

Archaeology on the Western Front: Memory, Narrative, Identity

Ross J. Wilson

Name: Ross Julian Wilson

Thesis submitted for: Doctorate

University: The University of York

Department: Archaeology

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R.J.Wilson
Archaeology Department
University of York

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Abstract

This thesis concerns the archaeology of the Western Front, and the way a discipline concerned with the materiality and spatiality of the past can impact upon the popular memory of the battlefields. Using specifically data from excavations of British sites on the former battlefields and the popular memory in Britain, this project also sets out to build a new agenda in memory studies within archaeology. Challenging traditional metaphors and conceptions that exist between archaeology and memory, this project suggests an alternative way of remembrance, one which takes account of the specifics of archaeology, through the concept of embodied memory. Utilising sociological and philosophical thought, the idea of embodied memory is expounded; essentially it involves the memory of the corporeal experiences of individuals in the past, examining a past ‘being-in-the-world.’ This mode of memory suggests that time or experience is no barrier in remembering the physical sensations of past peoples. Using this concept for the British soldiers on the Western Front involves the research of archaeological excavations carried out in the region, and the investigation of a substantial amount of archive material. Indeed, such is the intensive nature of this research regarding the experiences of individuals on the battlefields it is referred to as an ‘ethnographic study’ of the British soldiers. The idea of an embodied memory is then used to situate the project in the contemporary debates concerning the Western Front and European identity and heritage. Recent moves by museums in the region have focused on remembering the battlefields as a ‘shared heritage’; highlighting the faults in this objective this project uses the idea of embodied memory to build an alternative European identity. This project therefore covers a great deal of material which is only just coming to the attention of archaeologists, specifically, memory, narrative and identity.

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Introduction

‘What is recalled to memory calls one to responsibility’ (Derrida 1989, xi).

‘I have only tried to make a shape in words, using as data the complex of sights, sounds, fears, hopes, apprehensions, smells, things exterior and interior, the landscape and paraphernalia of that singular time and of those particular men’ (Jones 1968, x).

The Western Front retains a powerful hold over sections of British society even as the ninetieth anniversaries of the events of the war come upon us. The names of the battlefields, Somme, Ypres, Arras, Vimy still seem to summon certain images of a devastated landscape, hideous industrialised war, and near infinite pity for those who fought. As Dyer (1995, 7) has remarked, these perceptions and memories ‘seem...to have pulsed into life in the nation’s collective memory.’ As the generation which fought in the war passes on, there are claims that the Western Front will also recede from memory, that it will no longer possess the capability of holding our imagination and emotion. This fear however has been constantly reiterated since the Armistice, seemingly every generation is concerned that it will be the last to remember. The memory of the Western Front within British society has nevertheless endured; the images and narratives associated with the Western Front, and their capability of evoking great emotion, sadness and compassion, have perhaps ensured that ‘the trenches’ continue to haunt British society regardless of the passing generations.

This does not mean that the memory of the Western Front in Britain is stable, it is in actuality a dynamic, fluid concept; it has been constructed, negotiated and reconstructed through various cultural forms since the Armistice (see Winter 1995). The raw emotion which appears to be so naturally generated has been created and remodelled through various cultural forms, namely the memorial landscape, historiography, literature, and the depictions of the Western Front in the popular media. It is through these forms of representation that the memory of the Western Front in Britain has been reproduced, communicated to and manipulated by subsequent generations enabling and constraining the

development of memory. This negotiated concept of the memory of the Western Front is crucial, as it demonstrates that it is not the case of how the war itself has generated memory, but the way forms of memory have shaped our understanding and grasp of the war (after Dyer 1995, 18). In this respect the Western Front within British society represents a contested site of memory, which has never been preserved in a static, unalterable form (after Nora 1989). As archaeological excavations commence on the Western Front, and as an archaeological agenda emerges as a serious format to discuss the battlefields, archaeology itself will affect this process of remembering the Western Front. Archaeology will contribute to the cultural production of memory, through its specific and particular approach to the study of the materials and landscapes of the Western Front and through its own agenda within memory studies in general. Archaeology will therefore create distinct memories of the Western Front for society as a mode of cultural production.

This project will investigate how the British soldiers experienced the materials, spaces and landscapes of the Western Front. The study area for this research will be focused entirely upon the British sections of the Western Front, comprising the trench system and no man's land, as this is where at present the majority of archaeological excavations have been conducted (Price, 2003). It will examine how soldiers constructed a 'sense of place', experienced the corporeality of the war landscape and materials, and attributed meaning and values upon their surroundings in this hostile environment. Through this study a concept of an 'embodied memory' of the British soldiers of the Western Front will be forwarded, an alternative way of remembering the Western Front: a memory through the body, rather than a solely cognitive perspective (after Casey 2000). Embodied memory is a term which refers to a way of remembering the past, remembering the pain, pleasure and suffering of the body, as the body becomes a site of memory (Quashie 2004). Rather than relying on the rote memory of dates and events, or the 'external scaffolding' (Nora 1989) of memory created through monuments, embodied memory places the body at the centre of remembering. Rejecting a Cartesian divide of body and mind, the limited conceptions of memory within modernist discourse, and laments of the decline of 'organic' memory within contemporary 'postmodern' Western society, a study of embodied memory seeks to describe the formation of the memory of

the past by examining the materials and spaces that past peoples lived with and used. Archaeology in this manner can be considered as an act, or practice of embodied memory, as archaeologists have already used concepts of the body to investigate a past materiality (see Tilley 1994). Within this project ‘archaeology as embodied memory’ will be used to examine the spaces in which the soldiers lived and the materials which they used during their tours of the battlefields. This provides a different perspective, a different memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front. This analysis will be balanced by the investigation of the development of the memory of the Western Front, how other cultural forms have ‘remembered’ the battlefields, and how a popular cultural memory of the Western Front can be observed. It will also consider the role of this ‘embodied memory’ within contemporary political, social and cultural concerns.

It is possible to delineate these objectives into four main aims;

- i) To examine the place of archaeology within the wider field of memory studies, and propose the concept of embodied memory.
- ii) To assess how the memorial landscape, historiography, literature, art and representations in the popular media have created narratives which have ‘remembered’ the Western Front, and the formation of the popular cultural memory of the Western Front in Britain.
- iii) To investigate the impact of an archaeological study on the memory of the Western Front; how the discipline forms its own cultural memory of the former battlefields through an embodied memory, and how archaeology will construct its own narrative of the Western Front.
- iv) To consider the place of an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front, in the context of the social and political issues concerning a ‘European identity.’

Memory as a topic of academic interest has come to dominate a number of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences in recent years, but the relationship between archaeology and memory in the past and in the present has only lately begun to emerge (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003; Shackel 2000; Williams 2003a). As memory begins to be studied within the discipline of

archaeology there arises an opportunity to expand and develop the subject, to add a theoretical agenda to the area and to challenge existing preconceptions. As archaeology is also only just beginning to realise and examine its role in the study of the Western Front, it appears the ideal setting in which to study the association between archaeology and memory.

Perspectives

Such a limited perspective of the study of the Western Front, and of the Great War may well attract criticism from a number of areas. One in particular is the manner in which this project focuses entirely upon the male experience of war at the front, and could therefore be considered to obscure or ‘forget’ the memory of both non-combatant males and the variety of roles performed by women during the conflict (Tate 1998). Though the war was experienced from a multitude of perspectives by both women and men, it is the male combatants’ perspective which forms for many *the* memory of the Western Front and the Great War (Watson 2004). Through the study of an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front this project can counter these deficiencies by providing a means of remembering the war focused on the individuals who were present rather than prioritising their context. By placing memory of the body as the object of its research this project offers a perspective which could be considered for all those involved in wartime activities, soldiers, conscientious objectors, women working at the front or in factories in Britain, regardless of their situation. In the opening comments in a publication of a selection of letters written by a jailed conscientious objector, one observer stated, ‘the way in which the war impinges upon any individual is of interest, not because of the opinions of the individual, but because he or she is a human being like ourselves’ (Mason 1918, vii).

The specific role of women in wartime has become a highly important aspect of study, especially in the consideration of the memory of the war (Higonnet 1999). These studies have focused on undermining the traditional emphasis on the battlefield, as this orientation towards the military has ensured a lack of recognition of the roles of women in wartime, both in the present and at

the time of hostilities (Higonnet *et al* 1987). Indeed, despite women nurses and carriers at the front lines as well as women in auxiliary and volunteer functions farther back beside male support forces, women were considered only capable of fulfilling secondary functions ‘behind the lines’ (Higonnet 1993, 193). Virginia Woolf (1992) highlighted the dominance of the masculine perspective. ‘Yet it is the masculine values that prevail...This is an important book...because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women...A scene in a battlefield is more important than a scene in a shop – everywhere and much more subtly the difference of value persists’ (Woolf 1992, 95-96). This reveals that the reason for the dominance of a male perspective is one of definition, conflicts are remembered through individuals being ‘in war’, or to be more precise, about being ‘in combat’, women are therefore more likely to be remembered as victims rather than participants of war (Cooke 1996, 3). Therefore, by limiting the memory of the war to actual combat, men and male authors and historians have claimed war, and a particular aspect of war as their own subject (after Sheldon 2001). In reality there is no one story about the war on the Western Front that has a greater claim to be ‘the real war’; ‘history is made up of multiple stories, many of them “herstories”, which emanate from and then reconstruct events’ (Cooke 1996, 4). In extenuation for this study it must be acknowledged that it aims only to study a limited aspect of the war, to represent a partial memory of the Great War. However, as the wider study of archaeology on the Western Front increases in its scale and research objectives, the area of analysis can spread out from the front and can study the networks of supply to the frontlines, thus incorporating not only the study of women at the front but also the thousands of men from East Africa and China who also served in the British army in vital support roles. Archaeology offers new opportunities of studying the Western Front and the diverse roles of men and women during wartime.

The use of a singularly British perspective for a global conflict may also appear to represent too narrow an analysis of the complex events of the war. This is especially so when one considers that too often the perception of Britain’s role on the Western Front is considered in an insular manner, without regard to the international forces and labourers who also served on the front (see Terraine 1980). Such is the insularity of the memory of the British Tommy on the Western

Front that it has played an important part in the construction of a white 'British' identity; the soldiers are seen to embody the traditional characteristics of stoicism, endurance and dedication to duty. In this respect the memory of the Western Front appears as incongruous to a multi-ethnic Britain, especially if one considers how Britain as an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983, 12) has radically altered as a political, social and cultural entity since the end of the First World War (Nairn 1977, 12). Certainly, the memory of the Western Front should therefore not be considered as the defining narrative of a 'British' identity, but nevertheless one of a diverse array of narratives used to express a sense of belonging and place which as a whole represent the diversity of a 'British' identity (after Bhabha 1995, 311). What is important for this project is to examine the dominance of this particular narrative and this particular memory, and provide an alternative manner in which to narrate or retell this memory of the Western Front and thereby narrate and imagine a British identity (after Popular Memory Group 1983, 213).

This is itself not an easy task, as to even speak of 'Britain', let alone engage in a discussion which defines a popular cultural memory within Britain raises a myriad of problems as to what exactly is meant politically, socially, culturally, even geographically when referring to 'Britain' (Kearney 1995; 2004). To invoke Britain and a British popular memory within this project could be regarded as highly problematic; throughout the conflict Ireland was still part of Britain, and Irish troops fought for Britain alongside large numbers of Commonwealth soldiers, a high proportion of which were first generation British emigrants (Johnson 2003, 132). To define this project therefore it will be observed that the use of the term 'Britain' is a discursive and classificatory tool; within England, Scotland, Wales and to a limited extent in the province of Ulster, a particular memory of the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium can be found to be in common; this memory can of course be rearticulated, distinguished and debated, but it does retain similarities and differs substantially in the way the Western Front is recalled in Ireland, Canada and Australia. How this British popular memory reacts with a wider European perspective also forms an important part of this project. Sites of war, which were once sites of international divisions, can conversely act to unite nations individually and collectively in mourning and remembrance (Carman 2003). This is particularly

true of the Western Front and the First World War as a whole, as though it encompassed large areas of the globe it is still considered mainly as a 'European war' (Smith *et al* 2003, 6). In fact the major battlefields of the Great War all geographically, politically and emotionally fall within and concern the modern expanded European Union, from the Western and Eastern Fronts, to Salonika and Gallipoli. This is also reflected in the endurance of the war in the memory of contemporary European populations as opposed to America, where it is the Second World War which dominates 'national' memory and identity (Connerton 1989, 20). Just as the memory of the First World War has been used to construct a national identity for Australians, Canadians and New Zealanders, the Western Front is often cited as possessing the potential to build a European identity.

Narratives

It is imperative in this study is to stress how the inception of an archaeological agenda on the Western Front does not equate with a paradigm shift in knowledge and perception. It does not represent a tradition-shattering revolution, as it is not the simple case of replacing one paradigm with another (see Kuhn 1970). Though archaeology may well posit and inspire ideas and theories which are inconsistent with well-established notions and approaches, it is not assumed that this represents a more rounded form of knowledge or mode of representation (Feyerabend 1975). To understand the different ways in which the Western Front can be remembered, and archaeology's own place within this process, the narratives which archaeology can create about the Western Front, the stories that archaeologists are able to tell, will be examined in context with the narratives of the Western Front created through the memorial landscape, historiography, literature and the popular media. These cultural forms through which memories are created, transmitted and recreated, form particular narratives of memory. These narratives create distinct types of memory concerning the Western Front through their own individual content and form. By utilising certain modes of discourse and subject matter, these cultural forms have focused on distinct aspects of the Western Front, ensuring that particular narratives are produced. To examine these narratives, to explain the variety of memories

concerning the Western Front, allows the comparison with the content and the form of memory created through archaeology with other modes of cultural production. The 'narratives of memory' of the Western Front transmitted through cultural forms are shaped by a number of complex factors, involving agents, events, time, consciousness, style, judgement, rhetoric and language. It is these factors which render the narratives separate from each other and thus open to analysis. For these reasons the examination of the various narratives of the Western Front functions as a useful way in which to describe the array of memories of the Western Front, as it allows the consideration of the methods of transmission, the modes of communication, its reception and possible reuse by its audience, the styles used to generate and perpetuate memories and societal perceptions (after Genette 1980).

Archaeology in this project will form its own distinct narrative, its own 'embodied memory' of the battlefields, through its concern with the material evidence and the landscapes which it uncovers. This project will examine the way archaeology creates embodied memory through the narratives it produces and the stories archaeologists tell about the Western Front, through the examination of the objects, spaces and images which are investigated in an archaeological analysis. Throughout this project it will be maintained that archaeology acts as a mode of cultural production and must take responsibility for the effect this production will have on society (Shanks and McGuire 1996). As archaeology examines the Western Front it will confront already well-established forms of memory, which possess an emotive and powerful position. Through the construction of an individual archaeological narrative, drawing upon postmodern concerns for the development of unconventional, de-centred, intimate narratives (Lyotard 1984, 60), and recent archaeological work focusing upon alternative ways of expressing information (see Shanks 1992; Edmonds 1999), this project will forward an alternative form of remembrance. This memory will be sensitive to the place the Western Front holds within British society but will also challenge traditional forms of remembrance. In this endeavour, as archaeology impacts upon the memory of the Western Front, it will become a means of articulating political, social and cultural arguments and undeniably it will also question the very way in which we remember.

The Western Front

This project focuses solely upon the experiences of the British soldiers on the Western Front from the beginning of trench warfare in November 1914 to the cessation of hostilities in November 1918. It assesses specifically the front line area and battlefields of the Western Front, which encompasses the trench system and the areas of no man's land in the British sections of the front line. By drawing evidence from both archival material at the Liddle Collection (LC), housed at the Brotherton Library Leeds, and the Imperial War Museum (IWM) in London (see appendix), and recent archaeological excavations, this project examines the perceptions and bodily experiences of soldiers in this hostile landscape, in order to create an 'embodied memory' of the Western Front. The formation of a 'sense of place' will be concentrated upon to create this embodied memory. Place is considered in this study to represent a process of understanding, of coming to terms with a surrounding (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976). The soldiers' relationship with the material culture of the war is crucial in this analysis, as soldiers would come to an awareness of their landscape through their experiences with the technology and material of the war (see Audoin-Rouzeau 1998). Although historians have already come to study soldiers actions in combat (see Bourke 1999; Ferguson 1998; 2004), these appear decontextualised as they neglect an examination of their perception and experiences of the war landscape and material (see Saunders 2001). It is through the examination of these concepts of materiality and spatiality, that archaeology can impact upon the manner in which the Great War on the Western Front is remembered. An embodied memory therefore offers an alternative means of remembering the battlefields, beginning a new focus on the trenches and no man's land of the Western Front, which have become so ingrained within popular culture, that many scholars have found it difficult to escape particular, standard interpretations and analyses of the battlefields (see Fussell 1975, 136). To begin to build an alternative embodied memory of the battlefields, in effect to retell a story which has already been recounted numerous for nearly ninety years, a formal description of the study area is needed: the landscape must be contextualised (after Ward 2004, 97: Bender 1993, 3).

The Western Front could be said to have been formed when the German armies invaded Belgium on the 4th of August 1914 (Edmonds 1922, 28). This event led to the British declaration of war on the same day, and the order that the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was to be sent to fight on the left flank of the French army; this in effect constitutes the origins of the Western Front (Bourne 1989, 33). Between the 9th and the 22nd of August the BEF arrived in France, with nearly 160,000 troops under the command of Sir John French (Tucker 1998, 28). The German invasion of Belgium and France marked the opening phase of the war which witnessed a war of movement, with rapid manoeuvres of troops and artillery (Ashworth 1980, 1). There were however hints of the type of warfare which was to come, as at the Battle of the Marne (5th-11th of September 1914), which halted the German army's advance to Paris, where the large number of shells fired seemed to mark a new era in the conduct of war (Wilson 1986, 42). It was after the Battle of the Marne in late September, and the beginning of the so-called 'Race to the Sea', that the BEF was relocated north to Flanders (Bourne 1989, 24). This move to Belgium was tactical, as it shortened the lines of communication between the BEF and its supply routes back to Britain. It also ensured that British forces were participants in the last bout of hostilities in the initial phase of open warfare in what became known as the First Battle of Ypres (October 11th to November 11th 1914) (Holmes 1999, 49). The First Battle of Ypres in-fact marked the end of the war of movement and the beginning of the stalemate which was to last until the German Spring Offensives of 1918 (Tucker 1998, 35). The armies of all sides, after running out of space to outflank each other now dug in, creating the trench systems which was to characterise the war in the minds of many; 'the war had gone to earth' (Holmes 1999, 49) (Fig.1).

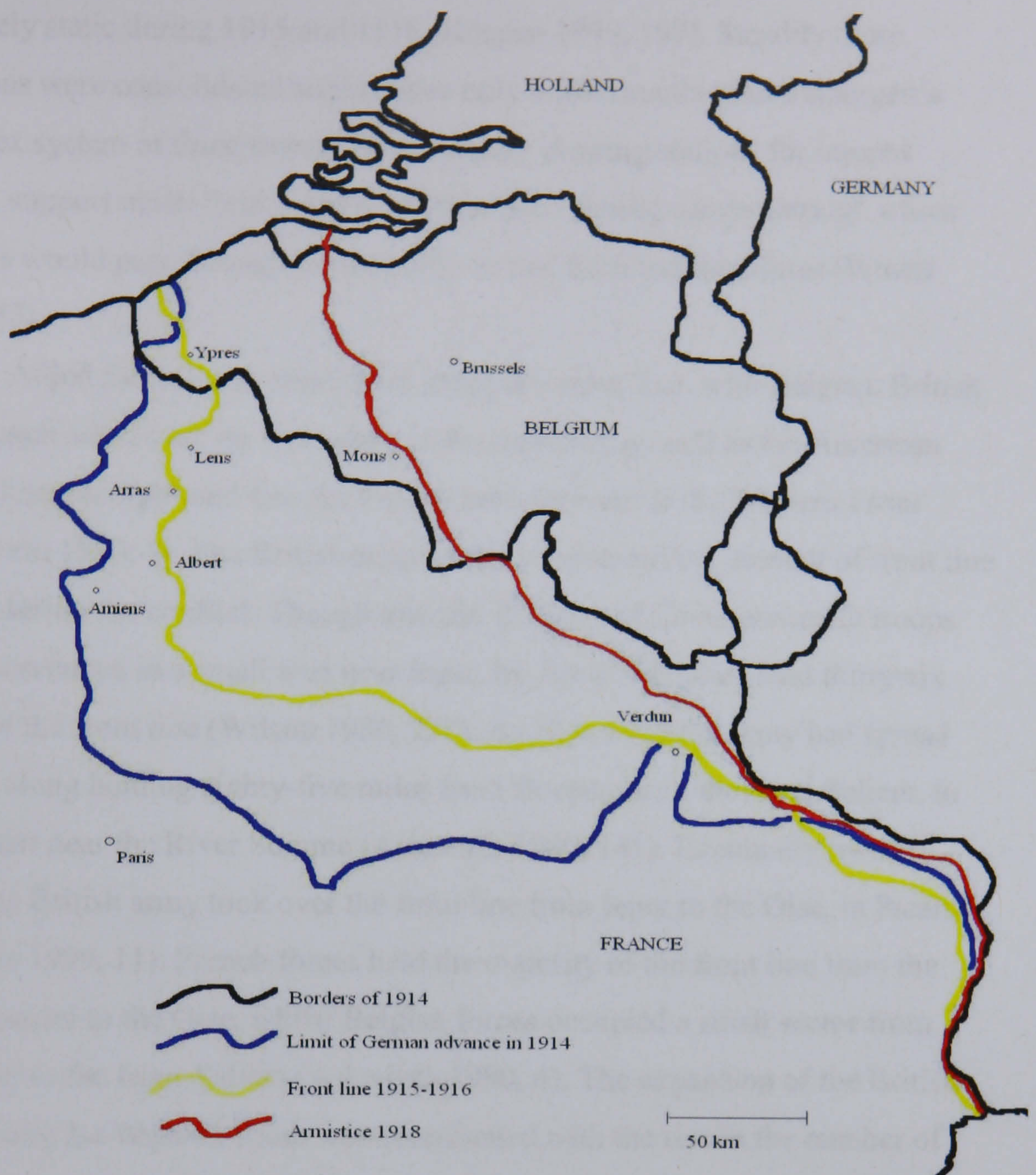


Fig.1: The Western Front 1914-1918 (after Clout 1996, 8)

The years of static trench warfare which prevailed after November 1914, were fought along the Western Front which ran from the Swiss border to the North Sea for nearly 475 miles (Tucker 1998, 34-35; Keegan 1999, 199). Its shape inevitably varied slightly with the ebb and flow of the war, as enemy trenches could be taken and reused, with opposing troops constructing a new line of defence further back (Ashworth 1980, 7). During the four years of war several major battles were initiated in vain by British and Allied forces to break the deadlock, such as at Neuve Chapelle in 1915, the Battle of the Somme in 1916, and the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917 (also known as the Third Battle of Ypres). The failure of these operations to secure a noticeable advance ensured that the overall picture of the Western Front in November 1914 was not vastly dissimilar from that of September 1918, with positions of all sides being

relatively static during 1915 and 1916 (Keegan 1999, 199). Steadily these positions were consolidated so that after only a few months, there emerged a complex system of three trench lines, casualty clearing stations for injured troops, support units, field hospitals, billets and training camps through which soldiers would pass through on their way to and from the front lines (Winter 1978, 85).

Allied forces were distributed along this front line, with Belgian, British and French armies taking their place in the trenches, as well as the American troops later incorporated into the French held sections of the Western Front (Ashworth 1980, 4). The British army steadily increased the amount of front line it held during the conflict. Though initially British and Commonwealth troops were entrenched in a small area near Ieper, by April 1915 they held thirty-six miles of the front line (Wilson 1986, 238). By June 1916 the army had spread further along holding eighty-five miles from Boesinghe in the Ieper Salient, to Mericourt near the River Somme (Ashworth 1980, 141). Eventually by early 1918 the British army took over the front line from Ieper to the Oise, in Picardy (Holmes 1999, 11). French forces held the majority of the front line from the Swiss border to the Oise, whilst Belgian forces occupied a small sector from Nieuport to the Ieper Salient (Ashworth 1980, 4). The expansion of the British army along the Western Front was coordinated with the rise in the number of troops, which increased from 125,000 men in 1914 to 1,764,000 by 1918. These soldiers were organised at various times into four and five separate armies, each holding their own section of front line (Bourke 1996, 15-28; Simpson 1984, 140-142; 2002, 213). In Britain between August 1914 and December 1915, 2,466,719 men enlisted for service, and from January 1916 to the end of the war 2,504,183 men were conscripted into the army (Bet-El 1999, 2).

It is the scale of this involvement that has meant that the Great War and particularly the Western Front has such prominence within British history (Bourne 1989, 1). The Western Front retains its particular fascination in Britain, as most British soldiers who came under fire did so in France and the Belgium (Holmes 1999, 17). Inevitably, the majority of British war deaths also took place on the Western Front (Terraine 1980, 35-47), with Winter (1985, 74) placing the total number for the war at 723,000. The battlefields are also seen as portents of what was to become a century ravaged by war and mass death; the Western Front

therefore forms for many in Britain the stock image of the brutality of industrialised war (see Winter 2004). Battles at Ieper, Vimy, Neuve Chapelle and in particular on the Somme, which often appears almost automatically to evoke the statistic of 60,000 dead or wounded on the first day, are seen as the examples of the scale and type of fighting which was to mark the last century (Griffith 1994, xi). This memory of the battlefields is reinforced by the unprecedented figures of British soldiers, killed, wounded or reported missing during the conflict; indeed, the Western Front retains its 'melancholy distinction' as the arena where the highest number of lives were lost by the British armed forces (Holmes 2005, 13). Despite this apparent familiarity with the Western Front, the battlefields were an historical anomaly; the scale of fighting, the tactics employed, the methods of warfare and that the majority of deaths and casualties were military, all mark the conflict as being distinct, both in the other theatres of warfare during 1914-1918, and in the warfare of the twentieth century as a whole. Yet the Western Front remains in memory as the truest expression of industrialised war, a peculiarity which has contributed to its persistence and power in its remembrance in Britain (Winter 2004).

Despite the centrality the Western Front is given in Britain there were other areas of conflict. The major front in the east is usually forgotten by Western historians (Triska 1998; Stone 1975), as is the fighting in Egypt and modern-day Iraq. There was also sporadic fighting in the German African colonies of Togoland and south-west Africa (Holmes 1999, 18). The British army was also part of a multinational force (see Morrow 2005), with France the senior partner, coordinating Allied actions (Brown 1993, xx). Britain's mobilisation for the war was paralleled in the Empire with troops sent to the Western Front to serve the Commonwealth from Canada (458,000 men), Australia (332,000 men), India (130,000 men), New Zealand (112,000 men) and South Africa (30,000 men) (Beckett 2001, 67). The British army also employed 96,000 Chinese labourers on the Western Front (Brown 1993, 227-232), as well as 56,000 black soldiers and labourers from the colonies in Africa and the West Indies (Beckett 2001, 72). Although only a small number of black soldiers from Bermuda were permitted to fight on the front line, these men were used in general to provide the essential logistical support for the British army (Brown 1993, 227). British women also contributed to this aspect of the war effort

through their role on the Western Front as nurses in hospitals or drivers of ambulances (Brown 1993, 313). With the formation of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in March 1918, later renamed as the Queen Mary Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC), over 41,000 women were used by the British army to complete a variety of administration tasks as well as to tend the war cemeteries (Brown 1993, 313). It is in this respect that the British involvement on the Western Front represents a 'widening of horizons', as the demands of an industrialised war, entailed the use and appropriation of labour across national, ethnic and gender divides (Beckett 2001, 67).

The British Army

At the apex of the British army of the First World War was the Field Marshall, the commander-in-chief. Sir Douglas Haig replaced Sir John French in this role in December 1915 and held the position for the rest of the conflict (Ashworth 1980, 11; Simpson 2002, 213). The commander-in-chief would be in charge of the entire British army, which could number nearly one-and-a-half million men in the field at any given time, while under him five generals each commanded an army of between two and three hundred thousand men (Van Emden 2002, 75). An army was a permanent administrative and strategic unit and could be responsible for up to twenty-five miles of front line (Ashworth 1980, 11). Each army consisted of a number of Corps, with each Corps totalling around fifty thousand men and commanded by a lieutenant-general (Simpson 2002, 213; Van Emden 2002, 75). A Corps was a static formation, comprised of three to four divisions, which during the later years of the war usually held a section of twelve miles of the front line (Ashworth 1980, 11). A division normally contained approximately nineteen thousand men, made up of twelve thousand infantrymen, four thousand artillery men and a number of non-military, medical and supply staff, as well as administrative staff (Simpson 2002, 213). Divisions within the British army during the Great War could be moved within the army, with the exception of Canadian, Australian and New Zealand divisions, which were allowed to remain within the same Corps (Simpson 2002, 213). Three infantry brigades commanded by a Brigadier-General made up a division,

and brigades were permanently assigned to that division for the entirety of their existence (Ashworth 1980, 9). Four battalions of one thousand men made up a brigade although after the shortage of manpower in 1918 this was reduced to three battalions (Simpson 2002, 213). These battalions were led by a Lieutenant Colonel or a Major and were divided into four companies of about two hundred men under a Captain. This was further divided into four platoons each under a Lieutenant and four sections of ten men, commanded by a Sergeant (Simpson 1984, 147; 2002, 213; Ashworth 1980, 7-11).

The British length of the Western Front was divided into four or five army sectors, which were subdivided in turn into sixteen Corps sectors, along which the infantry divisions were distributed (Ashworth 1980, 11; Simpson 2002, 213). It was this layout that constituted the British army's 'Formal Command Structure', which linked the front-line soldier to the commander-in-chief. The ordinary soldier received his orders through this structure, and his superiors exercised their authority in its name (Bourne 1989, 217). Through this command structure the British army enforced strict discipline on its soldiers (Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002, 8). This discipline and the rigid organisation of the army despite its appearance today would not have been completely alien to the British citizen soldier, manned as it was by perhaps the most highly disciplined industrial labour force in the world (Winter 1985, 159). British society at this period is a world hard for us to recreate or comprehend (Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002, 24). The majority of individuals were outside public affairs and authority was prevalent, despite pre-war social tensions (Bourne 1989, 199-201; Ferro 1973, 4). The British working classes, which were to form the majority of the army, were conditioned within a society that demanded their discipline and deference (Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002, 5-6). They were on the whole conformist, patriotic and loyal, as a great deal of goodwill towards Britain's national institutions and hierarchy existed, encouraged by the popular media (Bourne 1989, 204; De Groot 1996, 12-15).

Troops in the British army throughout the war were governed by a disciplinary code of uncompromising severity (Bourne 1989, 215). Military crime including petty theft, drunkenness, desertion, insubordination, misuse of equipment, malingering and untidiness, were met with quick and painful forms of retribution (Bourne 1989, 215). The objective of military law was to maintain

discipline, to ensure that the proper character of the soldier was not compromised (HMSO 1914, 6). If individuals stepped out of line, then the army was backed by a formidable list of punitive measures. Military law was no finely honed legal instrument but rather, 'a broad-headed sledgehammer to be brought down smartly and with great force on any military delinquent' (P. Scott 1997, 349). For minor infringements offenders were sentenced to 'field punishment number two', which included forfeiture of pay, sleeping under guard and performance of gruelling fatigues and pack duties (Winter 1978, 42-43). For more serious crimes, such as theft or looting, soldiers were sentenced to 'field punishment number one.' This consisted of lashing a man to a gun-wheel by his wrists and ankles for an hour at a time in the morning and in the evening (Bourke 1996, 99). These punishments were to be taken out of line in full view of the soldier's regiment (HMSO 1914, 721). Serious offenders faced a court martial and the threat of execution by firing squad (Winter 1978, 43). During the Great War the British army executed two-hundred and sixty-six British soldiers for desertion, eighteen for cowardice, seven for quitting their posts, and two for casting away their weapons; two-hundred and ninety-three in all (Ferguson 2004, 171). The army hierarchy remained convinced that the death penalty was essential to the maintenance of morale, and publicised notifications of executions to the ranks *pour encourager les autres*, to 'stiffen the army's backbone' (Sheffield 1996b, 77). These punishments were known, understood and accepted by most of the soldiers (Winter 1978, 43).

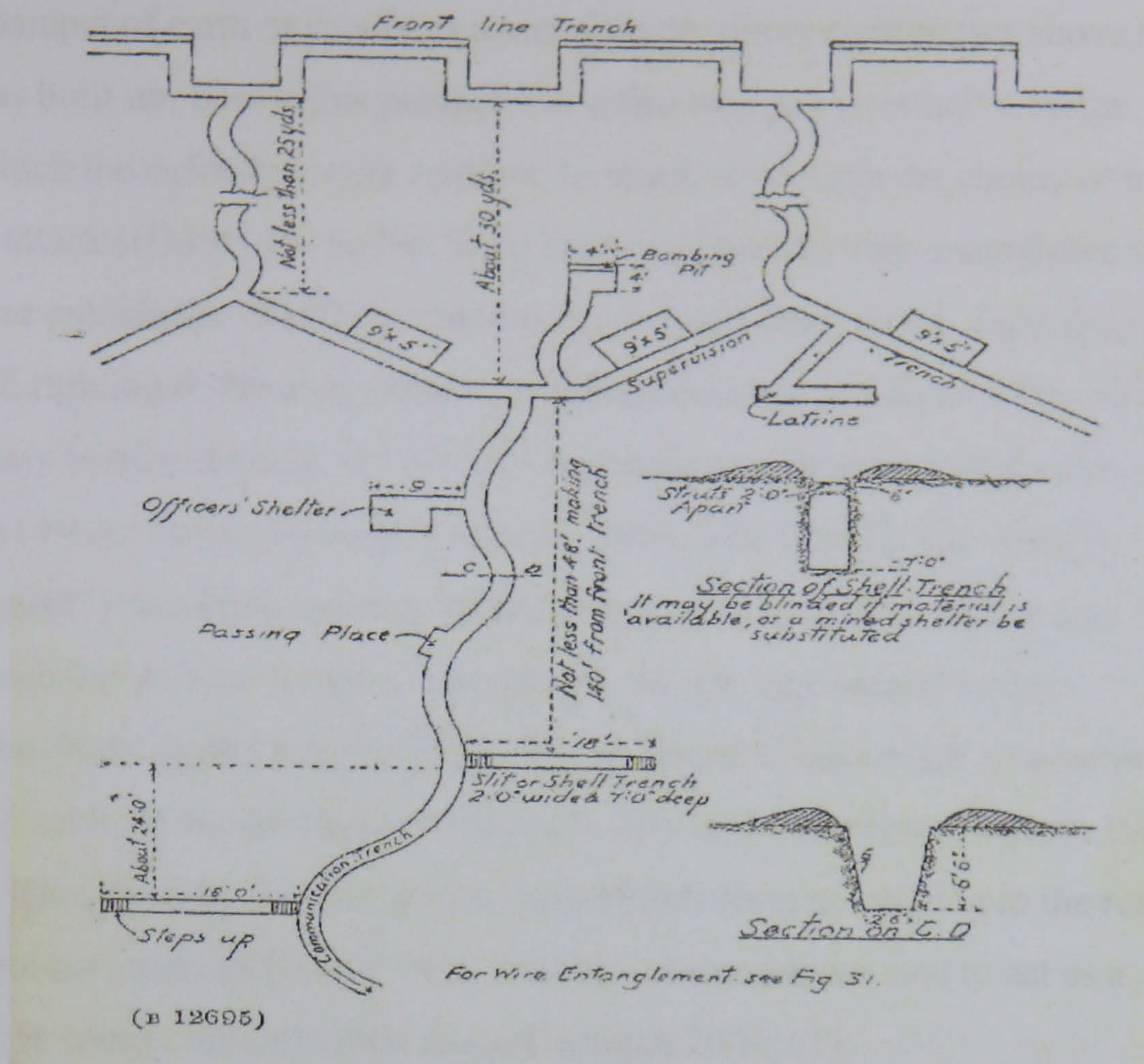


Fig.2: Trench layout (IWM 1997, 6)

Although variations in terrain and climate along the front necessarily entailed alterations in dimension, structure and layout, the British trench system on the Western Front which developed from late 1914 was usually made up of three parallel lines, the fire trench, the support trench and the reserve lines (Bet-El 1999, 97) (Fig.2). Though initially dug in haste in late 1914 this system was by 1916 an impressive defensive position of trenches, strong-points and observation posts which were established in depth and could cover an area of between two to six miles (Simpson 1984, 149). Although in some sections of the line where high water-tables forced the construction of breastworks above the ground, in general, trenches were dug to a depth of approximately one to one-and-a-half metres, with another half a metre to a metre of wall above ground constructed from sandbags (Ashworth 1980, 4). The floor was made from duckboards, which covered a drainage tunnel (Bet-El 1999, 97). In essence the British trenches were a ditch dug deep enough to shelter a man, narrow enough to present a difficult target, and traversed at intervals to diffuse shrapnel (Keegan 1999, 191-192). In the front line fire trenches, the design and layout was slightly different than the communication and reserve trenches. On the enemy side of this

trench, a parapet of earth or sandbags about sixty to ninety centimetres above the ground was built up. Below this parapet was a fire-step just over half a metre high on which the defenders were required to stand, to observe the enemy or to launch an attack (HMSO 1916, 20). Several rows of barbed wire entanglements were placed outside the front line trenches in no man's land, which depending on the level of fighting in the area could be rendered desolate and filled with craters from artillery bombardments, or still have the remains of buildings and wild vegetation or even crops growing (Ashworth 1980, 5-6) (Fig.3). The enemy trenches could be anything from under thirty metres to just under a kilometre away, though the average length of no man's land was approximately two-hundred and thirty metres (Brown 2001, 43). A 'parados' about half a metre or so high was often built on the top of the opposite side of the trench (Ashworth 1980, 5) (Fig.4). This parados was designed to stop bullets from continuing to the rear lines of trenches, to shield men from a shell blast behind them, and to act as a parapet if the enemy ran over their lines (Corrigan 2003, 81).

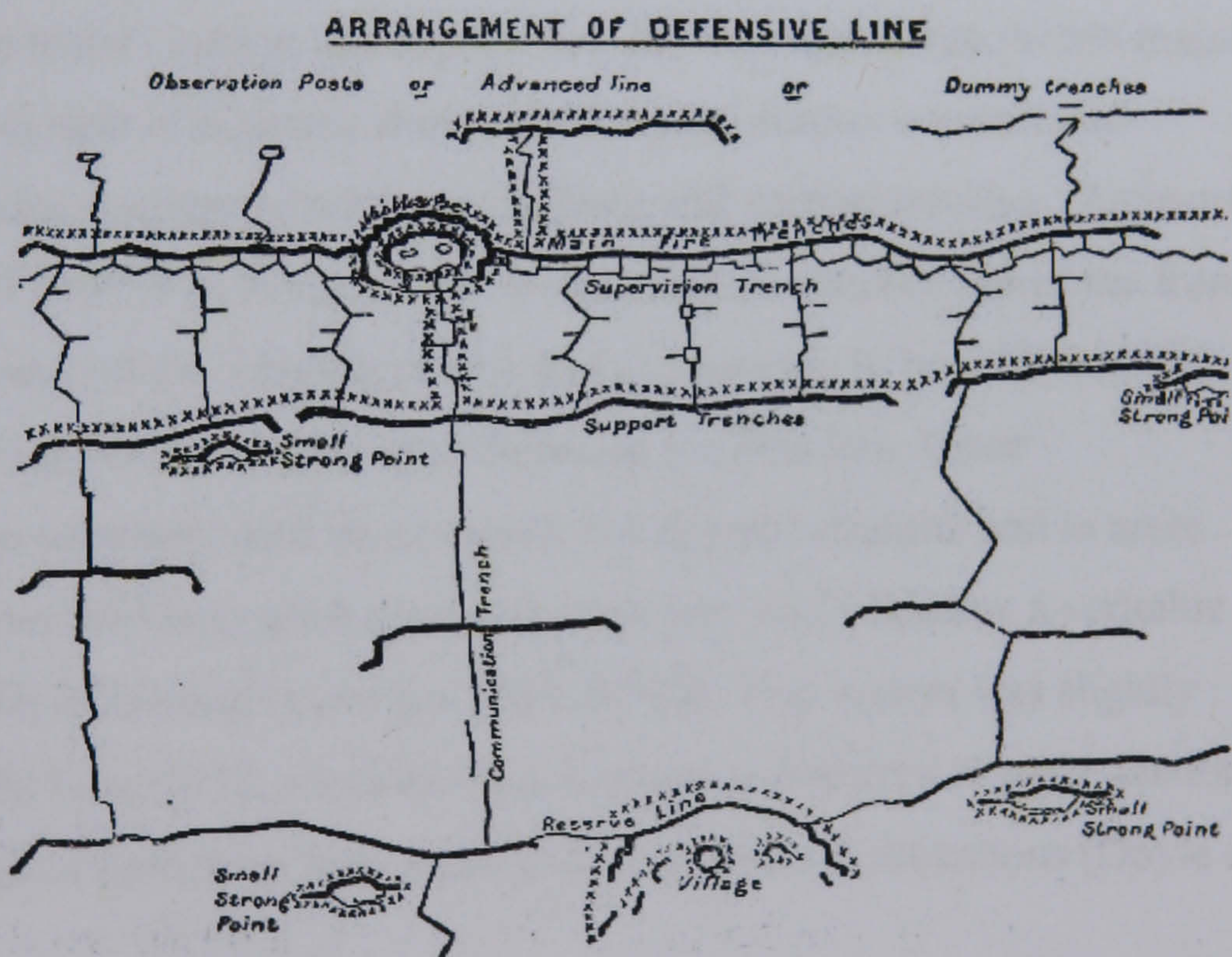


Fig.3: Trench system (Baker, 2004)

Between each traverse in the front line fire trench the length of trench or bay could be between five to ten metres (Ashworth 1980, 5). Behind the fire trench a command or supervision trench was connected to the former at frequent intervals, to provide officers with access to observe soldiers in the front line (Bet-

El 1999, 97). This trench contained both shallow dugouts and latrines (Ashworth 1980, 5). Captain O. Lyle (LC) in a letter written in early January 1915 describes this line as a, 'trench parallel to and close to sixteen or twenty feet from the fire trench. Its possession enables officers and N.C.O.'s to control the men without disturbing them by barging through the fire trench.' Behind the front line was the support trench, which was a single line trench, and was used to accommodate troops for the front line (Ashworth 1980, 5-6). These trenches were rather more complex, as the absence of the dangers of the front line allowed extra facilities to be constructed. Kitchens, latrines and stores were frequently part of this structure, and trench-mortar positions were dug at the end of short lead-off trenches. Deep dugouts were also characteristic of the support line; these were usually though not exclusively for officers only (Winter 1978, 80-81). Support trenches were intended to be close to the firing line trenches usually between three to four hundred metres behind, and built for the possibilities of launching an attack or defending their positions, but 'constructed in such a manner that soldiers would be able to lie down and sleep' (General Staff 1914, 9). About four to five hundred metres behind this support line lay the reserve line, which mainly consisted of a system of dugouts, stores, kitchens and further networks of trenches, containing troops to reinforce the front and support trenches (Ashworth 1980, 6; Bet-El 1999, 97). A system of communication trenches linked the front, support and reserve lines enabling rations and ammunition to be delivered and fresh troops to relieve those soldiers stationed in the trenches. These communication trenches could be traversed, but also run straight, and in areas which had witnessed heavy shell bombardments they could become a veritable labyrinth for the uninitiated (Corrigan 2003, 84-85). This system was slightly modified by 1917 and 1918, when the trench layout was altered in some sections to include a lightly held front line, supported by concrete fortifications (Doyle *et al* 2002, 210).

Trench Routine

Soldiers were not permanently stationed in the front line trenches, but were in-fact rotated in and out of the trenches (Brown 2001, 43-45).

Approximately three-fifths of an infantryman's time was spent in rest sections; for example the 7th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment was typical in spending forty-two percent of their time of service in the front line or in close support between 1915-1918 (Ferguson 1998, 352; Fuller 1991, 6). The soldiers would move between the three trench lines, front, support and reserve, and then back to their billets away from the front (Winter 1978, 80-82). Periods spent out of the line 'at rest', belied the term. 'Rest' could consist of marches, fatigues, digging and repairing (Fuller 1991, 44-47). Six days in each of the lines was the usual amount of time the soldiers spent in the trenches although three conditions appear to have determined these routines (Bet-El 1999, 164). First, that the length of time at the front was dependent upon the conditions in that section, the shortest time being spent in a quiet sector (Bet-El 1999, 164). Secondly, soldiers would spend the same amount of time in each line of the sector, though the period in rest at their billets could be longer. Lastly, the policy of rotation ensured that soldiers would always occupy all three lines within a given sector, although this would not always begin with the front line (Bet-El 1999, 164-165). The distribution of a battalion in the trenches would usually consist of two or three companies in the front line and two or more companies in battalion reserve (IWM 1997, 57). For every one soldier who served in the front line there were another eight in support roles in the reserve lines (Bourke 1999, 6).

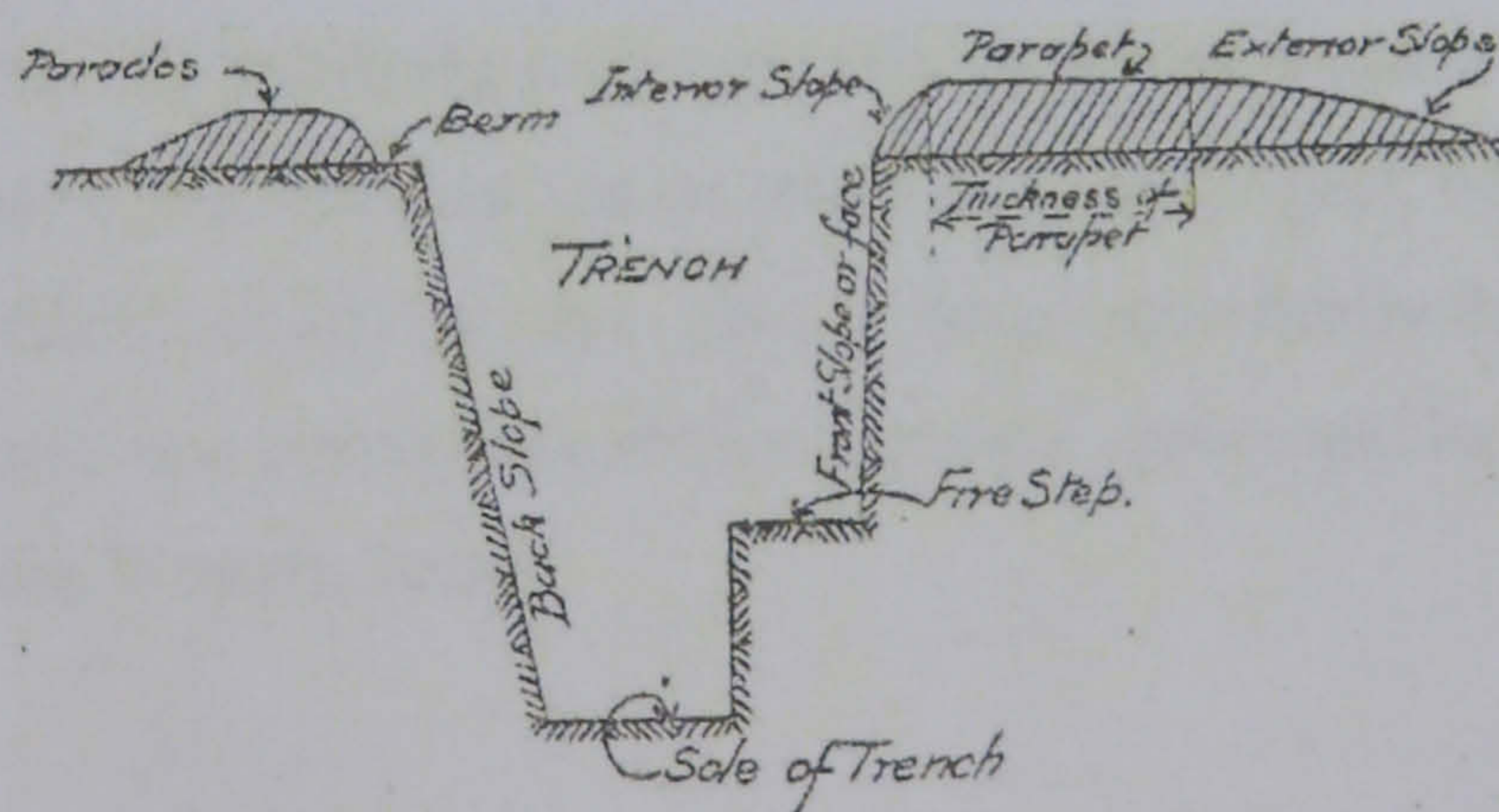


Fig.4: Trench cross-section (IWM 1997, 9)

It must be emphasised that the war landscape, comprising the trench system, was only part of the soldiers' experiences, which would have included reserve areas and billets, training camps, and the local towns and villages (Winter 1978, 85; Gibson 2003, 175-176). Time in these areas away from the front would

provide a contrast for the soldier as an absence of the sights and sounds of the war, and contact with women, children and civilian life would enable him to escape his military identity (Winter 1978, 142; Brown 2001, 77; 1996, 69). The substantial network of facilities designed to provide for the British soldier may have also provided an escape from the front line. These included the YMCA, Church Army huts, canteens, and the concert parties and sports events, all of which provided familiar recreational and cultural outlets (Collins 1998, 134; Simkins 1991, 302). The towns, cafés and brothels also significantly contributed to the soldiers' lives during wartime (after Herwig 1997, 3; Gibson 2001, 540). These experiences were a major contributor to the soldiers' perceptions of the war, just as much as the moments spent in the combat zone (Brown 2001, 77). Although these experiences behind the lines provide an additional image of the soldiers away from the front, an image that certainly must be sustained to ensure a wider appreciation of the soldiers lives, these aspects will not feature in this necessarily specific study. Nor will the variety of activities carried out by labourers and support staff, which ensured the supply of materials and provisions for front line troops (Simpson 1984, 149). This particular role was integral to the army's performance, and demanded an ever-increasing amount of man-power; by 1918 in-fact, hundreds of thousands of British soldiers were undertaking jobs which were far removed from the front line, and the Labour Corps formed in 1917, had by 1918 fifteen percent of the infantry's strength serving in its ranks (Simpson 1984, 146). By focussing solely upon the front line soldiers' reactions to the war landscape of the trenches and no man's land this project, whilst recognising the partiality of its narrative, aims to assess specifically the embodied experiences and perceptions of the materials, spaces and landscapes of the battlefields of the Western Front.

Chapter One

Memory

Memory provides the means by which human beings understand and make sense of the present. In its capacity for enabling individuals to carry out physical and mental activities, to comprehend and participate within society with its complex social and cultural rules, memory can be regarded as one of the key necessities of human life itself (Schacter and Dodson 2001, 71). It is not however just the memory of an individual's life, their past actions and experiences, which constitutes their sense of identity. People also seek memories of the distant historical past to mould, create and sustain meanings, to inform their present and guide their future. Within a wider societal context, the memory of the past deeply affects the present, as institutions and individuals alike treat these memories as a real contemporary force in the present (Schudson 1992, 2). This is what Halbwachs (1992) defined as the 'collective memory', whereby the memory of the past is forged through social structures. 'Human beings do not just live in time, they have an awareness of the passing of time which is incorporated in the nature of their social institutions' (Giddens 1995, 36). Humans are indeed conscious of the historic past; 'to be a member of any human community is to situate oneself with regard to one's past. The past is therefore a permanent dimension of the human consciousness' (Hobsbawm 1972, 3).

Memory therefore is an essential and defining quality of what it means to be human; it is the source of our identity, our understanding, and our perceptions of the past, present and future (Nora 1989; Yerushalmi 1996). Given the importance of memory it is unsurprising that within the last two decades memory studies have become such a topic of fascination for a number of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences (Radstone 2000). This concern with memory is not however restricted to academic discourse, as access to memory has become a highly contested issue in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century world; individuals and groups use the memory of past events and its importance to the present to raise concerns and awareness especially concerning gender and ethnicity (Lambek and Antze 1996, vii). Memory has

become a means to heal, to blame, to legitimate and to empower; it is also a focus of concern in the construction of national and ethnic identities, and has thereby found a prominent place in contemporary political debates (Cattell and Climo 2002, 2). The diverse approach of memory studies seeks to understand these issues by providing 'a general rubric for inquiry into the varieties of forms through which we are shaped by the past, conscious and unconscious, public and private, material and communicative, consensual and challenged' (Olick and Robbins 1998, 112). These studies have made important contributions to the study of how we remember, and the varying political, cultural and social conditions which constrain or enable memories of the past to come to prominence. This has inevitably led to questions concerning power, legitimacy and control, as studies assess how memory can be mobilised and denied in relation to the social, political and cultural context of the time (Müller 2002, 1). Foucault (1975, 25) accurately observed this capacity when he stated that since memory was 'actually a very important factor in struggle', therefore, 'if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism.'

The recent proliferation of memory studies has led some to label our own time to be obsessed with memory, perhaps even addicted to it (Maier 1993, 140). This has sparked further study into the specific ways in which memory is conceived within contemporary society. The way in which we remember is certainly not static, nor is the understanding and definition of memory: it is culturally determined (Darian-Smith and Hamilton 1994, 4). Memory and the way we think about memory are variable with changes in society, it is not simply an innate aspect of our cognitive operation (Rose 1997, 239; 1998, 179). To understand how we regard the role of memory in the present, its history must be considered. 'Even memory has a history, every culture depends on its memory of the past, but how a culture performs and sustains this recollection is distinctive and diagnostic' (Terdiman 1993, 4).

History of Memory

A consideration of the nature of memory can be found in the writings of the classical Greek and Roman philosophers and scholars (Morris 1994).

Memory was considered an essential facet of cultural and social life to the Ancient Greeks, its cultivation and capacity an almost obsessive concern, as memory was thought to be the precondition of thought (Notopoulos 1938, 469). Mnemosyne, the daughter of Uranus and Gaia, and mother of the nine muses, was the venerated Greek goddess of memory, a deity who enabled not only knowledge but also inspiration (Havelock 1986, 79). This concept that creativity and originality depended upon memory for its existence, and indeed derived its strength from the remembrance of the past was deeply embedded in Greek thought (Bertman 2000, 37). The revered place of memory within Ancient Greek society is understandable when considering that the oral culture of the Archaic period of the twelfth to eighth centuries B.C. would have relied solely upon a system of concerted, disciplined remembering; 'language and thought for the early Greeks grew out of memory' (Ong 2002, 169). The Ancient Greeks depended upon those who had received instructions for the storage and retrieval of memory, those who had learnt mnemonic devices which enabled them to store and retrieve large amounts of information (Small 1997, 71). One such individual was the *mnemon*, who kept track of proceedings in law courts using these mnemonic devices (Graves 1985, 292). One of the most well known of these mnemonic practices was that supposedly used by Simonides, the Greek poet of Cos in the fifth century B.C (Sorabji 1972, 22). Cicero (1871, 325-326) and Quintilian (2001b, 63) both relate the story of how Simonides was able to recall those who were present at a banquet, where the roof of the hall had collapsed crushing those inside, ensuring that their bodies were identifiable. By attaching his memory to the particular places where the individuals had sat and placing himself into that image the poet was able to recall who had been present at the feast (Yates 1966, 1).

This mnemonic practice marks a distinction for the conception of memory in Greek and later Roman cultures, as the emphasis placed in this mnemonic device is a corporeal experience of memory, not memory solely as a mental construct. Indeed, within Greek and Roman culture the 'process in which impressions were received and retained by the memory was generally believed to be somatic or bodily' (Whitehead 2003, 29). Due to the development of this technique, memory came to be conceived as a corporeal experience, one which depended upon imagining what was to be remembered as a physical object or

image and immersing oneself within that image (Carruthers 1994, 33). Memory in the ancient world was therefore considered as a bodily experience, one which did not consider memory as an abstract mental phenomenon, but as a physical engagement with images and objects (see Samuel 1994, viii). Memory in the guise of these mnemonic devices was listed alongside invention, arrangement, style and delivery as one of the five parts of rhetoric (Yates 1978, 20). The mnemonic techniques of classical Rome for instance were developed in reference to oratory, whereby a Roman lawyer could use the classical technique of fixing memory to a place as a way of remembering meaningful points of an argument he wished to place before the court (Fentress and Wickham 1992, 11). Cicero (1871, 147) expressed favour for the technique devised by Simonides to remember parts of his speeches, and of memory as the key to a good orator, as without it, 'all the talents of the orator...though they may be of the highest degree of excellence, will be of no avail.' The orator in these circumstances would imagine walking through a building and attaching parts of the speech to the places and objects in that building to sustain memory (Morris 1994, 2). 'Students learn sites (*loca*) which are as extensive as possible and are marked by a variety of objects, perhaps a large house divided into many separate areas. They carefully fix in their mind everything there which is notable, so that their thoughts can run over all the parts of it without any hesitation or delay' (Quintilian 2001b, 67). This is not however a purely formulaic concept of memory, as the construction and apprehension of these images and objects involved the imagination as much as recollection (see Quintilian 2001a, 271). In fact the Latin word *memoria*, from which the English word memory is derived, was conceived as entailing both reminiscing and imagination (Vico 1982, 69; 1999, 369). The role of memory and imagination attributed by the Ancient Greeks in the formation of creative thought was not lost in the Roman world, and the notion of memory as a corporeal experience was sustained (Yates 1966). 'By these imaginary forms and objects, as by all those that came under our corporeal vision, our memory is admonished and excited; but some place for them must be imagined; as bodily shape cannot be conceived without a place for it' (Cicero 1871, 327).

It is in this aspect of the formulation of memory; its mnemonic, structuring, rhetorical and importantly its corporeal features, which was

rearticulated into the medieval world (West 2003, 61). Saint Augustine (1995, 185) also considered memory as a physical experience rather than as a purely abstract, mental phenomenon; 'I come to the fields and vast palaces of memory, where are the treasuries of innumerable images of all kinds of objects brought in by sense-perception...When I am in this storehouse, I ask that it produce what I want to recall, and immediately certain things come out.' According to Saint Thomas Aquinas the art of connecting the physical experience of objects with memory was the very essence of remembering; 'Man cannot understand without images; the image is a similitude of a corporeal thing' (Yates 1966, 70). Memory was considered in this manner to be a function not of the intellect, but of the soul (Geary 1994, 18). This art of memory allowed the individual to become physically immersed in their theological teachings, so that they were able to interpret the world around them through their understanding (Aquinas 1964, 31). Memory was viewed as a physical process whereby the human soul reflected and came closer to God (Geary 1994, 18). Aquinas was influenced in this respect by the work of the tenth century Islamic scholar Avicenna (1952, 45), who drew attention to the way in which memory was developed through the senses; 'this form of perception takes place through the bodily matter...the imaginative perception also takes place through the body.'

This concept of memory as a physical conception was also present in Renaissance Europe, where contemplation using images and objects to aid recollection led to the construction of what were termed 'memory theatres' (Bolzoni 1995, xvi). These constructs, developed by hermeneutical and cabalistic scholars in the fifteenth century, were similar to the classical mnemonic devices as they contained carefully constructed arrangements of images designed to act upon the individual as they imagined entering these theatres and evoke memory. These mnemonic devices were seen to be a means whereupon the scholar could glimpse the divine by possessing the universal, linking truth of the world (see Johnston 1996, 12). As Llull (1985, 854) taught, 'memory was created to remember many things and great ones, by which it can greatly remember God.' These memory theatres were not, however, a representation of a purely formulaic conception of memory. Rather, its arrangement whilst designed to assist memory, could also be the space where new discoveries could be made through careful contemplation (Rossi 2000, 19). The corporeal experience of memory in

these 'memory theatres' acted upon the individual to recall past experiences in a manner which enabled the mobilization of emotion and imagination, calling into performance body and soul (Le Goff 1992, 70). It would be mistaken to assume these images placed in the memory theatre were solely cognitive perceptions, as the images become imbued with a life of their own (Bolzoni 1995, 130). Neo-Platonic philosophy enabled scholars to consider their experiences in the memory theatres as corporeal, a bodily engagement with their memory (see Kristeller 1980, 91). The most famous of these 'memory theatres' was that devised by Giordano Bruno, a mnemonic device modelled in such a way as to 'crystallise and reanimate recollections,' and to contemplate the divine (see Bruno 1964, 77; 1975, 61). Through its regard for a corporeal process in memory this technique enabled the construction of a memory theatre within which texts and images were placed and rendered effective and memorable (Gatti 1999, 173). The memory theatres of the sixteenth century also indicated the beginning of a subtle but distinctive shift in the definition of memory, as the ordered places and images of the mnemonic devices coincided with growing movements for the regulation and documentation of knowledge within more 'rational' structures (after Dilthey 1976, 82).

From the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries another conception of memory began to emerge, one in-fact which has dominated the way in which memory is considered to the present day. Associated with the developments within philosophy and especially the natural sciences, memory became associated less with a corporeal, physical sense, than as a pragmatic mental phenomenon (Matsuda 1995, 5). The memory theatres were seen in this rational age as prone to inaccuracies and the blurring of fact and fiction (Fentress and Wickham 1992, 16). The teachings of the medieval theologians were also seen as relying too heavily on the unsubstantiated notions of faith, without reason or judgement (Porter 1990, 2). Though individuals such as Francis Bacon still regarded the mnemonic devices as useful, it was to the purpose of storing and retaining the knowledge of the ever-growing scientific fields of enquiry that these devices were to be employed (Rossi 1968, 207). Bacon criticised the over elaborate design of the memory theatres, calling for a radical transformation in the art of memory in the design and purpose of these mnemonic devices. 'It is certain that art (as it is) may be raised to points of ostentation prodigious: but in

use (as it is now managed) it is barren; not burdensome...that is, not dexterous to be applied to the serious use of business and occasions' (Bacon 1996, 229).

Memory, came to be regarded in this manner as 'nothing else than sensation of impressions on the brain accompanied with the thought to determine the duration of the sensation' (Spinoza 1959, 254). Therefore, notions of corporeality in memory were disregarded by the rational philosophers of the sixteenth century; and this alteration was accompanied by an attack on the reliability of memory and the questioning of its use and value within rational philosophy (see Sorell 1996, 10). 'I believe that my memory tells me lies, and that none of the things that it reports ever happened' (Descartes 1986, 16). Locke (1975, 151-152) also wrote about the fallibility of memory; 'and our minds represent to us those Tombs to which we are approaching; where though the Brass and Marble remain, yet the Inscriptions are effaced by time and the Imagery moulders away.'

Memory was seen as an irrational device, devoid of the certainty of logic which was now to become the object of research (Schouls 1989, 19-20). Memory was considered as distinct from the properties of reason and knowledge and as an indication of human imperfection (Liebniz 1962, 256). Hobbes (1996, 16) labelled memory; 'this decaying sense', and that 'when wee would express the decay, and signifie that the sense is fading, old, and past, it is called memory.'

The Enlightenment philosophers of the seventeenth century continued this scepticism of human memory but also began a process of the positivist study of memory, of experience and experiment, based upon scientific ideals and frameworks (Cassirer 1951, 8). The Enlightenment was a desire for human affairs to be guided by rationality rather than by faith, superstition, or revelation; liberty from the restraints of custom or arbitrary authority: a world validated by science rather than by religion or tradition (Outram 1995, 3). Kant (1963, 3) stated, 'have courage to use your own reason! – that is the motto of enlightenment.' Memory in this conception becomes solely a mental construct available for analysing and testing (Broadie 1997, 22). Although the uncertainty attached to the value of memory still persisted in this period it was derived from the belief that empirical and scientific studies of human remembering had highlighted its flaws; 'memory alone is not enough, since it has essential limitations of which...moreover it is extremely imperfect and treacherous' (Schopenhauer 1966, 139). The Scottish Enlightenment philosophers Hume and

Reid, both provide examples of this analysis of memory. Hume (2000, 12) regarded memory as a device whereby facts could be placed in order, and the memory cultivated as a means of developing an empirical study of its workings and reason (see Kant 1960, 73). Reid (1969, 325) observed the rational purposes which memory could be put to use, without the limitations and restrictions which the human body causes; 'but in the operations of memory we are free from this embarrassment.' The development of archives, encyclopaedias and dictionaries hastened the conception of human memory as a definite asset of the mind, one which could only be enriched and cultivated through reason. Memory became defined as a cognitive phenomenon, and therefore a facet which could be defined, labelled and studied by empirical science (Ong 2002, 278).

Studies of memory from the eighteenth century to the present day have been based upon this underlying principle that, 'there is a body of facts about memory to be known' (see Hacking 1995, 200). Whereas the object of medieval mnemonic devices was to assist in the contemplation of the divine, based on Neo-Platonic notions of the transmigration of the soul, by the Enlightenment such a philosophy began to be dismissed as irrational (see Berlin 1956, 19). Therefore, as Hacking (1995, 219) has observed, as 'there could be no science of the soul...there came to be a science of memory' (see Sutton 1998, 118). This definition of memory continued throughout the twentieth century, with the psychological studies of memory confirming memory's role purely as a cognitive facet (Freud 1957; Ebbinghaus 1987; Jung 1940). 'A trace is left in our psychical apparatus of the perceptions which impinge upon it. This we may describe as a "memory-trace"; and to the function relating to it we give the name of "memory"' (Freud 1954, 538). This way of describing memory is also reiterated in the language we use; the twentieth-century scientific study of memory has entailed that the words 'memory' and 'remembering' are now not so much value-free words as agents of a way in which these processes are conceived (Wittgenstein 1958, 231e). Their use denotes an attempt at a hypothetical definition of a process, a model used to explain a conscious mental phenomenon (Wittgenstein 1969, 117-118). Our uncritical use of terms such as 'I remember' overlooks the distinction being made between stating a 'conscious mental event', and making a judgement about what could be termed 'the mechanism of the mind'; in these circumstances it is perhaps inevitable that the mind is conceived

as separate from the body, ‘a place in which what we remember is kept’ (Wittgenstein 1969, 40). These notions of memory as a mental phenomenon, and the neglect of any corporeal sense in the process of memory has endured to this day, and provides the dominant way in which memory is thought of and conceived (Casey 2000, 5).

Archaeology and Memory

This framework has also shaped the way memory is considered within archaeology. Indeed the very basis of archaeology as a modern discipline is rooted within this conception of memory. Although archaeological studies of memory have only recently emerged, archaeology and archaeological excavations have frequently been used as a metaphor by scholars and artists to describe memory and the retrieval of memory. Infact, Burke (1989) has remarked on how often digging is evoked in the discussions of memory throughout the last century (see Hartman 1994, 1). This association between memory and archaeology has certainly inspired a number of individuals, and can be seen to emerge during the initial psychological investigations of memory in the early 1900s (Khanna 2003, 34). It is especially associated with the work of Freud who was greatly inspired by the excavations of Schliemann on Ancient Greek sites in the Mediterranean. Freud hoped that through this metaphor his methods of psychoanalysis would gain the popularity and scientific credence which Schliemann’s excavations received (Kuspit 1989, 133). Freud would later use these archaeological examples to identify the process of psychoanalysis and the recovery of repressed memory with the process of excavation (Bernfield 1951, 107). ‘This procedure was one of clearing away the pathogenic psychical material layer by layer and we liked to compare it with the techniques of excavating a buried city’ (Breuer and Freud 1988, 206). Freud (1957, 15) supposed that the annihilation of human memory wasn’t possible as ‘nothing once formed in the mind could ever perish.’ Using this perspective Freud compared the archaeological study of Rome and its ancient remains with the psychological study of the memory of an individual subject; as archaeologists discover the traces of the city, psychologists recover the traces of memory (Freud

1957, 15-18). Jung (1940, 1) incorporates this Freudian metaphor of excavation for psychoanalytic practice in his own studies in psychology. Indeed he places great weight in the use of this metaphor; 'it would be significance enough if only the far-reaching analogy between the psychologic structure of the historical relics and the structure of the recent individual psychological products alone were demonstrated' (Jung 1940, 3). William James (1890, 646; 1892, 290) similarly described the uncovering buried material; 'an object which is recollected in the proper sense of that term is one which has been absent from conscious altogether and now revives anew. It is brought back...with countless other objects, it lay buried and lost from view.' Benjamin (1979) was also inspired by the excavations of Schliemann and significantly also uses the same metaphor of digging and archaeology as a description of 'memory work.' 'The medium of past experience as the ground is the medium in which dead cities lie interred. He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging...He must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil' (Benjamin 1979, 314). This metaphor of archaeology and excavation for recalling or for the discovery of 'lost' memory has endured throughout the twentieth century; one of the more recent contributors to this perspective has been the Irish poet Seamus Heaney (1990, 2), who describes the memory of his father and grandfather digging, and the retrieval of those memories through a process of 'excavation'; 'Between my finger and my thumb / The squat pen rests. / I'll dig with it.'

That archaeologists have been so reticent regarding memory within the discipline appears puzzling, as in a sense all archaeological analysis is concerned with creating an image, an interpretation, a memory of the past in the present: all archaeology is memory work. Infact, Shanks and McGuire (1996) have recently highlighted how archaeology is in actuality a form of commemoration, so that when archaeologists interpret their evidence they not only create a memory of the past, but also a memory which is constructed and filtered through present day concerns (after Shackel 2004, 14). Despite this, the role of archaeology in the discussion of memory has remained until recently very limited, with the emergence of the consideration of memory within the discipline only occurring in the last decade.

One of the first studies to address memory explicitly within archaeology

was Renfrew's (1998) assessment and elaboration of the work of the anthropologist Merlin Donald and the theories contained within his work, *Origins of the Modern Mind* (1991). Donald (1991, 20) introduced the theme of 'external symbolic storage' in his study of early, literate societies, whereby the development of devices outside the body were developed to either explicitly or unconsciously hold and convey information. This was taken up by Renfrew under the theoretical approach of cognitive archaeology (see Renfrew and Zubrow 1994; Renfrew *et al* 1993). In this analysis, Donald's concept of 'external symbolic storage' was used to examine how the monumental architecture of the British Neolithic acted as a means to externalise the memory of the society, to hold it in perpetuity. 'Monuments are built for remembrance. They are often memorials. It is the role of a memorial to serve the memory, often the collective memory' (Renfrew 1998, 5). This perspective has been criticised by postprocessual archaeologists, as it relies on the unwarranted assumption of a universal category of mind, a belief in a common cognitive structure of the human mind which would enable a shared understanding of the monuments (see Hodder 1991, 15).

Thomas (1998, 149) has also forwarded a second argument against the notion of 'external symbolic storage', assessing that this concept of externalized memory relies upon the Cartesian division between the mental and material, and presents human knowledge as being composed of 'atomized bits of information', which are 'gathered from the environment before being downloaded.' The interpretation of Neolithic monuments as representing the externalised memory of a community and the initial study of memory by cognitive archaeologists, has also drawn critical comment from some archaeologists for its reliance on the meaning of the monument to be fixed and permanent within a community (after Shanks 1992, 109). The construction of a monument should not necessarily entail that the meaning and memory of that structure is encapsulated in its form, which is then accessible to a society across generations. Rather, its understanding should be considered as an ongoing process of renegotiation (Boric 2003, 50; Bradley 2002, 111). Recently archaeologists have used post-structural theories in this evaluation, considering that the signifier in the form of a monument is inherently ambiguous, and can potentially yield 'limitless numbers of readings' (Olsen 1990, 165). Therefore, through the process of building, rebuilding,

neglect, abandonment and reuse, monuments would have been redefined and re-remembered, with new associations and contexts (Boric 2003, 56). Indeed, this recognition of monument reuse as an act of remembrance itself, as demonstrative of the fluidity of memory within a society, has become critical to subsequent studies of the role of monuments and material culture in the generation of memory in prehistoric and even historic periods (Alcock 2002, 5; Jones 2003, 65; Blake 1998, 59-63; 1999, 230; Holtorf 1998, 23-25; Cummings 2003, 26; Hodder and Cessford 2003, 18; Williams 1998, 90; 2001, 39; 2004a, 263; 2004b, 51; 2005, 253; Hope 2003, 113; Tarlow 1997, 105-106; 1999, 5; 2000, 235; Meredith-Lobay 2005, 97).

This critique of a positivist, processual study of memory in prehistory by archaeologists has led to a wider debate within archaeology as concerns were expressed by archaeologists about the role of the conceptualization of history held by past human societies. From this arose the study of 'the past in the past' (Gosden and Lock 1998). Using the work of Halbwachs (1992) and his analysis of the 'collective memory', this debate within British archaeology has mainly concentrated on the study of the prehistoric monuments and landscapes as places and sites of collective memory which created a shared sense of identity within prehistoric communities. These studies have placed emphasis on the way monuments and other structures were used to maintain traditions through their construction and maintenance, providing a dialogue with the community's past (Barrett 1994; Edmonds 1999). Bradley (1998a; 2002) has become one of the major figures in this conception of memory, and his work has influenced further archaeologists to study memory within past societies (see Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 1). In his study of the British Neolithic and Bronze Age, Bradley (1993, 45-68; 2002, 12) argues that the very process of living within a society would have inculcated a sense of the appropriate behaviour and memory. This knowledge might accrue through moving through monuments, participating in rituals, but also through the very construction of monuments and through material culture, all of which could provide a way in which group memory could be learnt and disseminated throughout a society.

Although certainly dominated by prehistoric scholarship, memory studies in archaeology have not been solely restricted to this period, as there are also a growing number of archaeological analyses which address memory, monuments

and material culture in the Middle Ages (after Williams 2003b; 2004a). These studies have addressed specifically the material culture associated with funerary rites, to describe the mnemonic devices which were employed to evoke certain memories of the deceased (Finch 2000; Binski 2001; Hadley, 2003; Saul 2001). This work has concentrated on a number of repetitive spatial and material mnemonic devices associated with the deceased; in fact Williams (2003b, 230) has highlighted that ‘during the funeral, the deployment of portable objects, architecture church space and not least the physical remains of dead bodies themselves, could all be important resources reemployed in non-written, non-verbal strategies of remembrance.’ Alcock (2002) has also argued for an archaeological study of memory in her analysis of Ancient Greek landscapes and material culture. As in the studies of memory conducted within British prehistory, Alcock (2002) stresses how the process of moving through monumental forms, landscapes and using material culture created a shared sense of memory within Ancient Greek society (Alcock 2002, 35). These studies have highlighted the value of studying memory held by past societies through archaeology, as archaeologists have realised that it is through the study of material culture and landscapes, and an archaeological method and perspective, that a new way in which to study memory and its use in the past can be realised.

Whilst an ever-increasing amount of attention is devoted to the study of memory in the past, it is important for archaeologists to maintain that though the archaeological remains they study come from the past, ‘they belong to the present’, and that their work is also creating a memory of the past for their own time (Olivier 2001, 68). Archaeologists, through their interpretations, and the stories they tell about the past create memories of the past for contemporary society (Mathers *et al* 2005). Williams (2003a, 1-3) has highlighted how the initial formation of an archaeological discipline regularly associated itself with the creation of memory in the present through excavated material. Certainly since the emergence of an antiquarian study in the eighteenth century, the use of archaeological evidence has often been drawn upon by the political elites to maintain their control over the popular memory of the past (see Dietler 1994, 584). Indeed, throughout the twentieth century archaeologists have been involved in projects to fix a memory of the past within the minds of present populations. It is imperative to remember however that this work has often been used and

indeed corrupted to support fraudulent and despotic regimes (see Gilkes 2003). This appropriation continues with governments and dictators drawing on archaeological interpretations to maintain and accentuate certain aspects of the national past within popular conceptions (see Abu El-Haj 1998; Meskell 1998; Banks 1996; Di'az-Andreu and Champion 1996; Kohl and Fawcett 1995).

Undeniably, excavations revealing the spaces, landscapes and materials of past societies have often had a great impact on the way in which contemporary societies remember a collective past (Kane 2003). Effros (2003, 257-258) for example has highlighted how archaeological excavations of early medieval sites were used in nineteenth century France to reiterate certain memories, with the project of creating a consensus of national memory throughout what was then a diverse populace. The early medieval period, previously only known by the public through historical texts, gained a greater immediacy and accessibility through the materials produced through archaeological excavations. These remains were used to construct memory, and indeed shaped scholarly and public perceptions of the early Middle Ages in France in the late nineteenth and even up to the early twentieth centuries (Effros 2003, 274). Similarly, Dietler (1994; 1998) has shown how archaeological evidence from Iron Age hillforts has been used by successive French governments throughout the twentieth century to fulfil a variety of political functions. From stressing self-sacrifice during the Vichy government, to re-invigorating an image of a powerful, independent nation during the 1980s and 1990s as France took a leading role in pressing for European integration; these archaeological sites have been used to 'anchor' national memory (Dietler 1998, 85). This aspect of archaeology has also been recently highlighted by the work of both Shackel (2000; 2001a; 2001b; 2003) in his study of the archaeology of Harpers Ferry National Park and the Ludlow Collective (2001). The archaeological investigation at Harpers Ferry has shown how the discipline working for the present population, can either 'bolster public memory and tradition or it can help contradict the status quo by providing an alternative past' (Shackel 2000, vii; 2004, 14). The project has explored how the memory of the town of Harper's Ferry and its history, was developed in the earlier twentieth century at the expense of certain sections of the community, namely the labouring and working classes who became forgotten in the town's historical accounts. Archaeology is therefore considered to confront time-

honoured views, provide more inclusive memories and create alternative voices for the contemporary population (Shackel 2000, vii). The Ludlow Collective (2001) use the archaeology of the Colorado Coal Field War of 1913-1914, at the site of what is known as the Ludlow Massacre, to instil a greater appreciation for the working class labour history, and an enriched memory of the conditions and lives of the miners and their families. The group excavated the striker's campsite revealing a number of artefacts and a cellar dug by the strikers for themselves and their families to cover from the bullets which were periodically fired at their site, where they had encamped during their long-running dispute with the mine's owners over pay and working conditions. Tensions on both sides escalated, and had eventually resulted in Colorado militiamen and private guards hired by the company opening fire on the camp site and burning the tents, killing twenty men, women and children (Ludlow Collective 2001, 94). The group state unequivocally that their 'project is a form of memory, assisting and maintaining the memory of the Ludlow massacre' (Ludlow Collective 2001, 96).

Archaeologists have often confronted issues concerning the importance of the memory of the past to groups and individuals through their work in Cultural Resource Management, museum studies and communications with indigenous peoples (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 2). Lowenthal (1985, 35; 1990, 302-314; 2002, 62) particularly has also described the manner in which archaeologists have contributed to the construction of memory within our society, shaping and delineating its form through its specific regard for the materiality and spatiality of the past. This sentiment is also reflected in the growing study of public archaeology (Merriman 2004) which emerged as a concern in the 1970s due to the theoretical changes within the discipline which contributed to a desire for archaeologists to recognise both the temporal nature of their interpretations and the public as their eventual audience (Schadla-Hall 1999, 147-148; Ascherson 2000, 1). Since that time, archaeologists within this perspective have contributed to the formation of memory within contemporary society through their interpretations and the narratives that they create. Therefore it becomes of great significance that those within the discipline should recognise the various factors and circumstances in which these memories are created (Shackel 2000, vii). This provides an opportunity for those involved within public archaeology to draw attention to the 'processes and outcomes whereby the discipline of archaeology

becomes part of a wider public culture, where contestation and dissonance are inevitable' (Merriman 2004, 4). In these circumstances archaeology becomes involved in a highly politicised cultural production of memory: the discipline's distinctive role in this procedure derives from its ability to provide a material link between the past and a set of current political, social and cultural conditions (Lowenthal 2002, 62).

However, such an acknowledgement of the role of archaeology in the wider cultural sphere could only have been recognised within the last two decades of archaeological study. Indeed, one of the most important developments which occurred within archaeology with the arrival of the 'postprocessual critique' was the necessity of situating archaeology within the context of contemporary social, political and cultural agendas. No longer could the scholar take refuge from the world, but their work was assessed to be enmeshed within the debates and arguments which defined the times (Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 28). 'Archaeology is not neutral knowledge but plays an active social role in the culture in which it is produced. It is an active product of the present and its relationship to non-archaeologists must be considered' (Hodder 1984, 26). The work of Hodder (1982; 1984; 1985; 1991; 1999; 2003), Tilley (1989; 1990b; 1991) and the Marxist archaeologist Trigger (1984a; 1984b; 1986a; 1986b) in particular have stressed this new concern for a 'fully-reflexive' position, which entails a detailed consideration of the effect and impact in the act of examining the past. Archaeology was reconsidered as an activity taking place in the present, which inevitably involves the archaeologist with the conditions affecting their own society (Baker *et al* 1990). Archaeology was redefined in the light of these theoretical developments as 'a vibrant, socially aware, and as a politically and intellectually engaging study' (Tilley 1990b, 130). As Tilley (1989; 1990a; 1990b) has highlighted, culture historians and processual archaeologists though acknowledging the ways in which archaeologists gave meaning to their subject matter through interpretation did not connect this process with the contemporary social and cultural issues of their own society (after Fritz and Plog 1970, 412). Although this observation is not entirely accurate as Childe (1933) drew attention to the ways in which the prehistoric past was being manipulated in Nazi Germany, this did demand archaeology be situated in its societal context. This recognition is crucial within a discipline which has proven to be so important in

struggles for legitimacy and identity; therefore, 'archaeology can never turn in on itself. It can never close its eyes and protest the purity of its ideals without acknowledging how that purity affects others. Archaeology has to negotiate the cultural realities' (Denning 2004, 46).

Whereas processual archaeologists in general did not acknowledge this aspect of their work, relying on the objectivity of a positivistic science, the relationship between the past and the present has become one of the main concerns for a postprocessual archaeology. The idea of the past as a construction, specifically produced, something done here and now in the present has become one of the few commonly held views of a diverse and varied postprocessual archaeology (Tilley 1990b, 136). Part of this process has also had a radical social agenda, as archaeologists become involved in attempts to stress and highlight the perhaps radical difference of the past (see Yates 1993, 60). Archaeology can therefore be seen as a mode of cultural production, a discipline both shaped by its society and one which can in turn shape society itself (Shanks 2004b, 497). Consequently, archaeology as a cultural product can enrich and even alter the popular memory of the past and with it the perception and perspective of a historical period, it can also provide an interpretation which is conscious of the cultural importance of the memory of the past (see Shackel 2000, 14).

Archaeological Metaphor

Whilst some have acknowledged the discipline's role in forming cultural memory in the present, the advent of memory studies within archaeology has also ensured that those within the discipline have begun to question archaeology's own contribution to this ever-increasing field (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 2). This has caused many archaeologists to state that the discipline provides a distinctive approach to the study of memory, both of the past and in the present, through its unique concern for materials, spaces and landscapes. This apparent distinction is however negated by the reliance within archaeological studies of memory, both processual and postprocessual, both in the past and the present, of a rather staid and limited definition of memory, one which draws upon post-Enlightenment and twentieth century psychological studies of memory

solely as an individualistic, definable concept of the mind. Archaeological studies of memory, though highlighting how materiality and spatiality impacts upon the way groups and individuals remember in the past and the present utilise Cartesian definitions and Freudian perceptions of what constitutes memory (after Thomas 1998, 149). This way of viewing memory within the discipline can be seen to be shaped and defined by the longstanding Freudian metaphor of archaeology 'uncovering' and 'excavating' memory (see Holtorf 2000, 180). Archaeologists studying memory both within past societies and in contemporary society have either implicitly or explicitly been highly influenced by this metaphor and the image of archaeological investigations being used to uncover hidden, past, or even 'repressed' memories is one which regularly appears within the wider archaeological community (see Shanks 1992, 138; Shackel 2004, 14; Renfrew 1998, 5; Saunders 2002a, 102; Baker 1987, 93). Whilst it is certainly the case that the popularity of the use of the archaeological process as a metaphor for memory may have ensured the recognition of the relationship between the two, it is however a recognition of a fundamentally limiting role for both archaeology and memory (see Rieff 1960, 43; Kuspit 1989, 145). The pervasive power of this metaphor is undeniable (see Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 9), as it provides not only a way of describing and explaining memory, but it also creates 'a way of experiencing it' (Hallam and Hockey 2001, 27). It is not however impossible to imagine memory in archaeology, in terms of what it is, how it works and where it lies, without recourse to using this metaphor.

Freud (1957) employed this archaeological metaphor in his work to describe psychoanalysis as an empirical search for the forgotten memories of an individual (Neu 1994, 258). Its use relies upon the modernist principles of uncovering and revealing actual, objective 'truths', as for Freud the memories of the individual were always able to be retrieved, 'excavated' from the patient's sub-consciousness; the memories already existed, all that was needed was their excavation (Khanna 2003, 38). In this manner the role of the analyst was considered to be neutral or passive, and their interpretation of the patient's case singular and non-ambiguous; if the memories of the past were already in existence there could be no room for multiple interpretation and hypotheses could be examined empirically (Spence 1987, 57). This metaphorical allusion has in actuality been highly significant in subsequent studies across many disciplines.

Indeed, Derrida (1996, 30) wrote specifically about the difficulty of escaping this pervasive influence of Freudian definitions in the study of memory, how the metaphors, descriptions and interpretations offered by Freud shape studies in this field; 'the impression left by Freud...having been marked in advance in one way or another, by this Freudian impression.' If it is considered that this metaphor has implicitly structured the work of archaeologists researching memory, its influence for archaeologists can be seen as symptomatic of the inherent dominance of positivist, modernist perceptions within the discipline (Lucas 2005, 135). 'With its practice of uncovering the hidden past, stripping away layers of debates in order to disclose older and more profound realities, archaeology provides the perfect paradigm for modern thought' (Thomas 1996, 12). In effect, the use of this metaphor implicitly perpetuates the traditions of a positivist perspective within Anglo-American archaeology which emerged during the 1960s, and has equated excavation and archaeological analysis as a whole with an empirical, hypothetico-deductive process, capable of testing propositions about the past, of 'uncovering the truth' (Binford 1962).

The metaphor of archaeology and memory also rests on the assumption of the Cartesian divide between body and mind, as the process of the retrieval of memory, its 'excavation', is oddly not intended to convey a material perspective, as it is solely concerned with the description of this process as a mental phenomenon. For example, this is indicated in the work of Shackel (2000; 2005) and the Ludlow Collective (2001), who both attempt in their research objectives to excavate 'hidden' or 'painful' memories of the past to aid the present, to recover a memory of the past and place it within the contemporary world. For both these studies the archaeological interpretation of spaces and materials are secondary to placing a mental picture of a difficult or uncomfortable past in the present. In this conception of memory the archaeologist becomes separated from the approach that makes the discipline distinct, relying instead on this Cartesian perspective which has tended to centre some sections of memory studies within archaeology away from the specific concerns of archaeology for the materiality and spatiality of the past. By rejecting this approach, by denying the dominance of the influential metaphor of archaeology and memory, a number of other ways in which archaeology can be considered as providing an original perspective on memory studies can emerge (after Thomas 2004a, 244). One of the most

significant of these is a consideration of memory as a corporeal experience, drawing upon pre-Enlightenment concepts of memory as a physical and bodily practice. Cartesian divisions of body and mind which have dominated conceptions of memory since the Enlightenment cannot incorporate archaeological concerns for the materials, spaces and landscapes, and it is therefore necessary to consider an alternative concept of memory and remembering, one which focuses upon the body's role in memory (after Casey 2000).

Influenced by the metaphor of archaeology as 'uncovering' or 'excavating' memories, memory within the discipline has in general 'been conceived as occurring exclusively within the closely contained canopy of the mind' (after Casey 2000, 144). A regard for the body in memory in what can be termed 'embodied memory' challenges this Cartesian dichotomy by proposing a study of memory concerned with the body, how memory is formulated in, by, and through the body (Grunebaum and Henri 2003, 102; Kott 1992, 113; Grobbel 2004, 2; Bennett 2002, 333; Nourbese Philip 2002, 4; Quashie 2004, 115; Landsberg 1995, 176; 1997, 66; 2004; 3; 2005, 148-149). This concept of memory and remembering shares in common with pre-Enlightenment notions of memory, a concern for spatiality and corporeality in memory (see Cicero 1871; Quintilian 2001a). These ideas were disregarded with the advent of rational and Enlightenment studies of the mind (Descartes 1986; Hume 2000), and the psychological study of memory in the early twentieth century (see Freud 1957), all of which conceptualised memory solely as a mental category. Recent studies in the social sciences and humanities have challenged this divide, and stated how 'memory cannot be confined to a purely mentalist...sphere', as it is a 'culturally mediated practice, evoked through the study of the body' (Serematakis 1994, 9). These have located the study of memory in traditional societies and modern Western contexts within the body (Rosaldo 1993; Hallam and Hockey 2001; Turner 1992; Casey 2000; Csordas 2004), the body is placed as the central concern in this analysis (see Butler 1993; Shilling 1993). It is through the study of the body, remembering how human bodies moved through spaces and engaged with materials, the pain, pleasure, suffering and satisfaction of the body that an embodied memory is created (after Bennett 2002; 2003; 2005). Therefore an archaeological study of past individuals and their embodied experiences of

materials and spaces can be used to create an alternative memory in the present (after Shanks 1992, 157; Thomas 1996, 88). The body acts as an intermediary between the materials and spaces of the past and the memory of that past in the present. Embodied memory entails the use of the body as a site of memory, as a perspective to express in the present how individuals in the past acted and reacted to the world around them.

Archaeologists seeking to describe how communities in the past organised, perpetuated and controlled the formation of memory have already used concepts of corporeality within memory (Hodder and Cessford 2003). It is however in the study of memory within contemporary society, which this project shall focus on, where a greater regard for the body in memory can have the most impact, as the use of concepts of embodied memory can provide a means of imagining distant or traumatic events of the historic past in a far more direct manner than regarding memory solely as a mental concept (Grunebaum and Henri 2003, 102). The contrast between the accessibility and immediacy of an embodied memory and a purely mental approach can be observed in the depersonalised and dispassionate memories obtained through the learning of dates or historical facts (Casey 2000, 68-69). Rather than rely on what Nora (1989, 15) has criticised as the externalised ‘scaffolding of memory’, present in descriptive histories or monuments, embodied memory takes an alternative, and a far more intimate approach, to the formation of memory. Such an approach also rejects Nora’s (1989, 13) assertion that memory is absent from the body in contemporary society, as this notion of remembering maintains that memory can be evoked through the body, through the ‘spaces...images and objects’, which Nora quixotically assumes only to be possible within traditional societies (see Nora 1989, 9).

Archaeology as a means of forming contemporary cultural memory can therefore create a new perspective on the past through an embodied memory. It engages with the past materiality and spatiality to describe how individuals in the past experienced their own world and it uses this to create distinct memories in the present (after Thomas 2001, 181). This will necessarily involve a shift in the conception of memory, a questioning of the language used to express the process of recall and commemoration; we must ask ourselves, ‘do we *understand* the word “remember”’ (Wittgenstein 1969, 183). The move away from solely mental

and psychological definitions of memory, to place the body as the centre of memory requires a dramatic alteration and critical assessment of our use of language, as the words 'memory' and 'remembering' automatically shape interpretations of memory as a solely cognitive faculty (Vygotsky 1978, 50-51). What must be denied is the presumption that the picture of the 'inner process' which is given by the use of these words is 'the correct idea' of the use of the words 'to remember': 'we say that this picture with its ramifications stands in the way of our seeing the use of the word as it is' (Wittgenstein 1958, 102e). An alternative definition of memory, realising that the ways in which we conceive memory and remembering as a mental phenomenon are shaped by our usage of words, ensures the realisation that 'embodied memory' and a concern for the 'body in memory' can be disregarded and denied validity only upon grammatical propositions not epistemological (after Wittgenstein 1958, 90e).

Embodied Memory

Casey (2000) has emphasised how the philosophy of embodied memory can be found in the phenomenological writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Heidegger (1962), but it can also be located within the earlier work of Henri Bergson (1911). Bergson (1911, 55) described the difference between the approaches of a 'mentalist' conception of memory and an embodied memory; a solely cognitive definition of memory, 'no longer represents our past to us, it acts it; and if it still deserves the name of memory, it is not because it conserves bygone images, but because it prolongs their useful effect into the present moment.' Although much of Bergson's work concerned the individual's memory of their own past, the conclusions which were drawn by Bergson can be extrapolated to consider the body in the historic past, as the body and its experiences of material objects were considered essential components in the formation of memory (see Chevalier 1928, 157). Bergson's original work attempted to 'define the reality of spirit and the reality of matter, and tries to determine the relation of one to the other by the study of memory' (Bergson 1911, vii). Following this perspective it can be considered, using Bergson's theory, that a regard for corporeality in memory collapses the modernist

distinction between past and present, enabling a greater immediacy in the remembrance of the past (Deleuze 1988, 58-59). Embodied memory, influenced by Bergson's work, can be considered as playing an active force: as such a means of remembering imbues objects from a personally known and historically distant past with significance (Deleuze 1988, 48). It obtains this significance from the distinctive approach of an embodied memory which calls for 'a leap' into the past, into the being-of-the-past (after Deleuze 1988, 56). 'We really leap into being, into being in-itself, into the being in itself of the past. It is a case of leaving psychology altogether. It is a case of an immemorial or ontological memory' (Deleuze 1988, 57). As Vico (1999, 369) stated, 'while such faculties belong to the mind, they are rooted in the body and derive their power from it.'

Such ideas were also highly influential to Proust (2003) in his great work, *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. The conclusions reached in Bergson's *Matter and Memory* (1911) and the effect of the work of Bergson on Proust, who was in fact Proust's cousin by marriage, is often cited as highly important in Proust's own discussion of memory (Alden 1943). Proust draws from Bergson a concern for the corporeality and spatiality in memory, rejecting positivist Freudian investigations of memory, and assessing how memory is evoked through the body's senses. Memory in *A la Recherche* can therefore be considered to be expressed with the sentiment, 'that we do not proceed from an actual present to the past...but that we place ourselves, directly in the past itself' (Deleuze 1973, 57). Although Proust is concerned with individual memory, the work is important to this project as the concepts of remembering and memory Proust discusses reject the casting of memory solely as a cognitive device, it is the sensuous memory through the body which guides and structures Proust's analysis of recollection, 'the immense edifice of memory' (Proust 2003, 30). Proust (2003) describes how his body not only remembers the sensations and feelings of his own personal surroundings, but is capable of remembering pasts of others unknown to him; 'When I woke in the middle of the night, since I did not know where I was...all I had in its original simplicity, was the sense of existence as it may quiver in the depths of an animal...but then the memory – not yet of the place where I was, but of several of these where I had lived and where I might have been – would come to me like help from on high to pull out of the void from which I could not have got on my own' (Proust 2003, 9). Tastes,

smells, sounds and sensations are the embodied forms within which memory is evoked; the presence or absence of objects also impacts upon what is and what is not recalled (Kristeva 1993, 91). But these are rendered less important in comparison to the way memory is experienced through the body (Henrot 2002, 110). 'My body, too benumbed to move would try to locate, according to the form of its fatigue, the position of its limbs in order to deduce from this the direction of the wall, the location of the furniture, in order to reconstruct and name the dwelling in which it found itself' (Proust 2003, 10). Deleuze (1973) uses the work of Proust to draw attention to what he regards as the 'encountered' and 'sensuous' signs which can evoke an intimate, bodily experience of memory both of an individual's past and a historical past; a 'sign that is felt, rather than recognised or perceived through cognition' (Bennett 2005, 7). Materiality in this regard acts as a means by which these sensuous signs are expressed, a creative process which transcends the individual, 'it mobilizes the memory, it sets the soul in motion' (Deleuze 1973, 166)

This notion of the body's place in memory was also very important to Halbwachs (1992), who was originally a pupil of Bergson's, and who implicitly uses a regard for embodied memory in his study of the Holy Land (see Alcock 2002). Halbwachs (1992, 207) described how the embodied memory of Christ's life and death in the region provided for generations of Christians, a 'topography of remembrance' (see Elsner and Rubiés 1999, 17). Pilgrims travelling through the region found the places associated with the life of Christ as reminders and powerful evocations of the Bible. 'Sacred places thus commemorate not facts certified by contemporary witnesses, but rather beliefs...strengthened by taking root in this environment' (Halbwachs 1992, 199). This memory and image of the being of Christ inhabiting certain spaces and places also provided a means by which the lessons and events of the New Testament could be understood and remembered within the contemporary exigencies of Christianity, alongside its current needs and aspirations (Halbwachs 1992, 207). In this perspective embodied memory and the place of such memories are considered to be crucial to the retention of memory, 'if a truth is to be settled in the memory of a group it needs to be presented in the concrete form of an event, of a personality or of a locality' (Halbwachs 1992, 200). This regard for the embodied memory of the life of Christ is also present in the medieval church through pictorial schemes

and devotional texts, as Christian teaching sought to place the memory of the suffering of Christ at the centre of worship (see Bennett 2001; Landsberg 2004). Images and texts called upon the devotee to remember the crucifixion of Christ, to create a mental landscape into which the individual could situate themselves to witness and experience the suffering endured by Christ on the cross (Frugoni 1996, 130). Bennett (2001) has drawn attention to the importance of art and literature in this process, and points to works such as the fifteenth century text *The Imitation of Christ*, which acted to place the devotee into a setting where they could remember and share the pain of Christ. 'Take up therefore thy Cross and follow Jesus and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He went before bearing His Cross, and died for thee on the Cross; that thou mayest also bear thy Cross and desire to die on the Cross with him' (à Kempis 1961, 90).

Bachelard (1994, 9) also contributes to this study of an embodied memory, describing how memory of an individual's past and a historic past can be evoked through remembering the body's movement through space, 'memories are motionless, and the more securely they are fixed in space the sounder they are.' Bachelard (1994, 8) draws on pre-Enlightenment definitions of memory in his observation of an embodied experience in memory in his assertion that, 'in the theatre of the past that is constituted by memory, the stage setting maintains the characters in their dominant roles.' It is this regard for a corporeal and spatial sense of memory which is revealed in Bachelard's (1994, 188) claim that, 'I know, for instance that my grandfather got lost in a certain wood. I was told this, and I have not forgotten it. It happened in a past before I was born. My oldest memories, therefore are a hundred years old, or perhaps a bit more.' It is not the simple fact that his Grandfather was lost in the wood; rather, it is the embodied memory of his Grandfather, of the corporeal sensations of fear, distress, spatial confinement and disorientation of being lost in the wood which makes this memory so pervasive. These sentiments were also expressed by the philosopher Adam Smith (1982, 9) in the late eighteenth century; 'by the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence some form of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them.' Smith (1982, 13) saw this capacity of imagination as being able to embody memory, an

approach essential in the consideration of those individuals in the distant past who were in danger of falling from memory completely. 'The tribute of our fellow-feeling seems doubly due to them now, when they are in danger of being forgot by everybody; and by the vain honours which we pay to their memory, we endeavour...to keep alive our melancholy memory of their misfortune' (Smith 1982, 13). Placing the body at the centre of remembering in this manner also draws out the necessity of considering particular issues of trauma and traumatic memory (Bennett and Kennedy 2003). Remembering the suffering and trauma inflicted on the bodies of those in the past, and using the body as a site of memory whereby that experience can be communicated and retained is a growing concern amongst studies of memory and trauma (Das 1997). These works concentrate on remembering how bodies suffered in these traumatic events of history, drawing inspiration particularly from the work of the French poet and writer Delbo (1995). In Delbo's work regarding her imprisonment at Auschwitz she focuses on what is termed 'sense memory', the memory of the physical conditions of her incarceration in the death camp, as a means of conveying her experiences to those born long after the events: '*Il faut donner à voir*' (Langer 1995a, xiv).

In this definition, notions of embodied memory have become vital for expressing the past for oppressed and dominated groups, whose representations would otherwise be made under a hegemonic narrative (see Nourbese Philip 2002, 4). Placing memory in the body offers an alternative way in which to remember the past, and as an act of cultural memory the consideration of the corporeal experiences of past peoples, because of its accessibility and immediacy will inevitably have great resonance in the present, particularly within issues of gender and ethnicity (Quashie 2004, 108). It is also through this embodied perspective, an embodied memory of the past, that a greater consideration of being, both of the 'self' and 'the other' can be fostered in the present (after Levinas 1998a; 2001; 2003). By placing memory in the body, its pain, pleasure and suffering, an acknowledgement of the place, existence and experience of 'the other', their histories and stories of the past can be considered. Rather than seeking similarity and common ground by relying on essentialist notions of 'pure memory' (Deleuze 1988, 55), Hegelian (1961, 807; 1977 16-17) theories of the universal spirit, or indeed Plato's (1985, 65) concept of *reminiscence*, whereby

the human soul retained the knowledge of previous lives, it is the difference encountered within a consideration of embodied memory which requires attention (after Levinas 2003, 63). By remembering pasts in this manner, individuals in the present can begin to explore and challenge the nationalistic or sexist elements in their treasured historical stories and recognise the histories and experiences of 'the other', as embodied memory engages with the corporeal experiences of past peoples and therefore a means to build an 'interhuman' perspective (see Levinas 1998a, 100).

Drawing upon all these perspectives a consideration of what constitutes an embodied memory can be constructed. Far from forming an abstracted, empathetic analysis, embodied memory seeks to place the body within memory by assessing the materiality and spatiality which was inhabited. The torment, delight, anguish and joy which were experienced through the body, by being-in a place, become the focus of memory: this establishes a phenomenology of memory. Merleau-Ponty (1968, 9) indeed emphasises this concern for the body, and its essential role in assessing perspective and memory in his influential study of phenomenology. The body and this way of focusing memory upon it is not disregarded in this analysis, as in the early positivist twentieth century studies of memory, but the body is moreover considered 'our means of communication with it' (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 92). As Sartre (1996, 359) stated, 'the body is the instrument which I am.' A phenomenology of remembering is therefore only possible through the perception and perspective of the body. 'To remember is not to bring into the focus of consciousness a self-subsistent picture of the past; it is to thrust deeply into the horizon of the past and take apart step by step the interlocked perspectives until the experiences which it epitomizes are as if relived in their temporal setting' (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 22). Merleau-Ponty (1962, 235) therefore considered the body as the 'general instrument' of comprehension in this objective of remembering, a position derived from Husserl (1931), but particularly from Nietzsche (1968) (see Deleuze 2002, 40). Nietzsche stated that the 'body and physiology' must be considered as 'the starting point' (Nietzsche 1968, 271), and Nietzsche (1968, 289) instructed the scholar 'to start from the body and employ it as a guide.' Heidegger (1962), was also influenced by this perspective in his work *Being and Time* and described the embodied dasein, the being-in-the-world, as the 'essential state' (1962, 80; 1978, 349;

1992, 7e). Heidegger (1962, 432) importantly uses this to illustrate the employment of a phenomenology of remembering, an embodied memory to assess a 'dasein who was-in-the-world', through the examination of the remains of a past dasein's material in the present. It is the physical, tangible existence of these remains which allows an embodied memory, as these 'concrete objects' form part of a present 'in-the-world, for-me and for-others' (Sartre 1996, 112). Indeed, as Collingwood (1989, 96) assured, 'if there were a past event, which had left no trace of any kind in the present world, it would be a past event for which there was no evidence and...no historian...could know anything about it.' It is through the consideration of this materiality of the past, that the 'leap into being' can be achieved and an embodied memory constructed (after Deleuze 1988, 57). Acknowledging that the world in which the material initially derived from is no longer present, Heidegger (1962, 432) maintains that this material should be recognised as what was formerly within-the-world, and through our own being-in-the-world we can remember 'the dasein which has-been-there' (Heidegger 1962, 446).

Phenomenology and Memory

The use of phenomenological theory has already been taken up by a number of archaeologists as they seek to investigate how materials or a site or landscape in the past were experienced by their contemporary population. Archaeological analyses incorporating this phenomenological perspective have focused on the construction of a 'sense of place', as following from the work of cultural geographers, it is maintained that to be 'embodied is to be emplaced' (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976; Buttner 1980). It is through this approach that these studies in attempting to define the corporeal experiences of past peoples can be considered as examples of the production of embodied memory, as their interpretations are inevitably located and grounded in the present (Olivier 2001, 69). This application of phenomenology within archaeology however, has led a number of archaeologists (Meskell 1996, 6; Hodder 1999, 13) to criticise this stance for apparently applying the ideas and associations of a modern body, usually white, Western, male and middle-class, as a universal category in the

past. In effect this represents a continuation of the dominating masculine perception of the world; 'he thinks of his body as a direct and normal connection with the world, which he believes he apprehends objectively' (de Beauvoir 1988, 16). On the contrary to these criticisms, archaeologists engaged in this phenomenological study aim not to incorporate contemporary, masculine, Western concepts of the body, but to use the body as a conceptual tool to investigate an unfamiliar materiality and spatiality through the analysis of a bodily engagement with the world (Thomas 2001, 181). It is the study of the material conditions of the body which will enable this analysis of embodied memory, as rather than locating difference in some inherent, essential quality possessed from birth, it is the material surroundings of the body, its 'locations', which results in the bodies that were 'lived and experienced' (Haraway 1991, 23; Butler 1993, 9). These studies do not seek to erase the historical and contemporary distinctions of being an embodied man or woman in a given society, as 'each of us (male or female) has a place, this place that envelops only his or her body, the first envelope of our own bodies, the corporeal identity, the boundary that which delineates us from other bodies' (Irigaray 1993, 36). The emphasis on the material circumstances of the body accepts the necessarily embodied standpoint of the subject and its inevitable limitations (Csordas 1993, 139).

To place memory in the body may also impact upon issues of gender; how we remember the particular ways of being a man or a woman in the past (Quashie 2004, 115). If gender is considered to be constructed through performance and action, this approach of an embodied memory provides a way in which the diversity of roles both men and women take can be examined, and the variety of responses which are involved in assuming and possessing a particular gender in society can be studied. Though de Beauvoir (1988, 66) argued with her work in phenomenology, that 'certainly these facts cannot be denied – but in themselves they have no significance. Once we adopt the human perspective, interpreting the body on the basis of existence, biology becomes an abstract science' (see Grosz 1995). Issues of age could also be a concern in this perspective as the corporeal sensations of maturity and immaturity are also culturally specific. Phenomenology in archaeological studies, and an embodied memory however does not imply a universal, ageless, non-gendered, generic

body, but uses concepts of the body to study the ‘otherness’ of a past society, group or culture, the distinctions between the embodied experiences of individuals in the past (Meskell 1999, 51). Embodied memory does not insist on a ‘collective body’, but acknowledges the plurality of bodies (see Grosz 1995, 13); it recognises that individuals experience their bodies in a variety of circumstances, and that any ‘embodied memory’ is a contested space, composed of different, even contradictory experiences struggling for representation (see Csordas 1993, 135). A phenomenology of memory is therefore an attempt to ‘ground human consciousness in its lived experience and to resist the entrenched concepts and systematic explanations that seek to flatten out, even efface the qualities of life one desperately seeks to apprehend’ (Meskell 2004, 10). The implication is that ‘while one can never enter into the mental life of a past person, one can use one’s body as an analogue for a past body as a means of addressing the physical world’ (Thomas 1996, 88). Such an approach provides an alternative to the positivist study of processual archaeology, which demanded a separation between the archaeologist and the material they study in the interests of intellectual rigour (see Binford 2001, 676). It stresses that archaeologists should engage with the materiality they study, and refutes the traditional Cartesian divide between body, mind and material. It asks scholars to use their imagination, as Collingwood (1946, 242) suggested, in examining their evidence; to imagine the bodily experiences of individuals in the past, how they encountered and inhabited their own world.

Narratives and Archaeology

An essential aspect of this study is the way in which archaeologists place the body in memory through their interpretations and the narratives they create about a site or landscape. If cultural memory relies on its articulation through narratives (Ashplant *et al* 2000, 5), archaeology must also consider the role its narratives, the stories which archaeologists tell and communicate, ‘remember’ and create a memory of the past (see Tilley 1994, 31-32). This perspective and the role of archaeological narratives have already been questioned by feminist and postprocessual archaeologists (Joyce 2002; E. Scott 1997) and archaeologists

attempting a phenomenological investigation have also used their experiences to create unconventional narratives to communicate their interpretations (see Edmonds 1999). These emphasise an alternative approach to the study of the past, highlighting a different way in which the past can be remembered, whilst also offering an answer to those who have voiced criticisms concerning the traditional narratives within archaeology (see Hill 1993, 215; Hodder 1989, 268). However, rarely are these alternative approaches to studying or writing the past, which have emerged with postprocessual archaeology, considered as influencing or impacting upon the way the past is remembered (after Pluciennik 1999, 693) as so often within theoretical postprocessual archaeology the practical examples and effects of this work never leave the discipline (after L. Smith 1994). If archaeology is to investigate how its interpretations can create an embodied memory of the past, it must take into account the way it represents the past in the present (see Merriman 2004, 2). How archaeologists represent and communicate the past through the narratives they produce, the stories they tell about the past has received very little critical analysis (Joyce 2002, 5). It is only within the last few years that archaeologists have recognised the importance of narrative and the theories of narratologists, both in communicating to fellow archaeologists and the public (see Conkey 2002, 166). It is through these narratives that archaeologists create about the past that archaeology impacts upon memory; perhaps echoing Georges Perec's (1996, 42) thoughts regarding the ways writing and remembering intertwine, that these stories and narratives are bound up with the 'task of remembering.'

The study of archaeological narratives has remained limited in its scope, despite a barrage of criticism concerning the limitations and hidden agendas of traditional archaeological narratives (see Hodder 1989, 268; Tilley 1990b, 128). In fact, Pluciennik (1999) has observed that any notion of narrative or narrative theory within archaeology has been restricted to discussions of the role of material culture as text, where narrative tropes are used as comparisons for the stylistic variations of material culture (see Moore 1986, 25). This situation persists in spite of the influence of the post-structural and postmodernist critique, which has caused archaeologists since the 1980s to acknowledge the way in which those within the discipline construct and perpetuate the character of archaeology through their own discourse. Traditional culture-historical and

processual archaeological narratives tended to present their material in a dispassionate, externalized narrative, describing the movements of peoples and ideas, focusing on the 'big issues' such as trade, farming and monument construction (Lucas 1995, 38). These narratives whilst claiming to be objective studies of a past reality, were in-fact constructions, formed from the archaeologists own theoretical and methodological perspective (Hodder 1989, 271). Processual archaeologists attempting to create a scientific agenda with the discipline rejected the implication that their work was a narrative construction, emphasising their objective status as a scientific discourse (see Clarke 1968, 13). As Lyotard (1984, 25) has stated 'scientific knowledge requires that one language game denotation be retained, and all others excluded.' Following these arguments, Jones (2002, 170) amongst others within the discipline has stated that these scientific texts in archaeology were in actuality always constructed narratives, stories about scientific facts and scientific knowledge, aiming to persuade, convince and communicate (see Lyotard 1984, 28-29). Archaeologists in response to these singular conceptions of archaeology have explored 'different ways of telling', and moves towards an 'archaeological poetics' have ensured that archaeological narratives are now considered a medium through which an understanding and memory of the past can be formed and altered (Shanks 1992; 1995; Shanks and Hodder 1995; Tilley 1990c).

Archaeological poetics was defined by its proponents as a subject of inquiry, where the aim was to identify the forms in which archaeological knowledge is communicated, or the manner in which archaeology designs and produces its narratives of the past, and the implicit rules governing the production of this discourse (Moser 2001, 262). This would provide the groundwork whereby archaeologists could be involved in 're-enchanting the past; mobilising the affective. We can capture the imagination to re-embody the past in bringing it into the present' (Shanks 1990, 310). Following this work, some archaeologists have incorporated a variety of perspectives to present their interpretations, to tell stories about the past in the present (see Pearson and Shanks 2001; Campbell and Hanson 2000). Some archaeologists have also begun to use these alternative writings as an inspiration, to construct archaeologies which focus on notions of embodiment and the experience of agents in the past (Barrett 1999; Meskell 1999; 2004). Pluciennik (1999, 654) has also recently

emphasised the importance of considering narrative within archaeology as a way of representing and consequently remembering the past (see Given 2004, 6). Despite these intentions however archaeological narratives can still remain largely distant and removed (see Hodder 1990). These writings lack a sense of the human bodily engagement with the world, how individuals in the past experienced through their bodies the materials and spaces which surrounded them (Chadwick 2004, 9).

These apparently impersonal and ‘disembodied’ narratives of the past have been challenged with the emergence of gender and feminist archaeologies in the 1980s, by narratives which stress the necessity for a perspective on the past individuals who would have acted within their material surroundings. Inevitably, these narratives concentrate upon the intimate and the everyday aspects of peoples lives (see Spector 1991). This has been of especial importance for feminist archaeologists who have used narratives to place women back into history, to remember those who had been forgotten by empirical, archaeological narratives (Conkey and Gero 1991, 5; Gilchrist 1994, 2). This work has also been an attempt to avoid archaeological narratives with ‘faceless blobs’ (Tringham 1991, 94) rather than individuals, and to criticise formal traditional narratives as being composed of ‘uninhabited histories and non-peopled pasts’ (Meskell 1996, 7). This attempt to ‘remember’ women as individuals in the past has been accompanied by the use of the theories of agency, as expressed through Bourdieu (1977; 1990; 1998) and Giddens (1984; 1990), which have been taken up by a number of archaeologists to place the individual back into their archaeological narratives. These issues are not concerned just with representation, but a move towards stating the diversity of roles of women, not simply locating interpretation within a stereotype. In many ways this mirrors current concerns within post-colonial studies, which questioned the representation of former colonial states and challenged the hegemony of former colonial powers (see Said 1978, 5). Post-colonial studies across a number of disciplines have also pointed to the importance of memory in their narratives (Gates 1986, 11); to remember past injustices and to remember those who have no voice (Spivak 1988, 272). Language, narrative and representation are central to these concerns, and post-structuralist theories are regularly invoked to reinforce claims for recognition, as Derrida (1973, 57) remarked, ‘the subject cannot speak without giving himself a

representation of his speaking.’ These studies highlight in particular the political, social and cultural issues involved in the construction of archaeological narratives, as representation becomes a powerful and emotive subject, and the absence or derogation of the role of women or ethnic groups in an archaeological narrative becomes highly important, as it implies absence or subservience in memory (after Conkey and Gero 1991, 15).

An ‘embodied memory’ created through an archaeological analysis therefore relies on its description through narrative, both in content and in form. These embodied narratives are not intended to represent things ‘as they were’, through an objective explanation, but rather to ‘extract and express their emotional essence’ (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 187). Embodied memory expressed through an archaeological narrative is also importantly a communication (after Delbo 1995), a way of ‘letting someone see with us what we have pointed out by way of giving it a definite character’ (Heidegger 1962, 197). This evokes Wittgenstein’s (1958, 91e; 1969, 74) concern for the way in which deep emotion, pain and suffering could be expressed through language. According to Wittgenstein communicating and articulating these emotions is not rendered insurmountable because of the limitations of our vocabulary (see Scarry 1985; Kristeva 1980a), but rather through our willingness to accept or deny that another in the past or the present endures this anguish. Following this, the experiences of another, whether contemporary or historical, become shared, communicated, articulated, as experience is regarded as a discursive not an individualistic phenomenon (Scott 1992, 34; de Lauretis 1984, 159). In this definition it is even possible to speak of individuals sharing pain, of feeling the same pain in their bodies (Wittgenstein 1958, 91e). ‘The kernel of our proposition that that which has pains or sees or thinks is of a mental nature is only, that the word “I” in “I have pains” does not denote a particular body, for we can’t substitute for ‘I’ a description of a body’ (Wittgenstein 1969, 74). This conception of language enables the theory of evoking the experiences of the body through memory, through the narratives that are told about the past. Following this, embodied memory can take as its subject of analysis the manner in which humans can remember through and with the body (Casey 2000, 147). By incorporating this perspective of embodied memory, archaeology must accordingly create narratives which whilst recognising the effect this work will have on the memory

of the past in the present, attempts to describe the embodied experience of those who lived in the past (after Meskell 2004, 5). This perspective will inevitably impact upon the wider political, social and economic debates regarding the cultural memory of the past (after Shanks and McGuire 1996; Shanks 2004a), as it places archaeologists in symmetry 'with those in the past who are studied', and with those in the present who are not archaeologists but who try to make sense of their historic past (Shanks and Hodder 1995, 28). In effect these will provide 'cultural and historical accounts' of how the present population can remember the past through the archaeological study of material objects and spaces. Through the emergence of memory studies within archaeology, archaeologists have begun to define how material remains and spaces can play a specific and unique role in the preservation and creation of memory, both in the past and in the present (Williams 2003a). The exploration and investigation of this distinct and peculiar relation between spatiality, materiality and memory is perhaps 'destined to become the specific task of archaeology' (Olivier 2000, 387; 2001, 70).

Chapter Two

Archaeology on the Western Front

The value and potential of an archaeological study of the Western Front has been a growing realisation over the last fifteen years (Saunders 2001, 45; 2002a, 101; 2004, 4) (Fig.5). Though many have commented on the subject still in its ‘infancy’ (after Saunders 2002a, 101), an archaeological study of the world’s first industrialised conflict appears necessary as the material and physical evidence of the war is innumerable (after Schnapp 1998, 26). The objects and structures of the human endeavours of the four years of conflict still litter the battlefields (Chippendale 1997, 505). Scraps of barbed wire and corroded chunks of concrete can even now be found on the fields of Northern France and Flanders (Silberman 2004, 12). Observant visitors to the former battlefields can discover rotting pieces of military leather, the rusting metal remains of a badge or button, corroded clips of ammunition and pockmarked shards of shell (Keegan 1999, 3). These surface scatters are however only a minor part of the archaeological evidence for the war on the Western Front (Barton 2003, 15). As Saunders (2001, 48) has observed, ‘the rapid post-war reconstruction left trenches, dugouts, material and human remains often perfectly preserved, just centimetres beneath the surface.’ The Great War on the Western Front has also left its legacy in the dangerous and toxic war material still present in the former battlefields (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 10). This landscape that was once subject to intense conflict still remains dangerous, as the vast quantities of unexploded ordinance left in the ground still kills and maims nearly ninety years after the cessation of hostilities (Stephan 1997, 214-215). Three-dozen farmers were killed due to unexploded shells in 1991 alone (Saunders 2001, 46), and each year as farmers plough the fields, the former war zone yields several tonnes of the metal detritus of the war, in what has been named ‘The Iron Harvest’ (Holt and Holt 1996, 12; Coombs 1994, 6).



Fig.5: Excavation at the A19 site (A.W.A., 2005)

The advent of archaeology on the Western Front has not gone unexamined and several questions concerning the use, value and agenda of the discipline in the region have been raised (Price, 2003; 2004; Saunders 2001; 2002a). These debates have been unfortunately quite limited, and have in the main revolved around the place of an archaeological study of the Western Front when considering the already well-established traditions of the study of the battlefields in literature and military history (Schnapp 1998). Excavations have however highlighted how archaeological interpretation and an archaeological approach gains its distinction in comparison to other disciplines, and contributes to knowledge, through its specific concern for the war materials, spaces and landscapes (A.W.A., 2005). This is not to suggest that the discipline of archaeology can or should act alone in the examination of the battlefields; such is the vast array of evidence concerning the Western Front that it is only through an interdisciplinary agenda that progress can be made (Schnapp 1998; Braybon 2003; Purseigle 2005). What is suggested is that archaeological evidence and an archaeological agenda focused on the materiality and spatiality of the conflict brings an entirely original perspective to the study of the battlefields (see A.W.A., 2005). It is through this original approach to the study of the conflict on the Western Front that archaeology can both take its place within the growing area of a multidisciplinary 'new agenda' in Great War studies (see Braybon 2003; Saunders 2004; Purseigle 2005), and begin to forge a position for itself in the 'dialogism' of the ongoing and multiform processes in the construction of the

cultural memory of the Western Front (see Korte 2001). The paucity of debates concerning the exact role of archaeology in the study of the battlefields hinders this development, as the manner in which archaeology approaches, researches and investigates the Western Front will in turn shape and reiterate certain memories of the First World War battlefields of France and Belgium. How these narratives are in turn captured by a public and selected and utilised to develop and perpetuate certain memories of the war is also neglected, as the place of archaeology in the popular memory of the war has rarely been considered (after Brown pers. comm. December 2004). As the archaeological study of the battlefields is still regarded to be in its 'infancy', and publication of excavations still remains sparse, such a self-reflective position has not been apparent and archaeologists working in the region have yet to fully consider the impact and responsibility of their work (Price, 2003; 2004; Fabiansson, 2005; Boura 1997; 1998).

This deficiency is untenable when considering the growing interest expressed for the study from both academia and the public. Battlefield archaeology of the Western Front has become such a topic of fascination that tours, in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum, are taken to Northern France and Belgium (Barton 2003, 15). The tour consists of visits to excavations as well as talks by the archaeologists involved (Tours with Experts, 2003). The archaeology of the Western Front has also featured twice on the BBC's television programme *Meet the Ancestors* (BBC, 2003); one programme focussed on the excavations of a dugout at Serre (Price pers. comm. April 2004), whilst the other examined the excavation of the Boesinghe battlefield near Ieper (Reed, 2003). This interest has also been fuelled by a number of high-profile excavations in the region which have attracted worldwide media attention (Fabiansson, 2005). Despite these well-publicised excavations archaeological research on the battlefields has mainly been restricted to rescue operations, mostly completed by amateur groups, whilst professional investigations have occurred only recently (Saunders 2002a, 103; A.W.A., 2005; de Meyer and Pype 2004, 1; 2005, 3). However, many of these professional excavations of Great War sites in France and Belgium have been part of large public works programmes, which take as their objective the investigation of the archaeological record of earlier periods, and are not wholly concerned with the exploration of material from the 1914-

1918 war (Desfossés 1998, 37-38). Some professional French and Belgian archaeologists even regard the presence of Great War material in the region as a hindrance and a disruption to their research of earlier periods (Price 2004, 125). Archaeological projects that have taken place in this limited guise have therefore mainly been concerned with the recovery of material, the production of data, the classification of materials and the conservation of sites, rather than interpretation (Price pers. comm. April 2004; see Bull and Panton 2001). This has ensured that the archaeological study of the Western Front is often seen as an illustration or counterpoint to military history, without any regard to the alternative ways in which archaeological evidence can contribute to the study of the battlefields (Schnapp 1998, 27; Boura 1997, 16). With the subject thereby lacking recognition and credence in certain sectors it is perhaps unsurprising that a discussion of the impact of archaeology on the interpretation, representation and memory of the battlefields has been limited (see Schnapp 1998). This situation has been compounded by the fact that archaeologists who have been involved in battlefield excavations have focused on the instigation of a period of what is termed 'normal science' for the study, which whilst aiming to develop its recognition within the discipline of archaeology as well as the wider academic community has served to quieten and limit the impact of the study (see Price 2004; Saunders 2004)

Beaumont-Hamel

The excavation carried out at the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park on the Somme by professional archaeologists from Parcs Canada provides an example of this limited perspective of archaeological analysis (Piédalue, 2003). Undertaken in August and September 1998 in advance of the construction of a visitor centre at the Memorial Park, these excavations revealed sections of the communication trench known as the Uxbridge Road. Due to the confines of time and space, and a wish to avoid any disruption to the normal operation of the site, the excavation concentrated solely on the trench system affected by the proposed visitor centre, rather than considering the site within the context of the wider Western Front. The project was designed as a rescue excavation, to examine the

impact the construction would have on the material remains of the threatened area (Piédalue, 2003) (Fig.6).



Fig.6: Beaumont Hamel excavation (Piédalue, 2003)

The excavation recorded the process and techniques of the construction of the communication trench. The trench was found to be dug into the chalk outcrop and the traverses, to protect the soldiers from enfilade fire, could clearly be defined. The trench was constructed with the parapet at an angle of forty-five degrees, but the post-war levelling and embanking had obscured any further details. The trench did not appear to have any other alternative methods of revetments. Two features described as lookouts were defined in the excavation, made from the construction of a wooden bench into the side of the trench. Artefacts recovered from the excavation included, barbed wire, spent ammunition, containers and utensils as well as parts of the soldiers' clothing. A rubbish pit was also located during the excavation, which was thought to have been used during the post-war reconstruction of the site. It contained objects that related to the everyday life of the troops. This included water cans, an element of an oil lamp, empty cans of 'bully beef' (corned beef), bottles of condiments, associated food residues as well as cattle bones, upon which butchery marks could be seen (Piédalue, 2003). The excavation provided a glimpse of the routine physical and material life of the soldier in the trenches.

Amateur Groups

The study of the material remains of the Western Front has been driven by a number of amateur groups and volunteer organisations which have engaged in archaeological work in the region (Saunders 2002a, 101-108). These studies have focused on the research and classification of the war material, confining archaeology to a salvage operation, as their projects are instigated usually on an ‘*ad hoc*’ basis rather than as a systematic programme of investigation’ (Saunders 2001, 48). This situation is illustrated by examining three of these groups and their projects and perspective (see Saunders 2002a). The first of these groups is the ASBF (Association pour le Souvenir du Bataille de Fromelles), which has conducted several excavations of underground features such as tunnels and dugouts from the Great War, and which presents their finds from these projects in their own museum. To avoid accusations of illegality, their website does state clearly that their excavations are undertaken with the full permission of the French archaeological department, with all the necessary legal authorisations (ASBF, 2005). Whilst groups such as this have enabled the communication of the existence and potential of archaeology on the Western Front, they perpetuate a limited role for the discipline and the evidence it uncovers. The Belgian volunteers ‘The Diggers’ (2005) state in their website that they make no claim for ‘academic qualifications’ and learn the process of archaeological excavation ‘on the job.’ Their aim of ensuring ‘a proper grave to the soldiers’ of all nationalities and saving the evidence of the war from development, whilst commendable, does ensure that many of the sites they excavate lack any defined research goals, and can therefore represent lost opportunities for an archaeology of the Western Front.. ‘The Diggers’ have carried out excavations on trenches and dugouts since the 1980s, and have an agreement with the *In Flanders Fields* museum (Ieper), which takes care of their finds (The Diggers, 2005). Interestingly, the group were the subject of a television programme broadcast in Britain in 2000, which labelled their activities as ‘battlefield scavenging’, ensuring that the group received wide coverage in the British press for the manner of their excavations. For the first time the impact of archaeology on the memory of the Western Front came to public prominence in Britain (see Saunders 2002a, 103). Such was the interest generated by the programme that questions were raised in parliament, and the All-Party Parliamentary War Graves and Battlefield Heritage Group was set up to ensure that the battlefields of all

conflicts were examined with the utmost care and high standards (Barton 2003, 14). Throughout the controversy The Diggers complained that they were wrongly represented, and indeed were subsequently to win an appeal through the Independent Television Commission, which criticised the programme for its sensationalism and inaccurate reporting (The Diggers, 2005). The ABAF (The Association of Battlefield Archaeology in Flanders) are also a volunteer group from the Ieper area who were initially part of the 'The Diggers', but later formed their own archaeological group. The ABAF have excavated a number of features in the region, most notably the British 'Beecham Dugout' and the number of tunnels in the Ieper region dug by the Royal Engineers (Doyle *et al* 2001). Apart from this investigation of the 'underground war', which was primarily concerned with the classification of material, the group are notable for the organisation of a specialist conference concerning the archaeology of the Western Front, which stated the original approach of the discipline to studying the battlefields (ABAF, 2003).

These examples highlight both the disparate nature of the archaeological study of the Western Front, and its limited applications. Despite this situation, as the study of the archaeology of the Western Front develops as an area of concern, and as the volunteer groups have recently been joined by professional bodies with more academic concerns, there emerges an ideal opportunity to begin to expand the study. This would certainly be a welcome addition to the study as at present there has yet to emerge any specific or distinctive agenda or objectives for the information generated by excavations (Desfossés 1998, 51). Neither professional archaeologists nor amateur groups have yet to pay sufficient attention to the ways in which archaeology can interpret, represent and remember the Western Front (Price, 2003). Too often excavations have focused upon the technical details, the military minutiae, rather than emphasising alternative ways in which archaeology can study the Western Front (Schnapp 1998, 25; de Meyer and Pype 2004, 25).

Yorkshire Trench

This unfortunately narrow use of archaeology on the Western Front can

be demonstrated by examining the work of 'The Diggers' on a rescue project they undertook of a British trench on the Boezinghe battlefield near Ieper. The initial excavation of the site, which took place during the summer of 1998, focussed upon a section of trench between the two entrances of a 1917 British dug-out, which had previously been examined by the group. The project which was initiated in response to the proposed development of the site, concentrated on the immediate vicinity of the trench and dugout, looking particularly at the construction techniques and development of the trench system (The Diggers, 2005) (Fig.7).

The 1998 excavations produced evidence for the development of the trench, through the discovery of several 'A-frames' (Fig.9). These structural features were used from 1916 in British trenches to facilitate drainage, and the conditions had ensured that some were remarkably preserved. The remnants of the corrugated iron sheets that supported the trenches were also visible as an orange staining in the soil. The finds from this initial excavation included a detonation box, a Lee Enfield rifle, ammonia ampoules, eye glasses from gas masks, a pistol holster and a supply of hand-grenades that were placed on a fire step. During excavations in the summer of 2000, more A-frames were discovered, as well as a drainage system for the trench, which included a partition that could be raised to control the water level. Finds from this phase of the excavation included a rifle, a chest with Vickers gun ammunition and trench duckboards. Perhaps the most remarkable find was the signpost for the 'Irish Bridge' which instructed soldiers to march single file (Fig.8). The bridge is believed to have been a quarter of a mile away to the south of the Yorkshire Trench, and was one of many that traversed the area (The Diggers, 2005).

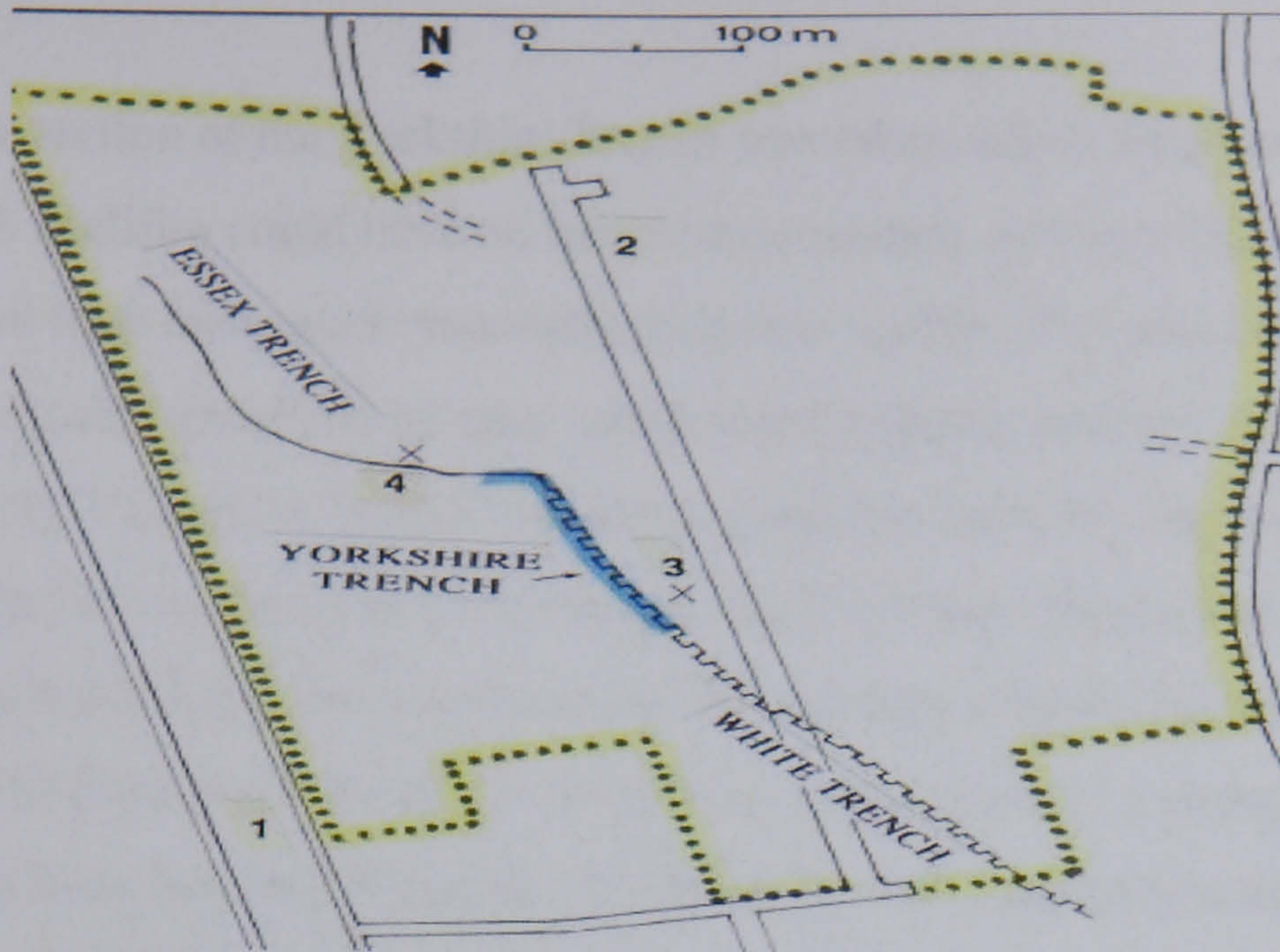


Fig.7: Map of the Yorkshire Trench (The Diggers, 2005)

Key: 1) Ieperlee Canal: 2) Bargiestraat (new road constructed in 1998:
 3) British dug-out: 4) Site of the trench drainage system



Fig.8: Irish Bridge sign excavated at the Yorkshire Trench
 (The Diggers, 2005)



Fig.9: Excavation of A-frames at the Yorkshire Trench
 (The Diggers, 2005)

A cross-section of the Yorkshire Trench was taken which emphasised the possible effects shellfire could have on trench construction, as the collapse of trench walls and their subsequent reconstruction was visible. The positioning of the sandbags, which formed the parapet, could also be clearly defined. A shallow predecessor to the Yorkshire Trench was discovered, and probably represents the initial occupation of the line by French troops. The Yorkshire Trench itself, through the evidence from the excavation and the associated historical research, has been dated to February 1916 and is thought to be the result of a strategic retreat. It was a front line trench during a relatively peaceful time from February 1916, until the offensives connected to the Battle of Passchendaele on the 31st of July 1917 (The Diggers, 2005).

The name of the Yorkshire Trench has been researched by The Diggers to discover its origins, though as yet no definitive answer has been forwarded. The trench, which runs for approximately two hundred metres, meeting Essex Trench to the north and White Trench to the south, is referred to in maps and diaries. It makes its first appearance on a British trench map dated the 9th of September 1916, marked by a simple line. The name can also be seen on maps from the 6th of January 1917, although soldiers' diaries make reference to the Yorkshire Trench from the autumn of 1916. Historical research has also been conducted to discover the battalions that occupied the trenches, to assess if the name is linked to the troops serving in the area. In the second half of 1915, the 49th (West Riding) Division were on the Boezinghe Canal Site. There were also other units serving here from Yorkshire. These included the 1/4th and 1/5th Battalions of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, the 1/4th and 1/5th Battalions of the York and Lancaster Regiment, and the 1/7th and 1/8th Battalions of the West Yorkshires. Trenches around the area on the Boezinghe Canal also make references to Yorkshire in their names, such as Colne Valley, Huddersfield Road and Skipton Road (The Diggers, 2005). The project because of its focus on military hardware and wartime logistics failed to communicate the soldiers' experiences of their surroundings.

Military Heritage

The study of the military remains on the former battlefields on the Western Front can be developed and enhanced by considering how the growing appreciation in Britain of the military heritage of the twentieth century has taken form (Schofield 1998a; Schofield *et al* 2002; Dobinson *et al* 1997). One of the important features of this study has been the depth of feeling generated within the public, frequently witnessed by archaeologists as they conduct investigations into the former military structures (Schofield 1998b, 22-23). The reason for this strong reaction can be seen to arise from the associations which these buildings have with the lives and deaths of ordinary people, and of events located in individual, family, community and national history which possess great emotive meaning. The recent Defence of Britain project (2005) undertaken from 1995 to 2002, underlines the importance of this study and the significance that many of these structures possess for the general public. Understanding these reactions is essential both in the conservation as well as the archaeological study and interpretation of the military heritage of the twentieth century (Schofield and Lake 1996, 13). Archaeology in the analysis and explanation of these military remains can therefore be used to articulate and reinvigorate memory, as these structures are physically threatened by the erosion of materials and development proposals, and the events themselves are fading from living memory as those who fought pass away.

Some of these issues have begun to be addressed by French and Belgium archaeologists investigating the material of the Great War. This process has been slow, however, and recognition of the value of the archaeology of the conflict remains partial (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 32). Construction programmes in the mid-1990s, such as the A29 motorway and the TGV expansion forced French archaeologists to confront the archaeology of the Western Front for the first time, as the routes cut across a vast swathe of the battlefields, encompassing large areas which witnessed intense fighting during the four years of war (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 33). Unfortunately the amount of interest paid to the remains of the Great War during these construction programmes often depended upon the individual director of the excavations; and the procedures employed to define structures in the investigations were based upon strategies employed for much older archaeological features, which therefore entailed the loss of certain features and

materials from the Great War (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 34). It is important to note that the development did provide an opportunity of glimpsing the types of evidence available and thereby the potential of an archaeological study of the Western Front (Desfossés 1998, 40-41). The interventions carried out along a part of the planned route of the A29 in Picardie in 1998, unearthed a section of a British trench, thought to be constructed in April 1918, and the remains of a British soldier. The subsequent analysis of these remains indicated that the individual was of approximately eighteen years of age, and a copper medallion, found with the soldier, established his exact date of birth as December 26th, 1899. Through the well-preserved condition of the military badges, it was also possible to confirm that he was part of the 52nd Northamptonshire Battalion. It is thought that the soldier may have been killed at the time of the 1918 German Spring Offensive (Barbet, 2003).

Despite finds such as these there have been incidental reports that this scale of examination was not always the case, as it has been suggested that remains of soldiers at some sites were overlooked or unceremoniously covered over during the construction, so as not to disrupt deadlines for completion (Saunders 2001, 49). Accompanied by these troubling accounts is the real and present threat to the study of the battlefields posed by the large number of people who search, gather and excavate material from the former fields of conflict. These items of war material, usually clothing, personal artefacts, debris and weaponry have fuelled the profitable military memorabilia fairs around Europe and America. The occurrence or even the possibility of incidents such as this has led a number of archaeologists to highlight their concerns over 'battlefield scavenging' (Price, 2003). Though perhaps innocently encapsulated in the work of the Australian popular historian John Laffin (1993), these activities are highly damaging to the nascent study of archaeology in the region. Ranging from casual field walking, metal detecting, to clandestine digging and the stripping of material from archaeological sites, such behaviour inevitably hinders and can even prevent any possible study or identification of the material or human remains (Saunders 2001, 47-48). Such activities have forced the realisation of the importance of the material for the study and the memory of the war. Saunders (2001) has even compared the depth of feeling and arguments which ensue over this issue to the ongoing debates concerning the repatriation of indigenous

material culture and human remains. A pertinent point indeed, in the context of the acquisition and repatriation of human remains from the battlefields of the Western Front, to be re-interred as 'Unknown Soldiers' by Australia in 1993, Canada in 2000 and New Zealand in 2004.

Recent Projects

A number of French archaeological units have begun to seriously assess and investigate the subject of the archaeology and the Western Front, though again this has mainly relied on the interest of the individual archaeologist involved (Desfossés 1998, 37-38). This is particularly the case around in the city of Arras, where the chief archaeologist for the city Alain Jacques has conducted a number of high-profile excavations of Great War features (see Desfossés *et al* 2000). An excavation that attracted worldwide attention was the investigation of an elaborate, underground British Field Hospital in Arras in 2000. The hospital with its own water and electricity supply is thought to have been able to accommodate around seven hundred wounded in over eight hundred metres of tunnels, with several operating rooms for the seriously wounded, as well as house all the necessary support staff. The excavation produced bullets, badges, food cans and parts of stretchers used for the wounded in the tunnels of the hospital. These tunnels were also found to have graffiti and carvings along their sides. Some of the workmen and stretcher-bearers who constructed and worked in the hospital were of Maori origin, and representations of their language and iconography can be found on the tunnel walls. Signposts were also placed in the tunnels, marking the names of 'Iceland' and 'Hunter Streets', which allowed the stretcher-bearers to find their way through the complex system. The hospital was abandoned on the 11th April 1917 during the offensive at Arras, when it was hit by a shell, causing the walls of some sections to collapse (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 38). Another excavation near Arras in 2001 at Le Point du Jour which revealed a British mass grave of 20 servicemen also received wide coverage throughout the world (Desfossés *et al* 2003). These remains, discovered by French archaeologists in advance of the development of the site, possessed no identity tags or helmets, and just a few fragments of clothing and boots, creating a

haunting and vivid image of the conditions of war and the treatment of the dead (Desfossés *et al* 2003). These excavations and others conducted by French archaeologists have facilitated a degree of consideration and debate in France regarding the place of archaeology and the memories the discipline can create through its investigation of the Western Front (see Boura 2000).

Further excavations have contributed to this debate as well as providing further stimulus to the archaeological study of the battlefields (Schnapp 1998). With the digging of a gas pipeline at Monchy-le-Preux, Pas-de-Calais, the body of a British soldier was discovered in the filling of a shell hole. The possessions in the haversack found with the body identified the soldier as an officer of the Royal Scots Regiment. The burial itself appears to have been made purposefully, as the position of the body was carefully laid out. This burial was made without knowing that close by was the body of a German infantryman who appears to have been buried earlier in the shell hole. The position of this second body would suggest the soldier died where he fell, and was probably buried by falling debris from explosions (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 34). Along the same gas pipeline at Gavrelle, excavations revealed twelve German soldiers buried in a mass grave. The soldiers appear to have had most of their personal and military items removed, although two still had their helmets which appear cracked and would not have been reusable. The presence of aluminium eyelets suggests that some men were buried wrapped in canvas tents. Although there were no personal items found with the men, a pipe, a pen feather and an inkbottle were found in the layer above the burial. Identity discs were too badly corroded to allow individual identification but regimental insignia were used to identify the men as belonging to the 152nd Infantry Regiment, of the 48th Division, which through historical records were known to have suffered heavy losses during the 1918 German Spring Offensive. The soldiers seem to have been buried hastily possibly by Allied soldiers as they retreated back, as their internment appears fast and opportunistic, making use of an old shell hole (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 35). These excavations have emphasised both the originality of archaeological evidence on the Western Front, and the manner in which this original data can be utilised to contribute to the memory of the battlefields. The excavations provide a stunning image of the war as a contrast to the organised post-war cemeteries, as well as providing information as to the condition of life and the manner of death and

burial of the soldiers at the front, information only obtainable through archaeology (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 35). Excavation of these burial sites creates new and original evidence, revealing aspects of the war which aren't remembered or represented in historical studies (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 35).

This situation is demonstrated through the archaeological projects in the northern French town of Cambrai. Local interest in the town and region encouraged some individuals to research the town's place in the Great War. This led to a growth in interest in the town's place as the first battlefield which witnessed the large scale tank use on the Western Front. The Allies, who were attempting to breach the German line, used 476 tanks around Cambrai, forty of which were destroyed. Surveys of local knowledge uncovered stories that there were many of these tanks were left on the battlefield after the war, with some buried in large pits. Using this information, archaeologists identified the village of Flesquières as the potential location of one of these tanks (Desfossés 2002). Receiving technical support from the official archaeological body in the region, the preliminary survey located a tank at around 2m beneath the ground surface. Subsequent excavations revealed a Mark IV British tank largely intact, except on its right side where a shell explosion had damaged its armour plating. Mechanical pieces also appeared to have been removed from the vehicle, and the presence of a wide range of material inside the tank suggests that it was reused by German soldiers as a dugout. This material revealed other aspects of the soldiers' lives not directly associated with the war, including a whisky flask and wine bottles, food cans and a water canteen. The detailed study of the interior of this tank allowed the observation of the presence of wood boxes containing parts of equipment, greasing devices and tools. The excavation of the tank provides a reminder of the destruction that could be witnessed on the battlefield, as the large-scale shell damage to the vehicle underlined the extreme violence of the conflict. This evidence, alongside the objects which related to the particular living conditions of the crew of one of the first tanks used in warfare, ensure that this vehicle and the material recovered from within it represent the only tangible memory of the Battle of Cambrai. This battle would otherwise be remembered through historical documents, military cemeteries and the monuments erected after the war in the town. In fact, the tank itself is now displayed and classed as a historical monument (Desfossés *et al* 2000, 37).

The Department of First World War Archaeology, part of the Institute for the Archaeological Heritage of the Flemish Community (IAP) was opened in 2003, emphasising the progress made by archaeologists in the field in the recognition of the importance of the archaeological material in the study and remembrance of the Western Front. The new department is supported by the province of Western Flanders, the combined Flemish universities, the Belgian Army's Service for the Disposal and Demolition of Explosives (DOVO), associations of amateur archaeologists, and a wide range of international collaborators (Dewilde *et al*, 2004). This emergence of a professional concern for the archaeology of the Western Front has allowed certain archaeologists to consider the way in which archaeology creates a distinctive narrative of the war, through its study of the physicality of the conflict. Although excavations such as 'The Yorkshire Trench', the work of amateur groups in general, and such studies as Beaumont Hamel have all added to the information available for the archaeological study of the Western Front, these rescue excavations have not considered their evidence as forming its own individual archaeological interpretation of the war. All too often archaeological projects are subsumed within a wider historical and military study of the Western Front, reduced to illustrations or to arguing over points of technical description and classification. In general archaeological projects have in general placed their evidence and interpretations within the established historical narrative of the war, examining the main events of the conflict. Despite the pervasive nature of this reliance on historical frameworks there have been attempts to form a distinctive archaeological approach to the study of the Western Front, at both Auchonvillers on the Somme (OVPW, 2005), but particularly with the recent excavations which have taken place in advance of the A19 construction near Ieper (de Meyer and Pype 2004; 2005). These excavations have demonstrated both the value of conducting archaeological projects on the Western Front, bearing in mind the rich assemblage of material the excavations produced, and importantly the role of archaeological evidence in stressing an original approach to the study of the Western Front, focusing on the materials and spaces of the war.

The A19 Project

In November 2002 Belgian archaeologists from the University of Ghent and the Belgium Institute of Archaeology began a series of trial excavations along the planned extension of the motorway. Historians and archaeologists from Britain and France were also invited to carry out research and suggest areas where trial excavations could be carried out. Nine sites were selected and two trench systems were excavated, Turco Farm (British) and High Command Redoubt (German) (Barton 2003, 13-15). Of these nine sites, some were to be excavated partially, while other areas were to be investigated by geophysical means; of each of these nine zones, an additional and more detailed inventory was to be made based upon aerial photography (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 10). Initial research in the area confirmed that the motorway extension would cross parts of the region which were involved in the three major battles in the Ieper Salient, with the remains of troops of many nations from the Allied and Axis powers still buried in ground (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 4-5). This area was the fighting ground for Belgian, Indian, British, Moroccan, German, French, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand troops, which therefore ascribed the area with international importance (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 7). The project represents the beginning of a professional and comprehensive archaeological investigation of the Western Front, and offers an opportunity to integrate evidence from a variety of sources particularly oral testimonies, historical documents and aerial photography, with evidence gained from the archaeological excavations (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 2). Further archival work is also being undertaken to locate the testimonies of the soldiers who fought in the area which is hoped will complement the fieldwork, but as yet such a complete report remains unpublished, as there are still more excavations to complete (Barton pers. comm. March 2004).

In the primary phase of the field research conducted at the site, the most important sectors of the front lines were researched using French, British and German trenchmaps. A Geographic Information System and resistivity surveys were also used to complement this research and indicate features such as trenches, bunkers and shelters (A.W.A., 2005). Aerial photographs of the area were located in archives and used to map features onto contemporary maps, so that trenches, barbed wire, tracks, old field boundaries, battery positions and

other structures could be located exactly. This technique was applied on aerial photographs of different periods during the conflict, so that the results could be placed in overlay, allowing the analysis of the evolution of the terrain (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 24). Field walking was also conducted providing a great variety of finds, including various types of ammunition (shrapnel, shells, lead shrapnel balls, bullets, explosives and scrap metal), barbed wire entanglements (rolls of barbed wire, fragments of barbed wire), trenches (duckboards, petrified sandbags), metre gauge railways, telephone lines, bunkers, weaponry, supplies (potsherds and pieces of glass from bottles of rum) and the personal gear of the soldiers (fragmentary helmets, a harness, spades, etc.) (Fig.10). Farmers who have worked on the land along the proposed A19 route were also interviewed to gain additional information on the presence of remains from the First World War. Indeed, more than 70 farmers co-operated with this initiative and several of these oral witnesses proved to be of great value in locating particular features (A.W.A., 2005; de Meyer and Pype 2004, 7-8).



Fig.10: Grenades found at the A19 site (A.W.A., 2005)

The first excavations took place near a road called the ‘Admiral’s Road’ by the British soldiers, at the Turco Farm site. The team excavated three long test-pits to evaluate the site, dug over a distance of 100 meters and a width of 4 meters, transversing the planned A19-trajectory. The allied frontline system at Turco Farm was set up after the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915, which

witnessed the first use of poisonous gas by German troops. No man's land was just across the 'Admiral's Road' and the German front line was only a few hundred meters away. The excavation highlighted the complexity involved in defining trenches to one particular phase of occupation as the orientation of the trenches was known to have changed several times up to the summer of 1916. These trenches were also to be reused as one of the jumping-off points for the Third Battle of Ypres (Ieper) (also known as the Battle of Passchendaele). The area was then used as rear supporting lines for the British forces until the end of the war. The most remarkable structures found during the excavations were the traces of shell holes and the remains of trenches. The shell holes ranged in size but were clearly definable, with the team sometimes even able to detect which types of ammunition were used to cause the explosion, based on the size of the crater. The shape of the crater was also used to reconstruct the direction from which the shell was fired. Unsurprisingly, other archaeological traces were found to be severely damaged by the intensity of the shelling, and in one of the test-pits only a small fragment of an A-frame from a trench could be recorded. The second test-pit however contained two well-preserved segments of trenches, showing the traverses of the trench system and examples of wooden duckboards still in good condition. The deep ploughing at the site which had occurred as the land was put under use for intensive agriculture made it impossible to study the walls of the trenches, although some remains of parapet sandbags were found in the filling. A third test-pit also contained the remains of trenches, of which one segment was found to be reinforced by corrugated-iron sheeting. Near another trench the remains of a collapsed shelter was located constructed alongside the trench. The structure found was probably the wooden roof, covered with corrugated iron plates. Some sandbags that served as part of the walls of the shelter were definable, and although the textiles had rotted away, the shape of the bags and the marks of the textile could still be recognised (A.W.A., 2005; de Meyer and Pype 2004, 12) (Fig.11).



Fig.11: Excavation at the Turco farm site (A.W.A., 2005)

Numerous objects were found during the dig, which had to be differentiated between those used in the trenches during the fighting and those that were deposited there during the reconstruction at the end of the war. Three categories of material were distinguished; standard equipment, other articles of use and ammunition. Most of the finds were part of the standard equipment used by the British soldiers, such as uniform buttons, cutlery, water bottles, items of clothing and personal items such as combs and pencils (Figs.12 and 13). Inevitably perhaps the single most common class of finds consists of ammunition and weaponry. Bullets, shells, shrapnel-balls and grenades were retrieved from the excavation. Hand grenades were particularly common, and several types were identified, including a number made from the remains of shells. On the Turco site there was also a dump of Mills hand grenades, and two rifle-grenades were found. Heavy ordinance was also identified, and whilst many of the shells and shell fragments found on the excavation site were filled with a conventional payload, some also contained toxic substances or were filled with lead ‘shrapnel’ balls (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 13).



Fig.12: Copper spoon from Turco excavation (A.W.A., 2005)



Fig.13: Uniform button from Turco excavation (A.W.A., 2005)

The second excavation area of 'High Command Redoubt' was a site which was located on the German frontline from 1915-1917. This site was an important German observation post, protected by many small concrete shelters, the remains of which can still be seen scattered in the fields (A.W.A., 2005). The 'Canadian dugouts' site was also investigated but yielded few results in terms of material evidence or structural features. The excavation team though were able to assess the evolution of the techniques of trench construction on the site of 'Cross Road Farm' (de Meyer and Pype 2005). By integrating excavated features and aerial photographs with archival sources, the study has allowed individuals to be placed in particular parts of the trenches, and their comments written down in diaries, official accounts or letters home have been found to correspond nearly exactly to what the archaeologists had defined during their investigations (Barton pers. comm. March 2004). Traces of sandbags were found in several places on the site as well as duckboards, bricks, stones and even stable-doors used to floor the trenches. With the excavators noting the changes in shape and style of the duckboards used between earlier and later trench systems. Structures, depots and artillery platforms were also found to be linked up with the trenches, each filled with the material remains of the soldiers' lives at the front (A.W.A., 2005). In an ammunition depot a case was found filled with cartridges for a standard Lee-Enfield rifle, and in a short communication trench connecting the frontline trench a pit was uncovered containing metal cans of food. The remains of a possible

dugout frame were also found, measuring 2m x 2m, and which is thought to have been used as a depot. Nearby was a dump of 35 unused Stokes mortar grenades, suggesting that a Stokes-trench mortar had also been placed here (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 17). The movement between the frontline trenches was enabled by the presence of thin communication trenches, five of which have been excavated. Their floors were generally made from duckboards although in one of the excavated examples, the soldiers had placed a layer of bricks (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 17). The remains of several British soldiers and one French soldier were discovered during the course of these excavations, and although none could be individually identified, it was possible to deduce the nationality and in some cases the regiment of the soldier (Fig.14). After the examination of the bodies and the accompanying artefacts, the recovered remains of the British soldiers were re-buried in one of the many British cemeteries around Ieper. The French remains were deposited in a mass grave at one of the major French cemeteries in the area (A.W.A., 2005).



Fig.14: Royal Sussex soldier excavated at High Command (A.W.A., 2005)

The Auchonvillers Project

Near the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park, in Auchonvillers, there have also been attempts to incorporate a different approach to the study of Western Front archaeology. This has involved moving away from opportunistic, short-

term, rescue excavations, to using archaeology in a wider study of the Western Front (see Price 2004). The Auchonvillers site was originally partially excavated by a small group of volunteers, known as the 'Khaki Chums', though in 1997 the excavation has been taken over by a professional team from the National Army Museum (Fraser 2003, 10; Saunders 2002a, 105-106). The project, named 'Ocean Villas' after the name British soldiers gave to the French village during the war, aims to incorporate 'professional standards of recording and excavation' (Fraser 2003, 10). The project's stated purpose is to study an entire spectrum of the Western Front, encompassing the British trench system, the village of Auchonvillers, as well as the area of no man's land and the German trenches (Fraser 2003, 10). As the project focuses on an area outside the immediate combat zone, it has set out to investigate the range of activities that were carried out behind the front line (Price 2004). The site is a test case for an archaeological study of the Western Front, as it utilises a multi-discipline approach. Documents, maps and contemporary aerial photographs of the area have been used to direct the archaeological enquiries, and examine the site within the context of its wider place on the Western Front (OVPW, 2005). The project has also involved substantial archival research, investigating the soldiers' experiences and perceptions, as they occupied this particular stretch of trench (OVPW, 2005; Price 2004, 126).



Fig.15: Entrance to the dugout (OVPW, 2005)

Initial excavations by the team revealed a brick-floored communication trench, which was reached by a brick-floored ramp, and a brick staircase leading into a cellar, which was divided into two rooms (OVPW, 2005) (Fig.15). The trench was constructed during the early phases of the war in 1914, and was

manned by British troops from late July 1915. It probably went out of use in February 1918, and was not used again until at least August 1918, after which the British army left the area (Fraser 2003, 11). These periods of occupation at the site have been obtained from sections of the trench, which have also enabled a preliminary phasing of activity to be proposed (Fig.4.8). These phases spanned the initial construction, possibly undertaken by French troops, to the final levelling and clearing of the site after the war (Price 2004, 183). By placing the finds with the dates given for these sections, an attempt has been made to associate finds with particular events. For example, a single fired .303 round located in a phase placed in the last few months of the war could represent action during the German advance of 1918 (OVPW, 2005) (Fig.16).



Fig.16: Section of the excavated trench (OVPW, 2005)

The floor of the cellar was littered with a variety of objects representing the occupation of the site, including cap badges, coins, cutlery and webbing buckles of both French and British origin. A Royal Irish Fusiliers cap badge found near the entrance of the cellar, and was probably dropped by a member of the 2nd Battalion. From historical records it was possible to find that this particular battalion, served in this area with the 4th Division of the British army from July 1915 until early July 1916 (Fraser 2003, 11). Evidence from the cellar suggests, that during 1915-1917 a reserve company of the infantry battalion, occupying the front line in that sector, used this section of the trench. The

excavation has also produced the first example of 'trench art' from an archaeological context (Saunders 2002a, 106). A single fired Lebel round, fashioned into a pencil was recovered from a drain cut beneath the brick floor of the trench. Although the type of ammunition suggests French occupation, it is unfortunately impossible to state whether the pencil was made by a French or British soldier or a civilian (OVPW, 2005).

The sides of the excavated trench also showed damage, possibly by shellfire, which prevented an accurate definition of the trench dimensions, but illustrates the capabilities of the trenches to withstand a bombardment. Several items have been recovered which relate to the soldiers life in the trenches. These have included a tin plate, a food can and the celluloid faceplate from a gas helmet. Perhaps the most stereotypical find recovered during the project has been the remains of a mouth organ, forever associated with the British 'Tommy'. Amongst the most recent finds has been a chalk carving tentatively identified as an Auckland Regiment badge. If this proves correct, it may have been carved by a member of the 2nd Auckland Regiment, 2nd Brigade, New Zealand Division, which occupied this area between the 26th of March and the 23rd of April 1918 (Fraser 2003, 11). The chalk bricks of the cellar also exhibit the numerous graffiti written by soldiers. One particular inscription, which has attracted a great deal of interest, is a carving bearing the initials 'J.C.'. It has been suggested that this relates to James Crozier, a soldier of the 9th Royal Irish Rifles, who was shot for desertion in 1916 (OVPW, 2005; Fraser 2003, 11).

Battlefield Studies

There has also been a surge of interest in the use of geological techniques in the study of the Western Front (see Doyle 2001, 237; Barton and Doyle 2003, 55). Geologists have begun to use geophysical surveys of the former battlefields to assess and reconstruct the wartime landscape, as a means to examine the events of the conflict, the tactics employed and the reasons for the failures and successes of military campaigns (Doyle and Bennett 1997; 2002). The stated aim of this work is to 'provide an overview of the importance of terrain to the military geography of the war' (Doyle and Bennett 1997, 3). In this analysis the geophysical survey maps of battlefields are used to stress the importance of

terrain in influencing the outcome of the Western Front. The terrain of the battlefield is considered central to the tactics employed in the conflict as well as influencing the nature of trench positions, the provision of resources, and significantly affecting the outcome of battles (Doyle and Bennett 1997, 23). Associated with these geophysical surveys has also been a growing interest in the dugouts and tunnels of the 'underground war', with particular attention paid to the tunnels used to plant explosives underneath the opposing trenches (Doyle and Bennett 2002; Barton *et al* 2004). These tunnels have become an object of study in recent years, as the rapid post-war reconstruction neglected to fill and support these excavations, which are now causing subsidence and even the collapse of buildings in some Belgian towns, especially Nieuwpoort (The Geological Society, 2000). Bostyn (2002, 225-236) has examined these tunnels, some of which have been uncovered through archaeological excavation, and used this evidence to assess the techniques and the devices used by the tunnelling companies of the British Royal Engineers in developing mine warfare on the Western Front.

The underground features of the battlefields have also attracted the attention of the British volunteer organisation, the Durand Group (2004). The group, founded in 1998 aims to 'further research and investigation of military-related subterranean features including: military mining systems; tunnels; subways; dugouts and bunkers; and other underground structures.' The group also takes an active role in the disposal and defusing of ammunition and explosives in the mines and former battlefields (Durand Group, 2004). Their work on the Western Front has included recent surveys in advance of excavations at the site of the recently opened Thiepval Memorial Centre on the Somme (Prada 2002, 21), and working with the Canadian Parks Authorities, they have also undertaken underground survey and mapping work at Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park and the Vimy Ridge Memorial Park. This work has also involved recording the substantial graffiti left by the soldiers who worked in these underground tunnels (Dolamore and McCann 2001). These studies of the tunnels and dugouts and the terrain of the battlefields does however represent the limits that some place on the archaeological study of the battlefields; the discipline is reduced to the role of salvage and classification of materials and structures, often without regard to the individuals who would have used them, thereby creating an

abstract fetishism rather than a contemporary archaeological assessment.

Within the last few years the study of the archaeology and the material culture on the Western Front has been greatly enhanced and indeed almost transformed by the work of Saunders (2001; 2002a; 2002b; 2003a; 2003b; 2004). Developing initially from the study of the production of 'trench art', into further studies of landscape and the material culture of the battlefields in general, Saunders (2001) has succeeded in radically altering the perception of the study of the Great War on the Western Front. Emphasising that despite the war being regarded as a war of material at the time of the conflict (*Materialschlact*), Saunders (2001, 43-44; 2002a, 101-102; 2003a, 7) has highlighted that the materiality of the Western Front is a subject which has remained largely unexamined since the Armistice. For the first time through this work attention has been drawn to the manner in which the materiality of the conflict affected the soldiers who fought on the Western Front, changing their perceptions and ideas of the battlefield landscape where they fought (Saunders 2001; 2003b). The way in which this materiality of the conflict has impacted upon the memory of the conflict has also featured in this approach (Saunders 2003a). Using the work of Kopytoff (1986) in his analysis of the 'cultural biography' of objects, Saunders (2002b) examines how the war material refashioned by soldiers at the front into 'trench art', became venerated for its associations with the experiences of a deceased loved one, or cherished mementoes of the war, or even decorative furniture. The style of these objects, usually refashioned from spent ammunition or shell cases was also copied on a wider scale and found a commercial value for post-war pilgrims and even modern-day battlefield tourists. Perhaps the main value of the work of Saunders has been in commanding attention to the archaeological study of the battlefields, an area of concern previously unknown to most British archaeologists. Certainly, from his work assessing the current state of the archaeology of the Western Front, the study of the materials and landscapes of the battlefields has come to both academic and public prominence (see Saunders 2002a).

The academic recognition of the archaeological study of the battlefields began a little earlier with the publication of the *Historial de la Grand Guerre*. Pérrone, of a journal featuring the debates and development of Great War archaeology (Schnapp 1998). Although dominated by the application of

archaeology to answer the specific areas thought relevant by historians, the journal posed the question as to whether an archaeology study of the Great War would be possible. Alongside this issue were separate issues concerning what form an archaeology of the battlefields should actually take, and although examined less rigorously, what impact archaeological analysis would have on the way in which the war is remembered. To answer these various questions the publication focused on one excavation in particular, that at Saint-Rémy-la-Calonne (Schnapp 1998, 23).

Saint-Rémy-la-Calonne

The archaeological study of the Western Front can be thought of as originating and undoubtedly receiving prominence from the excavation at Saint-Rémy-la-Calonne of a mass grave in 1991 (Desfossés 1998, 38). The site has also provided a test-case for studying the effect on memory that archaeology will have, as the discipline begins to study the Western Front (Boura 2000, 29; Hill and Cowley 1993, 98). The excavation attracted widespread public interest as the grave contained the remains of the well-known writer Henri-Alban Fournier, known as Alain Fournier, author of *Les Grand Meaulnes*. The notoriety of the author and the mystery which surrounded his death fuelled the public and press interest in the project (Adam 1998, 31). The mass grave was uncovered only after fifteen years of research by individuals and enthusiasts studying Fournier's work (Boura 1997, 29). This study located official documents relating to the disappearance of Fournier and his reservist regiment on the 22nd of September 1914 (Boura 1998, 75). These documents placed Fournier's 288th Infantry Regiment specifically in a small area of woodland southeast of Verdun above the Meuse River (Hill and Cowley 1993, 98). The 288th Infantry Regiment were believed to have gone into action during the initial advance of the German forces as they threatened to overrun the French fort at Verdun (Boura 1997, 29). Somewhere between the trees, the platoon apparently blundered into a German ambush, where a survivor last saw Fournier dashing forward as he fired his officer's revolver (Hill and Cowley 1993, 99). Application to survey the area was initially refused by the French authorities, as the excavation of military personal

is forbidden by a French law, dating back to the Great War, which was designed to prevent families searching the battlefields for the remains of loved ones (Boura 1997, 29). After further archival research and fieldwalking, which led to the discovery of a large mound in the woodland, permission was given to conduct initial archaeological surveys (Hill and Cowley 1993, 98-99). When these surveys retrieved scraps of clothing and a leather boot, the official archaeological service was contracted to carry out excavations on the mound (Boura 1997, 29; Adam 1998, 29) (Fig.17).

A few days after the preliminary investigations of the site, a pit measuring approximately 5m by 2m was found containing the bodies of the French soldiers who died in 1914 (Adam 1998, 32; Boura 2000, 29). The bodies had been placed in two rows of ten bodies, which had been laid head-to-foot, with the twenty-first body placed in the middle, across five of the others (Hill and Cowley 1993, 99). The status of the soldiers as reservists was confirmed by the presence of certain equipment only used in 1914 and recovered from the graves; in particular the brass buttons decorated with flaming grenades, and the nails used in the boot soles which had been changed the following year (Hill and Cowley 1993, 99; Boura 1997, 16). The excavation also produced a number of personal items belonging to the soldiers, such as mirrors, pencils, cigarette lighters, and coins which were wrapped in paper to prevent them making noise in their pockets (Boura 1997, 16; Adam 1998, 32). Some of the soldiers also possessed small religious medallions, and the fabric of uniforms and knitted underclothes were also recovered (Boura 1997, 16). It appeared that the bodies were not buried randomly, but were buried according to hierarchy. Excavations revealed that the Captain was the first to be buried at one end of the pit, followed by the Lieutenant, the Second Lieutenant then officers and the other ranks (Adam 1999, 32). The project focussed upon the analysis of the human remains, to identify Fournier and the soldiers, and to assess their general health (Adam 1998, 35). The post-excavation analysis revealed the prevalence of misshapen or missing teeth, and that the average height of the officers, who were selected from the bourgeoisie, was over five inches taller than the other ranks (Hill and Cowley 1993, 99). Identification of the soldiers was obtained through documents both personal and official relating to the men's stature, physical condition or medical problems (Adam 1999, 33). The remains were reburied, and the soldiers'

personal possessions were returned where possible to the families of the soldiers (Boura 1998, 82-83; 2000, 29).



Fig.17: Excavation at Saint-Rémy (Fabiansson, 2005)

Articles emerged in the Parisian press during the excavation, though no official statement was given by the excavating team, which sparked a surge of public interest in the project, necessitating a security gate around the perimeter of the woods and guards to be kept at the site to prevent looters (Adam 1998, 30-31). This interest entailed that archaeologists working on the site began to examine the consequences of their work. By excavating the grave the archaeologists opened a new field of research into the memory of the Great War, emphasising how archaeology and its particular research objectives can shape and alter memory (Boura 2000, 29). The excavation at Saint-Remy provided an opportunity, for the first time, of placing the archaeological study of the conflict in relation both to the public and to historian's study of the war. There were also questions raised of the motivations behind the study the mass grave, which was in reality only investigated for its association with Fournier; there was therefore a concern that the archaeological study of the Great War and the discipline itself may have been devalued for the sake of the sensational finds which were bound to draw a great deal of attention (Boura 2000, 29).

The excavation of the burial site impacted upon the way the war was remembered, and challenged historical records and family memories; it also affected the national memory and its image of the 1914 volunteers who fought to protect the nation (Boura 2000, 30-31). The impact of the actual image of the mass grave was also a powerful factor in this process (Boura 1997, 16). The study was for instance able to dispel the widely-held belief that Fournier had been executed by the German soldiers, analysis of the remains showed that the

men had died from wounds sustained in combat. Six men did however have single bullet wounds to the head, although these may have been mercy shots, as their skeletons showed signs of sustaining other injuries (Krumeich 1998, 85-87). It is this excavation of the human remains of the conflict, which provided part of a new dimension to the archaeological study of the Western Front. The remains provide tangible evidence of the violence experienced by the soldiers on the battlefield (Duday 1998, 94-95). The archaeological excavation of the mass grave, both the human remains and the material, returns us to the drama of the war, as it creates a vivid and intimate perception of the human reality of the war by the study of these remains (Boura 1997, 16; 2000, 31). Importantly the excavation also provides a way in which the war could be remembered apart from historical documents, memorials or veteran's testimonies, a distinct archaeological memory of the war.

Alternative Agendas

The archaeological study of the Western Front is certainly growing in prominence (de Meyer and Pype 2004, 22). Though due to its nascent state, archaeological projects have yet to incorporate considerations of how interpretations will impact on the way in which the Western Front is remembered. Limited approaches to the archaeology of the Western Front, such as that concentrating on the development of the trench system, which have dominated research agendas, compound this problem. Archaeology in these studies is reduced to classification rather than interpretation, as the originality of archaeological evidence and an 'archaeological perspective' is unexamined. Such approaches are inevitably narrow in scope as knowledge of artefacts, military procedures, tactics and equipment without consideration of the soldiers' experiences in the war landscape, cannot produce a dynamic understanding of this historical situation (after Dobres 2000, 143). To restrict archaeology to the classification of the physical, architectural and material remains of the Western Front, at the expense of the soldiers themselves, is to compromise the archaeological evidence, and deny the individuality of those who lived and fought within this landscape. The archaeology of the Western Front should

therefore be considered more than ‘an examination of food cans and cartridges, as archaeology can interpret what the war was like for the soldiers’ (Brown pers. comm. March 2004).

Such an approach has already begun to be put in place at the ‘Ocean Villas’ site, where the analysis of the stratigraphy of the trench system has been offered as a way in which archaeology provides a unique perspective on the war. Indeed, it is through the careful examination of the transformations in geological stratigraphy, that Price (2004, 183) contends that the project can assess, ‘what the soldiers were doing, how they were doing it, and where they were doing it.’ Seven phases have been identified in this stratigraphic study, spanning the initial construction, possibly undertaken by French troops, to the final levelling and clearing of the site after the war (OVPW, 2005) (Fig.18).

- Phase A. Original (French 1914?) excavation of trench. Includes drainage channel.
- Phase B. Churned up matrix around brick floor subsequent to construction. Covered by clean run off probably following cleaning back of trench sides. Covered by final use run off.
- Phase C. Debris introduced into trench during a single burst of activity. Possibly deliberate infill.
- Phase D. Possible shallow re-cut. Surface of churned material probably indicates short period of activity/occupation. No apparent sedimentation. Single fired .303 round on occupation surface. (1918?)
- Phase E: Final deliberate infill of trench with building debris from destruction of original buildings. Sequence in trench (wall debris below roof debris) reverses probable sequence on ground (roof debris under wall debris as roof blown off followed by destruction of walls). Final mixed soil layer may represent content of sandbags or other earth used to protect roof of cellar and shovelled off last.
- Phase F: Layer of garden soil spread across site in first phase of civilian reoccupation.
- Phase G: Upcast spoil produced during modern uncontrolled excavation of site.



Fig.18: Trench section at Auchonvillers (OVPW, 2005)

It has been argued, however, by Dunnel (1992; Dunnel and Dancey 1983) that the analysis of stratigraphy from a single site, let alone a single stratigraphic section such as this, can never provide more than a limited and localised view of the far wider human activity which occurs across a landscape (Dunnel 1992, 29). Such a wider landscape approach has yet to be applied to the sites on the Western Front, although Ocean Villas does aim in future to study the impact of the war across the spectrum, including the British trenches, the village of Auchonvillers and the German positions (Price pers. comm. April 2004). The interpretation of this stratigraphic section at Ocean Villas does also tend towards a particular way of viewing and interpreting the site (after Dunnel 1992). As the stratigraphic units are taken as evidence of the wider processes in operation at the site, the interpretation of the site is geared towards an assessment of how the site was built up (Harris 1977; 1989), rather than the situation and conditions in which the deposit is formed (Carver 1990). This relies on the traditional archaeological endeavour to establish a fixed chronological ordering of events. A significant feature of this approach is the implicit understanding that once the archaeologist places events in time then this will gain a more complete understanding, by logically fitting events and processes together and organising them into a coherent classificatory sequence (after McGlade and Van der Leeuw 1997, 4). Such an approach lacks a consideration of the contemporaneous human activities and events which created these phases, and places a specific 'object character' on

the stratigraphic phases, rather than viewing them as part of the human actions which created the site (see Adams and Valdez 1997, 235; Collis 2001a, 65). Although single specific finds such as the refashioned Lebel bullet, do give an indication of the activities in the trenches which created a sense of place, identity and understanding, the stratigraphic analyses employed in the Ocean Villas site is unable to utilise this; it remains too fixed, too non-mobile, and in effect non-temporal, as the sections form homogenous moments, only given value by virtue of their inclusion within the framework (after Lucas 2001, 158-168; see Dannel 1992, 33). This interpretation is in stark contrast to the objectives of what can be termed 'postprocessual landscape archaeology.' This movement, which although encompassing a variety of approaches, initially developed from a concern to move away from limited, individual excavations, to observe how sites across a landscape were experienced (Thomas 1993a, 23; Ashmore and Knapp 1999, 3; Layton and Ucko 1999, 16).

By utilising the developments made within landscape archaeology by Tilley (1994; 2004), Thomas (1993a; 2001), Gosden (1994) and Bender (1993; 1998), a new approach to the study of the battlefields can be created (after Carman 1997). These archaeological studies have placed at the forefront of their analyses the examination of 'a sense of place', a study of how individuals in the past operated and formed a being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962). 'Place' has become a topic of concern within anthropology, human geography as well as archaeology over the last two decades; although studies which invoke 'place' in their analyses are diverse, a 'sense of place' can be loosely described as how human involvement with the world brings about an attachment to a particular area, an evocative response to a specific area or space (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976; Buttimer 1980). In this manner place becomes an essential aspect in this study of an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front, as it is maintained that 'to be embodied is to be emplaced' (Casey 1996). Following the examples of phenomenological landscape analysis this new approach to the battlefields can begin to examine how soldiers in the trenches and no man's land experienced their surroundings of both the material of war and the battlefield landscape, how they came to an understanding in this hostile landscape (after Tilley 1994, 10). In effect, this is to provide an answer to the question which has haunted those studying the war since the Armistice, and remains the key in the

consideration of the memory of the Western Front. It is also a question of especial pertinence as the few remaining veterans pass on: 'what was it like?' (Ward 2004). Such a study will also further the development of a multidisciplinary agenda (Schnapp 1998; Saunders 2004), as a study of place incorporates not only the corporeal sensations of the agent's immediate physical and material surroundings, but also the emotions felt as they encounter these contexts (after Relph 1976). It is through this study that this project, as an active production of the past, an intellectual and cultural labour, acts to construct memory for society (Shanks and Tilley 1987a; Shanks and McGuire 1996; Hamilakis 1999). Such an approach has enormous resonance, not only contributing to the new approach in Great War studies, but through this perspective archaeology acts as a form of remembrance.

Chapter Three

The Memory of the Western Front

The fascination of the Western Front in Britain is undeniably derived from the fact that the majority of British troops served in this theatre of war, that Britain had never before witnessed such a mobilisation of civilians, and the scale of fatalities was unprecedented in British military history (Corrigan 2003, 54). It is these factors which have constituted a ‘dense and impenetrable insular mythology’ concerning the battlefields, and has perhaps ensured that the British sections of the Western Front are seen not just as the only battlefield, but as the whole war; consequently, the front is often viewed as ‘a private British sorrow’ (Terraine 1980, 171). Whilst this popular memory has been challenged by military historians, it is important to maintain that the Western Front has never been preserved as a static, unalterable myth or memory (Braybon 2003, 5). Military historians themselves cannot claim to possess an inalienable right to examine the Western Front, or access to the ‘truth’ of the war, as the sole means of remembering the conflict (Leed 1979, ix). The discipline itself is composed and constructed, whilst evidence is selected and filtered to be incorporated within narratives, as military historians choose their particular areas of concern (Collingwood 1989, 110). Over the last ninety years military history has been accompanied and challenged by other forms of historical discourse, namely oral history, family history and micro-history, as well as literary and cultural studies which have all examined the battlefields from their own methodological and theoretical lenses (Winter 1998). Studied and remembered from a variety of perspectives the Western Front therefore represents a site of memory, which has constantly been under a process of construction and reconstruction since the Armistice (Korte 2001, 121).

A number of scholars from a variety of disciplines have examined the memory of the conflict through a diverse array of forms (see Fussell 1975; Winter 1995; Mosse 1990; Eksteins 1989; Hynes 1991; Bessel 1988; Cooper 2003; Vance 1998; Johnson 2003; Todman 2005; Watson 2004; Leese 1997). Some of these studies have in a large part been inspired by the work of the

literary scholar Fussell (1975), who considered that the Great War brought with it irreconcilable alterations within Western society, heralding an ‘ironic age’, and the arrival of modernism. Although Fussell’s position is largely reiterated in the later studies by Hynes (1991) and Eksteins (1989), it is strongly refuted by Winter (1992; 1995), who rather than observing the arrival of a ironic perspective, emphasises how traditional, romantic and sentimental representations of the war were used to overcome the grief of the bereaved and to understand the war within societies (see Lloyd 1998; Gregory 1994; King 1998). These continuing debates concerning the memory of the conflict, have been joined in recent years by historians’ criticisms of the ‘myths’ of the Western Front, which still colour the popular memory of the conflict in Britain (see Corrigan 2003; Badsey 2001). This memory of the Western Front can be described as shaped by images of the blasted trenches, mud, futility, pity, waste and disillusioned soldiers fighting in desolated landscapes commanded by an incompetent officer class. These views have been challenged in recent years by a growing number of military historians who have attempted a revision of the performance of the British army and their generals, challenging this popular memory of the war (Bond 1991, 1-11; 1999a, vii; 2002, 75-101; Beckett 1985, 3; 2001, 464; Sheffield 2002, 9-12; Corrigan 2003, 18-19; Palazzo 2000, 3; Travers 1982, 523-544; 2003, xvii-xviii; Griffith 1994, ix-xii; 1996, xi-xv; Todman and Sheffield 2004, 2-3). However by their own admissions these authors have yet to make any impact on revising the popular public memory of the Western Front (see Beckett 2001, 464; Todman and Sheffield 2004, 3), the sentiments of which are best encapsulated in Porter’s (1983, 40) poem ‘*Somme and Flanders.*’

**‘One image haunts us who have read of death
In Auschwitz in our time – it is just light,
Shivering men breathing rum crouch beneath
The sandbag parapet – left to right.
The Line goes up and over the top,
Serious in gas masks, bayonet fixed,
Slowly forward – the swearing shells have stopped –
Somewhere ahead of them stop-watch ticks.’**

‘Their world was made of nerves and mud.
Reading about it now shocks me – Haig
Gets transfusions of their blood.’

This popular memory of the Western Front in Britain is even reiterated with the very language that we use (see Winter 2004; McCrum, 2002); the legacy in our language in expressions, metaphors and similes have shaped and continue to shape our memory of the Western Front (after Schudson 1992, 154). Frequent usage of terms such as ‘going over the top’, describing argumentative positions as ‘entrenched’, or respective parties being ‘in the trenches’, speaking of ‘no man’s land’ as a dangerous and threatening area, using the ‘Somme’ or ‘Passchendaele’ to describe desolated areas, futile wastes, or tragic encounters, further shape and define the popular memory of the Western Front as one of horror, pity, and pointless attrition (Saunders 2001, 37; Sheffield 2002, 5). Historians have placed the reasons for these popular perceptions of the battlefields on this media representation, citing their influence as shaping the popular cultural memory of the Western Front in Britain (see Bond 2002; Sheffield 2002; Paris 1999a; Badsey 2001; 2002). This assumption however rests on the insulting, implicit and often explicit suggestion that individuals are ‘passive dupes’, accepting and vapidly consuming particular memories of the Western Front because they are ‘easier’ to grasp (after Hall 1981, 232). Such a diagnosis is inadequate and takes a complacent response to the power this popular memory holds over contemporary society (Keegan 1999, 7). As such the memory of the Western Front in Britain should not be considered as ‘consumed’ by the public, but rather chosen for specific reasons (after Corradi 1984, 295). ‘In dealing with the figures of national myth, one is confronted not by realities which became fictions, but rather by fictions which by dint of their popularity, became realities in their own right’ (Samuel 1989a, xxvii). Whilst this popular memory can be observed to be shaped by particular themes and concepts, representing Marx’s (1963, 16) observation that histories are made by individuals, but not under the circumstances of their choosing; what remains significant is the manner in which individuals have appropriated these cultural materials to fashion their own memories and histories. This ‘selection’ remains unaddressed within the context of the memory of the Western Front in Britain, with military

historians quick to dismiss the popular memory as regrettable ‘myths.’ Samuel and Thompson (1990, 8) have indeed highlighted how historians may seek to undermine popular memory without considering the ‘selection, ordering and simplifying’ which takes place in the production of the popular perceptions of the past (de Certeau 1984, 18; Samuel 1989a, xxix). Although studies following Hobsbawm (1983) have sought to show the historical development of the memory of the battlefields in Britain, such an approach does not explain why this memory is chosen, the reasons behind its appeal and its development by those who use it (after Samuel 1989a, xxix). Therefore, what becomes of interest for this project therefore, examining the role of archaeology in the memory of the battlefields, is the diverse means by which this memory is constituted, what particular areas it focuses upon and what results, politically, culturally and socially from this popular memory of the Western Front (after Popular Memory Group 1983, 205). This perspective has yet to be fully examined, but such an investigation is becoming increasingly important as the centenary anniversaries approach and the few remaining veterans pass away. This discussion is also taking place at a time when further British-European integration remains a possibility, and devolution of power to Scotland and Wales have begun to erode former well-established political boundaries and identities (see Nairn 1977; Gamble 2003).

The Memorial Landscape

The monuments of the Western Front of all nations have drawn much scholarly attention in recent years (Winter 1995; Lloyd 1998; Mosse 1990; Bushaway 1992; Heffernan 1995). These studies have centred upon two themes in particular: firstly, the grief and trauma of the bereaved, and secondly, the political importance and agenda of the memorial landscape (Goebel 2004). For the purposes of this study rather than viewing these as two separate objects of study, the memorial landscape will be considered as a cultural form, representing both individual and official collective ways of remembering the war (after Williams 1961, 44; Lefebvre 2003, 19). By utilising concepts derived from the archaeological study of Neolithic monuments and landscapes (see Tilley 1994;

Thomas 1993a; Edmonds 1999; Bradley 1998b; Bender 1993; 1998), the recursive relationship between the official meanings of the monuments and cemeteries of the Western Front, with the meanings and values attached to the sites by the bereaved in the immediate aftermath of the war, as well as subsequent generations can be studied (after Bender 1993, 3; 1998, 12). This objective will also be aided by the wide variety of literature available within historical discourses, as the study of monuments and their role in the study of the control, appropriation and dissemination of popular memory is a well-established field of study (see Carrier 2005; Nelson and Olin 2003; Michalski 1998; Sturken 1991; Savage 1997; Dovey 1999). Young's (1986; 1993; 1994; 2000) work in particular has served to illustrate how monuments should be studied critically, both in their construction and consumption and not merely assumed to be inactive 'idols of remembrance.' Young demonstrates how the continuing public response to architectural forms also impacts on the interpretation and remembrance of the past. Drawing on these studies the memorial landscape of the Western Front is considered in this study to represent a dialogue of contesting narratives, between official attempts to create specific memories and images, and individual attempts to attribute their own ideas and stories onto this space (after Lefebvre 1991, 224).

The construction of the monuments and cemeteries for the soldiers of the Great War was historically unprecedented for British military dead; soldiers had been dumped in mass graves at Waterloo and the Crimea (Mosse 1990, 46). The realities of recruiting and conscripting a civilian army and the unprecedented number of fatalities entailed that the British government was now considered by large sections of the public to be answerable, and almost duty-bound to bear the responsibility that the war dead would not be unceremoniously disposed of and forgotten (Cannadine 1981, 187). The origins of the Imperial War Graves Commission, which was to eventually come to deal with this difficult area, has been traced to the British Red Cross Society Mobile Unit founded by Fabian Ware in 1914, which operated to locate, mark and register graves, and to help find missing bodies along the battlezones of the Western Front (Longworth 1982). Ware was undoubtedly the dynamism behind this project, firstly persuading the British army of the importance of tending to the dead, and later convincing the British government of the work which was needed as an

appropriate commemoration (Longworth 1982, 2-5). The British government indeed granted Ware and his reburial unit official status in 1915, entrusting it with the responsibility of constructing cemeteries as well as ascertaining the location and reburial of soldiers' remains (Beckett 2001, 432). Undertaking these tasks, Ware's organisation underwent several name changes until it emerged by Royal Charter as the Imperial War Graves Commission in May 1917 (IWGC 1919-1920, 5). This institutionalisation signalled by the Royal Charter marked the beginning of the IWGC's role in shaping the memory of the Western Front through the forms chosen for commemorating the war dead. Indeed, soon after assuming its role as the official body for the burial of British and Commonwealth soldiers, Ware began negotiations with the French and Belgian authorities, which eventually led to both governments granting permission for the granting of land to Britain in perpetuity, for the construction of cemeteries for the British and Commonwealth dead (Ware 1917, 1; Longworth 1982, 11; Heffernan 1995, 296).

In considering the form of post-war commemoration Ware wanted to reflect what he sensed as the democratic mood in the army, and thereby instigated one of the most controversial policies of the IWGC, forbidding the repatriation of bodies or the erection of personal memorials (Longworth 1982, 14). This decision certainly caused distress amongst the families of the bereaved. W.G. Thompson (CWGC: 1294/3) wrote to the IWGC on the 25th of October 1919, regarding the remains of his son who was killed in action, stating his 'wish to bring his remains home to England to be placed in my family grave so should be glad if you would kindly advise me of the necessary steps.' Such requests were met with a firm reiteration of the Commission's policy on reburial, but such a position could easily lead to anger. On the 20th of August 1919, William Dawson (CWGC: 1294/3) wrote to the IWGC; 'I am afraid there is going to be great and grave trouble over this question unless your commission, instead of thwarting, endeavour to assist me to carry out my son's expressed wish – And there must be hundreds of similar cases.' The IWGC policy was also derived from a fear of a profusion of memorials of questionable taste. 'It is clearly undesirable to allow free scope for the effusions of the mortuary mason, the sentimental versifier or the crank' (Kenyon 1918, 9). Frederick Kenyon of the British Museum was also asked to contribute to the ongoing discussions regarding the future design and layout of the cemeteries. Kenyon took it upon

himself to ensure that the cemeteries would not resemble an unordered collection of sentimental memorials of varying quality, but would be governed by principles of 'fine taste' (Longworth 1982, 40). Kenyon (CWGC: 18) wrote in January 1918 apologising for the impossibility of accepting a personal design for a headstone; 'the cemeteries would be collections of individual memorials, not symbols of the common life, the common death, the common sacrifice. The idea of these corporate memorials...seems to me a fine one, and the one which is appropriate for the cemeteries in France.' The IWGC invited the notable architects, Herbert Baker, Edwin Lutyens and Reginald Blomfield to forward designs for the cemeteries, with the brief that they should reflect the common sacrifice of the soldier, and importantly for Ware as an arch-imperialist, the dedication to Britain and the Empire which their deaths represented (Longworth 1982, 24; Heffernan 1995, 297; Morris 1997, 419). Three principles were formulated to guide the architectural design. Firstly, it was decided that the memorials should be permanent; secondly that the headstones should be uniform, and finally that no distinction should be made from military or civil rank (Ware 1937, 28-30) (Fig.19).



Fig.19: Headstone of an unknown soldier (Photograph by author)

As Laquer (1994, 153) has suggested, with the creation of these cemeteries the IWGC placed upon the former battlefields and behind the front lines, '*lieux de mémoire*' designed to create and evoke a specific memory of the

war (after Nora 1989). These sites were intended 'to stop time, to block the work of forgetting, to establish a state of things, to immortalise death, to materialise the immaterial' (Nora 1989, 19). As narratives of memory for the war, they also formed 'enclosures of national identity and grief', as the cemeteries were powerfully symbolic spaces of Britain and Empire (Morris 1997, 411). The work of constructing the cemeteries themselves represented a monumental effort (Morris 1997, 415). By 1928 some 550,000 headstones were constructed in Britain and shipped to France and Belgium, 63 miles of hedges were planted in addition to the construction of stone walls surrounding the cemeteries, and over five hundred acres were sown to produce the verdant turf covering the cemeteries, attempting to evoke ideas of English lawns (The Times 1928, 34). The cemeteries were to be based upon a general plan which included three repeated forms, the rows of identical headstones, and the monumental architecture of Blomfield's Cross of Sacrifice and Lutyens's Stone of Remembrance (Kipling 1919, 12) (Fig.20). This repetitive symbolic language with its recurring images and ideas evoked a particular narrative and memory of the war, concentrating on themes of sacrifice, endeavour, Britain and the Empire (Bushaway 1992, 136-137). The cemeteries were to be 'a memorial of those lost in the war such as never had been dreamt of before', providing an 'expression of the idea of sacrifice and heroic death for a great cause' (Blomfield 1932, 176). In a letter dated the 3rd of January 1918, Kenyon (CWGC: 18) wrote to the IWGC, stating 'the cemetery will have the appearance of a small park or garden', with, 'rows of headstones of uniform height and width.' It was these headstones which were to cause great controversy, despite the simple design of the identical, plain Portland stones (2'6" by 1'3") (The Times 1928, 21). This design raised questions in Parliament concerning the absence of the Cross on the headstones as some leading churchmen and politicians wanted the war to be remembered as a Christian sacrifice (see Churchill 1974, 2993). This appeal eventually succeeded, ensuring that the Cross would always feature on the headstones unless the soldier was known to belong to another faith (Heffernan 1995, 300). Families were also given the opportunity to place upon the individual headstone their own choice of inscription, providing it was believed appropriate by the IWGC (Heffernan 1995, 302). This provided an opportunity to place often sentimental but also occasionally quite barbed comments on the war, an alternative memory of the

war on the Western Front; 'School War Death' is inscribed on a headstone at Cambrai, and, 'Sacrificed to the Fallacy that war can end all war', on a subaltern's headstone at Tyne Cot (Holmes 2005, 629). Associated with the debates regarding the headstones, the IWGC were also faced with the tremendous task of providing adequate commemoration for the remains of soldiers who could not be identified (Heffernan 1995, 302). When official systematic efforts to find bodies had ceased in 1921, the unidentifiable remains of 204,650 soldiers had been located and reburied (Laquer 1994, 153). The headstones over these remains were to be the same style, but an inscription chosen by Kipling would be carved onto them accompanied by a simple cross. The inscription was to read, 'A soldier of the Great War Known unto God' (Ware 1937, 31).



Fig.20: Cross of Sacrifice (Photograph by author)

This representation of sacrifice and dedication to the Empire was firmly embedded in the monumental architecture of Lutyens and Blomfield commissioned to be erected in the cemeteries (Longworth 1982, 127; Ware 1937, 30). These designs selected by the IWGC reflected both the desire to avoid popular sentimentality and romanticism, and to demonstrate the glory of those who had died (Heffernan 1995, 300). Lutyens and Blomfield chose simple

classical and medieval designs in which to express these sentiments (Winter 1995, 106-107). The Stone of Remembrance, was imagined by Lutyens (CWGC: 18) as a 'great stone of fine proportions, twelve feet in length, lying raised upon three steps.' After much consideration the Stone was inscribed with a passage from Ecclesiasticus, chosen by Kipling, 'Their Name Liveth for Evermore' (Longworth 1982, 36). Although Luytens had intended the Stone of Remembrance to be non-denominational, it was chosen for its 'altar-like' form, which was thought appropriate by the Commission, attempting to maintain the idea of sacrifice (The Times 1928, 21-22). The design did not meet with universal acceptance however, as revealed by Baker's (CWGC: 18) letter to Ware regarding the design; 'An altar must surely be considered a pagan symbol by many Christian communities...And would it not symbolise vicarious rather than self-sacrifice, the sacrifice of the living and not the dead.' Blomfield avoided such criticism in his design of the Cross of Sacrifice relying on late nineteenth century medievalism to avoid accusations of paganism or sentimentality with his design, a large stone cross with an inverted bronze sword at its centre (Blomfield 1932, 179). Together this architectural scheme was chosen for the cemeteries to convey the concepts of nobility, sacrifice and honour for the war dead and their dedication to Britain and to the Empire. So, as Lutyens (CWGC: 18) stated, 'all men in all times may read and know the reason why these stones are so placed throughout France.'

Winter (1995, 82) has stated that in the post-war period, during the construction of this memorial landscape on the Western Front, 'each nation developed its own language of commemoration.' The British and Commonwealth cemeteries do reflect this suggestion, as through the communication of a specific architectural narrative they form a particular way of remembering the war on the Western Front (after Bushaway 1992, 136-138). Most notably the IWGC self-consciously planned the cemeteries in order to evoke Brooke's (1943, 106) now immortal patriotic verse;

'If I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England...'



Fig.21: Ramparts Cemetery, Ieper (Photograph by author)

This specific image was used to create a memory of the war on the Western Front as a righteous endeavour for England, made manifest with the recreation of an English garden of verdant turf and neatly trimmed rows of flower beds within the cemeteries on the former battlefields (Morris 1997, 411; Lloyd 1998, 124) (Fig.21). This evocation of England was not considered incongruous, despite members of the British Army being drawn from all over the Empire. It was considered only right that the notion of England as the 'home nation' was demonstrated in the cemeteries and the deaths of the soldiers were portrayed as selfless devotion to the Empire (Lloyd 1998, 124; Morris 1997, 424). The memorial landscape with this stress on Imperial devotion thereby subsumed the identities of the Commonwealth armies into the overarching schemes of remembrance designated for the cemeteries and memorials (Bushaway 1992). Although Australia at Villers Bretonneaux, New Zealand at Mesen (Messines), South Africa at Delville Wood, Canada at Vimy Ridge and St Juliaan, and India at Neuve Chapelle all possessed their own national monuments on the Western Front, it was to the IWGC's scheme which was adhered to (after Laquer 1994, 158). The Huts Cemetery in Dickebusch, Belgium, reflects this; the cemetery with its Cross of Sacrifice and Stone of Remembrance, and its overall scheme designed by Luytens, contains the graves of eight-hundred and sixteen soldiers from the United Kingdom, two-hundred and forty-two from Australia, nineteen from New Zealand, five from Canada, four from South Africa, one from

India, and one from the British West Indies. Within the cemetery walls are also the remains of six soldiers of unknown nationality, and six German prisoners (IWGC 1924, 5).

This stance was also present in the design of the monuments to the missing, which were planned initially through a Government sponsored, National Battlefield Memorial Committee organised in 1919, though the authority to erect monuments was eventually passed to the IWGC (Ware 1937, 32). It was proposed that 'the missing' should be commemorated by a memorial closest to where they were thought to have died, for the British army this meant monuments in the areas around Ieper and the Somme (Kipling 1919, 12). Ieper was considered to be a special case, as the intensive fighting around the city over four years meant that for many it represented the graveyard for hundreds and thousands of British war dead (Longworth 1982, 86). By June 1921 it was decided that a monument on the city walls, where the British and Commonwealth soldiers could be commemorated, would be appropriate, and Blomfield was commissioned to undertake the work (Longworth 1982, 86-90). Ware had already planned this monument as an expression of sacrifice to the Empire, persuading the Australian, Indian and Canadian authorities to abandon their own plans for individual monuments and to allow the names of their own missing soldiers to be inscribed on the Ieper monument (see Ware 1937, 36). Blomfield (1932, 189) would later describe it as 'a symbol of the latent strength and heroism of our race.' The Menin Gate forms the chief memorial to the missing of the British and Commonwealth armies; constructed in the form of an arch or gateway it has, inscribed on the inside walls of the monument, the names of 54,896 soldiers (Longworth 1982, 96; Ware 1937, 36) (Figs. 22 and 23). Inaugurated in 1927, it bears the epitaph 'To the armies of the British Empire who stood here from 1914 to 1918 and to those of their dead who have no known grave'. Equal in importance and stature to the Menin Gate, is Lutyens's monument on the Somme (Longworth 1982, 96-101). The Thiepval monument, takes the form of a succession of red brick and stone arches, with the names of 73,367 soldiers commemorated from Britain and the Commonwealth (Ware 1937, 56-57). Lutyens again relied on geometrical principles to provide 'a language of remembrance' through the monumental form (Winter 1995, 105). **Finally inaugurated** in August 1932, some felt that Lutyens's monument at

Thiepval 'had created a new Empire within and without the British Empire; an Empire of the Silent Dead' (Longworth 1982, 130). The Thiepval monument was amongst the last phases of the construction of the memorial landscape, by the late 1930s across France and Belgium the IWGC had overseen the construction of 970 cemeteries and eighteen monuments to the missing (Ware 1937, 57). Churchill (1974, 2994) remarked in a speech in 1920 that 'even if our language, our institutions, and our Empire all have faded from the memory of man, these great stones will still preserve the memory in the remote past and will undoubtedly excite the wonder and reverence of a future age.' The memorial landscape remains a singular expression, a narrative of memory emphasising a particular version of the war on the Western Front.



Fig.22: Menin Gate (Photograph by author)



Fig.23: Menin Gate (Photograph by author)

Scholars such as Heffernan (1995) and Bushaway (1992) have regarded this memorial landscape as a fixed entity, representing the cultural domination by an elite, to create a particular way of remembering the war. In opposition to these theories, this study will show how the cemeteries and monuments have shifted in meaning from their construction to the present day, as subsequent generations and changing perceptions have acted to interpret these sites for themselves (see de Certeau 1984, 18). Although framed within the narratives, and forms of memory provided by the original imperial and nationalistic design of the cemeteries and monuments, issues of bereavement, politics and identity are involved in a process whereby individuals from Britain have sought to infuse this landscape with their own values. As Lloyd (1998) has highlighted, the most important manner in which this appropriation of memory took place, is the expansion of visits and tours to the battlefields by the bereaved and by the curious, which took place after the Armistice. These post-war pilgrimages were not passive trips, they facilitated the generation of narratives of memory concerning the Western Front. Some of these narratives were highly conservative reflecting official forms of commemoration, whilst others expressed views which were not originally intended to be articulated through any of the cemeteries and memorials of the IWGC (Lloyd 1998).

It was the first visitors to the cemeteries, which were being constructed

by the IWGC, who began to associate the act of visiting the grave of a loved one, or seeing their name inscribed on a memorial to the missing, as a 'pilgrimage', and as the cemeteries and monuments as 'sacred' ground (Lloyd 1998, 21). Popular writers expressed these responses, as well as numerous guidebooks, which articulated a sentimentality which was denied in official forms of commemoration (see Graham 1921, 9). Sentimentality in this usage is not meant in a derogatory sense, but rather as an alternative means of representation (see Williams 1976, 237; 1977, 166). The narratives used to describe these sites by both the authors of battlefield guides and individuals who came to visit indicate a subtle challenge to the official IWGC design (after Mosse 1990, 126). In this manner the Ieper Salient in particular was singled out as particularly important for the British army; 'the name...stands out among all the great place names of the war, and stands as a synonym for sacrifice, bitter endurance and suffering, ultimately crowned by the laurels of victory' (Pollard 1920, 5). As Lloyd (1998, 26) has demonstrated, the death of so many soldiers in a region was considered by the visiting bereaved to have altered the land making it sacred and therefore a site of pilgrimage. The cemeteries played a key role in this process, as the evocations of an English cemetery made through their design contributed to the sense of occupying a 'sacred space' (Taylor 1928, 27). The Somme was also associated with this appropriation of meaning, frequently being described as an 'altar' (Graham 1921, 9). Taylor (1928, 54) remarked that pilgrims to Lutyens's Thiepval monument came 'to mediate upon deeds of valour and of matchless self-sacrifice.' Though expressions of popular sentimentality, they were still nevertheless influenced by the official forms of commemoration which were centred on concepts of the Empire and nation. 'The knowledge that we defeated our enemies in the Great War 1914-1918 and that our success was the outcome of intense effort throughout the British Empire may...be calculated to stir up feelings of pride within the hearts of all patriotic British people' (Pulteney 1925, 61).

It is important to maintain the value the cemeteries possessed for the visiting bereaved. Dorothea Bowen (LC) who worked in a St. Barnabus Hostel for pilgrims in Amiens during 1921, described the variety of individuals who came to the sites, and the emotional condition of the bereaved. In her letters back home, she reveals the sense of completion and fulfilment which the cemeteries

could bring to the bereaved, through their apparent solace and beauty. She describes the visit of two Welsh mothers who had both lost sons, and whose village had asked them to visit the graves of their loved ones as well, demonstrating how the cemeteries became imbued with meaning and purpose for the bereaved by providing a sense of comfort. The actions of the father of Private W. Kitchen (LC), whose son was killed in combat and buried in Aval Wood Military Cemetery, emphasises this sentiment as on his visit to his son's grave in 1927. He compiled a detailed photographic album of his son's headstone and the cemetery where he was buried. The use of the cemeteries and monuments as part of this process of emphasising sentimental attitudes towards the Western Front, as opposed to official designs, emphasises the process of appropriation of the dominant memory and the impact of individual desires on the collective memory (see Giddens 1984, 118). It is valuable in this discussion to also state that the cemeteries and monuments still angered a great many individuals, including ex-servicemen and the bereaved (Heffernan 1995, 300-302). Brittain (1940, 362) wrote, 'what a cheating and a camouflage was this combined efforts of man and nature to create the impression that war was glorious, just because its aftermath could wear an appearance of beauty and dignity when fifteen years of uneasy peace had passed over mankind.' Ware (1928) himself noticed the wider process of alteration in the manner in which the memorial landscape was used to represent the changing narratives of the memory of the Western Front. Although Ware (1928, 3) considered the landscape as a 'national heritage of the peoples of the Empire', he also foresaw the future alteration in their meaning; 'around them is steadily growing up the feeling of intimate public and individual ownership which is associated with all truly national monuments, and it is the duty of the official organisation responsible for their upkeep and maintenance to serve this public sentiment, and more and more to leave the form of its expression to develop freely and spontaneously.'

This process of the shifting memories and narratives of the Western Front as expressed using the memorial landscape has occurred since the construction of the cemeteries and monuments. It represents 'a subtle, elusive set of exchanges, a network of trades and trade-offs, a jostling of competing representations' (Greenblatt 1988, 7). These processes can be observed as early as 1922, during the King's Pilgrimage (Fox 1922). It is on this occasion that perceptions of the

cemeteries and monuments as representing nation, or Empire were officially disregarded, as the sites became representative of a desire to avoid war, considered as a lasting testament against future conflict (Ware 1937, 61). Perhaps reflecting the uncertainties of the post-war world there also emerged a desire to view the cemeteries and monuments as evidence of the human cost of war (see Graham 1921, 117). This idea certainly increased throughout the late 1920s and 1930s as political and economic instability affected the popular perceptions of the war within the British public, which fostered a tremendous desire to avoid a future conflict (Bond 2002, 27-28; Lloyd 1998, 177). The cemeteries were considered to 'tell the lingerer that the men beneath that green coverlet should be there to enjoy such influence; the tyranny of war stands all the more terribly revealed' (Blunden 1937, 20). This image of the cemeteries and memorials as examples of peace and testaments to the high price of war has endured to the present day; but was evoked particularly after the 1960s when the threat of nuclear war became apparent (Beckett 2001, 438). The 1963 Theatre Workshop production of *Oh! What a Lovely War*, used the backdrop of the cemeteries to conclude the drama, which warned of the ease and complacency with which society could slip into war, and its terrible human cost (see Theatre Workshop 1965).

The cemeteries and monuments of the memorial landscape have proved a vehicle for the creation of narratives of the war on the Western Front, both individually and collectively, for those who come as pilgrims or tourists. H.R. Stone (LC), a veteran of the Western Front would remark upon his return in 1957 that the beauty of the cemeteries was important for his recollection of the comrades who died on the front. George Coppard (2003, 145) describing his return in 1973 in his memoir, states his difficulty in relating his memories of his former comrades with the headstones, but nevertheless feeling a 'spiritual link' in the cemeteries and realising the 'futility' of war. Elliot (1964, 3) a veteran of the conflict, described his own pilgrimage fifty years after the war as the 'most evocative and emotional experience of my life.' With the threat of the Cold War erupting ever-present during the 1960s, and the memory of the Second World War still pertinent, Elliot stressed the values of freedom which the cemeteries represent, 'a visit to the Western Front brings it home beyond argument is that in a warring, troubled world, because of the lives lost we are still free, with all our

faults, to speak as we like, to live as we want to live' (Elliot 1964, 15). The cemeteries and memorials still possess the power to evoke strong emotion and a sense of individual fulfilment for the bereaved relatives. The sister of Private G. Ellis (LC) was unaware of the cemetery in which her brother had been buried, when her family had refused to discuss the matter after news of her brother's death. Her letter to the CWGC in 1985 requesting information demonstrates the necessity for the bereaved to use the memorial landscape for their own emotional needs; 'I am sure you will understand the sense of happiness and peace of mind it would give if after all those years it should transpire my brother may have a known grave or perhaps have his name inscribed on a memorial or plaque.' The sentimentality which redefined the cemeteries and monuments in the immediate post-war period can also still be observed in the contemporary guidebooks to the battlefields (see Sweeney, 1999). The areas of Picardy and Ieper are still described as 'important to the British race', and visits to the memorial landscape defined as a 'spiritual pilgrimage' (Spagnoly 1999, ix; Spagnoly and Smith 1995, ix; Stedman 1995, 127; Cave 1996, 189). Descriptions of walking upon the 'hallowed terrain' (Freeman 1999, 19; Oldham 1998, 124) of the cemeteries can still be found, as visitors are described as pilgrims come to 'pay homage on the altar of remembrance' (Freeman 1999, 98; Horsfall and Cave 1996, 108; Stedman 1997, 12). All of these responses to the memorial landscape are means by which individuals and communities in Britain have created their own narratives and memories of the Western Front, influenced certainly by the design of its original nationalistic purpose, but still distinct (after de Certeau 1984, 18) (Fig.24).

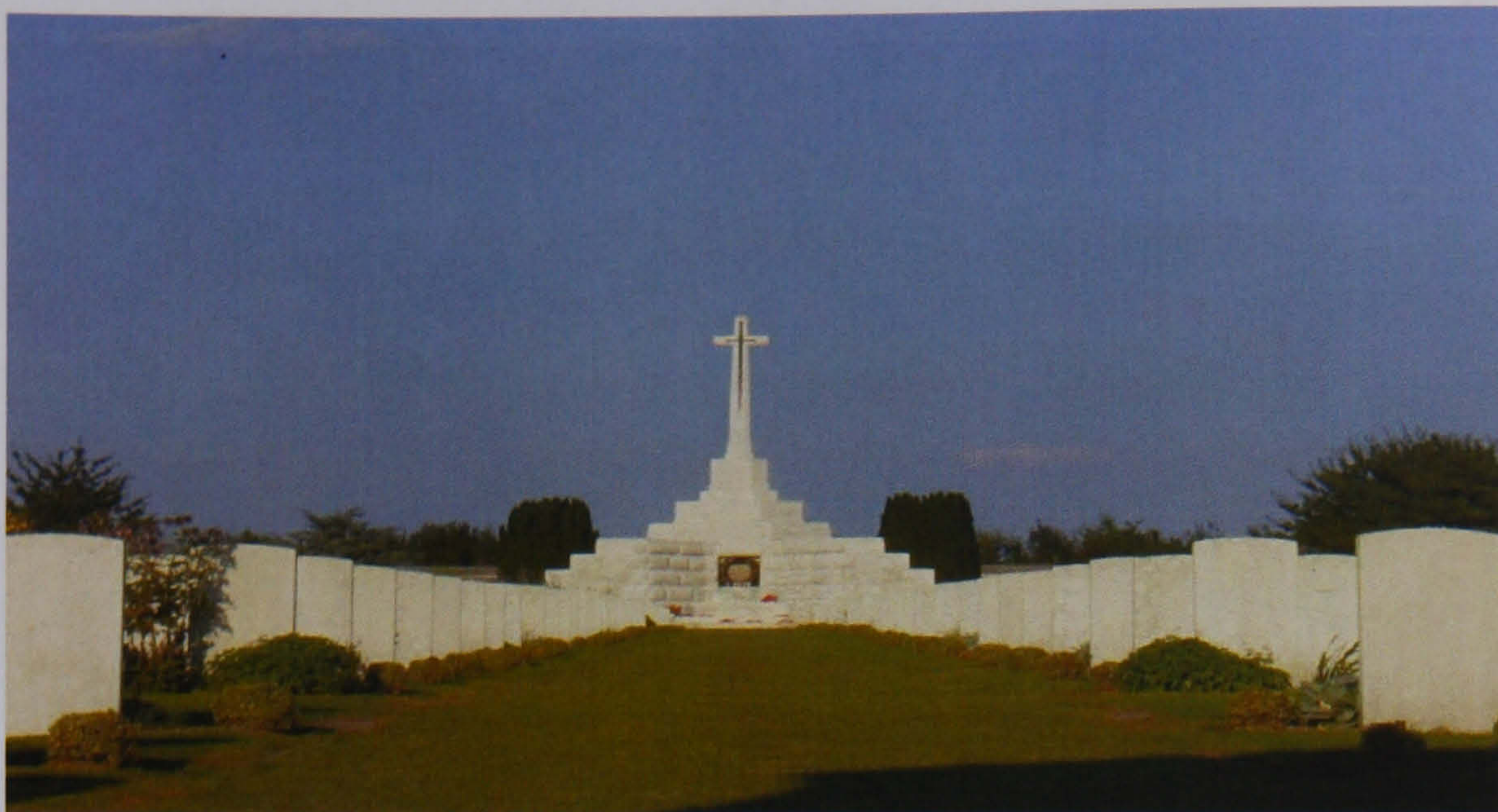


Fig.24: Tyne Cot Cemetery (firstworldwar.com, 2006)

This process is ongoing, especially as the popularity of tours to the region has increased since the fiftieth anniversaries of the Great War in the 1960s (see Skylark Tours, 2004; Holt's Tours, 2004). Detailed guides to the battlefields are published every year and the popularity of visits to the region shows no sign of abating (Coombes 1994; Holt and Holt 1996). Neither has the emotive power of the cemeteries diminished; the crowds of British schoolchildren moved to tears by visiting the cemeteries, or listening to the Last Post played at the Menin Gate testify to this (see Sweeney, 1999). But as Thorpe (2005, 34) has highlighted this act of commemoration is still influenced by the original intention of the memorial landscape, to re-iterate concepts of nation and sacrifice, perpetuating the memory of the Western Front as a British tragedy, a British sacrifice (see Sweeney, 1999). Reflecting this, the memorial landscape has also become a target for those wishing to criticise or condemn the present-day actions and policies of Britain. In April 2003, the Cross of Sacrifice at Étaples was daubed with anti-British graffiti, protesting against the decision to attack Iraq. Amongst the swastikas and anti-war slogans, were remarks such as 'Rosbeefs go home', and descriptions of the graves as 'contaminating French soil' (The Guardian, 2003) (Fig.25).



Fig.25: Desecration at Étapes cemetery (The Guardian, 2003)

The idea of the memorial landscape of the Western Front reflecting themes of nation and Empire has also been challenged by the erection of monuments reflecting the multinational constitution of the British army. On the 10th November 2002, of a memorial to the Indian Army at the Menin Gate was unveiled, commemorating the Indian soldiers who fought (Saunders 2003, 223) (Fig.26).



Fig.26: Indian War Memorial, Ieper (Photograph by author)

In 1998 the Queen and the Irish President Mary McAleese opened a 'Peace Park' at Mesen (Messines), in the spirit of the Good Friday agreement, marking a new stage in the relationship between Britain and Ireland (Jeffery 2000, 138). Saunders (2001, 45) has highlighted how the memorial landscape of the Western Front in the last three decades has become a multi-vocal landscape of a variety of overlapping interests, political, commercial and cultural (see Graham *et al* 2000, 36). This reflects the working and reworking in Britain of the

meaning and memory of the cemeteries and monuments on the Western Front, which has been ongoing since the cessation of hostilities. These 'sites of memory' do not lack meaning or purpose (see Laquer 1994, 164), but rather they represent the contestation of memory, the shifting forms of memory which occur as part of the changes in society, but more importantly as part of the attempts by individuals to reform the cultural memory of the Western Front.

Historiography

The relationship between history and memory has attracted a great deal of debate since the emergence of memory studies in the 1980s; both Nora (1989) and Yersushalmi (1996) followed Halbwachs (1992) in characterising history as opposed to memory (see Nora 1989, 8). 'Historians have never much liked the analogy between history and memory. Largely due to the belief that whilst history is hard work recollection seems passive, noninferential and unverified' (Mink 1981, 234). History and memory do nevertheless share a great deal of common ground and shared goals (Hutton 1991, 59); 'the challenge of history is to recover the past and introduce it to the present, it is the same challenge that confronts memory' (Thelen 1989, 1117). Historians are often seen within their own discipline and by society in general as 'custodians of the past', from this perspective by engaging in the shape and intent of memory, their work impacts upon the cultural memory that is available to the public (Blight 2002, 1). Historians act to shape these memories not only by the content of their work, but by their own representations of the past, which are all encapsulated within the narratives in which their work is conveyed (after White 1978, 91-92).

The importance of narrative in conveying historical representation and memory is essential as these 'narrative accounts do not consist of factual statements and arguments: but also poetic and rhetorical elements by which what would otherwise be a list of facts is transformed into a story' (White 1992, 38; 1981, 5). Historical situations are therefore not considered by White (1992, 37-39) to be inherently tragic, comic, or romantic, the perception of events as such arise partly from received cultural norms, but also by the manner in which the historian uses these literary tropes in their narrative. However, one particular

aspect of the manner in which narratives are constructed by historians, which has not been addressed by White, and which forms an important feature of this analysis, is the concept of focalization (Carrard 1992, 120). Whenever events are considered by historians, they are always presented from within a certain perspective, a certain way of viewing events and a certain angle (after Bal 1985, 142). The historian's focalization can take a variety of perspectives, but is in general divided between the external and the internal (Genette 1980, 191). External focalization refers to the scope of narration to 'only what can be outwardly observed', and internal focalization refers to 'what a character knows, thinks and feels' (Lanser 1981, 38). Focalisation therefore has a major impact on the way the narrative is perceived and presented, and constitutes a 'powerful and manipulative textual device' (O'Neil 1996, 96). This discussion of narrative construction is of particular importance for the study of the British war effort on the Western Front, as the historical representation has shifted in its style and focalization, reflecting the changing trends in historiography in the twentieth century, and the manner and perspective in which historians have presented the Western Front (see Iggers 1997, 3). These processes may be reflective of wider social changes, but they also demonstrate how history can validate, shape and appropriate the memory of the Western Front; historical studies should therefore not be considered distinct from the memory process, rather the very act of historical study can be considered as an act of remembrance (see Novick 1999, 5).

The British historical perspective of the Western Front has been examined overwhelmingly from a military history standpoint, an area of historical discourse often considered to be last refuge of an empirical, positivist, grand narrative history (see Keegan 1976, 27). The study of military history has remained dominated by particular perspectives in its narratives, mostly drawn from the nineteenth century military theorist Von Clausewitz (1976), whose work *On War*, published in 1832, has provided a conceptual scheme for studying conflict (Bassford 1994, 11). By emphasising the political nature of conflict, Clausewitz enabled the study of vast areas of diverse and confused military engagements to appear within an ordered, logical narrative (Paret 1974, 18). This narrative representation remains embedded within military history, and is rarely theorised; an untenable position since it is after all military historians who take it

upon themselves to create a semblance of order from chaotic and disparate events (Howard 1983, 192-193). 'They stand at some palpable but unspecified remove from an address to the subject which, in its goal of rendering complex and confused events into the certainties of linear narratives, has always been determinedly literal and scorned language in all but its technical functions' (Ousby 2002, 17; Collingwood 1989, 110). It is however in an examination of the language and narratives used by military historians that the process of selection, definition and focalization can be defined, and the way in which historical studies have remembered the Western Front can be assessed (see Ousby 2002, 18; Keegan 1976, 27).

The historical representation of the Western Front within Britain began even as the war was still ongoing (Grievies 1991, 15; Stevenson 2005, 588). The British Ministry of Information had encouraged a number of eminent novelists, such as Kipling and Bennett, to be part of their campaign to present a favourable historical perspective of the war (Buitenhuis 1989, xvi). Conan Doyle, John Fortescue and John Buchan also wrote historical accounts of the war in its entirety, which were published after the cessation of hostilities; although not overly propagandist in tone, they nevertheless maintained the official line of noble sacrifice for the British nation and Empire (Grievies 1991, 35-37; 1993, 533-534). These early reports of the war on the Western Front were supplanted by the emergence in the interwar years of a series of historical works which assessed and interpreted the conflict, and which would begin the traditions of study of the Western Front (see Strachan 1991, 41-43). During the interwar period three individuals dominated the historical study of the Western Front, and the wider investigation of the Great War, Captain Basil Liddell Hart, C.R.M.F. Cruttwell and J.F.C. Fuller. All three were veterans of the war, having all served as infantry officers on the Western Front (see Strachan 1991, 41). It was however Liddell Hart in particular who became an influential figure in shaping the historical representation of the Western Front and who was for almost half a century the most important writer on strategy and military matters in the English-speaking world (Mearcheimer 1988, ix; Bond 1977, 5; Danchev 1998, 45). Liddell Hart was essentially concerned with tactics and strategy, stressing the significance of 'great captains' more than such aspects as war production, manpower, allocation and civilian morale (Bond 1988, 6; 1999b, 23). As such

Liddell Hart's work represents the external focalization of his subject matter (after Cohan and Shires 1988, 95-96). Liddell Hart published his first book in 1928, *Reputations*, which examined the generals of the Western Front through a series of biographical essays. This early work demonstrates the manner in which Liddell Hart formulated his narratives, and the particular perspective used to represent the conflict. Liddell Hart (1928, 81) described the generalship of Haig during the early period of the war by identifying him with the British army as a whole, even stating that 'Haig was (the) distilled essence of Britain.'

This narrative construction and the focalization concentrating on the higher command is most clearly seen in Liddell Hart's 1930 work *The Real War*. The narrative emphasis throughout is on the will of the commander, the psychological effect of his actions on his opponent, the value of surprise (Strachan 1991, 50). This perspective should be viewed in its proper context as Liddell Hart was himself reacting against the publication of a number of memoirs during the late 1920s which described individual war experiences. Liddell Hart (1930, 9) cynically undermines these individual accounts, stating that although 'some may say that the war depicted here is not "the real war", that is to be discovered in the torn bodies and minds of individual', because of the scale of the conflict it was necessary to see it in perspective and to 'disentangle its main threads from the accidents of human misery.' He concludes that 'this attempt is all the more desirable by reason of the trend of recent war literature which is not merely individualistic but focuses attention on the thoughts and feelings of some of the pawns of war' (Liddell Hart 1930, 9). This perspective led many to judge that Liddell Hart eschewed human suffering for a concentration on the wartime claims of politicians and of the General Staff (Strachan 1991, 46; Mearcheimer 1988, 220-222). Herbert Read (1930, 766) indeed criticised Liddell Hart for his 'impersonal conception' of the war; 'Fifty-nine thousand honest Englishmen and half as many of their German cousins shot to pieces that Captain Liddell Hart might write this shoddy piece of rhetoric.' Nickerson (1931, 549) also stated in a review of *The Real War*, 'the author is not directly concerned with the sufferings and emotions of the individual soldier – the pawn upon the military and political chessboard – but with the game played by the respective commanders.' Liddell Hart (1934, vii) was aware of the selection needed to convey his historical study in narrative form, and chose a 'guiding principle' placed within the perspective

of the command and politicians, 'to pick out those which definitively moulded the course of events.' This selection entailed the use of the events of battle and the soldiers' experiences in a rather abstract manner to convey meaning into the event and to present a more coherent narrative (Scarry 1985, 72). The first use of gas on the Ieper Salient in April 1915 was expressed as 'with the aid of gas the Germans had removed the defenders on the north flank of the Salient as deftly as if extracting the back teeth from one side of a jaw' (Liddell Hart 1934, 245). Fuller and Cruttwell both influenced by Liddell Hart in their historical research also represented the activities of the army in a similarly abstract manner; 'the trunk nerves of an army are its general staff, whose great duty is to convey the impressions felt by the rank and file to the brains of their commander' (Fuller 1923, 38); 'Haig had not intention of blunting the bright spear of his new armies in this way' (Cruttwell 1934, 256). These historical studies of the Western Front were also supplemented by the official histories of the war which began to emerge from the early 1920s (French 1991, 69-71). These provided an opportunity to make use of the official documents of the military commanders, as it based its narrative at the level of the higher administrative units of the British army (Edmonds 1922, v). The impact of these official histories has been immense; indeed, the twenty-nine volumes of the official history constitute the major work within the historiography of the First World War, and have 'undoubtedly left their mark on the enormous numbers of historical writings that have followed then even to this day' (Green 2003, 1). Keegan (1976, 31) has however labelled this study as, 'writing an exhaustive account of one of the world's greatest tragedies without the display of any emotion at all.' The detached perspective of this narrative focus was also mirrored in the publication of the personal dispatches of the British army commanders (see Haig 1919, v; Robertson 1926, xiv; Repington 1920, v).

This body of work demonstrates the conveyance of a particular type of narrative of memory, through the representation of the war on the Western Front. By selecting and defining their objects of study for depiction in their narratives, Liddell Hart, Cruttwell and Fuller reflected the dominating form of traditional military history (Bassford 1994, 130-138). Their concentration on tactics, strategy and the aims of politicians and the General Staff conform to the principles of military study as practised by Von Clausewitz (Bond 1988, 6;

Bassford 1994, 3). In effect Liddell Hart set the framework for the debates concerning the Western Front, which still trouble historians, namely the capabilities of the generals in the British army (Bond 2002, 58). Although initially sympathetic in his 1928 study, he became very critical of the tactics and strategies used, especially the command of Field Marshall Haig (Mearcheimer 1988, 6). This debate has endured with military historians today still debating the adequacy of British army generals and the tactics they employed (see Griffith 1994; 1996; Sheffield 2000; 2002; Travers 1982; 2003; Bidwell and Graham 1982). This concentration on the analysis of the General Staff ensures that the focus of the narrative takes the perspective of the higher orders of command, which is inevitably a selection, a partial representation of the war on the Western Front. In studying this perspective these military historians produce narratives which disregard the experiences of the individual soldiers, arguing that 'the struggles of individuals and small companies were not necessarily a reflection of what was occurring over an entire battlefield' (Prior and Wilson 1992, 4). Terraine (1960; 1977; 1978; 1980; 1983), for example had for many years attempted to rehabilitate the reputations of the British generals who held command on the Western Front. In so doing however, Terraine created narratives of the Western Front which distances his study from the conditions in the trenches faced by the ranks of soldiers by focussing on the higher levels of command (Brown 1998, 5).

This study of narratives used by military historians portrays the external focalization employed and the traditional selection of strategies, battalions and battles. The history of the events of war on the Western Front can however be written in many different ways, not all of which will necessarily use the established narratives of military history (Jordanova 2000, 36). An alteration in the narratives and focalisation used will inevitably entail a change in the way we remember the Western Front, allowing a different perspective, an alternative narrative of memory of the conflict. An alteration in the historical representation of the Western Front can be traced to the 1960s, when the study was revitalized during the fiftieth anniversaries of the Great War (Bond 1991, 5). With this departure from traditional narrative modes of representation the forms in which the Western Front is remembered was altered (after Iggers 1997, 1). The impact of the events of the Second World War irrevocably affected the study and

practice of history, as a greater concern was expressed for the study of a wider social base than had hitherto been addressed (Dosse 1994, 79). The traditional structure of military history, as a linear narrative of events was also undermined by the developments within the second generation of *Annales* scholars, notably Braudel (Chartier 1958, 21-22; Rancière 1994, 11). Braudel (1980, 11) came to criticise such types of historical narrative as, 'a gleam but no illumination; facts but no humanity.' Duby (1990, 1) also criticised this particular type of historical narrative, dismissing the history of events as 'like the foam of history.' By calling for an examination of the 'social realities' of history, Braudel's (1980, 11) work, alongside the acceptance of Marxist theory within historical study (Eley 2003; Samuel 1980), reflected the wider shift in historiography, whereby the predominantly political narratives which had dominated the study of history since the nineteenth century, gave way to a range of social, economic and cultural perspectives, which inevitably altered the manner in which war on the Western Front was studied.

Some have also connected this alteration in the representation of the Western Front to the social, cultural and political changes which were occurring during the 1960s (Winter 1992). Bond (2002, 58-59) has also drawn attention to these changes in the study of history, which can be observed in the analyses of the Western Front from the 'revisionist' work of the 1960s, which began to alter the manner in which the Western Front was represented. Although still drawing on aspects of the established narratives of military history the work of three individuals, Wolff (1959), Tuchman (1962) and Taylor (1963) drew attention to the possibility of a narrative expressing an internal focalisation, and thereby impacting upon the manner in which the battlefields were remembered (see Danchev 1991, 263). The two American historians Wolff and Tuchman principally provided a new and highly influential perspective on the Western Front in Britain and the emergence of Wolff's work in particular has been described 'a prototype and a portent' (Danchev 1991, 265). The originality of Wolff's work was demonstrated in his use of the personal documents of ordinary soldiers alongside the official papers, to create a narrative account of 'the atmosphere of the time, especially the casual heroism and fragile hold on life at the front' (Danchev 1991, 265). Rejecting outright any study of tactics or strategy, Wolff concentrates on the human cost of what he concluded was a

disordered butchery of soldiers, organised by incompetent generals (Bond 1997, 483). Although still placing the events within a traditional linear account, Wolff succeeded in creating something 'much more than military history' (Fuller 1959, xi). This rejection of the dominant narrative structure of military history, and an exploration of internal focalisation was also a part of Tuchman's research. The work is a self-conscious attempt to avoid the pattern of what Tuchman (1962, 8) names as the 'he must have' grand military narrative; a direct consequence of which is a greater emphasis on the perspective of the common soldier within her narrative (TLS 1962, 423). Tuchman (1962, 428) even acknowledges that the war was a kaleidoscope, composed of 'little bits seen, experienced and recorded by different people.' Throughout the 1960s there arose a greater concern for the representation of the massed ranks of soldiers who served on the Western Front, marking a shift in the focalization of historical narratives. This desire is even reflected within what could be termed 'traditional' military history, as Woodward (1967, xii) in his history of the war states unequivocally that, 'the history which I would like to have written would have been distilled from the "case histories" of many millions of soldiers, records personal and unique, infinite in their variety...' This frequently manifested itself in a critique of the British General staff encapsulated in Clark's (1961) 'Lions led by donkeys.' Undoubtedly however the biggest impact on the historical study of the Western Front during this period was Taylor's 1963 study. The book was released at the height of Taylor's fame as one of the first television historians, and arguably remains the most widely read historical work on the war in English (Danchev 1991, 263). A concern for the ordinary ranks was directly expressed in the inclusion for the first time in a major popular publication, of harrowing images of the war in the trenches (TLS 1963, 1013). The photographs were believed by Taylor to 'take us into the trenches', as they recorded 'the life of the Everyman' (Taylor 1963, 11). The same insistence to break away from traditional military history, as expressed by Wolff and Tuchman, was the motive for the use of this photographic evidence; 'in the narrative, the war is an academic exercise, as remote from present experience as the great war of Troy. The illustrations show men. This war was our war too' (Taylor 1963, 11).

Although the introduction of social (Fairburn 1999) and cultural history (Hunt 1989) has affected the manner in which the Western Front has been

represented in the last few decades (see Mosse 1990; Winter 1998; Bourke 1996; Frantzen 2004; Schweitzer 2003), the focalization of the historical narratives of the Western Front in Britain was dramatically altered by the introduction in the 1960s and 1970s of oral history (see Liddle and Richardson 1996, 651). This confirmed the place of the perspective of the ordinary soldier, as a greater concern for the rank and file of society was expressed by oral historians. The interpretation of history with oral evidence was thought by the practitioners of oral history to open up many new possibilities of historical study; 'to explore and develop new interpretations, to establish or confirm an interpretation of past patterns or change' (Thompson 1978, 265). Oral history dramatically altered the traditional historical representation of the Western Front, and placed the ordinary soldier as the basis of study. With the realisation in the 1960s and 1970s that the generation that had taken part in the war was passing away and that their version of the war remained largely unrepresented, individuals and institutions began a process of interviewing veterans which has resulted in the large archives of material at the Liddle Collection (2005) and the Imperial War Museum (2004). A number of important studies have emerged in the last three decades utilising this evidence and an internal focalisation to produce historical narratives which have the soldier at the centre of their concern. Perhaps the most well-known is Middlebrook's (1971) study of the Somme, which drew on official sources, newspapers, autobiographies, novels and poems, alongside the recollections of hundred of British and German veterans (Middlebrook 1971, xviii; see also 1978, 12). This pioneering work was soon accompanied by studies from historians such as Ellis (1976), Winter (1978), Brown (1996; 2001; Brown and Seaton 1984) and Macdonald (1978; 1980; 1983; 1987; 1998) who have produced popular accounts of the war on the Western Front through old soldiers' letters and diaries. Within these popular accounts of the war, is a determination that the narratives presented the soldiers' viewpoints, to 'tell it like it was' (Macdonald 1983, xiv).

The impact of the radical agenda of oral history, to uncover those individuals traditionally neglected by 'great men' historical studies presented an alternative way in which to study and remember the war. It has also influenced a number of traditional military historians to consider the experience of the soldier (see Holmes 1999, 19; 2005, 12). Most notably its impact can be seen in Keegan's (1976) attempt to uncover 'the face of battle'. In this groundbreaking

work Keegan (1976, 27) voiced dissatisfaction with the traditional narratives of military history; viewing them as constructions which glossed over the experiences of battle. In his view, allowing the combatants to 'speak for themselves' was an essential ingredient of battle narratives and battle analysis (Keegan 1976, 32). The focalisation of historical narratives utilising oral history has dramatically altered the historical representation of the Western Front, and the introduction of oral history has ensured that the memory of the Western Front has to an extent become democratised, 'no longer the preserve of the historian, intellectual or political leader' (Vance 1998, 7). Following this 'democratisation' of memory of the Western Front there emerged a strong interest in the Great War in the 1980s (Richardson 1998, 360). In Britain this manifested itself in the formation of the Western Front Association (WFA), which sought to further 'interest in the period 1914-1918, to perpetuate the memory, courage and comradeship of all those who served their countries in France and Flanders and their own countries during The Great War' (WFA, 2005). What the formation of the WFA indicates is how the memory of the battlefields still resonates and still holds meaning, as the society's members are predominantly drawn from a generation who did not serve in the conflict, but whose interest is derived from scholarly or genealogical interest (Richardson 1998, 360). This is certainly also represented in the ever-increasing interest in family history, and attempts by individuals to trace and research relatives who fought on the Western Front (see Moriarty 1999, 653; Fowler 2003, 7; CWGC 2004). Some historians of the Great War have likened this process of recovering individuals from the all-encompassing narratives of history as a 'the return of the repressed' (see Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002, 9).

The eightieth anniversary of the Armistice in 1998 proved to be an occasion for the articulation of this repression, as a public voicing of pain and outrage concerning the Western Front emerged through and within the popular media (see Stummer 1998, 12). It marked an occasion when popular sentiment demanded that the soldiers of the Western Front be remembered as victims of the war (Moriarty 1999, 653). This shift can be seen both as an indicator of the power of the cultural memory of the Western Front and a desire to rearticulate that memory in a new way (after de Certeau 1984, 18). This movement may be seen to mirror Novick's (2001, 8) sentiments on the reasons for the emergence of

memory studies within history, as he states that in a century of suffering and pain, the opportunity of claiming part of that suffering is now regarded as empowering. Perhaps the most telling indicator of this is the ongoing campaign in Britain which was initiated in 1998, for the granting of posthumous pardons to the soldiers, most of whom served on the Western Front, who were executed during the war (see *Shot at Dawn*, 2005; Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002; Putkowski and Sykes 1989; Peaty 1999). In the background of the catharsis evoked by the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice, parliamentary debates ensued, with the Government refusing to grant the pardons, but recognising that the soldiers should be considered in an equal manner alongside their comrades. Dr. John Reid, then Minister for the Armed forces, spoke to the Commons on the 24th of July 1998, in response to the request for the pardons, naming the executed soldiers as ‘victims of the war’ (see Hansard, 1998). Conversely, accompanying this drive for the recognition of the soldiers as victims has been an attempt by some historians to give a proper consideration of the soldiers as active participants in the war (see Jabri 1996). In many ways this represents both the turn to cultural history in the study of the war, and the contribution made by the growing number of scholars associated with the Historial de la Grande Guerre in Péronne (Winter 1998). This multinational research facility has sponsored work focusing on the ‘war culture’ (see Audoin-Rouzeau 1992; Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002), which has focused its concern upon certain features of the war, the violence of the conflict being one of these key features (Purseigle 2005, 5; Purseigle and Macleod 2004, 12). This can be seen in Bourke’s (1999) study which draws upon evidence from the soldiers of the Western Front and their responses to the necessity of killing on the battlefield. Bourke (1999, 1) considers this area of study to be absent from the narratives of military history, to concerned with the performance of the army at a higher level, and a public not willing to confront this particular role of the soldiers (Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002, 6).

The Western Front has also become considered by some historians as an arena of identity, especially for the soldiers of the commonwealth who fought for Britain, but also within Britain itself. Histories of battalions, the ‘Pals’, from particular regions of Britain who served on the Western Front have become increasingly popular over the last twenty years as interest in local history projects

have come to the fore (see Riden 1983). Studies of the Pals (Bilton 1999; 2002; Turner 1998; Stedman 2004; Lewis 2004) have all drawn their success and appeal by placing local and regional identity in the context of a wider historical event. At a time when boundaries within Britain are being refined there has also been an increased degree of interest in the histories of Scottish and Welsh soldiers on the Western Front, examining their experiences apart from the wider British army (see Young 2004; Hughes 1982; Richards 1994). This in part is influenced by the far more established studies which have located particular nationalities within the former British Commonwealth, emerging and defining themselves through the soldiers' involvement in the conflict. Historical studies have examined the soldiers from Ireland (Denman 1992; Dungan 1995; 1997), Canada (Vance 1998; Rawling 1992), Australia and New Zealand (Hoffenberg 2001; Thomson 1994), India (Omissi 1999; Corrigan 1999), and soldiers and labourers from South Africa (Grundlingh 1987), China (Summerskill 1982) and the West Indies (Howe 2002; Smith 2004) who participated in the British army. These studies have challenged the prevailing image and memory of the Western Front in this country as a solely British affair. In fact the memory of black and Asian men fighting and labouring for the British Army during the Great War has been recently utilised by the British Armed Forces to encourage recruitment, with a special touring photographic exhibition around Britain in 2000 (Norton-Taylor, 2000; Bright, 2002). Accompanying this move for recognition has been a proliferation of studies considering the involvement of British women on the Western Front, who occupied a number of essential roles during the conflict (Braybon 1981; Higonnet *et al* 1987; Tate 1998; Kahn 1988; Tylee 1990; Thomas 1989; Marlow 1998). This has also highlighted the misogyny present in the construction of the memory of the Western Front in Britain, as it is the soldier on the battlefield who is remembered as *the* story of the war. Watson (2004) has exposed this phenomenon in her study of the Great War in Britain, revealing how though the war was experienced by men and women from a variety of perspectives, it has been the soldier in the trenches which has come to dominate memory, displacing female as well as non-combatant males experiences of the conflict (see Hanley 1991, 7). This dominance has been challenged since the 1980s as research has been undertaken regarding conscientious objectors, as well as a number of studies which emphasise the links between the Western Front and

the home front, an extension of the battlefield, to show how women also suffered the privations and dangers of the war (Tate 1995, 85; Higonnet *et al* 1987, 1). This has challenged the dominant memory of the Western Front in Britain, by locating the memory of the war away from the images of the trenches and no man's land towards the casualty clearing units, ambulances and hospitals, and the home front, in munitions factories, schools and agriculture, where women worked and contributed to the war effort (Higonnet 1993, 195; 1999, xxi). The moves in recent years towards remembering the war as a tragedy, with the men and women of all nations and roles considered as its victims, highlights the manner in which the Western Front still possesses the power to dominate contemporary concerns in Britain. The historical narratives of the Western Front undeniably shape and inform these memories, most notably through historians' choice of subject matter, narrative style and the manner of their focalisation. Yet these memories have been revised and re-appropriated, as individuals, groups and communities have searched for a way in which to remember the war, to create their own memory of the conflict, marking how the cultural memory of the Western Front represents an 'assemblage of claims to knowledge' (Rorty 1980, 3).

Artistic Representations

The Western Front has become a literary *topos*, which has been evoked in the writings of a wide variety of British poets, dramatists, memoirists, artists and novelists over the last ninety years (after Herzfeld 1991, 24). The way in which these specific cultural forms, principally those published in the first decade after the war, have shaped and influenced the remembrance of the conflict has been highlighted by critics as being the predominant means by which the war is remembered (see Bond 2002). The study of the literature and poetry of the Western Front has also become a well-established object of study amongst literary scholars (see Klein 1976; Rutherford 1978; Onions 1992; Bracco 1993; Cecil 1996; Fields 1991; Parfitt 1988; Bergonzi 1965; 1999; Quinn and Trout 2001). However, such is the importance placed on the literature of the conflict that it has become a major object of debate amongst those contesting the memory

of the war (Hynes 1991; Eksteins 1989; Fussell 1975; Winter 1995). Those seeking to undermine the 'myths' of the war, have examined the contradictory sentiments and erroneous factual statements expressed in the literary representations of the war since 1918 (MacCallum-Stewart, 2002). Rarely examined however is the manner in which these works of fiction, memoirs and poetry have constructed a specific discourse of the battlefields, and how and why this discourse has been reiterated by later authors, poets and dramatists (after Foucault 1977, 32). Such a consideration also highlights another distinct deficiency in the study of the literature of the war, as what has also been oddly overlooked by scholars assessing this material is the response of the reader (after Eco 1984; Fish 1980). Those studying the memory of the conflict have remained consistent in their approach, by treating 'the public' as a homogenous, passive mass, emptily consuming rather than acting as involved, concerned agents (after Hall 1981).

Assessing both the production and reading of the war literature necessitates that a certain consideration of the societal context of the author and the audience is required (Szanto 1987). Evidently the way in which certain cultural forms are produced and consumed will differ depending on the nuances and distinctions of different groups and classes within society (after Bourdieu 1984). The role of art, drama and literature in a mass-consumer society may also be questioned, as the operation of capitalist society can be seen to devalue the impact and response to cultural forms (Adorno 1991). Conversely however, mass culture should be considered as a 'fundamental form of interaction' in society, providing a means by which the beliefs and perceptions of society across different social strata can be assessed. 'The very fact that it is less individualised and less dependent on personal response, that its effects are very generalised, makes it a ready instance of large-scale forms of value-transmission and value-interaction' (Bradbury 1971, 177). The study of the literature which has represented the Western Front, presents an ideal form in which to investigate the ways in which certain preferred readings of the battlefields have come to constitute the popular memory (after Hynes 1991, x). The concept of the 'preferred readings' (Morley 1980: 1983) of material reflects the subtle nuances involved in the reception of cultural forms across society, where some meanings are preferred and others closed off (Fiske 1987, 65).

Whilst Marx (1973a, 92) revealed that consumption and production were locked in a recursive cycle perpetuating the conditions of society; its beliefs, its structures, this hegemony cannot be regarded as a totality (Gramsci 1971, 181-182). de Certeau (1984) has indeed highlighted the performance of 'oppositional tactics', or 'ways of operating' which occur within the conditions of everyday life, which are intended not to overturn the dominant element in society, but to improve the condition of the individual or group. It is the use of tactics or 'ways of operating' in the reading of the war literature which will form part of this study (after Chambers 1991). Inevitably these tactics in reading will be influenced by the shifting desires and wants in society, corresponding to generational and cultural changes, but nevertheless these tactics provide an alternative means by which the literature of the war and the memory of the Western Front can be examined. The importance of literature in shaping the memory of the Western Front revolves around issues of 'truth', and the representation of the 'truth of the war' (see Graham 1984). It is the desire both of the producers and consumers of the literature of the war over the last ninety years to obtain the 'truth' which constructs a particular discourse of the Western Front (after Foucault 1977). As the emotional appeal of this 'truth' has proved both difficult to resist and indeed specifically chosen by some, it has been the very claim of authors and poets to 'truth' in their representation of the Western Front, which has contributed to the enduring popular memory of the battlefields in Britain.

This assertion of the truth in the memory of the Western Front can be found to originate in the wartime writings of the poets Sassoon, Owen, Gurney, Graves and Rosenberg, all of whose powerful and emotive verses represents for many the 'quintessential images' of the Western Front (see Graham 1984, 65-66). Indeed, the war poetry of the Western Front is for many schoolchildren in Britain their first introduction to the study of the battlefields (see Featherstone 1995, 10). It is Owen's verse in particular which is believed to represent the experience of the soldier of the Western Front; 'the intellectual and emotional content of his verse is valuable because it expresses, in terms of poetry a personal reaction to experiences which at the time of their incidence at least, left most men hopelessly inarticulate' (Parson 1931, 667). The defining principle of Owen's work concerning the Western Front was his insistence that he was

attempting to describe the real events of the war, the soldiers' experience, the ugliness, 'and the futility and waste of it all' (Parsons 1931, 668-669). Owen (1998, 351) was concerned that the truth of the experiences of the soldiers should be told, he would state in a letter home in 1918, that 'I came out in order to help these boys – directly by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can.' Through constant reference to the war-torn landscape, material, activities and language of the war on the Western Front, Owen uses his poetry to enforce the perceptions of horror, waste and futility as truths, his poetry is intended 'not to be imagination but historical fact' (Graham 1984, 32). Such intent to represent the truth of war is also expressed by Sassoon in his famous protest against the continuation of the war. 'I believe that by taking this action I am helping to destroy the system of deception...which prevents people from facing the truth and demanding some guarantee that the torture of humanity shall not be prolonged unnecessarily' (Sassoon 1940, 481). The truth for the war poets represented the brutal aspects of the conflict on the Western Front, what Ezra Pound (1974, 17) named as 'the war waste', which the war poets thought to be unrepresented in the newspapers and ignored by the politicians and the public (after Graham 1984, 49). Therefore to present the horrors of the Western Front, the conditions in which men served, was to force an engagement with this 'truth' of the war (Rutherford 1978, 77).

This concern for the representation of the 'truth' of war in the narratives of artists and poets, and its actualisation through the depiction of the horror and desolation of the Western Front was also present in the inter-war years, as authors, some of whom had seen active service on the Western Front sought to portray their experiences through narrative fiction and memoirs (Cecil 1984, 205; 1996, 1; MacCallum-Stewart, 2005). The Western Front became an arena of literary imagination, as it appears in a variety of genres in the interwar period; it is however the reoccurring images of brutality, filth and alienation of the trenches and battlefields which are alluded to in the narratives, in an effort to maintain the 'truth' of the war. The interwar years saw a number of works of literature emerging. Indeed, one of the most successful novels of the war was published only a few years after the Armistice, Ewart's 1921 novel *The Way of Revelation*. Ewart's work is a complex psychological investigation of how two

enthusiastic young men became disillusioned in the mud of Flanders (Bracco 1993, 14). Ewart having served for a short period on the Western Front, uses the same descriptions of the Western Front as the war poets Owen and Sassoon (Hynes 1991, 334; Cecil 1984, 211). 'The soil had been hollowed and scarred and rent into a great cavity which provided a last shelter for many – a pit of horror indescribable...Many German dead lay here grey and bloody amid the upturned earth. By itself lay the body of a British soldier, face covered by a piece of white tarpaulin...The tradition of blood and iron seemed to have found its consummation in that one place' (Ewart 1983, 133).

Although publication of war novels fell during the 1920s three key works were published which had a significant impact on the memory of the war. Montague's (1922) war memoirs *Disenchantment*, Ford's (1922) novel *Parade's End* (published 1924-1928) and Mottram's (1924) novel *Spanish Farm Trilogy* (published 1924-1926). Amongst these it is Montague's *Disenchantment* (1922) which had the most profound effect on the perceptions of the Western Front at the time of its publication (Hynes 1991, 310). Although impossible to gauge every single reader's response to the work, it is through Montague's memoirs that the oppositional tactics used by readers can also be observed (after Chambers 1991). The memoir in itself narrated in the third-person provides a perspective of an individual soldier's life in the war (Falls 1930, 194). Montague intended that the work was not to be seen as anti-war or demonstrative of the wider army, but of a single individual; an individual, who in fact had been too old to enlist in 1914, so had lied about his age and dyed his hair to convince the recruiting officer. The reading of this memoir, shifting the narrative perspective, provided however the means by which a wider appreciation of the British army on the Western Front could be fostered by the novel's audience (see TLS 1922, 106). Instead of reading the narrative as an account of one man, it began to be read as of an account of the millions who had served (see Tomlinson 1930, 410). In this manner, *Disenchantment* sold widely after its publication in 1922, its reception was heightened by the public reception of the work which focused on both the vivid descriptions of the horror of the front and the oblique criticism of the military and political command, a perspective sharpened by the growing popularity of pacifism in Britain in the 1920s and a growing sense that another war would bring even heavier numbers of fatalities (Cecil 1996, 8).

The boom in war novels and memoirs emerged in the late 1920s, in-fact the idea of the war book as a specific genre began to emerge after 1929, as authors depicting the Western Front became, ‘as well recognised a category as the disparaging biography, the “thriller”, or the “fantasy”’ (Brophy 1929, viii). What is significant to note with the ‘war books boom’ of the late 1920s and early 1930s was the way in which the consumers of this literature were reading and interpreting these works and forming a distinct memory of the Western Front (see Fall 1930, ix; TLS 1930, 485). This reading was focused on the interpretation of the literature as being representative of the wider army, as with the rise of this literature, of memoirs and fiction there emerged the belief that the voices of the ordinary soldiers were being heard (Brophy 1929, viii; Parson 1931, 667). Eksteins (1989, 290) has also noted how all the successful war books of this period were written from the point of view of the individual, but read as indicative of the wider collective. Drawing a distinct division with the distant work of historians of the period such as Edmonds and Liddel Hart, and what could be called the ‘official’ narrative of the war, the Western Front was read and remembered through these oppositional tactics (de Certeau 1984, 18). Although critics of the popular memory of the war point to the predominance of the perspective of upper class officers in the available literature (Beckett 2001, 433), this neglects the way in which readers expanded this narrow perspective to articulate contemporary concerns regarding the threat of war (after Chambers 1991, 33). As international tensions increased during the 1930s, with especial regard to the threat of re-armament, this literature was consistently read as highlighting the slaughter of war and the threat of militarism (see Parfitt 1988, 5). This point of view is present in the classic narratives of the war on the Western Front which were written in the late 1920s and 1930s and inevitably share and reiterate the already well-established elements of the trenches, mud, horror, brutality and the devastation of the landscape (see TLS 1930, 485).

This ‘war books boom’, was inspired by the overwhelming success amongst the public of two particular works, R.C. Sherriff’s drama *Journey’s End* and Remarque’s classic novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*, both of which reached British audiences in 1929 (Eksteins 1989, 276-277). Both of these had a sensational impact, with readers interpreting the latter as presenting the conflict as a futile waste of a generation, and the former as an irredeemable tragedy

(Cecil 1996, 8-9; Onions 1992, 75). Remarque described the slow and painful process of disillusionment amongst initially idealistic youths in the German army (Eksteins 1980, 345-366; 1995, 30). The public desire for this mode of representation, by which it could remember the conflict, was eagerly noted in Britain by both authors and publishers alike (Rutherford 1978, 87). One critic described this as 'sitting down to compete for the very substantial crumbs which fell from Herr Remarque's table' (TLS 1930, 485). Its success was certainly unprecedented; an international sensation, in Britain where it was published in March 1929, 25,000 copies were sold in a fortnight (Bracco 1993, 145).

Sherriff's play *Journey's End* has also become to be regarded as a classic example of the dehumanising effects of the Western Front, and an indeed for its audiences provided an encapsulation of the memory of the trenches (Bracco 1993, 199; Richards 1984, 289). The play is set entirely in a dugout in the British trenches, a few days before the beginning of the German Spring Offensive in 1918 (Sherriff 1929, 5). The deaths of the main protagonists, and the closing scenes where shellfire destroys the dugout, shrouding the stage in darkness, where only the faint sound of machine gun fire can be heard, fuelled the memory of the war on the Western Front amongst the public as one of images of waste and desolation (Sherriff 1929, 128).

The memoirs of Blunden, Sassoon and Graves, written in the context of this resurgence of interest in the war on the Western Front, have themselves become accepted classics in Britain of the 'war books' genre (Rutherford 1978, 87-89). It is these commercially successful memoirs which are often cited as forming the basis on which an erroneous popular memory of the war has been constructed. Critics have sought to undermine their influence by pointing to the contradictory characters of the authors, their upper-class bias, their personal difficulties and the factual errors of the memoirs (see Bond 2002; Sheffield 2002). This again neglects an assessment of how this literature was read, how these memoirs were taken as representative of the whole of the British army on the Western Front, and how the focus on the brutality and misery of the battlefields, reflected now widespread perceptions in the memory of the war (see Rutherford 1978, 101). What can also be observed in these memoirs is the reinforcement of the manner of narrative representation of the Western Front (Hynes 1991, 423). The similarity and recurrence in the descriptions of the

battlefields, initiated in the work of the war poets and continued in the narratives and memoirs of the 1920s and 1930s, reached an apogee in the work of Blunden, Sassoon and Graves (Cobley 1993, 21). Influenced by the expression of public desire for this particular image, these narratives reiterating descriptions of horror, waste and desolation, formed a distinct discourse on the Western Front, delineating the acceptable manner of representation of the battlefields (see Foucault 1977, 41). This is especially true of Graves (1929) whose war memoirs make frequent reference to the repulsive, gory scenes on the Western Front and who would later describe his memoirs as deliberately written to capture the public's taste (see Graves 1930, 13). He describes a stretch of trench as stinking 'with a gas-blood-lyddite-latrine smell' (Graves 1929, 205). And recalls with almost relish how, 'after the first day or two the bodies swelled up and stank... The ones that we could not get in from the German wire continued to swell until the wall of the stomach collapsed, either naturally or punctured by a bullet; a disgusting smell would float across' (1929, 211). The soldiers deaths are vividly recounted by Graves, 'at my feet was the cap he had worn, splashed with his brains' (1929, 155). Such evocations of desolation are also a frequent occurrence in Sassoon's work; 'I could see the ruined village below the hill and leafless trees...down in the craters the dead water took a dull gleam from the sky. I stared at the tangles of wire and the leaning posts and there seemed no sort of comfort left in life' (Sassoon 1940, 281). It is the filth and degradation which also fascinated Blunden, observed in his account of the 'shell hole...used by us as a latrine, with those two fattened German bodies in it, tallow-faced and dirty stubbled' (Blunden 1930, 135).

Regarding these works of fiction, it is also important to remember the diversity of responses to the Western Front, some of which were wholly affirmative of the war, with old soldiers expressing their fondness for their wartime experiences, which were detailed in memoirs and novels in the interwar years (TLS 1930, 486). The reason for the lack of exposure of these works can be seen to be a specific preference by readers of one particular narrative over another, of the favour of certain memories of the war over others (after Chambers 1991, 10-11). Rather than describing the horror and waste, these narratives portray the war in a positive light. Charles Carrington, writing under the *nom de plume* Charles Edmonds, stated that 'after the war was over a fashion set in for

decrying the efforts and defaming the characters of all those in authority in the war, but we never thought of such things...' (Edmonds 1929, 17). In 1935 Greenwell (1972, xxi) expressed the sentiment that 'I have to confess that I look back on the years 1914-1918 as among the happiest I have ever spent.' Falls (1930, xi) also criticised the authors of what he considered to be anti-war books; 'every sector becomes a bad one, every working party is shot to pieces; if a man is killed or wounded his brains or his entrails always protrude from his body; no one ever seems to have a rest.'

The 'war book boom' was not to last, losing momentum after 1933, with the evocation of the Western Front within British literature not reoccurring until after the Second World War (Fussell 1975, 325-326). However, since 1945 and the fiftieth anniversaries of the Great War in the 1950s, a new generation of authors have come to use the Western Front in their work, a generation who had no direct experience of the fighting (see Robinson 1971; Marshall 1970). Whilst the manner in which these novelists evoke the battlefields are inevitably dependent on the social and cultural context of the author and the prevailing societal attitudes and perceptions of the consumers of this literature, these works do still use the images of horror, futility and waste: the established discourse of the Western Front (after Korte 2001, 121-122). Harris's (1962) novel for example, *Covenant of Death*, was amongst the first of the post-Second World War fictions to portray the Western Front. The mud and filth of the front are evoked throughout the novel, 'it was raining more heavily now and this together with the mud and the desolation, began to have a depressing effect on everybody' (1962, 168). Interestingly Harris (1962, 5) who used the accounts of veterans in his novel, also makes a claim for 'the truth' of his description of the Western Front. Similar themes are also explored by the Irish writer Johnston (1974) in her novel of two Irish soldiers in the British army, *How Many Miles to Babylon?* and Hill's (1971) novel *Strange Meeting*. Anti-war sentiments are also evoked through these works, as the continuing war in Vietnam provided a frame of reference in which to articulate the horrors of the Western Front (TLS 1971; TLS 1974). Trenches are, 'little more than drains thick with mud and rubbish and sewerage' (Johnston 1974, 84), with the soldiers living in 'grotesque obscenity' (Johnston 1974, 84). Hill (1971, 163) also uses such images of the front, 'with water up to your thighs and shells bursting all over the place, you often feel like

simply giving up and lying face down in the water.’ On the Western Front the soldiers are described as living amongst the corpses, filth and detritus of war; ‘the remnants of our men and animals were constantly with us. I found it hard to feel any emotion towards this debris, merely nausea’ (Johnston 1974, 124).

Perhaps one of the major influences of the memory of the Western Front after 1945 was Joan Littlewood’s Theatre Workshop production *Oh! What a Lovely War* first performed in 1963 (Howard and Stokes 1996, 16; Paget 1996, 82). Performed against the backdrop of the Cold War, the Great War was used as an example providing a warning for the dangers of falling into an apocalyptic war. The play’s originality and indeed its continuing influence lay predominantly in the appropriation of the oppositional tactics of the reading of the war literature of the 1920s and 1930s, by presenting of the war from the common soldier’s viewpoint (Bond 2002, 63-65; Danchev 1991, 282-283; Sorlin 1999, 63; Paget 1996, 85). Influenced by the historical works of Clark, Tuchman and Wolff, for perhaps the first time the *Oh! What a Lovely War* gave a definite voice to point of view of the working-class ‘other ranks’, who were only supposed to endure phlegmatically the absurd tactical errors by the generals (Paget 1996, 85). The play was also interspersed with slides depicting the war ravaged landscape of the Western Front (Theatre Workshop 1965, 61). These scenes used in the performance stressed the dark humour of war, juxtaposing the absurd with the horrific (Theatre Workshop 1965, 54-55).

Commanding Officer: ‘Damn place still reeks of decomposing bodies.’

Lieutenant: ‘I’m afraid it’s unavoidable, sir; the trench was mainly full of Jerries.’

Commanding Officer: ‘Yes, of course, you were more or less sharing the same front line for a couple of days, weren’t you?’

Lieutenant: ‘Yes, Sir’

Commanding Officer: ‘Oh well carry on.’

Lieutenant: ‘Thank you, sir.’

Commanding Officer: ‘Ye Gods! What’s that?’

Lieutenant: ‘Oh, it’s a Jerry, Sir.’

Commanding Officer: ‘What?’

Lieutenant: ‘It’s a leg Sir.’

A number of novels written by British authors through the 1980s also evoked the Western Front using these established images of the battlefields. Both Carr (1980) in *A Month in the Country* and Bailey's (1980) *Old Soldiers*, do however approach the battlefields in a different manner than their predecessors. Rather than dealing with the experiences of the war directly, the trenches, the mud and the slaughter reappear obliquely as the memory of the conflict haunts the protagonists of both novels (Lasdean 1980, 510; Lewis 1980, 228). Korte (2001, 122) has also observed how the established discourse of the Western Front was rearticulated within these works of fiction through the prevailing social and political situation in Britain during the early 1980s. Samuel (1989b) described how 1980s Britain witnessed a widespread encouragement of popular nationalism evoked by Conservative politicians and the right-wing press. Samuel (1989b, x) drew attention to the use of Newbolt's (1972, 109) patriotic cry 'play up and play the game.' A sentiment which Samuel (1989b, x) himself evoked the popular memory of the Western Front to counter, highlighting that 'for the first time since Passchendaele', 'this could be intoned without embarrassment by a British Prime Minister; even as it turned out endorsed by the electorate.' Korte (2001, 122) has also noted that the prevailing nationalistic, neo-conservative climate under Thatcherism fostered a counter-discourse criticising patriotism using the memory of the Western Front. This articulation of the popular memory is perhaps seen most evidently in the fiery indignation of the Porter (1983, 40) poem 'Somme and Flanders', Whelan's (1982) play *The Accrington Pals*, McGuinness's (1986) play *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, and a small section of the novel *Waterland* (Swift 1983).

It was the 1990s which witnessed a large-scale revival of war literature, at least comparable to the 'war books boom' of the 1930s, associated with the interest generated by the commemorations of the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice (MacCallum-Stewart, 2002). These novels have also utilised and perpetuated the popular memory of the Western Front, drawing upon the popular readings and discourse of the battlefields established in the 1920s. Bestsellers of the 1990s also display the tendency to dwell on the horrors of the Western Front: reiterating a specific memory, utilising a specific narrative (see Edric 1997; Thorpe 2001; Saunders 1993; Barker 1991; 1993; 1995). Hartnett's (1999) novel

Brother to Dragons also uses disturbing images of the Western Front in a shocking and disturbing manner. In a parody of a letter informing a relative of a soldier's death, the death-scene is recounted where a soldier, 'attempting, as part of his company's second wave, to climb out of a support trench, he had not acted "bravely" but mechanically, his mind having already vacated a body anaesthetised on Navy issue rum; nor, being hit by a piece of shell casing that tore the face away from the skull could be said to have died "gallantly"' (Hartnett 1999, 324). Barker's (1998) novel *Another World* also uses the psychological damage of the war, as the memory of the Western Front troubles a dying veteran. The main character Geordie is terminally ill and relives the moments when he killed, as an act of mercy, his mortally wounded brother on the battlefield. 'Just as I'm crawling the last few feet a flare goes up, he's screaming, all I can see is the mouth, little blue slitty eyes and his guts are hanging out' (Barker 1998, 263).

As these modern authors could have no experience of the fighting on the Western Front they have used the detailed archives and interviews with veterans to describe the trenches and no man's land. In Faulks's *Birdsong* (1993), for example, full use of soldiers' diaries and letters is made to recreate in imaginative terms the slaughter on the Somme on the 1st July 1916 (Bond 2002, 75). This has led contemporary authors to re-invoke the concept of 'truth' as expressed by the war poets. Indeed, Hartnett (1997, ii), states in the preface to his novel that 'it could be said to typify the many volunteer units – Kitchener's "New Army" – raised all over the United Kingdom, during the first months of the Great War and "baptised" two years later on the first day of the Somme.' Thorpe (2001, 122) even has his author stressing the issue regarding his war novel, that 'I deal only in truths.' The rhetorical power of stating the 'truth' of the war has remained undiminished for both authors and readers. As Jaspers (1971, 33) has stated, the word and evocation of 'truth', 'has an incomparable magic. It seems to promise what really matters to us.' Korte (2001, 124) has observed that the equation of the truth of the war with the description of the horror and brutality of the war continues to be relied upon, so much so that reading these works of fiction evokes a distinct sense of *deja lu*, as the reliance on a particular way of narrating and remembering the Western Front is quite apparent. The popularity of these works of fiction and their perceived role as 'shaping the memory of the war' for a new generation has ensured that critics of

the popular memory of the war highlight the flaws and anachronisms of the novels (see MacCallum-Stewart, 2002). This again neglects the pivotal role that the reading of this material possesses. Popular memory is not merely shaped by these cultural forms, but the acceptance and popularity of certain forms of representation amongst the consumers of this work, emphasises the way in which specific narratives are themselves selected and filtered and raised above others (after Chambers 1991). The representation of the Western Front as a horrific, desolate, and pitiful wasteland, evoking poignancy and sadness continues not merely through the volition of the authors, or the reliance on standard descriptions, but through the tastes and beliefs of those consuming this work (after Fish 1980, 158). In this manner two important features can be detected in the examination of the literature, drama and poetry representing the Western Front over the last ninety years. Firstly, the formation of a particular discourse of the battlefields, utilised by authors and accepted and desired by readers, and secondly, the way in which the Western Front has become a site of memory to be evoked and articulated with regard to the changes in society. The Western Front through its artistic representations has become a vehicle for expressing the altering concerns of society regarding war, violence, social and political issues since the Armistice. This can be observed with the recent revival of *Journey's End* in 2004, and *Oh! What a Lovely War* in 2002, both of which opened against the backdrop of the Iraq war, drawing parallels with the slaughter of a war of attrition, the tragic farce of a war without meaning, and a critique of a government's policies which instigated the conflict (see Billington 2002; 2004). Contrary to the assertions of others, it is not the novels, dramas and poetry which have shaped the memory of the war; it is their reception and reading by their consumers, a continually changing endeavour, which provides a telling indication of the values and beliefs within British society with regard to the Western Front.

Media Representations

The representation of the battlefields in the popular media began as the war was ongoing, to deliver positive and uplifting versions of the war to the

public. Since the cessation of hostilities the Western Front has been repeatedly represented both in film and television (Badsey 2001; 2002). These cultural modes of expression and the narratives they create are often critically considered to be amongst the main source of people's perceptions and memory of the Western Front (Bond 2002, 75; Todman 2002, 29; Paris 1999a, 1). Rather than assuming the popular memory of the Western Front to be the result of the passive public consumption of these cultural forms, this project takes the position that certain tactics are used in the acceptance and denial of forms of memory (after de Certeau 1984, 18). Media representations are an ideal form in which to demonstrate this process of the construction of memory (see Hoskins 2001). Film and television programmes are often seen by cultural critics as vehicles to appropriate, disseminate and control popular memory by a dominant group (see Pearson 1999, 181). This assertion rests on the unacknowledged assumption that viewers have no role to play in the dissemination of beliefs and values through film and television (after Foucault 1975, 25). These cultural forms however also provide a means by which consumers can articulate possible dissident and resisting memories (after Fiske 1987). This again takes the form of 'preferred readings', which whilst acknowledging the constraints on interpretation that are placed in the cultural forms themselves, nevertheless recognises that viewers can still select and filter their own meanings of these forms (see Morley 1983; 1992).

For the purposes of this study a selection of the English language films released and television programmes broadcast in Britain will be examined to validate this claim. Though this study will draw on productions over the last ninety years, it is also important to note the manner of the representations of the battlefields as the war was ongoing. Official wartime cinematic representations of the Western Front, though highly tailored in certain cases (see Saunders and Taylor 1982; Reeves 1983; 1986; Kelly 1997), created vivid images of the war on the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium for the public (Reeves 1999, 45; Mosse 1990, 147). Through such films as *The Battle of the Somme* (1916), which is still regarded as the most successful film in British cinema history, the public were given a sanitised image of the Western Front to which it was hoped that they could relate (Reeves 1997, 5-7; 1999, 45). The way in which the Western Front has been remembered in film after the Armistice, and later on television in Britain however marks a distinction in representation (after Kelly

1997). These cultural forms have relied on certain repeated themes and images, namely the trenches, the brutality and the desolated landscape, which have provided a particular memory of the battlefields which has been favoured and accepted by audiences over other forms of representation.

Major Hollywood productions, shown to ever increasing audiences, had begun to dominate British cinemas in the 1920s and 1930s. Indeed, it has been estimated that by the 1930s forty percent of the British population went to the cinema once a week (Kuhn 2002, 1-2). The American films featuring the Western Front seen by British audiences such as *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921) or *Wings* (1927), which though depicting soldiers enjoying aspects of the war, and usually concentrating on a romantic plot, nevertheless used images of the desolated landscape, the filth of the trenches, the horror of the war (Paris 1995, 45). The popularity of these Hollywood films indicated the public response to the depiction of the battlefields and to what would become the accepted imagery of the war: this manifested itself in the desire for 'realism' which showed the audience what the war 'was really like' (after Hill 1986, 53-54; MacCabe 1974, 7; 1981, 216). This notion of 'realism' in these early films depicting the Western Front is highly important, as the films gained acceptance and popularity amongst the public through the belief that the scenes these films contained were accurate portrayals of reality (after Comolli and Narboni 1971). British films featuring the battlefields released during the interwar period, such as *Mademoiselle from Armentières* (1926) and *The W Plan* (1930), also gave detailed attention to their shots of the front lines, drawing on the representations in the popular literature of the now accepted and desired images of the destruction and desolation of the Western Front (Gledhill 2003, 107). The major films to emerge during the interwar years, and which cemented this concept of the 'realistic depiction' of the Western Front, were the adaptations to cinema in 1930, of *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Journey's End* (Richards 1984, 289; Kelly 1997, 65-75). Perhaps even more vividly than the book, the film provided its audience with scenes of destruction and horror, of blasted trenches, death and mangled bodies (Kelly 1997, 46; Bond 2002, 35-36; Eksteins 1995, 34). The 'realistic' depiction of the horror and the fighting was the greatest technical innovation of the film, with battlefield scenes replete with sounds of rifles, explosions and machine guns (Sorlin 1999, 18). Similarly the film of *Journey's*

End used the same ‘realistic’ images of darkened, dingy dugouts, terrifying bombardments, and filthy trenches, presenting the war as an absolute hell (Kelly 1997, 70; Low 1985, 129). *All Quiet* and *Journey’s End* do represent the use of the core iconography of the Western Front, already present in the major Hollywood films of the early 1920s, and used in the ‘war books boom’ of the period (Paris 1999b, 54; Sorlin 1999, 20).

What constitutes ‘realism’ has been the subject of much debate amongst film scholars, who draw attention to the continually shifting meaning of the word with regard to film (see Deleuze 1986, 141). ‘Realism’ as a visual concept alters with changing forms of technology as well as the social and political climate (after Williams 1989, 239). With regard to the construction of ‘realism’ in the films of the Western Front, although technical innovations and shifts in society have caused alterations in representation, there have nevertheless remained certain core images of the battlefields which have been reiterated and are seen to represent a ‘realistic’ depiction: the trenches, mud, and horror (see Korte 2001). Certainly whilst the appreciation of ‘realism’ amongst the audience will alter through time, in the consideration of the ‘realism’ in the films of the Western Front, what is striking is the reiteration of these images which are supposed to constitute the real (Sorlin 1999). The reception and audience response to these images have indicated to film-makers and production companies the acceptable image of the battlefields: ‘the meanings of popular culture exist only in their circulation’ (Fiske 1989, 4). Realism is thereby constituted by the tastes, habits and beliefs of the audiences of the film or television programme; ‘realism’ is constructed from the desired (after Barthes 1980, 80). ‘Film does not reveal the real in a moment of transparency, but rather that film is constituted by a set of discourses which produce a reality’ (MacCabe 1985, 62). This notion of ‘realism’ originating with the early films of the war has formed an important part in the way in which the Western Front is remembered through the films and indeed television. In many ways this mirrors the established discourse of the war which emerged with the war literature (see Hynes 1991, 423). ‘The images of the war which emerged in the 1930s were neither true nor false, they were partial and limited. We may call them “stereotypes” not because they lie but because they restrict the memory of war to a few recurring pictures’ (Sorlin 1999, 20). These same images can be seen in the films depicting the Western Front during

the 1960s up to the present day. Films such as *Paths of Glory* (1957), *King and Country* (1964) and the film adaptation of *Oh! What a Lovely War* (1969), although drawing upon the counter-cultural, anti-authoritarian popular attitude of the period, retained the key features of the muddy trenches and brutality of the Western Front (Paris 1999b, 67-68). *Paths of Glory* was indeed praised for its 'realism' on its release, as in its opening scenes it featured a terrifying attack by French troops; soldiers stormed over the top amidst a deafening noise, with corpses littering the battlefields and trenches (Nelson 2000, 46). Similarly, *King and Country* attacks the military injustice of the British army, as it sentences a shell-shocked soldier to death, but also contains within it the core features of the filthy trenches, rats and mud, with even a severed arm holding up one of the trench walls. The 'realistic' portrayal of the soldiers is heightened by the use of contemporary photographs of the trenches merging into the films opening scenes. Although a critical success, *King and Country* failed commercially, perhaps as the depiction of the British soldiers as brutal, callous and apparently uncaring did not find favour with the audience (Kelly 1997, 180). This is an example of the way the memory of the Western Front is chosen to be represented by particular narratives. The audience should not be considered as passive participants, but with the forms offered capable of making choices and decisions concerning their acceptance or rejection of forms of representation (after Fiske 1987, 19). These films also featured two diametrically opposed social classes, with the officers drawn from the upper-classes sending the working-class privates to their deaths (Sorlin 1999, 24; Kelly 1997, 176).

This period also witnessed the broadcast of the highly popular twenty-six part BBC television series *The Great War*, screened in 1964 to coincide with the fiftieth anniversaries of the conflict. What is interesting to note is the manner in which the documentary used the images of waste and filth on the front, to great criticism from certain historians, in its episodes devoted to the Western Front (Danchev 1991, 279; Ramsden 2002, 17-18). Indeed, it is these images which had the greatest impact on viewers according to audience reviews (see Bond 2002, 70; Connelly 2002, 21). The series also gained popularity through its apparent 'realistic' depiction of graphic and shocking images of the battlefields, with restored footage and added sound effects (Todman 2002, 32). The BBC television drama series *Days of Hope* (1975), which also propounded a radical

class basis, recounting the stories of individuals during the years 1916-1926, attracted particular concerns for its claims to 'realism' in its depiction of the battlefields and those who fought (MacCabe 1981; McArthur 1981; Hill 1986). As Tribe (1981, 324) observed, regarding the episode which featured the battlefields; 'the tonal quality of the pictures at the Front, and...of the sets, draw heavily on photographs that were taken at the time and which over the years have become recognised as the First World War.' These same images of the front were also utilised by Jarman's powerful *War Requiem* (1989), which set Britten's 'Opus 66' to vivid and haunting scenes. The extent of the establishment of these images as representative of the battlefields can be observed in the two historical documentaries *The Great War and the shaping of the 20th century* (1996; see Winter and Baggett 1996) and *The Western Front* (1999; see Holmes 1999), which were commissioned in time for the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice in 1998. These continued the agenda set by *The Great War* series, by focusing on the brutality of the war and reflecting popular concern that the individual soldier on the battlefield was represented (Badsey 2002, 45; Barnett 1997, 18-19; Sternberg 2002, 214).

Given the prevalence and popularity of these images of the Western Front, depicted through film and television since the Armistice, it is unsurprising that these established images have inevitably become an almost inescapable template for later film and television programmes (after Kelly 1997, 181). Indeed, the British film *Deathwatch* (2002) though criticised for its plot and performances was still praised for its realistic depiction of a 'muddy, corpse-riddled, rat-infested set' (French, 2002). Recent films and television programmes reflect this observation as the films of the Western Front which emerged in the 1990s, *The Trench* (1998) and the cinematic revision of Barker's novel, *Regeneration* (1997) have continued this theme. *The Trench* uses contemporary photographs and paintings of the battlefields and trenches in its opening scenes and its set design (Gerrard, 1999). What is interesting however is the response which the film generated by drawing on the popular memory of the war, with one critic remarking, 'there's nothing new or surprising in *The Trench*, nothing we didn't know already' (Bradshaw, 1999). The recent television 'reality-program', also named *The Trench* (2002) indicates how ingrained these images are as it attempted to recreate the battlefield conditions for a group of men in a muddy

trench in Northern France (see Van Emden 2002). The controversial programme ensured the men wore the right equipment, endured the physical training, and whilst in the trenches kept to the diet and routine of trench life, even including controlled explosions to heighten the sense of 'realism' in its depiction (Branigan, 2001). A number of questions both within the public arena and the popular media were raised regarding taste and decency, with commentators enquiring if a similar reality programme could occur for the concentration camps (see Lawson, 2002). One of the television programmes which has however provoked the most criticism from military historians, but also the most praise from its viewers, for its portrayal of the Western Front, has been the popular *Blackadder Goes Forth* (1989; see Sheffield 1996a; 2002; Bond 2002; Paris 1999a). Set mostly in a filthy dugout on the Western Front, the main characters are placed at the whim of absurd orders, and forced to exist in the filth and deprivation of the front line (Badsey 2001, 116). The final poignant episode, which is frequently labelled as one of the most popular moments on British television (Badsey 2001, 114), follows the characters as they go over the top of the trenches into a filthy no man's land to their deaths (see Curtis *et al* 1999, 452).

Rather than considering the film and television representations of the battlefields in themselves to have formed the popular memory of the Western Front (see Bond 2002), what must be maintained is that viewers 'are not "cultural dopes"', they are not a passive, helpless mass incapable of discrimination' (Fiske 1987, 309). The enduring appeal of these realistic images of the Western Front, of this particular narrative and memory of the battlefields and the soldiers who fought, is one which is chosen to be accepted, a conscious choice by the viewing public (after Fiske and Hartley 1987, 17). 'For a cultural commodity to be popular...it must be able to meet the various interests of the people amongst whom it is popular as well as the interests of its producers' (Fiske 1987, 310). The memory of the Western Front as a preferred reading, is demonstrated in the value and indeed cherished place of the memory within contemporary Britain (see Leese 1997). So dominant is this accepted form of memory that any study that detracts from these established and accepted images faces inevitable criticism and opposition (see Stephen 1998, x). In 1986 the television drama series *The Monocled Mutineer*, based on an earlier novel (see Alison and Fairley

1986), recounted a story of the mutiny at the Étaples base in 1917 (see Dallas and Gill 1975, 88-112; Putkowski 1998, 26). The programme caused a widespread public outcry when televised in Britain, as the main character, Percy Toppliss, did not conform to the ideal of the decent, long-suffering, working class soldier who stoically endured the hardships of war. The representation of British soldiers on the Western Front in the drama, who cheated, lied, raped and mutinied, was also apparently abhorrent to popular perceptions (after DeGroot, 1996, 161; Todman 2003, 115; Putkowski 1998, 26). The analysis of the ways in which the Western Front has been portrayed in film and television, therefore emphasises the importance of considering the representation in the construction of cultural memory (Rigney 2005). Owens (1992) has observed that these representational systems form an essential role in the analysis of culture, revealing the diverse meanings and values which underlie the tactical choices and uses of those representations (de Certeau 1984, 18; Denning 1994, 340). Whilst critics of the popular memory have highlighted the representations in the popular media as being responsible for the popular perceptions of the Western Front, they neglect how the viewers themselves receive and interpret these forms. Though influenced by the decisions taken by the producers of these cultural forms, viewers nevertheless are able to prefer to select particular forms over others, and interpret for themselves the representations which are offered.

Summary

Rather than subscribe to the assumed view that popular memory is perpetuated by the films and novels, this project places itself within the context that the popular memory of the battlefields is a particular cultural choice. This stance ensures that a greater regard is given to the popular memory, whilst it also heightens the responsibility regarding the project's interpretation of the battlefields (after Hamilakis 1999; Shanks 2004b). This responsibility must take note of the reasons for and the character of this popular memory. Certainly the sentimentality and emotive ties of the memorial landscape, the popular histories of the war, the rise of interest in family history, and the representations in fiction and film all point to a specific contemporary concern in the memory of the

Western Front. This can be seen as portraying a poignant memory of the ordinary, individual soldier in the trenches. Such a perspective certainly arises from a sense of moral justification, as the high number of fatalities has ensured the war has come to be remembered as unremittingly horrific and a needless waste; remembering the regular soldier therefore serves to soothe our consciences (see Corrigan 2003). This memory has also ensured that the Western Front has been utilised over the last ninety years as a vehicle for those wishing to express anti-war sentiments, as the battlefields have become *the* image of total industrial war in Britain which is recalled to illustrate the horrors and waste of conflict in general (see Steel, 1998). In this manner the memory of the Western Front has remained politically difficult as successive British Governments have sought to distance themselves from the critical memory of the Government and Military authorities in the accusation of ‘lions led by donkeys.’ An indication of this awkwardness could be witnessed in the procrastination of the Government with regard to the pardons of executed soldiers and in the furore caused by a lack of Government representation during commemorations marking the eightieth anniversary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme (see Duval Smith 1996, 1). Shaw (2005, 133) has reiterated this perspective with his recent critical work regarding the military policies of the West against enemy combatants, remarking that ‘since the slaughter of the trenches we had learned to attach more significance to the lives of soldiers.’ As this memory of the horror, brutality and suffering on the battlefields is evoked as the ‘truth of the war’, the popular memory of the Western Front in Britain perhaps reiterates Rorty’s (1980, 10) re-assertion of the pragmatic claim that truth is only ‘what it is better for us to believe.’

The importance of the memory of the Western Front in contemporary Britain cannot be underestimated, neither can its diverse and multiform articulations, as alongside this ‘anti-war’ memory there also emerges a sense of national identity, with the noble Tommy remembered as enduring stoically with typically British characteristics (see Fussell 1975, 125). This popular memory is often considered to evoke a certain radical element of class conflict, through the same reiteration of ‘lions led by donkeys’; remembering a cruel and callous officer class which sent thousands of working-class soldiers to their deaths (after Winter 2004, 213-214). The effects of this popular memory must be explored

further as despite this apparent militant class rhetoric employed in the memory of the Western Front, the consequence of this memory in contemporary Britain has not been utilised in such a manner; rather, the memory of the battlefields has had a far more conservative consequence (Thorpe 2005). The weight of emotion attached to the battlefields has served to concentrate a national focus on the war. As Cohen (1994, 13) observes, the popular memory of ‘the ineptitude and callousness of the British generals towards the...troops during the First World War’ has propelled British society towards a sense of insular nationalism rather than class conflict (see Reimann 1998, 120). The Western Front has become ingrained within the array of narratives constructing British nationalism and identity, as the soldiers of the British army fighting in a desolate, horrific wasteland, whether cast as phlegmatic, dry-humoured Scotsmen, jovial but dedicated English Tommies, loyal Ulstermen, or patriotic and fervent Welshmen, contribute to a sense of identity and place.

Even the very names of the battles are part of this process, as the Somme or Passchendaele have become synonymous with pity and sorrow, tragic reminders of sacrifice and heroic endeavour. The soldiers of the conflict can still be described as ‘fighting in best Henry Newbolt style’ (Howard 2005, 4). Those who fought are valorised, and the pity and futility with which the war is recalled ensures the Western Front can often be found to be referred to as a ‘British Holocaust’ (see Thorpe 2005, 34-35). Some commentators have suggested that this association with suffering reflects the wider cultural shifts which have occurred in the late twentieth century, which has placed the notion of ‘passive suffering’ and ‘vicarious victim-hood’ as a desirable and advantageous quality (Novick 1999, 5). To state association with those in the past who have suffered is often commented upon as being a key tactic in struggles for representation and identity (Kleinman *et al* 1997, xi). If the construction of identity is regarded as an ongoing discourse, utilising the memory of the past to articulate current desires and needs, then the memory of the suffering soldiers in the trenches on the Western Front can be seen to be used in Britain as a resource to state a distinctive identity concurrent with the prevailing societal context (after Hall 1990, 222; 1996a, 3). Viewed in this way the weight of the emotional impact of the battlefields has ensured that this memory of the Western Front has remained protected and perpetuated within Britain, especially within communities who feel

their sense of identity threatened. Bryan (2000, 55-56; Bryan and Jarman 1997, 222) has illustrated this in his study of how Ulster Unionists recall and commemorate particular historic events, especially the battles fought by the 36th Ulster Division on the Western Front to stress their attachment to Britain. The catharsis witnessed with the commemoration of the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice, and the re-articulation of the memory of the soldiers suffering in the trenches as victims of the war, can also be interpreted as an expression of national identity. As Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland achieved the promise of some form of independence with the referendums on devolution in 1997 and the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998, and with the ever-present debates regarding wider European integration, the concept of the suffering British soldier on the Western Front can be seen as a means for sections of the population to coalesce around a single issue as seemingly well-established national boundaries appeared to be crumbling. As the popular historian Lyn Macdonald (quoted in Stummer 1998, 16) stated at the time, ‘people are interested because they *care*, people *care* about this...People realise it is relevant to our country now.’

Indeed, within the context of the potential ‘break-up’ of Britain and the possibility of further European integration, the memory of the Western Front, especially as the centenary anniversaries approach, may become a highly contested arena as individuals and communities within Britain seek to assert their identities, their history and narratives, and their memories of the past. The memory of the battlefields and its role in the formation of identity might also receive increasing focus from another current area of concern, as terrorist attacks and the detainment of ‘suspected terrorists’ have provided stimulus for discussions regarding the meaning of British citizenship and identity. Therefore the integration of what is considered as a key aspect of British history, which is so often remembered as an ‘exclusionary and private affair’, within a wider multicultural society could become a primary concern (see Gilroy 2004, 99-100). The introduction of archaeology on the Western Front as an interpretative discipline will impact upon these processes and what is already a well-established field of memory analyses (see Fussell 1975; Winter 1995). As archaeology forms its own narrative of the war, tells its own story of the Western Front, it will necessarily engage with and depart from the stories which have preceded the development of an archaeological study, and impact on the stories

which have yet to be told. This will sustain the ‘dialogism’ of alternative narratives and memories expressed and re-expressed through a variety of cultural forms, which has already characterised the memory of the Western Front (see Braybon 2003, 5). Whether through the memorial landscape, historiography, literature, art or the popular media, the Western Front has been remembered in different forms by individuals and groups of individuals (after Brabazon 2005, 76). Though these have all contributed to a popular memory of the battlefields, based around certain limited themes, they nevertheless represent means to retell and rearticulate the Western Front for current needs and desires (Leese 1997, 176). To describe these multiform ways in which the memory of the battlefields can be expressed as a dialogism, follows from the work of Bakhtin (1984; see Holquist 1990, 28; see Todorov 1984, x), who conceived subjectivity as derived from the other. By acknowledging the memory of the Western Front as a dialogism, or a *bricolage* (Derrida 1970, 225), the manner in which the battlefields have been remembered in Britain can be observed as competing forms of knowledge (see Watson 2004). The use and deployment of specific ways of remembering is not a passive act, but a specific engagement with the past in the context of the cultural and social milieu of the present. It is therefore only through this recognition of the value, importance and the selection processes involved in the formation of the popular memory of the battlefields, as well as other categories of knowledge, other forms of remembering, that this project and archaeology as a discipline can begin to examine the ways in which it may contribute to this dialogism and remember the Western Front.

Chapter Four

Methodology

This project will demonstrate how archaeology can act to create an embodied memory of the Western Front by means of the discipline's specific concern for the materials and spaces of the battlefields; by examining the way soldiers experienced the war landscape through their bodies. This project can begin to tell a story which will 'remember' the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium, creating its own narrative as it examines the 'sensuous geography' of the Western Front. This narrative of embodied memory relies on a particular approach to the spaces, landscapes and materials of the Western Front, a humanistic assessment which emphasises how the soldiers in this hostile and dangerous war zone acted to create a 'sense of place' and understanding, how they experienced 'being-in' the war landscape. This study aims to embody memory, by assessing the corporeal experiences of the British soldiers on the Western Front. The concept of a 'sense of place' is therefore essential because to be embodied is to be emplaced (Casey 1996). To make a 'leap into the being of the past' (Deleuze 1988), to locate the body at the centre of memory, is to examine how an individual's corporeality, their being-in-the-world constituted and constructed 'place.' In the construction of an embodied memory this project must focus its attention on the way individuals, moved, reacted and acted within the spaces and with the materials which surrounded them, and how these actions recursively created the sense of place and understanding of this war landscape.

Place

The study of 'a sense of place' has dominated the field of cultural and human geography since the 1960s (Gold 1980; Ley and Samuels 1978; Feld and Basso 1996), but the concern for the human, emotional responses to the surrounding environment can be traced back to the 1930s, originating with the work of the American geographer Carl Sauer (1971; 2001). In part, the concern for assessing 'place' within geography originated in a reaction against the

positivist New Geography which had dominated the discipline; this approach stressed the logical spatial and chronological arrangements within geographical analyses as it attempted to recast geography as a natural science (Hammond and McCullagh 1978). Studies of concepts such as 'place' and 'belonging' by contrast sought to address how human involvement with the world brought about an attachment to a particular area, transforming space into place, an evocative response to a specific area or surrounding (Tuan 1977; Relph 1976; Buttner 1993; Jackson 1994; Ley 2001). 'Place' in this approach is considered to be different from 'space', with the latter assuming a 'fixed, lifeless' quality, and acting as an immobile 'stage for the human drama, an external and eternal complication' (Soja 1996, 169). 'Place' by contrast is defined by the emotions felt among humans by their association with things and locations (Tuan 1998, 452; de Certeau 1984, 117; Lefebvre 1991, 224; Casey 1996, 14). 'Space' is also often associated with positivist Euclidean geometric analysis, as opposed to the nuanced, human perception of 'place' (Tuan 1977, 12). Place as a term is used therefore to describe how physical environments are imbued with particular characteristics and properties by the people who inhabit them (Lovell 1998, 5; Relph 1976, 7). In this respect 'place' can only exist in relation to the humans who act as social agents, who through their actions create meaning within their surroundings (Soja 1996, 10; Urry 1995, 1; Massey 2000, 49). Therefore a sense of place was considered by human and cultural geographers therefore as being at the very core of existence within a world (Auge 1995, 9-10). Relph (1976, 1) described this as, 'to be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know your place.'

Cultural and human geographers utilised Heidegger's (1962, 189) proposal of phenomenology as a method of examining the human context within the world as through our experiences we negotiate, and make sense of our surroundings. Phenomenology uncovers the processes of making manifest the way we encounter the world (Relph 1976, 16; Levinas 1998a, 156-157). It is because of this active engagement with the world that humans create a sense of place and belonging as whilst we are in the world we are not, and never can be, radically detached from it (Merleau-Ponty 1962, xvi-xvii). The phenomenological significance of place has been examined by human and cultural geographers, as they have assessed the various ways in which places are

characterised as meaningful or loaded with intention and purpose, or places which call to mind the experiences and evoke the aspirations of people (Tuan 1977, 26; Relph 1976, 55; Buttimer 1980, 167). In this approach place as an investigative concept and term has come to dominate and influence a number of disciplines across the humanities and the social sciences (Agnew and Duncan 1989; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Bender 1998; 2001; Dovey 1999; Feld and Basso 1996; Gosden 1994; Guptor and Ferguson 1997; Hillier and Hanson 1984; Hirsch 1995; hooks 1990; Keith and Pile 1993; Massey 1994; Norberg-Schultz 1985; Tilley 1994). 'Place' has also become the site of social, cultural, national, ethnic, gender and political contestations, as the formation of place is seen to be of the utmost importance for individuals and groups, and issues of representation, agency and resistance are present within these debates (Allen 2003; Bender 1998; 2001; Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Haraway 1991; Duncan and Ley 1992; Grosz 1995; Irigaray 1991; 1993; Keith and Pile 1993; Massey 1994; McDowell 1999).

These studies have utilised the work of Foucault (1979; 1980) to describe the way in which individuals experience of place and space are controlled and ordered. Foucault (1979, 198) examined how the organisation of space by governing institutions enabled the control over others, a domination which facilitated the creation of a 'docile body', an individual who could be manipulated and controlled through spatial forms (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 188). This perspective is best illustrated within Foucault's discussion of Bentham's panopticon where power and domination are expressed through spatial forms (Foucault 1979, 195). 'The panopticon brings together knowledge, power, the control of the body, and the control of space into an integrated technology of discipline' (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, 189). Through the manipulation of space, power over individuals could be created and maintained, thereby transforming the individual (see Foucault 1979, 128-129; 1980, 47). Through the adherence to these norms, through the governance of space and thereby place, the individual will alter their own self as these power relations became internalized within the body (Foucault 1980, 186; Halperin 1995, 18). Foucauldian theory doesn't entail that people are passive automatons forged by a dominating, hierarchical society (see Habermas 1987, 293), but examines a far more nuanced assessment of the seductive nature of power, and how agents turn

themselves into subjects (Foucault 1982, 208; 1998, 95-96).

The work of Lefebvre (1991; 1996; 2003) has also been highly influential in these analyses of the control and manipulation of space (see Soja 1996).

Lefebvre (1991) relies on a Marxist critique in his observation that space is entirely bound up with the forces of production, and is therefore the outcome of a series of ongoing social conflicts (Debord 1989, 6-7). It is through the human involvement with space by which particular spaces are imagined and imbued with purpose. Lefebvre also remarked that how people make sense of where they carry out activities; 'such a space is determined by what may take place there, and consequently by what may not take place there' (Lefebvre 1991, 224). This attribution of meaning to space is at all times subject to control and observation, as 'space commands bodies prescribing or proscribing gestures, routes and distances to be covered' (Lefebvre 1991, 143).

Similarly, the social and cultural conflicts involved in the formation of space have also been assessed by de Certeau (1984, xiv-xv) who described how individuals act to realign their social and spatial surroundings. These studies, especially Foucault's (1979; 1980), have also highlighted the importance of the body in the study of place. In fact the analysis of the body in space and place has only arisen as a serious object of study in the last three decades, with the advent of critiques of modernism, consumer culture and the impact of feminism being the main instigators for this work (Grosz 1995; Butler 1993; Irigaray 1993; Shilling 1993; Bourdieu 1977; 1990; Falk 1994; Turner 1992; Csordas 1994; Connell 1995). These studies have examined how the body is controlled and ordered through space, a process of 'disciplining the body' (Foucault 1979, 136). Although Foucauldian (1979; 1980) theory and 'panopticism' has dominated this aspect of research (after Meskell 1996; Crossley 1996; Lash 1984), other theorists from a variety of disciplines and perspectives have done much to further and expand this study of the body (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Csordas 1993; 1994; 1999). One of the most influential figures in this study has been Bourdieu (2004, 62-63) who described how the body incorporates social values through the spatial forms in which it operates, and the ordering of those spatial forms inscribes these values within the body. Similarly, Giddens (1984, 188) has described manipulations of space, *locales*, which act as the sites of human interaction and agency, but which can also constrain activity because of their

physical form, or the meanings associated with it (Giddens 1984, xxv). This work shares many similarities with Heideggerian phenomenology, which also assessed how the body acts recursively with spatial forms, as Heidegger (1962, 419) stated that 'Dasein takes space in; this is to be understood literally.' What is distinct in these studies of space and place is the manner in which Cartesian divisions of body and mind are dismissed. Whereas Descartes (1986, 54) proposed that 'the mind, by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from the body', contemporary studies of place and space have been informed by the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1968). Merleau-Ponty (1962, 139) viewed the body as a being involved in the world, therefore, the body exists in a place and becomes associated with it; 'I am not in space and time nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them. My body combines with them and includes them' (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 140).

Archaeology and Place

The work of these theorists and the developments within human and cultural geography has greatly influenced the theories and interpretations of archaeologists who seek to examine the ways individuals acted and reacted to their surroundings in the past (Thomas 1993a, 28; 2001, 174; Hodder 1987, 139-141; Shanks 1992, 152; 1997, iii; Tilley 1993b, 81; 1994, 12; 1995, 55; 2004, 7; Bender 1993, 3-4; 1998, 7; Gosden 1994, 80; 1999, 154; Blake 2004, 230-231; Evans 1985, 80-81). This work has been utilised especially in the development of a post-processual landscape analysis in archaeology (see Bender 1993). Landscape archaeology and contemporary archaeological studies of space and place have expanded over the last two decades, moving beyond empirical, functional assessments of landscape (Clarke 1977; Hodder and Orton 1976; Binford 1978; 1983; Aston and Rowley 1974), to a more humanised assessment of being, dwelling and inhabiting the landscape (after Thomas 1993a, 19). Preucel and Meskell (2004, 219) view this process which has been ongoing since the 1980s, as a crucial move from a conception of 'landscape as passive to landscape as active.' Landscape archaeology and a 'landscape perspective' are now considered 'central to the archaeological programme as a whole because the

history of human life is about ways of inhabiting the world' (Barrett 1999, 30). Although landscape archaeology does represent a diversity of approaches, theories and methods (Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Ashmore 2004; David and Wilson 2002; Edmonds 1999; Evans 1985; Yamin and Metheny 1996; Barker 1981; Rowley 1978; Taylor 1975), this particular 'humanised' conception of landscape has taken a dominating role within contemporary archaeology (Chadwick 2004; Darvil 1998; Darvill and Gojda 1999). Influenced by the work of cultural geographers and the study of place, 'landscapes' in this theoretical standpoint are considered to be constructed and developed as 'a set of values, meanings and understandings', which are created in response to what people may see around them, what they are told and their social situation (Thomas 2001, 174; Tilley 1994, 12; Layton and Ucko 1999, 3).

Recent British archaeological interest in landscapes has focussed upon the construction of prehistoric landscapes, as a primary source of involvement in the world, deriving from the establishment of human belonging and emplacement (Bender 1993, 5; 1998, 4; Brück and Goodman 2003, 14; Darvill 1998, 104; Tilley 1994, 10-12; 2004, 8; Edmonds 1999, 3-4; Barrett 1994, 14; Gosden 1994, 33-36; Bradley 1998b, 100; 2000, 1-11; Lane 2000, 531). Landscapes are considered to be turned into places by human action and involvement; specific places in the landscape are created out of undifferentiated space by this process of becoming imbued with particular meanings for the individuals who inhabit the landscape (Gosden 1994, 34). The work of the anthropologist Ingold (1993; 1995; 2000) has been especially influential in this study, as his model of the 'taskspace', to describe how space is given purpose and understanding through human activities, has been utilised by recent landscape studies. Tilley (1994; 1995; 1996; 2004) has also drawn upon the work of Heidegger (1962) and Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1968) to create a phenomenological understanding of prehistoric landscapes, and to examine how past individuals experienced 'being-in-the-world' (see also Thomas 1996; 2001; Kirk 1997; Gosden 1994; Shanks 1992). Both concepts of the 'taskscape' and phenomenology have been criticised for their perceived failings in attempts to understand the particularity and diversity of the individuals' understanding of the world (Bender 1998, 37; Hind 2004, 39; Brück 1998, 28). The Heideggerian notion of the *dasein* is a concept noted by critics as fundamentally too simplistic to deal with the complex and

multiple human processes which create a sense of place (after Sartre 1996, 430). The model of the *dasein*, as used in these landscape analyses, does not only rely on a singular perspective of landscape, but takes into account the polysemous and contested nature of a landscape perspective (Bender 1998, 5). These studies use the *dasein* to question the socialised nature of the landscape, the 'existential space' in which social participation creates a meaningful place (Tilley 1994, 16-17). Schutz (1970; 1972) stressed that a phenomenological analysis can assess the 'life-world' of an individual or group, but can also account for the variety of perspectives which constitute this 'life-world'; indeed, the 'life-world', 'is by no means homogenous but exhibits a multiform structure' (Schutz 1972, 139).

It is important to stress that the term 'landscape' in these archaeological analyses does not refer completely to the physical, natural environment, but also the human creations which are placed in the landscape, both structures and material artefacts (Chadwick 2004, 1). 'Place' therefore must be considered as conceptual, physical and material (Attfield 2000, 179). The perceived absence of the study of the material context in contemporary landscape studies has been a source of criticism (Hind 2004, 39; Olsen 2003, 87). Material culture, whether through artefacts or architectural structures, certainly represents an essential component for the assessment of a landscape (Bender 1993, 3). It forms a link between individuals and their world, a way of understanding the surrounding environment (see Attfield 2000, 5; Ingold 1986, 6; Pfaffenberger 2004, 70). Latour (1993; 1999) has suggested through what is termed actor network theory (ANT), that material objects should be considered alongside humans as agents in the world. Arguing that a purely human perspective is inevitably limiting, ANT states that humans alongside other factors such as material culture, animals, the environment and physical geography should be considered as equal participants in a network which forms what we would term 'society' (Law 1992). Material culture certainly possesses agency; individuals use material objects, which in turn act upon them to create, and recreate behaviour and perceptions (Tilley 1996; 1999; Miller 1985; 1987). The importance of the assessment of material culture has indeed become so prominent that to an extent it can be said to have formed its own sub-discipline outside of the wider study of archaeology (Miller 1985; 1987; 1995; Miller and Tilley 1996; Greene 2004; Graves-Brown 2000; Pfaffenberger 2004). This separation has served to refine the theories and debates

concerning the use and application of material culture, though theoretical perspectives within the study do mirror to some extent the current concerns within archaeology (Graves-Brown 2000; Pfaffenberger 2004). Although studies of modern material culture seem to be mainly dominated by functional arguments (see Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 112), and issues of consumption and production (see Berger 1992; Schlereth 1985; Miller 1993; 1995; 2001a; 2001b; Rathje 1979; 1993; Schiffer 1991; Hall 2000; Gould and Schiffer 1981), theorists examining material culture in the present and in historical contexts have also considered the actual use of objects by human agents and the relationships between objects and the humans who use them (Attfield 2000; Ingold 1990; 1993; Latour 1987; 1992; 2000; 2002; Lemonnier 2002; Prown 2002; Dobres 1995; 2000; Tilley 1999).

This particular area of study has proven to be of especial concern, as through use and application material culture and technology is attributed with meaning, value and purpose for individuals and groups (Bijker and Law 1997; Pinch and Bijker 1987; MacKenzie and Wajcman 1999). In this manner objects can be used as a means to convey information, but also to control and shape identity and behaviour, and even social and cultural definitions such as gender (Cowan 1979; Cockburn 1981; 1983; Latour 1993; Murphie and Potts 2003). Though alternative perspectives have emerged, the dominating theories within this field of material culture and technological studies have been Marxist notions of production, domination, control and alienation (MacKenzie 1984; 1996; Callon 1987; Noble 1979). 'What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production' (Marx and Engels 1965, 32; Marx 1973a, 92). The human subject's materiality, in this traditional Marxist perspective, reflects and shapes the wider social structure (Marx and Engels 1985, 87; Marx 1973b, 114). 'The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life' (Marx and Engels 1965, 37).

Whilst this Marxist perspective has provided inspiration for those studying material culture (MacKenzie 1984; Miller 1987; Shanks and Tilley 1987a), a number of theorists within material culture studies and archaeologists

have begun to explore alternative approaches. These include Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *habitus* and its role in material culture (see Gosden 1994, 114-115), but it is Heidegger's (1962) (see Zimmerman 1990; Lovitt and Lovitt 1995; Ihde 1979) phenomenological writings on the relationship between technology and individuals which have become particularly important both for the study of material culture and the practice of contemporary archaeology (Dobres 2000; Thomas 1996; Tilley 1999). Heidegger (1962; 1977; 1996) assessed the bodily engagement with technology and the embodied experience of materials; how as individuals experience the material world around them, they simultaneously realign their own perceptions of the world and their concepts of the material they use (Heidegger 1962, 98; 1977, 12; see Levinas 1998b, 167). This is reflected in the concept of 'ready-to-hand', which Heidegger forwarded as representing an engagement with the material world, an understanding of the object and its use; 'the ready-to-hand is always understood in terms of actuality of involvements' (Heidegger 1962, 191).

It is through the material world in this analysis that individuals begin to comprehend their wider circumstances in the environment; 'when equipment for something or other has its place, this place defines itself as the place of this equipment – as one place out of a whole totality of places (*platzgunzheit*) directionally lined up with each other and belonging to the context of equipment that is environmentally ready-to-hand' (Heidegger 1962, 136). Heidegger (1996, 19) rejected the Marxist concept of alienation through the means of production, and argued that the 'assessment that contemporary humanity has become the slave of machines and mechanisms is...superficial.' Heideggerian theory concerning the role of technology and materials has provided archaeologists and theorists of technology with an alternative perspective and through this approach they can now conceive that 'the essence of technology is by no means anything technological' (Heidegger 1977, 4). Material culture should not therefore be considered as mere passive objects, but rather as active, always creating the world anew (after Bourdieu 1977, 90). 'They define nature, the world and ourselves. Objects change the world, and we ourselves rediscover and redefine the world through objects' (Lubar 1993, 197; Dobres 2000, 89; Keightly 1987, 91-92).

Embodied Memory and the Western Front

It is these approaches, studying the embodied experiences of space, place, landscape and materials, which will be used to construct an embodied memory of the Western Front. This embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front is based on the corporeal experiences of the soldiers as they served in the trenches, how they acted and reacted in the war landscape, how they came to imbue their surroundings with meaning and value, how they constructed a sense of place in a hostile landscape. Archaeology in this project is used as a practice of embodied memory as it seeks to interpret the spaces and materials of the past and remember how past individuals through their own bodies acted and reacted with these features. A 'landscape perspective' focusing on the construction of 'place' in the war landscape can begin to interpret the materials and spaces of the battlefields to question how soldiers reacted to different parts of the battle zone, the alternative meanings different sections may have held for the soldiers, as well as a broader examination of the perceptions of the objects they used. It is through this study of place that an embodied memory of the Western Front can be assessed, and a radically new agenda for the study of the war considered, as it encourages the deliberation of areas of study which have traditionally remained unexamined in historical studies (Saunders 2001, 43). Through this project's innovative study of the war landscape as it was experienced by the British soldiers, how these men came to an understanding of their surroundings can be examined. This construction of a 'sense of place' enables a novel perspective on the memory of the battlefields to emerge, as the body of the soldiers becomes the focus of memory, because it is through the body's experience of the landscape, movement through space and engagement with materials that an embodied memory is created (after Heidegger 1962, 446). This embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front is not based therefore on the whole gamut of the physical experiences of the British soldier. Constipation, trench feet, diet, venereal disease, clothing, experiences of latrines, sex and masturbation are not featured in the study. This is not an attempt to sanitise or devalue what may be considered to be either the more mundane or sensational features of the lives of the soldiers (see Gibson 2001). These areas are not addressed in this work in

r to draw a distinction between this project with its objective of an embodied memory and the array of descriptive histories which have revealed the smallest details of the soldiers' lives (see Brown 2001). These studies provide no more than a voyeuristic perspective on the past because it disconnects the soldiers and their experiences from the war landscape. By focusing on how a 'sense of place' constructed in this project the corporeal experiences of the soldiers can be examined beyond a descriptive agenda, towards an explanation of how these experiences shaped the understanding of the war landscape.

To examine these embodied experiences of past individuals, this study will draw on the vast array of evidence available for the study of the Western Front (Simkins 1991; Bond 1991). This will include the details of the materials and spaces of the battlefields obtained through excavations. Although the amount of work published concerning archaeological projects on the Western Front is limited, these reports do provide an original source of data. Archaeological reports highlight the shape, layout and size of the trench lines and dugouts, revealing the physical confinement of the soldier's world. Excavations also provide evidence regarding the material of the war through the various artefacts recovered (OVPW, 2005; *The Diggers*, 2005; Fabiansson, 2004; A.W.A., 2004; Price, 2003; 2004; Schnapp 1998; Boura 1997; 1998; 2000). This project will further this archaeological agenda on the battlefields by making use of the large quantity of primary and secondary archive material (Liddle Collection, 2005; IWM, 2005) available in soldiers' letters and diaries, as well as veterans memoirs and oral testimonies (after Bourke 1996; Brown 2001; MacDonald 1983; Winter 1978; Liddle 1988). This original use of such documentary evidence in this archaeological project does not detract from its focus on the materials and spaces of the battlefields. The aim of this project is to create an embodied memory of the Western Front by examining the war landscape, the materials and spaces of the battlefields; if such a landscape perspective is to be taken then it is this social experience of the landscape that must also be assessed (after Newsome 2003, 42). This relationship, and the conflicts and potential common ground between historical sources and archaeological evidence in periods of the recent past is a recurring theme within historical archaeology (see Shanks and Tilley 1987a; Hodder 1999; Leone and Crosby 1987; Snodgrass 1985a; 1985b; Andr n 1998; Moreland 2003; Johnson 1996; 1999). Traditionally, historians have viewed

archaeological evidence as supplementary and inferior, and ‘the potential contribution of archaeology to history’ is ‘inversely proportional to the quantity and quality of the available written sources’ (Finley 1975, 93). Archaeologists working within these recent periods of history have highlighted how the material condition of people’s lives has gone largely unexamined by historians (see Hunt 1989). This approach considering both material and documentary evidence provides a new agenda and an opportunity to enrich our knowledge of the past (see Johnson 1996, 18; Andr en 1998, 4; Schnapp 1998, 25).

The evidence derived from personal papers and memoirs will be used in an original manner to examine the perceptions and experiences of the war landscape. Whilst this archival data on the Western Front has been drawn upon repeatedly by historians over the last forty years the potential of examining this data with new research questions is quite apparent (see Liddle and Richardson 1996). Ward (2004, 93) has questioned historians’ restricted use of this resource, arguing that it has merely reproduced historical narratives which conform to a standard pattern of interpretation of the Western Front. This criticism is perhaps best illustrated by the consideration of the numerous popular histories which have emerged over the last forty years, as although this primary and secondary archival material is used by these historians to examine the ‘ordinary soldiers’ viewpoint, this is still considered within the major events in the grand narratives of the war (see MacDonald 1983). This project brings a distinctive and original agenda to the study of these documents by using its own questions, and its specific concerns for spaces and materials (see Anderton 2002). Much of this archival material was collected from the 1960s and 1970s with the knowledge that the generation which had fought was passing on, and that this perspective of the Great War on the Western Front had yet to be fully examined (see Middlebrook 1971; Liddle and Richardson 1996). Some historians have questioned the validity of soldiers’ recollection of events, which were in some oral testimonies relayed nearly fifty years after the events themselves (Simkins 1991, 292). Unarguably, however, the critical use of this material has greatly benefited research in the period (Bourke 1996; Liddle and Richardson 1996; Saunders 2002b). Although soldiers’ letters and diaries were collected ‘to preserve first-hand individual experiences of the First World War’ (Liddle Collection, 2005), researchers interviewing veterans were concerned to record

particular aspects of their war experiences which were thought relevant to current historical interest (see Simpson 1984). These included motivations for joining up, their part in the major events of the war, discipline, army life at the front and behind the lines, and attitudes to the high command (Liddle and Richardson 1996). Despite the lack of direct questions regarding the spaces and materials of the war which would benefit an alternative study of the Western Front, the value of this resource is not depleted. Within these sources are the soldiers' perceptions and experiences of the landscape, which though perhaps described unknowingly, are nevertheless still present and can therefore be investigated to question alternative research topics and bring an original agenda to the study of the battlefields (after Anderton 2002, 197; Newsome 2003, 42). Such is the vast quantity of detailed data available in this resource, that combined with the evidence of excavations, this study examining how soldiers created a sense of place on the battlefields, can be described as an ethnographic analysis of the Western Front. Using soldiers' diaries, letters, memoirs and oral accounts to examine their perceptions, one can examine how they experienced the materials and spaces of the Western Front (after Reverchon and Gaudin 1998).

This particular type of documentary evidence is certainly ideal for this study, as it is abundant and from a wide social base, as successive Education Acts before the war ensured that the majority of soldiers were likely to be literate (Winter 1978, 16-17). It must however be remembered that this evidence could well be representative of a better-educated middle and upper class, as letter writing and diaries, the latter officially forbidden by the army, may have been more common in the higher ranks (Simkins 1991, 292). There must also inevitably be a degree of scepticism attached to some of the soldiers' letters, diaries and later accounts. The audience of the letters in particular must be considered, as soldiers writing home to their families and loved ones would often describe brutal scenes from the front line, and it must be expected that some of these could be on occasion embellished (Bourke 1999, 8-12). This evidence nevertheless, has provided a broad range of viewpoints and detailed information for this analysis and represents a highly valuable resource (Bourke 1996, 15). The project will also make use of the poems and memoirs of literary figures to assist in creating a detailed picture of the landscape and the soldiers' actions within it. Some historians have decried approaches that utilise this material in

analysing the Western Front or the Great War (see Bond 2002, 25). Terraine (1972, ix-xix) argued that this evidence is ‘true only of particular moods and particular frames of mind experienced at certain times, and in these cases expressed by men of rare sensitivity and articulateness.’ Many historians claim the war poetry and the post-war memoirs were merely a reaction of a highly educated officer class and not representative of the wider army. Those in the lower ranks would have held different experiences of the war, as class lines perceived and defined the experiences of the soldiers (Leed 1978, 680-681). Ward (2004) however states that these views are indicative of the limited use historians have made of this material and highlight an unwillingness to engage with alternative forms of evidence and representation. The poetry and memoirs from literary figures are a ‘crucial resource’ for this project, as it seeks to develop its own narrative of the war. Certainly, class lines were significant in the experience of the war, so much so that there can never be a fully comprehensive account of the war experience for the soldiers, as any analysis claiming to be a “true” account would be illusory (Watson 2004, 272); ‘the war produced a near infinity of profound experiences’ (Ashworth 1980, 22). To use a landscape perspective is to accept these diverse viewpoints, to realise that landscape and a sense of place are constructed from these shifting and various perspectives, and to incorporate this into its narrative (after Bender 1998).

An Ethnographic Study

To term this study of the archival and archaeological evidence of the British soldiers of the Great War an ethnographic investigation entails that a number of points need to be clarified. The study will focus on soldiers in the British army who were from Britain. Soldiers from Ireland, Ulster or the rest of the Commonwealth are not included to provide a fixed basis of examination in a limited study. This is not to suggest that soldiers from Britain can be treated as a homogenous unit, regional and class differences would have inevitably impacted upon experience on the battlefield (McCartney 2005). This ethnographic study does not attempt generalisations however but seeks to examine the diverse ways in which soldiers constructed a sense of place on the Western Front (after Latour

2005). Ethnography should be thought of in this respect as fundamentally a method of studying a culture or group of people from their own perspective (Fetterman 1989, 30; Fielding 2001, 46). 'Ethnography means describing a culture and understanding a way of the life from the point of view of its participants' (Punch 1998, 157). In the construction of an ethnographic analysis of the British soldiers of the Western Front, the abundant evidence available ensures a 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, 5) is possible, though there remains the possibility of being overwhelmed by the evidence (after Price 2004, 188). The archaeological and archival sources will therefore be researched with three specific questions;

- i) What was the main material and physical conditions for the soldier in the trench system?
- ii) What were the soldiers' reactions and perceptions to these material and physical conditions?
- iii) How did this materiality and spatiality impact on the soldier in the construct of a 'sense of place' in the war landscape?

This study will include the details of the materials and spaces obtained through excavations which have revealed the physical and material conditions of the soldiers' world (OVPW, 2005; The Diggers, 2005; Fabiansson, 2004; A.W.A., 2004; Price, 2003; 2004; Schnapp 1998; Boura 1997; 1998; 2000). It will coordinate this material with the large quantity of primary and secondary archival sources available with soldiers' letters and diaries, as well as veterans' memoirs and oral testimonies (see Liddle Collection, 2005; IWM, 2005). Both sources of evidence, archaeological and archival, will be examined for the years of static trench warfare from November 1914 to the recommencement of a more mobile form of warfare in September 1918. The excavated material and spaces and the archival documents will be examined to gain an insight into the perception of the war landscape by the British soldiers. Although the excavated features and materials of the battlefields would also have been used by Commonwealth soldiers who were integrated into the British army as well as other Allied troops, which ensures a difficulty in this respect of presenting a distinct study of the British soldiers, the detail of the archival material which

describes this evidence can be classified as belonging to soldiers from Britain and who served in British regiments (see Liddle and Richardson 1996).

To construct a phenomenological ethnographic study of the soldiers, the work of Schutz (1970; 1972) will be utilised to provide an understanding of the 'life-world' of the British soldiers on the Western Front. Schutz (1970, 72) argued using Husserlian philosophy that a phenomenological analysis of the individual's perception of their surroundings; the manner in which facts, objects and events are imbued with significance was not only achievable but also the real goal in the study of the human sciences (see Schrag 1970, 115; Ihde 1973, 17-18; 1979, 50). 'The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience' (Moustakas 1994, 13). Through the careful and detailed observation of the actions and environment of the agent in the social world, Schutz (1972, 101) speculated that the observer could begin to interpret the 'life-world' of the group or individual under study through the 'perceptions of his body in motion.' Although acknowledging, as many contemporary ethnographers have (see Clifford 1983; 1986; Van Maanen 1988; 1995), that complete understanding is inevitably impossible, and that any ethnographic study can only be a representation (see Wolf 1992), Schutz (1972, 99) nevertheless regarded that through the detailed study of the agent, their actions and their immediate physical and material environment, a phenomenological analysis could be achieved. Following this example, a structured and detailed approach to the evidence is needed to ensure that the collection of data is processed rigorously, and the evidence is selected with regard to the research questions stated above. Therefore, this project will follow a series of guidelines developed after those set out by Patton (1990, 273) for the formulation of an ethnographic study.

- i) Be descriptive in taking notes from sources.
- ii) Gather a variety of information from different perspectives.
- iii) Cross-reference and triangulate by gathering different kinds of data – soldier's personal observations, veteran's recollections, official histories, archaeological finds, and contemporary photographs – and using multiple methods.

- iv) Use quotations; represent those studied in their own terms. Capture the individual's views of their experiences in their own words.
- v) Select key sources of evidence wisely and use them carefully. Draw on the information available with individual's informed perspectives, but keep in mind that these perspectives are limited.

This approach is similar to the work which has been conducted under the approach of ethnohistory (Carmack 1972; Sturtevant 1966; Harvey and Prem 1984; Voegelin 1954), and complements Saunders's (2002a; 2004) call for an anthropologically informed archaeological study of the Western Front (see Audoin-Rouzeau 1998). This project can certainly draw upon the work undertaken within ethnohistory, as such studies regularly employ documentary materials, ethnographic and archaeological data within a framework derived from historical and anthropological approaches (Baemis 1961, 70; Mintz and Price 1976, 44; Pratap 2000, 29; Grumet 1995, 6; Karakasidou 1997, xv; Sahlins 1985, 72; Swadesh 1976, 31). Such an approach 'attempts to show not merely what people thought but how they thought – how they construed the world, invested it with meaning and infused it with emotion' (Darnton 1984, 3; 1990, 332). This ethnohistoric methodology assesses the materials and documents of the past in the manner of an ethnographic study; it examines these sources to derive an impression of the actions of individuals in the past, and it is the analysis of these actions which form the basis of inquiry (Isaac 1982, 347). This method of examining the past from the perspective of those who experienced it entails a different approach and agenda to the documents and sources of the past; to ask new questions of data which may have already been well studied by other scholars (Isaac 1982, 324; Denning 1988, 99; 1989, ix; 1994, 5). 'Not only must the ethnohistorian search for new facts, he must dare to be innovative and creative in working with the facts. He must search out new ideas, explore their ramifications, and develop their theoretical implications' (Schwerin 1976, 323). Ethnohistory combines the innovative use of documents and archives, with the study of the material and physical conditions of those in the past, to produce an interpretation 'in the ethnographic grain' (Darnton 1984, 3).

An Archaeological Narrative

This ethnography of the Western Front will certainly offer an original narrative of the battlefields. Narratives of the Western Front as presented through the memorial landscape, military history, oral history, cultural history, literature, artistic and media representations offer distinct versions and selections of events and interests, particular means by which the Western Front is remembered (after Ashplant *et al* 2000, 5). Although society can act upon these narratives, choosing their own preferred reading of cultural forms to suit their own desires these are inevitably still structured to some extent by these original forms (after de Certeau 1984, 18). By examining the narratives in which governments, historians, artists, poets and authors have depicted and represented the battlefields since the Armistice, the Western Front can be observed as a narrative construction, whereby events, themes, processes and characters are filtered, selected and placed within these discourses (see White 1978, 51). These have created narratives which depict the Western Front and remember it in a particular manner; whether this is the political machinations of the generals and the governments, the details and logistics of the decisive battles, heroism and sacrifice of those who fought, the suffering of the ordinary soldiers or the 'ironic nature' of the war (Braybon 2003). As archaeology begins to examine, interpret and eventually retell a story of the Western Front, archaeologists will inevitably and necessarily construct their own narratives, their own selections of events and expressions for areas of concern (Boura 1997; 2000). The question of how archaeology should begin to provide its own narrative of the Western Front and how this narrative will 'remember' the battlefields is an issue which has yet to be addressed. Studies have thus far placed their discussion and interpretations within an established historical narrative, focusing on the major events of the war (Piédalue, 2003; The Diggers, 2005). By the sheer volume of discourse describing, explaining and analysing the Western Front from a variety of historical and literary perspectives, it might be considered that archaeology will inevitably conform to an established mode of representation; 'captive in a network of language, writing, knowledge and even narration' (Derrida 1992a, 281). This project demonstrates archaeology is more than a means of illustration

for the events of the war on the Western Front, by telling and remembering an original story within the study of the battlefields (Boura 2000, 31; Audoin-Rouzeau 1998, 105).

This investigation through its concern for the materiality and spatiality of the past can create an 'intimate perception of the human reality of the war', and thereby a distinct memory of the Western Front, drawing upon but ultimately separate from historical and literary studies (Boura 1997, 15; 2000, 31; Schnapp 1998, 27). This archaeological narrative of the Western Front will inevitably have different agendas and areas of concern than more established historical or literary narratives. For the purposes of this project, what becomes a central topic of enquiry in the study of the impact of archaeology on the memory of the Western Front, is the mode in which these narratives are presented (after White 1978; 1981). In the creation of an embodied memory of the Western Front, the narrative style in which the past is remembered is crucial, as it is through this narrative that this project attempts to re-embody the memory of the past (see Shanks 2004a, 150). Boura (1997, 15), has described this process of writing and remembering in his examination of the remains of soldiers excavated on the Western Front; he expresses his method as passing from the skeleton, to the corpse, to the soldier, moving from the distal end of the forelimb of the skeleton, to the hand of the archaeologist as writer. Writing in this manner represents an effort to recapture the embodied experiences of the past, an attempt 'not to obliterate the picture, not to forget' (Cixous 1993, 7).

The historical and literary narratives of the Western Front are often taken as the model or a framework for the archaeological narratives of the battlefields (see Piédalue, 2003; Price 2004). These established narratives have created a particular way of viewing and remembering the war, as they assess, dissect and retell the activities of either the high command or the infantryman (see Cobley 1993). Despite the apparent irreconcilable positions which are frequently voiced by historians regarding literary and historical representations of the battlefields (Badsey 2001), the historical and literary approaches do share a grounding principle, which both structures their respective narratives and impacts upon the memory of the conflict. Both narrative styles rely on the chronological ordering of events to provide a coherent and presentable narrative of the war. Using official documents, personal memories', private papers, oral testimonies or the

author's imagination, events on the Western Front are constructed in chronological order, to explain and narrate the circumstances of the conflict from August 1914 to November 1918, and the specific events, individuals and battles of the war (Cobley 1993, 3). Ricœur (1981, 131; 1984, 208; 1994, 13), states that this is the key feature and *raison d'être* of the narrative form, especially the historical narrative, as linear narratives offer the only way in which an event can be comprehended. 'A complete description of an event should therefore register everything that happened, in the order in which it happened...that is, the whole truth concerning this event cannot be known until after the fact and long after it has taken place' (Ricœur 1984, 145). In this position, linear narrative form derives its power and value from what Ricœur (1984, 168) terms 'emplotment.' Narrative meaning is enabled within emplotment because we can read into narratives the anticipation of its structuring power of a beginning, middle and end; granted by the position of retrospective analysis these historical narratives can be ordered and emploted (Ricœur 1984, 76; Brooks 1984, 94). Ricœur leans heavily on Aristotle's conception of plot for his theories of narrative, as Aristotle (1941, 1462) in his *Poetics* stated that 'a whole is that which has beginning, middle and end.' Such conceptions of linear narratives of the Western Front have dominated the representation of the battlefields, providing a frame of reference and an established form of discourse, ensuring that the conflict is remembered and represented in a similar manner (after Goffman 1975; Foucault 1977). Popper (1957, 135) argued that such representations should always be considered not as 'real' or 'true' articulations of fact, but necessary reductions as part of the explanation offered in historical narratives. The apparent self-evident nature of these linear narratives should therefore not go unexamined, as this narrative form does not necessarily represent the only way in which the war on the Western Front can be narrated or remembered (after Kermode 1990, 31).

Ricœur's (1984) conception of narrative rests upon the traditional structuralist notion of narrative, as forming a bounded space in which events are relayed in chronological order. Post-structuralist and postmodern theorists have undermined this conception of narrative and narrative theory by focusing on the multiplicity, open-endedness and acentered nature of narratives (Hutcheon 1989, 76). The Derridean (1979a, 87) concept of deconstruction has also been used to question structuralist, linear narratives and what were presumed to be the

'classical assurances of history and the genealogical narrative' (Derrida 1989, 15). As Derrida (1979a, 86) states, 'the "line" represents only a particular model, whatever might be its privilege.' Foucault (1980, 114), naming himself as an anti-structuralist, reiterated this position by stating that the structuralist conception of narrative was undermined by, 'realising that there are actually a whole order of levels of different types of events differing in amplitude, chronological breadth, and capacity to produce effects.' This describes the fluidity of the post-structuralist narrative form, unrestricted in terms of narrator, plot, structure, agent or focalization (Gibson 1996; Currie 1998); 'The center is at the center of the totality... totality has its center elsewhere. The center is not a center (Derrida 1978, 248).

Using these postmodern and poststructuralist examinations of narrative, this project, studying the hitherto unexamined areas of the materiality and spatiality of the conflict on the Western Front, can create its own distinctive narrative structure. For the purposes of this study of an embodied memory, and its attempt to study how the British soldiers acted and reacted within the war landscape, the established linear narrative form for representing the events of the Western Front is inappropriate, as the soldiers themselves would not have experienced the conflict with the expectation of emplotment (after Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 19). As Ward (2004, 112) states in his call for a different narrative of the Somme; 'we ought to write in an odd way, oughtn't we? After all, what most people experience most of the time isn't a set of coherent phenomena but a kind of tolerable and tolerated low-key randomness; things which are instantly translated moment by annihilating moment, into fleeting and undisciplined sounds of emotion.' Events, experiences and emotions combined to construct a sense of place and attribute the Western Front with value and meaning for the soldiers. These brief glimpses of evidence cannot be portrayed chronologically or thematically, as they represent a contemporary, real and continually changing endeavour to come to an understanding of the world. This study of an alternative narrative of the Western Front should therefore not rely on traditional historical narrative forms, as the purpose and drive within these linear narratives is the consideration of events and actions with the knowledge of their outcome, a perspective unsuitable for this study. The use of post-structuralist narrative theory is therefore of deep importance for the purposes of this analysis, as it

offers a way in which to represent the minor, small-scale events and actions which constituted the soldiers' perceptions of their landscape (after Kristeva 1980b, 78).

Landscape studies within archaeology have on the whole been presented in one of two differing narrative forms which archaeologists have used to represent their interpretations (see Hind 2004, 48). Predominantly, the *long durée* (see Bintliff 1991; 2004; Knapp 1992) has been used by processual archaeologists to convey the long-term environmental change and the human relationship with the landscape (Taylor 1975; Aston and Rowley 1974), whereas a number of archaeologists have utilised notions of the *dasein*, to examine the 'human perception' of the landscape (Tilley 1994; Thomas 1996; Gosden 1994). Although both these forms have structured the narratives that archaeologists have used to convey their analyses of the past (Gilchrist 2000), the concern with portraying more intimate life-cycles through the study of the *dasein* in archaeological narratives, has become of increasing importance within contemporary archaeology (Meskell 1999; 2004). The study of the time scale of 'lived reality' is thought within these analyses to constitute the main context for the formation of sites and landscapes (Foxhall 2000, 496). To represent these potentially diverse and conflicting events and views within a narrative form requires an alternative conception of narrative, one which doesn't rest on structuralist assessments of a linear progression (McGlade 1995; 1999a; 1999b; McGlade and Van der leeuw 1997). As Shanks and Tilley (1987b, 119) have stated the 'archaeological text legislates on chronology' (see Joyce 2002, 34). Therefore, in this project the narrative of the Western Front offered will incorporate notions of an acentered, polysemous, post-structuralist theory of narrative, a narrative which has no fixed chronological form and speaks from a variety of positions (after Bakhtin 1984, 21).

Archaeological narratives which have attempted this experimentation with traditional narrative form and representation in their work (see Campbell and Hansson 2004) have also examined the use of images to convey interpretations and meanings (see Chadwick 2004; Shanks 1992; 1997). These images form an essential part of archaeological discourse, as through these images archaeologists communicate with each other and the wider world (Moser and Smiles 2005; Drew 2001). Archaeological images also have a significant

impact on the ideas which are generated through these archaeological narratives about the past and about archaeology itself (Moser 2001, 262). Therefore, these images also contribute to the memory of the past in the present, as Bertrand Russell (1921, 175) stated, memory can ‘only be represented by images.’ Images are in fact considered by Zelizer (1998, 6) as not only creating memory but also aiding the remembrance of a past event to the extent that images are often considered as an event’s ‘primary markers.’ Images within archaeology have too often been considered as merely technical aids, as diagrams or as ‘objective’ recordings of features and artefacts, rather than essential parts of the narrative, as another voice in the stories which archaeologists tell through their interpretations (Shanks 1997, 73; Drew 2001, 83).

Hall (1991a, 57), conversely, has described how the images used in interpretations of the past create a dialogue and a narrative themselves, examining ideas and perceptions in the present, by presenting the reader with this ‘multiaccented’ evidence (see Berger 1997, 42). In this manner archaeological representations and images make meaning and memory, as they appeal directly to the viewer and provide an apparent immediacy with the past (after Sontag 1990, 3-4; Barthes 1983, 195; 1984, 9). A number of archaeologists have used these conceptions of the image in their work to, ‘take up the remains of the past and work upon them’, and ‘to express different interests in the material past’ (Shanks 1997, 73). Rather than allow archaeologists to rely on a conception of image use as a functional means of displaying data, archaeologists have used images to challenge and subvert interpretations of the past within the narratives they construct (after Drew 2001). The relationship between text and image within these narratives provide a space within which different stories can emerge, entwine and contest meanings (Giles 2004, 118). Whilst these photographs and images of archaeological contexts do not provide ‘innocent analogues’ of the past, they do represent a means of exploring the embodiment of the materials and spaces of the past, and form an important and valuable research tool (Shanks 1997, 101). This is certainly the case for the Western Front, as the ever-increasing and often haunting images of materials, spaces and human remains from archaeological excavations of the battlefields provide a means to portray and examine the embodied experiences of soldiers within an archaeological narrative (see Desfossés *et al* 2003). Alongside this evidence there also exists a

vast quantity of contemporary photographic material of the battlefields, both official and personal (see Taylor 1963). These photographs have been utilised by historians since the 1960s, but in a limited fashion, relying on them merely as a means of illustrating their narratives (after Ward 2004, 93). Rather, this data presents a means to examine the corporeal experiences of the soldiers as they used the materials of the conflict and moved through the war landscape. Incorporating both images of archaeological excavations and wartime photographs of the battlefields and soldiers as part of a narrative, represents an alternative means by which the war can be narrated and remembered (after Berger and Mohr 1975; 1982). Landsberg (1995; 1997; 2004; 2005) has indeed highlighted how images can assist in constituting an embodied memory, providing the viewer with the means of situating themselves in the context they witness (see Sontag 1990, 15).

A Different Story

The post-structuralist and postmodern theories of narrative allows this project to state the difference of its approach, they provide a way in which archaeology can convey its distinctive concern for the spaces and materials of the battlefields, and demonstrates how this project can create an embodied memory of the Western Front. Such a narrative of the Western Front is made up of a phenomenological examination of how the soldiers experienced their landscape, a narrative constituted by ‘variously formed matters and very different dates and speeds’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 3). Rather than a narrative which unveils a unilinear progress from beginning to end, this narrative ‘flows in a turbulent and chaotic manner’ (see Serres 1998, 45), taking into account that ‘not everything has yet happened’ (Derrida 1979b, 145). Kristeva’s (1986, 160-186) essay ‘Stabat Mater’, demonstrates this acentered narrative, as well as questions the structuralist notion of narrative authority (see Kristeva 1980b, 78). In this essay Kristeva’s personal reflection on her experiences of motherhood is weaved together with an essay on the Virgin Mother in an echoing and anticipatory dialogue (Edelstein 1992, 30-35). Derrida (1979a, 86; 1979b, 78) also challenges the linear conception of narrative, by similarly constructing two parallel and

simultaneous essays, which reject simplistic notions of endings and beginnings, boundaries and divisions (Henderson 1995, 2). 'No one inflection enjoys any absolute privilege, no meaning can be fixed or decided upon. No border is guaranteed, inside or out' (Derrida 1979b, 78). Following these essays this project will utilise this parallel narrative form, which will entwine, repeat and contradict to demonstrate the alternative narratives in which the battlefields can be represented, and the fallacy that a linear narrative is required in the study of the spaces and materials of the Western Front. This in effect forms an example of the rhizomatic model proposed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), a conception of a framework not reliant on traditional linear or arboreal notions; where events are 'never present but always yet to come and already passed' (Deleuze 1990, 100).

A rhizomatic model consists of neither beginnings nor endings, but rather a series of plateaus or middles, all of which are intersecting: 'a rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984, 25). To use this narrative style to examine and retell the Western Front ensures that the past 'is not surpassed but revisited, repeated, surrounded, protected, recombined, reinterpreted and reshuffled' (Latour 1993, 75). It is this refusal of linearity in this rhizomatic narrative that creates an embodied memory, as this project through the narrative style deployed gain a greater appreciation of how a sense of place was created by the soldiers. The events and circumstances which served to attribute spaces, materials and the war landscape with value and meaning are better represented by this narrative than a chronological or thematic linear narrative. As such the manner in which the British soldiers on the Western Front embodied the war landscape can be assessed; the corporeal experiences which constituted 'place' in the hostile landscape can be examined.

If this 'lived reality' of the Western Front, the embodied experiences of soldiers with the landscape and materials of the battlefields is to be represented, recent work by feminist authors can also be used to convey a greater sense of corporeality. Cixous (1990; 1993; 1998), Kristeva (1986) and Suleiman (1986) all use conceptions of the body within their narratives as a means to convey experiences of pleasure, excitement, suffering, pain and injustice; 'to enable the world to become flesh' (Cixous 1993, 65). These narratives highlight the manner in which the body has been constructed within the narrative, shaped into a

meaningful textual object by specific choices made by the author in their narrative text (Punday 2003, 57; Ledbetter 1996, 12-13). Drawing on the work of Delbo (1995; 2000) this visceral perspective in narrative forms the key by which an embodied memory can be communicated, a sense memory, allowing the reader, the rememberer, to access the past, to place the experiences of the body as the focus of memory, to 'make a leap into being' (after Deleuze 1988, 57).

This project's narrative focusing on a multivocal, acentred structure, facilitates and accepts the various 'preferred meanings' that could be read into the text by its audience (after Hall 1981). What is distinct from the established historical and literary discourses of the battlefields is that the structure of this narrative provides an alternative framework for memory. If individuals do make their own history, just not under the circumstances of their choosing, this narrative form provides a separate and original framework in which to remember the war. This not only includes many of the features of the popular memory, including presenting the ordinary soldier in the trenches, but it articulates this popular memory away from the notions of passive suffering, stoicism and victimhood, towards a regard for active agency. It considers a far broader analysis of the soldiers than the memory of 'lions led by donkeys' or the 'lost generation' (Winter 2004). Whilst this image of the totally victimized soldier on the Western Front in the popular memory is loaded with moral justification, it nevertheless obscures interpretation of the war and inevitably those who fought in it (L.V. Smith 1994, 250). The soldiers are too often interpreted as passive victims in the landscape, pushed into slaughter at the behest of the high command (see Hynes 1991, 56). This study of an embodied memory of the Western Front, using a postprocessual landscape perspective, can act upon these popular memories of the war and retell a story about the actions of individuals within the war landscape. The importance of the popular cultural memory of the war is acknowledged through the project's concern for the individual soldier, but this is not allowed to limit or constrain interpretation. As Brown (pers. comm. December 2004) has commented, archaeology must engage with the popular memory of the war, but 'anyone expecting to see a manifestation of "Lions led by Donkeys" might be disappointed', nevertheless, archaeology can examine and explore issues at a 'human level.' Inevitably the narrative offered in this project, and the stories that archaeologists will tell about the battlefields of the world's

first industrialised conflict will themselves be selected and chosen by the public which receives them (de Certeau 1984, 18; Chambers 1991, 10). This does not render the work of archaeologists valueless, but rather necessitates an understanding of the context in which their discourse is submitted, acknowledging its possible effects and place within the memory of the conflict (after Denning 1994, 340).

The use of an acentered narrative is not an exercise in aesthetics, but a demonstration that narratives about the battlefields do not necessarily have to comply with the established linear mode of representation focusing on the events of the conflict (after Derrida 1979a, 86). There is no inherent value in this linear form of representation which grants this narrative structure an inalienable claim to facilitate a better understanding of the war (see Kermode 1990, 31). 'For most of the objects of social science, if not all of them, are abstract objects; they are theoretical constructs' (Popper 1957, 135). In such a manner, in the consideration of the war in historical discourse, references to the 'army' and even to 'war' itself are abstract concepts, what appears as the only concrete reality is the scale of death, the human life lost (Popper 1957, 135). By demonstrating the ability to deny the claim of linear narratives, which undermine the event-structure and emplotment devices which characterises historical and literary discourse on the war (after Cobley 1993), it forces a consideration of how historians portray mass-death, and how these painful and traumatic episodes of modern history are to be remembered (Ward 2004; LaCapra 1998). Historical narratives and memorial schemes draw legitimacy and a sense of logic, coherence and order, by rendering the conflict of the Western Front within the boundaries of 1914-1918: a distinct beginning and a distinct end (see Dyer 1995, 10). Indeed, the chronological dates act as parentheses, bracketing the four years of war so effectively within the minds of many that the expression of the numerical figures appear themselves to hold meaning, evoking the pity and waste of war almost automatically. This 'bracketing' can even be seen as a role of historical discourse and the memorial landscape over the last ninety years, to provide what would now be termed within modern psychotherapy, a feeling of 'closure' (see Cobley 1993, 127). Such a notion of conclusion and its usefulness to society has come to the fore, especially within historical discourse, after the catharsis witnessed with the eightieth anniversary of the Armistice in 1998 (see Stummer 1998). However,

rather than examine the reasons behind the enduring public fascination with the war, historians have been quick to lament the existence of the continuing emotional appeal of the battlefields (see Bond 2002; Sheffield 2002). The eminent professor of the Great War, Jay Winter reiterated this sentiment with his oft-quoted remark, 'the First World War is over' (quoted in Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002, 7).

This drive by contemporary historians to seal off the past, to enable an objective historical analysis to occur, disregards the pressing and continuing desire from the public in Britain and elsewhere in Europe to return to their painful history (see Moriarty 1999, 693). In part this situation stems from the historians' own work which provides a sense of 'closure' within a chronological, linear framework. This provision of a conclusion is inevitably still a product of historical discourse, and can be seen to be a fabricated impression of an ending, failing to accommodate the continuing trauma of the war in popular memory (after Friedlander 1992, 51). By considering a narrative format which proposes no beginnings or endings; an acentred narrative which resists the tradition of conforming to a linear framework, this project forms a suitable mode in which to express and perpetuate the memory of the soldiers on the Western Front (after Žižek 1999, 13). Edkins's (2003, 229) has identified this non-linear structure of trauma in the memory of the historic past. 'Trauma is that which refuses to take its place in history as done and finished with. It demands an acknowledgement of a different temporality, where the past is produced by – or even takes place in – the present' (Edkins 2003, 59). In this respect historical studies which seek to provide an ending, a sense of 'closure' are inadequate, as they fail to represent the effects of death on such a scale, and the way the memory of this trauma is articulated and voiced by contemporary society (Eksteins 1989, 290; Hynes 1991, 99). This mirrors developments elsewhere in the study of memory of the twentieth century, especially in the study of the remembrance of the Holocaust (LaCapra 1998, 8-9; Langer 1995b, 17-18). Friedlander (1992) has even criticised historical studies which provide fabricated conclusions as a means of constructing a meaningful narrative, arguing that such 'naïve historical positivism' inevitably leads to 'self-assured historical narrations and closures' (Friedlander 1992, 53). Friedlander calls for historians to 'disrupt the facile linear progression of the narration, introduce alternative interpretations, question any

partial conclusions and withstand the need for closure (Friedlander 1992, 53). In effect this argues for a narrative form which returns to the past, which directly engages with the effects of the past on the present, which acknowledges that in many respects, for many people, the past is certainly not over (see Latour 1993, 76). The rhizomatic narrative model used in this analysis provides this sense of openness, of continuation, of dialogue with the past. It does not seek easy or comfortable resolutions, and in this manner impacts on the way in which the battlefields are remembered. It demonstrates how the memory of the war can be perpetuated by the memory of the trauma and pain of the past, and in this respect reiterates what Nietzsche described as the 'festering wound' in the mind which was needed to prolong and continue the remembrance of the past. 'Something is burnt in as to remain in his memory: only that which never stops hurting remains in his memory' (Nietzsche 1910, 66).

The following chapter is set out as an acentered, non-linear narrative, based upon parallel columns which anticipate, contradict and echo one another. This narrative format is used to demonstrate that a linear, chronological narrative is not the only means to represent the Western Front. This mode of representation is important for two reasons; firstly as the soldiers themselves would not have experienced the battlefield landscape in such a structured fashion, their understanding of their surroundings would have been composed of momentary incidents. Secondly, this narrative provides the means by which an alternative remembrance of the war can occur. The narrative rejects beginnings and endings, and thereby it finds a balance with the way the war is remembered within British society, it isn't closed off, it's still there to be revisited. By using this narrative and focusing upon the actions of the soldiers, the Western Front, too often shrouded in sentimentality, can finally begin to be recalled in the context of individuals acting and reacting within the war landscape.

Chapter Five: Analysis

Death and mutilation define the landscape; their threat brings order, meaning and understanding for the soldiers who fight within and inhabit the trench system and no man's land. Witnessing death and the fear of mutilation forms a 'sense of place': it constitutes a sense of becoming within this war landscape.

The trench system is composed of roughly three lines of trenches: reserve, support and the front line. The atmosphere within each of them is never the same, neither are the fears or apprehensions experienced within the confinements of the trench walls. J.A. Malcolm (LC) recalled in his memoirs that, 'the blue sky above, or the rain soaked clouds, were the only views...'

A 'sense of place'; a being-in-the-world; the soldier entering and living in the battlefields represents an individual immersed in this hostile space, a landscape that is not merely observed but experienced. 'We enter into a landscape and turn it into a place, which we are no longer able to abstract ourselves from' (Lovell 1998, 8-9).

Life defines the landscape; through the soldier's actions, through their existence they constitute the war landscape into a meaningful world. The human involvement in this war landscape brings order, meaning and understanding for the soldiers who live and fight on the battlefields of the Western Front.

In these front line trenches the presence of death was palpable, 'death could drop from the dark' (Rosenberg 1962, 80). 'Snipers were constantly on the watch for the unwary. Notices would appear in the trench at the spot. "Beware of sniper" and that would be on account of some unfortunate having already become a victim' (H.S. Taylor, LC).

‘We were all told to
keep our heads down.

A boy named

Prendergast took a
look over the top and
a bullet hit him on the
forehead blowing his
brains out.’ (J.C.
McLeary, LC).

‘The snipers are the
things which worry
us – they always keep
us on the jump’
(R.A.B. Orlebat, LC).

‘Several casualties
from soldiers poking
their heads above the
parapet...they simply
won’t be
warned...they are
such fools, they take
no notice’ (J.W.
Allen, LC).

The trenches are described
by the soldiers as homely, safe, nice,
pleasant; a reflection of their status
amongst the soldiers, of the comfort
and security they afford and the
sentiment that ‘trenches saved lives’
(H.M. Alexander, LC). The trenches
are considered to be ‘healthy
places’, where only ‘the careless get
killed’ (C.K. McKerrow, LC). The
trenches ‘feel like home when I’m in
them’ (A.D. Looker, LC), and ‘what
nice, snug places these trenches are’
(J.W.B. Russell, LC). An
individual’s presence in the trenches
even fulfilled a sense of belonging,
of purpose, of understanding: to be
within the walls of these structures
itself provided an identity, a
rationale.

Some relish their
opportunities to be in the front line,
Private W.H. Gardner (LC) wrote in
1916 that, ‘at last I have achieved
my ambition, I must also say my
main aim, during the last 18 months,
i.e. I have got to the trenches.’ G.E.
Raven (LC) wrote after a week in
the front line in 1917 that ‘I
wouldn’t have missed it for
anything.’

Deaths of soldiers in the trenches attributed areas and places along the line as those which were to be approached with apprehension, 'in certain places there were signs such as "Sniper Beware" and "Keep Head Down"' (V. Fagence, IWM). 'On every principal front there was a Hell Fire corner, identified by this or similar name, and occasionally there were trench junctions which it was wise to traverse at speed' (J.R. Belderby, LC). 'Towards the bottom of the trench there was a dip into a valley and Fritz had a machine gun barrage on here, bullets came like hail and we had to run the gauntlet' (H. Silbey, LC). Soldiers crouched down in more exposed sections of the trenches where sandbags and trench walls had fallen in, or where German posts overlooked the trenches (Griffith 1994, 38).

'One was always under the conditions where you had to keep your head down which was very difficult to do, in daytime...below the parapet particularly if you was in a narrow trench, in a crouched position' (H. Oxley, IWM). 'Our trench was only about three feet deep and very narrow as one did nothing and kept out of sight' (H.S. Taylor, LC). Movement was restricted within the walls of the trench, 'everyone who puts his head up gets shot at' (S.D. Charter, IWM). V.C. Magre (LC) wrote that due to snipers and the dangers of movement, 'if anyone gets it here they have to remain in the trenches until dusk'. To be confined, within the spaces of the trench, to be restricted from viewing the world outside ensured a feeling of safety and sanctuary (Fussell 1975, 51). 'If the trench was deep enough it didn't matter how you moved' (U. Burke, IWM).

It is within these trench walls that the soldier experienced the war landscape, it is within this space that a sense of understanding was engendered, 'the space of immobility becomes the space of being' (Bachelard 1994, 137). The soldier knew the trenches provided sanctuary from the mortars, grenades, snipers and the shell fire of the enemy, as they were 'sprawled in the bowels of the earth' (Rosenberg 1962, 73). 'Flammenwerfer...is comparatively innocuous to men in trenches as the flame cannot be made to fall, and by crouching at the bottom of the trench you can avoid it altogether and the heat is not excessive' (E. Gore-Brown, IWM).

R.G. Ashford (LC) recalled how relieved he was to feel the trenches 'sheltering walls.' I.G. Andrew (LC) stated that 'it is a strange feeling when one leaves the friendly shelter of the trenches and advances, naked and exposed over the open ground.' Within the hostile space the trenches represent feelings of safety, a place away from the threat of death and mutilation, a possible refuge from the dangers of bodily exposure above the parapet. 'A rapidly increasing shriek made us hug the trench wall' (J.A. Johnston, IWM). 'I grovelled in the mud muttering incoherent prayers and enduring the torrent of the damned' (H.N. Edwards, LC). Through the body, the soldiers felt the sensations of the security of the walls and floor of the trench from the maelstrom of the war outside the trench system (after Tilley 1994, 12). 'We crouched hugging the ground for half an hour' (R.C. Bingham, LC).



Fig.27: Excavated trench at the A19 site (A.W.A., 2005)



Fig.28: Excavated trench section, Yorkshire Trench (The Diggers, 2005)



Fig.29: British soldiers in the trenches (gwpda, 2006)

These bombardments could level a trench system destroying the walls and floors of the trench, exposing the soldier to the danger about him. 'Ground all around us – ploughed up with bursting shells – some holes more than 6ft deep' (R. Grimshaw, IWM). 'The trenches were blown flat by huge shells, dugouts collapsed under direct hits from the trench mortars, barbed wire and their supports were hurled on top of soldiers crouching on the fire steps, and sandbags flung high in the air were scattered around us' (J.A. Johnston, IWM). These bombardments and attacks also placed new meanings upon the soldiers' surroundings; perhaps it no longer represented the security he had once felt within the trenches. 'That was the time when one gets the "wind up" worst, although I had moved a few yds (sic) up the trench one hardly felt safe after what had occurred' (F. Philipson, IWM).

The trenches can also be subject to enemy raids and shelling, when to be in the trenches threatens the lives of the soldiers; 'when you were in no man's land you were safer (during a bombardment) than in your own trench at the reserve or support' (H. Oxley, IWM). To be under an artillery attack in the trenches was to experience a sense of captivity, of physical restriction (Bourke 2000, 58). 'The worst of being shelled is that you're so absolutely helpless; all you can do is to crouch under parapet or in a dug-out like a rat in a trap and wait for things to happen to you!' (L.M. Edwards, LC). P.H. Rawson (LC) also wrote of his reactions to a heavy shelling in the trenches, 'it makes one feel such an absolute worm and so helpless.'

The associations the trenches held for the soldiers were dependent on which sector of the front line they served upon, as activity in the trenches would vary from place to place (Ashworth 1980, 5). The very names of the trenches or areas which contained trench systems held dread fear for some soldiers. 'Stringy and his pal bring souvenirs from dead Germans collected during the night. They have been out since the start and regale us with tales of Ypres and Givenchy. Hope we don't have to go there if accounts are reliable as must be hell itself (A.J. Rixon, IWM). Certain places became synonymous with the threat to life and limb; 'Givenchy has a very bad name' (A.G. Chambers, LC). Trenches in these sectors were scenes of horror, death and mutilation; on the Somme in 1916, 'the trenches were filled to the top with them...their upturned faces with eyeless sockets gleaned in the moonlight' (C.E. Moy, LC). The trenches at Delville Wood were especially notorious; 'strewn with unburied dead, German and British' (A.E. Blenkinsop, LC); 'I do not think I saw or sensed another such rotting scene of slaughter' (I.L. Read, LC).

The trenches at Ypres however occupied the soldiers' minds as a place of fear and anxiety, where the threat of death was always apparent in the landscape; 'the most evil and threatening of all the sectors of the Western Front' (J.T. Caplon, IWM). 'Ypres was a quite distinct from all other parts of the line. There was a gloom hanging over it which neither nature nor the occasional blue of the sky could dissipate' (J.R. Belderby, LC). 'We were told that we would be going to a quiet part of the line, i.e. the Ypres Salient. I had heard about Hell Fire Corner, the Menin Road, etc. etc. so we were not commonly inspired with any sense of re-assurance as to our general health in the future' (H.S. Taylor, LC). Soldiers recounted that the horrors of the trenches of Ypres; 'men and pieces of men everywhere...all black and covered with flies...the horrid debris...all around us' (K. Townsend, LC); 'a desperate place' (N.M. McLeod, LC); but, 'one of the greatest battlefields there has ever been' (P. McEvoy, LC).

After artillery attacks, the surroundings would have been physically altered, but, also experienced in a new manner, as the trenches then became integrated within a 'landscape of fear' (Tuan 1980). Private H.H. Hobbs (LC), in his memoirs, described the effects of enduring a heavy shell bombardment in the trenches: 'another awful night. Three men lost their reason and tore their hair, cried like babies.' Experiences of attacks, raids, and bombardments could imbue the trenches with new meanings, anxieties, apprehensions (Leed 2001, 85-86). Lieutenant J.W.B. Russell (LC), in February 1916, described this trepidation, as 'wind up (fear) is a terrible disease in the trenches.' Fear in the trenches was rife. 'Fear of being killed, fear of killing, fear of being blinded, maimed, disfigured, gassed, burned, buried alive, fear of pain and fear of fear' (Bourne 1989, 214).

This fear was especially pronounced within certain sections of the front line; 'Our wind-up...increased by this incident, subsided somewhat in the comparative safety of the communication trench (I.L. Read, LC). Passing into the trenches, soldiers could observe the sections of the line which had been subject to attack, sections which induced fear, trepidation and anxiety; 'the parts you went through where you could see there'd been a lot of blood spilled where the sandbags were new, you knew something must have happened there' (W.E. Clarke, IWM).

Excavations at the A19 site near Ieper revealed the trench structure of the British and Commonwealth forces. At the area of the site named as 'Crossroads' sections of the trench wall had collapsed, and the supporting corrugated iron appeared bent, twisted and broken, indicating the damage to the trenches caused by artillery bombardments; showing how the apparent safety of the trenches, the soldiers' perceptions of their environment could be altered drastically by such an incident (A.W.A., 2005).

Taking cover from the bombardments and attacks of the enemy, and to sleep and rest, ensure that small, confined places are highly regarded by the soldiers. Even the smallest space which offers some shelter from the war and the elements becomes a space of immense meaning, as its 'protective qualities increased, it grows outwardly stronger. From having been a refuge it becomes a redoubt' (Bachelard 1994, 46).

The dug-outs, 'funk-holes' and shell-holes in and around the trench system offer this retreat from the world, they become places of associations, which engendered feelings of safety but also fear and violence (after Tuan 1977, 16). These places could become imbued with qualities, of security and sanctuary, which soldiers placed upon them as they presented an opportunity of physical protection. 'This time there was no doubt about it we jumped into a friendly shell-hole, and cowered down while dirt and refuse was showered on us' (W.C. Clifford, IWM).

‘There was something warm and friendly about a dugout even though it smelt of damp chalk, candle smoke, fag fag, rat dung and damp, dirty, lousy humanity’ (A.J. Abraham, LC). ‘Funk holes’ were shallow excavations dug by the soldiers whose rank did not permit them entrance to the dugouts used by the officers (Fussell 1975, 42). Constructed from a few feet dug into the trench, so that they ‘could get out of the way’ (P. Webb, IWM), and to ‘leave the trench clear for anyone passing up and down’ (J.A. Johnston, IWM).

‘We slept in funk holes, i.e. hollows below the parapet. These were only five foot long and two to three feet wide and sloped down with wear. You had to wedge yourself to stop falling out’ (H. Goldby, LC). These “funk holes” were merely excavations in the trench walls dug sufficiently far in ‘to shelter one’s body but not far enough to cause the trench wall to fall in and bury us’ (J.A. Johnston, IWM). These features offer a means of survival, of continuing, their construction, and their use describes a way of being in the world, of perceiving and experiencing the landscape (after Bachelard 1994, 46-47).



Fig.30: Crossroads site dugout (A.W.A., 2005)



Fig.31: British Officers in a dugout (gwpda, 2006)

It is the dugouts in particular which are seen as spaces of survival within this hostile landscape, where soldiers could endure the heavy artillery fire; their apprehension of safety reinforced by the apparent solidity of the structure which they occupied (after Tuan 1977, 107). 'Snugly ensconced in our dugouts we listened and laughed' (J.T. Gardiner, LC). 'Bombardment by heavy stuff doesn't make much impression on the concrete dugout' (A.S.G. Butler, LC). Dugouts were described as 'cosy' (H. Old, LC), a 'really glorious place' (J.W.B. Russell, LC), as 'when you were down in the dugouts you felt you were safe' (W.E. Clarke, IWM). Though in some cases restricted to officers only, they could be a haven away from the battlefield; 'I am writing this in the trenches in my 'dug out' – with a wood fire going and plenty of straw, it is rather cosy' (S.D. Charter, IWM).

The depth and strength of the dugouts would depend on the terrain and the speed of its construction. Consequently, shallow front-line dugouts, did not instil the same sense of security as the deeper structures in the reserve and support lines. 'For the next half hour or so we stayed where we were, in constant fear that the dug-out would collapse on us' (I.L. Read, LC). 'First experience of dug outs proper not impressed. They may be alright for shell fire or rabbits, but personally don't like them a bit: Much too dark and damp' (A.J. Rixon, IWM). These places could appear so secure, however that soldiers would develop 'dug-out disease', where the fear of death and mutilation would prevent those usually of a higher rank, who could have a choice, from leaving these shelters (Brophy and Partridge 1931, 120). 'Dug-outs make you windy though. When there's heavy shelling and you can go away from it, it makes you more frightened when you come to a place where there are no dugouts' (H. Cooper, LC).

The greatest threat to the soldiers in the dugouts was the howitzers and heavy mortars of the German army, whose guns fired shells with a steep trajectory capable of considerable ground penetration (Doyle *et al* 2001, 268). The deeper the dugout, which usually entailed mined dugouts, the safer the soldiers would feel during a shell bombardment. Beecham Dugout in the Ieper Salient would not have provided this sense of security. Excavations of the dugout revealed a T-shape gallery, close-timbered throughout and with bunks which would have provided accommodation for over sixty men and three officers (Doyle *et al* 2001, 269).

The Beecham dugout was mined, but appears to have only had an overhead cover of between one to two metres, varying according to slight variations in slope with the average total depth of the dugout including the gallery, of only four metres (Doyle *et al* 2001, 269). The tendency for the dugout to accumulate water is illustrated by the presence of a sump just under a metre deeper than the base of the dugout which enabled those using the dugout to pump out accumulated water (Doyle *et al* 2001, 269). Studies of the dugout walls also revealed how the silts at the base of the gallery were not oxidized suggesting that the contemporary water table was at the level of the base of the gallery itself (Doyle *et al* 2001, 270). Certainly, the presence of duckboards with non-slip protection covering the floor of the dugout, and the sump suggest that getting rid of the accumulated water in the dugout would have been a constant concern (Doyle *et al* 2001, 271).

Dugouts, shelters and any form of structure which offered the apprehension of safety from bombardments were afforded the greatest significance. These spaces were invested with meaning and value; soldiers would place immense importance upon them. Their appearance of security also made them places where soldiers could leave their own mark of habitation and existence, in a hostile landscape where all trace of them could be obliterated completely (Becker 1998, 4). Graffiti adorning the walls of trenches and dugouts depicted a diverse range of subjects including initials, place names, sexual references, religious symbols and regimental crests (after Becker 1998, 4; see Desfossés *et al* 2000, 38).



Fig.32: Carving (OVPW, 2005)

In the cellar at Auchonvillers, the evidence from the excavated finds suggests that the structure during 1915-1917 was used by the reserve company of the infantry battalions who held the front line in that sector (Fraser 2003). Upon the chalk bricks of the cellar walls the infantry soldiers carved inscriptions and graffiti; of particular interest is a carving with the initials "J.C." Despite the religious connotations, it has been suggested that these initials represent James Crozier, a soldier of 9th Royal Irish Rifles who served in this sector, who was shot for desertion in 1916 (Fraser 2003). The carving is thought to be a memorial for the soldier, probably carved by a stretcher bearer, who used the cellar as a staging post (Saunders 2003, 121). Also inscribed on the wall is the name of John Edward Hargreaves, who joined the army in 1917. Beneath a carving of a pair of crossed flags, he engraved his name on the brick wall (Fraser 2003). The walls of the cellar therefore bear the marks of the soldiers who occupied the structure, however briefly.

These inscriptions form a process of being accustomed and reaching an understanding of the world (Heidegger 1962, 79). They represent action taken to create a dwelling, a place, a sense of permanency in an uncertain and hostile landscape (after Bender 2001, 7).

The Beecham dugout also records the dangerous and hazardous lives of the soldiers, how the dugout, despite its lack of cover, could still prove to be a haven from the dangers of the war landscape. The stepped entrances and the gallery junctions of the dugout were equipped with inclined frames so that dampened blankets could be rolled down in the case of a gas attack (Doyle *et al* 2001, 269). Beecham Dugout is an anomaly in the context of the other British dugouts in the immediate region, as all other British dugouts have an average of six metres of cover to protect them from heavy artillery bombardments (Doyle *et al* 2001, 273).

Beecham was behind the front lines, and would have been used by troops in reserve, but it still would have been in danger of coming under enemy bombardments (Doyle *et al* 2001, 273). The shallow depth of the dugout suggest that it may have originally been a German dugout, occupied by British soldiers after an advance had pushed the German front lines back (Doyle *et al* 2001, 273).

Dugouts were the scenes of attacks, brutality and horror; ‘history attaches itself to them, associations surround them’ (S.A. Knight, IWM). The shallow dugouts in a front line trench could provide shelter at night from the continuous bombardment; however, the cramped conditions, the cries of the wounded and the behaviour of those who had lost their ‘reason’ could make these times in the dugouts moments of ‘mental horror’ (H.H. Hobbs, LC).

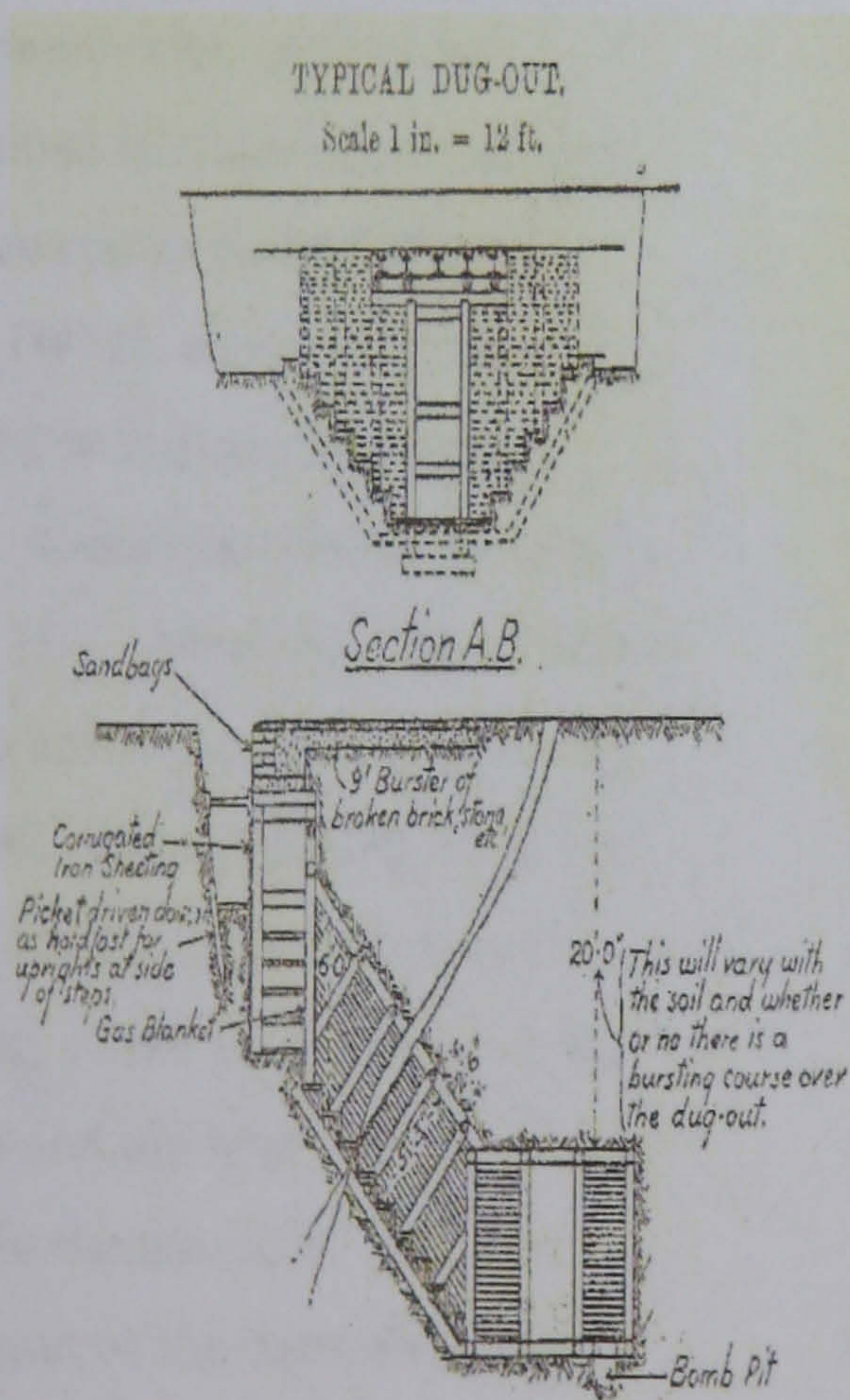


Fig.33: Dugout section (IWM 1997, 62)

‘The dugout was wet and slimy and full of the splashes in the wood work that a Mills bomb makes...when young Hollis saw the place he recognised it with shouts of glee...“There was a crowd of Huns down here and they wouldn’t come out when I yelled so I threw a Mills down. Some one must have cleaned it up since then”’ (J.R. Tibbles, LC). The spaces of the dugouts, the shell holes and the ‘funk-holes’ acquired definition and meaning through their use within this war landscape, as sites of refuge and comparative safety, and also of bloodshed, horror and violence, as these meanings and associations were attributed to these features, so the characteristics of these features in turn acted upon the soldiers themselves (after Tuan 1977, 162; Relph 1976, 141).

To arrive at the front meant a process of readjustment, of coming to terms with these new surroundings, particularly for those who were encountering the trenches for the first time. 'Bewilderment. One or two of the lads in my post actually started to break down and cry' (H. Oxley, IWM). Soldiers who had become accustomed to the dangers that could be present within the battlefield noticed the difference in the movement, actions and perceptions of those recent arrivals. 'The newcomer had no idea' (U. Burke, IWM), whereas, 'a man hardened to it does not mind so much...it must be terrible for a new fellow' (R.L. Mackay, LC). Soldiers came to know the area, whether by their own direct experiences or by the tales of the troops they were relieving, of the lie of the land, the dangers and the hostility they could expect in the trenches. 'My first impression of the battlefield was inquisitiveness, trying to find out what it was all about, until they started shelling and that. And then you realised what it was' (F. Lewis, LC).

The disorientating immersion into this hostile space could leave soldiers in a state of concern and anxiety, a fear of the unknown and the threats which surrounded them. 'This first night was a strange one. Left by ourselves, every tree stump seemed to assume the shape of crawling men while a continuous stream of shells and bullets, passed overhead without us being able to tell which was which' (R.G. Ashford, LC). These initial experiences would be tempered with the knowledge that accrued from inhabiting the war landscape. 'It gave me a sense of pleasurable excitement to dodge and duck and run for cover as the shells came screaming over. I had indeed been told of all this; how one laughs at the first, but gradually as realisation of the meaning of war comes, one develops fear and a hatred of the line and shells and such matters' (J.R. Tibbles, LC).

To occupy a section of the front line trench is to become aware of the threats and dangers within the war landscape; soldiers would quickly attribute the area they were stationed in as being 'cushy' or hostile. 'We got used to the lines and knew them' (U. Burke, IWM). 'We then went up to the trenches for instruction, to a notoriously quiet part of the line near Armentières. The trenches are the same ones as have been occupied since October, last year, where they have never attacked or been attacked' (O. Lyle, LC).



Fig.34: Reinforcements (ww1photos, 2006)

T.E. Hulme, serving on the front in 1915 noted that, the proximity of the German trenches in his section changed his understanding of his surroundings; 'its curious how the mere fact that in a certain direction there really are the German lines, seems to alter the feeling of a landscape' (Hynes 1955, 164). The amount of attacks that were inflicted upon them and the level of activity against the enemy that they were expected to maintain, assigned the section with particular meanings for the soldiers. 'Things were just as usual however at this part of the line; just this morning there has been a good deal of artillery work and the thud and rumble of the guns which is continuing as I write is beginning to give us a dull and heady feeling' (J. Jacobs, LC). 'The line is bad – all these beastly mines and I'm afraid we may not have a very pleasant time of it' (E. Gore-Brown, IWM). 'It was really not what might be called a healthy spot' (R.J. Mason, LC).

Placed in an 'active' section of the front line, or commanded by senior officers to step up the level of aggression in the sector, transformed the war landscape, and the actions and perceptions of the soldiers who inhabited it. 'The whole line was quiet when we took over but some months later, when we in turn left that sector, our front line had been advanced two hundred yards nearer to the Germans in many places, and the sector was known as one of the hottest parts south of Arras' (J.A. Johnston, IWM). 'The whole of the time was pretty eventful, there was a sort of liveliness about the trenches we were in, night and day. The trench was rather a tricky bit of the line; it was at one point only 60 yards from the German line and between there were two craters, one very large and small, of mines we had exploded. The two lines the German's and our own, were too near for shelling to be resorted to, but trench mortars and rifle grenades came over pretty frequently' (J. Jacobs, LC). The 'cushy' and quiet areas of the line could represent an active decision by the soldiers to lessen the levels of activity in the trenches (Ashworth 1968; 1980).

Relieving troops moving into the front line were able to take on the trench, acquaint themselves with the potential hazards in the area, and also receive any information regarding the 'atmosphere' of that section of the line (Ashworth 1980, 48). Illustrated by A.J. Abrahams' (LC) memoir which described such a manoeuvre, when soldiers would enquire about the attitude in the area by asking, 'any shit about?'

'I don't want to be a soldier,
I don't want to go to war,
I'd rather stay at home,
Around the streets to roam'
(Gardner 1964, 88).

This sociability of the trenches was suited particularly to the small groups which the soldiers were divided into, as the lived experience could be collectivized, and the experiences of old soldiers could be communicated to new recruits (Ashworth 1980, 27-28; L.V. Smith 1994, 85). This exchange of ideas was also enabled by the architecture of the trenches, its particular physical features (Ashworth 1968, 408).



Fig.36: Trench traverses (A.W.A., 2005)



Fig.35: Trenches, Serre (Fabiansson, 2005)

The traverses of the trenches, whilst preventing enfilading fire along the whole length of the line, also grouped soldiers together along a section or bay of a trench (L.V. Smith 1994, 82). Usually these positions were held by a small group of soldiers from the same section performing a tour of duty (Ashworth 1980, 5). This distribution allowed the soldiers, to some extent, to avoid surveillance by the commanding officer, which facilitated the live and let live principle, as well as encouraging the communication between men of attitudes, actions and principles (Ashworth 1968, 408). Some junior officers may have also connived in this policy of sociability, and of keeping aggression in the trenches to a minimum (Englander and Osborne 1978, 598).

To arise out of the protective walls of the trenches into no man's land was a beguiling sensation; as the soldiers had become aware of the dangers of exposure above the parapet, no man's land was a space of both terror and danger, but also excitement (Leed 1979, 128). 'When your out there in no man's land your standing there naked' (C.R. Quinnet, IWM). During raids and observation parties the proximity of the German lines ensured that time spent in this section were moments of hesitation and fear; 'in no man's land: it wasn't only the warmth of the day that made me uncomfortable. Germans must be very near, and the revolver, I'd never yet used...wouldn't have helped against the shower of grenades they'd have pelted us with (J.T. Caplon, IWM).

Within no man's land would be the detritus of the occupation of the land, and evidence of any previous conflicts which had occurred there. 'In...no man's land – ghastly sights – several skulls with skin and hair still on, a boot with leg bones in, stray bones everywhere' (J.H. Fearnhead, LC). 'No man's land was abomination of tortured chalk and loam, very often corpses.' (J.R. Tibbles, LC). Soldiers came to ascribe the space as a 'terrible zone' (H.V. Jones, LC). A sense of unreality also pervaded the space of no man's land, it had the capacity to evoke a sense of uncertainty and paranoia; whilst it could be 'a desolate wilderness', it was nevertheless 'a dangerous one' (G.W. Matthews, LC).

‘No man’s land in the darkness you would become convinced that there was something in the dark foreground only to realise that the object was only a post or a screw picket amongst the barbed wire’ (H.S. Taylor, LC). ‘Tense ...total exposure...no trench to give you any protection...soon as you go beyond our barbed wire you crawl, flat on your stomach, moving towards the Bosche front line, inches at a time, every sense alert’ (Martin 1958, 68). No man’s land became associated with the atrocities of war; a space where the soldiers committed and witnessed brutal and horrific acts.

‘A party of about 20 Frits (sic) came across no man’s land with their hands up as if to surrender, when close up they opened fire with revolvers killing a lot of our chaps. They hopped it as fast as they could back again, but not fast enough as my guns knocked every one out before they could get back’ (H. Sibley, LC). The space of no man’s land became the space of possibility, of revenge and hatred, not just between the opposing armies, but also within the army itself. ‘One hears stories of irate other ranks threatening to shoot dastardly officers in the back once they had them in no man’s land (J.R. Belderby, LC).

The technology of the battlefields, the material culture of the war, offered the soldiers a means of understanding the war landscape and their place within it, of acting upon it and altering it; the weapons the soldiers used represented possibilities, but both the weapons and the individual soldier are agents themselves, human and non-human, acting upon each other (Latour 1987, 268; MacKenzie and Wajcman 1999, 3; Heidegger 1977, 15). These weapons also constituted part of the organisation and governance of the army, and could be involved in schemes of control and domination through their own agency (Law 1987, 236). The military technology of the war was not the 'neutral servant' of the General Staff which distributed these materials to the soldiers. Their acceptance and operation by the soldiers often involved changes to the dictated orders – changes that did not necessarily result from technical differences but must themselves be engineered, often in the face of conflict and resistance (after MacKenzie 1996, 14).

The materials the soldiers used exerted an influence of the soldiers' behaviour and actions within this landscape, and the way the soldiers applied these materials shaped the nature of the materials themselves, constituting the soldiers sense of place upon the battlefields (after Schlereth 1985, 3; MacKenzie 2002, 45).

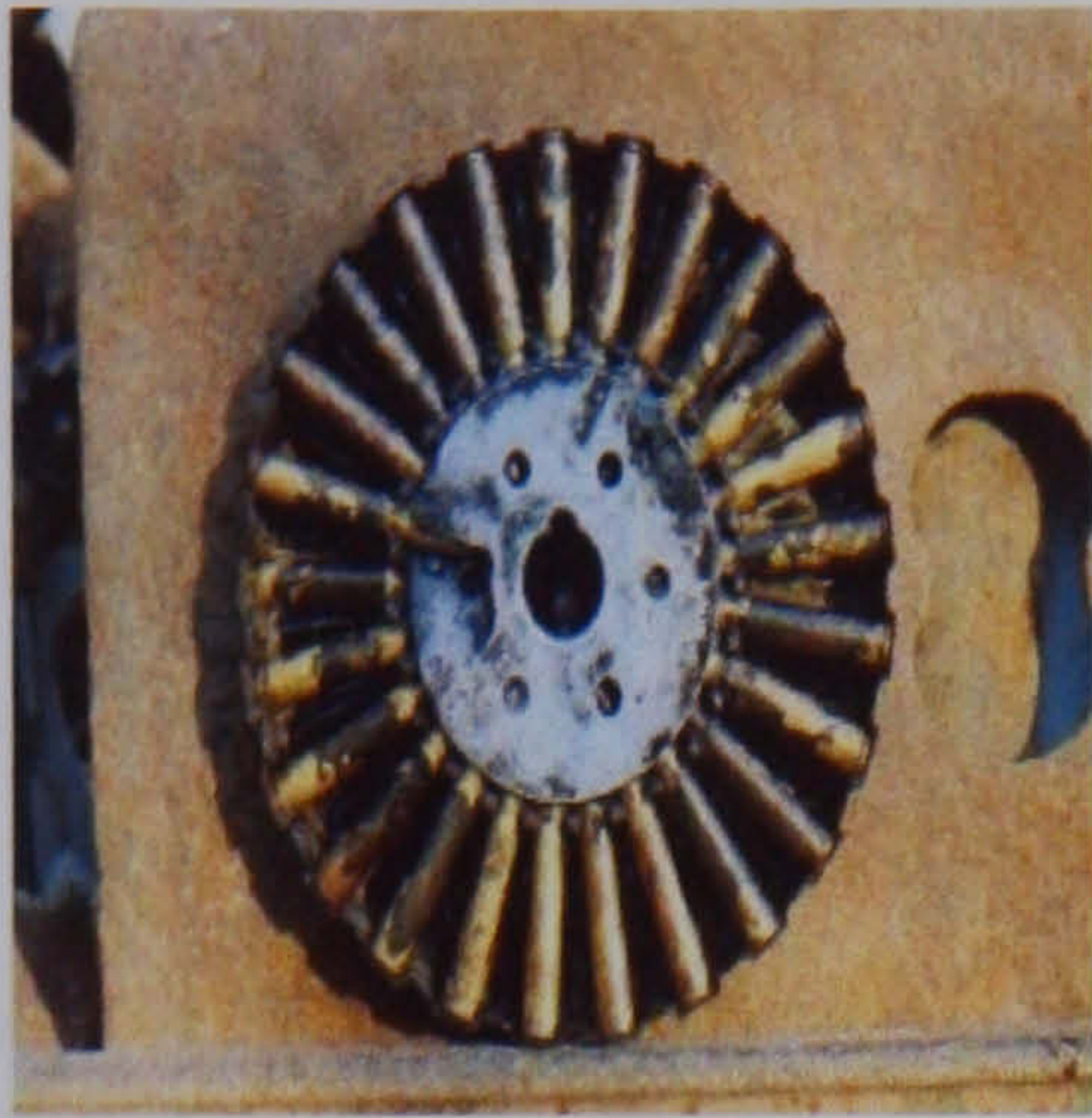


Fig.37: Lewis Gun (The Diggers, 2005)

It is upon the human body where this impact of technology is most apparent (Haraway 1997); how the technologies shape the body, its behaviours, movement, actions, creating a 'coercive link with the apparatus of production' (Foucault 1979, 153). This link is so profound, that to consider the relationship between the soldier and the material culture of the war in terms of a subject-object distinction is insufficient, the relationship represents in actuality 'the folding of humans and non-humans' (Latour 1999, 193-194).

Technology should be considered as acting upon the individual, creating 'a dramatic and vivid effect on the social actor', not just on their behaviour, but on their physical being (Tilley 1999, 272; Moore 1994, 71). This link between the body and technology is crucial, indeed, 'there is no sense in which humans may be said to exist as humans without entering into commerce with what authorizes and enables them to exist' (Latour 1993, 45-46; 1999, 192). The British soldier on the Western Front was instructed on the place and value of the material of war; 'equipment and rifles must be carried always' (A. Anderson, IWM). The soldiers' identity and actions developed through a process of continual interaction with the material objects contained within the landscape, and through this process a perception of the landscape itself was formed (see Strang 1997, 171; Gosden 1999, 120). The material culture of the Western Front shaped a world and a being for the men who fought with it (Leed 1979, 37).

The Lee Enfield rifle represented for the soldiers the reasons for their continued presence in the war, their purpose and their role within the military structure of the British army (Richardson 1997, 333). The rifle was amongst the first items of equipment issued to each soldier and formed part of the basic equipment to be carried at all times by the soldier (Winter 1978, 107; Hayes 1916, 214). The British General Staff (1917, 11) called for confidence in its use, necessitating 'a high standard of skill at arms'. Weighing just over nine pounds and fitted with magazines of ten bullets, with a twenty-one inch sword bayonet attached, the upkeep of the rifle in a man's possession was also strictly observed, with rifle inspections advised daily in the trenches (Winter 1978, 107-108; HMSO 1916, 43). Careful handling, familiarity and the knowledge of the place, use and value of the rifle was almost guaranteed by the frequency and rigour of rifle inspection in the trenches (HMSO 1916, 43). Over the whole surface of contact between the body and the object it handles, power is introduced, 'fastening them to one another' (Foucault 1979, 153).

For the soldiers, the rifle denoted a symbol of their security in their own hands, a means by which they could defend themselves (Winter 1978, 107-108).

Holding and using the rifle, entailed associations, meanings, a way of acting, of moving, of perceiving. 'We all stood there fitting the new heavy clips of cartridges into our ammunition pouches. There was certainly a sort of final significance about this' (H. Cooper, LC). 'The empty case tinkle on the duckboards below as I reloaded and pushed back the safety catch. I felt better, – heaps better... Now that I knew a little of the lie of the land' (I.L. Read, LC). A sense of security was felt when handling the rifle, when the soldier felt threatened; or, from the sense of purpose, control, and possibilities when placing the ammunition clips into the gun (after MacKenzie 1990, 4). 'Men dozed rifle and fixed bayonet to hand ready to man the trench if there was an alarm' (W.G. Taplin, LC).



Fig.38: Rifle cartridges (A.W.A., 2005)

The soldiers themselves began to associate the rifle and the bayonet with the ability to defend themselves, as a means of security; ‘we of the poor working party chucked down our loads, hanged up our magazines and waited, feeling sort of naked without our equipment- and above all – bayonets’ (L.M. Edwards, LC). ‘We were supposed to sleep in our equipment too, with rifles handy’ (J.A. Johnston, IWM). ‘Cartridge after cartridge, I bolted into my rifle, seeing nothing in the darkness we kept up, but imagining the grey forms advancing and advancing towards us – I fire about chest height’ (H. Cooper, LC).

To be without the feel of the weapon, its familiar hold and place on the body, would result in feelings of loss and abandonment. Deprived of the security which the rifle afforded, resulted in an escalation of fear. ‘I did the unforgivable thing – I left my rifle’ (W.J. Senescall, LC). ‘My personal situation improved when I first was able to pick up a German rifle, and then later exchange it for a British one’ (J. R. Belderby, LC).

‘I heard a rifle shot which I though was a sniper quite near and grabbed my rifle and went along the trench to see the sentry to find out what happened’ (R.J. Mason, LC). ‘Once or twice, we seemed to hear sounds of movement ahead which sent a thrill down our backs and a tightening grip to our hands on the rifle’ (H. Cooper, LC). The rifle itself is an agent; its qualities and character were never fixed, but reworked by the possibilities which its form and function offered to the soldier (after Pacey 2001, 4).

‘You are different with a gun in your hand; the gun is different with you holding it. You are another subject because you hold the gun; the gun is another object because it has entered into a relationship with you’ (Latour 1999, 179). ‘As sniper – I endeavour to give the Bosche as lively a time as possible and get through plenty of ammunition’ (A. Anderson, IWM). ‘Raising myself, I got the butt of the gun into my shoulder and peered through the sights of the trench, firing short bursts while I endeavoured to spot the barrel’ (I.L Read, LC).

Its presence, its possibilities, alter the character and perceptions of the soldier, it is a way of revealing (Heidegger 1977, 12). ‘I mean that whenever we saw a German moving we fired at them with our rifles’ (G.A. Brett, LC). ‘I shan’t take many prisoners when it comes to going in the thick of it (with) a rifle...at each Bosh (sic) I come in contact with at close quarters. The more we send to heaven, the sooner the war will be ended’ (H.H. Spelman, LC). ‘I never felt any danger, I never expected to come out of the crater alive. I said to myself if I have got to die I’ll die fighting like a Diehard and when the Alleman (sic)...poked their heads up I fired to kill and what I hit I know I killed’ (G. Adams, LC).

The military authorities considered the rifle to be one of the foremost offensive weapons of the infantry and essential in maintaining an active front policy, therefore, 'the use of the rifle must become an instinct' (General Staff 1918, 15). The physical form of the rifle could not be solely interpreted within the dictated conventions of the military authorities (see Smith *et al* 2003, 91-92). 'An individual's sense of purpose and meaning can affect the shape and use of technology' (Pacey 2001, 201). This violent and hostile landscape confronted soldiers with moments of absolute brutality, where regulation use of weaponry proved of little use (Bourke 1999, 7-8). 'We went in with our rifles without bayonets fixed or with bayonets only. Using bayonets in the form of a dagger and rifles as clubs and they were much more effective that way. Although a shorter reach of course. We really got into a tangle, that is the only expression one can use' (E. Watts-Moses, LC).

'Rifles were being used as clubs and a real hand-to-hand set up' (H.O. Tomkins, LC). 'Having once plunged the bayonet it was impossible, you had to defend yourself, you probably used it then holding onto the barrel, and using the butt, more than the bayonet' (U. Burke, IWM). 'Jerry showed considerable fight, and it was a good hand to hand scrap, before we were enabled to advance again. Practically all the Germans here had half their heads knocked in with the Butt of a Rifle, but a fair number of our men were treated likewise' (R. Cude, IWM).

The soldiers' behaviour, perceptions and actions developed through a process of continual interaction with these material objects of the war, as technology is figured and embodied in material practices (MacKenzie 2002, 205). The materials of the war are agents, and the recursive relationship they form with the soldiers who use them provides a means of control of action and behaviour (Gosden 1999, 120). Soldiers of the Great War were conditioned by the technology around them which could form and dictate actions, purpose and the understanding of their surroundings.

This is demonstrated in the primacy accorded to the use of the bayonet by the General Staff, derived from the belief that this would encourage the offensive and fighting spirit amongst the men (Griffith 1994, 67; Bourke 1999, 90). 'In a bayonet fight the impetus of a charging line gives it moral and physical advantages over a stationary line' (War Office 1914, 222).

The emphasis on the use of the rifle and bayonet is based on the perceived character of these materials to create an active front line and instil the ordered aggression amongst the soldiers; ‘the aim and object of all ranks must be to come to close quarters with the enemy as quickly as possible’ (General Staff 1918, 15). The rifle and bayonet were considered by the General Staff to be easier to harass the enemy with (Griffith 1994, 69). Indeed, the aggressive character of the rifle and bayonet and the prescribed use of these weapons, were those that were desired by the General Staff to be embodied by the soldiers. Embodiment explains how culture is incorporated into the body, how it becomes naturalised in actions, behaviour and belief (Attfield 2000, 241; Haraway 1991, 196). It is a process which changes the individual themselves; ‘embodiment as a movement of incorporation rather than inscription...a movement wherein forms themselves are generated’ (Ingold 1993, 157).

‘The rifle and bayonet being the most efficient offensive weapons of the soldier, are for assault, for repelling attack or for obtaining superiority of fire. Every N.C.O. and man in the Platoon must be proficient in their use’ (General Staff 1917, 7).

Handling the bayonet, fixing it upon the rifle in preparation for an attack, itself signalled a new response from the soldier; 'had the most exciting time of my life. Called out at midnight, and ordered to 'don' respirators, 'fix bayonets' and 'stand to' (R. Grimshaw, IWM). The bayonet represented for the soldier the most extreme form of aggression, an ability to dictate situations an altered perception on the world around them. 'Charged into the trenches, killed and bayoneted troops you didn't stop to look at them or take prisoners' (U. Burke, IWM). 'One of our fellows...put his bayonet in the first prisoner's eye and loosed off – he had lost a brother in the war so perhaps he was justified' (J.W.B. Russell, LC). 'There was this German kneeling on the floor of the trench, the poor bugger was dead scared...I was standing there wondering whether to stick him or shoot him' (C.R. Quinnel, IWM).

'He lifted his left arm only and said 'mercy' with his mouth but his dark Prussian eyes said murder, and my bayonet went into the back of his heart in a flash he collapsed with a grunt, I withdrew the bayonet and pressed the trigger, just to make sure' (J. Gerrard, LC).

'Just outside a dugout lay about five dead Germans, some only half out of the entrance. A man standing there said that when they took the trench they called down the dugout for the Germans to come up and waited for them with bayonets at the top...They said the Captain told them, "Stick all the bastards"' (H. Cooper, LC). The rifle and bayonet operated on the behaviour and actions of the soldier, their use conditioned a way of being-in-the-work, a way of working upon the world; 'a bayonet is an excellent coxer!' (R.C. Bingham, LC).

The rifle and bayonet formed with the soldier a means of defining possibilities, a means of acting within this hostile landscape. Whilst these materials could be used to control the actions and behaviour of the soldiers, in turn they could also be used to subvert the dictated use of materials, and the soldiers' requirements in the trenches (after MacKenzie and Wajcman 1999, 21). Rifles in particular could be used for an undirected purpose, not intended by the military authorities. Soldiers could also turn their weapons against their own bodies. Self-inflicted wounds constituted damage inflated upon army property, as the soldier's own body under military law was regarded as another part of the army's material (Bet-El 1999, 153). Soldiers would turn their rifles upon themselves, shooting hands and feet, damage limbs using their own bayonets and bombs, and they could remove and ingest the cordite from rifle cartridges to induce an erratic heart beat (Bourke 1996, 85; Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002, 308). A reaction against the war landscape, which could induce such fear, that soldiers would damage their own bodies to remove themselves from this hostile space.

There are some anecdotal reports of unpopular officers or N.C.O.'s being shot by their men and some soldiers may have used their weapons to settle grievances amongst themselves (Corns and Hughes-Wilson 2002, 360). Advances into no man's land gave soldiers opportunities to use their weapons, to subvert the military order, and their roles within it; 'his chest had been blown out, he'd been shot by his own men' (U. Burke, IWM). In this manner weapons offered the opportunity for the soldiers to change the way they viewed the landscape, altering the controls within it, and changing its perception (after Latour 1999, 208).

Weapons could be used in a way which would reduce the dangers in the hostile landscape, by denying the materials the role given to them by the military authorities, and also by denying the roles given to the soldiers themselves. Ashworth (1980, 15) has described how soldiers were able to control and radically alter their situation, reducing the danger within their surroundings. This was accomplished through the 'live and let live' policy, described by Blunden (1930, 167) as one of the 'soundest elements in trench war.' Live and let live was defined as a truce where enemies stopped fighting, by withholding fire, or reducing fire to periods of 'ritualised aggression' (Ashworth 1980, 19).

This habit was forged through the soldiers' ability to communicate indirectly with the enemy, by withholding fire or restricting it to a regular, predictable time (Ashworth 1980, 28). Sorley (1978, 100) described it as 'we refrain from interfering with Brother Bosch...as long as he is kind to us.' J.W. Allen (LC) described the 'delightful trenches' near Armentieers, where opposing forces had agreed to withhold fire, 'the British and Germans arrange about burying the dead and live in a kind of friendship.' Just as their weapons had the potential to kill, order and control, giving the soldiers power over others, the weapons also possessed a quality to remain unfired (after Pacey 2001, 78).

The landscape was redefined by associations with non-human agents, and the resulting action is a property of the whole association between human and non-human (Latour 1999, 183). ‘Our policy just then was to live and let live; for we argued, if we shot these Germans from this post, we invited retaliation by ‘rum jars’...Subsequent events proved that we were right’ (I.L. Read, LC). J.C. Wedgewood (LC) reported in September 1915 of the attitudes of troops in some sections of the trenches. ‘The holding of the trenches differed also. In some there appeared to be an “agreement” with the Germans to hold fire.’ Graves (1929, 105) also described the attitude in the quiet sections; ‘the spirit in the trenches was largely defensive, the policy being not to stir the Germans into more than their usual hostility.’

Entering into these sections of the line appeared incongruous to those who had experienced the hostility of active sectors; ‘we felt we had arrived in an area where the war was almost unknown’ (G.A. Brett, LC). Live and let live was a refusal of the values and outlook dictated by the military hierarchy, a redefinition by the soldiers of their weapons and their military role, and it alleviated the violence and danger in the landscape, altering the fear and anxiety within it. R.J.T. Evans (LC), in a letter dated November 1915, wrote that whilst in a trench German soldiers called out, ‘you no shoot, we no shoot.’ Captain O. Lyle (LC) remarked that the ‘trenches...are nice gentlemanly places, except when the Bosch becomes aggressive.’

The material world that surrounded the soldiers was one in which their bodies gave substance to the distinctions and differences between themselves (after Moore 1994, 71). The use of particular weapons and the membership of a specialist weapons group would inspire not only a sense of identity for the soldier, but also an assumed behaviour and attitude (Ashworth 1980, 82). This was discouraged by the authorities who insisted that specialist troops were to be regarded as infantry soldiers (General Staff 1917, 9). Soldiers who operated the Vickers and Lewis machine guns and served within machine gun groups not only considered themselves members of a specialist weapon group but also operated more autonomously than other members of the infantry (Ashworth 1980, 60). This was a particular source of identity for those who served within these groups; 'nobody enlisted we all found ourselves part of it, and funny enough proud to be part of a unit that other infantry called 'The Suicide Club' (C.J. Giggins, LC).

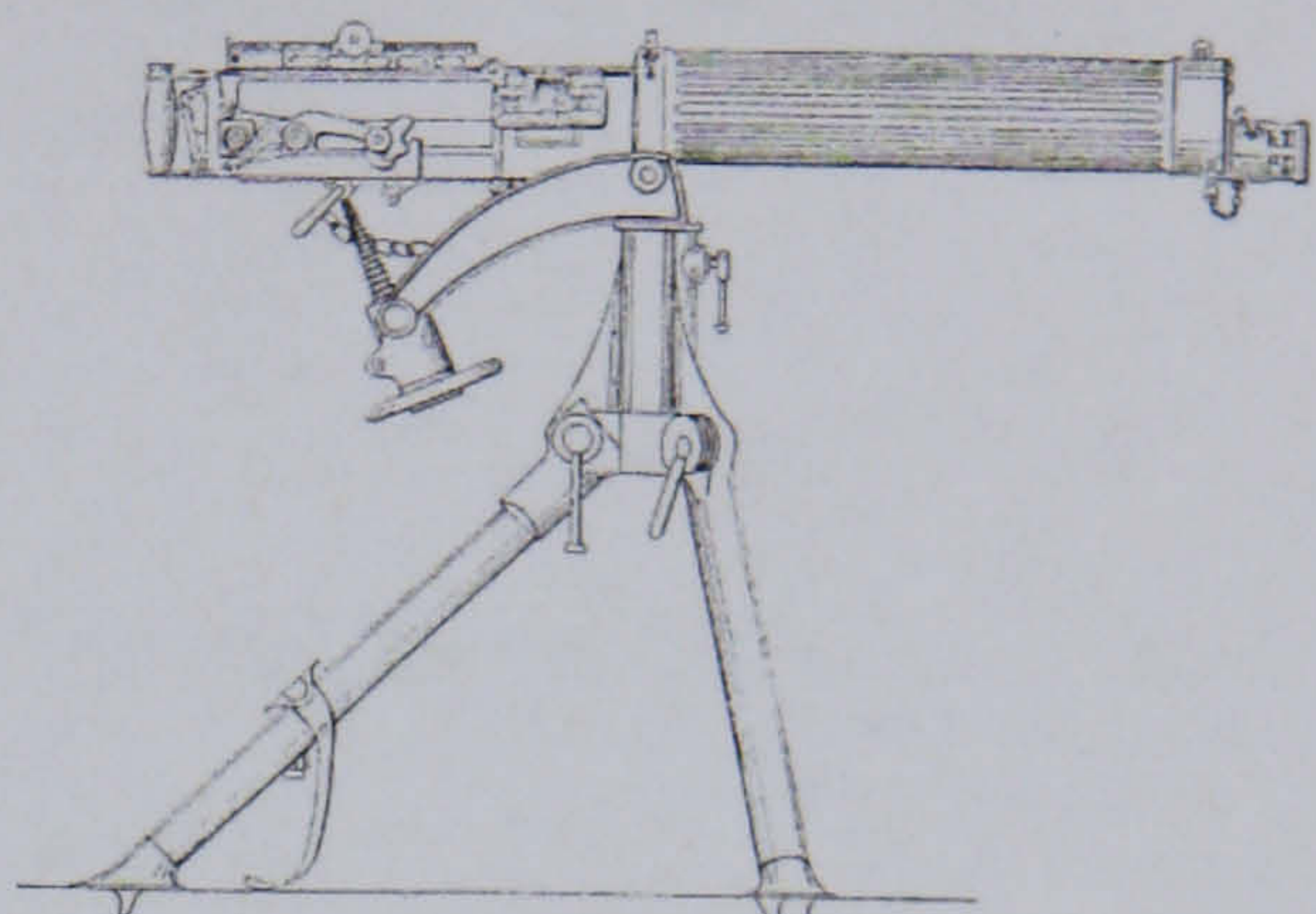


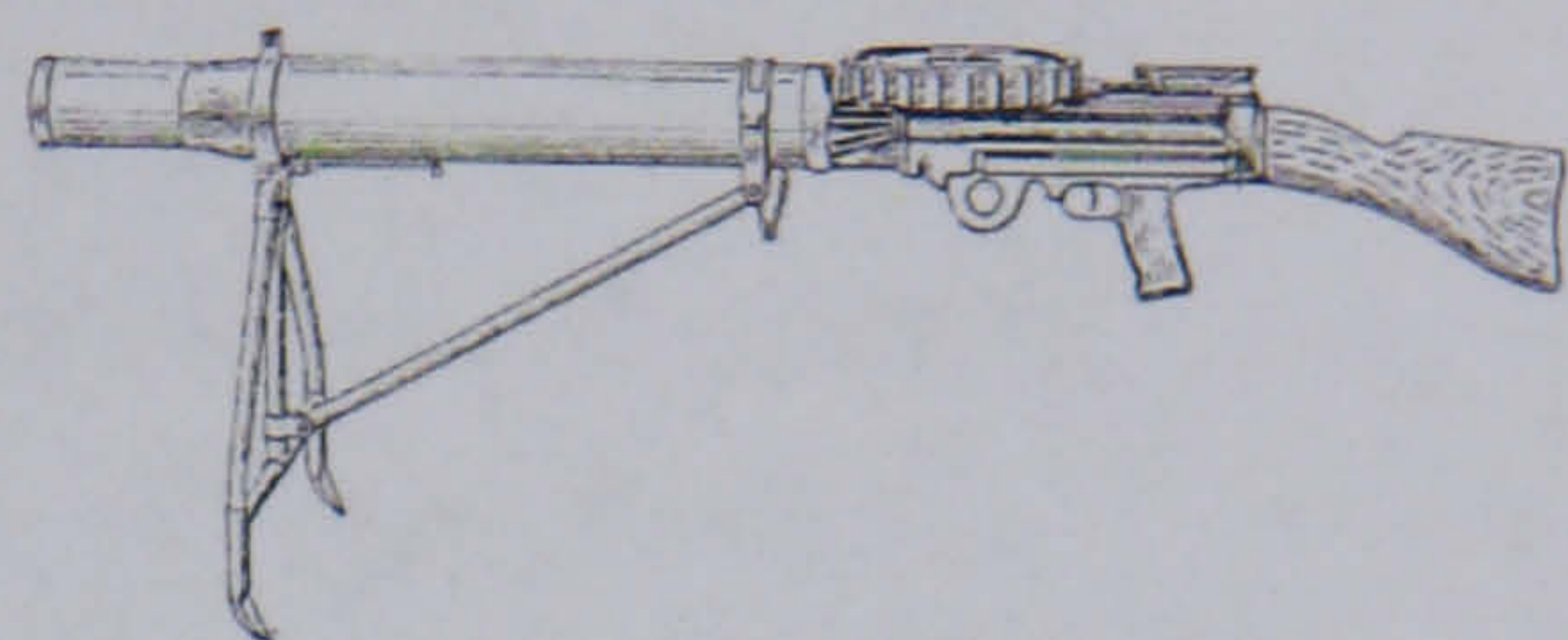
Fig.39: Vickers gun (Tactics, LC)

Whilst some welcomed the 'camaraderie' of being part of a machine gun team (V. Fagence, IWM), having to be placed within the front line, and providing cover for advancing infantry, necessarily entailed being a distinct target for the enemy. 'It was more dangerous work and being a machine gunner had its disadvantages as well as privileges' (J.A. Johnston, IWM).

The ability of the machine gun to cause heavy damage to both structures and substantial loss of life to the enemy was recognised by the high command and it's instructed use was 'to kill the enemy above ground and to obtain superiority of fire' (General Staff 1917, 4). The soldiers operating the weapon also attached importance to this powerful feature of the machine gun, which shaped their use and actions within the war landscape (after Latour 1993, 45).



Fig.41: Lewis Gun team (gwpda, 2006)



LEWIS GUN.

Fig.40: Lewis Gun (Tactics, LC)

'The devastating effects both moral and material of machine gun fire opened unexpectedly at close range, would more than compensate for our lack of numbers' (I.L. Read, LC). 'There were a number of huns and I played my gun on them and I should imagine I must have put the majority of them out of action as we saw nothing of them afterwards' (L.E. Eggleton, LC). 'We raked the trench with three drums at close range and had the fierce satisfaction of causing frightful execution down there' (I.L. Read). 'Clarke one of my Lewis Gunners...gave them a whole magazine at twenty yards before they had time to fire or surrender. We did not want prisoners' (G.B. Riddell, LC).

Soldiers enjoyed the power and the aggression of the machine gun, and some took immense 'pride' in their 'hostile machine gun' (J.W.B. Russell, LC), and its 'rapid fire' (J.R. Belderby, IWM). 'The Vickers was a wonderful weapon, and we were very thankful for its reliability' (C.J. Giggins, LC). The machine gun groups were usually constituted by five individuals; three to carry ammunition and spare parts, one to provide maintenance and one to fire the weapon (Ashworth 1980, 60; Winter 1978, 111-112). 'When mobile that is in action and moving or proceeding to or from the line, No.2 carries the gun and spare parts case, to keep his hands free he is armed with a revolver not a rifle, on gun cleaning and stripping he works with No.1 and if the gun is firing and No.1 becomes a casualty he takes over the firing' (C.J. Giggins, LC).

The soldiers operating and maintaining the machine gun were commanded never to abandon the weapon on the battlefield, in order to prevent its capture and use by the enemy on retreating troops, a reminder of the damage the weapon could inflict (Griffith 1994, 25; 1996, 7). 'You kept your own gun all the time. There was never anything left in the line, you carried it with you' (J. Scott, LC).

'There are strange hells within the minds war made,
Not so often not so humiliatingly afraid,
As one would have expected - the racket and fear guns made' (Gurney 1996, 214).

Being No.1 on the machine gun, firing the weapon itself, could shape the actions and perceptions of the soldier, with the soldier's behaviour altered by the machinery of the war (Leed 1979, 153). 'Being No.1 on the Machine Gun was immensely gripping' (J.R. Belderby, LC). Using the weapon commanded the soldier's bodily position as well, which itself would reinforce his discipline and his actions on the battlefield (Foucault 1979, 152). 'In later months when operating a machine gun against fatigue parties moving along communicating trenches we evolved the technique of waiting for the first man to reach a gap a few yards preceding another gap and fired at this second gap immediately a head was sighted at the first...the sights were already laid and nothing more was needed than to press the thumb piece' (J.R. Belderby, LC).

'It is great fun firing the Lewis Gun on the move. It works just like a hose pipe and it is like walking against a heavy wind – the effect being a steady pressure' (R.E. Wilson, LC). Jones (1968, 46) describes the operation of the machine gun as 'making taller men stoop, hunchbackwise.' Operation of the machine gun necessitated a certain stance, a certain posture, an understanding of the functions of the weapon, a 'body-weapon, body-tool, body-machine complex' (Foucault 1979, 153).

'The Gunner sitting normally although he can stand or kneel or even lie depends on circumstances, but sitting is the more comfortable and efficient, to carry on, sitting with his knees up, he puts his fingers around the two handles, the index finger over the top of the handle, the others wrapped around the handles, the thumbs on the thumbpiece, his elbows are supported by the inside of his knees which can also aid if the gun vibrates too freely' (C.J. Giggins, LC). This 'body-machine complex' (Foucault 1979, 153), also incorporated those who maintained the machine gun, the complexities of which entailed the need for an almost rhythmic assemblage pattern. 'You could only fire for half a hour or you would destroy the gun altogether. You had to take the breech block off and take the barrel out and all the surroundings. You can destroy it if you keep on firing because after about a hour it gets red hot and burns itself out' (J. Scott, LC).

'The gun itself is like a jig-saw puzzle and on taking it to pieces and putting it together if not careful you may have some parts left over and must thoroughly understand the whole working of it' (F. Philipson, IWM). 'When I got through the first belt (barbed wire) I saw a Lewis Gunner go down. A Lance Corporal rushed up pulled the Lewis gun from under the body and fired out. Then the damned thing jammed and this Lance Corporal calmly sat down stripped the gun and cleaned the stoppage. Then he went on firing as he ran, got through the second belt and dropped into the German trench and did great execution' (H.O. Tomkins, LC). Material objects must be considered part of the way soldiers understood and conceptualised this hostile space, and as such they influence their actions within the war landscape. This relationship was essentially recursive, as individuals invest their 'self' in material objects, thus contributing to actions and behaviour that moulds the individual development of self (after Strang 1997, 177).

The other weapon available to the front line soldier was the grenade or bomb. Together the rifle, the bayonet, and the bomb were initially considered to be the most effective, offensive weapons for an attack on enemy positions (General Staff 1917, 4). Originally, improvised grenades fashioned from jam tins, or slabs of guncotton wrapped around a detonator and six-inch nails (the hairbrush bomb), were used on the front (Saunders 1999, 2-6). The Mills bomb, in particular came to represent for the soldiers the main offensive weapon, a symbol of their security and ability to defend themselves within a hostile landscape (Winter 1978, 110).

‘When the broken battered trenches,
Are like the bloody butchers’
benches,
And the air is thick with stench,
Carry on.’ (Gardner 1964, 48).

‘We’re here because of we’re here
Because we’re here, because we’re
here.’
(Gardner 1964, 97).

recalled how the 'Mills bombs were beautiful little things, and effective. They fitted the hand perfectly and were thrown like a bowling a cricket ball.' 'As all troops were provided with two Mills bombs each...we felt reasonably comfortable' (J.R. Belderby, LC). The Mills bomb was considered 'the second weapon' behind the rifle and bayonet of every soldier and its use was for 'dislodging the enemy from behind cover or below ground and killing him' (General Staff 1917, 7).

Private S.A. Lane (LC)

This bomb was used by the soldiers to exert power and influence on the battlefield (MacKenzie 1996, 15); soldiers enthused over, 'getting a deady (sic) hand at bombs and grenades' (J.W.B. Russell, LC), and were 'all agog at the idea of possibly having a go with...bombs' (R. Grimshaw, IWM). 'My hand strays to my pocket. Have 2 "Mills" in each, and there are some Jerrys' against me. They are prisoners and had it not been for the fact that they are being closely watched I would have put one at least of my bombs among them' (R. Cude, IWM).

who were still alive as we took trench after trench seemed too shaken to put up resistance some too ready to surrender, while those in the safety of their deep underground shelters were not too anxious to come out, until persuaded by a Mills bomb and threats of more, I saw none resisting after that' (W.J. Muir, LC). The use of the bomb in some circumstances was opposed by the military hierarchy, who believed that the use of the Mills grenade in the initial encounter with the enemy should not be encouraged (Griffith 1994, 67).

'Quite a lot of the Germans

It seemed that to many that the cult of the bomb, could only too easily be used as an excuse by soldiers, who wanted quietly to forsake the offensive (Griffith 1994, 67). E. Blackburn (LC) emphasised this perspective calling ‘bomb throwing...a soft job. No pack to carry and a nice easy time.’ The bombers’ role was criticised by the military hierarchy, as they considered it to include too much emphasis on ‘not-exposing oneself’, and too little on such things as ‘capturing the enemy trench’ (Griffith 1994, 68). Far from storming forward in fact, such troops were now perceived as preferring to cower behind a trench traverse (Ashworth 1980, 68-69).



Fig.42: Mills grenade (The Diggers, 2005)

It was considered that for bombers ‘there is...a great temptation for men under heavy fire to drop into shell holes or trenches instead of going forward thereby escaping observation’ (quoted in Griffith 1994, 69). The bomb became not just a means to harass the enemy with, but also to avoid the possibilities of encountering danger and to prolong any tacit truce which might be present within that section of the battlefield (Ashworth 1980, 68-69). ‘For either side to bomb the other would be a useless violation of the unwritten laws that govern the relations of combatants permanently within a hundred yards distance of each other’ (Sorley 1978, 100). The Mills bomb in these circumstances could be seen to threaten the very soldiers who used them, both by attracting enemy hostility but also to their physical being; bombs were considered ‘nasty little cylinders’ (D. Allen, LC), as ‘you see a bomb is just as likely to kill yourself as kill a German’ (G. Adams, LC).

Raids which were made on the enemy trenches could be comprised of moments of extreme brutality, they arose from a combination of official policies designed to train troops in assault tactics and encourage an 'active front', but also demonstrate the soldiers perceptions of the hostile landscape which they inhabited (Simkins 1996, 52; Griffith 1994, 60-61). Raids were organised from a small groups of soldiers, who would conceal rank badges, blacken faces, and arm themselves with clubs, knives, bayonets, pistols and bombs (Winter 1978, 92-93). The hand-to-hand weapons reflect the violent nature of these expeditions.

'Sometimes night raids were made. About twenty men would creep through the gaps in our wire and the German wire and pounce on the enemy trench in the hope of killing the occupants, throwing hand grenades into dugouts, seizing a prisoner and dragging him back to our lines for interrogation' (W.G. Taplin, LC). 'Owing to the probability of a hand to hand struggle, raiders of both sides were usually armed with long knives, revolvers and bombs. These were occasionally varied by introducing bludgeons about the size of a police truncheon but thickly studded with nails, or canes with the head weighted with lead. Knuckledusters were favourites too, especially with our Officers' (J.A. Johnston, LC).

The General Staff (1916, 20) recommended that soldiers should be ready during these raids to use ‘a bayonet or special stabbing knife or weapon for hand-to-hand fighting, such as an axe or knobkerry (trench club).’ Sassoon (1940, 302) recalled in his memoirs, his preparation for a raid on the enemy’s trenches, ‘it was time to be moving; I took off my tunic slipped my old raincoat on over my leather waistcoat, dumped my tin hat on my head, and picked up my nail-studded knobkerrie (sic)’.



Fig.43: Trench club (The Diggers, 2005)

It is these trench clubs which illustrate how the materials used by the soldiers influenced their actions (after Bijker and Law 1997, 4). These weapons were not officially distributed; they were constructed in a variety of forms from the vast quantity of materials available (see Brophy and Partridge 1931, 325); ‘we got the engineers to make us some coshes. And these coshes they’d got a leather thong on them as you put your hand. And there was a great big horses shoe nails all around the top and a lump of lead drilled into the top’ (F. Lewis, LC). It is however the human users that are seen behind these weapons (Latour 1999, 189-190).

The soldier's equipment was loaded with significance and purpose; this is true not just of the weapons but also the wider military equipment issued by the individual. A relationship between these human and non-human agents served to place soldiers and materials within the wider context of meanings of the war landscape (after MacKenzie 1996, 14). The soldier's steel helmet is an example of this process, wearing the helmet, in preparation for an assault, or during a bombardment, ensured that its presence placed certain associations within the minds of the soldiers (after Leed 1979, 79); 'what has been learned from nonhumans is reimported so as to reconfigure people' (Latour 1999, 208).

The capacity for the helmets to offer protection appeared self-evident. 'Everyone has a tin helmet and very useful they are too. I've seen big bumps go through, but twice I've seen them stop bullets myself. Many a man owes his life to them' (D.P Hirsch, LC). 'We...look like Chinese mandarins, but...they...have already saved some of us' (S.C. Marriott, LC). 'Six hits on the helmet and the helmet was not even dented' (A.H. Cabeldu, LC). 'One of these High Explosive shrapnel shells burst over the trench; normally you didn't take much notice of them, with you tin hats on you only got some splinters down' (F.E. Molz, LC). The physical discomforts of wearing the tin helmet were disregarded in the face of the security which the helmets appeared to offer. 'I have had my tin helmet dished out. They are heavy but save you a lot besides giving you confidence' (F.B. Hirsch, LC); 'beastly uncomfortable'... 'but did give protection from splinters, shrapnel and bullets' (E.A. Shephard, LC).

The 'tin helmets', 'came in for a good deal of unfavourable and indeed, ribald comment' (J.A. Johnston, IWM), but their capacity to preserve life was undoubted by some soldiers. 'For myself the tin hat at first had two uses, a) as a seat in damp or muddy conditions, and b) for making porridge after removing the lining. I could scarcely anticipate that my life would be saved by my helmet when a bullet went in and out via my skull at Passchendaele' (H.S. Taylor, LC). J.R. Tibbles (LC) described the fear he witnessed of soldiers without their equipment; 'where's my helmet? I can't find my hat.'

The level of assurance the soldiers felt with the security of the steel helmet enabled them to face the prospect of going into attack, as the meanings of technology coexist and interact with the personal responses and the 'existential' experience of individuals (Pacey 2001, 78). 'The newly issued steel helmets were certainly a boom' (R.J. Mason, LC). 'Would not go near the front line without one, unless we couldn't help it' (I.L. Read, LC). 'I feel much more comfortable now that I have got my steel helmet on once more' (A. Anderson, IWM). J.G. Burgess (LC) described the relief felt of going into battle after being equipped with a steel helmet. Overwhelmingly, 'the steel helmets which we are now wearing seem to give one a feeling of safety' (J. Collier, LC).

The trenches, after successive bombardments, shifts in positions and reconstructions, became a maze of duplicates and dead ends in which soldiers would easily lose their way (Keegan 1999, 193). To be in the trench system could be disorientating, as the similarity of construction and layout gave no indication to location; 'when moving about in a trench you turn a corner every few yards, which makes it seem like walking in a maze' (Edmonds 1929, 217-218). The comparisons between trenches and mazes emphasise the confusion and bewilderment that soldiers would encounter upon entering into the trenches; 'to the uninitiated they were a maze' (C.R. Quinell, IWM). Whilst the threat to life in these trench systems was still undiminished; 'trenches are a maze only a trifle more dangerous' (A.J. Rixon, IWM). For those new to the battlefields or that particular section of line, yet to familiarise themselves with the intricacies of the system, soldiers could easily find themselves lost and were dependent upon those leading them to where they were to be stationed; 'you simply followed the guide who knew the locality' (H. Oxley, IWM).

Signposts were used to direct the soldiers to the front line, reserve or communication trenches, and the army gave these trenches official names which corresponded to the area in which they were in (Keegan 1999, 193); 'name boards were placed in trenches in Arras to help new troops find their way' (G.A.A. Willis, LC). Official names for the trenches did nothing to aid lost soldiers, as in each section, all trenches were given a name beginning with the same letter (Chasseaud 1991, 7); 'certain trenches are marked up with names, such as "Caledonian Road" and "Clarendon Road". It is very easy to lose ones self...' (H. Old, LC).

Official trench names meant little to the soldiers who served in them, as their names arose from bureaucracy (Martin 1958, 145). 'All the trenches had names, many of them singularly inappropriate... The other advanced posts were Nestor, Netley and Nelson. This latter was the only one whose name made any sense in an ironic sort of way, because it included an observation post where a sniper sat all day observing the enemy lines through a telescope' (A.J. Abraham, LC).

The geography of the Western Front took upon significance for the soldiers who fought there, behind the lines and at the front. Place-names were 'Tommified', to create 'Armenteurs', 'Wipers', 'Eetaps', or more intimately 'Doll's House Cottage' or 'Tram Car Cottage'. The origins would be forgotten but the names would still pass from mouth to mouth as new battalions relieved old (Keegan 1976, 208). Most of these names were formed simply, by anglicizing French words (Mucky Farm – Mouquet Farm; Auchonvillers – Ocean Villas) (Ward 2004, 102).

Despite these official titles or because of them, soldiers began to name their surroundings in the trenches, and the wider war landscape themselves, a process of understanding the hostile landscape (after Tilley 1994, 18).

It is within the trenches though that this process takes on a more important role. Through the names soldiers gave to areas within the trench system, sections of trenches and the weapons which threatened them, a sense emerges of a 'presence of a world' (Ward 2004, 102). 'There were lots of curious names to trenches all over France though... named after Colonel Wing, Wing's Way. I don't know what he did, or what his battalion was, but its a great memorial for any man to have' (J.R. Tibbles, LC).

The names given to the trenches by the soldiers reflect their presence in the landscape, their witnessing of the events of the war, and a way of placing meaning and permanence upon their surroundings (Tilley 1994, 18; Graham 1984, 11). One veteran recalled how a communication trench was named 'Stuart Trench', after a popular officer was killed by sniper fire whilst it was being constructed, during the Battle of Hooze (1915) (Slowe and Woods 1986, 42).

Naming the trenches ensured a sense of familiarity with their surroundings, a means of understanding the hostile, threatening landscape in which they were situated. 'The trenches about here were in good condition, a London Brigade had been here and all the trenches had London names' (J.C. McLeary, LC). The names of trenches could evoke past events, the dead and the living, they could serve as indicators of the atmosphere of places, and they could act as warnings.

'Too bewildered to be frightened we kept on until we reached a place known as Death Valley...Truly this place had earned (sic) its name for it had been the scene of a most bitter struggle and was now a mass of shell holes' (R.G. Ashford, LC). These names carried great meaning for those fighting in this landscape, reminders of home, warnings of danger, non-military identities and dark humour; 'Jacob's' Ladder', 'The Great Wall of China', 'Windy Corner', 'Dead End', 'Old Kent Road', 'Shrapnel Corner', 'Clapham Junction', 'Tower Hamlets' (Blunden 1930, 348-349; Martin 1958, 145). 'They are all named (and duly labelled) mostly after some London street – Cheyne Walk...Baker Street, Bayswater, Waterloo Bridge (planks across a mouldy little ditch) were some of them' (L.M. Edwards, LC).

The mere names of the trenches and traverses were capable of instilling a sense of fear and anxiety within the soldiers who passed through them or occupied them. 'Bullet missed me by inches at Windy Corner. Felt very uneasy as had a presentiment something was going to happen' (A.J. Rixon, IWM). 'Vindictive Crossroads was a terrible place' (U. Burke, IWM). 'Matters were perhaps a little more lively but that may have been due to the nature of the section of trench we occupied (Death Valley, I believe is its unofficial title)' (J. Jacobs, LC). All attempted to create a context and knowledge, so meanings, warnings and sentiments could be expressed within the soldiers' landscape (Graham 1984, 11).

'We reached the valley in safety, the Valley of Death it was called and well it earned its name. Fritz had concentrated 400 batteries on the valley alone as he knew we had to cross there to get near the ridge, it was absolute Hell' (H. Sibley, LC). This network of named and experienced places was constructed through the soldiers' habitual activities, experiences and interactions (after Thomas 2001, 173). J.M. Pritchard (LC), in his memoirs, recalled that a natural drop in the ground that had made a part of trench especially exposed to German sniper fire, was named 'Suicide Corner.' The names used by the soldiers could be used to describe, identify and understand the hostility of the landscape, and the threats it posed to them (Brophy and Partridge 1931, 186-187; Graham 1984, 106).

Soldiers would attribute names to the weapons sent to inflict damage upon their trenches and mutilation and death upon themselves, names which reflected the characteristics of the weapons, their physical features; 'archies', 'Jack Johnson', 'flying pigs', 'Black Maria', 'toffee apples', 'whizz-bangs.' 'One heavy howitzer shell was nicknamed Jack Johnston, and another of that calibre a "coal box" because it left a very large pall of black smoke hanging about' (H.S. Taylor, LC). W.O. Duncan (LC) wrote in his diary in 1914, 'went up the line immediately after dinner and found Vermelles being shelled by coal boxes and Jack Johnsons.' 'Those great Jack Johnsons they used to put down tremendous great shell...apart from the explosion the blackness of the smoke would almost demoralise you' (P. Webb, IWM).

These names also acted as warnings, of the damage that these weapons could inflict, but also their identifiable features (Graham 1984, 106). 'It was dubbed by us the "Whizz-Bang" gun. We hated it and had good cause to fear it as with its high velocity, the shell was on you almost at the same moment you realise the gun had fired and all you heard in truth was "whizz-bang"' (J.A. Johnston, IWM). 'The Germans laid down a barrage consisting of smallish high-velocity shells and gas shells, the former we called whizzbangs because the explosion followed so fast on the sound of the approaching shell, and the latter exploding with a 'plop' releasing a cloud of phosgene, mustard gas' (W.G. Taplin, LC).

H. Clayton-Nunn (LC) wrote in April 1915, 'they have official nicknames for shells here, the shrapnel fired by ordinary German field gun is called "Little Willie". The field Howitzers we called "White Hopes". The five inch "Black Maria". The 8-inch is called "Postmaster". Anything over 8-inch is called "Jack Johnson".'

References abound to the German Minnenwerfer (trench mortar), named 'Minnie' (Brophy and Partridge 1931, 139). J. Jacobs (LC) described them in a letter in February 1916 as 'horrible unpleasant things; although you can see them coming and can avoid them by bolting up the trench'; a bombardment of these trench mortars was described as 'sheer gut stabbing ferocity' (H.N. Edwards, LC).

Blunden (1930, 348-349) described the 'Minnie' as a 'forward queen', a prostitute or monarch that ruled the land. By naming the war landscape, soldiers derived meaning and understanding of the dangers present, a knowledge of the features and habits of this hostile landscape which they inhabited (Graham 1984, 106).

The orders of the military hierarchy shaped the actions and the awareness of the war landscape for the soldiers and attempted to forge within the soldiers a perception of a distinct 'sense of place', of a violent, brutal, hostile landscape. The actions of the soldiers were strictly governed and ordered along the Western Front by the General Staff (Fuller 1990, 61). Trench warfare was considered by the War Office and the military authorities to be only a phase in the operation of their war plan. To gain a decisive success on the battlefield it was believed that the battle must be taken out of the trenches, and 'the enemy...armies crushed in the open' (HMSO 1916, 5). It was therefore central to British army policy throughout the war to create an aggressive front line, encouraging the soldiers to attack and harass the enemy at every available opportunity (Keegan 1999, 198; Ashworth 1980, 12).

The soldiers in the trenches were to maintain what the War Office (1914, 9) defined as the 'fighting spirit controlled by discipline.' The requirements of the infantry in the trenches were set out by a variety of official notices by the war office, to be enforced by officers (Ashworth 1980, 90-91). A publication of 1917 sets out the need for the 'offensive spirit' where, 'all ranks must be taught that their aim and object is to come to close quarters with the enemy as quickly as possible...this must become a second nature' (General Staff 1917, 11).

Official policy did hold that men should not be allowed to lapse into passive defence and that exposure to danger was necessary to maintain the fighting spirit (Fuller 1990, 62). Inactivity in the trenches was considered to dilute this offensive spirit (General Staff 1916, 8). Therefore 'minor local enterprises and constant occupation' were advised. Harassing the enemy was ordered, to give 'the troops a healthy interest and wholesome topics of conversation' (General Staff 1916, 8).

The initiative, self-confidence and offensive power of the infantry was therefore emphasised and called upon to be 'developed to the utmost' (HMSO 1918, 5), and throughout the day the General Staff recommended that the 'maximum amount of work is done daily towards the subjection and annoyance of the enemy' (HMSO 1916, 43). The performance of these routines emphasised the control over the soldiers, it reinforced the governing structure of the army and therefore the maintenance of the soldiers discipline and their own military identity (Giddens 1984, 60; after Bourdieu 1977, 72). Through this predictability and the repetition of day-to-day routines by the soldiers, the system of power enforced by the army is maintained (Giddens 1995, 90-91). Soldiers could certainly find this aspect of their lives frustrating, Sorley (1978, 95) declared this 'alarming sameness' was worse 'than any so-called atrocities.' It was through these 'tedious and repetitious' (A.J. Abraham, LC) activities within the trenches, that the soldier was believed to understand his being and purpose, 'how to go on' in the world (after Tilley 1994, 16).

It is through these ordered and controlled activities that discipline, surveillance, the offensive spirit and importantly morale were maintained (Giddens 1984, 145; Foucault 1979, 141). The British army placed great emphasis in the belief that efficiency in trench warfare was produced by morale (Travers 2003, 5-6). The primacy accorded to this morale factor derived in part from a strategically specific vision of the modern battlefield, whereby fighting in the trenches and the battlefields was therefore believed to require an army steeled, disciplined and inspired by the idea of the attack (Englander 1997, 126). The prescribed method to ensure that these characters and conditions were kept was to keep the soldiers in close groups in the trenches, to enable mutual surveillance, emulation and cohesion (Griffith 1994, 69). The trenches of the British army became not just the focus of the conflict, but the focus of surveillance of the soldier, to observe if the correct attitude and discipline were being maintained (Englander 1997, 126).

Strict discipline was essential at all times in the trenches and the British soldier was well aware of the punishments for dissent (Fuller 1990, 61). F. Lewis (LC) remarked in his memoirs that 'insubordination on the front line they knew meant court martial and probably death.' R.M. Luther (LC), in his memoirs, wrote that the punishment for infringing army law was well known by the ranks; 'the penalty for running away or desertion was a bullet, and all the men knew this. We were told that iron discipline would control a man's nerves under any circumstances.' If soldiers were to be ordered to cross no man's land under heavy fire during battle, or endure prolonged shellfire, it was held that stern discipline and high levels of morale were required (Englander 1997, 126). Discipline maintained by military law was set out by the War Office Manual in 1914, so that 'at all times and all places the conduct of officers and soldiers as such is regulated by military law' (HMSO 1914, 1; Fuller 1990, 48).

H.O. Moore-Gwyn (LC), writing to a fellow officer in early 1915 on the importance of discipline in the trenches remarked that, ‘the whole thing in this war is discipline, which must be strict in every way...They must realise that if they fall out, etc. they are going to get severely punished. Everything ought to be automatic.’

To enable this control the soldier would have to conform to a level of docility, ‘subjected, used, transformed and improved’ (Foucault 1979, 136). Control requires that the whole must be held together, that dissent is prevented and punished, and that a dominant, desirable identity is mobilised (Jabri 1996, 132). Therefore, to create this ‘docile body’ shaped to the demands of the military hierarchy, the values prescribed have to become wholly absorbed (Foucault 1979, 138).

R.V. Maudsley (LC) in May 1915, wrote of the power of this discipline and the brutality witnessed within the war landscape; ‘it was an awful thing to see the men mown down by machine gun fire and yet one after the other going over the parapet to almost certain death.’

Discipline consequently ‘makes’ individuals; it possesses the specific techniques of power, domination and control that creates individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercises (Foucault 1979, 170).

Although the soldier acting under authority performs actions that seem to violate stances of conscience, it would not be true to say that he loses his moral sense; rather the soldier acquires a radically different focus, a consideration of how well he is living up to the expectations that the authority has of him (Milgram 1997, 26). Through these orders of the military hierarchy the soldiers were bombarded with 'warlike impressions' so that their reflexes became 'wholly warlike' (Bourke 1999, 78). Some commissioned officers also attempted to convince soldiers to act in a violent manner through their commands, as they believed that orders such as 'take no prisoners', encouraged the aggression and fighting capabilities of their men (Ferguson 2004, 158).

'We were told by one (officer) that we could take prisoners but he did not want to see them. One way of saying kill them all' (W.J. Senescall, LC). Soldiers were often given the instruction 'keep smiling and kill Bosche' by their commanding officers (P. Webb, IWM). These orders, legitimized by the military authorities, forged a new perception of the landscape and a clear 'sense of place', of a violent and hostile environment where soldiers were accordingly encouraged to act in a brutal and violent manner.

The Western Front formed a landscape that was physically contested and infused with meaning, a landscape that framed the experience of those who fought within it (Saunders 2001, 38). The trenches and no man's land of the battlefields created areas of devastation along the zones of conflict (Clout 1996, 4). Though in some sectors, the physical impact of the war might not be as profound, a panorama of devastation confronted the soldiers in the major battle zones (Eksteins 1989, 146). Within these belts of ravaged vegetation, devastated farmland and ruined buildings, a harsh and brutal 'sense of place' was constructed by the soldiers themselves (Keegan 1999, 198; Bourke 1999, 4; Ashworth 1980, 1).

The war-torn landscape is not merely a world observed, but a world experienced as a place of understanding (after Cosgrove 1984, 13). Participation in war, immersion into this war landscape created a 'trench mind', an understanding of this hostile and dangerous place, creating an impression of how they were to continue and act within the war landscape (Hynes 1998, 16). The soldiers' imagined, observed and constructed this sense of place through the experience of the lingering threat of death and mutilation in the trenches, their own violent lives and the scenes of devastation and brutality they witnessed within the battlefield (after Tilley 1994, 11; Tuan 1980, 3).

Soldiers on the Western Front inhabited an 'otherworldly landscape' (Winter 1995, 68-69); 'this war defies description...no words or photographs can picture the awful scenes.' (H.L. Carrall, LC).

Graves (1929, 211) recalled the abject horror of corpses in no man's land, which 'after the first day or two the bodies swelled and stank.' Sassoon (1940, 216-217) refers to the front as a 'veritable...Armageddon.' 'There was no green anywhere. The meadows were just seas of brown craters, there hardly remaining a square yard anywhere without a shell hole' (R.G. Ashford, LC). 'All about was desolation, destruction, graves, equipment of dead men, German ammunition and arms, "duds" and larger pieces of shells that had burst – all signs of grim work' (W. Claughton, LC).



Fig.46: The battlefield at Ieper (Baker, 2004)

This ruined landscape deeply effected the soldiers; 'you can imagine the gloomy sight of a straffed wood' (A.C. Cave, LC). This desolation which soldiers observed upon the land could have 'deleterious effects on men's morale' (I.L. Read, LC). 'Fancy fighting Germans for land like this. If it was mine I'd give up the whole damn rotten country' (R. Chambers, LC). The scenes of shell holes and wasted terrain also provided a context by which soldiers understood their own actions in the battlefields. This destruction of the landscape, the pastoral fields laid waste by war, ruined villages and their displaced inhabitants for the soldiers could emphasise the cruelty of the battlefield, the inhumanity of the enemy (after Ferme 2001, 25).

‘Huns are such thorough haters...they may keep on as long as possible...to work the maximum amount of evil to do’ (G. Mortimer, LC). ‘This village was once in the hands of the “Huns” so of course there are no houses left standing and all the fruit trees are cut down’ (L.E. Eggleton, LC). ‘This must have been a lovely country before the Allemands turned their attention to it’ (H.A. Ryott, LC). To pass into a section of the line ruined by fighting was to become aware of the intensity of the fighting that had taken place there, and the hostility and violence in the landscape. ‘I can only express the conditions around Passchendaele by the one word Hell’ (H.V. Jones, LC). ‘Charnel house par excellence. I suppose there never has been worse fighting, worse living, harder dying, more hell in a short space, than in Delville Wood...no grub, no drink, no rest, crumped, sniped, machine gunned, gas shelled, attacked and attacking all day long and all night long’ (J.R. Tibbles).

This desolation, the wrecked landscape itself, acted upon the soldiers as the scenes of devastation and brutality began to be mirrored in the soldiers own actions, and constituted their sense of place (after Tilley 1994, 12); ‘if only we could make the Boch pay for these things’ (P.E. McEvoy, LC). Inhabiting the trenches, threatened by shell and sniper fire and experiencing the brutality of the ‘torn and vile’ (Blunden 1930, 99) battlefield could instil within the soldiers the same brutality and violence in their own actions (Taussig 1987, 7). The meanings that soldiers found in the war landscape, the sense of place they constructed were obtained through their perceptions of their surroundings (Ingold 1993); ‘German wanted to surrender but Geordies weren’t having any, it was ‘kill, smash, kill...I got three of the swine with my revolver’ (E.G. Bates, LC). This harsh and brutal landscape created a set of understandings for the soldiers, the war landscape can be claimed to be an ‘extension of the social self providing a series of principles for living and going on in the world’ (after Tilley 1995, 5-6).

Fig.47: No man's land (gwpda, 2006)



It is through this frame of reference that the soldiers' acted and recreated the violent landscape in which they occupied (after Werlen 1993, 6; Taussig 1987, 7). The actions of the men were created and conditioned through their perception of their experiences on the battlefield (see Giddens 1984, 377).

Attacks encouraged the violence felt by soldiers towards the enemy; 'made me wild. Don't want to take prisoners after this' (R.L. Mackay LC). 'The Germans asked for it and Proctor gave them what they asked for...getting a bit of my own back' (J. Gerrard, LC). Atrocities were repaid with atrocities, Owen's (1963, 52-53) 'superhuman inhumanities'; 'Glad to read 7,000 Prussian pigs had been slaughtered at Loos' (T.B. Gresham, LC). 'I can quite understand how men stick prisoners and wounded when they get the chance...I was quite mad with fury for a bit' (J.H. Butler, LC). While the soldiers' actions assisted in the creation of this war landscape, the landscape acted recursively creating the soldiers' who belonged to it (after Tilley 1995, 5-6).

‘When we tumbled in, I fell on top of some of the enemy, and one put his teeth in my cheek and held on. I was dragged close to him, but my arms were free, and I tried to get my thumbs into his eyes and push out his eyes, but found his throat instead, and squeezed his windpipe. I felt my cheek being released, and my enemy struggled no more. Immediately I grabbed my rifle and clubbed him with the butt’ (R.M. Luther, LC).

W.H. Binks (LC) witnessed a German soldier who after offering his surrender, ‘threw two bombs at a lad about seventeen years old and killed him instantly.’ British soldiers then ‘absolutely riddled that Hun and cut him up to mincemeat with their bayonets.’ The soldiers entered into a landscape and turned it into a place, the meanings of which they were unable to abstract ourselves from (after Lovell 1998, 8-9). ‘We looked down their dug out steps, choked with shattered and swollen bodies – two of them with their machine gun belts wound around them. We could picture them – knocked – shot or bayoneted into the entrance, and the Mills bombs being thrown among them to finish them off. Finally – in their blind fury – the attacking British has tossed the gun and its stand, together with all the spare ammunition boxes – in upon the top of them’ (I.L Read, LC).

Within the trenches and no man's land soldiers experienced moments of extreme horror and violence, against themselves and against the enemy. Enemy trenches captured after heavy artillery bombardments were hideous places; 'mangled and mutilated bodies, pools of blood, all amidst a most obnoxious smell, were strewn all over the place. The trench itself...was battered about in a terrible manner' (H. Old, LC). 'After a shell bombardment – dead men lay every few yards in horrible positions...we passed the German posts, in one two Germans lay on the edge, as though they had been trying to escape, on had the whole of his chest out the other his head off. Later I passed just the naked back of a man and no other limb and even now it was steaming' (H. Cooper, LC). Attacks on enemy lines also acted to forge a sense of perception of the battlefields. 'At 1 o'clock the gas and smoke started from our lines – an awful scene – a layer of smoke and below it the greens and yellows and purples of the gas...I've seen two of these gas attacks now, they are indescribably awful – hell could not be worse' (E. Gore-Brown, IWM).

The visceral terrors of the trenches could be overwhelming, 'the trench was filled with corpses and the smell was horrible. One particular corpse, frozen in the mud of the battered communication trench, we had to use as a land mark to show us where to get out on the top to follow a tape to the bomb dumps' (F. Lobel, LC). 'German corpses twenty or thirty yards from our front line, each facing downwards with head towards us' (J. R. Belderby, LC). It is the smell of the trenches which tells soldiers of their presence in a dangerous place; it warns them of the risks and what has occurred there. Areas which had witnessed intense fighting were 'littered with corpses and very smelly.' (R.C. Bingham, LC). 'There had been a hard fight here – the traces of which were only too evident to sight and smell – it was ghastly' (L.M. Edward, LC). 'The smell rising from the bloated bodies was beyond description...They were blown up like balloons, their hands and distended features were jet black' (H. Cooper, LC). The unburied dead, 'accumulate and leave a horrible impression on all who pass' (W.C.G. Walker, LC).

‘The smell of dead around here is something terrible...you come across a man’s legs sticking out of the bank – bodies underfoot and so on’ (L.E. Eggleton, LC).

The presence of dead men and animals appeared in some sections of the front lines to surround the soldiers in the trenches, not just on the battlefield, but where they dug extensions to the reserve and communication trenches or new latrines, the dead would be uncovered. ‘We were making a traverse of sandbags where one of our dead lay; stench was abominable...dead bodies are lying everywhere, increasing the difficulty as earth is very scarce as you keep on uncovering these bodies’ (H. Ridsdale, LC).

Alongside the bodies of men, the corpses of horses would also litter the battlefield. ‘Ground in awful condition. Equipment, etc. dead horses, dead or wounded English and Germans everywhere’ (F.J. Shield, IWM). ‘Bodies of men and horses in a fearfully mangled state were lying about’ (F.W. Turner, LC).

To be part of this landscape was to experience the proximity of the dead, and to relate it to your own experience of the battlefields, your own actions upon it. ‘Kept up continuous fire on Germans all night. At daybreak can see their dead lying in front of trench. The place is a bit gruesome – dead bodies all over the place’ (R. Grimshaw, IWM).

The smell of the dead, the scenes of devastation, the mutilated and deformed corpses were part of the construction of a sense of place, a means by which the soldiers being in the trenches would understand their place in the war (Leed 1979, 37). 'It was a terrific ordeal...for the infantry we saw several dead men their faces absolutely parched with the hair the same colour as the bleach. Horrible' (C.C. Taylor, LC).

The broken corpses in the trenches and no man's land indicated the damage that could be done to the soldiers own bodies, it constituted a way of apprehending the war landscape, and the threats which it posed. The horrifying images and scenes of devastation, which were witnessed by the soldiers, in turn served to create and maintain a high level of hostility and violence within the landscape (after Taussig 1987, 57). 'We had seen so many shattered bodies on the Somme that we dreaded the thought that we might go "out" that way' (J.A. Johnston, IWM).

The presence of the dead on the battlefield can be observed at the excavated 'Actiparc' site near Arras, where the bodies of several British soldiers involved in the attack on the Hindenburg Line between the 9th and 24th of April 1917 have been discovered (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 87). The site corresponds to the sectors of the battlefield assigned to the 9th and 34th divisions of the 3rd Army on the morning of April 9th 1917. Amongst these divisions were the 10th battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment as well as a number of Scottish battalions (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 87). The bodies of soldiers belonging to these battalions were found on the site, representing the advances of the battalions with the confirmed historical records of the fighting (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 87).

The absence of the bodies at the 'Actiparc' site of German soldiers suggests that the German command ordered the evacuation of the front line in advance of the massive artillery bombardment which preceded the attack (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 87). A body found at the edge of the site was identified by the preserved regimental crests on the uniform as belonging to the Nelson Brigade unit of Royal Naval Division, which also took part in the offensive around the nearby village of Gavrelle five days later on the 14th of April 1917 (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 87-89; Arnaud 2001, 80). The site was fought over repeatedly during the attack; a ground saturated by shell bombardments, small arms fire, and the bodies of the dead from each successive wave of soldiers (Arnaud 2001, 80).

The wounds of the soldiers and the destruction they witnessed on the Western Front created a landscape with new meanings and values (Saunders 2001, 39; Hynes 1991, 201). Just as a shell fragment could mutilate the bodies of men, it could also disfigure the landscape (Fussell 1975, 67-68). As shrapnel strikes a man's thigh, penetrating dirty clothing and driving it into the wound as it pierces the skin, severing veins, arteries, muscle, and shattering the bone, the landscape is itself shattered and broken after a barrage of shell-fire (Noon 1996, 91; Tate 1998, 239; Bourke 1996, 34).

The prospect of this mutilation to their bodies was the principal cause of fear for the soldiers of the Western Front (Bourke 1996, 31). C.M. Murray (LC) thought, 'the wounds inflicted by bursting shells...are too fearful to contemplate.' The disfigurement of the soldiers' bodies as well as the destruction of the landscape was predominantly caused by artillery fire, with almost three-quarters of wounds by the end of the war resulting from shell-fire (Winter 1978, 117).

The excavation of twenty British soldiers at Le Point du Jour, near Arras, where the fractures, dismemberment and severe trauma could be witnessed on the soldier's bodies, reveals how vicious and brutal military engagements were and the damage inflicted upon the bodies of the soldiers (Bura 2003, 92). Although most of the skeletons were complete, all showed evidence of shrapnel wounds caused by heavy artillery, but the sixteenth and seventeenth bodies were represented only by fragments of long bones and pieces of the rib cage, approximately ten percent of a complete individual skeleton, illustrating the mutilation caused by heavy artillery fire (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 90).

The fifth soldier in the burial was found to have been hit by three pieces of shrapnel, one piece cutting his larynx, the second entering his rib cage and possibly perforating his heart, and the last cutting into his right knee (Bura 2003, 93). The eighth soldier of the burial had sustained massive damage to the left-hand side of his skull caused by what is believed to be a shell fragment, which would have certainly caused his death; his jaw bone was completely disconnected by the impact of the projectile (Bura 2003, 93).

Soldiers who had been badly wounded lay on the battlefield, some screamed and became delirious, others waited for the stretcher-bearers, pinned back by the weight of their equipment, to be taken to a regimental aid post in the reserve trench lines (Winter 1978 196).

On the fourth soldier a piece of shell, located at the level of the sixth cervical vertebra, is believed to have divided the carotid artery ensuring the soldier would have quickly bled to death (Bura 2003, 93). On the bodies of the twenty servicemen, sixty-nine impact wounds were recorded, over fifty percent caused by heavy artillery, and most of the wounds were inflicted on the bodies of the soldiers from the top of the cranium to the lower abdomen (Bura 2003, 97).

Fig.48: Le Point du Jour (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 24)



Through the collection of souvenirs of enemy material and through trench art the soldiers constructed their own world (see Berger 1984, 63; Smith *et al* 2003, 76). The desire for souvenirs, usually enemy guns, ammunition and pieces of uniform and associated items of the war was profound (Saunders 2003, 13). G.H. Singles (LC), in a letter from late 1914, described his haversack as ‘full of German souvenirs and I also had German helmets I picked up after the battle.’ The soldiers would view a variety of items, even the most mundane, as souvenirs or trophies; ‘got a lot of small souvenirs, match boxes, buttons and 2 Iron Cross Ribbons’ (W.R. Ludlow, LC).

‘Many trophies are to be found...in the way of German helmets, picks and shovels, rifles, etc. and entrenching tools’ (H. Ridsdale, LC). C. Eshborn (LC) described his war souvenirs as constituted by ‘photographs, letters, badges, mostly taken from the dead or found on the battlefield.’ The fascination for souvenirs amongst the soldiers was great, even worth exposing yourself to danger and possible death (Saunders 2003, 40). ‘During the day a shell burst outside parapet and blew a dead German out of his grave. They went over and cut the buttons from his tunic, gave them to the boys as souvenirs (A.J. Rixon, IWM). G. Mortimer (LC) wrote how, ‘it is amusing to see how people are keen to get hold of souvenirs. Even in attack.’ ‘The Germans are sending over a few shells over here and I am going to try to find a nose cap’ (L.W. Gamble, LC).

Souvenirs became a preoccupation for some; 'There were many interesting things in the German trenches and some good souvenirs...I found a German officers pack containing many interesting objects' (L.M. Edwards, LC). Souvenir collecting by the soldiers is not just a passive activity, but rather constitutes an attempt to gather something from the world; to verify their existence to themselves and to others back home, to whom these objects could be sent, to state their place in a landscape that continually threatened them (after Becker 1998).

'We had a comparatively quiet night so will just close with instructions to judiciously distribute the enclosed war souvenirs' (J. Laws, LC) 'I have sent two Bosch bayonets home. Please guard them jealously as I got them in a place where I had quite a lot of fun and excitement' (M.L. Walkington, LC). Similarly, 'trench art' which represents a wide diversity of forms, and was produced both in the trenches and behind the front lines, was also a means by which soldiers could state their existence (Saunders 2001, 48-49; 2003, 13).

Soldiers would use every available material in the construction of this trench art; wood, chalk, scrap metal, even using the very material which was sent to kill them (Smith *et al* 2003, 101; Saunders 2001, 47). The variety of material used was matched by an inventiveness of form, as war material was fashioned into writing equipment, smoking equipment, decorated shell cases, miscellaneous items of personal adornment and miniatures (Saunders 2003, 39-40). Creation of these pieces of trench art was a means of measuring time, representing continuation and survival, a means of being (after Bender 2001, 7). J. Laws (LC) described in his diary how, 'the lads in the trenches whileaway (sic) the flat time by fashioning rings, crosses and pendants out of bullets and the softer parts of shells.'

'Having nothing to do the next morning, I found a nice block of pure chalk about a foot square and with my knife carved on one face of it the regimental badge' (J.A. Johnston, IWM). This trench art could represent identity and place, as regimental crests were a favourite adornment amongst soldiers, but they could also be used to depict scenes of home and a non-military identity, emphasised by the shell case discovered in a recent excavation of a section of trench near Ieper, upon which a three-leg Isle of Man motif could be seen (Saunders 2003, 73).

A typical routine occupied the men in the trenches: for the front line troops, soldiers were engaged in activities including the maintenance and construction of the trenches, sentry duty, harassing the enemy and inspections. For soldiers in the reserve and support lines, maintenance duties, ammunition runs and ration parties were required to keep the front line operational. The day would begin and end with the flurry of activity associated with stand-to and stand-down in the morning and evening respectively (Farrar 1998, 93-94; Winter 1978, 81; IWM 1997, 44-57; Simpson 2002, 10-13; Bet-El 1999, 165). The performance of these routines by the soldiers, their participation in the functioning of the army, is recursive; reinforcing the governing structure for the soldiers, the maintenance of discipline and their own military identity (after Giddens 1984, 60).

‘In reserve line...things are fairly quiet. Occasional shells disturb the serenity but otherwise nothing doing’ (A.J. Rixon, IWM). ‘Most of the men preferred the front line to the reserve trenches because of the shelling’ (M. Ward, LC). ‘Generally speaking being in reserve is a more trying time than that spent in the front line’ (R.E. Wilson, LC). ‘Being in reserve was a sluggish business; in the front line we were much less morose’ (Sassoon 1940, 276). ‘In support or reserve it was generally heavy shells received’ (W.E. Stachwell, LC). Though their own experiences and perceptions of the war landscape, their participation in the war on the Western Front, a recursive understanding of the landscape is formed: a sense of belonging and emplacement, an attribution of meaning (after Tilley 1994, 12).

Chapter Six

A European memory on the Western Front

In examining the impact of archaeology on the memory of the Western Front in Britain, this project has forwarded the concept of an embodied memory of the battlefields. Embodied memory is an alternative means of remembering, one which centres on the corporeal experiences of the past. Such an approach to the battlefields is evidently amenable to a multinational context, as it facilitates a means by which a humanised understanding of the fields of conflict can emerge. As such, the wider implications of an embodied memory must be considered. In Britain, where the battlefields form such an important part of identity and nationality, an embodied memory can provide a new perspective on the past. Considering the legacy the war also has in the former combatant countries in Europe, it would appear pertinent to consider the notion of an embodied memory in a wider European perspective. With recent moves by historians stressing a trans-national study of the war with ‘comparative histories’, and moves by the major Great War museums on the former battlefields towards a European history of the conflict, examining an embodied memory with regard to a European ‘memory’ or ‘identity’ is essential. As the European Union seeks to expand and forge a common meaning amongst its citizens, episodes of history which can be utilised to strengthen these ideas will be sought.

The archaeology of the Western Front is often cited as possessing the ability to impact upon contemporary debates regarding nationalism and a ‘European identity’ (Price, 2003). This should not be surprising as the use of memory of the past, of historical events and figures to mobilise and articulate national identities in the present, is a well-established field of study (see Gillis 1994; Schwartz *et al* 1986). It is through the evocation of a collective memory that governments and institutions have been able to attribute particular cultural or ethnic characteristics to a group or nation (Müller 2002). The very emergence and consolidation of nation-states in modern Europe was largely based on the creation by national governments of a shared memory and tradition amongst their peoples (see Hobsbawm 1983). The notion of a collective memory within a

nation is therefore considered to be one of the key integrating processes within society; a sense of a common past, of shared stories, is one which enables individuals to coexist alongside one another (Pennebaker 1997). Inevitably, if these claims are made for a singular national collective memory, whilst including some members of society, it must be remembered that it will also exclude others participating in this process (Radstone 2000). The formation of a specific national or group identity, ingrained within a collective memory, could be said to rely and necessitate upon the construction of 'the other' in society (Foucault 1998; Derrida 1994; 1997; Levinas 1998b; Hall 1996b; 1998; Sardar 1998). This dangerous capacity of schemes used to induce a sense of national memory, to define 'the other' as separate from society has been witnessed at a terrible cost in twentieth-century Europe (Barash 1997, 707; Gillis 1994, 5). Whilst memory and the memory of the past can be employed as a liberating and empowering device for an oppressed people, it can occasionally simultaneously also provide fuel for racist and religious hatred (Fijda 1997; Nutall and Coetzee 1998; Soyinka 1999; McEachern 2002). The latter has been the unfortunate case throughout the last century where genocide, ethnic tensions and conflict have all been fed by a nation's or a community's sense of the memory of the past, a memory which may emphasise their homogeneity in the face of difference, their superiority to the other's apparent weakness and their particular cultural identity which is seen as under threat from outside influences (after Said 1978, 5; Müller 2002, 10). This has been supported to some extent by the conception of what constitutes a nation-state, as traditional analyses of the construction of nation states and identity focused upon their functional attributes, of militarism, communications, infrastructure, economic, social and familial homogeneity, and how this constituted a 'single caging institution' (Mann 1993, 118).

Current research has emphasised the more fluent nature of identity within society, with Anderson's (1983) term 'imagined communities', highlighting identity as a social construct rather than a racially or culturally defined homogenous essentialism. Memory studies in the twenty-first century therefore face a pressing concern to examine the construction of memory, both responsibly and sensitively, to explore how memory and identity are socially formed discourses and to be aware of the repercussions of its investigations within the contemporary political and cultural climate. These concerns are especially

pertinent within contemporary Britain and Europe, which have recently witnessed the rise in popularity of extreme right-wing, nationalist and isolationist political parties as well as concerns over racial and religious tensions (Ignazi 2003). This increase has appeared at a time when globalization and the growing calls for greater international cooperation have a substantial and ever-growing impact upon the decisions of national governments (see Leonard 1998). In these conditions concerns are often expressed that certain groups within European societies might attempt to exploit the potential alienating processes of these social, political and economic circumstances, by referring back to a national or collective memory which stresses a 'golden age' or a homogenous racial or superior cultural identity (see Smith 1999, 4).

In part, these issues have come to light particularly in the context of European integration, as European countries have begun to explore the possibilities of greater unity amongst the states that constitute the European Union (Featherstone 2003, 6-7). 'Europeanization' is often heralded as an alternative to the national discourses which have caused the rifts and conflicts which have ravaged the countries of Europe (Laffan 1992, 2); 'the idea of European integration was conceived to prevent such killing and destruction from ever happening again' (Europa, 2004). In the face of this process, however, many national political parties within European countries have sought to reject this development as a dilution of national identity and leading towards the eventual submission of national sovereignty (Shore 2000, 17; Dunkerley *et al* 2002, 4). This is the case certainly within Britain, where it is frequently stated that the specific 'British identity' entails a fundamental difference between Britain and its continental counterparts (Marcussen *et al* 2001, 112; Spybey 1997, 7). Indeed, memories of Empire, alongside heroism and victory in war in the twentieth-century, have contributed to enduring suspicion of Europe as 'the other', and a sense of British superiority (Marcussen *et al* 2001, 12). Colley (2002, 220) has highlighted that whilst these recourses to historical examples are said to explain why the British are so different from, and have such trouble with Europe, is not necessarily 'British history' as such, but rather the 'truncated and selective view of it that is often purveyed and believed.' In opposition to 'Euro-sceptics', proponents of European cooperation argue that that inclusion within Europe already assists the people of Europe in a variety of forms, and that greater unity

would not only facilitate the functioning of the European Union and benefit its citizens, it would be a means by which the post-1945 peace between European nation states could be maintained (Leonard and Leonard 2002, 10). To aid and engender this notion of the importance of European integration the European Union has relied on a number of institutions and initiatives to promote European harmony and cultivate a sense of European identity (Beetham and Lloyd 1998, 33). By using symbols such as the EU flag, passports and anthems, as well as more subtle means of facilitating a common identity such as schools programs, business initiatives and economic development, the European Union has sought to bring the diverse populations of European countries towards recognition of the European Union within their everyday lives (Shore 2000, 47). This process has been accelerated with the introduction of a common currency in some member states in 2002, as well as growing calls for a pan-European control on immigration and migrant workers, but has been brought under greater scrutiny with the proposed expansion of the European Union to include the countries of the former Eastern bloc and Turkey (see Vaughan-Whitehead 2003; Hoggart and Johnson 2002). This has led many to question what it is to be European, to possess a European identity, and has initiated research into analysis of the histories of European nations to find common values, characters, beliefs, stories and significant memories, to create what Mikhail Gorbachev (1988, 190) termed 'a common European home.'

A European memory, an appreciation of a shared European narrative and heritage, is now seen as a distinct objective within the EU, as a means by which individuals from European countries can realise a 'European identity' (see Shore 1996a). A shared European heritage, and its potential benefits is not a recent objective; Churchill (1948, 198) argued that, 'if Europe were once united in the sharing of its common inheritance, there would be no limit to the happiness, to the prosperity and glory which its three or four hundred million people would enjoy.' Debates concerning what would constitute a common European memory have become an important area of study as researchers have pointed to a variety of historical periods and figures as constituting a shared memory for the peoples of Europe (Hoggart and Johnson 2002, 94-95). It could be argued however, that such a search for a 'European memory' is a flawed objective, the stories and narratives of Europe and its peoples though intertwined, are complex and on

many occasions bitter, the search for a shared memory may do no more than emphasise the issues which divide rather than unite (Müller 2002, 10). Forty (1999, 7-8), has in-fact stated that because of these conflicting national memories, peace in Europe since 1945 has been based upon forgetting rather than remembering. A shared historical and cultural awareness has nevertheless been identified by some, and the Ancient Greeks, Roman civilization and Christianity have all been suggested as potentially contributing to a common sense of identity, a shared memory of a European past (Shore 1996b; Dunkerley *et al* 2002). Although Smith (1991, 14; 1995, 133) has cast doubt on such endeavours and questions whether such a memory actually exists, however contrived, and significantly states that such a memory will itself inevitably be partial and exclusive. For example, the notion that Christianity as the bedrock of a European identity, certainly has historical precedent, as ‘there is a clear sense, going back at least to the Crusades...in which Europeans see themselves as not-Muslim or as not-Jews’ (Smith 1992, 69). But to use Christianity as a means to foster a sense of a ‘European identity’ based on common values, would disregard not only the non-Christian religions and secular traditions in Europe, but also forgets the divided nature of the Christian church in Europe, of Orthodox, Protestantism and Catholicism, and the variety of denominations spread amongst them (Wintle 1996). This demonstrates the flaw in the project, as the attempt to define a European memory has to a large extent followed the traditional pattern established with the formation of nation-states in Europe. Such a conception of what constitutes ‘belonging’ will inescapably exclude certain sections of European society, whilst attempting to provide a common ground for European citizens (Christiansen *et al* 2001, 2). Wintle (1996, 20) has stated that whether it is migrant workers, illegal immigrants, ‘*habitus Americana*’ or Islam, ‘in the process of the formation of identity, Europe will inevitably need “an other”.’ Shore (1993, 791) has also pointed out the irony of the attempts of European Union to create a shared trans-national memory, as the symbolic terrain on which this European identity is proposed, ‘is precisely that upon which the nation-state has traditionally been constructed.’

Within these attempts to find a European identity, the traditional assumptions from the Enlightenment, of cultural and racial superiority can be located; these inevitably exclude or forget how the European societies are

constituted by a variety of cultures and religions, which do not necessary share or associate themselves with these common pasts, this 'European memory.' Said (1978, 7) in-fact argued that it was this sense of superiority and exclusivity which has marked European culture and identity since the Enlightenment; 'the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures.' This led Derrida (1992b, 79) to state what should be considered as a uniquely European responsibility given the legacy of colonialism and imperialism, to address Europe's 'bad conscience' (Levinas 1998a, 191); 'respecting differences, idioms, minorities, singularities, but also the universality of formal law, the desire for translation, agreement and univocity, the law of the majority, opposition to racism, nationalism and xenophobia' (Derrida 1992b, 79; 1995, 4). This is not meant to perpetuate the idea of European superiority, by stating that it is only within Europe that such concepts could emerge, but that European history necessitates that these concepts be considered (Derrida 1995, 3-4). Such a responsibility cannot be integrated within the traditional structures of nation-building; indeed, such a process would be an anathema, as these requirements appear as an antithesis to the cultural, political and social homogeny demanded by established definitions of the nation state (Shore 1993, 791).

This 'European responsibility' is also therefore in opposition to the projects of the European Union which seek to build on the same foundations as the nation-states it seeks to replace, a process which could conceivably lead to a 'super-nation-state founded on European chauvinism' (Nairn 1977, 317). To break away from the traditional models of the construction of identity, a different perspective must be sought, and any attempt to begin to propose the concept of a European identity must therefore address the 'multiple issues raised by the national, ethnic, regional and local identities within Europe' (Macdonald 1993, 1). This must be more than the European Union's quoted aim of 'unity through diversity' (Europa, 2004), but an attempt to foster a European identity which can bring an understanding of the self and recognition of 'the other' (Friese 2002, 12; Werbner 1996, 67-68). The need for such a project is especially pertinent in the context of terrorist attacks and the nebulous 'war on terror' which has served to foster a sense of 'anxious isolationism' in Europe and raised questions regarding assimilation and multiculturalism (see Gilroy 2004, 70). In this sense a European

identity and a European memory must recognise the plurality and diversity within Europe and find a means to represent it, rather than attempting to locate a specific European cultural or historical trait, which can be manipulated to show how it impinges upon the lives of the majority of citizens of Europe (Featherstone 2003, 6-7): to construct what Lionel Jospin (2002, 15) recently referred to as a European 'art de vivre.' This is to follow Derrida's (1992; 1995) suggestion of a 'European responsibility', and to advocate an identity built on cosmopolitanism rather than with the same designs as the nation state (see Shore 1996a). This responsibility entails focusing on issues of recognition, representation and ethics (Levinas 1998b). It is this 'European responsibility' which forms the basis of this identity, as a means of being and operating in the world (Levinas 2003, 66). Following the work of Levinas (1998a; 2001; 2003), this regard for the acknowledgement of the plurality of European society, the existence of 'the other', takes the form of responsibility; an accountability that the existence, the very being of another is acknowledged and represented as the basis of understanding oneself (Levinas 2001, 95). 'No one can stay in himself; the humanity of man, subjectivity, is a responsibility for other, an extreme vulnerability' (Levinas 2003, 67).

This is not to deny the difference of 'the other', to advocate a blasé multiculturalism or a homogenisation of values and desires, it is to state the necessity of an 'interhuman' perspective, one in which an active response is required; 'interhuman, properly speaking, lies in a non-indifference of one to another, in a responsibility of one for another' (Levinas 1998a, 100). This in effect is a call for cosmopolitanism in a new Europe. Cosmopolitanism is a theory that has attracted many scholars considering the direction of humanity as issues of global concern become evermore apparent (Beck 2000: Attack 2005). It is often described in a number of ways but simply stated it entails a rejection of national boundaries, demands a consideration of another individual's humanity and calls for an end to the belief in a homogenous culture. 'Cosmopolitanism – it means the ability to stand outside of having one's life written and scripted by any one community, whether that is a faith or tradition or religion or culture – whatever it might be – and to draw selectively on a variety of discursive meanings' (Hall 2002, 26). It is therefore becoming of increasing interest as a framework is sought for a European identity (Delanty and Rumford 2005).

Cosmopolitanism appears to offer a way out of nation-centred politics, allowing citizens across Europe to consider themselves part of and believe in a larger political body. 'Cosmopolitanism therefore becomes a means whereby national and global cultures can be mediated, where dialogues can be initiated and transboundary issues resolved by those who can see above their national parapets' (Vertovec and Cohen 2002, 17).

Memory and European Identity

The memory of the past can play a crucial role in this development of an alternative approach to a European identity, just as the memory of historical events have shaped cultural, national or group identity, and as such archaeology as an interpretative discipline has the potential to make a significant contribution to these debates. The subject has in-fact already begun to impact upon the issues regarding a 'European identity' (Jones and Graves-Brown 1996; Kristiansen 1993; Renfrew 1994; Rowlands 1994; Pluciennik 1996; Willems 1998). The memory of the past and the sense of identity in the present have indeed been the concern of the discipline of archaeology since its inception (see Thomas 2004a). Indeed, as a subject borne out of modernity, the evidence and interpretations of archaeologists have been used since the nineteenth century to shape ethnic, nationalist, and racist histories for nation-states (Hill 1993, 57; Gröhn 2004, 163). European archaeologists have now also begun to consider the place of their work within the wider European Union, and some archaeologists do now speak of a 'shared heritage' (Jones and Graves-Brown 1996, 13). This perspective has been assisted by the creation in 1994 of the European Association of Archaeologists, whose stated aim is 'to promote the management and interpretation of the European archaeological heritage' (EAA, 2005). This has led to some archaeologists specifically seeking to locate their interpretations within a European context, in consideration of this attempt to foster a European identity; a common heritage and a shared narrative, a 'European memory' (see Renfrew 1994). As more recent periods of European history are considered too emotive, political or painful and awkward to be used in these objectives, this work has therefore occurred mainly within studies of prehistory (Shore 1996b).

Archaeologists studying the Neolithic, Bronze Age, the Iron Age and especially the Iron Age ‘Celts’, have broadened their studies to create a ‘European Neolithic’ or ‘European Bronze Age’ as opposed to a study centred around solely upon national or specific local evidence (see Ritchie 2000; Wells 1993; Collis 1984; 1996; 2001b; Gröhn 2004). To often however these interpretations can be seen to merely reiterate what makes Europe and thus Europeans distinctive, by repeating the same limited perspective of what can constitute a European memory and identity by implicitly stating what isn’t ‘European’ (Shore 1996b, 105). The singular and homogenous view of European prehistory can only constitute a restricted and potentially dangerous and divisive sense of ‘European identity.’ What is after all the ‘European Bronze Age’ to black and Asian Europeans? What are the dangers of suggesting a prehistoric dawn of Europe within the context of the sensitive debates regarding asylum seekers and migrants (after Jones and Graves-Brown 1996, 13)? Archaeology can assist in providing a memory of the past for the new Europe, one which can foster an identity for its citizens, but it must be with the recognition that a singular European identity is a chimera; it must acknowledge the existence of ‘European identities’, of the diverse array of narratives which constitute Europe, and the political and ethical responsibilities of recognition within a European identity (Gramsch 1997). The concept of an ability to hold multiple identities is essential in this objective of situating an identity within notions of responsibility and recognition, as the claim of memory and identity is too important to obscure or withhold from those groups seeking representation (Fitzhugh Brundage 2000, 10).

A move towards a European identity must not be based upon choosing between belonging to Europe and any other identities, whether national or more local loyalties: European identity must be based on the recognition and acceptance of this diversity (after Dodd 2002, 191; Marcussen *et al* 2001, 118; see Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 4). This postmodern notion of a ‘saturated self’ (Gergen 1991), of being able to possess many identities and affiliations, is one not yet considered within studies aiming to forge a European identity. An ability to accept and possess an array of identities is not regarded as being constructive to forming neither common European values or a common identity and memory (see Leonard 1998, 16). Moves toward constructing a European memory and

identity have therefore, as stated, relied on established modernist definitions of identity, derived from the ideology of the nation state (Shore 1996a). These have at their very definition rigid criteria as to what can and what cannot constitute inclusion within an established identity, and therefore lack the consideration of responsibility, ethics and importantly recognition around which an alternative sense of European identity can be built (Laffan *et al* 2000, 8).

The European Battlefield

It is in this context of a 'European identity' and 'European memory' that the Western Front has recently been addressed (Price, 2003; 2004). This is in contrast to a number of scholars who have highlighted how the war actually prevented and disrupted further European integration at the beginning of the twentieth century (see Keegan 1999; Strikwerda 1993). The battlefields have begun to be considered as a 'shared heritage' in Europe, with a number of projects initiated to develop a regard for considering the battlefields as a historical resource common to all former combatant nations, and a means of engendering a collective 'European' memory (see Fabiansson, 2005). This perspective has been instigated largely by the historians associated with the multinational research centre at the Historial de la Grande Guerre at Péronne (see Winter 1998), and with the recent instigation of the International Society for First World War Studies (ISFWWS, 2005). The Historial in particular has sponsored studies which have facilitated the emergence of 'comparative history', that analyse the conflict as a 'transnational phenomenon' (Purseigle 2005, 3; Purseigle and Macleod 2004, 11). Comparative history relies on the focus of cultural history being beyond national restrictions in scope or content, and allows the assessment of national developments and processes alongside those of other nations (Winter 1998, 94). A recent example would be the work of Audoin-Rouzeau (1992) and Fuller (1990) who both examine the trench newspapers of the French and British armies respectively. This utilization of the battlefields of the Western Front to explore issues of European identity and European integration within the framework of 'comparative history' has also been particularly prominent in the recent designs and refurbishments of the major

museums and visitor centres in France and Belgium. This development has also occurred at a time when a regard for the role of museums in the construction of identity and memory has come to the fore within the discipline of Museum Studies (see Mack 2003; Crane 1997; 2000; Kavanagh 1996; 2000; Dubin 1999; Hodgkin and Radstone 2003; Davison 1998; Huyssen 1995). The ways in which museums impact upon the memory of the past highlighted in these studies is based on the reaction of the individual as they pass through the exhibition, and respond to the images and displays presented to them (after Annis 1987; Clifford 1997; Roberts 1997).

Using these recent works, it is possible to consider the manner in which the museums of the conflict situate their displays and interpretations of the war on the Western Front in the context of European integration and therefore constitute a means to remember the battlefields. This itself is a highly debatable issue as museums which feature the material and artefacts of recent conflicts can all too easily become embroiled in highly emotional debates regarding morality and nationalism (see Jones 1996), demonstrated by the furore over the decision to exhibit a section of the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian in 1993 (Crane 1997, 55; Gieryn 1998, 197). In these circumstances the narratives featured in the museum displays, both visual and textual, have to be carefully phrased and placed to avoid accusations of jingoism or triumphalism, and the inevitable hurt, pain and anger that can arise from an insensitive approach to the material (Uzzell 1989, 46; Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 8). The museum's powerful role in society can therefore not be underestimated, as it forms the arena where a society's myths and memories are made visible and tangible, where the stories of the past are institutionalised and materialised (after Ambrose and Paine 1993, 3; Samuel 1990, 147; Sherman and Royoff 1994, xi). The manner in which the museums of the Western Front construct, narrate and enable a space for perpetuating, encouraging and perhaps even controlling memory therefore is one fraught with difficulties, especially when one considers the important role of the memory of the Great War in the formation of national identities in European nations over the last ninety years (after Price, 2003; Hanks, 2002). Alongside these concerns are also issues of how to represent and remember the conflict which is suitable and acceptable both for tourists and visitors as well as the local populace (see Witcomb 2003, 48; Walsh 1992, 160).

Museums on The Western Front

These difficult factors have not prevented a number of recent initiatives aiming to incorporate a regard for situating what has all too often been an overwhelming nationalistic memory of the Great War on the Western Front, into a wider transnational basis (Thorpe 2005). This is demonstrated by the unveiling of the Visitor Centre at the Thiepval Memorial on the Somme in 2004 (Thiepval, 2005). Set just a short distance from the Memorial, the innovative design of the Centre which incorporates the same local red brick as Lutyens's Memorial, has been set into the ground, surrounded by a belt of trees, so the vista from the Memorial itself remains uninterrupted. The £1 million construction costs of the project were met by private individuals from Britain, through a charitable organisation set up for the project, the local French authorities on the Somme and funding from the European Union (Graves, 2002). The Centre was set up to provide the thousands of French, German and British visitors with information regarding the conflict, and is particularly aimed at the large numbers of British schoolchildren who visit the battlefields (Lichfield, 1999). Despite this perspective, the emphasis in the displays is based upon a shared heritage and the connection with individual stories. Panels in all three languages, English, French and German, with informative text and detailed maps placed alongside the walls and separate video displays tell the story of the conflict from 1914-1918, with the focus particularly on the fighting in the Somme region. The concentration on the individuals of the war, the ordinary soldiers of the armies, can be observed at the entrance of the Centre where a panel of 600 photographs of 'the missing' of all the nations involved in the conflict are displayed; visitors can search the databases at the Centre to retrieve more information on these individuals from their home life to their arrival on the battlefield, a feature of the Centre which is hoped to be expanded as more records of those who fought are obtained and researched (Thiepval, 2005). In this manner, a memory of the way the war impacted on British, French and German soldiers and civilians is hoped to be portrayed and therefore a more accessible and understandable history of the war offered to visitors (see McPhail, 2001). It is however, a history which can appear

strangely disembodied, lacking in any display of the material or physical conditions of the soldiers, as the displays develop the well-known major historical events of the conflict. Interestingly, the site of the building itself was subjected to very little archaeological examination prior to construction, though the site was surveyed using ground penetrating radar, the organisers of the Centre believed that little could be obtained from further investigation of the site (Fabiansson, 2005). This absence of a consideration of the material and physical conditions of the soldiers would certainly appear to detract from the Centre's overall aim of providing an accessible and immediate perspective on the past and a sense of shared memory.

Indeed the display of the materiality and spatiality of the conflict is a distinct difficulty for the museums of the war, and one which prevents the displays and exhibitions of the museums from offering anything but a sanitised and decontextualised representation (after Shanks and Tilley 1987a, 73). The two main museums of the battlefields, *In Flanders Fields* (IFF, 2005), in the Belgian town of Ieper, and *l'Historial de la Grande Guerre* (Historial, 2005) in Péronne, both fall victim to this criticism, which also impacts upon the way in which they hope to represent and remember the conflict as a 'European Civil War' (Lichfield, 1999). The *In Flanders Fields* (Fig.49) replaced an existing exhibition of the war in the Ieper region in 1998; the museum is located in the Cloth Hall, a medieval building ruined by shell bombardments during the conflict and rebuilt in its entirety after the war. The award-winning museum uses computers, videos, interactive models and cd-roms to describe the events of the war around Ieper, and presents this information in various languages. A distinct feature of the museum is the focus on the individual in the war, both soldiers and civilians; the visitor upon entering is presented with a card with a name and barcode upon it, which when placed in the computer displays around the museum and allows the visitor to examine this individual's life before and during the war, as well as finding out if the person survived or was killed during the conflict. A particular European perspective is perceptible, not only through the multi-lingual presentations, but also through the focus in the exhibition of particular events such as the Christmas Truce of 1914, and displays which highlight the shared conditions of the soldiers (IFF, 2005). It is this sentiment of a multinational effort, but a distinctly European agenda, focused on peace and reconciliation

which is prevalent. Aspects of the violence, horror and brutality of wartime are however addressed, however, one display features a photograph of a German soldier proudly posing with the corpse of a French soldier killed by a gas attack. One of the most striking rooms is the atmospheric depiction of no man's land, where video screens show footage of the battlefields, and disturbing audio sequences are played out in a claustrophobic, smoke-filled room. The material of the war does play a role in the museum's interpretation, as it is displayed in cases to illustrate the events of the war which are portrayed chronologically through the exhibition (IFF, 2005). Even the archaeology of the battlefields is represented, with a model, a display of the finds and an interactive touch-screen of the excavation of the Yorkshire Trench carried out by the Belgian volunteer group 'The Diggers.' It is however, the use of this material of the war as mere illustrations for the historical story of the conflict, which negates the use of this source of evidence; by presenting the weaponry and the effects of this material in this way the human involvement in the war appears removed, and somewhat 'cleansed.' 'Abstracted from any context, stripped of living history and shrouded with scholarly history, artefacts lie in the museum as corpses in an ossuary' (Maleuvre 1999, 16). An opportunity of presenting a dynamic interpretation of the war through the material itself, rather than placing it within the established historical framework of the war is not considered; as a result 'the war' which is presented to the people of Europe fails to communicate the memory of the Western Front as an actual occurrence, fought by individuals with materials in a battlefield, rather than an image or a spectacle on a flickering video-screen (after Deboard 1994, 12).



Fig.49: In Flanders Fields Museum, Ieper (Photograph by author)

The particular contribution that the study of the material of the war can make to the way in which the Western Front is remembered, has however received attention in the exhibitions of *l'Historial de la Grande Guerre*. Located in the town of Péronne, at the centre of the battlefields of the Somme, the museum does offer an alternative way in which to remember the conflict. Housed in the medieval Péronne Château, the museum, which opened in 1992, uses its contemporary design by the architect Ciriani as an expression of its research goals, 'to give a different picture of the Great War which goes beyond the history of the battles alone' (Historial, 2005). The *Historial* uses this 'different picture' to focus on an international view of the conflict, incorporating civilian and military life into its presentations of the war within the contexts of British, French and German histories of the war. It is the vast collection of material possessed by the *Historial*, which makes its approach so distinct; over 25,000 civilian and military artefacts of the war are kept by the museum and utilised to present a more direct and personal approach to the war (see Thorpe 2005). Material from the time of the war from the home and civilian contexts are displayed in cases around the walls of the main exhibition space, whilst the

centre of the room is devoted to the life of the soldier at the front. Along three separate lines the soldiers from Britain, France and Germany are represented, and the material of the front is placed in display cases set into the ground, giving the material a distinct place in the museum's representation. Alongside the weapons and uniforms of the soldiers, more mundane pieces of domestic equipment are also presented as well as examples of trench art. The visitor is given no proscribed route within the museum's main exhibition, nor are the artefacts arranged chronologically, which facilitates the consideration and comparison between soldiers from different nations. Though the museum hopes to evoke the 'shared suffering of the combatants' (Historial, 2005), this is a sentiment which the visitor is allowed to explore for themselves, rather than it being forced upon them. Yet, the display of the artefacts can be criticised for its cold, museological approach (after Uzzell 1989). It may be considered that the museum's goal of offering a memory of the war on the Western Front in a European context based on suffering obscures not only the role of the soldiers as killers (see Bourke 1999), but as the material of the battlefields is presented in such a detached fashion, the suffering caused by the use of the material cannot be comprehended (after Jones 1996, 154). The weapons, the guns, ammunition, shells and trench clubs all kept behind the pristine display cases would seem to abstract the one very real attribute of the conflict, the violence (see Audoin-Rouzeau 1998). Displays of weapons in this manner can only ever serve to detract from their intended purpose, to remove from context the place and use of weapons on the battlefields. With no regard for the damage and death wrought by the use of this material in the museum's representation of the conflict, the impression once again is of a sanitised, disembodied history (after Scarry 1985, 17).

This lack of contextulisation of the material of war inevitably impacts upon the manner in which the war is remembered, as though both the *Historial* and *In Flanders Fields* both stress a unity in memory across the combatant nations, the way in which the war is presented entails an absence of how individuals respond to their involvement in conflict. This fails in engendering any real sense in which the memory of the battlefields can be considered to be shared, as the conflict is represented in a manner which obscures any human involvement in the conflict. If a consideration of a European identity and a shared memory is to be fashioned from the world's first industrialised war, then

an understanding of the violence and brutality of the conflict cannot be avoided, how individuals could both be seduced and repelled by what they witnessed and experienced needs to be examined. A painful memory of the way in which humans act and react in combat is needed as a reminder of the value of peace. A regard for the corporeality of soldiers experiences must be represented and communicated, as a means of generating a shared sense of the memory of the battlefields. A memory of the Western Front located in the analysis and interpretation of the materiality and spatiality of the conflict can provide this, by situating a comprehensible memory of the war as one fought by individuals with materials, in the trenches and battlefields of Northern France and Belgium.

Archaeology and Europe

The archaeology of the Western Front, through a consideration of an embodied memory, is ideally placed to highlight and assess this process, as it places the memory of the conflict directly within the context of the corporeal experiences of the individuals who fought. It also demonstrates an alternative approach to a European identity, in which the peoples of Europe can develop a sense of identity and memory which is not based on exclusion and belonging, but allows the possibilities of considering and acknowledging 'the other', by basing an identity on responsibility for 'the other' and their experiences (see Levinas 1998b, 194). The archaeology of the Western Front has certainly come to be recognised quite quickly as a site of memory of considerable importance to a variety of nations and communities across both Europe and the world (Barton 2003). It is however the memory of the war in Europe which appears still after nearly ninety years to be painful and readily evoked by citizens of combatant countries (after Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002). In fact it may be said that the prominent place of the memory of the conflict is a distinctly European feature, as it is often considered as a 'European Civil War', as opposed to the more encompassing conflict of World War Two (Connerton 1989, 20). Price (2003), however has pointed out that the war on the Western Front involved not just the combatant nations of Europe, but also soldiers and labourers from the former European colonial nations as well. Archaeology has begun to play a distinct role in this broadening of horizons, as excavations in the region have involved the

recovery of human remains and artefacts from the trench systems and battlefields as well as hospital bases and casualty clearing stations where individuals, men and women, from Europe lived and worked, with others from India, South Africa, West Indies, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, America, Australia, China, Senegal and Tunisia: all of whom represent a diverse array of beliefs and cultures (Desfossés *et al* 2000). Far from reiterating the memory of the Western Front as a private British sorrow, British teams examining the archaeology of the Western Front have emphasised that these sites of war should be treated, managed and interpreted as ‘supranational’ or ‘transnational’ sites (Price, 2003). With regard to this doctoral project, the study concentrating on the embodied memory of the British soldiers of the Western Front, should not be too hastily regarded as contributing to the narrow, single nation studies which have dominated historical research (after Braybon 2003, 5). The embodied memory of the British soldiers offers a different way of constructing the memory of the war on the Western Front, of retelling a story and demonstrating how a shared sense of understanding and identity across Europe can be formed. Rather than the battlefields of Northern France and Belgium forming a barrier to understanding and identification within Europe, as the painful memories of the war may divide rather than reconcile, they in-fact form a site of memory where an alternative agenda to the study of a European identity can be built and demonstrated (after Carman 2003).

Conversely, such an endeavour can begin within the insular, cultural memory of the Western Front within Britain. By taking the soldier’s perspective as crucial in its analysis of the Western Front to create an embodied memory, this project offers an opportunity to develop the limited popular memory of the battlefields in Britain. Although acknowledging the need to consider the soldiers’ suffering and rejection of the war, this project also seeks to expand this memory by stressing how the soldiers could accept their place on the battlefield, how they created a sense of place and came to an understanding of their place in the battlefields of the Western Front. Rather than portray the soldiers as ‘victims’ or ‘heroes’ it offers an opportunity to remember the soldiers in a brutal, hostile landscape as human beings, whose own choices and actions further shaped their understanding of the war landscape. Inevitably this will imply a memory of these soldiers which to some is uncomfortable and awkward, but it will allow an

enriched consideration of the soldiers who served on the Western Front. How this embodied memory of British soldiers on the battlefields, which recalls some of the more violent and crueller episodes of the war, could participate in moves towards a European identity based on ethics and responsibility may not seem immediately apparent. It is however by locating the memory of the British soldiers of the Western Front in the body that a new perspective on the memory of the battlefields can be formed. Disregarding the agendas of previous studies which have viewed the history of the conflict in a strictly nationalist sense, assessing the achievements of the British army (Griffith 1994; Sheffield 2002; Bond 1991), or locating a specific 'British' identity in the trenches (Fussell 1975), this study does not concern itself with the traditional objectives of historical discourse, such as the details of a specific battle (see Macdonald 1983).

This approach is also in contrast to the national and insular designs of the war cemeteries and monuments, as it offers a way of remembering the soldiers of the British army without hiding behind nationalistic designs and rhetoric. The popular cultural memory of the war, illustrated by the popular media and by such phrases as 'the lost generation' or 'lions led by donkeys' is respected, but is hoped to be developed beyond the limited memory of the war as a 'private British sorrow' (Terraine 1980). By placing such a regard for corporeality in the memory of the battlefields, this project contributes to the 'opening up' of the study of the Western Front (see Braybon 2003). It offers a way of remembering the perhaps uncomfortable aspects of the violence and brutality of war, but also significantly the humanity of the British soldiers as they constructed a 'sense of place' in a hostile landscape. In this sense it opens up the memory of the Western Front and the British soldiers, by remembering in a manner which allows a greater contemplation of their experiences, and allows others to view and share these experiences as well (after Levinas 1998a, 100). It is this exposure in embodied memory, the regard for expressing the corporeal experiences of the past that allows this memory to be considered by 'the self' and the 'other' (see Quashie 2004, 112-113). Allowing 'the other' to view what may be considered by some as the treasured, national historical narratives in this manner is a major factor in undermining the insular nature of the memory of these events (after Levinas 2004, 82). Indeed, the manner of such a disclosure can be considered as an antithesis to the way in which the singular national memory of the past fosters

distrust and suspicion between peoples (see Powell 2002, 233). 'Hate between human beings carries from our cutting ourselves off from each other. Because we don't want anyone else to see inside us, since it's not a pretty sight in there' (Wittgenstein 1998, 52e). By letting someone see inside us, by remembering the past in this particular mode we can avoid becoming both strangers to ourselves and our own history and to others by hiding and obscuring our past (see Theleweit 1987, 362-363).

It is also through the project's consideration of the materials and spaces of the war landscape, which the soldiers of all nations encountered, that a further possible agenda for considering the battlefields in the context of a European identity can be observed. The concern for these specific types of evidence, of the materiality and spatiality of the past allows a shared sense, a shared memory of the Western Front to emerge; in effect a different grammar of remembrance, as it moves away from the studies of political and military machinations towards factors which would have affected all soldiers of all combatant nations (see Saunders 2001). A wider embodied memory of the Western Front could therefore foster the memory of how the materials and spaces were experienced, and a sense of how combatants from other nations may have understood, endured and inhabited the battlefield can be considered alongside the British cultural memory of the war. Such an approach can also begin to take a new perspective on the memory of combatants and non-combatants from the colonies called up by the Imperial European nations (Morrow 2005). It is this regard for the materiality and spatiality in the construction of an embodied memory, which allows the consideration of Levinas's (2001; 2003) concept of responsibility. Embodied memory in this manner enables an 'interhuman' perspective, it facilitates a consideration of how others lived and experienced and the importance of acknowledging another's history and memory of this past. Levinas (1998b, 207) indeed has argued that the possibility of finding meaning within our own cultural memory can only be borne out by a consideration of the presence of an others' memory of their historical past, their pain, their suffering, their pleasure, their existence (see Levinas 2001, 95; 2003, 23). An opportunity for this consideration of the others experiences in the study of the Western Front is most clearly demonstrated in the archaeological projects, such as that at Serre in 2002, which revealed the remains of allied and opposing troops within only a few metres of

each other (Brown pers. comm. December 2004). The images from archaeological projects on these former battlefields can also play a vital role in this retelling (after Shanks 1997; Chadwick 2004) (Figs. 50 and 51).



Fig.50: Le Point du Jour (Desfossés *et al* 2003, 24)



Fig.51: German mass grave at Gavrelle, France (Fabiansson, 2005)

The pictures of the excavation of the remains of soldiers in particular provide an opportunity to reflect on the past, and its relevance to the present (see Barthes 1984, 7). The photographs of the mass graves at Saint-Rémy, Le Pont-du-Jour and Gavrelle, although representing the dead from different nations, are striking in their visual similarities when compared to the nationalistic and patriotic designs of the national war cemeteries (see Bushaway 1992). These images provide a means for recognition and consideration of the pain and experience of others, and perhaps can even form the basis of a shared *momento*

mori in Europe (after Sontag 1990, 15). ‘Let the atrocious images haunt us. Even if they are tokens and cannot possibly encompass most of the reality to which they refer, they still perform a vital function. The images say: This is what human beings are capable of doing – may volunteer to do, self-righteously. Don’t forget’ (Sontag 2003, 102). The material and physical conditions of the soldier, the human remains with the traces of uniform and equipment still visible, form an important part in this process of recognising the experience, the history and memory of ‘the other.’ This evidence constitutes what Levinas (1998b, 33) termed ‘the presence of the face’, a means by which the humanity of ‘the other’ can be contemplated. Rather than using ‘face’ literally Levinas (2001, 85) described how this in fact entailed the delineation of a surface, a means by which the observer could begin to see, construct and recognise the being of another (Levinas 2003, 14).

Whilst this approach may constitute a means of generating a shared understanding of the Western Front, this is not to suggest that it forms a single memory of the battlefields; it does, however, facilitate the consideration of how combatants of all nations lived, fought and died on the Western Front. The link between the combatants cannot be achieved through overarching, disembodied narratives of the war, present in museological displays and historical discourses which attempt a multinational, ‘comparative history’ perspective (see Purseigle 2005; Purseigle and Macleod 2004), but through the assessment of how the actual soldiers themselves experienced the conflict (after Ward 2004). In the context of the British memory of the Western Front, by placing the body as the focus of memory, an alteration in the limited national forms in which the war has been remembered can be achieved, enabling this project to play a crucial role in establishing the importance of responsibility and acknowledgement in a European identity, the ‘finding of common meanings and directions’ (Williams 1989, 4). It demonstrates how a European identity can be considered through acknowledging the existence, the place of the other, their being, their pains, an identity based on acknowledgement and understanding rather than exclusionist concepts derived from Enlightenment definitions of the nation-state (after Kristeva 1991, 172). Through offering the analysis of the embodied experience of the British soldier, by examining the materials and landscape of the battlefields, this project can also emphasise and demonstrate the means by which

all those who participated in the war on the Western Front can be remembered. Though the partiality of this project may be seen to reiterate traditional concepts of remembrance based on the male soldier in the battlefield (see Hall 1992), this approach of embodied memory can also be used to remember not just the soldiers who fought, but also the men and women from around the world who provided labour both immediately behind the front lines and in the munitions factories on the home front (after Saunders 2002a). With specific regard to this project, to place this study as an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front is not to perpetuate the soldier-hero myth so prevalent within constructions of masculine hegemony and national narratives in Britain, Europe and in the wider Western world (Dawson 1990; 1994). Rather, it offers a means whereby the valorised myths which are associated with these men can be assessed; it is to challenge the seemingly apparent and inherent nature of the memory of the British soldier of the battlefields, to offer an alternative way in which to remember these men. Placing this study's concern for 'embodied memory' in the context of a European identity challenges rather than continues the masculine image of society and the body politic (see Gatens 1997, 85). Locating this study within notions of the corporality of memory moves away from a modern, empiricist discourse, which has served to locate masculinity within the objective search for reason, 'where knowledge became disembodied' (Theleweit 1987, 364). In this manner a study of embodied memory furthers the aim already stated of 'opening up' the memory of the war, it allows the consideration of the various ways in which men reacted to the war on the front, and therefore the various ways in which masculinity can be constructed (see Seidler 1989; Spierenburg 1998; Edley and Wetherell 1995; Connell 1995).

It is this consideration of recognition of the other which has the capacity to influence a wider European identity. Whilst an embodied memory of the battlefields may reveal incidents which can appear initially divisive, episodes of the past which depict moments when the citizens of Europe were filled with hate and brutality for one another, it represents a responsible approach to the study of the past: it is indeed only through this recognition of past violence that we can remain open to the idea of peace (Derrida 1978, 148). Following this, rather than locate the similarities between the peoples of Europe in the distant past, avoiding the more painful recent history of Europe, this study offers an opportunity to

understand the cost of the conflict, and how individuals took their part in an important episode of European history. Such a consideration is aided both by the undiminished place of the memory of the Great War amongst the former combatant nations within Europe, and importantly by the desire to locate the ordinary serving soldier at the forefront of remembrance (see Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker 2002, 3-4). An embodied memory of the soldiers of the conflict can harness this, and with the ongoing archaeological projects on the battlefields and military structures along the former battlefields, offer a way of remembering how individuals from across Europe inhabited this war landscape, forming a consideration of what Williams (1961, 64) termed 'a structure of feeling.' From this, a reconsideration of identity and memory can emerge within Europe. This sense of identity is not based on notions of inclusion and exclusion (see Bauman 1993, 78), it does not entail the dilution of national identity, but looks towards an acceptance of these boundaries themselves as an object of reflection, and leads to a consideration of what others have also experienced (Friese 2002, 12; Spivak 1988, 197). Where the memorial landscape, historiography and literature of the Western Front have relied on limited concerns and national perspectives, an embodied memory of the battlefields, can overlook these traditional discourses through its study of the materials and landscapes of the war (see Price, 2003). The Western Front, through an archaeological study of an embodied memory, can therefore emerge as a demonstration of what can be achieved by locating an identity within a consideration of responsibility towards others (after Levinas 1998b, 207). Derrida (2001) has named this consideration and responsibility 'hospitality', derived from the Enlightenment notion of cosmopolitanism (see also Kristeva 1991, 172); 'the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others as our own and as foreigners, ethics is hospitality; ethics is so thoroughly co-extensive with the experience of hospitality' (Derrida 2001, 17).

Whereas moves by the European Union have sought to stimulate a 'European identity' and a 'European memory' by imposition of institutions and cultural programmes, which inevitably implicitly state by some cultural trait what is and what is not European, this sense of a responsibility to the other can emerge amongst the peoples of Europe themselves. The overarching endeavours by the European Union to establish a common identity could be said to be flawed from the beginning, as shared identities and memories which can cross

established national boundaries, cannot be engendered from the initiatives set in place by the political elite, but must be built from the concepts and ideas held and formulated within the general populace (see Hall 1991b, 39). Rather than rely on the attempts by the European Union to forge a European identity, which can be seen to be designed to aid the self-interests of member states, this creates the possibility of an alternative European identity from the bottom-up; an understanding created amongst the peoples of Europe, instead of an imposed template (see Hegardt 2000). This concept of belonging and identity within European nations can be derived not from delineating what is and what is not European, but through the acknowledgement and consideration of 'the other' as the basis of the self (see Friese 2002, 12; Levinas 1998b, 194; Derrida 2001, 17). Of course, this understanding of the Western Front can only ever be a small part of the diverse stories which contribute to the plethora of identities in Europe, but importantly such a retelling of the Western Front demonstrates a way in which identity and memory in Europe can be constructed not by exclusion but a consideration of 'the other.'

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

The issues which have driven this project; memory, narrative and identity, are concerns shared across the humanities and social sciences, but it has been the purpose of this project to demonstrate how these areas can be articulated in a different manner, emphasising both the worth and distinction of archaeology (Shanks 2004b). It is however to the particular issue of narrative which this conclusion shall initially return to considering how both memory and identity are communicated, shared, disputed and displaced by narrative vehicles (Huysen 1995; Assman 1996). The issue of narrative and its role in disseminating archaeological knowledge within the discipline and to the wider public is an issue which until recently had remained unexamined by archaeologists (Bernbeck 2005, 114; Paynter 2002, 85; Praetzelis 1998, 1; Solli 1996, 209). The narratives which are formed by archaeological interpretation have been either unacknowledged in the bounds of a pseudo-scientific processual discourse (Binford 1962; Renfrew 1973), or subsumed within ‘experimental’ interpretations (Bender *et al* 1997; Edmonds 1999). Neither satisfactorily expresses the ways archaeologists as interpreters, as storytellers, shape the past for public consumption and how those narratives are in turn shaped by the public themselves (after Denning 1994, 353). Archaeologists, alongside historians, poets and authors, articulate narratives about the past, whether through a scientific analysis of material artefacts, or a ‘stream of consciousness’ relation of an excavation or landscape. These ‘narratives of memory’ shape remembrance and thereby the issues within our own society; social, political, cultural, even economic (Pollock and Bernbeck 2005, 1; Hamilakis 2004, 296). This is particularly so if one considers the role of the archaeologist in a post-colonial context, where issues of representation and reflexivity are paramount and where the memory of the past is highly contested (see Gosden 2004).

The reticence within archaeology towards a consideration of narratological theory can be best understood within the context of the casting of archaeology as a discipline in a modernist, positivist framework (Schnapp *et al*

2004, 1-2). The concerns of narratology for aesthetics, ethics and politics, appears to be an antithesis for an approach determined to take its place within the natural sciences and to be an empirical, subjective search for 'truth' (after Thomas 2004a, 238). Although recognising archaeology as an interpretative discipline, postprocessualism has similarly discounted narratological analysis in its study (see Hodder 1993; after Pluciennik 1999; Joyce 2002). The only areas in which such concerns were expressed by postprocessual archaeologists were in a deconstruction of discourses of culture historians and new archaeologists (see Tilley 1990a, 281; Thomas 1993b, 357) to emphasise that rhetoric and style were as important in these theoretical schools, or within the concerns for a 'different way of telling', as archaeologists have sought alternative mediums in which to express their interpretations (Bender 1998; Edmonds 1999). Such a limited approach to narratology within the discipline echoes the wider failings of postprocessualism as highlighted by Smith (1994), as the concerns raised by postprocessual theorists rarely move outside the discipline. In effect this perpetuates the cycle of archaeologists talking about each other to one another. To break away from this limiting and self-serving dialogue entails a consideration of the impact of the form and content of archaeological narratives on the memory of the past, and the manner in which we remember the past (see Given 2004, 5). The consideration within this project of evoking an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front using postmodern and poststructural theories of narratives demonstrates the potentials for this approach.

By incorporating a rhizomatic scheme within the analysis this project has attempted to challenge the traditional concepts of historical and literary narratives in their use of a linear framework and their focus upon the major events of the conflict (after Furet 1984, 55). It explores the possibility of providing a multivocal perspective on the landscape of the Western Front, an examination of the plethora of actions and reactions of the soldiers with the materials and spaces they encountered (after Bender 1993). Multivocality has remained an objective rarely achieved within archaeological discourse (see Lucas 2005, 118), although a concern for this perspective is still often expressed by archaeologists, inspired in part by Bahktinian theory (Joyce 2002). The work of archaeologists attempting to achieve this multivocality often fails to convince because it relies too much on a standpoint within the discipline arguing against

the entrenched methods of processual archaeologists. These efforts therefore appear to be no more than the *avant-garde* musings of the archaeological intelligentsia (after Fleming 1999). Whilst aesthetic considerations have a role in the consideration of narratology within archaeology, it cannot be the sole concern, and it need not necessarily be over-elaborate. 'In truth, it is not enough to say, 'long live the multiple', difficult as it is to raise that cry. No typographical, lexical or even syntactical cleverness is enough to make it heard. The multiple must be made, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety...' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984, 6). Within the narrative forwarded for this project, the inclusion of soldiers' letters, oral testimonies and diary entries, alongside the evidence obtained from archaeological excavation, may appear to be a rather simplistic way of achieving a multivocal perspective, but it does demonstrate how such a narrative style can incorporate issues of contradiction and perspective (after Bernbeck 2005).

The notion of an archaeological interpretation which accounts for these concerns, which considers issues such as focalisation and structure, and which acknowledges that total representations are an impossibility is largely alien to a discipline still concerned with providing detailed and structured accounts of the past based upon a linear chronological framework (Joyce 2002, 12). An understanding that narratives can be acentered, without unifying concepts or structures, or that the past was neither experienced in such a homogenous fashion nor can be related in a neat, packaged and unified manner remains mainly outside archaeological concerns (after Gilchrist 2000; McGlade 1995). The critique by postmodern and poststructural narrative theory of the linear framework, which was considered almost innate within structural narratology, has facilitated the rejection of providing a fabricated sense of beginning and closure within narratives (Gibson 1996; Currie 1998). It has enabled the recognition that ideas such as emplotment, events, character, openings and conclusions are themselves products of a narrative style which is not merely confined to authors of literature and poets, but also to the interpretations of historians, sociologists and of course archaeologists (Bernbeck 2005, 114; Pluciennik 2003, 643-645). This is not however a continuation of an interest in purely stylistic experimentation, rather these narratological theories impact decisively on political and cultural issues, as they provide an alternative perspective for the presentation and therefore the

memory of the past for the public (Joyce 2002, 143).

In its objective of creating an embodied memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front this project has utilised the archival and archaeological evidence to formulate an ethnographic study of these men, how they experienced their surroundings and formulated a sense of place. What is significant in this study is that it uses the soldiers' perspective within the narrative and allows them to express their experiences in their own words, but within the research purposes of the project (after Darnton 1984, 3; Issac 1982, 347). It therefore follows on from the popular studies of the battlefields, which have used oral accounts to provide descriptive histories of the soldiers, but importantly departs from them in its attempt to answer specific objectives beyond the simplistic question 'what was it like?' (see Macdonald 1983, xiv). These oral histories have retained their popularity because they are seen to provide an alternative to the dry, grand-narratives styles of military history (Ashplant *et al* 2000, 5). It is not surprising therefore that it is this expression of events from the soldiers' viewpoint within these histories, the view 'from the trenches', which is both inspired by and contributes to the enduring popular memory of the Western Front. The narrative presented within this analysis, by using this evidence, draws upon this public sympathy for studies which stress the soldiers' experiences (Simkins 1991, 293).

Importantly, there is also a distinction in this respect, as archaeology as a cultural product, by taking this perspective can also expand and alter the popular memory of the Western Front (see Price 2003). In these circumstances archaeology can really be considered a craft, producing and fashioning interpretations for the general public (see Shanks and McGuire 1996; McGuire 1992). Rather than rely on interpretations driven solely by concerns with the discipline, or those which view the public as a monolithic consumer of the past, archaeology as a production, or craft, acknowledges the value of its product and the role of the audience to whom it is presented (see Potter 1990; Hamilakis 1999). 'The alternative to the consumerist model is to recognise that there are many different legitimate interests in the past. Archaeology can offer these interests our craft, the ability to use material culture to make observations about the events and practices of the past, and to weave these into reconstructions of life in the past' (McGuire 1992, 261). This should not be considered within romantic notions of a 'craft product', rather a work of craft enters into a dialogue

with its eventual consumers, its maker comprehends the context into which the work is situated and can therefore can enhance, alter and present new possibilities to the audience concerned (McGuire 1992, 261). The importance of the memory of the Western Front in Britain is respected in this study, and the choice of such a memory is taken to be an active decision by knowing agents, rather than a passive acceptance by 'cultural dupes' (de Certeau 1984, 16). By using an ethnographic analysis and the soldier's perspective, this study offers an immediacy and accessibility comparable to the popular descriptive histories, and by using this standpoint, by crafting a product within a framework which has found a favourable response within the wider public, this project can further and expand the memory of the British soldiers on the Western Front.

This project therefore forwards the notion that the considerations and concerns for narratological analysis should be given a more substantial role within archaeological discourse, as through both form and content archaeological narratives can shape and reinterpret the memory of the past (Lopiparo 2002, 71). An inclusion of narratological analysis would necessitate that a range of suppositions which have been inherited from the conception of archaeology as a modern, positivist discipline are also undermined (see Thomas 2004a; 2004b). This enables a reconsideration of a number of factors, most notably, a linear framework and time perspectives, use of sources of evidence and political and ethical questions (Bernbeck 2005; Murray 1999; Lucas 2005). Undoubtedly, it is the question of a linear framework for archaeological interpretations which has the strongest hold within the subject. Placing archaeological evidence and interpretations into chronological and typological orderings has been a significant feature of the discipline since its inception. This approach has as its implicit formula that once the archaeologist places events in time then this will enable a more complete understanding, by logically fitting events and processes together and organising them into a coherent classificatory sequence (after McGlade and Van der Leeuw 1997, 4). Time in this approach is a physical-objective, a non-questioned assumption that frames the interpretation (Bernbeck 2005, 114). Inclusion of narratological theory within the discipline undermines this assumption, by a consideration that narrative forms need not have linear progression, that events may have occurred or been perceived differently, that the conclusion given of a story of a site, landscape or artefact is just one of the many

possibilities that could have occurred, so that archaeological narratives which appear self-assured and present the narrative of the past with a sense of inevitability are seen for what they are, a narrative construct (Lucas 2005, 117; Chadwick 2004, 11). It is however, a bizarre occurrence, that although issues of the representation of time have recently come to the forefront within archaeology, rarely has the issue of narrative construction within archaeology been considered in this respect (see Gosden 1994; Murray 1999; Lucas 2005). That archaeological narratives are products, formed by the interpreter seems an admission too far for some within the discipline (after Shanks and Tilley 1987b, 119); this hesitance unfortunately hinders a consideration of how archaeological narratives can be written at different, perhaps even contradictory perspectives which account for the disruption, fluidity and multivocal nature of the past (see Foxhall 2000, 496). Neither the evidence nor the methods that archaeologists draw upon to make their interpretations have some inherent chronological quality, but gain such a status from the manner in which they are conveyed and explained through archaeological narratives (after Lucas 2005, 43). Furthermore, by placing and acknowledging the archaeologist as an author and as a storyteller, a notion of the existence of a multitude of perspectives on the past can be considered, forcing the discipline into concerns about the effects their narratives of the past will have, the role of the archaeologist in society, and the relevance of claims to objectivity, narrow empiricism and truth (Bernbeck 2005, 114).

The issues of narrative construction are particularly relevant to the nascent study of the archaeology of the Western Front, not just within this project but within the wider study of the battlefields. Archaeologists working on the former sites of battlefields, trenches and field hospitals must face a challenge as to what the character of the discipline should be (see Saunders 2001, 45; 2002a, 109). The wealth of historical documentation and interpretation may appear for some working with the material culture and landscapes of the war to be too significant and too overwhelming to depart from the established narrative mode of the war (after Ward 2004). This indeed can be demonstrated in archaeological projects which have occurred on sites strongly connected with the major battles and events of the war, where archaeology and an archaeological approach is reduced to a mere illustration for historical interpretations (see Piédalue, 2003). An archaeological agenda is not however a historical or literary

agenda, different sources of evidence are utilised and different questions are asked by archaeologists about existing evidence (after Clarke 1968, 13). This approach is perhaps demonstrated at the Ocean Villas project on the Somme, which has attempted to approach the study of the site of a reserve trench and a cellar used as a dugout, as an example of the distinctive approach archaeology brings to the study of the battlefields (OVPW, 2005). By locating the concerns of the project, however, with the development of the course of the war, post-war reconstruction across the spectrum of British positions, German positions and the local village, it merely reiterates the established linear perspective of the battlefields (see Fraser 2003). As such the particular agenda of archaeology is diminished as the site is merely placed within the grand historical narrative of the war.

Although issues of narrative and memory have yet to be fully examined in the archaeological projects of the battlefields, the means by which the archaeology of the battlefields has been disseminated does form an interesting feature (see Fabiansson, 2005). As whilst the state of academic publications of excavated sites remains poor, though archaeological groups in the region do state their commitment to publishing, the format whereby archaeology has been able to communicate its evidence is through the mass-media, through television (Reed, 2003) and the internet (Fabiansson 2004). Indeed, it is through the appearance of archaeological television programmes regarding the activities of archaeological groups that the excavations of the battlefields have gained prominence and publicity (Saunders 2002a, 108). It is the dissemination of archaeological knowledge through the internet though which has proven to be of most use in publicising archaeological work; the findings of excavation teams and recent developments are posted on web-sites before any publication or conference address takes place (see OVPW, 2005; A.W.A. 2004). Whilst the state of publication of the archaeology of the battlefields languishes, websites have flourished and remain the main source of evidence for anyone researching the area. Despite the apparent radical nature of this mode of transmission (see Jordan 1999, 116; Jones 1997, 24), websites regarding the results of excavations often suffer from a similar fate which has beset actual publication. Websites are not updated regularly, and in some cases such as *The Diggers* (2005), due to internal divisions, have ceased to place updates altogether, extinguishing the only

real way by which the results of the group can be examined. As the study is still developing, it must be hoped that the issues concerning the lack of publications will alter in time (Price, 2003; Fabiansson, 2005). If archaeology is to form a credible source of information on the Great War on the Western Front, and impact upon the manner in which the war is remembered, the situation regarding publication of site reports, conference speeches and theoretical discussion must be altered drastically.

Despite this paucity of publication it is still possible, as is demonstrated in this project to suggest ways in which archaeology and an archaeological approach can impact on the memory of the battlefields. It is to this concern for memory and remembrance, in what has been termed in this project 'embodied memory', that these concluding notes will now finally turn. Memory has provided a new subject for archaeologists, a new arena in which to explore and address a variety of issues in the past and in the present (Van Dyke and Alcock 2003; Alcock 2001; 2002; Van Dyke 2004; Bradley 2002; Williams 2003a; Shackel 2000; Effros 2003; Tarlow 1999; Dietlar 1994; 1998). As a necessary regard, as memory is incorporated within the discipline, archaeologists should warn themselves against importing wholesale or indeed only partial ideas without considering the particular regard and approach archaeology has for the study of the past (see Van Dyke and Alcock 2003, 1-2). Memory is a diverse and varied topic across a number of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, which evoke it and utilise it as a source of study (see Olick and Robbins 1998).

Archaeology must in turn, whilst regarding its use within other disciplines, come to remake, examine and develop concepts of memory itself. It is for this purpose that the term embodied memory has been forwarded within this project, as it is seen to provide a means of remembering the past, specific to the distinction of an archaeological approach, and is also able to articulate the impact of that past onto present day concerns (after Nourbese Philip 2002, 4). Embodied memory has been used in this project, not to provide a sentimental or empathetic consideration of a traumatic and painful past (after Bennett 2005, 11). It is not intended that the research objectives of the project provide a 'comfortable' or 'easy' perspective on the events of the battlefields of the Western Front. Too often memorial schemes and historical discourse are seen to disregard the intense experiences of wartime, a selective forgetting rather than a

critical commemoration (after Bourke 1999), aptly summarised in Sturken's (1991, 32) phrase regarding the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C.; 'to dismember (in war) is to fragment a body and its memory; to remember is to make a body complete.' In contrast, this project places the corporeal experiences of joy, pleasure, pain and suffering at the centre of remembrance schemes; it aims not to reconstitute shattered bodies, to provide sanitised histories and memories, but to remember those bodies placed within the materiality and spatiality of the time. Embodied memory is therefore a practice, a means by which we can remember a past and also contemplate another's in way that focuses on the human experiences of place, space and materiality (after Quashie 2004, 99).

Archaeology as an act, a performance of embodied memory, forms a means to present an interpretation of the past which places the immediacy of human experience at its core, by evoking a narrative which re-embodies the past and by doing so reconsiders the content of our memory and our ways of remembrance. By using embodied memory to assess the manner in which archaeology impacts upon the memory of the British soldiers of the Western Front, a difference is highlighted between the modes of remembering, whether through the memorial landscape, historiography, literature or media representations, an embodied memory brings a distinctive perspective to the conflict. Locating this memory within a study of British soldiers also contributes to a wider field, as a particular memory of the soldiers from Britain forms a significant feature of national identity and culture. An embodied memory of these soldiers not only removes these men from the historical narratives which have cast the Western Front as a 'private British sorrow' (Terraine 1980, 171), but places a means into consideration by which comparisons can be considered with combatants from different nations, forming an 'intimate alterity' (Csordas 2004, 163). This approach, whilst focusing solely on the war-zone, can also paradoxically remove the significance of the battlefields, their prominent place in commemoration schemes, as the major events of the conflict associated with the fields of conflict do not constitute the objectives of the study, rather the corporeal experiences of individuals has become the research aim. Embodied memory represents a means which reverses the dislocation of the past from the present called for by a positivist study, it represents an alternative form of remembering

and claim to knowledge and it represents the beginning of a means whereby we can remember how these battlefields were experienced, not in an abstract sense of military engagement, but a humanised understanding of a hostile landscape.

Appendix

This Archive Evidence Catalogue lists the sources used in this thesis. Every source from the Liddle Collection and the Imperial War Museum collection is listed individually according to the 'Data Type' and 'Evidence' categories. Individuals can therefore on occasion be listed more than once. These two categories are divided into sub-categories. 'Data type' is divided into letters, diaries, memoirs and oral testimonies. 'Evidence' is divided into spaces, landscape and materials. This illustrates the nature of the evidence used and to what aspect of an archaeological agenda it relates to.

Key:

LC: Liddle Collection, Brotherton Library, University of Leeds.

- GA: General Aspects
- GS: General Section (Reference number noted where available)
- WF/Rec: Western Front Recollections

IWM: Imperial War Museum, Collections, London.

Archive Evidence Catalogue				
Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Adams, G.	LC GS 0006	Letters	Spaces	Wounded in the trenches / Fighting
Adams, G.	LC GS 0006	Letters	Material	Bombers
Alexander, H.M.	LC GS 0014	Diary	Spaces	Trenches saved lives
Alexander, H.M.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Trench architecture 'saved lives'
Allen, D.	LC GS 0024	Letters	Landscape	Retaliation: Presence of the dead
Allen, D.	LC GS 0024	Letters	Material	Bombers
Allen, D.	LC GS 0024	Letters	Spaces	Crowded trenches
Allen, J.W.	LC GS 0025	Letters	Landscape	Threat of death above the parapet
Allen, J.W.	LC GS 0025	Letters	Material	Mortars
Allen, J.W.	LC GS 0025	Letters	Spaces	Unburied dead: 'Friendly trenches': Truce

Archive Evidence Catalogue

Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Anderson, A	IWM 85/23/1	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches: Duckboards: Dugouts
Anderson, A.	IWM 85/23/1	Memoirs	Material	As a sniper he harasses the enemy often
Andrew, I.G.	LC WF/Rec	Memoir	Spaces	Trenches
Ashford, R.G.	LC WF/Rec	Memoir	Landscape	Presence of the dead: Desolation
Bates, E.G	LC GS 0098	Letters	Material	Revolver used
Bates, E.G.	LC GS 0098	Letters	Landscape	Fighting: Hatred of Germans
Belderby, J.R.	LC GS	Memoirs	Spaces	Hell Fire Corner:
Belderby, J.R.	LC GS	Memoirs	Landscape	Presence of the dead: Gloom of Ypres
Belderby, J.R.	LC GS	Memoirs	Materials	Machine gun: Fear of losing weapon
Bingham, R.C.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Bayonet: Gas masks: Bombs
Bingham, R.C.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Presence of the dead
Binks, W.H.	LC GS 0140	Diary	Landscape	Retaliation
Blackburn, E.	LC GS 0145	Letters	Material	Bombers
Blenkinsop, A.E.	LC GS	Diary	Landscape	Deville Wood 'strewn with dead'
Brett, G.A.	LC GS 0194	Memoirs	Landscape	Retaliation: Killing
Brett, G.A.	LC GS 0194	Memoirs	Material	Lewis Guns: Rifles
Burgess, J.G.	LC GS	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Burke, U.	IWM 569/18	Oral testimony	Material	Bayonet: Grenades
Burke, U.	IWM 569/18	Oral testimony	Spaces	Newcomers: 'Vindictive Crossroads'
Butler, A.G.S.	LC GS 0251	Letter	Landscape	Barbarous 'Huns'
Butler, A.G.S.	LC GS 0251	Letter	Spaces	Bombardment had no effect on concrete dugout
Butler, J.H.	LC GS 0253	Memoirs	Spaces	Retaliation for German atrocities
Butler, J.H.	LC GS 0253	Memoirs	Material	Minnenwerfers named 'Archibald'
Cabeldu, A.H.	AIR 061	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Caplon, J.T.	IWM 87/33/1	Memoirs	Spaces	Death Valley: Desolation
Cave, A.C.	LC GS 0276	Diary	Landscape	Slaughter: Soldiers killed and mutilated

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Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Chambers, A.G	LC GS 0281	Diary	Spaces	German atrocities
Chambers, A.G.	LC GS 0281	Diary	Landscape	Givenchy has a 'bad name'
Chambers, R.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	'Fancy fighting for land like this'
Charter, S.D.	IWM 87/56/1	Diary	Landscape	'Damned place': Threat from snipers
Clarke, W.E.	IWM 577	Oral testimony	Spaces	Felt safe in the dugouts: Death in the trenches
Claughton, W.	LC GS 0326	Letters	Landscape	Presence of the dead: Shell-fire: Desolation
Claughton, W.	LC GS 0326	Letter	Spaces	Trenches destroyed by shell-fire
Clayton-Nunn, T.H.	LC GS	Letter	Material	Nick-names of German artillery
Clifford, W.C.	IWM 98/28/1	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches: Friendly shell-hole
Collier, J.	LC GS 0339	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Cooper, H.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Dugouts: Trenches
Crockett, D.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	Deaths leading to despair amongst soldiers
Cude, R.	IWM (Con. Shelf)	Memoirs	Materials	Mills bombs: Rifles used as clubs: Bombs to 'coax'
Cude, R.	IWM (Con. Shelf)	Memoirs	Spaces	Trench warfare
Duncan, W.O.	LC GS 0479	Diaries	Materials	Coal boxes and Jack Johnsons
Edwards, H.N.	LC GS 0502	Memoirs	Spaces	Grovelled in the mud: Minnenwerfer attack
Edwards, L.M.	LC GS 0503	Letters	Material	Fear of losing weapon:
Edwards, L.M.	LC GS 0503	Letters	Landscape	Effects of bombardment: Discipline: Desolation
Eggleton, L.E.	LC GS 0508	Diary	Landscape	Death: Presence of the dead
Eggleton, L.E.	LC GS 0508	Diary	Spaces	Taking cover in shell-holes: Shrapnel Corner
Eggleton, L.E.	LC GS 0508	Diary	Materials	Machine gun: Souvenirs
Ellis, G.	LC GS	Letters	Material	Letter from sister to CWGC regarding brother's grave

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Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Eshborn, C	LC GS 0526	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Evans, R.J.T.	LC GS 1816	Letters	Landscape	Live and let live
Fagence, V.	IWM 327/8	Oral testimony	Spaces	Signs in the trenches 'Sniper: Berware': Dugouts
Fagence, V.	IWM 327/8	Oral testimony	Materials	Machine gun
Fearnhead, J.H.	LC GS 0541	Letters	Landscape	Presence of the dead
Gamble, L.W.	LC GS 0603	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Gardiner, J.T.	LC GS 0606	Letters	Spaces	Dugouts
Gardiner, J.T.	LC GS 0606	Letters	Materials	Identifies explosions by sound
Gardner, W.H.	LC GS 0609	Letter	Spaces	Ambition of going to the trenches
Gerrard, J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Killing
Gerrard, J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Materials	Machine gun
Giggins, C.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Machine gun
Goldby, H.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Accustomed to the trenches
Gore-Brown, E.	IWM 88/52/1	Diary	Landscape	Hopes to crush the Hun
Gore-Brown, E.	IWM 88/52/1	Diary	Materials	Steel helmet
Gore-Brown, E.	IWM 88/52/1	Diary	Spaces	Trench warfare
Gresham, T.B.	LC GS 0662	Letters	Spaces	Rejoyced at news of German deaths
Grimshaw, R.	IWM 88/7/1	Diary	Landscape	Bombardment: Presence of the dead
Hirsch, D.P.	LC GS 0770	Letters	Spaces	Arras cave
Hirsch, D.P.	LC GS 0770	Letters	Material	Steel helmets: Souvenirs
Hirsch, F.B.	LC GS 0771	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Hobbs, H.H.	LC GS 0744	Memoirs	Spaces	Up to the front: Dugout
Hobbs, H.H.	LC GS 0774	Memoirs	Landscape	Under shell-fire: Terror in battlefield
Jacobs, J.	LC GS 0844	Letters	Landscape	War makes him feel 'like an animal'
Jacobs, J.	LC GS 0844	Letters	Spaces	Trenches named 'Death Valley'
Jacobs, J.	LC GS 0844	Letters	Material	Machine gun
Johnston, J.A.	IWM 02/09/02	Memoirs	Landscape	'Refuse of the battlefield littered the ground'
Johnston, J.A.	IWM 02/09/02	Memoirs	Spaces	Shelter of the trenches: Dugouts

Archive Evidence Catalogue

Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Johnston, J.A.	IWM 02/09/02	Memoirs	Materials	Carved chalk block:Trench clubs: Weapons to hand
Jones, H.V.	LC GS 0868	Letters	Landscape	Passchendaele 'hell': Desolation: Fighting spirit
Jones, H.V.	LC GS 0868	Letters	Material	Tanks: Souvenirs
Jones, H.V.	LC GS 0868	Letters	Spaces	Revenge
Kitchen, W.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	Father's photographs of grave
Knight, S.A.	IWM 96/29/1	Memoirs	Landscape	Fear: Going up to the line
Knight, S.A.	IWM 96/29/1	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches: Dugouts
Lane, S.A.	LC GS 0918	Memoirs	Landscape	Presence of the dead: 'Murderous scene'
Lane, S.A.	LC GS 0918	Memoirs	Material	Mills bombs
Laws, J.	LC GS 0932	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Lewis, F.	LC GS	Memoirs	Landscape	Under shell-fire, discipline
Lobel, F.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches
Looker, A.D.	LC GS 0979	Letters	Landscape	Boredom
Looker, A.D.	LC GS 0979	Letters	Spaces	Trenches
Ludlow, W.R.	LC GS 0984	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Ludlow, W.R.	LC GS 0984	Letters	Landscape	Desolation
Ludlow, W.R.	LC GS 0984	Letters	Spaces	Hun 'wonderfully clever'
Luther, R.M.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Discipline
Lyle, O.	LC GS 0992	Letters	Landscape	Fighting: Fear: Threat of death
Lyle, O.	LC GS 0992	Letters	Spaces	Boredom: Routine
Mackay, R.L.	LC GS 1016	Diary	Spaces	Pities those new to death on the front
Mackay, R.L.	LC GS 1016	Diary	Landscape	Gas attack: Retaliation: Dead: Ypres: Killing
Magre, V.C.	LC GS	Letters	Spaces	Fear of snipers
Maile, W.C.D.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Gas attack
Malcolm, J.A.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches: Discipline: Latrines
Marriott, S.C.	LC GS 1052	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Mason, R.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Trenches 'not a healthy place'
Mason, R.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Materials	Steel helmets

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Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Mason, R.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Fear: Memories of Ypres
Matthews, G.W.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	No man's land a 'desolate wilderness'
Matthews, G.W.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Discipline
Maudsley, R.V.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	Tired of the slaughter
Maudsley, R.V.	LC GS	Letter	Spaces	Bombardment: Enjoys trenches
McEvoy, P.E.	LC GS 1011	Letters	Spaces	Told to 'dig in or find a shell hole'
McEvoy, P.E.	LC GS 1011	Letters	Landscape	Ypres: Retaliation: Desolation
McKerrow, C.K.	LC GS 1020	Diary	Spaces	Trenches 'healthy places'
McLeary, J.C.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	Snipers, trench names
McLeod, N.M.	LC GS 1029	Letters	Landscape	Ypres 'a desperate place'
Molz, F.E	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Steel helmets
Moore-Gwyn, H.O.	LC GS 1142	Letters	Spaces	German snipers
Moore-Gwyn, H.O.	LC GS	Letters	Landscape	Suspects Belgian civilians: Discipline
Mortimer, G.	LC GS 1136	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Mortimer, G.	LC GS 1136	Letters	Landscape	'Evil' Huns
Moy, C.E.	LC GS 1149	Letters	Landscape	Leuze Wood: Horror of the front: Death:
Moy, C.E.	LC GS 1149	Letters	Spaces	Presence of the dead: Readjustment
Muir, W.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Persuaded German prisoners with a Mills bomb
Murray, C.M.	LC GS 1153	Diary	Spaces	Atrocious fighting in Deville Wood
Murray, C.M.	LC GS 1153	Diary	Material	Artillery batteries
Old, H.	LC GS	Memoirs	Landscape	Trenches and dug outs
Orlebat, R.A.B.	LC GS 1205	Diary	Landscape	Fear of snipers
Oxley, H.	IWM 716/8	Oral testimony	Landscape	Presence of the dead
Oxley, H.	IWM 716/8	Oral testimony	Spaces	Trench warfare, continuously crouching
Philipson, F.	IWM 02/04/01	Memoirs	Spaces	Fear in the trenches: desire for a Blighty

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Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Philipson, F.	IWM 02/04/01	Memoirs	Material	Machine gun
Pritchard, J.M.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Trench routine
Quinnel, C.R.	IWM 554	Oral testimony	Landscape	Killing
Quinnel, C.R.	IWM 554	Oral testimony	Spaces	Threat of exposure outside trenches
Raven, G.E.	LC GS 1330	Letters	Landscape	Exhilarated at fighting
Rawson, P.H.	LC GS 1332	Letters	Landscape	Threat of Death
Rawson, P.H.	LC GS 1332	Letters	Spaces	Underwent shell bombardment
Rawson, P.H.	LC GS 1332	Letters	Landscape	Approach to the trenches
Read, I.L.	LC GS 1133	Memoirs	Spaces	Atrocious fighting in Deville Wood
Read, I.L.	LC GS 1133	Memoirs	Material	Using machine gun: Killing
Read, I.L.	LC GS 1133	Memoirs	Landscape	Harassing the enemy
Riddell, G.B	LC GS 1351	Diary	Material	Rifles: Bombs
Riddell, G.B	LC GS 1351	Diary	Spaces	Trenches
Ridsdale, H.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Presence of the dead: Neuve Chappelle desolate
Ridsdale, H.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Souvenirs
Ridsdale, H.	LC GS 1356	Letters	Spaces	Presence of the dead
Rixon, A.J.	IWM 99/13/1	Diary	Material	Souvenirs
Rixon, A.J.	IWM 99/13/1	Diary	Landscape	Desolation: Retaliation
Rixon, A.J.	IWM 99/13/1	Diary	Spaces	Trenches: Dugouts
Russell, J.W.B.	LC GS 1405	Letters	Material	Bayonet: Bombers: Machine gun
Russell, J.W.B.	LC GS 1405	Letters	Spaces	Trenches: Dugouts
Russell, J.W.B.	LC GS 1405	Letters	Landscape	Death: Desolation: Fear
Ryott, H.A.	LC GS 1409	Letters	Landscape	War altering the land: Advance across battlefield
Scott, J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Machine gun
Senescall, W.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Fear of the open
Senescall, W.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Told to use bayonet: Loss of weapon
Senescall, W.J.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	No prisoners
Shephard, E.A.	LC GS 1453	Letters	Landscape	Raid on enemy trench

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Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
Shephard, E.A.	LC GS 1453	Letters	Spaces	Guides need for 'labyrinthine' trenches: Gas
Shephard, E.A.	LC GS 1453	Letters	Material	Steel helmets: Stokes Gunners and Trench Mortars
Shield, F.J.	IWM 87/17/1	Diary	Landscape	Desolation
Silbey, H.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Fear of the open: Trench renamed 'Valley of Death'
Singles, G.H.	LC GS 1479	Letters	Spaces	German 'vermin'
Singles, G.H.	LC GS 1479	Letter	Material	As sniper kills Germans: Souvenirs
Singles, G.H.	LC GS 1479	Letters	Landscape	Killing
Spelman, H.H.	LC GS 1512	Letter	Material	Retaliation: Bayonet: Killing
Stachwell, W.E.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Support and reserve trenches shelled heavily
Stone, H.R.	LC GS	Memoirs	Landscape	Memorial landscape
Taplin, W.G.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Trench raids
Taplin, W.G.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Weapons always at hand
Taylor, C.C.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Effects of a gas attack
Taylor, H.S.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Landscape	Exciting going up the line: Fear: Death
Taylor, H.S.	LC GS 1579	Letters	Material	Steel helmets
Taylor, H.S.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Steel helmets: Coal boxes: Gas masks
Taylor, H.S.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Spaces	Death Valley: Hell Fire Corner
Tibbles, J.R.	LC GS 1603	Memoirs	Landscape	War damage: Fear: Threat: Killing
Tibbles, J.R.	LC GS 1603	Memoirs	Spaces	Dugouts: Trenches
Tibbles, J.R.	LC GS 1603	Memoirs	Material	Steel helmets: Mills bomb
Tomkins, H.O.	LC WF/Rec	Memoirs	Material	Rifles: Bombs: Machine gun
Townsend, K.	LC GS 1620	Letters	Landscape	Ypres 'horrid debris': Killing Germans
Turner, F.W.	LC GS 1638	Diary	Spaces	'Lively' trenches
Turner, F.W.	LC GS 1638	Diary	Landscape	Desolation: Effects of war
Walker, W.C.G.	LC GS	Memoirs	Spaces	Presence of the dead: Shell-fire

Archive Evidence Catalogue

Name	Reference Number	Data Type	Evidence	Keywords
				prevents burial
Walkington, M.L.	LC GS	Letters	Material	Souvenirs
Ward, M.	LC WF/Rec	Memoir	Spaces	Trench conditions
Watts-Moses, E.	LC GS 1694	Oral testimony	Material	Rifles: Bayonets
Watts-Moses, E.	LC GS 1694	Oral testimony	Spaces	Trenches: Duckboards
Webb, P	IWM 578	Oral testimony	Landscape	Accustomed to war landscape
Webb, P.	IWM 578	Oral testimony	Spaces	Funk holes dug
Webb, P.	IWM 578	Oral testimony	Material	Jack Johnsons: Bombardment
Wedgewood, J.C.	LC GS	Letters	Spaces	Trench conditions
Willis, G.A.A.	LC GS 1751	Letter	Spaces	Name boards in trenches
Willis, G.A.A.	LC GS 1751	Letter	Landscape	Booby-traps
Wilson, R.E.	LC GS 1766	Letters	Material	Gas masks: Lewis Guns: Steel helmets
Wilson, R.E.	LC GS 1766	Letters	Landscape	Bombardment: Mud: Desolation: Threat

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