related to the words used about him. For instance, on George's return to England he falls foul of two journalists of the 'less reputable press' (Ford 1923, p. 67) who hated Germany and Jessop, loved Podd, and who had been at the night club when George had performed 'German songs' (Ford 1923, p. 152). They write of George as 'a dangerous alien' speaking perfect English and dressed 'in the uniform of an officer in the Guards' (Ford 1923, p. 267). When public belief in their claims leads to the burning down of his boarding-house, killing his 'landlady, an old German woman', a coroner concludes that, as someone himself suspect, George should have been more prudent than to reside with another alien. He therefore holds George 'morally responsible for the old thing's death' (Ford 1923, p. 277). The Evening Paper suggests that both George and his landlady should have 'been shot on Tower Hill' (Ford 1923, p. 277). These are no longer people with any direct connection to George, but representatives of a society trapped in and destabilized by war, and they attack in words. George is suspect, alien, dangerous and even imprudent. He defends himself not in words but in action, going missing for three days until found by Clarice and placed in the care of her father.

Part 2 of the novel is, as Ambrose Gordon observed, overcrowded with developments (Gordon 1964, p. 27). George's misfortunes accumulate with indecent haste. His open court case places him in breach of bail conditions. He is the subject of public censure. Well-meaning attempts by Mr. Pflugschmied to raise international awareness of what he labels the 'persecution' of the 'heirs to Marsden Moor' by 'British Officialdom' rebound

on George (Ford 1923, p. 279). As his problems stockpile and interweave, it becomes easy to lose sight of George himself, as his friends do. In the immediate period before his suicide attempt George kept 'his mouth absolutely shut' on personal matters, confining his exchanges to topics of interest to others: America with Mr. Pflugschmied, chickens with his sister, his outstanding court case with Miss Jeaffreson's brother, and 'psychotherapeutics' and 'auto-suggestion' with Miss Jeaffreson (Ford 1923, p. 280). In other words, they talk at him. Financially stretched and low spirited themselves, they fail to notice that George has become withdrawn. He is eventually roused by Pflugschmied's misreporting of a chicken guana formula which George had hoped to sell to supplement their income. It led to another attack on him, this time by an 'enraged scientist' because the faulty formula would 'kill any green thing' (Ford 1923, p. 283). This 'finally broke George's patience' (Ford 1923, p. 283).

Although 'by then raging mad', George's commitment to decorous behaviour meant none of his companions 'suspected anything' (Ford 1923, p. 283/4). Nor apparently did Jessop. At least, though he noted George's 'deadness of voice', slow movement and listless questioning of him when he was witness at his trial, he was more preoccupied with his own feelings (Ford 1923, p. 284). He was disappointed that his expectation of recognition, having travelled a long way to help George, 'never came,' (Ford 1923, p. 284) and was 'bitterly hurt' by George's 'absolute indifference' to his congratulations on his acquittal (Ford 1923, p. 288). George had responded 'that they hadn't had a leg to stand on' in 'a ghostly—really a ghostly!—voice' (Ibid). Jessop also describes George's voice as like a machine. It is a depiction which suggests the kind of dissociation frequently associated with trauma, in which a person is numb or feels detachment from a physical sense of self (MIND (The National Association For Mental Health) n.d.). If Jessop had noted these things at the time, he had not acted on them but simply accepted Clarice's explanation that George was avoiding her not him, to honour his promise to her father. When she assures him that she is not 'going to let anything *happen* to George' she effectively 'took him off' Jessop's hands, and 'gradually (he) forgot George' (Ford 1923, p. 292/3). Like George's other friends, Jessop could be accused of not caring enough but if this is a retrospective admission of culpability, it is offered without contrition. Why might this be? Jessop's slight acquaintance with George or his hurt feelings are plausible reasons. More pertinent to the case Jessop is making, however, is the sense that any potential negligence on his part was the least of George's problems. George was tipped into the kind of madness which led to his suicide attempt not by any single factor but by the gradual accretion of different kinds of pressure. Notably, the final straw for George was reaching the conclusion that he would 'have to write to the papers!' (Ford 1923, p. 315) In other words, he would have to break his silence on personal matters and put painful things into words. The challenge of putting difficult experiences into words is something Ford himself noted during the war (See Ford 1999a, p. 37), and his recovery from it has been attributed to his 'ability to write about them' (Chantler and Hawkes 2015, p. 5). However, the depictions in *The Marsden Case* are more equivocal. Of course, in this narrative it is Jessop putting things into words. It is not George's unmediated account of his experiences, but a story shaped by Jessop. As he narrates George's story, Jessop reveals his own.

2.2. A Shadow Story

Jessop's story unfolds in the language he uses and in the questions it raises. For instance, why does he feel the need to tell the story of the 'Marsden Case' at all? Why does he empathize so strongly with a young man he had never met before, to the extent that the 'look of pain on that boy's face' was 'too much' for him? (Ford 1923, p. 14) A clue lies in his description of George's voice as 'ghostly'. Jessop's story is haunted. Told with hindsight and from the perspective of a man recently returned from distinguished war service, it is partly a lament for a time when the 'old George' had been a 'courteous, and visionary boy' (Ford 1923, p. 334) and Jessop could let his brother leave for war without having resolved a disagreement between them. However, its retrospective nature

is significant psychologically. Karolyn Steffens argues for 'belatedness' as central to both Freud's conception of trauma and Ford's writing about it (Steffens 2015, p. 41). In both, the retrospective revisiting of the original traumatic experience is an attempt to regain emotional and cognitive ownership of events which defied this at the time. This raises the possibility that Jessop's narrative constitutes his own effort to come to terms with events.

As discussed, Jessop's narrative focuses on George. It is notable that he draws attention to George's apparent 'foreignness' from the outset (Ford 1923, p. 4). In their first meeting, Jessop is 'certain that he was as English as could be' (Ford 1923, p. 6), whilst Podd is commensurately uncertain about this 'man without origins, without a name' (Ford 1923, p. 12). That George is a form of cipher for the experience of war is betrayed not only by questions of identity, shown above to be of huge import in wartime, but by Jessop's language. Podd's accusations of illegitimacy are words which 'detonated' (Ford 1923, p. 12). Jessop tells him to 'hold (his) tongue' (Ford 1923, p. 12) for fear that George might kill him. The 'note of pain' in George's voice is compared with a soldier 'half of whose chest had just been blown away' (Ford 1923, p. 13). When George put his hands to Podd's throat Jessop 'imagined' Podd's 'obscene blue eyes being pushed by strangulation out of their sockets' (Ford 1923, p. 13). Violence permeates Jessop's account of this first meeting. Violence, and fear. He claims to have been frightened throughout and 'could have screamed' (Ford 1923, p. 13) before George stopped, just short of strangulation. Vivid images of physical violence are accompanied by intimations that words themselves are dangerous, that they could make the situation explode. Just as he advises Podd to avert danger by saying nothing, Jessop asks George to 'cut some of this out', to curtail his allegations to avoid litigation (Ford 1923, p. 8). George, however, insisted that 'one must be prepared to stick to his words' (Ford 1923, p. 15) and Podd 'perjured himself' (Ford 1923, p. 10) to obtain a warrant. They conduct a battle of words which, when Jessop says it made him 'more afraid than I can tell you' (Ford 1923, p. 13), suggests hyperbole. Why would an argument between a man he found repugnant and another he barely knew make Jessop so afraid that he can't voice it? One answer is suggested by his emphasis on sound, on Podd's howling, which 'gave the effect of half a dozen men all caterwauling together' (Ford 1923, p. 13) against George's calm denunciations, a 'feat of self-control' (Ford 1923, p. 16). Jessop may have survived the war, but it has not left him. Podd's loudness and George's stillness mirror the alternation between falling bombs and periods of tense calm in trench warfare, and between men like McKechnie in *Parade's End* who shout obscenities under bombing (Ford 2011, p. 113) and those like Tietjens who block their fear by not putting it into words.[13]

Jessop's account of the personal dispute is a way of talking about the bigger conflict into which they were all soon to walk but his evasiveness is not wholly war related. His claim to have been more afraid that he could say it is not simply a suggestion that some things are too difficult to put into words. It is counsel that, as he advocated to George and Podd, it is sometimes better not to do so. His comments on writing about the war illustrate this. 'This is not', he asserts, 'a war novel' (Ford 1923, p. 143). Though he would 'willingly wipe out of (his) mind every sight. . .. every sound. . .every memory' (Ford 1923, p. 143), of the war, it is 'impossible' and would be a 'wicked' capitulation to the demands of 'non-participants' to do so (Ford 1923, p. 144). It is a direct challenge to the position of those who, like the specialist in *That Same Poor Man*, assert that no one wanted to hear about the war. For Jessop, acquiescence constitutes a denial of the 'Armageddon' which had 'seared' the 'eyes, the ears, the brain and the fibres of every soul to-day adult' (Ford 1923, p. 144). This is an arresting statement, centred on the word 'sear' which literally means to scorch flesh with intense heat. Its associations with damage, impairment, and disfigurement conjure up the physical wounds of war. In parallel, the image conveys the sense of an experience indelibly branded not only on the physical senses, but on the mind. Ford recorded his own inability to put into words the 'extraordinarily coloured and exact pictures' in his mind, as if his brain had stopped or closed down (Ford 1999a, p. 37). Jessop might feel that he ought to put words to the images but if he is unable to do so, it will create the same mental conflict and dissonance that George experienced about killing.

Additionally, if war experiences are inexpressible, then there is no obvious salve in the way there might be for a physical wound. Just as the slightest touch on a wound revives pain, so talking about painful experiences might revive mental anguish. When Jessop refers to every person 'now adult' he co-joins anyone who lived through the war to this mental wound. Taken alone, this serves as a justification for his obliqueness about the war. When combined with explicit references to Freud in his narrative, it suggests something more. Freud explained his therapy as 'nothing. . .but an exchange of words' between patient and therapist (Freud 1922, p. 13). It was an exchange designed to effect a cure when a therapist brought the unconscious mental processes driving symptoms into a patient's conscious understanding (Freud 1922, p. 237).

It signifies, therefore, that Jessop directly questions whether talking helps to reduce or merely cements painful experiences. He lays out the debate early in the novel when he when he muses that:

> it has never been really settled whether, if you have a sensitive spot in your consciousness, it is better to avoid dwelling on it so that, as it were, you may efface it by the friction—as you may rub spots out of clothing. There is one school that holds you should "dwell" . . .. .But there are others who say that, by dwelling on these painfulnesses, you raise all sorts of buried reminiscences, all sorts of remorse for past sins, omissions, or mere foolishness. (Ford 1923, pp. 23–24)

This raises the stakes. It is not only other people's words which might damage, but one's own, vocalized or merely thought. Jessop's narrative is itself a dwelling on past events. It begs the question of why he is so concerned with the experiences of a man with whom he spent part of a day and had a few subsequent meetings before becoming largely estranged? One answer is that George is a case study for Jessop, himself 'a newly recovered nerve patient' (Ford 1923, p. 335). He is a container for what Jessop wants to say about psychological breakdown.

This makes it pertinent that Jessop's nervous problems predate his war service. Part 2 opens with him at his brother Fred's home, 'enervated and weak in all (his) joints' (Ford 1923, p. 138). He 'wasn't well' but neither was he 'ill' and called in Dr. Robins 'out of curiosity rather' (Ford 1923, p. 138). Yet despite Jessop's minimizing, a prescription of bed rest proved unnecessary because he 'did not want to get up at all' (Ford 1923, p. 138). Indeed, he often did not get up until dinner time, but then dressed for it. These contradictions obfuscate Jessop's problems. However, that he is referring to a pre-war period is confirmed when he dates a conversation during this illness with George as 'on the fifteenth of July, two days after the evening of the Night Club' when he had been at his brother's home for 'just twenty-four hours'.(Ford 1923, p. 141) He then states that for the following 17 or 18 days things were quiet because the doctor ordered that people be 'kept away' from him (Ford 1923, p. 141/2). The implication here is that Jessop had been placed on bed rest, a cure often used with neurasthenic patients (Shorter 1997, p. 129), of whom Dr. Robins later remarks that there are 'more of those in the country than you would think' (Ford 1923, p. 162). However, this relative peace after what Jessop recalls as 'that hateful end of a season' (Ford 1923, p. 142) proved to be the lull before the storm.

When Jessop saw Professor Curtius with 'an engrossed expression' and his 'expressionless' brother pass by his window he says that he 'knew that there was going to be a war' (Ford 1923, p. 143). He dates this as 2nd August, after which Fred is 'agitating' him with suspicions about the Heimanns and Curtius (Ford 1923, p. 145). He recounts 'worrying as in a nightmare' about his culpability in George's decision not to have secured the birth certificate which would have proved his nationality (Ford 1923, p. 147). He was clearly still unwell because this is the point at which he says that he had been unable to concentrate sufficiently to read the letter from George's father. He recalls only 'a sprawling, masculine hand' which suggested to him that it was the letter of 'a madman—of a man mad with pain, perhaps' (Ford 1923, p. 154). Notice how a man's words can lead him to be labelled a 'madman'. It is another instance of Jessop projecting, and revealing, his own pain. This

is reinforced by the fact that the conversation in which he and Fred pressure George into going to Germany ends 'untidily, with sentences left unfinished', and a reminder from Dr Robins that Jessop is his 'patient' (Ford 1923, p. 159). Jessop's illness, however, does not deter Dr. Robins from questioning him about George, who he thinks 'wants looking after' (Ford 1923, p. 161). Asked how he knows, he responds 'I study: I collect: neurasthenic symptoms' (Ford 1923, p. 162). If what Dr. Robins looks for are neurasthenic symptoms, then that is what he will find. It is a remark which suggests that his offer to look after George carries a pre-determined diagnosis. It is also a subtle way in which Jessop calls into question his own treatment.

Apart from the fact that Jessop was ill, these conversations are from recall at least seven years later[14], making the accuracy of his account doubtful. For example, he claims that during this period he 'had to go up to Town twice for that confounded trial', something Dr Robins had sanctioned and to which his brother had driven him (Ford 1923, p. 139). His description of the trial outcome indicates that he means the one between George and Podd, but he had earlier said that this did not take place until May or June 1915, by which time he was 'an officer of Her Majesty's Army' (Ford 1923, p. 10). Additionally, his earlier claim to have been cross-examined is replaced by the complaint that he 'was not even called to give evidence' (Ford 1923, p. 142). He dates the trial as taking place on the twentieth and twenty-first of July (Ford 1923, p. 139) and much later in the narrative places the 'final stage of the Podd trial' in the middle of July, a year after the initial altercation with George (Ford 1923, p. 283). As if accounting for the earlier discrepancy, Jessop mentions that it was meant to have taken place in May twice and June once but had been adjourned by Podd's counsel. Yet, this does not account for the confusion. Jessop's period of illness had been at the end of the 1914 season shortly after meeting George, which does not align with the trial dates, and it seems highly unlikely that Dr. Robins would have released a patient who was sequestered, bedridden and being prescribed 'cat's valerian' (Ford 1923, p. 138). Valerian, a herb with mild tranquillizing effects used for insomnia and anxiety was, 'during the First World War [. . ..] a primary treatment for shell shock' (Cummings 2002, p. 39). Its mention raises the issue of why and when it was prescribed for Jessop, of whether he suffered a second breakdown. More important than the question, however, is what the apparent confusion signifies.

The possibility that the discrepancies are Ford's error is undermined by the repetition in the latter stages of the novel that the trial happened in 1915. It is more plausible to assume that the confusion is deliberate and designed to convey that Jessop's recall is unstable. This matters because the reader is in Jessop's hands, following the case he makes. It is a narrative offered by a man who self identifies as an 'only just recovering neurasthenic' and who strongly identifies with George (Ford 1923, p. 328). This is the point of the 'Marsden Case'. It allows Jessop to displace onto George an account of how cumulative pressures can become intolerable and fracture even stable minds. After all, George is judged by Dr Robins to be 'twice as stolid' as the 'relatively degenerate' Jessop (Ford 1923, p. 164). Robins' positioning of Jessop as degenerate is complex. Scull argues that Morel's 1857 Treatise on degeneration influenced perceptions for generations (Scull 2015, p. 243). It perpetuated a view of biological inferiority mirrored in medical and literary texts, notably Émile Zola's *Les Rougon-Macquart* series, which portrays characters whose madness or suicide derives from their ancestry (Scull 2015, p. 247). Jessop, therefore, appears to be 'tainted' and so predisposed to breakdown under pressure (Scull 2015, p. 244). However, as Scull points out, medics increasingly found degeneration to be an uncomfortable explanation when applied to those who fought in the war, as Jessop did (Ibid). It creates an ambivalence about the cause of his problems. Taylor Downing, in exploring shell shock in the First World War from the perspective of the military response to it provides useful insight (Downing 2017). He identifies a distinction in diagnoses of nervous problems between rank-and-file soldiers and officers. Whilst ordinary soldiers were commonly described as suffering from shell shock, 'often seen as a form of hysteria', officers were more often diagnosed with 'neurasthenia', an illness attributed to being worn down by their responsibilities (Downing

2017, p. 89). Furthermore, in the early phases of the war, medical staff were inclined to believe that those with a past history of nervous conditions were 'much more likely to be affected' (Downing 2017, p. 92). Jessop's claim, therefore, to be a newly recovered neurasthenic does not preclude the possibility that he suffered shell shock during the war, a point further discussed below.

However, as Jessop was ill before his war service, it is useful to examine how he portrays the immediate war period. He explains that no-one seemed to bother about George because there was 'too much' else to of concern with when the 'very slates on the roof' seemed to 'be whispering agitated news' (Ford 1923, p. 150). He suggests a kind of systemic hysteria in which everyone was caught. This reflects the change in tone between the two parts of the novel. Part 1, a day crowded with people and with competing demands on Jessop, appears to lead to the collapse which leaves him enervated at the start of Part 2. Part 1 personalizes the pressures faced by individuals, such as the incessant talk which agitates both George and Jessop. The opening of Part 2 foregrounds the anxiety of imminent war which envelops all the characters. If no-one is immune from such pressures, why does it appear to affect Jessop more acutely? This question suggests why Jessop reviews the other case of nervous breakdown he knows, that of George. Jessop's narrative essentially explores whether it helps to dwell on painful experiences, using his own and George's experience as cases. This is why the issue of talk permeates the account; the excess of it and the lack of it. The impossibility and undesirability of effacing the war does not, for Jessop, translate into a need to immerse himself or others in painful topics. George, on the other hand, is plunged into painful discussions, both personally and professionally.

One way to illustrate this is through the treatment of loss and grief. George's grief at the death of a man he knew to be his father, but who he could neither acknowledge as such nor be acknowledged by, was likely to have been complex but Jessop gives it little space. To understand why this might be, it helps to notice a litany of deaths in the narrative. For instance, Jessop records that his brother and Curtius, are now 'both dead of course' (Ford 1923, p. 150). Miss Scott, who hosted the Ladies Club literary event he attended in that 1914 season, he believes was 'killed in an air-raid. Anyhow, she is dead. I wish she wasn't' (Ford 1923, p. 69). A 'poor fellow' who took courage from hearing Clarice sing and feeling as if he was 'in a teashop: in Blighty' is also 'dead now' (Ford 1923, p. 272). The blend of small, personalizing details with the blunt factual statement of their death gives each instance impact. Taken together they are the kind of memorializing for which Jessop argues. They are not forgotten, individually or collectively. The simple wish that Miss Scott was still alive stands for all the war dead. By implication, it is not necessary to dwell on the detail. In contrast, George holds onto a vivid image of his father's death to the extent that he tries to recreate it. Jessop describes it as a detrimental obsession, something which finds its parallel perhaps in his own inability to remove from his memory the sights and sounds of the war in which he had fought.

Jessop subtly highlights similarities in their nervous problems. Much of his description of the way George is subjected to talk and 'pushed into. . .. combat by the united strength of his women', can be seen as a form of projective identification (Ford 1923, p. 27). In part, this is because it is never entirely clear why Jessop becomes sufficiently ill to need rest and care within days of meeting George. He mentions briefly that two to three days earlier he had 'been so badly manhandled by a woman' that he did not 'rightly know what (he) was doing' (Ford 1923, p. 83). He would 'see things vividly for an hour or so, and then. . .. dimness—a wavering' in which he could hear himself 'speaking collectedly or with cynicism' (Ford 1923, p. 84). It was, he claims, the worst sort of '"underself"' to have!' (Ford 1923, p. 84) The placing of 'underself' in quotation marks implies that Jessop is drawing on specific terminology in circulation, but not with any conviction. The obvious implication is that it relates to Miss Jeaffreson's Freudian lectures to him. However, Ford's use of the term connects this scene back to some of his Edwardian novels exploring different states of consciousness,[15] where it is linked not to Freud but to Frederick Myers.[16] When Jessop says he heard himself speaking, it suggests a mental activity outside his conscious

awareness. This connects to a recurring motif in Ford's oeuvre; the idea of different levels of knowing, best illustrated by Dowell, in *The Good Soldier*. Jessop's reference to an 'underself', therefore, creates intertextuality with Ford's pre-war novels and primes the observation that Jessop's experience of mental detachment from his surroundings is comparable to the scene in *The Good Soldier* when Dowell discovers Florence's infidelity.[17] Both represent a form of dissociation. This perhaps explains why Jessop finds George's introspection courageous. Where George steps into the pain, Jessop steps outside of it. This is reflected in the treatments they undergo. Jessop has people kept away from him, is given a drug designed to reduce anxiety and lies in bed reading novels but not 'excitable journals' (Ford 1923, p. 143). The letter from George's father presumably constituted excitable material, but its significance goes beyond this. It contained words from a mind not in control of itself, someone Jessop labelled a 'madman'. Jessop chooses to say less and so shield himself from such judgements.

Hence, just as it is unclear precisely how Jessop became ill, his recovery is equally opaque. In September 1915 he appears to be well for he could by then 'read quickly' the documents showing Marie Elizabeth's legitimacy and lend her money for the court case (Ford 1923, p. 299). He recalls Clarice accompanying him to the train station in September 1915 when his 'last leave' had been curtailed. This seems to spark a memory of a train station at Hazebrouck where he was waiting for a train to return him to the front. This setting is itself suggestive for, as Trevor Dodman argues in his discussion of the opening scene of *Some Do Not*. . ., 'railway spine', a term used to capture nervous disorders following rail accidents, can be seen as a precursor for shell shock (Dodman 2015, p. 6). It signifies too that Jessop dates the Hazebrouck memory hesitantly, as February 1917, two years into his war service (Ford 1923, p. 301). Jessop's statement that he was 'not well, of course' and 'had just come out of hospital', is another clue (Ford 1923, p. 302). However, his added 'I think' makes it uncertain. He expected to see the 'invalid N.C.O'. but instead saw Clarice, who refers to him as 'Dear Ernest', complains that he never wrote, and suggests that he allow George to 'get (him) a staff job' because he is 'not fit' and 'can't go on' (Ford 1923, p. 303/4). Why Clarice might have been in France in September 1917 is unexplained. Their exchange ends with Jessop saying that 'She must have put her right foot down on the invisible ballast, and there was nothing but inky darkness beneath my face' (Ford 1923, p. 304). It is clearly an unstable memory, confused perhaps in time or place. It could be a hallucination especially as it coincides with 'A *great* crash' which he attributes to a German bomb destroying much of the train on which he was waiting (Ford 1923, p. 304). At least he 'daresay that was what it was', but he had 'nothing personal to record' and was 'not, after that, much good' until 1921 (Ford 1923, p. 304). Whether he had been in hospital before or after the bombing is unclear. Under its impact, however, he appears to have lost consciousness and been badly affected. As no physical injuries are mentioned, it implies shell shock. Dodman's observation that the 'fractured and confusing chronologies' in *Parade's End* 'stand in for shell shock's insidious disruptions to consciousness, memory and time' can equally be claimed for Jessop's account (Dodman 2015, p. 53).

However, by the time he encounters George, now Lord Marsden, in 1921 he was 'supposed to be cured;' having recently returned from 'a cold-water-cure institute' (Ford 1923, p. 324). This had been 'the last stage of a mental pilgrimage begun among beastly horrors, lasting for horrible years' (Ford 1923, p. 324). He now had 'the insatiable craving of one nearly come back into active life—for the details of active life' (Ford 1923, p. 326). The claim to desire a return to life works on two levels. It implies both the physical near death of surviving the train bombing, and the war, but also implies a form of death in life from years of mental suffering which had culminated in his treatment at the cold-water-cure institute. There is a correspondence between what Jessop does not make explicit and the craving for action, for immersion with other people and their lives. It expresses a desire for a turn outward, not inward. This is the essence of the storyline of Jessops' illness. Outwardly he tells George's story, but he weaves through it incomplete, ambiguous accounts of his own illness, leaving readers to deduce that he had suffered shell shock, and possibly amnesia.

It is an intimation lent weight by the knowledge of Ford's own experience at the Somme (Saunders 2012b, p. 2), about which he was less equivocal than his narrator character, writing to his daughter that he 'wasn't so much wounded as blown up by a 4.2 (inch artillery shell) and shaken into a nervous breakdown' (Saunders 2012b, p. 23). Jessop, in this reading, is as damaged as the man whose story he purports to tell.

2.3. To Dwell or Not to Dwell

It is in the telling of the two stories that Jessop explores how best to deal with mental distress. His own story reflects a 'least said, soonest mended' philosophy. In contrast, George's nervous illness is inherently associated with talk. George himself admits to not 'bearing. . .very well' the 'alternations. And the talk', or 'The Jeaffrresons [. . ..] on the 'phone for hours' (Ford 1923, p. 153). George, a man attuned to the power of language, is unable to keep their words out of his ears. He is a man keen to stay out of the Press who repeatedly finds himself a topic in newspapers. Miss Jeaffreson and Dr. Robins, in putting terminology to his behaviours and feelings, influence how he sees himself. Even questions from Dr Robins about 'buzzings in the ears, voices, visions, obsessions', are enough to give George 'ideas' (Ford 1923, p. 259). Both could be accused of having their own obsessions: Dr. Robins with finding neurasthenic symptoms and Miss Jeaffreson with Freud. If Dr. Robins' obsessions put ideas into George's head, Miss Jeaffreson's determined his treatment. When she finds George 'rushing backwards and forwards, like a mad sentry, between two thorn trees' she follows him, repeatedly telling him that 'if he did not keep still he would go mad' (Ford 1923, p. 315). When Jessop adds that he 'daresay it was a good thing to do' he insinuates the opposite. He credits her with at least recognizing that George was beyond her ability to help and with getting him to 'a soul-straightener of sorts, a man in whom she had implicit confidence' (Ford 1923, p. 314/5). That Jessop does not share this confidence is revealed in the qualifier 'of sorts'. He goes on to say:

> What that soul-straightener did to George I don't know. I have as to these matters an absolutely open mind. George told Clarice that the fellow made the whole of his past life rush before him in a few seconds, like an adder going through heather on a hot day. (Ford 1923, p. 315)

The simile for George's experience of the process conjures up the image of a snake slithering by so swiftly that you might doubt having quite seen it. The specificity of an adder, the only venomous British snake, implies a kind of poisoning as past images flash through George's mind. It conveys at least ambivalence about the method. Whether it is Jessop's or George's simile is ambiguous, but Jessop's position is less so. He undercuts the claim in his first sentence by describing the method as designed to dig up 'secrets of the past' (Ford 1923, p. 316). Not only does he know its purpose, but he provides examples of the treatment. His description of word association is oversimplified to invite derision: if the doctor says the word 'Father!' and a patient 'instantaneously. . .answered "Kicks!" they knew he had a brutal male progenitor' (Ford 1923, p. 316). George, however, had confounded this with his response of 'Swine!' (Ford 1923, p. 316) Whilst the expert interpreted this to mean that 'George's father had behaved badly to him', in fact, George had been recalling the image of the pigs beneath his hanged father (Ford 1923, p. 316). It was these pigs, Jessop proposes, that 'really saved George'[18] or the policeman or 'of course, Clarice' (Ford 1923, p. 316). The comments that it 'may well have been the soul-straightening expert!' and that the process was probably 'all right' lack conviction (Ford 1923, p. 316). When he follows them with the observation that the process, which 'took a long time for completion: days, hours, or years!', had been since 'speeded up' he suggests that it almost certainly was not, in fact, 'all right' (Ford 1923, p. 317).

Even if it was effective, Jessop questions the necessity. Miss Jeaffreson may have acted out of 'genuine affection' for George, but her actions were driven by her obsession with getting him to a doctor who practiced the theories she espoused (Ford 1923, p. 315). So dogmatic was her pursuit that she had not 'sense enough' to pass on the information that he would later that day be acknowledged as Earl Marsden (Ford 1923, p. 315). No young

man, Jessop argues, 'would hang himself if he suddenly learned that he had come in for a title and a good lot of money' (Ford 1923, p. 318). Instead, George is left believing that he remains under suspicion as an enemy, a situation only rectified when Clarice showed him the newspaper in which his legitimacy is confirmed (Ford 1923, p. 321). Until this point he had been 'comatose for three days' and Clarice was 'of the opinion' that the treatment by the soul straightener had left 'his poor mind. . .. whirring through all the minutiae of all the unpleasantness that had ever befallen him. '(Ford 1923, p. 321) In a deft sleight of hand Jessop makes Clarice a witness in his case, someone providing evidence to support his doubts about the new talking therapy.

Whether the therapy itself or the inadequacy of the therapist was the blame, there was clearly a failure of the promise that bringing painful issues to the fore somehow resolved them. Kuhn's research uncovered an eclectic approach in Britain with doctors likely to meld hypnotism, suggestion therapy, and Jungian word association techniques with Breuer and Freud's cathartic approach (Kuhn 2016, p. xvi). This is borne out by oral testimony from those who served in the war. For example, a Red Cross nurse recalls that that some doctors 'dabbled' in 'analysis' of the 'Freudian school and whilst such amateurs 'might get the men on their feet for a time' they soon relapsed' (Perry n.d.). Jessop's depiction of Miss Jeaffreson and Dr. Robins as practicing various therapies of which they are not masters of them is part of the case he is making for the damage they did to George. Thus, the suggestion that Miss Jeaffreson's confidence in the therapist to whom she had handed over George was misplaced is reiterated by Jessop when he is reunited with George and Clarice in 1921. He observes that Clarice's 'naïve interest in his (late) maladies' was no more than a quest for hints on what remedies to try if her husband relapsed (Ford 1923, p. 335). To the woman he loves, Jessop represents only a 'sufferer expert in nerve cures of the old-fashioned kind' (Ford 1923, p. 335). Jessop claims Clarice as the source of all he has revealed of George's 'later vicissitudes' (Ford 1923, p. 335), again co-joining her to his account. It was Clarice who told him that 'The Straightener' had said that the failed attempt to hang himself had saved George's 'reason and his life' for only the shock of that 'could have cleared up all the complexes' of his 'worried brain' (Ford 1923, p. 335). This is an explanation with a different theoretical base, that shock could cure. This is one of the points at which, as suggested in the introduction, the novel depicts the confused range of approaches to nervous illness. Ford's inclusion of shock therapy probably reflects exposure to the idea during his war service, for there is some evidence that the idea of a 'reverse shock' strategy was used with shell shock victims (Stagg n.d.). In the novel the reference constitutes an apparent admission that talking therapy had achieved little if George's near-death experience had effected his cure. Certainly, Clarice was determined that he would never try it again. Her appeal to Jessop, with his experience of old-fashioned cold-water institutes, signals lost confidence in the 'newest, auto-suggestion treatments' (Ford 1923, p. 335). Thus, Jessop appears to close the case on the question of whether raking over painful incidents is curative.

Yet his case is not quite complete. Jessop's earlier resistance to people being tabulated, in the way these treatments appear to do, is related to the reminder that he is, after all, 'a poet' (Ford 1923, p. 335). Thus, he speaks as a writer when he says that 'no immensely long psychological analyses' of his would help readers to see how George was driven to attempt the same suicide as his father (Ford 1923, p. 273). Nor would tracing the 'poor boy's brain gradually dissolving' add anything; it would be 'pathology' to 'write all that' (Ford 1923, p. 273). He claims to have no interest in elaborating his account with descriptions of places he had never seen and 'inventions of mental crises for which (his) insight alone was the warrant' (Ford 1923, p. 273). However, this invites scepticism. Jessop's narrative of George's case has included examination of the potential causes of his breakdown, much as a pathologist might study a disease. Though he claims impartiality by citing where information has been relayed to him by others, his recall is shown to be questionable, making it unlikely that he has remembered conversations exactly. He has almost certainly filled in gaps from the personal insight he seeks to disavow. Perhaps most importantly, the

whole story is the one Jessop wants to tell. His promise to the reader had been to create a sense of the world which had put George's mind under such pressure. This is the point of the frantic piling of one incident upon another. It is to show that it is not single big shocks or traumas which push someone to breakdown, but the slow accretion of acts and omissions. The story he tells is of a mind in pain. He can tell George's tale in the way he does because he enters sympathetically into his experiences. Though he may draw on the insights from his own experiences, Jessop is also Ford's author character, someone who need not rely on psychological analyses to show how mental distress is induced or where it leads. He has a facility with words, when to use them and when not.

He has chosen to use them to tell this story. One rationale for it lies in his comment that if the 'Intelligentsia' understood how 'terrible, and how long a strain on the mind war really was' they would not so easily drive 'poor fellows again into such pain in the mind' (Ford 1923, p. 304). Those who fought were not magically shielded from 'all temporal cares' but instead their minds retained the 'old evils, old heartbreaks and the old cruelties' awaiting them at home (Ford 1923, p. 305). This is why Jessop says it is not a war story and is why his pre-war breakdown matters. He had taken these vulnerabilities with him to war and the combination left him open to 'the idea of being killed' (Ford 1923, p. 305). This is the parallel with George who, exposed to a barrage of 'stupidly cruel' behaviours, lost the will to live (Ford 1923, p. 305). George is an example of how someone might be driven to the edge of sanity but also code for the things Jessop cannot say directly of his own experiences. His description of the letter from George's father as that of a madman in pain, signals this. In its equation of mental anguish with pain it claims the legitimacy more commonly accorded to physical illness. It also shows Jessop's understanding that to write his experiences directly would be a re-immersion in the experiences and memories he wants to leave behind. That there is good reason to avoid this is suggested by the fact that though neither man dies they are damaged. Despite years in treatment, Clarice's concern for George illustrates that recovery is not an assured state. Jessop too is still 'quivering with nerves' (Ford 1923, p. 333).

This complicates Jessop's case against talk and its associated therapies, for his own approach seems no more successful. Yet, to conclude this would be to miss the point. Jessop's answer to the question of why both he and George suffer breakdowns lies in their willingness to confront the painful areas of life. Whilst Jessop's obliqueness might indicate that he lacks the introspective courage he attributes to George, his whole narrative performs the same function, but is written not spoken. Behind the shield of fiction, he tells his story in lacunae, making it necessary to read between the lines and to notice what is not said. Just as he uses George's story to illustrate how people breakdown because they reach a personal threshold of pressure which they cannot tolerate, so he chooses another story to illustrate the legacy. This is the point of the tale, in the final chapter, of the 'once weeping waiter', whose wife has been 'murdered' and 'daughter carried off' who will be returned, by the grace and largesse of George and Clarice, to preside over a hotel 'sacked by Cossacks, gutted by Servians, (and) burned by Austrians' (Ford 1923, p. 336). It is a 'poor little fairy tale', to imagine that this man who had 'so frightful a nervous breakdown' could just return, unmarked, to the life he had before (Ford 1923, p. 337). By implication, neither can he. Thus, *The Marsden Case* ends as it began, in a story. The stories of George Heimann and Ernest Jessop are there to show that sheer cumulative worry can bring people to the brink of their sanity. In that sense, it anticipates the strategy Ford adopts in presenting the war in *Parade's End* (Ford 2007, p. 206). If, as Ford argued, 'piling horrors on horrors' about the war would lead people to close their minds in self-preservation, then critics like Gordon who found the sheer volume of trials facing George tiresome prove him right (Ibid). Jessop's more quietly expressed anguish is more palatable and so is likely to elicit the compassion and understanding for which the novel calls.

3. Concluding Comments

This paper has argued for *The Marsden Case* as part of Ford's war writing but that discussion of it should not be limited to this frame of reference. Some concluding remarks on its relationship to Ford's aesthetics and the theme of madness in his oeuvre are therefore necessary. Ford's aesthetics, as discussed previously, rest on treating the novel a vehicle for inquiry and offering a subjective history of his own times. These are enacted in *The Marsden Case* in two ways. Firstly, beyond the parallels between George and Jessop's breakdown lies the juxtaposition of different approaches to helping them. Jessop's 'old fashioned' cures are those Kuhn identifies as based in assumptions of a somatic cause whereas George experiences the newer therapies designed to engage the mind in self-healing. Ford uses his characters to explore the 'old' and the 'new' approaches in a way which makes it difficult to conclude that either is effective. In that sense, he is representing back to contemporary readers the confused state of medicine as it would have been experienced by those suffering nervous illness. Of course, the war brought this into sharp relief, but Ford's characters show that nervous illnesses originating from other sources were not replaced by those generated by war but persisted alongside them. Secondly, the focus on language and words has import beyond the difficulty of describing war. Mark Micale observes a 'convergence of the psychiatric and the literary', evident in form and genre, in the early twentieth century (Micale 2004, p. 6). Specifically, he notes the centrality of 'the spoken word' as patients told their 'life story' to a 'hypnotist, psychotherapist, or psychoanalyst' who then offered an interpretation and produced a 'narrative of their own', often directed to a medical readership (Ibid). In essence, this is what Jessop does with George. This is why Ford makes him an author, someone attuned to power of words and stories, who presents his case to a more general readership. It is notable, therefore, that Jessop suggests that some stories are best not told, that some experiences evade language and that words can be weapons. Ford might have lost confidence, as Haslam argues, in the beneficial power of words, but not in their force. It is an understanding which paves the way for *Parade's End*, in which words are weaponized.

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Notes

1 Saunders states that it also sometimes titled *Mr. Croyd* or *The Wheels of the Plough*

2 Gutta percha is a form of rubber used as a sealant in dentistry, making the suggestion here that Ralston intended suffocation in his sleep.

3 See Mizener (1971), Moser (1980) and Saunders (2012a) and (2012b) for a sequential exploration.

4 This approach derives from my recently submitted thesis which explores Ford's treatment of madness in his novels.

5 A word search using software programme *antconc* on the *Delphi Complete Works of Ford Madox Ford* (2013, Version 2) shows over 100 uses of 'madness' and over 300 of 'mad' but less than 30 of 'insanity' and 'insane' combined.

6 Kuhn, p. xvi observes that a wide range of practices, including different types of psychotherapy, hypnosis, psychic and faith healing, ran concurrently.

7 In the novel George is referred to as both Heimann and Marsden and by a pseudonym, James Pearson, so for clarity his forename is used throughout.

8 Marie Elizabeth, known as Heimann, is claiming the right to the name Marsden and marries twice, to Jessop's brother and to Mr. Plugschmied, so her forename is the most stable reference point.

9 Though her first name is given as Eleanor she is generally referred to as Miss Jeaffreson by other characters, so this convention is maintained.

10 Jessop repeatedly uses the word 'poor' in relation to George, referring to him repeatedly as a 'poor boy.' See pages 74 and 273 for instance.

11 Ibid. Farnworth cites Suzanne Raitt.

[12] Pre-war medical opinion largely considered nervous problems to be physically located. See, for instance, Kuhn (2016, p. xiv) who records a shift away from materialist medical thinking which ascribed mental diseases to physiological or organic causes.

[13] Tietjens is renowned for his 'complete taciturnity', see p. 9 in Ford (2010) and after his war service he tells Mrs. Wannop that he has not 'really spoken to a soul for two years', p. 199 in *A Man Could Stand Up-'*.

[14] As the final chapters are set in 1921 the novel is presumably written no earlier than this.

[15] For instance, *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes* (1911) and *The Young Lovell* (1913). Its significance to Ford's treatment of madness is discussed in a recently submitted thesis and is not replicated here. The most pertinent point to this paper is the source of the term 'underself'.

[16] Frederick Myers, was a leading member of the Society for Psychical Research. In the Glossary to his book, Myers (1903, p. xxi) he defines the term "subliminal" as indicating a consciousness below that of normal waking consciousness. Ford knew key members of the Society and seems to use the terms 'underself' and 'subliminal self' interchangeably. See page 56–57 of *The Marsden Case*.

[17] See p. 78 in *The Good Soldier.*

[18] In the novel George miscalculates the length and angle of the rope needed to hang himself because of assumptions he made about the presence of the pigs, meaning that the policeman could hold him up until the rope was cut.

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Article

The First World War and Ford Madox Ford's Short Stories, 1914–1920

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Abstract: This article analyses together, for the first time, Ford Madox Ford's short stories about the First World War. A surprisingly unfamiliar form for Ford, who valued allusion, subtlety, and omission as narrative devices, we see in these stories his first attempts to parse his experience of wartime and, subsequently, military service. It is also an aspect of Ford's writing which has received little previous critical comment. The wartime and post-war short stories are approached chronologically: 'The Scaremonger: A Tale of the War Times' (1914), 'Fun!—It's Heaven' (1915), 'Pink Flannel' (1919), 'The Colonel's Shoes' (1920), 'Enigma' ([1920–1922] 1999), and 'The Miracle' (1928). The contemporary debates in which Ford intervened are highlighted by returning to their original periodical publications, and extensive reference to a range of his non-fictional periodical contributions establishes new connections among his wartime writing. Here I bring together for the first time these short stories, arguing that Ford's refracting of the war through the lens of his impressionism is distinctive as an early response to war, trauma, and neurosis and is vital to the genesis of his later successes in prose, notably the *Parade's End* novel tetralogy (1924–1928).

Keywords: Ford Madox Ford; First World War; short stories; periodical studies; haunting; ellipsis

1. Introduction

Ford Madox Ford's most famous works have the First World War at their centre: his poem *Antwerp* (1914), lauded by T.S. Eliot; his novel *The Good Soldier* (1915), the first part serialised before the conflict's outbreak, the second part focusing on 4 August, opportunistically titled by its publisher John Lane; his epic realisation of his pre-war, wartime and post-war experiences in his masterful *Parade's End* tetralogy (1924–1928). Ford's Anglo-German ancestry—he was still, until 1919, Ford Madox Hueffer—meant that he felt the impact of war acutely. He enlisted and served, suffering from shell shock not long after his arrival on the front line at the Somme, before spending most of the rest of the war in administrative and service roles. These creative works address his war experiences in poetry and long prose, but Ford also wrote several compelling short stories about the conflict. In her important study of *The Short Story and the First World War* (2013), Ann-Marie Einhaus asks why: 'First World War short stories have largely been disregarded for so long?' (Einhaus 2013, p. 4)[1] This trend is replicated in Ford's oeuvre. I return to the original periodical publications to establish the contemporary debates in which he was intervening, also invoking a range of his non-fictional periodical contributions to establish new connections among his wartime writing.[2] I approach the wartime and immediately post-war short stories chronologically, which are 'The Scaremonger: A Tale of the War Times' (first published November 1914), 'Fun!—It's Heaven' (November 1915), 'Pink Flannel' (May 1919), 'The Colonel's Shoes' (January 1920), and 'Enigma' (written September 1920–November 1922, unpublished until 1999), also looking briefly at 'The Miracle' (December 1928).[3] Here I bring together for the first time these short stories, arguing that Ford's refracting of the war through the lens of his impressionism is distinctive as an early response to war, trauma, and neurosis, and is vital to the genesis of his later successes in prose.

If the short story is undercommented in relation to the First World War, it is also a form particularly of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during which mass-market periodicals boomed. Andrew Maunder and Angela Smith observe that it 'maintained its popularity during the war years; short stories could at least be read quickly, in a single sitting', an important concern whether on active service or in a harried home front existence (Maunder and Smith 2011, p. xiv; see also Einhaus 2016b, p. 152). Alfred C. Ward, in his pioneering 1924 study, states that 'as a medium for the conscious exercise of literary art [. . .] it is the youngest among the literary forms[. . .. I]t now seems to be on the threshold of a burgeoning maturity' (Ward 1924, p. 8). This suggests the short story's roots as an ephemeral form in periodicals, moving towards the respectability of volume publication (see Einhaus 2013, p. 38; 2016b, pp. 160–61).[4] Ward argues for the necessity of experiment in the form and discerns 'a genuine wish to explore new fields of thought opened up by advances in psychological study' (Ward 1924, p. 16). Valerie Shaw sees the short story as encompassing spontaneity, instinct, and/or revelation, suggesting that 'it can use its intactness to say that life's possibilities are hedged and narrow, or to express a view of life as violent and torn by harsh conflict' (Shaw 1983, pp. 8–9). In a key work from before Ford's recovery to the modernist canon, Dominic Head argues that 'the short story encapsulates the essence of literary modernism, and has an enduring ability to capture the episodic nature of twentieth-century experience' (Head 1992, p. 1). He also asserts that it is a form that has 'flourished in difficult social and economic circumstances' (Head 2016, p. 9). Psychology, restraint, conflict (military, interpersonal, and domestic), and literary experimentation are central to Ford's writing, constellated in what he came to theorise, in 1913–1914, as impressionism.

2. Ford and Short Writing

As editor, and indeed founder, of modernist magazines such as the *English Review* (1908–1910) and the *transatlantic review* (1924), Ford was familiar with outstanding essays, short stories, and their writers (see Wulfman 2009; Morrisson 2000).[5] The first issue of the *English Review* (December 1908) contained Henry James's 'The Jolly Corner' and the first part of Constance Garnett's new translation of Tolstoy's 'The Raid' (1853).[6] These address Fordian themes that recur in the wartime short stories, with James's Spencer Brydon and his ghostly alter-ego highlighting doubling and split personalities, and resonating with hauntings and apparitions. Tolstoy's story, set during the Caucasus War (1817–64), is told by an army narrator who reflects on and discusses with his comrades the nature of bravery in wartime. Ford used the device of separation and simultaneity of thought and action several times to speak to the disjunction between exhausted but continuing physical bodies, and minds wandering at the limits of endurance. Ford's brief editorships were influential; they attest to his important position in literary networks of the time and his acute awareness of periodical cultures. They also shaped his own creative practice.

Ford contributed to newspapers, magazines, and periodicals throughout his writing career. If, as David Malcolm suggests, 'the shortness of the short story—its concrete and unavoidable spatial minimalism—is arguably the only viable definition of the form' (Malcolm 2016, p. 56), then we should consider Ford's short stories among his other short writings. A writer who lived by the pen, Ford wrote regularly for publications such as the *Outlook*, the *Bystander*, and *Reynolds's Newspaper*, in which several of these stories appeared, holding forth on the contemporary literary sphere, Anglo-German relations, and publishing poems and short stories. His regular non-fictional writing provided a relatively consistent income from 1907–1915: his journalism, as a consequence, is voluminous, but his short stories relatively few.[7] Praising Ford's linking stories for *Zeppelin Nights: A London Entertainment* (1915), co-authored with his increasingly-estranged partner Violet Hunt, Sondra J. Stang states that 'Ford did not feel comfortable with the short story form: he could not, he complained, write "short" (Stang 1986, p. 448). This is borne out by a letter, likely about 'The Colonel's Shoes', in which he tells his agent J.B. Pinker that 'I'm afraid it's nearly 5000 words, does that matter? 3000 is too short for me.—but I c$^{d.}$ cut it a little if

necessary'.[8] In a 1924 *transatlantic review* editorial, he saw 7000 words as a minimum, noting that 'English writers have rarely either the technical skill or the desire for selection that are needed for the real perfecting of the quite short story' (Ford 1924, p. 350).[9] This is surprising, as the form seems tailor-made for Ford in its thematic breadth and suggestive form, and he was in various ways expert in the rhythms of short prose, honing in his collaboration with Joseph Conrad the value of excision as an aesthetic technique (see Brebach 1985, 2022).

Ford's literary antecedents and contemporaries attest further to his expertise in short writing and ground the development of his impressionism. Max Saunders sees Ford's unpublished short stories of the 1890s as an important part of his development (Saunders 1996, vol. 1, pp. 102–5). Looking across the English Channel, the roots of the modern short story are in the French authors Ford admired: particularly Flaubert, but also Maupassant, who wrote powerfully about the Franco-Prussian War (see March-Russell 2009, pp. 88–90). Indeed, Ford connects Flaubert with war on 8 August 1914: 'if France had mastered *L'Education Sentimentale*, France would have been spared the horrors of 1870' (Hueffer 1914l, p. 174; 1905). Flaubert and Maupassant were acknowledged as masters of their particular modes of realism, and Ford developed their verité after his own fashion. His friendship and collaborations with Conrad, whose precision and brevity he praised (Ford 2002, pp. 228–31), influenced the development of his literary impressionism, a form which Paul March-Russell observes 'had a lasting effect' on the short story (March-Russell 2009, pp. 91–2).[10] Rebecca Bowler summarises: 'key tenets of this impressionism were the rendering of experience as multiple and fragmentary, the suppression of authorial commentary, and a concern with the subjective and objective: the objective rendering of subjective experience' (Bowler 2016, p. 18). These topics surface repeatedly in these stories as ghostliness, uncanniness, psychological distress and distortion, and verbal and narrative absences. Ford's critical essays on the subject were published first in modernist periodicals: 'Impressionism—Some Speculations' appeared in *Poetry* (August 1913), and the two parts of 'On Impressionism' straddled the beginning of the War in *Poetry and Drama* (June and December 1914), the second appearing alongside studies by Remy de Gourmont of 'French Literature and the War', and Edward Thomas of 'War Poetry' (Hueffer 1913a, 1914n, 1914m; de Gourmont 1914; Thomas 1914). While the second essay does not directly address the War, Ford does consider a hypothetical character's German ancestry (Hueffer 1914m, p. 325), criticises the popular novelist and propagandist Hall Caine compared to Flaubert and Maupassant, asserting that 'the great majority of mankind are, on the surface, vulgar and trivial—the stuff to fill graveyards' (Hueffer 1914m, p. 328), and praises Tolstoy (Hueffer 1914m, p. 330).[11] The language echoes his first article of the War (WP 207). Once the War starts, it is never far from the surface in Ford's writing which, for the conflict's duration, is mostly short.[12]

3. Ford's 1914 Short Prose about the War

Ford registers the magnitude of the war immediately, writing by the end of 1914 about 'the immense wall built across August of 1914, like the wall of Hadrian across Britain' (Hueffer 1915d, p. 15); he uses a similar metaphor, 'this crack across the table of History', in *A Man Could Stand Up*—(1926), the third volume of the *Parade's End* tetralogy (Ford [1926] 2011, pp. 17–18). His developing response is played out in his weekly column for the *Outlook*, a conservative weekly; Lucinda Borkett-Jones charts more extensively the shape of Ford's writing in this periodical (Borkett-Jones 2019). He ponders the aesthetic impact of the conflict, in general, and on himself, ruminating on 'the future of the arts when we have a little quiet again' (WP 208) (Hueffer 1914k), and bemoaning his inability to write poetry at a moment in which many found it desirable, even necessary:

> I simply cannot do it. I should like to; but the words do not come. There is the blank sheet—and then. . . nothing. It is, I think, because of the hazy remoteness of the war-grounds; the impossibility of visualising anything, because of a total incapacity to believe any single thing that I have read in the daily papers. (WP 209) (Hueffer 1914c)

The complexities of the moment are evident here: that 'hazy remoteness' was characteristic of Ford's impressionism, while the final clause is ironic given that the *Outlook*'s conservatism often tipped over into jingoism. Without invoking the war directly, he repeats his desire 'to drop creative writing for good and all' in the second article of 'On Impressionism' (December 1914); in the essay 'Arms and the Mind' (written September 1916), he bemoans the loss of his ability to '"visualize things" [. . .] anything I had seen, and still better, anything I hadn't seen' (WP 36).[13] His creative abilities are displaced into reportage: in his first article of the conflict he asserts that 'Pictures of the horrors of war in no way appal me' (WP 207), going on to imagine a litany. Having started with gloomy commentary on the value of literary criticism in wartime, he concludes:

> men have no rights—they have only duties. And if some millions of men die in the making clear of these things, their lives will have been well spent since, dying so, they will have removed from this sad world one of its scourges and many of its terrors. (Hueffer 1914l, p. 175)

Ford seems to have no sense that he might put himself in mortal danger; he would not enlist until the summer of the following year. He continued to write.

These columns, titled 'Literary Portraits', became only superficially tied to their subject matter for much of the remainder of 1914, as Ford 'fanc[ied] that we are in for eight years of war' (WP 208) and set himself to working through the topic of Anglo-German relations, overtly politically, implicitly personally. Barbara Korte follows Adrian Hunter in suggesting that 'the short story seems to speak "directly to and about those whose sense of self, region, state, or nation is insecure"' (Korte 2016, p. 42). Wartime made even more vivid for Ford a topic of which he was already all too conscious. He had written about it previously, including on the strength of 'war feeling in Pure Germany' in late 1911 in the *Bystander*, which would publish 'The Scaremonger' and 'Fun!—It's Heaven', and had regularly featured Ford's criticism and creative works (Hueffer 1911b). These issues feature in earlier short stories: 'The Baron' (1903) sees an Englishman in the War Office visit his German relations. The enmity between England and Germany is also addressed in 'What Happened at Eleven Forty-Five' (1911), in which a fatal coincidence in England leads to a German waiter's murder of his family and then suicide; the warning about what might happen if war broke out is barely concealed (Saunders 1996, vol. 1, pp. 361–63). At the outbreak of war, Ford is compelled to try to master rhetorically his Anglo-German identity. In a late August 1914 article for the *Outlook*, pointedly entitled 'The Face of Janus', he pleads that 'his Britannic Majesty has no more loyal servant than myself', asserting the primacy of the British soldier while arguing to revive the phrase 'the gallant enemy' (WP 208) (Hueffer 1914b, p. 270). By October, Ford is still keen to humanise Germany, describing its rural poverty: 'to poke fun at Germania [. . .] has always seemed to me to be like poking fun at a starving child with its nose glued against the windows of a cookshop' (Hueffer 1914e, p. 430). Ford distinguishes between regions of Germany, describing 'this series of articles, which has latterly resolved itself into a frontal attack not so much upon Germany as upon Prussian culture' (Hueffer 1914g, p. 493).[14] As we have already seen, he would return to this in the second essay of 'On Impressionism', too.

Vituperation persisted, and the Saturday after the Wednesday publication of 'The Scaremonger', Ford responded scathingly to George Bernard Shaw's critique of German and English jingoism, 'Common-Sense About the War', first published as a supplement to the *New Statesman* on 14 November 1914. He attacked Shaw for being 'stupid to the extent of revealing his own self-interest', reading it as 'the announcement that the Marxian Socialist intends to get the lion's share of the spoils at the end of the war'. Shaw, for Ford, is 'thoroughly Teutonic by blood and German by training' (Hueffer 1914h, p. 693; see Hueffer 1915h). By contrast, Ford situates himself as 'for many historic reasons a hot-headed anti-Prussian, Prussianism being the death of all I value in the world', repeating the separation between Prussian militarism, which he later explicitly articulates as un-German, and the culture of Germany which gives life its value (Hueffer 1914h).[15] Ford argues, in

a manner which would have been persuasive among contemporary rhetoric, but which bears little scholarly scrutiny, against the idea that England has an equivalent militarism. These claims are undercut by the continuing linking of the conflict with the effects of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1). As so often in wartime writing, Ford looks back to the impact of previous conflicts, highlighting 'the constant Prussian endeavour since 1870 [. . .] to build up a national spirit not of the German people, but of the German Empire' (Hueffer 1914g, p. 493; see Hueffer 1915c, 1915i, 1915k). The rhetoric of German might was prevalent at the time.

4. 'The Scaremonger'

The resulting fears of invasion spawned a literary genre enduring from George Tomkyns Chesney's ur-text novella *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) beyond the First World War, extensively mined and parodied in short form (Bulfin 2018; Clarke 1992).[16] Ford addresses this in unpublished stories of the 1890s: 'A Romance of the Times Before Us' imagines war between England and Germany; 'The Land of Song: a phantasy' is about a boat which beaches on the coast; 'A Mother' focuses on smugglers in 1815, the date hardly coincidental (see Saunders 1996, vol. 1, pp. 104–8). 'The Scaremonger' sits in this lineage, a tale of the febrile environment of late 1914 in the UK. It satirises Ford's acquaintance Edward Heron Allen, a friend of Hunt's who was shrilly talking about the possibility of a German invasion. The story intervenes in a literary marketplace in which existing invasion texts were republished, and new stories by prominent authors added to those fears. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'Danger! Being the Log of Captain John Sirius' was published as Europe stood on the cusp of war in July 1914 in the *Strand*; the narrative was accompanied by paratextual expert commentary on its plausibility (see Liggins et al. 2011, pp. 136–37). Doyle focuses on naval invasion, and at the beginning of 'The Scaremonger', the area's Lieutenant asserts the importance even of 'this collection of bungalows and bathing places' (WP 142) (Hueffer 1914o, p. 276). However, where Doyle outlines the naval situation, following earlier works such as Erskine Childers's *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), Ford concentrates on the impact of propaganda on the individual. By the time 'The Scaremonger' appeared, on 25 November 1914, the Retreat from Mons and ensuing 'Race to the Sea' made such issues immediate; the First Battle of Ypres had petered out in wet, freezing conditions.

Both 'The Scaremonger' and 'Fun!—It's Heaven' were published in the *Bystander*, a conservative weekly, in the last issues of November of 1914 and 1915, respectively. The issue was billed as a Christmas issue. A regular contributor, Ford was familiar with the magazine's context and sympathetic, if questioningly so, to its position; understanding its tone elucidates our reading of the stories. G.E. Studdy's cover illustration sets the mood for the 25 November 1914 issue, a walled British house, bulldog snarling and flag flying, approached by Father Christmas with a sack of presents over his shoulder and a bomb in the other hand, followed by a humorous editorial about the deleterious effect of reading newspapers and books about the war ('Our Vision' 1914). Satirical commentary punctuates the magazine, with an article entitled 'Does Germany Count? By Our Military Expert Who Can't' ('Does Germany Count?' 1914), and a later cartoon captioned 'Thanks to the newspapers, our emotions from hour to hour are subject to the most violent fluctuations' ('Correct Expression' 1914). 'The Scaremonger', spanning three pages and with an illustration by Alick P.F. Ritchie on each, is followed by a serious article on war rumours (R. S. 1914).[17] The story characterises the fevered mood of late 1914: Ford wrote in the first month of the war about 'reading sedulously for the daily journals in order to find a grain of truth or interest' (Hueffer 1914a, p. 237). It was also significant as the *Bystander* had stopped accepting short stories at the outbreak of war, ending its own embargo with Ford's piece (Maunder 2011b, p. xliv). The magazine's editorship clearly saw the public mood as one of barely-contained hysteria foaming around a core of demonstrable support for the conflict, and Ford responded directly to these conditions.

A decade before the Tietjens family first appears in *Parade's End*, in this story the Squire of Bleakham—his name needs no interpretation—is an archetypal fading aristocrat,

a symbol of the decline of English traditions in the face of modernity who sees it everywhere but in himself: 'The words "national degeneration" were continually on his lips' (WP 143–4). Before the war, he is contentedly out of time, 'devoted to so serious a study of the works of Horace and the medieval Latinists that he found never a minute, even, to devote to the study of the newspapers' (WP 142–43). The war jolts him from his intellectual attachment to a dead civilization and forces him to engage with the New Journalism, which the narrator critiques: 'In the last fifteen years the papers have, you know, made much progress in the conveying of excitements. And the Squire had had to read them then. They had revenged themselves amply for his neglect of them' (WP 143).[18] Their revenge is his rapid decline, and the Squire becomes almost immediately ghostly:

> the Squire's features had fallen away; colour had deserted them till they had the dull opacity of alabaster; his grey hair had, in the four months of war, grown absolutely white—paper-white. His mouth dragged over to one side; only his eyes had any sign of life. These even sparkled when he spread panic in the village. (WP 143)

The Squire's deterioration warns against replicating his behaviour. He is pale and fragile, paper-thin and alabaster-soft, while the lopsided mouth suggests partial paralysis following a stroke. He is constantly on the brink of death until he achieves it, perhaps echoing the fate of the soldiers dying in the war. Spectral presences recur in Ford's war stories, a defining feature of his impressionism.

The Squire's Germanophobia is rooted in a contretemps with a German Latinist, with whom he argued over his edition of Petronius's *Satyricon* and 'over the proper pronunciation of the ode "Planco Consule"' (WP 144).[19] 'Immediately afterwards the war had broken out', the narrator reports, the context arcane in the story but obvious to its readership. Ford points ironically to Horace's odes,[20] inviting comparison with Plancus, a Roman consul notorious for his changes of affiliation for safety and progression; the opening line of that ode's final quatrain translates as 'With whitening hair the temper cools'.[21] The Squire's newly-white hair soothes little. Ford saw German intellectuals as particularly culpable in an October article for the *Outlook*, criticising the nation's professoriat as 'a curse [. . .] the death of learning with its substitution of philology for scholarship', particularly war-hungry; he wrote in three further articles about the relationship between German culture, education, and the Prussian state (Hueffer 1914e, p. 431; see also Hueffer 1914f, 1914i, 1914j; see Borkett-Jones 2019, pp. 143–45). In 'The Scaremonger', somewhat unbelievably, the Prussian professor informs the Squire he has asked his naval brother to target Bleakham; the Squire feels that he has betrayed his country by hosting the professor previously, enabling him to know the area.

The disorder, chaos, and confusion of the story's denouement ask readers to recognise and calm the situation around them, as the military fails to restore order. The Lieutenant of the area musters troops to perform a mock capture of the Squire to shock him back to reality. This is disrupted by an actual German submarine invasion, made surreal as it is led by an East Prussian Cycle Corps, which the assembled troops are then able to foil. The Squire's tragedy is that he is right. He is present to defend his territory, but because of his newspaper-influenced inability to interpret the situation he is unable to act correctly

> The casualties of the mid-Kents amounted to three men wounded, and they were wounded by the revolver of the Squire who had advanced alone against the submarine, firing twelve shots from two revolvers. He was found by a Boy Scout at the edge of the tide next morning, with a nasty hole in the middle of his alabaster forehead. He had turned the last shot against himself. (WP 148)

Hysteria is harming Britain, and so is suicidal, even when it has its facts right. The story echoes Ford's very first response in print to the War, on 8 August 1914 in the *Outlook*, in which he claims: 'Whichever side wins in the end—my own heart is certain to be over France; I think I would cut my throat if the German Fleet destroyed the British Fleet'

(WP 208). Returning to the vexed issue of his Anglo-German identity, he wrote later that month that

> I quite contemplate being murdered by a mob here for my German sympathies; I quite contemplate being hung [sic] by the German troops, if they invade this country, for having subscribed the roll of British subjecthood and having set myself down for service under the British Crown. (Hueffer 1914b, p. 270)

While Ford was committed to writing for the government, he would not set himself down for military service for another ten months.

* * * * *

Continuing his articles for the *Outlook* at the beginning of January 1915, a busy year for him on all fronts, Ford was in a reflective but still pugilistic mood. In his 2 January column, he muses on the possibility of justifying war:

> in the beginning of the year 1914 I would have dogmatised cheerfully in the columns of the *Outlook* as to any topic beneath the sun except the integral calculus or the sailing of schooners. And so I ask myself: Is it wrong to thank God for the deaths of a million of one's fellow-beings? (Hueffer 1915d, p. 15)

The narrowing of horizons is painfully apparent in Ford's columns of the first year of the conflict, and his first columns of its second continue the sense of urgency, articulating his desire for German internment, and saying that the editor has told him that he has 'grown monotonous [. . .] certainly since 4 August 1914, I have been in a sort of trance of attack—of attack upon Prussia' (Hueffer 1915f, p. 79).[22] These articles informed Ford's propaganda, *When Blood is Their Argument* (March 1915) and *Between St Dennis and St George* (September 1915); the long form leavens the mix somewhat from these columns (see Lemarchal 2004; Wollaeger 2006, chap. 3; Jain 2006). By June 1915, Ford is nudged to move on from his articulations of German horrors and French genius and return to book reviewing in his columns, doing so complainingly with commentary on Pound's *Cathay* and a book on yerba maté tea, but still finding time in the article to critique the use of poison gas (Hueffer 1915b, p. 801). A month later, in late July 1915, he enlisted, a bulky 41-year-old, and was gazetted on 13 August (Saunders 1996, vol. 1, pp. 479, 486). On the cusp of enlistment, he criticised James Douglas's review of the war number of *Blast*, the column becoming an obituary in which he outlined the military record of its subject, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska: 'Put in this cold language this is a record fine enough—I wish I had it behind me' (Hueffer 1915g, p. 143; see also Hueffer 1919a). His columns for the *Outlook* finished on 21 August, after which 'Fun!—It's Heaven' was his next periodical publication. From being a weekly contributor, after enlisting he published only 20 items in periodicals in the subsequent 4 years up to and including the publication of 'Pink Flannel'.[23]

5. 'Fun!—It's Heaven'

The *Bystander* Christmas issue of 1915, in which 'Fun!—It's Heaven' appeared, was slightly more sober than the previous year. Ritchie's cover design depicts a Santa Claus on the rooftops, framed by searchlights, weighed down by responsibilities, and ready for service when called. A satirical editorial muses on the range of views on the appropriateness of humour and its particular types during wartime, poking fun at the apparent inevitability of military metaphors ('Editor's Apology' 1915, p. 287). Fun there still is, though, in pieces such as 'Alice in Censorland', which she describes as 'a very stupid place', a personified Christmas Bystander revealing his 'message to my readers': 'The—mas Bystander wishes all his readers a—mas, and a—New Year.—on earth, and—will towards men' ('Alice' 1915, p. 297). Faith, cheer, and hope are blanked out, alluding to uncertainties about the whereabouts and wellbeing of friends and family members created by the obfuscation of censorship. The body text of Ford's story is broken up by a cartoon entitled 'Passed by the censor—' of a pleased woman reading a letter, captioned '—but not for publication'; the news, presumably romantic, even sexual content, offers some relief (Leste 1915). The issue

also features the iconic cartoon of the War, Bruce Bairnsfather's 'One of our minor wars', better known by part of its caption, one of two men in a shell hole saying to the other 'Well, if you knows of a better 'ole, go to it'; Bairnsfather's cartoons were a major draw for buying the *Bystander* (Bairnsfather 1915). Ford's story is surrounded by and surrounds cartoons, with which its rather arch tone sits oddly. However, other essays offer more measured commentary. The story's viewpoint echoes the editorial, which is in turn picked up in an article focusing on difficulties of tone and content in wartime for novelists (R. S. 1915). The war's increasingly interminable duration is highlighted by W.H.B.'s 'Looking forward: pars [*sic*] from the papers of ten years hence', all of which imagine that the war is still ongoing in 1925 (W. H. B. 1915). Hunt also features in the issue, 'The Fascination of the Dark' musing on the oppressiveness of blackout darkness. She uses the phrase 'a true Zeppelin night', but the article is not from their collaborative volume of the same name, for which Ford supplied short linking sketches, published the previous week (18 November) (Hunt 1915; Hunt and Hueffer 1916; see Saunders 1996, vol. 1, p. 484). The mood has shifted from gung-ho hysteria to the fear and desperation of stasis.

If Ford's story is not exactly humorous, it is certainly characteristically peculiar. Its focus on coping, and the difficulty of communication with an absent (or dead) partner, is an acute commentary on its moment; the evasions and obliqueness of impressionism are a form by which the omnipresence of the conflict can be addressed. 'Fun!—It's Heaven' is set in a multifaith space, and focuses on a conversation between a lay sister and an elderly doctor, who despairs at having to break bad news to Joan, the fiancée of a soldier named Dicky Trout: 'How can you console a child of nineteen whose lover of twenty-two has been shot through the head after ninety minutes in the trenches? There is no consolation. It is the most final thing in the world' (WP 149) (Hueffer 1915j, p. 327). The sister offers the consolations of religion, *contra* the doctor's despairing rationalism. Joan's grief manifests as a concern that 'he won't ever have any fun again; not any fun! [. . . T]he lights, and the white paint and the young girls; and the tea, and the river, and the little bands playing "Hitchy Koo"' (WP 149–50). The doctor relates his conversation with Joan, and it is not clear whether this is his or her quotidian idea of fun. Either way, it imagines a pre-war world, thinking back to the ragtime hit of 1912; Mary Dudziak argues that in the wartime imagination, the 'future is, in essence, the return to a time that war had suspended' (Dudziak 2012, p. 22). The longing is for the pleasures restricted in wartime in general, let alone denied by death in it. The barely double entendre of the chorus of "Hitchy Koo" makes clear one thing that Joan feels she is missing: 'say he does it just like no one could/when he does it, say, he does it good' (Gilbert et al. 1912, p. 5).[24] The lay sister's desire to 'hear the tune of "Get Out and Get Under"', a 1913 song that is not really about fixing an automobile, clarifies further the ubiquity of wartime sexuality. The delicate line Ford treads between the tragedy of the soldier's death and the need to keep believing in good things beyond wartime attests to his sensitivity both to contemporary debates and the tone of the magazine.

The doctor poignantly accompanies Joan to visit the training camp in the Midlands where Dicky spent his last months; Ford is clearly also commenting on his own recent training. The doctor invites the lay sister to

> Try to imagine the Mosslott Range for yourself. In the squalid suburbs of a hideous city, on a dirty, flat expanse of sordid grass, some banks of clay, like long graves. And, in them, beneath the squalid clouds, clay-coloured figures reclining, intent, gazing at the banks before them, at a distance. And flat, black shapes, like the heads and shoulders of devils peep up over the banks in front and lob away. Fun! (WP 150)

The inspiration seems likely to be a new camp at Cannock Chase, on the outskirts of Stoke-on-Trent, whose population soared in the early years of the twentieth century and which would officially become a city in 1925.[25] The first camp there was named Rugeley, after the town to its east side; Ford gives the same name to 'Sylvia Tietjens' portentous ducal second cousin' in *Parade's End* (Ford [1925] 2011, p. 47). The clay evokes the potteries, but also the Flanders mud which Ford had already described movingly in *Antwerp*. The

extent of the description evokes the narrative painting of Ford's maternal grandfather, from whom he took his chosen name, Ford Madox Brown, while its relative lack of precision also evokes the French Impressionist painters. The indistinct nature of the figures, drab and/or black, also recalls Pound's 'In a Station of the Metro', while the blackness also registers the depression from which Ford tried to escape by enlisting. The doctor describes 'plumes of dim flames running away down the wind and invisible smoke because the sky was just smoke! Fun! The proper fun for a boy of twenty-two, the sweetheart of a girl of nineteen. Well, I suppose it is alright' (WP 150). The bitter irony concerns the idea of fun in wartime, but also that Ford was not a boy of twenty-two, despite his romantic entanglements. After the war, training camps often came to be looked back on relatively fondly by soldiers, as a time before the horrors of the front line became known. Dicky can never develop that nostalgia.

Ford's impressionism registers here as the ghostly apparition of soldiers; uncanniness, disembodiment, and hauntings, manifestations of Ford's impressionism, are common to all these stories.[26] Spectral connections are the theme of pre-war stories such as 'The Medium's End' (Hueffer 1912) and 'Telepathy' (Hueffer 1913b); we might read the telephone's ghostly voices of '4692 Padd' (Hueffer 1908) in a similar light.[27] Here, Ford imagines both what will happen to young soldiers such as Dicky, but also attempts to reconcile and rationalise what might happen to himself. Ward observed that 'death and life are uncertainly poised' in the contemporary short story (Ward 1924, p. 16), while Malcolm sees 'The ghost or supernatural story [... as] the paradigmatic anti-mimetic text. A vision of the world that precludes the supernatural is shown to be defective. The world of the dead, or the supernaturally monstrous, intrudes into the world of the living', and requires 'a revision of an empirical understanding of the world' (Malcolm 2016, p. 62).[28] As the doctor 'sees' the band playing 'Hitchy Koo', the historical frame is skewed, with language, dress, and action of the eighteenth century; the return to this moment anticipates Tietjens's preference for that era in *Parade's End* (see Haslam 2014). However, he then moves from this ante-room into a 'long white inner room [...] full of young men in khaki, sitting at little tables, laughing with the young girls, chaffing the waitresses even—and eating éclairs'; one of these men is Dicky Trout (WP 151). Fun. The men are heading to Ypres, which the initial readership would associate immediately with the first German use of poison gas in the Second Battle (April–May 1915) and with the widely-circulating ghost story to which the doctor alludes: 'Marlborough's men got out of their graves and fought for us at Ypres' (WP 152) (see Liggins et al. 2011, pp. 134–5). This returns us supernaturally to the Battle of Blenheim (1704). Andrew Maunder links the supernatural element to Arthur Machen's popular story 'The Bowman' (1914) (Maunder 2011a, p. 95), which does the same with the Battle of Agincourt (1415); Ford's propaganda volumes both take their titles from Shakespeare's *Henry V*, and he had written in the second month of the war about being able to see 'former wars [...] much more clearly' (Hueffer 1914c, p. 334). The doctor's glimpse of the past ends with a word from the ghostly Dicky: 'I was fed up with Ypres, but it's all the fun of the fair here. And Joan will be here! Fun! I tell you it's Heaven' (WP 151–2). Joan has had a similar vision and takes the veil to achieve ongoing spiritual communion. In late 1915 the imperative for consolation is clear, with the narrator concluding that 'Assuredly if there were no Heaven we whom Flanders has not yet claimed must will one into existence with all the volition of united humanity' (WP 153).

* * * * *

Ford's first attempts to parse his military experience came shortly after he was shell-shocked in late July 1916 at the Somme, suffering physical and mental ailments, notably amnesia. This led to a flurry of literary activity. His next periodical publication was the poem 'Nostalgia', dated approximately a week before his shell shock, at Albert on 22 July, and published in the 14 September *Westminster Gazette* (Hueffer 1916a).[29] The poem looks back wistfully to the England left just a few weeks ago. Ford also wrote a preface to Hunt's *Their Lives* (1916), as well as material that would be rewritten as part of *No Enemy*

(1929), and the 'Arms and the Mind' essays, the latter two of which have been commented widely (see Skinner 2002; Chantler and Hawkes 2015). I comment briefly here on two understudied short pieces from the period of Ford's military service. Firstly, Ford's preface to his translation of Pierre Loti's pamphlet *The Trail of the Barbarians*, dated 9 August 1917, is revealing about his state of mind:

> It has been my ambition, for more years than I can remember, to devote the closing stage of my life to rendering into English some masterpiece of a French stylist. Well, here is the rendering of the masterpiece of a French stylist; and Fate wills it that it has been performed between parades, orderly rooms, strafes, and the rest of the preoccupations that re-fit us for France. . .so it is not a good rendering. You need from 11.45 pip emma of 8/8/17 to 11.57 pip emma of 9/8/17 for the rendering of almost any French sentence !. . . (Hueffer 1917, p. v)

The precarious nature of life is still uppermost in Ford's mind, allied with characteristic self-deprecation and the constancy of his appreciation for the French literature which underpinned his impressionism. Ford only demurs from an agreement with Loti on the claim that France is irreparable, concluding that 'in France nothing is irreparable, since France possesses the secret of eternal life' (Hueffer 1917, p. vi). The secret in the face of military conflict, presumably, is the enduring work of prose stylists.

First published in French in the *Revue des Idées* in November 1918, Ford's essay 'Pon. . . ti. . . pri. . . ith' continues to struggle to connect with the landscape: physical, but also literary and cultural (Hueffer 1918; see Saunders 2000, p. 155). He reflects on the scars created by the violence of industrial modernity and concludes with his regret that he cannot find any copies of Flaubert in ruined Rouen, the captain to whom he talks again invoking the Franco-Prussian War (WP 35). The essay registers Ford's continuing self-definition as an outsider even in war, the great communal effort, an Anglo-German litterateur in a Welsh regiment. The fragility of national identity again comes to the fore:

> And when you hear "Pontypridd" said by the fields of France, you see rise up before you the rocks, the fir trees, the waterfalls of the Golden Valley; the castles, Castell Goch and the "mountains" of Caerphilly; the clouds, the chimneys and the gigantic wheels of the Rhondda; the salt marsh sheep of Porthcawl and Sker. . . (WP 34)

A romanticised version of rural south Wales is contrasted with the similar land that is currently being fought over, offering a way out of the grotesqueries of war via the imagination less than a week before the deaths in Mametz Wood of many of the men Ford memorialises here (WP 34). The impressionistic fragments of wartime memory amid the imaginative desire to be elsewhere attest not only to Ford's mental state but the wartime imperative to see beyond it.

6. 'Pink Flannel'

If (unusually) we take Ford's word in writing to Stella Bowen that 'Pink Flannel' is 'a silly story I wrote in the line two or three years ago', then we might see it in the light of the mid-war work sketched above (Saunders 2000, p. 155). The story is about an adulterous assignation to be conducted on leave, evoking previous short stories on this topic such as 'L'Affaire Ingram' (1899), which involves the humiliation of a young officer; 'Below the Stairs' (1906); and 'A Silence' (1909) (Hueffer 1899, 1906, 1909). While it describes 'ninety-six hours' leave' (WP 154), there are commonalities with the essay 'Trois Jours de Permission', published in the *Nation* in September 1916 (Hueffer 1916b, 1919b). In 'Pink Flannel' a voice calls 'The Major wants: *Mr Britling Sees It Through*'; H.G. Wells's novel was being serialised in the *Nation* when Ford's earlier essay was published. This story was published on 8 May 1919 in *Land & Water*, a periodical which was notorious for anti-German sentiment during the war. It sits among ongoing commentary on war and peace, including regular contributions by authors including A.P. Herbert, whose novel of shell shock and desertion *The Secret Battle* was published in volume form at the end of

May, and Joseph Conrad, whose *A Rescue* was being serialised. Siegfried Sassoon's poem 'Cinema Hero' was published in the previous issue (Sassoon 1919), whose cover featured a picture of Lloyd George and Edwin Montagu, then Secretary of State for India, titled 'The Paris Imbroglio', as negotiations prior to the Paris Peace Conference continued haltingly.

'Pink Flannel' powerfully situates against each other the disordered, brutally parodied domesticity of trench life with a transgression against conventional domesticity on the home front. The protagonist, W.L. James, frets over a forgotten safe place for a letter containing details of the adultery he plans, or at least hopes, to commit with Mrs Wilkinson on his brief leave; the misplaced letter trope is a common one from Victorian fiction.[30] At the front he finds comfort in 'calculat[ing] the chances' of injury by various kinds of weaponry (WP 155), anticipating the preternatural gifts of Ford's later protagonist Christopher Tietjens in *Parade's End*. The weighing of odds attempts to impose logic on a chaotic, infinitely dangerous situation. James's imaginative reverie of the projected dinner encounter is in a touchingly different register:

> He would keep her waiting twenty minutes in the vestibule of his hotel while he had a quick bath. By 6.45 they would be dining together; she would be looking at him across the table with her exciting eyes that had dark pupils and yellow-brown iris! Her chin would be upon her hands with the fingers interlocked. Then they would be in the dress circle of the theatre – looking down on the nearly darkened stage from which, nevertheless, a warm light would well upwards upon her face . . .. And she would be warm, beside him, her hand touching his hand amongst her first . . .. And her white shoulders . . .. And they would whisper, her hair just touching his ear . . .. And be warm . . .. Warm! (WP 156)

This reverie divests James of the traces of war, bathing first, and then returning to heterosexual domesticity, albeit a form which as adultery comes with its own dangers; James fears that he will be stood up. The trip to the theatre connotes that civilian life is a remembered performance for soldiers in wartime, the lights falling somehow on the audience. Ellipsis would become a characteristic Fordian device in writing about the war (Sorum 2007; Haslam 2011, p. xxxvi; Dutton 2021), and Head argues for the '*disunifying* effects of ellipsis and ambiguity, indicating how this kind of disruption establishes a connection between text and context' (Head 1992, p. 2). The ellipses demand imaginative filling, indicating thoughts that cannot be completed, here pointing to the gap between the home front and the Western front.

James's forgetfulness, echoing Ford's own amnesia, is resolved by a vision, a similar structure to 'Fun!—It's Heaven' and a recurring device of his impressionism. He prays to St Anthony, the patron saint of the lost (people, items, faith, love) who in some countries is also known as a marriage saint. Here, St Anthony comes through for the adulterers, as the location of the letter comes to James in a Fauvist vision of Swan and Edgar's shop on Piccadilly Circus, a noted place for assignations which was also hit in the last Zeppelin raid on London on 19 October 1917:

> 'You perceive? Pink flannel!' [. . .] 'Pink!' the saint said: 'Bluey pink!'
>
> Yes: there were pink monticules, pink watersheds, cascades of pink flannel, deserts, wild crevasses, perspectives . . ..
>
> W.L. James looked at St Anthony with deep anxiety: he was excited, he was bewildered. The saint continued to point a plum finger, and the crowd all round tittered.
>
> The saint slowly ascended towards a black heaven that was filled with the beams from searchlights . . .. (WP 157)

The fantastic civilian landscape is filled with eruptions, the vision refracting the landscape of the trenches into a surreally soft cataclysm. The searchlight beams bitterly parody the idea of a heaven as James snaps out of his reverie into frantic action, retrieving the pocket book and the letter within it from the tunic of a comrade, 'under the pink flannel

intended to hold a supply of pins' (WP 158). The protagonist recalls that as an attack had begun, he panicked not for his own life, but to hide the letter: 'he had tried to shield to the best of his ability the woman he loved at the cost of quite great danger to himself. For the rum jar had flattened out the wretched sandbags of the trench exactly where he had been standing'. (WP 158) The story is one of a near miss, an escape due to the adultery, but also of amnesia, infidelity, and extreme duress, buttressed by the hope of a life beyond it which leads the protagonist to think that 'I may be worthy of her even yet', his sleep fading into the same reverie of dinner and theatre as the waking reverie from earlier in the story (WP 158). Whether we view this as a story of its possible composition in 1916, or its publication in 1919, the need to imagine a world beyond the war remains clear.

* * * * *

Ford's literary production slowed in his post-war recovery, and there is little periodical publication between 'Pink Flannel' and 'The Colonel's Shoes'. Back across the channel, he contributed three essays on 'English Country' to the *New Statesman* (August–September 1919; later part of No Enemy), another account of Gaudier's life and career for the *English Review* (October 1919), and five review essays for the short-lived *Piccadilly Review* (October–November 1919); he began this series by describing it 'as a friendly enquiry into how literature has survived Armageddon than as any browbeating disquisition', asking for progress in criticism as 'before the 4 August 1914, we certainly had not even the rudiments of an agreed critical language' (Ford 1919, 2002, p. 186). Even after the war, it seems impossible to avoid viewing its start as the moment at which things changed. His creative slump, as he recuperated at Red Ford in Sussex, wrestling with manuscripts that would remain unfinished such as *True Love & a G.C.M.* and *Mr Croyd* is punctuated by brief publications such as the following short stories, which rehearse themes and incidents that would later be reused.

7. 'The Colonel's Shoes'

The portrait of a soldier at the limits of his physical and mental endurance is the focus of 'The Colonel's Shoes' (1920). The story was first published on 11 January 1920 in *Reynolds's Newspaper*, an enduring and popular Sunday publication, in an issue that is dominated by issues of peace and reintegration. The headline article is 'How Peace Was Signed With Germany', lauding the conclusion of the conflict, the birth of the League of Nations, and the end of 'the proud German hopes for world domination' ('How Peace Was Signed' 1920). Problems of military reintegration recur in the news stories, including the execution of a Russian-Jewish soldier in the British Army for murder ('Poetry in Condemned Cell' 1920), an indecent assault case brought by a soldier against a civil servant ('Soldier's Complaint' 1920), and the apparent accident of a soldier found drowned in a well ('Soldier Drowned in Shallow Well' 1920). The military connection is invariably the headline, the ghost of the war contributing to the creation of further soldierly ghosts. That the motif becomes so prominent in Ford's war writings is a manifestation of his moment, seen through his impressionist lens. 'The Colonel's Shoes' begins with a post-war encounter on a train, for Ford a liminal space where unlikely encounters and indiscretions can happen. Ford had written a thematically similar story before the war in 'The Case of James Lurgan' (1911), and the railway is vital in *Parade's End*, both the tetralogy and, in it, the war beginning with Tietjens on a train (Hueffer 1911a; see Haslam 2003). This story is about a space between places, an in-between state of disassociation, and also about the slow healing of the body politic: it looks back to the darkest days of the war, but also speaks to its own moment, in which post-war recoveries, both personal and social, seemed perilous in the face of poverty and industrial unrest.

The story is told at two removes, to the narrator by an Irish Medical Officer, which contemporary audiences would have understood as suggesting unreliability. It focuses on the relationship between a preternaturally close uncle and nephew, Lieutenant-Colonel Leslie Arkwright and Lieutenant Hugh Arkwright, as they try what is suggested to be a vexatious case of military discipline brought by the unscrupulous Captain Gotch, pseudonymised by

the narrator (the implication of the slang 'gotcha', which dates back to the 1920s, seems pointed).[31] Gotch is a type of man that the 'inexperienced like [. . .] enormously; the experienced hold their tongues about them' (WP 161); the questioning of his 'soundness' parallels the treatment of the Jewish staff officer Levin in *Parade's End* (Hueffer 1920; Saunders 1996, vol. 2, p. 212). For Saunders, the primary characters all contain elements of their author: 'If "Lieut. Hugh" sounds like Lieut. Hueffer, and the worn out Colonel sounds like the Ford who wrote to Hunt from Rouen, "I am tired of fighting", it is Gotch who embodies many of Ford's concerns about what he might be like' (Saunders 1996, vol. 2, p. 34). Perhaps predictably, then, Gotch is humanised by a form of artistry, popular for his 'fine baritone voice', in which he 'would sing popular sentimental songs of the day, and put in nasty meanings and raise one brown eyebrow when he came to them' (WP 162). However, we are told that 'his own company was nasty' (WP 162), and it should not then be a surprise that the culminating suggestion is he should apply to 'look after Divisional Follies', a barely punning suggestion (WP 168). The relationship between instinct, training, performance, and action is vital to the story.

These men are operating at the limits of their endurance, and the narrator opines that 'There were many who went over the edge of unreason—but there were many and many who stayed, by the grace of God, just on this side of the edge' (WP 160).[32] If they are men on the right side of an edge, it is a close-run thing. The 'indefatigable' Colonel, who will not delegate and as a consequence whose 'mind was overloaded' (WP 162) seems to be suffering from narcoleptic exhaustion. His nephew suffers from a different malady, reported by the MO to be 'depressed about his health' and seeking medication (WP 164). The MO wonders if his illusions were 'pink and red or bottle green blackbirds', echoing the technicolour hallucinations of 'Pink Flannel', but is told by Hugh that 'it was queerer than that' (WP 165). The kinship between Leslie and Hugh becomes an instance of haunting, possession, even shapeshifting:

> suddenly Hugh heard his uncle's voice say in his ear, "I can't keep. . .. Oh God, I can't keep. . .. I'm falling. . .. falling. . .." And then—he himself—he, Hugh, himself – was sitting on the hard wooden chair at the CO's table. He felt older, older; and wiser, wiser; and surer of himself than he had ever felt sure. (WP 166)

The repeated assertion by Hugh of his own identity makes clear that this is a form of transfiguration, Hugh's reserves of energy sustaining his uncle, while perspicacity passes in the other direction, turning the younger man against Gotch, previously his ally. The moment anticipates the bodily dissociation of Tietjens in *Parade's End* as he talks to General Campion, his godfather and Commanding Officer, about an arrest that has been maliciously mistakenly attributed to him (Ford [1925] 2011, pp. 227–30). While these stories are interesting in their own right, it is clear that Ford continued to process his wartime experiences as he developed his own principles of fictional form.

8. 'Enigma'

The other two post-war stories about the conflict are less successful, which explains why 'Enigma' did not appear until its first publication in *War Prose* (Ford 1999), and 'The Miracle' was only published after the successes of the *Parade's End* novels. Saunders dates 'Enigma' to between September 1920 and November 1922; it is not impossible that this is the story that Ford sends to his agent, J.B. Pinker, on 20 August 1920. Pinker appears to have suggested that war stories are out of fashion, with Ford responding: 'It is nonsense to talk of the story as a war story; it isn't, tho' I suppose it has a war-frame to an idea. And if OUR HEROES are to be taboo in the Press it is a bad business'.[33] Thinking of the story as the product of a moment close to 'The Colonel's Shoes' would situate it at an early stage in Ford's recovery, suggesting a stage of experimentation in this relatively marginal form for him, at a moment when he was searching for inspiration. There is no periodical context here, but the story is still worth considering.

'Enigma' deals with a disappearance whose only witness Young Price, a man who had been in the Fordian narrator's battalion, is shell shocked: his implied unreliability continues to ask the questions about the impact of war on literature and narrative that had concerned Ford since 1914. The narrator muses

> I suppose it is possible, even in the twentieth century, to vanish. I mean, to go out completely, in a minute, leaving as you say of hares, the form still hot after you. Without any debts left behind you. Just walking out of the house. That was what the quite pleasant young couple, Mr and Mrs Rockingham-Denman had done. One's evil mind suggests the worst to one: but there was no worst discoverable. Nothing. Not even any good foot-prints. A complete blank! (WP 171)

This is an unsolved, unsolvable detective story: the fantasy of disappearance is revealing for the recuperating Ford, struggling with his inability to return to creative prominence and productivity. The inconspicuousness of the couple is a form of blankness that allows the sorts of hauntings, transpositions, and evasions we see. Young Price's attempts to be employed by the disappeared couple are the only traces of them. Their encounter is related as dream-like good fortune; they establish their credentials by tenuous points of military intersection, and as a consequence 'Price's description of them would have described two thousand other couples' (WP 176). The impressionistic rendering leads to them making him an offer 'to live with them; to take all the animal-responsibility and two thirds of the profits' (WP 176). It is an offer that seems too good to be true and proves to be, Price's bubble burst almost immediately by their departure, apparently in response to a similarly unspecified suspicious-looking man. The couple's blankness also makes them a palimpsest onto which fantasies of veteran post-war prosperity can be inscribed, in the face of substantial material hardships for many. The necessity of imagining a better world is stressed, along with the difficulties of making it a reality.

The story is complicated by the fact that it is again the narrator's secondhand relation with a further unreliable narrator—a device common in Ford's impressionism. Indeed, Ford would later write back to around this moment, suggesting that 'everyone who had taken physical part in the war was then [in 1919] mad. No one could have come through that shattering experience and still view life and mankind with any normal vision' (Ford 1934, p. 48). Young Price is described at length by the narrator:

> Young Price was one of a hundred thousand—a little better off than some, he had come out of the army with his undistinguished university career that should have fitted him to be a schoolmaster or something like that, completely stopped. Real, bad—and I assure you quite genuine—shell-shock had made it absolutely impossible that he should continue his studies. [. . . T]he greatest part of his small capital [got] into the hands of ingenious swindlers with a sham automobile agency. So he had an incredibly small sum a week, interest from a few railway shares which he was determined not to sell, and had been tramping about the country with a ruck-sack in search of agricultural work. (WP 173)

The hundred thousand alludes to the first Kitchener battalions, the initial enlisters in the British Army, romanticised in Ian Hay's *The First Hundred Thousand* (1915), suggesting the arduousness of long wartime service in a way that would have been recognised immediately by the first readers. Young Price's shell shock immediately places him as an unreliable narrator, throwing into question his interpretation of the encounter, and also his analysis of their disappearance, which he puts down to an elopement. Again, the narrator, Young Price, and Mr Rockingham-Denham manifest different attributes of Ford and Christopher Tietjens: the impecunious habits, the holding on to railway stocks, and the fascination with the rural (see Walters 2021). Ford also refuses the conventional resolution of the detective story, stating that 'I have no answer to offer to this enigma' (WP 176). These factors point us to the ongoing hardships of those suffering from shellshock and demobilised in the post-war world, the struggles, as Ford was experiencing, to reintegrate, to find work, which echoed the precarious state of the reconstruction effort.

9. 'The Miracle'

Ford's final short story about the First World War, 'The Miracle', was published in the *Yale Review* of Winter 1928, and reprinted in the *English Review* in 1930. Both of these publications align with the War Books Boom of the turn of the post-war decade (see Frayn and Houston 2022), a moment at which an author like Ford, who had by then achieved at least critical success for his fiction about the conflict in the *Parade's End* tetralogy, was doubly able to capitalise on remaining material about the war. The story narrates a bombing raid seven years ago; this suggests that the story is set in 1923, and the composition date may be closely aligned; Saunders notes the possibility of its autobiographical elements, but places its composition after Ford had finished *Parade's End* (Saunders 1996, vol. 2, pp. 257, 280) The *Yale Review* is a much more academic publication than those in which Ford's previous stories appeared, pointing to a change in his literary status and perhaps arising from the visiting lectureships in the US he would intermittently take up. The war is registered primarily in non-fiction book reviews, notably one which covers five books on Germany and the war, and one of Mussolini's autobiography (Dawson 1928; Greenfield 1928).

'The Miracle', like all of these stories, returns to an epiphanic moment, a common short story and, indeed, modernist trope. A post-war veteran who has become a brilliant but absent-minded Fordian/Tietjens-esque professor recounts the revelatory moment for his faith, the appearance in his rucksack on a wartime bombing raid of the cigarettes, necessary for lighting the fuse, which he is convinced he has forgotten to pack. The answering of his prayers leads to his belief that there is 'a Special Providence', but also strengthens his belief in himself; his new wife, to whom he tells the story, realises it is his own faulty memory which underlies the apparent miracle. Saunders outlines the narrative, the autobiographical context, and the connections to *Parade's End* (Saunders 1996, vol. 2, pp. 257–58). Here, however, I examine briefly the story's focus on remembering and forgetting ten years on from the conflict. The narrator tells his wife that

> I remembered with absolute precision—that I had forgotten. It was no hallucination. I remembered not only that I had forgotten, but *how!* [. . .] You *see!* I *remembered!* I remembered the *action* of forgetting. As I went out of the hut, I had had the sensation that something was unsatisfactory. Omitted! You know what I mean about that sensation: it is like a little thirst . . .. And there I was with that sudden remembrance. (WP 184) (Ford 1928, p. 329)

This, the story's pivotal moment, addresses the more general experience of the 1920s in recalling the conflict, the position on the cusp of remembering and forgetting a characteristic form of the modernist story which, for Claire Drewery, 'may thus be interpreted in terms of tension and contradiction as opposed to conveying a transcendent insight' (Drewery 2016, p. 135). Here it is both: the Professor experiences his revelation, while tensions and contradictions are recognised by the Professor's wife, identified only in terms of her previous identity as the former Miss Sinclair, and the reader. Ford makes clear here that both remembering and forgetting are active processes in themselves, realising that the war continues constantly to be registered indirectly, in traces, in absences. Whether written five or ten years after the conflict, it is now receding and its memory is becoming formalised, as the story's conclusion recognises. The Professor's wife tells him

> 'I should suggest that on this anniversary we should. . .you might like to. . .go to a service at the Cathedral. And, side by side. . .oh, offer thanks, and whatever it is you do to confirm yourself in. . .Faith!
>
> With an ecstatic face he had tiptoed to the head of the bed and now, bending down, he folded her in his arms. (WP 185)

The anniversary seems to be of the event, but its publication in December 1928 would point its first readership clearly to the ten-year anniversary of the Armistice, which was widely commemorated. She realises that his faith is rooted in his own absent-mindedness, but understands the importance of this self-belief to his subsequent success, the characteristically Fordian elliptical hesitations conveying her resistance both to faith and the

shattering of his illusions. Inverting the narrative of 'Fun!—It's Heaven' in survival and post-war marriage, the story reminds us that romantic intimacy was another aspect of life that became precarious in wartime, and must be cherished, literally clung on to. It is apposite that Ford's final short story addressing the First World War finishes on these terms, amid the social and political uncertainties of Europe in the 1920s.

* * * * *

Ford's short stories warrant further sustained critical attention in and of themselves, as well as for their role in Ford's oeuvre more generally. The success of digitisation programmes means that Ford's periodical contributions are more accessible than ever, and the frameworks for discussing periodicals are now robustly established. That said, work still tends to focus on the coterie magazines which are typically associated with high modernism; we have a wealth of scholarship, for example, on Ford, the *English Review,* and the *transatlantic review*. Even in the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies* or the *Journal of European Periodical Studies* there is little work on, or even mention of, the more popular periodicals such as the *Bystander*, the *Outlook*, or *Reynolds's Newspaper* in which these stories appeared. The literary contributions to these publications, Ford's included, warrant further consideration as ephemera becomes more accessible.

Here, I have argued that these stories are important in developing Ford's impressionism, as well as acting as the proving ground for his fictional response to the hardships of, and recovery from, his wartime experiences. The heavenly and/or hysterical nature of Ford's pre-1916 impressionism becomes transmuted into forgetting and more sustained absences. The overall method remains relatively consistent, but the devices and tropes by which it is enacted shift as Ford hones his form *en route* to his masterpieces, the *Parade's End* novels. The teetering of these narratives on the cusp of the natural and supernatural, rational and insane, absence and presence, highlights the enduring impact of the First World War both on Ford and more generally in the post-war decade. Bringing these stories together for the first time shifts our understanding of the development of Ford's response to the conflict and his literary style more generally.

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Notes

1 Einhaus only glances at Ford, referring to his founding of the *English Review* (Einhaus 2013, p. 44), to the reprinting of 'Fun!—It's Heaven' in Andrew Maunder's anthology (Maunder 2011a; Einhaus 2013, p. 69), and to his production of 'anti-German writing independent of a government commission' (Einhaus 2013, p. 121).

2 For a selection of Ford's short critical writing, see Ford (2002). There is a huge amount that is not yet collected, although the forthcoming Complete Works of Ford Madox Ford may change this.

3 These stories are all contained in Ford (1999). I give parenthetical references to that edition in the body text using the abbreviation (WP), and cite details of the first periodical publication at the first quotation from each story; Saunders does not reproduce these articles in their entirety. I style him as Ford Madox Ford in this essay, but in the first references to periodicals I use the name under which the pieces were published, for the most part, Ford Madox Hueffer.

4 Digitization projects such as the *Modernist Journals Project* (1995-) have made many early-twentieth-century periodicals accessible, and a wealth of Fordian material therein is yet to be recuperated fully to the critical conversation.

5 The essays of Harding (2010) offer valuable context, but do not include any work on the short stories nor, indeed, the range of periodicals for which Ford wrote beyond those that he edited.

6 Rebecca Beasley discusses Ford, Conrad, and the *English Review* extensively in Beasley (2020), chap. 2. She discusses the publication of 'The Raid' on pp. 164–65.

7 The series 'Literary Portraits', a wide-ranging series in the *Daily Mail* which ran weekly from 20 April to 20 July 1907, was Ford's first regular column, then moved to the *Tribune*. See Harvey (1962, pp. 147–9).

8 Ford to J.B. Pinker, 4 October 1919, text ALS Huntington. Unpublished. Thanks to Paul Skinner for this information.

9 Ford is commenting on A.E. Coppard's 'The Higgler', also in this issue, but the suggestion of autocritique is unavoidable.

[10] Shaw parallels the short story and impressionist art (Shaw 1983, p. 13), although Head critiques her lack of nuance in doing so (Head 1992, p. 14).

[11] Caine's war enthusiasm would likely have come to Ford's notice through his propaganda work for Ford's friend C.F.G. Masterman's War Propaganda Bureau.

[12] *The Good Soldier* might be cited against this claim, but the novel was largely completed before the conflict began.

[13] This and the companion essay 'War and the Mind' were not published until 1980 and 1989 respectively. They are most easily accessed in Ford (1999), pp. 36–48.

[14] A continuation of this article is in the following issue, (Hueffer 1914q).

[15] On Prussian un-Germanness, see Hueffer (1915a, p. 141).

[16] On this topic in Ford, see Parfect (2006). Ford would later review Herbert Gorman's biography of Alexander *Dumas: The Incredible Marquis* (Ford 1929). He claims to have read novels by Dumas under bombardment in Armentières (see Saunders 2000, p. 162).

[17] On Ford, propaganda and rumour, see Tate (1998).

[18] On the complexities of Ford's position in relation to New Journalism see Rogers (2019, pp. 308–10).

[19] Ford writes about the Satyricon in Hueffer (1914d).

[20] He states a preference for Tibullus and Ovid over Horace and Virgil in (Hueffer 1914p).

[21] Horace, *Odes*, 3.14, l. 25 (trans. A. D. Godley).

[22] For his agitating for internment, see Hueffer (1915e, p. 47).

[23] See Harvey (1962, pp. 214–16); Saunders (2000, p. 155). Aside from the stories named, Ford publishes 9 poems (plus one reprint/rewrite), 9 essays, 3 standalone pieces, and the 6 essays of the 'Men and Women' series in the *Little Review*.

[24] On the spinster and the First World War, see Einhaus (2016a, pp. 108–11).

[25] On Cannock Chase and the First World War, see Carpenter et al. (2018).

[26] Foley asserts the ghostliness of Ford's poem *Antwerp* (Foley 2017, pp. 69–74). On spiritualism and the First World War see, for example, Owen (2004); Falcon (2023).

[27] '4692 Padd' (Hueffer 1908) is the basis for Ford's novella *A Call* (1909).

[28] On the nineteenth-century roots of this genre, see also Cox (2016).

[29] The poem is also known as 'The Iron Music'.

[30] The Imperial War Museum's 'Lives of the First World War' database reveals that there was, in fact, a W. L. James in the Welsh Regiment, in which Ford served, during the First World War <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/2579082> (accessed 15 August 2022). The man who hands the letter to James in the story is called Caradoc Morris, of whom there was an instance in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/lifestory/5680944> (accessed 15 August 2022). Canadian troops feature prominently in Ford's later *Parade's End*. While this may be a coincidence, it is a notable one.

[31] The name Arkwright is repeated from *Zeppelin Nights* (WP 216).

[32] Saunders (1996, vol. 2) uses this quotation as the epigraph and title for his chap. 3, '1917: The Edge of Unreason', which deals with Ford's experiences in the dog days of the war.

[33] Ford to J.B. Pinker, 1 September 1920, TLS Huntington, Unpublished.

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Article

Ford Madox Ford's Unusual War: Ongoing Worry and Modernity

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Abstract: In *Parade's End*, Ford Madox Ford approaches the experience of trauma in an unusual way—it is no longer just past experiences, but the expectancy of dismal events that become as traumatic. Ford chooses worry for such rendering. In order to make the correlation between suffering and sensibility, he places worry in the lives of his characters, which reflects on Ford's own life. This discussion will introduce the idea that worry is going to be a major component of Ford's psychologising of war. I explore this worry-driven sensibility and the ways it is reflected, especially in the characters' obsession with the anticipation of death and face-forward mourning. Within this loss-filled atmosphere, worry over being killed dominates the narrative and continually feeds the sentiment of mournfulness. The Great War transforms into a Greater War, seeping into the societal realm, where it amplifies the private emotional battles of the characters, centred around worry. Consequently, the narrative highlights the coexistence of these personal and public conflicts, ultimately resulting in both physical and psychological losses throughout the story.

Keywords: World War One; ongoing worry; mourning; trauma; Ford Madox Ford; *Parade's End*

1. Introduction

Ford, unlike his contemporaries, chooses to render war by focusing on "worry". This is what feeds suffering and mourning in *Parade's End*. Ford conveys worry—not fear, nor horror, and not merely death. This is because such elements would all terminate in finding rest in the end. On the other hand, worry feeds on itself and, in the end, so destroys the morale less than a grasshopper becomes a burden. It is without predictable terms; it is as menacing as the eye of a serpent; it causes unspeakable fatigue even as, remorselessly, it banishes rest (Ford 2007, p. 206).

Before the Victorian period, worry existed in the English language, yet rather it "referred to the act of choking or strangling, later of distressing, human beings or animals. It was about acts of physical harassment, sometimes leading to death" (O'Gorman 2015, p. 30). As Francis O'Gorman has shown, in the Victorian period, the concept of worry was beginning to gain a new meaning. Literary texts of the era were among the crucial markers of this transformation. The emergence of the concept of "Victorian anxiety" confirms this conversion. O'Gorman refers to the texts that were written towards the end of the 19th century as "worry novels" (O'Gorman 2015, p. 31).

The nature of worry changes dramatically at the start of the twentieth century. The writers of this period start to see worry not as an individual's specific trouble, but as a collective problem, where it becomes, as George Lincoln Walton has stated, the "disease of the age" (Walton 1908, p. 22). In 1908, Walton argues that the disease of worry is a cultural phenomenon caused by the twentieth century. In *Worry: The Disease of the Age*, C. W. Saleeby shares similar insights, asserting that worry is a disease of the twentieth-century (Saleeby 1909, pp. 9–10). Ford Madox Ford's handling of worry in *Parade's End* demonstrates his keen observations of worry's transformation as a disorder of the modern era.

The transformation of an individual's domestic or financial worry into a notion that impacts on an age reveals the problematic nature of modernity.[1] The 1900s saw the incapability of individuals to adjust to a new way of life due to the detrimental changes in industry and technology.

2. Modernity

Malcolm Bradbury asserts that "there is the new era, but not the new man, or the new hope. The traditional into the modern is enacted, and the modern self-initiated, dispossessed of older meanings" (Bradbury 1992, p. xviii). He sees a dismal consequence: "This produces not hope but disillusion, futility, disenchantment, a sense of living between disaster and disaster" (Bradbury 1992, p. xviii).

In *Parade's End*, this uncertain atmosphere leaves no choice for individuals but to worry. Their concerns are not limited to earning a living, nor maintaining a peaceful marriage; in the insecure climate of modernity, there is worry over the dissolution of traditional values, the loss of common values, and the debasement of ideals that gave life meaning. Focusing on this dark side of modernity brings the undeniable cause-and-effect between modernised urban life and worry. In *Worry, the Disease of the Age*, C. W. Saleeby makes a rather radical claim about this disorder, and asserts that "every access of civilisation increases the importance of this malady. Printing must have multiplied it a hundredfold; cities, with their pace and their competition and their foul air, have done the like—and we are all becoming citi-fied, if not civilised to-day" (Saleeby 1909, p. 9). Saleeby's reflections on the ills of "becoming citi-fied" are consistent with Ford's attitude toward the urbanization in London. Ford's pre-war text, *The Soul of London* (Ford 1905), demonstrates comparable insights. He is preoccupied with the notion of "the death of the Spirit of Place". Ford sees the lost soul of London and is melancholic over that. Along with the lost values and civilization, Ford is disturbed by the effects of modernity. For him "that is indeed the problem which is set before London—the apotheosis of modern life." (Ford 1905, p. 173). Demonstration of the changing values and the way in which they are reflected in London become the main concern of Ford's book. For him,

> London has become a mere bazaar, a mere market. Its associations have gone; its humanity has gone; it is uninhabitable for its atmosphere, for its inhuman solitude, for its indifference to architecture, for its pulling down of old courts. So, in this image, London, an immense galleon, drifts down the tideway of ages, threatened imminently by those black and sulphurous clouds, Neurasthenia, Decay, and the waters of the Earth. (Ford 1905, p. 168)

Ford's choice of the word "neurasthenia" in this quotation is significant, and becomes crucial in relation to worry. In *'Shattered Nerves': Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England*, Janet Oppenheim discusses the idea that this term, which came into use toward the end of the 19th century, was referred to as "shattered nerves" or "broken health" by the Victorians (Oppenheim 1991, p. 5). Oppenheim refers to the neurologist George Miller Beard, who from 1869 to 1883 tried to raise awareness of the reality of neurasthenia (93). She mentions the fact that he was facing difficulties while defining this notion, as Beard did not want to limit his list of definitive factors; so, he came up with more than fifty signs, such as:

> . . .profound anxiety, despair, and fear, various phobias, fretfulness, insomnia and nightmares, indecisiveness and inattention, extreme weakness and fatigue, migraine, dilated pupils, frequent blushing, heart palpitations, cramps, dental decay, indigestion, neuralgia, rapid changes in body temperature, sexual impotence, backache, and the fidgets (Oppenheim 1991, p. 93).

Beard argues that the 19th century gave rise to neurasthenia due to factors such as "rapid transportation and communication, great advance in scientific learning, and the widespread education of women"; with these developments taking place, he thinks that "repose" became implausible (Oppenheim 1991, p. 93). He acknowledges the existence of nervous disorders in previous centuries too, but claims that these were never experienced

in the way they were experienced with modernity (93). In "Modernity as the Cultural Crucible of Trauma", Karolyn Steffens also refers to Beard and German social critic Max Nordau's focus on drawing a close connection between neurosis and modernity. Nordau talks about the "language of degeneracy", and he observes the ways in which "steam and electricity have turned the customs of life of every member of the civilized nations upside down" (Steffens 2018, p. 40). They both blame the "present conditions of civilized life" as causing "our brains' wear and tear" (40). In other words, this can be seen as increasing the sensitivity of individuals amidst the "vertigo and whirl of our frenzied life" (Steffens 2018, p. 40). With neurasthenia, Ford is able to embrace various factors of the sad state of nerve weakness and sensibility, along with the critical rendering of modernity.

The epistemological history of nerves and nervousness is discussed by Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail in the introduction to *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems, 1800–1950*. In 1691, the translation of Ambroise Pare's 1575 collection of works defines nerves as "the substance of an organ which dilates and contracts"; this contractility would designate a "strength" in the early modern period (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Salisbury and Shail also discuss the definition of nerves and refer to Edward Philip's 1658 dictionary of difficult words, which defines "nerve" as "a sinew, also by metaphor, force or strength of body"; they stress the fact that, in 1735, "nervous" was still defined in the same way (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Only in Samuel Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary* can a change be observed in the way in which this word is defined. Along with the common definition, Johnson adds the notion of "having weak or diseased nerves" (Salisbury and Shail 2010). Salisbury and Shail point out that this new meaning did not find acceptance, as it was not even included in John Walker's dictionary of 1775. Towards the mid-1800s, this new meaning began to be embraced in new dictionaries. Joseph Worcester's American dictionary of 1859 included a comprehensive explanation of "nervous" as "Having a weak or diseased nerves; easily agitated or excited; irritable; timid; fearful" (Salisbury and Shail 2010, p. 27). The editors make a comparison between the attributed meanings of nerves and nervous both before and after the 1840s. They argue that, after those years, the new meaning was incorporated, and thus there was a switch from "the temporary state of having one's nerves agitated" to a "permanent state of liability to such temporary agitation" (Salisbury and Shail 2010, p. 28). They observe the transformation of these concepts occurring especially with modernity.

While Ford's emphasis on worry is related to turn-of-the-century discourses on degeneration, neurasthenia, and nerves or nervousness, he frames the problem differently. Instead of focusing on a term that is mostly associated with a medical context, he wants to deploy a sentiment that every single person is experiencing continuously on a daily basis. In *'Shattered Nerves': Doctors, Patients, and Depression in Victorian England*, Oppenheim discusses the way in which nerves started to be understood to be beyond the limitations of health and illness:

> The nerves and their disorders were inextricably interwoven with nineteenth-century British assumptions about more than health and illness, or normalcy and deviance; they were interlaced with attitudes toward success and failure, civilization and barbarism, order and chaos, masculinity and femininity. Just as nerves pervaded the physical body, so did they permeate the images with which the Victorians evoked their society. Nerves existed physiologically and metaphorically, conjuring up complicated and sometimes contradictory associations. Occasionally conveying an idea of courage and vigor, they more often stood for fragility and weakness. They suggested sensitivity, sympathy, and, above all, suffering that frequently defied medical knowledge and curative skill (Oppenheim 1991, p. 3).

This understanding reflects Ford's rendering of the discussion around the notion of nerves and its related terms. For Ford, the medical context is too limiting; he rather sees and regards nerves within the context discussed above, and sees how this idea is still prevalent

in modernity. His choice to focus on worry in the tetralogy instead of other sentiments, or the choice of this word, can be understood along these lines.

In *A View of the Nervous Temperament*, Thomas Trotter also links nervous disorders to the British in the 19th century (Trotter 1808).

> This disposition to nerve-wracking conditions, or the 18th century perspective of sensibility (emotional catharsis), finds a continuum in the medium of suffering in Ford's writings, especially *Parade's End* (Haslam 2014). Critics have noted the importance of the 18th century to Ford, and particularly to Tietjens and *Parade's End*.[2]

Ford's focus on 18th century sensibilities and the discussion of worry go along with each other. Oppenheim discusses the inseparability of 19th century British attitudes to nervous conditions. This connection sheds light on the way in which Ford draws heavily on the invisible line between the "somatic functions of the nerves" and "their psychological, or emotional, manifestations", as discussed by Oppenheim:

> Victorian and Edwardian theorizing about the nervous system depended heavily on metaphor to span the gulf between the somatic functions of the nerves and their psychological, or emotional, manifestations. [. . .] Every term used to describe and explain the operations of the nervous system—tension, sympathy, excitability, irritability, sensibility, and depression—at once denoted a bodily state and connoted an emotional one. Signifying a somatic condition, each word also carried a heavy psychological cargo, and the line separating the two was virtually invisible (Oppenheim 1991, p. 86).

In a similar way, Ford has psychological pain causing seizures or physical pain for his characters, making his characters feel like a knife is stabbing them when they encounter unbearably dismal situations. We witness an instance of this mental wound overtaking the physical body when Tietjens loses himself over tormenting flashbacks while having breakfast with Sylvia and Sylvia's mother, Mrs. Satterthwaite. In that scene, Sylvia is getting bored and starting to break the plates and talking "cruelly, with maddening inaccuracy, and with wicked penetration", causing Tietjens a great deal of "pressure in his forehead" (Ford 2010, p. 152). He loses himself in thought over his defeat against her physical attraction, and the possibility of having the child by another man. He starts to have catastrophic thoughts: "'By God! I've had a stroke!' and he got out of his chair to test his legs. . .But he had not had a stroke. It must then, he thought, be that the pain of his last consideration must be too great for his mind to register, as certain great physical pains go unperceived" (Ford 2010, p. 153). Testing his legs demonstrates the power of his imagination to alter his perspective on reality. He cannot differentiate whether he is still well and healthy or teetering on death and paralysis. Ford draws a shadowy line between the liminal states of great pain and numbness. The hallucinatory stroke can also be observed as an echo of his traumatized inner life and mind filled with worry.

Similar descriptions persist in the second volume of the tetralogy: "Heavy depression" settles on Tiejtens; "the distrust of the home Cabinet" becomes "like physical pain" (Ford 2011b, p. 16). And psychological pain becomes manifest in Tietjens' physical appearance. This becomes apparent when the general is discussing Tietjens' problematic marriage. Tietjens' face, "beginning with the edges round the nostrils, go chalk white", it becomes "colourless", and his eyes "of porcelain-blue" protrude "extraordinarily". The general thinks how ugly he looks, as "his face is all crooked" (Ford 2011b, p. 245). Such physical deterioration is punctuated by the "mournful cadences" in their voices (Ford 2011b, p. 245). The General's thoughts note Tietjens' troubled life: '"This fellow's mother died of a broken heart in 1912. The father committed suicide five years after. He had not spoken to the son's wife for four or five years! That takes us back to 1912. . .. Then, when I strafed him in Rye, the wife was in France with Perowne'" (Ford 2011b, p. 245). When reminded of the troubles in his life, Tietjens' face almost turns into a "Cubist painting", detached from reality. Tietjens' detachment helps him to cope with his psychological pain. His persona is shaped by losses, both physical and psychological—joined to his "identity by a black cord" (Ford 2011b, p. 86).

Similarly, in *No Enemy*, Gringoire is struck by the motionless trees, and the feelings aroused by the melancholic setting are so powerful that he vividly recalls his suffering: "I remember it still as a pain. Nay, in the remembrance, I feel it so strongly that it is still a pain, like that of an old, deep cicatrized wound" (Ford 2002, p. 15). These tormenting memories become like physical wounds that leave a scar on his consciousness. Ford blurs the line between physical and psychological wounds by focusing on worry.

3. Worrying and Forward-Facing Mourning

Suffering is not only observed in Ford's writings, but also in his anguished life. Ford's traumatised persona is exacerbated by his incessant worrying about forthcoming events. While Ford accepts the reality of war, his anticipation of it becomes a mode of suffering. A similar pattern is also observed in the life of Tietjens.

Worry and forward-facing mourning has a strong presence in Ford's life. Even before The Great War, Ford demonstrates that a powerful sense of gloominess dooms him to nervous breakdowns.[3] His mournfulness can be traced back to the 1880s, coinciding with the First Boer War, which plays a crucial role in shaping his melancholic persona. He sees the Second Boer War as the beginning of a "loss of values, a confusion of standards, and the shock of alienation" (Gasiorek and Moore 2008, p. 5). More than the physical loss, he is taken aback by the moral and spiritual loss caused by the war. In a sense, Ford equates the outcome of these wars with the effects caused by modernity. Modernity and the Boer War seem to be interchangeable sources for the cause of his mournfulness. The "iron door between the past and the present" is torn down with the war, and the painful transitory period begins to unsettle the traditional past, heralding in the new, ambiguous, modern present (Saunders 2013, p. 175). Saunders questions why the Boer War creates such a catastrophic effect on Ford—as he is surrounded with "the apocalyptic sense of war as bringing things to an end" (Saunders 2013, p. 134). He notes the possible reasons for the war's ruinous influence on Ford. Saunders argues that Ford was pro-Boer and felt vulnerable to jingoistic mobs harassing people like him expressing what they saw as anti-patriotic (i.e., anti-imperialist) feelings (Saunders 2013, pp. 134–35). He argues that "though technically an eventual British victory, the British had for the first time since the Norman conquest felt in peril of defeat" (Saunders 2013, p. 134). The Second Anglo–Boer War is very destructive for Ford; he worries about the threat of losing the war.

Along with Ford's prevalent hysteria, his receptiveness toward a plausible war is enough to make him an ongoing worrier. Wyndham Lewis' *Blasting and Bombadiering*, sheds light onto Ford's awareness of the upcoming European war. Lewis' memories of himself, Ford, Ford's partner Violet Hunt, and Mary Borden Turner being together in Berwickshire in 1914, reveal Ford's decisiveness over England joining the war. Regardless of Mrs. Turner's certainty that England will not be joining the war, Ford insists that, since there is a Liberal government in power, it will declare war:

> 'I don't agree', Ford answered, in his faintest voice, with consummate indifference, 'because it has always been the Liberals who have gone to war. It is *because* it is a Liberal Government that it *will* declare war'. And of course, as we all know, a Liberal Government *did* declare it. Within a few days of the period of those country house conversations Great Britain was at war, within a year so Britain had become so many Heartbreak Houses; and the British Empire, covered in blood, was gasping its way through an immense and disastrous war, upon which it should have never entered" (Lewis 1967, p. 57-8-9).

Unlike Lewis' observations on Ford seeming "bored", rather Ford's forward-facing mourning can be detected. He does not simply worry about the upcoming war; for him, the war has already begun, and he is mourning for the future losses already. Expectancy towards such a catastrophic event would make keeping calm highly unlikely. Yet, worry does not disappear with the ending of the war. Francis O'Gorman's insights confirm this, as worry becomes "well established in the West" after the Great War (O'Gorman 2015, p. 38). The dominant worry becomes evident in both spheres of the war: the battle and

the home. Soldiers worry over their lives and the lives of their comrades. The war is much harder for the worrisome Tietjens. "The lonely buffalo outside the herd" becomes a comrade of his fellow men. Sylvia expresses her astonishment at observing this change: "She had never seen Tietjens put his head together with any soul before: he was the lonely buffalo. . .. Now! Anyone: any fatuous staff-officer, whom at home he would never so much as have spoken to: any trustworthy beer-sodden sergeant, any street urchin dressed up as orderly. . .". (Ford 2011b, p. 178). Tietjens, the isolated individual who is beset with worry about his personal life and the future of his nation, is now confined to the trenches. He is in close contact with other individuals—something not experienced in his life-time—but now becomes worried about his fellow soldiers. Sylvia observes his concern: "They had only to appear and all his mind went into close-headed conference over some ignoble point in the child's game: the laundry, the chiropody, the religions, the bastards. . .of millions of the indistinguishable. . .. Or their deaths as well!" (Ford 2011b, p. 178). An incredible transformation takes place, in which Tietjens becomes this sociable companion who cares about the troubles of his fellow soldiers. Tietjens seizes the worry in his fellow soldiers' faces, and it is compared to a cloud of dust in the narrative: "Like dust: like a cloud of dust that would approach and overwhelm a landscape: every one with preposterous troubles and anxieties, even if they did not overwhelm you personally with them. . . Brown dust. . ." (Ford 2011b, p. 43). Ford usually uses cloud imagery as in the "cloud of the dead". The choice to use an expression of death along with worry signals the inseparable connection between them. Within this loss-filled atmosphere, worry over being killed dominates the narrative and continually feeds the sentiment of losses.

This hard-to-express, not-easily-communicated worry booms after the Great War and rises to the surface. The emergence of self-help books for overcoming worry in post-war Britain confirms that society was trying to get to grips with its anxiety. O'Gorman argues that "as worry began to appear on the book shelves, it was ironically clear that it was here to stay" (O'Gorman 2015, p. 33). So once worry—"a part of our underground life"—is brought to surface, it captures the mind of the individual even more (O'Gorman 2015, p. 10). Ford seems to be aware of this paradoxical predicament. Ford, a worrier himself, is not concerned with finding a solution to overcoming worry, but he knows the best possible way of dealing with it, and this is what he reflects in *Parade's End*. He chooses to represent worry discreetly, not openly. Even though worry seems to be easy to talk about, or to notice as more of a conscious face of anxiety, it still requires an effort to bring it to the surface from the hidden corners of the mind. O'Gorman argues that "Worry's a part of individuality, a feature of the inner life, about which we hardly dare talk. [. . .] The inner life of worry is one of discomfort, awkwardness, a loss of focus, a sense of dislocation, and an inability to accept the logic of the 'most likely' in the eddies of faith in the improbable" (xvii). Ford is aware that "to think about worry is to look beneath often polished surfaces and probe layers of camouflage" (O'Gorman 2015, p. 49). His characters in the tetralogy reflect this awareness. O'Gorman discusses the ways in which worry is experienced, especially in the time period between the two World Wars, yet not analysed accordingly. Ford, in a way, undertakes this task of attempting to "recover the histories of ordinary mental pain that aren't lost but occluded" (O'Gorman 2015, p. 49).

Ruminations on why Ford chooses the word worry over anxiety make more sense when viewed in the light of Clayton's observations on the anxiety of modernist writers. Anxiety becomes a force trapping the individual into melancholia. For Ford to combine different expressions of grief, he needs to have a feeling that would focus on not only undefinable loss but something that would relate to specific losses as well. Anxiety becomes a reaction to an incomprehensible sense of loss. Clayton argues in a similar way while addressing the anxiety of modern writers and defines it as the "experience of being a fragile or empty self in an empty world" (Clayton 1991, p. 6). He argues that their art is a response to this anxiety, and shapes their "gesture of healing" (Clayton 1991, p. 6). We can list a number of reasons for worry within the tetralogy: war, death, sufferings, marital troubles, and social changes. Ford does not deny the inexplicable angst caused in relation

to modernity, but relates this rather to melancholia. With mournfulness, he picks worry, as there are specific things to be sad about.

4. Theoretical Texts

Theoretical texts on worry help us to investigate the possible reasons for Ford's choice of the word worry instead of similar terms, like anxiety or nervousness. In the preface to *Worry and Its Psychological Disorders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment*, Graham C.L. Davey and Adrian Wells discuss the everydayness of worry experienced by every individual to some degree (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). Examining the "normality of worry", that can transform into a "pervasive daily activity" and grow into "a source of extreme emotional discomfort", the authors explain that worry can be directed towards "major life issues" and "minor day-to-day issues", and is "uncontrollable" (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). It is this quality of worry that Ford deploys to represent the daily and general troubling incidents of his characters. Furthermore, Davey and Wells see the nature of worry as the "cardinal diagnostic feature of generalised anxiety disorder", which is seen to be the main factor for many anxiety disorders, such as "phobias, obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, and PTSD" (Holaway et al. 2006, p. xv). Holaway, Rodebaugh, and Heimberg state that worry's crucial feature is the "anxious apprehension for future, negative events", which coincides with Ford's main triggering effect of the unending sufferings (Holaway et al. 2006, p. 3).[4] A lot of which can be traced back to his own life, as he says, "I have suffered much, and shall probably continue to suffer much", which demonstrates a faculty for expecting the worst, which is present in his characters (Ford 1907, p. 144). He demonstrates his characters' anxiety for the future, which is mostly associated with a nervousness angst related to death. In *A Man Could Stand Up—*, the awaited strafe impacts Tietjens physically and psychologically. When sounds are heard they are taken as a signal for the artillery: "Tietjens' heart stopped; his skin on the nape of the neck began to prickle: his hands were cold" (Ford 2011a, p. 100). His mouth fills "with a dreadful salty flavour", the back of his tongue becomes dry, and his chest and heart "labours heavily" (Ford 2011a, p. 130). The fear increases to such an extent that it blocks his capability to think, and he worries about losing his reason (Ford 2011a, p. 100). He imagines himself to be hearing "the wings of the angel of death" (Ford 2011a, p. 101).

The anticipation of death asserts itself in this third volume more as Tietjens is seen constantly calculating his chances of being hit by a shell in the trenches as if solving an ordinary mathematics problem. No feelings are attached to his discussion on death; it is simply numerical and logical: "Still, the chances against a hit by a rifle-bullet were eighty thousand to one in a deep gravel trench like that. And he had had poor Jimmy Johns killed beside him by a bullet like that. So that gave him, say, 140,000 chances to one against. He wished his mind would not go on and on figuring" (Ford 2011a, p. 73). He cannot control his mind from pondering death; he compares his mind to a dog that you leave in a room and tell to stay in a corner, but then it moves elsewhere. Along with his calculations, he recalls the death of a fellow soldier, his logical thinking containing little emotion. In the same way that he calculates his chances of being shot, Tietjens also looks around him and speculates which of the soldiers will be killed: "Ghostly! Well, they had all been killed: and more on to that" (Ford 2011a, p. 71). Not only fixated on imagining the slaughter of his fellow soldiers, he is also obsessed with his own condition. Tietjens is certain that he will be wounded, and this certainty is to such a degree that he speculates on the exact spot of the wound, "behind the collar-bone" (Ford 2011a, p. 73) Tietjens is so obsessed with this imagined physical wound and worrying over this that he neglects his existing psychological wounds.

The other characters are also fighting a battle against worry in this third volume of the book. Ford uses them to demonstrate a range of worries, stemming from monetary to war-related reasons. Mackenzie displays anxieties over various money-related troubles. He would feel much better if "he had only his pay and an extravagant wife to keep" (Ford 2011a, p. 44). Yet, he refers to his complicated situation as his "funeral" (Ford 2011a,

p. 44). Later, we encounter Levin, whose worry reaches a peak in this section due to the fear of getting killed: "Colonel Levin let air lispingly out between his teeth. 'No. 16 Draft not off yet... Dear, dear! Dear, dear!... We shall be strafed to hell by First Army....'" (Ford 2011a, p. 48). He becomes the doomsayer, announcing the likely deaths of them all. Levin internalises his worries too deeply, such that his physical features are read as reflecting his troubled self by his fellows: "And here was Levin with the familiar feminine-agonized wrinkle on his bronzed-alabaster brow..." (Ford 2011a, p. 50). He becomes fully immersed in this anxious mood, both physically and psychologically. Levin triggers the suppressed worries of Tietjens, and "consternation" rushed upon them, "the weight upon the mind" becomes like "a weight upon the brows" (Ford 2011a, p. 51). Levin's reactions dig out Tietjens' buried anxieties and bring them to the surface. With the waiting for the upcoming strafe and the fear of death, Ford introduces mist again, which purports mournfulness. The characters experience the expected strafe and death as if they were taking place before they actually do, due to high levels of worry. Thus, suffering conquers the characters mentally and physically, causing them to mourn in advance.

Sylvia becomes another victim of worry. She is at the war zone to torment Tietjens, but instead of being the torturer, she becomes the tortured—she is in near panic as the bombardment occurs near the hotel. Seizing the worry in which Tietjens is involved affects her too, so she exclaims in "sudden and complete despair" that Tietjens' lack of intention to live at Groby means that he intends on getting himself killed (Ford 2011a, p. 170). This realisation startles her, yet she gives a sadistic Sylvian reaction to this and warns Tietjens that, if he is killed, she will cut down the Groby tree (Ford 2011a, p. 170). She is supressing her worries over Tietjens' being killed in her own sadistic way. Yet, seeing Tietjens' reaction to that, "He winced: he certainly winced at that", she regrets torturing someone who is already under a lot of pressure (Ford 2011a, p. 170). By disclosing the worries of various characters, Ford demonstrates the commonness of this feeling, and the dominance it has in the overall tetralogy.

Unlike anxiety, in "Worry and Rumination: Styles of Persistent Negative Thinking in Anxiety and Depression", Costas Papageorgiou explains that worry is a "common mental activity in both clinical and non-clinical populations" (Papageorgiou 2006, p. 21). As Purdon and Harrington explain, worry "typically concerns negative future events and is an attempt to avoid negative outcomes or prepare for the worst" (Purdon and Harrington 2006, p. 41). Worry is "a closely associated consequence of anxious apprehension" (Papageorgiou 2006, p. 41).

In *Worry and Nervousness or The Science of Self-Mastery*, William S. Sadler discusses worry in relation to the paradigms of "forethought" and "fearthought". He sees forethought as being very useful for the smooth running of daily events (Sadler 1914, p. 52). However, he defines the latter as "nothing more or less than a process of borrowing trouble from the future for the purpose of augmenting our present sorrows", stating that it "harasses the mind, tortures the soul, while it so effectively dissipates the mental energies and weakens the nervous forces" (Sadler 1914, p. 52). Ford's texts borrow troubles from the past and future to combine them with today's distresses. His way of handling thinking, as observed in his characters, does not present a healthy forethinking, it is always fearthinking, regardless of being fixated on the past, present, or future. His way of handling thinking generates a blurred line between forethinking and fearthinking. Thoughts about the future trigger worrisome contemplations. The characters' cynicism is not always pessimism; however, the line between those is never clear.

5. On Trauma

In *Worlds of Hurt*, Kali Tal discusses the alteration of the meaning of signs related to individual traumatic experiences (Tal 1996, p. 16). She examines how words like "*blood*, *terror*, *agony* and *madness*" are defined differently by trauma survivors. These words seem to mean the same thing to people who have not experienced trauma, but for traumatized individuals, they have different connotations. These meanings are only discovered through the cry of

survivors whose "words can only evoke the incomprehensible" (Tal 1996, p. 16). For them, for example, "hunger, thirst, fear, humiliation, waiting, death" carry "different realities" (Tal 1996, p. 16). This can be seen as "the ultimate tragedy of the victims" (Tal 1996, p. 16). Ford observes fear as the core emotion in war writing, which authors draw on to narrate trauma. Fear is associated more with danger; what Ford wants to put at stake in his trauma narrative is more the expectation that worse things might happen. By switching fear for worry, he does show that there is a continuous feeling that bothers the soldiers and from which recovery is very hard, as it does not come to an end with the ending of the war.

The *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry* selects feelings of "intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation" as the shared factors of psychological trauma (Herman 1992, p. 33). Trevor Dodman regards the telling of trauma in relation to World War I as a struggle of naming and describing (Dodman 2015, p. 52). He lists various ways of naming the trauma, as follows:

> Insanity. Madness. Lunacy. Cowardice. Desertion. Funk. Epilepsy. Effort Syndrome. DAH (Disordered Action of the Heart). GPI (General Paralysis of the Insane). GOK (God Only Knows). Hysteria. Neurasthenia. Psychasthenia. Wounds of Consciousness. Dementia Praecox. Soldier's Heart. Malingering. Skrim-Shanking. Skulking. NYDN (Not Yet Diagnosed Nervous). Traumatic Neurosis. Psychoneurosis. Anxiety Neurosis. War Neurosis. Battle Strain. Battle Shock. Commotional Shock. Emotional Shock. Shell Shock (Sickness). Shell Shock (Wounded). Shock, Shell. Shell-shock. Shell Shock. (Dodman 2015, p. 52).

Dodman argues that *Parade's End* becomes a unique novel pursuing "these definitional crises, these debates over naming, these twists and turns in the 'evolution' of shell shock discourses" like no other World War I novel (Dodman 2015, p. 52). Ford's methodology of addressing trauma brings a different perspective to Dodman's list of naming trauma: exposing the inner shock of the mind; addressing the repressed nature of the tortured souls and their struggles to find a medium to speak their sufferings.

Ford sees the narration of war as a "delicate task". Being aware of this, he is cautious not to exaggerate the level of horror in his narration as that would in fact undermine the effect on the reader. Ford applies the same treatment to braveries; overstressing them would create a contrary effect on the reader (Ford 2011b, p. 4). A plethora of war scenes with brutal descriptions would diminish the effect he wants to create. This makes Ford's war narration different from many war writings, in which the brutality of the war zone is explicitly described. Instead of showing the horrors in the battlefield, Ford discloses the horrors within the mind: the disastrous mind-set. Anxiety and suffering are seldom far from the minds of his characters. In a dedicatory letter to William Augustus Bird, the founder of the Three Mountains Press in Paris, while describing a base camp in France, Ford writes,

> We were oppressed, ordered, counter-ordered, commanded, countermanded, harassed, strafed, denounced—and, above all, dreadfully worried. The never-ending sense of worry, in fact, far surpassed any of the 'exigencies of troops actually in contact with enemy forces,' and that applied not merely to the bases, but to the whole field of military operations. Unceasing worry! (Ford 2011b, pp. 3–4).

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Notes

1 Peter Childs lists the birth pains of the new century: "The emergence of the New Woman [—like *Parade's End*'s Valentine], the peak and downturn of the British Empire, unprecedented technological change, the rise of the Labour Party, the appearance of factory-line mass production, war in Africa, Europe and elsewhere" (15).

2 Haslam discusses the importance of the 18th century for Ford in "From Conversation to Humiliation: Parade's End and the Eighteenth Century" (Haslam 2014, p. 39).

[3] "Ford's interest in the instabilities and uncertainties of modernity as well as in psychological responses to that very sense of insecurity began well before 1914. He suffered the first of a number of nervous breakdowns in 1904 and was treated in a series of sanatoria in Austria". (Chantler and Hawkes 2015, p. 5).

[4] "One of the first attempts to define worry" was provided by Borkovec, Robinson, Pruzinsky and DePree in the following way:"Worry is a chain of thoughts and images, negatively affect-laden and relatively uncontrollable; it represents an attempt to engage in mental problem-solving on an issue whose outcome is uncertain but contains the possibility of one or more negative outcomes; consequently, worry relates closely to the fear process" (Borkovec et al. 1983, p. 9).

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Article

Humility and Perspective-Taking: Ford's Ethics and Aesthetics of War Writing

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Abstract: In an essay written sometime in 1917 or 1918, unpublished during his lifetime and only discovered in 1980, Ford Madox Ford reflects on what his war experience in France taught him: "above all things—humility". This article argues that Ford's writing about humility and perspective-taking in his wartime essays, which he connects to unstinting attentiveness to the particularities of place and people, can be read through an ecocritical lens that sees an ecological humility as central to reorienting human relationships within the natural world. In reflecting on both the lessons of war and the causes of such conflicts, Ford highlights humility in terms of perspective-taking and, in a related move, foregrounds the necessity for the precise use of language—both he sees as key to representing and preventing war. In so doing, I argue, Ford calls for an aesthetics and an ethics of war writing. Such literature must realize the impossibility and hubris of the bird's-eye view, instead rooting itself in the ground, both literally and linguistically, while using a precise language that emerges from a clear awareness of this limited perspective.

Keywords: Ford Madox Ford; humility; ecology; war writing; First World War

> Or perhaps it is that one has learnt out in France, above all things—humility. There, one is like a grain of sand, drifting here and there, downwards as the sands run out of an hour glass"
>
> (Ford 1999, p. 63)

Humility might not be the first word that comes to mind when thinking about Ford Madox Ford, who is so often described as a notorious embellisher of stories and quoted for lines like this one in a 1920 letter to Herbert Read, where he claims, "England learned all it knows of Literature from me" (Ford 1965, p. 127). Yet, as the subtitle—"A Dual Life"—of Max Saunders's meticulous and generative biography of Ford suggests, Ford's stance is never simply one thing or another; he is both hubristic and humble, and his characters and narrative situations are never understandable from singular and unchanging perspectives. We must always take into account, Saunders notes, "Ford's genius at showing two sides of an affair," since "As so often in Ford, the double picture is itself something of a double: both a picture of dual mental processes, and also a picture of the doubleness of the act of imagining" (Saunders 1996, pp. 12, 35). Indeed, when we look at Ford's writing about aesthetics and language in essays written during the First World War, we can see how Ford's essential and strong argument in favor of humility emerges alongside and despite the simultaneous perspective-limiting experience of war trauma.

The form of humility that I examine here is one that Ford links with the experience of war and with perspective-taking. To do so, I read essays Ford wrote while on the Western Front that reveal a perhaps counterintuitive connection between attention to granular detail—a commitment to precision in perspective—and humility, which might be otherwise seen as arising from a more open or expansive vision. The fact that the experience of war precipitated this focus on humility is something that Ford notes directly in a draft of an essay written sometime in 1917 or 1918, unpublished during his lifetime and only discovered in 1980, where he reflects on what his war experience in France has taught him: "above all things—humility" (Ford 1999, p. 63). This education in humility arises

from what Saunders describes as Ford's understanding of "war's transformation of values" (Saunders 1996, p. 223), which happens, Ford writes, because "Bluff has got its death blow" (qtd. in Saunders 1996, p. 224). "Bluff," in this case, involves the stirring, but ultimately deceptive terms—Ford mentions "Heroism" and "Patriotism" as examples (ibid.)—that the war revealed as fundamentally "alibis for imperialism" (Saunders 1996, p. 224). War has exposed the bluff of England's pretensions in the world and, even if it may not have rendered the irrepressible Ford exactly humble, he sees that it has led to the need for an aesthetic form and a granular language that brings us back down to the ground, in both literal and metaphoric ways.

Connected to this idea of grounding, I also argue here that Ford's writing about humility and perspective-taking in his wartime essays, including in the above draft and in essays like "France, 1915" and "War and the Mind," anticipates a contemporary turn in ecocriticism towards an "ecological humility" (J. Weinstein 2015). Critic Josh Weinstein describes this humility as emerging from that term's etymological link to the earth—the humus—that grounds and centers our perspective. Weinstein writes that "ecological humility is a humility that *recognizes the simultaneous smallness of any one being in relation to the whole*" (J. Weinstein 2015, p. 771). Such smallness mirrors Ford's sense of being a grain of sand "drifting here and there," quoted in the epigraph above, but Weinstein clarifies this further, drawing out the inverse implication: such recognition of one's smallness in relation to the whole is countered by an awareness of "*the impossibility of the whole without its constituent parts*. . . .What is most important here is the recognition of multiple perspectives, which exist without the need for a grand hierarchy" (p. 771). Weinstein thereby helps us see how humility is in fact *dependent* on states of contradiction in which the subject holds seemingly irreconcilable positions at the same time. Thus, you are aware of your smallness, your sense of being a grain of sand, indistinguishable and aimless, and at the same time, you are aware of your role as part of a greater whole, a greater plan. The individual perspective loses its pre-eminence, but it is a loss that does not lead to a sense of self-abnegation.

Reading humility as fundamentally about the reorientation of human relationships to the world allows me to connect it to Ford's aesthetic theory of impressionism, as well as to his sense of the role of the self in writing, both of which become important in his discussion of silences and ellipses, as well as in his attention to precise and concrete description. Working from Weinstein's theory of ecological humility, I argue that we can see Fordian humility as an eco-humility not because he writes about nature (though he does so at many points), but because he reorients the perceiving subject into a non-hierarchical relationship of perspective-taking and description of the human and non-human world. This form of eco-humility materializes as central to Ford's connections between aesthetics and ethics, art and education.

1. Humility, Silence, Education

Freighted with religious, moral, and political weight—the usage examples in the Oxford English Dictionary reveal how, from the 12th century onward, humility was connected to a sense of self-abasement both before God and before royalty—the concept of humility seems at odds with what may often seem the experiments of high modernism; the difficulty of the poetry and prose of writers ranging from Gertrude Stein to Ford Madox Ford to James Joyce, as well as the readerly work required when engaging with their texts, suggest hubris, not humility, on the part of their creators (Oxford English Dictionary 2023a, 2023b). As Merve Emre wrote during the 2022 celebrations of *Ulysses* and other modernist monuments in *The New Yorker*, "Seduced and abandoned, the reader makes one connection after another, but they affirm nothing more than Joyce's appetite for knowledge, a cultural literacy presented as godlike in its extent" (Emre 2022). Yet, this pursuit of a godlike cultural literacy comes from a disciplinary vision that sees knowledge as based upon accumulation and ordering; there are other ways to approach Ford or Joyce's novels and difficult texts in general. Jack Halberstam offers a response for academics to this

imperative: he argues we must "*Resist mastery*" by "investing in counterintuitive modes of knowing such as failure and stupidity" (Halberstam 2011, p. 11). By resisting the project of coming into knowledge—a project encoded in the *bildungsroman* and one that modernist narratives upend[1]—these texts offer up an alternative humanistic project: they instigate what Elizabeth Freeman describes in disciplinary terms as the "shock to common sense, the estranging move that will always make what we do unintelligible and incalculable and that may release or catalyze enough energy to blow out a few institutional fuses" (qtd. in Halberstam 2011, p. 20).

Ford anticipates this argument seventy years earlier in his discussion of the role of art in the modern state in a 1935 *American Mercury* article titled "Hands off the Arts." Making an argument that may seem surprising to those who know of Ford's own propagandistic wartime writings, which include *When Blood is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture* (1915) and *Between St. Denis and St. George: A Sketch of Three Civilisations* (1915), Ford takes a different line in this piece written after he had experienced the brutality of war.[2] In "Hands off the Arts," he argues against the use of art for propaganda, as well as, more broadly, for the importance of the arts in education, claiming that the arts play an essential educative role in society—"Your only educators are the Arts" (Ford 2004, p. 301). We confuse, Ford notes, instruction with education: while "instruction is a pumping in of records of facts, education consists in the opening of men's minds to the perception of fitnesses", which comes from "the consumption, from subjection to the influences, of the arts", and which in turn makes humans more humane, separating them from "the beast that perishes and causes to perish" (p. 302).

Embedded in this layered description is what we could describe as an ultimately pacifist ethical agenda—an education in the arts will take us away from actions that cause ourselves and others to perish. Yet, this cannot be learned in the traditional way because it is not a project of accumulation or of acts of action and mastery. Indeed, this form of education harkens back to the word's etymological roots, the Latin ēdūcere, which has, as the Oxford English Dictionary notes, "connotations of a person's intrinsic qualities being 'drawn out'". Such a drawing out involves attentiveness, and Ford goes on to emphasize that one reaches this point through contemplation and silence. Reading or examining a piece of art, Ford writes, "will ensure for yourself a moment of silence and in that your perceptions of human values will become more clear in your subconscious" (Ford 2004, p. 306). While reminiscent, on the one hand, of a Paterian vision of art as the place where humans can attempt, perhaps futilely, to capture a moment in our ever-changing world and reality—"art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass" (Pater 1998, p. 153)—on the other hand, Ford's vision is deeply focused not just on the aesthetic experience, but also on the ethical implications of this experience—increased insight about the "perceptions of human values" and of, as we will see in his wartime literature, the experiences of the non-human and the spaces of the natural world.

I bring these ideas of art, education, and perception together here because we can begin to see the relationship between an engagement with art (literary or otherwise) and perspective-taking as a simultaneously aesthetic and ethical one. In order to heed Ford's call to pause and contemplate, one must resist that urge to master and one must remain humble; a state of openness is the bedrock of learning. Humility is, therefore, embedded in successful educational practices, as well as in, as Ford's formulation suggests, meaningful works of art and engagements with these works. On the one hand, this focus on humility defines many modernist aesthetic projects beyond Ford's—perhaps, most famously in Joyce's *Ulysses*, since the reader must reach a state of openness in order to experience the myriad forms and voices on display.[3] Yet, Ford's version of humility and the necessary readerly openness differs from Joyce's when we consider its origin in the First World War. By 1935, Ford is focusing on the encounter with a work of art that can teach the viewer or reader how to listen and, therefore, engender a humble openness, but he still links this experience of intellectual and emotional humility specifically with how it takes us out of

a warlike frame of mind (we are no longer simply "the beast that perishes and causes to perish"). Not the Joycean epiphany nor the "sudden violent shock" Virginia Woolf describes as central to her identity as a writer,[4] Ford's focus on pauses and listening, while deeply embedded in and manifested through language, is less epiphanic or revelatory and more reflective—perhaps more akin to Woolf's description in her 1926 essay, "On Being Ill," of how illness transforms both spatial and temporal relations and, therefore, leads to these moments of reflection: for the invalid, trapped in the stasis of the ill body, "the world has changed its shape; the tools of business grown remote. . .while the whole landscape of life lies remote and fair, like the shore seen from a ship far out at sea" (Woolf 1975, p. 12). Spatial isolation and the act of reorientation that it produces then leads to an expansion of time: the invalid is "able, perhaps for the first time for years, to look round, to look up—to look, for example, at the sky" (p. 14).

The connection that Woolf makes between illness and the observational pause proves useful for understanding the generative potential of Ford's turn to humility in his fiction, and how such a turn might lead to a more granular and attentive form of writing, particularly because of the link between the aporia of illness and the gaps caused by shell shock.[5] In "On Being Ill," Woolf reveals how a seemingly traumatic (or, at the least, inconvenient) event—the experience of illness—creates a space from which the invalid can fully, expansively *look*. Here, illness creates both a displacement and a pause—a spatial *and* a temporal jolt—and, therefore, highlights the interconnection of the spatial and the temporal. In coming to a halt, we are taken out of our normal sphere and resituated; this displacement allows us to look more intently and with renewed attention at the textures of the world around us. And this carries over into language: illness reveals the sounds and experience of words because the reasoning mind lets down its guard, "the words give out their scent and distil their flavour" (Woolf 1975, p. 19), *before* one then starts to parse the meaning. Rather than being immediately caught up in the active diachronic experience of making meaning and charting narrative progression, there is a pause in which the senses respond first, hearing the sounds or seeing the shapes before the reader engages in analysis and interpretation. Displacement, therefore, can be linked with, on the level of the line, ellipses and dashes, and, on the level of a narrative, interludes and narrative breaks. This is not just about the pace of the line or text but also about the way that unexpected movements (movements from place to place) require a different kind of looking or reading; we see differently when we are jolted into a different space.

In Ford's war tetralogy, *Parade's End*, and with his shell-shocked protagonist, Christopher Tietjens, the aesthetic and ethical import of noticing, along with the narrative experiments with pauses, reaches an apotheosis. Elsewhere, I have written about how ellipses function in the tetralogy to represent the erasures caused by war trauma, perforating the minds of characters when they are immersed in moments of war violence, and simultaneously calling attention to the movements between different perspectives and the possibility of empathetic engagement with others (Sorum 2019). As Saunders discusses in his introduction to *Some Do Not*. . . (where ellipses infiltrate even the title), and Sara Haslam in the introduction to *A Man Could Stand Up*—(which ends with a similarly elliptical dash), the Fordian ellipses in the novel serve as pauses in which "characters let their minds race around and beyond the words they have heard or said or are about to say" (Saunders 2010, p. xxxvi). Even as they signify "suppression, repression, doubt, hesitation, nervousness, or expectation," they also contain "another level of running, unspoken dialogue" (Haslam 2011a, pp. xxxvi, xxxvii).[6] Indeed, the most complete understanding between characters—for example, as Saunders describes, in the love scene between Tietjens and his unexpected love interest, Valentine Wannop—occurs in "broken, choking fragments" that are perforated with ellipses. After this scene, Tietjens and Valentine are finally "able to recognize and act upon their love" (Saunders 2010, pp. xlv, xlvi). Equally momentous is the unspoken dialogue that occurs in the interstices of the conversation between Tietjens and General Campion, his commanding officer and old family friend, in the final pages of *No More Parades*. After shielding his wife's affair from everyone for years, instead allowing

them to assume that he had been the transgressor, Tietjens lets slip, in a moment of extreme stress, a statement that reveals she had been in the wrong: "As a matter of fact, Sylvia and my father were not on any sort of terms. I don't believe they exchanged two words for the last five years of my father's life" (Ford [1925] 2011, p. 244). Upon hearing this, both men become silent: "The general's eyes were fixed with an extreme hardness on Tietjens'. He watched Tietjens' face, beginning with the edges around the nostrils, go chalk white. [. . .] In the silence the voices of the men talking over the game of House came as a murmur to them" (pp. 244–45). This moment of silence is important not because it reveals Campion's realization of Tietjens' extreme honor and self-sacrifice (indeed, he had already suspected, though he had not guessed the extent of the effects of Sylvia's indiscretions), but because it is a moment of *shared* understanding ("He knows he's given his wife away!. . .Good God!" (p. 245)), which continues over the narrative time of a page: "He and Tietjens continued to look at each other. It was as if they were hypnotized" (p. 245). The silence is finally broken by Campion's careful choice of a question that signals to Tietjens that they can return to their normal relationship—a signal that the silence, during which we see how Campion's mind works through past events and realizes the extent of the trauma faced by Tietjens and the pain that his wife has caused, has led to a compassionate understanding of Tietjens' sacrifices. These conversational ellipses, in which the characters stop talking, while the narrative traces Campion's growing understanding of Tietjens' situation, make clear how Ford's war novels use silences, gaps, and ellipses to emphasize the sort of pauses that must occur in order to listen. Ellipses, in this way, become a marker of a silence that prepares the way for a thoughtful engagement with the world around and with others, which in turn will be the basis for Ford's granular, observational humility.

2. Precise Language, Humility, Nature

The humility that I am charting here is not about self-abasement, therefore, but rather a form of listening or a pause that allows for an attentiveness to the world outside the self—the surrounding non-human, as well as human ecology—thereby negating the idea of the self as the all-important, all-defining source of meaning and perception, and instead moving towards a recognition of the multi-perspectival nature of existence.[7] This is a stance that demands both a clear and generous vision and a passion for precision with language—"precision" because, if the observing and narrating perspectives are attentive, the most minute details will emerge under their gaze. Such precision connects to the modernist urge to bend language, to adopt T. E. Hulme's metaphor, so that it can try to reach some sort of more scrupulous connection with reality: "The great aim is accurate, precise and definite description," Hulme writes, and "It is only by a concentrated effort of the mind that you can hold it fixed to your own purpose" (Hulme 1936, p. 132). Since "each man sees a little differently, and to get out clearly and exactly what he does see, he must have a terrific struggle with language"—only this will lead to "sincerity" in expression (pp. 132, 133). Such precision develops from a sense of rootedness in language: what Hulme describes as "a pedestrian taking you over the ground" (p. 134), and Ford calls an "extreme concreteness of mentality" (Ford 2004, p. 171). The concentrated mind does not have to be a narrow mind if the concentration is on that which is outside the self.

There are clear aesthetic ramifications to these beliefs in a concrete mentality and sincerity of expression, and they point us towards the ideas of an eco-humility that surface in Ford's writing from both before and during the war period. We can see this turn, for example, in Ford's review of Robert Frost's *North of Boston* (1914), which was published in the *Outlook* on 27 June 1914, just a little over a month before the outbreak of the First World War. In this review, Ford notes and praises the "very real sense of his meadows and woods and rocks and berries, and of night and of showers and of wildernesses and dangers" (Ford 2004, p. 169) in Frost's poetry, which Ford describes as penned in a verse that "is much finer, much more near the ground and much more national, in the true sense, than anything that Whitman gave the world" (p. 169). Ford's connection between what is "near the ground" and "more national" hints at how these aesthetic questions are bound

for him with questions of language and nation; the entanglement of the aesthetic and the political become crucial from the vantage point of France in 1915.

Such groundedness carries over into Ford's war writing, yet this is not the peacetime "meadows and woods" of Frost's poetry but the perforated and bloodied territory of the Western Front. The perspective here, therefore, takes on an ethical, as well as an aesthetic, import. Reflecting on both the lessons of war and the causes of the conflict in an essay written a year later, titled "France, 1915," Ford highlights humility in perspective-taking and the precision of language as key to representing *and* preventing war. In so doing, Ford calls for both an aesthetics and an ethics of war writing: such literature must realize the impossibility and hubris of the bird's-eye view, instead rooting itself in the ground, both literally (narrating from the perspective of the soldiers in the trenches) and linguistically, using language with a precision that comes out of a clear awareness of this limited perspective.[8] Language, for Ford, determines both aesthetic and ethical positions: "it has never been sufficiently recognized in this country [England] how language holds sway over character, over action, and over all the attributes of humanity" (Ford 2004, p. 170). The concrete mentality that he attributes to the French appears in their precision of speech; attempts to achieve such precision, Ford argues, are particularly crucial because the world "drifted into the greatest of catastrophes for want of plain-speaking" (p. 171). He argues, therefore, that

> one might think that sanity would lead the populations of this country and the world to see the desirability of cultivating the exact use of speech. We are at war today very largely because of the imbecilely figurative language that prevails in German ministries and Chancelleries, and of the imbecilely phrased reservations that characterize the diplomatic language of the rest of the world. (p. 171)

The ethical and political merge with the aesthetic for Ford: precision in the use of language becomes not simply desirable for reasons of style, beauty, and clarity of thought, but because words lead to actions as profound as war, and "if similar blunders of diplomacy are to be avoided in the future it is important that clarity of phrase and exactness of thought should be cultivated. And here at once the question of aesthetics comes in" (Ford 2004, p. 172). Ford's argument stands in a compelling, if unexpectedly, direct relationship to his pre-war writings about literary impressionism, as I will discuss below, and exhibits again his (unabashedly confident!) belief in concrete and precise language as key to avoiding war. Both national and literary humility involve eschewing the generalizations that a bird's-eye view allows (those terms the war had exposed as "bluff") and instead cultivating precise description. The existence of this seemingly contradictory stance—a call for attention to detail in the face of world catastrophe—will prove, in fact, deeply connected to eco-humility.

The aesthetic question, therefore, depends, for Ford, on language being rooted in the place from which it emerges and in the experiences of everyday life. Unsurprisingly, after this claim about aesthetics, Ford first turns to the example of the farmer to illustrate what he means: the "farmer who can instruct his hind in the fewest and most exact words how deep to plough a field, how low to cut a hedge" will be "doing a greater service to humanity" because his work will yield a larger return (Ford 2004, p. 172). This argument—that precise language results in more productive citizens—is not simply an economic one for Ford; it bleeds over into ethical action, connections to nature, and relationships between humans: "it is only by exactitude of expression between man and man that honesty and decency in human contacts can be attained to" (p. 173). The stakes of aesthetic expression and precision in language are high in 1915: "we shall only make a decent thing of peace when we can see human issues clearly, and we shall only see human issues clearly when we have learnt to effect their just expression" (p. 173).[9]

This vision of attentiveness to "just expression" requires a perspective based in a form of humility best defined by British philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch as a "selfless respect for reality" (Murdoch 2001, p. 93). In "The Sovereignty of Good Over Other Concepts," Murdoch writes that beauty provides the occasion for "unselfing"—experiences that can "alter consciousness in the direction of unselfishness" (p. 82). Murdoch's identification of both nature and art as the arenas in which we can encounter this beauty illuminates and supports Ford's connections between precise description and attentiveness to both the human and the natural world—for Murdoch, beauty is "the convenient and traditional name of something which art and nature share" (p. 82). Beauty can take oneself out of a self-obsessed state in order to, or with the unintended result of being able to, "clear our minds of selfish care" (p. 82). This is where the perceptive, the aesthetic, and the ethical experiences align, and Murdoch's language eerily mirrors Ford's from his essay on art in the 1935 *American Mercury*; Murdoch argues that since the "only thing which is of real importance is the ability to see it [art] all clearly and respond to it justly which is inseparable from virtue" (p. 85), and, therefore, art "is the most educational of all human activities and a place in which the nature of morality can be seen" (p. 85).

Art's impact depends here on attentiveness to the outside world—a focus on what Murdoch describes as the project of great artists: to "reveal the detail of the world" (Murdoch 2001, p. 94). Such vision requires absenting the self from the picture, and humility, Murdoch notes, is "one of the most difficult and central of all virtues"; it is "rather like having an inaudible voice, it is a selfless respect for reality" (p. 93). Revealing the details, having "respect for reality"—again, defying expectations of the narcissistic artist, Murdoch's argument is that the artist—to be a good one—must in fact work towards "the absence of the anxious avaricious tentacles of the self" (p. 101). Such clarity of vision can result in a kind of artistic revisioning: "The humble man, because he sees himself as nothing, can see other things as they are" (p. 101). This form of seeing *through* oneself—"through," in the sense that the self is still there but it acts as a lens rather than the focus—suggests that Murdoch's artist perceives in ways reminiscent of Ford's impressionist writer, whose "selfless respect for reality" comes out in what Saunders describes as key to Ford's theory of impressionism, the layering of multiple perspectives to create a "rendering without moralizing" (Saunders 2004, p. 436).

Such clarity of vision seems difficult to attain in a place like the Western Front; the sense of humility most clearly present is one's own insignificance in the face of the clear expendability of all the bodies there in service of a political struggle—a view that Ford's character Tietjens expounds upon in *A Man Could Stand Up*—: "They might very well be hoping that our losses through the counter-demonstration would be so heavy that the country would cry out for the evacuation of the Western Front. . .If they could get half a million of us killed perhaps the country might. . ." (Ford [1926] 2011, pp. 84–5). As Ford's essay, "Arms and the Mind," written while he was serving in Ypres in September 1916, attests, trauma and a sense of one's smallness in the face of mass tragedy do not necessarily lead to a humility that allows for clear vision: Ford describes how being in war in fact drove him more deeply "in on oneself. I used to think that being in France would be like being in a magic ring that would cut me off from all private troubles: but nothing is further from the truth" (Ford 1999, p. 41). Far from instigating the kind of "unselfing" that leads to attention to detail and great art, the trauma of war mires one in the weeds of personal emotion alongside the intensity of the frontline experience. The boundaries of perception are narrowed down to the view allowed from your position as a patrol officer or Battalion Intelligence Officer: "the class of object that is laid down for your observation is strictly limited in range" (p. 38) and even the idea of humanity dissolves as it "is all just matter—all humanity, just matter; one with the trees, the shells by the roadside, the limbered wagons, the howizters and the few upstanding housewalls" (p. 39).

This is a possible, if difficult, route to humility—to recognize all as "just matter," and to level the relationships between individuals, nature, and even human-made objects. Yet the experience of the war seems to stop thought, to even stop visualization: "why cannot I even evoke pictures of the Somme or the flat lands round Ploegsteert? With the pen, I used to be able to 'visualize things'—as it used to be called." (Ford 1999, p. 36). The brain, Ford says, can picture these places and events but, "as for putting them—into words! No: the mind stops dead, and something in the brain stops and shuts down" (p. 37). In this moment, Ford reveals the fineness of the line between a silence that forecloses meaning-making and one that enables it. And yet, in another unpublished piece, "Epilogue," written sometime between 1917 and 1919, we can begin to see how Ford goes from the wordlessness of his earlier essay to a practice in which humility can arise from this experience of war in such a way that then enables, rather than disables, attentiveness to detail. Soon after describing the humility acquired in France with that metaphor of the hour glass quoted in the epigraph to this essay—"one has learnt out in France, above all things—humility. There, one is like a grain of sand, drifting here and there, downwards as the sands run out of an hour glass" (Ford 1999, p. 63)—Ford notes:

> But, indeed, one couldn't ever really theorise worth twopence. Just as every human face differs, if just by the hair's breadth turn of a nostril, from every other human face, so every human life differs from every other human life if only by a little dimple on the stream of it. And the hair's breadth turn of the nostril—the hair's breadth dimple on the stream of life when they come in contact with the lives of others just make all the difference—all the huge difference in the fates of men and women. (p. 63)

This is the insight that humility brings: attentiveness to the granular details of others' lives and beings. Here, Ford evocatively describes it as those minuscule differences—between just the "turn of a nostril" or the "dimple on the stream of life"—that can have such far-reaching implications. The artist must be attentive to these details, as Murdoch has reminded us, and we see the connection here again to the way that one must be grounded. The problem with theorizing is, for Ford, that it takes one away from the intricate detail; Ford muses, "I don't see upon what hill they can stand in order to get their bird's eye views," since "if you stand aloof from humanity how can you know about us poor people?" (Ford 1999, pp. 62–3). While the trauma of war shuts down the ability to create, at least in the short term, the humility that one learns might provide the redemptive alternative side of the coin by foreclosing the idea of a remote and overarching view and instead insisting upon the importance of the tiny detail.

While Ford focuses on faces and small acts, it is worth noting that his metaphors about attentiveness to details develop from questions of perspective-taking—the helplessness that he feels in the face of the battle experience is one that is like being ungrounded: "There we were: those million men, forlorn, upon a raft in space" (Ford 1999, p. 38). The horror of this image is in the lack of connection, direction, and specification: they are an undifferentiated mass, untethered from the world, and floating aimlessly in the unknown. Such a focus on the alienation instigated by the war brings me back to Josh Weinstein's vision of ecological humility, which he characterizes in terms of relationships between parts and the whole. Weinstein's vision of this humility is ecological in its insistence on the interconnectedness of matter and a radical democracy of perspectives—that awareness of "*the impossibility of the whole without its constituent parts*" (J. Weinstein 2015, p. 771). This brings us back to Ford's argument in "Arms and the Mind" that war allows and enforces a leveling of perspectives not just between humans, but in a broader ecological system as well; it reveals that it is "all just matter—all humanity, just matter; one with the trees" (Ford 1999, p. 39). Rather than unrelenting sameness, we can see this as connected to a humility that has resonances with Ford's most famous aesthetic theory on impressionism in literature. Impressionism might first seem antithetical to humility since, as Ford writes, "the Impressionist gives you, as a rule, the fruits of his own observations and the fruits of his observations alone" (Ford [1914] 1995, p. 260). Yet, as eco-critic Jeffrey Mathes

McCarthy notes, impressionism is a tool that the "green modernists," like Ford, "use to emplace consciousness" (McCarthy 2016, p. 23). Writing about Ford's tetralogy, *Parade's End*, McCarthy argues that Ford presents a "material awareness unfolding across life during wartime" (p. 24) and shows how "consciousness negotiates the profound actualities of physical existence" (p. 25). McCarthy's discussion of the emplaced consciousness clarifies beautifully Ford's description of what the impressionist tries to do: "render those queer effects of real life that are like so many views seen through bright glass—through glass so bright that whilst you perceive through it a landscape or a backyard, you are aware that, on the surface, it reflects the face of a person behind you" (Ford [1914] 1995, p. 263). The perceiving consciousness is both visible and invisible, and the landscape is both backdrop and primary object of examination.

Thus, Ford's turn in the final paragraphs of his essay on impressionism to the issue of humility makes sense in this context: although the impressionist can only relay his own impressions, Ford says, this is not because of a hubristic belief in the infallibility of his own way of seeing the world. Instead, the artist embodies a form of eco-humility, with a seemingly contradictory set of stances about the self in the world: "the artist must always be humble and humble and again humble, since before the greatness of his task he himself is nothing. He must again be outrageous, since the greatness of his task calls for enormous excesses by means of which he may recoup his energies" (Ford [1914] 1995, p. 274). Ford's statements here bring us back to Saunders' insights about the irrepressibly dual nature of Ford's engagement with the world, but they also foreground why humility is both an aesthetic and an ethical stance for him—writing on the eve of the next world war in his polemical piece defending the arts, Ford bemoans the use of artists for propaganda because "There was never a time when humanity so needed the inculcation of the gift of sympathetic insight" (Ford 2004, p. 303).

What does this sympathetic insight, this humility in the face of the world and, in particular, the war world look like in Ford's writing, then? In part, Ford answers this in one of his letters to Joseph Conrad written while at the front in France on 9 July 1916. Describing the unrelenting noise of the war, Ford writes, "I wonder if it is just vanity that in these cataclysmic moments makes one desire to record. I hope it is, rather, the annalist's wish to help the historian—or, in a humble sort of way, my desire to help you, cher maître!—if you ever wanted to do anything in 'this line'" (Ford 1965, p. 75). The precision of language, which means an attentiveness to the experience and a desire to put the details down as carefully as possible, goes here hand in hand with a sense of the historicity of the moment and the particularities of the space of the war.

We can see this play out in scenes in *Parade's End*, where Tietjens reflects on the loss of the self in the face of bombardment, and yet in that reflection, manages to paint a deeply evocative vision of eco-humility—that "simultaneous smallness of any one being in relation to the whole" (J. Weinstein 2015) next to the essential nature of each small part for the whole to exist. At one memorable moment in *A Man Could Stand Up—*, which has the most extended scenes of battle and trench life in the tetralogy, Tietjens is almost hit by a flying skylark as he peers over the edge of the trench. As he recovers and listens to his Sergeant talk animatedly about the "Won'erful trust in yumanity! Won'erful hinstinck set in the fethered brest by the Halmighty! For *oo* was goin' to 'it a skylark on a battlefield!" (Ford [1926] 2011, p. 63), Tietjens turns to one of his favorite writers, "Gilbert White of Selborne" (p. 64), to think through the role of the lark. This is an overt turn to an ecological vision of the world; as Haslam's note to this passage indicates, White is "often referred to as the founding father of the ecology movement" (p. 64, note). And Tietjens takes this moment of fear on the battlefield to reflect on the relationship between the bird and the human: "as for trust in humanity, the Sergeant might take it that larks never gave us a thought. We were part of the landscape and if what destroyed their nests whilst they sat on them was a bit of H.E. shell or the coulter of a plow it was all one to them" (p. 64). Not a callous dismissal, but rather a reminder of the smallness of humans in the face of the multiplicity of perspectives, Tietjens's comment evinces the kind of eco-humility that reads

humans as simply one (overly destructive) element of the landscape—an idea that we find echoed today in definitions, like that of Jedidiah Purdy, of the ecological imagination as fundamentally about interconnection—"all natural systems, including the bodies of living things, are linked and interpermeable" (Purdy 2015, p. 200). Faced on the Western Front with this resilient skylark, Ford shows us here how Tietjens embodies habits of perception and humility in the face of multiplicity, revealing a truly ecological vision of the world.

The aesthetics of Ford's ecological vision in his First World War tetralogy is, therefore, based in both precise description and in an impressionistic awareness of the landscape *alongside* the perceiving viewers. His attentiveness to the presence of experiences of the world other than that of the human connects Ford's modernist impressionism to an eco-aesthetics that reorients the readers and the characters in a world of complex and often competing perspectives, both human and non-human.[10] Yet, we might also return to Hulme's dry and hard description; Hulme clarifies that such description is made so because "The classical poet never forgets this finiteness, this limit of man. He remembers always that he is mixed up with earth" (Hulme 1936, p. 120). The earthy roots of modernism become dampened when we enter the muddy terrain of the Western Front, but Ford retains that modernist call for precise description as part of his aesthetic and ethical imperative for a "selfless respect for reality" (Murdoch 2001, p. 93), as well as for a corresponding humility in the face of writing about the First World War.

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Notes

1 See Philip Weinstein (2005) for a discussion of modernism's inversion of the narrative of progress embedded in the form of the *bildungsroman*.

2 For a thorough discussion of Ford's wartime propagandistic writing, the role of Wellington House as the British propaganda machine, and the changing definitions of propaganda, see Fiona Houston's dissertation on the First World War propaganda written by Ford and John Buchan (Houston 2020).

3 Humility is also foregrounded in the characters. Bloom, for example, springs forth from the page as a deeply and often surprisingly ethical being, most strikingly characterized by his humility and generosity in the face of others and of the world. Such humility turns out to be a thread running through the book; as Mr. Deasy, Stephen's employer at the school, rather pompously pronounces, "To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher" (Joyce 1986, p. 29). The alchemy that occurs in this double-sided process of being both receptive and attentive encourages and, perhaps, even requires a kind of readerly humility in the face of the teachings of the life of the novel, as we navigate the episodes that each pose their own distinctive interpretive set of demands on the reader, who, alongside Bloom, tries to navigate the trajectory between sensation and language.

4 It differs from the Joycean epiphany that involves, as Joyce writes in a famous passage in *Stephen Hero*, a "sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself" (Joyce 1963, p. 211). Critic Sangam MacDuff has recently argued that these epiphanic instigators are fundamentally "linguistic phenonena," and "not a revelation of God, nature, or the mind but of the human spirit embodied in language" (MacDuff 2020, pp. 1, 2). And yet, they are defined by revelation, or the "sudden violent shock" of an encounter, like what Virginia Woolf describes in her memoir, "A Sketch of the Past," as central to her ability to create: "I go on to suppose that the shock-receiving capacity is what makes me a writer" (Woolf 1985, pp. 71, 72).

5 Woolf performs this sort of pause in much of her fiction (from the observational aporia of the narrator gazing at the dark spot in "The Mark on the Wall," to the interludes of *The Waves*, where the reader must observe the changes in light on the ocean).

6 Ford's erratic and changing punctuation in the typescript to *A Man Could Stand Up*—is meticulously detailed by Haslam in "A Note on the Text of *A Man Could Stand Up*—". She writes, "The minimum number of suspension dots in what is unquestionably

Ford's favorite kind of punctuation, for example, is three, but the maximum is eight" (Haslam 2011b, p. lxxii). The notes to the text also detail the instances where there are differences between the number of ellipses given in the typescript and in the US or UK editions of the novel; those instances are many.

[7] See Haslam's "From Conversation to Humiliation" for a discussion of the concept of humiliation in *Parade's End*. While Haslam is examining humiliation in a piece about Tietjens's deep ties to the 18th century, her argument that humiliation for Tietjens "has very little to do with private practices or individual feeling" (p. 48) connects to my own argument that humility in Ford is not about an abnegation of the self but rather an attentiveness to the world around (Haslam 2014).

[8] The limits on the warfront perspectives are not what Ford suggests are preferable; as the title of his third volume of *Parade's End*, *A Man Could Stand Up*—suggests, perhaps more than anything, a need or desire for some kind of expansive vision. As Haslam notes in the introduction to that volume, "it is this related writerly aim of being able to see the subject clearly, without fear or flinching, that is perhaps most important in the initial approach to the book" (Haslam 2011a, p. xviii).

[9] See also Ford's later travel book, *Provence* (1935), in which he spends a significant portion of time in the chapter on "Nature" extolling the relationship to the land experienced by the Provençal citizen. The relationship is defined by close attention to the most minute details of the terrain (as well as interest in working the land). He writes, "For the Provençal. . .Nature is a matter of little squares in the orange, sun-baked earth. [. . .] with a tiny knife before the dawn is up you remove an infinitely tiny but superfluous leaf from a tiny pan; between clods the countenance of every one of which is as familiar to you as the face of your child" (Ford 1935, p. 110).

[10] We can see this orientation in modernist poets like Marianne Moore and Wallace Stevens. See, for example, Bonnie Costello's discussion of Moore's humility and awareness of perspective-taking; she writes, "Like Stevens, she knows her eccentricity and suspects a perspective that claims the center" (Costello 2003, p. 86).

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Article

Beautiful Birds and Hun Planes: Ford Madox Ford in the Early Age of Flight

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Abstract: Reactions to the Wright brothers' achievement of the first sustained, controlled powered flight in December 1903 ranged from complete indifference to voluble celebration and evolved into convictions that ranged from a belief that war would be rendered impossible to confident predictions of invasion and widespread destruction. The policies and perceptions of institutions, governments and individuals were subject to constant revision and often abrupt reversal. When war came, the aeroplane, which began as an instrument of reconnaissance, rapidly became one more hazard among many for those at the front and a further point of division between combatants and civilians, for whom airships and air raids tended to loom larger. The first dynamic phase in the story of the aeroplane overlaps with the major early modernist period. This essay seeks to map, within that wider context, the experiences and responses of Ford Madox Ford. He began, like many others, with images of beauty and the natural world in that early stage when a functioning range of descriptive or comparative terms had yet to emerge. He encountered them next in the theatre of war during his service in France. His ambivalence towards aeroplanes was both similar to and different from his earlier responses to trains, cars and telephones. Their relative rarity, as well as their both physical and metaphorical distance, and Ford's own apparent immunity to the glamour and dynamism of aviation enabled him to view them retrospectively and employ them in anecdote, autobiography and fiction as both threat and saviour.

Keywords: Ford; modernism; aeroplane; First World War; flight; No Enemy; Parade's End

Writing to Stella Bowen in November 1918, Ford Madox Ford assured her that 'the old novel will get itself written when I haven't any other bothers. Of course it's a fairy tale written to please you. I suppose I have always been writing fairy tales to please you—waiting for the person whose Favourite Author I shd one day be.'[1]

That 'old novel', then two months into the writing, was 'True Love & a GCM'. Stella would remain the 'true love' for several years, but the General Court Martial did not materialise, since Ford abandoned the work some four months later.[2] By June 1919, when he wrote to his old friend Charles Masterman, the Liberal politician who had been in charge of the War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House, he could tell him, 'I have made a rather beautiful garden with the work of my own unaided hands, & subsist rather largely on its products. I am also writing some rather pretty stuff.' (Ford 1965, pp. 95–96).

This 'rather pretty stuff', 'about the country—gardening, birds and the like', was 'English Country', published as three essays in the *New Statesman*, then radically revised in the autumn of 1919, finally appearing, though only in the United States, as *No Enemy* in 1929.[3] Its genre has been defined, debated and redefined numerous times; Ford himself described it to Hugh Walpole as 'a perfect paean to the English countryside in the middle of war reminiscences', adding in the same letter that he thought it 'the best prose I ever wrote' and 'a tribute to the country and my comrades in arms.'[4] Initial reviews stressed the autobiographical aspects of the text, and Herbert Gorman remarked that, of all Ford's books, 'this one may be selected as peculiarly his book, the book of himself. He is the observant Compiler and he is the poet Gringoire'.[5]

The three *New Statesman* pieces are voiced in the first-person, and there is no mention of 'Compiler' or 'Gringoire'.[6] Ford continued to work on the manuscript and, in a short letter to James Pinker in October, which accompanied 'the complete m.s. of "English Country"', he wrote: 'I have changed it a good deal—altogether in form: but I think it reads better.'[7] The phrase 'altogether in form' strongly implies a shift to that doubled or split narrator which, in various forms, Ford employed so often. Cornelia Cook has discussed the ways in which the 'double act of Compiler and Gringoire calls attention to the mechanics of narrative construction', and other critics have also focused on the interplay between them.[8]

The immediate postwar Ford is not only rebuilding his memory; he is reconstructing his ability to articulate what he has seen and heard. Two hugely significant essays from 1916 and 1917, posthumously published as 'Arms and the Mind' and 'War and the Mind', concern the inability to write about what is before one's eyes and the states of mind and levels of consciousness that enable or prevent that writing. If much of the matter of *No Enemy* is not exactly recollected in tranquillity, it is recalled sharply and lucidly, and much of its content is close to its author's lived experience; it was perhaps felt at the time to be a little closer than desired, as with 'True Love and a GCM', the material of which Ford may have felt 'too painfully self-exposing'.[9]

It is the self-appointed task of the 'compiler' to elicit Gringoire's experiences of the late war, the lessons learned, and the implications for the wider world. One of those implications, though it was perceived at the time by relatively few people, concerned the emergence of the aeroplane, of powered flight, which was first achieved barely fifteen years before the armistice. It was on Ford's thirtieth birthday, 17 December 1903, that Wilbur and Orville Wright, in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, achieved the first sustained, controlled power flight in four successful attempts, the first traveling around 120 feet and the fourth and last carrying the pilot 852 feet in 59 seconds. Orville's telegram to his father, Bishop Wright, reporting their four successful flights into a 21 m.p.h. wind, concluded: 'home Christmas.' (Stoff 1996, pp. 13–14). It also requested that the Bishop 'inform Press', an initiative that was met with either disbelief or lack of interest. Only in 1909 did the US Government finally purchase the Wrights' flying machine for $30,000, after Orville's demonstration flights under the proposed contract were judged to be successful (McCullough 2015, p. 238).

The same year saw the first great international air shows, and, in an event that was perhaps of more immediate significance, Louis Blériot, encouraged by Lord Northcliffe's 1908 offer of £1000 for the first flight across the English Channel, achieved this goal on the morning of 25 July 1909, 'after which it was clear that England "was no longer an island"'.[10] In 1914, Robert Delaunay, 'the painter of the Eiffel Tower', exhibited his *Hommage à Blériot*, in which, Robert Hughes observes, all Delaunay's 'favourite emblems of newness (Tower, radio telegraphy, aviation) are swept together into a paean to the man he called, significantly, 'le grand Constructeur', because, with his flight across the English Channel, Louis Blériot 'had "constructed" a bridge more imposing than any physical structure could be.' It is, Hughes concludes, 'almost a religious painting, an angelic conception of modernism'.[11]

Blériot's 'bridge' had other implications, as some observers realised. While Winston Churchill, then Home Secretary, showed great interest in the possibilities of aerial reconnaissance in warfare, the War Office took some convincing that the utility of aeroplanes extended much beyond that. Were they even, perhaps, a bit unsporting? Before the conflict began, General Grierson reportedly observed to George V, '"I think, sir, that those aeroplanes are going to spoil the war. When they come over I can only tell my men to cover their heads and make a noise like a mushroom." (Winter 1979, p. 127). The linking of war and sport had a long pedigree: William Somerville's 'The Chase' (1735), a poem in four books, had traced the pre-Conquest history of hunting, 'the sport of kings;/Image of war without its guilt'. There was also the implied necessity for fairness, gentlemanliness—even chivalry. Towards the end of August 1916, when Wilfred Owen thought of applying for a transfer to the Royal Flying Corps, he wrote to his mother, 'To battle with the Super-Zeppelin, when he comes, this would be chivalry more than Arthur dreamed of.'[12] Mark Girouard observed

that the war 'both brought Victorian chivalry to its climax and helped to destroy it', and Owen's terms of reference were not unusual (Girouard 1981, p. vi). 'It was like the lists of the Middle Ages', Cecil Lewis recalled, 'the only sphere in modern warfare where a man saw his adversary and faced him in mortal combat, the only sphere where there was still chivalry and honour.' (Lewis [1936] 1977, p. 45). In the 'resolutions of thanks' given in both Houses in 1917, Lloyd George remarked that the Air Service 'formed the knighthood of the war', while Lord Curzon, in the Upper House, saluted the 'knights of the air' who had 'revived the spirit of knight errantry'.[13] Those conquerors of the air were seen as 'a special breed—that of the ultimate hero' (Paris 1993, pp. 124–25).

Although H. G. Wells had once thought it improbable that aeronautics would ever 'come into play as a serious modification of transport and communication', by 1908, he had published *The War in the Air*, and he later suggested that the Government urgently set about 'building ten thousand aeroplanes'.[14] Responding to Colonel G. F. Stone's 1909 address, 'Defence of Harbours against Naval Airships', to the Royal United Services Institute, Major Sir Alexander Bannerman, Bart., 'an experienced balloonist', was sceptical of the views put forward by the Colonel. Emphasising the difficulty of hitting a target from the air, Bannerman doubted whether 'one shot in 10,000 will, from a height of 5000 feet, hit a battleship'. But then, at the 1911 Hendon Air Display, Claude Graham-White several times dropped a 100-lb sandbag onto 'the outline of a battleship whitewashed on the grass' from a height of 2000 feet, an exploit that noticeably concerned at least one of the distinguished spectators, Admiral Fisher.[15]

In the early stages of the First World War, pilots were most often observers, armed with cameras and notebooks rather than military hardware. Air warfare, as John Laffin observes, 'was a direct product of trench warfare', since shell-holes, barbed wire, the churned up ground, the defensive strength of the trenches themselves, all made it impossible for cavalry to 'fulfil its traditional role of scouting.'[16] Airmen's gestures towards offensive action began as fairly crude and small-scale efforts: revolvers, occasional grenades and even darts.[17] In the British raid on Cuxhaven on Christmas Day 1914, *The Guardian* reported, 'They threw bombs upon German warships lying in the roads there and upon the gasworks'.[18] By the spring of 1915, the Germans had developed the mechanism required to synchronize machine guns firing forward through propeller blades, and dogfights became increasingly common.[19] Soon after the armistice, British forces were carrying out aerial bombardments in Somaliland, Afghanistan and Iraq. Thereafter, 'the training runs for future conflicts would continue, aircraft flying higher, faster and further, into the realms of what was regarded as technically impossible and morally unthinkable only a few years earlier.'[20] In effect, the aeroplane would become normalised, increasingly a barely remarked element of the physical and mental landscape.

This essay seeks to map, within this wider context, Ford Madox Ford's experiences and responses, drawing on both fiction and autobiographical writings. His ambivalence towards aeroplanes was both similar to and different from his responses to trains, cars and telephones. They were representative of that modernity whose elements he continued to interrogate. He was never intoxicated by speed, rather the reverse. It was C. W. R. Nevinson, 'the English Futurist painter', whose 'aeroplane pictures', Sue Malvern wrote, compelled 'an identification with the war machine rendered into a modern democratic hierarchy of working men overseen by airmen, recently promoted to the status of the new Gods.'[21] Additionally, though Ford had ironically praised Marinetti and other Futurists for their radical energies, he was largely immune to the glamour and dynamism of aviation and would not have endorsed their more general hymning of machinery, nor the dismissal of history or the glorification of war.

The aeroplane was, as Stephen Kern remarked, 'but one variant of the technology that sundered protective frontiers and created new spatial dynamics' (Kern 1983, p. 242), and those 'frontiers' were not only national borders. Cubists and Futurists fractured or dissolved the picture frame, and, for many writers as well as painters, envisioning a

world seen from thousands of feet up—or a world potentially without end, seen from below—was exhilarating and artistically stimulating. Ford's case was a little different, both psychologically, given his history of agoraphobia (Moser 1980, pp.137–42; Saunders 1996, I, 178–80, 186–88; Beaumont 2010), and artistically, given his desire always to maintain the human scale, keeping his reader in mind and in sight.[22] He had several times in his earlier writings employed the image of the bird's eye view, in the 1905 *Soul of London* and in an editorial column in the *English Review*; additionally, around the end of the war, he wrote of the 'theorists' who generalised about it: 'But I don't see upon what hill they can stand in order to get their bird's eye views. Of course there are remote persons who stand aloof from humanity—but if you stand aloof from humanity how can you know about us poor people?'[23]

Describing the landscape of a down behind Albert, *No Enemy*'s Gringoire evokes both Second Lieutenant Ford Madox Hueffer in 1916 and his several recollections of W. H. Hudson's *Nature in Downland*:[24.]

Tiny and incredibly pretty, like films of gold dust floating in blue water and like peach blossom leaves—yes, incredibly pretty in the sunlight—aeroplanes were there. Because the—just as pretty—little mushrooms that existed suddenly in the sky, beside the sunlit dragonflies and peach blossoms, were pearly white, one officer said,

"Hun planes!"[25]

The abrupt and brutal monosyllables that rupture an ostensibly idyllic scene echo in a later reversal or inversion. In *Return to Yesterday*, Ford recalls his visit to Germany in 1913, accompanying Charles Masterman and his wife Lucy (also with Ford's then-partner, Violet Hunt, though she is not mentioned).[26] Ford and Masterman are lying on the turf at the top of a hill in Trêves—the French name of Trier—which gives a 'great view, going into France':

Seven hundred feet below us a great, beautiful white bird, with the tips of its wings turned back, glided noiselessly along above a green field. It dipped with supreme grace to rest. I had never seen an aeroplane before. So the first I ever saw was a German war-plane and I saw it from above.[27]

This alignment of the aeroplane with the natural world—dragonflies, peach blossoms, white bird, green field—is there too in Ford's 1914 *Outlook* column, 'The Classic Muse': 'Anyhow, it was very tranquil and sunny and early, and from the not distant marshes came the thin bleating of the flocks . . . Classical. . .'

And then there arose on the air a sound, not in seeming unclassical—a sound like the humming of a bee-god, persistent, musical, more and more musical, more and more persistent. I have never heard a seaplane sound so like a Jew's harp. The great beautiful thing in the sunlight, against the blue of the sky and the immense clouds, was coming over the arm of the sea from Portsmouth –going over the house, God knows whither. And I assure you that there was nothing unclassical in the vision. Against the sky and the clouds it was as clear in outline and in illuminated beauty as is the Victory of Samothrace. . .[28]

Ford's choice of reference here is suggestive. He had recently written, 'whichever side prevails—and I guess that it will not be my side—there remains the uniting bond, the doctrine that a bowler-hat purchased in Oxford Street to-day is as good as the helmet of Pallas Athene.' That 'side', however, was a cultural rather than a military one, and the article appeared more than three weeks before the outbreak of war (Ford 1914b).

In 1916, the poet Ivor Gurney wrote to his friend and sponsor Marion Scott in terms not unlike those of Ford's Gringoire: 'Tonight an aeroplane has been sailing high up in the blue—right over the German lines, and occasionally leaving at his back a flock of tiny white clouds; looking so innocent as they unfold, that unless one has caught the tiny flash of the explosion it is perfectly impossible to think that these are anything but the tiny clouds of Summer W H D[avies] loves to sing of.'[29] Edward Thomas, in February 1917, wrote, 'Enemy plane like pale moth beautiful among shrapnel bursts', and 'Four or five planes hovering and wheeling as kestrels used to over Mutton and Ludcombe.' (Thomas 1983, pp. 160, 163). In Mary Borden's 'The Bombardment', the 'defenders of the town' attempt 'to shoot to death a mosquito floating in boundless heaven', and 'The little clouds that

burst in the sunlight were like materialised kisses.' (Borden 1929, p. 9; Sinclair 1915, p. 86; Mottram 1927, pp. 524, 706). A Taube hovering above the city of Ghent prompted May Sinclair's reflection that: 'Up there, in the clear blue sky it looks innocent, like an enormous greyish blond dragon-fly hovering over a pond. You stare at it, fascinated, as you stare at a hawk that hangs in mid-air, steadied by the vibration of its wings, watching its prey.'

This writing contains a stress on beauty, implicit or explicit gestures towards the celestial, clouds, birds, and insects. Several of these writers had, of course, written often of rural life, but, as Ford's memory of Trêves suggests, such terms of comparison resulted primarily from their having seen aeroplanes so rarely, if at all, prior to the war. Nor were they unusual in this: the first great international air shows of 1909, at Rheims and then Breschia, made such an impact on their vast crowds because hardly any of the spectators had ever before seen an aircraft in flight. The novelist R. H. Mottram, too, has an aeroplane 'dipping like a swallow'. What else, after all, might such 'a miracle' be compared to? Flight had always been the prerogative of birds—or gods, or demons. One of the notable features of the Wright brothers' achievement was that, unlike Leonardo da Vinci and countless inventors since, they began not with birds, but with kites.[30]

If British artists seemed less energised than some of their European confrères by this particular 'newness', a significant factor was the imperative, certainly for Wyndham Lewis, to differentiate Vorticism from other movements in a crowded field, especially Futurism. This imperative contributed to Lewis's assertion that 'The Latins', in large part due to their 'Futuristic gush over machines, aeroplanes, etc.', were then 'the most romantic and sentimental "moderns" to be found.' He concluded 'The Melodrama of Modernity' by demanding, 'Cannot Marinetti, sensible and energetic man that he is, be induced to throw over this sentimental rubbish about Automobiles and Aeroplanes, and follow his friend Balla into a purer region of art?'[31] In his foreword to the catalogue of the 'Exhibition of English Post-Impressionists, Cubists and Others', held from November 1913 to January 1914, Lewis began with a swipe at the Futurists and commented a little later that 'Man with an aeroplane is still merely a bad bird'. In *The Caliph's Design*, he argued that dynamic shapes such as aeroplanes essentially developed 'in accordance with a law of efficient evolution as absolute as that determining the shape of the tiger, the wasp, or the swallow. They are definitely, for the artist, in the category of animals.'[32]

Aircraft—the words, if not the machines themselves—had drifted into view in several pre-war Fordian texts. The magistrate in *Mr Apollo*, confused by the 'sailing down through the air' testimony of Police Constable 742L, imagines 'that the prisoner must be a competitor in a distance competition for balloonists who had discovered an actual aeroplane.' (Ford 1908, p. 20). In *The New Humpty-Dumpty*, Count Macdonald 'looked at the King. "Come along, Mr Spenlow," he said, "we'll be down at Brooklands by half-past twelve all right. And I guess if you want to do a kingly action you will ask Miss Dexter and Mrs Pett to come with us. They haven't either of them seen an aeroplane."'[33] Also in 1912, *The Panel* had Major Brent Foster, just returned from India to 'a most extraordinary world' of social reformers, declare, '"There's my aunt that I'm going to, dear old soul, who knows about as much of evil as an egg knows of aeroplanes, and she's the secretary of the Society for the Suppression of Sin."' (Ford 1912b, pp. 29–30). Again, characters who have never seen an aeroplane.

Even after that first sighting in Germany, though, the shadow of flying machines fell very rarely across the many pages that Ford produced in the first year of the war. He responded with great rapidity to Antwerp's surrender to German forces on 9 October, his poem—then called 'In October, 1914'—appearing in *Outlook* in that same month.[34] *The Good Soldier* was published by John Lane in March 1915, and Ford was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the Welch Regiment in August. His first propaganda volume, *When Blood is Their Argument* had appeared in May, the second, *Between St Dennis and St George*, in September, and on 18 November 1915, the collaboration with Violet Hunt, he published *Zeppelin Nights: A London Entertainment*. Collecting two dozen previously published 'historical vignettes', it ranges in time from the Battle of Marathon to the 1910 coronation of

George V, with commentaries, apparently provided by Hunt, linking the stories told by Serapion Hunter, 'a fictionalized Ford', as Max Saunders observes, 'having an affair with "Candour", a non-shrinking Violet'.[35] The closing discussion ends very much in Ford's own present: '"Oh, don't you understand?" Candour cried out. "Serapion enlisted this morning. He put his age down at thirty-three and they jumped at him." And she went out of the room crying.'[36]

After training at Tenby and Cardiff, Ford arrived in France in July 1916, two months after the death of Arthur Marwood (partial model for *Parade's End*'s Christopher Tietjens) and mere days after the Welch Regiment's appalling loss of life in Mametz Wood. On 28 July, he wrote to Lucy Masterman that he had seen only 'occasional aeroplanes. The Germans do not seem very enterprising in this department & rarely come over our lines. I have only seen three since I have been here & one was brought down.'[37] On that day or the next, he was blown into the air and concussed by a high explosive shell; he lost his memory for several weeks and could not recall even his own name for some thirty-six hours. He was sent to a Casualty Clearing Station at Corbie when the battalion went into rest camp, then rejoined the 9th battalion, then stationed in the Ypres Salient near Kemmel Hill. The shelled church and stained glass that he wrote of in a September letter to Joseph Conrad would reappear in *No Enemy*, though shells are not there the immediate cause: 'Whilst we were passing under the immense Madonna and Child that hung over the Cathedral steps, a Hun plane dropped a couple of bombs right into the body of the church [. . .] But what was really interesting to hear was the sifting tinkle of broken stained-glass of the windows that went on rustling, tinkling, sifting, and rustling down into the rubble in the body of the church until we were out of earshot' (*No Enemy* 93).[38]

For frontline troops, enemy aircraft were one more threat to life that must be withstood, less frequent than artillery barrages, less chillingly personal than a sniper's bullet. But they were still 'deathly, dreadful things': 'For there was nothing more terrifying in the whole war than that span of lightness, swaying, approaching a few feet above the heads of your column of men: instinct with wrath: dispensing the dreadful rain!'[39] As the only direct experience of hostilities for most civilians, they inevitably loomed larger in their lives, whether as threat or stimulus.[40] W. B. Yeats, genuinely unsettled by the raids on London, was happy to spend the winter of 1915–1916 'tucked away' in Ashdown Forest with Ezra Pound, but wrote 'An Irish Airman Foresees his Death' when Lady Gregory's son Robert was killed.[41] Rudyard Kipling's 'Mary Postgate' has the son of her employer killed during a trial flight, a child killed by a dropped bomb and an injured German pilot who calls for medical assistance while Mary waits for him to die, during which time 'an increasing rapture laid hold on her.'[42] Katherine Mansfield, caught up in a Zeppelin raid in Paris, wrote, 'It is absurd to say that romance is dead when things like this happen'. Making tea after the 'All Clear', she felt that 'a great danger was past' and 'longed to throw my arms round someone–it gave one a feeling of boundless physical relief like the aftermath of an earthquake'.[43]

In *It Was the Nightingale*, Ford recalled at length his own experience of a major air raid, probably that of 28–29 January 1918, when several enemy aircraft penetrated to the capital. He commented that, 'In the line we were used to consider that air-raids over London must be trifling enough.'[44] However, he had found this one 'sufficiently frightful and disagreeable, and hilarious and a nuisance and an occasion for prayer. With all the range of emotions of the line enhanced'. This 'baptism of fire' had put 'the final seal' on the city's 'dignity'—yet it had necessitated the 'unlovely DORA', the Defence of the Realm Act and its extensions, the long-term effects of which strengthened government control of industry, enabled press censorship and restricted individual liberties (through measures such as those governing public house opening hours and the strength of beer); the cumulative effects, Ford maintained, robbed London of the characteristics he had so valued before the war.[45]

The impingement of enemy aircraft on Ford's army life unsurprisingly increased after that first letter to Lucy Masterman. In his account of a long weekend in Paris, the city is 'in darkness, out of deference to Zeppelins and airplanes, so that it was all a heavy, velvety black beneath a pallid sky' (*No Enemy* 86).[46] Of Gabriel Morton, his central character in 'True Love & a GCM', Ford wrote, 'He had been pretty bad eleven months before; but, no longer, the moment he shut his eyes in bed did he hear the picks and drills of the German mines going beneath him; he didn't, any more, feel a vague but very real malaise at the droned sounds of aeroplanes in the summer evening skies, and all the doors of a house could slam in a draught without making him spring out of an armchair' (*War Prose* 81).[47] In *No Enemy*, he referred to Hazebrouck, 'where, whilst we waited for a connection, a German plane was dropping bombs on the goods line and Cochin-Chinese in furred silk hoods were working as plate-layers' (133). The later 'Supper Reminiscences' enormously expands this, employing it as framework for the story of a significant meal which, 'as I remember, marked rather a turning point of my career' (*War Prose* 242). His personal experience of flying emerges in an anecdote he told about the aftermath of a mix-up that arose between Maurice Hewlett and himself due to the similarity of their novel titles. 'I felt no great annoyance', Ford commented, 'If he did he was vicariously avenged'. He recalled that after he was sent to the Severn Tunnel station for 'instruction in observing trenches', he was taken up by Hewlett's son for three-quarters of an hour, during which Ford suffered 'an agony of dread.' He had never afterwards been able 'to enter or remain in an aeroplane without a return of that fear', so 'if his father needed revenge he had it, for I had to go up several times after that' (*Return to Yesterday* 291).[48] Less stressful was the occasion, ten days before the Armistice, when, Ford wrote to Stella Bowen, 'A nice boy called Pat Brain that I used to know very well at Cardiff turned up this morning & took me out over the sea in a Blimph.'[49]

Last Post's composition dates have Ford beginning the book in Paris on 7 June 1927, a little over two weeks after Charles Lindbergh, in the *Spirit of St Louis*, had made the first solo transatlantic flight, which took thirty-three and a half hours and brought him from New York to Paris. By the time of writing the book, nearly nine years after the Armistice, the aeroplane has become an assured *fictional* resource.

The aeroplane contributes to the delineation of the character of Marie-Léonie, the wife of Christopher Tietjens' brother Mark. Wondering 'what was to be said against such innocent things as the reading-desk, the revolving hut and the aeroplane. Yes, the aeroplane!', she is told that it is too late in the season to procure seeds of her desired 'navets de Paris' because it would take a month to do so. She reflects that, 'supposing they had sent a letter by aeroplane, requesting the dispatch of the seeds equally by aeroplane, to procure them, as all the world knew, would be a matter merely of a few hours' (*Last Post* 31, 32).[50] The aeroplane explains in part the absence of Christopher and the opportunity this absence affords his estranged wife Sylvia to enter the property. It also offers a point of comparison with which the appalling Mrs de Bray Pape can hector the silent Mark Tietjens and provides the occasion for Valentine's perceiving or divining what is in Christopher's mind as he gazes up into the sky—thus confirming that their thoughts continue to echo one another's as they had done so significantly before, particularly in the preceding volume: 'Their thoughts marched together; not in the least amazing' (*A Man Could Stand Up–* 192: see also 190, 191). Although Christopher is able to fly to Groby in an attempt to prevent the cutting down of Groby Great Tree, he notably fails to do so. Aircraft may help that small community at Tietjens to make a living, but Valentine reflects that 'It was an extraordinary thing to live with Americans all over you, dropping down in aeroplanes, seeming to come up out of the earth. . . There, all of a sudden, you didn't know how' (*Last Post* 174). The doubled sense of height and depth mirror the height of the tree and the depth of the well at Groby, respectively 320 ft and 160 ft, according to Lance-Corporal Duckett.[51] Additionally, although Ford considered the idea of Christopher Tietjens' death in an aeroplane crash, he decided against it in typescript (*Last Post* xlv fn. and textual note, 232 n.103). This choice was not only an artistic decision to eschew such an obviously dramatic ending, a

decision perhaps related to his strong dislike of the 'big scene' in Victorian serial fiction; it also responded to the feeling attributed to Valentine Wannop, who 'did not know what she wished, because she did not know what was to become of England or the world' (*Last Post* 176).

When *No Enemy*'s Gringoire notices the aircraft escorting 'an immense plane, appearing in the firmament above Bailleul', he notes that 'at that date, the poor bloody Infantry were not brought much in contact with the air force.' The 'Compiler' adds that, 'apart from their spectacular, picturesque, or dangerous aspects, they hardly came within the scope of Gringoire's professional attentions. "Airmen," he said, "were brilliant beings, who treated us with contempt and carried off the affections of our young women. Otherwise they lived in the air whilst we plodded amongst mud and barbed wire. Professionally, they rivalled the cavalry; obtained information for the Artillery—but, as for co-operating with us, we were below their notice."' The plane, at this point still a 'great, beautiful machine', passes overhead 'without Gringoire's thinking of more than that it was beautiful' (*No Enemy* 41).

That near-absolute separation between airmen and infantry was significant; it was not only elemental—earth and air—but demarcated the individual from the collective. 'I applied for a transfer to the Air Force', Ernst Toller wrote, 'not from any heroic motive, or for love of adventure, but simply to get away from the mass, from mass-living and mass-dying.'[52]

It was significant in another sense. The infantryman in the trench watching a dogfight might see one combatant appear to fall, whether hit or pursuing evasive action. However, the man or men in the plane 'can so seldom be seen that you do not, it must be confessed, feel all the exultant and poignant sympathy that you feel with comrades fighting near you on the earth.'[53] Ford stressed many times and repeatedly indicated in letters, articles and memoirs his close identification with his fellow officers and the men under their command. Nor was this at all unusual, but it did depend on physical proximity, visibility and familiarity. The pilot of the aeroplane was simply too distant, both physically and metaphorically.[54] Flying south towards Boulogne in March 1916 in a B.E.2C (a single-engine two-seater biplane used primarily for reconnaissance), Cecil Lewis remembered seeing beneath him fields, woods, roads, houses—and men. 'I saw them for the first time with detachment, dispassionately: a strange, pitiable, crawling race, to us who strode the sky.'[55]

For all his many references to Heaven, whether humorous or serious, Ford was essentially earthbound. The instances of other worlds in his work—*The Inheritors*, *Mr Apollo*—entail celestial descent rather than human ascent. Rather than the godlike figure of the aviator, Ford's focus is on a more human scale and a nearer terrain, though some possibility or intimation of the divine may always be at hand. Thus, Gringoire, striding downhill through the thistles amidst innumerable swallows, feels like a Greek god; so too will Christopher Tietjens when that passage essentially recurs (*No Enemy* 24, 25; *A Man Could Stand Up*–167).[56]

If Ford's early responses or accounts of first sightings, were—not untypically—lyrical or romantic, they were soon overtaken by sometimes bitter experience and tempered by the instincts and resources of the novelist. They readily become, in fact, one of those symbols of modernity–'the aeroplane, the wireless telegraph, the white-tiled bathroom'–those 'glamours' which were regarded by many as assurances of 'civilization'.[57] Ford himself locates such assurances elsewhere, in literary or artistic achievement and aspects of the art of living well: kitchen gardening, food and wine, good conversation, and amity among neighbours. Never a passive consumer of modern technologies, his stance towards them, characteristically sceptical or wary, was directed by the personal or literary context. Their deployment reflected positive choices, negative reactions, and tryings outassays comparable to his approach to modernist styles and techniques, in which he retained what worked for him and discarded what did not; this stance was not, in fact, dissimilar to his earlier reactions to cars or trains, which he viewed as both threat and promise, the doubling of implication and response always present to the writing mind.[58]

> Trains occur in his very first published volume; telephones appear in the Edwardian fiction, beginning with the collaborative *The Inheritors*; motor cars are present from *The Benefactor* onwards.[59] Aircraft emerge more slowly and never as significantly, not least because much of Ford's Edwardian fiction was historical, ruling out such modern trappings. Though he encountered them relatively rarely, even when he was on active service in France, for Ford, as for others, they soon became—and still are—one of the recurrent background sights and noises of modern life, often unremarked, familiar, generally assumed benign, an assumption edged or shadowed by residual memories of the most recent or outrageous airborne atrocity, and occasionally, in the wake of disaster or at times of heightened international tension or conflict or crisis, shifting abruptly, and sometimes devastatingly, from periphery to centre. We are, of course, on *this* side of Guernica, the Blitz, Dresden, Coventry and later horrors. Ford completed *It Was the Nightingale* in the summer of 1933, and he wrote there (254), 'A finished book is something alive and, in its measure, permanent. But until you have written the last word it is no more than a heap of soiled paper. I fear preposterous things—that one of the aeroplanes that are forever soaring overhead here might drop a spanner on my head. . .. Anything. . ..'

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Notes

1 Stang and Cochran (1994, p. 52). They date the letter, which was mistakenly dated 4/1/18 in Ford's holograph, [4 January 1919] but there are strong arguments against this dating also, as discussed by Saunders (1996, II, 564 n.4).

2 Ford (1999, pp. 77–139). Details of the text are echoed on numerous occasions in Ford's later writings, both fictional and autobiographical.

3 Ford's contract with the American publisher Macaulay retained the title 'English Country' and alternative titles were still being discussed two months before publication: Ford (Ford [1929] 2002, p. xiv).

4 *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, 191. The phrase 'the country' should perhaps be approached warily. Richard Ludwig, in his prefatory list of Ford's books, termed it 'Autobiography described as fiction' (xv).

5 Gorman review in *New York Herald Tribune Books*, 5 (29 December 1929): see Harvey (1972, p. 385). In Ford (1921), Ford cites a 'friend' sending a letter, addressing him as 'Gringoire' and, recalling the Imagist dinner of July 1914, asks: 'Do you remember, Gringoire?' (pp. 79, 176).

6 The published volume has some fifty emendations from the first instalment alone, even aside from those necessitated by the shift from the first-person narrator.

7 Ford to Pinker, 9 October 1919 (The Huntington Library, California: Ford Madox Ford Letters, mssFMF1-316). The letter in which he expresses concern that Pinker views it as a novel rather than 'a piece of writing' was dated 22 January 1920: Ford (1986, pp. 478–79).

8 Cook (2003, pp. 191–205, 194–95). See also Saunders (2014, pp. 109, 111). The interplay of Gringoire and the Compiler is a central concern of Rummel (2018, pp. 54–64).

9 Max Saunders, introduction to 'True Love & a GCM', *War Prose*, 77. He discusses 'A Day of Battle' as 'one of the key documents in the genesis of *Parade's End*' in *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, II, 197–201. The essays are a central reference point in the first section, 'Ford Madox Ford's Unrelatable Narrative of War', of Brasme (2023, pp. 16–54), and are discussed by several scholars in Haslam et al. (2019), including Laura Colombino, 'Ford, vision, and media', 402–3; see also O'Malley (2015, pp. 118–20).

10 Searle (2004, p. 506). He notes that the phrase had been used by Northcliffe about the first recorded flight in Europe, made by Alberto Santos-Dumont in October 1906. It was widely used in the press—British, French and German—immediately following Blériot's historic half-hour journey.

11 Hughes (1991, pp. 38, 40). Marjorie Perloff observes that 'Delaunay's colorful celebration of those biplanes' circling the Eiffel Tower 'seems curiously devoid of any inkling that the airplane might have uses quite different from those of transport or spectacle': Perloff (2003, pp. xvii–xviii).

12 Hibberd (2002, p. 194). Owen spoke to his Colonel about it again in December but still nothing came of it (201).

13 *The Times* (30 October 1917), 10.

14 Wells (1902, p. 32, n.12). A suggestion cited approvingly by Wyatt (1915), who stressed that the development of aviation had made command of the sea obsolete as a final means of defence against attack.

15 Gollin (1989, pp. 102–3, 172). Fisher returned to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord in October 1914 but fell out with Churchill over the proposed Dardanelles campaign and resigned in 1915.

16 Laffin (1997, p. 120). David Pascoe quotes the French philosopher Paul Virilio's 1989 *War and Cinema*, on aviation, just prior to the outbreak of war, '"becoming one way, or perhaps even the ultimate way, of *seeing*"; in effect, the Air Force emerged out of the art of reconnaissance': 'Warplane', Piette and Rawlinson (2012, p. 368).

17 Even earlier, though, in another war, that between Italy and the Ottoman Empire, Italian pilots in Libya not only carried out reconnaissance flights (October 1911) but dropped four bombs on the town of Ain Zara, on 1 November.

18 This was the raid in which Maurice Hewlett's son, Francis ('Cecco') Hewlett, took part; forced to ditch in the sea, he was posted as 'missing', but was picked up by a Dutch trawler and made his way back to England. The novelist Erskine Childers instructed the seaplane pilots on navigating by means of landmarks and the stars.

19 'Over the sepulchral, catacombed city, aeroplanes flew and fought in the cold winter sun', Edmund Blunden wrote of Ypres in early 1917: Blunden (Blunden [1928] 2015, p. 135).

20 David Pascoe, 'Warplane', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century British and American War Literature*, 367.

21 So Marinetti referred to Nevinson in 'A Futurist Manifesto: Vital English Art': see Walsh (2002, pp. 76–77). Stressing that aviation was ideal for an artist seeking 'novelty, originality and dynamism in his subject matter', and also lent itself to 'Futurist principles', Walsh identifies Nevinson's *A Taube Pursued by Commander Samson* [1915] as one of the 'first ever attempts to capture in paint the entire concept of aviation and aerial conflict' (117). Samson (then a Lieutenant) had become one of the Royal Navy's first qualified pilots, in April 1911, after just two months' instruction. Malvern (2004, p. 57).

22 Increasingly so, in fact: see Max Saunders, 'Ford in 1922', *Last Post: A Literary Journal from the Ford Madox Ford Society*, I, 8–9 (Spring & Autumn, 2022), 1–19 (particularly 6–10).

23 'Epilogue' (written between early 1917 and January 1919), 62–63, though unpublished at the time: see *War Prose*, 52–63. It was rewritten to form part of a chapter in *No Enemy*, 'Rosalie Prudent'.

24 Particularly the opening chapter, 'Thistle-Down'. See Ford Madox Ford, 'The Work of W. H. Hudson', *English Review*, II, v (April 1909), 160; *Thus to Revisit*, 77; *Return to Yesterday* (London: Gollancz, 1931), 26.

25 *No Enemy*, 32.

26 In Ford's telling, Masterman in 1913 was already predicting war with Germany. When it began, Masterman was placed in charge of the propaganda department based in Wellington House, previously the premises of the Insurance Commission. A first Wellington House conference, primarily of writers who promised their services, was held in early September 1914: Masterman (Masterman [1939] 1968, pp. 272–73). Ford was not among those present: the likely reasons for his absence are discussed by Borkett-Jones (2019, pp. 83–84).

27 Ford, *Return to Yesterday*, 422–23. This is oddly reminiscent of Arthur Ransome's memory of his friend William Canton's delight, on the long hill into Shaftesbury in 1911, 'at looking *down* on a kestrel hovering high over the valley below': Ransome (1976, p. 143).

28 Ford (1914a, 1915). That votive monument is usually named 'The Winged Victory': Ford omits what the aircraft has rendered superfluous but may also allude to the Futurist Manifesto of February 1909, in which Marinetti asserts: 'a roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*.' The last of the numbered sections of the Manifesto closes by hymning 'the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd': Manifesto (1972, pp. 41, 42).

29 Ivor Gurney, letter of 21(?) June 1916, in Gurney (1991, p. 102). See W. H. Davies' 'Clouds': 'My Fancy loves to play with Clouds/ That hour by hour can change Heaven's face;/ For I am sure of my delight, / In green or stony place'.

30 As did Ludwig Wittgenstein, then an aeronautics research student at Manchester University. 'It was his apparent intention to construct, and eventually to fly, an aeroplane of his own design': Monk (1991, p. 28).

31 Balla (1914, pp. 41, 144). Giacomo Balla was one of the most prominent Futurists. Lewis asserted that Balla 'is the best painter of what was once the Automobilist group.'

32 Michel and Fox (1969, pp. 56–57, 146). Lewis did, though, admire the wartime paintings of aeroplane scenes by John Turnbull, which used 'a near-abstract, geometrical style' (102).

33 Ford Madox Ford [as Daniel Chaucer], Ford (1912a, p. 248). Brooklands, in Surrey, was a motor-racing circuit and aerodrome which opened in 1907, was requisitioned by the War Office in 1914, and by 1918 had become the largest aircraft manufacturing centre in the country.

34 Referring to its imminent publication in an unpublished letter to C. F. G. Masterman (21 October 1914), Ford commented: 'Now, if you would have eighty million copies of my poem about the Belgians, which will appear in next Saturday's Outlook, distributed about the globe from aeroplanes you might do something' (Ford Madox Ford collection, #4605. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library). Around fifty of Ford's weekly articles in *The Outlook* appeared between 4 August 1914 and Ford's departure for training in Tenby.

35 Max Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, I, 484.

[36] Hunt and Hueffer (Hunt and Hueffer [1915] 1916, p. 405). That choice of age—thirty-three—may prompt thoughts of Sylvia Tietjens asserting to General Campion that Christopher desires 'to model himself' upon '"our Lord Jesus Christ"': Ford (Ford [1925] 2011, pp. 148–49). Among the several Serapions of the classical world is the second century's martyred Serapion of Macedonia.

[37] *Letters of Ford Madox Ford*, 67. To his mother in August he remarked: 'we hardly ever see one of their planes': *War Prose*, 224.

[38] Letter to Conrad of 6 September 1916: Stang (1981, p. 173). The 'sifting' glass appears too in Ford's 'Preface' to Violet Hunt's *Their Lives*: see *War Prose*, 190.

[39] Ford (Ford [1926] 2011, p. 137). On this see Ford (1934, p. 196): 'Wounds, rain, fear, and other horrors are terrible but relatively simple matters; you either endure them or you do not.'

[40] As Modris Eksteins remarked, 'From its start, the war was a stimulus to the imagination': Eksteins (1990, p. 208). For a recent discussion of the impact of air raids on the civilian population, see Grayzel (2023, pp. 583–98).

[41] Longenbach (1990, p. 180); Yeats (1994, pp. 184–85). Gregory was shot down by an Italian plane in error, a fact not immediately known: Foster (2003, p. 117).

[42] Kipling (Kipling [1917] 1987, p. 355). His earlier 'The Edge of the Evening' (December 1913), has two foreign spies killed in an altercation after their biplane develops engine trouble and lands in the grounds of an English country house. He had published 'With the Night Mail' in 1905 and 'As Easy as A. B. C.' in 1912 (its first draft written five years earlier).

[43] [21 March 1915], Mansfield (1990, p. 26). Mansfield's responses to this and other air raids are discussed in Kelly (2020, pp. 129–33).

[44] Cf. Herbert Read in October 1917: 'I was thoroughly "fed up" with the attitude of most of the people I met on leave—especially the Londoners. They simply have no conception whatever of what war is really like and don't seem concerned about it at all. They are much more troubled about a few paltry air raids', Read (1963, p. 112).

[45] Ford, *It Was the Nightingale*, 76–84. He mentions the damage to the premises of *John Bull* magazine and people killed in a shelter. Reports in the 30 January issues of the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror*, and the notice from *John Bull* in the *Evening Standard*, confirm the date. The raids were among those singled out by Peel (1929, p. 147).

[46] A briefer version of this visit is 'Trois Jours de Permission', written almost immediately after the events described, in *War Prose*, 49–51.

[47] Sounds of 'pickaxes beneath his flea-bag' and a German officer's voice under his camp-bed, calling for a candle, are among the manifestations of Christopher Tietjens' nervous strain in *A Man Could Stand Up–* (82–85).

[48] Hewlett's *The Queen's Quair* was published in 1904; Ford presumably refers to his own *The Fifth Queen* (1906). Hewlett's wife Hilda was the first woman in the United Kingdom to gain a pilot's licence, in 1911.

[49] Stang and Cochran, *Correspondence of Ford Madox Ford and Stella Bowen*, 28. 'Blimph' appears to be Ford's error for 'blimp', a small airship used for scouting and observation. The word was later associated with a pompous and rigidly conservative ex-army officer, popularized by David Low's cartoons of 'Colonel Blimp'.

[50] 'Air Transport and Travel', then Daimler Airlines, Imperial Airways and others offered flights to Paris from 1920–1922: Pugh (2008, p. 316).

[51] *A Man Could Stand Up–* 170. *Last Post* offers another version, Groby Great Tree 365ft high, Groby well 365ft deep, though this declaration depends on the Cleveland villagers being 'really imaginatively drunk' (80).

[52] Ernst Toller, *Eine Jugend in Deutschland* (1933), translated as *I Was a German* by Ford's friend Edward Crankshaw (John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1934), excerpted in Glover and Silkin (1990, p. 273).

[53] C. E. Montague, in his introduction, 'War Aeroplanes', to *British Artists at the Front. I: C. R. W. Nevinson* (Country Life, 1918).

[54] 'But we stand down below', Franz Kafka wrote of the 1909 airshow, 'quite left behind and insignificant and we watch this man': 'The Aeroplanes at Brescia' [1909], Kafka (1992, p. 8).

[55] Cecil Lewis, *Sagittarius Rising*, 54.

[56] Sara Haslam observes that 'In both cases the effect depends on the sense of mortality that is also made present by Ford': *A Man Could Stand Up–* xxiii. Karolyn Steffens, in 'Impressionism and Psychoanalytic Trauma Theory', notes the later avoidance of explicit mentioning of the dead beneath the thistles: Chantler and Hawkes (2015, pp. 44–46). Ford's poem 'The Iron Music', mentions 'Dust and corpses in the thistles' and is dated 'Albert 22/7/16', just days after his arrival there.

[57] The 'glamours': so phrased in Ford (1926, p. 195, 184).

[58] See Sara Haslam, 'Ford's Training', in *Ford Madox Ford's Modernity*, 35–46; Paul Skinner, 'Tietjens Walking, Ford Talking', in *Ford Madox Ford's* Parade's End*: The First World War, Culture, and Modernity: International Ford Madox Ford Studies 13*, edited by Ashley Chantler and Rob Hawkes, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014), particularly 132–33.

[59] On telephones, see Philip Horne, 'Absent-Mindedness: Ford on the Phone', in Hampson and Saunders, *Ford Madox Ford's Modernity*, 17–34; Kate McLoughlin, 'Interruption Overload: Telephones in Ford Madox Ford's "4692 Padd", *A Call* and *A Man Could Stand Up–*', *Journal of Modern Literature*, 36.3 (2013), 50–68.

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Article

"Damn the Empire!": Imperial Excess, National Nostalgia, and Metaphysical Modernism in the Poetics of *Parade's End*

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Abstract: Ford Madox Ford famously intended his First World War tetralogy *Parade's End* to have "for its purpose the obviating of all future wars". But why do we engage in war to begin with? Modernist literature provides some provocative explanations. Ford's Sylvia Tietjens, for example, proclaims that "You went to war when you desired to rape innumerable women. It was what war was for". And in the very same year, Virginia Woolf's shell-shocked Septimus Smith "went to France to save an England which consisted almost entirely of Shakespeare. . ." I argue that Ford's understanding of the causality of war involves a strange combination of these two explanations in *Parade's End*'s triangulation of seventeenth-century English literary tradition along with sexual and imperial conquest. While countless modernist novels exhibit a sensibility to the power of early modern poetry amidst battle, *Parade's End* displays a particularly emphatic and extended focus on the relationship between poetic tradition and war. Soldiers of various ranks "talk. . .in intimate undertones about the resemblances between the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean sonnet form", host timed sonnet competitions in the trenches, recurringly quote the seduction poetry of Marvell, and fantasize about George Herbert's lifespan being "the only satisfactory age in England. . .yet what chance had it today? Or, still more, to-morrow?". To answer this question, my own transtemporal study will use early modern scholarship to investigate seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry's dual power to inspire and potentially obviate war. Much has been written on this tetralogy's anti-linear plot but less on the broader temporality of its politico-literary vision. I contend that the metaphysical allusions of this text help Ford to show us the complexities of nationalism in the imperial conquest and imperial damnation that (early) modern aesthetics can catalyse.

Keywords: empire; modernism; early modern; poetics; First World War; Ford Madox Ford; George Herbert; Andrew Marvell

1. Prologue: A Meeting with Time

O, how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track![1]
But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;[2]
Meeting with Time, slack thing, said I,[3]
What did the Lamb that He should die?[4]
—Some "metaphysical" poets, muddled

My paper begins in an epigraphic experiment of confusion. I have pieced together this epigraphic collage of old seventeenth-century poets worried about growing old, for I like to imagine that my subject, the disorienting modernist innovator and early modern poetry appreciator Ford Madox Ford, would potentially approve. Midway through Ford's World War One tetralogy *Parade's* End (published 1924–1928[5]), for example, amid antilinear plots, elliptically[6] obfuscated revelations, and allusive jumps in time, the volunteer soldier

protagonist's commander General Campion seemingly speaks for the wearied, confused reader when he complains, "What is language for? What the *hell* is language for? We go round and round" (Ford 2012, p. 529)[7]. The General's own language certainly does, circling from modern trench warfare tactics to three-hundred-year-old seduction poetry. Earlier in this same conversation, General Campion extensively quotes a classic carpe diem poem by Andrew Marvell from memory in order to illustrate the precarity of "a general's life in this accursed war" (Ford 2012, p. 512). He goes on to explain: "You think all generals are illiterate fools. But I have spent a great deal of time in reading, though I never read anything written later than the seventeenth century" (Ford 2012, p. 512). While the narrator describes this moment of poetic allusion as delivered "astonishingly", General Campion is not singular in his fixation on seventeenth-century poetics (Ford 2012, p. 513). Numerous literary works of the 1920s quote Marvell's heroic couplets, and the aforementioned soldier protagonist of *Parade's End*, Christopher Tietjens, recurringly laments amidst the trenches, "What had become of the seventeenth century? And Herbert and Donne and Crashaw and Vaughan, the Silurist?" (Ford 2012, p. 611).

I would like to attempt to respond to this question. What has happened to the literary legacy of the seventeenth century, especially the metaphysical poets Tietjens lists, by the opening of late modernity? Why would one choose to mourn a dislocated, distant past amidst tangibly modern destruction? And what role could love poetry like Campion's favoured "To His Coy Mistress" have for a militaristic, imperial project? While countless modernist novels display an attraction to the power of early modern poetry amidst battle, *Parade's End* exhibits a particularly emphatic and extended focus on the relationship between poetry and war—and to an absurd degree, at least to an outsider. Soldiers "talk. . .in intimate undertones about the resemblances between the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean sonnet form" just before battle, they host timed sonnet competitions on Armistice Day and in the midst of fire (really!), and they recurrently quote (and misquote) poets like Marvell and George Herbert (Ford 2012, p. 643). Why is the love poetry of the seventeenth century relevant for examining amid modern conflict and its modernist literary coverage?

In his joint status as a formative modernist experimenter and volunteer soldier, Ford offers a particularly striking case study to examine the relationship between poetic tradition and imperial conflict. While enthusiast scholars have engaged in some analysis of his own poetry, his influence on later innovation, and his treatment of recent predecessors like Dante Gabriel Rossetti, there has been less sustained critical attention to his complex relationship to literary tradition, which is most vibrant, I would argue, in the characters' curious apotheosis of seventeenth-century poetics. Tietjens has often been considered a man out of time; his deep roots in the seventeenth century in particular have not been thoroughly unearthed. Meghan Marie Hammond defines Tietjens as an "eighteenth-century man[8] caught in the first great conflict of the twentieth century" in his promotion of the "eighteenth-century virtue" of "sympathy" (Hammond 2015, p. 65). Yet to fully grasp the heights of his strange, salvific vision that extends beyond "fellow feeling" to something perhaps even grander, this paper argues for the need to travel even further back in time, for in Tietjens' words, the seventeenth century might as well save one man!" (Ford 2012, p. 611). As Sara Haslam argues in another study of Tietjens' eighteenth-century influences, "There was, quite simply, more to history in *Parade's End* than the war", and I would further refine this statement: there is more to history in *Parade's End* than the eighteenth century (Haslam 2014, p. 38). Indeed, Haslam notes that "there is not space here to explore the theological aspects of Christopher's seventeenth-century allegiances here", "significant" though they are (Haslam 2014, p. 47). While Melanie East has engaged in helpful theological work in outlining the Christological aspects of Christopher Tietjens as a "Christ figure" who is "more confrontational than comforting", I seek to delve further into the seventeenth-century devotional poetics she mentions briefly (East 2023, p. 424).

In the ampler space of these pages, then, we will "go round and round" further back temporally, as I will outline the importance of seventeenth-century metaphysical poetry for modernist writers (especially but not limited to Ford) amid the context of muddy trench warfare of the First World War and analyse how *Parade's End* employs allusions to the poets Marvell and George Herbert to show early modern poetry's ambivalent capacities to fuel, escape, and critique modern warfare—to dwell, in short, in the ever-complicated tug of war between the aesthetic and the ethical. While high modernist writing traditionally prioritises the former over supposedly stilted Victorian moralisms, I argue that Ford utilises vital poetic allusion to attempt a thrilling, hopeful union of poetic justice through his revisions of early modern devotional poetics.

2. (Early) Modernism: "Heterogenous Ideas Yoked by Violence"

To better understand this modern(ist) temporal dialogue, let us "travel back" and look at the wider literary context of the early twentieth century before dropping any further into the trenches of Ford's particular corner of this cosmos. Writing on the emergence of European modernism in the battles of the First World War, poet Dana Gioia summarises: "For poets, the unprecedented scale of violence annihilated the classic traditions of war literature—individual heroism, military glory, and virtuous leadership. Writers struggled for a new idiom commensurate with their apocalyptic personal experience" (Gioia 2020, p. 4). But while poets and novelists give birth to radically new forms in this period, I'd suggest that this "idiom" has been curiously midwifed by early modern poetry. As I have mentioned, the characters of *Parade's End* do not have a monopoly on their obsession with the seventeenth century. In a puzzlingly funny moment amid the sad story of Septimus Smith in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, when we learn the strange reasoning behind his decision to fight in the First World War: "He was one of the first to volunteer. He went to France to save an England which consisted almost entirely of Shakespeare's plays and Miss Isabel Pole in a green dress walking in a square" (Woolf 1996, p. 64). Even ignoring the oddness of the green dress, his reasoning raises questions: why exactly have romantic love, early modern verse, and late modern English militarism been placed together? As the novel continues, Septimus' rambling post-war "writings" continue a backward danse macabre in describing "how the dead sing behind rhododendron bushes; odes to Time; conversations with Shakespeare" and "universal love" (Woolf 1996, p. 107).

It is unclear how all these obsessions connect, but lonely Septimus is not alone in his modernist, militaristic devotion to both women and early modern poetry amid infernal, temporal confusion. While surveying the soldiers under his command, *Parade's End*'s Tietjens stands (in a repeated comparison) "like Shakespeare contemplating the creation of, say, Cordelia" (Ford 2012, p. 559). This literary significance infused actual soldiers as well: in his landmark, polemical study, the 1975 *Great War and the Modern Memory*, Fussell punningly proclaims that "Oh what a literary war" the conflict was, as "there are some intersections of literature with life that we have taken too little notice of", like poet Siegfried Sassoon reading Thomas Hardy in a trench dugout (Fussell 2013, pp. 168, 8). More recently, Meredith Martin has argued that real-life "soldier-poets were conditioned to see themselves. . . as part of a collective English culture, bound to defend the language of Shakespeare" before and during the First World War, much like fictional Septimus (Martin 2012, p. 149). And soldier-poet Rupert Brooke, known to his contemporaries as "our Donne Redivivus", was inspired by the language of another early modern poet: for Joseph Bristow, his scholarly "admiration for Donne's resilient faith" emerges in his contested "Soldier"'s "English heaven" (Bristow 2014, pp. 679, 676).

As Brooke's English wording implies, soldier's literary language was often explicitly nation-based, and *The Great War and Modern Memory* has received critique for the unacknowledged "limits of Fussell's argument" in its "Anglo-centric" view (Jay Winter in the "Introduction" to Fussell 2013, p. xii). My study of this "literary war" will exclusively and explicitly focus on the affordances and limitations of an Anglo-centric imaginary in one particular English author in Ford.[9] However, I note that early English poetry's ability to capture the

ephemerality of life extends across the Atlantic (and into the fictional realm) in Ernest Hemingway's 1929 *A Farewell to Arms*, as protagonist Frederic Henry quotes Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress", to his consummated mistress before he must go back to war. After hearing, "but at my back, I always hear time's winged chariot hurrying near" the pregnant, soon-to-be-abandoned Catherine Barkley dryly identifies the poem and its divergence from her current state (Hemingway 1997, p. 143). T. S. Eliot's "Prufrock" also quotes (and tweaks) the poem to a romantic conquest, as he hopes "to have squeezed the universe into a ball/ To roll it towards some overwhelming question," but has not had as much success as Hemingway's hero (Eliot 1988, p. 60). So why this Early Modern(ist) fixation, for a movement famously focused on Ezra Pound's plea to "make it new", and especially in the wake of a war promising to usher in a new world order?

Much of T. S. Eliot's own prose helps explain and historically caused the modernist fixation on early modern poetry, so let us turn to his influential 1921 essay, "The Metaphysical Poets", for some guidance. Writing against the grain of longstanding tradition led by Samuel Johnson (in 1781) that considers "the race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets" to be "not successful", and even to "lose their right to the name of poets" in the "perverseness" of their expressions, Eliot celebrates these long-overlooked seventeenth-century poets such as Marvell and Herbert (whom we will later discuss) because they "possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience", perhaps even twentieth-century military discord (Johnson 1858, pp. 11–12; Eliot 2006, p. 198). Indeed, while Johnson complains of "the *discordia concors*" or "combination of dissimilar images" when "the most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together", Eliot sees modernist value in a discordant mosaic of meaning (Johnson 1858, p. 12). While Eliot himself never saw combat, I contend that this "violent" metaphysical combination of "thought and feeling" was particularly compelling for soldiers attempting to come to emotional and logical grips with the horror of the First World War (Eliot 2006, p. 199). Neither the emotional distance of Victorian poets nor the logical justifications of classical war poetry could suffice for the modern experience of war. Instead of just sentimentally, insufficiently looking into the heart, Eliot shows how the "metaphysical" poets also "look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and the digestive tracts", which was particularly fruitful for the psychological and physical toll of modern trauma like shell shock (Eliot 2006, p. 200). Indeed, for Martin, while "soldier-poets recognised their relationship to poetry and poetic form as equivocal, volatile, and distressing", the process of writing traditional poetry was a medically prescribed way of therapeutically processing trauma for soldiers like Wilfred Owen and Robert Graves, and "poetic meter was increasingly seen as a symbol of English national culture in this period" (Martin 2012, pp. 148, 147).

Quoting seventeenth-century authors in the midst of a global clash of waning empires could fantasise about a Europe devoid of modern weaponry and appeal to a glorified English past in its imperial heyday. Indeed, in her study of *Parade's End*'s temporal politics, Isabelle Brasme argues that the metaphysical poets represent "age-old resistance of insular values to continental invasion, a theme that was reactivated at the time of the First World War" (Brasme 2015, p. 3). By contrast, the advent of the eighteenth century and later Victorian "sentimental age" is marked by "the dissociation of sensibility" which Eliot argues dominated poetry after the metaphysical poets could not sufficiently adapt to the logical and emotional hurdles of the war, for Victorian poets "do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of the rose" (Eliot 2006, p. 198). However, to misquote Septimus Smith's favourite near-metaphysical poet Shakespeare, do these violent metaphysical delights have violent ends? In other words, does poetic tradition catalyse conflict or help resolve it?

3. Setting the Scene of Battle

To help answer this question, I argue that Ford Madox Ford explores the political efficacy of metaphysical poetry most strikingly amidst the early modern fans amongst the modernists and in a way that prophetically anticipates contemporary academic treatment

of the mutually constitutive nature of war and sexual conquest. While Ford is perhaps best known for the pre-war ironic anti-heroism of the 1915 novel *The Good Solder*, the four novels comprising *Parade's End* chronicle the psychological experiences of British men and women before, during, and after the First World War with far richer political and poetic complexity (and much more confusion and heft). Developing upon its taut predecessor's impressionistic style, this epic tetralogy brims with disorienting modernist experimentation (in the disordered, fractured plot that represents shell shock), stirringly lyrical nostalgia, and futuristic, Christological hope.

This temporal tension is key: *Parade's End* is deeply invested in investigating Englishness, more specifically, for Brasme, the "*when* of Englishness", in order to understand and potentially reshape English identity and British imperial control (Brasme 2014, p. 1). The work's archetypal Englishman, protagonist Christopher Tietjens, volunteers for service in the First World War and depends on early modern poetic remembrance to get through the muddy, shell-shocked trauma of battle against both German soldiers and his wife Sylvia. Like his godfather General Campion (who incidentally pursues an affair with Sylvia), Tietjens possesses "a belief that all that was good in English literature ended with the seventeenth century", but the experimental tetralogy does not solely descend into melancholic nostalgia (Ford 2012, p. 394). While most of Ford's contemporary and more-canonised modernist writers like Hemingway and Eliot seem politically trapped in aestheticised melancholia[10], Paul Saint-Amour argues that through the novel's "untimely protagonist, one not the contemporary of his contemporaries; Ford will attempt to warn his own contemporaries away from war; through a futureless character. . .*Parade's End* tries to undoom the future of the world" (Saint-Amour 2015, p. 271). While Fussell's sweeping cultural history argues that this tragic war "reversed the Idea of Progress" in its "hideous embarrassment to the prevailing Meliorist myth which had dominated the public consciousness for a century", I contend Ford's futureless character offers an idiosyncratic reinterpretation of progressive ideas, perhaps without the capital "P" (Fussell 2013, p. 8).

We can see the seeds of the "undooming" Saint-Amour applauds alongside a hint at Fussell's sense of regress combined with Eliot's rejection of Victorian sensibility early in the pages of *Parade's End*, and its turn to the metaphysical poetry Eliot celebrates takes centre stage as the plot and the war develops. At the start of the first novel set in 1912, Tietjens' friend, a Victorianist Dante Gabriel Rossetti scholar named Vincent MacMaster, insists that "a war is impossible", but Tietjens disagrees and correctly predicts, in a fascinating theorisation of the roots of conflict combining sexual and imperial conquest:

> Yes, a war is inevitable. Firstly, there's you fellows who can't be trusted. And then there's the multitude who mean to have bathrooms and white enamel. Millions of them; all over the world. Not merely here. And there aren't enough bathrooms and white enamel in the world to go round. It's like you polygamists with women. There aren't enough women in the world to go round to satisfy your insatiable appetites. And there aren't enough men in the world to give each woman one. And most women want several. So you have divorce cases. I suppose you won't say that because you're so circumspect and right there shall be no more divorce? Well, war is as inevitable as divorce. . . (Ford 2012, p. 22)

In the dismissive "you fellows", Tietjens decries a certain sentimental type of poetic temperament. The narrator remarks that he is "jibing again at the subject of Macmaster's monograph", the Victorian poet (and loose relation of Ford's[11]) Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Ford 2012, p. 22). His like-minded love and ultimate mistress Valentine Wannop, a "New Woman" figure (whom Tietjens first encounters while she is blowing up his golf course in a suffragette demonstration and with whom he falls in love while she corrects his Latin poetry errors), agrees—she mocks Macmaster's mistress' pretentious "sets of quotations for appropriate occasions": Dante Gabriel "Rossetti for Love; Browning for optimism" amid other "shallow" pieces of Victoriana (Ford 2012, p. 548). Ultimately, as Alec Marsh has written, "the titillating 'aesthetes' of the later nineteenth century [are] replaced by deeper seventeenth-century voices" and "the shaky morality of Rossetti[12] [is] exchanged for the

upright virtue of George Herbert" (Marsh 2014, p. 167). Well, not quite "upright". In choosing to pursue sexual communion outside of marriage, Tietjens' own mistress mourns that her beloved can never be a "country parson" like Herbert, but he can perhaps pursue a new form of sainthood in innovative conversation with the past virtue. Dialogue with these seventeenth-century voices does not arrive until the trenches, but this early pre-war passage sets up the novel's futuristic vision of the complex relationship between imperial expansion, financial greed, and sexual conquest. And, of course, poetic tradition.

But before we study how it is allusively articulated, what guides this "undoomed" future in its unlikely combination of saintly verse and sexual sin? Some form of Christology, for one: this untimely protagonist, volunteer soldier "Christopher" Tietjens is a Christ-bearer, etymologically, at least, and he shows a new way, or *when*, of thinking in his status as a sacrificial soldier fighting for an earlier era to promote progress—not Benjamin's "homogenous, empty time of modernity" but something perhaps approaching his mystic "messianic time" (Benjamin 2019, p. 264). In the philosophical structure of the singular "now" of a "monad" that allows a departure from temporal homogeneity, Benjamin "recognizes the sign of a Messianic cessation of happening, or put differently, a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past", and through the monadic figure of Tietjens, the reader encounters a strange, backward-glancing yet revolutionary hero (Benjamin 2019, p. 257). In memories of car crashes, mutilated bodies, and a deeply marred marriage, like Benjamin's "Angel of History", Tietjens' "face is turned toward the past" and "sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage", but he nevertheless finds something to hope for (Benjamin 2019, p. 257). For in Ford's strange soteriology,[13] I would argue that we see not a "chain of events" but a catastrophic apocalypse of nonlinear writing in which "every second" is "shot through with chips of Messianic time" (Benjamin 2019, pp. 263–64).

What new heaven or earth does the angel see in our modernist, backward-looking Christ's resurrection? Not an entirely conventional one. In rejecting British emotional suppression and breaking his marriage vows to pursue his true love and intellectual equal in Valentine as his mistress, he articulates a strange new vision of loving Christian communion of interpersonal transcendence in a fascinating (a)sexual fantasy amid the muddy trenches. Amid the aforementioned backdrop of Marvellian seduction poetry, Christopher offers the unintuitive reformulation of modern love:

> You seduced a young woman in order to be able to finish your talks with her. You could not do that without living with her. You could not live with her without seducing her; but that was the by-product. The point is that you can't otherwise talk. You can't finish talks at street corners; in museums; even in drawing-rooms. You mayn't be in the mood when she is in the mood--for the intimate conversation that means the final communion of your souls. You have to wait together--for a week, for a year, for a lifetime, before the final intimate conversation may be attained. . .and exhausted. So that. . .
>
> That in effect was love. It struck him as astonishing. (Ford 2012, p. 629)

Christ bore his own astonishing vision first to women at the tomb, and Christopher's vision of atypical modernist love is a relatively feminist one—Tietjens suggests that "the future of the world [is] to women", and in a strange sort of erotic conversion narrative, he chooses to leave his society wife Sylvia for the company and politics of the pacifist suffragette Valentine (Ford 2012, p. 629). This feminist vision is not limited to Christopher: in her exploration of the tetralogy's "Articulations of Femininity", Brasme summarises that Ford's "feminism surfaces. . .through the way in which he allows his narrative to be constantly inhabited by women's voices" (Brasme 2014, p. 184). Indeed, though Ford himself had complicated relationships with the opposite sex (first mentoring then romantically jilting Jean Rhys[14]), he was an avowed suffragette. While Tietjens' amatory dogma is seemingly similar to Macmaster's exaltation of sex, this picture really functions

as its opposite: sex as object and seducee as objectified are replaced here by transcendent, egalitarian love by means of sex.

This end of sexual oppression and of the entrenched battle of the sexes is deeply imbricated, as we shall see, with literal battle, in Ford's (and heroine Valentine's) overarching, explicitly stated purpose of pacifism. While he began the war working for the War Propaganda Bureau, as Brasme outlines, Ford's stances deepened as the fighting progressed with regards to "the ethical dimension of literary creation" universally, in his "feeling of duty toward humanity as a whole" (Brasme 2020, p. 7). His stances had dramatically and explicitly shifted by the 1920s; in his memoir, Ford notes that while he previously had "the greatest contempt for novels written with a purpose", *Parade's End* was intended as a work that "should have as its purpose the obviating of all future wars" (Ford 1933, p. 205).

The pacifistic, feminist future this novel attempts to imagine should be fairly clear. But how exactly do we achieve this vision through a backwards protagonist with a "belief that all that was good in literature ended in the seventeenth century" (Ford 2012, p. 394)? This article attempts to reconcile this temporal fissure by arguing that the devotional aspect of early modern poetry has a very complex but powerful role in shaping Ford's political purpose in this strange conversion narrative. Contemporary peace and conflict studies scholars such as Holly Furneaux situate their literary criticism "within continuing, broader scholarship about the relationship between emotion, war, and the possible end to war" with the hope of the "potential to change tolerances for war", and while Furneaux focuses on the earlier Crimean War, and to trace the pacifistic uses of early modern poetry in the modernist vision, I will extend her refreshingly idealistic study in both directions (Furneaux 2016).

4. (Early) Modern Love

For Tietjens' constellation of complex causes of "inevitable" war is not distinct to late modernity: sex, war, and poetry have been triangulated at least as far back as the *Iliad*, and it particularly evokes an earlier age of England, such as seventeenth-century poetics scholar Roland Greene's depiction of "the mutuality of love and empire, and its implications for how we read early modern literature" in his classic *Unrequited Conquest* (Greene 1999, p. 33). Tietjens' beloved Donne compares his "Mistress Going to Bed" to an "empirie" and "all states", and an understanding of the imbricated nature of sexual and imperial conquest has great implications for how we read how *modernists* like Ford read early modern literature as well. We can see the modern(ist) inheritance of Roland Greene's unified discourse of love and empire in the muddled scene with which this essay opened, for General Campion's allusion to Marvell in the second novel of the tetralogy clearly displays "the interpersonal, the social, the political, and the religious senses of love may animate each other" (Greene 1999, p. 23). Hundreds of pages and several years have passed since the beginning of the story's pre-war, idyllic, Rossetian days, and "no more parades" of sentimental, honourable Victoriana are in sight, as the second novel's title contends. In order to describe the existential despair of his "general's life in this accursed war" Campion quotes:

> But at my back I always hear
>
> Time's winged chariot hurrying near:
>
> And yonder all before me lie
>
> Deserts of vast eternity! (Ford 2012, p. 511)

While Marvell's original verses argue that life is tantalisingly short in order to seduce his "coy mistress", and Hemingway's Frederic Henry quotes it to a woman he has already seduced, Campion quotes these lines to another soldier, seemingly to indicate a renewed wartime horror at the ephemerality of life and finality of death amid shell bombardment. He continues to selectively quote the poem's depiction of death later in the conversation. As he notes:

> But there are finer things in Marvell than that. . .
>
> There's, for instance:

'The grave's a fine and secret place

But none I think do there embrace. . .' (Ford 2012, p. 512)

Interestingly, Campion misquotes the poem in both of these instances, changing "yonder all before *us* lie" to "before *me lie*" and "the grave's a fine and private place" to "secret place", which perhaps indicates the temporal fissures between early modern and modernist society—here we may thus glimpse an increased sense of isolated individuality. Indeed, there is no "us" of seduction here, just individual soldiers' existential despair and imprecision. T. S. Eliot quotes Marvell for Prufrock's attempt to woo a woman, and after hearing about a soldier who tries and fails to work up the courage to get divorced after his wife seduces him, Campion proclaims, "*that's* modernism" amid the sexual yearning of seduction poetry (Ford 2012, p. 529). Divorce was much less attainable in the seventeenth century, of course, but its overt sexual desire appeals to a wasteland of death; Eros and Thanatos coalesce in early modern and modernist love. While Woolf's Clarissa Dalloway seems to respond to Marvell in her final revelation of the distanced, sublimated erotics of "an embrace in death" when she hears of a stranger's suicide, *Parade's End* insists on real seduction amidst the infernal trenches (Woolf 1996, p. 134).

For there is more to the ideological dimension of seduction poetics than first meets the eye—as we later learn, General Campion is currently engaged in winning over his godson Tietjens' wife Sylvia. Sylvia herself notes candidly a few pages before: "This whole war was an agapemone. . . You went to war when you desired to rape innumerable women. . .It was what war was for. . .All these men, crowded in this narrow space. . ." (Ford 2012, p. 428). Again, Ford anticipates Greene's early modern theorisations. Sexual and imperial exploitation are mutually, fatally allied—a time-transcending truth, perhaps, but rendered more corrosive in the brusqueness of modernist prose and the seams cracking in the late-stage British empire. While perhaps more explicit in Ford's raw twentieth-century language, looking further into the love discourse of Marvell's poem may reveal the roots of English imperial love:

We would sit down, and think which way

To walk, and pass our long love's day.

Thou by the Indian Ganges' side

Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide

Of Humber would complain. I would

Love you ten years before the flood,

And you should, if you please, refuse

Till the conversion of the Jews.

My vegetable love should grow

Vaster than empires and more slow [. . .] (Marvell 1681, pp. 19–20 emphasis mine)

Like Greene's unified discourse of imperial lust, Marvell's love is measured in terms of empire expansion and in rubies gained. Here, the poetic speaker links the desire for riches, sexual consummation, and imperial conquest. While antithetical to Eliot's ahistorical, New Critical assessment of metaphysical poets like Marvell, it has become more or less a critical commonplace to link Marvell's love poetry with imperial desire and his position as a member of Parliament. For example, Michael McKeon argues that "Marvell's poetry, whether political or pastoral, amatory or devotional, is deeply concerned with the imperialistic and deeply problematic relation between unequal entities" in his portrayal of "imperious loves" (McKeon 1983, p. 46). For McKeon, almost all his poetry is "bound together by the seventeenth-century notion and language of empire", such as Marvell's celebration of Puritan colonisation of Edenic "Bermudas" (McKeon 1983, p. 46). In the seventeenth century, Britain's imperial hold on India was still in its initial supposed "trading" phases, but by the early twentieth century, its dominance was at its height. And in an eerily fitting textual congruity, at the close of *Parade's End*, Campion has successfully seduced Christopher Tietjens' wife, and the two of them are heading to occupy his post as the Viceroy of India. Pleasing rhymed couplets from

England's early glory days make this conclusion all the more palatable, at least for Campion. The novel does not necessarily sanction these imperial events, but it does show the power of a certain valence of poetry to catalyse romantic and political dominance.

5. Pacifist Poetics

While we see here that early modern poetic tradition can be used to successfully fuel imperial and sexual conquest in the case of Campion, *Parade's End* shows at greater length with its protagonist that it can wield the opposite effect, especially in this poetry's devotional capacity. Saint-Amour remarks that "in its great goal of obviating all future wars, *Parade's End* might have found a powerful instrument" in Campion's "ability to connect military and private life, war and empire", somewhat like Greene (Saint-Amour 2015, p. 287). But while the figure of Campion unpacks the rhetoric of imperial lust, Ford ultimately "routes his anti-war polemic" through "the minute-by-minute psychological experience of the soldier" Tietjens, and his intense fixation on a more psychologically insular, devotional metaphysical poet (Saint-Amour 2015, p. 287). Shortly after Campion quotes Marvell, Tietjens begins to fantasise about Welsh-born priest George Herbert:

> Tietjens was sentimental at rest, still with wet eyes. He was walking near Salisbury in a grove, regarding long pastures and ploughlands running to dark, high elms from which, embowered. . .Embowered was the word!—peeped the spire of George Herbert's church. . . One ought to be a seventeenth-century parson at the time of the renaissance of Anglican saintliness. . . who wrote, perhaps poems". (Ford 2012, p. 535)

After this sentimental backward glance of a reverie ends, Tietjens summarises, "That was home-sickness! . . .He himself was never to go home!" (Ford 2012, p. 535). The second novel of the tetralogy ends in this nostalgic despair for a seventeenth-century British fantasy that cannot match his horrific present in the trenches of France. But in the next volume of the work, Tietjens' idealisation of Herbert moves from a passing fancy to an imperial rejection. He dreams of Herbert's Bemerton parsonage, an idealised space and time outside of the thorny warring present, and uses it not only to escape but also to question his current political situation.

In the third and more optimistic novel of *Parade's End*, *A Man Could Stand Up–*, Tietjens repeatedly quotes Herbert's "Vertue" (from his 1633 The Temple) for solace for and beyond his individual soul (he mainly quotes the first line, but I will include some of the rest of the poem for context):

> Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
>
> The bridal of the earth and sky;
>
> The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
>
> For thou must die.
>
> [. . .]
>
> Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
>
> Like season'd timber, never gives;
>
> But though the whole world turn to coal,
>
> Then chiefly lives. (Herbert 1903b, p. 80)

Fussell notes that "Christopher Tietjens' obsession with 'Virtue'" among other examples, displays how "the *Oxford Book of English Verse* presides over the Great War in a way that has never been sufficiently appreciated", and I would like to appreciate the significance of this example in greater depth than afforded in Fussell's list (Fussell 2013, p. 172). Like Marvell, Herbert's poem speaks to that age-old human concern that was especially trenchant in the trenches of the First World War—how must we act when starkly confronted with our mortality? For Marvell, it is sexual (and latently imperial) conquest in what time we have. For Herbert here, the solution is to turn inward—to cling to oneself and, more

importantly, to one's God. In a telling contrast that implies the great distance within the classic "metaphysical" grouping, Marvell asks us to seize the day; Herbert asks us to weep for its death and hope for its eternal resurrection. Herbert's poem grants Tietjens immense spiritual solace in the godless warfare of WWI and offers a catalysing point for reimagining, or rather re-temporalizing, English politics. He also quotes Herbert's "The Elixir" as "the equivalent of prayer" before battle, as Haslam's notes to *A Man Could Stand Up*—highlight (Ford 2011, p. 126). In a subtle but telling difference, Tietjens changes God's "laws" to a higher "cause" in quoting the line "who sweeps the room as for thy cause" for leaderly inspiration, which perhaps indicates Tietjens' preference for a spirituality not based on conventional "rules" that would deny him the chance for the higher love of his desired mistress Valentine (Ford 2012, pp. 125–26).

As the novel progresses, Tietjens continues to distinguish his preference for seventeenth-century insular, pastoral spirituality over the Elizabethan "preposterous drumbeating" a figure like Campion perhaps inherits:

> Heaven knew, we did not want a preposterous drumbeating such as the Elizabethans produced—and received. Like lions at a fair. . . But what chance had quiet fields, Anglican sainthood, accuracy of thought, heavy-leaved, timbered hedgerows, slowly creeping plough-lands moving up the slopes? . . .Still, the land remains. . . The land remains. . . It remains! . . .At that same moment the dawn was wetly revealing; over there in George Herbert's parish. . . What was it called? . . .What the devil was its name? Oh, Hell! . . .Between Salisbury and Wilton. . . (Ford 2012, p. 612).

For Tietjens, Herbert's metaphysical epoch is "the only satisfactory age in England. . . yet what chance had it today? Or, still more, to-morrow?" (Ford 2012, p. 612). Initially, the answer seems none, no chance—reclaiming George Herbert's pastoral ideal in the muddied trenches of a different century seems fantastically unattainable, especially because Tietjens cannot even remember the name of it (due to shell-shock-induced memory problems). But all is not consigned to half-remembered oblivion—Tietjens does remember the name of the parish (Bemerton) after sustained mental exercise, and his poetic allusion builds to an imperial critique. Describing Herbert's parish, he thinks:

> What a handful of frail grass with which to stop an aperture in the dam of— of the Empire! Damn the Empire! It was England! It was Bemerton Parsonage that mattered! What did we want with an Empire? It was only a jerry-building Jew like Disraeli that could have provided us with that jerry-built name! The Tories said they had to have someone to do their dirty work. . . Well, they'd had it! (Ford 2012, p. 639)

"Dam" transforms into damnation to obstruct imperial flow in this radicallyrooted stream of consciousness. In Tietjens' mind, the sacred particularity of Bemerton Parsonage's dewy grass can somehow replace the seductive claims to universality of the British Empire. Indeed, Tietjens continues to not just imagine Herbert's words but the particular terrain they are rooted in, as he ecstatically imagines the sun "rising on Bemerton!" in a hopeful backdrop to his repetition of "sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright (Ford 2012, p. 634). While Fussell, using the (brief, uncontextualised) example of Tietjens, describes the "cruel reversal that sunrise and sunset, established by over a century of Romantic poetry and painting as the tokens of hope and peace and rural charm, should now be exactly the moments of heightened ritual anxiety" I argue that Ford's use of devotional poetry *does* retain an explicitly sunny hope against hope, not just ironic, tragic, anxiety (Fussell 2013, p. 56). Even in Ford's nonfiction, Herbert's verse along with his "vision of a perfected High Church Earth" at near Salisbury marks the "final height to which devotional poetry may attain", and its invocation helps Tietjens attain a political vision of the prince of peace (Ford 1994, p. 488). While Campion employs Marvell to establish his conquesting desires, Tietjens employs Herbert to reimagine and ultimately reject the imperial trenches of the present through an excavation of sedimented literary layers which can uncover an earlier, more

insular version of England where "a man can stand up," like Herbert at Bemerton, "upon a hill" (Ford 2012, p. 656).

6. The Implications of Isolationism

But pastoral as these poetics may be, this anti-imperial fantasy is not without its complications. The contrast between Herbert and Marvell's usage shows that metaphysical poetry can be used for quite different purposes, but the shared appeal to a bygone era has its ideological overlaps. Racial and religious purity and English supremacy can accompany imperial as well as insular "Little England" politics. Indeed, Tietjens (or is it Ford?) actually mixes up his metaphysical poets and mistakenly thinks that Campion earlier quoted Herbert, which may subtly show the potential slippage between these two ostensibly different poetic purposes, amatory and devotional (which we can also see in the sacred erotics of another metaphysical poet, John Donne). In his confused recollection, Tietjens' consciousness streams:

> Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright, the bridal of the earth and sky! . . .By Jove, it was that!. . .Old Campion, flashing like a popinjay in the scarlet and gilt of the Major-General, had quoted that in the base camp, years ago. Or was it months? Or wasn't it: 'But at my back I always hear Time's winged chariots hurrying near', that he had quoted? (Ford 2012, p. 611)

Tietjens does not just mess up the poets—he slightly changes the poetry, as Haslam's notes to the volume indicate that "'chariot'" is singular" in the original, and his remediation of the past may lose some legitimacy when he has no confident sense of his own time passing (Ford 2011, p. 88). Misquotation may seem minor, but it can be telling: Marvell's speaker temporally connects the seduction of his beloved to the "conversion of the Jews", and Tietjens similarly builds its pastoral, anti-imperial fantasy in contrast with the "jerry-building Jew Disraeli" (Ford 2012, p. 639). He blames the empire on the nineteenth-century Jewish Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, but the roots of empire can be clearly found in the early modern period he idealises.

Indeed, while the Herbert ensconced in his Bemerton parsonage was not as directly connected to imperial development as Parliamentarian Andrew Marvell, Herbert was quite ideologically committed to transatlantic expansion. As John Kuhn has argued in his re-contextualization of Herbert's writings such as "The Church Militant", "Herbert's desire to work in 'New Jerusalem' was anything but figurative" (Kuhn 2016, p. 65). This idealised New Jerusalem is not just a state of spiritual immortality achieved after a life of "virtue", but rather "a practical goal. . .fueled by the widespread suggestion that the New World of the English colonies might eventually be the site of the new world of the godly" (Kuhn 2016, pp. 65–66). It is outside of the scope of this paper to dwell in the minutiae of Herbert's religiously-infused politics (which seem markedly less antisemitic than Tietjens'[15]), but looking further into early modern scholarship displays that the completely insular rural England Tietjens idealises is to a considerable extent a constructed fantasy. As Saint-Amour remarks, "The condemnation of the imperial present, the idealisation of the rural past, the anti-Semitism alongside Anglo-Saxon 'cradle of the race' paeans to the Salisbury countryside—this is none other than. . . Little Englandism" (Saint-Amour 2015, p. 299). Through this nativist, alien-averse political orientation, Tietjens "assuag[es] the loss of British universalism through an embrace of English particularism" which is "nostalgic in its temporality" (Saint-Amour 2015, p. 299). The impending loss of empire is replaced by prejudiced isolationism, which is not necessarily a healthier political paradigm.

Of course, neither Herbert's views nor even Tietjens' are necessarily the novel's. Sara Haslam's notes to the critical edition of this volume that as late as 1914, in an *Outlook* essay, Ford quoted this Herbert poem as "a symbol of the distance he feels from his friend's 'High Church' religion" (Ford 2011, p. 87). Perhaps Ford's hellish time in the trenches brought him closer to a theologically-laden Herbert fantasy, but this does not necessarily rope him to conservatively nostalgic politics. As Max Saunders has shown in his study of Ford and race, throughout his life, "Ford was categorical and clear in his

anti-imperialism," such as in his "support. . .for African and Irish home rule", and that he clearly "reproves the Little Englanders who want to keep out the alien" for "they are likely to be the product of something as 'other', or alien, as anything else" (Saunders 2011, p. 48). Writing in the introduction of his critical edition of the first volume of *Parade's End*, *Some Do Not*. . . Saunders summarises that "Ford sees Englishness as the product of sustained immigration" (Ford 2010, p. xxxvii). Within the novel, the ideal of English racial purity seems completely untenable in practice with the relatively ethnically diverse characters of *Parade's End*—Christopher Tietjens himself is of Dutch origin (as his oft-mocked name implies), he ultimately goes into business with an American Jew, and Ford's own father was German.[16] And elsewhere, the novel strongly critiques antisemitism in its portrayal of the Dreyfuss affair. Moreover, the tetralogy's own experimental anti-linear form itself shows the importance of thinking beyond outdated aesthetic models, even as we may use them for (limited) inspiration.

7. Coda

For all its future-oriented modernism, then *Parade's End* displays early modern poetry's lasting power even as it articulates a new vision of transcendent community. Christopher Tietjens does not quite achieve the "Anglican sainthood" of George Herbert; in the final novel, he retires to the English countryside and keeps fantasising about Herbert, yes, to "buy a living where George Herbert had been parson" for his son, but to live quite modernly and seize the day with his mistress Valentine out of wedlock (Ford 2012, p. 882). The parade of artificial and often violent tradition ends, and Ford does not advocate for poetically infatuated time travel backwards, no matter how appealing it may seem. For Brasme, even as these novels appear to mourn for the passing of an English greatness, they "invite us to consider anew the pretence and fragility, if not hypocrisy, of national identity" as well as masculine bravado (Brasme 2015, p. 21). We see no simple Edwardian exaltation of "hearts at peace, under an English heaven" as Rupert Brooke's "Soldier" yearns, but a rearticulation of the universal in the intimate as articulated by a humble Welsh-born priest. Heaven may be rooted in the local, but Ford's use of Herbert's words orients us away from landed conquest to the transcendent. Empire be damned, interpersonal communion (whether in devotion to women, a poetic predecessor, or God) be saved. And unlike the fragility of intimacy in other aforementioned modernist writers—*A Farewell to Arms'* fatal childbirth, Septimus' suicide, and Prufrock's unanswered "love song"— in contrast to the dominant "tragic metanarrative" that Leonard V. Smith finds in many works about the First World War like Fussel's, *Parade's End* dares to imagine a hopeful postwar future full of (ir)reverent, continued consummation and new life (Smith 2001, p. 258).

Utopia on this earth is not so easy, of course, as the interpersonal and financial tensions of the last post-war volume of the novel display in its fraught pastoral aspirations and tensions. Ultimately, the complexities of the long-negotiated metaphysical allusions of this text help Ford to show us to be mindful of the nuanced, nationalistic ways poetry can sanction both imperial exaltation and damnation. Devotional verse may direct us to a complicated heaven, while unchecked amatory verse can lead us to imperial hell. In Tietjens' devotional and amatory finale that lives out his ideal of "communion of souls", Ford offers us a new vision of both masculine seduction and empire through dialogue for and against metaphysical poetry in a modern conversion narrative to feminist, pacifist devotional poetics. Unlike Eliot's essay, this multivalent work does not prescribe precisely how we should utilise poetic history, but Ford's temporal jumble encourages readers to take nuanced stock of our cultural memory and the ways it may help us reify or reimagine the failures of the present. And to write our own poetry, in dialogue or argument with history. For if poetry does anything, it keeps us living meaningfully in the face of impending death, like the soldiers writing sonnets in the trenches. I opened with some of my own attempts at (early) modernist poetics, and I'll close with some of Ford's own war verse, in which the past can be made anew:

I should like to imagine

A moonlight in which the machine-guns of trouble
Will be silent. . .
Do you remember, my dear
Long ago, on the cliffs, in the moonlight,
Looking over to Flatholme
We sat. . . Long ago!. . .
We shall do it again
(Ford 1971, p. 79)

Perhaps in this paper, I am a version of another MacMaster with an overinflated sense of poetry's import[17], or an excessively nostalgic Tietjens, or a Ford confusing his reader with an antilinear piece of writing. But like Benjamin, I have a metaphysical feeling that the backward glance can be a progressive force. For the moment, though, craning my head back, I see "time's chariot hurrying near", and cannot make the sun (or this paper) run any longer.

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Notes

1 This poetic collage of an epigraph features lines from four poems spliced together from seventeenth-century poems associated with the "metaphysical school" later described in the essay. Lines one and two are from "The Retreat" by Henry Vaughan (1621–1695), a Welsh poet whose lost presence the protagonist briefly laments (Vaughan 1914, p. 419).

2 Lines three and four are from English poet Andrew Marvell's (1621–1678) seduction poem "To His Coy Mistress", which will feature prominently in the essay as it plays a major part in *Parade's End* (Marvell 1681, pp. 19–20).

3 Line five is drawn from Welsh-born English poet and parson George Herbert's (1593–1633) "Time" (Herbert 1903a, p. 124). This particular poem does not feature in the tetralogy (or this essay), but Herbert plays a major role, as does the fraught exploration of "time".

4 Finally, the final line six comes from Richard Crashaw's (1612–1649) "Caritas Nimia", or "The Dear Bargain" (Crashaw 1836, pp. 334–35). Crashaw was an English poet and cleric who converted to Roman Catholicism, and like Vaughan features briefly in the protagonist's lament of a bygone time.

5 The saga is composed of four novels: *Some Do Not*. . . (1924), *No More Parades* (1925), *A Man Could Stand Up*—(1926), and *Last Post* (1928).

6 Quite literally, my computer cannot seem to count the number of ellipses in the first novel alone—at least 1000.

7 All citations of *Parade's End* will be from the omnibus Vintage edition unless otherwise specified (occasionally, I cite footnotes from Carcanet critical editions). Additioanlly, all parenthetical citations refer to page number.

8 Multiple women in the novel describe him in this temporal way, including the leading ladies we shall soon discuss, his pacifist mistress, Valentine Wannop and his society wife, Sylvia.

9 Others have critiqued Fussell's unacknowledged bias toward "high culture", as Leonard V. Smith describes in his 2001 article "Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory*: Twenty-Five Years Later" (Smith 2001, p. 243). Smith shows how Fussell gestures toward archival work on common soldiers but never takes up this work at length in his focus on "great" writers. I cannot claim to either Fussell's veteran experience or his archival work, though this essay was in part inspired by visiting the Imperial War Museum in London, whose materials Fussell cites. However, I can try to be more specific about the limitations of the vision of a single English author who is immersed in high culture. While Ford's work can be a fascinating starting point for rethinking how cultural memory functions in war and his literary predilections resonate with other soldiers to some extent, this one work by Ford cannot come close to speaking for "great war and modern memory" at large.

[10] See Seth Moglen's (2007) *Mourning Modernity* for a fascinating account of the ways conservative critics canonised the supposed sophistication of politically "resigned" works and left out more radical responses to modern paradigm shifts. While he focuses on American authors, I would argue they cannot be isolated from the transatlantic culture of modernism and that Ford falls in the latter category.

[11] Ford's mother's half-sister was married to Dante Gabriel Rossetti's brother, William Michael Rossetti.

[12] The poetry of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's (then) less famous sister Christina (who Ford considered one of the best poets of the nineteenth century) receives better treatment in the novel, but the encyclopedia-minded Tietjens cannot remember it after the shell shock of battle (Ford 2012, p. 175). His vision of history must be strengthened by something further back than the short-term Victorian past.

[13] I have not the space to detail Ford's own religious proclivities, but he was frustrated with contemporary religious ennui and converted to Catholicism at the age of 18, though his series of sexual affairs does not necessarily rhyme with traditional Catholic morality. For more on Ford's complex relationship with faith as "not a very good Catholic", see Max Saunders's biographies, especially his recent "critical life", *Ford Madox Ford* (Saunders 2023, p. 168).

[14] For far more depth on these relational complexities, see Joseph Weisenfarth's (2005) *Ford Madox Ford and the Regiment of Women: Violet Hunt, Jean Rhys, Stella Bowen, Janice Biala* and his 2016 (Weisenfarth 2016) "'Quartet' with Variations: Ford Madox Ford, Stella Bowen, Jean Rhys, Jean Lenglet" (*International Ford Madox Ford Studies*). This paper will largely stay confined to the politics on the page and between the pages.

[15] As Kuhn argues, "Throughout his works, Herbert urges his readers to identify with the figure of the Jew as the exemplar of the experience of divine abandonment, explicitly inviting the implied English (or colonial) reader to understand the Jewish experience as a version of the church's immediate future" (Kuhn 2016, p. 74). While Tietjens juxtaposes Englishness with Jewishness, Herbert perhaps advocates for uniting the two.

[16] Ford's birth name was Ford Hermann Hueffer, and as Saunders quotes, Ford wrote in 1911 that "because I have a German name, I am often taken for a Jew," though he was a Catholic (qtd. In Saunders 2011, p. 47). Analysing Ford's complex personal relationship to English race and religion is outside the scope of this argument, but for more information, see Saunders' "Ford Madox Ford, Race and Europe".

[17] While my self-analysis and use of the "I" may be untraditional, if not even more self-aggrandising, I do think Ford invites scholars to think metacognitively about the use and abuse, power and glory of our own words.

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Article

'[M]en's Dwellings Were Thin Shells': Uncertain Interiors and Domestic Violence in Ford Madox Ford's War Writing

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Abstract: The standard image of First World War soldiers is of men in open trenches: waiting to attack or be attacked; walking, sitting, sleeping, dead. Ford's *Parade's End* includes such scenes. But it is a different kind of image which predominates in his war writings and often produces its most memorable passages: images of houses or house-like shelters. The mind seeks protection in such structures; but they offer little security against the destructiveness outside, against the bombardments, gas, shrapnel, bullets. Ford wrote that the experience of war revealed: 'men's dwellings were thin shells that could be crushed as walnuts are crushed. . . . all things that lived and moved and had volition and life might at any moment be resolved into a scarlet viscosity seeping into the earth of torn fields [. . .]'. This realisation works in two ways. The soldier's sense of vulnerability provokes fantasies of home, solidity, sanctuary, while for the returnee soldier, domestic architecture summons war-visions of its own annihilation: 'it had been revealed to you', adds Ford, 'that beneath Ordered Life itself was stretched, the merest film with, beneath it, the abysses of Chaos'. It is now customary to read war literature through trauma theory. Building on analyses of Ford's use of repression, but drawing instead on object relations theory, I argue that Ford's houses of war are not screen memories but images of the failure of repression to screen off devastating experiences. The abysses of Chaos can be seen through the screen or projected upon it. Attending to Ford's handling of this theme enables a new reading of his war writing and a new case for its coherence. The essay will connect the opening of *No More Parades* (in a hut, during a bombardment) with the war poem 'The Old Houses of Flanders'; the postwar poem *A House*; the memoir *It Was the Nightingale* (quoted above); and the otherwise puzzling, fictionalised memoir *No Enemy*, structured in terms of 'Four Landscapes' and 'Certain Interiors'.

Keywords: Ford Madox Ford; First World War; trauma; architecture; Interior; violence; fiction; memoir

Ford Madox Ford had joined the army in August 1915. When the Battle of the Somme began on 1 July 1916, he narrowly missed being there and being killed on the bloodiest day of British Military History. Instead, he arrived there later in the battle. He had been given a commission in the 3rd Battalion of the Welch Regiment, had left Cardiff for France on 13 July, and arrived in Rouen around 18 July (where he had been attached to the 9th Battalion of the Welch); there, he was placed in a support trench with the First Line Transport, near Bécourt wood, just behind the front line near Albert. On 28 or 29 July, he was 'blown into the air by something'—a high-explosive shell landing too near; he fell on his face and damaged his mouth and teeth. The concussion erased whole patches of his knowledge: 'I had completely lost my memory so that [. . .] three weeks of my life are completely dead to me'. He even forgot his own name for thirty-six hours.

He was sent to a Casualty Clearing Station at Corbie—an experience which haunted him all his life, and which he was to draw on in the expressionist scene in *Parade's End* when Tietjens is in hospital and a fellow-patient tries to strangle him. But by at least 23 August, he had left Corbie to rejoin the 9th battalion of the Welch regiment, which was now stationed in the Ypres salient near Kemmel Hill.

It was while he was there that he wrote his most significant piece of prose while on the Western Front, the essay 'A Day of Battle', dated 15 September 1916, signing 'Miles Ignotus'—the unknown soldier—remember, his own name had been unknown to him a few weeks earlier. Ford gave the first part the sub-heading 'Arms And The Mind', playing off the Virgilian 'Arms, and the man, I sing'. This Fordian war epic was going to be a psychological affair. 'Arms And The Mind' starts with a problem—he feels unable to write about his war experiences:

> "I have asked myself continuously why I can write nothing—why I cannot even think anything that to myself seems worth thinking!—about the psychology of that Active Service of which I have seen my share. And why cannot I even evoke pictures of the Somme or the flat lands round Ploegsteert? With the pen, I used to be able to "visualize things"—as it used to be called. [. . .] To-day, when I look at a mere coarse map of the Line, simply to read 'Ploegsteert' or 'Armentières' seems to bring up extraordinarily coloured and exact pictures behind my eyeballs—little pictures having all the brilliant minuteness that medieval illuminations had—of towers, and roofs, and belts of trees and sunlight; or, for the matter of that, of men, burst into mere showers of blood and dissolving into muddy ooze; or of aeroplanes and shells against the translucent blue.—But, as for putting them—into words! No: the mind stops dead, and something in the brain stops and shuts down [. . .]
>
> As far as I am concerned an invisible barrier in my brain seems to lie between the profession of Arms and the mind that put things into words. And I ask myself: why? And I ask myself: why?[1]"

One might say that all Ford's subsequent writing begins here and from that problem. In *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, I read that phrase 'an invisible barrier in my brain' as an image for repression; repression of traumatic experience, which left Ford feeling that all he could write about the war was effectively comparable to what Freud had called 'screen memories'; arbitrary associations carrying a high emotional charge connected with the thing they conceal.[2] I still think repression is important here; though the process is more complicated than that makes it sound. The vision Ford describes when he imagines the image, as he puts it, 'of men, burst into mere showers of blood and dissolving into muddy ooze', might be thought to articulate its traumatic memory vividly enough; except that the splatter of blood and the red-stained mud is itself a sign of a worse trauma, and one that can't be seen or heard, in the chaos of an explosion.[3] The silence of that description is perhaps part of its horror. But the key point is that Ford is not saying his war experiences were repressed from his conscious mind; rather, that what is repressed is his conscious art. He can still see them; he just cannot make us see them.

That suggests the alternative reading explored in this essay, according to which the screen does not screen or repress enough. It is an idea which we shall trace through several of Ford's post-war works. The most evocative statement comes in *It Was the Nightingale*, the volume of Ford's reminiscences that takes up the story immediately on his demobilisation. It seems to recall the earlier passage from 'Arms And The Mind', or at least a similar complex of feelings. 'One had had', he says of the insouciance of pre-war London life, 'little sense of the values of life if indeed one had the sense that life had any values at all'. Standing on the kerb, and looking over London from Campden Hill in 1919:

> "it was as if some of the darkness of nights of air-raids still hung in the shadows of the enormous city. Standing on the Hill that is high above that world of streets one had the sense that vast disaster stretched into those caverns of blackness. A social system had crumbled. Recklessness had taken the place of insouciance. In the old days we had seemed to have ourselves and our destinies well in hand. Now we were drifting towards a weir. . ..
>
> You may say that everyone who had taken physical part in the war was then mad. No one could have come through that shattering experience and still

> view life and mankind with any normal vision. In those days you saw objects that the earlier mind labelled as houses. They had been used to seem cubic and solid permanences. But we had seen Ploegsteert where it had been revealed that men's dwellings were thin shells that could be crushed as walnuts are crushed. Man and even Beast . . . all things that lived and moved and had volition and life might at any moment be resolved into a scarlet viscosity seeping into the earth of torn fields [. . .] Nay, it had been revealed to you that beneath Ordered Life itself was stretched, the merest film with, beneath it, the abysses of Chaos. One had come from the frail shelters of the Line to a world that was more frail than any canvas hut." (Ford 1934)

The view itself had changed little over the five years of war. But Ford's impression of it has changed. He feels the shadow of the war superimposed over London, even though the war has ended. That shadow, he says, has 'revealed' two things to be terrifyingly different from their pre-war appearance: houses and civilisation.

Yet that last image, of the film that separates us from the 'abysses of Chaos,' is paradoxical. It is offered as something revealed by the war. Yet what it offers is a vision of a civilisation that has always been suspended over its annihilation but merely hadn't realised it. Or rather, a civilisation which had been distracted from it by the 'hectic gaiety' (48) of the eve of the war. For there had been glimpses, which Ford knew well, in the years before the war, that London, the world city, the apex of civilisation, the heart of empire, had a heart of darkness. Indeed, that vision of annihilation had been contemplated even as early as thirty years before the war by William Hale White, writing as Mark Rutherford: 'Our civilisation seemed nothing but a thin film or crust lying over a volcanic pit, and I often wondered whether some day the pit would not break up through it and destroy us all'.[4]

To Ford, who was 42 in 1916, and to the younger generation serving with him, it must have felt as if that was exactly what had happened. He had certainly read Rutherford,[5] and he knew T. E. Hulme, the philosopher, critic and poet who was killed in the war in 1917 and who had been working for at least a decade on a work called 'Cinders', which Herbert Read described as 'a personal philosophy, cast into an allegorical form perhaps analogous to Nietzsche's Zarathustra, and having as its final object the destruction of the idea that the world has unity, or that anything can be described in words'. 'The world is a plurality', writes Hulme:

> This plurality consists in the nature of an ash-heap. In this ash-pit of cinders, certain ordered routes have been made, thus constituting whatever unity there may be a kind of manufactured chess-board laid on a cinder-heap. Not a real chess-board impressed on the cinders, but the gossamer world of symbolic communication already spoken of.[6]

It is possible Ford heard Hulme discussing these ideas or heard mutual friends such as Ezra Pound or Richard Aldington discussing them. Hulme's vision of a game of chess superimposed over a barren waste land appears to have made its impression on Eliot too. The point is that it was the experience of the post-war city which brought such images back.

Virginia Woolf, too, used a similar image in representing a similar disorientation in the business of walking about on the streets and pavements of an immediately postwar London which had supposedly returned to orderly life. A diary entry from 1920 begins: 'Why is life so tragic; so like a little strip of pavement over an abyss. I look down; I feel giddy. I wonder how I am ever to walk to the end'.[7] At first, she develops the idea through very personal anxieties about 'having no children, living away from friends, failing to write well, spending too much on food, growing old'. But then she turns outward to the public and political sphere of Ireland and to the violent civil war which had erupted:

> its life itself, I think sometimes, for us in our generation so tragic—no newspaper placard without its shriek of agony from someone. McSwiney this afternoon

> and violence in Ireland; or it'll be the strike. Unhappiness is everywhere; just beyond the door; or stupidity, which is worse.[8]

That 'shriek of agony' indicates that this is no self-indulgent *crise de quarantaine*, but a response to real physical violence in the UK.[9] Her response was public and political too; she signed a petition, organised by Ford and his friends; a protest to the government from leaders in thought and the arts against the repressive policies being brutally enforced by the Black and Tans in Ireland.[10]

Her other main comment on the Anglo-Irish war comes on 13 March the following year and also invokes a barrier keeping violence from full consciousness:

> In the way of history the Germans [the unsuccessful delegation to the Reparations Conference] have gone back to Germany. People go on being shot & hanged in Ireland. Dora described mass going on all day in Dublin for some wretched boy killed early on Monday morning. The worst of it is the screen between our eyes & these [?] gallows is so thick. So easily one forgets it—or I do.[11]

Here, the deaths in Ireland are juxtaposed with the First World War and the concept of reparation. Here too, an image of a screen shielding the mind from the devastation, to put alongside Rutherford's film or crust, Ford's film, Hulme's gossamer. Ford was repeatedly drawn to images of invisible or transparent barriers between the soldier and violent death; and, as we shall see, the hint of the cinematic in these images is telling.

In *It Was the Nightingale*, Ford is attempting to recreate the damaged and fragile mental state in which he found himself immediately after the war. He had already published *No Enemy* (Ford 1929), which was mostly written in the immediate aftermath of the war, subtitled 'A Tale of Reconstruction' (Ford 2002)—implying that the post-war project of reconstruction was not only, or should not only be, a matter of restoring the land and buildings that had been damaged and of trying to repair injured bodies, but of reconstructing people's psychologies and reconstructing civilisation itself. In Henri Barbusse's *Le Feu*, the soldiers pass the village where one of them, Poterloo, had lived. It has disappeared so completely he cannot even find the site of his house, and he says: 'It's wiped out too much—all my life up to now. It makes me afraid—it is so completely wiped out'.[12] Such habitations can be reconstructed, even if they are beyond repair. Surgery and prosthetics can mitigate some damage to injured bodies; but the abject bloody human remains—that 'scarlet viscosity seeping into the earth'—cannot be reconstructed. What of the mind traumatised by such annihilations?

There are continual intimations in *It Was the Nightingale* of a suicidal mindset—as here, where doubting that 'that life had any values at all' is perilously close to doubting whether it had any *value* at all. The whole idea of life, what it was, what it was for, what it was worth, had itself been damaged, possibly beyond repair. The book goes on to recount how, once he has decided to leave London and sets up home in the Sussex countryside, while cooking his first meal, he makes a pact with destiny that if the skins of the onions he has despairingly thrown into the stew separate and rise to the surface he will resolve to keep on going.

The moment on Campden Hill is an earlier stage in this process of existential indecision. He is poised on the edge of the kerb as he's about to cross the road: 'as I extended my foot to make that crossing something snapped. It was the iron band around my heart that had hitherto made it London's own' (64). The narrative keeps returning to this moment, with the effect of leaving him teetering on the edge of the abyss. It is the moment he determines to leave London; to go to live with Stella Bowen in the Sussex cottage 'Red Ford'—a move which would eventually lead to his leaving Britain altogether. The tone is a complex balancing act; the comic freezing of the frame catching him with one foot in the air, set against the surrounding somberness—not just of London and its war memories of air raids, but of the stories he has been telling of physical and mental wrecks before the war and after, as the narrative builds to this Rubicon moment. Graham Greene described one

of Ford's later reminiscential books, *Provence*, as being written 'out of a kind of hilarious depression' (Greene 1938).

Ford's and Woolf's abysses are—at least at first glance—more metaphysical than Rutherford's volcano, which allows them also to suggest war and disorder; but then his concrete images of volcano and crust are metaphors for metaphysical and moral dilemmas, crises of faith, whereas their more abstract metaphors express both real physical horrors and the mind's attempts to keep them at bay. But there are three other differences in Ford's version. First, in the Rutherford, the film is the civilisation; just a thin layer that keeps us from destruction; the equivalent of Woolf's pavements, whereas in the Ford, the film is beneath civilisation; a barrier of sorts between what he calls 'ordered life' and death.

Second, where Rutherford talks of 'civilisation', with all its grand and abstract notions of history and culture and value, and Woolf uses the image of 'a little strip of pavement over an abyss' as a simile for the tragic quality of life, Ford uses that phrase 'ordered life'. It is neutral, yet highly suggestive, collaging different kinds of ways life can be ordered: by civilised regulation, yes; but also by military orders; or by the order of art, whether in fiction or autobiography; or indeed, in poetry. Ford also used the phrase in his postwar poem that won the 1921 prize from the Chicago magazine *Poetry*; the poem simply called 'A House'.[13] The unnamed woman, the 'She' of the poem, though evidently based to some extent on Stella Bowen, longs for 'an ordered life in a household' (Ford 1997).

Writing about that passage from *It Was the Nightingale* about 'ordered life', I argued it showed 'how the envisaged "order" is something more ontological than a matter of domestic arrangements'.[14] What was at stake was a sense that Ford's writing between the war and *Parade's End* struggles to relate personal relationships and anxieties to war sufferings. 'A House' expresses as much anxiety over domestic difficulties as about trench battles. Ford's first published postwar novel, *The Marsden Case* (Ford 1923), covers a similar timeframe to *Parade's End*—pre-war to post-war—but unlike the tetralogy, avoids representing the war itself, wanting us to feel the pathos of the protagonist's despair at purely personal and familiar anxieties as somehow equivalent to the war. Ford had written—in the opening of *The Good Soldier*, before the war:

> Some one has said that the death of a mouse from cancer is the whole sack of Rome by the Goths, and I swear to you that the breaking up of our little four-square coterie was such another unthinkable event. (Ford 2012)

The novel didn't appear in book form until 1915, by which time it had had its name changed from 'The Saddest Story' to something more military; but it is not a war novel, despite the carnage amongst the characters (three dead, one mad).

Though I still stand by these critical judgements, I think what goes awry in 'A House' or *The Marsden Case* is instructive about what goes right in *Parade's End* or *It Was the Nightingale*. It is the effort to fend certain memories off, to keep them out of the narrative or the poem, which distorts them—at least for us. Perhaps contemporary readers would have understood better and wanted themselves to keep the abysses of Chaos at bay just as much. That effort to stop thinking of things was in a sense Ford's subject; and arguably had been even before the war, in his tales of suppression and obtuseness like *A Call* or *The Good Soldier*; but what you see so vividly in the passage from *It Was the Nightingale* is the haunting realisation that however hard you try, the horror of war cannot be screened off from the mind; that the very things you rely on to keep it out—ordered life, London streets, houses, walnuts—keep making you think of it. That is why the image of the house is so important: because to the postwar mind, 'domestic arrangements' cannot be kept separate from war.

That is the third difference from Rutherford's image. Rutherford imagined apocalypse on an epic scale, destroying civilisation. Hulme imagined civilisation as already incinerated. Ford gives us a house. He domesticates the terror; which is not to say, tames or subdues it; but adds to it, by unleashing it in the very place that should offer sanctuary. It shows how there is no longer any order in life that can keep the domestic and the ontological terror apart. Being in the war showed how a solid wall can be crushed like a walnut; was as frail

as canvas; as fragile as 'the merest film'. So now, back amongst the solidities of civilisation, the walls of houses keep making Ford think of their destruction, or of being in a canvas hut. (There is a similar effect in Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero*, when the narrator imagines postwar city streets as part of gigantic and 'intricate trench systems' of social hostility.) (Aldington 1929).

One of the few passages in *The Marsden Case* that mentions the war says:

> I used to think that, once out there, we should be surrounded by a magic and invisible tent that would keep from us all temporal cares. But we are not so surrounded, and it is not like that [. . .] round your transparent tent, the old evils, the old heartbreaks and the old cruelties are unceasingly at work. (Ford 1923)

This too recalls the essay written in the Salient, 'A Day of Battle', which also had a fantasy of a protective 'magic ring'.[15] The ontological complexity increases, since not only is there the ambiguity of the barrier (a tent, but invisible; a wishful fantasy of security), but also the ambiguity over what has been fended off: not just bullets and shells, but domestic anxiety as well.

The Italian critic Mario Praz, writing, after the Second World War, in a book called *The Philosophy of Interior Decorating* of the bombed ruins of the Roman Gate at Viterbo, was drawn towards a comparable conjunction of domestic interior, wartime destruction, and uncanny screen: 'the magic screen of memory' is 'brutally torn away, and your mind [is] gripped by rubble, destruction and horror'.[16]

Ford's writing about war, then, keeps returning to this notion of some kind of perplexing screen: invisible barrier; merest film; frail canvas hut; invisible tent; magic ring. In the third novel of *Parade's End*, *A Man Could Stand Up*, Tietjens imagines an 'inviolable sphere' of safety.[17] There is an element of wishful thinking. If there is nothing there, you imagine a shelter; but then, if there is a shelter, the imagination of war makes its fabric transparent. War becomes visible through it. It is so frail you imagine things penetrating it (and you). The effect continues even if the shelter has the solidity of a peacetime house of bricks and mortar, since those too can be pulverised by shellfire. So, if you're in a real house, you keep imagining it as a tent or invisible film. But this effect persists after the war too, so peacetime house walls no longer keep out the anxiety of danger.

What makes this such a potent cluster of ideas for Ford, I think, is the power of his longing, and presumably that of most of the participants, to be back at home, in a house.[18] *No Enemy* images the house as a gingerbread cottage; a childish fantasy of a house to protect you from the infantilising terrors of the grown-up world at war. The received image of soldiers on the Western Front is of men in open trenches or exposed in the open spaces of No Man's Land; but often, they were sheltering in simulacra of houses: dug-outs at the Front, or tents and huts behind the lines. These may have kept the worst of the elements out, but they offered little protection against artillery or aerial attack.

It is in the first chapters of *No More Parades*, the second novel of *Parade's End* and the first passage in the tetralogy to describe the Western Front directly, that Ford is able to bring all these ideas together with extraordinarily powerful effect. The novel begins:

> WHEN you came in the space was desultory, rectangular, warm after the drip of the winter night, and transfused with a brown-orange dust that was light. It was shaped like the house a child draws. Three groups of brown limbs spotted with brass took dim high-lights from shafts that came from a bucket pierced with holes, filled with incandescent coke and covered in with a sheet of iron in the shape of a tunnel. Two men, as if hierarchically smaller, crouched on the floor beside the brazier; four, two at each end of the hut, drooped over tables in attitudes of extreme indifference [. . .]
>
> An immense tea-tray, august, its voice filling the black circle of the horizon, thundered to the ground. Numerous pieces of sheet-iron said, "Pack. Pack. Pack." In a minute the clay floor of the hut shook, the drums of ears were pressed inwards, solid noise showered about the universe, enormous echoes pushed

> these men—to the right, to the left, or down towards the tables, and crackling like that of flames among vast underwood became the settled condition of the night. Catching the light from the brazier as the head leaned over, the lips of one of the two men on the floor were incredibly red and full and went on talking and talking. . .. (Ford 2011b)

'It was shaped like the house a child draws'. The house in Ford's poem *A House* is imagined saying: 'I am the House!/I resemble/The drawing of a child/That draws "just a house"'.[19] The 'space' is hard to make out, presumably as it would be for someone coming into the brown-orange dust and dim light. The phrase 'that was light' has a faint echo of the creation in beginning of *Genesis*; only in this site of destruction, the process is in reverse: the light has become dust. Then we gather that the space we are in is a hut. Where it is situated remains obscure. We gather that it is near enough to the Front to be targeted by enemy artillery. All we know of its construction is that it has a clay floor, only mentioned because it shakes. The first glimpse we get of its structure is through the dead eyes of O Nine Morgan, who bursts in to announce his own death with an extraordinary stoic joke: "Ere's another bloomin' casualty':

> The face below him grinned at the roof—the half face! The nose was there, half the mouth with the teeth showing in the firelight. .. It was extraordinary how defined the peaked nose and the serrated teeth were in that mess. .. The eye looked jauntily at the peak of the canvas hut-roof. ..[20]

Morgan was hit outside. But anyone following his glazed gaze up to the roof would be reminded what negligible protection this house-like space affords. Is this the kind of 'canvas hut' of the passage in *It Was the Nightingale*? Whether it is or not, the image of the house a child draws is very deliberate. Not just a basic hut, but one which conjures familial, domestic life in this no child's land of the war. Whatever the walls are made out of, they are not thick enough to keep out the noise; to stop war's violence forcing itself through the roof, the walls, even the floor (Tietjens also has nightmarish fantasies of German soldiers undermining the Allied trenches); nor the thoughts of home. In *No More Parades,* Tietjens has to live in a 'sackcloth hut' (14). This may be a different hut; but its textile roof leaves it comparably vulnerable. It is a passage like this that shows why a house never seemed just a house after the war; because things that are so obviously not houses became permeated with thoughts of houseness—

> Two stories down below someone let two hundred-pound dumb-bells drop on the drawing-room carpet; all the windows of the house slammed in a race to get it over.[21]

—so that, reciprocally, once back in actual houses, those then seem permeated by war. That is why it is important to Ford to begin the close-up description of war in *No More Parades* by invoking a house; or why, in his poem 'A House', his anxieties over trying to keep his animals alive brings back memories of the trenches.

What is inside this parody of a house in *No More Parades* is a parody of a domestic hearth: the brazier the men are crouching round to keep warm; described as 'a bucket pierced with holes, filled with incandescent coke and covered in with a sheet of iron'. The coke and sheet iron evoke industrial processes. This is what mechanised mass war does to domestic space; but the iron is also another version of the image of a sheet, a thin barrier, between us and the destructive element—the erupting volcano, the abysses of Chaos; and lest that suggestion seem too far-fetched, look at the connections Ford is so careful to establish. The 'sheet of iron' of the brazier is echoed by the 'sheet iron' invoked to express the noise of the explosions; and also by the 'Teatray'—again, a domestic object which acquires a paranoid terror in this context. And then, the 'incandescent coke' inside the hut is connected with the shelling outside. After the bombardment, there is a noise of 'crackling like that of flames among vast underwood' which 'became the settled condition of the night'. Only the childish imagination of a house is between the men and the conflagration; and so it will be back home.

Considering this group of texts enables us to see that Ford's writing about war involves writing about houses to a surprising extent. It is hard to think of another poet who could write as evocative a war poem as the one Ford called 'Old Houses of Flanders' (Ford 1918):

> The old houses of Flanders,
> They watch by the high cathedrals;
> They have eyes, mournful, tolerant and sardonic, for the ways of men,
> In the high, white, tiled gables.
> The rain and the night have settled down on Flanders;
> It is all wet darkness; you can see nothing.
> Then those old eyes, mournful, tolerant and sardonic,
> Look at great, sudden, red lights,
> Look upon the shades of the cathedral
> And the golden rods of the illuminated rain,
> For a second . . ..
> And those old eyes,
> Very old eyes that have watched the ways of men for generations,
> Close for ever.
> The high white shoulders of the gables
> Slouch together for a consultation,
> Slant drunkenly over in the lea of the flaming cathedrals.
> They are no more, the old houses of Flanders.[22]

He was as attentive to war's destruction of houses and the ordered life they stood for as to its destruction of their occupants. His vision of London remaining under the shadow of the war was in part a product of his having seen war *in* London before and after seeing it in France and Belgium. *It Was the Nightingale* describes going to see if his mother is all right during a Zeppelin raid and finding her in her house, 'sitting in her bedroom window—which she should not have been!—reading *Lorna Doone* in between the shrapnel flashes in the sky' (80):

> "I can assure you [wrote Ford] that walking along High Street, Kensington, was a sufficiently frightful experience, so that I prayed I might be back in places where you would be hit by a nice clean piece of shell-casing. In there the air seemed to be filled with bits of flying chimney pots and coping stones and our own shrapnel [. . .]" (79–80)

Ford and Violet Hunt had written about the fear of Zeppelin raids in *Zeppelin Nights* and been criticised for being unpatriotic cowards for doing so during wartime. The scenario there is a group of Londoners sitting out the raids indoors by listening to historical sketches. If the source of the frightfulness here is partly the anticipation of horrible messy injuries, it is also to do with the uncanniness of bits of house not behaving like houses should.

Dennis Brown, in a fine essay, connected *Parade's End* with W. R. Bion's psycho-analytic concepts of container and contained; ideas which D. W. Winnicott developed into the idea of 'holding'.[23] In *Attention and Interpretation,* Bion wrote: 'According to his background, a patient will describe various objects as containers, such as his mind, the unconsciousness, the nation; others as contained, such as his money, his ideas' (Bion 1923). These ideas theorise the relation between infant and mother: the mother 'holds' the baby, not just literally, but psychically, guaranteeing its security and protection however stricken it is by anxiety or rage; acting as container for those emotions that the infant projects, and which otherwise would flood the infant's entire world. According to the post-Kleinian object-relations theory that both men contributed to, our relations with objects reflect, and also develop, this primal relationship.

A house, according to this view, is never just a house; never just a physical container for people and furniture, but it is also a psychic container; something we rely on to protect us from real threats like weather, or hostile animals or people; but also to protect us against our own anxiety. It is not irrelevant to this discussion that Bion served in tanks on the

Western Front. When Ford writes 'men's dwellings were thin shells', it is as if they were our protective carapaces; as if war reveals the thinness of our skin—our literal container; and makes our desire for better containers a matter of life and death.

Think of how we react to houses blown open, by explosion or natural disaster—whether bombs and missiles in Syria and Ukraine; or the blitzed ruins of the buildings the Woolfs had lived in in London's Tavistock and Mecklenbugh Squares, interior walls with doors and decorations and fireplaces left clinging to the exterior; or the devastation of hurricanes like Katrina and Sandy. That sense of insides not staying inside, but spilling outwards, can mobilise all the 'powers of horror' at our human vulnerability that Julia Kristeva writes about in her analysis of abjection (Kristeva 1980). Trauma—the kind of trauma Ford experienced amidst shell explosions—is uncontained panic. When memories of it recur, they have all the unpredictability and plenitude of Proustian involuntary memory, but not in a good way; annihilating and overwhelming rather than ecstatic and restorative. The panic couldn't be contained at the time; nor will it remain contained by the past, but instead keeps flooding back through associations, nightmares, visions, or apparently, just at random. The soldier feeling exposed to gunfire and shellfire longs for a protective container; but he sees the very houses that should offer such security themselves being annihilated by war. So, he also knows that they will never feel as if they really can contain the terror. Robert Graves described how visions of war would burst into his postwar bedroom (Graves 1986). The more disturbing the memory, the harder it is to say *Goodbye to All That*.

Criticism of war literature has become so dominated by trauma theory that we neglect kinds of writing, like Ford's or Graves's, in which shocking experiences have not been fully repressed—banished to the unconscious—but recur and overshadow the present. Tietjens has not blanked out the memory of O Nine Morgan's death. His hallucinatory vision of a map with blood flowing over it is, rather, an involuntary *memento mori*. The map is another variant on the screen: a paper sheet giving a euphemistic representation of the sites of carnage; but which—perhaps because the names of places on it summon back memories of the actual places—becomes a transparent film through which the carnage returns. Like the pages of a book, perhaps. Rather than loss of memory, this is memory in excess: a kind of overwhelming flood of reminiscence. Of course, the memories which recur may themselves be screening worse, genuinely traumatic ones. But they are not Freudian screen memories, the point of which is that they have no obvious or logical link with the traumatic memory they mask. In Ford's houses of war, the trauma is projected onto the screen memory.

Ford's houses of war are thus both images for repression—or rather, of the desire to repress, to keep threats at bay; and also images of the failure of repression and self-protection. The Fordian house in war functions at two levels. It is an actual container, offering some form of shelter, however inadequate; but it is also a symbol of containment; of the possibility of anxiety being able to be contained. Ford's postwar anxiety about the insubstantiality of houses correspondingly works on two levels. It is about the terror of feeling unprotected on the Western Front, even when inside huts or houses; about the feeling, then, that the walls of the dugout or hut couldn't keep the terror out. But it is also about the feeling that houses after the war cannot keep the terror from coming *back*. The walls are insubstantial, like a cinematic 'screen'—*No Enemy* ends with a chapter on 'The Movies'—because the mind, as Ford describes it, is always in two places at once; ranging out through the walls of space and time:

You would think that, out there, in a French dug-out, in a tent in support; in an army hut, you would at least be cut off from the anxieties of the everyday world. But you will find yourself a prey to the worst of all anxieties [. . . Such a man] is indeed *homo duplex*: a poor fellow whose body is tied in one place, but whose mind and personality brood eternally over another distant locality.[24]

To give a final example of how this view might let us see Ford's war writing differently, let us consider *No Enemy*: a work the generic hybridity and fragmentariness of which has tended to resist analysis. As suggested, Ford's posing of it as 'a Reconstructionary Tale'

(11) is psychically motivated, as much as it is motivated by economics or demographics or politics. This reading offers a new sense of its structure. It is, after all, remarkably odd: dealing with the war and its aftermath not directly, but obliquely, through reminiscences of places and people; b these are gathered into two halves: Four Landscapes, and Certain Interiors. It might, at first glance, seem fairly arbitrary; or to be making an aesthetic claim, as if we were looking at pictures in an exhibition: landscapes on this wall, on this, interiors; but the distinction between outside and inside is crucial. The insides represent places that are supposed to be refuges from war: a grand hotel; a billet, a bathhouse, the movies, etc; but violence or the memory of violence will keep creeping in. The last of the interiors concerns the Belgian woman Ford calls Rosalie Prudent, who sits sewing in her house in a town that has recently been shelled by the Germans.[25] In many ways, she embodies a maternal, containing function: repairing clothes, talking about her menfolk; and she represents, too, that kind of feminine resilience that Ford so admired—and needed—in characters like Meary Walker, the Romney Marsh peasant whose motto was 'I keep all on going'. They are 'certain interiors' in the sense of 'just a few'; but 'certain' also implies other qualities: houses you can be sure of; on which you can rely, like your mother's fearlessness (or is it oblivion?) during danger, as in an air raid. Ford says, in a note to the opening of the next chapter, 'The Movies': his persona Gringoire has asked the fictional 'Compiler' to note that Rosalie's real name was not Prudent but *Dutoit: le toit* being the roof. On the other hand, the notion of interiors which are certain might imply the opposite: *un*certain interiors. It is because one feels one's own interior to be uncertain (or, as a psychoanalyst might say, unconscious), that one wants one's domestic interiors to be certain.

There is, thus, finally, a very different story sharing the same domestic space. Gringoire is introduced as having survived the war:

> to inhabit in tranquillity with the most charming of companions a rural habitation so ancient, frail and unreal that it is impossible to think of it otherwise than as the Gingerbread Cottage you may have read of in the tale of "Hansel and Gretel." (7)

The charming cottage turns out in the fairy tale to be very sinister: luring the children in so the wicked witch can cook and eat them. Just as its walls are liminal, blurring the boundary between inedible and edible, building materials and food, so the witch plans to transgress the boundary between treating the children to supper and treating them as supper. Containers can be sanctuaries; they can sometimes be traps.

The domestic violence of my title, that is to say, is not a matter of violence done just *to* houses like the Old Houses of Flanders, but of violence done *in* houses; or even, in a sense, *by* houses, or rather, by households; by the domesticity, the ordering of life in the domestic space. *It Was the Nightingale* is explicit that what the soldier's mind broods on are the treacheries of others and betrayals by his womenfolk (197).

Parade's End repeatedly juxtaposes the violence done outside to that done inside houses or huts. In *Some Do Not . . .*Sylvia throws a plate of food at Tietjens. (In a cancelled version of the ending Ford even had Sylvia striking both his cheekbones as hard as she can with her fists and giving him two black eyes; 415). In *No More Parades*, the dying O Nine Morgan bursts into the hut as McKechnie has been arguing violently with Tietjens. Later, Tietjens faces verbal aggression from General Campion. There are the domestic or quasi-domestic containers in which marital violence erupts; as it does between Tietjens and Sylvia in the hotel room in Rouen; or that which Tietjens fears might erupt between O Nine Morgan and his wife's lover, the prize-fighter (to spare Morgan from which, Tietjens denies his request for the leave which might have saved his life). On the Armistice, in *A Man Could Stand Up—*, it is Edith Ethel Duchemin (now Lady Macmaster) who tries to destroy the relationship between Tietjens and Valentine. *Last Post*, the final volume, is permeated by the fear of what havoc Sylvia might unleash next. One of her acts is to get Groby Great Tree cut down so that it smashes through one of the walls of the Tietjens family's ancestral home.

That is very much the core plot of *Parade's End*: that 'ordered life'—the life of civilised houses—is threatened as much by sexual and social hostilities as by war; and even that war

is itself motivated by such sexual aggressions. With a characteristic turn, Ford suggests that the walls of the house are not just the things that should shield us from violence, but that, at some level, they contribute to it. The pun on 'shells' does some of that work: 'men's dwellings were thin shells'. The walls are a shell that you hope will keep at least some of the blast and shrapnel out. But a shell casing keeps the explosive *in*; until it bursts violently out. If a house is that sort of container, the danger comes from within; from us; from the explosive potential of human aggression and destructiveness; whether the potential of the individual human to disintegrate through terror; or that of humans in relationship to wound each other when they cannot contain their selves. As with shells, the structure designed to contain can also intensify the destructive power.

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Notes

1 (Ford 1999, pp. 36–37).
2 2 vols (Oxford University Press, 1996), vol. 2, pp. 197–98. (Freud 1899) trans. (Strachey 1962).
3 I am indebted here to Michael Mageean, "*The Secret Agent*'s (T)extimacies." in (Kaplan and Simpson 1996).
4 (White 1885), has 'bottomless pit'; 'volcanic' was substituted in later editions.
5 See, for example, (Ford 1939, p. 790).
6 Hulme, 'Cinders', in (Read 1924, vol. xiv, p. 219).
7 (Woolf 1978).
8 Terence MacSwiney was the Lord Mayor of Cork and MP for mid-Cork who had died that morning from hunger strike. The strike referred to at the end of the sentence was of the coal miners.
9 See (Patten 2022, p. 13).
10 See (Saunders 2023).
11 (Woolf 1978, p. 100).
12 Barbusse, *Le Feu*, translated by (Wray 1926).
13 'A House' was published in *Poetry* in March 1921; in October, it was awarded the magazine's prize of $100 for the best poem of the year.
14 *A Dual Life*, II, 89.
15 (Ford 1999, p. 41).
16 Mario Praz, *The Philosophy of Interior Decorating* (1945); translation by (Siegel 2017, pp. 205–6).
17 (Ford 2011a). Compare (Aldington 1929, pp. 345, 429).
18 See Sara Haslam's podcast lecture 'Contested Ground: Alcohol, Attachment and the Hut Habit at War', delivered at University College Dublin in June 2015: available online at https://soundcloud.com/ucd-humanities/sara-haslam-contested-ground-alcohol-attachment-and-the-hut-habit-at-war (accessed on 11 March 2024).
19 (Hueffer 1921), 3. *Selected Poems*, p. 126.
20 (Ford 2011b, p. 30).
21 (Ford 2011b, p. 24).
22 (Ford 1997, pp. 88–89). First published in the War Number of *Blast*, July 1915 (without the third line).
23 (Brown 2003; Bion 1962; Winnicott 1960).
24 (Ford 1934, p. 197).
25 See Paul Skinner, 'Introduction', *No Enemy*, xviii. As Helen Chambers notes, Ford would also have been thinking of Maupassant's story 'Rosalie Prudent': (Chambers 2016, p. 163).

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Article

The Pragmatics, Poetics, and Ethics of Pronouns in Ford Madox Ford's War Prose

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Abstract: This essay adopts a stylistic approach to delineate the various—and varying—pragmatic effects inherent in the use and interactions of pronouns in Ford's war prose. Ford's singular use of pronouns is shown to be instrumental in his practice of literary impressionism. In particular, the omnipresent second person is granted a variety of referents that coexist along a "continuum of reference" (as defined by Bettina Kluge), from a "you" that is speaker-oriented to one that is addressee-oriented. Sorlin's intersection of Kluge's continuum with a gradient from personalisation to generalisation (2022) is illuminating when examining the manifold significance of Ford's use of the second person, as it brings to light its ethical impact. Ford's war essays shift from the general to the particular and from the collective to the individual in a manner that opposes propaganda rhetorics. Furthermore, the gradient established by Sandrine Sorlin to account for the pragmatic effect of "you" also proves remarkably useful when applied to the pronoun "one". Scrutinising the interplay between these various pronouns allows us to investigate the multifarious relationships that Ford establishes in his war essays between the persona, the reader, those he often called "my men", and the collective ethos of wartime Britain.

Keywords: alterity; ethics; Ford Madox Ford; literary impressionism; second-person pronoun; stylistics; war writing

1. Introduction

There is no doubt that Ford Madox Ford is best known for his fiction and has been celebrated above all as the author of *The Good Soldier* (Ford [1915] 1995) and *Parade's End* (1924–28). Both works frame the First World War and are concerned at varying degrees of directness with the civilisational, psychological, and moral reverberations of the war. While *The Good Soldier* was mostly written before the war, the recurring date of August 4 operates as a powerful tool in the modernist sleight of hand achieved by the narrative.[1] *Parade's End* is usually considered as Ford's most mature and masterful work of fiction. Between these two works stands the war, during which Ford hardly wrote any long-form fiction. After participating in the war effort through propaganda, Ford enlisted in July 1915 and joined the Western Front as Second Lieutenant in charge of transport in the summer of 1916, first in the Somme and later in the Ypres Salient. The form that he favoured to render his increasingly direct experience of the war, first as he reflected on it from London and then as he shared his views from the trenches, was the essay. Ford's establishment as a major force in pre-war literary London granted him a weekly column in the *Outlook* magazine; the numerous articles he published there, as well as his letters and other essays written from the front, grant us a close insight into his concerns and his evolution as a writer confronted with the collective and individual trauma of the First World War.

The arguments that inform this article germinated as I was completing a chapter for a recent book, *Writers at War* (Brasme 2023), in which I examine the impact of the First World War on authors who wrote from the spatial and temporal immediacy of—or proximity

to—the Western Front. The present article prolongs and refines the analyses I developed in the chapter focusing on Ford's war prose. In *Writers at War*, the chapter devoted to Ford's war writing addresses the predicament of an author who expressed the pangs of aesthetic aporia, first because he was too far from the theatre of war—"because of the hazy remoteness of the war-grounds; the impossibility of visualising anything" (Ford 1914, p. 334); and then conversely because his experience of the war as he joined the Front was sensed as cognitively and psychologically immeasurable, and as a result, impossible to convey through his pen. Ford was himself acutely aware of this double plight, lamenting: "One is always too close or too remote" (Ford 1918b, p. 59). Notwithstanding these scopic limitations, my recent chapter argues that Ford's war essays allowed him to acknowledge and navigate this witnessing and representational crisis; in the process, he enriched and updated his practice of literary impressionism in order to capture and render his experience of the war both as a British subject and as a lieutenant. I discuss how Ford's war prose allows us to delineate Ford's trajectory from *The Good Soldier* to *Parade's End*: though they ostensibly expressed his sense of uselessness as a man of letters in the world of the First World War, Ford's essays eventually paved the way for a renewal of his aspirations as an author and of his techniques as a novelist. Ford's updated aesthetics stemmed from an ethical urge to make the war and its participants as vividly present as possible to the reader's mind. His intention in this endeavour was twofold: firstly, he aimed to recreate a vivid memory of and pay tribute to the dead; secondly, he hoped to generate a sense of its horror in his readers so strong that no one may ever wish to reiterate such a conflict: his intent was "of aiding [. . .] in bringing about such a state of mind as should end wars as possibilities" (Ford 1927, p. 197). In the present article, I delve deeper into Ford's stylistic practices to examine specifically one of his idiosyncrasies that permeates both his war essays and his later prose work, especially *No Enemy* and *Parade's End*. This idiosyncrasy concerns his essays' tendency to unstable enunciative framing through a constant shift in pronouns, which I wish to demonstrate was carefully calibrated and stands as a powerful tool within Ford's arsenal of techniques that partake of literary impressionism and that are used to convey the war experience to the reader. In her analysis of *No Enemy*, Cornelia Cook has remarked on the "pronominal confusion" that pervades the narrative: "Free indirect speech, employed by the Compiler, promotes a notable slippage in pronouns: 'he [. . .] one [. . .] we [. . .] one' and sometimes 'you' merge their points of view" (Cook 2003, p. 194). Yet, this "slippage" has not been addressed in any further detail.

This paper draws from theories and analyses formulated in the field of stylistics and relies in particular on a recent study by Sandrine Sorlin (2022) that outlines the varied uses and pragmatic effects of the second-person pronoun in narratives. The present essay opens with a few theoretical preliminaries before investigating the manner in which Ford's war prose fluctuates between various enunciative structures through the use of the first-person singular, the second person, the indefinite "one" pronoun, and the first- and third-persons plural. These shifts have an impact on the reader's experience that proves crucial to Ford's practice of literary impressionism. The aesthetic consequences of this "slippage" will eventually lead to a reflection on the dual ethical consequences of the shift in pronouns, first as it opens up what was expected as a first-person account to alterity and secondly, as this shift has an impact on the reader that turns her into an "implicated witness" (Rothberg 2019).

2. Theoretical Preliminaries: The Pragmatic Impact of Pronouns

One of the most striking and consistent stylistic traits that permeate Ford's war writing is the fact that texts typically intended as autobiographical narratives of or reflections on his war experience are continually interspersed with pronouns that differ from the expected and conventional first-person singular. Ford's use of "you" is probably the most conspicuous.[2] According to Monika Fludernik, "You is typically ambiguous in its applications to self and other and to a definite or indefinite reading" (Fludernik 1994, p. 461). It is this ambiguity that Sorlin addresses, dissects, and eventually elucidates in

her monograph, *The Stylistics of "You"*. She starts by positing the impact of the choice of personal pronouns in any discourse and reminds us that pronouns "are instrumental in [. . .] attributing positions to both speaker and addressee" (Sorlin 2022, p. 5) and in "orchestrating focalisation and fostering projection into the different positions they set up" (pp. 7–8). The use of "you" in particular "tends to involve the reader in unprecedented ways" (p. 8), both in terms of psycholinguistics,[3] pragmatics, and ethics.

The frequent use of "you" in Ford's war texts thus opens up the experiential frame to the reader, introducing an implicit dialogic structure. Yet, Sorlin demonstrates that the use and subsequent pragmatic effect of the second-person pronoun in narratives operates along a gradient on which "you" sits at varying degrees of distance between the poles of self and other on the one hand, and between the poles of personal and generic address on the other. Building from and updating Bettina Kluge's "continuum of reference" (Kluge 2016), Sorlin delineates six main types of "you" in second-person narratives. These types are thus organised on a gradient of distantiation from the self to the other in the wake of the continuum defined by Kluge, and Sorlin doubles this continuum with a vertical axis from personalisation to generalisation that will prove essential to elucidate the significance of pronoun shifts in Ford's war essays (See Sorlin, Figure 1, "The six points of reference in 'you narratives'").

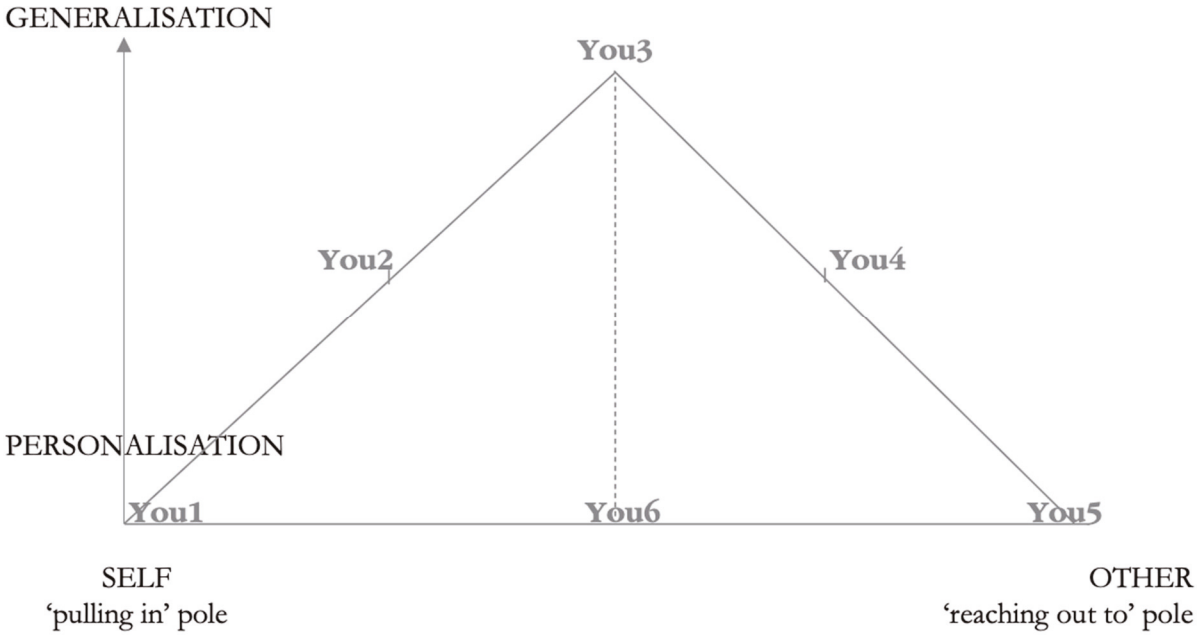

Figure 1. Sandrine Sorlin, "The six points of reference in 'you narratives'" (Sorlin 2022, p. 16). Reproduced with kind permission from the author.

Furthermore, I argue and will demonstrate in this essay that an analogous indefiniteness, instability, and expressive force apply to Ford's ubiquitous use of "one" in his war prose and that a similar gradient of distantiation can be observed in the case of "one" from a speaker-oriented, personal position to an other-oriented, generic stance. As a result, the types of double deixis that we encounter in both Ford's war prose and post-war writing about the war correspond alternately to those that Sorlin identifies as "You1", in which the "you" clearly refers to the speaker but has a "pulling-in" force that "incites the reader to share the self's experience" (p. 14); "You2", "used by a speaker speaking on behalf of a larger entity, presenting herself as a 'typical representative'" (p. 12); "You4", which in our case refers to Ford's "authorial audience"; "You5", which concerns an instance felt as radically other; the more singular "You6"; and the more generic "You3", which can mean "anyone", with a lower degree of identification to the speaker.

After this brief theoretical outline, I will now examine three of the texts that Ford wrote from France and Belgium at war to delineate the constant "slippage in pronouns" (Cook 2003, p. 194) and to assess the resulting shifts in distantiation and their pragmatic, aesthetic, and ethical consequences, as the essays travel constantly along a gradient that differentiates speaker- and reader-oriented discourses. The essays under scrutiny are "Arms and the Mind", "Trois Jours de Permission", and "Epilogue".

3. From a Pragmatics of Pronouns to Literary Impressionism in "Arms and the Mind" and "Trois Jours de Permission"

During the battle of the Somme in late July 1916, as he was serving as Second Lieutenant in the Welch Regiment and stationed with the battalion transport in Bécourt-Bécordel, Ford was caught in an explosion, was wounded, and suffered a thirty-six-hour memory loss. A few weeks later in September 1916, Ford collapsed during a leave in Paris and was diagnosed with shell shock, but he decided to go back to his battalion; in the few days following this episode, he wrote "A Day of Battle" from the Ypres Salient.[4] "Arms and the Mind" is the first in the pair of essays that make up "A Day of Battle". Investigating the psychological aspect of "Arms and the Mind", Alan Munton has established the essay as a self-diagnosis of a nervous breakdown: "Brain, mind, words, repetitive self-questioning: the incipient breakup is clear" (Munton 2008, p. 113). In this perspective, the constant shift from "I" to "you" in this essay may first be ascribed to psychological instability. Analysing the use of the second person in Jim Grimsley's *Winter Birds* as a manner of "performing self-othering", Sorlin posits that "[p]utting a distance between oneself and the self about whom one is talking via the second person is one possible means to address the ungraspable traumatic ordeal of one's childhood" (Sorlin 2022, pp. 84–85). The "you" thus shifts from a self-referential "You1" to an alienating "You5" through which the self is considered as "other".[5] However, while this aspect is present to a degree in the use of the second person in "Arms and the Mind", this use of "you" is not prevalent in the essay. Indeed, as will soon become apparent, the type of "you" present in the essay is never strictly self-referential ("You1" on Sorlin's continuum). Although the constant shift in pronouns is an unquestionable component in performing self-othering, it primarily foregrounds the relationship between writer and reader and is a means of involving the latter in the former's experience.

"Arms and the Mind" starts with an explicitly speaker-oriented enunciative frame, since its first word is "I", and refers to Ford as a writer and as a lieutenant behind the lines; however, this "I" immediately appears as split, since it is doubled in the first few words of the text: "I have asked myself", signalling from the start a self-division that contributes to the complex deictic system at work in the essay. "I" shifts to the indefinite "oneself" at the end of the first paragraph, with the phrase "[i]t is no very valuable claim to make for oneself" (Ford 1916a, p. 36). This first "one" is clearly self-referential since Ford is discussing the process of "visualising" through writing that is fundamental to his practice of literary impressionism. Conversely, the first "you", occurring in the phrase "I could make you see", that echoes Conrad's famous tenet in the preface to the *Nigger of the "Narcissus"* evidently refers to the reader as distinct from the author. On Sorlin's continuum, the type of "you" here implied is a "You4": it can be construed as an "authorial audience" as defined by James Phelan:

> The authorial audience is neither wholly hypothetical nor wholly actual, but instead it is a hybrid of readers an author knows or knows about—or at least an interpretation of such readers—and an audience the author imagines. (Phelan 2017, p. 7, quoted in Sorlin 2022, p. 16)

The presence of "You" as "You4" in Ford's texts on writing is not surprising, as the aim of his technique is to generate impressions in the reader: the writer–reader relationship is a prevalent concern in Ford's theoretical essays on literary impressionism. Making the reader present through the recurrence of the second person is a way to enact and perform within the text this specific relationship between writer and reader. What is more significant is the

subtle shift from a different type of "you" in the next occurrence: "Now I could not make you see Messines, Wytschaete, St Eloi; or La Boisselle, the Bois de Bécourt or de Mametz". Ford here moves from the generic reader implied in the Conradian "make you see" to the specific reader of his essay.

The enunciative shift to "one" occurs as Ford reminisces on the landscape of the Somme:

> I remember standing at an OP during the July "push" on the Somme. It was the OP called Max Redoubt on the highest point of the road between Albert and Bécourt Wood. One looked up to the tufted fastness of Martinpuich that the Huns still held: one looked down upon Mametz, upon Fricourt, upon the Ancre, upon Bécourt-Bécordel, upon La Boisselle, upon Pozières. We held all those: or perhaps we did not already hold Pozières. (Ford 1916a, p. 37)

Significantly, the shift to "one" is associated with another verb of sight—"look". When put in contrast with Ford's ideal of "mak[ing] you see" a few paragraphs earlier in the essay, the use of "one" here aims to conflate Ford's gaze with that of his fellow combatants into a joint scopic experience of the scene of war. "One" needs to be distinguished from the use of "we" in the next sentence: in Ford's war essays, "we" typically refers to the army—sometimes even more largely to Britain—that is quite distinct from the shared embodied experience that is expressed through "one". "We" refers to an abstract community—the idealized nation and army of the posters and propaganda—whereas "one" connects Ford's intimate individual experience with that of his fellow soldiers: the use of "one" is particularly powerful as it generates a shared phenomenological space, conveying a graspable, communal experience. I argue that this shift from the individual experience of "I" to the no less embodied but collective experience of "one" allows Ford to navigate and mitigate the inability to share his experience with the noncombatant reader that is the crux of "Arms and the Mind". In the next few paragraphs of the essay, the psychological blockage and resulting representational aporia are insensibly resolved as the pronouns shift from "I" to "one"—as distinct from the impersonal "we"—and finally back to "you". Ford first uses the first-person pronoun to convey his inability to wholly take in the immensity of the two opposing armies in their respective trenches: "as for explanation I hadn't any" (Ford 1916a, p. 38). As in the beginning of the essay, "I" here clearly refers to Ford as a writer. The frame then broadens to "one" in order to render a more generic trench experience: "the Will that had brought one there did not seem to be, much, one's own Will".

Although negligible at first sight, the pronoun "one" is replete with a multiplicity of unsaid meanings and deserves closer examination. Sorlin briefly addresses the use of "one" in George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* and notes that "one" has been addressed in scholarship as an indefinite pronoun that can carry some degree of definiteness. Sorlin emphasises the specificities of "one" vs. "you":

> Although the second-person pronoun seems to share with "one" this combination of potential indefiniteness and definiteness, there is a difference between the two pronouns: while "one" is an indefinite pronoun that can shelter "an element of definiteness", "you" is inherently a definite pronoun (because of its original interpersonal base) that can include an element of indefiniteness. (Sorlin 2022, p. 48)

Despite the differences between the use of definite, interpersonal "you" and that of indefinite "one", Ford's conjoined and fluctuating use of both pronouns in his war pieces invites us to consider "one" as closer to "you" than is perhaps usual, as I now propose to examine.

As I translated "Arms and the Mind" into French a few years ago for a collection of essays on war by British, Irish, and American authors (Brasme 2017), my main predicament resided in rendering the distinctive and plethoric use of "one" in Ford's writing. Although "one" may often be translated to "*on*" in French,[6] their meanings do not quite coincide. Looking at their respective etymologies helps identify the specificity of the English pro-

noun. English "one" derives from Proto-Indo-European "**óynos*", a numeral that has also given Latin "*unus*" and "*un*" in French, and it primarily signifies singularity. In contrast, French "*on*" derives from Latin "*homo*" and denotes genericity as it ultimately refers to human experience. If we were to focus on the vertical personalisation–generalisation axis on Sorlin's continuum, French "*on*" would thus tend to be closer to generalisation, whereas English "one", which mixes indefiniteness with singularity, would be closer to personalisation. Furthermore, French "on" corresponds to a degree to German "*man*", in which the derivation from Proto-Germanic **mann*- ("person") and the link to human experience[7] is more transparent and thus perhaps more clearly felt in contemporary usage. The German term "*man*" may also have played a part in Ford's extensive and idiosyncratic use of "one" in his English prose. This gives us an inkling of the extent to which Ford's multilingualism, as an Anglo-German who was also deeply Francophile, brought added richness and nuance to his writing, in which echoes of German or French idioms abound more or less explicitly.[8] In relation perhaps with his multilingualism and his resulting sensitivity to the nuances of "one"/"*on*"/"*man*" in each language, Ford's use of "one" goes beyond typical English usage and is strikingly protean, as it is singular yet implies that while the action described is that of the speaker, of an "I", it may also be that of *any*one. As a result, "one" vibrates with a variety of degrees of involvement and is markedly mobile on the combined gradients from self to other and from the personal to the generic. In "Arms and the Mind" as in other instances of Ford's war writing, "one" seems indeed to be the very locus where the shift takes place from Ford's personal experience to that of any other soldier or lieutenant, and by extension, to anyone who might imagine being in this situation, which helps the reader identify with the experiences described despite their inevitable and unbridgeable distance. "One" may be considered the quintessential pronoun in Ford's practice of literary impressionism, as it displaces the experience from an "I" that is subtly erased from the text to *any*-one, and it unifies the speaker's actual and the reader's imagined (or vicarious) impressions in an expression of singularity. If we take up Sorlin's continuum from self to other and from personalisation to generalisation, "one" tends to be more comparable to "You6" (implying a profoundly personal experience that is yet equally relatable to the self and the other) than to "You3" (implying a generic experience)—although it evidently lacks the direct "addressive" function of the second-person pronoun. Going back to the etymology of French "on" (and German "man"), it might be ventured that Ford's idiosyncratic use of "one", condensing English and French (and perhaps even German) usage, is a privileged locus of Ford's experience of himself as *homo duplex*—or indeed, *triplex*.[9]

The same process is at work in "Trois Jours de Permission", which was published in *Nation* in September 1916. This essay has hardly ever featured in criticism except in relation with *No Enemy*, as it provides the basis for chapters VII and X (see Longenbach 1984, p. 154, n. 12; Saunders 1996b, p. 557, n. 13). It is a condensed account of Ford's leave in Paris a few days earlier; its brevity and short, paratactic sentences aim to mimic the quick-paced and all-too-swift "weekend leave in Paris" (Ford 1916b, p. 50). Ford first uses "one" in the first paragraph, where the pronoun conveys the communal experience of a body of soldiers, much as in the beginning of "Arms and the Mind". In the second paragraph, "one" is narrowed down to refer to the specific small group in the waiting room. This narrowing process intensifies in the third paragraph, which catalogues the manifold activities that Ford packed into his stay: these activities are unmistakably and increasingly specific to him, culminating in his "playing hide-and-seek with the children in the hotel hall, making a prodigious noise on the marble tiles" (Ford 1916b, p. 50), a seemingly gratuitous though vividly evocative detail typical of Fordian impressionism. Yet, in this third paragraph, the systematic use of the pronoun "one" as a subject for every clause ultimately allows the description to broaden in scope and become not just that of Ford's but of any officer's occupations on a three-day permission in Paris. Some might argue that because Ford in fact centres his account on his own experience, the use of "one" cannot operate as an instrument of intersubjectivity. I contend that the purpose of such specific detail is to eschew any depersonalisation that may occur for the sake of generalisation.

Instead, the specific and seemingly trivial details allow the experience to appear all the more relatable—because it is inherently human. Here again, the deft use of pronouns plays an essential part in the practice and success of literary impressionism. The use of "one" has a deeply connective force in Ford's war essays. It allows him to detach himself from his personal experience so it may become part of a more general story—that of British officers on leave in Paris, or even beyond this, that of any human being in conditions of extreme stress. This may bring to mind Gertrude Stein's aim in *Everybody's Autobiography*, as elucidated by Lénárt-Cheng (2015). Stein favoured pronouns as they are "not really the name of anything. They represent some one but they are not it or his name. In not being his or its or her name they already have a greater possibility of being something" (Stein 1935, pp. 213–14; qtd in Lénárt-Cheng 2015, p. 281). To Lénárt-Cheng, Stein's

> strategic use of indefinite pronouns suggests more than imprecision or nonchalance. [. . .] [O]ne could argue that these statements were simply meant to satisfy Stein's compulsive predilection for aphorisms. It is well known that Stein reveled in the simplicity of laconic phrases. The key to this simplicity is generalization. A statement such as "anybody is more interesting doing nothing than doing something" (Stein 1973, p. 109) works precisely because it is so open-ended that it can be applied to an infinite number of different situations. (Lénárt-Cheng 2015, p. 282)

The question of generalisation will be resumed and refined later, but I now propose we go back to "Arms and the Mind" and continue examining the shift in pronouns. The cursor on the gradient from self to other moves further to the right as the essay progresses: Ford eventually reverts to "you" to express the experience of a patrol officer, a Battalion Intelligence Officer, and finally an actual fighting officer—a role, it is worth noting, that Ford never had:

> If you are patrol officer your limits are laid down: if you are Battalion Intelligence Officer up on an Observation Point, the class of object that is laid down for your observation is strictly limited in range. And, within the prescribed limits there is so much to which one must pay attention that other sights, sounds and speculations are very much dimmed. And of course, if you are actually firing a rifle your range of observation is still more limited. Dimly, but very tyrannically, there lurk in your mind the precepts of the musketry instructors at Splott or at Veryd ranges. The precepts that the sights must be upright, the tip of the foresight in line with the shoulders of the ¯V¯ of the backsight are always there, even when the ¯V¯ of the backsight has assumed its air of being a loophole between yourself and the sun and wind and when the blade of the foresight is like a bar across that loophole. And the dark, smallish, potlike object upon whose 'six o'clock' you must align both bar and loophole has none of the aspects of a man's head. It is just a pot. (Ford 1916a, pp. 38–39)

Unlike the "you" used earlier in the phrase "make you see", in which the reader is addressed as clearly distinct from the writer ("You4"), the use of the second person here corresponds to "You6" as it expresses a deeply personal experience that sits right between self and other—between the lieutenant-writer and the reader. Ford's endeavour to bring the experience closer to the reader is all the more striking as he is not strictly the "I" implied in this paragraph but projects himself into the experience of a fighting officer with such acumen that anyone not versed in the details of Ford's service at the Front may be led to believe that he actually fought—a skill that belongs of course to Ford as a novelist and comes to negate the writerly impasse that the entire essay explores and deplores. So, in effect, although performing as "You6", the "you" in this paragraph turns out to be the projection of a deeply personal yet fictitious experience that provides the reader with the means to bridge this otherwise unfathomable experience. This page illustrates to what extent pronominal interplay performs as a fundamental and efficient tool in Ford's literary impressionist technique—one designed, above all, to "make you see".

The recurring use of "you" Is also notable in Ford's post-war narratives of the war such as *No Enemy* and *Parade's End*.[10] The second-person pronouns scattered in the texts operate as tools of the sensory and experiential implication of the reader and are again fundamental to Ford's impressionist technique. *No Enemy* thus deploys terrain observation through precise landmarks that bear a marked resemblance to "Arms and the Mind", though the landscape this time is not that of the Somme but of the mining country of Nord-Pas-de-Calais: "If you looked over the hedge you saw Bailleul, Armentières, away to queer, conical, grey mountains that were the slag-heaps near Béthune, and away, farther, toward the Somme itself" (Ford [1929] 2002, p. 72). The specific enunciative frame of *No Enemy*, with its layering of narrative—and readerly—instances that highlight both the process of witnessing and storytelling and that of receiving this testimony, demonstrates Ford's intent commitment to and experimentation in transmitting his experience to the reader in as close and vibrant a manner as possible. Laura Colombino has investigated the way in which *No Enemy* explores and foregrounds the role of Ford's experience of the war in his development of "empathy" (Colombino 2019). I would argue that one of the main markers of this empathy is the fluctuation between pronouns, especially the use of "you" and "one". Given that these pronouns conflate the speaker and the addressee, one may wonder whether this empathy does not also imply an internal, reflexive form of empathy—where Ford addresses his own traumatised self from an external stance that aims at a compassionate understanding of what he went through while in service. This appears all the more apt when we consider how "Arms and the Mind" begins: "I have asked myself".

A similar process can be noted in *Parade's End*. While the first part of *Some Do Not* . . . (Ford [1924] 2010) takes place before the war and the second part remains confined to 1917 London, the narrative in *No More Parades*, the next volume in the tetralogy (Ford [1924] 2010), shifts abruptly to the trenches. Significantly, the first pronoun in the volume is "you"—here is the volume's first sentence: "When you came in the space was desultory, rectangular, warm after the drip of the winter night, and transfused with a brown-orange dust that was light" (Ford [1925] 2011, p. 9). The result is a direct implication for the reader that is quite different from the openings of parts 1 and 2 in *Some Do Not*. . ., where the third-person narrative sets the action at a distance from us. The use of "you" invites the reader to figuratively enter the scene—to be dropped right into the trenches as she is made to "c[o]me in" rather than look at it from the outside. It thus appears that in the essays he wrote from the Front, Ford was effectively trying out new tools to help him convey his experience: these tools were then honed and perfected in his post-war fiction. I now propose to examine the consequences on the reading experience and to consider how the resulting experiential involvement of the reader is driven by an ethical intent on the part of Ford.

4. The Ethical Force of Pronoun Shifts in "Epilogue"

Unusual pronoun choice and pronoun shifts play no small part in the ethical impact of Ford's war prose. Sorlin has addressed the ethical aspect of "you narratives":

> "You", as it has been described by many philosophers, is the relating pronoun par excellence, linking one human to another as interdependent beings and as such it has an ethical dimension. In his ethics of alterity, Levinas (1991), for example, has emphasised the role of the second-person relationship, entailing recognition of the vulnerability and fragility in the summons of an "other", calling for ethical responsibility. [. . .] In the specific way "you narratives" construct encounters between reader and character, they undeniably make an ethical demand on readers to show some responsibility or at least compassion for the "other". (Sorlin 2022, p. 24)

"You" narratives prompt an active and embodied reading experience as they invite the reader to feel *with* the other, rather than *through* him or her.[11] This matches what Meghan

Marie Hammond has identified as the shift from "sympathy" to "empathy" in literary modernism. Noting that the word "empathy" was coined in 1909, at much the same time as literary modernism, and that "'sympathy', once understood as the core of moral life, came to be widely understood as a 'feeling for' that is inferior to empathic 'feeling with'" (4), she argues:

> we should be attentive to the ways in which we can see that difference developing in literary modernism. Indeed, [. . .] both the new psychologies and literary modernism attempted to expand and reconfigure how we understand intersubjective experience. It is not surprising that in the wake of their contributions the new word seemed appropriate. In other words, while the writers I study did not yet have the vocabulary to separate sympathy from what I identify as empathy, their work in fact enacts that separation. (Hammond 2014, p. 7)

Hammond argues that Ford was consistently concerned with "sympathetic imagination", a term that can be construed as a precursor for "empathy" and that is at the heart of Ford's impressionist technique. In *The Good Soldier*, however, Hammond argues that the call for an empathetic listener/reader foregrounds the limitations of empathy: "When the urge to empathise is satisfied in that book, the result is a violent linguistic breakdown that fractures minds and the connections between them" (Hammond 2014, p. 126). This matches my earlier brief analysis of the use of double deixis in *The Good Soldier* (see note 10). Turning to Ford's post-war *A Man Could Stand Up*—(1926), Hammond demonstrates that Valentine and Tietjens "surrender to the same affective state, each trusting that the other feels the same way", thus "privileging [. . .] affective empathy over cognitive empathy, [. . .] emotional oneness over mental oneness" (Hammond 2014, p. 145). Hammond's identifying a shift in empathy from *The Good Soldier* to Ford's post-war fiction is deeply relevant to the present essay. I argue that Ford's complex use of double deixis in his war prose is both a signal and an instrument of Ford's working out, both psychologically and in his writing, the increased challenges to—but also the heightened need for—empathy posed by the war experience.

In this respect, it may be useful to compare the use of "you" in Ford's war prose with that at work in the contemporary 1914 recruitment poster—aptly mentioned by Sorlin (2022, p. 6)—in which Field Marshal Kitchener points his finger at the viewer and a large caption reads: "Your country needs YOU". In *De L'interpellation*, Jean-Jacques Lecercle (2019) has analysed the implicating process at work in this poster: while some aspects are common to the involvement of the reader in Ford's war essays, the purpose and nature of this involvement ultimately differ. In Kitchener's poster, orality is emphasised by the quotation marks framing the slogan: as Lecercle points out, "this writing insists on its primitively and mainly oral character as it is between quotation marks" (Lecercle 2019, p. 15, my translation). Lecercle demonstrates that the injunction inherent in the message performs at three levels. At the pragmatic level, the slogan has a conative function,[12] aiming to have a direct impact—an action—on the reader. At the semantic level, through the double second person ("your" and "you"), the sentence creates an assumption that then appears to become irrefutable: "since this is *your* country, *you* are called out, and you know what you have to do" (Lecercle 2019, p. 16, my translation, emphasis Lecercle's). This ineluctability is generated by the affirmative sentence: Lecercle refers to what Barthes called "imposed meaning" and to "his provoking sentence: 'language is fascist'" (16, my translation). Lecercle further analyses the use of "you" in Kitchener's poster through the lens of Louis Althusser's theorisation of interpellation. To Althusser, through interpellation, ideology turns individuals into subjects: "We suggest ideology 'acts' or 'works' so that it 'recruits' subjects among individuals [. . .], or 'transforms' individuals into subjects [. . .] through this very specific operation that we call *interpellation*" (Althusser 1976, p. 113; qtd in Lecercle 2019, p. 19, my translation). To Lecercle, the subject in Althusser's text is "mainly subjected" and "the free subject, centre of consciousness, action and responsibility, is an illusion" (Lecercle 2019, p. 21).

It may seem ironical to bring together the use of the second person in such a famous propaganda poster with that at work in Ford's essays, in which Ford quickly expressed his distance from the authorities' cynical use of soldiers as cannon fodder for political purposes. In fact, the use of the same pronoun only enhances Ford's alternative usage of double deixis. Although Ford's use of "you" also bears an undeniable conative force, its intent is markedly different; the difference lies in Ford's resistance to genericity and in his promotion of singularity. This appears in many of his essays as well as in *No Enemy* and *Parade's End*[13] and is perhaps most forcefully in effect in a seldom-studied yet thought-provoking essay, "Epilogue" (Ford 1918b).[14] All of the phenomena analysed earlier in "Arms and the Mind" and "Trois Jours de Permission" are present in this piece—one of the most-quoted phrases from this otherwise little-known essay is the sentence "*one* is always too close or too remote" (Ford 1918b, p. 59, emphasis mine). Yet, the process deepens and gains an added layer as Ford, who has taken pains to describe the life of Rosalie Martin—an apparently nondescript woman from Northern France and the transparent inspiration for Rosalie Prudent in *No Enemy*[15]—through a minutely detailed third-person narrative so as to render the singularity of her suffering as a civilian in a territory at war, suddenly makes the voice of Rosalie more forcibly present through the shift from indirect to direct speech:

> And gradually it seemed to Rosalie Martin that she had lived all her life in the washhouse of 27 Rue de la Gare—that that was her life. So at least she said in a sudden burst of speech that came from her when she had nearly finished sewing the second cuff of my shirt.—And she continued:
>
> "One gives oneself so much trouble to bring men children into the world, and one gives so much trouble in order to keep them alive and in the straight road. And the days go on and the years go on and the fields are there and the troops come marching, over them. And one's male children are gone . . .". (Ford 1918b, pp. 58–59)

The paradox—which might be considered as characteristically Fordian—is of course that the use of direct speech does not lead to the expected first person but to the indefinite "one". Direct speech is thus employed not simply to highlight the poignancy of Rosalie's personal experience but to foreground her—or Ford's?—own consciousness of how common her own experience is and to enact its resulting shareability and relatability. Rosalie's worry goes beyond that of a mother for her sons: it may be shared by any noncombatant for the soldiers at war. Earlier in the essay, Ford expresses his own worry for his company through the pronoun "one" as he has just heard the distressing rumour that his battalion may have been shelled: "one wants to be near someone of one's own battalion when a lot of one's own men have gone West" (Ford 1918b, p. 54). Through the joint use of "one", Ford's chronicle of his own experience thus coalesces with that of Rosalie, and his overlaying worry for his "men" while he listens to Rosalie becomes interwoven with that of Rosalie for her "men children". It is worth noting that as this passage was rewritten in *No Enemy*, Ford opted to retain the "one" pronoun: "And I ask you, *M. l'officier*, for what purpose is it that *one* brings men children into the world if this is to be the end?" (Ford [1929] 2002, p. 130, emphasis mine).

I have recently demonstrated that the ethical force at the heart of "Epilogue" lies in Ford's rejection of the collective morality of the nation at war as dictated by government propaganda and instead in his advocation of singular experience as founding the basis for an ethics of alterity (Brasme 2023, pp. 33–38). The pronominal interplay here confirms this and operates as a powerful device within this process. In his war essays, Ford strives to acknowledge—and to have us acknowledge—the individual out of the collective but also the collective experience of the individual. It is Ford's acute interest in the singularity of Rosalie's face, which to the current reader cannot fail to evoke Levinas's theorisation of the ethics of alterity, and his detailed account of Rosalie's individual experience that lead in turn to a consideration of universal suffering. In Ford's war fiction as in his nonfiction, this consideration is never generic and abstract but embodied in concrete, individual experience.

This interaction between the particular and the universal is addressed in explicit terms in the rest of "Epilogue", where it appears that Ford's encounter with Rosalie Martin has worked as a trigger, allowing him to crystallise his own ethical stance towards the people caught in the war and to work out the manner in which he means to write on and for them. His resistance to generalisation is articulated in terms of his distrust of politicians for whom individuals do not matter: "Of course there are remote persons who stand aloof from humanity—but if you stand aloof from humanity how can you know about us poor people?" (Ford 1918b, pp. 62–63).[16] The choice of the second-person pronoun is here again, ethical: the reader is not simply addressed but called upon or "interpellated" as a responsible subject—a subject that is however quite different from the sub-jected[17] "subject" developed in Althusser's theorisation of interpellation, as she is urged to detach herself from the generalising posture that precisely disengages from an empathetic and embodied relationship to the other. This exhortation is activated as much through the sentence's direct message as through the specific enunciative frame that Ford so often favours and that is central to the principles of literary impressionism: it is when going through a singular experience that "one" can hope to fathom forms of human experience so radically unfamiliar as that of being at war but also to sense the collective experience of the individual.

Though largely unstudied until now, the subtle and constant interplay of pronouns in Ford's war writing is one of the stylistic strategies that allow him to come to terms with the predicament of writing of those he called the "untold millions" (Ford 1927, p. 70). His urge to "make [us] see", and feel, the individuality and experience of the people at war brings added relevancy to his impressionist technique. This essay has established that Ford's updating and refining of his impressionist technique were enacted in part through his exquisitely nuanced and singular pronoun usage—one that took on particular salience in his nonfictional war essays and that paved the way for the rejuvenation of his writing technique in his later work. This essay thus demonstrates that although it first led to the fear of a loss of articulateness and relevance, the war experience proved instrumental in Ford's maturation as a writer and in his finding a renewed sense of significance. There is much more to explore on the topic of pronoun usage in Ford's war prose and more largely in his practice of literary impressionism; while the present article has but brushed the surface, it is aimed as a starting point towards a much larger study of Ford's singular use of pronouns in his fictional and nonfictional writing and of the evolution of his usage from earlier, pre-war writing to his later works. It would be useful to investigate further the hypothesis that Ford's trilingualism played no trifling part in his idiosyncratic writing style. It is also worth pondering to what extent Ford's commitment to rendering the collective human experience might be related, in other works, particularly his critical essays, to his own deep attachment to the republic of letters. Ford was acutely aware of the writing and creative communities from which his own formation and inspiration stemmed, and his critical and editorial works are testament to the fact that his own aesthetics take place within a large community of artists past and future. Analysing pronoun usage in his literary—and artistic—criticism might prove fertile in demonstrating that his sense of embedment within an aesthetic collective is ingrained in the very syntax of his writing.

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Notes

1 On the recurring date of August 4 in *The Good Soldier*, see Stannard (1995, p. x); on the inconsistent use of the date, see (Moser 1980, pp. 161–62; Saunders 2012, pp. xxxvii–xliii); on the erroneous use of the date, see (Brasme 2015, pp. 85–6).

[2] While this paper focuses on Ford's war writing, the second-person pronoun also features conspicuously in *The Good Soldier*, which was written before Ford had any experience of the Western Front. The type of 'you' encountered in the novel, however, is different than that of Ford's nonfictional war writing, the foremost reason for this being the difference in enunciative frame from fictional narrator to autobiographical prose. While the present article is devoted to Ford's testimonies of the war in the context of this issue of *Humanities*, I acknowledge that there is a much wider study waiting to be done on the evolution of pronoun usage in Ford's writing as a whole; and I plan on conducting this work in the years to come. See also note 10 below.

[3] Sorlin: "The 'you' pronoun used in fictional texts has been shown in psycholinguistic research to be a better attractor than other pronouns because the personalisation it implies appears to have an impact on depth of processing and thus on memory (Sanford and Emmott 2012, p. 255)" (Sorlin 2022, p. 8).

[4] In *A Dual Life*, Max Saunders informs us that Ford was on leave in Paris from 9 to 11 September and was back to Ypres by 13 September (Saunders 1996b, p. 21), and reminds us that "A Day of Battle" is dated 15 September 1916 (p. 20).

[5] "Grimsley's use of self-referential You1 at times could also be interpreted as a You5 addressed 'other'" (Sorlin 2022, p. 85).

[6] Ford himself uses "on" quite liberally in his French essay "Pon . . . ti . . . pri . . . ith" (Ford 1918a).

[7] Although "*Mensch*" is an apter representation of humankind as a whole, the masculine "*Mann*" has often been used in German to refer to humanity, much like "man" in English. I am not condoning this usage but merely remarking on a use of the word that was particularly prevalent in previous centuries, and therefore relevant to Ford.

[8] On Ford's being "fluently trilingual", see for instance Saunders (1996a, p. 33). I believe there is much to uncover in regard to the influence of French and German over Ford's writing, which would benefit from the input of scholars fluent in French and/or German.

[9] On the analysis of Ford as *homo duplex*, see Saunders's introduction to *A Dual Life* (Saunders 1996a, pp. 2–3) and the eponymous collection of essays, *Homo Duplex: Ford Madox Ford's Experience and Aesthetics of Alterity* (Brasme 2020).

[10] To follow up on the second footnote, there is a clear discrepancy between the pervasive use of 'you' in *The Good Soldier* and its use in *Parade's End*, which is largely due to the difference in the narrative stance. In *The Good Soldier*, the first-person narrator is openly unreliable and the pervasive use of 'you' aims at manipulating the narratee; Dowell is engaged in a fictional conversation with the reader. As a result, this addressed reader ends up developing into a fictional stance herself, almost a character in the narrative, and as such, becomes distinct from the actual reader of the novel. This fictional reader corresponds to Sorlin's "You4", or even "You3", which sits highest on the personalisation to generalisation pole—becoming an abstract stance. This does not however preclude an inevitable involvement of the actual reader through the recurrent use of double deixis in the narrative. I would argue that this blend of the fictional, abstract narratee and the actual, real-world reader participates of the singular reading experience that *The Good Soldier* occasions; but this would warrant a whole other paper.

[11] Sorlin also quotes Gallese: "[W]e do not only mentally entertain an 'objective' third-person account of what others are, do to us and with us. When relating to others, we also experience them as bodily selves, similar to how we experience ourselves as the owners of our body and the authors of our actions" (Gallese 2014, p. 5; qtd in Sorlin 2022, p. 46).

[12] "Orientation toward the addressee, the CONATIVE function, finds its purest grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative" (Jakobson 1960, p. 355).

[13] I have discussed the ethics of alterity and singularity in *Parade's End* in an earlier essay (Brasme 2013).

[14] "Epilogue" remained unpublished until Saunders included it in *War Prose*. Saunders tells us it was composed 'after February 17, and before 7 January 1919' (Ford 1999, p. 52), adding that it was probably composed as an epilogue to "Women and Men", published by Pound in the *Little Review* in 1918. This explains why I have chosen "1918?" as a tentative publication date.

[15] It is worth noting that in his introduction to his edition of *No Enemy*, Paul Skinner remarks on the erasure of boundaries between "Rosalie"—the *Poilus'* nickname for their bayonet—and Rosalie Prudent, the civilian, especially as Gringoire uses the phrase "stick it" to refer to both: this contributes to "the slippage between war and peace, or rather, between the destructive work of war and the constructive work of art" (Skinner 2002, pp. xviii–xix).

[16] See also Ford's article entitled "Preparedness": "Normally we do not count—we, the decent quiet subjects or citizens of great empires. We are in the hands of politicians over whom we have no influence, they being unable or disinclined to know what we are thinking" (Ford 1927, p. 70).

[17] From Latin *sub-jectus*, "thrown under".

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