

**The extent, nature and impact of military
group cohesion in London Regiment
infantry battalions during the Great War**

Thomas Owen James Thorpe MCIPR MA
BA (Hons)

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Dedication

To my wife, Claire, to my parents, and my grandfathers, Private Leonard Thorpe, 1/13 Battalion, London Regiment (Kensingtons) and Captain Frank N.J. Moody, Royal Garrison Artillery and Artists' Rifles (post war), who both served in the Great War and survived.

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Glossary

ASC	Army Service Corps
<i>AF&S</i>	<i>Armed Forces & Society Journal</i>
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
CAR	Canadian Airborne Regiment
CO	Commanding Officer
CSM	Company Sergeant Major
DCM	Distinguished Conduct Medal
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
HQ	Headquarters
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
IWM	Imperial War Museum
IWMSA	Imperial War Museum Sound Archive
<i>JRUSI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal United Services Institute</i>
KCL	King's College London
KRRC	King's Royal Rifle Corps
LC	Liddle Collection, Leeds.
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LRB	London Rifle Brigade
LRWD	London Regiment War Diary
MC	Military Cross
MM	Military Medal
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Military Policeman
NAM	National Army Museum
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
NPD	No published date
OTC	Officer Training Corps
POW	Prisoner of War
QM	Quarter Master
QMS	Quartermaster Sergeant
QVR	Queen Victoria's Rifles
QWR	Queen's Westminster Rifles
RE	Royal Engineer
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major
TF	Territorial Force
TNA	The National Archives
USARI	U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences
VC	Victoria Cross
WD	War Diary
WRAMC	Walter Reed Army Medical Center (US Army)
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Abstract

Social science research suggests that military group cohesion can lead to high levels of teamwork, resilience and group performance and scholars believe this delivers better outcomes to bring battlefield success. This study examines the strength and nature of bonds between British Army soldiers and their peers, leaders, military units and wider society in a historical setting. It also considers what impact these relationships had on men's attitudes, their actions, and, ultimately, their motivation and ability to fight during the Great War. An adapted version of Professor Guy Siebold's Standard Model of Military Group Cohesion is used to analyse cohesion. It is a flexible and broad based model which structures the key relationships of a soldier in a military unit. These are with his leaders (vertical cohesion), his peers (horizontal cohesion), the higher levels of the military hierarchy beyond his primary group (organizational/institutional cohesion) and, finally, with the wider society, culture and community from which he originates (societal cohesion). Eight infantry battalions of the London Regiment are studied to determine the existence of cohesion and examine the impact of cohesion in individual units. These battalions were first line Territorial formations and were dispatched to France in 1914, all later serving with the 56th Division from 1916 to 1918. Three research questions are posed to investigate cohesion as part of a longitudinal approach: (1) what was the extent and nature of cohesion in the Edwardian British Army?, (2) what was its impact on how men worked together, fought and carried out their military duties?, and (3) how did cohesion and its impact change over the course of the war?

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Why did men fight and endure the Great War? On the 11 November 1918, Brigadier General James Jack, a regular officer who had served throughout the war, wrote in his diary that conflict had been ‘a frightful four years’ during which his men ‘suffered bravely, patiently and unselfishly, hardships and perils beyond even the imagination of those, including soldiers, who have not shared them.’¹ Over a hundred years on, the capacity of the British soldier not only to endure and persevere but also to fight well, continues to fascinate and mystify. What is surprising is not the number of men who deserted, fled or suffered a breakdown, but the number who did not. From 1914 to 1918, 8,691 men were tried for cowardice, mutiny or desertion and 265 of these men were executed.² These numbers are minute when compared with the strength of the British Army which stood at 5,383,943 when Jack made his diary entry.³

Historians have proposed explanations for this endurance and motivation, including regional patriotism, leadership, mental coping strategies and coercion. These are all considered to be factors that kept men fighting until the end. However, no study to date has sought to examine in depth the role of close relationships between combatants, or, in other words, their cohesion as a factor that underpinned morale, motivation and resilience. This is surprising, as military doctrine for over 2,500 years has stressed the importance of group solidarity for effective military performance.⁴ This study seeks to address this omission, by exploring military group cohesion in eight British Expeditionary Force (BEF) infantry battalions fighting in France and Belgium throughout the Great War. It will examine the strength and nature of bonds between combatants and their peers, leaders, military units and wider society, and consider what impact these relationships had on men’s attitudes, their actions and, ultimately, their capacity and ability to fight.

¹ J. Terraine (ed), *General Jack’s Diary* (London, 2000), p.297.

² *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire During the Great War* (London, 1922), p.666. Compiled from A. Babington, *For the Sake of Example* (Barnsley, 1983), pp.228-231.

³ *Statistics*, p.29.

⁴ F.J. Manning, ‘Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry’ in F.D. Jones, L.R. Sparacino, V.L. Wilcox & J.M. Rothberg (eds), *Textbook of Military Medicine, Part I* (Falls Church, 1994), p.4.

A. What is cohesion?

Cohesion is a term that refers to a process of positive social integration and the building, maintaining and dynamics of close relationships in small human groups, but also with wider entities outside the small group, such as organisations and ideas. It has been studied in family, sports, educational, workplace and armed force settings. The study of cohesion in military groups and units received serious academic attention and achieved popular prominence after the Second World War. American psychologists and sociologists were impressed by the effect close relationships (or cohesion) appeared to have on morale and combat performance of American and German soldiers.⁵ US Air Force psychologists Roy Grinker and John Paul Spiegel observed that ‘men seem to be fighting more for someone than against somebody.’⁶ In interviews with German POWs, Edward Shills and Morris Janowitz wrote that solidarity between primary groups of men, namely small intimate groups of men who have close personal relationships, was the dominant motivator of Wehrmacht soldiers to fight on, often in hopeless situations.⁷ S.L.A. Marshall, from his work studying US ground forces in the Pacific theatre, believed that men were sustained in battle by the knowledge that others were around as this made ‘danger more endurable’.⁸ Much of this post war research on the relationships in small groups became known as primary group theory.

Since the Second World War, psychologists, social psychologists and sociologists have dominated the study of military group or unit cohesion, in both civilian and military settings. Much debate in America in the 1980’s, after the defeat in Vietnam, focused on how army and marine units could develop cohesion.⁹ In the 1990’s, research focused on the impact of sexual orientation of serving soldiers on cohesion in military units and this led to the ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ policy.¹⁰ More recently, cohesion remains an important topic of discussion and research and public debates have focused on the impact on cohesion of women serving in units, which are currently all male, such as the infantry.¹¹

⁵ S.A. Stouffer et al. *The American Soldier: Combat and Its Aftermath*, Vols.1&2 (Princeton, 1949). S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire* (New York, 1947). E.A. Shills & M. Janowitz, ‘Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II’, *Public Opinion Quarterly* 12 (Summer 1948).

⁶ R.R. Grinker & J.P. Siegel, *Men Under Stress* (Philadelphia, 1945), p.32.

⁷ Shills, ‘Cohesion....’, p.281.

⁸ S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire* (New York, 1947), p.141.

⁹ S.J. Jozwiak, *Military Unit Cohesion: The Mechanics and Why some Programs Evolve and Others Dissolve* (Quantico, 1999), p.20. D. Henderson 1985. *Cohesion: the Human Element* (Washington DC, 1983), p.155.

¹⁰ RAND, *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy, an Update Of RAND’s 1993 Study* (Washington, 2010).

¹¹ A. King (ed), *Frontline* (Oxford, 2015). P. Cawkill, A. Rogers, S. Knight & L. Spear, *Women in Ground Close Combat Roles: The Experiences of Other Nations and a Review of the Academic Literature* (London, 2009).

The primary research methods into cohesion have been based around the use of questionnaires, surveys and interviews and this work has created a broad range of debates on different aspects of cohesion. For example, many scholars have suggested that shared background commonality between group members including a shared ethnic background or common social class, help build strong relationships.¹² Others disagree suggesting instead, that shared group experiences such as performing collective tasks are more important.¹³

Observational studies have been used to study cohesion. Researchers Tamotsu Shibutani, Knut Pipping, Roger Little, Larry Ingraham, Frederick Manning, Charles Moskos and John Hockey have conducted a range of longitudinal studies over years embedded in a number of small units both in war and peace.¹⁴ These studies have revealed the dynamic nature of cohesion in groups that is not captured in surveys and have shown how group-held beliefs which they title ‘informal norms’ can shape how group members should behave in a given context and exert a powerful influence on behaviour; for example, following or disobeying the orders of a leader.¹⁵ For instance, Pipping’s research into a Finnish machine gun company during World War 2 found that groups would determine what was in the group’s best interest when given a task or order which affected the security, comfort and well-being of their community. These group decisions would then dictate whether orders were followed or other activities undertaken.¹⁶

Many of the findings of this modern research are relevant to the historical investigation of cohesion in the Edwardian army. Clearly there are limitations to the application or consideration of modern research to a historical study, as many of the contemporary debates around cohesion reflect modern concerns, such as the impact of women serving in army units. However, there are areas of modern debate which can be considered from a historical angle and are important to consider when examining cohesion in a retrospective setting. For example, the modern debate around the role of shared background commonalities or

¹² T. Shibutani, *The Derelicts of Company K* (Berkley, 1978), pp.11-12. F.B. Kish, *Cohesion: the Vital Ingredient for Successful Army Units* (Carlisle, 1982), pp.12-13. Henderson, *Cohesion*, p.75.

¹³ Manning, ‘Morale...’, p.9. M. Salo, *The Relation Between Group-Level Characteristics and Group Cohesion* (USARI, 11/2006), p.15. J. Hamilton, ‘Unit Cohesion’, *Canadian Army Journal*, 12:3 (Winter 2010), pp.16-17. *Sexual Orientation and US Military Personnel Policy: Options and Assessment* (Santa Monica, 1993), p.299.

¹⁴ Shibutani, *Derelicts*. K. Pipping, *Infantry Company as a Society*, (Helsinki, 1947). R. Little, ‘Buddy Relations and Combat Performance’, in M. Janowitz (ed), *The New Military* (New York, 1964). L.H. Ingraham & F.J. Manning, *The Boys in the Barracks* (Philadelphia, 1984). C. Moskos, *The American Enlisted Man* (Hartford, 1970). J. Hockey, *Squaddies, Portrait of a Subculture* (Exeter, 1986).

¹⁵ D.C. Feldman, ‘The Development and Enforcement of Group Norms’, *Academy of Management Review*, 9:1 (1/1984), pp. 47-53.

¹⁶ Pipping, *Infantry*, p.202.

collective experience in groups in building cohesion can be discussed; as can the role of informal norms in dictating how groups or units may have functioned.

However, the idea of cohesion is not new. Commentators since the time of ancient Greece observed how close personal relations among soldiers could motivate them to fight and win on the battlefield. Xenophon wrote that there is ‘no stronger phalanx than that which is composed of comrades that are close friends’.¹⁷ Plutarch, his fellow countryman, 300 years later saw that a ‘band [of men] which is united with ties of love is truly indissoluble and unbreakable, because one is ashamed to be disgraced in the presence of another, and each stands his ground at a moment of danger to protect the other.’¹⁸

In more recent times, French Colonel Ardant du Picq was the first theorist to articulate the importance of interpersonal relations in combat units in war. In 1870, he wrote that the ‘science of the organization of armies’ was found in reciprocal trust between comrades. He argued that ‘four brave men who do not know each other will not dare to attack a lion. Four less brave, but knowing each other well, sure of their reliability and consequently of mutual aid, will attack resolutely’. He believed that social pressure from close team mates in a soldier’s unit, rather than punitive discipline, was crucial to keep men fighting and he set out measures to promote and develop these close relationships between men such as training men together in peace who would subsequently fight together in war.¹⁹

By the early 20th Century his ideas were widely adopted and practised in European armies including the British. Much of British Edwardian military thought on combat motivation captured the importance of morale, esprit de corps, religion, patriotism and the ‘soldierly spirit’ but many commentators also saw the value of close relationships between men and their leaders.²⁰ In his 1914 *Training of an Infantry Company*, Major E. Kirkpatrick recommended the establishment of permanent sections (primary groups) for training and operations rather than ones chosen randomly from a company, as he believed solidarity was critical to success in the units. He considered that this practice built relationships which were important to make men fight more effectively and develop discipline based on the ‘dread of

¹⁷ Cyropaedia of Xenophon, The Life of Cyrus the Great, para 7.1.30.

¹⁸ Plutarch, *Pelopidas*, para.18.

¹⁹ A. Du Picq, *Battle Studies: Ancient and Modern* (New York, 1921), pp.10, 96.

²⁰ E. Kirkpatrick, *Training of an Infantry Company* (London 1914), p.28. *Training and Manoeuvre Regulations* (London, 1913), pp.10, 65. *Infantry Training* (London, 1914), p.2. A. Lawson, ‘How Can Moral Qualities Best be Developed During the Preparation of the Officer and the Man for the Duties Each Will Carry Out in War?’, *JRUSI*, 58:1 (1914), p.446.

losing the respect...of one's comrades'. This was vital on the dispersed battlefield where the commander could not personally supervise his men.²¹ Other observers have noted the key importance of personal relationships between leader and subordinate, as 'the soldier will yield readier obedience to a superior known to him than to a total stranger' [sic].²² John Fuller believed that soldiers were sustained on the battlefield by the 'habit of knowing...that no single man will leave a comrade in the lurch'.²³ Robert Baden Powell, in his 1909 *RUSI* article developed training for part-time Territorial soldiers under his command to promote close relationships. He organised them into permanent sections so that 'at camp and in the field' they became 'a self-trained unit' by 'getting together and learning their work'.²⁴ Historians have argued that pre-war Edwardian military leaders were cognizant of the principles of promoting cohesion in army organisation and training although they did not articulate their ideas as modern theorists do.²⁵

Many scholars conclude that high levels of cohesion in military units deliver better outcomes to bring battlefield success and this explains why cohesion interests so many theorists and military leaders. Many argue that close relations between combatants in the same unit help promote support and caring which, in turn, can act as a source of combat motivation, reduce battlefield stress, psychological breakdown and conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder.²⁶ Other commentators suggest that tightly knit teams help deliver higher levels of teamwork, interaction, communication and consensus building all of which lead to better cooperation between unit members.²⁷

Some commentators have argued that cohesive military units perform better and have fewer casualties than non-cohesive units.²⁸ Cited examples include Israeli victories over Arab

²¹ Kirkpatrick, *Training*, p.28.

²² Lawson, 'How can...', pp.434, 438.

²³ J.F.C Fuller, 'The Procedure of the Infantry Attack', *JRUSI* 58:431 (1914), pp.65-84.

²⁴ R. Baden-Powell, 'Training for Territorials', *JRUSI* 52:369 (1908), p.1480.

²⁵ K. Roy, 'The Construction of Regiments in the Indian Army 1859-1913', *War in History* 8:2 (2001), p.139. P. Morris, 'Leeds and the amateur military tradition: the Leeds Rifles and their antecedents, 1859-1918 (PhD, University of Leeds, 1983), p.913. G.D. Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22' (PhD, KCL, 1994), pp.41-42.

²⁶ L. Wong, et al., *Why they Fight: Combat Motivation in the Iraq War* (Carlisle, 2003), pp.10-11, 23-25. G.L. Belenky, F.J. Sodetz & F. Tyner, *Israeli Battle Shock Casualties: 1973 and 1982* (Washington DC, 1983), p.17. Canby, Gudmundsson and Shay quoted in B. McBreen, 'Improving Unit Cohesion', (Thesis for Marine Corps National Fellowship Program, 2002), p.8.

²⁷ J. Griffith, 'Multilevel analysis of cohesion's relation to stress, well-being identification, disintegration, and perceived combat readiness', *Military Psychology* 14:3 (2002), pp.217-239. D. Cartwright, 'The nature of group cohesiveness', in D. Cartwright & A. Zander (eds), *Group dynamics: Research and Theory* (New York, 1968), pp.91-109. S.J. Zaccaro & C.A. Lowe, 'Cohesiveness and performance of an additive task: evidence for multidimensionality', *Journal of Social Psychology* 128:4 (1988), pp.547-558. A. Tziner & Y. Vardi, 'Effects of command style on group cohesiveness on the effectiveness of self-selected tank crews', *Journal of Applied Psychology* 67:6 (1982), pp.769-775.

²⁸ D.K. Wols, 'The Relationship Between Cohesion And Casualty Rates' (B.A Thesis, Northwest Nazarene University, 1987).

armies and British success in the Falklands/Malvinas conflict.²⁹ Some have gone as far as to suggest cohesion is ‘a key predictor’ and even ‘a prerequisite’ for combat performance and effectiveness.’³⁰ James Griffith disagrees, suggesting that the effects of cohesion are indirect rather than direct, making cohesion a performance enabler rather than performance enhancer.³¹

However, there are those who have dismissed this ‘primary group theory’ that close relationships between soldiers motivate them in combat and, instead, consider it to be a ‘romantic mythology’.³² Sir Hew Strachan argues that in high intensity conflicts cohesion based on close links between known individuals in a small group rests on a paradox. The ability and will of a group to sustain itself in combat rest on the morale derived from group members and their relationships but this can be eroded in heavy fighting through casualties which disrupt the very relationships the group depends on, to fight and endure.³³ Omer Bartov, with reference to the Wehrmacht fighting in Russia during the Second World War, suggests that Nazi nationalism was the source of much soldier combat motivation as units suffered huge attrition rates, meaning that personnel turbulence and disruption made building and sustaining relationships in small groups impossible.³⁴ Also from the Wehrmacht in the Second World War, Robert Rush offers another explanation for men fighting with tenacity. He concludes that men were coerced to fight by the threat of punitive discipline against themselves or their families if they refused.³⁵

There are challenges which need to be addressed when considering in this study the role of cohesion in explaining troop resilience, motivation and morale. The first issue is to assess the impact of casualties on the formation, maintenance and longevity of cohesion in groups and units. The Great War by any measure was a high intensive war that recorded five casualties for every nine men sent out to the Western Front and it is important to consider how personnel attrition impacted on soldiers’ ability and opportunity to bond with their

²⁹ See E. Luttwak and D. Horowitz, *The Israeli Army, 1948-1973* (Cambridge, 1983) and Henderson, *Cohesion*, p.xx. N. Kinzer Stewart, *Mates and Muchachos: Unit Cohesion in the Falklands/Malvinas War* (London, 1986).

³⁰ McBreen, *Improving*, p.6. See J.J.J. Phipps, *Unit Cohesion* (Washington DC, 1982).

³¹ J. Griffith, ‘Further Considerations Concerning the Cohesion-Performance Relation in Military Settings’, *AF&S* 34:1 (2007), p.144.

³² U. Ben-Shalom, Z. Lehrer & E. Ben-Ari, ‘Cohesion during Military Operations: A Field Study on Combat Units in the Al-Aqsa Intifada’, *AF&S* 32:1 (10/2005), p. 66.

³³ H. Strachan, ‘Training, Morale and Modern War’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 41:2 (2006), p.212.

³⁴ O. Bartov, ‘Daily life and motivation in war: The Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 12:2 (1989), p.203.

³⁵ R.S. Rush, ‘A Different Perspective: Cohesion, Morale, and Operational Effectiveness in the German Army, Fall 1944’, *AF&S* 25:3 (1999), pp.477-510.

comrades.³⁶ The second challenge is to consider the importance of other types of motivation which scholars suggest influenced soldiers to fight and endure, such as ideology, nationalism or coercion.

B. The historical study of cohesion

This study seeks to examine a social science concept in the historical context of the Great War and it is necessary to consider how this thesis fits into the existing academic discourse in two relevant areas of scholarly work. The first is to explore the scope and nature of studies which have examined cohesion as a historical subject. It is important to reflect on how scholars have previously approached this task as this may provide some useful direction to deal with the methodological challenges of investigating cohesion in historical settings. For instance, how is cohesion defined and historical sources used to prove, or disprove, its existence? The second body of work to consider is the ongoing debate among historians about what motivated soldiers to fight and endure the Great War. As social scientists suggest that cohesion contributes to a soldier's resilience and motivation in combat, it is important to consider the role and importance historical scholars have attributed to cohesion, both as a phenomenon in itself, during the conflict and also as a factor in building and sustaining a soldier's determination and durability to fight.

Scholarly attention of cohesion as a historical subject is very limited. Academics have acknowledged the existence and importance of cohesion to produce outcomes in combat, but only six studies have been published which specifically address how it forms, functions and influences men's behaviour and attitudes. The earliest of these studies is William Henderson's 1979 study, *Why the Vietcong Fought*, which looks at the reasons for the Vietnamese victory over the USA in the Vietnam War. He argues that the Vietcong had superior cohesion based on their three-man cell, around which their platoons were structured, and this helped them fight and endure overwhelming US firepower. He based his conclusions on interviews and personal experience of the conflict.³⁷ Nora Kinzer Stewart's 1990 book, *Mates and Muchachos*, compares cohesion in the British and Argentine forces during the Falklands/Malvinas conflict. She defines cohesion as the bonding of group or team members in such a way that it builds collective commitment to each other, their unit and the mission. She proposes that cohesion forms at four levels: between men of equal rank (horizontal

³⁶ *Statistics*, p.48.

³⁷ W.D. Henderson, *Why the Vietcong Fought* (Westport, 1979).

cohesion), leaders and the led (vertical cohesion), individuals and their organisation (organisational cohesion) and the individual and culture and society at large (societal cohesion). She used interviews with veterans, from both sides, to explore cohesion and concludes it was a 'force multiplier'.³⁸ Two articles also explore cohesion in historical conflicts. David Skaggs examines how American naval commander Oliver Hazard Perry defeated the British at the 1812 Battle of Lake Erie. He concludes that Perry's inspired training and battle leadership helped him build a cohesive fighting force based on strong bonds of mutual respect and trust.³⁹ Peter Boer charts the three-month history of a Dutch fighter squadron during the Second World War, from its creation to becoming a cohesively 'mature unit' and finally to disbandment.⁴⁰ More recently, two scholars have examined cohesion in the Edwardian/Great War era, both of which used very different definitions of cohesion. Antullio Echevarria II explored how Western armies moving across the battlefield prior to the Great War retained their cohesion, which he defined as their 'unity of action', when faced with the devastating firepower of modern weapons technology.⁴¹ The final study is by Anthony King in his book, *Combat Soldier*, in which he focuses on the effectiveness of Western infantry units from 1914 to the present day. He defines cohesion as a measure of 'collective combat performance' rather than the 'classical' characterisation of cohesion as a group integration process as used in this study. He argues that present day infantry units are more effective than their historic successors because they create cohesion (performance) through professionalism, modern training and tactics. Citizen armies like the BEF, on the other hand, created cohesion (performance) through normative values such as masculinity and nationalism and that leadership was predominantly based on interpersonal relations and individual heroism.⁴²

The methodologies adopted in four of these six studies offer little direction for the examination of cohesion in this study, due to their differing definitions and historical aspects of cohesion. Echevarria's and King's publications define cohesion very differently from this study which will consider cohesion as a process of social integration. Skragg's and Boer's articles only concentrate on how cohesion was formed in their specific case study units and their methodologies consequently reflect this focus. For example, Boer uses Paul Bartone's

³⁸ Kinzer Stewart, *Mates*, p.xii.

³⁹ D.C. Skaggs, 'Creating Small Unit Cohesion: Oliver Hazard Perry at the Battle of Lake Erie', *AF&S* 23:4 (Summer 1997), pp.635-668.

⁴⁰ P.C Boer, 'Small Unit Cohesion: The Case of Fighter Squadron 3-VI.G.IV', *AF&S* 28:1 (Fall 2001).

⁴¹ A. Echevarria II, 'Combat and Cohesion in the Early Twentieth Century' in A. King (ed), *Frontline* (Oxford, 2015).

⁴² A. King, *The Combat Soldier* (Oxford, 2013), pp.36, 43.

and Faris Kirkland's four sequential stage model of cohesion development to show how the squadron in his study went from a 'neonatal unit' to a 'combat mature one'.⁴³ In contrast, this study will not only examine how cohesion was created, but also how it developed and was maintained over time.

However, the other two studies, by Henderson and Kinzer Stewart, are of more value as they provide a logical approach to examining cohesion in a historical way and both studies consider the broad context of the culture, society and socio-political system from which each army originates. They also seek to show how these external factors shaped how soldiers related to one another and consequently cohered. Both commentators also examine cohesion outside the primary group and, in particular, consider how soldiers relate to the organisation and wider society of which they are a part. Kinzer Stewart uses four distinct cohesion relationships to structure her analysis of cohesion. Firstly, vertical cohesion, between soldiers and their leaders; secondly, horizontal cohesion between peers of equal rank; thirdly, organisational cohesion with their wider organisation and finally, societal cohesion with the culture or society at large. Her approach can be easily replicated and it will be adopted in this study to analyse cohesion.

It is remarkable that there have been so few historical case studies of cohesion given its apparent importance as part of the 'human element' on the battlefield. Social scientists have noted that a retrospective analysis of cohesion, using observational accounts and veteran testimony, are helpful to the understanding of cohesion function in military settings.⁴⁴ Psychologist, Stasiu Labuc, argues that 'historical evidence is valuable for the light it sheds directly on the combat environment and man's reaction to it'.⁴⁵ Importantly, a historical approach can also help exploration of the relationships and aspects of cohesion that other disciplines may find hard to investigate; for example, the relationship between time and cohesion. A key question is how long does it take groups to become cohesive. Studies suggest that the longer a group is together, then the greater the cohesion, but Bartone and Kirkland are the only scholars to estimate the time taken for a unit to become cohesive in peacetime (10 to 12 months) and there is only one study (Boer) which has attempted to

⁴³ Boer, 'Small...'

⁴⁴ J. Griffith, 'Further...', p.140.

⁴⁵ Cited in Skaggs, 'Creating...', p.635.

evaluate this time period in war.⁴⁶ A related question is how does cohesion alter over time. Paul Bartone and Amy Adler's study of a six-month deployment of a US medical unit on peacekeeping activities is the only study that examines strength of cohesion against time and found that it was an inverted U.⁴⁷ Longitudinal observational accounts have given insight into how cohesion can be influenced by events, but such studies are very limited in number and their utility is confined to the experience of the observer. The historian can often shed light on these important questions by using a wide range of historical sources including first-hand accounts and official papers. For example, this study will model personnel attrition rates suffered by an infantry battalion during the Great War and assess the impact on cohesion. Historical investigations can also illuminate the interactions between different types of cohesion, such as horizontal and vertical, but they may also show how cohesion can be shaped by wider cultural, social, political and economic factors, which, in turn, influence how people in groups may, or may not, build cohesion. It is hoped that this study will have utility both to social scientists and historians, as it is a historical case study examining how cohesion is formed, how it functions, how its nature changes over time but also how it shapes attitudes and actions of soldiers in battle.

The second area for consideration is how this historical study of cohesion fits into the current historiography on combatant motivation and endurance during the First World War. Great War historians acknowledge that cohesion was an important influence on soldiers in the trenches as it helped men cope, gave men combat motivation and enhanced their fighting power.⁴⁸ For instance, John Bourne observed that cohesion was the 'strongest element in the BEF's morale' in the last two years of the war.⁴⁹ Authors have examined aspects of cohesion which helped generate it such as sports activities.⁵⁰ However, scholarly attention on the morale/endurance debate has been largely focused on other aspects of the discourse such as

⁴⁶ P.T. Bartone, B. Johnsen, J. Eid, W. Brun & J.C. Laberg, 'Factors Influencing Small Unit Cohesion in Norwegian Navy Officer Cadets', *Military Psychology* 14:1 (2002), pp.1-22. Salo, 'The Relation...', p.15. Hamilton, 'Unit Cohesion', pp.16-17. P.T. Bartone & F.R. Kirkland, 'Optimal Leadership in Small Army Units', in R. Gal and A.D. Mangelsdorff (ed), *Handbook of Military Psychology* (Chichester, 1991) pp.393-409. Boer, 'Small...'

⁴⁷ P.T. Bartone and A.B. Adler, 'Cohesion Over Time in Peacekeeping Medical Task Force', *Military Psychology* 11:1 (3/1989), p.102.

⁴⁸ R. Van Emden, *The Soldier's War, The Great War Through Veterans' Eyes* (London, 2008), pp.22-23. J. Bourne, 'The British Working Man in Arms', in H. Cecil & P.H. Liddle (eds), *Facing Armageddon, The First World War Experienced* (London, 1996), p. 345. S. Wessely, 'Twentieth-century Theories on Combat Motivation and Breakdown', *Journal of Contemporary History* 41:2 (2006), pp. 269-286. P. Griffith, 'The Extend of Tactical Reform in the British Army, in P. Griffith (ed), *British Fighting Methods of the Great War*, (Abingdon, 1998), p.6. J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.22. J. Roberts, "'The Best Football Team, The Best Platoon': The Role of Football in the Proletarianisation of the British Expeditionary Force, 1914-1918", *Sport in History* 26:1 (2006), pp.26-46. I. Beckett, *The Great War 1914-1918* (London, 2001), p.221.

⁴⁹ J. Bourne, *Britain and the Great War 1914-1918*, (London, 1989), p.220.

⁵⁰ Roberts, "The Best...", pp.26-46.

the relationships between morale/endurance and leadership, influence of civilian backgrounds, psychological coping and discipline.⁵¹

Cohesion has been examined in more detail in unit level studies but its treatment still is cursory. Pat Morris in her 1983 unpublished PhD on two Leeds Rifles battalions argues they were cohesive and this was underpinned by their 'homogeneity of social background...regimental pride and identification in the TF'.⁵² This is an important work but spans from 1859 to the 1930's and has only limited analysis of cohesion. John Baynes' 1967 study, *Morale*, examined the 'morale of the front line soldier' in the 2/Scottish Rifles during the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. Again, it is valuable as it explores aspects of cohesion, such as officers-men relations, but it focuses on just one short battle and Baynes' objectivity may be questioned as he later commanded the regiment at its disbandment in 1968.⁵³ Finally, there is James Kitchen's study on the Egyptian Expeditionary Force fighting in Palestine from 1916 to 1918. He examines the sources of morale in several formations and considers the role of cohesion. For the TF 54th Division, he found that cohesion helped build morale but it is assumed that it was rapidly destroyed after heavy fighting at Gaza in 1917. In the Australian and New Zealand Division, he argues that there was no cohesion as these units were characterised by high levels of crime.⁵⁴

Historians acknowledge that cohesion was an important factor in morale during the Great War but it has been a neglected area of study. In 1983, historian Arthur Gilbert stated that history had been 'slow to adopt the techniques of modern social science' to explore how men behave and it is hoped that this study will help fill this void by furthering historical understanding of how sociological factors contributed to retrospective debates about how and why men fought and endured the war.⁵⁵ This study also seeks to examine a social science phenomenon in a historical context to show how cohesion is built and maintained and its impact.

⁵¹ G. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches*, (London, 2000). H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorials in the First World War*, (Cambridge, 2005). A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War*, (Cambridge, 2008). G. Oram, "What alternative punishment is there?": military executions during World War I, (PhD, Open University, 2000). T. Bowman, *Irish Regiments in the Great War*, (Manchester, 2003).

⁵² Morris, PhD, pp.909-913.

⁵³ J. Baynes, *Morale: A Study of Men and Courage* (London, 1967), pp.3, 8-9. *Daily Telegraph*, obituary, 21/3/2005.

⁵⁴ J. Kitchen, *The British Imperial Army in the Middle East*, (London, 2015), pp.135-137, 173-174.

⁵⁵ P. Simkins, 'Everyman at War', in B. Bond (ed), *The First World War and British Military History* (Oxford, 1997), pp.312-313. J. Griffiths, 'Further Considerations...', p.140. A.N. Gilbert, 'A Tale of Two Regiments: Manpower and Effectiveness in British Military Units During the Napoleonic Wars', *AF&S* 9:2 (1983), pp.275-276.

C. Methodology

This is a historical study which aims to investigate the strength and nature of a social science developed phenomenon of human behaviour in Great War infantry battalions and to establish its impact over the course of the war. This is an ambitious project, which is not without methodological challenges. The first challenge is how to describe and conceptualise cohesion in a retrospective setting, given the vast array of definitions of cohesions that exist, as demonstrated above. The second challenge is how to prove the existence of cohesion and assess its impact in a historical period, when the concept was not yet conceived, using contemporary testimony, such as diaries, memoirs and letters. This challenge is further complicated by issues of bias, accuracy and reliability of these historical sources. This section sets out the case studies in which cohesion will be examined and the methodological problems will be addressed in turn.

i) Case studies

Eight infantry battalions of the London Regiment will be studied to determine the existence of cohesion and examine the impact of cohesion in individual units.⁵⁶ These units existed prior to the outbreak of war as part of the auxiliary Territorial Force (TF) structure created in 1908. They have been selected for a number of reasons. Many studies suggest that Edwardian regional identity shaped the experience and motivation of men in the trenches and this study will seek to examine this phenomenon from the perspective of battalions based in the capital as all units were drawn from metropolitan London and all had their drill halls situated across west London, the City, central London and the East End.⁵⁷

Allied to this, the London Regiment battalions have received little scholarly attention. Only two battalion histories have been produced on the units under study and one academic work on the London Regiment.⁵⁸ This is surprising as the London Regiment raised a record 88 battalions during the war.⁵⁹ The London Regiment was an integral part of metropolitan London's history and involvement in the Great War, as 80% of the Regiment's men were London residents.⁶⁰ In addition, the Regiment was part of the TF which also receives little

⁵⁶ See Appendix 11.

⁵⁷ McCartney, *Citizen*. K. Grieves, *Sussex and the First World War* (Lewes, 2004). Morris, PhD.

⁵⁸ M. Lloyd, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (Barnsley, 2001). K.W. Mitchison, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995). M. Jones, 'The London Regiment, 1908-18' (MPhil, Birmingham University, 1999).

⁵⁹ E.A. James, *British Regiments 1914-1918* (Dallington, 1974), Table C.

⁶⁰ A. Gregory, 'Lost generations: the impact of military casualties in Paris, London and Berlin', in J. Winter & J Robert (eds), *Capital Cities at War* (London, 1997), p.63.

scholarly attention despite the fact it raised 692 battalions compared with 557 battalions of the New Army during the war.⁶¹

Also, all had very similar service records being deployed to France in 1914/5, serving with regular brigades in 1915 and all being drawn together in the TF 56th Division from 1916 to the Armistice. All units were involved in heavy and continuous fighting throughout the war and suffered heavy casualties and are ideally placed to test whether Bartov's contention that casualties in high intensity fighting made cohesion impossible.

However, the most important reason for choosing the units under study is the large number of available sources. Over 117 individuals have been identified who left some documentary record of their service in the Great War. In addition, all units have a battalion history, five have regimental journals and there is a division history. This high level of literacy is explained by the large number of middle class men who served in these units, many of whom were recruited from London's white collar workers, and this will be covered in more detail later.

ii) Conceptualising cohesion

To examine cohesion in these units it is necessary first to define it, but this is a difficult task as there are multiple definitions and conceptions that 'vary from the tautological, to the atomic, to the structural'.⁶² One solution is to use a model already created, developed and tested by social scientists and apply this to examine cohesion in a historical context. This approach was used by Boer and it ensures that the definition and conception of cohesion is taken directly from the peer reviewed work of academics and, as a result, any explanation of cohesion is based on research and field work and it is more likely to reflect an evidence-based description.⁶³ There are many models available including Bartone's and Kirkland's model of cohesion development, Charles Kirke's military cultural model and Bruce Tuckman's 'Developmental Sequence in Small Groups' model.⁶⁴ However, probably the best available model for application to a historical period is Guy Siebold's Standard Model for Military Group Cohesion.

⁶¹ P. Simkins, Kitchener's, *the Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Barnsley, 1988), p.46.

⁶² G.L. Siebold, 'The Evolution of the Measurement of Cohesion', *Military Psychology*, 11:1 (1999), p.6.

⁶³ Boer, 'Small...'.

⁶⁴ Bartone, 'Optimal...'. C. Kirke, 'Group Cohesion, Culture, and Practice', *AF&S* 35:4 (7/2009). B.W. Tuckman, 'Developmental Sequence in Small Groups' *Psychological Bulletin* 63 (1965), pp.384-99.

The Standard Model was first described in 2007 and it developed a structure of relationships as a means of understanding cohesion in a small group or unit. Cohesion is defined as the process of developing and maintaining close relationships and social integration. It occurs at two distinct levels, inside the primary group and outside the primary group. Primary group cohesion is based on relationships within primary groups, which are small collections of people who have close regular personal social relations and treat one another as individuals. These can be families, sports teams or platoons. In military settings, primary group relationships are formed between two sets of people; horizontal cohesion is formed between soldiers of equal rank and vertical cohesion is established between leaders and their subordinates. Secondary group cohesion, on the other hand, is based on relationships with abstract entities outside the primary group. The focus for these secondary group relationships in the Standard Model is the wider organisation of which the service person is a member. There are two areas of bonding in secondary group cohesion; organisational cohesion is the relationship between individuals and the levels of the military hierarchy above their primary group; for example, company, battalion or division. Institutional cohesion is the association between individuals and the service branch.⁶⁵

At both the primary and secondary levels, cohesion is based on two types of motivation. The first is on a task basis, where people give commitment, reciprocity and allegiance to the group and/or the organisation collectively to complete shared tasks or jobs on behalf of the group, team or organisation through teamwork and a shared commitment to the task. The other is on a social basis, where group members give affection and emotional commitment to form mutually supporting relationships based on caring, interpersonal attraction, social support and intimacy among group members or personal attachment or duty to the organisation.⁶⁶

The basis of these relationships is trust which can be defined as the positive expectation that fellow group members will act in one another's best interest in situations involving risk.⁶⁷ On a task basis, people give their trust to other team members with whom they share labour, risk and rewards for working on a joint project and/or willing give their labour to further the

⁶⁵ G.L. Siebold, 'The Essence of Military Group Cohesion', *AF&S* 33:2 (2007), pp.288-290.

⁶⁶ R.J. MacCoun, 'What Is Known About Unit Cohesion and Military Performance', in *Sexual Orientation and US Military Personnel Policy: Options and Assessment* (Santa Monica, 1993), p.291.

⁶⁷ Siebold, 'The Essence...', p.288. S.D. Boon & J.G. Holmes, 'The Dynamics of Interpersonal Trust: Resolving Uncertainty in the Face of Risk', in R.A. Hinde & J. Groebel (eds), *Cooperation and Prosocial Behavior* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.190-212.

objectives of the organisation of which they are part. On a social basis, trust rests on companionship and devotion between emotionally committed group members and/or an emotional commitment to the organisation of which a soldier is a member.

All relationships are based on an exchange. Individuals give their faith, service, loyalty, commitment and belief to other primary group team members or the organisation, of which they are part, in return for benefits. These benefits may be task related, such as pay from the organisation and/or the benefits of collective group action, such as sharing a shelter built by communal effort, or socially related, such as friendship and/or pride in being a member of an organisation. Neither is mutually exclusive and individuals can have both primary and secondary group relationships simultaneously.

(a) Why use the Standard Model?

The Standard Model is a flexible and broad based model which offers a wide-ranging framework to examine cohesion during the Great War. It is a further developed version of the structure which Kinzer Stewart successfully used in her 1990 study.⁶⁸ Since then, the Standard Model has been revised, by the addition of the concept of institutional cohesion to the structure and trust being defined as the basis of cohesive relationships at each of the four levels (horizontal, vertical, organisational and institutional).

The use of 'trust' as the basis of determining the existence of cohesion in the Standard Model means that a wide range of evidence can be used. Trust between people can be demonstrated through individual deeds and words as well as group actions and behaviour, such as high levels of confidence and loyalty to peers and leaders.⁶⁹ Historical records can also be researched for similar examples. For instance, it is possible to suggest that Rifleman Leslie Walkinton, serving in the QWR, had strong vertical cohesion with his platoon commander Harding, because he described him as the 'perfect example of a good officer' and 'an ideal leader in France' on whom he based his conduct when commissioned.⁷⁰ Language can be another indicator of trust; for example, if a soldier uses terms such as "we", "us" and "our", this may suggest affinity with his group or regiment.⁷¹ Actions of groups can also indicate

⁶⁸ G.L. Siebold & D.R. Kelly, *Development of the Platoon Cohesion Index* (Alexandria, 1988). C. Kirke, 'Group Cohesion...', p.147.

⁶⁹ F.J. Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion' in *Military Psychiatry Preparing In Peace For War* in F.D. Jones et al (eds), *Textbook of Military Medicine, Part I* (Falls Church, 1994), pp.11-12.

⁷⁰ M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), pp.14-15, 27, 41-42.

⁷¹ F.G. Wong, *A Formula for Building Cohesion* (Carlisle, 1985), pp.34-35.

trust, such as effective teamwork in a raid where men's lives depend on them having faith in their colleagues, for instance to give them covering fire. Expressions and demonstrations of loyalty and confidence in peers, leaders or in an entire organisation suggest levels of trust and therefore cohesion. For example, Private Frank Hawkings noted, proudly, in his diary in April 1915, the 'distinction' of QVR being the first TF unit in which a soldier was awarded the VC. This would appear to be an example of organisational cohesion.⁷²

Finally, the Standard Model does not predict the development of cohesion or its potential outcomes; it only sets out a framework for the analysis of cohesion. Some models, such as Tuckman's, have set out a presumptive sequence of cohesion development in small groups which leads to assumed outcomes. He suggested that cohesion proceeds through sequential stages in a linear way that he labelled forming, storming and norming, which culminated with groups 'performing' 'constructive action'.⁷³ Modern research supports this straight progression in many groups. However cohesion development also can often be highly dynamic and less linear.⁷⁴ In addition, there is much evidence that cohesive groups can perform 'destructive' action that can be detrimental to the wider military organisation of which a small group may be a part. This is labelled as 'deviant cohesion' and can take many forms, such as cohesive groups deliberately deciding to maintain low levels of productivity or performance.⁷⁵ Deviant cohesion in the Canadian Airborne Regiment (CAR) resulted in the unit being disbanded in 1995. It shows that strong peer cohesion led to major disciplinary problems, 'extreme initiation rites' and the torture and death of a Somali civilian while the CAR were on peacekeeping duties in 1993.⁷⁶

(b) Alterations to the Standard Model

The Standard Model will be applied with two changes. The first is the amalgamation of 'organisational cohesion' and 'institutional cohesion' into a single category titled 'organisational cohesion'. This refers to the secondary group cohesion soldiers have with the different levels of the command chain above their primary group. This change has been made as the organisation, from the section to the service branch (army or navy), can be considered to be one bureaucratic entity. Men will have varying cohesion with the different levels of the

⁷² F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morley, 1973), p.61.

⁷³ B.W. Tuckman, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups," *Psychological Bulletin* 63 (1965), pp.384–99.

⁷⁴ L.W. Oliver, J. Harman, E. Hoover, S.M. Hayes & N. Pandhi, 'A Quantitative Integration of the Military Cohesion Literature', *Military Psychology* 11 (1999), p.74. G.L. Siebold, 'Key Questions and Challenges to the Standard Model of Military Group Cohesion', *AF&S* 37:3 (7/2011), p.454.

⁷⁵ King, *Combat*, p.32. *Sexual Orientation*, RAND, p.296.

⁷⁶ D. Winslow, 'Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne', *AF&S* 25:3 (Spring 1999), p.445.

organisational chain and may regard the top element (the service branch) differently from the intermediate levels, for example division or corps. Men's cohesion with the service branch may be in the context of its role as an 'institution' in society derived from its statutory, political, cultural and social function in the society of which it is a part. It may be viewed in similar terms to other 'institutions' in Edwardian Britain such as the church, judiciary or Royal Navy.

The second alteration is the introduction of 'societal cohesion' which will replace 'institutional' cohesion as the fourth type of cohesion considered in this study. This idea was first set out in Stewart's 1990 study but she did not define what this encompassed, so a new description will be required.⁷⁷ Societal cohesion is the relationship soldiers have with their wider community or society and, based on the work of historians, two dimensions of this relationship have been developed. The first dimension is between soldiers and their 'communities of experience', that is their family and social networks which are physically located in their home area in which they lived and worked as civilians before they entered military service. These relationships are primary group ones based on actual relations and many scholars have pointed to the pivotal relationship families at home had in sustaining soldiers' morale and endurance.⁷⁸ The second dimension is with the broader community of which the soldiers are, or consider themselves to be, citizens, residents or subjects. The relationship defined by the individuals are 'imagined' as it is an abstract secondary group relationship and can include many notions of community or society including ideas of the state, nation, country or geographical entity. Social class or ethnicity can determine how people perceive this community and their relationship with it and those who give affinity to such a community, however defined, may regard themselves as patriots or nationalists.⁷⁹ This is based on Benedict Anderson's work on imagined communities, and historical research which shows that these ideas were powerful motivators and were an important source of morale for soldiers in the trenches.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Kinzer Stewart, *Mates*, p.27. Kirke, 'Group...', pp.147-148.

⁷⁸ McCartney, *Citizen* and 'North-West infantry battalions and local patriotism in the First World War' in *Manchester Regional History Review*, Vol.24: The Great War and the North West, 2014. Watson, *Enduring*, pp.77-79.

⁷⁹ A. Loez, 'Between Acceptance and Refusal - Soldiers' Attitudes Towards War, 1914-1918-online. http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/between_acceptance_and_refusal_-_soldiers_attitudes_towards_war Accessed 12/5/2016.

⁸⁰ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1991). McCartney, *Citizen* and 'North-West...'.

(c) Applying the adapted Standard Model

The adapted Standard Model will be applied on several levels. The four cohesive relationships of the adapted Standard Model (vertical, horizontal, organisational/institutional and societal) will form thematic elements of this study. Each will be investigated to assess the existence of cohesion, which is necessary, as it cannot be assumed that it automatically exists. If cohesion is found to exist, then its extent and dynamics will be explored, for example by determining whether men were motivated to cohere based on a task or social basis with their colleagues, leaders, organisation or wider society. The next step will be to assess what impact cohesion may have had. There is much evidence among social scientists of a link between strong cohesion and definite outcomes, but a tentative approach will be taken in this study as drawing any conclusions on the relationships will depend on the quantity and quality of the available evidence. The final element is to examine how each type of cohesion may have changed during the course of the war. To do this, three research questions will be posed for each type of cohesion: (1) what was the extent and nature of cohesion?, (2) what was its impact?, and (3) how did the cohesion and its impact change over the duration of the war?

iii) Sources

Most of the recent investigation of cohesion has used social scientific methodologies of testing hypotheses with surveys. Historical accounts of cohesion have also relied on interviews, questionnaires and field studies.⁸¹ Given the passage of time, these methodologies are not open to this study and conclusions will instead have to be drawn from the existing historical evidence. This creates some limitations which need to be addressed and considered when drawing conclusions.

(a) The problem of middle class dominance

The first issue which needs to be considered is the dominance of volunteer and middle class authors of the available sources. It has been determined, using the methodology in Chapter 2, that around 87% of the 117 authors were middle class (see Appendix 1). This is partly explained because London had a large middle class population and four out of five men serving in the London Regiment came from the Greater London area. It has been calculated that the ‘middle class’ made up 31% of the workforce, a fact that is not surprising given

⁸¹ Kinzer Stewart, *Mates*, pp.143-151. See Shibutani, *Derelicts*. Shibutani wrote contemporary notes during his military service in the US Army.

London's financial and commercial industries and its role as the political and administrative centre of the Empire. It is estimated that London's middle class may have been 50% larger than its counterpart in other cities.⁸² In addition, as Adrian Gregory demonstrated in London, those in non-manual roles had a much higher enlistment rate in the armed forces compared with manual workers. He calculated that during the war 40% of the non-manual workforce of London County Council enlisted, a figure estimated to be twice the proportion in the national population.⁸³

However, it would be clearly misleading to assume that the testament of these middle-class men was descriptive of the general war experience. Middle class men's writings, like those of other social classes, were informed by their civilian experience, education and views.

However, historians are often forced to use these sources because of the absence of working class diaries, memoirs and letters. This situation can be especially acute in regional studies. David Sibley's nationwide study on working class enthusiasm for the war demonstrates this point well by showing how few sources from working class men were available when broken down to a regional level. For London, he discovered 120 relevant sources of which only a quarter were 'useful'.⁸⁴ This situation is clearly imperfect and issues of bias will be considered when handling evidence.

(b) The challenge of historical evidence

The second issue which faces all historians is the reliability and accuracy of primary sources. Table 1 in Appendix 1 sets out the types of evidence used in this study and when it was written. All historical research requires the use of sources which have their strengths and weaknesses and they will be considered in turn.

Memoirs constitute the largest group of primary sources (42), and the majority of these (36/42) were written after the conflict. Retrospective accounts can be candid about past occurrences and give reflective consideration to happenings as well as useful context to events.⁸⁵ However, this needs to be balanced with the delay between something being witnessed and being recorded, as the interval tends to increase the fallibility of memory

⁸² J. Lawrence, 'Material pressures on the middle classes' in J. Winter & J Robert, *Capital Cities at War* (London, 1997), p.232. For example McCartney estimated that Liverpool's middle class population was 22%. McCartney, *Citizen*, p.33.

⁸³ A. Gregory, 'Lost generations: the impact of military casualties in Paris, London and Berlin', in Winter & Robert, *Capital Cities*, p.79. J. Winter, 'Demographic Context', in I. Beckett (ed), *Army and Society* (London, 1980), p.195.

⁸⁴ D. Sibley, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (Abingdon, 2006), pp.3-4.

⁸⁵ See A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922).

where events can be telescoped, transposed or otherwise confused over time. Private John Tucker records in his 1978 memoirs of his experience in the Kensingtons that ‘time ha[d]...tended to misplace some occurrences’ from their true historical sequence.⁸⁶

Also, there is the ever present issue of reliability of sources.⁸⁷ Richard Holmes identified the problem that many accounts written long after the event reflect the past through the prism of the present in which they were written.⁸⁸ This could be seen as an issue with several memoirs used in this study that were published in the 1970’s such as Stuart Dolden’s *Cannon Fodder* and Archie Groom’s *Poor Bloody Infantry*.⁸⁹ The titles of these books are reminiscent of themes set out in the dominant historical views of the time put forward by scholars such as Eric Leed, Paul Fussell, Norman Dixon and Alan Clark. Their perspectives formed two broad schools of interpretation on the Great War. The Leed/Fussell school argued that patriotic volunteers who joined up in 1914/5 had their ideals crushed by the horror of war resulting in them being disconnected from their civilian society.⁹⁰ The Dixon/Clark school suggested that the generals were myopic and incompetent and their ineptitude prolonged the war and caused huge unnecessary casualties.⁹¹ Groom’s recollections pick up many of these narratives, for example, he blames the generals for sacrificing men’s lives and talks about how he became disillusioned about the war and alienated from society.⁹²

Give these parallels between Groom’s story and the prevailing historiography that existed when he published his book, can his account be trusted as reliable? The perspectives of Fussell/Leed and Dixon/Clark schools have been challenged by modern historians and the former view is questioned in this study (see Chapter 8).⁹³ However, it would be wrong to discount Groom’s account as unreliable just because it appeared to support particular historical perspectives that have been contested by revisionist assessments. Groom’s views on the war being badly run, wasteful and pointless were prevalent among a small number of soldiers, such as Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. The historiography in the 1970’s took these views of these poet-soldiers to be that of Tommy Atkins but this version has now been

⁸⁶ J. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.9.

⁸⁷ M. Hewison, ‘I Witnesses’: Soldiers, Selfhood and Testimony in Modern Wars’ *German History* 28:3 (8/2010), pp.310–325.

⁸⁸ R. Holmes, (London, 2005), *Tommy*, p. xxiii.

⁸⁹ A.S. Dolden, *Cannon Fodder* (Poole, 1980). W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976).

⁹⁰ See P.. Fussell, *Modern Memory and the Great War* (London, 1975) and E. Leed, *No Mans’ Land* (Cambridge, 1983).

⁹¹ See N.E. Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London, 1976) and A. Clark, *The Donkeys* (London, 1961).

⁹² Groom, *Poor*, pp.73-85, 92, 97, 153-154.

⁹³ A. Gregory, *The Last Great War* (Cambridge, 2008), p.271.

corrected by recent historians.⁹⁴ However, it is not for the historian to reject viewpoints like Groom's but rather to test them alongside other evidence for their credibility and veracity.

Groom's account is referred to on several occasions in this work and much of his writing is consistent with other memoirs; for instance, his views on discipline in the LRB (see Chapter 5 and 6). However, some of his recollections require investigation. For example, he recalls a series of strikes and soldier protests in the LRB in 1917 that he says were 'hushed up' to save the regiment's reputation.⁹⁵ The reliability of these claims has been challenged by some former LRB members.⁹⁶ However, using corroborating evidence, it is possible to make a convincing case that these events probably did take place. There was severe discontent reported in the LRB at the time and the CO assembled his men to discuss their issues head on, and a similar incident is reported in the QVR.⁹⁷

Literary accounts by soldiers based on their service present a mixed blessing. Henry Williamson, Arthur Gristwood and Joseph Steward all wrote stories which closely mirrored their service in France.⁹⁸ While the events depicted need to be treated with caution, this literature is a very useful means of demonstrating attitudes and points of view prevalent at the time.⁹⁹ Steward's semi fictional narrative of men in the Kensingtons turns out to be very accurate as it matches his own service and the chronology and service of the unit.¹⁰⁰ In addition, some incidents that Steward recorded are corroborated by other sources. For example, when Steward's draft of men arrived at the Kensingtons on the day after the 1 July 1916 Gommecourt attack, he records an exchange between some artillerymen and his main characters, who were moving up to the frontline. The artillerymen 'told them of the fierce fighting', adding, 'your chaps have been cut up bad'.¹⁰¹ A similar exchange is mentioned in the letters of Percival Mundy, who was also in the same draft and overheard one soldier say to another, 'these poor buggers can't know what they're in for'.¹⁰²

⁹⁴ B. Bond, *The Unquiet Western Front* (Cambridge, 2002), pp.75-101.

⁹⁵ Groom, *Poor*, pp.147-148, 103-104.

⁹⁶ K. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995), p.169.

⁹⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.274. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.170. T.G. Elliot & R. Gregory (ed), *Tim's War* (Sutton, 2013), p.93.

⁹⁸ *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* was a novel published by Williamson. C. Gristwood, *The Somme and The Coward* (Columbia, 1927). J.Steward, *The Platoon* (Barnsley, 2011).

⁹⁹ H. Cecil, 'The Literacy Legacy of the War: The Post-war British War Novel' in P. Liddle (ed), *Home Fires and Foreign Fields* (London, 1988), p.206.

¹⁰⁰ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.1-13.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.42.

¹⁰² Letter, 7/7/916, P.D. Mundy, IWM, 4862/80/43/1.

The final retrospective sources which will be used in this study are 17 oral interviews. Interviews are well recognised as a useful and valuable primary source but their use is not without problems.¹⁰³ Like retrospective written accounts, men may recount what they have heard rather than witnessed directly.¹⁰⁴ Also, there is the danger that modern historiography has shaped views. Henry Coates recalled in one IWM 1970's interview about his 'bad feelings' towards the 'generals' that had come about because 'more and more evidence [was emerging that they] 'had not the slightest idea of what they were asking men to do.'¹⁰⁵ The content of interviews can be shaped by the questions asked by the interviewer and this, in turn, can be influenced by the interviewer's assumptions and potential bias.¹⁰⁶ However, oral history interviews are often a highly effective medium to reach experience which cannot be accessed by other more traditional means such as memoirs. Four oral accounts used in this study are from working class men who give an important and much needed different perspective, given the dominance of middle class sources.¹⁰⁷

The last sources to be considered are those made by soldiers contemporaneously such as diaries and letters. These form just under half of all sources and can be useful to discover thoughts, attitudes and perspectives of events at the time. Issues of accuracy and reliability must be considered as diaries written by men may not reflect what actually happened, so caution needs to be exercised when analysing their content.¹⁰⁸ Letters pose different challenges because the content had to comply with censorship and many authors self-censored.¹⁰⁹

The context, purpose and awareness of the intended audience may condition to some extent the accuracy and reliability of past events as recorded in sources, but these issues will be addressed, where possible through finding corroborating evidence from different sources and also by acknowledging, where necessary, the weakness or bias of sources where deployed.

¹⁰³ See P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past* (Oxford, 2000). D. Hiscocks, 'Keeping the Individual in Focus: Making Use of Interviews with Great War Veterans from the IWM Sound Archive', *Stand To!* 105 (1/2016), pp.24-26.

¹⁰⁴ Holmes, *Tommy*, p.xxiii.

¹⁰⁵ H.B. Coates, Reel-3, IWMSA, 9833.

¹⁰⁶ D.A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History* (New York, 1995), p. 96.

¹⁰⁷ See C. Wood (IWMSA, 11265), F.C. Higgins (IWMSA, 9884), W.G. Holmes (IWMSA, 8868) and C.W.S. Coutts (LC).

¹⁰⁸ D. Todman, *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (London, 2005), p.187.

¹⁰⁹ J. Meyer, *Men of War* (London, 2009), pp.14-46.

D. Research design

The four areas for analysis as set out in the adapted Standard Model – vertical, horizontal, organisational and societal – will be used as chapter headings for this study. Within each of these areas, where appropriate, consideration will be given to the social scientific debates on cohesion detailed above to serve as a basis for discussion and debate.

Chapter 2 will set out the service of the case study units on the Western Front as a historical context for the development of cohesion. It will examine the impact and experience of active service on those battalions for officers and other ranks. It will also consider how this affected the composition of these units, their organisation and the environment in which the men fought, lived and trained and which ultimately created the milieu for the development of cohesion.

Chapter 3 to Chapter 6 will address primary group cohesion. Chapter 3 will examine the formation, structure and strength of horizontal cohesion and will examine the role of background commonalities and shared experience in the creation of social and task cohesion in primary groups. It will also challenge the assertions made by historians that high casualty rates detrimentally affected cohesion in units by examining the impact of personnel attrition and its impact on the generation, maintenance and longevity of cohesive relationships in units. Chapter 4 will address the impact of horizontal cohesion and consider the level and extent of ‘deviant cohesion’ and role of informal and formal norms in determining the behaviour of groups.

Chapters 5 and 6 will address the construction and impact of vertical cohesion. Chapter 5 will examine how leaders behaved and what impact this had on building vertical cohesion in particular leaders’ technical competence and battlefield leadership, and how the way they cared for their men affected the development of task and social cohesion between leader and subordinate and what impact these relationships had. It will also consider the impact of junior officer casualties on developing vertical cohesion using a similar approach detailed in Chapter 4. Chapter 6 will examine how officers and NCOs in the units under study used their informal and formal powers to reward, coerce and discipline their subordinates and explore the impact of the use of such powers on vertical cohesion between them and their men.

Chapter 7 and 8 will address the extent and nature of secondary group cohesion and its impacts. Chapter 7 will examine a soldier's association with the organisation of which he is a part. It will examine the relationship with the various levels of the command hierarchy from battalion upwards. It also considers the cohesion connection with the service branch as an institution based on its political, social and statutory role in society. Chapter 8 will examine societal cohesion between men and the wider society from which they originated. It will examine soldiers' bonds with their 'communities of experience' and 'imagined communities'.

Chapter 9 will draw conclusions on the role of cohesion and its relationship with motivation, morale and resilience of soldiers in the units under study during the war. It will seek to examine the nature and strength of cohesion as it changed over the war and assess the impact it had on men's attitudes, actions and conduct in war.

Chapter 2 – The context: the impact and experience of active service

Primary and secondary group relationships form between individuals, their peers, leaders, organization and society. A myriad of influences outside the bounds of the group, in the external environment, can heavily affect how and why individuals bond. These influences can be unique to specific conflicts, countries and historical periods and can include the cultural, economic, social and political characteristics of the countries or societies from which the soldiers originate, as both Nora Kinzer Stewart and William Henderson demonstrated in their respective studies of cohesion.¹ These factors can shape how combatants communicate and interact and also their level of expectation of colleagues. Within a group or unit, the characteristics of individuals such as gender, social class and age can be important in determining how people relate to one another.² An individual's background, education and occupation can also inform their attitudes, values and, ultimately, how they interact with others.³ Also important are the structural properties of the group or unit to which a person is a member, such as group size, function and organisation. These group structural properties, in conjunction with the nature of work undertaken, can influence the levels of physical contact, communication and interaction between group members.⁴ The final factor that can shape cohesion in groups and units is the location in which they find themselves and the experience of everyday life. The location of a group or unit, such as in battle or on rest, and the daily routine at this location can impact on behaviour.⁵

Reflecting these broad areas, this chapter will examine the impact of war and experience of active service on the units under study in three sections. The first section will set out a broad chronological narrative to provide context and background to the role of the units on the Western Front.

The second section will examine how the progression of the war affected battalions under study, as this was the 'environment' in which cohesion was formed and developed. The war had a major effect on the structure, composition and functioning of battalions, which, in turn, affected the milieu in which men formed relationships with one another and their organisation. This section will consider how the war changed the social and geographical

¹ W.D. Henderson, *Why the Vietcong Fought* (Westport, 1979). N. Kinzer Stewart, *Mates and Muchachos* (New York, 1991).

² M. Salo, 'United We Stand – Divided We Fall' (PhD, University of Helsinki, 2011), pp.56-63.

³ W.D. Henderson, *Cohesion, The Human Element in Combat* (Washington, DC, 1985), pp.75-78.

⁴ Salo, PhD, pp.63-70.

⁵ See T. Shibutani, *The Derelicts of Company K* (Los Angeles, 1978).

composition of units and secondly, how the war changed the organisational structure and functional operation of battalions. Examination of the social class and geographic origins of soldiers in the units is important as a shared background in either could act as a source of bonding.

Edwardian Britain was a hierarchical, class-based society which was dominated by social conventions that influenced how people of the same and different classes related to each other. For example, relationships between middle and working class people were frequently determined by paternalism by the former exchanged for deference by the latter. Social composition therefore was an important background factor in shaping how social relations were conducted and, ultimately, cohesion.

Many people in Edwardian Britain had a strong sense of place, with local identity being highly developed through strong regional dialects, customs and traditions and geographical origin could be a strong factor which drew people together.⁶

The last part of this section will examine how the war changed the organisation and functioning of battalions. Over the course of the conflict, lessons learned from battles led to the re-structuring and re-organisation of battalions and the introduction of new types of weapons and tactics. These structural changes altered the size, function and purpose of platoons and sections and they had major implications for unit and group cohesion as they altered the way in which men communicated and co-operated together.

The third and final section will consider the experience of active service from the perspective of the individual serviceman. This section sets out some of the daily challenges and physical conditions which were encountered by the men on a regular basis and informed their decisions to build cohesion (or not) with other men. It also details how long soldiers actually served in the trenches. As mentioned in the introduction, there is considerable debate about whether men served long enough in high intensity battles to cohere with other men. To answer this, it is necessary to know how long soldiers actually served in France and how this time period changed over the course of the war.

⁶ See K. Grieves, *Sussex and the First World War* (Lewes, 2004).

A) Fighting on the Western Front

This section sets out a broad historical narrative to provide context and background for the units under study as Territorial units and their service on the Western Front.

i) Pre-war

The units under study officially came into existence in 1908 as part of a new arrangement for home defence forces created by Secretary of State for War, Richard Haldane. The Haldane reforms created a new Territorial Force (TF), which abolished the three existing auxiliary force structures, the yeomanry, militia and volunteers.⁷ The new TF had an establishment of 316,000 organised into 14 divisions with the purpose of home defence but with a secondary role of providing ‘support and expansion’ of the regular army in wartime.⁸ The TF was largely derided by regular professional soldiers who regarded it as a recreational organisation for men to play being soldiers.⁹

The case study units were created from the merging or re-designating existing Volunteer units which had been created in the late 1850’s and formed as part of the popular movement to counter a perceived threat of French invasion. They were drawn together into a new London Regiment with 28 battalions.¹⁰ Under the regulations, each battalion was established with 29 officers and 980 other ranks.¹¹

Since their creation in the mid Nineteenth Century, the units under study had all evolved unique identities. Many adopted a nickname in addition to their formal army designation, such as the 13th London Battalion, known also as the Kensingtons.¹² All had regimental connections with regular formations and adopted those units’ uniforms and customs, such as the London Scottish who wore the Gordon Highlanders’ ‘hoden grey’ kilt.¹³

Also, important to defining their identity were the type and nature of man they recruited into their uniform. The London Scottish, QWR and LRB recruited white collar professional men

⁷ H. Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force* (London, 1974), pp.5-18.

⁸ P. Simpkins, *Kitchener’s Army – The Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Barnsley, 2007), p.14. C. Barnett, *Britain and Her Army 1509-1970* (London, 1970), p.365.

⁹ G. Sheffield, *Officer-Man Relations, ‘Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22’* (PhD, KCL, 1994), p.47.

¹⁰ *Territorial Year Book 1909* (London, 1909), pp.252-261.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.25.

¹² O.F. Bailey & H.M. Hollier, *The Kensingtons, 13th London Regiment* (London, 1936), p.7.

¹³ J. Grierson, *Records of the Scottish Volunteer Force 1859-1908* (London, 1909), pp.336-341. J. Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London 1926), p.5.

into their ranks and, as a result, they were known as ‘class corps’ units.¹⁴ These units actively sought to protect their exclusivity by setting membership requirements. The LRB, QWR and London Scottish charged annual subscriptions of around £1 per year, required their noviates to be public or grammar school educated and often they had to be recommended by a current member.¹⁵ These measures were designed to protect the ‘social status’ of the battalions.¹⁶

Stemming from this elitism, class corps units had high romantic notions of their worth. The London Scottish styled themselves as the ‘guardians of the Stone of Scone’ and represented, before London, ‘in visible form, the Scottish people’. They claimed that among their pre-war ranks ‘an esprit de corps as strong as ever existed in any association of men’.¹⁷ The London Scottish believed this diaspora identity was important to their self-perception as they demanded that initiates, in addition to paying the membership fee, have ‘Scottish nationality’.¹⁸

Though not articulated in the same quixotic way, non-class corps units under study also exhibited a strong sense of self-confidence. The 1/2 Londons believed they were ‘second to nondons’.¹⁹ The self-confidence of many units led to considerable pre-war competition between units, for instance the LRB and London Scottish had a historic feud and both competed to record the quickest route march to Brighton, which the LRB held in 1914.²⁰ For many soldiers, these pre-war identities were an important source of organisation cohesion as James Kitchen pointed out, and this will be explored in more detail in Chapter 8.²¹

ii) 1914/5

On the outbreak of war the units under study were mobilised. The 1/2 and 1/4 Londons departed to garrison Malta to relieve regular units and the other units were sent to train in the Home Counties. In September, the decision was taken by the War Office to deploy first line

¹⁴ R. Holmes, *Soldier* (London, 2011), p.108. C. Messenger, *Call to Arms – The British Army 1914-1918* (London, 2005), p.80.

¹⁵ K. Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope, The Territorial Force, 1908-14* (London, 2008), p.19. Grierson, *Records*, p.337. Dolden, *Cannon*, p.11. Queen's Westminster Rifles, C Company, Details of Competitions and Company Roll, 1914. G.S. Nottage, LC. Smith, *Four*, p.1. *Daily Express*, 8/2/1909.

¹⁶ Standing Orders, Queen's Westminster Rifles (1912), p.69, G.S. Nottage, LC. K. Mitchinson, *England's*, p.89.

¹⁷ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.13.

¹⁸ Grierson, *Records*, p.337.

¹⁹ W.E Grey, *2nd City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929) F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.xxxiv.

²⁰ *A Short History of the London Rifle Brigade* (Aldershot, 1916), p.6.

²¹ J. Kitchen, *The British Imperial Army in the Middle East* (London, 2015), pp.135-137.

TF units abroad to help support the regular units of the BEF which were engaged in heavy fighting throughout September and October 1914.²²

The London Scottish was the first unit under study to be deployed in September 1914. They were involved in the first action by a TF unit in the Great War, taking part in a bloody defensive engagement at Messines on 29 October 1914.²³ After this date all units were deployed to France and attached to regular brigades on trench holding duties until the spring of 1915. From March 1915, all units saw considerable action in all principal engagements fought by the BEF. For example, the London Scottish, Kensingtons and 1/4 Londons fought at Neuve Chapelle in March; the QVR, LRB, 1/4 Londons and Rangers all took engagements during 2nd Ypres during April and May; the Kensingtons led an assault at Aubers Ridge in May (the first TF unit to be used in an offensive action) and London Scottish and 1/4 Londons both took part in the fighting at Loos in September. For the rest of the time, units were on trench holding duties or behind the front. Participation in these actions brought significant casualties; for example, the London Scottish suffered 394 casualties at Messines and the Kensingtons suffered 436 total 'losses' at Aubers Ridge.²⁴

However, the actions of all units impressed regular officers, many of whom had been deeply prejudiced against the auxiliary units before the war, often labelling them as "spare time soldiers" trying to do a professionals' job.²⁵ For example, 4th Corps Commander Sir Henry Wilson, a pre-war TF critic, told the London Scottish he had thought of them as 'peace-time soldiers' but their deeds showed they were 'veteran troops'.²⁶

Within a few weeks of the start of the war, additional battalions were raised at each of the units' drill halls to accommodate, train and administer the increasing numbers of men joining these formations. These became known as second and third line battalions.²⁷ The original pre-war battalion was known as the first line unit and given a 1 before its pre-war battalion designation. For example, the Kensingtons pre-war battalion, known up to the war as the 13th Battalion County of London Regiment became the 1/13; the second line unit raised in

²² A. Farrar-Hockley, *Death of an Army* (London, 1967), p.169.

²³ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, pp.28-96.

²⁴ Lloyd, *London Scottish*, p.43. Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.51.

²⁵ P. Hurd, *Fighting Territorials, Vol.1* (London, 1915), p.12. Cunningham, *Volunteer*, p.78. C. Kernahan, *An Author in the Territorials* (London, 1908), p.1.

²⁶ M. Gilbert, *The First World War* (London, 1994), p.80. Lindsay, *London Scottish*, pp.94-95.

²⁷ I. Beckett, 'The Territorial Force', in I. Beckett and K. Simpson (eds), *British Army in the First World War* (Manchester, 1985), p.132.

September 1914 became the 2/13 and the third line unit, raised three months later became the 3/13.²⁸

By the end of 1915, many believed that ‘London Territorials...[were] equals of the...Regular Army’ through their conduct in battle and trench holding.²⁹ The units under study had suffered major casualties over the first 12 months of the war. The LRB recorded 591 casualties but these were replaced by eager volunteers from their reserve units who joined the ranks in late 1914 and throughout 1915 and continued to reflect their pre-war social composition.³⁰

iii) 1916

In February 1916, all units were removed from their regular brigades and drawn together in a single division of first line territorials, the 56th Division. The 1/2 Londons LRB, QVR and QWR were in 169 Brigade under Brigadier General Coke and 1/4 Londons, Rangers, Kensingtons and London Scottish were under Brigadier General Loch. The other brigade was 167 Brigade, which contained the 1/1 and 1/3 Londons and 1/7 and 1/8 Battalions, Middlesex Regiment. The division also had a pioneer battalion, the 1/5 Battalion, Cheshire Regiment. The divisional commander was Major General Hull.

From February to June 1916, the division prepared and trained for the forthcoming Somme offensive. Many men welcomed being drawn together into a single division as there was friendly competition between units that resulted in ‘considerable rivalry’.³¹ The first action of the new 56th Division was a diversionary attack at Gommecourt in concert with the 46th (North Midland) Division.³² The assault lasted one day after both divisions were forced back to their start lines; the units under study suffering 49% killed, missing or wounded of 8,308 men that went into action that morning.³³

²⁸ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.209-225. The term Kensingtons is used throughout this study to refer to the 1/13 Battalion, London Regiment not new army unit raised in Kensington in late 1914, the 22nd (service) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (Kensington). For more information on this unit see C. Stone, *A History of the 22nd (Service) Battalion (Kensington)* (London, 1922) and G.I.S. Ingliss, *The Kensington Battalion: Never Lost a Yard of Trench* (Barnsley, 2010).

²⁹ Hurd, *Fighting Vol.1*, p.8.

³⁰ Maude, *History*, p.428.

³¹ Smith, *Four*, p.121.

³² See A. MacDonald's, *Pro Patria Mori* (Liskeard, 2006) and *A Lack of Offensive Spirit* (Milton Keynes, 2008).

³³ Compiled from 56th Division Report on 1/7/1916, TNA, WO-95/2931 and strength on 1/7/1916, 6/1916, 56th Divisional Adjutant and Quartermaster WD, TNA, WO-95/2936.

The 56th Division continued to fight in brutal attritional actions of the Somme taking a major role in the September and October battles around Leuze Wood, Borleaux Wood and the Transloy Ridges.³⁴ Conditions were appalling, for instance, the 1/4 Londons spent 35 days sleeping in the open in cold, wet and muddy trenches; they had only four days in rest bivouacs and were in action five times.³⁵ Many units by the end of September were at the 'limit of their endurance'.³⁶ By mid-October, the division was withdrawn from the area to hold trenches for the remainder of 1916. The fighting in September and October alone had cost the units under study 6,366 casualties.³⁷ As a result of the casualties on the Somme and the introduction of conscription in mid-1916, the social composition of units began to change radically.

iv) 1917

In January the 56th Division was holding trenches near Laventie sector and became involved in fierce fights for a series of outposts they had constructed in Germans lines, known as the 'saga of the posts'.³⁸ On 9 April 1917 units attacked German positions at Neuville-Vitasse as part of the Battle of Arras. They made rapid progress on the first day but got quickly mired down in attritional fighting until late May.³⁹ The 'intoxication of victory during April' gave way to 'the dull, heart-breaking work of holding the gains on 'the "morning after"'.⁴⁰ Casualties were heavy with 1,700 men being lost in May alone (no figures for April).⁴¹ After Arras, the 56th Division was thrown into the Third Battle of Ypres. They were involved in an attack near Inverness Copse on 16 August 1917.⁴² Labelled a 'sorry story', its advance was forced back to the start line at the cost of 2,053 casualties in the units under study.⁴³ Finally, in November 1917, the 56th Division participated in the Battle of Cambrai. The Division was stationed on the left flank of the offensive and had a minor supporting role until the closing stages when they helped hold back a heavy German counter attack. The actions of the 56th Division during the battle were celebrated in a GHQ published pamphlet titled *The Story of a*

³⁴ C.H. Dudley Ward, *The Fifty-Sixth Division* (London, 1922), pp.49-100. See also P. Reed, *Combles* (Barnsley, 2002).

³⁵ F.C. Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)* (London, 1922), p.215.

³⁶ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.95.

³⁷ Decreases in strength (Appendix B) for 9-10/1916, 56th Divisional Adjutant, TNA, WO-95/2936.

³⁸ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), pp.73-86.

³⁹ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers' Historical Records: From 1859 to the Conclusion of the Great War* (London, 1921), p.110, Smith, *Four*, p.220.

⁴⁰ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.112.

⁴¹ Decreases in strength for 5/1917, 56th Divisional Adjutant, TNA, WO-95/2936.

⁴² Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, pp.144-164.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.160. Decreases in strength for 8/1917, 56th Divisional Adjutant. TNA, WO-95/2936.

Great Fight, which observed how the London Scottish, QWR and 1/2 London vied with each other for the 'valour of their resistance'.⁴⁴

v) Morale issues

The allies dealt with severe morale concerns in their armies while these battles were conducted; French army units mutinied in April 1917.⁴⁵ The BEF was not without its own issues; with a 'mutiny' at Etaples in September and general war weariness reported in the second half of the year contributing to low morale.⁴⁶ Historians have argued about the extent, significance and nature of this matter. David Englander suggested that the situation was serious and the BEF in 1918 was facing a potential mutiny which was only averted by the German spring offensive.⁴⁷ Others have proposed that morale was low but commitment to the war remained solid and incidents, like the Etaples mutiny, can be explained by local causes, such as poor conditions and brutal instructors.⁴⁸

Against this backdrop, there were accounts of a series of protests and strikes throughout 1917. Official views suggested that morale was holding up well during and after the Battle of Arras. By this time, the 56th Division had joined the Third Army and Captain Hardie, the Third Army's post censor, reported that men 'long for a normal life, for home comforts, or at least for leave - but there are no indications that their power of endurance is failing or their spirit blunted.'⁴⁹ However, in April problems began to emerge, LRB men instituted a 'small strike' when they had been contracted to work for a French farmer while behind the lines.⁵⁰ In August, after their participation at Third Ypres, problems were evident in the LRB. Men were close to a mutiny over the apparent bungling of the operation by staff and the 'rank and file' felt 'that the Passenedaele Ridge was not worth the sacrifice involved'.⁵¹ This feeling of discontent prompted the CO, Lieutenant Colonel Wallis, to organise an open air meeting with the unit to address their concerns. He agreed with their point of view and blamed General Hubert Gough and his staff for the debacle.⁵² Other incidents were reported in units which were fighting in the Battle of Cambrai in late November. QVR soldiers went on 'strike'

⁴⁴ *Story of a Great Fight* (GHQ, 1918), p.6.

⁴⁵ See L. Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience* (Princeton, 1994).

⁴⁶ D. Gill & G Dallas, 'Mutiny at Etaples Base in 1917', *Past and Present* 69:1 (1975), pp.88-112. Sheffield, PhD, pp.85-86.

⁴⁷ D. Englander, 'Discipline and Morale in the British Army, 1917-18', in J. Horne (ed), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge, 1997), p.141.

⁴⁸ Sheffield, PhD, p.87. T. Bowman, *The Irish regiments in the Great War* (Manchester, 2003), pp.158-159.

⁴⁹ Report on Morale, May 1917, M. Hardie, IWM, 84/46/1.

⁵⁰ Groom, *Poor*, pp.103-104.

⁵¹ Smith, *Four*, p.274.

⁵² Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.170.

against ‘working with the Hun’ [sic] to build a POW ‘cage’.⁵³ There was further trouble in the LRB when one company held a ‘mutiny’, ‘downing tools’ and complaining they had eaten iron rations for eight days, living in the cold without greatcoats and wanted hot food as they were as ‘mad as hell’ when they heard that a unit on their flank had received hot ‘bread and soup’.⁵⁴

These incidents appear to have been resolved peacefully with no major repercussions but they were not unusual in the British army during the Great War.⁵⁵ However, it is significant that these incidents happened in France and some during battle. These were serious threats to military authority but they did not necessarily represent a breakdown in morale. The units which protested during the Battle of Cambrai were later involved in fierce fighting for which GHQ praised their conduct as ‘heroic’.⁵⁶ Rifleman Aubrey Smith said that LRB ‘soon got over the shock of its Ypres adventure and...[all]...fell into the old routine... We felt rather disillusioned - that was all.’⁵⁷

vi) 1918

After Cambrai, the 56th Division was sent to hold trenches between Gravelle and Oppy. Here they held the trench lines and started to prepare defensive positions for the expected German offensive widely believed to be launched in early 1918. During this time the brigades were reduced from four to three battalions under an army restructuring which resulted in the QVR and Rangers being disbanded and many of their men were reallocated across the division.

In March 1918, the Germans launched their spring offensive in an attempt to bring an end to the war. As part of these operations, on 28 March 1918, General Ludendorff launched Operation Mars which aimed to smash allied positions around Arras. The 56th Division and other units held their positions preventing a German breakthrough.⁵⁸

The 56th Division remained stationed in the Arras area on trench holding duties during the rest of the spring and early summer. It was engaged in a large series of raids ordered by Hull

⁵³ T.G. Elliot & R. Gregory (ed), *Tim's War* (Sutton, 2013), p.93.

⁵⁴ Groom, *Poor*, pp.147-148.

⁵⁵ Simkins, *Kitchener's*, pp.200-201, 238-239, 243-244.

⁵⁶ *Story*, p.2.

⁵⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.276.

⁵⁸ I. Passingham, *The German Offensives of 1918* (Barnsley, 2008), pp.74-77.

which caused the Germans to erect a board from their trenches saying “Please do not raid us anymore!”⁵⁹ In August, the final allied offensive (Hundred Days) started. The 56th Division was in action from the 23 August in the Battle of Albert and continually in the line through actions at Bullecourt, Sambre, Canal Du Nord and Cambrai.

From the summer of 1918 morale improved. Smith recalled that news of the German defeat on the Marne was received ‘in a luke warm fashion, since two thirds of the men obviously did not believe it’.⁶⁰ Men, he said, were ‘accustomed to reverse after reverse’ and ‘the change of fortune overwhelmed us at first...[i]t put everyone in good spirits’.⁶¹ Rifleman Aubrey Smith said the impact of the 8 August victory was ‘electrical’. When the Armistice was called, the division was near Mons.⁶²

B. Change in social and geographical composition

Over the four years of the war, all battalions underwent major change in the social and geographical composition of the men who filled their ranks. The pre-war character of units remained largely unchanged until the summer of 1916. Fighting on the Somme, and the need to replace high numbers of casualties, radically changed the units as replacements were being increasingly drawn from the urban working classes. This, in turn, had a major bearing on primary group cohesion and this will be explored in Chapters 3 to 6.

Social class played a vital role in social interaction. Intra-class relationships were characterised by social ease whereas inter-class relations were often governed by different unwritten norms. In return for paternalistic leadership and care, people in lower social positions gave respect and deference to those above them. This dynamic often operated regardless of income; for example, James Sloan recalled how a train driver who lived next door to his father, probably earning twice his father’s wages, still called him ‘Mr Sloan’ because he worked in a socially more respectable role as a hat store manager.⁶³ In many situations, working class men expected to give deference to middle class gentlemen and they expected them to behave as such. Tucker recalls a case in 1915 of ‘inverted snobbery’ in the Kensingtons where a subaltern, who was a bank clerk, was ‘looked down upon’ by the men

⁵⁹ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, pp.248-252.

⁶⁰ Smith, *Four*, p.344.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.345.

⁶² Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, pp.262-313.

⁶³ Cited D. Sibley, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (Abingdon, 2005), p.10.

because of his 'slight cockney accent.'⁶⁴ Many men treated their social 'superiors' with respect and distance due to social differences and these conventions remained even after the war. Public school boy and bank clerk, T.H. Holmes, was invited to his former company commander flat after the war but he did not go as 'he was...cuts above me socially'.⁶⁵ The rigid pre-war social conventions were blurred but for many, these rules still informed how people conducted themselves.⁶⁶ Tracking the geographical background of men in units is also important. Great War historians have shown that men who served in units raised from their home area often drew motivation, cohesion and morale from this link. In some units, such as the Liverpool territorial units, this association was maintained throughout the war because the units received reinforcements drawn from their local areas.⁶⁷ However, other units, such as the 1/1 Royal Buckinghamshire Hussars, lost their local character as they were reinforced by drafts recruited outside Buckinghamshire.⁶⁸ Social composition and geographical origin will be addressed in turn.

i) Social composition

To many Edwardians, social class was determined by occupation; those in non-manual roles being middle class, whereas those in manual jobs were working class.⁶⁹ While this definition has been used by contemporary commentators and historians to delineate social class in Edwardian society, it does not reflect the complex hierarchies of status that existed within each social class, such as the difference between skilled and unskilled manual workers.⁷⁰ Probably the best system to determine social class is that proposed by Helen McCartney in her study of Liverpool Territorials.

She used the occupational classifications set out by the Registrar General for the 1921 Census. This defined social class in five broad occupational categories. Class 1 and 2 represented the middle and upper classes in professional roles and other white-collar occupations, such as clerks. Classes 3 to 5 represented the working classes which covered in turn skilled artisans, the partially skilled worker and unskilled respectively.⁷¹

⁶⁴ J. F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.41.

⁶⁵ Account by T.H. Holmes (no page numbers), IWM, 06/30/1.

⁶⁶ M. Petter, 'Temporary Gentlemen' in the Aftermath of the Great War: Rank, Status and the Ex-Officer', *Historical Journal*, 37:1 (3/1994), pp.127-152.

⁶⁷ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.62-88.

⁶⁸ Beckett, 'The Territorial Force', pp.147-151.

⁶⁹ See C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London* (London, 1902).

⁷⁰ Cunningham, *Volunteer*, p.33. McCartney, *Citizen*, p.27.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp.27-32.

Using occupation as a marker of social class is useful as it is readily available information which was frequently recorded on soldiers' attestation papers and other official records such as the Census. Also, 90% of working class men remained in the same economic cohort as their fathers; economic mobility, and with it social mobility, was possible but rare.⁷²

Adopting the 1921 occupational categories also has major advantages over the system used in the 1911 census. The 1911 Census was the first to use a system of social classification and it had eight categories which sought to put occupations into 'social grades' but was not particularly discriminating.⁷³ For example, the scheme could place business proprietors in Class 3 (intermediate roles) or below, whereas their clerks would go in Class 1.⁷⁴ Indeed, Class 1 under the system put doctors and judges in the same category as clerks and commercial travellers.⁷⁵ The 1921 system sought a stronger relationship of 'skill' to occupation.⁷⁶

However, as McCartney highlights, the 1921 Census classifications are occupational categories and not definitions of social class. While there was a strong correlation by Edwardians between occupation and social class, it is important to consider contemporary views when examining categorisation. For instance, she points out that many shop assistants were regarded as middle class by contemporaries whereas the 1921 Census classifications would have determined them as working class (Class 3).⁷⁷ It is important to take into account other indicators used by people at the time to determine class such as educational background.

Attending a public school or grammar school was indicative of membership of the middle and upper classes because of the cost of fees. For example, the cost of attending some preparatory schools was approximately £150 (triple the average wage) and even a grammar school education could cost £6 per year per pupil.⁷⁸ Also attending higher education was

⁷² M. Savage & A. Miles, *The Remaking of the British Working Class* (London, 1994), pp.30-40.

⁷³ Registrar General, *Seventy-Fourth Report of the Registrar General* (London, 1913). Official Social Classifications in the UK, Social Research Update, 9, University of Surrey (7/1995), <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU9.html> Accessed 17/8/2015.

⁷⁴ W.A. Armstrong, 'The use of information about occupation', in E. A. Wigley, *Nineteenth Century Society* (London, 1972), pp.203-204.

⁷⁵ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.28.

⁷⁶ Official Social Classifications..., Surrey.

⁷⁷ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.29.

⁷⁸ R.D. Pearce, 'The Prep School and Imperialism: The Example of Orwell's St. Cyprian's', *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 23:1 (1991), p.44. N. Bently, *Edwardian Album* (London, 1975), p.35. *March on in Firm Endeavour, The Fallen of Sudbury Grammar School* (Old Boys' Association, 2007), p.78.

expensive and it has been estimated that in 1914 90% of Britain's 27,000 university students were 'middle class'.⁷⁹

(a) Social class pre-war

Using the above approach it is possible to ascertain the social profile of the pre-war units.⁸⁰ The first group to consider are officers; examination of the occupational backgrounds of commissioned men across all eight units suggests they were solidly middle class. For example, an analysis of the occupations of 24 Kensington officers recorded on the February 1914 *Army List* showed that 23 were in middle class occupations (Appendix 2, Table 2.1). The only exception was the Lieutenant Quartermaster (LQM), which by army tradition was always a role given to an NCO promoted from the ranks; the Kensingtons' LQM was a stable hand.⁸¹ An analysis of the educational background of LRB officers, who served or joined the battalion in 1914, showed all attended public school with 62% having been educated at super exclusive Clarendon schools (Appendix 2, Table 2.2).

However, examination of the social class of NCOs and other ranks suggests units fall into two distinct groups. The first group consists of the LRB, QWR and London Scottish, whose rankers were overwhelmingly middle class and were drawn from the same occupation and educational backgrounds as their officers. The London Scottish was 'filled chiefly by public school and university men'.⁸² The 'pattern' of men joining the QWR was 'clerky' but the QWR also had a company of shop assistants formed from exclusive Tottenham Street drapers and furniture store Messrs. Shoolbred and Co.⁸³

The remaining study units drew their NCOs and rankers from both the middle and working classes. A small study of Kensingtons other ranks, who joined the unit between 1908 and the start of the war, suggests that 53% were engaged in working class occupations and that the companies were largely mixed between working and middle class men (see Appendix 3). Other units formed companies based on the occupation of their men or their work place such as the Rangers who founded companies of working class gas workers based at its Beckton

⁷⁹ R. Anderson, *British Universities* (London, 2006), pp.56, 66.

⁸⁰ For example, A.H. Maude, *The History of the 47th Division* (London, 1922), pp.6-7.

⁸¹ Sheffield, PhD, p.4.

⁸² Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.13.

⁸³ Holmes, IWM. *Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times*, 22/5/1909. See C. Edwards, 'Tottenham Court Road: the changing fortunes of London's furniture street 1850-1950', *London Journal*, 36:2 (2011), pp.140-160.

and Nine Elms plants of the Gas Light & Coke Company.⁸⁴ The Rangers also created a 'Poly' company drawn from predominantly middle class students undertaking commercial and technical courses at Regent's Street Polytechnic.⁸⁵

(b) Social class during the first half of the war

Up until late 1915, replacements for all units under study were drawn from the volunteers who joined up in the first year of the war. It appears that Londoners were represented heavily among the initial flood of volunteers who 'rushed to the colours'.⁸⁶ The units under study reported queues of willing recruits and there are some accounts of men who had to visit numerous different units before being accepted.⁸⁷ It is possible, by correlating the four digit army number and enlistment date, to calculate the number of men who enlisted in the early stages of the war; between 4 August and the year's end, the Kensingtons enlisted 2,030 men.⁸⁸

The units could choose their recruits and many favoured a similar class and type of man to their pre-war Territorials and, as a result, the social composition of the units remained largely unchanged. The class corps units retained their entry requirements until the introduction of conscription and even collected their subscriptions in the trenches.⁸⁹ The London Scottish initial deployment in September 1914 was made up of 460 clerks, 264 professional men, 226 commercial men, 101 undergraduates and 10 apprentices.⁹⁰ The LRB's membership in mid-1915 was described as 'clerks, solicitors, barristers and businessmen.'⁹¹

Similarly, the 1/2 Londons drew large numbers from Army & Navy, Selfridges and other stores.⁹² Units which had a pre-war association with an institution often drew additional recruits from that institution. For example, the Rangers recruited over 900 men from Regent's Street Polytechnic.⁹³ In some units the social standing of units increased; a survey of the occupations of 45 Kensingtons, who joined between 4 August and the end of 1914, suggested that 62% were engaged in middle class occupations (Appendix 10) which was higher than the

⁸⁴ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, pp.11-12.

⁸⁵ C.T. Townsend, *Chemicals From Coal: A History Of Beckton Products Works*, 2003.
http://www.glias.org.uk/Chemicals_from_Coal/INDEX.HTM. Accessed 12/4/2016.

⁸⁶ A. Gregory, 'Lost Generations' in J. Winter & J-L. Robert (eds), *Capital Cities at War* (Cambridge, 1997), p.73.

⁸⁷ See D. Wheatley, *Officer and Temporary Gentleman* (London, 1978), pp.36-53.

⁸⁸ Figures taken from the database looking at four digit regimental number given to each man which was given out in ascending order and matched against attestation date.

⁸⁹ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.50.

⁹⁰ Hurd, *Fighting Vol. 1*, p.96.

⁹¹ *Dispatch*, 15/6/1915.

⁹² Grey, *2nd*, p.7.

⁹³ Hurd, *Fighting Vol. 1*, p.75.

pre-war number (47%). The Rangers was described of being ‘mostly clerks ...with a sprinkling...of...hybrid cockneys’.⁹⁴ The exact proportion of middle class recruits is impossible to determine but explanation for the change of social profile in early war volunteers may have been due to the better organised recruitment in London, disruption by the war to commercial life which freed middle class men from their employment and that few middle class men aged between 19 and 25 were married or had dependents, which may otherwise have prevented them from enlisting.⁹⁵ Compared with other units being raised, London TF battalions recruited a high proportion of middle class men. It is estimated that around three quarters of the initial recruits in units like the 5/Connaught Rangers and 6/Leinsters were from unskilled working class occupations, mainly agricultural labourers.⁹⁶

(c) Social composition from the Somme to the Armistice

The casualties suffered by units on the Somme led to a major change in their social composition. From late 1915 the War Office changed the system of supplying new reinforcements to the BEF from one of drill halls sending individual soldiers to their overseas battalion to one of pooling recruits from a region, such as London or the North West, and dispatching them where expediency required.⁹⁷ Relying on individual drill halls to supply individual volunteers to units was inefficient once conscription was introduced in January 1916 and the second line units, from which recruits were drawn, were constituted as fighting battalions in their own right. The change was bitterly resisted by units who believed it was detrimental to unit *esprit des corps* but their attempts to prevent it failed.⁹⁸

As a result, unit reinforcements were drawn from all classes and led to inevitable change in their social composition. It is not possible to describe accurately the speed and nature of the change in social composition due to the lack of available evidence but it is probable that all units by the Armistice reflected the demographics of the country where the working classes made up around 80% of the population by the war’s end.⁹⁹

Class corps units experienced the greatest change as their ranks had all been middle class up to July 1916. In his study of the LRB, K.W. Mitchinson suggested that the change was very

⁹⁴ R.J. Mason, ‘Up the Rangers’, p.1, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

⁹⁵ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.211. A. Gregory, ‘Lost Generations’ in Winter, *Capital*, pp.73-74. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.21.

⁹⁶ S. Sandford, *Neither Unionist or Nationalist* (Kildare, 2015), p.40.

⁹⁷ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.61.

⁹⁸ Maude, *History*, p.153. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, pp.130-136.

⁹⁹ J. Winter, ‘Demographic Context’, in I. Beckett (ed), *Army and Society* (London, 1980), p.195.

rapid as the reinforcements to replace the 1 July casualties were drawn from ‘non-commercial classes’. Over the course of the war the LRB continued to receive drafts of working class men, such as in March 1918 when it was reinforced by Durham miners.¹⁰⁰ The process of social change was probably also accelerated in class corps units as a result of middle class rankers taking commissions; the London Scottish and LRB recorded a total of 4,339 commissions over the course of the war.¹⁰¹ However, despite the influx of working class men, there is evidence to suggest that middle class men still retained dominance in some specialist units of battalions such as the LRB’s transport section.¹⁰²

The officer corps, unlike other ranks, remained dominated by the middle classes throughout the war. An analysis of the educational background of 116 officers, who served in the LRB throughout the war, shows that 98.3% went to public or grammar school (see Appendix 2). It is interesting to note that in 1914 there were no grammar school educated officers in the LRB but they made up 33% by the war’s end, suggesting a social change (See Appendix 2, Table 2).

Similar evidence does not exist for the other units under study but using the War Office categorisation of 3.4m soldiers on active service in 1918 into 44 ‘industrial groups’, it is possible to get a broad view of the social class of officers at the war’s end (see Appendix 5). The War Office undertook this task to prioritise those who would be demobilised first as being most valuable to the civilian economy post war. Many of these categories are too broad to give an indication of occupation, and hence social class; for example, Group 1 is simply ‘agriculture’ which could include both landowners and farm hands.¹⁰³ However, others do provide a more specific indication of occupation such as the top four occupational categories from which 69% of all officers were drawn. These included professional men (Group 42), commercial and clerical (Group 37), students and teachers (Group 43) and engineering (Group 26); all livelihoods which fit broadly into the middle class occupational categories 1 and 2 of the 1921 Registrar General’s census scheme.¹⁰⁴ Men who had these pre-war occupations were significantly more likely to be officers than men from other trades or groups. For instance, 80% of those classified as ‘professional men’ and 63% of ‘students and teachers’ held commissions. In contrast, only 0.1% (184) of all officers classified as dock and

¹⁰⁰ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.221.

¹⁰¹ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.408. R. Holmes, *Soldiers*, p.188.

¹⁰² See Smith, *Four*.

¹⁰³ Sheffield, PhD, p.99.

¹⁰⁴ *Statistics of Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War* (London, 1922), p.707.

wharf labourers (Group 32) were commissioned.¹⁰⁵ This suggests that those in pre-war middle class occupations were significantly more likely to be commissioned compared with those in working class roles.

ii) Geographical origin

The geographical background of soldiers joining all eight units under study before the war closely reflected the social class differences of class corps units and non-class corps units. Class corps units had their drill halls near their members' places of work rather than their homes; for example, the LRB's drill hall was based in the City whereas its officers and men resided mainly in the suburbs in south and northeast London.¹⁰⁶ Non-class corps units tended to have a stronger link with the areas in which their members' lived. The 1/2 London, based in Westminster, considered its 'home areas' as Pimlico, Westminster and North Lambeth.¹⁰⁷ However, while the link was more direct, it could still be weak; for example, a study of other ranks serving in the Kensingtons between 1908 and the outbreak of war showed them living in 60 different locations across London, 69% being classified as living in 'west London' and 12% 'south of the river'. Though the Kensingtons were known as a 'thoroughly local corps', only 18% lived in the Royal Borough where the unit was headquartered (see Appendix 3).¹⁰⁸

The onset of war saw the geographical origins of recruits widen. Analysis of the Kensingtons' recruits joining between the start of the war and the end of 1914 suggested that only 43% were resident in 'west London' compared with 69% pre-war (Appendix 3). Many men therefore who joined the Kensingtons had no connection with the unit or borough before enlisting.¹⁰⁹ While many of these men came from outside the 'traditional' recruiting areas, they still came from the Greater London area. It has been estimated that 80% of the men in the London Regiment were resident in Greater London and there is data to support this in the units under study.¹¹⁰ Analysis of Soldiers' Died data for 1914/5 to 1918 for the Kensingtons, where place of residence is listed, confirms that around 80% of men were Greater London residents. However, it also suggests that the number of men drawn from 'traditional' recruiting areas that had supplied the pre-war unit declined rapidly from 98% in 1914 to 18% in 1918 (see Appendix 4).

¹⁰⁵ Sheffield, PhD, pp.97-117.

¹⁰⁶ Mitchinson, *England's*, pp.19, 23.

¹⁰⁷ Grey, *2nd*, p.xxxiii.

¹⁰⁸ Hurd, *Fighting Vol. 1*, p.76.

¹⁰⁹ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.211.

¹¹⁰ A. Gregory, 'Lost Generations' in Winter, *Capital*, p.63.

Table 2.1 - Percentage of soldiers who died according to the place of residence, 1914-1918

Recruitment area	1914/5	1916	1917	1918
The Kensingtons' pre-war traditional area of recruitment (Kensington, Hammersmith, Fulham, Chelsea boroughs).	98%	59%	33%	29%
County of London (as defined in 1914)	2%	30%	52%	53%
Outside London	0%	11%	15%	18%

The data in Table 2.1 suggests that the majority of men joining the Kensingtons, throughout the war continued to be drawn from London and as such, it remained reasonably homogeneous. This reflects a similar experience in other units, such as those from the North West. However, other war histories from the units under study reflect a different pattern, especially in the final year of the war.¹¹¹ In April 1918, the QWR reported the majority of their reinforcements were recruited from 'northern county regiments'.¹¹² At the same time, the 1/4 Londons recalled that they were 'transformed into a mild imitation of the Tower of Babel...with [the] accents of London, Kent, Surrey, Berkshire, the broader dialects of Yorkshire, Cheshire, Lancashire and Wiltshire, and even the unmistakable tones of Scotland and South Wales'.¹¹³ This suggests major change in the geographical composition of reinforcement drafts but the level of change is very difficult to assess.

Over the course of the war, the battalions underwent a major change. In the first half of the war the units' membership reflected their pre-war composition. Class corps units selected public and grammar school educated men, working in professional middle class occupations who largely resided in the affluent suburbs. Non-class corps units drew men from working and middle class backgrounds that lived closer to their drill halls. After suffering huge casualties on the Somme and the introduction of conscription, the social composition of all units became increasingly dominated by urban working class recruits who were increasingly drawn from across Greater London rather than from the traditional pre-war recruitment areas. The officer corps of all units was middle class before the war and remained so throughout the war. This social change, over the course of the war, influenced how cohesion functioned, especially in class corps units. In these units, rankers and officers had been social equals but

¹¹¹ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.58-87.

¹¹² J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), p.237.

¹¹³ Grimwade, 4th, p.411.

the gradual influx of working class reinforcements changed the social relations and, as a result, so to the nature of horizontal and vertical cohesion (see Chapters 3 to 6).

C. Tactical and organisational change

Cohesion within military units is influenced by their purpose, structure and function. This section will examine how the platoon and section, in which the majority of soldiers spent their military lives, were configured, organised and employed on active service and how this changed over the course of the war as tactics and technology evolved.

The infantry battalion was the basic tactical unit of the infantry of the British Army. When all units under study arrived in France in 1914/5 they were organised into a headquarters section, a machine gun section of two weapons and four rifle companies (they had been organised under an eight company system in the UK but adopted the four company ‘modern pattern’ of regular units). Each company had four platoons of 56 men organised into four sections of around 12 riflemen, which was the ‘normal fire unit’. Each platoon had a headquarters section.¹¹⁴ Battalion headquarters managed the transport section, adjutant and orderly office and other departments.

The plan for the employment of an infantry battalion in an attack was through ‘fire and movement’. Sections and platoons gave each other mutual supporting fire while they advanced towards the enemy before mounting a final bayonet charge.¹¹⁵ However, the practical reality of trench warfare with its dependence on artillery to cut wire and deal with enemy trench fortifications, meant that operations in much of 1915 and 1916 became very focused on occupying and defending enemy positions, clearing dug outs and trenches with bombers and supplying the units occupying enemy territory.¹¹⁶ This approach was probably also taken because senior military leaders believed that new army volunteers and territorials lacked the necessary military skills for the pre-war ‘fire and movement’ tactics.¹¹⁷ As a result, infantry units became tied to specific objectives on strict timetables to comply with artillery

¹¹⁴ *Infantry Training, 4-Company Organisation* (GHQ, 1914), pp.xiv-xv. *Field Service Manual, 1914: Infantry Battalion. (Expeditionary Force)* (London, 1914), p.7.

¹¹⁵ P. Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Western Front* (London, 1996), pp.48-50.

¹¹⁶ For instance see battle orders for the Kensingtons at Aubers Ridge on 9/5/1915, Operational Order No.2, 5/1915, 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/1730.

¹¹⁷ Griffiths, *Battle*, pp.52-60. *SS109, Training of Divisions for Offensive Action* (GHQ, 1916), p.2.

schedules and focused on bombing and ad hoc temporary groups of men to be bombers or pioneers to help mop up enemy resistance and defend ground gained.¹¹⁸

The BEF's experience on the Somme led to the development of new tactics set out in the February 1917 publication *SS143 Instructions for the Training of Platoons for Offensive Action*.¹¹⁹ This described how new technologies, such as the Lewis gun, rifle grenade and hand grenade, which were becoming increasingly available, were to be used in a co-ordinated and combined manner to make the platoon an independent fighting unit. *SS143* organised the platoon into four specialist sections of bombers, rifle grenadiers, riflemen and Lewis gunners. Each section ideally had nine men, with four men constituting platoon headquarters, making a total of 40. The assault plan using these sections, was for the rifle grenadiers to give covering fire to the advancing rifle and bomber sections with the Lewis gun section engaging the 'main point of resistance' and working round a flank.¹²⁰

These tactics were quickly adopted and implemented by the units within three weeks of its publication and the Rangers were selected to demonstrate *SS143*'s attack scheme to the 'nobility and gentry of various divisions.'¹²¹ *SS143* had implications for how men related to each other, trained and operated. In sections which specialised in rifle grenades, and especially Lewis guns, men had to co-operate together to use their weapon to effect. They were no longer individual riflemen who could choose when to aim and fire (or not) their own weapon. Rifle grenadiers, as the 'howitzer' of the infantry, needed to work together to concentrate their fire to obtain a 'hurricane bombardment' which would give them 'superiority of fire'. It was centrally directed by their leader and it required them to be in close physical proximity to hear his commands.¹²² Similarly, Lewis gunners had to work together to fire their weapon, keep it supplied with ammunition and deal with stoppages which were a common problem and this required considerable interaction and communication.¹²³ There is evidence that men spent much time with their section colleagues on specialist training and certain units established battalion bombing and Lewis guns schools to facilitate this training.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ For example E.W. Squire was attached to the Kensingtons bombing section. Letter, 26/3/1915, E.W. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

¹¹⁹ J. Lee, 'Some Lessons of the Somme', in B. Bond (ed), *'Look to Your Front'* (London, 1999), pp.79-89.

¹²⁰ *SS143 Instructions for the Training of Platoons for Offensive Action* (GHQ, 1917), pp.6, 8.

¹²¹ Diary, 15-16/3/1917, 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA WO-95/2955. Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.82.

¹²² *SS143*, pp.6-8.

¹²³ *SS197, Tactics Employment of Lewis Guns* (GHQ, 1918).

¹²⁴ Training programme, 10/1917, 1/4 Battalion LRWD, TNA WO-95/2654. Battalion Bombing and Grenade School, 12/1917, 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA WO-95/2954.

In February 1918, a new document, *Platoon Training*, replaced *SS143*. It absorbed lessons of the 1917 battles and aimed to prepare the BEF to counter the expected German 1918 spring offensive. The platoon remained the ‘tactical unit of the infantry’ but the section became the most important element.¹²⁵ Its membership was set at a maximum of six plus their leader, a reduction of two men from the number specified in *SS143*, making the recommended platoon establishment 32, including the headquarters section. It also set out that ‘working parties’ and other duties ‘must be found by *complete units* under their own commanders [italics added]’ and that it could only be attached to another section if its strength was below three. The identity of the section was important and ‘transfer of NCOs and men from one section to another should be avoided’. These changes highlighted the importance of unit identity; men should be kept together where possible and deployed on tasks, such as fatigues, together rather than separately.¹²⁶

The other change *Platoon Training* brought was to reorganise platoons to have two rifle and two Lewis gun sections; doubling the number of Lewis guns to 32 per battalion. The rifle sections were designated to use rifles and other crewed weapons such as rifle grenades.¹²⁷ This meant that half of all men in a platoon from February 1918 were operating as part of a Lewis gun team. The men in the remaining half were operating independently as riflemen but also collectively as rifle grenadiers or bombers as the tactical situation dictated.

From 1917, the tactical reform of platoons brought three major changes to the way men fought in small units - firstly, increasing co-operation and interdependence through greater mechanisation of firepower – especially the increase in Lewis guns – and men becoming part of a team collectively operating weapon systems rather than an individual rifleman and consequently increasing his reliance, communication and co-operation with team mates in combat; secondly, sections and platoon became increasingly fixed in their membership with official policy forbidding movement of personnel except for promotion; and finally, units became smaller; a platoon establishment of 56 in 1914 was reduced in size by 40% to 36 by early 1918 which meant the milieu in which a soldier functioned, lived and fought became smaller and more intimate. It is argued in Chapter 3 that these changes created an

¹²⁵ *Platoon Training* (GHQ, 1918), p.2.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.1-5.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

environment which required much closer and intense working relationships which, in turn, had implications for generating horizontal cohesion.

D. Life on active service

The third and final section considers the everyday life of the serviceman in the frontline in the units under study. It is impossible to summarise the individual experiences; however, common themes are evident in nearly all recollections and those which influenced the formation and maintenance of cohesion will be explored. This will be followed with a quantitative analysis on how long soldiers actually spent in France and Belgium on active service as a background to determine if they were actually in units long enough to build relationships with their colleagues and leaders.

i) Existing in the trenches

For the vast majority, the first experience of military life was basic training. Early in the war this was conducted at the drill hall and from around 1916 it was conducted at London Regiment camps on Wimbledon and Richmond Commons but also at Fovant in Wiltshire. Many found that drill and especially singing on route marches helped them develop a ‘feeling of comradeship’.¹²⁸ Men's co-operation and compliance with military training were enforced by collective punishments for disciplinary infringements such as having dirty rifles.¹²⁹

On joining a battalion in the field, a man was assigned to a subunit for the duration of their service unless promoted. For instance, Private F.C. Higgins remained in the same platoon in the 1/4 Londons for all of his two years’ service as did Private Joseph Steward’s mates in the Kensingtons.¹³⁰ There were exceptions, for example, Kensington Private Fred Smith was an infantryman, stretcher-bearer and bomber.¹³¹ These moves could be arbitrary but rarely happened to men deployed to units requiring technical knowledge and skill. Rifleman Archie Groom, once deployed to his Lewis gun team remained there for his 20 months’ service.¹³² The same was true of Private Stuart Dolden, who served over 30 months as a D Company

¹²⁸ Holmes, IWM.

¹²⁹ Memoir, p.128, A.H. Collins, LC, GS 0340.

¹³⁰ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.42-181.

¹³¹ F. Smith, I'll always remember (Private), p.33.

¹³² Groom, *Poor*, pp.20-179.

cook in the London Scottish and Smith who was a driver in LRB's Transport section from late 1915 to the Armistice.¹³³

Experience varied considerably depending on the location and function of the battalion. Battle was probably the most striking memory for many. On one hand, many regarded it with sheer horror and terror; Kensingtons who survived Aubers Ridge regarded it as an 'action so terrible', 'hell unlimited' and 'a fantastic accumulation of tragedy'.¹³⁴ However, other Kensingtons had a different reaction, reflecting that their performance in battle demonstrated their martial prowess. Private George Spikins regarded it as a 'proud position for [us] territorials' with the 'regulars...[doing] the support work'.¹³⁵

Though battle may have been a dominant memory for many, it formed a relatively small part of their life on active service. Throughout 1915, the units under study spent less than seven days in battle. Even in the later years of the war, where the BEF fought large scale drawn out actions as set out above, men still spent relatively little time in high intensity combat. For example, the 56th Division spent only 10% of their time from February 1916 to the Armistice 'in battle', including engagements like the Somme, Arras or Cambrai.¹³⁶

Being rotated through front line trenches, support lines and reserve was a routine that occupied the majority of their men's time during the war. For example, between 1916 and 1918, the 56th Division spent 57% of its time manning trenches and rotating units between front, support and reserve lines.¹³⁷

The appalling physical conditions men had to endure emerge from nearly all accounts. For many men who were 'accustomed to the amenities of London home life nothing could...be more distasteful than...persistent muck and mud'; Private Edward Squire told his parents in January 1915 that 'we stand in mud, sleep in mud, eat mud, wear mud.'¹³⁸ These conditions were exacerbated by the weather, cold and the constant problem of lice, rats and vermin which added to men's misery.¹³⁹ Being in the trenches was tiring as there was often 'nowhere to rest, let alone sleep' and trench life was often 'continual service, hard work, lack of sleep

¹³³ Dolden, *Cannon*, pp. 64-181. F.C. Higgins, Reel-10. IWMSA, 9884. Smith, *Four*

¹³⁴ Letters 16/5/1915 & 15/5/1915, E.H. Anderton, IWM, 88/20/1. *Daily Graphic*, 18/5/1915. *The Kensington*, 3/1963.

¹³⁵ [Anon] Private Spikins quoted in W. Wood, *In the Line of Battle* (London, 1916), p.91.

¹³⁶ Diary of Events of 56th Division, p.7, TNA, WO-95/2931.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Hurd, *Fighting Vol. 1*, p.79. Letter, 14/1/1915, E.W Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

¹³⁹ F.C. Higgins, Reel-6, 9884; H.V. Stone, Reel-2, 24883; and F. Austin, Reel-1, 33293, IWMSA.

and long hours.’¹⁴⁰ In these conditions, men would often contract trench foot.¹⁴¹ Collective action was needed to build shelters and make life as comfortable as possible in this adverse environment and it helped to bring men together as comrades.

Men also had to cope with the physical destruction of the landscape, death and the detritus of the battlefield. For some individuals, as will be set out in Chapter 8, the sight of destroyed homes and villages gave them resolve to fight the Germans. For example, London Scot Douglas Pinkerton describes how he arrived at the front with his comrades in early 1915 to find that ‘such sights were new to us, and they had their full effect. Laughter and talking died... silent determination had taken its place to avenge’ the destruction.¹⁴²

In addition to these sites and hardships, men also had to deal with the enemy camped across no man’s land. Many units participated in informal truces as described by Tony Ashworth.¹⁴³ The LRB, QWR, and Kensingtons all participated in the 1914 Christmas truce and QVR, London Scottish and QWR all reported informal trucing in 1915.¹⁴⁴ It appears that this tacit trucing continued throughout the war with the 56th Division from 1916 to 1918 reporting that it spent 195 days in ‘quiet sectors’.¹⁴⁵ Some leaders and their men also actively sought to avoid contact with Germans while patrolling no man’s land.¹⁴⁶

Though men normally preferred to be in quiet sectors, they spent the majority of their time in ‘active sectors’.¹⁴⁷ The intensity of hostilities could vary considerably depending on their own belligerence or that of the enemy. At one end of the spectrum, units could face low-level attrition such as the Kensingtons during their initial deployment in the front line near Laventie from November 1914 until March 1915. Over the 115 days they held the line, the war diary recorded 27 days of sporadic sniping and 15 days of artillery fire. While this enemy action was intermittent, they still suffered casualties with 37 killed and 56 wounded.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ Kensington, 6/1962. E.H. Kennington, *The Kensingtons at Laventie, Notes for exhibition, The Goupil Gallery* (1916), p.7.

¹⁴¹ Diary, 21/12/1914, WD of 1/13 Battalion, London Regiment, TNA, WO-95 1730.

¹⁴² D. Pinkerton, *Ladies From Hell* (New York, 1918), pp.48-49.

¹⁴³ T. Ashworth, *Trench Warfare* (London, 1981).

¹⁴⁴ Maude, *History*, p.76. Walkington, *Twice*, pp.43-45. Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.27-29. C.A.C. Keelson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London, 1923), pp.48-49. H.B. Coates, Reel-2, IWMSA, 9833. Walkington, *Twice*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁵ Diary of Events of 56th Division, p.7, TNA, WO-95/2931. Also, see Smith, *Four*, p.195.

¹⁴⁶ L.C. Furse, Reel-1, IWMSA, 9712.

¹⁴⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.277. The 56th Division said that it spent 195 days in quiet sectors and 385 days in ‘active’ sectors. Diary of Events of 56th Division, p.7, TNA, WO-95/2931.

¹⁴⁸ Diary, 2/3/1915, 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/1730.

At the other end of the spectrum, units could be involved in pitched mini battles over weeks similar to that experienced by units of 169 Brigade, also in the Laventie sector, during January 1917 in what was known as the ‘saga of the posts’.¹⁴⁹ Battalions in the brigade were instructed by their Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Haking, to set up, occupy and ‘stubbornly defend’ a chain of outposts in the German front line in January 1917 opposite Laventie.¹⁵⁰ The outposts were located in isolated and poorly built positions on flooded ground with no shelter and overlooked by the Germans who frequently bombarded and raided them in the subzero conditions.¹⁵¹ Over a period of weeks the posts were held, lost and recaptured in a series of night fights in freezing weather.¹⁵² At the time, the Brigade Major for 169 Brigade questioned the utility of the outposts’ occupation as it adversely affected troop morale and the garrisons’ felt they were ‘occupying shell traps’.¹⁵³ The posts were quickly abandoned on army command orders.¹⁵⁴

In between these bursts of activity a ‘good deal of time was sitting about’ and as a result there ‘was always something or someone to laugh about; bits of letters to be read out; parcels to be shared; card schools; arguments about football teams; reminiscences of love affairs; letters to write; [and] cigarettes to smoke’.¹⁵⁵ In these conditions, Second Lieutenant Engall, in the QWR, reflected in a letter how ‘quickly you make friends when you’ve all a common danger to face; and the feeling of comradeship here is so different from that in England’.¹⁵⁶

No man entering the trenches throughout the war, whether that was in a quiet or active sector, knew exactly how he would cope with the terror, fear and sight of death once there. Rifleman Henry Bell, entering the line with the LRB in November 1914, was pleased that he ‘didn’t feel a bit nervous; merely interested’ because ‘he didn’t know how it would affect’ him.¹⁵⁷ Others had different reactions; Sergeant Harry Andrews in the Kensingtons admitted that German shelling made him ‘a bit squeamish’.¹⁵⁸ Some could never conquer their initial fear and others managed to cope and serve the whole duration of the war. Lord Moran, a regular medical officer, believed that different men’s resilience was explained by different levels of

¹⁴⁹ Groom, *Poor*, pp.73-86.

¹⁵⁰ Maude, *History*, p.179.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*

¹⁵² Henriques, *Westminsters*, pp.133-136.

¹⁵³ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, pp.108-109.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Higgins, Reel-9, IWMSA. Holmes, IWM.

¹⁵⁶ J.S. Engall, *A Subaltern's Letters* (London, 1917), p.60.

¹⁵⁷ H. Bell, *A Soldier's Diary of the Great War* (London, 1929), p.61.

¹⁵⁸ Undated cutting from *Kensington News*, Broughshane Scrapbook, Kensington and Chelsea Local Studies Centre.

‘courage’, a moral quality which gave their fortitude to cope with the stress of war. He believed that these qualities varied but, ultimately, all ‘men in war wear out like clothes’.¹⁵⁹ The exact number of men who became psychiatric casualties in the units under study is not known but anecdotal evidence suggests that though nearly all men felt ‘terrible fear at times’ there were only ‘occasional cases where a man’s reason broke down’.¹⁶⁰ It appears that many were resilient in the face of industrial war and adopted strategies to cope.¹⁶¹ In the QVR, Rifleman Bernard Stubbs ‘prayed fervently’ which helped him keep ‘calm and cool’ during an artillery bombardment.¹⁶² Many became emotionally detached from their surroundings, being ‘practically immune to the sight of death and terrible wounds’ concluding that ‘it would have been impossible to keep sane otherwise’.¹⁶³ Others adopted a fatalistic outlook; Sergeant Mason of the Rangers said the accepted philosophy was ‘if a bullet has got your name on it, then it is no good trying to dodge it’.¹⁶⁴ He believed that men ‘took such heart and comfort as they could from this doctrine and went forward to do their bit’ but still believed that their individual actions could increase their chance of survival.¹⁶⁵ A large number of men found that support and comfort in the company and friendship of others appeared to help them cope and manage the strain and trauma of the trenches.

The final element of men’s active service was that spent out of the line. This accounted for around a third of their time, again, like active sectors, experience at rest could be varied.¹⁶⁶ Stubbs complained after being ‘busy [on] fatigues...we come from the trenches for what is called...‘rest’....I should like to know what the army...call “work”’.¹⁶⁷ On many occasions men were given genuine relaxation, attended local entertainments, played sport, watched films and plays by concert troupes. This could divert men’s minds from the horrors of war; Sergeant T.H. Bisgood of the 1/2 Londons finding a Charlie Chaplin comedy ‘made us forget where we were’.¹⁶⁸ Others found the contact with civilians ‘did more to keep the spirit of the men that has ever been realised’.¹⁶⁹

¹⁵⁹ Moran, Lord, *The Anatomy of Courage* (London, 1945), pp.67-72.

¹⁶⁰ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.131.

¹⁶¹ A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.85-108.

¹⁶² B.C. Stubbs, *Diary Kept by Rifleman B.C. Stubbs* (Chicago, 1915), pp.15, 28.

¹⁶³ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.75-76.

¹⁶⁴ W.G. Holmes, Reel-6, IWMSA, 8868.

¹⁶⁵ R J Mason, ‘Up the Rangers’, p.31, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

¹⁶⁶ The 56th Division spent a third of its time on active service. Diary of Events of 56th Division, p.7, TNA, WO-95/2931.

¹⁶⁷ Stubbs, *Diary*, p.17.

¹⁶⁸ Diary, 12-19/12/1915, T.H. Bisgood, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488>, Accessed 7/1/2013.

¹⁶⁹ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.62.

The diversity of these experiences could influence how soldiers perceived the world, although these feelings were dynamic and transient. Groom recalled that men fluctuated between extremes of 'joy or despondency' that was 'up and down, up and down.'¹⁷⁰ The diary of Stubbs demonstrates these feelings well. Taking the month of March 1915 only, Stubbs's entries show how his personal morale varied. The night of 1 March 1915 was a 'perfect beast'. He was 'cold and wet', a shell burst on his parapet and he saw a man shot close to him. He had his 'first real feeling of funk' and struggled to maintain self-control. Over the next few days he wrote how being shelled was 'horribly nerve racking' and a listening patrol was 'a rotten job'. Towards the end of the month his moods picked up and he writes how he enjoyed playing football, and exclaimed about the 'joy of joys' of being ordered to parade to bath for the first time in two weeks.¹⁷¹

Though every serviceman's experience of active service and their reaction to it was unique, there were also many similarities. Men were frequently in situations of mortal danger from enemy action; they were predominantly outdoors, mostly in damp, muddy and cold conditions and they witnessed sights of destruction, death and decay for which little in their civilian lives could have prepared them. These extreme conditions were perceived differently by each person but they were shared on a daily basis with those around them. In these conditions, men were pushed to co-operate and depend on their fellow unit members. Shared military training had given them a shared language and methodology to approach and organise tasks. Working with others probably helped them stay alive, helped mitigate the tough physical conditions; for example jointly building a shelter, and also being with others may have helped to reduce the terror, stress, loneliness and boredom of trench life.

ii) The length of active service

A soldier's experience was determined largely by the length of time he spent with a unit at the front. Little research has been carried out into how long officers and rankers actually served in front line units. It is assumed that given that individual units suffered casualty rates up to four times their establishment of around 1,000, like the LRB, then soldiers spent little time with their units and with other men.¹⁷² Groom believed that the average infantryman

¹⁷⁰ Groom, *Poor*, p.98.

¹⁷¹ Stubbs, *Diary*, pp.15-68.

¹⁷² *Year Book*, p.25. Maude, *History*, p.428.

lasted 'statistically...six months only'¹⁷³ while Captain Thompson, in the QVR, said 'those who survived longer than six months considered themselves veterans.'¹⁷⁴ The length of time that a regimental officer spent with his unit is believed to have been even shorter, with popular estimates varying between three and six weeks.¹⁷⁵ Given this perception that soldiers only appeared to serve a short time, it is questionable whether men were able to bond with their colleagues and leaders during these brief periods of service.

Omer Bartov argued this point with regard to the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front during the Second World War. He wrote that units like the German 12th Infantry Division, which lost 16,112 men between 22 June 1941 and 16 October 1943, suffered such huge losses that men did not serve long enough for primary group cohesion to develop.¹⁷⁶ The losses of some German divisions on the Eastern Front appear to be similar to those suffered by British divisions on the Western Front. For example, the 56th Division suffered 34,809 casualties from February 1916 to the Armistice, roughly twice its establishment.¹⁷⁷ Given the apparent similarity of these casualty rates, it is also possible that the British soldiers in the units under study had insufficient time in the trenches to form relationships with their peers and leaders.

It is necessary to examine the length of time taken for men to develop cohesion and the length of time these soldiers actually served in France and Belgium with their units to be able to determine if primary group cohesion was established. Chapters 3 and 5 will address in more detail the length of time taken for men to develop cohesion and the length of time these soldiers actually served will be addressed further in this chapter.

It is necessary to take a quantitative approach to examine the actual length of time soldiers spent serving with their unit in the front line. The individual service records of soldiers have been examined to determine the length of time they served from entering France or Belgium until their service ended, for whatever reason which could include death, injury, illness, discharge, promotion, transfer or the Armistice. Calculations have been made for commissioned soldiers, using the service histories of 191 LRB officers and for enlisted men

¹⁷³ Groom, *Poor*, p.18.

¹⁷⁴ Thompson, p.16. IWM

¹⁷⁵ M. Middlebrook, *The Kaiser's Battle* (London, 1978), p.405. J. Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks* (London, 2011). R. Graves, 'The Kaiser's War: A British Point of View', in Panichas, *Promise of Greatness*, p.10. F.C. Hitchcock, 'Stand to', *A Diary of the Trenches 1915-1918* (London, 1937), p.258.

¹⁷⁶ O. Bartov, 'Daily life and motivation in war: The Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 12:2 (1989), p.202.

¹⁷⁷ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.314.

using the medal roll data of 3,101 Kensingtons other ranks. The length of service is calculated by each unique episode of service rather than a soldier's total service, which may involve several periods overseas. The length of service is calculated in the year that it ended and in days for the service preceding the end date. The methodology for these calculations is set out in Appendixes 6 and 7.

For other ranks, the average length of service in France throughout the war was 273 days, with an average of 122 days in 1914/5, 223 days in 1916, 246 days in 1917, 497 days in 1918 and 594 days on 11 November 1918. The proportion of men who served for 42 days (6 weeks) or less reduced from around 27% from 1914/5 to 1917 to 16% in 1918. At the same time, the number of men with six months or more service increased dramatically from 6% in 1914/5, to 49% in 1916, to 46% in 1917 to 71% in 1918. Also, one in eight men returned for a second episode of service.

This analysis shows that a surprisingly large number of other ranks, who deployed with the Kensingtons on 4 November 1914, were still with the unit at the Armistice. The figures suggest that 59 (7.4%) of the 790 Kensingtons, for whom records exist on 11 November 1918, served with the unit throughout the war and interestingly, 27 (3.4% of the total) were pre-war Territorials.

The figures for officers also suggest a similar pattern but show, not surprisingly, a shorter length of service. The data shows that the average length of a period of service was 178 days. Interestingly, the average length of duty also increases as the war progresses with the average episode of service in 1914/5 being 97 days, in 1916 being 137 days, in 1917 being 222 days and 243 days in 1918. Fewer than a fifth of officers spent six weeks or under with the LRB, suggesting the officers had far more time with their men than is popularly believed. More importantly, the number of officers serving six months or more rose from 8% in 1914/5 to 43% in 1918. Also, one in six returned for a second episode of service. These figures appear broadly to conform to the only other set of available figures produced by Martin Middlebrook, who calculated that the average length of service for junior officers in the 17th Division was around 185 days for the whole war.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ M. Middlebrook, *The Kaiser's Battle* (London, 1983), pp.405-407.

The data presented for officers in the LRB and other ranks in the Kensingtons could be considered to be representative for the other units under study, as all were deployed to France at roughly the same time. They had similar engagements in combat in 1915 and they all joined together in February 1916 in the 56th Division and the majority remained in the Division until the Armistice, with the exception of the Rangers and QVR who were disbanded in February 1918.

E. Conclusions

The battalions under study were combat units on active service for the duration of the war. They were deployed in 1914/5 and all units were engaged in near constant trench holding, being rotated through front line and support positions. Their service on the Western Front was interspersed with several episodes of battle and about a third of their time was spent behind the lines. The development of cohesion in these units is shaped by this experience and engagement over four years of the war.

From the individual perspective, this meant that soldiers were predominantly in the combat zone for all or the majority of their duty. Personal experience was dominated by situations of near and constant danger, where individuals were potentially at risk of death and injury. They were in areas which had suffered intense destruction through the static nature of warfare and were subject to the wrecked buildings, decay and detritus of war and all the sights of dead and rotting bodies of men and animals. Men lived predominantly outdoors and were frequently subjected to extreme physical conditions dominated by being cold, muddy and wet. They were also sent to a unit which they knew was probably going to be their permanent home for the duration of their service. These conditions encouraged men to co-operate, bond and engage with men who shared the same daily experiences. Men knew that collaboration with others could help them survive, mitigate their physical suffering and provide social and emotional support to cope with the terrible experiences they collectively witnessed. These factors probably persuaded them to form relationships with others and, ultimately, supported the development of horizontal and vertical cohesion throughout the war.

Running in parallel, the war exerted particular influences on battalions which shaped the 'environment' in which cohesion could develop. The first was the change in social composition and geographical origin of the rankers who filled the ranks. The units under

study until mid-1916 reflected their pre-war character; all retained their strong links with their affiliated regular units and selected, trained and reinforced their units in France with men who had volunteered to serve specifically in their unit. Units in 1915, despite the casualties of trench holding and battle, remained largely as they were pre-war. The class corps units – LRB, London Scottish and QWR – continued to draw their men predominantly from the suburban professional middle classes and retained their social exclusivity through membership requirements and subscriptions. The other five units drew their rankers from a mix of middle and working class professions, largely resident around their drill halls. The social composition had a major influence on the formation and maintenance of vertical and horizontal cohesion until 1916. In mid-1916, casualties incurred on the Somme and the introduction of conscription resulted in all units receiving increasing numbers of urban working class recruits. This change, especially in class corps units, had a dramatic effect on the nature of horizontal and vertical cohesion because the established social conventions were eroded as the social character of the units altered.

At the same time, major structural and tactical reforms of the battalions were occurring. These changed the operational functioning and tactical applications of the platoons in combat. From early 1917 to early 1918, platoons changed from four rifle sections to two Lewis gun and two rifle sections. These changes reduced the size of the platoon from 56 to 36, introduced crew operated and deployed weapons for nearly all platoon members, such as the Lewis gun and rifle grenade. This reduced the social horizon of sections and made them more intimate. It also turned independent riflemen into machine operators of crewed weapons, forcing a higher degree of interpersonal interaction, co-operation and communication between team members in training and combat, thus making relationships more intense.

The final factor which influenced the development of cohesion was the length of time soldiers spent on active service. The average length of service a soldier before they left their unit because of death, injury, illness, or other factors increased steadily through the war. For other ranks, the length of service in 1914/5 was 122 days and increasing to 497 days in 1918. For officers, the length of service in 1914/15 was 97 days and more than doubled to 243 days in 1918.

Chapter 3 - Horizontal cohesion – formation, nature and extent

Horizontal cohesion is defined as a positive primary group interpersonal relationship between peers of equal rank in a group or unit based on an exchange of mutual trust, commitment and loyalty which results in members actively co-operating and bonding on a common basis.¹ This chapter will examine the formation, nature and extent of horizontal cohesion and Chapter 4 will examine the impact and outcome of these relationships.

Much of the scholarship on horizontal cohesion has been conducted by social scientists and a brief summary of the key findings will be used as a framework for discussion when considering how horizontal cohesion operated in the units under study during the Great War. Guy Siebold suggested that trust is the essence of strong bonding between group members. This is demonstrated by group capacity for teamwork and caring behaviour between group members.² Frederick Manning proposed other indicators such as where units had high retention rates and unit members attempted to make their work group special, such as adopting nicknames and rituals.³

Some commentators suggest horizontal cohesion is created by two factors. The first is pre-existing background commonalities between group members, such as shared ethnicity, which can form the basis for relationships, by acting as ‘antecedent’ and creating common grounds for bonding.⁴ Others have highlighted the importance of shared experience, where men working together with frequent interaction and performing collective tasks can develop strong intimate bonds.⁵ Many argue that stability is the critical element needed in groups to enable relationships to form between men through shared experience.⁶ Without this, face-to-face relationships are difficult to establish and bonding does not follow.⁷

¹ G.L. Siebold, 'The Essence of Military Group Cohesion', *AF&S* 33:2 (1/2007), p.289.

² Ibid., p.288. N. Kinzer Stewart, *Mates and Muchachos: Unit Cohesion in the Falklands/Malvinas War* (New York, 1991), p.27. F. J. Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion' in F.D Jones et al (eds), *Military Psychiatry Preparing In Peace For War* (WRAMC, 1994), pp.11-12.

³ Ibid., pp.11-12.

⁴ W. D. Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat* (Washington DC, 1988), p. 75. M.D. Smith & J.D. Hagman, *Personnel Stabilization and Cohesion: A Summary of Key Research/Replacement System Assessment: Literature Review* (Adephi, 2004), p.10. M. Salo, *The Relation Between Group-Level Characteristics and Group Cohesion* (Adephi, MD, 2006), pp.2-3. Quoted in F. B. Kish, *Cohesion: the Vital Ingredient for Successful Army Units* (Carlisle, 1982), pp.12-13.

⁵ Smith, Personnel, p.10. P.T. Bartone, B.H. Johnsen, J. Eid, W. Brun & J.C. Laberg, 'Factors Influencing Small Unit Cohesion in Norwegian Navy Officer Cadets', *Military Psychology*, 14:1 (2002), pp.1-22, 7, 11-12. J. Hamilton, 'Unit Cohesion', *Canadian Army Journal*, 12:3 (Winter 2010), pp.16-17. P.T. Bartone & A.B. Adler, 'Cohesion Over Time in a Peacekeeping Medical Task Force', *Military Psychology* 11:1 (2000), p. 87.

⁶ Smith, Personnel, pp.11, 124-126.

⁷ F.G. Wong, *A Formula for Building Cohesion* (Carlisle, 1985), p.21. A.L. Corbacho, 'A Study of Professionalism during the Falklands/Malvinas War: The Case of the Argentine Marines', *Conference of Army Historians*, 13-15/7/2004, pp.17-18.

Debate has also focused on the length of time it takes to form cohesive units or groups. The exact length of time required for men to bond together is unknown but Paul Bartone and Faris Kirkland suggest between 10 and 12 months for men to bond into a 'combat mature unit'.⁸ Others argue the development of cohesion over time is neither a steady-state phenomenon nor a monotonically ascending function of time. Uzi Ben-Shalom and colleagues suggest that cohesion can develop very rapidly in specific circumstances. They put forward the idea of 'swift trust' in a study of Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) during the 2000 Al-Aqsa Intifada. It was found that instead of cohesion being based on long developed close personal relationships, it was instead built on 'loose coalitions created ad hoc for specific tasks'. Organic IDF units were 'split into components deployed in diverse areas and under the command of different commanders' and 'units were temporarily joined together according to the task at hand.' Units worked well together and he argues that 'traditional military ways of bonding [were] not useless' but that 'the dynamics of trust develop[ed] in a different way'. Groups were brought 'together...with a clear goal and their success depends on a...coordinated coupling of activity' and the result being 'an intensification of time through the constraints of carrying out assigned missions'.⁹

A number of historians have considered how men related to their peers during the Great War. Joanna Bourke argues that although the experience of war could enhance bonding, its extent was limited. Men related with others because of their 'attraction to the aesthetic beauty' of the uniformed group and the absence of women in the trenches but, ultimately, they did not bond with each other because their real world remained situated in the domestic realm at home and the emotional trauma of conflict prevented men getting close to others.¹⁰ Some historians question whether peer group bonding was possible in any war which had high levels of casualties, given the disruption to primary group relationships.¹¹ Other scholars suggest that peer group bonding was a major feature of the wartime experience and often a 'compensation' for the hardships of the trenches.¹² Helen McCartney argues that primary group bonding in the Liverpool Territorial units was based on pre-war civilian experience, especially in the early

⁸ Smith, *Personnel*, pp.6-7. Cited in P.C. Boer, 'Small Unit Cohesion: The Case of Fighter Squadron 3-VI.G.IV', *AF&S* 28:1 (Fall 2001), p. 35.

⁹ U. Ben-Shalom, Z. Lehrer & E. Ben-Ari, 'Cohesion during Military Operations: A Field Study on Combat Units in the Al-Aqsa Intifada', *AF&S* 32:1 (10/2005), pp.63-79.

¹⁰ J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Chicago, 1996), pp.128-152.

¹¹ O. Bartov, 'Daily life and motivation in war: The Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 12:2 (1989), pp.201-203.

¹² R. Van Emde, *The Soldier's War* (London, 2008), pp.22-23. Bourne, 'The British...', pp.347-348.

stages.¹³ Leonard Smith, with reference to the French 5th Division, suggests that the constant and close physical contact between men who shared ‘hardships and dangers’ in the trenches built strong horizontal bonds of ‘sociability’.¹⁴

This chapter will now explore the extent and nature of horizontal cohesion among the men in the units under study to establish if bonding was limited, as Bourke suggested, or whether it was a common experience of the front line soldier. It will examine the two major motivations for cohesion – task and social – in turn. For each, it will consider the role of shared commonalities or shared experience in creating and sustaining cohesion and finally, the impact of casualties on men’s opportunity to form task and socially cohesive relationships throughout the war.

A. Task cohesion

Task cohesion can be said to exist where men trust each other to work collectively, interdependently and co-operatively with a shared commitment to common objectives such as a specific job role or assignment. This largely happens within the confines of task groups such as rifle sections or Lewis guns team, which are structured around common functions or work. It can be demonstrated through effective teamwork, both within a unit or group and working with other groups or teams to co-ordinate joint action towards a greater objective.¹⁵

Men developed task cohesion in two situations while on active service in France and Belgium. The first was as part of a small functional sub-unit or group to which nearly all men were placed on joining a battalion, such as a Lewis gun team or a rifle section. Most men remained in these subunits for their service in the battalion and developed close and intimate relationships. The second was as part of larger ad-hoc groups drawn together for short-term jobs and tasks such as a fatigue or wiring party. These larger groups were often built up of small functional teams formed from volunteers or selected individuals for a specific task, such as a raid. The evidence suggests that men working in both scenarios developed task cohesion to deliver their tasks, jobs and work.

¹³ H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005), pp.52-53.

¹⁴ L. Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience* (Princeton, 1994), pp.79-89.

¹⁵ M. Salo, ‘United We Stand’ (PhD, University of Helsinki, 2011), pp.22-26.

Men spent the majority of their active service as part of a small team or unit and all accounts show that men developed co-operative and reciprocal relationships to carry out their assigned tasks or jobs. The size of these groups varied with the unit size and their work. For instance, Private Stuart Dolden's account as a London Scottish company cook shows how he worked closely with four colleagues for two years to supply hot food to their comrades. It clearly shows a shared commitment to their task and high levels of reciprocity and mutual confidence. They co-operated to solve challenges such as finding they had overslept one morning and they did not have enough time to light their cookers to boil water for the mess orderlies' tea. To avoid potential censure or punishment, their solution was to steal petrol from a nearby ASC dump which heated the water rapidly, 'easily breaking the record'. He also worked successfully with cooks from another company to split the work and gain economies of scale, which meant one team fed both companies while the other team had time off.¹⁶

It appears that many men developed high levels of identification with their work group and had professional pride. Many units gave themselves nicknames such as Sergeant T.H. Bisgood's 1/2 Londons sniping section of around six people, which called itself the 'brainwave dept', which suggested a close identification with their group and work.¹⁷ Private John Tucker in the Kensingtons' eight-man pioneer section said they 'never let conditions or danger hold [them]...up' and he personally 'felt great satisfaction' when completing a building or supply job.¹⁸

The nature of task cohesion in small groups often reflected the type of work they did. Those who operated a weapon system, such as a Lewis gun, often developed cohesion based on the technical aspect of the weapons system.¹⁹ Successful operation of the Lewis gun required the team to work closely together to ensure it was supplied with adequate ammunition and technical assistance in the event of mechanical problems such as stoppages, both well-known problems with the Lewis gun.²⁰ The crew needed to have close physical proximity, mutual surveillance and constant communication and this probably contributed to a strong interdependence and close relationships. During an attack, a Lewis gunner would run with his weapon and dive into a shell hole; then a man behind with an ammunition pannier, would take

¹⁶ A.S. Dolden, *Cannon Fodder* (Poole, 1980), pp. 64-181, 101-102, 127.

¹⁷ Diary, 16/11/1916, T.H. Bisgood, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488> Accessed 7/1/2013.

¹⁸ J. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.130.

¹⁹ M. Janowitz, *Sociology and Military Establishment* (New York, 1965), pp. 66-67. Kish, Cohesion, p.21.

²⁰ W.H.A Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), pp.105, 69.

his place as he ran forward.²¹ As a result of their work together, LRB Rifleman Archie Groom's Lewis gun section was a 'team of good companions.'²²

In contrast to this, task cohesion in a battalion transport section (of around 40 men) was not based on the same close physical proximity.²³ Instead, drivers, grooms and pony pack men spent much of their work independently either caring for their animals or delivering loads. Despite the often solitary nature of the work, men still had to trust and rely on others; for instance, the drivers would have to depend on grooms to care for their horses. Transport work in the LRB suited Rifleman Aubrey Smith, who liked the independence, but he said the section had a strong work based ethos; the motto for the section was 'we deliver the goods.'²⁴

The second situation men found themselves working in was as part of larger temporary groups drawn together to complete a short-term limited task such as a carrying party or burial detail. The size of working parties could vary from platoon to battalion size, depending on the situation. They were often formed quickly and composed of those who happened to be in the vicinity and included men who may not have known one another; for instance, Dolden, a company cook and colleagues, unexpectedly had to act as a covering party for a group of Royal Engineers working in no man's land in July 1916.²⁵ The evidence suggests that men largely worked effectively by developing task cohesion with those they knew intimately in their small functional task groups but this was also possible in larger groups.

Why did men develop task cohesion? As pointed out in Chapter 2, all men had been through basic military training which helped create a shared language and experience of co-operation and teamwork. Many found that drill, and especially singing, on route marches helped them develop a sense of collectivity.²⁶ At the end of their basic training, 'men changed from soft, weedy civilians into hard, competent warriors'.²⁷

Once deployed to France, the environment in which men found themselves gave them additional reasons to co-operate with others on common tasks. Soldiers knew their chances of

²¹ J. Steward, *The Platoon* (London, 2012), p.176.

²² Groom, *Poor*, p.100.

²³ A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), p.128.

²⁴ Smith, *Four*, pp.181, 340, 92.

²⁵ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.78.

²⁶ Account of T.H. Holmes [No page numbers], IWM, 06/30/1.

²⁷ Ibid.

survival increased if they worked with their comrades and, consequently, they united in the ‘face of common danger.’²⁸ In addition, collective action helped men mitigate the discomfort caused by their physical environment such as working together to build shelters against the rain.²⁹ Teamwork was further reinforced by regular training sessions of platoon and company, organised by battalions when out of the line.³⁰ Underpinning this need for co-operation was the threat of military discipline if they failed to carry out orders. There was also a perception among soldiers that they had no realistic chance of escaping their unit once they were overseas. Men deployed to a unit within a battalion usually remained with that unit for their service (see Chapter 2) unless promoted, or in rare situations, transferred. Groom contends that only after ‘six days in a rat ridden trench’ all men, given the choice, would have ‘taken a cushy job away from the place of fear’.³¹ Many men obtained legal exits from the front line, such as being commissioned; however, the majority saw no real means of escape and felt ‘irrevocably condemned to remain...until wounds, sickness or death should carry them away’.³² While men could and did leave the front with self-inflicted wounds, the vast majority were deterred from such action given the social stigma and disciplinary consequences. As a result, many men adopted a fatalistic attitude, ‘if he had to die nothing could save him, and if he had to live, nothing could kill him.’³³ However, for numerous men this was not a passive acceptance of an inevitable destiny but a mental coping mechanism with the situation they were in; many still reasoned that there was a ‘chance to save oneself by caution and good scout craft’ and the best opportunity to do this was by working with the men in their task group or unit of which they were a member. Individual survival became closely linked with unit survival and this was best achieved through collective action.³⁴

Also, the motivation to develop task cohesion was often contextual to the size and intimacy of group and their members. In large ad-hoc groups, where men may not have known one another, co-operation may be explained as a form of ‘swift trust’. Men relied on their colleagues because they had the collective experience of basic military training that taught them to trust and work with others in the same uniform. They were also in situations where completing the shared task with others would reduce their mutual exposure to danger. For example, in 1918, Private T.H. Holmes in the Kensingtons was on a trench digging fatigue and as a result of being

²⁸ Account of G.E.V. Thompson, p.5, IWM, 75/36/1.

²⁹ Thompson, p.24, IWM. Smith, *Four*, p.133.

³⁰ For instance see Appendix C [training programme] 9/1917, 1/4 Battalion LRWD, TNA WO-95/2954. Diary, 22/11/1915, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA WO-95/2960.

³¹ Groom, *Poor*, p.44.

³² Smith, *Four*, pp.69, 225.

³³ T. Tiplady, *The Soul of the Soldier* (London, 1918), p.122.

³⁴ R.J. Mason, ‘Up the Rangers’, p.31, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

a ‘very inferior digger’, his ‘part of trench progressed very slowly’. The man next to him though was ‘something of an expert, and finished his portion of trench’ and turned to help Holmes, ‘not so much on a generous impulse, as in the knowledge that none of us would be allowed to go until the prescribed length of trench was dug’.³⁵

A differing set of dynamics existed in smaller functional teams, from that noted in the larger ad-hoc groups described above. In small teams men had close personal relationships with others and relied on others to help them do their work and they developed interdependent social interactions to facilitate this. Importantly, they all knew that to survive, they depended on their colleagues and were ‘welded together through mutual danger and discomfort’. The nature of these relationships was often functional rather than based on liking or familiarity with the other team or group members. While many men got on well with their team mates, this was not necessary for them to co-operate. For example, T.H. Holmes worked effectively with his colleagues in the Kensingtons’ C Company HQ section but actively disliked several of them, especially fellow signaller Steer who was a ‘sly...mischief maker’.³⁶

Building task cohesion in small units was achieved by a combination of shared experiences and common backgrounds. At the start of the war, many men had the shared commonality of being pre-war volunteer territorials and knew each other from the weekly drill night and attendance at the annual camps and, as a result, many were deployed to France with men they had known for years. Many of the men who volunteered in the first two years often had common membership of pre-war social networks created through attending the same school or college. For example, 900 students and former students from Regent’s Street Polytechnic joined the Rangers, of whom 180 attended a Founder’s Day celebration in the trenches in France during February 1915.³⁷ These extended networks were important in establishing relationships in small units. Pinkerton recalled a London Scots reinforcement arriving at the front that contained ‘old friends’ and the union of the new draft and veterans was like ‘returning to school after a vacation’.³⁸ Padre Tiplady, chaplain in the QWR, told of the ‘pleasure a man feels when he meets someone he knew in...peace or even someone who knows the street or town out of which he came’.³⁹ These shared reference points of common backgrounds helped develop relationships. In the LRB, Rifleman Bell found Rowmer in his section and, on discovering they

³⁵ Holmes, IWM

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ P. Hurd, *Fighting Territorials*, Vol.1 (London, 1915), p.75. *Polytechnic Magazine*, 2/1915, p.27.

³⁸ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.96-97.

³⁹ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.142.

had been at the same school, became 'close pals'.⁴⁰ However, these commonalities declined as conscription was introduced and units could no longer select, train and deploy their own volunteers.

While shared commonalities helped form relationships, it is probable that shared experience cemented working relationships. Relationships were largely formed outside the heat of battle through the mundane routine of training, trench holding and rest.⁴¹ Most men learned practical trench skills from their colleagues such as Groom, who learned survival by watching the old soldiers in his unit and others were taught their particular job and, once competent, they then trained others.⁴² For example, T.H. Holmes 'nursed' two new members of his company HQ signal section to become competent signallers just as he himself had been supported.⁴³ Many new men were actively and positively integrated into task groups, the veterans knowing that training the rookies to be competent was in their interest to reduce their work load and improve collective security. Tucker was 'welcomed...in a generous and friendly manner' and Dolden shared his rations with new comers as men had done when he arrived in the unit.⁴⁴ Overall, men worked together through 'common prudence and the instinct of self-preservation [that] combine[d] to reduce the danger to its lowest limits.'⁴⁵

Battalions also sought to accelerate the integration of new men into units. Pinkerton arriving in the London Scottish was orientated into the unit and 'we worked at odd, meaningless jobs about the place...to familiarize ourselves with the modus operandi of the front-line'.⁴⁶ All units had regular training in sections, platoon and companies and some set up special courses to improve technical skills, which in turn helped men work effectively in their teams.⁴⁷ For instance, in October 1917 the Rangers developed five-day training programmes for Lewis guns, bombing and musketry to prepare men to pass official tests.⁴⁸ Additionally, for specific technical roles, some units adopted selection tests to ensure men were up to the work; for example, Holmes passed a test to be a company signaller.⁴⁹

⁴⁰ Bell, *Soldier's*, p.34.

⁴¹ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.52.

⁴² Groom, *Poor*, pp.46, 155.

⁴³ Holmes, IWM.

⁴⁴ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.26. Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.19, 48.

⁴⁵ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.138.

⁴⁶ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.54-55.

⁴⁷ For instance see Appendix C [training programme] 9/1917, 1/4 Battalion, LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954. Diary, 22/11/1915, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2960.

⁴⁸ Memo for Training, 10/1917, 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954.

⁴⁹ Holmes, IWM.

The time taken to achieve task cohesion in small units is difficult to assess but anecdotal evidence provides an indication. The available accounts suggest that becoming technically competent in a role and establishing task cohesion could happen reasonably quickly. For example, Dolden joined the company cooks in May 1916 on a temporary posting with ‘not the faintest idea about cooking’ but by June he described his cooking team as ‘we’ and was trusted to operate independently with the cooker.⁵⁰ Pinkerton deployed to a rifle section recalled that ‘we rapidly became rather set in our ways...experiences that would have filled a volume a month before were now ignored and forgotten’ suggesting that he had settled in rapidly.⁵¹ Smith joined the LRB transport section in September 1915 and was told he would be ‘quite efficient’ in a month and by November was given his own horse team and was busy taking an active part in the section.⁵² It is estimated that men probably took between 1 to 2 months (six weeks) to build effective task cohesion both in mastering the technical aspects of a role and building relationships in a team.

It is probable that the vast majority of men joining the units under study had the opportunity to build task cohesion with their colleagues, as throughout the war over two thirds of the men served longer than six weeks, as stated in Chapter 2. This questions previous assertions by some historians that bonding was not possible due to high levels of casualties in high intensity conflicts.

Once in a unit, task cohesion was maintained by informal group norms. These are group-held beliefs about how group members should behave in a given context and exert a powerful influence on behaviour.⁵³ In observational studies, it appears that collective behaviour is often directed towards a given task or situation which is dependent on how it benefits the group’s security, comfort and well-being.⁵⁴ It is highly probable that similar informal norms existed in the units under study. For example, Groom learned early on that ‘to survive, no unnecessary risk should be taken’.⁵⁵ Men respected those who showed courage under fire but not those who embarked on risky ‘devil may care behaviour’, especially where this may endanger the group unnecessarily.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.64-70.

⁵¹ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.54-55.

⁵² Smith, *Four*, p.86.

⁵³ D.C. Feldman, ‘The Development and Enforcement of Group Norms’, *Academy of Management Review*, 9:1 (1/1984), pp.47-53.

⁵⁴ K. Pipping, *Infantry Company as a Society* (Helsinki, 1947), p.202.

⁵⁵ Groom, *Poor*, p.155.

⁵⁶ Walkinton, *Twice*, pp.21-22. Groom, *Poor*, p.155.

The process by which groups decided on collective action and setting informal norms is complex. Soldiers often found themselves in difficult situations where collective action was required and agreement on the necessary action was achieved by debate and discussion amongst the group. For example, Smith and colleagues held a ‘hurried council of war’ to carry out reprisals against a ‘vitriolic’ French farmer.⁵⁷ Some informal norms were probably set by unwritten rules of human co-operation which dictated that, if you wanted to share in the benefits of group action, then a shared effort was expected, such as working together to improve billets.⁵⁸ Some norms were created by fatalistic beliefs, where groups preferred ‘ease and comfort to safety’.⁵⁹ Others were passed down from veteran to new comer, such as seemingly strange ‘ancient trench superstitions’ including ‘it is bad luck to light three cigarettes with the same match’ or look at a new moon through glass and some were simply reactions to the situations men found themselves in, such as, the relaxed approach taken towards security by some groups, where no threat was perceived.⁶⁰ This approach may have been seen as reckless behaviour by the uninformed observer. For instance, in late 1918 Private Joseph Steward’s section in the Kensingtons was in a shell hole in no man’s land and though orders mandated men kept watch, they did not post sentries as they knew no ‘Jerry’s would be...about’ and squatted in their hole ‘regardless of everyone’.⁶¹

In some groups, tasks were allocated in a hierarchical manner based on length of service. For instance, men became the number one on Lewis guns through their experience and length of service.⁶² Men who were new to units often got the menial jobs; T.H. Holmes in the Kensingtons as junior company signaller had to collect the rations as did J.A. Pincombe in his QWR rifle platoon despite being one of the oldest in his group.⁶³ In other groups, it is probable that dominant individuals dictated the allocation of roles and tasks. Tucker recalled how he joined a section where the ‘older soldiers’ were held in ‘awe’ by the ‘younger men’ due to ‘the impression [they gave] of being dangerous men to quarrel with, having no respect for Queensberry Rules’ and often managed to get the ‘best jobs’ for themselves.⁶⁴

In class corps units during the first two years of the war, informal norms were heavily dictated by the shared middle class backgrounds of the rankers. Men would actively run their task teams

⁵⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.202.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p.182.

⁵⁹ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.121.

⁶⁰ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.73. Tiplady, *Soul*, p.195.

⁶¹ Steward, *Platoon*, p.183.

⁶² See Groom, *Poor* and the character Knight in Steward, *Platoon*.

⁶³ Holmes, IWM. Account by J A Pincombe, NAM, 6833.

⁶⁴ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.20.

along ‘public school lines’ as all had a shared public or grammar school background.⁶⁵ This system was known as ‘reciprocal responsibility’; where leaders allowed their men to ‘do their allotted work without...supervision and criticism’ in return for men exercising a high standard of work and a collective responsibility in completing their allotted tasks and maintaining discipline.⁶⁶ This system worked because middle class rankers were of high social ‘standing...and [having] a high standard of education’ they knew from their ‘upbringing [and public or grammar school education] when discipline was necessary and to whom obedience was due’.⁶⁷ Their shared experience of the same educational system and values meant they all had a unwritten expectation of how to behave and a belief in the value of such a system and as a result they did not need to have discipline ‘drilled into [them]...on the parade ground’.⁶⁸ Units managed their own performance and group norms; LRB said the men were active in correcting ‘lapses’ of colleagues and the London Scottish said discipline was ‘largely administered by the men themselves.’⁶⁹ This appears to have operated effectively; in the LRB Rifleman Latham, billeted with six privates in early 1915, recalled that they managed their own affairs on a ‘co-operative basis’ despite the regulations stipulating that the oldest private had authority and Groom said that men ‘stood together and did not let the side down’.⁷⁰ However, this system only lasted as long as the class corps units remained dominated by middle class rankers and that ceased to be the case after the Somme.

Task cohesion in small groups was further ‘encouraged’ by an unwritten law of equality of effort. Failure to do equal share of the work resulted in unpopularity. Rifleman Tugswell in Leslie Walkinton’s QWR platoon was ‘unpopular’ because he was a ‘bible-puncher’ but also ‘inefficient’.⁷¹ Those who avoided their fair share were disliked; in the Kensingtons, Holmes detested ‘repulsive’ Goodliffe who played the violin and ‘worked his way into the Officers Mess, and thereby dodged fatigues, [and]...was thoroughly unpopular’ [sic].⁷²

Group members would encourage others to do their bit, supporting weaker members by carrying their rifles during a route march to prevent the ‘fearful disgrace’ of them falling out.⁷³

⁶⁵ J. Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London, 1926), p.382.

⁶⁶ See K.W. Mitchison, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995). Smith, *Four Years*, pp.92-93.

⁶⁷ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.18. B. Latham, *A Territorial Soldier's War* (London, 1967), pp.23, 2.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.60. B. Mainwood, a veteran of the London Scottish, said that discipline was stricter than in any other regiments and that was largely administered by the men themselves. *Sunday Times*, 20/5/1973.

⁷⁰ Latham, *Territorial*, p.18. Groom, *Poor*, p.45.

⁷¹ Walkinton, *Twice*, p.54.

⁷² Holmes, IWM.

⁷³ *The Kensington*, Autumn 1974.

They could also bully and cajole members to conform; Walkinton recalls how Trevor Jacobs got 'jeers and laughter' for being badly turned out on parade.⁷⁴ However, if a man failed to comply with informal groups rules, such as equality of effort, he could face social exclusion from the group. However, the group could accept difficult men if they were useful. Sergeant Mason, serving in the Rangers, had one section member who was a 'most difficult character'. Whilst they all 'knew this man well and tolerated these violent outbursts of temper for no reason, he was absolutely fearless and thoroughly reliable in action' [sic].⁷⁵

For many men, task groups were often co-terminus with social groups with whom they spent time off-duty and behind the lines. Friendships were generated as a result of being in task groups.⁷⁶ However, these were different from the more intense relationships generated by social cohesion. For instance, Rifleman Bob Brookes described the QWR signal section of 50 as 'one large family' and they frequently had 'feasts'.⁷⁷ Smith and friends in the 40 strong LRB transport section set up its own magazine *Old Doings* and certainly these close relationships could be important in raising one's morale. Kensington Private Anderton wrote to his friend Alf, saying that when he and friends were 'downhearted and depressed', they formed a group to 'strike up a song and...raise... [their] drooping spirits'.⁷⁸ While men's relationships in these groups could not be described as social cohesion (this will be set out in the next section), they were social, in that, people knew them as individuals and compliance with the prevailing informal group norms could make life significantly more bearable.⁷⁹

It would appear that relationships in task groups were largely ordered. Men were often forced to curb anti-social behaviour, such as Private Hook in the Kensingtons, a petty pre-war thief, who took great pride telling his mates of his many 'adventures' (crimes) in England but 'was not the sort of man to steal from his comrades'.⁸⁰ In the LRB, men 'behaved' and in the 1/4 Londons there was 'no stealing like there was at home...or slogging matches'.⁸¹

While the majority of accounts suggest that men had high levels of trust with their work colleagues, there were times when personalities clashed and circumstances disrupted group relationships. Walkinton noted that during the winter of 1914/5 'tempers got a bit frayed and

⁷⁴ Walkinton, *Twice*, pp.21-22.

⁷⁵ Mason, p.28, IWM.

⁷⁶ Higgins, Reel-9, IWMSA.

⁷⁷ Brookes.

⁷⁸ Smith, *Four Years*, p.128. Letter, 23/4/1915, E.H. Anderton, IWM, 88/20/1.

⁷⁹ T. Ashworth, *Trench Warfare* (London, 1981), p.155.

⁸⁰ Steward, *Platoon*, p.183.

⁸¹ C.F. Miller, Reel-1, IWMSA, 11043. Higgins, Reel-9, IWMSA.

we had the petty squabbles that men always have under such conditions'.⁸² In 1918, T.H. Holmes's company HQ section was trapped inside a small bunker for days by German shelling and team cohesion began to splinter into arguments, bullying and alcohol abuse which was an 'inevitable result amongst men when they are forced to put up with one another's undiluted company for long periods'.⁸³ However, by and large, these were temporary and once the circumstances changed, the relationships returned to normal.

Informal norms regulated how groups would divide and perform tasks but how teams regarded themselves and were regarded by others also had an influence on their task cohesion. Groom's Lewis gun team drew satisfaction from 'being the most important section in the platoon' and they had 'elite' status in the platoon and missed fatigues and had the best billets as a result.⁸⁴ The signal section of the QWR reserve unit, based in Richmond Park in late 1917, 'modestly described themselves as the eyes and ears of the army'. The 'tone of the section was a cut above the companies' and were approached 'with respect by the rest of the battalion' and considered itself an 'entity'.⁸⁵ Pinkerton said that his sniper section 'dared not enter a trench, unless we cared to take a verbal "strafing"' because they had failed to kill a troublesome German sniper and 'agreed upon a definite plan of campaign to wipe out this annoying fellow and...the unsavoury reputation that had fallen upon our heads'.⁸⁶

It is probable that men's experiences of civilian life influenced their ability to cohere and co-operate with their co-workers. Many working class men grew up in big families in small houses and were used to physical closeness.⁸⁷ Coming from a large Battersea family, Rifleman W.G. Holmes, in the Rangers, found he 'could mix in with the men no trouble at all...it was normal life'.⁸⁸ Working class life in London also had a community spirit which built mutual support in the face of hardship; communities in Lambeth would 'unite instinctively' to help others in need which 'was a kind of mutual respect in the face of trouble'.⁸⁹ Also, many men had previous experience of para-military youth groups, like the Boys' Brigade, that helped them adapt to the communal aspects of military life.⁹⁰

⁸² Walkington, *Twice*, p. 52.

⁸³ Holmes, IWM.

⁸⁴ Groom, *Poor*, pp. 100, 69, 131.

⁸⁵ Holmes, IWM.

⁸⁶ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.136.

⁸⁷ Bourne, 'The British Working Man...', pp.349-347.

⁸⁸ Holmes, Reel-1, IWMSA.

⁸⁹ M. Pember Reeves, *Round About A Pound a Week* (London, 1914), pp.39-40.

⁹⁰ Simkins, *Kitchener's*, p.20. Higgins, Reel-3, IWMSA. H.W.G Gower, Reel-1, 10966, IWMSA.

Another important background influence which may have affected task cohesion between men was prevailing notions of Edwardian masculinity. Many soldiers in the front line got their 'first chance of doing "a man's job,"' ⁹¹ but some feared they would not 'be able to live up to it...[many having the] haunting fear that there may be a strain of the coward in his make-up'. ⁹² Groom said one of the major challenges when in the line was not to show fear and to avoid 'being labelled as 'windy'' as this 'would mean letting down your companions or letting the side down.' He believed that it was the 'mental strain of not showing fear that is far more exhausting than fear itself'; men were 'afraid of being afraid'. ⁹³ As a result, many under strain and stress in the trenches sought to be 'Spartan without thought for the sweet ways of life' and 'play...the man' keeping under all sensitive, tender-hearted feelings that, if indulged in, might render one a coward. ⁹⁴

The final aspect to consider is how the formation and maintenance of task cohesion in groups and teams were affected by the war. Personnel changes brought on by casualties, promotions and transfers affected teams and groups throughout the war. The impact of personnel changes on soldiers' task cohesion is difficult to establish as it is not commented on by many soldiers. The reason for this lack of reference is difficult to explain but due to the fact that many men accepted the change and loss of personnel as part of the nature of war and adapted to the situation. For example, T.H. Holmes took over the role of lead company signaller from his colleagues Keane and Steer when they left. He got two new signallers whom he trained and all he said about the change was that 'the section did not disintegrate'. This and other accounts suggest that personnel change was accepted and dealt with and task cohesion did not breakdown as members left and others joined. ⁹⁵ Units sought to integrate new men quickly and battalions aimed to equip these men with the technical skills they needed to do their work through extensive training programmes. The influence of shared commonalities as a factor for building and maintaining task cohesion declined as the social and regional composition of units altered and the soldiery more diverse from mid-1916. In addition, the informal norm system of reciprocal responsibility also collapsed in class corps units as they became increasingly dominated by working class men (this will be discussed further in Chapter 5).

⁹¹ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.34.

⁹² Ibid, pp.124-125.

⁹³ Groom, *Poor*, p.56. See also Tucker, *Johnny*, p.131. Diary, 30/6/1916, H.T. Clements, IWM, 86/76/1.

⁹⁴ Letter, 24/3/1918, C.T. Newman, IWM, 30/5/01.

⁹⁵ Holmes, IWM. See Smith, *Four* and Dolden, *Cannon*.

From late 1916, the war brought further changes which had an impact on task cohesion. The first was that task cohesion in many groups became more intimate and interdependent due to technological and tactical changes in platoons (see Chapter 2). The introduction of crew-operated weapons, such as Lewis guns and rifle grenades, meant that many men ceased to be independent riflemen but instead became increasingly interdependent co-operators in weapons systems. Operation of these new weapons required much greater teamwork, communication and co-operation on the battlefield, resulting in closer and more intense working relationships and probably greater cohesion. Modern research suggests that soldiers who operate crewed weapons report higher levels of cohesion than independent riflemen.⁹⁶ These changes were introduced gradually but by 1918, two out of every four sections in a platoon were Lewis gun sections and the remainder were operating as independent riflemen but also collectively at times as rifle grenadiers.⁹⁷

The second change that occurred was that task cohesion became increasingly focused on a smaller group of people as firepower replaced manpower. From February 1917, the size of the platoon was reduced from 56 to 40 and then again to 32 in February 1918. This reduction also set the maximum size of the section at seven.⁹⁸ These size changes probably also increased cohesion as research suggests that smaller groups have greater interaction, shared decision making and better face-to-face interaction.⁹⁹

The final change, as the war progressed, was that the longevity and prevalence of task cohesion in the units increased. The available evidence from accounts suggests that the majority of men spent the bulk of their service in one unit, especially if that unit required a technical skill, such as operating a Lewis gun. The data from the Kensingtons other ranks length of service data shows that men were, as the war progressed, serving increasingly longer times in the front line before promotion, death or injury ended their service. The average time rose from 122 days in 1914/5 to 497 days in 1918; this meant that in the final year of the war greater than 50% of the Kensingtons complement had over a year's experience (see Table A6.7, Appendix 6). As a result, the teams were becoming more stable and established task cohesion relationships were maintained for longer periods before being disrupted by casualties or personnel changes. There

⁹⁶ Salo, PhD, p.76.

⁹⁷ *Platoon Training* (GHQ, 1918), pp.1-5.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p.2.

⁹⁹ Salo, PhD, p.64.

is much evidence to indicate that stabilised teams are critical to the maintenance of cohesion and the benefits that such relationships may bring to performance such as teamwork.¹⁰⁰

B. Social cohesion

Social cohesion is said to exist where men trust each other because of their mutual friendships and emotional commitment. These relationships are formed largely in groups rather than units as social cohesion is largely a matter of choice rather than necessity and the boundaries of the group may, or may not coincide with the formal boundaries of that unit.¹⁰¹ Social cohesion can be demonstrated between men by loyalty, supportive behaviour and solidarity.¹⁰² While task cohesion relationships between men could be civil and have elements of friendship, social cohesion is about relationships which are not focused exclusively on the task but rather on the people in the group.

The structure of these social cohesive relationships is complex and varied.¹⁰³ At the simplest level, many men developed strong relationships with a significant other. Roger Little's 1952 study of a US infantry platoons fighting in Korea described these as 'buddy relationships' and they were prevalent among the units under study.¹⁰⁴ Dolden was 'practically inseparable' from his friend Johnny and Kensingtons Lawley and Thomas 'did everything together'.¹⁰⁵ Men could also form close relationships with the men they messed with, which could be up to five people. Smith and his colleagues formed the closely knit Devil's Mess to 'amalgamate their resources'.¹⁰⁶ Others formed social cohesion with those with whom they had task cohesion. This was most often their section or team, for instance, Tucker's Kensingtons pioneer section of eight appeared to have strong social and task cohesion and 'got on very well together'.¹⁰⁷ Importantly, men may form relationships with all three levels and wider groups with which they were associated, such as sports teams or other social activities like theatre groups or the battalion Masonic lodge.¹⁰⁸ However, it appears that socially cohesive groups peaked at a maximum of eight people as no account details talks of social cohesion above this number.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, *Personnel*, p.5.

¹⁰¹ Shibutani, *Derelicts*, p.11.

¹⁰² Salo, Phd, pp.22-26.

¹⁰³ J. Bourne, 'The British Working Man...', p.349.

¹⁰⁴ Little, "Buddy Relations..." p. 198.

¹⁰⁵ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.34. Steward, *Platoon*, p.58.

¹⁰⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.95, 122.

¹⁰⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.130.

¹⁰⁸ C.A.C. Keeson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London, 1922), p.172.

These relationships were reciprocal and caring and not governed by the same informal norms as task cohesion. Many men were emotionally close to their colleagues; Dolden said he and Johnny ‘shared everything, our joys and even our sorrows.’¹⁰⁹ Some had a ‘love passing the love of women’.¹¹⁰ As a result, men would do favours for their friends, helping them with their work and in many cases, risk their lives for their mates.¹¹¹ Men found being close with other men in the ‘immediate presence of death at the Front gives tone to every expression of life, and makes it the kindest place in the world. No one feels he can do too much for you, and there is nothing you would not do for another’ [sic].¹¹² For example, Rifleman Hegarty of the Rangers was wounded in no man’s land during the 1 July Gommecourt attack and he remained in a shell hole with wounded mates for three days keeping them alive with supplies from the packs of dead soldiers until they were rescued.¹¹³ Men would also forgive the errors of friends such as Smith who was pardoned by the Devil’s Mess after ruining a ‘special meal’ by accidentally knocking the cooking pot over.¹¹⁴

There were many benefits from having these socially cohesive relationships. In a small group, men would have a distinct and unique role, for instance, in the LRB French speaking Smith was an interpreter for his section and Rifleman Henry Bell acted as ‘chief cook’ in his group.¹¹⁵ Being part of a group could also secure additional food and material comforts as it was common practice to share ones’ parcels with others and this was especially important when rations were short.¹¹⁶ It also allowed men to share their individual resources to improve their quality of life, such as getting a primus stove to cook communal meals.¹¹⁷

Close relationships could help men cope with the strain and trauma of the trenches. A.D. Gristwood wrote that as a result of being with his chums in the LRB, he had ‘other things to think of other than war’.¹¹⁸ Being with friends meant that men did not need to keep the façade of not showing fear; Rifleman Bernard Stubbs, in the QVR, said being shelled was a ‘horrible nerve racking job’ that made him feel ‘pretty bad’ but being with others who ‘felt the same’

¹⁰⁹ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.34.

¹¹⁰ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.86.

¹¹¹ Smith, *Four*, pp.103, 201.

¹¹² Tiplady, *Soul*, p.43

¹¹³ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers’ Historical Records: From 1859 to the Conclusion of the Great War* (London, 1921), pp.57-58.

¹¹⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.248.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.18. Bell, *Soldier’s*, p.74.

¹¹⁶ A. Williamson, *Henry Williamson and the First World War* (Stroud, 2004), p.25. Smith, *Four*, p.209.

¹¹⁷ L.C. Furse, Reel-1, IWMSA, 9712.

¹¹⁸ A.D. Gristwood, *The Somme and The Coward* (London, 1927), p.123.

meant he had no ‘need to blame himself.’¹¹⁹ Some wondered whether there was ‘anything to equal the happiness of the ‘camaraderie’ and friendship of the life out here’.¹²⁰

The development of social cohesion during the war appears to have been dependent on task cohesion which already had been established between relevant individuals. The accounts of Steward, Groom, Brookes, Dolden, Tucker and Smith confirm that they all worked with their colleagues in task teams before developing friendships and emotional attachments.¹²¹ Men lived in cramped physical conditions, they ate, slept, defecated and risked death together. By living in ‘close acquaintanceship’ with other soldiers, men ‘got to know each other as men had never done before the War [sic]. Everyone’s character, will-power, nerve, generosity, and general peculiarities came to be known little by little’.¹²² Tiplady thought that ‘but for the agony and bloody sweat in which I have seen my fellows, I should never have known them for what they are’.¹²³

The shared experience was the basis for most of these relationships however having similar backgrounds certainly contributed to their formation by giving men a shared reference point for conversation and bonding. T.H. Holmes describes how he bonded with his first group of comrades in his billets while training with the QWR in 1917. Four of them were of the ‘Westminster’s pattern’ (in other words, middle class) but Padley, their fifth member, was decidedly ‘common’. Padley ‘gaped at things [they]...laughed at, and laughed uproariously at jokes [they found]...mostly petty coarse jokes’. While Padley was a ‘good enough fellow’ Holmes thought he must have been lonely given their social distance. When Holmes reached his final posting with the Kensingtons C Company Headquarters section, he noted how common backgrounds drew men together. Former civil servant Keane was friendly with the former medical student and stretcher bearer Withycombe with whom he debated Ricardo’s Theory of Rent. Holmes’s fellow signaller Steer, a London Bridge Station porter, got on well with other working class men with whom he gambled.¹²⁴

For some, a form of apartheid was instigated as a result of social change in units. As noted by McCartney, the middle class social status of some gentlemen rankers remained a barrier to

¹¹⁹ B.C. Stubbs, *Diary Kept by Rifleman B. C. Stubbs* (Chicago, 1915), p.15.

¹²⁰ J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), p.183.

¹²¹ Steward, *Platoon*. Groom, *Poor*, Smith, *Four*, Brookes, online diary, Dolden, *Cannon* and Tucker, *Johnny*.

¹²² Smith, *Four*, p.185.

¹²³ Tiplady, *Soul*, p.33.

¹²⁴ Holmes, IWM.

social integration and this certainly happened in the class corps units under study.¹²⁵ Smith described how the middle class members of the LRB transport section had been ‘one big family’ but became divided into two ‘informal camps’ when a draft of working class Durham miners arrived to replace casualties in March 1918. The middle class members isolated themselves from the northern men because they had ‘no bonds of sympathy’ with them nor a ‘language in common’, not understanding their ‘Doorham’ dialect.¹²⁶

However, for the majority, including many middle class men, class and accent mattered little in the formation of social relationships despite the change in the social and regional composition of units from 1916.¹²⁷ Post war accounts often stress the camaraderie of the trenches; W.G. Holmes said he and his comrades were ‘brothers together, even though we came from different backgrounds’.¹²⁸ This is often seen as a cliché but contemporary evidence suggests that men from all backgrounds became close. Regional accents may have hindered communication but they were not necessarily a barrier to bonding; In the QVR, Rifleman Elliot wrote in his diary in 1917 that he was working with his friend ‘Durham’ who was ‘very nice’ but he could not ‘understand half he says’.¹²⁹ Class also, for the majority, was not an impediment to the creation of many friendships across pre-war traditional social strata.¹³⁰ Several accounts show men forming close relationships across the class boundaries.¹³¹ It would appear that as part of this greater acceptance, men became more tolerant of different habits and views which would have seemed unacceptable before the war. Rifleman C.T. Newman, also serving in the QVR and a Baptist Sunday school teacher, broadened his horizons as a result of his service; he wrote to his wife that he ‘used to look upon smoking, drinking and swearing from a narrow viewpoint but [his]...outlook has broadened considerably’.¹³²

From the existing evidence it is difficult to determine the time taken to form strong socially cohesive bonds, like task based cohesion, but it can be estimated from available accounts. Eric Kennington’s painting of his section ‘The Kensingtons at Laventie’ shows a socially cohesive unit.¹³³ The painting depicts Kenningtons’ section in C Company leaving the front line on 21 November 1914 after their first time in the trenches. The painting and his gallery exhibition

¹²⁵ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.54.

¹²⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.185, 402.

¹²⁷ Holmes, IWM. Dolden, *Cannon*.

¹²⁸ Holmes, Reel-4, IWMSA.

¹²⁹ T.G. Elliot & R.E. Gregory (ed), *Tim's War* (Sutton, 2013), p.78.

¹³⁰ H.W. Wilson (ed), *The Great War, Vol.9* (London, 1917), p.403.

¹³¹ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.35. Steward, Platoon.

¹³² Letter, 30/5/1917, Newman, IWM.

¹³³ E.H. Kennington, ‘Kensingtons at Laventie’, ART 15661, IWM.

notes for the public display of the work suggest close relationships in his section. His notes detail nicknames of four section members and the painting depicts 'the fit men support[ing] their exhausted comrades. The strong carry the rifles of the sick'.¹³⁴ Based on the four-digit service number, all members joined up in August and September 1914 but by late November (six to eight weeks later) they had developed strong caring relationships. Brookes was moved to the QWR signal section on 31 August 1914 and by November he was heavily engaged in social activities and calling the section 'we' in his diary, which would suggest he identified closely with them.¹³⁵ Smith joined the LRB's transport section in October 1915 and by January 1916 he 'had made fast friends' and 'resolved remain with the section'.¹³⁶ Joseph Steward's draft reinforcing the Kensingtons that arrived in June 1916, was described as 'friends', having trained together since February 1916.¹³⁷ From these accounts it is proposed that the time taken to form social cohesion was two to four months (60 to 120 days). However, the available evidence does not allow for any conclusive view on any variations of this time period over the course of the war.

Similarly, it is a challenge to gauge the prevalence, incidence and longevity of these relationships but one method, though crude and not scientific, may provide some anecdotal evidence. There are 15 accounts of men who served across all units under study for nine months or more and these include published accounts or diaries in archives (Pinkerton, Tucker, Steward, T.H. Holmes, Bell, Groom, Elliot, Smith, Latham, Dolden, Hawkings, Bisgood, Brooke, Walkinton and Stubbs).¹³⁸ Examination of these accounts provides a guide to the possible extent and nature of social cohesion in the units under study. Of these 15 accounts, 13 men record socially cohesive relationships with high levels of trust and friendships with other men at some point in their service. Six mention forming relationships with more than one group of men (Tucker, Steward, Elliot, Holmes, Smith, Dolden) as a result of their service. The accounts also suggest that, once formed, social cohesion was only disrupted by personnel changes, caused either by casualties or transfers. Pinkerton remarked that there 'was remarkably little discord ...of course we ha[d]...our little squabbles, but they...[were] squabbles and nothing more.'¹³⁹

¹³⁴ E.H. Kennington, *Kensingtons at Laventie, Winter 1914* (Goupil Gallery, 1916), pp.1-9.

¹³⁵ Brookes, online diary.

¹³⁶ Smith, *Four*, p.144.

¹³⁷ This is based on Steward's having joined the Army in January and arrived in France in 6/1916. Steward, *Platoon*, pp.16, 44.

¹³⁸ Pinkerton, *Ladies*. Tucker, *Johnny*. Steward, *Platoon*. Holmes, IWM. Bell, *Soldier's Diary*. Groom, *Poor*. Elliot, *Tim's War*. Smith, *Four*. Latham, *Territorial*. Dolden, *Cannon*. F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morley, 1974). T.H. Bisgood, *Diary*, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488>, Accessed 7/1/2013. Brookes, online diary. Walkinton, *Twice*. Stubbs, *Diary*.

¹³⁹ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.97.

The final section is to consider how the war affected the formation and maintenance of social cohesion. The changes that affected the development and persistence of task cohesion had a similar effect on social cohesion. The technological and tactical changes brought in from 1917 onwards probably intensified relationships in groups through increased co-operation and communication. Also, as sections became smaller it is probable that the boundaries of task and social cohesion became increasingly co-terminus. The increasing length of soldiers' service in France meant that socially cohesive relationships remained intact for longer and were disrupted less through personnel change as the war progressed.

Joanna Bourke and others suggest that the emotional trauma men experienced through the loss of close friends 'necessitated emotional hardening' in soldiers to survive and that meant that they often did not get close to other men.¹⁴⁰ However, the evidence in this study indicates that men's reactions were very individual and, on the whole, did not adversely affect horizontal cohesion. For some, the emotional impact of the loss of close friends could be devastating. Hawkings recalled after 2nd Ypres that they all felt 'very tired and depressed at the thought of all our comrades...gone'.¹⁴¹ After the Battle of Cambrai, Smith recalled that 'every old hand departed left a gap that no newcomer could adequately fill'.¹⁴² Of the 15 accounts detailed above, eight (Pinkerton, Tucker, Steward, Groom, Smith, Dolden, Hawkings, Brooke and Walkinton) mention losing a close friend during their service. While these events were emotionally painful, they do not appear to have stopped men developing further relationships or being part of future socially cohesive groups. For example, Dolden, writing in 1980, said his 'heart still goes back to Johnny' his 'personal friend' but as the 'war lingered on [he]...was able to make new friends' with whom he was so close to that he refused a commission to remain with them.¹⁴³ Men often found solace and comfort in their other friends. When Smith's Devil's Mess lost their close friend Kimbo, killed in a traffic jam by a shell, it appears that their first response was to question their own chances of survival and avoid being held up in traffic jams. While they missed Kimbo, they did not dwell on his death, quickly integrating an old friend Conibeer into their mess.¹⁴⁴ No account reports men losing two or more friends but where this

¹⁴⁰ Bourke, *Dismembering*, p.151.

¹⁴¹ Hawkings, *From*, p.48.

¹⁴² Smith, *Four*, p.291.

¹⁴³ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.34. Tucker for instance was friends with Arthur Budge and Billie Hewitt but were killed and wounded respectively (p.39), but he went on to make close friends with other men. Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.39, 130. Also see Steward, *Platoon*.

¹⁴⁴ Smith, *Four*, pp.212-213, 219, 223-235.

did occur, the impact could be severe. LRB Rifleman Schuman was wounded while in a 'deep depression' for days after the loss of his second close friend fighting on the Somme.¹⁴⁵

Men developed mechanisms to cope with the emotional trauma of bereavement. Many in the trenches 'found that however bad or terrifying anything was, it was rapidly forgotten [as] there was so much else to divert [their]...thoughts' and 'men seldom if ever spoke of casualties, confining themselves rather to the humorous side of trench life'.¹⁴⁶ F. Austin, who saw a mate blown up by a shell, thought there was 'no point getting sentimental in wartime.'¹⁴⁷ Others were pragmatic with the situation they found themselves in. T.H. Holmes commented that men 'made and discarded friends almost without noticing...we learned to be adaptable'.¹⁴⁸

C. Conclusions

Men were randomly allocated to small functional teams within their battalion and they normally bonded with these men on a task basis in approximately eight weeks. These relationships were based on mutual trust and confidence in other unit members to complete and share the allocated work. There were significant push and pull factors which facilitated these relationships; men knew their survival and comfort with others depended on collective action but also informal group norms could punish them for failure to do their portion of the work. Men largely bonded on shared experience but commonalities, such as the same social class, could accelerate the building of relationships. For the first two years of the war, in class corps units the system of informal norms was based around reciprocal responsibility, where middle class rankers did their work with minimal supervision from their middle class officers. Although unit members occasionally had disagreements, task based relationships generally remained in situ until disrupted by personnel change such as unit members leaving due to illness, being wounded, death or promotion. As the war progressed, personnel in units became considerably more stabilised as attrition levels reduced, thus increasing the longevity of cohesive relationships. In the final year of the war the prevalence of cohesion was at its greatest. At the same time, tactical and technical changes from 1917 reduced the size of sections, introduced crewed weapons such as the rifle grenade and Lewis gun that changed men from independent rifleman into interdependent machine operators. This made their relationships much closer and more reliant on greater communication and co-ordination. This meant that task relationships in groups probably became more intimate, personal and intense.

¹⁴⁵ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.145.

¹⁴⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.75. Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.39-40.

¹⁴⁷ Austin, Reel-2, IWMSA.

¹⁴⁸ Holmes, IWM.

However, when groups were disrupted by casualties, task cohesion was quickly re-established as units sought to positively integrate new members and battalions trained men to maintain technical proficiency and efficiency.

Social cohesion was built among self-selecting groups, developed from the men in units with whom they had already established task cohesion. These relationships were characterised by friendship, emotional commitment and liking. Trust was based on personal loyalty and confidence. Social cohesion took three to four months to establish from first contact and in common with task cohesion, remained until disrupted by personnel loss. The prevalence of social cohesion probably increased as personnel attrition reduced. Casualties among close knit groups could cause bereavement and emotional pain but many groups supported each other through the loss of close friends and frequently incorporated new members into their group.

The evidence indicates that horizontal cohesion was an extensive and strong force among men and supports the findings of historians such as Smith, Bourne and Van Emden. Men built strong relationships of trust with others throughout their service and these relationships were a key part of their wartime experience and often formed an indelible imprint on their memory.

Chapter 4 - The impact of horizontal cohesion

In Chapter 3 it was argued that significant levels of horizontal cohesion were present, both task and social, among men in the units under study throughout the Great War. This chapter seeks to examine the impact and consequence of such levels of horizontal cohesion. Two scholarly debates about the impact of horizontal cohesion exist. The first surrounds the relationship between horizontal cohesion and battlefield outcomes, as many academics have argued that strong peer relations correlate with group achievement, such as success in battle and performance in training.¹ For many, task based cohesion has the most powerful association with effect as it promotes teamwork, shared commitment and collective working.² Social cohesion, on the other hand, has little relation to group accomplishment as sociability ‘does not necessarily breed productivity’ and can promote ‘group think’.³ However, others oppose this view and instead consider social cohesion to be important for performance as it promotes trust, motivation among men to fight for others in the group and provides social support to help people cope with the stress and trauma of combat.⁴

The second debate surrounds the factors which make some horizontally cohesive groups or units bond together to resist or oppose their military leaders, organisation or orders.⁵ Historians and scholars have noted that although cohesion can correlate with outcomes, this is dependent on whether or not groups choose to act in this manner. Cohesion is therefore a double-edged sword as it can create common rebellion as well as common cause.⁶ ‘Deviant cohesion’ is the term given when cohesive groups decide to diverge from what their military masters expect and demand.⁷ This can be a serious matter as strong peer bonding in military units has been blamed for soldiers collectively committing atrocities, undertaking criminal behaviour and disobeying or ignoring orders.⁸ Chapter 2 details a number of incidents of such behaviour in the units under study which included trucing, several ‘strikes’ and a ‘mutiny’. These actions occurred in large groups but there was also considerable ‘deviant’ behaviour occurring in smaller groups, such as work avoidance and covert attempts to undermine leaders.

¹ F.B. Kish, *Cohesion: the Vital Ingredient for Successful Army Units*, (Carlisle, 1982).

² R.J. MacCoun, E. Kier & A. Belkin, ‘Does Social Cohesion Determine Motivation in Combat? An Old Question with an Old Answer’, *AF&S* 32:4 (2006), p.647. B. Mullen & C. Copper, ‘The Relation Between Group Cohesiveness and Performance: An Integration’, *Psychological Bulletin*, 115:2 (1994), pp. 210–227.

³ Sexual Orientation and US Military Personnel Policy: Options and Assessment (Santa Monica, 1993), p.294. S. Adams, ‘Status Congruency as a Variable in Small Group Performance’, *Social Forces* 32:1 (10/1953), p.21.

⁴ L. Wong, *Why they Fight: Combat Motivation in the Iraq War* (Carlisle, 2003) pp.10-11, 23-25. J. Ellis, *The Sharp End* (New York, 1980), p.282. R.R. Grinker & J.P. Spiegel, *Men Under stress* (Philadelphia, 1945), p. 41.

⁵ C.W. Langfred, ‘Is Group Cohesiveness a Double-Edged Sword?: An Investigation of the Effects of Cohesiveness on Performance’, *Small Group Research* 29:1 (2/1998), p.138.

⁶ J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.22.

⁷ A. King, *The Combat Soldier* (Oxford, 2013), pp.31-32.

⁸ See D. Winslow, ‘Rites of Passage and Group Bonding in the Canadian Airborne’, *AF&S* 25:3 (Spring 1999), p. 435.

Explanations for this group behaviour has been the debated and informal group norms have been highlighted as one important factor which could influence the attitudes and decisions to choose obedience or obstinacy of horizontally cohesive groups.⁹ Knut Pipping's study of a Finnish machine gun company during World War 2 suggested that actions by groups to obey, ignore or disobey orders were determined by how the orders impacted on group security, well-being and comfort. Groups of men evaluated each situation on its merits, and took appropriate action.¹⁰ Roger Little's Korea study suggested that group decisions were largely based on informal loyalty to mates rather than to the formal military organisation.¹¹

Historical research on the impact of horizontal cohesion during the Great War is limited. Attention has been given to the role of primary group relations in determining soldiers' attitudes to accept or reject the war and military authority, but the role of group relations has not been examined in detail.¹² Tony Ashworth has been the only historian who has specifically examined the role of peer groups and its impact and he suggests that such relationships influenced British soldiers to initiate informal truces with the Germans. He found these norms were largely informed by the pacifically inclined nature of men not to fight and bellicosity was often determined by the type of unit to which a man belonged or imposed by the high command.¹³ American historian, Leonard Smith, proposed an alternative reason to explain why horizontally cohesive groups obey or oppose authority. With reference to the French 5th Division, he argues that French soldiers' civilian backgrounds and political status as citizens of the Third Republic was important in shaping their attitudes towards military authority. He sought to explain the tradition of negotiation French soldiers had with their officers and why the 5th Division erupted in mutinies in spring 1917. Simply put, he suggests there were two elements to French soldiers' motivation to take such action. Strong peer group relations formed in the trenches, or 'horizontal sociability' as he termed it, was important in helping to create group solidarity for soldiers to make collective decisions to fight, truce or challenge their leaders. While this was important, the impetus, legitimacy and authority for soldiers to protest (as they saw it) rested in their civilian backgrounds as enfranchised French citizens. Citizens believed they could justly challenge the army as it was a servant of the Third Republic, which

⁹ See K. Pipping, *Infantry Company as a Society* (Helsinki, 1947), J. Hockey, *Squaddies, Portrait of a Subculture* (Exeter, 1986). L.H. Ingraham & F. Manning, *Boys in the Barracks* (Philadelphia, 1984). T. Shibutani, *Derelicts of Company K* (Berkley, 1978).

¹⁰ Pipping, *Infantry*, p.202.

¹¹ R.W. Little, 'Buddy Relations and Combat Performance', in M. Janowitz (ed), *The New Military* (New York, 1964), p.202. Hockey, *Squaddies*, pp.123–124.

¹² See V. Wilcox, 'Between Acceptance and Refusal - Soldiers' Attitudes Towards War (Italy), in: 1914-1918-online. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15463/ie1418.10850> Accessed 8/3/2016.

¹³ T. Ashworth, *Trench Warfare* (London, 1981), pp.20-21, 153-160, 76-77.

was ultimately, through popular sovereignty, accountable to them as citizens. Many believed that challenging their officers over something, with which they did not agree, was simply asserting their constitutional rights.¹⁴

This chapter will be structured around the two debates described. The first section will examine outcomes of horizontal cohesion on the battlefield and the relative influences of social and task cohesion. The second section will explore the relationship between horizontal cohesion, informal norms and soldiers' civilian backgrounds to explain 'deviant' cohesion reported in both small and large groups in the units under study.

A. Cohesion and battlefield outcomes

Strong horizontal cohesion, both task and social, produced three outcomes which helped soldiers endure and perform on the battlefield. Firstly, task and social cohesion created social groups whose presence on the battlefield helped men endure the terror and trauma of the conflict. Secondly, social cohesion in small groups welded them together into resilient teams, where men chose to risk death and injury to be with their teams and these bonds were a powerful force of combat motivation. Finally, task and social cohesion helped make teams and units more efficient and expert, which, in turn, contributed to improved battlefield performance especially in reference to the success of raids in the final year of the war, as documented in Chapter 2.

i) Coping with terror and the battlefield

At a very basic level, task and social cohesion with other men gave individuals a social circle throughout the duration of the war that helped them cope with the traumatic events on the battlefield and prevented them from fleeing, which would have been the natural reaction in such situations. S.L.A. Marshall believed that the presence of human company could make the battlefield and 'danger more endurable' and the 'near presence or presumed presence of a comrade' helped men carry on in the face of mortal danger.¹⁵ This appears to be borne out from accounts given by London Territorials. For example, 1/2 London's Sergeant T.H. Bisgood, searching for the wounded in no man's land days after the 1 July 1916 Gommecourt attack, found three wounded 'chums in one hole all unable to move but cuddled together and it was a

¹⁴ L. Smith, *Between Mutiny and Obedience* (Princeton, 1994), pp.87-91, 174-214.

¹⁵ S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire* (New York, 1947), pp.141, 5.

hard job to persuade one to leave'.¹⁶ Men found they could together endure the stress and terror of battle; in action at Hill 60 in 1915, Rifleman Bernard Stubbs writing in his diary while in the QVR, stuck out 'terribly hot fire from machine guns and whiz bangs and a rather terrible experience' only leaving to help his friend 'overcome by gas', to the dressing station.¹⁷ The 1/4 London's history wondered how runners managed to endure alone 'impossible barrages' without the 'moral support of comradeship'.¹⁸

There are several reasons why sharing the battlefield with those they knew, through task and social cohesion, could help them endure the fear. For many, being with familiar company provided distraction from the anxiety; Rifleman Polhill, in the LRB, said the attack during Arras would have been 'very frightening' had he not had his 'friends' with him.¹⁹ For others, it may have been a pressure of conformity to follow other group members and endure what they were experiencing. Marshall argued that in groups, where men were known to others, they had a 'social identity' and as a result they would rather risk death than their 'reputation with other men'.²⁰ Douglas Pinkerton, serving in the London Scottish, described this phenomenon as 'a species of auto-intoxication' where 'men are dying all about you, and in the face of death, life's uttermost efforts seem puny and small...but the fact that others are sticking it out, that others are holding and giving their all, must have an unconscious reaction that draws upon unsuspected wells of nervous and physical strength'.²¹ Pinkerton believed that 'the fear of what other men will think holds more men to their duty in the face of danger than does any firing squad in Flanders'.²² However, this only lasted while a man was in a social group because, when he became alone, his instinct for self-preservation could take over. When Ranger Sergeant Mason found himself alone during the Gommecourt attack, he headed back to British lines reasoning 'it is a lonely job fighting the war by oneself'.²³

ii) Resilience and morale

The second outcome was that small intimate groups with high levels of social cohesion would be emotionally welded together into resilient entities, which would voluntarily remain and share the dangers of the battlefield. There are a striking number of accounts throughout the war where men chose to remain with their mates in the front line and run the risk of possible death

¹⁶ Bisgood, 1/7/1916.

¹⁷ B.C Stubbs, *Diary Kept by Rifleman B. C. Stubbs* (Chicago, 1915), p.30.

¹⁸ F.C. Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment* (London, 1922), p.161.

¹⁹ K.W. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995), p.159.

²⁰ Marshall, *Men*, p.153.

²¹ D. Pinkerton, *Ladies from Hell* (New York, 1918), p.52.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.149-150.

²³ R.J. Mason, 'Up the Rangers', p.7, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

or injury rather than leave their comrades when given a legitimate and legal means of escape. For example, Aubrey Smith, in the LRB transport section, refused a job as a base hospital pianist saying he would be a 'fish out of water' until he was back with the section; he decided to 'sink or swim' with them.²⁴ Rifleman Ernest Steele, serving in the QWR, was given the opportunity of leaving the front line as he was underage but told his parents that he and friends 'after a discussion...decided to stay'.²⁵ Sergeant Samuel Lane and Private Patrick Horrigan, both in the Kensingtons, also decided to remain with their mates, both refusing offers of employment behind the lines.²⁶ The desire to be with their mates was given as the motivation by Private Godfrey, in the Kensingtons, and Rifleman Brookes, in the QWR, for prematurely discharging themselves from hospital and for London Scot Stuart Dolden refusing a commission.²⁷

Socially cohesive groups could offer members social support in traumatic events, such as bereavement or loss. In the QWR, friends of Rifleman Stone mourned his death together 'in their grief... kne[lt] in the trench to say...prayers and to read his Bible'.²⁸ Tucker gave support to his friend, Dick Sweet, on the news of the latter father's death.²⁹ Vicar Julian Bickersteth, Padre in the Rangers, believed that men at the front 'have...in the midst of what most people know to be a hopeless existence...their comradeship, their friendship. It is this fact alone which keeps them through - the comradeship of men who have shared countless hardships and dangers together'.³⁰

Close social bonds could also motivate men to fight with their comrades. Men who were part of such groups often opted to share battle with their comrades even if they had official permission to avoid it. This behaviour is demonstrated throughout the war. For example, in November 1914, Private McCafferty in the Kensingtons was on sick leave but was granted permission at his request to serve with his mates despite having an arm in a sling.³¹ Private Frane, also in the Kensingtons, opted to go with his mates in the first infantry wave at the Battle of Arras despite being told that he could report sick.³² Ranker Frank Hawkings, fighting with the QVR, was sent

²⁴ A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), pp.251, 144.

²⁵ Cited in R. Van Emden, *Boy Soldiers of the Great War* (London, 2006), p.97.

²⁶ *The Kensington*, Summer, 1970. P. Horrigan, Reel-2, IWMSA, 860.

²⁷ J. Steward, *The Platoon* (London, 2012), p.75. B.J. Brookes, diary, 2/4/1915, <http://bjb.bobbbrookes.co.uk/#home> Accessed 27/8/1914. Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.91-92.

²⁸ T. Tiplady, *The Soul of the Soldier* (London, 1918), p.86.

²⁹ J. F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.164.

³⁰ J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), p.234.

³¹ E.H. Kennington, *Kensingtons at Laventie, Winter 1914* (Goupil Gallery, 1916), pp.4-5.

³² Steward, *Platoon*, p.111.

back by the RSM as battle surplus before the Gommecourt attack but he volunteered to join his company in the assault.³³

Men could also be motivated to fight through bereavement of a close friend.³⁴ Their reactions were deeply personal and for some they could be long lasting. Pinkerton recalled that after the death of his friend Nicholls he would ‘make the bullet that sent him [Nicholls] west take its quadrupled toll of Germans [sic]’ and he volunteered for the sniper section and committed atrocities in his quest for vengeance.³⁵ Some men waited for an opportunity to avenge their comrades, often breaking the Geneva Convention by their actions; Groom writes of a LRB man shooting a surrendering German, exclaiming ‘that’s for my brother’.³⁶ The loss of mates also motivated men in other ways such as Horrigan and comrades who re-joined the Kensingtons after being injured and wanted to go to France so that they could see the graves of their close friends.³⁷

iii) Teamwork and outcomes

The final impact to be discussed is the contribution made by horizontal cohesion, both task and social, to the groups and units performing their work on a daily basis throughout the war. For example, many accounts show how men cohered with others, both friends and work colleagues, to complete their work as reflected in memoirs such as Dolden’s and Tucker’s.³⁸ Much modern research suggests a strong link between cohesion and ‘performance’ but from these accounts it is impossible to ascertain whether cohesion merely enabled these teams to function effectively or whether it enhanced their collective efforts. However, there is evidence to suggest that horizontal task and social cohesion may have contributed to success in raiding operations conducted by the units under study in the spring and early summer of 1918. It is argued that the longevity of soldiers’ service in 1918 (497 days), combined with the platoon reforms set out in SS143 and *Platoon Training* (outlined in Chapter 2), contributed to the development of high levels of horizontal cohesion which led to a dramatically increased effectiveness in raiding operations.

³³ F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morley, 1974), p.94.

³⁴ A. Watson & P. Porter, ‘Bereaved and aggrieved: combat motivation and the ideology of sacrifice in the First World War’, *Historical Research*, 83:219 (2/2010), p.162.

³⁵ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.128-129, 101-103, 161.

³⁶ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), p.141.

³⁷ Horrigan, IWMSA.

³⁸ Dolden, *Cannon*. Tucker, *Johnny*.

(a) Raiding operations and ‘success’

Mark Connelly in his study of Buffs battalions suggested that raiding offered a useful proxy for assessing operational effectiveness and this approach will be taken here.³⁹ In this study, a raid is defined as an operation that results in the ‘penetration of the enemy’s trenches’.⁴⁰ It is distinct from patrolling as patrols were largely confined to the geographical area of no-man’s land.⁴¹ Raids required considerable planning and are frequently identified in war diaries and other records, unlike patrols. Importantly, the success of raids was largely dependent on the skills, acumen and experience of the raiders and how they co-operated with other arms such as the artillery. There are limitations in using raids as a proxy for performance and operational efficiency as their objectives were frequently limited, their duration short and only a very small percentage of men who went through the trenches actually participated in a raid. However, raids do offer a ‘snap shot’ of the operational capabilities of a given unit at a specific time and, taken together, can provide an interesting illustration of how units approached and planned operations. Success of a raid will be judged on whether the raiders secured identification of enemy units by either capturing a prisoner and/or securing badges or buttons from bodies. This is a simple means to judge success as most raids (though not all) aimed to gather this intelligence.⁴²

The units under study carried out 29 operations conducted in 26 raids (several raids were conducted jointly with other battalions but for clarity are counted as one raid) between July 1916 and November 1918 which are detailed below (see Appendix 8 for further details). No raids are recorded before that time. The date and unit involved and whether they achieved an identification is set out below.

³⁹ M. Connelly, *Steady the Buffs* (Oxford, 2005), p.84.

⁴⁰ J.H. Boraston, *Sir Douglas Haig’s Dispatches* (London, 1923), pp.3-4.

⁴¹ See M. Senior, ‘Raids and Patrols: What the Difference?’, *Stand To!* 89 (9/2010), pp.9-10.

⁴² *SS107 Notes on Minor Enterprises* (GHQ, 1916).

Table 2.2 - Number of raids carried out by infantry battalions of the 168 and 169 Brigade and the number of identifications obtained in raids by units, 1916-1918

Date (start)	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Achieved Identification?
13/07/1916	QWR			Yes
16/07/1916	London Scottish			No
17/07/1916	Kensingtons			No
20/9/1916	1/2 London			No
02/12/1916	Kensingtons			No
08/12/1916	Rangers			No
11/12/1916	London Scottish			No
20/12/1916	London Scottish			No
19/01/1917	Kensingtons			No
7/2/1917	1/2 London			No
17/2/1917	Kensingtons			Yes
17/02/1917	LRB			No
8/10/1917	London Scottish			No
22/10/1917	QVR			No
8/11/1917	Rangers			No
09/03/1918	Kensingtons			Yes
16/03/1918	LRB			No
26/03/1918	1/2 London	LRB	QWR	No
19/04/1918	London Scottish	1/4 London		Yes (London Scottish)
24/04/1918	1/2 London			No
01/06/1918	Kensingtons			Yes
12/06/1918	LRB			Yes
08/07/1918	QWR			Yes

The number of identifications calculated for each year indicates an increase in the success rate from 12.5% in 1916, 14% in 1917 to 62% in 1918.

The initial record of raiding success for the units under study was poor. A raid carried out by the Kensingtons on 17 July 1916 being typical. In accordance with guidance set out in *SS107 Notes on Minor Enterprises* definite orders were written and the raiders were held back from routine duties to practise.⁴³ However, the raiders had only four days to prepare rather than the

⁴³ Diary, 13/7/1916-17/7/1916, 1/13 London LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

recommended seven.⁴⁴ Despite these preparations, this raid failed due to an alert sentry at the cost of three casualties but the War Diary recorded that 'valuable lessons were learnt'.⁴⁵

During 1916, an identification was achieved on only 1 of the 8 attempts (12.5%). The reasons for their failure were varied, but most frequently included an alert enemy or the raiders failed to find the enemy despite entering their trenches.⁴⁶ However, what does emerge from this experience is that units were starting to evaluate how they conducted raids. For example, in November 1916 the 1/2 Londons submitted a detailed raid plan to their Brigade, explicitly noting they will take account of the experience of other battalions' raids.⁴⁷

In early 1917, this learning process appears to continue by experimenting with different approaches to raiding. They used aerial photographs to plan, white camouflage suits in snow and deployed new technology such as Bangalore torpedoes to cut enemy wire.⁴⁸ Units also varied the size of raiding parties and the time of attack, with the Kensingtons executing a successful 150-strong raid at 7.15am rather than at night.⁴⁹ Despite these experiments the 'success rate' of raids carried out during 1917 was 14 % (one successful raid out of seven), only marginally better than the previous year. The reasons for these failures are similar to those in 1916, notably an alert enemy or a failure to co-ordinate artillery support.⁵⁰

The story in 1918 was different. Raids became more sophisticated in their planning and execution. One raiding operation was carried out jointly by two battalions and 169 Brigade launched a three-battalion operation.⁵¹ Raiders also worked very closely with artillery to lay down barrages and smoke to cover advances and extractions. Units in January 1918 also mounted 'dummy raids' to confuse the Germans.⁵²

One raid which exemplars the skill level attained by many units was conducted by the Kensingtons on 1 June 1918. The raid started at 9pm to allow the raiders time to retreat under cover of darkness and surprise the enemy before they had taken up their night dispositions. An

⁴⁴ SS107, p.1.

⁴⁵ Diary, 13/7/1916-17/7/1916, TNA, WO-95/2955.

⁴⁶ Diary, 11/12/1916, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956.

⁴⁷ 'Notes - Outline of Proposed Raid on German Trenches on or about the night 29/30th Nov. 1916', 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2960.

⁴⁸ O.F. Bailey & H.M. Hollier, *The Kensingtons* (London, 1936), pp.108, 104-105. J. Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London, 1926), p.155.

⁴⁹ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.108.

⁵⁰ Diary, 16/2/1917, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2961. 'Report on Attempted Raid of Magpie's Nest on the Night of 7/8th November 1917', 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954.

⁵¹ W.E. Grey, *2nd City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929), p.317.

⁵² Ibid, p.328. F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade* (London, 1921), pp.234-235. C.H. Dudley Ward, *The Fifty-Sixth Division* (London, 1922), p.251. Diary, 2/1918, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2961.

observation post was established in no-man's land to provide intelligence to the raiders. The raiders went to their start positions the night before and remained camouflaged in no-man's land all day without detection. Once zero hour came they achieved surprise and captured 25 prisoners. During the operation the tactics of *SS143* and *Platoon Training* are clear to see as Lewis guns gave cover and the other units advanced (see below). They then withdrew to their starting positions in no-man's land and waited for the retaliatory bombardment to fall on the British lines before returning to their trenches. The 168th Brigade commander praised the raid as a 'credit' to the Kensingtons' 'splendid reputation'.⁵³ The success of the Kensingtons' raid is an example of the marked improvement in raiding by many of the units under study. In 1918, 5 of the 8 raids attempted (62%) were successful. The experience of units under study appears to be similar to that of other units such as Connelly's Buffs but relative comparisons on effectiveness cannot be made as the number of identifications gained by these units is not recorded.⁵⁴

(b) Cohesion and raiding performance

Horizontal cohesion had a major role in making these raiding operations successful. Contrary to official guidance, 25 of the 26 raids carried out by the units under study were done so by organic formal units rather than by volunteers. This meant that raiders were deployed with their existing cohesive relationships intact, developed through fighting, living and training together.⁵⁵ The raids conducted in 1918 appear to show that units were operating with a much higher level of skill, teamwork and co-ordination especially when compared to raids for the previous two years.

One of the key indicators of effective teamwork was achieving surprise. *SS107* stated this was one of the most vital factors for raiding success and in 1918 all five successful raids achieved this unlike in the previous two years where seven raids failed due to 'alert enemies'.⁵⁶ Raid reports from 1916 and 1917 catalogue major blunders. For example, on a Kensingtons raid on 2 December 1916, one NCO got separated from the team and was 'abandoned to his fate' and another retreating soldier running back to British lines accidentally extinguished a burning fuse

⁵³ Diary, 1/6/1918, 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

⁵⁴ Connelly, *Steady*, pp.84-85.

⁵⁵ *SS107*, p.1. Steward, *Platoon*, pp.51-52.

⁵⁶ *SS107*, p.1. Maude, *History*, pp.234-235. Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. 'Report of Raid, 1st June 1918', 1/13 Battalion, LRWD, WO-95/2955, TNA. J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), pp.243-245. Diary, 18-19/4/1918, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956. Anon, 'Raids', pp.2-9, WO-95/1730. Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.120. A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers' Historical Records* (London, 1921), pp.80-81. Diary, 20/12/1916, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956. C.A.C. Keeson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol. 1* (London, 1923), pp.259-261. Grey, 2nd, pp.317-318. Dairy, 26/3/1918, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, 9/1916, TNA, WO-95/2960.

which was rigged to blow up a German machine gun.⁵⁷ On another raid, an excited soldier dropped a bomb from which the pin had been removed. This was spotted by an observant corporal who threw it out of harm's way.⁵⁸ There are no reports of similar mishaps reported for 1918 raids.

Excellent teamwork was further shown in the short preparation times taken in the units for raids in 1918 compared with previous years. *SS107* suggested a minimum of seven days to ready a team but raids were prepared in less than half this time.⁵⁹ For example, the QWR did two days rehearsal for their successful 8 July 1918 raid, which included an additional day as they were not considered ready.⁶⁰ The Kensingtons did only three days practice for their effective 9 March 1918 raid and did not rehearse at all for their 1 June 1918 raid.⁶¹ Preparation for raids in 1916 and 1917 took much longer; for instance, the QVR trained for eight days prior to their failed raid on 22 October 1917.⁶²

As preparation times decreased in 1918, so the complexity of operations increased. The average number of soldiers on each raid increased from an average of 80 in 1916/1917 to 110 in 1918, making co-ordination a more difficult task.⁶³ Also, the plans implemented for the raids became more sophisticated. For example, the Kensingtons successful 1 June raid demanded that 145 raiders camped out and remained concealed in no man's land, where they had to lie 'doggo' the night and day before their operation commenced at dusk the following evening.⁶⁴

Part of the explanation for the success of the raids in 1918 appears to be that the raiders had developed considerable experience working together. Lots of 'night patrol experience' was cited as a factor in the success of the LRB's 12 June 1918 raid and the achievement of the Kensingtons' 9 March 1918 raid, that captured three Germans, was because men were 'confident' and 'knew their jobs'.⁶⁵ Results from the Kensingtons' length of service data shows that the day before they participated in their 1 June raid, 55% of the battalion had over a year's experience which meant many had been through at least two battles and also considerable training and trench holding (See Appendix 6, Table A6.7). Combat experience was an important factor in the success of raids; the failure of the 1/7 Middlesex, also in the 56th

⁵⁷ Anon, 'Raids', pp.3-4, WO-95/1730.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ *SS107*, p.1.

⁶⁰ Diary, 4/7/1918, 1/16 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963.

⁶¹ Bailey, p.149. Anon, 'Raids', pp.8-10, WO-95/1730.

⁶² Keelson, *Victoria's*, pp.259-261.

⁶³ Average taken from number of raiders involved in attacks. See Appendix 8, Table 2.

⁶⁴ Account by T H Holmes [no page numbers], 06/30/1 IWM.

⁶⁵ *History of the London Rifle Brigade* (London, 1921), pp.234-235. Anon, 'Raids', pp.7-9. WO-95/1730.

Division (167 Brigade), to gain 'live' prisoners in May 1918 was blamed on the 'men's inexperience' because they killed all the Germans they met.⁶⁶

Experience also resulted in men who were skilled in the use of their weapons. By 1918, technical skill in the employment, co-ordination and maintenance of weapons had become much more complex and important as platoons were structured around the use and deployment of weapon systems such as the Lewis gun. Proficiency of the use of these weapons was demonstrated repeatedly in raids during 1918. In the two Kensingtons raids of March and June, the raiders' Lewis guns silenced German machine guns in both operations.⁶⁷ In the June raid, two Lewis guns fired over 600 rounds each without a stoppage, which was deemed 'going some', suggesting that teams could keep their weapon operating despite known mechanical problems and stoppages of these weapons. Rifle grenadiers and bombers also worked together to clear Germans from their trenches during the raid.⁶⁸

Men also appeared to be highly skilled in other areas such as navigation. Being able to get to the start point for raids or find gaps in the wire were important for operations to be able to proceed as planned. Orientating in an often barren wasteland, devoid of landmarks at night using a compass was an important skill; two raids in 1916 and 1918 reported a failure to locate gaps made in the German wire leading to unsuccessful operations.⁶⁹ Even during daylight it could be difficult to navigate while trying to remain undetected by the Germans. In 1918, many men appeared to have mastered this skill; it was noted that all units during the QWR's raid on 8 July 1918 had 'found their way to the target' and as a result they got to their start position on time to ensure effective co-ordination and teamwork during the successful raid.⁷⁰

The contribution of effective teamwork appears to have been a decisive factor to raiding success. Over 1916 and 1917 there were technical and tactical developments that aimed to improve the effectiveness of raids. From July 1916, units sought to learn the lessons from the failure of operations and by September 1916, battalions developed careful plans for such

⁶⁶ 'Report on Raid carried out by "C" and "D" Companies 7th Battn. Middlesex Regt. on night 28-29/5/1918', 1/7 Battalion Middlesex Regiment WD, TNA, WO-95/2950.

⁶⁷ Anon, Raids, pp.7-9. 1/13 Battalion London Regiment, TNA, WO-95/1730.

⁶⁸ 'Report of 11 Platoon's work in the Raid, 1st June 1918', 1/13 Battalion, LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

⁶⁹ Henriques, *Westminsters*, p.219. 'Report on a Raid Carried Out by the 2nd London Royal Fusiliers', 1/2 London Battalion Regiment WD, 9/1916, TNA, WO-95/2960.

⁷⁰ 'Report of a Raid...', WO-95/2963.

actions which were being plotted with the aid of aerial photography.⁷¹ Also, new weapons were being deployed such as Bangalore torpedoes, which appeared in September 1916 and new tactics, such as the use of white suits to move unseen across a snow covered no man's land in February 1917.⁷² These new developments and tactics, such as raiding in daylight rather than at night, resulted in limited success but overall in 1916 and 1917 they did not radically influence the outcome of raiding operations.⁷³ It was only in 1918 that these technical and tactical developments were fully realised and the units started to achieve more effective execution through better teamwork.

Both task and social cohesion contributed to teamwork of these raids. Strong task cohesion helped create high levels of inter and intra team co-operation, co-ordination and collaboration to keep units functioning and working. For example, signaller T.H. Holmes was involved in the 1 June raid by the Kensingtons and he described the task cohesion in his signal section. The signal section 'had to be kept close to the OC and send message by E [electronic] lamp back to our front line and forward to the platoons.' He carried out his duties to help make the raid a success even though he disliked other members.⁷⁴ The teams were deployed as organic units where social cohesion existed and it welded groups into tight cohesive teams, helped them mitigate the fear and trauma of battle but also influenced men to remain in the place of fear rather than let their comrades down.

Team skill and cohesion appear to be linked to greater raiding success but there were a number of other factors, such as cool and calm leadership which could assist.⁷⁵ The right environmental conditions could be crucial such as cloud cover; for example, a bright moon being blamed for illuminating raiders that contributed to the failure of the 1/2 Londons' raid on 26 March 1918.⁷⁶ The artillery's ability to cut the wire in the right place and time were also crucial for raids to do well. Uncut wire was highlighted as a contributory factor for the failure of operations between 1916 and 1918 as was supporting artillery falling on a raiding party in 1917.⁷⁷ However, the accuracy and reliability of the artillery was specifically mentioned as being important to the outcome, in three raids in 1918.⁷⁸

⁷¹ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.81, 104-108. 'Report on a Raid...', WO-95/2960.

⁷² Ibid., Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.104-105.

⁷³ Ibid, pp.104-108.

⁷⁴ Holmes, IWM.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Grey, 2nd, pp.317-318. Dairy, 26/3/1918, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2960.

⁷⁷ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, pp.120, 155. Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 219. Grey, 2nd, pp.317-318, 328. Dairy, 26/3/1918 & 24/4/1918, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2960. 'Scheme for Raid', 11/1917, 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954.

⁷⁸ 'Report...', WO-95/2955. Maude, *History*, pp.234-235. Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251.

Another variable to consider in the success of the raids was the influence of enemy morale. Alex Watson suggests that German morale was declining in the spring and early summer 1918 but the hiatus really happened from mid-July and August at the start of the allied counter-attack.⁷⁹ The units under study carried out their last raid on 8 July 1918. At this time, German morale was declining but it had not reached a level which would have affected the will of German defenders to resist raiders. Reports suggested that all raiders faced opposition and the Germans did not surrender en masse thereby indicating that they were not disenchanted or demoralised, but further research would be required to confirm this conclusively.

The available evidence suggests that both task and social cohesion in the context of peer-to-peer relations had a major impact on sustaining men, groups and units in combat. The evidence indicates a more complex dynamic than the simple binary idea, which is proposed in much of the modern debate, that task cohesion leads to better battlefield outcomes and social cohesion does not. The relationship between task and social cohesion in this study, at the horizontal level, appears to be symbiotic; where task cohesion contributed to teamwork and enabling units to perform at high levels through co-ordination and interaction, and social cohesion contributed to morale and resilience in teams which kept men in units in the face of potential injury or death.

B. 'Deviant' cohesion: the role of informal group norms and civilian backgrounds

As outlined in Chapter 2, there was a series of overt protests and truces by soldiers during 1917 and these actions were clear challenges to military authority. In addition to these open acts of defiance by large groups, covert acts of collective 'deviant' cohesion by small primary groups, such as sections and platoons, were more common. These were never direct challenges to authority, unlike the strikes and truces by larger groups, but rather involved cohesive groups avoiding or ignoring work or duty. Historians have sought to explain these events by proposing two reasons; firstly that of strong group relationships and informal norms and secondly, through the backgrounds of the soldiers who brought their civilian values, attitudes and expectations with them into uniform.

When considering the influence of horizontal cohesion on 'deviant cohesion', it is important to consider the size of the group, as this affected its dynamics, extent and nature. As described in

⁷⁹ A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War* (Cambridge, 2009), pp.184-195.

Chapter 3, cohesion forms differently in small and large groups. In the small groups, task cohesion was intimate, long-term and based around a job, role or function and social cohesion among group members often followed. In larger groups, task cohesion was formed around ad-hoc one off time-limited assignments, where men may not necessarily have known one another and focused on completing the assigned project; social cohesion in large groups was not reported. As the nature of cohesion was different, so was the type of 'deviant' cohesion manifested; each will be examined in turn.

i) 'Deviant' cohesion in small groups

It is difficult to assess the extent of 'deviant cohesion' in small groups, such as trucing or work avoidance, due to a lack of evidence. However, most documentary accounts mention some type of group 'rule breaking' activity, either as participant or spectator, which would suggest that it was not an uncommon occurrence.

Groups which had high levels of both task and/or social cohesion often sought, where possible, to protect and further their group's or unit's security, comfort or welfare. In doing so, they did not intend to break military laws or regulations but would do so, if they deemed it necessary on a particular issue or in a certain situation and, importantly, if they could get away with it. For example, food was one issue of particular importance to soldiers. The supply of fresh food was erratic and iron rations hated; bully beef was 'so nauseating over time that hunger became more preferable' and 'dog' biscuits cracked teeth.⁸⁰ Rations were often 'meagre' and soldiers often went hungry so that nothing changed one's spirits from 'buoyancy to utter despondency or vice-versa quicker than a shortage or surfeit of rations' especially in cold, damp and outdoor conditions.⁸¹ Given this centrality of food in men's lives, it is not surprising that it became a topic of frequent discussion and a commonly held grievance. Smith recalled being stuck in the rain at night on the Somme in 1916 with no rations and he and his friends were so outraged by their plight, that their 'conversations' would have made a 'Bolshevist see red'.⁸² It appears that across many units and small groups food was a common subject of discussion and anger. It was the top source of 'discontent' in the units under study.⁸³ In early 1917, Third Army Censor Captain Hardie reported that food remained the 'primary grouse' of the soldiers in his quarterly

⁸⁰ Smith, *Four*, pp. 226, 234. Groom, *Poor*, p.147. Tucker, *Johnny*, p.174.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.163. Smith, *Four*, p.100.

⁸² Ibid., p.162.

⁸³ Groom, *Poor*, pp.147-148.

morale reports compiled from the analysis of soldiers' letters.⁸⁴ It is probable that nearly all groups and units would have had a collective view on the poor quality of army food and grumbled about with their comrades and colleagues. Finding additional food, from whatever source, became a shared commonality which drew men close together. Dolden and mates formed the League of the Red Triangle (London Scottish's battalion sleeve symbol) to indulge in 'posh feeds' to 'keep up the[ir] spirits' and Smith and colleagues formed the Devil's Mess to do similarly.⁸⁵ Every opportunity was taken to further the group's comfort by obtaining better or fresh food, which, on some occasions, involved theft. Tucker and colleagues stole pork chops from a French farmer and they were 'devoured with relish.'⁸⁶ W.G. Holmes and friends helped themselves to stores when they got a chance.⁸⁷

Groups also took similar action in other situations, such as avoiding fatigues, especially if they were tiring and dangerous like wiring parties or the 'most distasteful [task] of all; burying the dead' [sic].⁸⁸ F.J. Hall, serving in the Rangers, noted in his diary on 18 December 1916, that he and his mates 'cleared off after tea' to avoid being 'clicked' for a wiring party.⁸⁹ Another instance was in the QWR where Holmes reported that some sections during night attack training in England in 1917 would 'slope off...[to the]...pub and report back at dawn as having "lost touch."'⁹⁰

Small groups also aimed to enhance their security by collectively limiting their violence in certain situations, especially where no gain would have been achieved. Pinkerton described an unofficial system operated by the London Scottish and the Germans during patrolling. He said that 'there is an unwritten law...that governs no-man's-land. While all patrols in this forbidden territory carry revolvers, they are seldom used, for obvious reasons. When hostile parties meet, if they be [sic] of equal strength, they pass each other with an exchange of horrible threats, but little else. However, if one patrol is stronger than the other, it may endeavour to capture the weaker party, but always without firing, if possible. Firing a shot in this God-forsaken territory is like lighting a match in a powder magazine. It is about as certain a method of suicide as has yet been discovered'.⁹¹

⁸⁴ 'Report on Morale in Third Army, January 1917', p.4, and 'Report on Morale in Third Army, May 1917', p.4., R. Hardie, IWM, 84/46/1.

⁸⁵ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.124. Smith, *Four*, p.122.

⁸⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.164.

⁸⁷ W.G. Holmes, Reel-4, 8868, IWMSA.

⁸⁸ Groom, *Poor*, p.59. Steward, *Platoon*, p.76.

⁸⁹ Diary, 18/12/1916. F.J. Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

⁹⁰ Holmes, IWM.

⁹¹ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.37-38.

Men also engaged with truces. In Steward's Kensingtons' platoon, he notes that the Adjutant breaks a truce they had been keeping, by firing a Lewis gun at the German lines and provoking them to retaliate.⁹² Others would seek to resist outside attempts to promote violence which could threaten their peace; Kensingtons in the front line resisted Sergeant Lane's sniper team who was 'distinctly unpopular' whenever he turned up in the front line as his unit's actions brought German retaliatory bombardment which his team could avoid.⁹³ Men in the QWR sought to limit the harm they did to Germans by firing high, if ordered to do so, thereby limiting their violence and possible retaliatory action.⁹⁴ Some of these truces appear to have been largely undertaken by ordinary soldiers; William Fry recalled that the LRB's 1914 Christmas truce was 'entirely a soldiers' truce, quite spontaneous on both sides' with resignation from their officers.⁹⁵

Groups and units also assessed how their leaders may affect their welfare, comfort or security and acted against those deemed to threaten one or more of these. Open defiance of a leader was rare as this would risk disciplinary consequences; however collective covert approaches could be adopted which undermined a leader's authority and effectiveness. For instance, Smith and colleagues, posted to a railhead on a short-term assignment as part of the LRB's deployment on lines of communications duty in 1915, planned and worked collectively against their NCO. He was considered to be a 'bullying, self-assertive RAMC lance-corporal' against whom they carried out a 'campaign of passive resistance'. The group used clever tactics to challenge his orders; he would instruct men to find fuel to boil the kettle for the Rail Transport Officer's tea but the men refused. They argued there was no fuel lying about, they had not had been issued with fuel for this purpose, they would not 'stoop to beg for coal from a train driver' and 'stealing was out of the question'. This tactic was 'successful' as the lance corporal spent 'an hour a day hunting for wood and coal'.⁹⁶ However, on other occasions with different leaders, Smith and his group collectively chose to follow and support their leader.⁹⁷

Once created, an informal norm could dictate how the group interacted with their leader and could become an important way of behaving for that group. Tucker recalls the Kensingtons' transport section 'greatly disliked' their officer Holland and actively disrespected him by shouting a chorus of 'dirty insult[s]' from a dark room after lights out when he was visiting

⁹² Steward, *Platoon*, p.47.

⁹³ S. Lane, 'The Sniper's Plate, circa 1916', *Kensington*, Spring 1973.

⁹⁴ M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), p.43.

⁹⁵ W. Fry, *Air of Battle* (London, 1974), p.29.

⁹⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.79-80.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.340.

their billets and they would swear loudly outside his office window. This informal norm determined group interaction with Holland but Tucker did not know why they hated Holland as he thought he treated his men fairly.⁹⁸

Loyalty to the group was a powerful force, which could lead men to put their allegiance towards their mates over that of their leaders. For example, Smith and his four colleagues all decided to refuse a voluntary typhoid vaccination as was their legal right and ‘there was fun in defying the M[edical] O[fficer]’. Smith knew the vaccination was for his own good but refused it, putting a ‘bold face in front of all the other men and could not climb down’.⁹⁹

In some groups that had very high levels of social cohesion, men could embark on particularly risky behaviours. The diary of one unidentified QWR soldier gives an interesting account of how strong relations of one group led to a campaign of petty villainy. On 4 February 1915, the diarist joined a new section and ended up in a group within the section which self-styled itself as the ‘Tough Guys’. He got this ‘distinction’ of being a ‘Guy’ as a result of ‘being able to pinch anything’. He wrote, over several weeks before his transfer, how he avoided rifle inspections and posted letters uncensored, indicating that he may have had a reputation for transgression before joining. Four days after he joined the new section, he wrote that he had been with the ‘Guys’ chasing the girls in the *estaminets* and also stole rum from the colonel’s ration party. The fact that the group had an identity (the Tough Guys) and an apparent entry requirement (successful larceny) suggests that the group had a high level of self-identification and cohesion. The diarist appears to have achieved this high level of cohesion in a number of days. His reputation and skill for ‘crime’ may have recommended him to the Tough Guys at both a task and social level as an experienced ‘felon’ willing to cohere over the group’s iniquitous activity but also a risk-taking individual whom the ‘Guys’ could like and trust. Unfortunately, it is not known what happened to the diarist or the Tough Guys as the diary ends abruptly.¹⁰⁰

It is possible that the ‘Tough Guys’ risk-taking behaviour may have helped them bond further and acted as a sort of feedback loop. This process can be seen with Groom’s Lewis gun team who deliberately marched out of step with the regimental band on route marches to give it ‘the bird’ [the middle finger]. These activities caused great hilarity and prompted the colonel to ride

⁹⁸ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.47-48.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Four*, pp.198-199.

¹⁰⁰ Diary, Diary of an unidentified QWR rifleman, 1914-1915, IWM, 133/2059.

up and berate them. However, the reaction they got just inspired songs to be written by the members and which they all sang as they marched along to celebrate their defiance and further reinforcing their shared history.¹⁰¹

Strong horizontal cohesion could lead tightly bonded groups and units to commit ‘deviant’ acts for two reasons. The first reason was the frequent desire of the group to enhance its security, protection and safety. In these circumstances, group members could be persuaded to commit acts, which may contravene military rules and orders such as skiving work or trucing with the enemy. The second reason was that cohesion enabled action to be planned, organised and sustained by group members through their mutual teamwork and loyalty. Frequently, groups would debate and discuss predicaments they found themselves in and agree a group perspective which could enter the group consciousness. This consensus could influence collective action, such as how they should engage with a new leader. The cohesion in the group was also an important mechanism for sustaining action, as devotion to group members was often placed above obedience to leaders, orders or the ‘war’. The extent and nature of ‘deviant’ cohesion varied depending on local situations but all recorded activity tended to be covert in nature. In general, it focused on active work avoidance or non-engagement with leaders, carried out in such a way, so not to risk punishment of individual group or unit members.

ii) ‘Deviant’ cohesion in large groups

Small groups or units could more easily debate, plan, execute and sustain action whereas larger groups did not have the unity, opportunity or co-ordination to do likewise. Groups were drawn together on an ad-hoc basis, as expediency demanded, such as a church parade, but men spent the majority of their time in their small units. Despite these challenges, large groups of men were still able to co-ordinate collective acts to defy orders or the wishes of their leaders. The range and scope of activity for collective action varied greatly, such as strikes and a ‘mutiny’, as described in Chapter 2. Other examples of collective action are documented. In 1915 a large number of Kensingtons held a ‘riot’ in their canteen when they returned from training ‘cold, wet and hungry’ and had to wait hours for food to arrive, and then ‘half raw and uneatable’, prompting them to explode.¹⁰² In June 1917, the whole of the Rangers’ C Company ‘fell out’ during a route march until only the company commander was left. This was jokingly referred to

¹⁰¹ Groom, *Poor*, p.99.

¹⁰² *Kensington*, Christmas 1974. *Kensington*, Autumn 1973.

C Company's 'day out' but it certainly suggests the men were trying to make some point but no evidence is available to indicate their grievance.¹⁰³

All of these incidents appear to have been spontaneous protests but the accounts are sparse and it is unclear how or why they started. It is likely that they were largely reactions to situations men found themselves in or news they had heard, which appeared to trigger a collective response, resulting in a breakdown of order and a refusal to follow orders. The feature that all events have in common is that they were among organic units, such as companies and platoons, which, in turn, were deployed with their component cohesive units and groups.

All the protests concerned issues which cohesive groups discussed among themselves, and probably reached an agreed communal position; for instance, on how they should not have to work on their 'rest'. The LRB 'mutiny' in November 1917 illustrates this point well. It was sparked because soldiers had been on iron rations and without hot food for eight days. As indicated previously, the quantity and quality of food were major issues of concern for soldiers. Gripes about the horridness of army food filled morale reports and obtaining better and more food was the topic of debate, agreement and collective action, both legal and illegal, for many individual groups and units. In many cases, such activity bonded men together. Given this shared complaint, individually held and agreed by many small groups, it is not surprising that small groups acted jointly to protest when they got their chance. In the situation of the LRB 'mutiny', collective protest may also have been prompted by the fact that the men were cold, hungry and tired after working for eight days in sub-zero conditions with no greatcoats or hot food. This is unlikely to have added to their humour.¹⁰⁴

Once a protest was initiated, it is probable that the dynamics of 'swift trust' helped it to spread across the assembled gathering. Some men, working with their small unit or group, would have followed their colleagues or comrades out of solidarity. They may well have also copied men outside their immediate primary group circle based on their 'swift trust' with them, as they wore the same uniform or were part of the same company or battalion. Soldiers probably welcomed the opportunity to show their protest on a commonly held view, such on the poor quality of the food. Some may have perceived it safe to protest in the anonymity of the mass, where the chances of individual disciplinary consequences were low.

¹⁰³ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.113.

¹⁰⁴ Groom, *Poor*, pp.147-148.

While small group cohesion shaped protest action by larger groups, it could also be triggered by shared individual views. Smith recounted an incident in 1918 where individual soldiers, anonymous to one another, acted collectively as they had a distain for MPs. Smith was returning from leave with other men, unknown to one another as they were from other units, when they docked at Boulogne. On the dockside, the MPs tried to organise the men into fours but they collectively 'struck' refusing to comply and began 'calling the police all sorts of...names and asking them when they had last heard a shell'.¹⁰⁵ The event was relatively minor and short lived but it demonstrates how collectively held views could shape group behaviour.

In summary, horizontal cohesion could promote 'deviant' activities in a number of ways. The focus of small groups to enhance their wellbeing, comfort and protection meant many would embark on activities, which could potentially bring them into conflict with the military authorities or law. Small group cohesion was also important in agreeing, planning, executing, and sustaining action that may be considered 'deviant'. The range of 'deviant' cohesion varied between groups, with most focusing on low risk avoidance but some were motivated to take significant risks such as the Tough Guys. Small group cohesion was at the heart of the majority of overt strikes and protests by larger groups of men. Though these protests were spontaneous, they occurred in situations where individual cohesive groups and units felt the same about a common issue. For example, many individual cohesive groups and units independently developed an agreed position on the quality of army food and, when given an opportunity to protest by collective action, whether a strike or riot, many groups took it.

C. The influence of civilian backgrounds on 'deviant' cohesion

Deeply rooted values, attitudes and most importantly, expectations that civilians brought with them into uniform, strongly influenced individual attitudes and group actions. For example, many soldiers disliked army food because they were used to better quality and a more varied diet at home. While some working class men got better victuals in the army than at home, they were in a minority; most men detested army food despite some solders' putting on weight.¹⁰⁶ This included many working class men such as F.C. Higgins, in the 1/4 Londons, who recalled army food 'kept you going' but was 'rough'. The first thing he wanted on leave was smoked

¹⁰⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.308.

¹⁰⁶ See A. Weeks, *Tea, Rum and Fags, Sustaining Tommy, 1914-1918* (Stroud, 2009), pp.11-28. J. Bourne, 'The British Working Man in Arms', in H. Cecil & P.H. Liddle (eds), *Facing Armageddon, The First World War Experienced* (London, 1996), p.345. Tucker, *Johnny*, p.93.

haddock.¹⁰⁷ Men ate army food and regarded it as an unpleasant necessity of war but they sought to improve their diets by a range of methods such as getting food parcels from home, forming dining groups or resorting to theft where they could.

Helen McCartney in her work on middle class Liverpool Territorials has shown how these civilian attitudes and expectations shaped what men expected from the army and, ultimately, how they acted in uniform. She examined how their values, social status and attitudes set patterns of behaviour, how they interacted with other men and, importantly, how they engaged with authority. She argued that middle class assumptions held by soldiers derived from their occupations, education and social status informed their behaviour. Many men believed their voluntary service was based on an informal unwritten contract with the army; soldiers gave service, and possibly their life, in exchange for recognition and material compensation such as food and pay. At the heart of the bargain was a balance of rights and responsibilities; men would serve and follow orders in return for being treated fairly (as they saw it), have their service recognised and a license to negotiate with military authority on issues they felt that breached this contract. She argued that this unofficial bargain was formed, in turn, by prevailing influences in Edwardian Society that Britain in 1914 was founded on consent and mutual agreement based on the rule of law. This meant political, industrial and civil disputes, were largely solved through discussion and compromise rather than coercion and force.¹⁰⁸

The idea that civilians joining the military saw their service as conditional, often based on their own perceptions, is one that other historians have suggested.¹⁰⁹ This is certainly the case with middle class London Territorials who also saw their service in similar terms to Liverpool Territorials, as a personal unofficial contract. It was more implied than overtly stated which generally happened when men felt that the army had failed to meet their expectations of its obligations to them. For example, Stubbs complained in his diary about the ‘trials of a voluntary soldier’ and being expected to ‘make...fires without wood and shave without water’, suggesting that he was giving his service but the army was expecting him to do impossible things.¹¹⁰ As part of their ‘contract’, many middle class men believed they had personal ‘rights’ and the entitlement to seek redress for any grievance they may have. Their confidence to do this came from their grammar or public school education and the fact that they were often of the

¹⁰⁷ F.C. Higgins, Reel-3, 5 & 8, IWMSA, 9884.

¹⁰⁸ H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005), pp.122-147.

¹⁰⁹ A. Gregory, *The Last Great War* (Cambridge, 2008), p.79. V. Wilcox, ‘Between Acceptance and Refusal - Soldiers’ Attitudes Towards War (Italy)’, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/between_acceptance_and_refusal_-_soldiers_attitudes_towards_war_italy Accessed 13/7/2016.

¹¹⁰ Stubbs, *Diary*, p.13.

same social class as their officers. Private A.H. Collins in the Kensingtons found that when he reported to the orderly room that his kit had been stolen he was 'advised to go and "win" another lot...[but he]...made it quite clear that it was not [his]...habit to "win" things' and his lost items were replaced.¹¹¹

As middle class men viewed their service as an unwritten contract, it is probable that many working class soldiers would have perceived something similar. Direct documentary confirmation of this is sparse but circumstantial evidence makes it probable that many working class men also viewed their military service as conditional. Social relations in Edwardian Britain between classes were governed by deference and paternalism, which many working class people willingly giving deference in return for paternalism by their social 'superiors'. However, this was an arrangement dependent on paternalistic obligations being met by those in authority and regulated through a generalised sense of 'fair play'. Combined with this, many working class soldiers would have viewed soldiering as a form of work, very similar to their own civil employment being largely manual, with strict discipline and tough physical conditions.¹¹² Also, a key feature of work for many was learning how to avoid it, such as dodging the foreman to sneak off to have an illicit cigarette without being caught.¹¹³ This civilian experience helped prepare working class men for the harsh rigours of army life. For some, it also set psychological limits on what an employer, including the army, could demand of its workforce as working conditions, such as hours, were often regulated by statute or trade union agreements. Many workers were aware of their 'rights' through the success of the trade union movement before the war which had successfully negotiated for record numbers of workers better wages and conditions upon which they traded their labour.¹¹⁴ This created a consciousness among many working class men, both union and non-union members, about what they could expect from employers and shaped the way in which some men engaged with army life. While men may have perceived they had 'rights', few working class men had the social confidence to challenge their leaders on an individual basis and preferred indirect collective methods, taken from the pre-war trade union movement such as controlling levels of productivity.¹¹⁵ However, there were exceptions; for example, it was noted how unionised English miners posted to the 10th Irish Division in 1915 were acutely aware of their 'rights' and willing to directly question authority.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Account of A.H. Collins, p.128, LC, GS 0340.

¹¹² J. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory, and the First World War*, (Cambridge, 2004), pp.4-9.

¹¹³ Bourne, 'The Working Man...', p.344-345.

¹¹⁴ R. Hattersley, *The Edwardians* (Oxford, 2004), pp.222-243.

¹¹⁵ Bourne, 'The Working Man...', p.344.

¹¹⁶ B. Cooper, *The Tenth (Irish) Division in Gallipoli* (London, 1918), pp.14-15.

The informal contract, that many men believed they had with the army, contributed to men protesting, trucing and challenging authority. Many men believed their unwritten agreement limited the levels of violence in which they would participate. They would fight, risk and endure casualties where they saw it had value; for instance, the 1/4 Londons believed that a raid carried out by a platoon in April 1918, had an impact on the ‘spirit of the men [that] fully justified its execution’, despite the 26 casualties.¹¹⁷ Many adopted a proportionate response to aggression. Second Lieutenant Engall wrote to his parents in January 1916, that the QWR retaliated against the Germans ‘very heavily for any strafing they may do’.¹¹⁸ However, in addition to the motivation of groups to protect their security through not provoking the enemy, many refused to use violence if it would serve no clear tactical or strategic purpose. Walkinton said QWR men truced with the Germans and he speculated about what would have happened if their truces led to all men wanting to ‘chuck it in and go home’ but he said that was an ‘impossible dream’ as he would himself have tried to prevent such action as ‘one of the keenest and patriotic of very young soldiers’.¹¹⁹ This suggests that his support for the truce was simply to limit local violence rather than to stop the war. Men may also have chosen to surrender rather than to be killed, when faced with situations of being surrounded and cut off by the enemy in battle. Rifleman Winterbourne, also in the QWR, recalled that he and colleagues surrendered to the Germans when fighting at Third Ypres, as they were ‘completely isolated and...the prospect of holding this position all day seemed hopeless.’ While soldiers may have chosen to surrender, it did not necessarily mean that they gave up. Winterbourne and comrades destroyed their maps before they raised the white flag.¹²⁰

However, it would be a mistake to assume that all soldiers had naturally pacific intentions, as Asthworth has suggested.¹²¹ Men would use violence if they felt fighting would help them stay alive; Groom said that he shot down oncoming Germans during the Battle of Passchendaele because the ‘only path left for survival was to get on with the killing and hope to survive...I loved life too much to lay it down’.¹²² Men could also use violence in a non-utilitarian way, for instance, as a result of bereavement, as indicated previously. This action could have been individually or collectively, for example, following the sniping dead of the ‘loved and respected’ Captain Thompson in early 1915, the Kensingtons’ ‘automatic and very angry

¹¹⁷ Grimwade, *4th*, p.414.

¹¹⁸ J.S Engall, *A Subaltern's Letters* (London, 1917), p.56.

¹¹⁹ Walkinton, *Twice*, p. 43.

¹²⁰ Cited in L. MacDonald, *They Called it Passchendaele* (London, 1978), p.141.

¹²¹ Ashworth, *Trench*, pp.76-77.

¹²² Groom, *Poor*, pp.122-123.

reaction' was 'sustained rifle fire' at German lines, after stand to, because his loss cast a 'gloom' over the battalion.¹²³

Probably the most keenly felt element of the unwritten bargain, and one which riled men to protest more than any other, was any perception that they were being unfairly treated and this probably lies at the heart of the 1917 protests. 'Fairness' is highly subjective but men applied it in many different situations where they thought that they were losing out; they had been mistreated by the military authority or they were being taken advantage of by others who were not 'doing their share'. Many of these notions of 'fairness' were collectively debated and agreed on at a group level. For example, many QVR men, in May 1915, felt it was unjust that they had fought for months, their battalion was 'decimated' and they questioned 'when the h[ell] are Kitchener's men coming out' to relieve them.¹²⁴

However, men did not act on these concerns in 1915. Grumbling about the injustices of the army was a common past time and the frequency of discontent in soldier's accounts and diaries appears to reach new heights in 1917. There is a clear sense of an 'inequality of sacrifice'.¹²⁵ For example, Tucker's memoirs recall how news of a coal miners' strike in mid-1917 was greeted as 'betrayal' while they were 'enduring unspeakable horrors...these strikers were deliberately putting a spoke in the wheel.'¹²⁶ Sergeant H.V. Holmes, in the London Scottish, wrote a pamphlet in which he said striking for extra pay was unacceptable, when the soldier 'received a shilling a day for the work he did for you'.¹²⁷ The accounts of LRB soldiers Aubrey Smith and Groom record similar sentiments among combatants in 1917.¹²⁸ Likewise, QVR Rifleman Tim Elliott's diary also contains gripes not reflected in entries for the other years, for example, about the short amount of leave British soldiers got compared to the French *poilu*.¹²⁹

It is possible that this elevated feeling of grievance was a cause of men collectively taking protest action in 1917. Due to only limited sources for these events, it is difficult to ascertain what exactly happened, but the dominant justification reported for taking these actions was a sense of injustice. The LRB's 'small strike' in April 1917 was because they believed it 'a damned disgrace' to make soldiers work during their 'hard earned rest'. The 'mutiny' reported

¹²³ Letter, E.G. Spikins, *The Kensington*, Spring 1983. Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.29.

¹²⁴ Hawkings, *From*, p.58.

¹²⁵ Gregory, *Last*, p.112.

¹²⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.135.

¹²⁷ H.V. Holmes, *An Infantryman on Strikes: An Appeal to the Workers of Great Britain* (npd), pp.10, 18.

¹²⁸ Smith, *Four*, pp.303-307. Groom, *Poor*, pp.92, 97.

¹²⁹ T.G. Elliot & R.E. Gregory (ed), *Tim's War* (Sutton, 2013), pp. 84, 95.

during the Battle of Cambrai in November 1917 was triggered when men heard a nearby unit received hot food while they were on their 8th day on iron rations and they were ‘mad as hell’ at this unfairness.¹³⁰ At the same time, the QVR went on ‘strike’ to protest about the injustice of building a ‘cage’ with German POWs.¹³¹

Men felt that the army had failed in its bargain to them (as they saw it) and treated them badly and they had a right to protest against such injustices. Many would have seen the right to protest in such circumstances as natural; Rifleman P.H. Jones, fighting with the QVR, was amazed that regular soldiers did not ‘down tools and strike’ as they had every encouragement to do so, as they had ‘little consideration from his officers [and were]...paid very little’ but ‘he plods on steadily, grouching and grumbling.’¹³²

However, social class often dictated the way in which men sought redress. Many middle class men, like Collins above, would have sought to address individually the decision maker who had the power to remedy their complaint. Working class men, on the other hand generally lacked the social confidence to do this and preferred methods of negotiation, such as strikes, which was more familiar to them in their civilian life.¹³³ Given that all units were predominantly working class at this stage of the war, it is no surprise that men adopted trade union tactics. This choice of tactics may have been influenced by the fact that many units under study had recruited from unionised industries pre-war and many of these men were still in the units in 1917. For instance, the pre-war Rangers recruited three companies from the Gas Light & Coke Company, from whose workers the highly successful National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers was formed.¹³⁴ In addition, many units received large drafts of unionised working class men from mid-1916. For instance, the LRB received a large numbers of Durham miners and it was noted they had a ‘mutinous air’.¹³⁵

Also, it is important to note that trade union activity before the war was not just a working class phenomenon. Large sections of the middle classes were increasingly represented by white-collar trade unions, such as the Railway Clerks Association (RCA) which protected the position

¹³⁰ Groom, *Poor*, pp. 103-104, 147-148.

¹³¹ Elliot, *Tim's*, p.93.

¹³² Letter, 21/11/1915, P.H. Jones, IWM, 12253.

¹³³ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.132-133.

¹³⁴ C.A. Townsend, *Chemicals from Coal*, 2003. http://www.glias.org.uk/Chemicals_from_Coal/INDEX.HTM. Accessed 18/3/2012.

¹³⁵ Groom, *Poor*, p.160. Smith, *Four*, p.332.

of railway clerks on several issues before the war.¹³⁶ Though much more conservative than their working class equivalents, its membership trebled to 30,000 in the four years prior to 1914.¹³⁷ This suggests that even respectable middle class employees were becoming increasingly collectivised and adopting tactics more familiar to the working classes. RCA members served as in the units under study.¹³⁸ It is interesting to note that when units did strike, both incidents in the LRB and QVR were reported by middle class men who appeared very willing to adopt the language and tactics of working class protest and actively joined the actions.¹³⁹

D. Conclusions

Horizontal cohesion could lead to paradoxical outcomes, both potentially furthering but also hindering the goals of the military organisation. On one hand, it supported the accomplishment of military objectives in three ways. Firstly, task and social cohesion created social groups which were critical to help people cope with the trauma and terror of battle and help them fight rather than flee. Secondly, it created social cohesion in small groups and helped build resilient and supportive teams, in which, large numbers of men voluntarily opted to remain and fight for their colleagues, both in life and death. Finally, through a combination of task and social cohesion, it helped create effective and efficient teams. This enabled the completion of a wide range of collective military tasks, from training to fighting and in some situations, enhanced military performance, such as contributing to the military success of raiding operations in 1918.

On the other hand, horizontal cohesion between soldiers could also motivate them to pursue, on occasion, alternative objectives to that of their military masters. This deviant group behaviour may be explained by two interdependent factors. The first is that strong horizontal bonds developed between peers in small groups and units. Men would often prioritise the comfort, safety and security of their colleagues and comrades above their military duty. These enduring horizontal bonds also facilitated consensus building around any deviant group action and enabled the planning, execution and longevity of such conduct. The second factor is the individual values and attitudes which the civilian soldier carried into the trenches. These were an important influence on how he acted, expected to be treated and perceived authority. Many soldiers held the belief that they had an unwritten bargain with the army, in which they would

¹³⁶ M. Heller, *London Clerical Workers, 1880-1914* (London, 2011), pp.343, 38–9; M. Wallace, *Single or Return? The History of the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association* (London, 1996), pp.47–48.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.8. G. Anderson, *Victorian Clerks* (Manchester, 1976), p.108.

¹³⁸ See list of fallen railway workers, National Railway Museum, <http://www.nrm.org.uk/RailwayStories/worldwarone.aspx> Accessed 9/2/2015. See also C. Horrie & K. Phelps, *When the Office Went to War* (London, 2015).

¹³⁹ Elliot, *Tim's*, p.93. Groom, *Poor*, pp.147-148.

trade their service and possible death or injury, in return for a certain level of treatment and care. Their perception of this informal contract was critical, as it could shape how they viewed and interpreted situations and often how they reacted.

The interplay of these influencing factors could determine how individuals and groups acted in certain situations. Soldiers may have chosen to truce with the enemy, if it protected and preserved the ease of their group, but also they may have held a utilitarian view of violence and they may have seen no point in fighting the enemy if there was no noticeable gain. Men sought to gain additional food for themselves and their comrades because it improved their well-being and also they believed that the army had failed to meet their end of the bargain.

Until 1917, the extent and nature of deviant cohesion had been largely low level, confined and focused on the small group and their local concerns, such as work avoidance and small scale truces. However, in 1917, there was a spate of strikes and protests, which were overt challenges to military authority. The dual influences of horizontal cohesion and civilian backgrounds shaped the cause, nature and mode of this public protest.

The men protested about issues which were deeply related to the belief that they were being unfairly and poorly treated by the army. This perception was rooted in their civilian notion of their military service. Many felt the army had betrayed them, for example, making them work with German POWs or on their rest. Soldiers' perception of this mistreatment was probably connected to an elevated sense of injustice that many soldiers felt in 1917 based around a feeling that they were risking all while many in Britain shirked their duty, notably striking miners. Many felt their unjust treatment gave them a right to protest and seek redress. The manner of their protest was also shaped by their civilian backgrounds and as many men in the units, by this time, were working class it would seem only natural they would adopt the tactics of the trade union.

Strong horizontal cohesion was important in turning a shared grievance into a collective action. Men protested on issues which had been topics they had debated and cursed the army about in their cohesive groups. They reached an agreement in their primary group on a range of issues, for instance, how the poor quality of the food was an example of their shoddy treatment by the 'army'. These gripes or injustices developed a group-shared perspective in their collective consciousness as a result of being discussed in the groups and when the opportunity arose, they

often took their chance to protest on these issues of collective concern. Group protest offered a means of registering their anger, in an environment where they could hide in the anonymity of the crowd. Importantly, many groups, across the units under study, independently reached similar positions on the same issues, as indicated by the censor reports and this made co-ordinated spontaneous action possible.

From the perspective of the military organisation, on balance, it appears that 'deviant' cohesion with its 'negative' outcomes was significantly outweighed by 'good' cohesion and positive outcomes. The large scale protests in 1917 were infrequent and had very limited objectives which officers largely conceded to and these incidents were quickly resolved. For the most part, vertical cohesion between leaders and subordinates was strong and it gave leaders significant influence over their men (as will be argued in Chapters 5 and 6). Some leaders co-operated and tacitly supported some acts of deviant cohesion, such as truces and, as a result, they defused many protests and proactively sought to prevent others. Also, leaders could use their disciplinary powers to deter deviant behaviour in extreme situations. Finally, as Chapter 8 will argue, despite being war weary and disillusioned at times, a strong commitment to the war helped most men fight on to the Armistice.

Chapter 5 - Vertical cohesion – extent, nature and impact

This chapter is the first of two which will examine vertical cohesion in the units under study. It will investigate how vertical cohesion was built and maintained and its impact. It will also consider the effect of officer casualties on vertical cohesion. Chapter 6 will explore the disciplinary powers of leaders and how their use could improve or degrade cohesion between leaders and subordinates.

Vertical cohesion is defined as a positive primary group relationship between leader and the led in a small unit; it is based on an interpersonal exchange of mutual trust, commitment and loyalty which results in the leader influencing his subordinates to actively co-operate, adopt and work towards the leader's goals and objectives.¹ Many commentators argue vertical cohesion has a major impact on performance of groups and units.² As with horizontal cohesion, much of the work on vertical cohesion has been conducted by social scientists and their work will be used as a framework for discussion in this chapter. The scholarship suggests a leader's behaviour is the major factor in developing trust amongst juniors and there are two aspects of conduct which can contribute to this.³

The first is leaders demonstrating care for the soldiers under their command.⁴ In a six-month study of a US medical team on peacekeeping duties, it was found that the soldiers' regard for their leaders was based on faith at the beginning of the deployment but their respect for them in the later stages of tour was informed by their leaders' concern for their men and their competence.⁵ Where leaders are perceived not to care for their soldiers, then this can lead to men leaving the military.⁶

The second aspect is showing competence in task performance. A leader who knows their job is able to gain the trust and confidence of their subordinates and research suggests that a leader's competence, cohesion and performance are mutually related.⁷ Clear communication is important,

¹ G.L. Siebold, 'The Essence of Military Group Cohesion', *AF&S* 33:2 (1/2007), p.289. F.J. Manning, 'Morale and Cohesion in Military Psychiatry', in F.D. Jones et al (eds), *Textbook of Military Medicine, Part I* (Falls Church, 1994), p.13.

² E.A. Shils & M. Janowitz, 'Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II', *Public Opinion Quarterly* 12 (Summer 1948), pp.297-99. S.L.A. Marshall, *The Officer as Leader* (Harrisburg, 1966), p.268. L. Wong, 'Combat Motivation in Today's Soldiers', *AF&S* 32:4 (7/2006), p.661.

³ G.L. Siebold & D. Kelly, *Development of the Platoon Cohesion Index* (Alexandria, 1988), p.44.

⁴ F.R. Kirkland, P.T. Bartone & D.H. Marlowe, 'Commanders' Priorities and Psychological Readiness', *AF&S* 19:4 (1993), p.582.

⁵ P.T. Bartone and A.B. Adler, 'Cohesion Over Time in Peacekeeping Medical Task Force', *Military Psychology* 11:1 (3/1989), p.102.

⁶ See F.J. Manning & L.H. Ingraham, 'Personnel Attrition in the U.S. Army in Europe', *AF&S* 7 (1981), pp.256-270. Kirkland, 'Commanders...', p.589. Bartone, 'Cohesion...', p.101

⁷ F.R. Kirkland, *Leading in COHORT companies* (Bethesda, 1987).

as soldiers need to know the purpose of an action to be motivated to perform it.⁸

Historical scholarship on regimental leadership by NCOs and officers in the BEF during the Great War is limited and little attention has been given to examining the technical competencies of the leaders and how they cared for their men. There has been no research on NCOs since an MPhil was published in 2003.⁹ Research has instead focused on morale and discipline between leaders and subordinates, broad overviews of junior officers, the backgrounds of battalion commanders and officer training and development.¹⁰

Gary Sheffield and Helen McCartney have addressed vertical cohesion in detail. Sheffield argued that British Army officer-man relationships were generally characterized by a reciprocal exchange of paternalistic leadership by largely middle and upper class officers for deferential followership by predominantly working class other ranks. Most officers looked after their men, met their needs and as a result gained followership and obedience.¹¹ McCartney examined two middle class battalions of the King's Liverpool Regiment which were comprised of largely middle-class officers and men for the first two years of the war. She argued that given the social equality between rankers and officers, the traditional leadership dynamic described by Sheffield was inhibited and rankers placed their leaders under considerable scrutiny, as both leader and led were socially qualified to lead. She found that NCOs and officers needed to demonstrate courageous leadership in battle and respect the social status of their men but also care for them in non-patronising ways to obtain their confidence. She reported that leaders adopted a more traditional paternal role as the social composition of other ranks became increasingly working class as the war progressed.¹² These historians suggest that leaders were broadly successful in building vertical cohesion as a result of attending to the needs of their men and by personal example but they had to adopt different approaches based on the social class of their men.

To examine vertical cohesion in the units under study, this chapter will be structured into two sections. The first section will examine leaders' behaviour commencing with a consideration of their task performance and care of their men from their soldiers' perspectives. Attention will be given to determining whether middle class rankers in class corps units placed their leaders under

⁸ G. Lawrence, *Motivation and Platoon Performance at Combat Training Centers* (Alexandria, 1992), p.13.

⁹ S. Penny, 'Discipline and Morale: The British Non-Commissioned Officer on the Western Front 1914–1918' (MPhil, De Montfort University, 2003).

¹⁰ C. Moore-Bick, *Playing the Game* (Solihull, 2011). J. Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks: The Short and Gallant Life of the British Officer in the First World War* (London, 2010). P.E. Hodgkinson, *British Infantry Battalion Commanders in the First World War* (London, 2015), p.3.

¹¹ G. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches* (London, 2000).

¹² H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005), pp.136-149.

the same scrutiny as their equivalents in the Liverpool Territorials as McCartney suggests and also the extent and nature of the reciprocal paternalistic/deferential exchange between leaders and the led, as Sheffield argued existed in most BEF units. The second section will consider how long it took soldiers to bond with their leaders. As stated in Chapter 2, regimental officers served in the front line for considerably longer than the three to six weeks of popular myth but whether this was long enough for men to form vertical cohesion requires further investigation.

A. Task performance

Military leaders knew that men would obey officers simply because they were their officers but they also understood that leaders would be able to get ‘infinitely more out of them’ if they won their respect.¹³ Men having trust and confidence in a leader’s ability and capacity to do his job was central to winning respect and soldiers looked at two broad inter-related areas when assessing a leader’s qualities; their technical proficiency to perform key responsibilities of their job and how they led their troops in battle.

i) Technical competence

The first area for consideration is how leaders fulfilled the basic requirements of their role. All officers and NCOs as leaders were expected to be able to carry out their jobs successfully; failure was often noticed. For example, all officers were expected to be able to ride but many were drawn from urban areas and had little or no experience of riding; their attempts to do so often caused much amusement to their men.¹⁴ Officers lacked competence in other areas, such as drill, where Aubrey Smith, in the LRB, noted they got into ‘hopeless tangles’ having to ‘constantly refer to their NCOs’.¹⁵ Rifleman Hall, serving in the Rangers, noted in his diary, while training on a new Lewis guns drill system, that it had to be repeated ‘for the benefit of Lt McBride’ [sic], the inference being clear.¹⁶

Demonstrating a clear lack of skill in horse riding or drill by a leader most likely caused short term amusement or irritation and was probably soon forgotten. However, showing a lack of capacity in areas such as map reading could cause confidence to erode. Map navigation and orientating was a proficiency all leaders needed and where deficient, officers frequently got their

¹³ [Anon], *A General's Letters to his Son* (London, 1917), p.24. G.D.Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations, ‘Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22’ (PhD, KCL, 1994), pp.236, 285. McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.139-140.

¹⁴ J. F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.115.

¹⁵ A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), p.2.

¹⁶ Diary, 21/6/1916, F.J Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

men lost.¹⁷ One private was ‘astounded’ that officers could be ‘so ignorant of the terrain as they had maps at their disposal.’¹⁸ This could have potentially life threatening consequences; for instance, a new platoon sergeant and officer in the Kensingtons stopped their unit in no man’s land during an attack in the Hundred Days to work out their direction.¹⁹ A lack of knowledge about the front was equally dangerous; one new Rangers’ officer on a wiring party in no-man’s land lit his ‘pipe ...in happy ignorance of the distance at which a lighted match can be seen...as the wiring party lay flat on their faces... waiting for the burst of machine-gun fire ...muttering curses’ as their leader puffed away.²⁰

The lack of appropriate skills and knowledge appears to have been a major issue among many new officers arriving in France. In 1915, London Scot Major Claud Low complained that ‘some of the children who pos[e] as officers should be in a position to guide and lead [at night]...Many of my privates could teach them in a week more than they ever learnt in England’.²¹ In April 1916, the 56th Division staff requested regimental depots supplying NCOs and officers to battalions in France be trained in ‘drill and discipline’ and weapon handling before they arrived but Private John Tucker, in the Kensingtons, still rated the majority of their officers in October 1916 as ‘young and inexperienced’.²² Even in May 1918, Third Army Commander Byng, in whose army the units under study would serve, was anxious at the ‘want of training of men & of officers’ [sic].²³ Certainly, all units under study undertook regular and detailed training programmes of officers and NCOs throughout the war and frequently senior battalion NCOs and officers taught their juniors.²⁴ Geoffrey Dreamer in the 2/2 Londons thought that, as the war progressed, junior officers, who joined his unit, were far better trained and not ‘green as green’ as they had been in the early part of the war.²⁵ This noted improvement in junior officers’ ability may well have been a function of experience as the length of time officers served in units increased dramatically over the course of the war. From 1914/5 to the Armistice the length of service of officers increased by two and half times from 97 days to 243 days (see Chapter 2).

¹⁷ J. Steward, *The Platoon* (Barnsley, 2011), p.72-73.

¹⁸ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.85.

¹⁹ Steward, *Platoon*, p.184.

²⁰ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers’ Historical Records* (London 1921), pp.124, 77.

²¹ Letter, 19/11/1915, Book-2, C. Low, IWM, 79/54/1.

²² ‘Suggestions on the Training of Drafts for Battalions in the 56th (London) Division’, 56th Division WD, TNA, WO-95/2931. Tucker, *Johnny*, p.88.

²³ Diary, 2/5/1918, H.W. Wilson, IWM, 2040.

²⁴ For instance, see Appendix C [training programme] 9/1917, 1/4 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954. Appendix 1, ‘Notes to Accompany Training Programme’, 7/7/1917, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956. ‘Memo for Training’, 1/12 Battalion, LRWD, 10/1917, TNA, WO-95/2954. Diary, 30/9/1917, J.Q. Henriques, NAM, 8901-105.

²⁵ G. Dreamer, Reel-1. IWMSA 13167.

Unsurprisingly, leaders were under constant scrutiny for any sign of ‘weakness, inefficiency or indecision’ as men’s lives could depend on their judgement and skill.²⁶ Those who were perceived as competent were respected and liked. Rifleman Groom’s company commander Captain Stayman in the LRB, was ‘popular with the rankers as he seemed to know what he was doing and exuded confidence’.²⁷ Hall found Sergeant Burnley was ‘invaluable’ for his ‘experience and practical hints’.²⁸ Importantly, competent leaders could help groups of men survive the war. Second Lieutenant Conrad Wood had a ‘good reputation’ in the 1/4 Londons ‘for being able to bring a patrol back to the same place as the start.’²⁹

Conversely, where soldiers had a ‘lack of confidence...in [a] leader [this could]...have [a] disastrous effect on morale’.³⁰ In the first two years of the war this was particularly important as men were under military discipline but officers still depended on men to volunteer for operations such as raids or patrols.³¹ Sergeant Mason, in the Rangers, recalled an incident when his company was ordered to do a patrol but ‘unfortunately, the officer selected was not one of the best and [the] volunteers were not readily forthcoming as usual.’³²

ii) Combat leadership

It was vital for a leader to be seen to carry out his leadership function at the head of his men in combat and this was probably the most important means of developing task based element of vertical cohesion.³³ Obituaries frequently record NCOs and officers being killed at the head of their men during attacks and the incredibly high level of casualties among junior officers is also testament to this; for example 84% of the 225 officers who served in the LRB were killed or wounded.³⁴ Many officers and NCOs also sought actively to lead from the front like Lieutenant Colonel Forbes Robertson VC, the Kensingtons’ CO, who ‘was a “fire eater” and made a point of visiting all his sentry and outposts’ every day.³⁵

²⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.41.

²⁷ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), p.45.

²⁸ Diary, 7/7/1916. F.J. Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

²⁹ C. Wood, Reel-2, IWMSA, 11265.

³⁰ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.41.

³¹ D. Pinkerton, *Ladies from Hell* (New York, 1918), p.101.

³² R.J. Mason, “Up the Rangers”, p.10, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

³³ Sheffield, PhD, pp.285-286.

³⁴ F. Maude, *History of the London Rifle Brigade* (London, 1921), p.428. McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.140-141. Sheffield, PhD, p.57.

Kensington, Summer 1973, ‘Major C. C. Dickens’. F.C Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)* (London, 1922), pp.165, Grey, W E Grey, 2nd *City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929), p.271.

³⁵ ‘With the 18 Pounders: J.T. Capron’s Memories of the 1914 War’, p.42, J.T. Capron, IWM, 87/33/1.

Leadership by personal example impressed soldiers. Men 'highly admired' Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Campbell, 1/4 Londons' commanding officer, because he was 'very brave...[and] used to wander about in no-man's land at night time, ...[and]...was wounded seven times'.³⁶ Serving in the Rangers, Malcolm Hall reckoned Lieutenant Woods was the 'coolest officer that could have been on the front' when he saw him in action with a shattered arm during fighting at Ypres in May 1915.³⁷ Men acknowledged decorations awarded to their leaders as clear evidence of valour. Rifleman Stone disliked his RSM in the QVR but 'he was a very brave man, he held a DCM.'³⁸

Strong vertical cohesion, created through personal example, had important outcomes on the battlefield, such as building confidence in stressful situations. Captain Gilbert Nobbs, a company commander in the LRB, recalled how in battle during fighting around Leuze Wood, a 'young sergeant came up at the double, and saluted', saying he was in charge of his platoon. Nobbs said 'his tone and manner inspired me immensely' and 'he seemed to be full of ginger and pride at finding himself in command'.³⁹

Personal leadership also built followership and emulation both on individual and group level. On a personal level, a leaders' example could leave a deep impression. T.H. Holmes's first platoon Sergeant Wheeler in the QWR deeply affected him and he modelled himself on him.⁴⁰ Men could follow a leader literally to their death; LRB Rifleman Henry Russell was with his officer Lieutenant Wallace during the Battle of Gommecourt and they were pinned down. Wallace told Russell that they had 'been ordered to go on at all costs and that we must comply with this order' and on this Wallace stood 'up and within a few seconds dropped down riddled with bullets'. Russell, having observed Wallace's example 'felt that [he]... must do the same'. He therefore stood up and was immediately hit, saying 'that a man who could stand up and knowingly face practically certain death in these circumstances must be very brave'.⁴¹ Men could unite behind an officer who set an exemplary personal example. 'Men would go anyplace' with Lieutenant Colonel R.E.F. Shaw, CO of the Kensingtons, because he 'was a fine officer, very cool under fire and a great leader'.⁴² In many horizontally cohesive groups and units, following a leader could become a locus of horizontal cohesion. Peers united together to follow, support and do their best

³⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.59-60.

³⁷ M. Hall, *In Enemy Hands* (Stroud, 2002), pp.41-42

³⁸ H.V. Stone, Reel-2, IWMSA, 24883.

³⁹ G. Nobbs, *Right of the British Line* (London, 1917), p.103.

⁴⁰ Account [no page numbers]. T. H. Holmes, IWM, 06/30/1.

⁴¹ Cited in R. Van Emden, *The Somme* (Barnsley, 2016), p.127.

⁴² F. Smith, *I'll Always Remember* (Private memoir), p.23.

for their leader. Just as groups could decide to work against a leader, if they so chose, they could also opt to do the opposite.

Finally, fearless leadership in battle could also help boost morale in tired and depressed men in dangerous situations. Gristwood writes about the character Lieutenant Mackie in his post war story based on his service in the LRB. He said that Mackie ‘persisted in promenading the line while the shelling was hottest, [the shells] scattering chaff on the tremblers in the trench below. Call this unnecessary, foolhardy...yet it was good to see and mightily heartening... [he gave the men some words]... You may say that this was theatrical, and self-consciously melodramatic, but it was the very thing to raise dashed spirits’.⁴³

In contrast, a lack of bravery and personal example in battle could drain confidence. Tucker recalled being ‘contemptuous’ of an officer who kept ducking when shells landed near ‘for showing his fear in front of the men he was supposed to be leading.’⁴⁴ Corporal Bisgood, 1/2 Londons, during the Battle of Arras, was so ‘furious’ with a young subaltern for giving a ‘lame’ excuse to his commanding officer for not completing a bombing mission that Bisgood volunteered to do the mission for the young officer.⁴⁵

Confidence could also be shaken if leaders, even if brave, were perceived as being reckless and their behaviour potentially endangering their men. Private Stuart Dolden recalls the London Scottish’s quartermaster who had a habit of boasting to the other brigade quartermasters that ‘his cooks got closer to the enemy than theirs’ which was ‘no idle boast’. It was not something that built the confidence of Dolden and colleagues.⁴⁶ Bisgood, mentioned above, found his men would not follow him after he took on the subaltern's mission. He called on bombers and a Lewis Gun Section to follow him. When they reached a barricade across the trench and the twenty or so men to Bisgood’s ‘intense disgust...refused to budge further... [He] was that wild to think...[the] men would let [him]...down.’ The reason his men failed to follow him may be that they perceived his conduct as potentially reckless especially as he admits that he was ‘furious’ with his subaltern's poor excuse and ‘wild’ when his men refused to follow him or simply it gave his men an excuse not to risk themselves on a potentially dangerous mission.⁴⁷

⁴³ A.D. Gristwood, *The Somme and The Coward* (London, 1927), pp.74-75.

⁴⁴ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.152.

⁴⁵ Diary, 17/4/1917, T.H. Bisgood, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488> Accessed 7/1/2013.

⁴⁶ A.S. Dolden, *Cannon Fodder* (Poole, 1980), p.81.

⁴⁷ Diary, 17/4/1917, Bisgood.

Demonstrating leadership by personal conduct was a conscious and deliberate act by many leaders. For example, during an attack on Leuze Wood in September 1916, Nobbs and his colleague Farman were 'both shook up and taking cover in shell hole'. Nobbs instructed Farman to 'have a cigarette; it will buck the men up to see us smoking.'⁴⁸ Bisgood during the same attack recalled 'zero hour...was at...noon, a most extraordinary hour, as every movement could be seen, but of course...over we went...*to show the new men an example*' [italics added].⁴⁹

Leaders' conduct may be explained by a variety of reasons. Setting a personal example was behaviour expected of officers by their men and the army. The official view was that 'the confidence of his men can be gained by example' and 'where the danger is thickest, there must the officer be, cheering and encouraging his men by his example and coolness.'⁵⁰ Many officers saw personal leadership as a necessary part of their role of caring for their men like Low, whose commanding officer wrote, 'he took the utmost care and consideration for his men and...will not have them try to do anything that he cannot do himself.'⁵¹

Many officers personally believed that they could not lead their men, except by personal example, such as Padre Julian Bickersteth, the Rangers' chaplain, who went out with a wiring party into no man's land. This was not something he had to do but he 'was glad of it because I do so dislike the men to have to listen to someone who has not been with them under all conditions.'⁵²

While some chose to lead by example, others were persuaded by a self-imposed social pressure of potential embarrassment in front of their men if they failed to lead in the prescribed manner. One officer told Pinkerton that 'all the firing squads in kingdom come could not have held him in the front line during a heavy shelling...[but] only the fear of losing the respect of his men kept him with them.'⁵³

Many middle class grammar and public school educated men drew motivation from their social position as gentlemen; a position which gave them a duty of leadership. Bickersteth's view was that the 'public schoolboy officer...has a fine sense of duty, and faces future danger...in a half

⁴⁸ Nobbs, *Right*, p.101.

⁴⁹ Diary, 5/9/1916, Bisgood.

⁵⁰ *SS143, Instructions for the Training of Platoons for Offensive Action* (GHQ, 1917), p.14. Lecture on "The 'Officer Spirit' and how to create it" by RMGT at Rippon on 6/8/1915. <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/bandl.danby/F041OfficerSpirit.html> Accessed, 12/3/2015.

⁵¹ Letter, 28/1/1915, Low, IWM.

⁵² J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), p.145.

⁵³ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.149-150.

jocular, half serious way...he intends to die like a gentleman with his face to the foe.’⁵⁴ During the war, a sense of duty and personal leadership had a powerful influence on men to do the ‘right thing.’ Second in command of the QWR, Major Henriques, met an officer who had previously been an OTC instructor and ‘had not been to France before and...[was not] keen to go, but felt he ought to.’⁵⁵

iii) Leader task performance and middle class rankers

In her study of middle class Liverpool Territorials, McCartney described a situation where the leadership of middle class officers and NCOs were under constant scrutiny by their middle class men, as officer and ranker were socially qualified to lead and as a result, their leadership could be challenged or ignored by their men.⁵⁶ For instance, in the 6th Battalion, King’s (Liverpool Regiment), there was a large number of court martials for disobedience and insolence as leaders endeavoured to enforce order amongst middle class rankers who were often critical and questioned the decisions of their leaders.⁵⁷ The class corps units under study certainly reflect a similar socially exclusive status of these Liverpool units; Smith noted that in early 1915 at least 95% of the LRB rankers could have been officers.⁵⁸ It is important to examine how middle class rankers in the class corps units under study viewed the task performance of their middle class officers.

In the class corps units in this study, it appears that the equality of social class between leaders and the led caused similar problems. Rifleman Bryan Latham, referring to the LRB in early 1915, suggested that actual rank may not have mattered a great deal because men knew by their ‘upbringing when discipline was necessary and obedience was due’ and that a ‘lance corporal...carried more authority than many a subaltern in later raised units.’⁵⁹ Smith recalls that at a social evening a number of men got drunk and ‘candid remarks passed about certain individuals [leaders]’, which resulted in an address by their officer the next day.⁶⁰ However, there were no major issues on the scale reported by McCartney; there were no court martials and little evidence of scrutiny or tension between ranks.

⁵⁴ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.83.

⁵⁵ Diary, 10/9/1917. J.Q. Henriques, NAM, 8901-105.

⁵⁶ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.141-142.

⁵⁷ Ibid, pp.177-179.

⁵⁸ Smith, *Four*, p.69.

⁵⁹ B. Latham, *A Territorial Soldier's War* (London, 1967), p.23.

⁶⁰ Smith, *Four*, p.95.

Disciplinary and other problems may have been avoided in these class corps units under study for several reasons. Many middle class rankers operated a system of ‘reciprocal responsibility’ as mentioned earlier where discipline as an informal norm was managed on a ‘co-operative basis’.⁶¹ In addition, leaders may also have sought to perform to a very high standard given the observation of their social equals, such as Rifleman Leslie Walkinton’s officer Harding in the QWR whom Walkinton described as a ‘perfect example of a good officer’ and ‘an ideal leader in France.’⁶² The leadership of the class corps units may also have avoided such problems as described by McCartney by encouraging those seeking promotion to apply for commissions outside their unit. Class corps COs obstructed men from applying for commissions in early 1915 fearing their units would evaporate⁶³ but these restrictions were lifted by the spring.⁶⁴ By November 1915 in the London Scottish alone, over 1,200 men were commissioned and by the Armistice, all class corps units under study had sent over 4,500 rankers to be officers.⁶⁵ The exodus of middle class men seeking commissions accelerated the change in social composition from predominantly middle class to working class by late 1916 thus removing the potential problems. Another important factor was that many men who had sought commissions with pretensions of leadership decided to remain as rankers having developed strong horizontal cohesion with their comrades.⁶⁶

In summary, a subordinate’s assessment of their leader’s task performance was critical in determining whether they built vertical cohesion with that leader. They would give their faith and loyalty only where they perceived a leader was competent and safe. Men gained trust and confidence from the personal example of their leader in combat. This appears to have been widespread among officers in the units under study throughout the war, with one private believing his battalion officers were ‘brave and disciplined men, many of them exceptionally so’.⁶⁷ This bond had important outcomes for a leader such as enabling him to persuade men to cross the fire swept space of no man’s land on repeated occasions. While bravery was respected and revered, it had to be coupled with a high regard for men’s safety and security and avoid reckless actions.

B. Care of men

The second area for consideration is how Edwardian officers and NCOs in the units under study cared for the men under their command. Modern research suggests that cohesion can be built and

⁶¹ Latham, *Territorial*, p.18.

⁶² M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), pp.14-15, 27, 41-42.

⁶³ Smith, *Four*, p.59.

⁶⁴ D.W. Clappen, Reel-2. IWMSA.

⁶⁵ *Aberdeen Journal*, 5/11/1915. Lindsay, *London Scottish*, pp.89, 408. Cited in R. Holmes, *Soldiers* (London, 2011), p.188.

⁶⁶ Smith, *Four*, p.114. Dolden, *Cannon*, p.91.

⁶⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.152.

sustained when leaders focus on the troops rather than the task. The broad historiography concludes that NCOs and officers in the BEF largely cared for their men in a paternal way. Middle class leaders broadly supplied working class soldiers with their material and leisure needs which historians suggest contributed positive leader-subordinate relations.⁶⁸ However, McCartney in her study of the King's Liverpool Regiment found that this traditional model of paternal officers caring for deferential other ranks did not function in these units in the first two years of the war. The officers and men were of the same social class and such a traditional paternal relationship by officers would have been deemed offensive by men who largely managed their own affairs and received food parcels from rich parents. This made much of the leaders' role of providing food redundant. She suggests that leaders still cared for their men but did this in different ways such as reducing inaccuracies in men's pay calculations.⁶⁹ This section will explore how leaders in the units under study cared for their men and, with reference to class corps units, whether leaders adopted the practices of officers and NCOs described by McCartney. It will look at two distinct areas exploring how leaders cared for the material, leisure and spiritual needs of their men and also how they communicated and interacted with them on a daily basis.

i) Material needs

It appears that the majority of leaders in the units under study cared for the material and leisure interests of their men but the social class of their soldiers determined how they did this. In class corps units, a pattern emerges similar to that described by McCartney in her Liverpool Territorials. Leaders cared for men but in an indirect way, such as Earl Cairns, the LRB's first CO in France, who kept 'a careful eye on [their] welfare' by employing half a dozen old over age army cooks who made food from the same ingredients but it was 'not only edible but actually tasty'.⁷⁰ This action provided a communal resource, which men could use if they chose. London Scottish officers allowed their men to put their packs on their horses during long marches.⁷¹ There are rare examples of leaders providing food or organising leisure activities for their middle class subordinates but insignificant when compared to the level of support given to men in non-class corps units.⁷² As with the Liverpool middle class rankers, class corps rankers did not need additional food as their rich parents constantly supplied them.⁷³ Smith reckoned the LRB in 1915

⁶⁸ J. Baynes *Morale* (London, 1967), p.160. G. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches* (London, 2000), pp.178-179. R. Holmes, *Tommy* (London, 2004), pp.572-582. C. Kang, *The British Infantry Officer on the Western Front in the First World War* (PhD, University of Birmingham, 2007). J. Lewis-Stempel, *Six Weeks* (London, 2011), pp.151-182.

⁶⁹ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.136-141, 160-161.

⁷⁰ Latham, *Territorial*, p.7.

⁷¹ Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.63, 133.

⁷² Memoir, p.2. A. Schuman, IWM, 82/1/1.

⁷³ A. Williamson, *Henry Williamson and the First World War* (Stroud, 1998), pp.33-57.

received twice the mail of the other four regular battalions in their brigade combined (as a comparison Major Higgins noted the Kensingtons in the winter of 1914/5 got ‘almost as much mail as the rest of the Brigade put together’ which also consisted of four regular battalions and the Kensingtons).⁷⁴ Men also organised their own leisure activities such as putting on concerts or writing magazines.⁷⁵

In non-class corps units, paternal care by officers was much more prevalent. For instance, in the Kensingtons Majors Higgins and Dickens provided cake and a YMCA tent for their men respectively.⁷⁶ QVR C Company officers provided wine and organised sports events for their men in early 1915.⁷⁷ NCOs played a major role in caring for their men. For example, Hall’s diary records how his colleagues were ‘grateful to Corporals Kedgeley and Mortlake for their attention to our wants. It says a great deal for the good spirit which prevails together between NCOs and men.’⁷⁸ Other leaders also sought to give paternal care, Padre Leighton Green, the 1/4 Londons’ chaplain, set up a ‘Mag-Fag’ fund based on subscriptions from his Norfolk based parishioners to supply magazines and cigarettes for his men.⁷⁹

Officers started to care for their men in the more traditional paternal ways as suggested by Sheffield as the war progressed and brought change to the social composition of class corps units making them more working class. For instance, in 1917 the QVR set up a regimental canteen and their second in command obtained playing cards for his men.⁸⁰

Not all officers though acted in such a paternal manner and some failed to care through human weakness or inability. For example, the London Scottish’s D Company QMS being frequently drunk failed to do his job and, as a result, his company often got the worst billets. It earned him little respect and the company titled themselves the Poor Old Bastards of D Company.⁸¹ Others were just mean, such as Private Joseph Steward’s platoon leader in the Kensingtons, Mr White, who ‘arrogated’ the platoon’s rum rations by reducing the ‘legitimate measure’ and making ‘fools of their mouths’. This infuriated his men, one of whom, Private Knight, took his mess tin further

⁷⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.56. Letter, 13/12/1914, J. Higgins, Bedford Archives.

⁷⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.29.

⁷⁶ *The Kensington*, June 1962. Letter, 30/12/1914. J. Higgins, Bedford Archives.

⁷⁷ C.A.C. Keelson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London, 1923), p.178. Letter, 20/1/1915. H. Flemming, NAM, 1999-01-141. F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morley, 1974), p.30.

⁷⁸ Diary, 14/1/1916, F. Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

⁷⁹ S.J. McLaren, *Somewhere in Flanders, The War Letters of the Revd Samuel Frederic Leighton Green* (Dereham, 2005), p.44.

⁸⁰ J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), p.164. Diary, 30/9/1917. J.Q. Henriques, NAM, 8901-105.

⁸¹ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.8.

down the trench and joined another platoon's rum queue to get his 'full whack'.⁸² These men clearly felt aggrieved by their leaders' actions and such acts were usually resented.⁸³

From the available evidence, these are the only two incidents where leaders clearly failed in their paternal duties, either by omission or commission, as their men saw it. There are vastly more acts of caring by leaders. These were important in building leader influence and could have a positive impact on soldiers' morale.⁸⁴ In terms of cohesion these acts helped build affection for leaders; for instance, Smith praised his CO's success ('God bless him!') in finding shelter for the LRB on a wet night while others camped in the open.⁸⁵ For others, these actions were direct evidence that leaders cared for their men; Rifleman Frank Hawkings, in the QVR, recalls his gratitude to his colonel for providing cold drinks after a route march.⁸⁶

ii) Interpersonal relationships

Another important element determining the leaders' influence was how they related to their subordinates on an interpersonal level. The development of these relationships depended on a wide range of communication styles, the leaders' education and background and probably most significantly, their personality.⁸⁷

An incident reported by T.H. Holmes demonstrates the varied leadership styles and subordinate reactions. Holmes was recovering from an inoculation and feeling ill and worn after the injection and was visited by his commanding officer, Colonel Lambert and the adjutant, Major Kelly. They had very different styles of communication. The 'colonel asked [Holmes] one or two sympathetic questions', but Kelly snarled sarcastic comments and 'poked [him] in the ribs with his...cane and said, "Pull yourself together man."' He assessed the former as a 'kind and clever soldier' but the latter, 'a bastard.' Holmes recalled that if he 'could have summoned the energy, I would have spat at him [Kelly]' and risked a court martial'.⁸⁸

Being sympathetic, as Lambert was in this example, was only one way to build influence with soldiers. Many leaders actively used humour to do this and it 'helped relieve the...dreadful

⁸² Steward, *Platoon*, pp.147-148.

⁸³ Sheffield, Phd, p.225.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.33.

⁸⁶ Hawkings, *From*, p.6.

⁸⁷ R. Holmes, *Tommy* (London, 2004), p.572.

⁸⁸ Holmes, IWM.

monotony and discomfort' of men's lives. Leaders who could make others laugh were popular.⁸⁹ The QWR lost a 'good soldier' when Captain Shattock was killed as he 'was liked very much by both the officers and men being always ready with a joke'.⁹⁰ Those who did not take themselves too seriously often made themselves liked by their men: Captain Flemming took part in a QWR batman versus QWR officers football match, which 'tickled the crowd no end'.⁹¹

In addition, it was often appreciated when leaders took a personal interest in their men and it could boost morale. Groom's platoon commander Armstrong was a 'good officer' as he was closely attached to his men.⁹² Corporal Schuman reported to LRB's Colonel Bates that he had lost his rifle. Bates replied 'don't worry about the rifle, we can replace that, but its men like you we can't' to which he 'felt quite bucked'.⁹³ Many men considered personal interest in their welfare by leaders as evidence of their care; for instance, Rifleman W.G. Holmes, in the Rangers, recalled that his sergeant sent a man to massage his injured hand.⁹⁴

These interpersonal relationships were often an extension of their paternal relationship with their subordinates. Leaders would frequently assume familiar roles as parents or siblings, providing advice and social support. Some would be named after patriarchal figures, such as Sergeant Bryant in the Kensingtons and Sergeant Townsend in the QWR being known as 'daddy' to their men.⁹⁵

Not all relationships between leader and led were so positive. The men in Gristwood's semi-autobiographical fictional account had a distant relationship with their subaltern Higgins whom they by 'no means 'worshipped'' and their 'dealings...were confined strictly to business transactions' [sic].⁹⁶ Often personal animosity between superior and subordinate affected relationships; T.H. Holmes's and 'swarthy' Corporal Baker mutually loathed each other, Holmes knew they would never be 'bosom pals'.⁹⁷ Other soldiers resented officers because of the supposed privileges such as more leave and that they avoided 'by virtue of... [their] office, all the hard work and much of the discomfort' of trench life.⁹⁸

⁸⁹ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.138.

⁹⁰ Diary, 9/1/1915, B.J. Brookes, <http://bjb.bobbrookes.co.uk/#home> Accessed 27/8/1914.

⁹¹ Letter, 20/1/1915, Flemming, NAM.

⁹² Groom, *Poor*, p.115.

⁹³ Memoirs, p.3. Schuman, IWM.

⁹⁴ W.G. Holmes, Reel-2. IWMSA, 8868.

⁹⁵ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.158. S. Bass, Reel-1, IWMSA, 17662.

⁹⁶ Gristwood, *Somme*, p.41.

⁹⁷ Holmes, IWM.

⁹⁸ Diary, 16/2/1916. A. Moffat, LC, GS 0340. Gristwood, *Somme*, p.41.

Understanding regional accents was a factor which appears to have hindered some relationships between leaders and men. Battalions became more diverse as the men who joined them were being drawn from across the UK. In 1916, Bickersteth admitted in a letter that this change had brought ‘farmers and farmhands’ into the Rangers with whom he admitted he did not ‘find it easy to get on with the yokel as I don’t know really understand him’.⁹⁹

However, reports of poor relationships between leaders and their men are very rare and outweighed by many more positive accounts. Some men could have great affection for their leaders; for example, a subaltern in the QVR recalled how he wrote home to tell how he ‘mentioned in the hearing of two or three of the men that I had not received any letters for some time. Two days later I received this little lot (enclosed). All signed by their nicknames’.¹⁰⁰ Leaders could be widely liked across a unit; for instance, in the 1/2 Londons, the popularity of CSM Dainty was such that, after his death, subscriptions collected for his wreath generated a surplus that erected a memorial tablet at his home church.¹⁰¹

The social dimension of vertical cohesion between leader and subordinate produced a number of outcomes. It was highly likely that where men liked their officer, they put much more effort into their jobs, so as not to let the leader down.¹⁰² Smith and the LRB transport section always maintained a ‘fair standard in their turn-outs’ at Brigade inspections because of their affection for their leader Sergeant Chrisp, whom they had known for years.¹⁰³

In some situations, maintaining good standards, loyalty and support for a leader became an object of horizontal cohesion among peers in groups and units. London Scot Douglas Pinkerton described his officer, Mr Findley, as the most ‘conscientious officer I have ever known. No matter what his own problems or discomforts, he never forgot "his boys."' On Findley’s death, Pinkerton and his colleagues bonded closely on a special pilgrimage to Findley’s grave, in Arras, where they ‘stood, hatless and wordless, silent tributes to this great Christian of war's making’.¹⁰⁴

Also, good personal relationships gave leaders influence. While officers had considerable formal power and informal power there were still many occasions when leaders needed to persuade men rather than order them. For instance, in order for Territorial soldiers to serve overseas, they

⁹⁹ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.115.

¹⁰⁰ C.A.C. Keeson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London, 1923), p.xiv.

¹⁰¹ Grey, 2nd, p.259.

¹⁰² Sheffield, PhD, p.286.

¹⁰³ Smith, *Four*, p.340.

¹⁰⁴ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.62, 109.

needed to sign the Imperial Service Order which changed their legal terms of service to allow deployment overseas. In the QWR ‘many men’ voluntarily signed the Order after being persuaded by the ‘remarks and advice’ of the Captain Shattock, mentioned above.¹⁰⁵

Finally, the loss of a beloved officer could lead men to seek revenge if their comrades were killed as outlined in Chapter 4. For instance, Private Barnett, fighting with the Kensingtons, was so maddened at the death of his officer, Mr Summers, that he set about the Germans during an attack on Leuze Wood ‘like a demon’.¹⁰⁶ One London Scottish subaltern killed surrendering German prisoners because they had ‘blinded [his]...lieutenant’.¹⁰⁷

Officers and NCOs cared, and promoted good relations with their men for a number of reasons. Leaders were aware of the importance of interpersonal relationships between officers, NCOs and men and sought to maintain and protect them where possible. For example, during the restructuring of the QWR from eight to four companies in 1914, units were organised to leave sections with their original sergeants and add surplus NCOs to their former company.¹⁰⁸

The ideas of paternalistic duty were present in the officer corps throughout the war. The public school education of the officers being commissioned in the early part of the war powerfully shaped their values. The emphasis on sport, muscular Christianity and classical teaching in public schools, reinforced ideas of paternalism, self-sacrifice, leading by example and loyalty to school (unit), King and empire.¹⁰⁹ As casualties mounted and officers were drawn from other social groups, for instance those educated at grammar schools, the values were still maintained. Grammar schools were closely modelled on public schools and adopted many of their values. This was further reinforced through officer training programmes from 1916 and actively practised in Officer Cadet Battalions.¹¹⁰ Exit exams asked new officers what were their duties when arriving with their men from the trenches when they were tired, wet and cold.¹¹¹

Official pamphlets also reinforced this role. *SSI43* dictated that ‘the platoon commander... will place his own comfort or convenience second to that of his men’.¹¹² Unofficial guidance also advised similarly by emphasising, ‘unless you play the game by them [your men], they’ll never

¹⁰⁵ Diary, 9/1/1915, Brookes.

¹⁰⁶ Steward, *Platoon*, p.69.

¹⁰⁷ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.161.

¹⁰⁸ Diary, 11/11/1914, Henriques, NAM.

¹⁰⁹ Sheffield, PhD, p.130.

¹¹⁰ C.J. Blomfield, *Once an Artist Always an Artist* (London, 1921) pp.152-53.

¹¹¹ Paper 1, Military Law, Military Organisation and Interior Economy, 12/1916, Officer Cadets' file, LC.

¹¹² *Platoon Training* (GHQ, 1918), p.24.

play the game by you'.¹¹³ Importantly, the aim of this was to make men efficient rather than display compassion.¹¹⁴ Once in the field, the care of men was institutionalized through 'paternalistic leadership and man management'.¹¹⁵ A lecture was given on 'billets and welfare and comfort of the men' as part of the 1/4 Londons' July 1917 training programme.¹¹⁶

The leaders 'lived – or rather existed – in the same slimy gulley, endured the same shell fire and was tormented by the same species of lice' as their men.¹¹⁷ Active service drew men together and the issues that had separated them in peacetime, such as class, became of secondary importance.¹¹⁸ Bickersteth found that 'having been with the lads in danger and lived close to them through these difficult and heart breaking days has given me a bond of sympathy with them that nothing can destroy'.¹¹⁹ Officers had intimate knowledge of their men through the censoring of their letters.¹²⁰ This contributed to strong relations between leaders and the led. For instance, Kensington Captain Clarke and Sergeant Oborn were close and on the latter's death the former wrote to Oborn's wife saying that he 'valued him as a friend as much as I respected him as a NCO'.¹²¹ NCOs also developed strong bonds with their men; Sergeant Bisgood, refused a rear echelon job because he could not see himself 'clear to leave the boys'.¹²²

Caring could result in strong bonds and in turn lead to strong units but there were also other less favourable consequences of cohesion. Officers who had strong emotional bonds with their men could suffer significant stress and even breakdown when men were lost in action. Flemming wrote that 'some days I get most terribly down...from the horror and misery of the war...and loathe taking my men out...the responsibility of knowing [what]...a false step – a wrong turn, might lead to'.¹²³ Groom describes his platoon commander Armstrong, who after the LRB's attack at Third Ypres on 16 August 1917, took a 'real mental and physical battering' and kept repeating that half his platoon was only three men.¹²⁴

¹¹³ 'The 'Officer Spirit'. C.N., *The Making of an Officer* (London, 1916), p.30. Anon, *A General's Letters to His Son* (London, 1917), pp.24-27

¹¹⁴ Baynes, *Morale*, p.169-170. Gary, G.D. Sheffield, 'A very good type of Londoner and a very good type of colonial: Officer-Man Relations, and Discipline in the 22nd RF, 1914-18', in B. Bond (ed), 'Look to your Front' (Staplehurst, 1999), p.139.

¹¹⁵ Sheffield, PhD, p.184.

¹¹⁶ Appendix, 7/1917, 1/4 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95 2954.

¹¹⁷ Steward, *Platoon*, p.113.

¹¹⁸ J. Baynes, *Morale, a Study of Men and Courage* (London, 1967), p.175.

¹¹⁹ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, pp.115-116.

¹²⁰ Letter, 11/11/1914, Flemming, NAM.

¹²¹ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.101.

¹²² Diary, 10-15/11/1916. Bisgood.

¹²³ Letter, 20/1/1915 & 1/3/1915, Flemming, NAM.

¹²⁴ Groom, *Poor*, p.115.

This close identification with one's men could lead to conflict with higher authority. Certainly two commanders of the Kensingtons clashed with their Brigade Commander, Brigadier Loch on this issue. F.W. Jeffries recalled a public dispute between Shaw and Loch where the latter complained that it 'was not the done thing' to have the men in such a dishevelled state returning from the trenches. Shaw replied that his men came first and needed a rest before 'spit and polish'.¹²⁵ The flip side of this is that close identification with one's men could protect a leader in times of need. Jimmy, a 'good corporal' in the Rangers and who was very close to his men, was brought before the Colonel for 'insulting the RSM' but his case was dismissed when 'his merry men all swore that he said nothing of the sort.'¹²⁶

A leader caring for his men in spiritual, material or emotional ways helped build respect and allegiance amongst his soldiers. Developing positive interpersonal relationships was also aided by demonstrating personal and caring communication. Both these elements were important in developing trust and loyalty to a leader by his men.¹²⁷ Men, frequently stated they would have 'gone anywhere and done anything' for an officer who was regarded as caring.¹²⁸ This appears to demonstrate the aims stated in *SSI43* were achieved; that if leaders talked frequently to their men and interested themselves in their 'men's welfare', they would 'earn a loyalty which the danger and discomfort of war will be powerless to shake.'¹²⁹ Loyalty and affection for leaders was often an object of horizontal cohesion in small units and teams. As groups could develop informal norms and action to undermine leaders, they could, and frequently did, develop norms, which dictated support and obedience for their leaders. It appears that this behaviour was reasonably widespread among officers and it did a considerable amount to build cohesion with men. For example, between November 1915 and the Armistice, Smith and the LRB transport section had five officers all of whom were paternal and cared for their men and this created confidence, loyalty, affection and trust from the men in the section.¹³⁰ Similarly, Steward's *Platoon* between July 1916 and October 1918 had five officers whom men knew by name. Three were caring and established fondness and allegiance from their men (Messrs Summer, Thorn and Wren). One was disliked (Mr White) and the other received no comment either way (Mr Blest).¹³¹

¹²⁵ Account, p.4. F.W. Jeffries, LC, J6-9.

¹²⁶ Mason, pp.29-30, IWM

¹²⁷ Sheffield, Phd, p.222.

¹²⁸ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.70. Smith, *Four Years*, p.340.

¹²⁹ *Platoon Training* (GHQ, 1918), p.24.

¹³⁰ Smith, *Four*, pp.45-365.

¹³¹ Steward, *Platoon*.

C. Officer casualties: making bonding impossible?

As with horizontal cohesion, it is important to consider if there was sufficient time to build vertical cohesion between men and their leaders before casualties disrupted their relationships.¹³² As stated in Chapter 2, the data shows that the average length of a period of service was 178 days which increased steadily as the war progressed, from 97 days in 1914/5 to and 243 days in 1918. But was this long enough for men to bond with their leaders?

It is important to acknowledge the value of NCO relationships as vertical cohesion was also strongly dependent on NCO/men relationships but currently no data is available on the length of service that corporals, sergeants and other NCOs served in France. The data used to calculate the average length of service for other ranks used in Chapter 1 includes NCOs but it is impossible to separate analysis for NCO service only.

The length of time taken to establish vertical cohesion may depend on the point at which the leader joined a unit during the war. Examining the pattern of leadership in small units is problematic as few hold records which detail when leaders came and went. The best available evidence is Steward's *Platoon*. Between July 1916 and October 1918 they had nine leaders, seven officers and two NCOs and they commanded the units for variable lengths of time. Two only lasted a matter of days before they were wounded or killed and their duration was so short they are not named while other leaders lasted months.¹³³

From the existing sources, it is difficult to determine with precision the length of time taken for men to form strong trusting relationships, either on a task or social basis. It no doubt depended on leader personality and the context in which the unit found itself. An estimate can be made but it has obvious limitations given the paucity of evidence. Veterans believed that men could assess leaders very quickly; Walkinton said that within a few days of joining the QWR he 'had a good idea of the habits and capabilities of the NCOs.'¹³⁴ Bickersteth believed that men 'are quick to read their officer's character and understand his every whim and wish'.¹³⁵ Smith and his transport section assessed their officers' abilities very quickly; on their first meetings with Mr Rose and Mr Finch, respectively, he concluded they were 'real sports' as both officers said they would leave

¹³² O. Bartov, 'Daily life and motivation in war: The Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 12:2 (1989), pp.201-203.

¹³³ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.174, 184.

¹³⁴ Walkinton, *Twice*, p.4.

¹³⁵ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.83.

the running of the section to the men and followed their word.¹³⁶ Tucker joined his pioneer section in April 1917 and he writes in his memoirs he was enjoying a good working relationship with his corporal certainly within 30 days.¹³⁷ The structural relationship between leader and men probably accelerated the assessment and bonding, as men only had to assess a single individual similar to a class where pupils know the teacher's abilities, attitudes and weaknesses long before the teacher knows the same of their students. The nature of bonding may have been influenced by external events such as whether a unit was in combat or not. Based on the available evidence it is estimated that men could have formed an assessment of a leader within 30 days.

The time taken to develop social and affective bonds with a leader was probably longer but could also be very short in certain circumstances. For example, during the battle of the Somme, men in Steward's platoon formed close emotional relationships with two paternal subalterns who served only between six to eight weeks each; Mr Summers being killed and Mr Wren wounded.¹³⁸ These relationships occurred through the prolonged engagement of the 56th Division in the Somme battles which may have accelerated bonding. Other records suggest that, out of combat, relationships may have taken longer. For instance, in the QWR, Second Lieutenant Engall wrote a letter to his parents in June 1916 saying that he thought his men 'loved' him and by this time he had been training for the forthcoming Somme battle for around three months.¹³⁹ It was certainly possible to develop affective relationships with leaders in sections and platoons within 60 days but it may have taken up to 90 days with other leaders. If these times are accepted then the evidence suggests that men had the opportunity throughout the war to develop task and/or socially based cohesion with their leaders, even in 1914/5.

If vertical cohesion, both task and socially based, could be formed in units, how long did it last? The evidence also suggests that once formed these relationships tended to persist. Men did fall out with some leaders, such as Smith's tiff with the MO over his own self-medication but these appear to be rare.¹⁴⁰ As the war progressed, the chances of these relationships being disrupted by officers being killed, wounded or other factors, reduced significantly as the average length of service increased. The number of officers serving six months or more in France and Belgium rose from 8% in 1914/5 to 43% in 1918. As a result, it is presumed that the incidence of vertical cohesion increased steadily in the units under study as the war progressed.

¹³⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.282, 368.

¹³⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.129.

¹³⁸ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.48, 69.

¹³⁹ J.S. Engall, *A Subaltern's Letters* (London, 1917), p.118.

¹⁴⁰ Smith, *Four*, pp.304-305.

D. Conclusions

In the units under study, the vast majority of leaders actively demonstrated care for the material, spiritual and emotional needs of their men; actively putting their men's requirements above their own. As Sheffield has shown, this was a powerful mechanism for developing trust and confidence among men. Leaders' influence was further enhanced where they could develop good interpersonal relationships with those they led. Caring and interacting effectively with ones' men was critical for developing social aspects of vertical cohesion based on emotional affective caring for a leader. Importantly, the officers in class corps units, like those in McCartney's study, were sensitive to the social status of their men and sought to care for them accordingly.

Leaders also gained influence by building confidence in their technical competency, which was important for building task cohesion. There are several examples of men questioning their belief in their leader when those leaders demonstrated a clear lack of professional expertise. However, strong trust and loyalty of men could be secured when leaders demonstrated high levels of knowledge and skill and especially where they demonstrated courageous leadership in combat through personal example.

Casualties amongst officers disrupted cohesion within primary groups but not to such an extent that it prevented or hindered it. It is estimated that the length of time to form task based cohesive relationships with leaders was around 30 days and social based relations between 30 to 180 days. This suggests that even in the early part of the war, officers served long enough for them to develop vertical cohesion with their men. Once established, vertical cohesion remained and the prevalence of vertical cohesion across units probably increased as the war progressed, as the average length of service of officers increased dramatically.

It appears that positive vertical cohesion was much more prevalent than negative vertical cohesion, as reflected in veteran accounts and the documentary record. This produced three key outcomes. Firstly, leaders derived considerable influence from vertical cohesion. Though they had 'formal' disciplinary powers to gain compliance from their subordinates, gaining their consent and commitment through positive vertical cohesion meant leaders could achieve far more from their soldiers. It enabled them to persuade their troops to follow them in potentially dangerous situations, such as combat. Secondly, it gave leaders influence in situations where leaders could not rely on their formal statutory powers to gain conformity from their men, such as getting them to sign the Imperial Service Order. Thirdly, positive vertical cohesion could also influence

horizontal cohesion amongst his men. Just as horizontally cohesive groups and units could choose to undermine a leader, they could also seek to support and obey that leader and this could act as an informal norm among some horizontally cohesive groups or units.

Chapter 6 – Formal and informal powers to reward and coerce and their impact on vertical cohesion

This chapter is the second to focus on vertical cohesion and it will examine how leaders in the units under study used their informal and formal powers to reward, coerce and discipline their subordinates. It will also consider the impact of the use of such powers on vertical cohesion between leaders and their men.

In all armies throughout history, leaders have had powers to incentivise (for example, through awarding medals) or to punish their soldiers but there has been little modern sociological research among social scientists on the impact of such powers on building or degrading vertical cohesion. Anthony King suggests this lack of interest, especially on the impact of coercive powers, is due to the ‘liberal perspectives’ of most commentators who assume that the threat of punishment could not motivate soldiers as they are driven by ‘higher’ ideals such as loyalty to fellows, leaders or country.¹

William Henderson has been the only commentator in recent times to articulate the value of reward and coercive powers in building cohesion. He examined their use in his comparative 1986 study of cohesion in the armies of USSR, North Vietnam, USA and Israel. He argues that where a leader has power to reward or punish a subordinate, this could ‘exert influence in personal relationships’ and gain conformity to group rules and procedures but these are only effective if rewards and punishments are congruent with group norms, values and expectations.²

While social scientists have largely ignored how leaders have used their reward or coercive powers to influence vertical cohesion, historians have not; especially those examining leader-subordinate relations in British Army units during the Great War. Historical attention on First World War junior leadership has focused on the use of formal disciplinary powers to coerce rather than to reward and the informal influence leaders gained from their official position. Research of these areas have lead historians to challenge the established view that BEF leaders behaved in a strictly centralised, top down system that stressed the value of obedience to the accepted hierarchy. Instead, they have presented a more complex picture.³

¹ A. King, ‘Discipline and Punish’, in A. King (ed), *Frontline* (Oxford, 2015), pp.95-111.

² W.D. Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Factor* (Washington, 1986), pp.112-113.

³ M. Van Creveld, *Command in War* (London, 1985), p.166. T. Travers, ‘The Hidden Army: Structural Problems in the British Officer Corps, 1900-1918’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17:3 (7/1982), p.525.

In regular units, historians suggest leaders used their powers with a strict adherence to rules and regulations, prosecuting offenders through the formal channels and often handing out harsh and tough penalties because it was believed to be important to manage the class of man who generally entered the regular units in peacetime. John Baynes argues that in the 2/Scottish Rifles during the Great War, soldiers accepted this system as it reflected much of their pre-service experience of education and work and officers cared for their men. The application of strict discipline by leaders did not inhibit vertical cohesion as officers and NCOs led by example and all had a strong loyalty to the 'regiment'; all of which contributed to morale and combat performance of the unit.⁴

Leaders in Territorial units had a more relaxed approach to discipline, based on informal relations, which reflected their experience as pre-war civilians. Helen McCartney suggests in her study of middle class TF units of the King's Liverpool Regiment that leaders used their powers on the principle of negotiation to reach agreement with their men. Before and during the early part of the war when the ranks, NCOs and officers were socially homogenous, disciplinary relationships were characterized by face-to-face discussions and bargaining which helped gain consent and engagement of soldiers with orders and authority. This style of negotiation altered with the influx of working class replacements and as the social hierarchy changed. Officers adopted a more traditional paternal 'regular style' disciplinary relationship with their social inferiors.⁵ Pat Morris, in her work on the Territorial Leeds Rifles, also shows that officers used their powers in a relaxed and informal way and as a result inter-rank relations were good.⁶

Gary Sheffield found that leaders in new army units adopted a variety of approaches. Some maintained an enlightened disciplinary regime, like auxiliary units, but the majority adopted a more 'regular style' of strict discipline.⁷ He argues that men did not necessarily resent strict discipline and it did not militate against good officer-men relations, rather it was considered that many paternal leaders protected their men from the harsher aspects of military discipline.⁸ Tim Bowman's study of discipline in Irish new army and regular units suggests that leaders in the former used their formal powers more frequently relative to the latter, where leaders often made allowances for their 'citizen soldiers'. He also suggests that leaders saw Irish soldiers as 'distinct'

⁴ J. Baynes, *Morale* (London, 1967), pp.109-199

⁵ H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005), pp.121-196.

⁶ P. Morris, 'Leeds and the amateur military tradition: the Leeds Rifles and their antecedents, 1859-1918' (PhD, University of Leeds 1983), pp.914-956.

⁷ G.D. Sheffield, 'A very good type of Londoner and a very good type of colonial: Officer-Man Relations, and Discipline in the 22nd RF, 1914-18', in B. Bond (ed), *'Look to your Front'* (Staplehurst, 1999).

⁸ G.D Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches* (London, 2000).

from English, Welsh or Scots men. There was a view that Irish soldiers required firmer discipline than others.⁹

The historiography suggests that the use of disciplinary powers contributed to good leader-subordinate relations which was shaped by leaders' pre-war experience, the unit traditions in which they served and prevailing societal perceptions of how men from certain social classes (or ethnic groups) should be treated. However, the focus of historians on the use of formal coercive powers potentially ignores other important influences that leaders had at their disposal to direct the behaviour of their soldiers. These include their formal powers to reward, as Henderson highlighted, but also the informal control they gained from the responsibilities held by their official position such as the allocation of tasks to subordinates. There is evidence to suggest that the ways in which leaders used their informal and formal powers influenced vertical cohesion and its outcomes and will be examined in two sections. The first will address the informal sway NCOs and officers gained as a result of the responsibilities derived from their roles to incentivise or compel. The second section will examine the authority leaders gained from exercising their statutory powers to reward and discipline.

A. Informal powers

All leaders in command manage soldiers and their responsibilities included organizing and directing those men to perform specific roles, be part of particular sub-units under their purview and make decisions on matters such as their men's leave. This gave leaders a powerful source of leverage to either coerce or incentivise their men.

The allocation of specific tasks was a key mechanism of power and leaders had significant licence to allocate such jobs or responsibilities. For instance, corporals could decide who did what and 'if he didn't like you, he could allot you something unpleasant, like "Latrine Duty"' [sic].¹⁰ On paper, this would appear to be a very valuable source of power but, in practice, the evidence suggests that the allocation of tasks in small groups was often dictated by the informal norms which set out an equal division of tasks. In Joseph Steward's book *Platoon*, about his time in the Kensingtons, Corporal Blown picks on two men by giving them additional tasks, an action which breaks the

⁹ T. Bowman, *Irish Regiments in the Great War* (Manchester, 2003), pp.202-204.

¹⁰ Account [no page numbers]. T. H. Holmes, IWM, 06/30/1.

informal group rule and results in his social exclusion from the group and open protest by some of his soldiers.¹¹

Leaders could also deploy men to sub-units under their control. These were frequently used to enforce discipline or deal with ‘problem men’. For example, Rifleman Bob Brookes was moved to the QWR’s signal section because the CSM had heard ‘some bad reports about [him that he was]...likely to be a ‘wash out’ as a rifleman’.¹² Similarly, Rifleman Conibeer was moved from the LRB’s transport section to a rifle company because he had been ‘speaking his mind pretty freely’ and irritated his superiors.¹³

While allocating job and roles by leaders was a source of disciplinary leverage, it could also be a source of reward. For example, Captain Russell gave priority for selection into the new reformed LRB transport section in 1915 to those who had served during 2nd Ypres.¹⁴ Choosing men for specific roles could also allow leaders to exercise paternal care; for instance, “Ginger” Evans, a private in the Kensingtons, was sent to be the divisional chaplain’s batman as his young ‘age and infirmity unfitted him for the firing-line.’¹⁵

Another important power was the allocation of leave. A senior officer could grant compassionate leave if he wanted to; London Scot Coates got two compassionate leaves to return home for family tragedies.¹⁶ Similarly, Rifleman Aubrey Smith’s LRB medical officer threatened to put Smith on the bottom of the leave list if he refused a voluntary typhoid inoculation. Even though the injection was voluntary, Smith consented as his ‘leave was more precious than anything in the world’.¹⁷

On paper, the informal powers that leaders derived from their position appeared powerful. They were able to allocate subordinates to jobs, responsibilities and sub-units as well as allocate leave in some situations and this, undoubtedly, gave them great scope for leverage which was a valuable adjunct to their formal powers. Also, superiors rarely questioned their junior leaders’ decisions as they had devolved powers and senior leaders would largely support their decisions in order to maintain discipline. Despite these advantages, leaders used their informal powers with

¹¹ J. Steward, *The Platoon* (Barnsley, 2011), pp.99-105.

¹² Diary, 31/8/1914. B.J. Brookes, <http://bjb.bobbrookes.co.uk/#home> Accessed 27/8/1914.

¹³ A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), p.203.

¹⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.86.

¹⁵ W. Drury, *Camp Follower* (Dublin, 1968), pp.84-85.

¹⁶ H.B Coates, Reel-2, IWMSA, 9833.

¹⁷ Smith, *Four*, pp.198-199.

circumspection. Informal and formal powers were used in parallel to build consensus with their subordinates, maintain relationships and use punitive sanctions only as an option of last resort.

B. Formal powers

i) Powers to reward

Dependent on their rank, leaders had a broad range of official powers to inspire and motivate men to behave in officially sanctioned ways. However their use appears to have been limited. For example, leaders had the power to recommend men to receive medals for gallant or meritorious conduct but the chance of the man being given the award was reasonably random. Decorations required confirmation of higher authorities and quotas were set for the number and types that could be bestowed. For instance, for much of the war Haig could grant only 200 DSOs and 500 MCs per month to the BEF.¹⁸ In addition, some of the criteria around specific honours were stringent; for example, a VC recommendation required three witnesses.¹⁹

Medals carried status among soldiers; men noticed ribbons on combatant's chests and they took great pride in awards given to comrades in their battalion but there is little evidence that they would, in Napoleon's dictum, 'fight long and hard for a bit of coloured ribbon.'²⁰ Men were well aware that the chances of a recommendation being converted into an actual medal were low. After a raid by the Kensingtons on 1 June 1918, Private T.H. Holmes' commander Smith said all participants deserved an MM but, due to their limited numbers, they were allocated by vote; only the most popular men receiving them.²¹ If anything, there is a negative view on men's behaviour being motivated by prospect of a medal. Rifleman Elliot, in the QVR, commented that 'those who work for these rewards only are not worth considering as workers or patriots'.²² Sergeant Mason, serving in the Rangers, said men were not awarded medals for patrols as 'they were not popular enough'.²³ It appears that the 56th Division instituted its own system of recognition, with some men getting Divisional cards such as William Dickson, who received one for participating in a trench raid carried out by the Kensingtons but the use of these cards appears to have been limited as this was the only mention of their award.²⁴

¹⁸ C. Messenger, *Call to Arms – The British Army 1914-1918* (London, 2005), pp.479-481.

¹⁹ M.J. Crook, *The Evolution of the Victoria Cross* (London, 1975), p.204.

²⁰ F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morely, 1974), p.61.

²¹ Holmes, IWM.

²² T.G. Elliot & R.E. Gregory (ed), *Tim's War* (Sutton, 2013), p.129.

²³ R.J. Mason, 'Up the Rangers', p.10. IWM, Misc 250, Box 12.

²⁴ G. Dickson (ed), *Granddad's Great War Diary* (Manchester, 2014), p.26.

The practice of leaders offering material, pecuniary and other rewards to entice men to carry out such activities as trench raids was more common. For one raid in July 1916, the Kensingtons, gave men 'juicy joints' to generate volunteers and 'stimulate the enthusiasm' for the operation.²⁵ The Rangers offered 'tempting prizes', including leave, for those who captured a prisoner on a patrol.²⁶ These incentives certainly created volunteers for the Kensingtons' raid but whether the Rangers captured the prisoners is unknown. Similarly, with the use of divisional cards, there is little evidence that bribes were offered widely to motivate men.

The final area for consideration is promotion. Officers promoted men to NCO positions and many men and NCOs were commissioned, some in the field. However, there is no evidence that leaders sought to use promotion as a tool to stimulate specific behaviour or gallantry. Men were promoted because of valiant conduct but no one appears to have behaved in such a manner just to get promoted. Many men shunned the prospect of promotion, considering themselves immature or were happy being privates with their friends or they did not want the additional responsibilities.²⁷

In practice, it appears that the leaders' formal powers to reward were reasonably limited and did not play a major part in influencing men's behaviour.

ii) Powers to coerce and discipline

Under the pre-war *King's Regulations* and *Manual of Military Law*, the battalion commander and his officers had significant licence, flexibility and opportunity to use their powers as they saw fit and set the disciplinary tone of their unit.²⁸ They also allowed the battalion commander to delegate disciplinary powers to his company commanders.²⁹ Their powers covered 23 offences to which they could impose a range of penalties such as detention, fines, pay deductions and field punishments.³⁰

As a consequence, individual units developed specific types of disciplinary regimes. In regular units, as suggested above, leaders used their powers in a strict, formal and 'all-encompassing

²⁵ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.51-52.

²⁶ Mason, p.10. IWM.

²⁷ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), p.135. J.F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.19. Smith, *Four*, p.247. Diary, 10-15/11/1916. T.H. Bisgood, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488> Accessed 7/1/2013.

²⁸ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.163.

²⁹ T. Bowman & M. Connelly, *The Edwardian Army* (Oxford, 2012), pp.58-59. *King's Regulations and orders for the Army 1912* (War Office, 1912), p.484.

³⁰ War Office, *Field Service Regulations*, Part II, (London, 1914), pp.135-137. E. Harry, *From Crime to Court Martial* (London, 1918), pp.20, 13. McCartney, *Citizen*, p.164.

manner', stressing the observance and enforcement of a strict code of rules that demanded smart turnout, cleanliness and a rigid adherence of rank and hierarchy with no familiarity or off-duty fraternization between NCOs, officers and men.³¹ It was believed that close order drill was 'of first importance in producing discipline, cohesion, and the habits of absolute and instant obedience to the orders of a superior'.³² Order was often enforced by a formal system of courts martial which could and did award harsh punishments.³³ During the war, regular units had a higher level of courts martial, death sentence condemnations and executions of soldiers than territorial units.³⁴

In contrast, leaders in TF units used their formal powers in a more relaxed manner. Officers and NCOs in the units examined in this study sought to maintain discipline based on four factors: matching the level of disciplinary supervision appropriate to the social class of their subordinates, using formal disciplinary procedures and harsh penalties *in extremis*, taking a relaxed approach to inter-rank hierarchy and fraternization and, where possible, informal unofficial consensual solutions to disciplinary problems such as bargaining. It will be argued here that this approach was, by and large, highly successful in developing and sustaining vertical cohesion and ultimately promoted morale and consent for the war effort.

(a) Social class and disciplinary supervision

The social class of soldiers was a determining factor in the way in which leaders, predominantly officers, used their formal disciplinary powers. As set out in Chapter 3, rankers in class corps units operated a system known as 'reciprocal responsibility' for the first two years of the war. Men completed their own work on a co-operative basis and maintained their own discipline in return for limited oversight from their officers.³⁵ Officers gave men of the same social class this latitude because they were gentlemen of social 'standing...and [having] a high standard of education' they knew from their 'upbringing [and public or grammar school education] when discipline was necessary and to whom obedience it was due', they did not have discipline 'drilled into [them]...on the parade ground'.³⁶

³¹ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.122 (footnote 7). Connelly, *Edwardian*, pp.58-59.

³² *Infantry Training* (London, 1914), p.3.

³³ R. Graves, *Goodbye to all That* (London, 1977), p.150. B. Farwell, *For Queen and Country* (London, 1981), pp.102-104.

³⁴ G. Oram, "What alternative punishment is there?": military executions during World War I' (PhD, Open University, 2000), pp. 75, 293.

³⁵ B. Latham, *A Territorial Soldier's War* (London, 1967), p.18.

³⁶ J. Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London 1926), p.18. Latham, *Territorial*, pp.23, 2.

This contrasted with views of how the average soldier of the pre-war regular army should be managed. These men needed discipline 'to be knocked it into them' as they were drawn from the 'bottom of society' and, as a result were 'the least intelligent and worse educated' and were largely thought of as 'hooks and crooks.'³⁷ Authoritarian uncompromising discipline was required to turn these men into soldiers hence the strict, severe and formal nature of the regular army's disciplinary system.³⁸

Between the gentleman ranker and the professional regular was the 'citizen soldier', either pre-war Territorial, wartime volunteer and, ultimately, conscripted man, largely drawn from the urban working classes. They required paternal guidance rather than discipline based only on 'punishment for infringing rules'. It was believed that the 'best results' were obtained from this type of man by 'leading' him rather than 'driving' him and leaders needed to gain his 'loyalty and confidence' to do this.³⁹ It had been recognized since the 1890's that incorporating such men into the army required a different approach as they did not have the 'traditional instinct and training of the regular soldiers' and 'habits and prejudices of civil life' meant that regular training was not suitable.⁴⁰ This approach was considered necessary because they were 'drawn from classes of men very different from...the regular army, and [were]...above the intelligence level of the regular private'.⁴¹

However, a degree of discipline was required to keep men from doing wrong. Many officers subscribed to the idea that as men were not 'gentlemen', they did not have the benefit of 'superior' education or the advantage of 'breeding' and 'brains' and still needed paternal guidance. They could not be left unsupervised and some required discipline 'to be knocked into' them, whereas, as many middle class officers thought, to a 'gentlemen it comes natural'.⁴² Many, like QVR's Major Sampson, believed that, if not monitored, soldiers would burn down a 'barn to light a fire'.⁴³ This was a key part of a gentleman officer's paternal duty which required them to direct, supervise and lead those below them on the class ladder.

³⁷ J.F.C. Fuller, *The Army in My Time* (London, 1935), p.6. A.J.A. Wright, 'The Probable Effects of Compulsory Military Training on Recruiting for the Regular Army', *JRUSI*, 55:406 (1911), p.1590. C.E.D. Telfer, 'Discipline: Its Importance to an Armed Force, and the Means of Promoting and Maintaining it', *JRUSI* 33:148 (1889), p.360. Baynes, *Morale*, p.184. F.C. Higgins, Reel-3, IWMSA, 9884.

³⁸ Higgins, Reel-3, IWMSA.

³⁹ R.F. Jelley, Military Essay, 1909, *JRUSI* 54:392 (1910), p.1269. R. Baden-Powell, 'Training for Territorials', *JRSUI* 52:369 (1908), p.1475.

⁴⁰ G.F.E. Henderson, *The Science of War* (London, 1912), p.310.

⁴¹ G. Adam, *Behind the Scenes at the Front* (New York, 1915), pp.115-119.

⁴² C. Kernahan, *An Author in the Territorials* (London, 1908), p.45.

⁴³ C.A.C. Keelson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London, 1923), p.128.

In the units under study, this led to two types of disciplinary ethos which were most marked in the first two years of the war. The three class corps units had a reputation for having a much freer style of discipline than that operated in the other units under study. In the LRB for example, Latham said in the winter of 1914 that ‘the kind of discipline that [was]...known as ‘spit and polish’...was not enforced’.⁴⁴ Smith recalled in 1915 that rifles were inspected once every two months and there was only a ‘semblance of drill’ and L.C. Furse said that they ‘had a good deal of freedom’.⁴⁵ Sid Amatt joined the LRB in late 1916 and said that their disciplinary style ‘seemed to be more of a kind of matey, chummy kind of approach...It was unlike the strict discipline of the county regiments...there... [was] less ‘bull’.⁴⁶ Men in the LRB did do ‘bull’, such as preparing their kit for inspection, but this was normally to satisfy brigade and divisional leaders and LRB officers. Indeed, the LRB NCOs sympathised with the men about the ‘time and energy wasted’ on ‘bull’ but ‘brigade orders were brigade orders’.⁴⁷

In comparison, the disciplinary regime described in the Kensingtons is very different. John Tucker, joining the Kensingtons in 1914, noted ‘discipline was very severe’ and they would miss breakfast if their billets were not ‘scrupulously clean’.⁴⁸ In the trenches in 1915, he recalled ‘we always had to keep...shaved and our buttons...polished...in and out of the line’.⁴⁹ Clean buttons were still being insisted on in 1917 and a company was confined to billets for having dirty quarters in 1918.⁵⁰ While the Kensingtons regime was stricter than the LRB’s throughout the war, its NCOs and officers still exercised a large degree of informality and flexibility in inter rank relations and it was by no means comparable to regular army discipline.

However, from 1916 the system of ‘reciprocal responsibility’ in the class corps units began to be replaced by a disciplinary culture increasingly similar to that of the Kensingtons as working class reinforcements gradually began to replace the middle class volunteers.⁵¹ For example, in July 1916 LRB leaders had to enforce ‘very militaristic ideas’ to deal with a ‘motley collection’ of drafts arriving to replace 1 July casualties. This caused discipline to become ‘defective’, probably due to the breakdown of the system of ‘reciprocal responsibility’. This was ‘most galling’ for the few old LRB men remaining who were used to the pre-war system.⁵²

⁴⁴ Latham, *Territorial*, p.23.

⁴⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.92. L.C. Furse, Reel-1, 9712, IWMSA.

⁴⁶ K.W. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995), pp.138-139.

⁴⁷ Smith, *Four*, pp.129, 195, 281.

⁴⁸ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.17-18.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.44.

⁵⁰ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.134, 139.

⁵¹ Groom, *Poor*, p.160.

⁵² Smith, *Four*, p.158.

The change from the system of 'reciprocal responsibility' in class corps units to one similar to that of the Kensingtons was probably gradual and episodic. K.W. Mitchinson believed the system changed radically from July 1916 but Rifleman Archie Groom believed the LRB's pre-war system of discipline based on the 'good understanding between men and officers' existed until March 1918, thereafter 'more orthodox methods' became necessary.⁵³ Importantly, the 'old system' was still adhered to where the social class of the men remained 'gentlemen'. For instance, in the LRB transport section, which was predominantly composed of middle class men, they 'were accustomed to leniency and trust by officers' and continued to receive it. In September 1917, Captain Rose became the new Transport Officer having previously been a company commander. His reputation there 'had been stern and military' which 'was stricter...than [the transport] section cared about'. However, on his first address to the section, he said 'I know you all think that, coming from a company I am going to ginger things up [but]...I'm going to leave you to yourselves. You know what your work is'. This was probably a combination of an acknowledgement of their technical expertise in managing the transport section but also the maintenance of the reciprocal responsibility system. Battalion HQ gave the transport section 'a great deal of latitude...being old hands' and new transport officers 'received the tip...how to pick them [the transport section] the right way'. In other words, the CO dictated how the transport section was to be treated. Smith suggests this style of discipline in the transport section was the only remnant of the 'old battalion' and remained throughout the war.⁵⁴

Leaders needed to adopt a style which was congruent with their own and their group's expectations and values, to build vertical cohesion with gentleman rankers. Trying to do anything less could have led to conflict as gentleman rankers were highly articulate men, aware of their rights and the social confidence to assert them. Major Dudley Ward, who served in the QWR, reflected that if class corps soldiers had been subjected to 'strict army discipline' they would have found this 'brutal'.⁵⁵ Latham said that he was 'never one to endure...strict army discipline, and when it was applied [he] always did [his]...best to escape'.⁵⁶ By respecting the system of 'reciprocal responsibility', officers gained the co-operation and loyalty of gentlemen rankers. Smith commented that he did not end up in a mental asylum after the war because the LRB 'discipline [had been] enforced by sensible means'.⁵⁷ Groom said the 'good relationships'

⁵³ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.221. Groom, *Poor*, p.160.

⁵⁴ Smith, *Four*, pp 158, 282, 234.

⁵⁵ Diary, 3/11/1915, C.H. Dudley Ward, IWM, 6374.

⁵⁶ Latham, *Territorial*, p.24.

⁵⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.409.

between NCOs and men ‘meant so much in the wretched conditions’.⁵⁸ This also led to them enforcing the discipline among themselves. Rifleman William Fry recalls that the LRB rum ration was left unsupervised for individuals to drink when they wished which was ‘incomprehensible to the regular[s]’ but this system was never ‘abused in our battalion’.⁵⁹

(b) Use of punitive disciplinary system in extremis

As with many TF battalions, leaders sought to use the formal disciplinary systems with its potentially harsh penalties only as a last resort.⁶⁰ The number of courts martial by unit is a useful indicator of unit leaders’ reliance on the official formal system of discipline and punishment. For example, the London Scottish had 17 courts martial during the war which was dramatically lower than other units such as 119 in 1/Borders (regular) and 93 in the 2/Royal Dublin Fusiliers (regular unit).⁶¹

Unfortunately, similar court martial statistics are not available for other units but the number of death sentences condemnations passed by courts martial do exist. Similarly, this is indicative of a leader’s willingness to deal with military crime through official channels and is a reliable measure as we know courts martial had a conviction rate of 89%. This would suggest that the number of convictions has a strong correlation with the number of charges prosecuted. It is not a perfect measure as there are some errors in the source material and sentencing was often not consistent with the crime. Also, courts martial where death sentences were passed from only 3,080 of the 304,262 courts martial held during the war.⁶² However, at a battalion level they can be used as a comparative indicator for the reliance on formal disciplinary procedures within a unit.⁶³

The units under study were on the Western Front from November 1914 to the Armistice and during that period across 757 different infantry battalions, 2,465 courts martial resulted in capital sentences. For the units under study, 17 condemnations were passed as set out above. Further breakdown for the individual unit were: the Kensingtons had 7, the QVR 5, the Rangers and 1/4 Londons, 2 each, and the 1/2 Londons 1. The ‘class corps units’ - London Scottish, QWR and LRB - had none; suggesting that their disciplinary regimes were less strict. These numbers were low compared to other units (see Appendix 9); at the top of the list were 2/King's Own Yorkshire

⁵⁸ Groom, *Poor*, p.45.

⁵⁹ W. Fry, *Air of Battle* (London, 1974), p.24.

⁶⁰ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.136.

⁶¹ S. Sandford, *Neither Unionist nor Nationalist* (Sallins, RoI, 2013), p.260.

⁶² *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War* (London, 1920), pp. 669, 649, 643.

⁶³ Oram, PhD, p.198.

Light Infantry (regular) with 28, 19/Durham Light Infantry (service) with 27 and 2/East Surrey (regular) with 26 indicating a much higher usage of the formal system.⁶⁴

While the units under study may have had significantly less reliance on formal measures, they did at times use the full range of disciplinary powers, penalties and punishments available to them under the regulations. For example, in February 1915 the Kensingtons sentenced Private Underhill to three months Field Punishment No.1 for disobedience.⁶⁵ Other punishments were given out for lesser offences; for example, Rifleman Frank Hawkins, serving with the QVR, was confined to barracks in 1915 for two days due to his rudeness towards a corporal and corporals Curling and Willet, in the 1/2 Londons, were reduced to privates for fighting.⁶⁶ Many others witnessed men being given field punishments.⁶⁷ Men were made aware of the penalties for wrong doing in all units by being read the *Army Act*. Hawkins and London Scot Stuart Dolden both experience this; the latter making a 'special note of the offences for which we could be shot.'⁶⁸

As the war progressed, all leaders in units adopted a stricter approach and became more reliant on the formal mechanisms available to them. From 1915 onwards, the 1/4 Londons introduced a system of "extra drills" as a minor punishment and QWR adopted unspecified 'sterner' disciplinary measures.⁶⁹ In the London Scottish, the number of courts martial increased from zero in 1914 and 1915 to three in 1916, five in 1917, and finally, nine in 1918.⁷⁰

These measures were adopted for several reasons. Pre-war, there was an 'implied "please" behind every order' given by a leader to achieve compliance from their part time civilian volunteers; however, this was clearly impractical on active duty.⁷¹ Groups of men in all units would commit 'crime', even in class corps units, as detailed in Chapter 4, and this needed a response. There was also the continual stream of advice and guidance from GHQ, which stressed the need for 'the strictest attention...be paid to...discipline...cleanliness and care of billets.'⁷² For all units, it was probable that the 'never-ending fighting and monotonous routine of continuous work' persuaded them to adopt tougher measures.⁷³

⁶⁴ G. Oram, *Death Sentences Passed By Military Court of the British Army 1914-1924* (London, 2005).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Hawkins, *From*, p.9. E.T. Cooper, *Soliloquies of a Subaltern* (London, 1915), p.32.

⁶⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.28. Steward, *Platoon*, pp.99, 105.

⁶⁸ A.S. Dolden, *Cannon Fodder* (Poole, 1980), p.63. Hawkins, *From*, p.6.

⁶⁹ F. Clive Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)* (London, 1922), p.75. J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), p.36.

⁷⁰ Cited in McCartney, *Citizen*, p.186.

⁷¹ *Daily Express*, 23/8/1910.

⁷² SS109, *Training of Divisions for Offensive Action*, 5/1916, para 16.

⁷³ Henriques, *Westminsters*, p.36.

Interestingly, in 1917 there was a major rise in the number of death sentences passed by courts martial in the non-class corps units (class corps units had none; Private Douglas Pinkerton said that the London Scottish ‘never found it necessary to have a "Blue Funk Squad" [firing squad]’).⁷⁴ There were three in 1915 and 1916 increasing to 11 in 1917. These 11 death sentences in 1917 were punishment for quitting post in two cases and desertion in the other nine resulting in three men being executed in QVR, Kensingtons and Rangers.⁷⁵ While battalions had little say on whether death sentences were confirmed or not, their decision to prosecute may have been more about setting an example. Many officers believed the death penalty was an important deterrent to prevent crime but there is no evidence that the leaders in the units under study believed this to be the case.⁷⁶ Certainly the units under study published the convictions. The Kensingtons read them out as part of daily orders to soldiers and the Rangers went even further, publically stripping one deserter of his regimental badges in front of the entire battalion.⁷⁷ Even in the class corps units, which passed no death sentences in courts martial, these sentences were read out to ‘stiffen...up’ the men.⁷⁸

There is no doubt that witnessing men being punished and hearing of executions had a deterrent effect. Interestingly, the military crimes committed by small cohesive groups in Chapter 4 (for example, the ‘Tough Guys’) were carried out covertly and never directly challenging authority. This would suggest that the fear of detection and subsequent penalties were effective in preventing some men from doing wrong. Groom, in the LRB, believed in a post-war assessment that men carried on because the military discipline system gave them ‘no choice’.⁷⁹ Pinkerton believed ‘attitude of the soldiery toward a man so strung [during Field Punishment No.1] up is one of intense hatred and derision...[and]...well merits the wrath of his entire regiment.’⁸⁰ Many veterans thought that the death sentence was necessary. In the Rangers, W.G. Holmes recalled that he had a soldier executed (Yeoman) from his platoon, for whom he felt sympathy, but said his execution was necessary to ‘maintain discipline’.⁸¹ Tucker, who painted the white target to be pinned on one soldier executed from the Kensingtons (Mayers), reflected that ‘desertion or cowardice ha[d]...to be dealt with drastically...not only to discourage waverers, but to prevent the

⁷⁴ D. Pinkerton, *Ladies from Hell* (New York, 1918), pp.149-150.

⁷⁵ Oram, *Death*. J. Putkowski & J. Sykes, *Shot at Dawn* (Barnsley, 1989), pp.193, 200, 255.

⁷⁶ Oram, PhD, p.131. J.W. Childs, *Episodes and Reflections* (London, 1930), pp.143-145.

⁷⁷ *The Kensington*, Summer 1973, Scrap Book ii. W.G. Holmes, Reel-6, IWMSA, 8868.

⁷⁸ J. Pincombe in L. McDonald, *They Called it Passehendale* (London, 1978), p.140.

⁷⁹ Groom, *Poor*, p.52.

⁸⁰ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.134.

⁸¹ Holmes, Reel-6, IWMSA.

spread of panic.⁸² These views were not extreme as capital punishment was accepted as part of the Edwardian judicial system and its use supported.⁸³

Nearly all men, to some degree, 'accepted the fetters of army discipline' as a necessary element of their service.⁸⁴ Obedience to authority and harsh penalties for transgressions were accepted as part of life; W.G. Holmes believed that he deserved to be punished with Field Punishment Number 1 for accidentally firing his rifle during an exercise.⁸⁵ This acceptance of often harsh punishment was part of childhood in Edwardian society, reinforced through strict parental upbringing and the education system.⁸⁶ A 1908 report on the British elementary system claimed it developed 'the habits of obedience and regularity'.⁸⁷ A combination of all these factors helped maintain order.

However, not all men were deterred from wrong doing. Smith recalls how in a camp in Boulogne, waiting to return to his unit, he and colleagues were forbidden to go into town. Some 'daring ones' broke out and had a 'happy day' while the 'disciplinarians', including Smith, were 'cooped up in their depressing enclosure [and]...had little to do but curse at their own timidity'.⁸⁸ Many men often deliberately broke regulations such as overstaying their leave. They knew they would face field punishments back in their unit but considered a few days at home was worth the penalty.⁸⁹ Fred Smith, on leave from the Kensingtons in France, over-stayed his time and when boarding the train back to France, was told by the inspecting officer that he could face jail and he replied that the prospect was 'far better than the front'.⁹⁰

In view of the low numbers of courts martial in the units under study, it is tempting to suggest that TF units had less military crime than other units. There may be some truth in this as veterans report that men 'behaved' and there was 'no stealing'.⁹¹ However, Chapter 4 details evidence of mutiny as constituted under military law, which is 'collective insubordination...to resist lawful military authority'.⁹² Also, veterans talk of offences including desertion during a raid and an assault by a private on an NCO, none of which were dealt with through the formal mechanisms of courts martial.

⁸² Tucker, *Johnny*, p.175.

⁸³ M.J. Wiener, 'Convicted Murderers and the Victorian Press: Condemnation vs. Sympathy', *Crimes and Misdemeanours* 1/2 (2007), pp.110-126.

⁸⁴ Holmes, IWM.

⁸⁵ G.D. Sheffield, G.D., 'Officer-Man Relations, 'Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22' (PhD, KCL, 1994), pp.165-167.

⁸⁶ Holmes, Reel-6, IWMSA.

⁸⁷ Sheffield, PhD, pp.165-167.

⁸⁸ W.H. Beveridge, *Unemployment: A Problem of Industry* (London, 1930), p.126.

⁸⁹ Smith, *Four*, p.308.

⁹⁰ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.169.

⁹¹ F. Smith, *I'll Always Remember* (Private account), p.21.

⁹² C.F. Miller, Reel-1, 11043 IWMSA. Higgins, Reel-9, IWMSA.

⁹³ F.D. Grierson, *The ABC of Military Law* (London, 1916), p.74.

TF NCOs and officers chose to administer discipline in different ways to the regular army which may suggest more informal resolution or administering discipline which did not leave a paper trail for future historians. Many believed their discipline was 'no less strict, but was of a different quality'.⁹³ For example, the London Scottish reported very few courts martial but there are examples of men being punished for infractions which didn't result in official proceedings. For example, a lance corporal was given six weeks 'hard fatigue' for firing on a returning patrol despite warnings that the patrol was out in no man's land and Pinkerton was punished with ten days 'extra fatigue' for not obeying orders.⁹⁴

The documentary evidence appears to suggest that officers listened and actively considered the testimony of those brought before them in the orderly room. On several occasions, cases were dismissed once the accused gave their evidence. T.G. Birch was brought before his colonel in the Rangers for losing his sniper rifle but the case was dismissed when Birch said his weapon was not loaded on to his stretcher when he was wounded.⁹⁵ Smith in the LRB and Rifleman Austin in the QVR were both brought to their respective orderly rooms on two occasions each but their cases were dismissed on the strength of their explanations.⁹⁶ It is not known whether these examples represent common practice but it could suggest that leaders were prepared to listen to the explanations and communicate with accused men.

When convictions occurred, leaders often sought to match the punishment to the crime, an approach which would have been regarded as unduly lenient to many regular officers.⁹⁷ Frequently, first time offenders were let off with a warning; Tucker was brought in front of an officer after he 'filched' coke from a train and was warned 'don't let me see you do it again'.⁹⁸ Others got no more than a stern telling off: Rifleman Leslie Walkinton got a 'good wiggling' from the QVR's RSM for missing company roll call and no further punishment.⁹⁹

Many leaders ignored orders of senior officers to punish men if they felt the case was not warranted. Groom's colonel ordered that the sergeant major put him on a charge for being unshaven but Groom heard nothing more of it, apart from being ridiculed as 'fluffy' by his

⁹³ Henriques, *Westminsters*, p.36.

⁹⁴ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp. 39-40, 59.

⁹⁵ T.G. Birch, Reel-1, 33096 IWMSA.

⁹⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.5, 305. F. Austin, Reel-1, IWMSA, 33293.

⁹⁷ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.179.

⁹⁸ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.41.

⁹⁹ M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), pp.55-56.

company.¹⁰⁰ Other leaders sought to treat some disciplinary charges as lightly as they could. Mason was put on a charge for ‘refusing to obey an officer’ after he failed to remove his kit from a mule while on his way on leave. He was brought in front of his colonel, an action that ‘flabbergasted’ Mason as it was something that would have been quite ‘foreign’ to the officers of the Rangers. He received a ‘severe reprimand’ from the RSM but no other action. It probable that the colonel shared Mason’s views, that such ‘trumped up’ charges did ‘not encourage the necessary harmony between officers and men in action’.¹⁰¹

Use of the punitive disciplinary system *in extremis* was important for building and maintaining vertical cohesion between leader and subordinate. By adopting a proportionate approach to enforcing discipline, leaders could make their point but still retain their relationship with the soldier. For example, Walkinton overslept and missed rifle inspection when he had the opportunity to sleep in a bed for the first time in six months. His platoon commander Harding reprimanded him and ‘looked suitably severe and told [him]...not to do it again, and remarked that the bed looked damned comfortable’. Walkinton modelled his own conduct on Harding’s ‘strict...but considerate’ approach when he was commissioned.¹⁰²

Also, officers could demonstrate paternal care by protecting their men from the harshness of military discipline, especially if imposed by external agencies, such as senior officers. For example, W.G. Holmes’s sergeant and officer faked the paper work to show Holmes completed seven days Field Punishment No.1 given to him by Brigadier Loch for accidentally firing his rifle during an exercise. Holmes, in fact, did only one day and his officer said he had done ‘quite enough’ which Holmes said he could ‘hardly believe it was true’.¹⁰³

In addition, taking a more relaxed approach helped maintain relationships with men and probably met more with their pre-war expectations of how they should be treated as part of their unwritten contract with the army. Rifleman Stone, who served in the QVR, reflected that discipline focusing on ‘knocking [men]...about’ and ‘shout[ing] and holla[ing]’ was not the ‘right way to enforce discipline’ at the front.¹⁰⁴ C.F. Miller noticed a real difference in the style of leadership between a new army battalion of the KRRC and two London TF battalions in which he served. He said he

¹⁰⁰ Groom, *Poor*, p.69.

¹⁰¹ Mason, p.11-12, IWM.

¹⁰² Walkinton, *Twice*, p.27.

¹⁰³ Holmes, Reel-6, IWMSA.

¹⁰⁴ H.V. Stone, Reel-2, IWMSA, 24883.

preferred the latter where they 'spoke to you' rather than being 'bellowed at', as was his experience in the former.¹⁰⁵

Evidence suggests that vertical cohesion was degraded where leaders adopted a 'disciplinarian' approach. One officer observed that 'Londoners' required a 'special sort of discipline' where their 'officers must win their confidence, make friends with, and lead them; a martinet is sure to fail in command of a London Battalion, for a Londoner becomes unhappy if driven, and when unhappy will not fight so well.'¹⁰⁶ Steward describes a new company commander, Captain Bull (fictional name), who joined the Kensingtons during their fighting at Third Ypres. He was disliked because he had taken 'his ease (and whisky) with the reserve away from the mire, blood and bitterness of battle' and once the unit returned tired, fatigued and depressed, he started to enforce discipline in a petty 'regimental' way. For example, on visiting the men's billets 'evidently the only fault he could find was...with Private Savage who put a novel into a bomb bag'. One man said his actions 'engendered hate', as he tested his rifle trigger, that 'this Captain is going the right way to be accidentally shot...next time he's in the line'.¹⁰⁷ In another case, it was suggested that one over-officious leader had been 'accidentally killed' for reporting a sleeping Lewis gun team which was subsequently court martialed.¹⁰⁸ There is no evidence that Captain Bull was killed or the Lewis gun team incident happened but it shows the strength of feeling some men had towards leaders who they perceived to be unfairly harsh.

Leaders throughout the war used their formal disciplinary powers as a last resort to enforce order. The more relaxed approach to the administration of justice, a proportionate approach to dishing out sentences and protecting subordinates from the disciplinary excesses (as they saw it) of senior leaders helped maintained vertical cohesion relationships while actively demonstrating paternal care, promoting communication and protecting relationships. While formal disciplinary structures were used less frequently in TF units compared with regular units and some new army units, discipline remained a major focus of officer subordinate relations. Punishments were still awarded, even if not officially recorded and men were disciplined but in such a way which was deemed as appropriate to the type of man they were managing. Major Dudley Ward recalled, when he transferred from the QWR to the Welsh Guards, that 'one must be much harder with these [regular] men than with...Territorials. They...have not the conscientiousness of the better

¹⁰⁵ Miller, Reel-3. IWMSA.

¹⁰⁶ S. Ashmead-Bartlett, *From the Somme to the Rhine* (London, 1921), p.30.

¹⁰⁷ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.139-140.

¹⁰⁸ Groom, *Poor*, p.61.

educated...and...are very quick to take advantage of kindness, mistaking it for weakness'.¹⁰⁹ As Rowland Coldicott, commanding London TF men in Palestine, observed that 'nothing on earth, not even the stains of many battles, could turn our [men]...into members of a regular army'.¹¹⁰ In addition, the potential use of the disciplinary system as a deterrent probably had a much greater effect on preventing crime and wrong doing than may be realized.¹¹¹

(c) A relaxed approach to inter-rank hierarchy and fraternalization

Many leaders took a flexible approach to the observance of rank, titles and off-duty socialization. It is argued here that this approach was a major factor in helping to develop close links between leaders and their men and contributed to maintaining discipline.

Many units had a very relaxed approach to saluting and observing rank. Men did not have to stand to attention when speaking to a corporal unlike in many regular army units.¹¹² Brookes and colleagues were reprimanded when they did stand to attention and salute a regular colonel as their practice was not to salute 'in the field'.¹¹³

This informality could extend to relationships between leaders and the small group they led and many addressed their commanders by non-standard titles. The LRB transport section knew their Lieutenant Chrisp as 'Crip' who had originally joined as a private and served in the section before his commission.¹¹⁴ In Tucker's pioneer section, they called their corporal 'Charlie' under whose command they had an 'easy going life'.¹¹⁵ These relationships were developed in small teams and no doubt influenced the informal norms in those groups.

There was also evidence of considerable inter-rank socialising outside small groups. As with regular units, many officers played sport with their men and this could result in admiration; Lieutenant Lester helped the Kensingtons win the Brigade football championship which made him a 'very popular officer'.¹¹⁶ In the Rangers, the officers played the sergeants, the latter playing in pyjamas and 'both sides wore tin hats because of the dangerous state of the pitch'.¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ Diary, 3/11/1915, C.H. Dudley-Ward, IWM, 6374.

¹¹⁰ R. Coldicott, *London Men in Palestine* (London, 1919), p.125.

¹¹¹ Oram, PhD, pp.191-192.

¹¹² Mitchison, *Gentlemen*, pp.138-139.

¹¹³ Diary, 22/6/1915, Brookes.

¹¹⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.340.

¹¹⁵ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.130.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.95.

¹¹⁷ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers' Historical Records* (London 1921), p.124.

There was also considerable off-duty fraternization. In class corps units before the war it 'was quite possible for men seeing each other in civil life, business or friendship, to meet at headquarters in the positions of officer and private, and for the distinction to be fully maintained' through 'good sense and tact.'¹¹⁸ For rankers in the LRB, this tradition continued in the war where they were 'treated as gentlemen and could talk on friendly terms to [their]...officer[s] and NCOs when not on duty' and in 1915 'nearly everyone' in the company congregated in the local bar behind the lines.¹¹⁹ Dolden recalls many episodes of London Scottish officers and men drinking together.¹²⁰ In November 1917, the LRB held a '1914 originals' dinner for men sent over with their first draft at which the 'distinctions of rank' disappeared.¹²¹ Though 'illegal', QWR NCOs would sometimes be 'offered a glass of whisky by [their]...officer' and sergeants' mess could get the 'occasional bottle from the captain.'¹²²

Social contact between different ranks also occurred in the non-class corps units. For example, the QVR held a meeting of its Masonic lodge in January 1916 and it was common for rankers to hold positions of authority over officers in many lodges.¹²³ Also, dinners were held for officers and sergeants in the QVR and Kensingtons.¹²⁴ In the Rangers at Christmas 1916, men and officers had festive company 'feasts', where they 'met together on terms of the utmost camaraderie and laughed and sang'.¹²⁵ F.C Higgins' recalled how his sergeant in the 1/4 London bought him a beer.¹²⁶ Elliott would go fishing with the officers for whom he was batman.¹²⁷ There is little doubt that this was important in building links between officers, NCOs and men and was probably a natural outcome of shared combat in the trenches.

Relaxed approaches to titles and social interaction significantly helped mutual bonding between leader and subordinate by building social relationships, mutual liking and understanding and contributed to vertical cohesion.

(d) Consensual solutions to disciplinary problems

Though leaders often eschewed use of formal procedures of trial and punishment, they did not ignore disciplinary problems but instead sought informal and unofficial ways to resolve them. For

¹¹⁸ F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.60.

¹¹⁹ Smith, *Four*, pp.92-93. W. Fry, *The Air of Battle* (London, 1974), p.31.

¹²⁰ Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.97, 55.

¹²¹ Smith, *Four*, p.285.

¹²² T. Tiplady, *The Cross at the Front* (London, 1917), p.79.

¹²³ Keeson, *Victoria's*, Vol.1, p.172.

¹²⁴ Elliot, *Tim's War*, p.69. Hawkings, *From*, p.72. *The Kensington*, Autumn, 1972.

¹²⁵ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.88.

¹²⁶ Higgins, Reel-7, IWMSA.

¹²⁷ Elliot, *Tim's*, p.41.

example, a Rangers' RSM at Fovant, dealt with a conscientious objector's refusal to wear khaki by removing his civilian clothes as he bathed.¹²⁸ Another instance was T.H. Holmes's CSM, who ran his B Company headquarters team using his personality and tact. Several potential disciplinary incidents occurred that he dealt with informally and some potentially serious incidents such as one drunken soldier discharging his weapon in billets. One such serious incident was when Holmes punched his corporal Baker after he had been bullied by him. The CSM persuaded the corporal to accept a public apology rather than press formal charges. Holmes was grateful once he realized that he had 'laid...[himself] open to a court martial'. It appears that Baker was deeply 'unpopular' and the CSM used this as way of removing the disliked corporal by sending him on a course and posting him to another company on his return.¹²⁹

Many leaders tempered unofficial solutions with violence. Tucker's corporal 'Charlie' may have been 'chummy' but could 'if necessary be very tough'. Tucker witnessed him on several occasions 'lift a man up at arm's length above his head and throw them.'¹³⁰ The RSM of the Kensingtons offered a sergeant, who went 'missing' on patrol, a choice of being dealt with informally by him or a court martial; he chose the former and got a 'beautiful punch to the jaw'.¹³¹ The use of violence or its threat, though not officially sanctioned, was an important measure to enforce discipline and was not only restricted to use in TF units.

In many situations, leaders, like Blake, would offer men bargains to resolve problems. For instance, a QVR Colonel, offered the conscientious objector a bargain in response to the 'conchy's' assertion that he had a mortal fear of killing anything; he could exchange his rifle for fixing the wire in no man's land at night. The man went out one night to do his work but quickly returned, demanding his rifle when he came under fire. The colonel never heard of the man again.¹³²

Leaders frequently bargained with their men for mutually beneficial outcomes. Mr Thorn was 'sporting' after he allowed his men to decorate their billet as they wanted 'insisting only that' rifles were kept clean.¹³³ Major Low bargained with his men that he would not censor their letters if they gave their word not to include military secrets; this was 'much appreciated' by his men.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Diary, 6/5/1916. F.J. Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

¹²⁹ Holmes, IWM.

¹³⁰ Tucker, Johnny, p.130.

¹³¹ Ibid., p.106.

¹³² Keeson, *Victoria's Vol. 1*, p.136.

¹³³ Steward, *Platoon*, p.129.

¹³⁴ Letter, 12/12/1914, Book 1, C. Low, IWM, 79/54/1.

The ultimate example of bargaining was the response of officers to the series of strikes and protests in 1917. These incidents were potentially very serious, being clear examples of mutiny and direct challenges to military discipline. Leaders had two options, either to prosecute the offenders under the official procedures or directly bargain with the offenders. Concern was caused to officers by the two LRB incidents: the 'strike' while working for a French farmer in the spring and the LRB 'mutiny' in November over the lack of hot food. The strike 'stirred up a hornet's nest' and after the mutiny 'there was fat on the fire' but there was no disciplinary action in either case.¹³⁵ Similarly, there was no action after QVR men, also in November, refused to build a cage with POWs.¹³⁶ Instead, officers in all cases appeared to concede to their men's demands.

Due to the lack of evidence, it is difficult to fully explain the motivation of leaders to both give in and not take any disciplinary action. Groom suggests that leaders took no action and hushed up the event to save the unit's reputation, which could offer part of the explanation as none of the above incidents are recorded in official sources.¹³⁷ In addition, any formal punishments allocated would have been severe and difficult to mitigate. Leaders may also have realized that all the demands were very limited, spontaneous in nature and could have been easily granted. Also, in the LRB November 'mutiny' the NCOs joined the other ranks in the protest and that may have convinced the officers that concession was the best and pragmatic solution given the circumstances.¹³⁸ Many may also have had sympathy with their men and had suffered the same privations and secretly agreed with their views.

Others may have thought along the lines of Captain J.H. Dible, a medical officer who had served at Etaples during the mutiny. He blamed the disturbances on those regular officers who treated civilian soldiers 'with the same rigid methods' more appropriate to pre-war regulars. Dible reflected on the differing views of how to handle the happenings at Etaples. Older, regular officers favoured harsh subjugation while others wanted more understanding and resolution of men's grievances. Dible considered adopting the former action would risk a further outbreak, threatening 'mutiny, bloodshed, and possibly civil war and revolution'.¹³⁹ Though officers in the units under study were faced with nothing like the scale and gravity of the Etaples incidents in their respective strikes and protests, it is quite possible they shared Dible's view for necessity of engagement rather than repression. The need for a different approach to manage civilian soldiers

¹³⁵ Groom, *Poor*, pp. 104-105, 147.

¹³⁶ Elliot, *Tim's*, p.93.

¹³⁷ Groom, *Poor*, p. 147.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Diary, 11/9/1917. J.H. Dible, IWM 10927.

compared with the pre-war professional was mentioned and recorded several times by leaders in the units under study. One officer wrote in 1917 'it is forgotten that the man in the army of to-day is...not a child, neither is he the illiterate soldier of fifty years ago. Tommy has a mind as well as a body'.¹⁴⁰ Padre Bickersteth, on joining the Rangers in 1916, realised that he was not dealing with the 'old type of army man at all, but...men of a citizen army [and]... it became necessary to change one's methods.'¹⁴¹

The need to handle civilian soldiers in a very different way may explain the actions of LRB CO Wallis who proactively sought to listen and resolve the grievances of his men on receiving news of their serious discontent after the 56th Division attack at Third Ypres in August 1917. As outlined above, there was widespread dissatisfaction within the battalion as it had suffered large losses for minimal gain.¹⁴² Orderly Sergeant Munday informed Wallis of the situation. In response, Wallis paraded the battalion and spoke to them about the attack. He agreed with the men's views that the attack had been pointless and with their wholly negative 'opinion of General Gough and his staff'. He wrote afterwards, that this meeting was so important that it needed to be held 'regardless of discipline or Field Service Regulations' so that the 'feeling of distrust' could be 'nipped in the bud'. His action, and the fact he believed that the LRB 'owe[d] a great debt of gratitude to...Munday', suggests a severe threat to morale and discipline.¹⁴³

This was an extraordinary action of informal proactive pragmatism to deal with potential disciplinary problems. Wallis sought to prevent possible protest or demonstrations by confronting their issues and publically agreeing with them. It was a high risk strategy as not only did he risk his command if word was sent to higher authority but he also gave the men a potential opportunity to protest collectively out of the line. His actions can be seen as him bargaining with the men; he acknowledges their concerns and complaints in exchange for a tacit expectation of no action by them. His tactics appear to have been clever and played to the rank and files dislike of the 'staff' [as shall be discussed in Chapter 7] and successfully placed the blame on them while distancing the leadership of the battalion. In many ways he bonded with his men against a common enemy. It probably also helped that he was a paternal and popular officer who had been with the LRB from the beginning.¹⁴⁴ It appears that his tactics were successful as Smith recalls that the disaster was 'not the fault of the regimental command...or brigade or division'. His action

¹⁴⁰ Tiplady, *Cross*, p.72.

¹⁴¹ J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), p.118.

¹⁴² Groom, *Poor*, p.128. Smith, *Four*, pp.273-274.

¹⁴³ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.170.

¹⁴⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.55.

does appear to have been successful in averting potential problems as the LRB ‘soon got over its shock of the Ypres adventure and the rank and file naturally fell into the old routine’. In terms of vertical cohesion, his actions appear, at the very least, to have prevented erosion of trust in the battalion officers. However, the whole episode did affect morale with Smith saying it made the men ‘rather disillusioned’.¹⁴⁵

Leaders sought to maintain discipline and their authority by developing close relationships through seeking informal solutions to disciplinary problems, often with a strong emphasis on negotiating and agreeing bargains with individuals or groups. Leaders also adopted this approach to resolve grievances that threatened protest and actual protests with their men. These tactics were successful in developing and maintaining vertical cohesion between leaders and men for two reasons. Firstly, such tactics built communication and understanding between leader and subordinate, as leaders endeavoured to understand the concerns of their men and secondly, leaders sought to gain the consent of their men by reaching a mutual agreement.

C. Why did leaders take a relaxed approach to their formal disciplinary powers?

At the heart of the matter was the fact that leaders were largely civilians like the men they commanded. As ‘fighting was not... [their]...neither profession nor desire’¹⁴⁶ they retained many of their civilian perspectives, habits and ways. This is demonstrated in an observation from Captain Gilbert Nobbs on his way to the LRB in France. He tipped a man who carried his bags at Le Havre and though it was ‘against all regulations to tip a soldier...*it seemed such a natural thing to do*, for his khaki uniform could not hide the habit of years. He did not salute, but touched his cap...He was a soldier now; but the uniform could not disguise the fact that he was still a dock porter’ [italics added].¹⁴⁷

Being civilians, leaders adopted similar views to their men on issues such as trucing. While some officers and NCOs sought to engage the enemy at every opportunity, many held similar utilitarian views to that of their men about violence and would seek to avoid unnecessary conflict. For example, QWR Second Lieutenant Moy, while leading a patrol in no man’s land, came across an enemy wiring party and he ‘decided it would be unseemly to disturb them...so about turned and returned to our line tout suite’.¹⁴⁸ In mid-1915, officers of the 1/2 Londons deceived their

¹⁴⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.276.

¹⁴⁶ G. Nobbs, *Right of the British Line* (London, 1917), p.22.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁴⁸ Memoir, p.27. C.E. Moy, IWM, 09/61/1.

Brigadier that they were carrying out his orders for vigorous counter sniping by leaving empty cartridge cases ‘specially arranged for his benefit’ around their sniper posts.¹⁴⁹ Groom said many of the NCOs during the LRB ‘mutiny’ in November 1917 supported their men and did not try to get them working again despite officer appeals.¹⁵⁰

Also, the approach taken by officers and NCOs was heavily influenced by the pre-war traditions of units. There was a common custom of all TF units where inter-rank relationships were frequently described as being ‘open and cordial’ and based on ‘mutual confidence and respect.’¹⁵¹ Many units had relationships similar to the occupational settings from which the pre-war volunteers were drawn and these described affiliations between officers and men as being ‘personal’.¹⁵² It was thus common for officers, NCOs and men to mix socially at unit dinners.¹⁵³

These pre-war traditions persisted during the war because leaders at all levels in the battalions remained largely drawn from the pre-war unit. The Rangers, 1/2 Londons, QWR and LRB had pre-war Territorials in command throughout the war.¹⁵⁴ Other units had a mix of regulars and territorials commanders but it appears that TF men were in command for the vast majority of time. For example, the Kensingtons had three regular officers, accounting for 24% of the Kensingtons’ time on active service.¹⁵⁵ This was significant because leaders had a major licence under the regulations to set the disciplinary tone of their unit as noted previously. In the LRB, the NCOs took their lead ‘from the top’ and the CO also dictated to Transport officers how they should manage the transport section.¹⁵⁶

It is also significant that many NCOs and officers were promoted from men within the unit. Henriques, returning to the QWR in September 1917, found key men who came out with him in 1914 were now in senior positions as RSM, QM and other senior NCOs.¹⁵⁷ At the Armistice, the Kensingtons had 60 men still serving who deployed with the unit four years before and 28 were NCOs, many of whom were very senior.¹⁵⁸ Also, the LRB had 44% officers promoted from the

¹⁴⁹ W E Grey, 2nd *City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929), p.35.

¹⁵⁰ Groom, *Poor*, p.147.

¹⁵¹ I. Hamilton, *Compulsory Service* (London, 1910), p.130. E.V. Tempest, *History of the 6th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment* (London, 1921), p.10.

¹⁵² Tempest, 6th, p.10. Address to the Birmingham and Midlands Institute, 1910, p.7. Hamilton papers, 5/4/1-15, LHCMA.

¹⁵³ For instance the Kensingtons’ Battalion Concert Committee in November 1912 organized six concerts between 11/1912 and 3/1913. *West London News and Kensington Times*, 25/11/1912.

¹⁵⁴ C.H. Dudley Ward, *The Fifty-Sixth Division* (London, 1922), pp.323-326.

¹⁵⁵ Worked out as a percentage of the total number of days spent in command. Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.325.

¹⁵⁶ Miller, Reel-1, IWMSA. Smith, *Four*, p.234.

¹⁵⁷ Diary, 16/9/1917, Henriques, NAM.

¹⁵⁸ See Appendix 6, Table A6.3.

ranks which would have helped to preserve unit traditions.¹⁵⁹ The practice of ‘battle reserve’, where a proportion of NCOs and officers were left out of attacks, helped preserve men with long service.¹⁶⁰ All these factors contributed to the persistence of unit ‘cultures’ throughout the stresses and strains of war.

Also, the shared experience of war played a major part in reducing formality and bonding men together. F.C. Higgins, in the 1/4 Londons, recalled that discipline in the front line was laxer than other places as ‘no one had the heart’ to enforce it.¹⁶¹ Many officers demonstrated scant regard for bureaucracy. Kensington B company commander Captain Heath told his adjutant, a ‘stickler for rules and regulations’, that he had used his written memo about whether the men had changed their socks in accordance with CRO 251G as ‘bumph’ [toilet paper]. There was a ‘fuss’ about this but this quickly evaporated as Heath had been awarded the MC with ‘three solid years’ in France.¹⁶²

Leaders had close identification with their men. Padre Leighton Green in the 1/4 London believed that ‘the fact of hardship, danger and suffering faced together does bind us together in a closer fellowship. Men seem to me more loveable. I don’t quite know why, but they are, I’m sure of it’.¹⁶³ Another officer in the Rangers felt the war ‘brought me into close touch with the ordinary men and opened my eyes to their point of view’.¹⁶⁴ Though rare, there are examples of leaders relating to their men as peers rather than subordinates and they had an active role in the informal norms of the group. For example, T.H. Holmes’s comrades and section Corporals Trott and Scobell actively held a ‘council of war’ with their men to take revenge against the London Scottish who had loosened their tent ropes while camped on Richmond Common. As a consequence the corporals ‘risked losing their stripes’ but they were ‘a happy lot and got on very well’. The agreed plan was to put a noxious substance concocted by a medical student in the London Scottish’s tents. It was considered an ‘inspiration of a genius...[and] was unanimously adopted’.¹⁶⁵ Also, some leaders actively joined their men in minor crime, Tucker’s corporal leading the theft of pork chops from a French farmer.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix 7.

¹⁶⁰ London Scottish held back 10 officers as part of its battle surplus for the attack on Gommecourt on 1/7/1916 (Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.118).

¹⁶¹ Higgins, Reel-7, IWMSA.

¹⁶² Holmes, IWM.

¹⁶³ S.J. McLaren, *Somewhere in Flanders, The War Letters of the Revd Samuel Frederic Leighton Green* (Dereham, 2005), p.76.

¹⁶⁴ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.75.

¹⁶⁵ Holmes, IWM.

¹⁶⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.164.

D. Conclusions

This chapter seeks to examine how leaders in the units under study used their informal and formal powers to reward, coerce and discipline their subordinates and what impact their use of such powers had on vertical cohesion between themselves and their men. Officers and NCOs could have significant leverage through the use of informal powers to incentivize or compel and these could build or degrade vertical cohesion depending on how they were used or abused but there is little evidence that leaders used them on a large scale. Formal powers to reward were weak, with leaders having little scope directly to award additional money, leave or medals thus having little effect on vertical cohesion. A leader's ability to influence vertical cohesion lay with the use of his formal powers to discipline.

NCOs and officers used their statutory powers in an informal, relaxed and unofficial way. The level of disciplinary scrutiny given to their charges depended on their social class; gentleman rankers were given licence to organize themselves and perform their duties unsupervised while other were deemed to require supervision and paternal guidance but not to the extent of pre-war regular soldiers who needed firm, harsh discipline to make them soldiers. This differential approach helped build and maintain vertical cohesion with soldiers, especially middle class privates and NCOs as it was congruent with their expectations of how the army should treat men of their social status.

Leaders also demonstrated a minimal reliance on the use of formal procedures and harsh penalties to enforce order and obedience. These were used to a much lesser extent relative to other units, especially regular battalions and leaders, instead, sought to use other tactics. Despite this, the deterrent value of formal punishment was an important threat to keep and maintain discipline. However, leaders were acutely aware that such tactics may gain the compliance of men but not their commitment.

Combined with this, leaders sought to gain discipline through earning the engagement, commitment and most importantly, the consent of their men. Building relationships with their men was fundamental to this and it could only be achieved if leaders engaged with men in a way they were used to in civilian life. This meant adopting unmilitary ways such as taking a relaxed approach to rank, hierarchy and 'bull'; building relationships between ranks off-duty and gaining men's engagement and agreement for discipline, by negotiating and bargaining with them. This

approach also appears to have been successful in defusing protest actions and strikes which could have posed a major threat to military discipline.

In addition, it appears to have encouraged positive leader-subordinate relations with many accounts detailing good associations between officers and men. For example, in the LRB 'most of our officers were good' and men got on 'very well' with them and the NCOs.¹⁶⁷ In the QWR, the sergeants were a 'fine lot.'¹⁶⁸ In the Rangers, men 'got on well with sergeants' and in the 1/4 Londons, there were some 'decent blokes and some not so decent, but generally speaking they tried their best'.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ H.G.R. Williams, Reel-3. IWMSA, 24878. Miller, Reel-1, IWMSA. Groom, *Poor*, p.45.

¹⁶⁸ Holmes, IWM.

¹⁶⁹ Holmes, Reel-1. IWMSA. F.C. Higgins, Reel-3, IWMSA, 9884.

Chapter 7 – Organisational cohesion

Organisational cohesion is defined as a positive secondary group relationship between the soldiers and the organisation outside their primary group of which they are members. Soldiers exchange their service and loyalty to the organisation for perceived subjective benefits such as pay, status or personal service which results in them actively engaging in the work and objectives of their organisation. These are secondary group relationships as they are between people and the abstract entity, the organisation, rather than regular interpersonal interactions between known individuals.

The organisation referred to in this chapter is defined as the British army and BEF. Two dimensions of organisational cohesion will be examined. The first is between the individual and the different administrative levels of the military hierarchy outside the primary group, such as the battalion, brigade or division. The second is between the soldier and the organisation as an 'institution' in the society from which both the organisation and soldier originate - in other words, the soldier's relationship with the army's ethos, values and mission as well as its social, political and cultural role and influence in Edwardian society.¹

Task and social elements exist within organisational cohesion at both organisational levels and also as an 'institution'. People can cohere on a task basis with the organisation by trading effort to complete the organisation's tasks and accepting the organisation's policies and mission, in return for material benefits such as money or career.² They can also cohere on a social basis by having an emotional attraction to the organisation, such as having a familial connection with a unit where successive generations have served.³ They give their labour and commitment in return for benefits such as identity, status and a sense of pride of being a member of that organisation.⁴ Strong cohesion, both on a task or social basis, exists where people give their trust and/or commitment to the organisation and is demonstrated by their loyalty to the organisation, identification and pride with its traditions, purpose and symbols and also their actions to do its work, promote its interests and protect its reputation.⁵

¹ G.L. Siebold, 'The Essence of Military Group Cohesion', *AF&S* 33:2 (1/2007), p.290.

² R. Gal, 'Commitment and Obedience in the Military: An Israeli Case Study', *AF&S* 11:4 (Summer 1985), p.555.

³ J. Yoon & E.J. Lawler, 'The relational cohesion model of organizational commitment'. Meeting of the American Sociological Association, 13-15/8/2005.

⁴ Siebold, 'Essence...', p.290.

⁵ Ibid, p.288. G.L. Siebold & D.R. Kelly, *The Development of the Combat Platoon Cohesion Questionnaire* (Alexandria, 1988).

Importantly, the formation of these relationships with secondary groups is largely determined by the soldiers' perception of that secondary group as an abstract entity rather than an interpersonal engagement.⁶ However, soldiers bond with the leaders of the organisation through human face-to-face interaction, such as parades or inspections. These contacts tend to be intermittent and structured but they still can help (or hinder) the development of trust and confidence between soldiers and the different levels of the organisation.⁷

Military leaders believe that developing organisational cohesion can be an important motivational factor to make soldiers fight and persevere in combat.⁸ A shared organisational commitment, for instance to the battalion, can focus the collective efforts of primary groups within the organisation by giving them a sense of purpose and direction.⁹ It can also be a source of the norms, goals and values, for example regimental traditions, to which the men and primary groups subscribe.¹⁰

However, organisational cohesion is not automatic and there are examples where men actively chose not to bond with the organisation. This can have implications for discipline and morale; for example, Graham Ingraham found an 'anti-Army norm' in US army barracks during the 1970's, suggesting that this shared dislike of the army may have bonded primary groups in collective acts of disobedience and sabotage.¹¹

Some researchers have reported that men form the strongest associations with the organisational structures that are immediately above their primary group, such as their battalion, as these are more relevant to them in their daily lives. Similarly, scholars argue men have little affinity with the higher levels of the military organisation, such as the division, as these are more remote and anonymous.¹²

Historical study of organisational cohesion in the Great War largely supports this sociological research. Paddy Griffith argued that 'cap-badge loyalty' to a soldier's battalion or regiment was a 'highly constructive force' which enhanced fighting powers and exercised 'a powerful

⁶ M. Salo, *United We Stand* (PhD, University of Helsinki, 2011), pp.34-35.

⁷ Siebold, 'Essence...', p.290. Salo, PhD, pp.35-36.

⁸ Gal, 'Commitment...', pp.553-564.

⁹ R.T. Todd, *An Exploration of Cohesion in the Land Support Combat Service* (Fort Leavenworth, 1991), pp.9-10.

¹⁰ C.W. Greenbaum, 'The Small Group Under the Gun: Uses of Small Groups in Battle Conditions', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 15 (1979), p.400.

¹¹ Quoted in *Sexual Orientation and US Military Personnel Policy: Options and Assessment* (Santa Monica, 1993), pp.296-297.

¹² See N.J. Allen, 'Organizational commitment in the military: A discussion of theory and practice', *Military Psychology* 15:3 (2003), pp.237-253.

magnetism and tribalism throughout the war'.¹³ Unit studies support this assertion, suggesting that battalion affinity among troops was an important source of their morale.¹⁴ Some historians have found that relationships with higher formations were much weaker; Keith Simpson suggests that few regimental soldiers had loyalty outside their battalion, viewing higher formations as impersonal; soldiers judged higher formations by practical criteria which included whether its commander was a 'thruster' or 'sensible'.¹⁵ Gary Sheffield proposes that mutual dislike of unpopular generals and staff officers helped bond regimental officers and men.¹⁶ However, there were exceptions; Helen McCartney demonstrates in her study of Liverpool TF battalions that many soldiers had an affinity with their parent division (55th West Lancashire) based on its local identification with their home areas and it was a source of motivation and pride for them.¹⁷

Historians have argued that there was a weak relationship with regard to the organisational cohesion in terms of the organisation as an 'institution'. Men entering the army had no 'high conception of the military life'. For many, they had little affinity with its ethos and values, instead, seeing it as an 'evil to be borne' in order to serve their country.¹⁸ Others took a 'perverse pride in being unmilitary'.¹⁹ This appears to have been the case in TF units where men took a delight in describing themselves as 'volunteers' and 'citizen soldiers' rather than adopting an identity as a 'regular' soldier.²⁰

This chapter will explore cohesion between the London Territorials and the wider military organisation and its impacts in three sections. The first section will examine the relationship between men and their company and battalion and, in particular, whether these relationships were strong associations and a source of morale as proposed by some scholars. The second section will address the relationship between soldiers and higher organisational levels of brigade, division and the 'staff' and investigate whether it was as negative as historians suggest. Finally, the third section will consider the association between combatants and the army as an 'institution' in their society and whether this motivated them to fight.

¹³ P. Griffith, 'The Extend of Tactical Reform in the British Army', in P. Griffith(ed.) *British Fighting Methods of the Great War* (Abingdon, 1998), p.6.

¹⁴ P. Morris, Leeds and the amateur military tradition: the Leeds Rifles and their antecedents, 1859-1918 (PhD, University of Leeds, 1983), pp.951-954. J. Baynes, *Morale: A Study of Men and Courage* (London, 1967), p.253. J. Kitchen, *The British Imperial Army in the Middle East* (London, 2015), pp.136-139,148-149.

¹⁵ K. Simpson, 'The British Soldier on the Western Front' in P. Liddle (ed) *Home Fires and Foreign Fields* (London, 1985), p.147.

¹⁶ G.D. Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22' (PhD, KCL, 1994), p.212.

¹⁷ H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005), p.82.

¹⁸ J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.33.

¹⁹ J. Bourne, 'The British Working Man in Arms', in H. Cecil & P.H. Liddle (ed), *Facing Armageddon* (Barnsley, 2003), p.339.

²⁰ Kitchen, *British*, p.128. See also, McCartney, *Citizen*.

A. Organisational cohesion with the company and battalion

Edwardian military leaders would have understood the concept of organisational cohesion. Many described this as 'esprit des corps' and saw it as 'the pride in the regiment' which they believed helped soldiers persevere in 'the presence of hardship and danger'.²¹ Medical Officer Charles Wilson, who served in the 1/Royal Fusiliers in the Great War, believed that organisational cohesion between regular soldiers and their battalion could be so strong that it 'steemed' men against death, being 'their source of strength, their abiding faith.' He suggested this 'domestic feeling like the affection of a crew for their ship' never 'took root in the citizen force'.²² Certainly, there is no evidence that London Territorials had a commitment to their battalion or company to the point of death but it is a mistake to suggest that they had no affection or loyalty in their membership of their respective units. For many, organisational cohesion between men and their company or battalion was a potent bond that influenced their behaviour.

i) August 1914 to mid 1916

Personal accounts and letters up to July 1916, suggest high levels of organisational cohesion between men and their battalion. Many made declarations about the unique excellence of their unit. For example, Sergeant Mason, joining the Rangers, believed they were 'second to none' and one London Scottish subaltern said the Scottish were the 'finest battalion in the British Army'.²³

Soldiers also actively sought to identify themselves as unit members by their dress and activities. For instance, QVR had their own football strip and in spring 1916 they replaced their metal '9th County of London Regiment' shoulder tabs with 'QVR' cloth badges, the abbreviation by which they were known.²⁴ The LRB had similar ones in regimental colours that the men paid for themselves.²⁵

Others adopted battalion customs which were based on each unit's association with their regular regiment to which they were linked (see Chapter 2). For example, members of the

²¹ 'The Officer Spirit and How To Create It', by RMGT, 6/8/1915.

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/bandl.danby/F041OfficerSpirit.html> *Regimental Nicknames and Traditions of the British Army* (London, 1916), p.xv.

²² C. Wilson, *The Anatomy of Courage* (London, 1945), pp.166, 183.

²³ R.J. Mason, 'Up the Rangers', p.1, IWM, Misc 250, Box 12. 'Mobilisation', Book 3, C. Low, IWM, 79/54/1.

²⁴ C.A.C. Keelson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol. 1*, (London, 1923), p.133. F. Hawkings, *From Ypres to Cambrai* (Morley, 1973), p.77.

²⁵ F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.114.

Rangers, QWR and QVR were affiliated with the KRRC and, as a rifle corps, they wore black buttons rather than brass and referred to the bayonet as the 'sword'.²⁶ They were also 'riflemen' not 'privates' and felt 'justly indignant when a wrong appellation plays skittles with our rank.'²⁷ London Scot V.S Kerridge recalled that wearing the kilt made them 'unique'.²⁸

Adopting these traditions and dress made men develop a strong tribal affinity to their unit and a dislike of 'outsiders'. For example, in May 1916 a draft of 4/2 Londons were posted to the Kensingtons but they continued to wear their Fusilier cap badge and were considered by the Kensingtons as 'attached only' rather than incorporated as new members.²⁹ In class corps units, organisational cohesion was further enhanced by the fact that recruitment and membership remained based on the exclusive pre-war criteria of social class, payment of a membership fee and recommendation by other members up until the introduction of conscription in mid-1916. Subscriptions continued to be collected in the trenches up until this time.³⁰ Research suggests that a much greater sense of commitment can be created by successful entrants to an organisation which considers itself elite and has strict entry requirements for its members.³¹ Certainly, there was status associated with being a member of class corps units. Social convention dictated that middle class men would want to join only a unit comprised of 'men of their class'.³² Philip Maddison, Henry Williamson's fictional hero serving in the imagined London Highlanders Brigade, based on Williamson's own experience in the LRB, was told in 'no uncertain terms' when joining the Highlanders, he had to be 'first class socially'. Maddison is warned that the 'battalion for the bobtails is the Tower Hamlets [17/Londons], [and]...the Shiny Old Seventh [7/Londons], the louts from Leyonstone'.³³ Both battalions recruited large numbers of working class men from the poorer areas of east London. There are many examples of middle class men in 1916/7, when threatened by conscription, sought to join a 'first class territorial battalion' of their choosing rather than run the risk of ending up with the 'coarse soldiery' of the regular army.³⁴

²⁶ P. Reed, *Combles* (Barnsley, 2001), p.20.

²⁷ P. McGill, *The Amateur Army* (London, 1916), p.15.

²⁸ V.S. Kerridge, Reel-1, IWMSA, 18836.

²⁹ O.F. Bailey & H.M. Hollier, *The Kensingtons* (London, 1936) p.67.

³⁰ K. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers*, (London, 1995), p.50. Maude, *History*, p. 54.

³¹ E. Aronson and J. Mills, 'The effects of severity of initiation on liking for a group', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 59:2 (1957), pp.177-182. J. McCollum, 'The Airborne Mystique', *Military Review* (11/1976), p.16.

³² *Times*, 3/6/1909.

³³ H. Williamson, *How Dear is Life* (London, 1957), p.61.

³⁴ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), p.33. Account [no page numbers]. T. H. Holmes, IWM, 06/30/1.

As a result of their exclusivity and elite status, class corps members often put in additional effort for the battalion, especially in the presence of men from less socially exclusive units. For example, just after mobilisation, the LRB as they marched out of London on their way to train in the Home Counties passed large numbers of men from other London Regiment battalions who had fallen out. These men were from units drawn from the 'poorer areas of London' but the LRB, even though they were weighted down with the same heavy kit as the others, considered themselves as an 'elite unit of the London Regiment' and 'did not fall out'.³⁵

Strong organisational cohesion resulted in active competition between units which prompted men to defend and, where possible, enhance their unit's reputation. Smith thought men's attachment to their unit gave them a reason to be well turned out as once they were 'away from one's unit, all smartness and desire to present a good appearance vanished'.³⁶ Private Stuart Dolden said that the London Scottish were challenged to a rugby match by a divisional supply column but there was an insufficient number of players, so rugby training was instigated in the battalion to build a rugby team and maintain regimental honour.³⁷ The London Scottish also identified themselves as 'champion diggers' as they were able to dig in the prescribed time 91 cubic metres per man as compared to the 'average' 80.³⁸ Smith said that in the spring of 1916, many TF units were dragged into a 'mad competition' with new army battalions to prove 'how smart they were'.³⁹

Much of this rivalry was further intensified between units which had historic feuds pre-war. For example, the London Scottish was the 'old rival' of the LRB, with whom they competed to get the shortest time for the London to Brighton route march.⁴⁰ Unit members wanted opportunities to test themselves against their rivals; Graham Williams was disappointed that the LRB were not ordered to continue an attack, started by regular soldiers in early 1915, as 'we all wished to see the LRB distinguish itself, as the London Scottish had done at Messines'.⁴¹ The 'eagerness to prove the battalion' resurfaced once they heard of the QVR's

³⁵ The Great War Interviews, Henry Williamson, BBC, Broadcast 1/2014. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.35.

³⁶ A. Smith, A., *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), p.250.

³⁷ A.S. Dolden, *Cannon Fodder* (Poole, 1980), p.25.

³⁸ J Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London, 1921), p.101.

³⁹ Smith, *Four*, p.129.

⁴⁰ F. Maude, *History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.56.

⁴¹ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.49.

valiant action at Hill 60 in April.⁴² Rivalries remained when all units were drawn together as part of the 56th Division in February 1916.⁴³

Some have argued that the desire to protect the battalion reputation could be so strong that it kept men fighting on the battlefield. London Scot Douglas Pinkerton believed that protecting the 'honour' of the regiment helped overcome surrendering to fear in the trenches.⁴⁴ This is believed to have happened during a 'panic' and retreat by the QWR during the 2nd Battle of Ypres where the CO steadied his men with a call to 'remember the regiment' but no other reports exist to verify the story.⁴⁵

There was significant organisational cohesion at the battalion level but this was also replicated at the company level. For example, Rifleman Leslie Walkinton joined the QWR with his brother and they were sent to different companies and each 'was convinced...his own company was the best'.⁴⁶ Edward Squire, after joining the Kensingtons' D Company, told his parents that it was 'the best' in the battalion.⁴⁷ These affinities were important to motivate men to put in additional effort on behalf of their company. While serving in the QWR, Lance Corporal Parr wrote about a long route march in early 1916. He recalled that in the final mile 'my left leg began to give...Still C Co[mpany] were singing at the back of us and we managed to raise a song to beat them' [sic].⁴⁸ However, these are the only references to organisational cohesion at the company level, suggesting that the main focus of men's attention and identity was to their battalion.

Why did men develop cohesion with their battalion or company? Until late 1916, the men in all units were volunteers and, on the whole, they were highly motivated to serve, 'having a glowing enthusiasm of that hour'.⁴⁹ Many had chosen the unit they joined, such as S. Suffield who selected the 'crack' QWR and they were eager to 'go to the front'.⁵⁰ Many signed the Imperial Service Order, which enabled them to be sent to France.⁵¹ Much of this enthusiasm was directed towards soldiering and the battalion. For example, in the QWR, Walkinton

⁴² Smith, *Four*, p.32.

⁴³ Ibid., p.121.

⁴⁴ D. Pinkerton, *Ladies from Hell* (New York, 1918), pp.149-150.

⁴⁵ A.R. Hossack, 'The First Gas Attack' in *Fifty Amazing Stories of the Great War* (London, 1936), p.84.

⁴⁶ M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), p.13.

⁴⁷ Letter, 26/8/1914. E. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

⁴⁸ Cited in R. Van Emden, *The Somme* (Barnsley, 2016), p.73.

⁴⁹ John Stewart Calder cited in M. Copp, 'Behind the lines, the story of the Calder Brothers', *Stand To!* 59 (9/2000), p.12.

⁵⁰ S. Suffield, 'One Man's War', *Stand To!* 21 (Winter 1987), pp.24-25. Undated letter, probably 8/1914. E.W. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

⁵¹ Mitchison, *Gentlemen*, p.34.

recalled on joining that ‘any and every detail of our own regiment was absorbing interest and nothing else mattered’ and his colleague, J.S Engall, was described as being as “‘keen as mustard” on drill and military training’.⁵²

Others joined because they had a familial connection to the unit which also may have strengthened their affection and commitment to their chosen battalion. A key feature of many TF battalions, like regular ones, was that generations of fathers and sons served in the same unit. Pat Morris’s early 1980’s survey of veterans joining the TF Leeds Rifles on the outbreak of war suggests that ‘family tradition’ was a motivation for 27% of men joining up.⁵³ This is also reflected in recruitment for the units under study; Tucker joined the Kensingtons because of the ‘family association’ of his father and uncles having been sergeants.⁵⁴ The son of former War Minister, Arnold Forster, followed his father by becoming an officer in the 2/London.⁵⁵

Affinity with the battalion may also be connected with the strong associational nature of Edwardian society. There was a major social trend in late Victorian and Edwardian Society to join associations, societies and clubs for a variety of leisure, sports, religious, charitable or political reasons.⁵⁶ There was a growth in formal organisations which people from all social classes flocked to join: for example, there was a huge rise in youth organisations, such as the Boys’ Brigade, Church Lads’ Brigade and the Boy Scouts.⁵⁷ These organisations attracted a massive following from boys who joined and adults who helped run branches and clubs.⁵⁸ Also, for many boys attending public or grammar school, there was often a strong quasi emotional connection to their former educational establishment. This maintained solid and enduring connections, for some, such as Rifleman Leslie Sanders, who enlisted in the QVR, made frequent contributions to the magazine of his former grammar school, St Olave’s, long after he had departed.⁵⁹

Being part of a club or school gave boys an identity and sense of belonging, as did, being a member of a company and battalion.⁶⁰ Individuals were proud to be part of a regiment and it

⁵² Walkinton, *Twice*, p.14. J.S Engall, *A Subaltern’s Letters* (London, 1917), p.13.

⁵³ Morris, PhD, p.53.

⁵⁴ J.F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.12.

⁵⁵ P. Hurd, *Fighting Territorials, Vol.2* (London, 1915), p.26.

⁵⁶ R J Morris, ‘Clubs, societies and associations’ in F. M. L. Thompson (ed), *Social Agencies and Institutions* (Cambridge, 1990).

⁵⁷ P. Wilkinson, ‘English Youth Movements, 1908-30’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 4:2 (4/1969), pp.3-23.

⁵⁸ S. Pryke, ‘The Popularity of Nationalism in the Early British Boy Scout Movement’, *Social History* 23:3 (1998), p.310.

⁵⁹ L. Sanders, *A Soldier of England* (Privately published, 1920), pp.11-47.

⁶⁰ R. Holmes, *Acts of War* (London, 2004), p.311.

gave them a strong sense of pride. Engall wrote to his parents in January 1916 that he had come to France ‘to find that our battalion has a wonderful name. There’s a common saying here that if you want work done well and without any fuss, give it to the Westminster’s’.⁶¹

Organisational cohesion was also a key focus of primary group cohesion as men in units and groups bonded over their shared identity and belonging to a wider group. For example, by November 1915, Aubrey Smith was ‘absolutely attached to the LRB’ because he had made ‘fast friends’ in its transport section.⁶² These shared identities were important for focusing group effort. For example, soldiers in many units who marched past the Rangers would hold their noses to suggest the Rangers stank, as they recruited large numbers of employees from the Gas Light and Coke Company. This tradition of regimental ridicule of the Rangers continued well into the 1930’s.⁶³

Importantly, in many units organisational cohesion at the group level became a powerful force, which could develop and sustain informal norms that were maintained and promoted by members of groups and units. For example, William Fry was posted to a platoon of the LRB, a number of whose members had completed the famous pre-war London to Brighton route march. He recalled that they were ‘rather fussy about marching discipline’ and insisted they comply with the LRB tradition of fast marching at 140 paces a minute and ‘do it correctly’.⁶⁴ Many men, who had left units pre-war, re-joined their old battalions on the outbreak of war and their knowledge of unit customs was ‘invaluable in carrying on to the new men the traditions and esprit de corps’ of their respective regiments.⁶⁵

The promotion of informal group norms in class corps units at this time may have been influenced by the shared educational background of these units’ middle class men. As many units were run on public school lines (see above), a key tenant of this shared education was loyalty to the wider organisation, whether that was team, house or school. Many drew parallels with the ‘importance of "esprit de corps" in the regiment as in the school’ and this shared background of educational experience meant that men understood ‘playing for the team’ in the self-segregated ranks of the class corps units.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Engall, *Letters*, p.47.

⁶² Smith, *Four*, p.114.

⁶³ A.V. Sellwood, *The Saturday Night Soldiers* (London, 1966), p.111.

⁶⁴ W. Fry, *Air of Battle* (London, 1974), p.15.

⁶⁵ *Short History of the London Rifle Brigade*, p.31.

⁶⁶ *The Worcesterian*, Vol XV, 7/1917, p.86. Groom, *Poor*, p.45.

Military leaders sought to promote competition and rivalry in units to stimulate organisational cohesion in the battalion. Lectures were delivered to troops at the Bull Ring in the spring of 1916 on the issue and senior commanders sought to promote competition in their brigades.⁶⁷ For example, in the 13th Brigade, to which the QVR was attached in 1915, the Brigadier encouraged 'great rivalry' between the various battalions to be 'ace' of the brigade.⁶⁸ Leaders also sought to promote affinity to a soldier's company as well as their battalion. For instance, Major Claud Low of the London Scottish in 1916 gave his 'customary address' to new recruits when they joined the battalion in France. He told them that they were in 'the best company in France' and tried 'hard to make them...proud.'⁶⁹

During the first half of the war organisational cohesion primarily focused on the battalion and, to a lesser degree, the company. Many individuals had a strong association with their battalion because they had selected to volunteer with a chosen unit and frequently individuals also had a familial or personal link. The pre-war customs, uniforms and traditions of the unit that members adopted further enhanced organisational cohesion. On a primary group level, collective membership of a wider tribe was a focus for bonding, as it provided a distinct common identity and place to belong which influenced unit and group members to work harder, especially when the unit's reputation or honour was at stake.

ii) Mid 1916 to the Armistice

The Rangers' regimental history argued that the levels of esprit des corps (organisational cohesion) peaked in the first half of 1916 before the Battle of the Somme and 'could hardly be regained in the war'. It was built on the membership of 'regulars[,]...territorial veterans and the early volunteers, tempered as it was with the rigours of trench warfare and the long period of training'.⁷⁰ It impossible to establish the exact levels of organisational cohesion in a unit but certainly the character of the organisational cohesion changed from mid-1916.

An alteration in the way in which units replaced their casualties was made by the War Office in the summer of 1916 and this is the main reason cited by units for this change. The system of individual unit drill halls supplying recruits from their reserve battalions was changed to a

⁶⁷ J. Steward, *Platoon* (London, 2012), p.35.

⁶⁸ Keeson, *Victoria's Vol. 1*, p.114.

⁶⁹ Letter, 19 /6/1916, Low, IWM.

⁷⁰ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers' Historical Records* (London 1921), p.48.

regional system of pooling recruits and sending them to units which needed them.⁷¹ As a result, units started to receive drafts from a variety of units to fill the gaps left by combat casualties; the QVR counted representatives of 17 regiments in the late summer of 1916.⁷²

Even though many of these drafts were from London regiment battalions, units felt this situation of apparently random ‘cross postings’ had an ‘effect on both the battalion and on the reinforcements’ that was ‘calculated to destroy esprit des corps’.⁷³ It was detrimental because men ‘imbued with their own regimental tradition’ developed at home did, for sentimental reasons, ‘better work and...[stood] the hardships of the campaign more satisfactorily with their own unit than with a strange one’.⁷⁴ Though units sought to ‘repatriate’ their cross postings to their parent units and ‘reclaim’ their own men from other battalions, this process was largely out of the control of commanders as they had little idea where drafts were deployed.⁷⁵ Men also believed this situation damaged esprit and could have been avoided.⁷⁶ By the end of 1916, as a consequence, the character of units had changed; Tucker felt that the Kensingtons’ ‘old esprit de corps’ was ‘practically non-existent’ and the London Scottish lamented that from this date ‘regimental peculiarities’ were no longer encouraged.⁷⁷

From late 1916, the units no longer had the ‘supply of high class’ volunteers who resembled the same type of man who had joined during peace or volunteered in the early part of the war. Instead they were ‘a heterogeneous crowd — College Professors and dustmen side by side, boys nominally 18 and men of 40, stalwart porters and weedy tailors’[sic].⁷⁸ Also, they were increasingly conscripts, pressed into service and included volunteers who joined under the threat of conscription under the Derby scheme, those volunteering before being called up and those directly enlisted under conscription.⁷⁹ McCartney suggests that the majority of reinforcement drafts arriving in France from September 1916 were made up of a mixture of these three groups. This date can be used to mark the start of when the majority of soldiers arriving in France were pressed men. It is possible to use the Kensingtons medal data to estimate the proportions of conscripts and old volunteers in the Kensingtons as the war

⁷¹ Mitchinson, *Gentleman*, p.130.

⁷² Keeson, *Victoria's* Vol.1, p.176.

⁷³ Grey, 2nd, p.125. Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.68. Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.264.

⁷⁴ Grey, 2nd, p.125. J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), p.109. Maude, *History*, p.153.

⁷⁵ C.H. Dudley Ward, *The Fifty-Sixth Division* (London, 1922), p.50.

⁷⁶ Smith, *Four*, p.153.

⁷⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.110. Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.381.

⁷⁸ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, pp.263-264.

⁷⁹ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.131.

progressed. The table below shows the percentage of conscripts in the battalion on key dates and suggests that the rise was gradual and that conscripts became a majority only after August 1917.

Table 7.1 – Percentage of conscripts in the Kensingtons, October 1916 to November 1918

Date	Percentage of conscripts in the Kensingtons on key dates from October 1916 to November 1918
31-Oct-1916	20.5%
31-Dec-1916	31.4%
08-Apr-1917	36.3%
31-May-1917	45.8%
15-Aug-1917	53.7%
30-Sep-1917	59.6%
31-Dec-1917	60.7%
27-Mar-1918	63.7%
31-May-1918	66.4%
22-Aug-1918	68.7%
30-Sep-1918	72.3%
11-Nov-1918	70.3%

The posting of these men to units, often against their will, was not conducive to creating organisational cohesion. On an individual level, many probably felt much like Private F.A.J. Taylor who was ‘unceremoniously thrust’ into’ 1/19 Londons in 1917. He considered it to be an ‘unknown’ regiment to which he ‘never developed any particular loyalty’.⁸⁰ Middlesex men posted to the LRB in late 1916 found their customs and traditions alien and complained that the LRB’s Rifle Corps fast march of 140 paces a minute a ‘**** jig’.⁸¹ Others found that they were sent to a unit which was connected to a completely different geographical area from which they had association or sympathy; for instance, northern miners sent to the LRB in 1918 were annoyed at being in a ‘blinking Cockney mob’.⁸² This feeling of dislocation was a probable source of discontent throughout their service as units were continually reinforced

⁸⁰ F.A.J. Taylor, *Bottom of the Barrel* (London, 1986), p.47.

⁸¹ Mitchinson, *Gentleman*, p.138. *Regimental Nicknames and Traditions of the British Army* (London, 1916), p.xix.

⁸² Smith, *Four*, p.332.

by men from different units and geographical regions, many of whom were forced to join against their will.

The organisational cohesion between men and their battalion did not vanish even though many men joining a unit may have had little sympathy with it. Certainly, the nature of the bond between men and their battalion was altered, making it less intense and militant than that which existed before the Somme. For example, in September 1917 units of 169 Brigade decorated their billets with their regimental badges in coloured stone.⁸³ The Rangers, on their disbandment in February 1918 were reported as 'furious' and 'strong men' were weeping.⁸⁴ At the same time, the QVR recorded that their amalgamation with their second battalion caused 'consternation and distress on all sides' and there was 'a little friction' between the 1st and 2nd battalions on their union.⁸⁵ Others believed that the disbandment of battalions 'caused bitter disappointment among the battalions and esprit de corps received temporarily a severe check'.⁸⁶

The motivation for organisational cohesion originated from two sources. The first was the affinity men had with their unit and its traditions. The volunteers who joined before summer 1916 still remained in significant numbers (as the table above indicates) even though battalions were increasingly comprised of conscripts. In the Kensingtons, this group of volunteers still made up just under a third of the entire battalion by the Armistice and many retained their individual and group organisational cohesion based on their units' identity and ethos. This appears especially in class corps units; for example, in 1917, London Scot Alec Stringer was ordered to the 47th Division as a clerk. He asked why he was being sent away from his 'very famous regiment' as he had paid his subscription, which he believed, gave him a 'right to serve'.⁸⁷ Indeed, all three class corps battalions claimed their 'spirit' and 'traditions' lasted throughout the war despite social change.⁸⁸ The London Scottish also said that the old ethos remained as strong throughout the war as if the 'donning of the grey kilt... [was] imbued by instinct with the old traditions'.⁸⁹ However, some new men joining class corps units did not have the same enthusiasm for unit traditions as the early war volunteers.

⁸³ Maude, *History*, p.208.

⁸⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.303. J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), pp.233-234.

⁸⁵ Keeson, *Victoria's Vol.2*, p.365. Elliot, *Tim's*, p.97.

⁸⁶ F. Clive Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)* (London, 1922), p.352.

⁸⁷ A. Stringer, 'My Experiences in the Great War', *Stand To!* 14 (Summer 1985), pp.6-7.

⁸⁸ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.187. G. Oram, "What alternative punishment is there?": military executions during World War I' (PhD, Open University, 2000), p.192. Maude, *History*, p.xv.

⁸⁹ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.382.

Two men joining the London Scottish complained that wearing the kilts was ‘terrible’ as they frequently ‘got splashed up the privates’ by cold liquid mud.⁹⁰

However, class corps units remained keen to maintain their traditions and promoting their exclusive nature despite the introduction of conscription. In February 1917, T.H. Holmes joined the QWR at their London drill hall and paid his £1 subscription. He trained with them in England and developed a strong bond, being ‘persuaded that the British Army consisted of the QWR and a lot of other rabble.’ Class corps units and others may have sought to instil their traditions and ways on their recruits but this often proved to be pointless as training with one unit did not guarantee service with it in the field. Private T.H. Holmes ended up being posted to the Kensingtons in early 1918 with whom he served until being wounded in August 1918.⁹¹

The second source came from men building an affinity with the unit once they arrived. Men like Holmes who found themselves posted to battalions they had not chosen or had any prior connection with were still able to form a close association with their new unit. An interesting example is Vicar Julian Bickersteth, who arrived from Australia in 1915 to join the war effort and was appointed padre to the Rangers in February 1916. He developed a strong affection for his ‘beloved’ unit and, when the Rangers were disbanded in February 1918, he lamented that he had ‘never witnessed anything sadder’.⁹²

For these men who were posted to an unfamiliar battalion, their motivations for forming organisational cohesion were complex and multiple. For Bickersteth, his reason was his affection for the men in the unit to whom he ministered.⁹³ For others, it was committing to the unit which gave them an identity and sense of belonging and helped build primary group relationships; for example, reinforcements from 2/2 Londons were sent to the QWR in May 1916 and they asked to wear the Westminster’s cap badge as ‘they were going to fight with the regiment’.⁹⁴ For some, bonding with the unit was an acceptance of a fate over which they had no control; Rifleman Hall noted in his diary on 2 October 1916 that he was to be

⁹⁰ C. Manton, Reel-4. IWMSA, 9756. H.B. Coates, Reel-2, IWMSA, 9833.

⁹¹ Holmes, IWM.

⁹² Bickersteth, *Diaries*, pp.200, 233-234.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.233-234.

⁹⁴ Henriques, *Westminster*, p.81.

transferred from the QVR to the Rangers which he did 'not mind... but one naturally takes a keen interest in the traditions of the QVR'. However, the 'old vics' were 'sore over it'.⁹⁵

It is probable that the shared experience of combat reinforced this association between individual and unit. Samuel Stouffer in the *American Soldier* interviewed men about their pride in their company during the Second World War. He found that 78% of men who been in combat had pride in their company as compared with 56% of those who had not seen action. This would suggest that individual levels of organisational commitment and cohesion were intensified through the experience of battle.⁹⁶

The integration of new men into units appears to have been encouraged by battalion leaders, a marked contrast to practice prior to the Somme. The LRB's adjutant had complained that Middlesex regiment draftees joining the unit in July 1916 were distinctly 'NOT LRB' but this attitude changed in February 1918 when the LRB welcomed a draft of Rangers transferred on the disbandment of their battalion.⁹⁷ CO Husey with 'good tact' 'reconciled them to a change of badge' as fellow Riflemen and the newcomers 'quickly merged...into the battalion', though there is little detail about what this process entailed.⁹⁸ Under specialist training instructions in September 1917, the 1/4 Londons stressed that during platoon lectures 'every effort' should be made to teach all ranks the names of regimental officers', especially those rankers that joined recently.⁹⁹

The reason for developing an inclusive approach was pragmatism. Military authorities had always promoted the value of esprit de corps and many probably saw the necessity to develop this internally, given the fact that men were increasingly being drawn from different regions, classes and units.¹⁰⁰ From 1917 onwards, guidance was much more prescriptive and focused on all organisational levels within the battalion. *SSI43*, published in February 1917, said that 'esprit des corps...must be built up in sections and platoons. Each section should consider itself the best section in the platoon, and the platoon the best in the battalion'.¹⁰¹ This was reinforced in *Platoon Training* in February 1918. This stated that organisational cohesion should be developed at the group level so that, 'on and off parade the man must work or play

⁹⁵ Diary, 20/10/1916. F.J. Hall, IWM, 67/13/1.

⁹⁶ S. Stouffer, *The American Soldier*, Vol.2 (Princeton, 1949), pp.138-139.

⁹⁷ Mitchinson, *Gentleman*, p.136.

⁹⁸ Smith, *Four*, p.304.

⁹⁹ Appendix D, 9/1917, 1/4 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95 2954.

¹⁰⁰ See for instance, *Infantry Training* (London, 1914), p.12, *Training and Manoeuvre Regulations*, (London, 1914), p.65.

¹⁰¹ *SSI43, Instructions for the Training of Platoons for Offensive Action* (GHQ, 1917), p.11.

not as an individual but as a member of his section, platoon or company.’ It emphasised football matches as important to ‘stimulate pride in the unit and loyalty to it’ and that ‘pride of regiment guarantees good work’.¹⁰²

Battalions actively implemented a range of measures and activities to achieve loyalty and pride and to build, promote and maintain organisational cohesion. These included officially sanctioned unit journals, such as the Rangers’ *The Jab* which ‘brightened...life and encouraged...esprit de corps’¹⁰³ and also lectures on regimental traditions.¹⁰⁴ Probably the most significant measure was a concerted effort by military authorities to organise sports and training activities to develop the ‘competitive spirit’.

Before 1916, the units under study held sports events but they were ad hoc local affairs.¹⁰⁵ The Kensingtons, for example, in 1914/5 are recorded as playing only one football match.¹⁰⁶ This all changed from early 1916, when sports events became arranged by battalions on a consistent and regular basis with support, resources and time being made available from senior commanders.¹⁰⁷ They covered a wide range of disciplines including boxing, football, swimming, diving and rugby. In 1916 alone, the Kensingtons recorded 10 organised sports events in their war diary. Also, competitions were instituted at Brigade and Divisional level with accompanying prizes and cups.¹⁰⁸ This is reflected across all units and continued to the end of the war.

These events were regarded as so important that units devoted considerable time and effort to organising and preparing for them. For instance, during a rest period in May 1917, 1/4 Londons’ training was ‘reduced to the minimum, and the Battalion’s really serious duty became that of training for Battalion and Brigade sports’ [sic].¹⁰⁹ In 1918, Bickersteth complained that across the 56th Division there was no time for church as ‘everyone is engaged in intensive training...and any time to spare is given to [sports].’¹¹⁰

¹⁰² *Platoon Training* (GHQ, 1918), p.23.

¹⁰³ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.181.

¹⁰⁴ Appendix 1, ‘Notes to Accompany Training Programme’, 7/71917, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.139.

¹⁰⁵ T. Mason & E. Riedi, *Sport and the Military* (Cambridge, 2010), p.80.

¹⁰⁶ See 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/1730.

¹⁰⁷ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.165.

¹⁰⁸ See 1916, 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955. Grey, 2nd, pp.154, 278, 330.

¹⁰⁹ Grimwade, 4th, p.270.

¹¹⁰ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.264.

The available evidence suggests that these events generated affinity with the organisation on a variety of levels. Tucker recalled the Kensingtons were in 'a highly exhilarated state' after winning the Brigade football cup in December 1916, beating the 1/4 Londons.¹¹¹ Steward described how members of his platoon arrived early to get a ringside seat to support one of their platoon members fight an inter-company boxing match.¹¹²

Combat training also acquired a more competitive edge. Frequent competitions were organised in bayonet fighting, the Lewis gun, bomb throwing and musketry at platoon, company and battalion level. For example, in January 1917, the LRB held battalion sports which included company competitions for drill, bayonet fighting and bomb throwing.¹¹³ In October 1918, 1/4 Londons held rifle competitions to 'add to the keenness of the men' and QWR held a series of inter-platoon competitions in rifle and Lewis gun shooting 'to foster the 'platoon spirit''.¹¹⁴ A lack of available sources makes it difficult to determine whether this combat training was as successful as sports in building feelings of pride.

These measures and initiatives to build organisational cohesion in the second half of the war appear to have been successful. One battalion thought these sports events 'quite as valuable as hours spent on the parade ground'; another that it 'may appear somewhat incongruous...to devote space to a sports meeting; but such events have a direct bearing on the development of that esprit de corps'.¹¹⁵

They certainly appear to have generated strong competition between companies. In October 1917, Henriques reported that the 'excellent competitive spirit' between QWR companies, as each sought to outdo each other in aggressive patrolling, showed a 'fine offensive spirit'.¹¹⁶ The 1/4 Londons said that there was a strong 'competitive spirit' between companies in early 1918 that 'was fostered in every possible way'.¹¹⁷

There is also evidence that these men's loyalty to their company or battalion continued to influence their behaviour. In early 1917, Rifleman Archie Groom was asked by General Haking whether things were bad or not; he lied, saying they were good as he could as 'not let

¹¹¹ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.104.

¹¹² Steward, *Platoon*, p.89.

¹¹³ Maude, *History*, p.179.

¹¹⁴ Grimwade, 4th, p.493. Henriques, *Westminster*, p.281.

¹¹⁵ Grimwade, 4th, pp.270-271. Henriques, *Westminster*, p.164.

¹¹⁶ Diary, 22/10/1917, J.Q. Henriques, NAM, 8901-19105.

¹¹⁷ Grimwade, 4th, p.353.

the regiment down' but also feared retribution from the RSM if he told the truth.¹¹⁸ Avoiding dishonour on their respective regiment and company was the motivation for two senior Kensingtons NCOs to resolve separate disciplinary matters in an informal manner. However, this may have been to protect their reputation and reduce paper work as well.¹¹⁹ Smith and LRB colleagues gave a 'stupendous effort' to get their kit ready for an inspection to 'save the regiment's reputation'.¹²⁰

Positive organisational cohesion at the battalion level was a constructive influence on individual and group behaviour throughout the war. Early war organisational cohesion focused on building affinity around the unit's pre-war identity, traditions and characteristics, whereas, from 1916 onwards, it was directed more towards a corporate and inclusive approach. Battalion and senior military leaders deliberately sought to build affinity with new conscript recruits with their platoon, company and battalion. This concentrated on a policy of building a shared belonging, through centrally organised sports events, leisure events and competitive training. It appears that the action taken to develop 'esprit de corps' with platoon, company and battalion was successful. Men put effort in, on behalf their unit, to save its reputation but organisational cohesion in the second half of the war appears to have lacked the militant enthusiasm of the early war volunteers and this may suggest, on balance, that it was a weaker force.

B. Organisational cohesion with higher formations

Writings by Great War veterans and historians suggest that organisational cohesion between regimental soldiers and their senior commanders, from brigade level upwards, was largely antagonistic and with officers in higher formations often being described as 'distant' and 'out of touch'.¹²¹ The evidence available for the units under study, suggests a slightly more complex relationship, varying between indifference and negativity to the various levels of command, such as division, and virulent animosity to what soldiers' collectively defined as the 'staff' or 'red tabs'. While soldiers acknowledged that senior leaders were from different organisational levels, they largely regarded the 'staff' as a homogenous mass with little differentiation. This is despite the fact that staff officers were attached to headquarters

¹¹⁸ Groom, *Poor*, p.82.

¹¹⁹ Holmes, IWM. Tucker, *Johnny*, p.106.

¹²⁰ Smith, *Four*, p.195.

¹²¹ B. Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein* (London, 1958), p.30. H. Macmillan, *Winds of Change, 1914-1939* (London, 1966), p.93.

establishments of the organisational levels from brigade level to GHQ. This section will address soldiers' relationships with the military hierarchy in two sections, in view of this self-defined perception of the 'staff'. The first will explore how men related to organisational levels, such as division, and the second will consider how they regarded the 'staff' as they defined them.

i) Cohesion with brigade, division and corps

Very few soldiers mention any type of relationship between themselves or their primary group and the brigade or division of which they were a part. Rifleman Frank Hawkings in early 1916 wrote in his diary that the QVR was 'fed up and sick' on leaving the 13th Brigade to join the 56th Division but this is the only comment of affection for a particular brigade.¹²² The 1/4 Londons reported that on the formation of the 56th Division in February 1916, there was a divisional *esprit de corps* but this is the only mention of such a phenomenon among the units or men under study.¹²³ No evidence is available of soldiers during the war expressing pride in being in a particular brigade or division as there is for being a member of a company or battalion.

This is not to say that London men could not have strong organisational cohesion with their brigade; before the war the Kensingtons, London Scottish and QWR were all members of the 4th London Brigade, known as the 'Grey Brigade' on account of the grey uniforms each battalion wore when brigaded together as Volunteer units. Units gained a cache being part of this formation; the Kensingtons marching song proclaimed the Brigade had men who were 'all the best'.¹²⁴ However, that was a peacetime formation with which the constituent battalions had several decades' association unlike the brigades formed during the war.

Also, men could have organisational cohesion with their division. McCartney has shown how many Liverpool Territorials had empathy with the 55th West Lancashire Division of which they were a constituent battalion for most of the war. She argues that their affinity for the division was largely based on its regional identity with the North West, from where they mostly came. Divisional authorities actively promoted this link which, for many of its

¹²² Hawkings, *From*, p.83.

¹²³ Grimwade, 4th, p.133.

¹²⁴ W.R.J. McClean & F.G. Lewis, *The Uniform Grey* (1914).

soldiers, was a strong cohesive and motivational function.¹²⁵ The predominantly London men under study showed no organisational cohesion with the divisions of which they were a part, even when drawn together in the regionally named 56th (1st London) Division. The explanation for this, as will be argued in the next chapter, is that few London men identified closely with London unlike the men from the North West.

The explanation for this lack of organisational cohesion between men and their higher levels of the organisation has several elements. Many men may have felt that the higher formations had little direct relevance or meaning to their daily lives. Though policy set at brigade or divisional level could affect the daily lives of troops, such as teetotal General Pinney substituting the rum ration for tea when taking command of the 35th Division in 1916, no such events are recorded in the units under study.¹²⁶ Certainly, men regarded higher formations above division as very remote. Smith said that he and colleagues were ‘not in the least interested as to who our army or corps commander might be, since we were continually being transferred from one to another’.¹²⁷

It appears that this disconnection from these higher formations may have been further reinforced by the lack of contact with representatives and leaders of each level. An analysis of the Kensingtons’ war diary from their deployment to France to the Armistice, suggests that there was very little formal contact with units by senior officers at all levels from brigade upwards. It records that there were 16 identified visits by senior officers (brigadiers to the Commander in Chief) involving 19 individuals (some were repeat visits). These visits had a variety of purposes including attending medal parades and inspections. Given that the average length of service of a NCO or private in the Kensingtons was 223 days across the whole of the war, he may only have seen a senior commander on two or three occasions. In 169 Brigade the situation appears similar. Groom saw his Brigadier only once in 21 months, and Smith, who served with the LRB from January 1915 to the war’s end, recorded six visits of senior leaders.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.78-88.

¹²⁶ J.C. Dunn, *The War the Infantry Knew 1914–1919* (London, 1994), p.362.

¹²⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.274.

¹²⁸ See Appendix 6. Groom, *Poor*, p.24. Smith, *Four*, pp.121-241

Table 7.2 - Visits by officers of Brigadier and above as recorded in the Kensingtons' War diary for the Great War.¹²⁹

Rank (formation)	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	Total
Brigadier (Brigade)		3	3	1		7
Major General (Division)	1	1	1		2	5
Lt General (Corps)	1		2	1		4
Army (General)			1			1
C-in-C		1		1		2
Total	2	5	7	3	2	19

It is not surprising that an ordinary ranker should have had such limited contact and there is no evidence to suggest that the Kensingtons' experience was unique or unusual. While infrequent, these contacts between the leaders and representatives of the organisational levels and regimental soldiers were still important in shaping the latter's cohesion with the former. For ordinary soldiers, this human contact and exchange personalised the impersonal organisational level and gave a soldier someone to relate to and judge. For example, Walkinton paraded with the QWR to be reviewed by Kitchener in 1914. Walkinton said Kitchener was considered by soldiers to be 'infallibl[e]'. On seeing the great man face-to-face, Walkinton had a very different impression; he was faced by a 'depressed and harassed old man' that was 'far from inspiring' and Kitchener's demeanour persuaded Walkinton that Britain could lose the war.¹³⁰ While personal contact with some leaders could reduce morale, for others it could have the reverse effect. For instance, a British POW told his German captors that a speech from General Plumer motivated his tired battalion to fight after they had taken heavy casualties.¹³¹ Additionally, Plumer was known as 'daddy' and he was widely respected as a caring, cautious and successful general.¹³²

The evidence from men's experience in the units under study suggests that the interaction with representatives and leaders at various organisational levels did little to inspire trust, confidence and loyalty as Plumer appeared to have done. Sir John French addressed the QVR in November 1914 and it was reported to have 'pleased the men' but this appears to have

¹²⁹ Compiled from TNA files WO-95/1730, WO-95/128, WO-95/2955.

¹³⁰ Walkinton, *Twice*, pp.17-18.

¹³¹ Cited in A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War* (Cambridge, 2009), p.63.

¹³² J. Terraine, 'British Military Leadership in the First World War', in P. Liddle (ed), *Home Fires and Foreign Fields* (London, 1988), p.40.

been the only recorded episode where a senior leader had a positive impact.¹³³ From this date, senior leaders' interactions with soldiers were, from the latter's perspective, regarded as negative. Men became 'browned off' when leaders failed to turn up for inspections and parades for which they had prepared and were often kept standing around for hours waiting for their dignitaries not to arrive.¹³⁴ Many men felt their visiting generals were giving them 'the soft soap' treatment. For instance, VII Corps Commander Snow addressed the Kensingtons after their Gommecourt attack and praised their conduct but they felt this was 'small comfort for the poor devils that had no gains to show for their sacrifice'.¹³⁵ Others regarded their words as insensitive; Snow also addressed 169 Brigade on the same subject where he caused 'bitter offence' to the LRB. He told them that 'when I heard you had been driven back, I did not care a damn. It did not matter whether you took your objectives or not.'¹³⁶ In the QWR, Second Lieutenant Moy believed Snow spoiled his speech when he mentioned "'Doesn't matter a damn' when we had lost all our friends'.¹³⁷ In 1918, it appears that this deleterious attitude towards senior leaders remained, despite senior officers' efforts to communicate more effectively with the men. An unnamed brigadier (probably Loch) addressed the Kensingtons in 1918. He 'was very friendly; making the men sit on the grass whilst he talked to them of war' but he was greeted by whispers of 'soft soap' when he completed his talk.¹³⁸

Soldiers also reported that informal contact with leaders, especially their brigadiers, led to largely adverse experiences and often disciplinary consequences. For example, Brigadier General Coke was described as 'the familiar incubus of vague anxiety and lurking dread'.¹³⁹ Brigadier Loch confined the Rangers to barracks because he considered their billets dirty at Christmas 1916 when the unit 'wanted to be out and about arranging for various festivities'.¹⁴⁰ In many situations, mutual dislike of brigadiers could unite soldiers. Dolden recorded that Loch, on a long route march, ordered that officers should not carry soldiers' packs on their horses. Though the soldiers were 'very nearly 'all out'', Dolden said he and his colleagues 'made up our minds that...the Scottish were not going to give the Brigadier the satisfaction of seeing that he [Loch] had marched us to a standstill...as we passed, we pushed

¹³³ Letter, 7/11/1914, H. Flemming, NAM, 1999-01-141.

¹³⁴ Steward, *Platoon*, p.133.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.49.

¹³⁶ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.128.

¹³⁷ Memoir, p.23. C.E. Moy, IWM, 09/61/1.

¹³⁸ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.181-182.

¹³⁹ A.D. Gristwood, *The Somme and The Coward* (London, 1927), p.33.

¹⁴⁰ Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.86.

out our chests and tried to look as if we were enjoying it'.¹⁴¹ Regimental officers (as detailed in Chapters 4 and 5) also reported occasional conflicts with their brigadiers.

Soldiers may have been either ambivalent or hostile to the higher levels of command and its representatives and leaders but there was little they could do to alter the relationship without risking possible disciplinary consequences. However, it appears that when they had the opportunity, they did show their hostility such as in two incidents in 1917. In February, a 56th Divisional order dictated that soldiers salute senior officers [those at divisional, corps and army commanders] or their cars [carrying their flags of rank] and threatened that if men did not obey and were caught for 'such slackness' it '*will tend to a confiscation of all leave allotments for units reported*' [italics added].¹⁴² In September the notice was reissued stating 'there is again a distinct slackness in saluting...*some officers are especially bad at saluting and returning salute, ...if they do, it is...half-hearted*' [italics added].¹⁴³ These incidents indicate that the lack of respect shown to senior leaders was perceived as a persistent problem across the 56th Division and the units under study and one that warranted the threat of severe disciplinary consequences. It is highly probable that acts of defiance, like these, helped build cohesion both on a horizontal and vertical level, where officers and men could unite, bond and demonstrate their shared dislike of senior officers. Both incidents also suggest that organisational cohesion, with levels above the battalion, in 1917 may have been weak across the division.

ii) Relations with the 'staff'

Contact with senior commanders had a detrimental effect on organisation cohesion with the various levels in the military hierarchy and contact with the 'staff' appears to have had a similar impact. Though the role and nature of staff functions varied, to the average regimental soldier they were all one and the same. This may have been because staff officers all wore distinctive red tabs on their uniforms. Padre Julian Bickersteth wrote in September 1917, then senior 56th Division chaplain, 'how the soldier (i.e. the man doing the real job) hates the brass hat or staff officer' suggesting that the opinion was widespread across the division.¹⁴⁴ In early 1917, the Kensingtons' transport section produced 'a mock General, complete with red tabs'

¹⁴¹ Dolden, *Cannon*, pp.63-4.

¹⁴² Orders No.41, 13/2/1917, 167 Brigade WD, TNA, WO-95/2946.

¹⁴³ Order No.152, 5/9/1917, 167 Brigade WD, TNA, WO-95/2947.

¹⁴⁴ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.214.

for several events which was a 'huge success'.¹⁴⁵ This dislike of the staff was also reflected in the divisional history, which reported in February 1918, that the 'red tab' was detested by all frontline troops.¹⁴⁶

Perceptions of staff officers, like many senior commanders, were often informed by personal contact which did little to inspire confidence. Many soldiers were utterly amazed at staff officers' lack of knowledge of the front; one such officer expected the LRB transport section's steel work to be free of rust after they had been fighting and living in the open for six weeks, a comment regarded as 'superfluous'.¹⁴⁷ Bickersteth believed that 'it is absolutely impossible for the Staff Officer to have the least idea of what the man in the Line has to go through [sic]'.¹⁴⁸

Men were also annoyed by the preparation they had to do for visits by staff officers. Smith gives many accounts of preparing for the visits of dignitaries, with 'spit and polish' to clean dirty kit on top of their normal duties. All too often, these visits were cancelled after the unit had been standing around, frequently, in the rain. Men became united in their 'grousing and cursing' and 'spluttering with wrath' against the 'red hats'.¹⁴⁹ Many found such occasions as 'instances of hypocrisy', where soldiers had 'buttons and brass work polished' but 'bodies dirty and lousy'.¹⁵⁰

In addition, most men considered there to be a major disconnection between frontline combatants and those behind the lines. Bickersteth believed that the 'man behind the line has time to make himself moderately comfortable, whereas the man with the bayonet has none'.¹⁵¹ Many perceived that those in the 'rear' had better food; when the LRB was acting as 3rd Army HQ guard detail, it was noted that 'we invariably had too much food, whereas in a fighting division rations were...insufficient...the unequal distribution of food was most marked and...commented upon'.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.108, 121.

¹⁴⁶ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.215.

¹⁴⁷ Smith, *Four*, p.189.

¹⁴⁸ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.270.

¹⁴⁹ Smith, *Four*, p.122.

¹⁵⁰ Steward, *Platoon*, p.85.

¹⁵¹ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.270.

¹⁵² Smith, *Four*, p.125.

Many complained that ‘nobody above Colonel visited the front line’ and staff officers were never seen in the front line.¹⁵³ Also, according to Tucker, there was a perception at times that 168 Brigade staff remained in deep bunkers during some operations which ‘caused much bitterness to our officers and men and did not tend to raise confidence or morale’. Tucker suggests that this was a shared dislike, probably uniting commissioned and enlisted rank in mutual dislike, but Tucker acknowledges that this was an isolated incident as many senior officers were killed in the war.¹⁵⁴ It was observed that ‘the cleavage between those who direct operations and those whose duty it is to carry them out’ was developing conditions in which ‘socialistic ideas grow apace’ [sic].¹⁵⁵

Battalion officers also appear to have had a poor view of the ‘staff’ even though they probably had more regular contact and often knew staff officers, certainly at brigade and division level. Though not universal, there are examples illustrating the frustration of regimental officers forced to carry out orders and requests of staff officers throughout the war which they often regarded as pointless and ill-considered. For example, in 1914 Flemming complained that the QVR had been marched around so much by the high command that his men had not eaten for 20 hours and that ‘showed very little forethought for our men’s welfare’.¹⁵⁶ In the winter of 1915/6, the LRB was in regular correspondence with the 8th Infantry Brigade HQ over a compensation claim by a farmer for a pig, allegedly killed by the LRB. Brigade HQ asked whether any LRB soldier could give ‘an expert opinion’ on the deceased beast’s health and condition to help calculate the claim.¹⁵⁷ Finally, Low commanding the London Scottish in August 1918, told a staff officer to ‘go to hell’ for ordering the battalion to retrace its steps on a route march to pick up tools which he thought they should have been informed about before they started.¹⁵⁸ Battalion officers’ disgruntlement with the staff could lead them to commit acts of minor sabotage; the LRB’s transport officer in September 1918 was ordered to provide horses for the staff runners to use but gave them ‘second rate’ ones after saying ‘nasty things’ about the staff.¹⁵⁹

Staff ‘policy’ was also blamed for the strikes in the LRB during 1917. Groom said that the strike in April where LRB men worked for a French farmer during their rest was Army Staff

¹⁵³ B. Houle cited in Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, pp.127-128. Groom, *Poor*, p.25.

¹⁵⁴ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.70-71.

¹⁵⁵ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, p.274.

¹⁵⁶ Letter, 14/12/1914, H. Flemming, NAM, 1999-01-141.

¹⁵⁷ Maude, *History*, pp.119-123.

¹⁵⁸ ‘The Last Battle of the War’, Book 3, Low, IWM.

¹⁵⁹ Smith, *Four*, p.362.

policy for the 'utilisation of troops for farm work'. Though not explicit, Groom also implies that the LRB 'mutiny' in November was also the staff's fault as 'someone was very much to blame for our treatment'.¹⁶⁰

Probably the greatest single issue which eroded organisational cohesion with 'staff' was their perceived role in battle failures. Catastrophes and heavy losses were, rightly or wrongly, widely blamed on the 'staff'. For example, the failure of the 56th Division to take Lesbœufs in October 1916 was blamed on 'extraordinarily bad staff-work somewhere in the higher realms'.¹⁶¹ Similar failures during the 'saga of the posts' (see Chapter 2), where battalions of 169 Brigade were ordered to occupy outposts in the German front line in February 1917, were leveled at the staff. Battalions 'were not very clear' what the 'higher authorities' sought to achieve in holding the posts which they thought was 'folly' that failed to achieve 'a useful purpose'.¹⁶² Many frontline soldiers involved believed they were treated as 'expendable units' and could 'anyone wonder at the changed attitude [of soldiers]...when faced with so much indifference to casualties and hardships?'¹⁶³

However, the operation for which the staff received the greatest castigation was the 56th Division's unsuccessful attack of 16 August 1917 during Third Ypres. The staff were criticised by many regiments involved and blamed them for it being 'badly handled', having 'inherent weakness' and the LRB believed those responsible should have been sacked.¹⁶⁴ This perception was discussed by the men in their small groups and units. Groom said 'never before had any battle affected our nerves so badly'.¹⁶⁵ Smith recalled that men were 'stupefied by the losses', adding, there was 'disgust with British tactics' and a feeling by the 'rank and file' that the operation was 'not worth the sacrifice involved'. It appears that the discussion was widespread and groups and units were beginning to express their discontent. Smith made a cryptic comment that the discontent was making 'itself felt' in the unit.¹⁶⁶ It appears that rumblings were picked up and conveyed to CO Wallis by orderly Sergeant Munday. As set out in Chapter 6, Wallis publicly agreed with his soldiers' negative views of the architects of the attack, namely General Gough and his staff.¹⁶⁷ It is not known if there were any other

¹⁶⁰ Groom, *Poor*, pp.103-104,

¹⁶¹ Smith, *Four*, p.187.

¹⁶² Henriques, *Westminster*, p.137. Grey, *2nd London*, p.157. Keeson, *Victoria's Vol.2*, p.214. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.152.

¹⁶³ Groom, *Poor*, p.82.

¹⁶⁴ Maude, *History*, p.205. Grimwade, *4th*, p.305. Grey, *2nd*, p.232.

¹⁶⁵ Groom, *Poor*, p.128.

¹⁶⁶ Smith, *Four*, pp.273-274.

¹⁶⁷ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.170.

factors which contributed to this incident but it indicates that discontent, with the 'staff', had reached such a level that it had become a source of vertical cohesion between regimental leaders and their subordinates.

Organisational cohesion between regimental soldiers and the higher military hierarchy above the battalion level or the 'staff' was largely negative throughout the war. Combatants felt little affinity with these organisational levels, its representatives and leaders as they were regarded as distant, remote and of little importance to their daily lives. Soldiers often focused their displeasure on the 'staff' who were blamed, rightly or wrongly, as being responsible for military disasters for which frontline soldiers paid the price. The regimental dislike of senior commanders and the 'staff' appears to have had a unifying effect on building horizontal and vertical cohesion within the units. In some units, discontent with the 'staff' brought men to the brink of collective action which was only halted through proactive action by battalion officers.

C. Cohesion with the army as an 'institution'

This last section will examine soldiers' organisational cohesion with the army as an 'institution' in Edwardian society. Commentators have suggested where an organisation has reputation and influence based on its role within the wider civil society, this can be an important source of organisational cohesion as men have affinity and identity with the army's purpose, values and ethos. For example, the Israel Defence Forces have high status, reputation and respect among much of the population it serves. It is regularly rated in opinion surveys as the most trusted 'institution' in Israel and as a result it commands high levels of loyalty and commitment from the population at large.¹⁶⁸ However, trust based on the organisation's role, influence and profile in its society is dependent on the national context such as a country's civil-military relations.¹⁶⁹

i) Relationship with the 'regular' army

The available evidence suggests that organisational cohesion between London Territorials and the army, based on its role as an institution, is complex. For the vast majority of men in the units under study, the army as an institution appears to command little affection or status, and for many, their experience of active service alienated them from the army's institutional values and ethos. On the other hand, a large number of men, mainly volunteers who enlisted

¹⁶⁸ 'Israelis trust the IDF and doubt political parties, poll finds', Israel Hayom 6/9/2012, http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_article.php?id=5703. Accessed 19/5/2015.

¹⁶⁹ Salo, Phd, p.37.

in the first two years of the war, had very strong organisational cohesion with their status as part of the TF. This bond had a positive influence on the behaviour of many soldiers who actively sought to protect and enhance the reputation of the TF, with many perceiving their role and identity as territorials as unique and different from the wider army of which they were administratively part. This section will firstly examine the cohesion between soldiers and the army as an institution and then look at how soldiers related to the TF.

In many ways, it is not surprising that there is an apparent lack of organisation cohesion with the army as an institution. Siebold suggests that institutional bonding occurred before civilians entered the military and the relationship between the majority of the British public and the army was weak and contradictory.¹⁷⁰ Unlike continental European countries, Britain did not have conscription. Consequently, male participation in the army and military experience was very low, even if those who were in the auxiliary forces were included.¹⁷¹ Much of Edwardian society embraced militaristic values of discipline, obedience and patriotism in education and para-military youth movements like the Scouts.¹⁷² However, very few middle or working class families wanted their sons to be career soldiers as it attracted the “‘wasters” of the civil population””.¹⁷³ Although people largely supported the regular army as ‘the finest in the world’ and celebrated its imperial triumphs, they wanted little contact with the average soldier.¹⁷⁴ Kipling’s late 19th Century poem *Tommy* illustrates society’s different attitude towards soldiers in peace and war; ‘I went into a theatre as sober as could be/They give a drunk civilian room, but hadn’t non for me.../But when it comes to fightin’, Lord!/They’ll shove me in the stalls’ [sic].¹⁷⁵ As a result ‘the army was not popular’ and, importantly, ‘no nice girls would be ever seen with’ soldiers.¹⁷⁶ Bryan Latham recalls in 1914 a ‘well known member of a famous London Club’ took his son in uniform to lunch and was refused service.¹⁷⁷

For many, the TF was not held in any higher regard. Although the public had more frequent contact with the Territorials than the regulars due to their community presence and they

¹⁷⁰ Siebold, ‘Essence...’, p.288.

¹⁷¹ I.W. Beckett, *The Amateur Military Tradition 1588-1945* (Manchester, 1991), p.200.

¹⁷² Beckett, *Amateur*, pp.197-203. P. Wilkinson, ‘English Youth Movements, 1908-30’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 4:2 (4/1969). S. Pryke, ‘The popularity of nationalism in the early British Boy Scout movement’, *Social History* 23:3 (1998), p.310.

¹⁷³ T. Bowman & M. Connelly, *The Edwardian Army* (Oxford, 2012), p.47. M. Arthur, *Lost Voices of the Edwardians* (London, 2007), p.391. J. Bourne, ‘The British Working...’, p.340.

¹⁷⁴ *Daily Express*, 16/10/1913.

¹⁷⁵ *Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (New York, 1899), pp.5-6.

¹⁷⁶ Arthur, *Lost*, p.391.

¹⁷⁷ B. Latham, *A Territorial Soldier’s War* (London, 1967), p.7.

frequently cheered them in public as they marched past, they were often still the object of public ridicule¹⁷⁸ and lambasted in music halls as ‘England’s Last Hope’ [sic].¹⁷⁹ They were seen as a ‘sham’, being no match for any potential European invader as they were badly equipped and trained; many believed conscription was required to ensure adequate home defence against invasion.¹⁸⁰ The TF consistently failed to recruit to its full establishment partly due to public attitudes.¹⁸¹

Despite these public perceptions, many thousands of men joined the ranks on the outbreak of war but, as John Fuller suggests, they may have done so with a relatively low opinion of the army.¹⁸² Once in the army, men largely ‘accepted the fetters of army discipline’ but as argued in Chapters 3 and 4 many men retained their civilian perspectives, values and attitudes and challenged army ways and their leaders.¹⁸³

Once in uniform, many men were distinctly turned off by what they saw of the army as an institution. Many came to view it as an impersonal faceless bureaucracy which was governed by a strange, perverse and vindictive kind of logic. Smith recalled that ‘blankets were collected each May and redistributed each October became an annual pastime...red tape ordained their removal according to the calendar, not to fluctuations of temperature’.¹⁸⁴ For instance, Dolden became ill through gas but remained at duty. Afterwards, on showing symptoms, he found that he could not go and see the MO because ‘instead of appreciating one’s efforts to carry on [he]...would have received a very severe ‘telling off’ for not having reported sick in the first instance.’ He concluded that the ‘army may have been a wonderful machine, but...lacked common sense or sympathy.’¹⁸⁵ A.D. Gristwood in the LRB complained that he hated the ‘stifling of initiative and responsibility, the change from a name to a number, the...sinking to the level of a reliable machine.’¹⁸⁶ Many men on leaving the army were sick of it and wanted to return to being a civilian; Fred Smith, who had served in

¹⁷⁸ F.W. Walker, ‘The Romantic Rise of a Territorial Force’, in *Cassell’s Magazine*, Vol. XLVII, 1/5/1909.

¹⁷⁹ H. Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force* (London, 1975), p.68. *Daily Mirror*, 11/2/1909, 15/2/1911 and 18/5/1909. *Hansard, Deb* 6/8/1913 vol 56 cc1462-3. <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1913/aug/06/territorial-force>, Accessed 30/3/2012.

¹⁸⁰ *Daily Express*, 4/4/1911, 8/7/1909, 24/4/1910, 30/10/1911, 14/12/1911, 18/12/1911, 10/2/1913,

¹⁸¹ P. Simkins, *Kitchener’s Army – The Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Barnsley, 2007), p.17.

¹⁸² Fuller, *Troop Morale*, p.33.

¹⁸³ Holmes, IWM.

¹⁸⁴ Smith, *Four*, p.132.

¹⁸⁵ Dolden, *Cannon*, p.161.

¹⁸⁶ Gristwood, *Somme*, p.149.

the Kensingtons, was offered a job after the war in the Royal Canadian Police, but he said 'No, no more uniforms'.¹⁸⁷

Men had little affinity with the army as an institution and some were directly put off by their experience in uniform but there was little they could do once they had enlisted. The only avenue for many was to resort to minor acts of anonymous protest such as Private Snipe of the Kensingtons who smashed the windows of his barrack hut on leaving his Hampshire camp as his way of getting 'even' with the 'army' as they had deducted 'mythical barrack damages' from his pay.¹⁸⁸ For most, however, they simply endured their time in uniform to avoid the risk of serious disciplinary consequences.

ii) Relationship with the Territorial Force

Many men had a strong affinity with the TF as it represented an institution where the citizen became a dutiful soldier and freely enlisted to defend his community against external threat. Post war unit accounts emphasize this narrative in describing their histories as the story of the 'Citizen Army' [sic] defending the 'Motherland.'¹⁸⁹ Many also accentuate their provenance as volunteer bodies formed in the British tradition of the armed amateur by civic-minded patriotic civilians back as far as Napoleonic times.¹⁹⁰ Many individual soldiers took pride in this identity; for example, in the QVR, Rifleman Borrow refused to be called a 'soldier' and preferred the term 'armed citizen'.¹⁹¹

Territorials also had other major characteristics which made them different from the regular army and with which men identified. They were drawn from higher social classes than the majority of pre-war regulars, their system of discipline was comparatively more relaxed and co-operative, fostering a 'family' atmosphere rather than one of strict discipline. Many believed that volunteer soldiers made better combatants than pressed men or paid mercenaries 'as if you let the British workman undertake a duty of his own free will...no one will be at greater pains to execute it thoroughly'.¹⁹² These all helped draw men together to cohere with the values, ethos and purpose of the TF.

¹⁸⁷ F. Smith, 'I'll always remember' (Private memoir), p.32.

¹⁸⁸ Steward, *Platoon*, p.31.

¹⁸⁹ Maude, *History*, p.xvi. Grimwade, 4th, p.1.

¹⁹⁰ See Keelson, *Victoria's Vol.2*, pp.461-575.

¹⁹¹ Account, p.19. S.W. Appleyard, IWM, 82/1/1.

¹⁹² I. Hamilton, *Compulsory Service* (London, 1910), p.89.

Many professional soldiers regarded territorials as bungling amateurs and militarily inefficient. Rifleman Austin, serving in the QVR, explained that ‘having T on the shoulder’ indicated that he ‘was lowest form of life’ compared with regulars.¹⁹³ The LRB battalion history noted how regular adjutants regarded them as ‘a smart lot of cranks’.¹⁹⁴ This disdain by professional soldiers appeared to have a positive motivational effect stimulating their organisational cohesion with the values and ethos of the TF but also demonstrating their equality in martial prowess to their regular colleagues.

Men in the TF demonstrated their cohesion by taking considerable pride in achievements of their TF units, especially where this compared their skills and ability relative to the regulars. For example, Hawkings in his diary noted the ‘distinction’ for the QVR being first Territorial unit to win a VC in April 1915.¹⁹⁵ One Rangers’ NCO recalled, during action at Ypres in May 1915, that the battalion’s performance ‘maintained their good name...and has...a record second to none in the TF and well able to hold its own with regulars’.¹⁹⁶

This pride influenced behaviour. In 1915, soldiers in the QVR recalled that to be ‘one of a working party...as a privilege rather than a duty ...this was the foundation of the Territorial spirit’.¹⁹⁷ Collective pride could also shape group behaviour, especially in the presence of regular soldiers. For example, while part of the Malta garrison, the 1/4 Londons was ‘subject to the critical—and...not always sympathetic —surveillance of the regular staff...[and that] provided the strongest possible incentive to all ranks to conduct themselves with credit to their Regiment and to the Territorial Force’ [sic]. Later, as part of the Ferozepore Brigade in Lahore Division, once they had ‘proved’ themselves in doing their equal share of work, this achievement ‘was in itself the best possible incentive to all ranks to uphold worthily the honour of their regiment’ [sic].¹⁹⁸

However, not all men were motivated by their status as territorials. Rifleman Appleyard of the QVR wrote in his diary how his divisional general in late 1915, when his unit, was attached to the regular 5th Division, visited their ‘trenches and was disgusted with their

¹⁹³ F. Austin, Reel-1, IWMSA, 33293.

¹⁹⁴ Maude, *History*, p.52.

¹⁹⁵ Hawkings, *From*, p.61.

¹⁹⁶ P. Hurd, *Fighting Territorials*, Vol. 1 (London, 1915), p.75.

¹⁹⁷ J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the 1st Battalion Queen’s Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), p.36.

¹⁹⁸ Grimwade, 4th, pp.10-11, 39.

condition. He said the Battalion was very slack and only fit for lines of communication, and we all hope he will be as good as his word [as]...we are fed up with the trenches' [sic].¹⁹⁹

It appears that organisational cohesion with the institution of the TF did not last beyond the end of 1915. After this date, no references are found of men taking pride in being Territorials or soldiers acting to protect or enhance their reputation as territorials. This may be due to the units being drawn together as part of the all TF 56th Division and this possibly negated the need to defend the TF's honour. A more likely explanation is that most men felt they had little to prove to their regular colleagues and believed their fighting record throughout 1915 clearly demonstrated that 'London Territorials...[were] equals of the...Regular Army and what higher praise than that could any troops desire?' [sic].²⁰⁰

D. Conclusions

The battalion was the locus of organisational cohesion. Men's motivation to bond with their battalion was largely based on emotional factors but was multifaceted and changed over the course of the war. Many men, who volunteered in the first half of the war, bonded strongly with pre-war unit customs and traditions and, as a result gained strong tribal belonging and identity. Others, especially conscripts who arrived from 1916 onwards and had no prior connection with the unit, developed a strong attachment based on their primary group relationships and simply serving in the unit through combat. After the Somme, military leaders actively sought to encourage bonding between new arrivals and the battalion through organised sports events, competitive training and other initiatives such as battalion journals. Organisational cohesion appears to have been important throughout the war and the trust and loyalty which many men had for their battalion led them to put additional effort into their work actively to protect and enhance the reputation of their battalion.

Cohesion between men and the higher organisation levels above battalion was largely negative. Within the available sources, there has been no record of any soldier articulating a relationship with the administrative levels above his battalion, for example brigade or division, suggesting that many regarded them as remote and of no importance to them. It appears that formal and informal interactions with representatives and leaders of higher

¹⁹⁹ Account, p.43. S.W. Appleyard, IWM 82/1/1.

²⁰⁰ Hurd, *Territorials Vol.1*, p.8. Wheeler-Holohan, *Rangers*, p.264. A.G. Empey, *From the Fire Step* (London, 1917), p.253.

formations, though rare, were instrumental in turning many soldiers against these levels as men reported these leaders as being insensitive or remote. Those regarded by soldiers as the 'staff' were intensely disliked, being perceived as ignorant, out of touch and incompetent. Men blamed them for poorly planned and bungled operations for which they experienced the unpleasant consequences.

It appears that negative organisational cohesion, at these levels, was a powerful source of primary group cohesion, especially in the second half of the war. Mutual dislike of senior leaders and the 'staff' certainly bonded peer to peer and peer to leader. Animosity to the staff was a contributing factor for soldiers undertaking strikes in 1917 and a direct factor for high levels of discontent in the LRB in August 1917. In the latter situation, 'staff' officers were blamed directly for the heavy casualties suffered by the units and the anger appears to have motivated groups to the point of protest or mutiny.

The final area for consideration is whether men had organisational cohesion with the army based on its position, status and role in society. It appears that no men cohered with the army based on this relationship. Few men had military experience and the army did not have a high status or profile with many elements of Edwardian society. For many men, the experience of active service did little to build empathy with the organisation. Most felt it was a bureaucratic machine whose rules they tolerated, as a necessity of service, at a time of national emergency. While some men rejected the army as an institution, many others bonded closely with their status as territorials. These soldiers took pride in volunteering for service and many regarded themselves as patriotic citizen soldiers. Contempt by the regular army for the TF's martial prowess motivated these men to show that they were equal to the regular army and they revelled in the opportunity to show pride in their unit's achievements and sought to protect their unit's honour whenever they could.

Chapter 8 – Societal cohesion

Social scientists have defined societal cohesion as the relationship between a soldier and the society or culture from which they originates.¹ It is a concept that has attracted little research from sociologists and psychologists compared with other areas of cohesion, such as horizontal, vertical and organisational cohesion. Societal cohesion is not part of the Standard Model of Cohesion and, as a result, there has been no conceptualisation of the relationship between soldier and society. This is strange as commentators have shown that where soldiers have a strong affiliation with their nation, this could be a powerful motivator in combat.² On the other hand, historians, especially Great War scholars, have devoted considerable attention to the relationship between the front line and home front.

They have articulated two types of relationships that soldiers have with their society. The first is with their family and social networks which were physically located in their home city, area or district in which they lived, worked and loved as civilians before they entered military service. The second is with the broader community of which they were citizens, residents or subjects. Defining the broader community can be subjective but it could include ideas of the state, nation, country or geographical entity and those giving affinity to a broader community, however defined, may regard themselves as patriots or nationalists.

For many years the ideas of historians like Eric Leed and Paul Fussell dominated the debate around how the First World War soldier related to his society. They suggested the relationship between soldiers and their civilian communities was characterised by schism and misunderstanding.³ Put simply, they argued that soldiers volunteering in 1914/5 joined up with high ideals of patriotism which were destroyed by the horror of industrial warfare and led to soldiers retreating into a self-isolating ‘trench culture’ and actively rejecting nationalistic ideas.⁴ Soldiers’ self-imposed segregation was further reinforced because civilians, including their friends and families at home, were subjected to censorship and jingoistic propaganda and, as a result, had romantic ideas of battle which was completely at odds with the combatants’ frontline experience.

¹ *The US Army Concept for the Human Dimension in Full Spectrum Operations 2015-2024* (US Army, 6/2008), p.17. N. Kinzer Stewart, *Mates and Muchachos* (New York, 1991), p.27.

² See W.D. Henderson, *Cohesion: the Human Element in Combat* (Washington, 1986), pp.81-95.

³ P. Fussell, *Modern Memory and the Great War* (London, 1975). E. Leed, *No Mans’ Land* (Cambridge, 1983), p.193.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Over the last quarter of a century, revisionist historians have challenged these dual ideas of isolation between soldiers and their families and that patriotic motivation ceased to be important to the morale of soldiers once in the trenches.⁵ For example, Helen McCartney in her studies of Liverpool and Lancashire soldiers concludes that men were not only motivated by notions of King, empire and country, but also drew stimulus from their affinity with civic pride and identification with their local towns and areas which helped sustain their morale and endurance for much of the war.⁶ Historians note that many combatants became cynical as the war progressed; however, their disillusionment did not alter their resolve to defeat Germany.⁷

Many of these same revisionist historians have also presented compelling evidence that no schism existed between combatants and their home-based families and communities and, if anything, it was the reverse. Recent studies suggest that there was significant interaction, through leave and the frequent exchange of letters and parcels, between soldiers and civilians which sustain close relationships between them and enabled significant awareness among home populations about frontline conditions.⁸ This helped to support soldiers' emotional survival in the trenches and sustained their morale.⁹ Several historians have suggested that protecting family and home life was a primary motivator for soldiers to keep fighting despite some expressing disenchantment with the war.¹⁰ Building and sustaining the links between family and frontline was a major function of government propaganda. David Monger has shown how the National War Aims Committee produced bi-monthly magazine *Welcome* for soldiers on leave in London to promote notions of home, community and domesticity and to persuade fighting troops that they had a stake in winning the war.¹¹

Based on this historiography, this chapter proposes a definition of societal cohesion which will form the framework for further analysis. Societal cohesion is defined as a positive secondary group relationship between soldiers and the society from which they originate; soldiers exchange their service and loyalty to the cause of the society to whose military forces

⁵ C. Pennell, *A Kingdom United* (Oxford, 2012), pp.64-65. J.G. Fuller, *Troop Morale and Popular Culture in the British and Dominion Armies 1914-1918* (Oxford, 1990), p.36.

⁶ H.B. McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers* (Cambridge, 2005) and 'North-West infantry battalions and local patriotism in the First World War in *Manchester Regional History Review*, Vol.24: *The Great War and the North West*, 2014.

⁷ A. Watson, *Enduring the Great War* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.77-79.

⁸ D. Englander, 'Soldiering and Identity: Reflections on the Great War', *War in History* 3:1 (1994), p.316.

⁹ M. Roper, *The Secret Battle* (Manchester, 2009), pp.71-72. McCartney, *Citizen*, p.117.

¹⁰ Watson, *Enduring*, pp.66-67, 72-84.

¹¹ D. Monger, 'Soldiers, propaganda, and ideas of home and community in First World War Britain', *Cultural and Social History*, 8:3 (2011), pp.345-346.

they belong for perceived subjective benefits such as duty or personal satisfaction which results in them actively fighting on behalf of that society. It will examine two types of relationships that soldiers in the units under study had with their society or broader community.

The first relationship is between soldiers and their ‘imagined’ community (as described by Benedict Anderson) which could be a country, town, people or geographical region.¹² The community is ‘imagined’ as it is a secondary group relationship with an abstract idea or notion; it is distinct from a primary group relationship with an actual community because it is not (and, for practical reasons, cannot be) based on everyday face-to-face interaction among its members. Also, the definition of ‘community’ can be highly subjective; McCartney showed that many North West soldiers had patriotic affinity with their local area as well as the nation at large.¹³ These notions of community may be individually or collectively held and shaped by education, community held definitions and cultural ideas expressed in literature, political discourse and the media. Societal cohesion in this type of relationship exists where people give loyalty and commitment based on their perception of trustworthiness of their ‘community’ and the value of their relationship to it. In exchange for their constancy, soldiers receive benefits as they perceive them, which may be task related such as citizenship and collective protection from external threats (the Germans), but also social related benefits such as pride of membership, a sense of belonging and attachment to that community.

The second relationship is between the soldiers and their ‘communities of experience’; in other words, the family and wider social circles developed through domestic life, leisure interests and employment which soldiers had as civilians before they entered military service. In this relationship of societal cohesion, associations are mainly primary group ones and, depending on the configuration of a soldier’s personal groups, they may have a mixture of vertical and horizontal relationships. Vertical elements could be characterised by those to whom they cede authority and leadership, such as parents and community leaders. Horizontal elements comprise relationships with equals such as siblings, work colleagues and friends. These relationships could have task and social elements but most relationships that men maintained with family and friends during war were overwhelmingly social based on a

¹² B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1991).

¹³ D. Sibley, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (London, 2005), p.13. J.S.K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars* (Cambridge, 2004), pp.8-10. McCartney, ‘North-West...’.

mutual exchange of affection, emotional commitment, social support, closeness and friendship.

This chapter will address each element in turn. It will start by examining soldiers' relationships with their 'imagined' community and whether ideas of patriotism and nationalism were important motivators for London Territorials enlisting in the army and also their service in the trenches. The chapter will then consider men's relationships with their 'communities of experience' and whether their relationships with home served to motivate them, as revisionist historians suggest.

A. 'Imagined communities'

The role and impact of an individual's relationship and affinity with imagined communities in building societal cohesion have been associated with two distinct episodes of the Great War; that of enlisting in the armed services in the first half of the war and, secondly, the role which such allegiances played in combatant morale and endurance while on active service. Each will be examined in sequence.

i) Joining up

It has been assumed in folk memory and, by some historians, that the outbreak of war was marked by a mad 'rush to the colours' by young men motivated by a naïve 'love of country' which was supported by enthusiastic crowds welcoming war.¹⁴ This general interpretation has been challenged by other historians, notably Catriona Pennell and Adrian Gregory, who suggest that men joined for more complex reasons than simply innocent affections for King and country.¹⁵

Certainly some men enlisted for the simple term 'patriotic reasons' and it can only be guessed as to what this meant.¹⁶ Others had more 'jingoistic' motivation for joining, for example, desperately wanting to put the "Bosch" to flight' [sic].¹⁷ However, many more framed their motivation to enlist in terms of protecting a distinct community. Some defined this as a geographical entity; for example, one soldier believed that 'our England is a garden, and such

¹⁴ A. Gregory, *The Last Great War* (Cambridge, 2008) p.9. A. Marwick, *The Deluge* (London, 1965), p.309. N. Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (London, 1998), p.201.

¹⁵ Pennell, *Kingdom*, pp.156-157. Gregory, *Last*, pp.9-39.

¹⁶ H.W.G. Gower, IWMSA, 10966. P. Horrigan, Reels-2&3, IWMSA, Mabbott, Henry et al 860.

¹⁷ Account [no page numbers], T.H. Holmes, IWM, 06/30/1.

gardens are not made by...sitting in the shade, while better men than we got out to fight'.¹⁸ Others located their community in a range of levels from familial primary groups to 'country'. Private John Tucker, for example, wanted to fight 'beside those who were sacrificing life and limb to protect our homes, families and country from the enemy.'¹⁹ Padre Tiplady, chaplain in the QWR, recorded that one soldier told him that he 'enlisted because I read of what the Germans had done in Belgium, and I thought of [mother]...and my sister.'²⁰ Much of this language suggests that many men saw their relationship with their imagined community in clear terms of duty and obligation such as Conrad Wood, who joined the 1/4 Londons because he 'ought to do something about [the war]'.²¹

However, men had other motives for enlisting. Some wanted 'glamour...[and saw] battle...[as] something rather gallant' and Tucker wanted an 'outdoor existence' as he found his office work 'repugnant'.²² Many wanted to join up as quickly as possible as it was believed by many that the war would be 'over by Christmas'.²³ Peer pressure and social networks were other important drivers for men joining. T.H. Holmes said 'it became the thing to be in uniform'.²⁴ Others realised that joining up was necessary to secure their future careers. Middlesex Cricketer Harry Lee was warned that he would 'not get much of a show around Lords' if he did not join up.²⁵ Peer group pressure and cohesion also played a part with large numbers of work colleagues joining together.²⁶

Enlistment motivation among those volunteering in 1915/6 appears to have a similar mix of stimuli to those enlisting in 1914. For example, A.V. Pohill joined the LRB in 1916 out of 'duty' but also because Germany had started the war and threatened 'British maritime security'.²⁷ Many men who joined up from 1915 commented how their motives were 'fanned by the propaganda machine'.²⁸ Recruitment posters created a 'persuasive atmosphere'²⁹ with Groom recalling how a recruiting sergeant told him of an 'eye witness account' of German infanticide. This was, he recalled later, 'war hysteria' but at the time said he 'wanted to

¹⁸ J. Steward, *Platoon* (London, 2012), p.175.

¹⁹ J.F. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.12

²⁰ T. Tiplady, *The Cross at the Front* (London, 1917), p.58.

²¹ C. Wood, Reel-2, IWMSA, 11265.

²² H.B. Coates, Reel-1, IWMSA, 9833. Tucker, *Johnny*, p.12

²³ Account, p.7, G.E.V. Thompson, IWM, 75/36/1.

²⁴ Holmes, IWM.

²⁵ H.W. Lee, *Forty Years of English Cricket* (London, 1948), p.42.

²⁶ *The Kensington*, August 1974.

²⁷ K.W. Mitchinson, *Gentlemen and Officers* (London, 1995), p.149.

²⁸ Holmes, IWM.

²⁹ H.W.G. Gower, Reel-1, IWMSA, 10966.

believe it'.³⁰ Men also joined up for reasons unconnected with national sentiment. For instance, C.F. Miller joined up under the Derby scheme because he did not want to be 'labelled a conscript'³¹ and Val Kerridge joined the London Scottish to be with a 'crack' unit.³² Also, peer pressure still continued to be important with friends often joining together such as Polhill and his friend Bert Acomb who joined together at Mill Hill School.³³

It is clear that men's affinity with, and allegiance to, their imagined community, whether that was England, Britain or simply 'home', was a powerful personal motivator for many men to enlist in the first two years of the war.³⁴ However, as other historians have noted, enlistment motivation was also influenced by other considerations, often held in parallel with the desire to serve their imagined community, such as escaping domestic life, adventure and peer pressure.³⁵

ii) Serving in the trenches

Whether men retained an affinity with their imagined communities once in the trenches has been, as David Monger has pointed out, an area little touched by historians.³⁶ Some veteran accounts suggest men's initial association with notions like patriotism faded quickly once they entered the trenches.³⁷ However, current research, such as McCartney's studies, challenges this interpretation and, instead, indicates that many men retained empathy with their imagined communities and this motivated many to fight. The evidence collected for this study supports these conclusions.³⁸

The nature of this affinity appears to have been to a degree personal, individual and quietly held, and is reflected in the way that men described the imagined communities they were serving. Many made broad assertions that in the trenches they had 'patriotism' or, like W.G. Holmes and comrades serving in the Rangers, were simply 'fond of [their] country'.³⁹ Others defined their community simply as 'home'. Henry Russell in the LRB wrote to his mother

³⁰ W.H.A. Groom, *Poor Bloody Infantry* (London, 1976), p.32.

³¹ C.F. Miller, Reel-1, IWMSA, 11043.

³² V.S. Kerridge, Reel-1, IWMSA, 18836.

³³ Mitchinson, *Gentlemen*, p.149.

³⁴ See McCartney, 'North-West...'

³⁵ Sibley, *British*.

³⁶ D. Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain* (Liverpool, 2012), pp.4-5.

³⁷ R. Graves, *Goodbye to All That* (London, 1960), p.157. G. Coppard, *With a Machine Gun to Cambrai* (London, 1980), p.109.

³⁸ See McCartney, 'North-West...'

³⁹ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.36. W.G. Holmes, Reel-4, IWMSA, 8868.

that he 'shall fight hard for home and shall make any sacrifice for it.'⁴⁰ In 1918, Padre Leighton Green of the 1/4 Londons believed that he and his men were 'fighting for our homes, for liberty and righteousness...In such a cause we should all be willing to fight and to suffer, and if need be to die' [sic].⁴¹

Men who came from middle class backgrounds, especially officers and rankers in class corps units, often articulated their imagined community and their relationship to it differently from those from lower social groups.⁴² Padre Bickersteth, the Rangers' chaplain, complained that working classes were not patriotic like the 'better classes' being 'inclined to think of their own pockets and their probable losses...The Empire doesn't mean much to them beyond some kind of far-away abstract idea.'⁴³ In comparison, many middle class men articulated their imagined community very much based on the ideals and principles of the community they were serving. Captain Studd, also in the Rangers, wrote in May 1915 believed that England's war was 'righteous...since it is waged on behalf of the weak and on account of a promise solemnly pledged'.⁴⁴ QWR second-in-command, Major Henriques, said in September 1917 that he was struggling for 'the greatness of Britain and the ideals she was fighting for'.⁴⁵ Many saw their relationship with their imagined community in sacrificial terms, being prepared to give themselves for their community and its cause.⁴⁶ For example, Second Lieutenant Engall, also in the QWR, stated he was willing to die for the '...cause of civilization...for God, King and Country' [sic].⁴⁷ Much of this language was particular to the moral universe of the public and grammar school educated middle classes which, through education and ethos, overtly promoted notions of service, principle, sacrifice and honour.⁴⁸

The community that men were willing to fight and die for was commonly defined as 'home' or a national or political entity such as 'the country', Britain or England; none articulated their 'community' as the area from which they originated, in this case, London or its suburbs. Londoners may have had a strong sense of place but no man mentions fighting for his local

⁴⁰ Cited in M. Brown, *The Western Front* (London, 1999), pp.132-133.

⁴¹ S.J. McLaren (ed), *Somewhere in Flanders, The War Letters of the Revd Samuel Frederic Leighton Green* (Dereham, 2005), p.92.

⁴² See A. Loez, *Between Acceptance and Refusal - Soldiers' Attitudes Towards War*, in: 1914-1918-online, http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/between_acceptance_and_refusal_-_soldiers_attitudes_towards_war Accessed 23/4/2016.

⁴³ J. Bickersteth, *Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918* (Barnsley, 1995), p.14.

⁴⁴ *Polytechnic Magazine*, 5/1915, p.108.

⁴⁵ Diary, 10/9/1917, J.Q. Henriques, NAM, 8901-105.

⁴⁶ See A. Watson & P. Porter, 'Combat Motivation and the Ideology of Sacrifice in the First World War', *Historical Research* 83:219 (2/2010).

⁴⁷ J.S. Engall, *A Subaltern's Letters* (London, 1917), p.120.

⁴⁸ Watson, 'Combat...', p.148.

area or links his motivation for enduring to the capital, its boroughs or its symbols.⁴⁹ This is despite the fact that the majority of wartime volunteers and recruits to the units under study came from the Greater London area (see Chapter 2). The extent of the association with London is the 56th Division's official name and the adoption of Wat Tyler's dagger as its divisional badge and the occasional naming of battlefield features after London suburbs.⁵⁰ In March 1918, a comment was made suggesting it was a 'farce' that the 56th Division retained its 'London' name given the regional heterogeneity of the men who made up its ranks.⁵¹

However, it would be wrong to assume that Londoners had no pride in their city. Men returning on leave were glad to be in 'dear old London' and Philip Gibbs thought men's association with the 'spirit' and memories of 'the Old City' helped them 'suffer' during the war.⁵² While they may have had fealty to London or its boroughs, they did not express it as a conscious notion of community or an expression of regional identity and there are three possible explanations for this. The first is geographical; London may just have been too big for people to consider it in terms of a region or city. In 1914, it was the biggest city in the world with a population of 7m. It may have been possible to have an affinity with a borough but no unit under study, even before the war, drew its men from a specific area and this lack of shared geographic origin among its pre-war and war time populations (see Chapter 2) meant that a focus for an association with place was weak. The second explanation is related to Londoners' perception of their city and how they described it. *The Dagger*, the 56th Division's journal, explained that the average Londoner had a 'self-satisfaction and proud complacency' about his city which he regards with 'detachment, if not with indifference' because it was the 'greatest ...in the world...the centre of modern civilisation'. As a result, its residents were not 'ferociously jealous of [its]...privileges...as the citizens of Manchester, Birmingham or Glasgow'.⁵³ A final explanation could be that many Londoners conflated community notions of England, Britain and Empire with that of London as it was the cultural, political and administrative centre of all three. For example, this identification was demonstrated on advertising on the side of London General Omnibus Company vehicles,

⁴⁹ J. Winter, 'Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919: Capital Cities at war' in J. Winter & J-L. Robert (ed), *Capital Cities at War* (London, 1997), p.7.

⁵⁰ W.E. Grey, *2nd City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929), p.157.

⁵¹ A. Smith, *Four Years on the Western Front* (London, 1922), p.332.

⁵² Tiplady, Cross, p.53. P. Gibbs, *Realities of War* (London, 1920), p.64.

⁵³ *The Dagger*, No.1 (11/1918), p.24.

which proclaimed that ‘just as the flag links the empire’s commerce...[it]... link[s] up the world’s greatest city’.⁵⁴

The absence of any identification between Londoners, their city, region or suburb and their ‘imagined community’ is significant. Many towns and areas in Edwardian Britain had strong regional identities, dialects and traditions which were promoted and celebrated as the UK was administratively and culturally decentralised with considerable power situated in municipal local authorities.⁵⁵ Men serving in units linked to their local areas frequently retained a strong tie with the home area.⁵⁶ McCartney’s study of men from the North West demonstrated a strong collective empathy between their unit and their native community. Many men defined their imagined community as their local city, town or county; they joined to defend ‘their’ Manchester or Liverpool and this link continued to motivate individuals and groups throughout the war.⁵⁷ She also showed that regional identity and pride existed in, and was promoted by, individual units. In her study of Liverpool Territorial battalions that served in the 55th (West Lancashire) Division, she explained how the division maintained ‘common ties at home and strong county pride’ and this helped to motivate men. For instance, the divisional symbol, the Red Rose of Lancashire, was used (but not all the time) to build a strong sense of pride among its men by stencilling it to transport carts.⁵⁸ It is difficult to know if the findings in this study are representative of other units drawn from London. The divisional history of the 47th (London) Division reports that it had a ‘civic patriotism’ and remained committed to London throughout the war but the experience of the London units examined in this study is completely different.⁵⁹

The final issue to consider is the extent of men’s affinity with their imagined communities on active service across the units under study during the war. This is a difficult task given the lack of evidence and highly individual nature of ‘imagined communities’ and the noted characteristic of a Londoner to ‘hide his purpose in the war under a covering of irony and cynical jests’.⁶⁰ Engall confirmed this problem when he wrote to his mother saying if you ‘ask a British Tommy why he’s fighting...he’ll say “jiggered if I know”’. However, Engall

⁵⁴ Cited in C. Emerson, *1913* (London, 2013), p.17.

⁵⁵ W. Marshall, ‘The Creation of Yorkshireness: Cultural Identities in Yorkshire, 1850 to 1918’ (PhD, University of Huddersfield, , 2011). H. Townsley, ‘The First World War and Voluntary Recruitment: A forum for regional identity? (PhD, University of Sussex, 2008).

⁵⁶ See K. Grieves, *Sussex and the First World War* (Lewes, 2004), pp.300-327.

⁵⁷ See McCartney, *Citizen* and ‘North-West...’.

⁵⁸ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.80-87.

⁵⁹ A.H. Maude, *The History of the 47th (London) Division 1914-1918* (London, 1922), p.211.

⁶⁰ Gibbs, *Realities*, p.64.

believed that the ‘real reason in lots of cases [was]...love of country and duty; but the Tommy [would]...never admit it’.⁶¹ This is supported by Tiplady in 1916/7, who noted that men were patriotic but this conviction was quietly held, and they never, for example, sang patriotic songs except the national anthem.⁶² The language other veterans used to describe notions of patriotism include pronouns ‘we’ and ‘they’, suggesting their individual ‘patriotism’ was shared by their colleagues.⁶³ Based on these observations, it can be concluded that, at times, affinity with the imagined communities and allegiance to the cause in which men were engaged was widespread.

iii) The impact of war and active service

All historians agree that the experience of active service and war had a significant influence on many soldiers’ relationship to, and commitment with, their imagined community. At one end of the spectrum, historians have suggested that active service could galvanise the resolve of soldiers, especially those who witnessed the plight of refugees and the destruction of buildings.⁶⁴ Others have posited that familiarity with combat distanced individuals from the mission in which they were engaged.⁶⁵ They maintain that this aloofness discredited traditional forms and rhetoric about warfare (for instance, sacrifice and honour), revealing them as hollow and absurd and, as conventional expression became incompatible with reality, soldiers turned to bitter cynicism and disillusion about the cause, which for many became pointless.⁶⁶ For men in the units under study, the impact of the fighting in the trenches produced a range of outcomes between these two polarities.

A common theme from these discussions is a feeling of cynicism, disgruntlement and ‘inequality of sacrifice’ with political leaders and some sections of society as the war progressed.⁶⁷ Tucker in the spring of 1917 commented that men blamed political leaders for their ‘ignorance, incompetence and ambition’, which was ‘prolonging the war’.⁶⁸ At the same time, Rifleman Aubrey Smith, in the LRB, said official communiqués were taken with ‘quite a bucketful of salt’ as were government press reports.⁶⁹ He also recorded how his section had

⁶¹ Engall, *Letters*, p.106.

⁶² T. Tiplady, *The Soul of the Soldier* (London, 1918), pp.59-60.

⁶³ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.36. Holmes, Reel-4, IWMSA.

⁶⁴ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.202.

⁶⁵ Leed, *No*, p.132.

⁶⁶ D. Monger, K. Pickles & S. Murray, *Endurance and the First World War* (Newcastle, 2014), pp.53-54. See R. Prior & T. Wilson, ‘Paul Fussell at War’, *War in History* 1:1 (1994), p.67.

⁶⁷ Gregory, *Last*, p.112.

⁶⁸ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.141-142.

⁶⁹ Smith, *Four*, pp.253, 283.

cheered in November 1916 when Lloyd George replaced the ‘old lady’ Asquith, but faith in Lloyd George had quickly evaporated by the following November. Smith and his colleagues drafted a parody of a speech, for their transport section journal, given by Lloyd George, as the war entered its seventh year (1921). Though the offending speech was never published, Smith enclosed it in a letter sent home. He was brought before the CO to explain its content but, ultimately, the CO laughed and allowed it to be sent.⁷⁰ This may suggest that even senior officers, by late 1917, held an equally dim view of their political leaders.

For some men, their disillusionment with the war led them to question its purpose and their commitment to the fight. In the spring of 1916, a rifleman was reported by QWR Lance Corporal James Parr for questioning the ‘use of [the war]...We lose money [and]...run the risk of losing our lives. What do we gain?’⁷¹ In the spring of 1917, Joseph Steward’s account of his time in the Kensingtons features Steenie, who in discussion with his mates on the purpose of the war openly asks “Wot’s the use of going on...we’re not getting nowhere; we might as well thrown in the towel” [sic].⁷² Archie Groom also claimed that his colleagues in the LRB went from naive enthusiasm to being ‘disillusioned and bitter’ by April 1917 as they ‘cursed the war which by now we felt had nothing to do with us’.⁷³

These are the only documented accounts of soldiers who questioned the war and their commitment to it. Interestingly, when men in the units under study did protest collectively in strikes and a ‘mutiny’ during 1917, the objective of their actions was distinctly non-political (see Chapter 2). Their complaints related to working conditions, such as having to build a ‘cage’ with German POWs. The primary source for the ‘mutiny’ in the LRB was Groom, who claimed that by the time these actions took place (November 1917) in the LRB, he and other men felt the war had little to do with them. He makes no comment to indicate that the cause or purpose of their ‘mutiny’ was against the war or its conduct but rather the demand for hot food.⁷⁴

What emerges from the majority of men’s accounts is that despite being war weary and wanting peace, this was not peace at any price. Men saw the need to fight on until victory was

⁷⁰ Smith, *Four*, pp.194-195, 297.

⁷¹ Cited in R. Van Emden, *The Somme* (Barnsley, 2016), p.83.

⁷² Steward, *Platoon*, p.99.

⁷³ Groom, *Poor*, pp.92, 97.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.146-147.

achieved throughout the war.⁷⁵ Rifleman Appleyard, serving in the QVR, wrote in his diary in September 1915 that he wished the ‘wretched business [of war] was over’. Later in the month he noted when the QVR were due to support a French attack, ‘the boys seem very keen on the effort in which we are taking part and I think we all realize what it means’. In October of the same year, he recorded ‘that we have long months ahead of monotonous trench work before the war is concluded’.⁷⁶ After the Battle of Arras in spring 1917, Tucker commented that ‘there seemed no likelihood of peace, the war being a deadlock...In spite of this...we were grimly determined to stick it out to the end, and in fact I never heard anyone suggesting that we should do otherwise’.⁷⁷ As the fourth winter (1917/8) of the war approached, resolve remained solid with many. Smith said that ‘though our confidence in the ultimate defeat of Germany was undiminished, it never the less looked as though there were stern times ahead and it would be foolish to pretend our spirits soared as high as they had done months before’.⁷⁸ Bickersteth had major conflicts with the war regarding it as ‘brutalising’ and believed in August 1917 ‘to beat Germany on land seems well-nigh impossible. We must stop it’. By June 1918, he believed that ‘the war becomes more terrible and soul corroding as month succeeds month...No one has any heart in it...men don’t and won’t hate the Germans – they only hate the war...I don’t see any end for the war under...ten years, unless we break – which to the proud Englishman is unthinkable’.⁷⁹ By the summer of 1918, the Kensingtons’ Battalion history described them as ‘war weary and disillusioned’ but still had determination to carry on the fight.⁸⁰

Many of the above quotations, for example, that of Appleyard, Tucker and Smith, use language which suggest that the commitment they had, was also shared by their comrades. Groom’s words reflecting the disenchantment of the men in 1917 imply that his opinion was also held by other soldiers with whom he associated. Support for the war (or not) and soldiers’ determination to fight (or not) was often a collectively held view or position at the group or unit level. Gibbs suggested that men remained ‘silent about the reasons for their coming out [to France] and the cause for which they risked their lives’; they may not have discussed it with journalists, like Gibbs, or necessarily with their officers, such as Engall, but

⁷⁵ This is also reflected in censorship reports of soldiers’ mail. See P. Scott, ‘Law and Order: Discipline and Morale in the British Armies in France, 1917’, in P. Liddle (ed), *Passchendaele in Perspective* (Barnsley, 1997), pp.360-361.

⁷⁶ Account, pp.31, 34-35, S.W. Appleyard, IWM, 82/1/1.

⁷⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.136.

⁷⁸ Smith, *Four*, p.294.

⁷⁹ Bickersteth, *Diaries*, pp.84, 137, 208, 134, 257.

⁸⁰ O.F. Bailey & H.M. Hollier, *The Kensingtons* (London, 1936), p.167.

they did vocalise the strategic, ethical and utility aspects of the war amongst themselves.⁸¹ Steward's semi-fictional account has three occasions when men discuss the war and their role. The first is a short exchange between two friends, Thomas and Lawley, set during the summer of 1916. The former comments on the 'mockery' of both the Germans and the allies claiming God on their side but both agree their fight is just. The second conversation takes place in early 1917 between four friends, all of whom had been through the battles of the Somme and a tough winter trench holding. One character, Steenie, openly questioned the point of fighting on, as the allies have nothing to show for their effort. The other three characters, Thomas, Blake and Godfrey, respond with surprise and argue that the war is necessary to prevent further German abuses. The third exchange is between men in 1918 discussing their reasons for joining up.⁸²

The men in Steward's account were drawn from across the social spectrum and the narrative portrays a robust debate on the justice of war. This is not surprising, as in 1914 the majority of the UK population was working class and they had near universal literacy and access to a mass circulation media, public libraries and other information sources, such as trade union newsletters. As a result, people had daily contact with a wider world of politics, economics, culture and society, making them more able than any previous generation to evaluate their own position and that of Britain in the wider universe.⁸³

The balance of evidence for this study suggests that the majority of units and groups broadly supported the war effort. Groom's account is the only one, which suggests that anti-war disenchantment was held amongst a collection of men rather than individuals. However, it is probable that this was an exception, as analysis of morale reports indicates continued support for the war, even during the second half of 1917 when BEF morale was under severe strain. The morale reports used soldiers' letters, which were intercepted, to gauge the general feeling of the men and they showed that the vast majority were desperate for peace but only on the proper terms.⁸⁴

Nevertheless, there were at certain times during the war, groups and units comprised of men, some of whom supported the war and others did not. This was a potential cause of conflict

⁸¹ Gibbs, *Realities*, p.64.

⁸² Steward, *Platoon*, pp.58-59, 98-99, 175.

⁸³ Sibley, *British*, pp.49-51.

⁸⁴ Scott, 'Law...', pp.359-361.

and threatened to disrupt cohesion and relations. It is possible that men who expressed doubts about the war would have been regarded by their colleagues as a potential threat to their own security, if there were doubts about their commitment to fight and protect other team members. In several units, it appears that men who expressed anti-war views were regarded as unreliable and deficient in the masculine qualities required for war. Parr, mentioned above, reacted to the rifleman's question about what was to be gained by the war by replying that it presented men with 'one thing that every man has wanted from his boyhood up...[, the]...opportunity to show what he is made of'.⁸⁵ In A.D. Gristwood's 'disenchantment' novel, *The Coward*, based on his service in the LRB, he noted that some men gave way to 'pacifism' but such views were regarded by their comrades as 'unmanly'.⁸⁶ Many people linked combat service with masculinity and refusal to fight was often seen as cowardice and fit only for the awarding of white feathers.⁸⁷ In situations like these, many soldiers who had doubts about the war were probably persuaded to avoid public declarations of disillusionment. Both of these examples suggest that, in some units, informal norms existed which discouraged or forbade the expression of views that could have been regarded as 'defeatist'.

In other groups and units, different norms prevailed that allowed a plurality of views to be expressed. The dialogue reported in Steward's book, where Steenie 'surprises' his colleagues with his lack of conviction for the cause, is evidence of this. Interestingly, Steenie's colleagues do not regard him as unmasculine or exclude him from their group but merely express bewilderment at his view. Their reasons may have been that he certainly had masculine qualities, as he was a boxer and known as 'bruiser', but it was more likely to be due to the fact that he put his reservations about the war aside and continued to fight with his colleagues, winning the MM in 1918.⁸⁸ Also, Steenie may have realised that, though he objected to the war, there was practically nothing he could do to action his disagreement. He could not have stopped fighting without exposing himself to possible formal punishment or informal group retribution.⁸⁹ Groom, who had reservations about the war by early 1917, carried on fighting because 'if a common soldier...refused to fight for conscientious reasons

⁸⁵ Van Emden, *Somme*, p.83.

⁸⁶ Gristwood, *Somme*, p.148.

⁸⁷ N.F. Gullace, 'White Feathers and Wounded Men: Female Patriotism and the Memory of the Great War', *Journal of British Studies* 36:2 (4/1997), p.182.

⁸⁸ Steward, *Platoon*, p.164.

⁸⁹ Loez, 'Between...'.

he would have unquestionably have been shot'.⁹⁰ While this may be overstating the potential repercussions of a refusal to fight, conscientious objectors were treated harshly. Being court martialled would have been a probable outcome and being shot was not an impossible sentence depending on the circumstances. Informal group norms also prevented men from withdrawing their labour or effort from the fighting, as norms promoted an equal distribution of work in groups and units, including fighting. This meant that opportunities for avoiding combat were realistically 'socially disqualified'.⁹¹ In addition, soldiers disliked the 'shirker', especially striking workers at home.⁹²

The last element in this section to consider is how active service contributed to individual and group commitment to fight. Many soldiers were influenced by a combination of first-hand experience and second-hand accounts which they obtained through official sources, friends, family and the press. For QVR Rifleman Will May, the arrival of American reinforcements in January 1918 meant that the allies would 'give the square headed devils...the blow by next autumn.'⁹³ Others were influenced in 1918 by the 'humiliation of a German peace revealed in the case of Russia and Romania [that] combined to stiffen the morale of the troops...[as]... defeat mean[t]...sheer utter ruin...in every department of life'.⁹⁴

For many, news of German 'atrocities' gave soldiers' in the trenches resolve to fight on. Smith, on hearing of the sinking of the *Lusitania*, said this incident 'inflamm[e]d the anger of the British soldier'.⁹⁵ Many were 'very bitter' over the Zeppelin raids which attacked southern England where many of their friends and family lived.⁹⁶ Lawley in Steward's account, believed the war was necessary because of the German 'atrocities' against 'little Belgium', the German use of poison gas and the fear of 'what other devilishness' the Germans may develop. His friend, Thomas, said that the war was required because the Germans 'believe they are a super people...They're jealous of us, and they won't be satisfied until they've beaten and bossed us' [sic].⁹⁷

⁹⁰ Groom, *Poor*, p.123.

⁹¹ Loez, 'Between...'.

⁹² D. Pinkerton, *Ladies From Hell* (New York, 1918), p.118.

⁹³ Letter, 2/1/1918, H.W. Sims, LC, GS1476.

⁹⁴ McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.94.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Four*, p.59.

⁹⁶ R. Davis, *One Young Man* (London, 1917), p.108.

⁹⁷ Steward, *Platoon*, pp.58-59.

The tone of these opinions sounds very similar to some of the lurid reporting of German atrocities and editorials in newspapers, such as the *Daily Mail*, and also government propaganda.⁹⁸ While it is impossible to know, it is highly probable that the resolve of these soldiers was partly influenced by such newspaper stories and propaganda publications and activities either directly or indirectly via hearsay and rumour through comrades, family or friends.⁹⁹ These stories may appear crude and offensive to the modern audience but they were notions held by many soldiers of the time and convinced them that Germany needed to be defeated.

Many of these perceptions of 'Teuton' barbarism were reinforced by soldiers' front line experience.¹⁰⁰ London Scot Douglas Pinkerton described how witnessing the destruction of 'homes violated, firesides wantonly wrecked' inspired his colleagues and him to fight on.¹⁰¹ Leighton Green felt the same; writing in February 1917, such sights gave him 'renewed determination to go on at whatever cost' [sic] and that when 'one sees the countryside ruined and desolate, one's thoughts turn to...the country towns and villages of England.'¹⁰²

Men in France and Belgium were also influenced by stories told to them by refugees. Pinkerton heard from 'Therese' about how the Germans entered Lille and 'ransacked every home...[and shot many] for imaginary or entirely fictitious causes'.¹⁰³ He believed that the 'only cure for...German atrocity is to fight fire with fire.'¹⁰⁴ In Steward's account, Thomas is told by a Laventie resident that German soldiers had bayoneted his daughter, a crime which convinced him of the need to continue the fight.¹⁰⁵

Witnessing events on the battlefield could also strengthen soldiers' resolve to fight and draw men together to act collectively. The London Scottish adopted an unofficial policy of not taking prisoners, after witnessing the massacre in no man's land of retreating Black Watch soldiers by German machine guns during the Battle of Aubers Ridge. They were outraged that their fellow countrymen were mown down like 'like gutter-dog' and reacted by adopting this extreme sanction for fighting the war. Their view was if you 'give a German an inch, he

⁹⁸ Gregory, *Last*, pp.47-55.

⁹⁹ Gregory, *Last*, pp.63-67.

¹⁰⁰ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.202.

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¹⁰¹ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.48-49.

¹⁰² McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.82.

¹⁰³ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.146-147.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.162.

¹⁰⁵ Steward, *Platoon*, p.99.

will take a mile'; Pinkerton posed a rhetorical question, 'Do you wonder that the Scottish do not find it in their hearts to take German prisoners?' As a result, the London Scottish soldiers '*individually and collectively*...swore to avenge' this 'barbarism' and did murder surrendering Germans [*italics added*].¹⁰⁶ This suggests that the shared event helped build cohesion in some platoons with a communal desire for revenge. Pinkerton is the source of this story and, given his previous allegations about the German conduct above, especially atrocities against civilians, the veracity of his account needs to be considered. However, his story of obtaining testimony from French civilians about German atrocities against Belgian civilians is corroborated by Steward's account, as is his assertion that the London Scottish adopted a policy of executing prisoners. Private Hubbard sent his mother an account describing the London Scottish's attack at Gommecourt in which he described how he had 'strict orders not to take prisoners, no matter if wounded' and he 'empt[ied]...his' magazine into three Germans'.¹⁰⁷ Hubbard was not present at Aubers Ridge, only arriving in France around May 1916 and Pinkerton was wounded in late 1915 so it is unlikely they would have exchanged stories. There is no official record of the 'no prisoners' policy in battalion orders, the war diary or official history and this is not surprising as it was a clear breach the Geneva Convention. It appears that the shared witnessing of the event during the Battle of Aubers Ridge created an informal norm to prosecute the war with extreme violence and this was passed down to new arrivals such as Hubbard, possibly with the tacit support of the leadership. It is not known if this approach was widespread or how long it lasted.

It would be wrong to assume that front line experience resulted in all soldiers becoming as Germanophobic as men like Pinkerton. Many soldiers talked about a major difference in the attitudes to the Germans between the home front and front line with 'the further [away] from the line [a person travelled], the greater the hatred of the enemy'.¹⁰⁸ Groom recalled that new soldiers who came over from England were 'brainwashed with hate and slogans such as 'The only good German is a dead one'' but, the longer they served, their 'hate lessened'.¹⁰⁹ Once in the trenches, many grew to respect their enemy even if they 'disliked' them.¹¹⁰ Brotherly love did not exist between foes but many men saw no contradiction with fighting yet respecting their enemy. W.G. Holmes described how he and his friends were in France 'to do a job' and they had 'no animosity to...the Germans [as they] were doing their job for their

¹⁰⁶ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, pp.78, 74, 161-162.

¹⁰⁷ Letter, 7/7/1916, Hubbard, IWM.

¹⁰⁸ M.L. Walkinton, *Twice in a Lifetime* (London, 1980), p.43. Gristwood, *Somme*, p.148.

¹⁰⁹ Groom, *Poor*, p.133.

¹¹⁰ F.C. Higgins, Reel-12, IWMSA, 9884. Miller, Reel-3, IWMSA.

country the same as we were' [sic].¹¹¹ Tiplady observed that 'the private agrees with the general in the necessity for killing Germans...[but t]he lust for killing Germans would never take a man out of his dug-out; but the love of his country and the resolve to do his duty will.'¹¹²

Societal cohesion based on the relationship between individuals and their imagined communities was strong. The nature of the imagined communities was self-defined as a variety of constructions which were described as 'home', country, England or Britain, or a combination of all three but not as the city, area or locality that men originated from such as London, its boroughs and suburbs. These affections for imagined communities were influential in persuading many men to join up but they were not the only motivating factor for men to enlist. Once in the trenches, an individual's affinity with his imagined community was an active force which helped many soldiers endure and fight. It appears that many groups and units adopted a collective position at the group or unit level, suggesting collective support for the war helped build and sustain primary group cohesion.

B. 'Communities of experience'

This section considers the relationship between the soldier and his 'communities of experience'; in other words, a soldier's primary groups and wider social networks created through his civilian employment, leisure interests and participation in local communities established before he entered the army. Recent historians have made effective challenges to the school of thought prominent in the late 1970's and 1980's that soldiers in the trenches were alienated from their homes and communities in Britain.¹¹³ Much contemporary research has shown that interactions between home front and front line were close, open and civilians had a pretty accurate view of what was happening on the front line through letters, local media, leave and social networks.¹¹⁴ These relationships, as McCartney has shown in her study of Liverpool Territorials, helped support combatant morale and endurance in the trenches.¹¹⁵ This section will examine the nature of the relationships between London Territorials and their home based networks and what impact they had on soldiers' behaviour

¹¹¹ Holmes, Reel-4, IWMSA.

¹¹² Tiplady, *Soul*, pp.191-192.

¹¹³ Though this myth still exists in the popular media. See S. Faulks, 'Sebastian Faulks on the legacy of the Great War', *The Times Magazine*, 12/2/2014.

¹¹⁴ See Bourke, *Dismembering*, J. Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Cambridge, 1995), p.36 and Englander, 'Soldering...'

¹¹⁵ McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.89-117.

and attitudes. The two key mediums through which combatants and their home based primary groups and social networks communicated were through the regular exchange of letters and parcels and a period of home leave which soldiers were allocated approximately every 15 months.¹¹⁶

i) Letters and parcels

Post between the front and home was the most common form of communication. During the war the army handled 7,000 sacks of mail and 60,000 parcels daily and it took around four days to arrive.¹¹⁷ Some sent and received a large number of letters such as Rifleman C.T. Newman sending 544 to his wife and family from May 1916 to the Armistice during his service in the QVR.¹¹⁸

The openness, detail and candour about conditions at the front and men's intimate feelings depended on the writer and the intended audience. Some letters were 'written with a simulated cheerfulness not felt, and a guarded description of the state of affairs'.¹¹⁹ Men suppressed details of battle; for example, Private Hodgkinson, in the Kensingtons, wrote to his local church newsletter about the Battle of Neuve Chapelle but could not 'describe the sight [as it was]...too horrible for words'.¹²⁰ Others qualified the information they gave to family members; Newman wrote to his wife that 'half the camp is down with illness' but added that she was told to 'keep it from mother'.¹²¹

It appears that in common with other studies the majority of soldiers painted vivid pictures of the front, its conditions and their feelings and experiences.¹²² Some were explicit about the violence they exacted on the Germans; Ranger L.J. Sylvester told his mother that, during one attack, he gave a German a 'nice tap on his skull with the butt of my rifle. I don't think his mother would know him'.¹²³ Others give graphic and gory details of front line conditions. Rifleman Reginald Davis, serving with the QVR, wrote home recalling that he 'sat down, dead beat, for some time on what I thought was a sandbag. I discovered afterwards it was a

¹¹⁶ Diary, 25/10/1915, J.H. McCormack (Private collection). Groom, *Poor*, p.152.

¹¹⁷ D. Winter, *Death's Men* (London, 1978), pp.164-165. Letter, 21/7/1916, P.D.Mundy, IWM, 4862/80/43/1.

¹¹⁸ C.T. Newman, IWM, 30/5/01.

¹¹⁹ Steward, *Platoon*, p.108.

¹²⁰ *Christchurch Parish Magazine*, Chelsea, 5/1915.

¹²¹ Letter, 25/8/1915, Newman, IWM.

¹²² McCartney, *Citizen*, pp.90-103.

¹²³ Letter, undated [1916]. L.J. Sylvester, IWM, 08/76/1.

dead body'.¹²⁴ Men frequently talked about death and its random nature. In 1916, Private Mundy told a Miss Simmons how 'a shell...went clean through the opening of a dugout inside which...four...were killed.'¹²⁵ Soldiers were also open with their loved ones about how they felt about the war; Hubbard told his mother he felt 'miserable' for which he was 'sorry to have to state all this but [he did not] feel inclined to tell...[a] pack of lies'.¹²⁶

Censorship by regimental officers appears not have hindered this dialogue. The efficacy of the system largely depended on the diligence of the censoring officer. Some such as London Scottish's Major Low bargained with his men not to censor their letters so long as they omitted military information.¹²⁷ Others were like the LRB's Captain Russell who confiscated letters which complained of short rations.¹²⁸ Many officers had a huge volume of letters to examine, some up to 250 at a time and, as a result, items often slipped through the system.¹²⁹ Men also found ways around regimental censorship such as posting letters in the UK, developing codes with their loved ones and writing letters in a green envelope which were not censored at the battalion level.¹³⁰

An understanding of the front line experience was further enhanced by the availability of relevant information to friends and family at home which gave them a good idea of the nature, conditions and routine of trench life. Frequently, the media carried reports of the conditions and horrors of the front. Private Anderton told his mother in April 1915 that he thought the *Daily Mirror* reports gave the 'folk a good idea of our life out here.'¹³¹ The *London Scottish Regimental Gazette* was published throughout the war and covered accounts of action, obituaries and photographs, Hubbard recommending it to his mother to 'gather more news about us each month.'¹³² As well as printed sources, film also played a part. The *Battle of the Somme* film, first shown in August 1916, was seen by an estimated 20 million Britons during the war.¹³³ While many dismissed this as propaganda, Appleyard, who saw the film in September 1916, noted in his diary it was 'very original and gives the people of

¹²⁴ Davis, *One*, p.47.

¹²⁵ Letter, 21/8/1916, Mundy, IWM.

¹²⁶ Letter, 29/6/1916, Hubbard, IWM.

¹²⁷ Letter, 12/12/1914, Book 1, C. Low, IWM, 79/54/1.

¹²⁸ Smith, *Four*, p.100.

¹²⁹ McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.47.

¹³⁰ Letter, 29/8/1915, Jack Widdicombe's WW1 letters home, <https://jackswarletters.wordpress.com/2015/07/29/29-aug-1915-put-an-x-through-the-line-underneath-the-day/> Accessed 12/11/ 2015. Englander, 'Soldiering...', p.308.

¹³¹ Letter, 24/4/1915, E.H. Anderton, IWM, 88/20/1.

¹³² For instance, see *London Scottish Regimental Gazette*, 12/1916. Letter, 9/6/1916, Hubbard, IWM.

¹³³ N. Reeves, *Official British Film Propaganda during the First World War* (London, 1986), p.15.

England a good idea of the terrible things going on in France'.¹³⁴ These sources could give family members useful context to help them effectively communicate with their loved ones. For example, those at home understood what a "Jack Johnson" was and the reason men in the trenches requested candles to be sent in parcels (to boil water rather than for illumination).¹³⁵

Postal communication between home and front line was important to soldiers and it had a range of benefits. It helped build and maintain close personal connections between combatant and his civilian world at home. Letters gave men a morale boost; Pinkerton believed the 'receipt of a letter means as much to [soldiers]...as a trip to the theatre' did for people at home.¹³⁶ Receiving a letter from a loved one provided social support in the trenches; Newman told his wife 'the arrival of mail is vital to our happiness...No post gives us a kind of malaise.'¹³⁷ Letters also reassured soldiers, especially if they had dependents at home; one said that hearing that those at 'home...[were] enjoying themselves [this was]...enjoyment to' those in the trenches.¹³⁸

Parcels were also meaningful as they brought food, cigarettes and material benefits to ease the tough physical conditions. Leighton Green thanked his parishioners at home for a large number of cigarettes sent to his men, as smoking one 'makes all the difference when you are cold...Hence the gratitude your parcel earns.'¹³⁹ Parcels were also a valuable means of connecting soldiers to their previous civilian life and making them feel appreciated. For example, Regent Street Polytechnic (the 'Poly', now the University of Westminster) had raised a company of Rangers before the war. Once the war started, the Poly organised a Comforts Fund for 'those in the trenches.' It was estimated that in early 1915 around 180 men in the Rangers had been at the Poly and the Fund sent these men parcels including items such as cricket equipment and cigarettes. One recalled that the Fund had 'anticipated every 'want' of a soldier...Pleasant surprises of this nature go a long way in helping one to forget the discomforts...on active service... Moreover it is nice to be...reminded that one is *still* a 'Poly boy '!'¹⁴⁰ For many, this recognition was valued as 'the men in the

¹³⁴ Account, p.64. S.W. Appleyard, IWM.

¹³⁵ Davis, *One*, p.111.

¹³⁶ Pinkerton, *Ladies*, p.123.

¹³⁷ Letter, 8/9/1917, Newman, IWM.

¹³⁸ Davis, *One*, p.108.

¹³⁹ McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.69.

¹⁴⁰ *Polytechnic Magazine*, 7/1916, p.167, 3/1915, p.65, 6/1915, p.144, 7/1916, p.169, 1/1917, p.6.

trenches don't mind [the hardships as long as the] people at home care about them...they can face the...horrors of war'.¹⁴¹

ii) Leave

Home leave was cherished more than letters and parcels. Leighton Green noted 'the thoughts of the soldier in France centre on this one absorbing topic – his leave. He talks about it every day, he writes about it every week and...he looks forward to it'.¹⁴² Low and his subalterns talked 'about leave as if we were all going home tomorrow: it is the best subject we know.'¹⁴³ Soldiers reported a range of experiences on leave; some conform to the 'alienation' idea of a schism between soldier and civilian and, as a result, many combatants were happier at the front. Groom reported in 1917 that there was much ignorance and 'a complete lack of communication and I could not get on the same wavelength with the civilians' he met. He also 'could not agree with the propaganda hate stuff' and as a result his leave was 'not happy' and it was 'fantastic' to be back at the front.¹⁴⁴

However, his experience appears to be an isolated one. For most, their leave was positive but adjusting to the home front was 'a little awkward at first, living in a house amidst the usual amenities of civilised life'.¹⁴⁵ Smith said that at the beginning of his leave he 'could hardly frame a dozen sentences without wishing to introduce some word that would offend a civilian ear'.¹⁴⁶ Tucker's mother was distressed at him sleeping on the floor rather than in his bed.¹⁴⁷ Some men had to correct their relatives' wild notions of what was happening in France such as Higgins who quashed rumours that there were 'lions and tigers in the trenches'.¹⁴⁸

Once over these challenges, men were welcomed back by their loved ones who appeared to be largely supportive of their role as soldiers. For QVR Rifleman John McCormack, his leave was 'ripping! Everybody [me] treated very well indeed'.¹⁴⁹ W.G. Holmes was cared for like a 'hero',¹⁵⁰ and Davis's leave 'was pure delight from one end to the other'.¹⁵¹ Tucker said it

¹⁴¹ McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.86.

¹⁴² McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.60.

¹⁴³ Letter, 20-21/6/1916, Low, IWM.

¹⁴⁴ Groom, *Poor*, pp.153-154.

¹⁴⁵ Hawkings, *From*, p.80.

¹⁴⁶ Smith, *Four*, p.253.

¹⁴⁷ Tucker, *Johnny*, p.94.

¹⁴⁸ Higgins, Reel-9, IWMSA.

¹⁴⁹ Diary, 25/10/1915, McCormack.

¹⁵⁰ Holmes, Reel-5, IWMSA.

¹⁵¹ Davis, *One*, p.91.

‘was marvellous to be back again amongst those I loved and the time went all too soon.’¹⁵² In late 1917, Aubrey Smith recalled ‘what an example...people at home still afforded us...they were all “fed up” but their faith in the Tommies was as strong as it ever had been’.¹⁵³ Many were sad to return to the trenches; Frank Hawkings was depressed on his return and Tim Elliot noted in his diary seven days after he had returned to the QVR that he had still ‘not got over leave yet’.¹⁵⁴

Leave, unlike letters, was one means by which men could talk to their families unhindered by military censorship. Men did discuss the war, conditions and what happened. Hubbard promised his family ‘lots of adventures to tell you when I get home.’¹⁵⁵ Tucker and his family ‘had plenty to talk about’ when he arrived back ‘home’ in 1916. Relatives could also see the positive and negative effects of trench warfare on their returning spouses and dependents. Tucker reported his clothes were a tight fit after regular food and exercise at the front whereas some mothers cried when their sons came home ‘because of the state they were in’.

¹⁵⁶

For the vast majority of soldiers, it appears that leave had a range of positive benefits in sustaining close links between the soldier and his primary groups at home. It helped reaffirm and cement relationships in a practical sense and demonstrate to both sides the emotional commitment each had for one another. Tiplady thought that leave helped many soldiers know they had a ‘women's love, admiration, and prayers that ke[pt] the[m]...bright and brave in the trenches’.¹⁵⁷ Leave also had a practical benefit of rejuvenating tired bodies ‘like a dose of Alpine air’.¹⁵⁸ Also, after returning to the trenches soldiers could ‘live in its [leave’s] memories’.¹⁵⁹ Finally, leave also assisted in building a shared understanding between serviceman and home front. Soldiers returning to the trenches brought news of home to the front line such as Hawkings who described how ‘the boys plied me with questions regarding my leave [and]...the shows in town.’¹⁶⁰

¹⁵² Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.93-94.

¹⁵³ Smith, *Four*, p.306.

¹⁵⁴ Hawkings, *From*, p.80. Elliot, *Tim's*, p.84.

¹⁵⁵ Letter, 5/7/1916, Hubbard, IWM.

¹⁵⁶ Tucker, *Johnny*, pp.93-94. Higgins, Reel-7, IWMSA.

¹⁵⁷ Tiplady, *Cross*, p.59.

¹⁵⁸ Smith, *Four*, p.252.

¹⁵⁹ McLaren, *Somewhere*, p.62.

¹⁶⁰ Hawkings, *From*, p.80.

iii) The influence of home

Letters and leave both helped to maintain and sustain close emotional relationships of separated primary groups. These relationships were vital, as historians have noted, because men perceived their lives and identity centred on their pre-war communities, domestic lives and roles.¹⁶¹ This is reflected by London Territorials in this study. Tiplady believed that the soldier 'leaves the dear place to do his duty, and marches away with a smile on his face, but he leaves his heart behind him.'¹⁶² As a result, men longed to be back home with the family, friends in a post-war world. Low said that he and his men had 'very little to complain about and few wants except the people we have at home'.¹⁶³ Davis speculated about what he would do 'apres la guerre' and thought he and his mother would have 'the old tea-time chats, a smaller house and less running about for you...[he would]...take up my Church secretaryship again and...work in the City [sic]'.¹⁶⁴ Also, many men were fathers, husbands and carers for dependent spouses, children and relatives and they sought to maintain these caring relationships whilst in uniform through advice in letters or by contributing a proportion of their pay to their families; some giving up to a third.¹⁶⁵

Also, these relationships were intensified by separation and circumstance. Distance and the constant potential for death or injury caused relatives concern and worry. Many combatants and civilians were drawn together in bereavement for a brother, father or son. John Calder, in the London Scottish, and his family were drawn together in mourning the death of their brother Colin who was in the LRB. John wrote to his family 'do not let this bereavement crush you' and how Colin was now in heaven with their sisters Lottie and Bessie, who had died in childhood.¹⁶⁶

Home and loved ones were on the mind of nearly all soldiers. It was demonstrated in the types of songs that soldiers chose to sing. Tiplady noted that 'on every march, in every billet and mess, there is the sound of singing' as men found song 'the great renewer of hope and courage...it [was]...an expression of emotions that can find no other voice'. He observed that there were five subjects of which men sang; 'nonsense songs' [comedy songs], 'songs of comradeship', 'hymns', 'songs of home' and 'love songs'. His writing emphasises a fondness

¹⁶¹ McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, p.95. Bourke, *Dismembering....*, pp.124-170.

¹⁶² Tiplady, *Cross*, p.21.

¹⁶³ Letter, 9/1/1918. Low, IWM.

¹⁶⁴ Davis, *One*, p.115.

¹⁶⁵ T.G. Birth, Reel-1, IWMSA 33096. Higgins, Reel-3, IWMSA.

¹⁶⁶ M. Copp, 'Behind their lines: The story of the Calder Brothers', *Stand To!* 59 (Summer 2000), p.12.

for songs of home and love songs, as in the lyrics of *Keep the Home Fires Burning*; ‘Though your lads are far away, They dream of home’.¹⁶⁷

These close relationships acted as a source of combat motivation and morale for soldiers in the trenches. Men frequently wrote that they were fighting for their primary groups at home.¹⁶⁸ Russell wrote to his mother ‘no sacrifice is too much for the ones that we love truly’.¹⁶⁹ Davis believed that he was in France to ‘have the harder tasks, and we want you all at home to have the benefits.’¹⁷⁰ Newman found inspiration in his fiancé, writing that he was ‘going forth cheerfully, willing to fight’ for her.¹⁷¹

While many men were motivated to protect their family through military service, this could often clash with their desire and duty to provide for their family, especially if they were the only source of income for that family. The need to protect the family by providing financially for them could prevent as well as facilitate enlistment as indicated by McCartney.¹⁷² Many faced such a dilemma like W.G. Holmes who tried to enlist in 1914, but he was forced by his siblings to remain at home to care for his mother until he was conscripted.¹⁷³ Davis supported his mother and sister as his father had died and their protection ‘was his solemn charge’. He faced a major dilemma ‘fight or to stay and look after our little home?’ which was a ‘problem that thousands...had to wrestle with’ but he chose the former.¹⁷⁴

Strong primary group bonds could cause problems in other ways. There is evidence that strong relationships with those at home may have drawn soldiers back home away from comrades and the cause they had volunteered to serve. In A.D. Gristwood’s novel *The Coward*, the principal character deliberately wounds himself to return to his family as he ‘rated their claim higher than the Army’s’. He received a letter from home containing primroses. The missive was ‘full of hopeful looking forward and eager prayers for present safety’ that ‘brought with it far more exasperation than comfort’. The scent of the ‘flowers recalled...the intensity of my longing for the peace of the English countryside...*I lost all shame at leaving my companions*’ [italics added]. He shoots himself in the hand but deceives

¹⁶⁷ Tiplady, *Soul*, pp.58-70. *Keep the Home-Fires Burning*, by I. Novello & L.G Ford. M. Pegler, *Soldiers' Songs and Slang of the Great War* (London, 2014), p.248.

¹⁶⁸ McCartney, *Citizen*, p.117.

¹⁶⁹ Cited in Brown, *Western*, pp.132-133.

¹⁷⁰ Davis, *One*, p.108.

¹⁷¹ Letter, 8/5/1915, Newman, IWM.

¹⁷² McCartney, ‘North-West...’

¹⁷³ Holmes, Reel-1, IWMSA.

¹⁷⁴ Davis, *One*, pp.16-17.

the authorities that the wound is not self-inflicted.¹⁷⁵ Though this is fiction, it may suggest that the pull of home for some men was powerful enough to risk potential court martial and social humiliation. Certainly, men in the units under study did injury themselves deliberately but their motivations are not known.

Parental relationships could also strongly shape the decisions their soldier-sons made in the trenches. For example, parents exerted considerable influence on some sons over the question of commissions. Norman Demuth's mother boasted to her sewing group that he had joined the LRB, but, when her next-door neighbour's son got a commission, she wanted her Norman to apply.¹⁷⁶ Parental pressure had mixed effects. Henry Bell refused to apply for a commission on his parents' request as he was 'happy' in the LRB.¹⁷⁷ Others were more successful; for example, Hawking's mother persuaded him not to apply for a commission after seeing the subaltern casualty lists in newspapers.¹⁷⁸ Edward Squire's parents influenced him in February 1915 to apply while serving in the Kensingtons. He revealed the tactics for getting a commission which was to 'go sick, get back to England and try'. It appears that parental pressure was also being applied to Squire's primary group friends as two had gone 'ill' to England and Squire and his friend Galt were going to 'follow their example'.¹⁷⁹ Hawkings reported this practice in the QVR in May 1915; his diary noted that 'few of the fellows who go home wounded ever come back, as they nearly all get commissioned'.¹⁸⁰ For 1914 and 1915, 1,725 men were commissioned from the ranks in the units under study, of which 70% came from the class corps units.¹⁸¹ It is impossible to determine how many of these men applied to be subalterns based on parental direction but the available evidence suggests that they did influence some sons and this may have had a detrimental impact on units in the front line. Certainly, the exodus of men from class corps units in 1915 caused problems with Low complaining in September 1915 that in his company 'all my best NCOs have taken commissions'.¹⁸²

Home was of critical importance to soldiers. The relationship that each combatant soldier had with his family was, by its very nature, unique and special and unknown to other men. The

¹⁷⁵ Gristwood, *Somme*, pp.151-155.

¹⁷⁶ Cited in M. Arthur, *Forgotten Voices of the Great War* (St Helens, 2002), p.21.

¹⁷⁷ H. Bell, *A Soldier's Diary of the Great War* (London, 1929), p.34.

¹⁷⁸ Hawkings, *From*, p.81.

¹⁷⁹ Letter, 24/2/1915, E.W. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

¹⁸⁰ Hawkings, *From*, p.64.

¹⁸¹ P. Reed, 'London's Saturday Night Soldiers', *Stand to!* 44 (9/1994), p.15.

¹⁸² Letter, 15/9/1915, Low, IWM.

relationships with 'home' could have strong influences over individuals. For the majority, it gave them a powerful reason to fight. Defending and protecting their families was a key motivation for many men enlisting and serving in the trenches. Many defined their 'imagined community' simply as 'home', meaning their family.

C. Conclusions

Societal cohesion is the relationship between soldiers and the wider society they originate from. This chapter has defined this association as two interconnecting and parallel interactions. The first is between the individual and his imagined community; how he relates to the country, state or nation to which he may belong or be a citizen. The second is the relationship with his civilian primary groups located at home of which he was a member, for example family and social networks, before he entered military service. It is argued that societal cohesion was strong and acted as a powerful source of combat motivation and endurance for many soldiers in the units under study, thus confirming recent historical research that men were motivated by notions of patriotism and nationalism and that there was a close interdependent relationship between combatant and non-combatant.

Men had strong affinities with their imagined communities which they defined as geo-political entities as England or Britain or more universal ideas as 'home' or 'country' and all of these men would have regarded themselves as patriots. However, no man defined his community as the borough, city or region from which he originated. The cohesion between men and their community was strongly motivated by 'duty' to be a protector against the perceived external threat of Germany. Differences between the social class and education of men influenced how they expressed this relationship. For example, middle class men used language of sacrifice and principle. Affinity with a person's imagined community was a powerful motivator for soldiers enlisting and it was also a source of personal morale for many in the trenches. It appears that allegiance to notions of country, Britain or 'home' were widespread among soldiers during the war and probably constituted the majority opinion.

The experience of war and active service shaped people's relationships with their imagined communities. For a small minority, the war destroyed their patriotism and they regarded the war as wasteful slaughter. However, for the majority, active service strengthened commitment to the cause. On an individual level, the destruction and impact of war on civilians strengthened many soldiers' resolve to endure the war. At a group level it appears

that widespread individual support for the war was shared among large numbers of men and acted as a commonality for the development and maintenance of primary group cohesion in many small units and groups. Men collectively agreed about the justice and right of the war and their devotion was further enhanced through the experience of shared events such as witnessing events on the battlefield, like the massacre of the Black Watch at Aubers Ridge. It appears in some groups that this collective commitment to the war led to the development and enforcement of informal norms which discouraged views which did not support the war, labelling those who held such views as ‘unmanly’.

In addition, the vast majority of men had solid and enduring relationships with their communities of experience, the families and social networks at home. These relationships were based on strong emotional and caring bonds, facilitated and encouraged through an efficient postal service and occasional home leave. Commitment to these primary groups was a key personal motivator to continue fighting, as many men, though in uniform, centred their life on their family, domestic life and community. In contrast, these close relationships could occasionally produce less desirable outcomes for the military authorities. Some men, through deception left the trenches because they could not bear to be separated from their families. Others were influenced by parents to seek legal exits from their unit, thus disrupting their military primary group and having a detrimental impact on their unit.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

This study examines the social science phenomenon of cohesion amongst British Army soldiers during the Great War. Cohesion is a social integration process leading to the development of close positive trusting relationships with peers, leaders, organisations and/or ideas. Modern social science scholarship suggests that higher levels of teamwork, resilience and group performance are present in groups of soldiers who have cohesive relationships, for example, with their peers, as compared with groups where such relationships are absent. Modern research indicates that cohesive units perform better in training and combat than non-cohesive units. This study sought to examine whether cohesion existed among officers and men in eight infantry battalions of the London Regiment fighting on the Western Front, and, if so, to explore whether cohesion led to similar outcomes as described above.

Sociologist, Professor Guy Siebold, in his Standard Model of Military Group Cohesion, described cohesion for a soldier in a military unit, as a structural interaction with four types of cohesion relationships. This study has used an adapted version of this Model, which places these four relationships at two levels. Primary group cohesion occurs within small intimate primary groups of individuals known to one another, such as families or platoons. Secondary group cohesion occurs with abstract entities outside the primary group, such as ideas or organizations. Within the primary group level, there are two types of cohesion relationships; horizontal cohesion between soldiers and their peers of the same rank (horizontal cohesion), and vertical cohesion between individuals and their leaders. At the secondary group level, there are also two types of cohesion; organizational cohesion between the soldiers and the organisation of which they are a part, and societal cohesion, which is the association between the soldiers and the wider society and community to which they belonged. All relationships, at both primary and secondary group levels, are based on trust, and framed as an exchange. For example, men trust one another to get a job done so they can all share the benefits. Within all these relationships, two motivations contribute to the formation of cohesion; a task-instrumental basis, where men cohere around the work, jobs or assignments collectively undertaken and/or an affective-social relationship based on an emotional commitment of friendship and caring.

It has been necessary to develop a description of societal cohesion for this study as none had been previously articulated in the literature. It has two dimensions. The first is between

soldiers and what is described as their ‘imagined community’; in other words, how the soldiers perceive the community they are fighting for. They may define it as their ‘home’, city, country, nation or region. The second element is the relationship between the soldiers and their ‘communities of experience’, which is their family and social networks based at home. For each of the four cohesive relationships, three research questions were set to investigate the existence and possible outcomes of cohesion; firstly, what was the extent and nature of cohesion? secondly, what impact did cohesion have on how men worked together, fought and carried out their military duties? and finally, how did cohesion and its outcomes change over the duration of the war?

This study argues that cohesion was strong, enduring and persistent in each of the four constituent relationships. When considered collectively, cohesion contributed to three outcomes in the units under study during the Great War. Firstly, it led to increased combatant morale and motivation to fight. Secondly, cohesion contributed to men’s resilience and endurance to cope with the terror, strain and horror of the trenches. Finally, cohesion helped soldiers perform their military roles. This was achieved by enabling groups and units to function in a co-ordinated way, producing better teams to complete their allocated duties and, at times, enhancing performance which, ultimately, improved battlefield outcomes.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the four component elements of cohesion functioned and operated together to shape feelings and behaviour and produce the three outcomes mentioned above. This study has described each cohesive relationship as single entities, each of which had important and powerful influences on opinion and conduct. However, soldiers were subjected to all four types of cohesion, often simultaneously, and therefore it is important to consider these interactions and to determine which one was most dominant and achieved most influence over actions or attitudes at specific times of the war. This chapter will chart the extent, nature and impact of cohesion by adopting a chronological approach. This is necessary as cohesion is often a function of time and is not a static phenomenon; for example, a horizontally cohesive team of peers could equally decide to fight or riot. Also, a soldier’s environment influenced the cohesive relationships that he chose, formed or maintained and this was constantly changing through his experience of war. Finally, it is necessary to consider cohesion in the wider context of the military forces of which the units under study were a part. Battalions were incessantly altered and shaped by tactical, organisational and policy changes from the Army and War Office and these changed the environment in which cohesion could be built, destroyed, enhanced or undermined. This

chapter will commence with a brief profile of the units prior to the start of the war as their pre-war characteristics influenced how cohesion formed in the early part of the war. The next section will examine cohesion on active service up until the end of the Battle of the Somme in late 1916. The penultimate section will explore cohesion and its impacts after the Battle of the Somme up to the Armistice. The final section will consider the wider national, cultural and societal factors, which shaped how cohesion functioned and operated during the war.

A. Case study units

The officers, NCOs and men of eight infantry battalions of the London Regiment make up the case studies used in this study. These units were auxiliary formations comprised of civilian volunteers to be mobilized in the event of war for the home defence. These units had originally been Volunteer units, created in the late 1850's by a popular movement to counter a threatened French invasion but they were reorganized in 1908 into a new auxiliary forces organization, the Territorial Force. Every formation had existed since the middle of the 19th Century and they had developed distinct individual identities influenced by their pairing with a regular unit, whose uniform and traditions they adopted, but also the social class, occupation and area of London from which they recruited their part-time soldiers. Three battalions under study were known as 'class corps' units – the London Scottish, LRB and QWR – as they drew their rankers from the suburban white collar middle class professionals who had been educated predominately at public and grammar schools and frequently attended university. These units were considered socially exclusive and set membership requirements to protect their social status and charged an annual membership fee. The other five units – the QVR, Kensingtons, 1/2 and 1/4 Londons and Rangers - were comprised of an integrated mix of middle and working class men, drawn from the retail, commercial and industrial sectors across London. The officers in all units before the war were overwhelmingly middle class.

B. Cohesion from the outbreak of war to the Battle of the Somme

On the declaration of war, all units under study were mobilised. The strength of nearly all battalions was significantly below their establishment but their numbers were rapidly made up from the pool of volunteers who enlisted in the autumn of 1914. Many men were in uniform for the first time and ended up with men with whom they had no prior connection. In

this new environment, most built cohesion with their peers (horizontal cohesion) and also with their new leaders (vertical cohesion).

The pattern set in 1914 for the formation of both horizontal and vertical cohesion remained constant throughout the war. The practice of all units from the start of the war was to place men permanently into a section where the majority served until death, injury, illness, promotion or the Armistice ended their service. Occasional men were switched between units but veteran testimony suggests this was the exception rather than the rule.

Men normally formed cohesive relationships first with their leaders. Documentary records suggest that the vast majority of leaders built trust among their subordinates by courageous personal leadership in battle, fair and judicious use of disciplinary powers, good interpersonal communication and demonstrable acts of paternal care. In most cases, this happened reasonably quickly, depending on circumstances, such as being in battle. It is estimated that within 30 days subordinates had assessed whether they could trust their commander's technical competence, and therefore could develop task cohesion. Once they had assessed their leaders' occupational aptitude, many developed a liking or caring for their leader. This often happened within 60 days. While developing task cohesion was common and social cohesion less so, it was by no means automatic. Leaders who were bullying and perceived as unfair and overly officious found men may obey them because of their formal disciplinary powers but would rarely give them their loyalty or commitment which, in reality, weakened the leader's influence and authority over their subordinates.

In class corps units, vertical cohesion was influenced by a system known as 'reciprocal responsibility'. Middle class rankers in a small unit or group independently sought to maintain their own discipline, do their own work and uphold standards, which they did in exchange for minimal supervision from their leaders. This informal unwritten agreement was reached with their officers because both officers and their subordinates were social equals as middle class gentlemen. As a result, officers left their gentlemen rankers alone, as it was believed they had the necessary self-discipline, through 'education and breeding', to be allowed to manage their own work and needed little supervision, unlike men from lower social groups.

In the non-class corps units, vertical cohesion was influenced by alternative social conventions. Leaders adopted a more paternal role, actively caring for their subordinates by organising their leisure needs and providing for their additional material needs, above and beyond their basic rations. This is not to say that leaders in class corps units did not care for their men but rather they demonstrated their care in ways that would not have been considered as patronising, such as carrying men's packs on their horses on route marches. As part of this paternal role, the authority of middle class officers was underpinned by a reliance on the threat and occasional use of the formal disciplinary system. However, this system was much more relaxed than that used in the regular army, as it relied on leaders gaining soldiers' consent rather than just their compliance.

Soldiers then developed cohesion with their peers at the horizontal level. Men initially built task cohesion with their colleagues around the work and function of their unit, for example, a transport or Lewis gun section. These relationships were characterised by teamwork, reciprocity and mutual trust to complete one's allocated work. It is estimated that it took between 30 to 60 days for a soldier to master the technical aspects of a unit's work and be trusted within the team. Push and pull factors influenced men to co-operate with their colleagues. Many men reasoned that survival rested with the existence of their team so individual survival depended on unit survival. Also, working collectively was the best way to ensure comfort and security in often unpleasant, wet and cold trenches, such as collectively building shelters from the rain. In addition, informal group norms that operated in units, dictated an equal share of work and threatened and administered punishments, to those who failed to comply. These norms could also dictate how a group responded to a leader. The norms could mandate compliance and obedience to that leader, if the group trusted and liked an officer or NCO, or alternatively, the norms could dictate passive resistance or active hostility, if the group felt otherwise. In class corps units, horizontal cohesion was further maintained by reciprocal responsibility, where men worked together to maintain their end of the bargain and ensure minimal interference from their officers. Across all units, it appears that most men formed task cohesion with their immediate unit or work group.

The majority of men progressed to develop social cohesion with a small self-select group of their peers, with whom they had already built task cohesion. They had initially been colleagues but they became comrades. These relationships were characterised by trust and based on caring and friendship. Such relationships offered social support against the trauma

of war, the sharing of resources, such as food parcels to counter ration shortages, and mutual aid in carrying out one's work. It is estimated that these relationships took between 60 to 120 days to form but this probably depended on their location and their front line experience. The documentary evidence suggests that nearly all men developed social cohesion with some groups of men, with a third developing close relationships with more than one group of men over their service.

Horizontal cohesion, both task and social, was largely formed through shared experience of working, fighting and living in close proximity with others. During the early part of the war, this cohesion was accelerated by shared background commonalities, for instance, attending the same work place or school. These connections were more common in the early stages of the war and are explained by the fact that many men had joined up with friends, colleagues and family from the same street, employer or social club. In addition, many units recruited large numbers from organisations with which they had an existing pre-war relationship. For example, the Rangers drew 900 men from Regent Street Polytechnic because they had a pre-war company established at the 'Poly'. Also, around half of those deploying, with each battalion in late 1914/5, were pre-war territorials who may have known one another through attending annual camp and weekly drill.

Primary group cohesion during the first part of the war was maintained by a series of factors. The environment on the front line promoted cohesion due to the constant rotation through the trenches and the need for constant co-operation to keep soldiers alive, the repeated need to build shelters and cope with the ever present horror of the battlefield. Informal group norms regulated the action of team or group members ensuring equality of effort, giving aid to those who needed it but punishing those who shirked. NCOs and officers predominantly continued to lead by personal example, demonstrated fatherly care for their men and sought to maintain discipline and order through consent rather than compliance, thus helping to maintain positive vertical cohesion.

Once formed, vertical and horizontal cohesion remained established and functional. There are no documented examples of horizontal cohesion breaking down among peers in a social group or task team though relationships were often strained through constant contact and personality clashes. Similarly, there are no examples of vertical cohesion disintegrating once established.

However, the major source of disruption to both vertical and horizontal cohesion was personnel change caused by the removal of soldiers through death, injury, illness, promotion, and occasionally, transfers. In 1914/5 the disruption was at its highest, with the enlisted soldier serving 122 days and the commissioned officer serving 97 days before their service was ended. However, even on these timelines, the vast majority of soldiers had the opportunity to form horizontal and vertical cohesion based on the estimates above. In 1916 the average length of service for officers and men rose to 137 and 223 days respectively, suggesting that the longevity of established cohesive relationships increased significantly.

Each type of primary group cohesion had a distinct range of outcomes. Social cohesion between small groups of the same rank welded men together into tight knit self-contained groups and, through mutual social support and friendship, they collectively assisted each other to cope with the emotional strain of war. These ties were so strong that many men refused to leave their socially cohesive groups when given official, legal and sanctioned exits from the front line. The commitment of groups to their members often was a source of combat motivation. Comrades would willingly serve with their companions in combat and often sought individual revenge if their friends were killed. Strong vertical cohesion gave leaders additional influence over their men, beyond just mere compliance. They were able to persuade their men, by personal example, to follow them repeatedly into dangerous and frequently mortal situations. Strong vertical cohesion could also motivate men to revenge in combat. In this way, vertical cohesion contributed to morale. Strong vertical cohesion enabled leaders to direct primary groups to achieve the wider objectives of the military organisation for which they were employed, and, as a result, of horizontal and vertical cohesion, these outcomes are recorded throughout the war.

The strong influence of secondary group cohesion underpinned primary group cohesion and its outcomes in the first half of the war. These secondary group relationships among soldiers exercised, not only, an important influence on their individual morale and conduct, but also that of their primary group. The dominant organisational cohesion relationship was between the individual and group and their battalion. On an individual level, this relationship was important for soldiers as most volunteers selected the unit they wished to join and this, in turn, created a strong affective bond with their unit. Many soldiers chose to enlist in a particular unit because of familial connections, often because relatives had served in these

units before them. Units also had distinctive uniforms, titles and regimental histories, based on their pre-war identities, all of which served to develop organisational cohesion between the battalion and the soldiers as they gained a strong identity and sense of belonging from this association. Battalion identity was strengthened by historic disputes with other battalions, such as a long-standing feud between the LRB and London Scottish. In the class corps units, this clannish association was further sharpened by the kudos gained from the socially exclusive nature of membership, which was maintained into 1917 when many units still collected membership fees. For some, this individual connection with a unit was strengthened by the fact that the battalion they joined was a TF one and they were bolstered by the notion of being volunteer citizen soldiers defending their homes from external aggression. This civic identity was a powerful motivator for some who wished to be known as ‘armed civilians’ rather than soldiers. For many soldiers, this often romantic attachment to their unit was an important personal motivator which influenced them to work harder on particular tasks, especially where the honour or reputation of their battalion was at stake.

For many, their organisational cohesion became so strong that they became highly tribal and regarded outsiders with disdain. Unfortunate reinforcements from other battalions sent by mistake to these units were often viewed with contempt and regarded as ‘attached’ only. In many groups and units, the shared individual commitment to the battalion became a group held value, collectively agreed and enforced by informal norms. Groups gained a collective identity within the wider community of the battalion and this generated a community loyalty and desire to enhance and promote the standing of their unit. Members of some groups sought to enforce this collective loyalty by insisting on group compliance with regimental traditions, such as marching at the battalion dictated speed. Organisational cohesion within the battalion influenced behaviour so, for example, men did not fall out of route marches to ‘save’ the unit marching record, and some have argued that saving battalion honour was a motivating factor for soldiers to fight. Battalion loyalty was often at its strongest when soldiers were in the presence of a presumed ‘enemy’, for instance, many battalions brigaded with regular units endeavoured to prove their worth to their professional colleagues, who regarded them as untrained amateur ‘Saturday Night soldiers’.

The influence of societal cohesion often runs in parallel with this organisational cohesion. There are two dimensions to the societal cohesion relationships. One is between men and their ‘communities of experience’; that is their families and social networks based at home.

The overwhelmingly majority of men had strong and committed relationships to their spouses, children and parents. Many had joined up, expressly, to fight for these groups. Once in the trenches, constant communication with 'home' through regular letters and parcels and also through occasional home leave, meant that the notion of defending home and family remained a constant source of personal morale, endurance and motivation.

The majority of men also had strong affinities with the wider society or community of which they, and their families, were a part. Soldiers defined their relationship with this 'imagined community' in a variety of ways, calling it 'home', Britain, England or country. Interesting, neither London nor any of its suburbs was identified by individuals as their 'community'. This appears to be at odds with much historiography, which suggests that many Edwardian soldiers reported having a strong connection with their local area. Regional identity and civic pride created a powerful sense of association, which motivated many men to join up and fight. Social class and educational background shaped how men articulated this community but all would have considered themselves as patriots. In the first two years of the war, many soldiers regarded their allegiance to their 'community' as a duty, giving them resolve and acting as a motivator to enlist.

In the first half of the war, military leaders took steps to promote cohesion among their soldiers through demonstrating care for their men. They endeavoured to keep NCOs with their men, as much as possible, and sought to ensure that when TF units were restructured, from their pre-war eight-company organisation to the regular four-company pattern, sergeants remained with the teams they had commanded. This contributed to the development of cohesion on horizontal, vertical and organisational levels and helped individual and group morale, resilience and fighting strength.

However, building strong relationships, especially at the primary group level, could lead to 'deviant' outcomes, not sanctioned by the senior leadership. These included activities such as groups or units avoiding fatigues, undermining leaders and initiating unofficial truces. Cohesion between peers was important in motivating and sustaining such activities. Many groups focused on enhancing their collective security, comfort and wellbeing, which, at times, clashed with the military law or their orders. Horizontal cohesion among group members was also critical for discussing and agreeing group priorities and also planning, executing and sustaining collective action. Leaders were also sometimes compliant in

promoting deviant activities. Strong vertical cohesion could create strong links between them and their men and these could take higher priority over the 'mission'. For example, many leaders actively engaged in truces and tacitly allowed them to continue.

Though primarily horizontal cohesion, and, to a lesser extent, vertical cohesion were important for initiating 'deviant' behaviour, the civilian backgrounds of the soldiers in the trenches were also relevant. The values, attitudes and expectations, which men developed as civilians, entered the trenches and shaped their views and behaviour whilst in uniform. Men of all social classes perceived their service with the army as an informal unwritten contract; they gave limited service, possibly risking their lives, in return for the army meeting their self-defined standards. Broadly, men expected fair treatment by the army, receiving basic material standards of food and shelter and not have their lives wasted in pointless slaughter. Men believed they had the right of protest and redress if the army failed to meet their self-defined principles.

Horizontal cohesion and the influence of civilian backgrounds combined to persuade some groups and units to behave in 'deviant' ways. For instance, many cohesive groups embarked on informal truces with the enemy as this gave the group comfort, protection and security from retaliation, prevented casualties and made the environment much more pleasant. At the same time, men rationalised under the terms of the unofficial contract they had with the army that their responsibilities did not include fighting in situations where there was no tangible gain to be made.

Between 1914 and 1916, the extent of this 'deviant' activity was extensive and frequently reported in soldiers' diaries, memoirs and letters. This activity degraded military efficiency and efficacy, but its character was covert and largely focused on work avoidance and evading confrontation with authority. The threat of formal court martial and the strong possibility of a harsh penalty acted as an effective deterrent so that no group consciously conducted deviant behaviour, which would bring them explicitly into conflict with military discipline.

Cohesion in the first half of the war was shaped by pre-war social networks and the traditions, identities and practices of battalions. Class corps units continued with the system of reciprocal responsibility as a way of regulating vertical and horizontal cohesion among its leaders and men. Much horizontal cohesion was formed on the basis of commonalities

created through joint membership of pre-war social networks such as being at the same employer or attending the same school. Organisational cohesion between men and their battalion was based on a pre-war tribalism, which placed an emphasis on unit traditions and identity and a continuance of pre-war rivalries with ‘old enemies’. Many soldiers also drew considerable pride and motivation from the fact that they had joined a TF unit of ‘citizens in arms’ and actively sought to demonstrate their martial equality to regular troops.

The pattern set in the first half of the war for the genesis, building and maintenance of vertical and horizontal cohesion set the blueprint for the remainder of war. Many men were posted to units in which they knew no one and they built cohesion through a shared experience in their immediate circle. Vertical cohesion was built between leaders and the led, based on the leader’s competence, paternalism and combat leadership. A shared commonality of school counted for little when people’s lives depended on the skill and experience of their leader.

C. Cohesion from late 1916 to November 1918

In February 1916, the eight units under study were drawn together into the all-Territorial 56th Division. In July, all were engaged in heavy fighting on the Somme, firstly at Gommecourt in July and then at Leuze and Borleaux Woods in September and October. All units suffered significant casualties. Until this date, units had replaced their losses with their own men who had volunteered to join the regiment at their drill hall and been trained and inducted into the battalion. However, in the summer of 1916 the War Office changed this system to one of regionally recruited men who were sent to whichever unit needed reinforcement rather than to the unit the volunteer had chosen to serve with. The introduction of conscription finally ended any option to choose the unit in which a recruit wished to serve. The consequence was that from mid 1916 the units received random drafts of men who were not chosen, trained or inducted in their regimental customs, ways and traditions of the unit.

As a result, the social composition of units altered as they became dominated by the urban working classes; the change was most dramatic in the class corps units, which had, up to mid-1916, recruited gentleman rankers from whom they continued to collect their membership fee. These changes affected the way cohesion operated on several levels.

Men of different social backgrounds generally cohered together in a way in which they would not have done before the war. Horizontal cohesion was generated between individuals much more on shared experience rather than on pre-existing background commonalities. Pre-war social conventions were dropped in favour of mutual co-operation and survival in the trenches and shared experience became the background commonality that bonded men together. There were exceptions; in some class corps units, middle class veterans would not mix socially with working class drafts, but these examples were rare.

The nature of vertical cohesion also changed. In class corps units, the arrangement of reciprocal responsibility was replaced with a more traditional paternal approach as the social class of the rankers changed. Officers in class corps battalions began, from late 1916, providing material support to their men and organising their leisure needs in line with their perceived paternal gentlemanly duties to those of lower social classes.

All units also reported an increasing reliance on formal disciplinary procedures. In 1917 three death sentences were carried out in three units. However, despite this increased dependence on formal measures, the policy was *in extremis* and vertical cohesion between leader and subordinate was predominantly based on paternal care, personal example and a corrective emphasis on bargaining and finding informal solutions to disciplinary problems.

The social change in units also affected the nature of organisational cohesion. Before the summer of 1916, organisational cohesion was rooted in the traditions, customs and identity of the battalion, which many volunteers adopted as they had chosen the unit in which to serve. Volunteers who joined battalions prior to conscription still continued to serve in these battalions until the end of the war and they probably still accounted for a third of every unit at the Armistice. Many of these volunteers, especially in class corps units, retained affection for their unit, based on their affinity with its traditions and customs. However, new conscript recruits joining the units under study had little sympathy or connection with the unit they had been forced to join.

The regimental leadership of the units under study recognised the importance of organisational cohesion, or *esprit de corps*, as they would have termed it. From 1916 onwards, large scale and organised attempts were made by the leadership to socialise men with their platoon, company and battalion. This association was based on being a member of

the unit rather than the pre-war identity of a battalion based on its regimental connections to its associated regular unit or, in the case of class corps units, based on the social exclusivity of its middle class membership. Sports events, brigade and divisional cups, and organised leisure activities were arranged on a regular basis around platoon, company and battalion competitions to help build a shared community feeling. Running in parallel with this was a regular training programme, which emphasised competition between units in marksmanship, bomb throwing and other martial activities and further strengthened corporate empathy. This approach appears to have been largely effective, with many men developing affinities with their battalions, companies and platoons and expressing regimental pride and gaining a sense of belonging to their unit. The nature of cohesion in the second half of the war was much more inclusive and less externally aggressive as compared with organisational cohesion at the battalion level before 1916, which could be tribal and militant and actively hostile to outsiders.

Tactical reform was another key change arising from the Battle of the Somme and it had a major impact on primary group cohesion. From February 1917 to the Armistice, platoon structures, weapons systems and tactics underwent radical re-organisation. The platoon moved from being structured around four rifle sections to being dominated, by early 1918, by two Lewis gun and two rifle sections. The introduction of Lewis guns meant sections became focused around a single weapon system that required constant close inter-dependent teamwork to operate, supply the gun with ammunition and fire the weapon. The new rifle sections also had to operate the rifle grenades, which required close collective co-operation to deploy effectively on a given target. Sections ceased being collections of individual riflemen and, instead, became a close-knit team of machine operators who had to develop close personal relationships to work effectively. This created situations for the development of horizontal cohesion. The massive increase in firepower saw a major reduction in manpower, with the platoon shrinking from 56 men to 32 men from January 1917 to February 1918. This made the social horizon in each section more intense and intimate and, in turn, strengthened relations.

In addition, to this tactical reform, there was a steady increase in the average length of time soldiers served in France before they left for whatever reason. In 1917, on average the officers served 222 days and other ranks served 246 days. In the final year of the war to the Armistice, this average length of time served continued to rise, with commissioned soldiers

serving an average of 243 days and enlisted men serving 497 days. This suggests that the longevity of vertical and horizontal cohesion, where these relationships were established, remained intact much longer as personnel in units became more stabilised.

These two factors – the mechanisation, contraction and specialisation of platoon sections and the increase in the longevity of primary group cohesion – contributed to the combat performance of raiding operations in the spring of 1918. Between 1916 and the Armistice, the units under study participated in 29 operations conducted in 26 raids (some raids were by two or more battalions). Their success was measured by the attainment of an identification of the German units opposite them, as this was the main purpose of raids. Identification was achieved by capturing a prisoner or bringing back documents that would identify the enemy. Using this measure, it is possible to show that the operational success rate steadily rose from 12.5% in 1916 to 14% in 1917 and then dramatically rose to 62% in the first seven months of 1918.

The raids in 1918 demonstrated a very different character from those in 1916/7 as they showed significantly better teamwork, professionalism and execution when compared with earlier raids. Those conducted in the final year of the war operated at a higher level of efficiency as all successful raids achieved surprise; they were planned and prepared in half the time of those in 1916/7 and were, at the same, time more sophisticated, complex and involved a larger number of men.

The efficiency of the raiding teams was largely due to the primary group cohesion developed by the raiders. The mechanisation of the sections probably contributed to an intensification of primary group relations as the groups were smaller, there was a requirement to work much more closely together and they were heavily inter-dependent on one another to operate the unit. Raiders were also exceptionally experienced, with over half the men in battalions in early 1918 having over a year's service, resulting in considerable personal and group shared experience of battle, trench holding and regular training. This collective know-how was evident in the skill with which they deployed and operated their weapons, their capacity to orientate to the start points and ability to co-operate with other teams and supporting arms. Importantly, leaders were also becoming more skilled and experienced as they were spending longer than ever in the front line. While strong primary group cohesion was important, other

developments were also critical in explaining the success of operations, such as the accuracy and effectiveness of artillery.

Cohesion helped to improve 'performance' in the second half of the war but it also contributed to continuing 'deviant' conduct. Throughout the second half of the war, many horizontally cohesive groups sought to act to further the security, safeguard and comfort of their groups, sometimes leading them to avoid work, truce with the enemy or undermine their leaders. However, in 1917 deviant conduct took a much more serious turn with unrest leading to protests in the shape of strikes. These incidents were serious threats to military discipline and their causes were complex.

A creeping cynicism among soldiers was behind the strikes and protests in 1917. Many soldiers had lost faith in their political leaders, some accusing them of prolonging the war. Soldiers expressed widespread anger that they were fighting and many at home were 'shirking', such as the striking miners. Combined with this, many soldiers were war weary, many having been out for several years and the constant strain was beginning to tell. These feelings were not restricted to the units under study as widespread problems in the BEF's morale were reported throughout 1917.

There was also a major breakdown in organisational cohesion between regimental soldiers and their senior leaders above their battalion. Brigadiers, generals and above were considered to be remote, insensitive and out of touch. 'Staff officers' were blamed for botching operations, which cost the units unnecessary casualties in operations at the Somme and during the 'saga of the posts' in February 1917. Staff 'policy' was cited as a contributing factor in both the strikes reported by the LRB in 1917. For example, men downed tools in April because they were being forced to work for a farmer on their 'rest'. In August, after the 56th Division's 16 August attack during Third Ypres, the LRB was reported to be on the brink of possible mutiny or some other lesser protest. The CO's intervention appears to have averted a potential disciplinary incident by directly addressing his troops and publicly blaming the staff for the bungled operation in which they had just fought.

This disgruntlement arose because soldiers felt that the informal contract they had with the army had been breached and that their lives were being wasted in badly executed operations, which were planned by individuals who were out of touch and remote. They felt that there

was an 'inequality of sacrifice', they were doing all the work on the front line whilst others were at home, safe from danger and dodging their responsibilities. Also, soldiers considered that they were being asked to do jobs that were unacceptable, and they had the right to remonstrate and seek recompense. When soldiers in the QVR were ordered to build a 'cage' with German POWs in December 1917, they held a 'strike'.

Strong primary group cohesion helped translate these grievances into action. Men present at protests were deployed in their formal unit structures of platoons and companies, in which they had horizontal cohesion within their respective small units and groups. All the protests were spontaneous with no evidence of pre-planning or prior organisation between the assembled men or other cohesive groups. In such circumstances, the protests could have only happened if the collected mass of men felt similarly about the issue of complaint and felt sufficiently strongly enough about it to defy orders, thereby risking potential disciplinary action. The mechanism, which led the gathered group of men to protest, was that the subject of grievance was a shared concern of many, or all, of the assembled cohesive groups.

A good example of how primary group cohesion could turn local group grievances into a widespread protest is shown in the 'mutiny' by a company in the LRB during November 1917. This company 'downed tools' after working for eight days solid on iron rations in sub-zero conditions when they heard a unit next to them had received hot food. Army food for nearly all men, including most working class men, was vastly inferior to what they had been used to as pre-war civilians. Army rations were monotonous, insufficient and boring and men complained to their families and many requested food parcels be sent to supplement their diets. The individual complaint about the horrendous iron rations and dog biscuits was frequently discussed within their group or unit and distain for army food became a group held gripe. Finding, sharing and sourcing additional food became a focus for men and many shared their food parcels and set up 'dining clubs'. Men further bonded together in 'deviant' action to procure additional food through theft or poaching. Horizontal group cohesion was created through small groups discussing and agreeing their collective hatred for army issued provisions and, sustained by group actions, both legal and illegal, obtained additional nourishment. Morale reports compiled from an analysis of soldiers' letters showed that food remained the top gripe among soldiers. It is probable that nearly all cohesive groups across the units under study were united independently in their local groups in their shared loathing of army food and in constant action to obtain additional supplies. The LRB company grasped

their opportunity to protest about the 'food' situation when it arose. They felt that they had been treated unfairly by the army by not being supplied with the same hot food which had been provided to others. They believed that this injustice gave them the right to protest. The protest spread quickly across the unit as this important issue had been at the centre of the creation and maintenance of horizontal cohesion in many of the small teams and units.

Dangerous though the protests and strikes were in 1917, they were limited and short lived because other forms of cohesion were much stronger. Strong vertical cohesion helped limit further problems and retain good relationships between leader and subordinate. Officers conceded to the demands of many of the protests mentioned, with no follow up disciplinary action. For example, in the QVR strike, men did not work with German POWs and, in the November, LRB 'mutiny' men got their hot food. Officers had a tradition of listening to and bargaining with the demands of their men and this formed part of their style of command. Yielding to the demands, of what was technically a mutiny, could have set a bad precedent for discipline but officers knew their men and, on the whole, had a good relationship with them. The protesters' demands largely concerned working conditions, such as hot food, and were not politically motivated or a protest at the war. The potential mutiny, which was threatened in the LRB after the August 1917 attack was averted when the CO arranged an open-air meeting of the whole battalion. The CO was popular and paternal and had been with the LRB since 1914. The respect his men had for him probably helped reduce the threatened action but it is more likely that his public agreement with the view of his men, ultimately, persuaded them against further action. A mutual dislike of higher formation commanders and the 'staff' actively shared by regimental officers and soldiers strengthened their vertical cohesion throughout 1917. Officers and men frequently refused to salute senior commanders' cars as they passed by and ridiculed the 'staff' by having men dressed as 'red tabs' at battalion concerts and plays.

Societal cohesion among soldiers in 1917/8 was also strong. Despite war weariness, a desire for peace and disillusionment with political and military leaders, soldiers still retained a commitment to the war and their imagined community. A few soldiers believed that the war was futile and obscene but they were a tiny minority; the majority remained grimly determined to fight on. The witnessing of the destruction of villages and hearing of German atrocities from refugees motivated many to fight on. Others were persuaded by tales of German 'atrocities' in the papers, via official communiqués and from family. Though these

‘atrocities’ stories were shaped by propaganda and deliberate enhancement, they persuaded many of the justice of the struggle. For others, motivation was derived from international developments such as the arrival of US forces in 1917/8 and the stringent terms of the German peace demands on the Russians in 1918. Large numbers of soldiers were still motivated by the notion of defending their homes and families from a German threat, which, if not stopped in France, would create similar destruction at home. Over all, it appears that in some groups support for the war was strong and any expression of views to the contrary were considered ‘unmanly’.

The key aspects that emerge from cohesion in the second half of the war are the establishment, intensification and increased prevalence of primary group cohesion in the units under study. The introduction of mechanisation to replace manpower turned individual riflemen to co-operators on crewed weapons; the reduction in size of platoons made units more intimate, and the increased longevity of soldiers’ service on the frontline meant relationships, once established, remained intact. Established teams built up extensive shared battlefield experience, skill in using new weapons and well established teamwork, all of which was applied and executed in the raids in early 1918 and ultimately, contributed to their success.

D. The outcomes of cohesion

Cohesion as a composite of its four constituent relationships led to three outcomes in the units under study during the Great War. Firstly, cohesion was a major source of combatant morale and motivation and was derived from a range of influences. Socially based horizontal cohesion could motivate individuals to seek revenge for the death of a loved group member. Individual friendship and emotional ties to groups could persuade men to fight with their mates rather than leave them when they had the opportunity. Strong leader attachment could convince units to follow leaders and fight for them in battle. A soldier’s organisational cohesion with his battalion could persuade him to apply more energy on its behalf. Finally, these influences could operate at the personal level and group level; for instance, all members agreeing to work for a liked leader. Although these influences varied greatly depending on the individual situation, the evidence suggests that, at many times throughout the war, people remained motivated by these relationships.

Secondly, cohesion helped build resilience and endurance among soldiers to cope with the terror and stress of the trenches. Again, cohesive relationships generated many influences that helped soldiers carry on during the war. Strong cohesive peer groups provided caring environments and gave members social support to buffer the stresses of combat and warfare. Being part of a social group and having company present during action, artillery barrages or moments of extreme stress, helped soldiers manage their fear. Courageous personal leadership by NCOs and officers in mortal and perilous situations also raised spirits and assisted soldiers in dealing with distressing situations. Also, a strong commitment to a soldier's imagined community gave him strength and purpose to carry on fighting. In addition, many soldiers were kept going through their personal relationships via regular post and parcel with 'home' and infrequent leaves. These influences were multifaceted and constant and contributed to a soldier's resilience in the trenches.

Finally, cohesion facilitated soldiers to perform their allocated tasks in a variety of contexts. In some groups, primary group cohesion enabled teams to perform collectively their daily work or tasks through trust-based teamwork. In other situations, cohesion that was well established and prevalent could lead to groups enhancing their performance as was demonstrated with raiding operations in 1918. Lastly, cohesion led to groups performing 'deviant' actions, which were contrary to the wider objectives of the military organisation of which they were a part. These could include activity to avoid work, trucing with the enemy or openly protest against authority. It was possible for cohesive units and groups to undertake all three activities depending on their situation.

Ultimately, cohesion and its related outcomes were shaped by an array of influences, which were, in many ways, unique to these units. The members of each cohesive group determined their own outcomes, often in reference to their own collective security, comfort and well-being. For example, many groups may have truced with the Germans to prevent retaliation and make their own quality of lives better. However, for other groups different issues or priorities informed their action.

The civilian backgrounds, as Helen McCartney pointed out, were important for informing the actions of individuals and groups. Many may have chosen to truce with the Germans as they had a rational and utilitarian view of fighting and didn't want to risk casualties for no clear tactical or strategic gain. Civilian values shaped how men perceived the world and the actions

they took. Many men perceived their service in the army as an unwritten bargain of responsibilities and rights. They had the responsibility to give their service, risk possible death, but they expected certain rights from the army in return. They anticipated to be fairly treated, given an acceptable level of material support and have the right of redress where their bargain with the army was not met. This mirrored the perceived relationship in the wider civilian society; for example, in employment where labour was given on defined conditions, with recourse to trade unions, strikes and other protests if the terms were broken. Men brought this perception of their service into the army and it defined the parameters of their grievances and their right to seek redress. In 1917 many men felt the army had treated them unfairly; for example, in April 1917, LRB felt that making them work on their 'rest' was unfair and they protested by strike action for this breach of their unwritten contract. The form of protest chosen was also informed by their experience of the occupational world, hence their choice of the strike.

Also important in shaping cohesion and its outcomes were prevailing social norms and values. In class corps units in the first half of the war, reciprocal responsibility between gentleman rankers and their middle class officers was vital for effective vertical cohesion as it was the social conduct which ranker subordinates expected from their officers. However, as the social composition of units changed so did the social expectations of the increasingly working class soldiers. These men expected their officers to behave as paternal gentleman to meet their civilian status as such. In exchange, many were happy to give deference, in the form of their trust, as this met with their experience of civilian life. Middle class officers took this change of roles seriously as part of their social duty as gentlemen. They cared for their men and led by example. This acted as the basis for the development of vertical cohesion between working class soldiers and middle class officers. In addition, prevailing notions of masculinity were also important in forming cohesion; for example, being perceived as 'unmanly' in a group could cast doubt on one's reliability as a team member.

Unit traditions within the battalions under study also played a role in shaping cohesion and its outcomes. The relaxed style of discipline, based on gaining consent and engagement of an officer's men, was rooted in the territorial ethos before the war. Socialisation between ranks, a laid-back approach to discipline and a degree of informality had dominated the pre-war regime of discipline. This style was largely carried into the trenches as officers believed this was the most effective means of gaining the trust and commitment of their men. The

persistence of this style of discipline was probably due to the fact that many pre-war officers served for long periods in their units and many NCOs were promoted from the ranks, often from pre-war TF men. This informal style of discipline contributed to good vertical cohesion, which dominated relations. It is likely that imposing a stricter form of discipline may have had adverse effects on vertical cohesion; a possible consequence understood by many officers serving in the units under study.

The final factor that shaped cohesion and outcomes to the greatest extent was the impact of war on the battalions. Casualties suffered on the Somme resulted in reinforcements being brought in to replace them. This changed the social composition of the units, which, in turn, influenced the nature of vertical and horizontal cohesion. Structural changes to the battalions implemented from 1917 saw the introduction of crewed weapons and tactics to employ them, and this influenced how cohesion functioned as it made relations more intimate, teams more inter-dependent and the milieu of sections smaller.

This study pursues an innovative approach to understanding cohesion and combatant morale and resilience in the Great War. Through applying an adapted social science model to a historical case study it has demonstrated that cohesion was widespread, strong and durable at both the primary and secondary group levels. The nature and extent of that cohesion altered as the war progressed and was heavily shaped by changes in the social class composition of units, platoon structure and function, and the impacts of war such as casualties. Nevertheless, throughout the war, cohesion influenced and shaped attitudes of soldiers and their primary groups and contributed to their collective motivation and endurance.

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Appendix 1 – Nature and type of primary sources and social class of authors used for this study

Overview

This appendix details the 117 primary sources identified for this study. It sets out the type and nature of sources by battalion and social class of the author.

A source is defined as a body of work of historical importance but it does not include single letters or quotations in books.

Sources by unit

The table below details the type of primary source by unit.

Table A1.1– Type of primary source by unit

Type Unit	Letters	Diary	Article	Interview	Memoir	Poems	Fiction	Papers (letters, diaries, other papers)	Total
1/2 Londons		2				1			3
1/4 Londons	2	1		2					5
LRB	2	2		5	7		2		18
QVR	5	6	1	3	2				17
Rangers	4	2		3	5				14
Kensingtons	6	3	1	2	7		1		20
London Scottish	2	4	1	2	12			1	22
QWR	4	5			8			1	18
Total	25	25	3	17	41	1	3	2	117

Forty-nine of the 117 sources were letters and diaries and are considered as contemporaneous while the remaining sources were written after the event.

Date of publication

The publication dates of the various types of primary sources are tabulated below.

Table A1.2 – Publication date of primary sources by date

Date Primary source	WW1	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	Post war (no date)	Total - post war	Grand Total
Article	1		1					1		2	3
Diary	24									0	24
Fiction – story based on service		1	1		1					3	3
Interview							17			17	17
Letters	25									0	25
Memoir	6	1		1		1	4	3	26	36	42
Papers [papers, diary, letters]	2									0	1
Poems	1									0	1
Grand Total	59	2	2	1	1	1	21	4	26	58	117

Social class of source author

The methodology set out in Chapter 2 has been used to determine the social class of the source author based on occupation, education and other factors, for instance, if a soldier sent part of his wage to his mother during the war or whether the author was a member of a class corps units in the first two years of the war.

Social class has been estimated for 89 of the 117 authors where information is available. It is estimated that 80 sources were written by middle class men and the remainder by working class men.

Table A1.3 – Social class of primary source author by unit

<div> <div>Social class</div> <div>Unit</div> </div>	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1/2 Londons	1	1				2
1/4 Londons	1	1	1			3
LRB	4	14				18
QVR	3	3	1			7
Rangers	2	2	3			7
Kensingtons	4	7	5	1		17
London Scottish	2	17				19
QWR	7	10				17
Total	24	55	10	1	0	90

Table A1.4 – List of primary sources

Surname	Forename	Title	Unit	Archive reference	Archive	Published info	Type	Occupation	social class	Notes
Anderton	E.H.		Kensingtons	88/20/1	IWM		Letters	?	?	
Appleyard	S.W.		QVR	82/1/1	IWM		Diary	Quantity surveyor	1	
Ashford	R.G.		QWR	A13	LC		Memoir	?	2	Early War QWR ranker.
Austin	F.		QVR	33293	IWMSA		Interview	?	?	
Barker	A.G.		LRB	8576	IWM		Letters		1	pre war TF member
Batho	A.C.		QVR	GS	LC		Letters	?	?	
Beck	E.		Kensingtons		Private		Diary	?	?	
Bell	H.	<i>A Soldier's Diary of the Great War</i>	LRB			(London, 1929)	Diary		2	Early war LRB ranker.
Bickersteth	J.	<i>Bickersteth Diaries, 1914-1918</i>	Rangers			(Barnsley, 1995)	Letters	Padre	1	
Birth	T.G.		Rangers	33096	IWMSA		Interview	?	?	
Bisgood	T.H.	The Complete Diary (as it survives), 2nd Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)	1/2 Londons			http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=29488	Diary	?	?	
Brookes	B.J.	A True and Personal Record of Experiences as a Signaller in the Army at Home and Abroad during the European War	QWR			http://bjb.bobbrookes.co.uk/#home	Diary	Bank clerk	2	
Brown	H.		LRB			http://robinlodge.com/	diary		1	Pre-war TF member.
Clark	C.	<i>The Tin Trunk, Letters and Drawings 1914-1918, Cosmo Clark</i>	Kensingtons			(London, 2000)	Letters	Artist	3	Letters
Clements	H.T.		1/2 London	86/76/1	IWM		Diary		2	Teacher
Coates	H.B.		London Scottish	9833	IWMSA		Interview	?	2	Early war volunteer
Collins	A.C.		Kensingtons	GS 0340	LC		Memoir	Business owner	1	
Coombes	C.R.		London scottish	GS 0355	LC		Letters		2	Early War London Scottish ranker.
Cooper	E.T.	<i>Soliloquies of a Subaltern</i>	1/2 London			(London, 1915)	Poems		1	

Coppard	E.F.		London scottish	GS	LC		Memoir	?	2	Early War London Scottish ranker.
Coutts	C.W.S.		Kensingtons	GS	LC		Interview	Plumber's mate	4	
Davis	R.	<i>One Young Man</i>	QVR			(London, 1917)	Letters	City worker	2	
Diary of an unidentified soldier in the 1/16 Battalion London Regiment 1914-1915			QWR	133/2059	iwm		Diary		2	Early war volunteer in QWR.
Dickson (ed)	G.	<i>Granddad's Great War Diary</i>	Kensingtons			(Manchester, 2014)	Diary	Gas fitter	3	Diary of William James Dickson
Dolden	A.S.	<i>Cannon Fodder</i>	London Scottish			(Poole, 1980)	Memoir	Solicitor	1	
Dudley-Ward	C.H.		QWR	6374	iwm		Memoirs	?	1	QWR early war officer.
Engall	J.S.	<i>A Subaltern's Letters: The Letters of Second-Lieutenant J. S. Engall 1915-16</i>	QWR			(London, 1917)	Letters	?	1	QWR early war officer.
Eve	W.	Diary of the Great War'	QWR			<i>Stand To!</i> 51 (Jan 1998)	Diary		2	Early war QWR volunteer.
Ferris	W.L.		Rangers			http://www.family-forest.co.uk/familytree/biographies/ferris/walter-ferris.shtml	Letters		2	Attempting to get clerks jobs.
Flemming	H.		QVR	1999/01\141	nam		Letters		1	Pre war officer
Fowler	H.J.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Fry	W.	<i>Air of Battle</i>	LRB			(London, 1974)	Memoir	Clerk	2	Early war LRB volunteer.
Furse	L.C.		LRB	9712	IWMSA		Interview	Insurance clerk	2	
Godsave	G.E.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Gower	H.W.G.		LRB	10966	IWMSA		Interview	Insurance clerk	3	
Graham	J.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.

Gregory (ed)	R.	<i>Tim's War, The Psychology of War and Peace Through One Man's Eyes</i>	QVR			(Sutton, 2013)	Diary	Printing assistant	3	Diary of Timothy Elliot
Gristwood	A.D.	<i>The Somme and The Coward</i>	LRB			(London, 1927)	Fiction	Insurance clerk	2	
Groom	W.H.A.	<i>Poor Bloody Infantry</i>	LRB			(London, 1976)	Memoir	Clerk	2	
Hall	F.J.		Rangers	67/13/1	iwm		Diary	Accountant	1	
Hall (ed)	M.	<i>In Enemy Hands, A British Territorial Soldier in Germany, 1915-1919</i>	Rangers			(Stroud, 2002)	Memoir	Storekeeper	3	Memoir of Alfred Hall.
Harrison	W.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Hase	Leslie	Interview with Leslie Hase	QVR			http://worldwar1vetrans.blogspot.com/2009/06/2120-pte-leslie-andrew-hase-9th-county.html Accessed 5/11/2011	Interview	?	?	
Hawkings	F.	<i>From Ypres to Cambrai</i>	QVR			(Morley, 1973)	Diary		?	?
Henriques	J.Q.		QWR	8901\105	NAM		Letters		1	Pre-war TF officer.
Hewitt	A.		Kensingtons	2003\05\22	nam		Letters	Draper	2	Father owned own business.
Higgins	F.C.		1/4 London	9884	IWMSA		Interview	Saw mill worker	3	
Higgins	J.E.L.		Kensingtons		Luton and Bedford Archives		Letters	Lawyer	1	
Holmes	T.H.		QWR	06/30/1	IWM		Memoir	Clerk	2	White collar worker
Holmes	W.G.		Rangers	8868	IWMSA		Interview	Shop assistant	3	
Horrigan	P.		Kensingtons	Mabbott, Henry et al 860	IWMSA		Interview	Stockbrokers clerk	2	
Hossack	A.R.	'The First Gas Attack'	QVR			<i>in Fifty Amazing Stories of the Great War, (London, 1936)</i>	Article	?	?	
Hubbard	A.H.		London Scottish	22009	Iwm		Letters		2	Early war London Scottish ranker.

Hughes	W.		London Scottish		LS archive		Diary		2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Jefferies	F.W.		Kensingtons	GS	LC		Memoir	Junior insurance clerk	2	
Jones	P.H.		qwr	12253	iwm		Letters		1	Early war volunteer in QWR.
Joy	A.		1/4 London	1992\09\193	NAM		Diary		?	
Kennington	E.H.	<i>Kensingtons at Laventie, Winter 1914</i>	Kensingtons			(Goupil Gallery, 1916)	Memoir	Painter	3	Gallery notes for exhibition of Kensingtons at Laventie.
Kerridge	V.S.		London Scottish	18836	iwmssa		Interview	?	2	Early War London Scottish member.
Kington	H.		Rangers			http://www.yorkfamilyhistory.org.uk/first-world-war-ancestors-the-kingtons-of-woolwich-england/	Diary	?	?	
Lane	C.J.		Rangers	GS 0914	LC		Letters	?	?	
Lane	S.		kensingtons	97/11/1	IWM		Memoir	Clerk	2	
Latham	B.	<i>A Soldier's Territorial War</i>	LRB			(Aldershot, 1967)	Memoir	?	2	Early war LRB member.
Lee	H.W	<i>Forty Years of English Cricket</i>	Kensingtons			(London, 1948)	Memoir	Sportsman	3	
Leighton Green	S.F.	<i>The Happy Padre. Letters of the Rev. S. F. Leighton Green from France and Flanders, 1916-1919.</i>	1/4 London			(London, 1929)	Letters	Padre		
Livering	E.	<i>Attack!</i>	Rangers			(London, 1918)	Memoir	?	2	Early war officer
Low	C.		London Scottish	79/54/1	IWM		Papers (letters, memoirs, articles)	?	1	Pre war London Scottish officer.
Manton	C.		LRB	9756	IWMSA		Interview	Engineer	2	Early war LRB member.
Marshall	L.T.		Kensingtons		Private		Diary		2	Attended St John's Cambridge.
Martin	W.G.		Rangers	GS	LC		Memoir	?	?	

Mason	R.J.		Rangers	Misc 250, Box 12	IWM		Memoir	?	?	
McCormack	J.		QVR		IWM	Private	Diary	?	?	
McLaren (ed)	S.J.	<i>Somewhere in Flanders, The War Letters of the Revd Samuel Frederic Leighton Green</i>	1/4 London			(Dereham, 2005)	Letters	Padre	1	
Miller	C.F.		LRB	11043	IWMSA		Interview	Insurance clerk	2	
Moffat	A.		London Scottish	GS	LC		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Moy	C.E.		QWR	09/61/1	IWM		Memoir	?	1	Commissioned early in war.
Mundy	P.D.		Kensingtons	4862/80/43/1	IWM		Letters	Civil Servant	1	Attended private school.
Newman	C.T.	Private	QVR	30/5/01	IWM		Letters	Sunday school teacher	2	
Nobbs	G.	<i>Right of the British Line</i>	LRB			(London, 1917)	Memoir	?	1	Pre war LRB officer
Nottage	G.S.		QWR	GS	LC		Papers [papers, diary, letters]		2	QWR pre war volunteer.
Peacock	S.C.		Rangers	9372	iwmsa		Interview	Shop assistant	3	
Pincombe	J.A.		QWR	6833	NAM		Memoir	?	?	
Pinkerton	D.	<i>Ladies From Hell</i>	London Scottish			(New York, 1918)	Memoir	?	2	Early War London Scottish volunteer.
Plant	G.S.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Rain	G.S.		QWR	GS	LC		Diary		2	Early war QWR volunteer.
Reid	J.E.		London Scottish	GS	LC		Diary		2	Early war London Scottish volunteer.
Richardson	A.		London Scottish		LS archive		Memoir	?	2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Ross	W.J.		London Scottish		LS archive		Diary		2	Early war London Scottish ranker.

Russell	A.B.		QWR	R17	LC		Memoir	?	1	QWR officer in early part of war.
Sanders	L.	Sanders, L., <i>A Soldier of England</i>	QVR			(Privately published, 1920)				
Schuman	A.		LRB	82/1/1	IWM		Memoir	?	1	Early war volunteer.
Simpkins	S		Kensington			in W. Wood, In the Line of Battle (London, 1916)	Article			
Sims	L.C.		QWR	GS 1476	LC		Letters		2	Early war QWR volunteer.
Sloan	J.A.C.		London Scottish	S17	LC		Memoir	?	?	
Smith	A.	<i>Four Years on the Western Front</i>	LRB			(London, 1922)	Memoir	Clerk	2	
Smith	F.	I'll always remember	Kensingtons			Private memoir	Memoir, written in 1970's	?	3	Sent mother half his pay.
Smith	H.T.		London Scottish		LS archive		Diary		2	Early war London Scottish ranker.
Smith	R.C.		QWR	R22	LC		Memoir	?	?	
Squire	E.W.		Kensingtons	369 Con Shelf	IWM		Letters	Student	1	
Steward	J.J.	<i>The Platoon</i>	Kensingtons			(Barnsley, 2011)	Fiction	Clerk	2	
Stone	H.V.		QVR	24883	IWMSA		Interview	?	?	
Stringer	A.	'My Experiences in the Great War'	London Scottish			<i>Stand To!</i> 14 (Summer 1985), pp.6-7	Memoir	?	2	Pre war London Scottish ranker
Stubbs	B.C.	<i>Diary Kept by Rifleman B. C. Stubbs</i>	QVR			(Chicago, 1915)	Diary		2	Insurance clerk
Suffield	S.	'One Man's War'	London Scottish			<i>Stand To!</i> 21 (Winter 1987)	Article	?	?	
Sylvester	L.J.		Rangers	08/76/1	IWM		Letters	?	?	
Tebbutt	L.		LRB	T8	LC		Memoir	?	2	Early war LRB ranker.
Thompson	G.E.V.		QVR	75/36/1	IWM		Memoir	?	1	Officer, early part of the war.
Tiplady	T.	<i>The Cross at the Front</i>	QWR			(London, 1917)	Memoir	Vicar	1	Padre
		<i>The Soul of the Soldier,</i>	QWR			(London, 1918)	Memoir	Vicar	1	
Tucker	J.F.	<i>Johnny Get Your Gun</i>	Kensingtons			(London, 1978)	Memoir	Clerk	2	

Walkinton	M.L.	<i>Twice in a Lifetime</i>	QWR			(London, 1980)	Memoir	Clerk	2	Early war QWR volunteer.
Widdicombe	J.	Jack Widdicombe's WW1 letters home	LRB			https://jacks-warletters.wordpress.com/2015/07/29/29-aug-1915-put-an-x-through-the-line-underneath-the-day/	Letters	Clerk	2	
Williams	F.J.		QVR		LC		Memoir	?	?	
Williams	H.G.R.		LRB	24878	IWMSA		Interview	?	3	Early war volunteer
Williamson	H.	<i>How Dear is Life</i>	LRB			(London, 1957)	Fiction	Insurance clerk	2	
Wood	C.		1/4 London	11265	IWMSA		Interview	Bank clerk	2	OTC public school boy
Woods	C.M.		QVR	GS 1784	LC		Diary	?	?	
Yearsley	V.C.R.		Rangers	GS	LC		Memoir	?	?	

Appendix 2 – Education and occupation of pre-war and wartime officers in the Kensingtons and London Rifle Brigade

Overview

This appendix sets out the educational and occupational backgrounds of pre-war Kensingtons and educational background of LRB officers during the war.

Pre-war occupations of Kensington officers

The occupation (with the most recent recorded) and their education background of Kensington officers on Army List for February 1914 are tabulated below.¹

Occupational details are known for 24 of the 27 men; all but one held white collar professional roles.

Table A2.1 – Occupational and educational background of Kensington officers listed on the February 1914 Army List

Name	Occupation	School	University
Lieutenant Colonel Fred Gustav Lewis (Commander)	Lawyer ²	Haileybury ³	Cambridge ⁴
Captain Gilbert Thompson (Adjutant)	Regular officer	‘educated privately’ ⁵	
Lieutenant Albert Ridley (QM)	Stable Helper Domestic ⁶		
Lieutenant L Colebrooke (RAMC)	Doctor		
Major Harry John Stafford	Secretary of the Patriotic Society ⁷		
Major Hugh Campbell	Unknown		
Captain Henry R. Robson	Stockbroker ⁸		
Captain Arthur Prismall	Stockbroker ⁹		
Captain Edward Louie Parnell	Civil Servant ¹⁰		
Captain H L Cabuche	Architect and manager at Barkers ¹¹		
Captain Herbert William Barnett	Stockbroker ¹²	University College School ¹³	
Captain Edmund Gibbs Kimber	Lawyer ¹⁴		University College London ¹⁵
Lieutenant Arthur Cecil Herne	Clerk ¹⁶		
Lieutenant Hamlin Whitty	Civil Engineer	Merchant Taylors ¹⁷	Cambridge ¹⁸
Lieutenant John Esmond Longuet	Stockbroker ¹⁹		

¹ *Army List*, 2/1914.

² *Kensington*, 3/1951.

³ *Who's Who* 1929.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Marquis de Ruvigny, Roll of Honour*, Vol.1, Part 1, p.349.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Marquis de Ruvigny, Roll of Honour*, Vol.1, Part 1, p.297.

¹⁰ 1911 Census.

¹¹ *Times*, 22/4/1915

¹² Stock Exchange Memorial Book

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *The Distinguished' Service Order*, p. 409

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ 1911 Census.

¹⁷ *Biographical History of Gonville and Caius College*, p.412.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ 1911 Census.

Higgins			
Lieutenant Cedric Charles Dickens	Lawyer ²⁰	Eton ²¹	Cambridge ²²
Lieutenant Robert Bingley Herbert	Stockbroker ²³		
Lieutenant Ernest Bereford Keen	Medical Student ²⁴	Epsom College ²⁵	
Lieutenant Cecil Noel Charles Howard	Art Student ²⁶		
Second Lieutenant Edward JSL Brooke	Unknown		
Second Lieutenant Robert Murray Macgregor	Warehouseman Soft Goods ²⁷		
Second Lieutenant Montegue Colquhoun Kelway Bamber	Student ²⁸	Tonbridge ²⁹	Oxford ³⁰
Second Lieutenant Edmund Ventris Field	Lawyer ³¹		Glasgow ³²
Second Lieutenant GLD Hall	Unknown		
Second Lieutenant WG Burn	Unknown		
Second Lieutenant Norman Oscar Sewell	Army Student ³³	St Pauls ³⁴	
Second Lieutenant Lionel Cohen	Lawyer ³⁵	Eton ³⁶	Oxford ³⁷

²⁰ *Record of Service for Lawyers and Articles Clerks 1914-1918*, London, 1920. Reprinted by Military and Naval Press, p.151.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ 1911 Census.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Epsom College Archive.

²⁶ 1911 Census.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ E.C. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

²⁹ *London Gazette*, 20/5/1913.

³⁰ E.C. Squire, IWM, 369 Con Shelf.

³¹ *Articled Clerks*, p.185

³² Ibid.

³³ 1911 Census.

³⁴ Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

³⁵ *Who's Who*, 1973.

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid.

Educational background of LRB officers serving in 1914 and throughout the war

The source material used is the LRB nominal roll of officers in its battalion history which details the service history of most officers who served with the battalion from 1860 to 1919.³⁸ This roll provides the educational background of 116 of the 226 officers who served with the 1st LRB during the war.

Table A2.2- Educational background of LRB officer corps, January 1914 to November 1918

Year in/ joining LRB	1914 (n=24)	1915 (n=23)	1916 (n=45)	1917 (n=12)	1918 (n=12)
Type of school					
Clarendon School (e.g. Eton, Harrow)	62%	17%	16%	17%	17%
Other public School (other fee paying)	38%	74%	57%	50%	50%
Grammar school	0%	9%	23%	33%	33%
Charity schools	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%

³⁸ Maude, *History*, pp.429-492.

Appendix 3 – Occupational, social class and area of residence of pre-war Kensingtons

Overview

This appendix details the occupations, social class and area of residence for Kensingtons who served as pre-war soldiers.

Occupation and social class

Occupational data is available for only 70 pre-war Kensington men and this represents around 4% of pre-war numbers who joined the Kensingtons between 1908 and the outbreak of war.¹ The available data limits the sample size.

The largest occupational group were clerks (24 men, 34%)² followed by gas fitters (3 men, 4%) and the rest were varied. For example, Nelson Condon was a college servant at University College London³, Charles Southwick was a school master at Vineyards School, Richmond⁴; Harry Gage-Cole was a pressman at Doves' press⁵ and William Coutts was a plumber's mate.⁶

These occupations are allocated into social class categories (see Chapter 2) and tabled below.

Table A3.1 – Social class of pre-war Kensingtons based on their occupation

Occupational class	Number	%
I	0	0
II	33	47.1
III	24	34.2
IV	11	15.7
V	2	2.8

It can be argued that the majority of pre-war Kensingtons (around 53%) were from working class professions based on occupational classes III to V.

Pat Morris in her study of the Leeds rifles noted that both units in her study had one company composed of men of a higher social class than other companies⁷ and this was also reflected in the 6/Battalion West Yorkshires.⁸ This pattern is not noted in the Kensingtons. The company designation is known for 51 of the 70 pre-war men who went to France in November 1914. While this is a small sample it suggests that all the companies were socially mixed.

¹ 1683 men joined the Kensingtons before the war. All men on the creation of the TF were given a new number. This was organised on seniority determined by length of service. The most senior NCO or other rank got the number 1 and so on. From looking at attestation dates and numbers it is possible to work out when people joined. Mark Guy Roberts joined the Kensingtons on 5 August 1914 and was given the number 1683. See Silver War Badge medal role WO-329 3160 at the National Archives.

² These men included Charles Maplethorpe (923/490035) who was a junior clerk at the Law Courts (Christchurch Parish church, Chelsea, Oct 1918. Royal Borough of Chelsea and Kensington Archives. See also War Office: Soldiers' Documents, First World War 'Burnt Documents' (Microfilm Copies); (The National Archives Microfilm Publication WO363); Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England. Accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk, Charles Tee (1605/490200) who worked for the National Amalgamated Approved Society² and Charles Williams Hoskins (520) worked for New Zealand Government Office in Victoria Street.

³ University of London University College Roll of Honour (1919), p.35.

⁴ de Ruvigny's Roll of Honour, Vol.1, 334.

⁵ <http://www.oakknoll.com/bookexcerpt.php?booknr=72642> Accessed 18/12/2011.

⁶ Transcriptions of C.W.S. Coutts, LC.

⁷ Pat Morris, 'Leeds and the amateur military tradition: the Leeds Rifles and their antecedents, 1859-1918' (Unpublished PhD, University of Leeds 1983), p.274.

⁸ E.V. Tempest, *History of 6th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment* (Bradford, 1921), p.12.

Table A3.2 – Social composition of Kensington companies

Company/ Occupational class	I	II	III	IV	V	Total
A	0	1	0	0	0	1
B	0	2	2	1	1	6
C	0	3	2	2	0	7
D	0	4	1	1	0	6
E	0	5	4	1	0	10
F	0	5	2	1	0	8
G	0	3	2	1	0	6
H	0	2	3	2	0	7

Area of residence

A study of the residence of 155 pre-war Kensingtons was carried out from attestation papers and other sources. The results show that 69% of these men lived in what can broadly be termed as ‘west’ London with 12% living south of the river. The most common area of residence was Fulham (21%), followed by Kensington (18%), Hammersmith (5%) and Notting Hill (4%).⁹

⁹ This data is taken from Soldiers Died in the Great War and the records of men from War Office: Soldiers' Documents, First World War 'Burnt Documents' (Microfilm Copies); (The National Archives Microfilm Publication WO363); Records created or inherited by the War Office, Armed Forces, Judge Advocate General, and related bodies; The National Archives of the UK (TNA), Kew, Surrey, England. Accessed via www.ancestry.co.uk.

Appendix 4 – Residence of soldiers died serving in the Kensingtons, 1914/5 to 1918

Overview

This appendix lists the residence of soldiers who died serving in the Kensingtons during the Great War. It is taken from the Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914-19 CD originally published by His Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) in 1921. Attestation forms were the source used to record the area of residence.

Summary of residence

The table below categorises areas of residence based on three distinctions:

- Area 1 – traditional recruiting area of the Kensingtons as determined by area of residence of pre-war volunteers. This covers areas of west London like Kensington, Chelsea, Fulham, Notting Hill, Hammersmith and Earl's Court.
- Area 2 – Greater London outside, area 1.
- Area 3 – rest of the world outside areas 1 and 2.

Table A4.1 – Residence as recorded for soldiers who died whilst serving in Kensingtons, 1914/5 to 1918

Area	1914/5	1916	1917	1918
Kensingtons' traditional area – West London (Area 1)	289	131	68	50
Greater London (Area 2)	5	68	109	90
Outside greater London (Area 3)	0	24	31	30
	294	223	208	170

Figures as a percentage

Area	1914/5	1916	1917	1918
Kensingtons' traditional area – west London (Area 1)	98%	59%	33%	29%
Greater London (Area 2)	2%	30%	52%	53%
Outside greater London (Area 3)	0%	11%	15%	18%

Specific areas of residence

Table A4.2 – Residences cited on attestation forms for soldiers who died whilst serving in Kensingtons, 1914/5 to 1918

Area given	1914/5	1916	1917	1918	Grand Total	Area coding (related to above)
Acton			2		2	2
Aldersgate Street		1			1	2
Battersea		3	3	1	7	2
Bedford				1	1	3
Bexley Heath		1	1	1	3	3
Bishop Auckland		1			1	3
Bloomsbury		9	10	9	28	2
Bournemouth		1			1	3
Bow				1	1	2
Brighton		1		1	2	3
Bunhill Row			1	3	4	2
Bury St Edmunds				1	1	3
Camberley			1		1	3
Camberwell		1	9	9	19	2
Canning Town			3	1	4	3
Canterbury				1	1	3
Caxton Hall			1		1	2
Chelsea		2		1	3	1
Chichester		1			1	3
Clare		1			1	3
Clevedon		1			1	3
Coalville		1			1	3
Cork				1	1	3
Croydon		1			1	3
Dartford		1			1	3
Deptford		1	5	1	7	3
Dorking			1		1	3
Ealing			1		1	2
Earl's Court	1				1	1
East Grinstead				1	1	3
East Ham			2		2	2
Eccles		1			1	3
Epsom		1			1	3
Exeter			2		2	3
Finchley			1		1	2
Finsbury		1	1	4	6	2
Finsbury Barracks		1		1	2	2
Folkestone			1	1	2	3
Fulham		5	1	3	9	1

Grays			1		1	2
Great Yarmouth		1			1	3
Greenwich		4	1		5	2
Guildford			1		1	3
Hackney		1	3	1	6	2
Hackney Baths				3	3	2
Hammersmith		2	1	1	4	1
Handel Street		2			2	2
Hanwell			1		1	3
Highbury			1		1	2
Holborn		1	2		3	2
Holloway		2	1	1	4	2
Holywell				1	1	3
Hounslow			2	3	5	3
Ilford		1		1	2	3
Ipswich		1	2		3	3
Islington		2		1	3	2
Kensington	288	119	58	38	503	1
Kingston upon Thames				2	2	3
Lambeth		1	2	3	6	2
Leicester		2	1	1	4	3
Lewisham			2		2	2
Leyton			4	2	6	2
Lincoln				1	1	3
Lincoln's Inn		1	1		2	2
London		10	9	5	24	2
Luton			1		1	3
Maidstone		1			1	3
Mansion House		1			1	2
Marylebone			2	4	6	1
Newark		1	1		2	3
Northampton				1	1	3
Norwich		2		1	3	3
Paddington		2	5	3	10	1
Peckham			2	3	5	2
Penton Street				1	1	2
Piccadilly			1	1	2	2
Pimlico			1		1	2
Plaistow				1	1	3
Poplar			3		3	2
Purfleet			1		1	3
Putney				1	1	2
Reading				1	1	3
Romford			1	2	3	3
Rotherhithe		1	2	3	6	2

Saffron Walden			2		2	3
Seven Oaks				1	1	3
Shepherd's Bush		1	1		2	1
Shoreditch		2	3	2	7	2
Somerset House		11	2	2	15	2
Southampton			1		1	3
Southhall		2		1	3	3
Southwark		1	2	3	6	2
St John Hill			1		1	2
St Pancras	4	3	2	3	12	2
St Paul's Churchyard			1	3	4	3
St Swithin's Lane		1	1	1	3	2
Stepney		1	1	2	4	2
Stoke Newington			4	3	7	2
Stratford		3	4	4	11	2
Streatham			1		1	2
Sudbury			1		1	3
Tottenham			1		1	2
Tredegar Road				2	2	2
Walthamstow		1	1		2	2
Wandsworth			2	1	3	2
Warley			3		3	2
Whitehall	1	1	5	9	16	2
Willesden				1	1	2
Wimbledon			1		1	2
Wolverhampton			1		1	3
Woodfield Road			1		1	2
Woolwich		2	7	4	13	2
Grand Total	294	224	208	170	896	

Appendix 5 - Officers' social class at the Armistice

Overview

In 1918 as part of the demobilisation plan, the War Office gave all soldiers an industrial group based on their pre-war occupation to help with prioritising the most economically useful soldiers for release from the army first. Officers and men were placed into one of 44 'industrial' groups. The dispersal certificates of the officers who had been demobilised by 12 May 1920 were analysed by the War Office and presented in the table below reproduced from the *Statistics of Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War*. There are some anomalies in the data, and the categories employed are so broad that it is not always possible to determine exactly the occupation that soldiers performed. For instance, Industrial Group 1, Agriculture, seems to cover both farm owners, labourers and all agricultural workers. However, these statistics do give a clear picture of the social status of the officer corps in 1918.

Table A5.1- Return of demobilization of soldiers by industrial groups¹

Group	Industrial Group	Officers - analysed in the previous 14 days	Other ranks - analysed during the previous 14 days	Officers – total demobbed since 11.11.18 to May 1920	Other ranks - demobbed since 11.11.18 to May 1920
1	Agriculture	29	203	7495	301770
2	Seamen and Fishermen	3	44	638	33747
3	Coal and shale mining	4	37	1016	220310
4	Mining other than 3	2	4	83	5182
5	Slate mines and quarries		1	20	2418
6	Quarries other than slate and iron		2	43	8978
7	Food, drink and tobacco	1	136	1499	102279
8	Explosives	1	17	371	19081
9	India rubber	1	6	159	7215
10	Paper, printing	1	52	880	65860
11	Woolen and worsted	2	24	579	26679
12	Cotton	2	47	701	63581
13	Textile, dyeing and Co	1	11	254	19519
14	Textile trades other than 11,12, 13	2	17	499	23766
15	Bootmakers		34	213	49377
16	Leather tanning		4	99	7472
17	Leather trades other than 16		20	214	15445
18	Clothing	2	56	657	64970
19	Sawmilling	2	26	405	26440
20	Furniture	1	14	128	27951
21	Coachbuilders and woodworkers		34	157	34222
22	Shipbuilding	1	21	342	33580
23	Iron and steel manufacture		10	111	17033
24	Tinplate manufacture	1	1	46	2864

¹ Statistics of Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War (London, 1922), p.707.

25	iron founding and moulding		25	160	31186
26	Engineering	59	478	11389	359948
27	Metal trades other than 2,24, 25	2	67	838	59879
28	China, glass ad pottery		3	140	15365
29	Brick and cement		3	168	8219
30	Building trades (including navies)	37	228	7739	269899
31	Railway workers	13	123	1122	105175
32	Dock and wharf labourers		38	184	39445
33	Carters (horse)		187	148	135746
34	Motor drivers	1	220	220	102312
35	Employers of public authorities	36	121	5533	133041
36	General labourers		153	363	131179
37	Commercial and Clerical	127	1121	38572	480374
38	Warehousemen and porters	1	47	266	42659
39	Domestic and personal	2	170	341	104302
40	Other manufacturers and industries	1	14	364	14312
41	Other occupations (except 43 and 43)	73	53	8852	34614
42	Professional men	100	60	21740	26988
43	Students and teachers	83	29	25577	41330
44	Soldiers extending their service for 2 years or longer		20	148	116952

Appendix 6 - Length of service for Kensingtons other ranks on the Western Front during the Great War

Overview

This appendix sets out the average length of time NCOs and privates spent serving in France in the 1/13 Battalion London Regiment (Kensingtons) on the Western Front between 4 November 1914 and the Armistice in 1918 in a single episode of service. This is defined as the length of time they served with the unit on the front line before their term ended for whatever reason which could include transferred, killed, commissioned, wounded, illness or the war ended. It does not cover a soldiers' total length of service with a unit or at war.

Methodology

The source material used is the London Regiment medal rolls for The British War Medal. This was a service medal awarded to service personnel and civilians who either entered a theatre of war, or rendered approved service overseas between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918.

It is silver and circular and carries a truncated bust of King George V on the obverse, while there is a depiction of Saint George on the reverse. There is a straight clasp carrying a watered silk ribbon. This has a central band of golden yellow with three stripes of white, black and blue on both sides. 6,610,000 British War Medals were issued after the Great War.

Medal rolls were created to assist with the identification of eligible soldiers. The medal rolls for the London Regiment at the National Archives give considerable detail of the theatres of war people served and their dates of entrance and exit.¹

It is possible to gain an idea of how long soldiers served with a unit until they were either transferred, wounded, killed, commissioned or their service ended for some reason by tabulating this into a database.

Data set

The data sample analysed for this study covers the service history of 3,102 men who served with the 1/13 London Regiment between 4 November 1914, when the battalion was deployed to France and 11 November 1918.

In total, this covers 3,505 episodes of service of 3,102 individuals of whom 2,690 had one episode of service, 412 had two episodes, 36 had three episodes and 1 had four episodes. The dates given relate to the time in theatre rather than the time spent with the battalion at the front line.

¹ British War Medal, London Regiment rolls for 13th London Battalion, WO-329/1525, WO-329/1526, WO-329/1527, TNA.

Length of service

This table presents the data set and length of service that men served from 1914/5 to 1918.

Table A6.1 – Data set and average length of service in France, 1914/5 to 1918

Year	Number of records ²	Average (mean) number of days	Number <42 days with the unit	% <42 days	Number >6 months' (182 days) with the unit	% > 6 months' (182 days) experience
1915	673	122	179	27%	42	6%
1916	659	223	185	28%	325	49%
1917	707	246	188	27%	325	46%
1918	1466	497	237	16%	1045	71%
Average	3505	272	197		434	

Fate

This table sets out what caused the end of a soldiers' episode of service

Table A6.2 – Cause of service episode ending, 1914/5 to 1918

		Cause of service episode ending									
	Total episodes	Killed	Comm ³	DW ⁴	Transfer ⁵	Present at war's end	Term of Engagement ended ⁶	Other/unknown	died	Discharged ⁷	Total
1914/5	673	243	67	49	1	N/A	16	289	7	1	673
1916	659	206	59	45	7	N/A	17	322	3	0	659
1917	707	141	41	54	112	N/A	0	353	5	1	707
1918	1466	93	6	36	118	790	0	413	9	1	1466
Total	3505	683	173	184	238	790	33	1377	24	3	3505

	Number of records	Cause of service episode ending									
		Killed	Comm ⁸	DW ⁹	Transfer ¹⁰	Present at war's end	Term of Engagement ended ¹¹	Other/unknown	died	Discharged ¹²	Total
1914/5	673	36%	10%	7%	0%	0%	2%	43%	1%	0%	100%
1916	659	31%	9%	7%	1%	0%	3%	49%	0%	0%	100%
1917	707	20%	6%	8%	16%	0%	0%	50%	1%	0%	100%
1918	1466	6%	0%	2%	8%	54%	0%	28%	1%	0%	100%
Total	3505										

² This covers men whose service ended in the calendar year for whatever reason.

³ Commissioned.

⁴ Died of wounds.

⁵ Transferred to another unit.

⁶ Term of engagement ended. The standard term of enlistment into the TF Reserve was for four years. On the declaration of war TF men were required to serve an additional 'buckshee year' but after that they could leave service. This applied to many men in 1915 who had served their contracted time and returned home.

⁷ Discharged because of illness.

⁸ Commissioned.

⁹ Died of wounds.

¹⁰ Transferred to another unit. This is taken from the medal roll where a soldier is recorded joining another unit.

¹¹ Term of engagement ended.

¹² Discharged because of illness.

At the Armistice

From these figures it is possible to calculate the number of men who were deployed with the Kensingtons on 4 November 1914 and who were still with the battalion at the Armistice. They are detailed in the table below.

Table A6.3 – Number and rank of other ranks remaining with the Kensingtons at the Armistice who deployed with the original battalion in November 1914.

Rank	Number	%
Private	32	53%
Corporal/Lance Corporal	8	13%
Sergeant	15	25%
Senior Warrant Officer (CSM, RSM, etc)	5	8%
Total	60	100

It is possible to estimate that 27 of these men were pre-war Territorials, using the regimental service number and cross-referencing it with enlistment dates.

The table below records the year in which men serving with the battalion at the Armistice joined the battalion. The results are tabulated from 790 men for whom service records exist.

Table A6.4 – Year at which Kensingtons serving with the battalion at the Armistice joined the battalion, 1914/5 to 1918

Year soldier joined	Number	%
1914/5	147	19%
1916	152	19%
1917	233	29%
1918	258	33%
Total	790	100%

The average length of service of these 790 men was 594 days.

Proportion of Kensingtons battalion by length of service at key dates

By using the database it is possible to calculate the length of service of soldiers at given dates. Key dates have been selected below to indicate how long other ranks had served at key dates over the course of the war.

Table A6.5– Proportion of battalion by length of service on specific days, 1915-1918, records.

Date	0-42 days	42-183 days	184-365 days	365+ days	Number of records	Volunteers (who arrived in France before 1/6/1916) ¹³	Conscripts (who arrived in France after 1/9/1916) ¹⁴
31-Dec-15	27	257	110	185	579	579	N/A
30-Jun-16	28	154	138	518	838	838	N/A
31-Aug-16	67	467	168	247	949	431	N/A
31-Oct-16	55	451	42	301	849	346	174
31-Dec-16	123	350	130	306	909	332	285
08-Apr-17	46	146	380	292	864	297	314
31-May-17	72	231	291	278	873	278	400
15-Aug-17	89	251	187	444	970	269	521
30-Sep-17	135	287	136	468	1027	246	612
31-Dec-17	74	180	217	491	962	231	584
27-Mar-18	63	129	260	533	958	214	610
31-May-18	6	211	204	526	947	193	629
22-Aug-18	43	178	149	600	955	182	656
30-Sep-18	3	35	188	733	959	169	693
11-Nov-18	72	80	175	496	822	158	578

¹³ Those men who arrived before this date are largely assumed to be volunteers who joined up before the Derby scheme was introduced.

¹⁴ The balance of conscripts to volunteers can be estimated in the Kensingtons. Helen McCartney has suggested the majority of men entering France from September 1916 were 'pressed' men and included men volunteers who joined under the threat of conscription under the Derby scheme, those volunteering before being called up and those directly enlisted under conscription. By assuming that the men who were entering the Kensingtons from this date were conscripts as defined above it is possible to assess the balance of such men to volunteers who joined up before the introduction of conscription. This assessment is simplistic but it gives an indication. The table below shows the percentage of conscripts in the battalion on key dates and suggests that the rise was gradual and that conscripts only began to dominate the unit from mid-1917.

Table A6.7 – Proportion of battalion by length of service on specific days, 1915-1918, percentage

	0-42 days	42-183 days	184-365 days	365+ days	Number of records	Volunteers (who arrived in France before 1/6/1916)	Conscripts (who arrived in France after 1/9/1916)
31-Dec-15	4.7%	44.4%	19.0%	32.0%	100.0%	100.0%	N/a
30-Jun-16 (day before the 56 th Division attack at Gommecourt)	3.3%	18.4%	16.5%	61.8%	100.0%	100.0%	N/a
31-Aug-16 (before Sept/Oct operations on the Somme)	7.1%	49.2%	17.7%	26.0%	100.0%	45.4%	N/a
31-Oct-1916 (after operations on the Somme)	6.5%	53.1%	4.9%	35.5%	100.0%	40.8%	20.5%
31-Dec-16	13.5%	38.5%	14.3%	33.7%	100.0%	36.5%	31.4%
08-Apr-17 (Day before Battle of Arras)	5.3%	16.9%	44.0%	33.8%	100.0%	34.4%	36.3%
31 May 1917	8.2%	26.5%	33.3%	31.8%	100.0%	31.8%	45.8%
15-Aug-1917 (Day before engagement at Third Ypres)	9.2%	25.9%	19.3%	45.8%	100.0%	27.7%	53.7%
30-Sept-1917 (six weeks after fighting at Third Ypres)	13.1%	27.9%	13.2%	45.6%	100.0%	24.0%	59.6%
31-Dec-17	7.7%	18.7%	22.6%	51.0%	100.0%	24.0%	60.7%
27-Mar-1918 (day before the attack on 56 th Division during Operation Mars)	6.6%	13.5%	27.1%	55.6%	100.0%	22.3%	63.7%
31-May-1918	0.6%	22.3%	21.5%	55.5%	100.0%	20.4%	66.4%
22-Aug-1918 (day before Battle of Albert, marking the start of 56 th Division's involvement in the 100 days)	4.5%	18.6%	15.6%	62.8%	100.0%	19.1%	68.7%
30-Sept-1918	0.3%	3.6%	19.6%	76.4%	100.0%	17.6%	72.3%
11-Nov-1918 (at the Armistice)	8.8%	9.7%	21.3%	60.3%	100.0%	19.2%	70.3%

Appendix 7 - Length of service for LRB officers on the Western Front during the Great War

Overview

This appendix sets out the average length of time officers spent serving in France in the 1/5 Battalion London Regiment (London Rifle Brigade) on the Western Front between November 1914 and the Armistice in 1918 in a single episode of service. This is defined as the length of time they served with the unit on the front line before their term ended for whatever reason which could include transferred, killed, wounded, illness or the war ended. It does not cover a soldiers' total length of service with a unit or at war.

Methodology

The source material used is the LRB nominal roll of officers in its battalion history which details the service history of most officers who served with the battalion from 1860 to 1919.¹ This roll gives the dates most officers served with the 1st Battalion and their dates of service and it is possible from this to construct a database which covers officers' episodes of service in France and Flanders and gives the cause of their departure, for instance, wounds.

Data set

A total of 225 officers served in the 1/5 LRB in the Great War for whom varying data is recorded, which is detailed below.

Length of service

Length of service data is known for 191 of the 225 officers who served in the LRB. Of the 190 men who served, 162 had one episode of service, 28 had two episodes of service and 2 had three episodes of service.

Table A7.1 – Data set and average length of officers' service in France, 1914/5 to 1918

Year	Average (days)	Records	Number <42 days with the unit	%<42 days with the unit	Number >6 months' (182 days) with the unit	% >6 months' (182 days) with
1914/1915	94	36	6	17%	3	8%
1916	136	77	28.0	36%	21	27%
1917	222	34	1.0	3%	15	44%
1918	248	73	11	15%	32	44%
Average	175					
Total		220				

¹ F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade in the Great War* (London, 1922), pp.429-492.

Fate

This table sets out the reasons for the end of an officer's episode of service for whom it is known.

Table A7.2 – Fate of officers

Year	Number of episodes	Killed or died	Transferred or discharged	Present at war's end	Other cause (probably sickness or injury, excl POW)	POW
1914/5	35	26%	9%	N/A	65%	0%
1916	58	34%	14%	N/A	50%	2%
1917	26	23%	15%	N/A	62%	0%
1918	64	22%	8%	26%	31%	9%

Proportion of LRB battalion officers by length of service at key dates

By using the database it is possible to calculate the length of service of officers at given dates. Key dates have been selected below to indicate how long officers had served at key dates over the course of the war.

Table A7.3 – Proportion of battalion by officers’ length of service on specific days, 1914/5-1918, records and percentage.

Length of service in France at key dates Date	6 weeks and under	6 weeks to 6 months	6 months to a year	Over a year
31-Dec-15	4	9	7	5
30-Jun-16 (day before the 56 th Division attack at Gommecourt)	6	11	10	7
31-Aug-16 (before Sept/Oct operations on the Somme)	9	11	6	5
31-Oct-1916 (after operations on the Somme)	8	3	4	5
31-Dec-16	2	19	3	5
08-Apr-17 (Day before Battle of Arras)	2	14	5	6
31-May-1917	6	9	12	7
15-Aug-917 (Day before engagement at Third Ypres)	4	15	12	6
30-Sept-1917 (six weeks after fighting at Third Ypres)	10	10	12	5
31-Dec-17	3	10	9	11
27-Mar-1918 (day before the attack on 56 th Division during Operation Mars)	1	7	7	12
31-May-1918	11	3	2	9
22-Aug-1918 (day before Battle of Albert, marking the start of 56 th Division’s involvement in the 100 days)	4	12	3	7
30-Sept-1918	8	4	2	7
11-Nov-1918 (at the Armistice)	2	5	4	8

Table A7.4 – Proportion of battalion by officers’ length of service on specific days, 1914/5-1918, percentage.

Date	Length of service in France at key dates	6 weeks and under	6 weeks to 6 months	6 months to a year	Over a year
31-Dec-15		15%	35%	27%	19%
30-Jun-16 (day before the 56 th Division attack at Gommecourt)		23%	42%	38%	21%
31-Aug-16 (before Sept/Oct operations on the Somme)		35%	42%	23%	19%
31-Oct-1916 (after operations on the Somme)		40%	15%	20%	25%
31-Dec-16		7%	66%	10%	17%
08-Apr-17 (Day before Battle of Arras)		7%	52%	19%	22%
31-May-1917		18%	26%	35%	21%
15-Aug-917 (Day before engagement at Third Ypres)		11%	41%	32%	16%
30-Sept-1917 (six weeks after fighting at Third Ypres)		27%	27%	32%	14%
31-Dec-17		9%	30%	27%	33%
27-Mar-1918 (day before the attack on 56 th Division during Operation Mars)		4%	26%	26%	44%
31-May-1918		44%	12%	8%	36%
22-Aug-1918 (day before Battle of Albert, marking the start of 56 th Division’s involvement in the 100 days)		15%	46%	12%	27%
30-Sept-1918		38%	19%	10%	33%
11-Nov-1918 (at the Armistice)		11%	26%	21%	42%

Commissioned from the Ranks

A total of 100 of the 225 LRB officers who served had previous service as a ranker.

Appendix 8– Raids by units of 168 and 169 Brigades, 56th Division, 1916 to 1918

Overview

This appendix details raids carried out by the units under study from 1916 to 1918 and sets out a metric to assess their success.

Methodology

A raid is defined as an operation that results in the ‘penetration of the enemy’s trenches’.¹ It is a distinct task, very different from patrolling as the latter were largely confined to the geographical area of no man’s land.² Raids have been selected to study as they often required considerable planning and are frequently identified in war diaries and other records unlike patrols.

Senior B.E.F. commanders³ believed raiding was a critical method of destroying German morale and building one’s own.⁴ Though higher authorities often ordered raids, their success was largely dependent on the skills and experience of the men who were raiding. Mark Connelly believed that the raiding activity of the four Buffs battalions in his study demonstrates that they had a definite learning curve in terms of planning, preparation and results.⁵ This learning curve will be examined for the units under study.

Between February 1916 and November 1918 the units under study carried out 26 operations involving 29 units.

Table A8.1 – Summary of raids carried out by units under study, 1916-1918

Date	Raids	Success	%
1916	8	1	12.5%
1917	7	1	14%
1918	8	5	62%

For simplicity, a raid is counted once per operation; so if two units co-operated in a raid this will count as one raid. Only the QVR are recorded as conducting a raid before February 1916 (on 20 December 1915⁶) but this will be excluded as it is not recorded in official sources.

A raid was judged as successful if raiders managed to secure an identification. For this to occur, the name of the enemy unit in the opposite trenches needed to be discovered. This was achieved by either capturing a prisoner or securing identifying materials such as cap badge. It is a simple means to judge ‘success’ as most raids aimed at gathering this intelligence (though not all) and this is normally recorded in war diaries and reports. The number of identifications obtained in raids is set out below.

¹ J.H. Boraston, *Sir Douglas Haig’s Despatches* (London, 1923), pp.3-4.

² See for the debate Mike Senior, ‘Raids and Patrols: What the Difference?’, *Stand To.*, 89 (September 2010), pp.9-10.

³ J.E. Edmonds and C. Wynne, *Military Operations France and Belgium 1915, Vol. 1* (London 1929), pp.33-34.

⁴ H. R. Sandilands, *The 23rd Division 1914-1919* (Edinburgh, 1925), pp. 58-9.

⁵ M. Connelly, *Steady the Buffs* (Oxford, 2006), p.84.

⁶ This was cited by Frank Hawkins but he does not give any further information (F.Hawkins, *From Ypres to Cambrai, the diary of an infantryman 1914-1919* (Morley, 1973), p.81).

Table A8.2 – Raids and their success by units of 168 and 169 Brigade, 1916-1918

Raid	Date (start)	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Identification? ⁷	Raiding party size ⁸	Raider's casualties ⁹	Enemy casualties ¹⁰
1.	13/07/1916	QWR			Y	23	1	1 ¹¹
2.	16/07/1916	London Scottish			N	160	0	0
3.	17/07/1916	Kensingtons			N	57	6	0
4.	20/9/1916	1/2 London			N	24	8	0
5.	02/12/1916	Kensingtons			N	40	0	0
6.	08/12/1916	Rangers			N	N/A	0	N/A
7.	11/12/1916	London Scottish			N	100	0	0
8.	20/12/1916	London Scottish			N	160	0	0
9.	19/01/1917	Kensingtons			N	160	21	0
10.	7/2/1917	1/2 London			N	21	0	0
11.	17/2/1917	Kensingtons			Y	150	37	30 ¹²
12.	17/02/1917	LRB			N	160	6	0
13.	8/10/1917	London Scottish			N	40	5	1
14.	22/10/1917	QWR			N	62	5	0
15.	8/11/1917	Rangers			N	69	3	0
16.	09/03/1918	Kensingtons			Y	44	1	29 ¹³
17.	16/03/1918	LRB			N	73	13	3 ¹⁴
18.	26/03/1918	1/2 London	LRB	QWR	N	150 (estimated)	0	0
19.	19/04/1918	London Scottish	1/4 London		Y (London Scottish)	160 – London Scottish 40 – 1/4 Londons	Unknown	37 (London Scottish) 26 (1/4 Londons) ¹⁵
20.	24/04/1918	1/2 London			N	41	13	0
21.	01/06/1918	Kensingtons			Y	145	18	5 ¹⁶
22.	12/06/1918	LRB			Y	160	14	27 ¹⁷
23.	08/07/1918	QWR			Y	90	11	53 ¹⁸

⁷ Whether the unit made an identification, either capturing an enemy prisoner or finding other information, such as papers, cap badges or other material.

⁸ The number of men in the raiding party.

⁹ The number of casualties to the raiders and this includes dead, wounded, missing or POWs.

¹⁰ This number is taken for all enemy casualties reported on the operation. Where a range is given the lowest number is taken.

¹¹ J.Q. Henriques, *The War History of the First Battalion, Queen's Westminster Rifles 1914-1918* (London, 1923), pp.104-105.

¹² Diary, 17/2/917, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2961.

¹³ C.H. Dudley Ward, *The Fifty-Sixth Division* (London, 1922), p.219. O.F. Bailey & H.M. Hollier, *The Kensingtons, 13th London Regiment* (London, 1936), p.150.

¹⁴ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 219.

¹⁵ J. Lindsay, *The London Scottish in the Great War* (London, 1926), pp.175-178. F.C. Grimwade, *The War History of the 4th Battalion, The London Regiment* (London, 1922), p.414.

¹⁶ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. 'Report of Raid, 1st June 1918', 1/13 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

¹⁷ 'Report on Raid carried out by the 1/5th London Regt - 12.6.18', p.2, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

¹⁸ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. 'Report on Raid carried out on 8 instant [July 1918] by 1/16th London Regt.', 7/1918, 1/16 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963.

Detail of raids

This sets out the detail of the 23 operations. It states the raid number (as determined by table above), date and unit involved.

Raid 1

13/07/1916

QWR

Raid ordered at very short notice to capture a prisoner. QWR sent party of one officer and 22 other ranks sent to German lines.¹⁹ Raiders entered the trench despite wire not being cut. They bombed some Germans down a dugout with 'groans heard' as a result. German prisoner captured but, according to the LRB's history he was 'too old to be any use'.²⁰ One officer killed. Action praised by Corps Commander.²¹

Raid 2

16/07/1916

London Scottish

Raid carried out by C Company under Captain MacGregor but ended with blowing up some enemy wire and brief fire being exchange. It was impossible to penetrate the front line due to enemy fire.²²

Raid 3

17/07/1916

Kensingtons

Raid ordered on 13/7/1916 and took place four days later.²³ The Battalion history recorded that 'The first raid the battalion under took was...about a fortnight after the July 1st battle...was rather a tall order. The assaulting party was chose with care and included many of the best bombers. Everything was well planned and thoroughly practised.' It was carried out by 57 raiders led by Lieutenant R.E.F. Shaw.²⁴ Alert sentry spotted the raiders and German artillery opened up. Raiders returned with six wounded. 'Valuable lessons were learnt'.²⁵ Steward in the Platoon recorded that 'during that spell in the trenches a night bombing raid was carried out by another company, who rehearsed back at Halloy. To stimulate the enthusiasm of the raiding party the instigators of the project concocted a crafty scheme: they fed the men with juicy joints, treated them to three or four pay parades, took them to army concert parties, gave them strawberry jam in lieu of the plebeinn (sic) plumb and apple, and generally petted them'. Before the raid Corporal Green took four men from the platoon to spy out the lie of the land and take a look at the German barbed wire. A little before midnight the raiders came up and crept near their wire, spread themselves out, laid on their bellies and waited. Suddenly the guns in the rear broke into a fury of thunder and the shells whizzed over the heads and in front of the crouching bombers, on to the German wire and trench, then lifted. The raiders rushed in, slinging their bombs; one laid about him with a heavy knobbly-headed cosh. "All you've got to do," the back-room boys had said, "is to nip in, snatch one or two prisoners, and nip back again" – unmindful of the probability that their ballistic overture would give away the show. So it came about that the raiders found their opponents ready waiting for them and about to drop a barrage on No Man's Land to baulk

¹⁹ Henriques, *Westminster*, pp.104-105.

²⁰ Diary, 13/7/1916. 1/16 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963. F. Maude, *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.154.

²¹ Henriques, *Westminster*, pp.104-105.

²² Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.120.

²³ Operation Order No.4, 7/1916, 1/13th Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

²⁴ Diary, 13/17/7/1916, 1/13th Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

²⁵ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.81.

their getaway. 'Parapet Percy' got busy spraying the ground with his machine-gun. (This chap was the successor of 'Parapet Pete', another gunner cursed but admired by Tommy for his smart shooting and cleverness in sweeping the dust from the parapets: he was killed on July the First. Rumour said that the troops who stormed his stronghold found him chained to his gun). After the raid Corporal Green again took his men out on patrol. They did not relish the job, as the Germans had now got the wind up and were feverishly shooting up Verey lights. In the interim Snipe whispered to his leader: "Look Corp., two Jerrys". Green crept towards the crouching figures, then a star-shell shot up and revealed them; their own medical officer and the chaplain, looking for wounded and dead. Next morning the Battalion was relieved by another of the Brigade and the platoon went back to Saily au Bois.²⁶

Raid 4

20/9/1916

1/2 London

Plan was submitted on 17 September 1916. The original plan submitted on 17/9 was adhered to with the exception that from reconnaissance a gap through the two lines of the German wire was proved to exist, and two officers and a NCO had actually passed through the gap... In consequence of this it was determined to attempt surprise by passing through the gap. The raiding party was 12 in the Bangalore team and a 'party' in the other. The gaps could not be found and an attempt to blast a gap using a Bangalore torpedo failed to explode and was captured. The raid failed to achieve anything. One man killed and seven wounded. Lt HURLE said the raid failed due to the failure of the torpedo to explode and the Germans were alert.²⁷

Raid 5

02/12/1916

Kensingtons

Raid led by officer and his platoon. The object of the raid was to 'put an end to the peregrinations of a certain bearded old 'dugout' who went along the line firing Very lights'. Raiders entered the German lines and spent an hour and three quarters.²⁸ No casualties. One NCO got lost and was abandoned to his fate. Another soldier who got left behind came running back and put his foot on a fuse which had been lit to destroy some machine guns.²⁹

Raid 6

08/12/1916

Rangers

Raiding party made their way to a machine gun post which had been previously located. Sentry was heard. Unit moved back to British lines unmolested.³⁰

Raid 7

11/12/1916

London Scottish

A raiding party from A Company 100 strong under Captain H.G. Worlock attempted to raid the enemy trench but they were spotted.³¹

²⁶ J. Steward, *The Platoon* (Barnsley, 2011), pp.51-52.

²⁷ 'Report on a Raid Carried Out by the 2nd London Royal Fusiliers', 1/2 Battalion LRWD, 9/1916, TNA, WO-95/2960.

²⁸ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.102-103.

²⁹ Anon, 'Raids...', pp.3-4, WO-95/1730.

³⁰ A.V. Wheeler-Holohan & G.M.C. Wyatt, *The Rangers' Historical Records* (London 1921), pp.80-81.

³¹ Diary, 11/12/1916, WD of 1/14 Battalion LRWD, WO-95/2956, TNA.

Raid 8

20/12/1916

London Scottish

Another raid by A Company raided enemy lines which entered the line and several dug outs were seen but were full of water and useless. No enemy encountered, no casualties and no identification.³²

Raid 9

19/01/1917

Kensingtons

A Company under Captain Clarke attacked in white snow suits at 3.30am. Enemy alert and raiders failed to penetrate the lines. Twenty one Kensingtons killed or wounded.³³ An account in the war diary recorded 'in this raid the luck was all against the raiders. Everything in connection with the stunt has been thought over and carried out...right down to the provision of snow suits for the party...After this the battalion gave up night raids and took to daylight raids with considerable success.'³⁴

Raid 10

12/2/1917

1/2 London

'Small raid' led by Second Lieutenant W.A. Francis with 20 other ranks and two Lewis guns. They entered enemy trenches which were in a poor state. No enemy encountered and no identification obtained.³⁵

Raid 11

17/2/1917

Kensingtons

A successful early morning daylight raid by 150 men penetrated German lines.³⁶ Aerial photographs used to plan operation. Five prisoners gained 1st Battalion, 13th Bavarian Infantry³⁷ and 40 Germans killed. Kensingtons took 37 casualties. A report in the war diary said 'In the excitement one of the raiders dropped a bomb, the pin of which had been pulled out. Fortunately the corporal saw it and threw it out...'³⁸

Raid 12

17/02/1917

LRB

Raid on Devil's Jump by Captain JS Calder, two officers, 9 NCOs and 61 other ranks. It was launched at 9pm by four parties, with artillery and machine gun support entered former posts (Hampsted, Enfield, Barnet) but found nothing. Enemy fire and own artillery fire killed on and wounded five.³⁹ Raid led Raiders addressed by the Brigadier. Eight Germans killed.⁴⁰ Division history suggests this raid obtained an identification but nothing is recorded in battalion history.⁴¹

³² Diary, 20/12/1916, WD of 1/14 Battalion LRWD, WO-95/2956, TNA.

³³ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.104-105.

³⁴ Anon, 'Raids...', pp.4-5. 1/13th Battalion LRWD, WO-95/1730.

³⁵ W.E. Grey, *2nd City of London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers) in the Great War* (London, 1929), p.158.

³⁶ Diary, 17/2/1917, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, WO-95/2961, NA.

³⁷ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, pp.104-108.

³⁸ Anon, 'Raids...', pp.6-7, WO-95/1730.

³⁹ Maude, *History of the London Rifle Brigade*, pp.183-184.

⁴⁰ Diary, 16/2/1917, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁴¹ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.113.

Raid 13

8/10/1917

London Scottish

'Reprisal raid' attempted by 2/Lt Gibson and No.11 platoon on an outpost known as the 'Magpie's nest'. Led in sections of bombers and rifle grenadiers and carried two Bangalore Torpedoes to blow gaps in the wire. The first miss-fired but the second blew a gap and the raiders rushed through but their progress was stopped by a second belt of wire.⁴² After a bombing fight the raiders returned to their line. Four other ranks wounded and one died of wounds.⁴³

Raid 14

22/10/1917

QVR

The raid failed as the enemy was alert. Raiding party was 50 strong with two Lewis gun sections as cover. Unit kept out of the line for eight days. Raid rehearsed in front of Brigadier and company commanders. Raiders patrolled in no man's land so they knew the ground for six nights. They carried two Bangalore Torpedoes (27 feet long) which they were sliding under German wire to blow it when they were challenged.⁴⁴ Casualties to party were 1 officer and 4 other ranks wounded, all brought back.⁴⁵

Raid 15

8/11/1917

Rangers

The raid aimed to kill or capture the garrison of 'Magpie's nest' and collect identifications. Party was seven for wire cutting party, ten for storming party, 12 for parapet party, 28 in two covering parties and 12 in a reserve party (69).⁴⁶ 'Complex artillery barrage' was to cover the operation. Second Lieutenant J.W. Day led the parties towards the German lines and halted on seeing men moving in the area. He reconnoitred the area and drew men forward. British artillery support fell into the raiding party killing one and wounding two. This caused disorganisation, men to scatter and Second Lieutenant Day decided to withdrawal.⁴⁷

Raid 16

09/03/1918

Kensingtons

Kensingtons launched a daylight raid with two officers and 42 other ranks took. It penetrated Germans lines and killed 25 and captured four who said the German offensive was imminent.⁴⁸ Casualties for the raiders were 1 killed.⁴⁹ Report in the War Diary said the 'daylight raid [was] similar to the Neuve Chapelle raid in early 1917. Men practiced for three days and 'could have gone to his correct position blindfolded, as he knew his job and was confident'. Machine gun fired at second element of the party but was silenced by Lewis guns. Raid was over in seven and a half minutes.⁵⁰

⁴² Lindsay, *London Scottish*, p.155.

⁴³ 'Report on Raid by London Scottish on Magpie's Nest on Night 8/9 October 1917', WD of 1/14 Battalion London Regiment (London Scottish), WO-95/2956, TNA.

⁴⁴ C.A.C. Keeson, *Queen Victoria's Rifles, 1792-1922, Vol.1* (London,1923), pp.259-261.

⁴⁵ Diary, 22/10/1917, 1/9 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963.

⁴⁶ 'Report on Attempted Raid of Magpie's Nest on the Night of 7/8th November 1917', 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954.

⁴⁷ 'Scheme for Raid, November 1917', 1/12 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2954.

⁴⁸ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p.219.

⁴⁹ Bailey, *Kensingtons*, p.150.

⁵⁰ Anon, Raids, pp.7-9. 1/13th Battalion London Regiment, WO-95/1730, TNA.

Raid 17

16/03/1918

LRB

Raid ordered on 5/3/18 on Crab trench and Chaff Communication trench aiming to establish identification.⁵¹ While in line (8-11 March) officers and NCOs patrolled no man's land to prepare. Model of enemy trenches constructed to prepare raiders. Raiding party was 73 which advanced in three waves. Wire in first belt cut but second belt not. Units managed to get into the German line but no identification.⁵² Total of 13 casualties to raiders. Artillery lifted punctually and TMs fired despite enemy retaliation.⁵³ Second Lieutenant Kite Powell cut through unbroken wire and killed three Germans.⁵⁴ Subalterns had no problem finding their way because of the patrolling they had done before. No identification.⁵⁵

Raid 18

26/03/1918

1/2 London, LRB, QWR

1/2 Londons reported that orders received for the raid on 26 March 1918 for three battalion raid with LRB and QWR on the same day. Three practices were held in the afternoon before the attack. Second Lieutenant Sloan's platoon from C Company selected for the attack. Men assembled 200 yards in the front of the line ready to advance once the RE had detonated a Bangalore torpedo under the enemy wire. A bright moon meant the party was discovered despite their blackened faces. Unit could not enter enemy trenches because wire remained uncut. Raiders saw from enemy SOS rockets that their lines were full of men. No casualties were reported.⁵⁶ LRB attempted raid but prevented through heavy TM and MG fire.⁵⁷ QWR sent Second Lieutenant's Rayner's platoon.⁵⁸ He led his men out in two waves. Men unable to find the gap in the wire and spotted by the Germans. Party returned to British lines. The other raids were unsuccessful.⁵⁹

Raid 19

19/04/1918

London Scottish, 1/4 London

London Scottish attacked with C Company and bombing section (under Captain White), 1/4 London with one platoon and two bombing sections attacked on the morning of 19/4/18 at 3.10am. Advance made under hail storm which covered their advance and enemy taken by surprise. Occupied enemy territory until late evening and then withdrew. Raiders destroyed several enemy MGs and captured a new type of German trench mortar. London Scottish reported five killed, 31 wounded and 1 wounded and missing.⁶⁰ 61 Four Germans captured and found be from 65th Infantry Regiment, 185th Division.⁶² 1/4 Londons contributed one platoon under Second Lieutenant Mills from C Company. Five NCO and men were killed and 21 wounded.⁶³

⁵¹ Operation Order for Raid, item 7, 3/1918, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁵² 'Report on Attempted Raid on German Trenches – 16th March 1918', 1/5 Battalion, LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁵³ Maude, *History of the London Rifle Brigade*, pp.223-225.

⁵⁴ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 219.

⁵⁵ Maude, *History of the London Rifle Brigade*, p.225.

⁵⁶ Grey, 2nd, pp.317-318. Dairy, 26/3/1918, 1/2 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2960.

⁵⁷ Diary, 26/3/1918, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, WO-95/2962, TNA

⁵⁸ Henriques, *Westminster*, p.219.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Lindsay, *London Scottish*, pp.175-178.

⁶¹ Diary, 18-19/4/1918, 1/14 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2956.

⁶² Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 247.

⁶³ Grimwade, 4th, p.414.

Raid 20

24/04/1918

1/2 London

Raiding party consisted of 39 men of A Coy and two men of 169 TMB. No equipment except gas masks was carried and faces were blackened. Raid attacked at 9.15pm under an intense barrage. Men rushed the German trench and kept the Germany at bay with rifle grenades and then bombed out dugouts. They suffered eight casualties during the advance as party on left was unable to enter the wire because it was uncut. One officer, one NCO killed and 11 other ranks wounded. Rifle grenadiers kept of German counter attacking parties. No training could be given to the raiding party as they were in the front line at the time. Supporting artillery reported as 'erratic'.⁶⁴

Raid 21

01/06/1918

Kensingtons

Raid near the Cambrai Road carried out by C Company and platoon of A Coompany with a total of 5 Officers and 140 men. The scheme was evolved during one of the long tours in the line and was not practised at all. One hundred men concealed in no man's land. One Lewis gun fired 700 rounds without 'a stoppage...which is 'going some'.⁶⁵ Artillery was good 'came down very accurately'.⁶⁶ Report from C Company Sergeant Lane said his Lewis guns silenced enemy MGs and got through 12 pans without a stoppage. Another LG also fired 14 pans without stoppage. Rifle grenade section worked with bombers to clear Germans.⁶⁷ The results were a 'moderate estimate' of 25 Germans killed and 27 prisoners taken who were from 50th Infantry Regiment, 214th Division. Kensington casualties were one killed and 17 wounded.⁶⁸ Holmes reported that 'Captain Heath came out to us HQ staff and told us jointly that we were going to carry out a raid on German lines on 1st June. It was all to be hush hush. It was going to be difficult as the German line just there was a quarter of a mile away...The bold scheme had, therefore, had been decided that the whole company – a very large number for a raiding party – should quietly make their way through the barbed wire...the night before the raid was to take place, and lie doggo in the gun pits all that night and all next day...We signallers had to be kept close to the OC and send message by E lamp back to our front line and forward to the platoons...the very next day, 27 May 1918, Captain Health was on top viewing the terrain with his glasses when he was wounded in the left arm from a large splinter...[He lost this arm]...he missed the raid on 1 June and he missed an outstanding success. His place had to be taken by Lt Smith at short notice and very creditably did Lt Smith acquit himself. We climbed out of the forward trenches at about midnight on 31 May and single file, walked into no mans land...It would have been...wholesale murder if the Germans' suspicion had been aroused and we had been caught in machine gun fire. We silently groped our way to the gunpits, and some NCOs no doubt spent the night quite comfortably in the dugouts under it. Most of the company, however, lay flat ou tin the open...If we wanted to eat any of the sandwiches supplied for our sustenance, we had to roll over on our sides and extract the food from our haversacks; this contortion also had to be gone through if we found it necessary to relieve ourselves. It was all rather thrilling....About

⁶⁴ Grey, 2nd, p.328.

⁶⁵ Anon, 'Raids...', pp.8-10. 1/13th Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/1730.

⁶⁶ 'Report of the Raid carried out on June 1st, 1918 by C Coy. 1/13th Bn. London Regt', 1/13 Battalion, LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

⁶⁷ 'Report of 11 Platoon's work in the Raid (1.6.18), Report of Raid, 1st June 1918', 1/13 Battalion, LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2955.

⁶⁸ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. 'Report...1st June 1918', WO-95/2955.

10 to 6 the whisper went around "Stand to"...Our barrage was magnificent. The artillery wallahs had carefully rehearsed the operation and they were not disturbed by a retaliatory gunfire...they were able to lay down that barrage in copy book fashion...The frontline we were aiming for was perhaps two hundred yards ahead. But here, absolutely unexpectedly, was a large pit covered over with camouflage and containing three wooden huts. The Jerries...[were] caught...entirely by suprise....some of them were actually in night attire...they scurried about like trapped rabbits, poor devils and you had only to take aim and fire and you could hardly help hitting one of them. I am fairly sure that I caught one as he emerged from a doorway of one of the huts...The excitement was terrific...It was about this time I nearly blew Bill Steer's ear off. I was drawing a sight on another man when Steer must had lurched in front of me. I fired, and he dropped to the ground with his hand clasped to his head and a string of nasty expressions coming from his lips...He was deaf in the ear for some days and swore I had done it on purpose...Lt Smith kept very calm during all this, and sent and received messages and controlled the situation admirably...Altogether we took 27 prisoners, and we must have killed and wounded three times that number...These prisoners were hustled along in front of us, and a poor lot they seemed...One or two of them who appeared to be NCOs were quite truculent, and would not hurry themselves. The runner, Charlie, took it upon himself to watch one of these NCO who was obviously hanging back, and sure enough, when we were jumping a shallow ditch, this chap...make a break for it. Without hesitation Charlie...shot him in the back, and when he fell, went over to him and shot him in again through the head. It is pretty ghastly to recall it at this distance of time, but when it happened it seemed the logical thing to do.⁶⁹

Raid 22

12/06/1918

LRB

On 10/6/18 plans for raid discussed and 13, 14, 15 and Lewis gun platoons units assigned from D Company. All men were familiar with the ground as they had reconnoitred the ground and route to their respective objection at least twice before the raid⁷⁰ Ariel photography used to plan operation. During the operation, the raiding party advanced under smoke and Germans caught by surprise. No prisoners captured but identification gained and rated as 'normal'.⁷¹ Twenty seven Germans killed (6 shot by raiders⁷²). Raiding party losses were three dead, 11 wounded.⁷³

Raid 23

08/07/1918

QWR

Raid ordered on 4/7/1918 and A Company (3 officers and 110 men) selected and sent back to near Dainville to prepare. Raid rehearsed on 7 July but postponed from night of 7-8/7/1918 for further rehearsal during the daytime of the 8 July. Objective 'carefully studied by means of ground observation and by all officers and NCOs forming...the raiding party. Study made of low level air photographs. Raid went in at 9.50pm aiming to surprise enemy before he had taken up his night dispositions. All units found their way to the target. Dugouts blown in by P grenades and ammonal charges. Gun pits also destroyed. Three prisoners captured from 358

⁶⁹ Account by T H Holmes [no page numbers], 06/30/1 IWM.

⁷⁰ 'Report on Raid carried out by the 1/5th London Regt - 12.6.18', p.1, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁷¹ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. Diary, 12/6/1918, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁷² 'Report on Raid carried out by the 1/5th London Regt - 12.6.18', p.2, 1/5 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2962.

⁷³ *The History of the London Rifle Brigade 1859-1919* (London, 1921), p.234-235.

Infantry Regiment, 214th Division. Raid lasted 22 minutes. Eleven other ranks wounded. Artillery had been 'excellent'. It was thought that between 50 and 60 men Germans killed.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Dudley Ward, *Fifty-Sixth*, p. 251. Diary, 4/7/1918, 1/16 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963. 'Report on Raid carried out on 8 instant [7/1918] by 1/16th London Regt.', 1/16 Battalion LRWD, TNA, WO-95/2963. Henriques, *Westminster*, p.243

Appendix 9 - Number of death sentences passed in infantry units stationed on the western Front during from 1st November 1914 to 11th November 1918.

Overview

This table details the number of death sentences passed by court martials in infantry units including infantry battalions and Machine Gun Corps serving in France and Flanders. It includes British and dominion forces. It excludes cavalry, RAMC, RE, artillery and ASC and any offences not committed in France and Flanders. This is based on a database compiled from Gerald Oram's compiled list.¹

Table A9.1 – The units with the highest number of death sentences passed on the Western Front, November 1914 to the Armistice

Rank	Unit	Number of death sentences passed.
1.	2/King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI)	28
2.	19/Durham Light Infantry	27
3.	2/East Surrey	25
4.	2/Royal Warwickshire	23
5.	22/Canadian Expeditionary Force	23
6.	2/Durham Light Infantry	21
7.	1/Loyal North Lincs	20
8.	4/Royal Fusiliers	19
9.	1/Royal Scot Fusiliers	17
10.	2/Lancashire Fusiliers	17
11.	1/North Staffordshire	16
12.	1/Royal Irish Rifles	15
13.	2/Manchester	15
14.	2-R Irish Rifles	15
15.	1/Liverpool	14
16.	2/Highland Light Infantry	14
17.	2/ Royal Scot Fusiliers	14
18.	13/Royal Scots	14
19.	38/ Canadian Expeditionary Force	14
20.	1/East Surrey	13

¹ G. Oram, *Death Sentences Passed By Military Court of the British Army 1914-1924* (London, 2005).

Appendix 10 – Brief demographic and social outline of early war volunteers joining the Kensingtons in 1914

Overview

This appendix gives a brief outline of the type of man joining the Kensingtons in late 1914.

Age

The average age of recruits was 21.6 years based on 298 records. The youngest recruit known was Frank Oliver Bailey aged 15 and the oldest was Broughton Munton aged 45. Munton had joined the 18th Middlesex Volunteers in 1899 and continued to serve when this unit became the Paddington based 10th London Battalion. He was a builder pre-war and lived in Shepherd's Bush. He left the TF when this unit was relocated to Hackney in 1912. He had three sons and five daughters.¹

Social class

The social class of the men joining was diverse. Records exist detailing the occupation of 45 men who joined between August and December 1914. The occupation of clerk formed the largest occupational group of 17 men and these included men like John (Jack) Francis Tucker was a junior clerk in a firm of East Indian export agents² and Stanley Lane worked as a civil servant in the Scottish Education Office³.

The remaining occupations were variable and included Eric Kennington⁴ who was a painter, Edward Beeston who was a domestic footman⁵, Harry Brooks Mortimer was restaurant manager at John Lewis stores and William Sidney Sherwood who was a West End theatre actor⁶. Others roles included tennis coach, draper, farm bailiff and teacher.

These occupations are allocated into social class categories (see Chapter 2) and the table below shows a slightly more socially elite profile of recruits as compared to those joining before the war (see Appendix 3).

Table A10.1– Social class of Kensingtons joining from August to December 1914 based on their occupation

Occupational class	Number	%
1	7	15
2	21	46
3	11	24
4	6	13
5		
Total	45	100

Occupational class I includes accountants, architects, solicitors or abstractors. Occupational class II includes clerks and draughtsmen. Occupational class III includes actors, tailors, motor fitter and watchman and jeweller. Occupational class IV includes iron mongers assistant, chauffeur and mechanics.

¹ *Marquis de Ruvigny, Roll of Honour*, Vol.1, Part 1, p.258.

² J. Tucker, *Johnny Get Your Gun* (London, 1978), p.12.

³ Personnel account, p.1. S. Lane, 97/10/1 IWM.

⁴ B. Bushaway, Eric Kennington's 'The Kensingtons at Laventie', <http://www.firstworldwar.bham.ac.uk/favourites.htm>

⁵ National Archives, PIN 82 data, Case number 6.

⁶ *de Ruvigny's Roll of Honour*, Vol.1, p.325.

Residence

Men were drawn from a much wider geographical area than the pre-war men. Residences and addresses are known for 328 men who joined between August and December 1914.

Recruitment is mainly a west London, north-west London and Middlesex affair with 55% of men coming from these areas. The majority overall (43% of the total) came from areas such as Fulham (13% of the total), Kensington (5%), Shepherd's Bush (3%) and Acton, Hammersmith and Ealing (each with 2%). Six percent came from places such as Brentford and Hounslow, in Middlesex. Fifteen percent came from south of the river with two percent coming from Barnes. The rest were mainly drawn from north London (4%), east London (3%) and the Home Counties

Appendix 11 – Case study units.

They are, listed in seniority and with their official designations as of late 1914 were:

- 1/2 Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)
- 1/4 Battalion, London Regiment (Royal Fusiliers)
- 1/5 Battalion, London Regiment (London Rifle Brigade)
- 1/9 Battalion, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles)
- 1/12 Battalion, London Regiment (Rangers)
- 1/13 Battalion, London Regiment (Kensingtons)
- 1/14 Battalion, London Regiment (London Scottish)
- 1/16 Battalion, London Regiment (Queen's Westminster Rifles)