

**VOLUNTEERING FOR WORLD WAR I: A CASE STUDY OF
INFLUENCES AND VALUES ON YOUNG MEN AS EVIDENT
FROM A SCHOOL MAGAZINE**

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ABSTRACT

Volunteering for World War I from the English public schools from August 1914 to the introduction of conscription in 1916 was considerable. Dean Close (Memorial) School, Cheltenham was one such school. It had its own distinct perspective on values and beliefs, being explicitly Evangelical Christian. This thesis explores the extent to which that approach to education influenced attitudes, values and behaviour of former pupils when asked to volunteer for World War I. There is also an examination of the part played in that school community by its magazine, *The Decanian*.

This thesis reviews the school's history and ethos. It also looks at both masculinities and the development of Christian manliness and growth of Athleticism that were part of the general public school experience of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Dean Close School curriculum in its broadest sense is discussed and the part *The Decanian* played both in disseminating news and reflecting that curriculum examined.

The recruitment of former pupils, or Old Decanians (ODs), is detailed and *The Decanian's* role in providing a conduit of information between school and front line discussed. The magazine's bias and reporting approach is examined, as is its presentation of Old Decanians' conduct in the War. Through appropriate tables, the contribution and sacrifice of Old Decanians as against those of former pupils of other public schools in different contexts are compared. A conclusion offers an explanation for the results obtained and an assessment of assistance given by *The Decanian* to the

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Dean Close School community, both former and present, during World War I.

The contribution of this thesis is it shows the specific support and sacrifice to the World War I public school effort made by an Evangelical Christian school. It also shows the information and insights possible in World War I studies using a school magazine of the period as a primary source.

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other educational institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed.....

Date.....

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CF	Chaplain to the Forces.
DSO	Distinguished Service Order – an officers' gallantry and leadership medal.
HMC	Headmasters' Conference (of public schools).
HMS	Her/His Majesty's Ship.
MC	Military Cross – a junior officers' gallantry medal.
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer (e.g. Corporal or Sergeant)
OD	Old Decanian, i.e. a former pupil of Dean Close School.
OTC	Officers' Training Corps developed in public schools.
POW	Prisoner of War
TB	Tuberculosis
UPS	University and Public Schools (usually refers to specific battalions)

(Other gallantry medal abbreviations are explained within the text)

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*We are the Pilgrims, Master; we shall go
Always a little further: it may be
Beyond the last blue mountain barred with snow,
Across that angry or that glimmering sea.*

James Elroy Flecker (1884-1915)
Old Decanian
Lines from the Epilogue of
The Golden Journey to Samarakand

Those lines have been adopted by
The Special Air Service (SAS)
since World War II

Those lines were also quoted in:
*We Will Remember them:
Old Decanians who Lost Their Lives
as a Result of Conflict*
by C. E. Whitney
part of the Centenary Remembrance
of World War I at
Dean Close School,
2014.

Introduction

Background to the Research.

This research resulted from a project into former pupils of Dean Close Memorial School, Cheltenham, known as Dean Close School from World War I and in this thesis, who died as a consequence of World Wars I and II. This led to the publication of a short book: *We Will Remember Them: Old Decanians Who Lost Their Lives as a Result of Conflict* (2014).¹ Further research indicated that specifically Evangelical Christian Schools in the Headmasters' Conference of public schools (HMC) at the end of the Victorian and into the Edwardian period were a small, informal but distinct group. It raised the question of whether the recruitment or war record of former pupils would be any different than those of former pupils from other types of public school. In researching the book it became evident that the school magazine, *The Decanian*, was a particularly rich primary source and in reflecting on its contribution to the initial publication, it became evident that it would provide a very fruitful and worthwhile part of the research project.

¹ C.E. Whitney, *We Will Remember Them: Old Decanians Who Lost Their Lives as a Result of Conflict* (Hereford: Logaston Press, 2014)

The Key Aims and Objects of this Research

The aim of this research project is to ascertain whether the influence of an Evangelical Christian approach to public school education made any difference to attitudes and values of former pupils when required to fight for their country. In particular, this project seeks to discover the level of volunteering to serve in the Armed Forces when compared to other public schools, particularly those of similar size and age, when World War I broke out. The premise was that it would make no discernible difference. It was also wondered whether boys from such an Evangelical institution would be different in their willingness to be involved in action in battle or personal sacrifice on the battlefield. This was because of different valid approaches possible within Christianity on this topic. There is the pacifist perspective, such as 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God' (Matt 5.9) or 'Love your enemies' (Matt 5.44 or Luke 6.35). Another, more sacrificial approach to action in war, is suggested by 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends' (John 15.13) or 'turning the other cheek' (Matt 5.39 or Luke 6.29). However, a much more militant and aggressive attitude is suggested by 'Who is the King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle' (Psalm.24. 8) or alternatively 'Blessed be the Lord my rock who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle' (Psalm 144.1). Even faith in God and Jesus Christ itself may be seen through the military analogy of 'put(ting) on the

whole armour of God' (Ephesians 6.11) with which to 'fight the good fight' (1 Tim 1.18). While some of these quotations may refer originally to spiritual or internal enemies, external enemies might be included if by so doing a perceived wrong could be corrected. The contrasting approaches notwithstanding, this thesis sought to explore the impact of Evangelical Christianity on how pupils were educated and what if any difference it made to recruitment and conduct in World War I. This was critical, as Christian approaches had the potential to alter views as to whether it was right for boys to offer themselves for service in the Armed Forces. Comparisons with other, non-Evangelical public schools, whose boys were exposed to different perspectives, were to be made on this topic. This research was undertaken as a case study of Dean Close School, as the researcher was professionally interested in that School.

A second aim of the research was to explore the School's magazine, *The Decanian*, as a primary source for understanding Dean Close School's engagement with the war effort. Evidence from *The Decanian* was used from 1892, when it first began, through to 1922. It provided both significant qualitative and quantitative evidence that will be discussed presently.

Literature Review

To understand the public school educational ethos in the 19th century that worked through to World War I, a general look at developing masculinities and manliness of the period was needed. Herbert Sussman does so, aware, as he puts it, of the earlier Victorian decades 'encompassing a variety of competing formations of the masculine' which he proceeds to tease out. This he does by using the literature and art of the early and later Victorian period. Sussman considers particularly the contributions of Thomas Carlyle, Robert Browning, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and Walter Pater.²

In the particular context of this case study, the development of ideals of manhood in the nineteenth century was followed through S.T. Coleridge's work of 1825.³ He was concerned with the formation of a manly character through prudence, morality and the Christian religion. His ideas were written during the Church of England's Evangelical Christian revival and both they and Evangelical Christianity would eventually find expression in schools such as Dean Close School. Coleridge encouraged reflective thinking that would lead to greater self-knowledge, in his view essential for the

² Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities: Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; 2008 edition) pp12-13; 176-186.

³ S.T. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* (Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1825; 1840 edition).

individual Christian's duty and purpose. The theme of pursuing what was perceived as the ideal 'manly character' was taken by Thomas Carlyle in a collection of six lectures given in 1840 on great men under different categories as heroes with reflections upon their characters and their awareness of God.⁴

John Tosh offers a more recent review of nineteenth century developments of notions of manly character and of masculinity in Britain in public perception and in the domestic and emotional lives of men.

The whole definition of 'Masculinity' is discussed in Tosh's book *Manliness and Masculinities*.⁵ In his introduction, Tosh explains that the term 'manliness' was used in the nineteenth century but that masculinities 'in common parlance dates no further back than the 1970s.' For Tosh, masculinities 'should ideally express individual choice (it) is an expression of personal authenticity, in which being true to oneself counts for much more than conforming to the expectations of others...It can be used in a prescriptive way, for instance by labelling someone as "unmasculine"'⁶ Tosh argues that the term is essentially descriptive and inclusive. 'Masculinity,' he

⁴ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1841). For a fairly concise discussion of Thomas Carlyle's life and thought, see A. L. Le Quesne, 'Carlyle' in Keith Thomas, (ed) *Victorian Thinkers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.1-102.

⁵ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson Educational Ltd, 2005), pp2-3

⁶ *ibid*

maintains, 'is the appropriate label for a culture which is obsessed by gender, but as an individual possession rather than a group characteristic'.⁷

Referring back to 1844, Tosh uses the observations and preferences of the Evangelical Christian, Lord Ashley – later the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury – to improve upon the 'gentleman' which Eton and other ancient public schools could produce, while Rugby School under Arnold and other like-minded institutions were working hard to translate sound religion into action, not the perpetuation of a social code. They hoped to produce 'inward', thinking gentlemen rather than the 'outward', possibly more superficial gentlemen. A moral tone and a sense of serving in a demanding vocation in life were the pre-eminent goals, coupled with a deep faith. This was Christian Manliness. Tosh points out that while initially this was happening in few of the handful of public schools that existed in the mid nineteenth century, their numbers – and those pursuing what Arnold had pioneered - expanded significantly, especially in the latter part of that century. However, Tosh notes that teamwork, duty and similar values inculcated in such schools tended to drift from an Arnoldian form of Christianity towards a greater identification with imperial loyalty at the turn of the century.⁸ Evangelical Christian public schools, such as

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities*, pp 84-5, 111-114, 197-198

Dean Close School, while acknowledging the importance of Empire, nevertheless insisted on maintaining the Christian context of Manliness.

A further useful discussion between ideals of manhood on the one hand and educational and religious thought on the other is provided by Norman Vance. He considers the religious and social thought of Coleridge, Carlyle, the Christian Socialist clergyman F.D. Maurice and Thomas Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby School, and shows how Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes developed their own ideals of Christian manliness from them. Vance goes on to show how Christian Socialism came to be an expression of Christian Manliness, to a certain extent. Vance shows that, over time, Christian Manliness was associated with physical activity, notably in public schools, and how this educational and pastoral function, including in its Christian Socialist guise, was taken over both by Evangelicals and by Anglo-Catholics. He shows also how it was that Christian Manliness gave way to Athleticism in many public schools and universities, and that Manliness and patriotism, almost bedfellows in the late nineteenth century, were less obvious and far less overtly Christian by the time World War I was reached.⁹

⁹ Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) pp 1-17, 26-31, 166-206

Also helpful in the same area was a study by Sean Gill.¹⁰ Educational thinking, notably that on the evolution of public schools in the mid to late nineteenth century, focused particularly on the life, work and thought of Thomas Arnold.¹¹ Arnold's contribution is explored in Thomas Arnold and Arthur P Stanley's *The Miscellaneous Works of Thomas Arnold Collected and Republished*.¹² A. P. Stanley's *Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold DD* (1844) and Lytton Strachey's and Stefan Collini's biographies of Arnold were also useful.¹³

How the ideals of Christian manliness formulated by Kingsley and Hughes developed has been discussed by Nick J. Watson, Stuart Weir and Stephen Friend.¹⁴ David Rosen and Norman Vance both tease out the key elements of Christian Manliness, seen in the evolution of Christian educational thought developed in part from Arnold.¹⁵ Essentially, what they discuss were notions of moral

¹⁰ Sean Gill, 'Christian Manliness Unmanned: Masculinity and Religion in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Western Society' in *Men and Masculinities in Christianity and Judaism* ed. by B. Krondorfer (London: SCM Press, 2009), pp. 306-318.

¹¹ Arnold Whitridge, *Dr Arnold of Rugby* (London: Constable, 1928).

¹² Thomas Arnold and Arthur P. Stanley, *The Miscellaneous Works of Thomas Arnold Collected and Republished* (London: T. Fellows, 1845: 1858 edition).

¹³ Dean Arthur P. Stanley, *Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold DD, Sometime Headmaster of Rugby School and Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford*. (London: Ward Lock, 1844: 1980 ed.); Lytton Strachey *Eminent Victorians* (London: Chatto, 1918); Stefan Collini 'Arnold' in *Victorian Thinkers* ed by Keith Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.195 –326.

¹⁴ Nick J. Watson, Stuart Weir and Stephen Friend 'The Development of Muscular Christianity in Victorian Britain and Beyond' in *The Journal of Religion and Society* (vol. 7, 2005), pp. 1-21. See also URI <http://ray.yorksi.ac.uk/id/eprint/840>.

¹⁵ David Rosen, 'The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness' in *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age* ed. by David E. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 17 – 44. See also Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit*.

maturity and virtue derived from Christian precepts. The ideas of Kingsley and Hughes were that Christian manliness included duty to God, physical courage, natural affection within marriage and concern for the world and its natural order.

Within the military, from 1854, there was a growing group of officers and men who practised Christian manliness, attempting to be a Christian soldier, investigated by Olive Anderson.¹⁶ For those not in the military, reading adventure stories in which a soldier, showing integrity, strength and courage, is hero, had led boys and men to construct their own, imagined masculinities, which Graham Dawson explores.¹⁷ Such imagining both informed and fed the ideal of Christian manliness. This was especially true when set beside such Christian manly heroes as Sir Henry Havelock of Lucknow, whose faith, exploits and hero-image are discussed by Graham Dawson.¹⁸ He approaches concepts of masculinities from a more psycho-analytical perspective. He felt historians needed to remember that, in Joanna Bourke's words, 'external social roles are only powerful because of men's psychic desires and pleasures'. How men see themselves and wish to be seen by others is a powerful determinant on how they may act. Historians need to be 'aware of the sub-text of

¹⁶ Olive Anderson 'The Growth of Christian Militarism in Mid-Victorian Britain' in *English Historical Review* vol. LXXXVI, issue CCCXXXVIII (January 1971), pp. 46-72.

¹⁷ Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.4.

¹⁸ *ibid*, pp. 79-166.

desire and fantasy'.¹⁹ For an Evangelical Christian school, an individual becoming heroic required application and the belief that 'God helps those who help themselves.'²⁰ Thus, some books also examined the possibilities of the Protestant work-ethic, explored by Jeffrey Richards.²¹ This is all relevant when considering what kind of soldier, sailor or airman Dean Close School was attempting to produce that would participate in World War I and the books that might influence attitudes and imagining that were to be found in the school's library.

The human qualities and masculinities required in building nation states have been considered by John Horne.²² Karen Hagemann examined German perspectives on the Classics and on what constituted 'manliness', even though it might not be overtly--Christian.²³ Sue Morgan suggests that by the end of the nineteenth

¹⁹ Graham Dawson *Soldier Heroes, British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinity* (London 1994) quoted in J.M. Bourke *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, Reaktion Books, 1996 and 1999), p.14.

²⁰ The saying is from ancient Greek: "To the worker God himself lends aid..." (Euripides, *The Hippolytus*, 428 BC). The Bible hints at it, particularly in the Book of Proverbs. Some Christians would query the idea as it might clash with the concept of God's grace. Evangelical Christians tend not to have such doubts

²¹ Jeffrey Richards 'Spreading the Gospel of Self-Help: G.A. Henty and Samuel Smiles' in *Journal of Popular Culture* (Hoboken, N. J., USA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), pp. 52 – 65.

²² John Horne, 'Masculinities in Politics and War in an Age of Nation-States and World Wars, 1850-1950' in S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh, (eds) *Masculinities in Politics and War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp.22-40.

²³ Karen Hagemann, 'German Heroes: The cult of the Death for the Fatherland in Nineteenth Century Germany' in *Masculinities in Politics and War*, ed. By S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 116-134. Hilda D. Oakeley's Essay, German Thought: The Real Conflict' *The Church Quarterly Review* vol. 79 (October 1914), pp. 96 – 119,

century masculine identity, be it 'masculinities' or types of 'manliness' in Britain, was being seen in a plurality of forms.²⁴ The theme of what constituted 'manliness', especially 'Christian manliness' was at the heart of Dean Close School's educational aspirations up to and including World War I and so is central to this thesis. For in the end, the aim of this thesis is to determine the particular religious ethos and education received in such a school as Dean Close. Having done so, to discover whether O.D.s' reaction to the call for volunteers and their subsequent behaviour and performance on the battlefield, so far as it can be determined, being similar or different from those from other types of public school. The thesis is that it would be similar.

A second background area of discussion is the development of the groupings within the Church of England, notably the Evangelicals, during the Victorian and Edwardian years, especially regarding child education. Initially, little was happening. The High Church Tractarians' and the Low Church Evangelicals' effective retreat inside their church buildings for theological reasons in the 1840s allowed F.D. Maurice's Christian Socialists, who believed in pastoral action, to expand. This included setting up educational facilities for working men, actively supported by Kingsley and Hughes. They and other

²⁴ Sue Morgan 'Writing the Male Body: Sexual Purity and Masculinity in *The Vanguard* 1884-94' in Andrew Bradstock, Sean Gill, Anne Hogan and Sue Morgan (eds) *Masculinity and Spirituality in Victorian Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp.179-193.

key figures involved are discussed by Chris Bryant.²⁵ Insights into Maurice's thinking are afforded by his own *'Theological Essays'* (1854).²⁶ The Revd William Temple, later Archbishop of Canterbury, supported Christian Socialism and later the decision to go to war in 1914, which is explored by F.A. Iremonger.²⁷ This is relevant to Dean Close School, as Temple was to visit it and spend time talking to the whole School about World War I, as recorded by *The Decanian* in 1916.²⁸

Policies within factions of the Church of England regarding Children's secondary education were considerably energized by the realization first by some Tractarians and later some Evangelicals that they ought to minister pastorally and educationally nationally. It led to their founding numerous public schools, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century, including Dean Close School. It was essentially Middle Class in its appeal and so reasons for its existence were not the same as for the Upper Classes as suggested by Harold

²⁵ Chris Bryant, *Possible Dreams: A Personal History of the British Christian Socialists* (London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1996).

²⁶ Frederick D. Maurice, *Theological Essays* (New York: Redfield Second ed., 1854). For a Discussion on roots of Christian Socialism, including notes on Chartist movement and connections with Christian Manliness, see David Alderson, *Mansex Fine: Religion, Manliness and Imperialism in Nineteenth Century British Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998) pp47-61. L.E. Elliott-Binns, discusses the practical work of Christian Socialism in *Religion in the Victorian Era* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1946 ed)

²⁷ F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple: Archbishop of Canterbury: His Life and Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948).

²⁸ Thomas Cooper (Ed), 'Occasional Notes': The Revd William Temple's Visit, 11th February 1916, *Decanian*, (June 1916), pp. 161-2.

Perkin.²⁹ Rather, it was part of the drive for a particular form of - Christian education. Francis Close, a nineteenth century Cheltenham clergyman, was at the forefront of the Evangelical drive in education in many forms, including public schools, as well as other issues in an impressive ministry, noted by Alan Munden.³⁰ The economic benefits of the ideas of the Protestant work ethic – hard work, thrift, that God helps those who help themselves – that Close endorsed are found in Max Weber's thought (1905).³¹

A third broad background area of discussion concerns the founding of Dean Close School, its curriculum, ethos and history. Close himself, after thirty years as Perpetual Curate of Cheltenham, became Dean of Carlisle Cathedral in 1856 and eventually died in 1882.³² Close's death triggered a movement that culminated in the opening of an avowedly Evangelical Dean Close School in Cheltenham in 1886. This is explored at some length by Khim Harris, who also helped confirm that there was a loose, informal grouping of five Evangelically minded public schools.³³ Further clues to this

²⁹ Harold Perkin, 'Teaching the Nations How to Play: Sport and Society in the British Empire and Commonwealth' in *The Cultural Bond: Sport, Empire, Society* ed. by J.A. Mangan (London; Frank Cass, 1992), pp.145 – 155.

³⁰ Alan Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1997). See also an outline of Close's life and ministry that appears on pp.32-33 of this thesis.

³¹ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (published in Germany, 1905; London: Penguin Books, 2002).

³² Being Perpetual Curate meant that while Close had all the authority of a Vicar or Rector, he did not have the Freehold. His immediate successors were more fortunate, being given both the Freehold and the title of 'Rector'.

³³ Khim Harris, *Evangelicals and Education: Evangelical Anglicans and Middle-Class Education in 19th Century England* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 2004).

relationship were additionally given both by *The Decanian* and also by A.F. Lacey.³⁴ Some crucial facts concerning some clerics were verified by *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (1858).³⁵ R.J.W. Evans was particularly concerned with nineteenth century Cheltenham and the setting up of Dean Close School itself, offering an informative history of the School up to the end of World War I.³⁶ Histories of the School by R.F. McNeile and C.E. Whitney both give an overview of the School's history from its opening.³⁷ L.M.J. Kramer offers a personal eye witness account of the first Headmaster.³⁸ The 1899 *Prospectus* gave valuable insights into priorities and curriculum at the School at the turn of the century. That information was further contextualized by both Richard Jenkyns and Norman Vance.³⁹ Both books helped to clarify the perceived importance of an education in 'the Classics' and assisted in explaining the Victorians' and Edwardians' preoccupation with the well-being of the British Empire.

³⁴ A.F. Lacey, *A Goodly Heritage: A History of Monkton Combe School 1868-1967* (Bath: Monkton Combe School, 1968).

³⁵ *Crockford's Clerical Directory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1858; 1929 ed.).

³⁶ R.J.W. Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth: An Essay on the Foundation of the School' in *Dean Close School: The First Hundred Years* ed. by J. Hooper and M.A. Girling (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1986), pp.1-39. At the time of writing the essay, Robert Evans, an OD, was Reader in Modern History at Oxford University. He subsequently became Regius Professor, the post which Dr Thomas Arnold occupied 1841-2. Today, Robert Evans is Regius Professor of History Emeritus at Oxford, a Fellow of both the British Academy and of Oriel College, Oxford and a former Governor of Dean Close School.

³⁷ R.F. McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1966). C.E. Whitney, *At Close Quarters: Dean Close School 1884-2009* (Hereford: Logaston Press, 2009).

³⁸ L.M.J. Kramer, *Another Look At Dr W.H. Flecker* (Cheltenham: privately published, c. 1979). Dr Kramer, OD, was a pupil at the School immediately after World War I. The monograph is a series of memories of several ODs of the same period.

³⁹ Richard Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980). Norman Vance, *The Victorians and Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997).

A fourth theme covers the relationship between a rather old fashioned British Army, public schools and sport as World War I approached. The British Army in Victorian and Edwardian days had not fought a major war between 1815 and 1914, apart from the Crimea, as Geoffrey Best points out.⁴⁰ Consequently, notions about the military were somewhat romantic and unrealistic. This is underlined by Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge, who note that 'Traditions of chivalry, the value of self-sacrifice, fair play, selfless patriotism, honour, duty...all played their part in fostering illusions about the nature of warfare'.⁴¹

The development of sport as part of the public school curriculum (including Dean Close School) and subsequently in the British Army concerned E. Reidi and Tony Mason.⁴² It was a central theme of J.A. Mangan, and his comment that 'Playing field and battlefield were linked – the former was a place of preparation for the latter', proved a useful insight.⁴³ Athleticism – a secular version of Christian

⁴⁰ Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in *The Victorian Public School* ed. by Brian Simon and Ian Bradley (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1975), pp.46-72.

⁴¹ Alan Bishop and Mark Bostridge (eds), *Letters From A Lost Generation: First World War Letters of Vera Brittain and Four Friends* (London; Abacus 1999), pp. 4-5.

⁴² E. Reidi and Tony Mason, "'Leather and the Fighting Spirit". Sport in the British Army in World War I' in *The Canadian Journal of History* (Winter 2006), pp.486 – 516. See also Colin Veitch 'Play up! Play up! And Win the War! Football, the Nation and the First World War 1914-15' in *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 20, (1985), pp. 363-378.

⁴³ J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1981; This edition London; Frank Cass;

manliness – was on the rise in public schools, with its emphasis on strength, fitness, energy, agility and training.⁴⁴ There was the notion that, at least initially, 'Sir John French's ideal new officers...tended to regard the First World War as 'the greatest game' ' as Niall Ferguson suggests, was also helpful.⁴⁵ Attitudes in the British Army to bayonet drill in schools like Dean Close School were examined by P. Hodges.⁴⁶

The content of the rest of the public school curriculum just prior to the outbreak of World War I was explored by Paul Methven's unpublished M. Phil Thesis as well as by Anthony Seldon and David Walsh.⁴⁷ C.B. Otley discusses the military connections with such schools as well as the beginnings of the Officers' Training Corps (OTC) in public schools at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁴⁸

Methven and also Seldon and Walsh discuss the role of the Chapel in such schools, and the effect that it had on the minds of the boys.

2000), Introduction, pp. xliii – xliv.

⁴⁴ J. A. Mangan, 'Athleticism: A Case Study of an Educational Ideology' in B. Simon and I. Bradley, (eds) *The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1975), pp.147 – 167.

⁴⁵ Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (London, Harmondsworth: Allen Lane; The Penguin Press, 1998), p. 202.

⁴⁶ P. Hodges, 'They Don't Like It Up 'em! Bayonet Fetishization in the British Army During the First World War' *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, vol.1 No.2 (2008), pp.123-138.

⁴⁷ Paul Methven, 'Children Ardent for Some Desperate Glory: Public Schools and First World War Volunteering' (unpublished M. Phil Thesis, University of Cardiff, 2013). Anthony Seldon and David Walsh, *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley: Sword and Pen Military, 2013).

⁴⁸ C.B. Otley, 'Militarism and Militarization in the Public Schools, 1900-1970' in *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol 29 Number 3 (September 1978) pp. 321 – 339.

The Book of Common Prayer (1662) still formed the basis of public school worship at the beginning of the twentieth century as did *The Public School Hymnbook* (1904).⁴⁹ They are important when considering the Evangelical Schools' policies on what constituted a Christian education.

How the Church itself was perceived by the general population, the troops, the clergy themselves and those clergy who volunteered to be Chaplains to the Forces in World War I is explored by Alan Wilkinson.⁵⁰ Shannon Ty Bontrager deals with the controversies and difficulties in which the Church of England found itself.⁵¹ A none too flattering view of the Chaplains as well as other perspectives on World War I is provided by Guy Chambers.⁵² Yet there were outstanding Chaplains. M. Moynihan included a chapter on former Dean Close School student the Revd. Victor Tanner, who won the Military Cross for gallantry twice as a Padre.⁵³ Models on how former pupils, known as Old Decanians (ODs), should consider acting in general was commented on by Andrew Bradstock and in particular in wartime in the front line was suggested by J.R. Watson.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ *Public School Hymnbook* (London: Headmasters' Conference, 1904: c1916 ed.).

⁵⁰ Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SCM Press, 1978: 1996 ed.).

⁵¹ S.T. Bontrager, 'The Imagined Crusade: The Church of England and the Mythology of Nationalism and Christianity During the Great War' in *Church History*, London (1996), pp.774 – 798.

⁵² Guy P. Chambers, *Echoes of War: A Passionate Prodigality: Fragments of Autobiography* (London: MacGibbon and Kee Ltd., 1965).

⁵³ M. Moynihan, *God on Our Side: The British Padre in World War I* (London: Leo Cooper in association with Martin Secker and Warburg, 1983).

⁵⁴ Hogan and S. Morgan (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp.10 – 26

Former Christian militaristic approaches were discussed by Mathew Kuefler.⁵⁵ He has argued that Roman soldiery was developed into a masculinity of the 'soldier of Christ' as seen in New Testament, notably Pauline, texts. It could be taken at face value in terms of carrying out the soldierly role. Alternatively, the bravery, endurance and self-sacrifice could be transferred to specifically Christian meaning, either as martyrs for the faith or else seen symbolically, fighting interior weaknesses such as lust, wrath, indolence and pride. This can be seen specifically in St. Paul's Epistle (Letter) to the Ephesians, Chapter 6 verses 10-18, where enemies are perceived to be both external and internal. There is also the exhortation to 'fight the good fight of faith' (1 Timothy 6 v12) and be 'A good soldier of Christ Jesus' in enduring suffering (2 Timothy 2 vv 3 and 4). This was reflected in Hymnody, such as 'Soldiers of Christ, Arise', written by Charles Wesley, first published in 1749.⁵⁶

However, there is also the concept, first expressed by second century Tertullian in the Christian context, usually rendered as 'the blood of the martyrs is the seedbed of the Church'.⁵⁷ It asserts that people prepared to die for a cause must perceive it as a cause worth

⁵⁵ Mathew Kuefler, "'Soldiers of Christ': Christian Masculinity and Militarism in Late Antiquity' in *Men and Masculinities in Christianity and Judaism: A Critical Reader* ed. by Bjorn Krondorfe (London: SCM Press, 2009), pp.237 – 258.

⁵⁶ *ibid* pp 242-250.

⁵⁷ Quintus S.F. Tetullian, *Apologeticum*, 1, quoted in *Dictionary of Quotations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Second Ed., 1978 reprint), p.542, col 1.

dying for. This model was developed further by George Mosse in *Fallen Soldiers*.⁵⁸ He concluded that in an increasingly secular society, those fallen in battle defending the society, nationality or cause they represented were perceived as 'new' martyrs. Their sacrifice encouraged others to join the cause. Modern examples include the Provisional IRA hunger strikers such as Bobby Sands who starved themselves to death for their cause in the early 1980s. A more recent example is the suicide bomber. John Horne has put it slightly differently. He suggests that:

The keynote of... male myths of nation building was heroism. Valour, sacrifice and martyrdom were of course not male prerogatives...yet men dominated the canon and it may not be too fanciful to argue that nation building required the secular equivalent of saint --hood that disproportionately favoured masculinity as the source of virtues to be celebrated.⁵⁹

If this is so, the same virtues would be celebrated in the protection of both nation and Empire. Further, for the Christian, war must be 'just'. This concept, first used by St. Augustine of Hippo, was later refined and expanded by St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. It has developed further to meet more modern conditions. Richard Jones'

⁵⁸ George L. Mosse *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York, USA, Oxford University Press, 1991), p.35.

⁵⁹ John Horne: 'Masculinities in Politics and War in the Age of Nation-States and World Wars' in S. Dudink, K. Hageman and J. Tosh (Eds): *Masculinities in Politics and War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p.28.

Groundwork of Christian Ethics reviews the situation in World War I and beyond.⁶⁰

There are two concepts of Christian masculinity explored by Sean Gill. The first is found in Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.⁶¹ Sean Gill comments that 'it is closely associated with the newly emergent English public school, the ideal of 'Muscular Christianity' exalted as an anti-intellectual credo of schoolboy athleticism and adult male toughness perfectly attuned to the ethos of Victorian imperialism'. Gill goes on to note that Hughes rejects another model of Christian masculinity, 'exemplified by the pacifism associated with the Quakers [Society of Friends] as impractical'.⁶²

Masculinities have been used to assist in exploring male gender behaviours, notably group, especially military behaviours, since Biblical times. They also have relevance to the history, including the military history, of other countries and not just Britain and her Empire. In *The Decanian*, it will be seen whether the reported actions of ODs in the front line relate to any of the masculinities discussed.

⁶⁰ Richard G. Jones *Groundwork of Christian Ethics* (London; Epworth Press, 1984).

⁶¹ Sean Gill 'Christian Manliness Unmanned: Masculinity and Religion in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Western Society' in Bjorn Krondorfer (Ed) *Men and Masculinities in Christianity and Judaism*; (London: SCM Press, 2009), p.310.

⁶² *Ibid*, pp.310- 311.

The impact of, and reaction to, the start of World War I, especially on ODs, provides the key basis on which this thesis was researched. The question was whether ODs would be more or less willing to volunteer, and whether their conduct on the battlefield would be different from those from other public schools. Anthony Fletcher provides comments on patriotism and manliness at the time seen both from the Christian position and also from that of Social Darwinism.⁶³

Not only was Christian manliness perceived to be in decline but Britain itself was unprepared for War, as is evident from B.H. Liddell Hart.⁶⁴ The state of the British Army in 1914 is discussed by G.D. Sheffield. In his study of the relationship between officers and men in World War I, he points out that at the very beginning of hostilities, '...the ranks of the British Army of the Edwardian era were filled with ill-educated men of indifferent health from poor urban backgrounds...' By contrast, he notes that 'Most officers ... came from 'traditional sources of supply' such as ' families with military connections, the gentry, the peerage and to some degree the professions and the clergy...' Leadership came from the countryside: even 'middle class' officers usually had a rural background. This was true of Dean Close

⁶³ Anthony Fletcher, 'Patriotism, the Great War and the Decline of Victorian Manliness' in *History* (2014), pp.40-72.

⁶⁴ B.H. Liddell Hart, *History of The First World War*. (London: originally published as *The Real War 1914-18*: Cassell and Co: 1930: enlarged edition published as *History of the First World War*: Cassell and Co., 1934: This edition, Book Club Associates, 1973).

School, who catered for the aspiring Middle Classes: gentry were very few and sons of the peerage almost non-existent. Sheffield points out that '...An education at a public school...was an almost essential rite of passage for the aspirant officer...' He discusses both definitions and the nature of leadership, the perceived obligations and expectations put on officers at that time that tied in neatly with the norms, values and ethos of public schools including Dean Close School.⁶⁵

A wider view of the first two years of World War I is provided by Peter Simkin's book on Kitchener as Secretary of State for War. In August 1914, he inherited a situation where the Regular Army was well under its establishment of 180,000, the Special Reserve was nowhere near its authorized 74,000 while the Territorial Force was 245, 779 in September 1913, 66,671 officers and men under establishment. In August 1914, he was one of very few British senior military figures who thought that the War would be a protracted and costly affair in terms of men and resources. Through his energy and drive, Kitchener recruited just over three million men between August 1914 and February 1916 when conscription came into full force. Simkins discusses the problems and how Kitchener set about resolving them. One of his main problems was finding over 30,000

⁶⁵ G. D. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000)pp 2,5, 41-60

officers for his New Armies. It helped if potential officers had either been to public school or had imbibed the ethos to be found therein. His solutions included: commissioning NCOs, suitable men from the ranks including from University and Public School battalions, and allowing those cadets that had passed Certificate 'A' in public school Officer Training Corps to be 'fast-tracked', all of which included Old Decanians. He also persuaded some retired officers to come back, although this appears to have affected comparatively few ODs.

Simkins also discusses the motivation behind those deciding to volunteer for the Armed Forces. He offers a variety of reasons giving insights into British Society at that time.⁶⁶

Catriona Pennell, in her discussion of the popular responses to the outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland, traces both the debate and government and popular reaction to the perceived growing menace of Germany. For many of the governing classes, it was seen against other national political preoccupations, such as the rise of the Labour Party, the call for Irish independence and also the demands of the Suffragette Movement.

Pennell discusses the immediate causes of the War, the 'rush to the

⁶⁶ Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army: The Raising of the New Armies 1914-1916* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988; this edition, Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2014) pp16, 109, 212-230

colours' and the repercussions on the country. She goes on to assert and offer evidence that reaction to the War was 'ambiguous' and perhaps not quite as whole-heartedly enthusiastic as may be sometimes portrayed.⁶⁷ This is of particular interest in the context of this thesis that attempts to gauge the level of commitment to the war by ODs.

Turning, briefly, to the rest of the country, Mark Bostridge gives a many-layered portrait of England in 1914, seen from a variety of different angles – political and social, urban and rural, industrial, commercial and cultural as well as military that complements Sheffield and Simkins' work.⁶⁸

The decision for War was made and Bishop Hensley Henson, among others, provided a Christian justification for British involvement.⁶⁹ However, not all were convinced and Duncan Marlor draws attention to those few in Parliament and beyond who campaigned for neutrality and peace.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) pp 11-21, 30-32, 45, 57-67, 198-226.

⁶⁸ Mark Bostridge, *The Fateful Year: England 1914* (London: Penguin Books, 2014)

⁶⁹ H. Hensley Henson, 'Christianity and War' *The Church Quarterly Review* Vol. 79, (October 1914) pp. 120 – 134. In the same issue of *The Church Quarterly Review*, Friedrich von Hugel 's thoughtful essay, 'Christianity in the Face of War: Its Strengths and Difficulties' is also found, pp. 275 – 288.

⁷⁰ Duncan Marlor, *Fatal Fortnight: Arthur Ponsonby and the Fight for British Neutrality in 1914* (Barnsley: Frontline Books, 2014).

Recruitment to the Armed services in general is dealt with by Lois Bibbings.⁷¹ Arthur Marwick gives useful indications as to where and how recruitment to the Armed Services was effected.⁷² Recruitment to the Armed Services by ODs is covered by Whitney, who derived some information from R.C. Padfield's *The Old Decanian Register 1886-1948*, one copy of which left cryptic, hand-written clues and notes on various ODs.⁷³ *The Decanian* magazine itself provided further information. 'We Will Remember Them' also details the casualties that ODs suffered. How the reality of casualties was dealt with in some instances is examined by Paul Fussell, including the poem 'The Hero' by Siegfried Sassoon, in which the manner of an officer's death is fictionalized to make it more bearable for his mother. Fussell also gives a most useful, realistic, detailed description of the trenches on the Western Front in the chapter entitled 'The Troglodyte World'. He compares the description of them suggested to the British public through the 'exhibition trenches' dug in Kensington Gardens in London with the appalling reality. He describes what it was like trying to live in them and the practical, psychological, physical and literary experiences of some of those who did. This is particularly useful

⁷¹ Lois Bibbings, 'Images of Manliness: The Portrayal of Soldiers and Conscientious Objectors in the Great War' in *Social and Legal Studies: an International Journal* Vol. 12, Issue 3, (2003), pp. 335-358.

⁷² Lois Bibbings, 'Images of Manliness: The Portrayal of Soldiers and Conscientious Objectors in the Great War' in *Social and Legal Studies: an International Journal* Vol. 12, Issue 3, (2003), pp. 335-358.

⁷³ C.E. Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, pp.3-6; also *Distinguished Old Decanians* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 2017), pp.8, 14-22.

when attempting to picture how many ODs in the Armed Forces lived on the Western Front. Further insights are offered in his discussion of 'Myth, Ritual and Romance': the growing fear in 1916 that the War would go on 'for ever'. There was the presence of what is called 'displaced' Christianity which involved superstitions, talismans, 'miracles', relics, legends and rumours, none of which seems to feature in ODs' letters that appeared in *The Decanian*.⁷⁴

This thesis is concerned with those from Dean Close School who volunteered for the Armed Services before conscription was introduced in 1916. Both A.J.P. Taylor and Marwick comment on how conscription came about.⁷⁵

The dilemmas that men in the front line experienced – the clash of masculinities in deciding what to put in their letters home – and also to their school – was considerable and is explored by Michael Roper.⁷⁶ Roper also helps explain the states of mind of many during World War I.⁷⁷ Roper's essay 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War'

⁷⁴ C.E. Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, pp.3-6; also *Distinguished Old Decanians* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 2017), pp.8, 14-22.

⁷⁵ A.J.P. Taylor, *English History 1914-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp.53-56. Arthur Marwick *The Deluge*, pp.116-125.

⁷⁶ Michael Roper, 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War' in *Masculinities in Politics and War* ed. by S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 295 – 315.

⁷⁷ Michael Roper, 'Between Manliness and Masculinity: The 'War Generation' and the Psychology of Fear in Britain 1914-1950' in *Journal of British Studies* vol. 44, No 2 (April 2005), pp. 343-362.

notes a particular masculinities problem – what he calls a 'profound difficulty' - that would have faced numbers of ODs when at the Front.⁷⁸ He observed that, when writing home after surviving a battle, junior officers had to decide what they told those waiting anxiously at home who needed news – but not the horrors. Roper explains that “How subalterns negotiated this dilemma tells us not only about the tensions within middle-class Edwardian scripts of masculinity, but something about what these felt like[...] In this context diminution of the self was not merely a pervasive cultural form, but was a response to anxiety that functioned at the very deepest psychic levels.”⁷⁹

In 1975, Gayle Rubin defined 'sex' as referring to anatomical differences between men and women, whereas 'gender' was a reference to the social construction of those differences.⁸⁰

In *Dismembering the Male*, Joanna Bourke declared that there was no clear distinction between the study of men's bodies and masculinity'.⁸¹ She asserted that there has been 'a growing interest

⁷⁸ Michael Roper, 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War' in S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (Eds) *Masculinities in Politics and War* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 311-312

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ Gayle Rubin, 'The Traffic in Women: Notes On the “Political Economy” of Sex' in Rayna Reiter (ed) *Towards an Anthropology of Women* (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1975), p.80 quoted in Joanna Burke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 1996), pp. 11-12.

⁸¹ Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reakin Books Ltd., 1996), pp 11-12.

in the relationship between biology and culture' that had generated an extensive historiography but which had been slow to 'incorporate analysis of the social construction of masculinity (as opposed to femininity) into its purview' This had been changing, and she pointed to work done on masculinity in institutions such as public schools and boys' organizations as well the military. She drew attention to typical class differences, noting, for example that 'working-class boys were lighter, leaner and in poorer health than their middle-class contemporaries,' a point first noted when the Army was recruiting for the Boer War.⁸²

Bourke discusses the impact of World War I on the men. She gives a number of sobering statistics of those involved both in the Boer War and World War I, including figures not only on those who took part but on those killed, wounded and refused entry because they were not sufficiently fit. She shows the changes through which men went as a result of their experiences. She also acknowledges 'considerable ambiguity' about what constitutes masculinity. It may be seen as particular 'systems of knowledge' in operation or the way particular power structures work. It may be more to do with a psycho-analytical approach, with which Bourke is more sympathetic. She

⁸² Ibid. On Boer War recruitment, see Anne Summers' essay: 'Militarism in Britain Before the Great War' in *History Workshop Journal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1976, Vol. 2 Issue 1), p.111, where she quotes Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice who claimed that 'out of 11,000 men offering themselves for military enlistment in Manchester in 1899, 8,000 had been rejected as physically unfit.'

discusses in some depth the impact that the 'Great' War had on men of all social classes, from self-mutilation and malingering through to various forms of bonding. This bonding was seen in Christian Manliness' more aggressive form, Muscular Christianity, but was also apparent in organizations such as The League of Health and Strength and the Boy Scouts. This bonding developed much further in the shock, privations and shared experiences of the War.⁸³

Jessica Meyer suggests her own models of masculinity in war, based on an exhaustive examination of the subject literature available and large numbers of letters and diaries of men in World War I trenches.⁸⁴

She concluded that two identities or models emerged clearly as ideals of masculinity. The first she called 'heroic'. This was ' associated primarily with the battlefield and the homosocial society of the military sphere and only secondarily with the home front that men sought to defend.'⁸⁵ This 'heroic' model was the one that was understandably most evident from the letters from the front sent back to Dean Close School. They were often sent to the Headmaster and other members of staff for inclusion in *The Decanian*. The second, equally important identity that men wanted to establish, was the

⁸³ J.M. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), pp 13-15, 21, 23-27, 137-144

⁸⁴ Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.2.

⁸⁵ *ibid*

'domestic'. This was 'located much more clearly in relation to women with its emphasis on men's roles as good sons, husbands and fathers as both protector and provider'.⁸⁶ Meyer concluded that within the framework of what constituted the perceived appropriate martial and domestic male roles, 'men's subjective identities were fluid and potentially contradictory'.⁸⁷ She cited the 'stoicism' of letters reflected in some of those sent to *The Decanian* by ODs on the one hand with the 'grousing' of diaries of the period on the other.

However, Meyer accepts that there are 'commonalities' that emerge from the various narratives: a focus on shellfire experiences, the need to express danger and horror. There is also 'an emphasis on service and sacrifice as defining qualities of martial courage'. All these ingredients '[unite] the ways in which men constructed wartime masculinities as both unique and potentially heroic'.⁸⁸ Eliza Riedi and Tony Mason note that her words echo those of Dr Welldon, Headmaster of Harrow School in 1906 who, when referring to games and moral discipline, said that: 'The spirit of subordination and co-operation, the complete authority, the ready obedience, the self-respect and self-sacrifice of the playing field enter largely into life'.⁸⁹ This in turn begins to explain the increasing organization and

⁸⁶ *ibid*

⁸⁷ *ibid*

⁸⁸ *ibid*

⁸⁹ E. Riedi and Tony Mason, '“Leather” and the Fighting Spirit: Sport in the British Army I World War I', *Canadian Journal of History* XLI Winter 2006, particularly p.496 but also pp.485 – 516.

importance of games and sport in the Armed Services during World War I to better develop and train regular, voluntary and conscript soldiers in their 'martial masculinity'. Again, considering the 'domestic' model, Meyer found numerous discussions on domestic responsibilities and a need to 'communicate with and about the home front'. Beyond the two broad models of masculinity that she offers, Meyer notes that 'war changed men'; the experiences were so horrendous, exceptional, cross-cultural that it caused men who served in World War I 'to construct themselves as a separate generation'.

Timothy Halstead's book on Uppingham School and World War I appears to be similar to this thesis.⁹⁰ Both studies are about particular public schools and World War I. Both give a synopsis of their respective histories including the coming of Officer Training Corps before that War. Both are concerned with the fate of their respective sets of former pupils during the hostilities and both recount incidents that occurred at the Western Front and the experiences of former pupils. However, while they overlap, the aims of the two studies are different. Timothy Halstead makes clear that the aim of his book was broad and was '...to provide an account of [Uppingham] school's involvement in the War and explain how it

⁹⁰ Timothy Halstead, *A School in Arms: Uppingham and the Great War* (Solihull: Helion & Company Ltd, 2017)

fitted into the Empire's war effort...' ⁹¹The aim of this thesis has been more narrow and focussed. It has been to discover whether the distinctively Evangelical Christian approach to public school education offered by Dean Close School made any difference to attitudes and values of former pupils when required to fight for their country. In particular, the research sought to discover the level of volunteering to serve in the Armed Forces when compared to other public schools of similar size and age when World War I broke out. Moreover, it was also wondered whether the boys from such a school as Dean Close would be different in their willingness to be involved in action or personal sacrifice on the battlefield.

A second aim was to explore Dean Close School's magazine as a primary source for understanding the School's engagement with the war effort, an approach that was not only different from other studies but was in large part necessary owing to the comparatively recent foundation of the school's archives and the paucity of other school material of the period. This was not the case in the Uppingham book, where there was material available stretching from relevant Chapel orders of service through to letters, memoirs and literary contributions that were not available in the Dean Close School situation. This was in part due to the difference in size of the two schools – Uppingham had 360 pupils at the beginning of World War I

⁹¹ Halstead, *A School in Arms*, Introduction p xi

whereas Dean Close School had 195 - and also to how long the respective schools had been established. Dean Close School had only been established since 1886, whereas Edward Thring's re-development of Uppingham had occurred a generation earlier, building on a school that had been founded in the sixteenth century. Moreover, the pupil social make-up of the two schools, while overlapping, was evidently different. Both schools attracted the children of professional men such as doctors, lawyers and clergy. However, a glance at the lists for World War I show that there were a dozen baronets and knights from Uppingham in the Armed Forces: Dean Close had none. It attracted the Middle Classes while Uppingham seems to have attracted those of the Upper Middle as well as the Middle Class. The numbers of Dean Close boys who were 'other ranks' were around 10%, whereas it was below 4% of those formerly from Uppingham. Interestingly, while Uppingham contributed 2,343 to the Armed Forces and Dean Close 771, Uppingham sent 20 Chaplains to the Forces while Dean Close sent almost as many – 17. It is also of interest to note that whereas Dean Close produced just one Major-General in World War I, Uppingham produced eight of that rank or higher.⁹²

Many members of the Armed Services won gallantry awards. What

⁹² Halstead, *A School in Arms*, for details of former Uppingham pupils as participants in World War I, see 'Appendix 1, Record of Service for Old Uppinghamians', pp166- 243

they signify is detailed in P.E. Abbott and J.M.A. Tamplin.⁹³ Who among ODs won such awards or service awards during World War I is detailed in Whitney.⁹⁴

This Literature Review reflects the several themes that this thesis aims to develop. They include ideals of manhood in the nineteenth century and perceptions of Christian education in the Victorian era. There is the evolution of Christian manliness, perceived masculinities and also the theme of belated realization by the Evangelicals that they should invest significantly in middle-class education. There is a consideration of the broad public school curriculum, sport and the state of the British Army and also an attempt to see the role of the Church in the contexts of both public school and the forces. Finally there is the theme of the impact of and reaction to the start of World War I, notably at Dean Close School.

In looking at former pupils from a specifically Evangelical Christian Public School, especially predominantly through the lens of its school magazine from the period, this study is breaking new ground in two ways. First, it is seeking to establish whether or not the products of Evangelical Christian schools within the public schools sector had a

⁹³ P.E. Abbott and J.M.A. Tamplin, *British Gallantry Awards* (Enfield: Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1971)

⁹⁴ C.E. Whitney, *Distinguished Old Decanians* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 2017) For British gallantry awards see pp. 14-22; for other military awards see pp.27-28, 29-31,32. For foreign military decorations see pp.34-35.

distinctive, faith-based perspective, attitude or record in World War I. Second, in using detailed information predominantly to be found in the School magazine, *The Decanian*, it is making particular use of a resource that seems to be not much used. For example, although Timothy Halstead mentions the Uppingham School Magazine in the extensive bibliography of his book *The School in Arms*, the Magazine itself is not even mentioned in the index.⁹⁵ In looking at the wider context, this study is also contributing to the general literature on public schools and their perceived role and contribution in World War I. Its particular contribution is not only to add to the stock of information already available but also to look in particular at a comparatively unknown public school within its own informal grouping of like-minded schools to ascertain how distinctive its contribution to World War I was. There were several types of fee-paying educational establishments that had managed to satisfy the entry requirements of The Headmasters' Conference (HMC). They could, as a consequence, be termed 'public schools'.

However, within the 'public schools' group they could be very different from each other in terms of their foundation, size, age,

⁹⁵ Halstead, Timothy, *A School in Arms*, p 275. School Magazines appear to be used little and never acknowledged. For further examples, see Christopher Wright *The Kent College Centenary Book* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1985); Lynne Turner *In the Shadow of the Cathedral: A History of The King's School, Ely* (Ely; Elean Publications, 2003); neither do they appear where several public schools are discussed: see Geoffrey Walford *Life in Public Schools* (London: Methuen, 1986)

ethos, clientèle, wealth, level of benefaction, religious affiliation, geographic location and facilities available. Thus, there were sub-groups, one of which consisted of late nineteenth century public schools who were Evangelical Christian in outlook, ethos and practice. Dean Close School belonged to that group, and this is a case study of such a school in the context of its former pupils' reaction to and recorded participation in World War I.

This thesis is endeavouring to establish why the former pupils of Dean Close School reacted to the advent of World War I as they did. It is to suggest what it was about the School, its curriculum and ethos that encouraged, educated or conditioned the former pupils of the School to volunteer. This continued even after news began to seep back home that casualties were much heavier than originally predicted. Some evidence is presented not only by the histories of the School noted earlier but also by books such as Anthony Seldon and David Walsh's *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (2015) and others mentioned in the Literature Review.

This thesis is particularly, though not exclusively, seen through the eyes of a reader of *The Decanian*. To what extent *The Decanian* presents a particular viewpoint, such as Evangelical Christian, and thereby possibly influenced ODs' views of the War is examined. In

exploring these questions through the use of a case study and a school magazine, the perspective is a fresh one that will also contribute to the literature on the general topic of public schools and World War I.

Contexts are all relevant to a consideration of the key themes of this thesis: Christianity and Christian manliness in the Victorian and Edwardian eras and Dean Close School's ethos in its broadest sense. All this helps determine, in this case study, whether or not those boys coming from public schools who were from an Evangelical institution, such as Dean Close School, were more or less willing than boys from other approaches in public schools to take up the call to serve God, King and Country at the beginning of World War I. This thesis also seeks to determine whether those from an Evangelical school were more or less conspicuous in their conduct than other public school pupils that had taken up the call, and the influence of the school's magazine.

***The Decanian* as the Key Primary Source.**

From 1892, when it was first published, the major primary source for this research is *The Dean Close Memorial School Magazine* that from January 1895 and thereafter was known as *The Decanian*. In the thirty years that included World War I, this publication appeared

three times annually and was intended for ODs and current pupils. It is indispensable in understanding how a middle-class school of the period saw itself. It has provided background and useful evidence in three main key themes of this thesis: Christianity and instances of Christian manliness; the School's ethos in the broadest possible sense including sporting achievement; and finally engagement in World War I.

The first key theme found in this study within *The Decanian* is that of Evangelical Christianity and arguably a particular expression of it, Christian manliness. Francis Close, in whose memory the School was founded, the School's founding fathers and the first Headmaster all held staunchly Evangelical beliefs. It was the reason for the School's existence. Therefore it informed many if not most aspects of how the School was run and beliefs and values inculcated into the boys. These values included the Protestant work ethic and ethos. Christian manliness was at least in part seen as the hoped for end-product of what Dean Close School was attempting to produce. In *The Decanian* there were occasional reports on Bible study groups; on what the Headmaster and others said on such occasions as Prize Day about Christianity or Christian manliness. Also reported were visits from missionaries who explained their work and purpose. Those ODs who became missionaries themselves were particularly honoured by the Headmaster, duly reflected in *The Decanian*.

Occasionally, the texts of sermons were quoted verbatim or in part.

The second significant theme to be found in *The Decanian* is the School's ethos. The ethos was the key element in School life that was largely responsible for producing boys with the beliefs, values and attitudes that shaped their reactions, both individual and corporate, to participating in World War I. The ethos also shaped the broad curriculum, including not just the academic but also spiritual and sporting elements in boys' education. In *The Decanian* the School's ethos was reflected in items that could be put under the Christianity or Christian manliness heading. Its ethos was also reflected in articles dealing with debates and various groups and societies within the School, such as the Temperance Society and missionary support groups. There was the 'muscular Christianity' element in sport, found in conventional games such as football and cricket as well as minor sports such as gymnastics.

As far as the third key theme, World War I, was concerned, *The Decanian* led each issue on the conflict from February 1915 – the first issue after the declaration of war - through to December 1919 with only one exception in October 1915.⁹⁶ Sometimes, twenty or more pages per issue were devoted to the War and 'War Notes'.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ A member of staff, the Revd J.A. Luce, had died unexpectedly and the first two pages were given over to a eulogy.

⁹⁷ See the issues for June 1915, (pp.1-24); January 1916, (pp. 85-104); October 1916, (pp.165-187); March 1919, (pp. 63-100)

Occasionally, lists of all those ODs known to be serving were printed, as well as information on which unit they were with and what had happened to them. Every fatal casualty known was mentioned and, if possible, the manner of death, usually through letters from chaplains or commanding officers.

There were extracts from letters from those ODs in the front line or elsewhere on active service to the Headmaster or other staff members. In short, *The Decanian* provided a conduit of news and information between the School and the front line. Such material provided useful qualitative evidence. Promotions, awards and quotes from citations were also included.

For this research, each issue of *The Decanian* was studied and twenty-nine issues were used in this thesis. These were the issues that had something relevant to say concerning the nature of Dean Close School, its activities or people of interest connected with the School as well as the First World War. They were also those issues that carried reports concerning ODs caught up in the War, either as casualties or as receiving an award, promotion or as involved correspondents. They were selected from the entire collection of *The Decanian* that currently number over 300. As the major source in this research, *The Decanian* provided considerable qualitative evidence about World War I and also supplied some details of

School life term by term. Additional information was found in *The Decanian* 'news in brief' articles that reported on School alumni already in or about to join the military or, occasionally, the adventures of ex-pats trying to reach England to join up. Insight into some former pupils' characters was provided by reports on how they performed in team sports at school, what prizes they won or what they said in debates. However, sometimes *The Decanian* was unable to provide all that was needed, and additional information was sought about former pupils via *The Old Decanians' Society Registers*, where often brief notes had been hand written into margins concerning what had occurred to individuals. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, University, College and regimental archives provided further information.

Structure of the Thesis

In the first chapter, the thesis will discuss the founding of Dean Close School, the School's Christian ethos, the connections with similar schools and the founding of *The Decanian*. There follows a discussion of *The Decanian* and military affairs prior to 1914. A second chapter will discuss Christian manliness and will trace elements of such manliness in the curriculum and in *The Decanian*. The third chapter will discuss the advent of World War I and *The Decanian*, and will look at recruitment and casualties, and

comparisons will be made with other schools. There will also be evidence suggesting how ODs behaved in the front line, almost all the evidence being provided by *The Decanian*. There will be evidence concerning gallantry awards won by ODs, both combatants and non-combatants, in the Armed Forces. The threads of the thesis will be drawn together in the Conclusion.

Chapter 1

DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL: ORIGINS, HISTORY AND ETHOS.

Introduction

This chapter will look briefly at the development of public schools in this country. It will then turn to the early nineteenth century origins of Dean Close School, based in part on perceived educational need for the middle classes but also a real Evangelical Christian fear of a resurgence in the Roman Catholic Church in England, helped by supportive legislation. It was feared that that ultimately the advances made since the Reformation could be lost and that for the first time since the sixteenth century the Pope would once more hold significant influence in the nation's life. Evangelicals felt that the Catholics were seemingly aided by the educational initiative of the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England in opening numbers of public schools. The late nineteenth century foundation of Dean Close School was part of the Evangelical response.

The School's ethos, given its Evangelical roots, will then be discussed. This included the 'unwritten rules' of the School as well as

attitudes to Christianity, work, sport and possible future careers.

Origins and History of the Foundation of the School.

Initially, 'public' schools were so-called in the fourteenth century and after because, historically, places for pupils in them were not '...the preserve of trainees for the Church...' but were open to anyone, from anywhere, who was accepted and was given a scholarship or bursary or paid fees.¹ The term 'public school' was not used until the early nineteenth century and was applied to influential, fee-paying schools '...shortly before the most prominent became the focus of public concern over their finances, the state of their buildings and the quality of their management...' The result was the Royal Commission on Revenues and Management of certain Schools and Colleges, known as the Clarendon Commission of 1861-64.²

The Headmaster's Conference organization of public school heads that evolved from 1869 was founded by Edward Thring, Headmaster of Uppingham School. It was for such schools to have a collective voice, able to respond to government initiatives.³ These were often

¹ Anthony Seldon and David Walsh, *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley: Sword and Pen Military, 2013), p.10

² The Clarendon Commission listed nine 'great' schools – Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Westminster, Rugby, Shrewsbury and Charterhouse and two London day schools, St Paul's and Merchant Taylors, often collectively referred to as the 'Clarendon' Schools. The Royal Commission was chaired by the Earl of Clarendon. See Khim Harris, *Evangelicals and Education, Evangelical Anglicans and Middle-Class Education in 19th Century England*. (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 2004), p. 80.

³ Seldon, and Walsh, *Public Schools and the Great War*, p11.

regarded as attempts to curtail the independence and authority of Headmasters. It became the norm that a public school was one whose Headmaster was a member of Headmasters' Conference, soon known as 'HMC'. In 1889 the first *Public Schools' Yearbook* clarified which schools had met the required standards.

In 1896, the Revd. Dr William Flecker of Dean Close School became a member of HMC. His School first appeared in the *Public Schools' Yearbook* in 1898.⁴ Evans suggests that there were three main criteria for assessing whether a school should be admitted to HMC, namely 'autonomy and efficiency in management; academic attainments; and sporting prowess'.⁵ The first two criteria were comparatively simple for Dean Close School to achieve. By 1896, when the School was admitted, it had acquired what is known as Big Field, the main games area. The School's facilities were comparable to many other public schools and its numbers were around 200 which, while not huge, was more than several competitors. Its fees were low, and every penny was carefully spent.⁶ Academically, the School was doing well, having sent several boys to University and to various training colleges, in addition to achieving increasing success in public examinations.⁷ It signalled its academic direction further

⁴ R.J.W. Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth, An Essay on the Foundation of the School' in *Dean Close School: The First Hundred Years* ed. by J. Hooper and M.A. Girling (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1986), p. 21.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth,' p.22.

⁷ Ibid, p.23.

through R.F. McNeile winning a prestigious Mathematics Scholarship to Balliol, Oxford, in 1894. In sport, Dean Close School was improving across a range of activities which will be discussed presently.⁸

Meanwhile, HMC brought together the more go-ahead old Grammar Schools, such as Tonbridge, Repton and Sherborne, serving the middle classes, with the 'great' 'Clarendon' public schools catering for the landed gentry and the upper middle classes. HMC also included what the Clarendon Commission described as '...the four chief modern Proprietary Schools...', namely Cheltenham, Marlborough and Wellington Colleges and Rossall School.⁹ It tended to be additional proprietary schools that bolstered numbers, often created under Church initiatives. McNeile noted that between 1840 and 1890, 62 public schools were founded.¹⁰ Of 103 Victorian public schools in order of foundation, Dean Close School was the 79th.¹¹ Such schools benefited from the influence and pioneer work of three key headmasters, Butler of Shrewsbury, Thring at Uppingham and Arnold at Rugby.¹²

The Oxford Movement and Tractarianism of the 1830s rejuvenated

⁸ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp.37-8.

⁹ Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, p. 80.

¹⁰ R.F. McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1966), p.1.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, p.1.

High Church Anglo-Catholicism within the Church of England. It resulted in numerous proprietary schools being founded, often by clergy who were very sympathetic to the approach, theology and liturgy of Anglo-Catholicism. Several such schools joined HMC, such as Radley, founded in 1847, Bradfield (1850), Bloxham (1860) and St Edward's, Oxford (1863).¹³In addition, the Revd. Canon Nathaniel Woodard, also an Anglo-Catholic clergyman, founded Lancing College in 1848, followed by Hurstpierpoint, Ardingly and later Denstone, Ellesmere and later still, Worksop Colleges. He founded eleven public schools in the course of his life¹⁴

The Church of England Evangelical wing were slower to act. However, John Newman's conversion to Rome in 1845, the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1850, following on from Roman Catholic emancipation in 1829, led to real Evangelical fears that Tractarianism would lead to Popery. The Schools started by Anglo-Catholic clergy would lead to gradual defection of the faithful back to Rome. Yet increasing numbers of public schools with High Church Anglo-Catholic foundations or influences were being founded.

¹³ Evans 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p. 7.

¹⁴ Ibid. Today the Woodard Corporation runs 16 public schools, several preparatory schools, works in partnership with 16 state secondary schools as well as academies. It also runs two schools abroad. (See Woodard Corporation website).

Eventually there was an Evangelical educational response. The first was Trent College's opening in Derbyshire in 1868 through Francis Wright and the Midland Branch of the Clerical and Lay Association, an Evangelical body, of which Wright was president.¹⁵ Monkton Combe, near Bath, began more modestly in the Revd. Francis Pocock's home the same year. Weymouth College, after an uncertain beginning in 1863, was more firmly re-founded by a group of local Evangelical churchmen under their Rector, the Revd. Talbot Greaves, in 1879. That same year, the South-Eastern Clerical and Lay Alliance, whose educational approach was identical to the Association that had set up Trent College, founded the South-Eastern College at Ramsgate, later St Lawrence College.¹⁶ One of the College's sponsors was John Deacon, a banker, co-founder of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford and Ridley Hall at Cambridge, both Evangelical Foundations for training clergy. He was later involved in Dean Close School's foundation.¹⁷

In June 1882, 24 years after its founding, the Western District Clerical and Lay Association discussed independent middle-class education in their area, which ranged from Bristol in the South to Tewkesbury in the North and Swindon in the East.¹⁸ A sub-

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 8.

¹⁶ McNeile, *History of Dean Close School*, p.2.

¹⁷ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p.8.

¹⁸ Branches within the District numbered 13 until a fourteenth was started in Bath. See Khim Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, p.278.

Committee later reported in favour of opening a school. They suggested building in Clifton, a suburb of Bristol then educationally served by the High Anglican Clifton College, opened in 1862. Moreover, the Revd. Talbot Greaves, experienced in such matters at Weymouth College, had recently become incumbent of Christ Church, Clifton, whose patron was the Evangelical Simeon Trust.¹⁹ On 2 November 1882 the ponderously named Clerical and Lay Association (Western District) Middle-Class Schools Committee, chaired by Talbot Greaves, met at the Weston-super-Mare home of the Revd. Thomas Clark, the Honorary Secretary.²⁰ They decided the new school would be modelled on St Lawrence, Ramsgate for day and boarding boys. It should also, 'be in, or very near a parish in which the church [was] in the hands of Evangelical Trustees'.²¹ Barely six weeks after that committee meeting, on 17th December 1882, the former Dean of Carlisle, Francis Close, died in retirement in Cornwall, aged 85.

Francis Close was a hugely respected Evangelical figure. Born near Bath in July, 1797, Close, son of the Revd. Henry Close and his wife Mary, he was educated in Midhurst, London and Hull, then an

¹⁹ The Simeon Trust was named after Charles Simeon, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge 1783-1836. The Simeon Trust bought up the 'advowson' for various parishes, - the right to present a person for an incumbency- and put into their parishes Evangelicals or those with Low Church views.

²⁰ See Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', pp.14 & 15.

²¹ From the Second Resolution at that Committee Meeting, quoted in Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, p. 283.

Evangelical centre.²² Close entered St John's College, Cambridge in 1816, graduating in 1820, and was ordained the same year. He had been strongly influenced in Cambridge by the Revd. Charles Simeon, Vicar of Holy Trinity. Simeon became, to Close, virtually a surrogate father, his own having died in 1806. Close served in three curacies, the last in Cheltenham's Holy Trinity Church, before becoming Perpetual Curate of St Mary's, Cheltenham's Parish Church, in 1826. Effectively, he had the authority of a vicar or rector but not the freehold. Over the next thirty years, Close turned Cheltenham into an Evangelical stronghold, building three chapels and four churches. A determined educationalist, he played a key part in the development of infant education and National Schools in Cheltenham. He was a strong supporter of Sunday Schools and also helped establish a school for what were then called the deaf and dumb. He was involved in the foundation of Cheltenham College, Cheltenham Grammar School and Cheltenham Ladies' College. He helped found two Cheltenham teacher training colleges, St Paul's College for men, St Mary's for women in 1847. They are now both part of the University of Gloucestershire. In 1856 Close was appointed Dean of Carlisle Cathedral. Eventually, he resigned as Dean in August 1881, then aged 84, and retired to Cornwall.²³

²² C.E. Whitney, *At Close Quarters: Dean Close School 1884-2009* (Hereford: Logaston Press, 2009), p.10. For a more detailed biography, see Alan F. Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1997)

²³ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.10.

When Close's death was announced, Evangelicals agreed that the proposed school should be named after him and sited in Cheltenham.²⁴ A local, Cheltenham committee of the Clerical and Lay Association was formed to oversee fund raising, planning and opening. The local committee liaised with the General Committee of the Western Division as well as the London based Central Committee of the Clerical and Lay Association. The Central Committee fulfilled a co-ordinating role with other Clerical and Lay Associations that helped to raise money. The local committee included the Revd. Canon Charles Bell as Chairman, now Rector of Cheltenham, and other local Evangelical clergy. Advertisements were placed in Evangelical publications such as *The Rock* and *The Record*. A quote from a letter written by Canon Bell appealing for funds published in *The Rock* gives an idea of the strength of feeling of some pushing the project forward: 'It is quite clear that Canon Woodard is part of a conspiracy of Anglo-Catholics to win England back to Catholicism.'²⁵

By the end of 1883, nearly £8,000 had been collected, worth over £750,000 in 2015. In April 1884, a 9.5 acre site was purchased for £1880 (roughly £183,000 in 2015) off Shelburne Road, then on the

²⁴ Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, pp. 285 – 291; also Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', pp. 15 – 19.

²⁵ *The Rock* 22nd March 1883, p.185.

edge of Cheltenham. The new school was to be incorporated under the Companies Act with a constitution based on that of the old South Eastern College, now St Lawrence College, Ramsgate. The chief object of the School was 'to educate Boys of Parents of limited means for the spheres they [were] to occupy upon Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant principles in conformity with the Articles of the Church of England'.²⁶ To ensure that these were not empty words, all members of the governing body, and the Headmaster, were required to sign statements declaring their commitment to undertake to secure and uphold the 'strictly Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant character' of the School.²⁷

Dean Close School was opened in May 1886 with a dozen boys, the youngest aged 8 and the oldest 15. The following term numbers were 43, rising to 51 boarders and 11 day boys in January 1887.²⁸ By Trinity Term 1888, less than two years later, 130 boys were at the School. The vast majority were boarders. The first Headmaster was the Revd. William Flecker, Headmaster 1886-1924, aged 26. His father, Issacher, was a Jew from Galacia in Austria, who emigrated to England, converted to Christianity, married and eventually became a Baptist Minister. William himself was always keen to teach. He went to Durham University where he read Mathematics and was deeply

²⁶ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, pp.4-5.

²⁷ *Ibid*

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.9.

involved in the Christian life of the University and its music.

Eventually Flecker was ordained into the Church of England, married and became Headmaster of the City of London School in 1884, which he left in order to become the first Headmaster of Dean Close School. Evans has remarked that 'Proselyte fervour and Jewish shrewdness surely contributed to the qualities[...] which must have impressed the governors of the new school.'²⁹ Flecker was described as being, 'pious, energetic and determined, with a thirst for learning and a good business-sense'.³⁰ 'Good business-sense' apart, the qualities mentioned would have commended him as an example of Christian manliness to Thomas Arnold of Rugby as well as Coleridge, Kingsley and Hughes whose ideals of Christian manliness were briefly mentioned in the Literature Review in the Introduction but are outlined in Chapter 2. Flecker guided the School through World War I although he and his wife had to face mindless xenophobia when he preached outside the School. This was because of his father's central European Jewish background and also possibly the Jewish background of his wife, Sarah.³¹ Yet there seems to have been no question among those who knew him that Flecker took a solid pro-British stance both before and throughout the War.

²⁹ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p.20.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid, p.30.

The President of Dean Close School was John Deacon, the London banker, who had been instrumental in establishing what was now St Lawrence, Ramsgate.³² In 1912, Dean Close School was one of only five schools both on the Church Association Register of Evangelical Schools as well as being members of Headmasters' Conference and therefore recognised as public schools.³³ Those five, though no part of a formal structure, nevertheless had links with one another. The Central Committee of the Union of Clerical and Lay Associations set up the Church of England Evangelical College and School Company Limited. That company bought up Monkton Combe School in 1891, Trent College, Derbyshire in 1893 and Weymouth College, Dorset in 1901. The School Company's bankers were Williams, Deacon and Co., of whom John Deacon of both St Lawrence College and Dean Close School was a part. St Lawrence and Dean Close School belonged respectively to the South Eastern and Western District Associations already, although in the latter case the Central Committee had had a part to play, too.³⁴

There were personal links, too, among the five Evangelical schools, such as the Revd. Talbot Greaves, who, when Rector of Melcombe

³² Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 6-9 and p.19.

³³ Dr Henry Wace, Evangelical Dean of Canterbury 1903 – 24, was Guest of Honour on Prize Day 1911 at Dean Close School; he was also Chairman of Governors of both

³⁴ Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, pp.327– 9, 330 – 1. See also A.F. Lacey, *A Godly Heritage: A History of Monkton Combe School 1868-1967* (Bath: Monkton Combe School, 1968), p. 48.

Regis in Dorset, helped re-constitute Weymouth College in 1879 and help found Dean Close School when he moved to Clifton in 1881.³⁵

One of William Flecker's most able staff colleagues, Edward Easterfield, was 'head-hunted' to become Headmaster of Monkton Combe Junior School in 1900. The Headmaster of Weymouth College selected in 1885, John Aaron Miller, was also, like Flecker, from Jewish stock that had been converted to Christianity.³⁶ The Chairman of Governors of both Trent and Weymouth Colleges was Dr Henry Wace, Dean of Canterbury, who also had connections with William Flecker of Dean Close.³⁷ Another connection was the marriage of Claire, William Flecker's elder daughter, to the Revd Edward Sherwood, Headmaster of St Lawrence, in 1911.³⁸ OD the Revd Victor Tanner was Chaplain of Weymouth College 1911-16 before becoming a Chaplain to the Forces(CF).³⁹ The Revd Wilfred Isaacs, a former pupil and Classics Scholar of Rugby School and of King's College, Cambridge was a very young Headmaster of Trent College (1890-95). When he left the College, he taught Classics at Dean Close School and supported the Chaplaincy. In 1904 he moved into parish ministry.⁴⁰

³⁵ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', pp.15-16.

³⁶ Ibid, p.20.

³⁷ See footnote, p36; see also Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, p.351; *Decanian*, August 1911, pp.185 – 188. Dr Wace had been at Dean Close School's Prize Days as a guest in 1906 and 1907.

³⁸ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 4 and 36. See also Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p.27.

³⁹ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.83. The Revd. E.V. Tanner, CF, won a Military Cross (MC) and Bar.

⁴⁰ *Crockford's Clerical Directory*: (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929 ed.). See also *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus*, 1899, third page.

When Dean Close School's Headmaster became a member of HMC in 1896, the other four Evangelical schools were already members. Dean Close School Governors' Executive Committee minutes record that in 1903 there was a move to form an association of five Evangelical schools, possibly all under one board. This would have been similar to the Woodard Corporation at the Anglo-Catholic end of public schools.⁴¹ Unfortunately, only two are known for sure, Trent College and Dean Close School. It appears likely that the other three were Monkton Combe, St Lawrence and Weymouth College. Even with a 'federal' approach, however, 'constitutional, theological and other difficulties made any sort of amalgamation impractical'.⁴² The idea was broached again in 1912 with an equally unsuccessful result. However, such other public schools as Felsted College, Uppingham School and Oakham School, Rutland, were of Puritan foundation, and so would also have had links. Schools such as Marlborough College were Church of England Foundations but tended to take a broader Christian view than the Evangelical schools on the one hand or the Woodard Corporation schools on the other.

⁴¹ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 36-37.

⁴² *Ibid* p. 37. It is highly likely that Weymouth College, Dorset, would be part of this grouping, because of the Revd. Talbot Greaves' connections with that College and Dean Close School. However, in its entry in *Paton's List of Schools* (1929 ed.), although the College said that 'The religious teaching is on sound Church of England principles', at no stage did it mention 'Protestant', 'Evangelical' or 'Scriptural' that would have been so important to Dean Close School.

Dean Close School was the cheapest of the five schools that were both on the Church Association Register of Evangelical Schools and members of HMC. It initially charged between £48 to £50 per annum.⁴³ That indicates one reason why there was a swift rise in the School's pupil population. Whereas £50 was the highest Dean Close boarding fee, it was lowest at other Evangelical public schools, whose top fees for the most senior children ranged between £65 and £80 per annum. The Revd. Dr William Flecker, Headmaster, awarded his doctorate in 1888, was able to achieve low fees because he paid himself only £300 a year.⁴⁴ The Cheltenham College headmaster was paid £800. Flecker taught a full timetable and was also School bursar. His teachers were paid between £40 and £100 per annum. Cheltenham College staff were paid roughly double. Sarah, Dr Flecker's wife, was in charge of all catering, health and domestic arrangements. She reduced expenditure by feeding boys the simplest, cheapest food available; by using vegetables grown on site and by employing young girls from the Welsh valleys as maids for domestic work, a practice that continued up until World War II.⁴⁵

Other than from initial advertisements at the School's opening, Flecker did not advertise, boys' parents heard of the School by word

⁴³ Harris, *Evangelicals and Education*, Appendix 2: Church Association Register of Evangelical Schools, August 1912, pp.356-7.

⁴⁴ McNeile *A History of Dean Close School*, p.13.

⁴⁵ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.22. See also Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth,' p. 22.

of mouth. Apart from its cheapness, the School attracted pupils by its Evangelical stance, Flecker's admission to HMC in 1896 and, in the twentieth century, its growing sporting and academic success. The School recruited from aspiring, middle-class parents, such as the traditional professions including doctors, solicitors, the military, business, farmers, the ex-patriot community abroad and the Church. In the last case, fees were often paid by missionary societies. Geographically, pupils were sent from Cheltenham and the surrounding countryside, London, the West of England, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Wales, Ireland and the ex-patriot community globally.⁴⁶ It is to the Ethos of the School that attention is now turned.

The Christian Ethos

The ethos of Dean Close School may be defined as '(the) characteristic spirit and beliefs of (such a) community', from the Greek meaning 'nature or disposition.'⁴⁷ The School's reasons for existing and its ethos was firmly based on a declaration, buried with the founding Corner Stone of the School on 11 November 1884. Copies of this document were posted up and a version inscribed on a

⁴⁶ *ibid*, p.9.

⁴⁷ B. Sykes, (ed) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (London: Guild Publishing (Book Club Associates) in association with Oxford University Press: 1982 ed.), p.331, col1.

brass plaque, part of which ran:

The Building of a Middle Class School
was undertaken for the Purpose of
Training Youths for spheres of Future Usefulness
upon Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant Principles
in accordance with the Articles and Liturgy
of the Church of England.

The laying of a Cornerstone, with its Biblical allusions to Christ (see Ephesians 2: 20, also 1 Peter, 2: 4-7 and through it also Psalm 118: 22,23) was thought more appropriate than referring to it as a Foundation Stone.⁴⁸

The ethos of Dean Close School's early years have been divided into four parts.⁴⁹ The first part might be summarized as 'Love God through worship and studying the Bible'. This was encouraged until 1909 by, firstly, two visits by the whole school to St. Mark's Parish Church every Sunday. The Church itself was less than three hundred yards from the perimeter of the School grounds. Years later, former pupils remarked on the length and tedium of sermons.⁵⁰ In 1909 a 'temporary' School Chapel was built and so services, including Holy Communion, took place on site. Secondly, Flecker lectured to the

⁴⁸ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.2.

⁴⁹ C E. Whitney, *Dean Close (Memorial) School: It's Foundation and the Development of its Ethos: An Occasional Paper prepared for Members of Dean Close School Common Room* (unpublished, 2013), p.1.

⁵⁰ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, p.12. The Vicar, Canon Griffiths, 'conducted [services that] were long and dull, and their climax, his sermon,[...]averaged thirty three minutes in length.'

senior half of the School on the Prayer Book between breakfast and Morning Service. 'He was able to pass on the results of a profound study of the history and structure of the Liturgy', remembers one boy.⁵¹ Indeed, Flecker wrote two brief commentaries on the Prayer Book, one in 1896, the other in 1903, which were welcomed by other headmasters.⁵²

In the *Book of Common Prayer* version of Holy Communion there is a required special prayer or Collect for the monarch. A further reference to the monarch is in the Intercession for the Church Militant. In the latter prayer there is a plea that all may be 'godly and quietly governed' and that the monarch and 'those that are put in authority' may punish 'wickedness and vice'. Thus, at one and the same time, communicants – including senior boys at the School – are enjoined not only to worship God but also to obey and support the monarch and government. This could be of significance should war threaten. Similar prayers are found in the *Book of Common Prayer* versions of both Morning and Evening Prayer.⁵³ Third, during the week, at School, daily Morning and Evening Prayers took place in the big schoolroom. Fourth, boys were encouraged to learn

⁵¹ *ibid*, pp.13 and 14.

⁵² W. H. Flecker, *The Student's Prayer-Book: The Text of Holy Communion* (London: Methuen and Co:1896) and also *The Student's Prayer Book: The Text of Morning and Evening Prayer and Litany* (London: Methuen and Co: 1903). The latter has recently (2018) been reprinted. See also Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p.25.

⁵³ See *Book of Common Prayer*. For discussions on its content and development, see R.C.D. Jasper, *The Development of the Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980* (London: SPCK,1989), pp. 40-113.

passages of the Authorized (King James) version of the Bible. Last, some boys organized their own prayer meetings at which the Headmaster sometimes spoke. He encouraged junior masters to hold their own Bible study groups in cubicles before lights out.⁵⁴

The second part of the School's ethos followed on from the first. It could be summarized as 'Love your neighbour as yourself', the second of the two great commandments in the Summary of the Law set out in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The emphasis was on the neighbour that you could not see – very often living in a far-flung part of Empire.⁵⁵ The pupil contributed through missionary charities.

Missionaries often came to the School, usually to preach or give talks or both. (see introductory chapter). Between 1892 and 1914, mostly through the Church Missionary Society (CMS), missionaries made 30 School visits, talking about 19 different areas of the world.⁵⁶ In addition there was a branch in school of Missions to Seamen, and the British and Foreign Bible Society came seeking support on two occasions. Pupils were encouraged if they thought about being either a parish clergyman or else a missionary themselves, thereby giving their lives to both God and neighbour. In the School's first 30

⁵⁴ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.22.

⁵⁵ Whitney, *Dean Close (Memorial) School: Its Foundation and the Development of Its Ethos*, p.1.

⁵⁶ The Church Missionary Society (CMS) was co-founded by Charles Simeon, mentor of Francis Close, in 1799, and because of its unimpeachable Evangelical credentials, particularly valued by Close, Flecker and the School community.

years of life, that is until 1916, over 70 ODs were ordained, a further number were medical missionaries and a few more were in other forms of lay ministry overseas.⁵⁷ The School was not seen as a 'missionary school' as such but its ability to inculcate its values in its pupils was clearly effective for some. Partly this was achieved by the heavy preponderance of boarders -usually about 90% - to day pupils. The Headmaster was careful who he recruited as day boys. On the occasions that he did allow day pupils in, they tended to be the sons of fathers in the professions rather than in business.

Contrary to the apparent situation in some other schools, the Headmaster seems always to have had duty staff patrolling the school outside lesson time. In addition, he, too, was often around. As he wrote in his School Prospectus, 'The system of supervision is very complete..[the] knowledge that [masters] are always at hand is a safeguard against many evils'.⁵⁸ The Headmaster wanted to be able to regulate anything that was happening. As McNeile has put it, 'One marked trait in his character was an unwillingness to decentralise or delegate authority'.⁵⁹ Pupils were, to a great extent, cocooned in their

⁵⁷ Whitney, *Dean Close (Memorial) School: Its Foundation and the Development of Its Ethos*, p.1. Among lay missionaries, Ashley King, OD, was arguably the most remarkable. A pronounced limp due to a childhood disease didn't stop him from being part of the Egypt General Mission for 40 years (1911-1951). His integrity, enthusiasm and humour were such that even on furlough in the UK he attracted people to Christianity, including Donald Coggan, who eventually became Archbishop of Canterbury. See Margaret Pawley *Donald Coggan: Servant of Christ* (London: SPCK, 1987), pp. 7-8.

⁵⁸ *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus*, 1899, Twelfth Page.

⁵⁹ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, p.14

own world that Dr Flecker largely controlled.

The third part of the ethos was that school rules were to be obeyed. 'Punishments,' reported McNeile, 'were innumerable. "Tanning" (physical beating) took place almost every day, and for lesser offences there were 'lines'.⁶⁰ There were duty masters, and also the ever present Headmaster. A third line of supervision were Prefects. These were entirely the Headmaster's appointments. He 'treated them somewhat more intimately than the rest...but allowed them little responsibility'.⁶¹ They were to be examples to the other boys: but they were there to supervise and, where they thought appropriate, punish younger boys by beating them. There was no system of 'fagging'. For boys as for prefects, obedience was a requirement, something that few would have to learn afresh when enlisting in World War I. The need to be an example to those below you was also not lost on Prefects and others, such as Captains of Sports.

The fourth and last part of the ethos of the School in the early years was that every child should work hard and play hard – where 'play' alluded to sport, not social functions. The Protestant work ethic – that is that as God has given a person life, through His goodness, it was that person's duty not to waste it but achieve success through hard work and thrift – seems to have been implicit if not explicit from the

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.11.

⁶¹ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth' p.25.

start of the School.⁶² Within ten years significant academic successes began. There was an entry at the top of the list to Sandhurst; a similar passing out into the Indian Medical Service: a scholarship for Classics to Oxford and two for Mathematics. There were also two scholarships and an exhibition to Cambridge and another exhibition for Classics, this time at Durham over and above normal entries to Universities.⁶³ In the first twenty years the School averaged nearly six boys every year entering Oxbridge.⁶⁴

The Headmaster was always seeking to maintain and, if possible, improve academic standards. A new junior member of staff may have been intimidated – or stimulated – to know that at any time the Headmaster might walk into his class. Without further ado, the Headmaster 'sometimes taught (that) teacher's class for a whole week to check the man's efficiency'.⁶⁵

However, not all boys achieved acceptable results. McNeile notes that 'Detention was held every day after morning school and on half-holidays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, in the afternoon as well'.⁶⁶

⁶² See *Oxford English Dictionary* online for a definition; for a discussion of the concept and its relationship to capitalism, see Max Weber, (and Peter Baehr & Gordon C. Wells, translators) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*: (London: Penguin Books; 2002). Although Calvinism embraced the Protestant ethic particularly, it was also evident in the Evangelical wing of the Church of England, the Presbyterian Churches, the Baptist Church and in Methodism

⁶³ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, p.11.

⁶⁴ vans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', Table p. 36.

⁶⁵ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.30.

⁶⁶ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School*, p.11.

There were usually at least twenty boys in Detention from a quarter of an hour for minor offences, up to two hours for some. McNeile commented that 'For very bad work, six hours or more might be awarded, or a boy might collect several hours of separate penalties which would be worked off in daily stints'.⁶⁷ There was encouragement, too. At each month's end, so twice a term, a whole day off was given. Boys were allowed to go anywhere, the only limit being cost. Only those who had four hours or more detention in the previous four weeks forfeited this freedom. After some years it was curtailed because local hostelries were doing unacceptably well out of it.⁶⁸

Games had importance, as any edition of *The Decanian* in its first thirty years shows. Initially, after a brief flirtation with Rugby, the School played Association Football for the Michaelmas and Lent terms and Cricket in the Summer.⁶⁹ As Colin Veitch has written '[Football] was to be played to to the uttermost of one's abilities – victory was to be accepted with humility, and defeat with unembittered integrity. Significantly, these characteristics were held to mould the boy for later life, fostering patriotism and preparing him for the moral and military battles he might have to face in the wider

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ McNeile, *A History of Dean Close School* p.12.

⁶⁹ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 15, 26. Rugby did not return to Dean Close School until Michaelmas Term, 1938. See p.163.

world'.⁷⁰ Hockey, introduced at Dean Close School in 1907, became the Lent Term main sport with its emphasis on playing as a team. However, until World War I, Cricket was the only sport at Dean Close School to be professionally coached. As Ric Sissons and Brian Stoddart have commented, 'On the Cricket grounds of Empire [was] fostered the spirit of never knowing when you [were] beaten, of playing for your side and not for yourself, and of never giving up a game as lost. This [was] as invaluable in Imperial matters as cricket'.⁷¹ All three sports taught different aspects of working in, and as part of, a team, later valued by the military. They fostered commitment, shared skills, the whole team's greater good and *esprit de corps*. All three sports were discussed at length in *The Decanian*. Inclusion in a School First Team and the acquisition of Colours were both seen as high points in a boy's school career.

Other sports were not omitted. Athletics happened, notably for three weeks culminating in Sports Day. The School was seventeenth out of 114 public.⁷² There was also cross country running, a double Fives Court, a small swimming pool from 1889, and shooting with the establishment of the Officers' Training Corps (OTC) in 1909.⁷⁴ Boxing

⁷⁰ Colin Veitch, 'Play up! Play Up! And Win the War!' Football, the Nation and the First World War 1914 -15' in *Journal of Contemporary History* (London; SAGE Vol. 20;1985), p.365.

⁷¹ Ric Sissons and Brian Stoddart *Cricket and Empire: The 1932-33 Bodyline Tour of Australia* (London; Allen and Unwin, 1984), p. 34.

⁷² Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 13,32.

existed intermittently from 1905 and there was an annual Tennis tournament.

Between 1898 and 1905, ODs won Blues at Oxford and Cambridge Universities for football, cricket, athletics and cross country running. Yet Dean Close School sport had not achieved much recognition beyond the School gate.⁷³ However, in 1906 the Lidderdale brothers won the Public Schools Gymnasium Competition at Aldershot, beating 40 other public schools.⁷⁴ It gave the School and its Headmaster greater sporting recognition within HMC, the education world generally and to potential parents. That gymnastic triumph, and 1907, when Hockey was introduced, underlined that sport and games were perceived as being of growing importance. This was particularly realised in 1908 when four Sports 'Clubs' were introduced, to which every pupil belonged. That encouraged increasingly keen team competition within the School, as *The Decanian* reported.⁷⁵

The ethos of the School and its inculcation into pupils did much to turn them into adults who would not hesitate to obey the call to serve King, country and empire. In doing so they would also have been

⁷³ Ibid, p.26.

⁷⁴ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp.37-8.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.42. The Sports Clubs (i.e. sports houses) were called North, South, West and South-West owing to the School's geographic position in England. They lasted until 1924 when the new Headmaster, Percy Bolton, instituted an all-encompassing house system that included games and sport.

minded to look after those for whom they were responsible. They tended to be obedient, tolerably fit, prepared to learn and able to understand the obligations and skills of working in a team.

However, the intellectual side of the School was important and the way that the Curriculum inculcated not only facts, theories and information but also the School's ethos has been discussed in the previous chapter.

The ethos of public schools in general at that time is discussed by Seldon and Walsh. They indicate that the public schools saw development of 'character' as 'of at least equal importance' as intellectual growth.⁷⁶ It was all about an 'unwritten code of behaviour.' Ingredients included 'unquestioning loyalty to the School and House, subordination of self to the team and school, reverence for 'manliness', stoicism in the face of physical and emotional pain, and the requirement to be self-effacing'.⁷⁷ It was close to a useful summary of what Flecker and his Evangelical backers were after. It would have been much closer still if the word 'Christian' had appeared before 'manliness' and a greater emphasis placed on school work and intellectual development. However, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the development of games and its perception as *the* character-forming activity at public school –

⁷⁶ Seldon & Walsh, *Public Schools and the Great War*, p.21.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Athleticism-- had begun to chip away at the place of Christianity as being the essential heart of such institutions. Athleticism's emphasis on strength, skill, fitness and agility, all improved by effective training, seemed to bring out what were perceived as particularly attractive qualities. As Mangan has commented 'the public school emphasis on gentlemanly Christian virtue was largely superseded by the games ethic's emphasis on physical strength as the basis of natural leadership'.⁷⁸ There came about a 'precarious fusion' of the ethical imperative with social Darwinism - a fusion in which Christianity came off 'second best'.⁷⁹ However, with its own ethos firmly established, Dean Close School continued to embrace its 'unwritten code of behaviour ' in which Christianity continued to be the very centre of school life.

Conclusion

Evangelicals were not as swift as Anglo-Catholics at founding public schools but the perceived threat of encroaching 'popery' eventually galvanized them into action. It was also found that evangelical public schools had their own informal organization, even though one place removed from branches of the evangelical Clerical and Lay Association. This somewhat 'ad hoc' grouping was dependant on key

⁷⁸ J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public Schools: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1981), p. 136.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

individuals working in the background, such as Talbot Greaves, John Deacon and Henry Wace.⁸⁰

Dean Close School followed its Evangelical and Scriptural principles. Its Headmaster watched over every aspect of the School's activity carefully and was very wary of any delegation to colleagues. Academic work was always central to School life. The growing importance of games was found to have occurred not as a result of Athleticism but as a response to the 'work hard, play hard' Protestant ethic. There was the growing realization that success at games enhanced the School's reputation. It was further realized that sport should be important for every pupil and 'sports clubs' resulted.

⁸⁰ See footnotes on Dr Wace on pp.36-37.

CHAPTER 2

CHRISTIAN MANLINESS, THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND MEETING POINTS IN *THE DECANIAN*

Introduction

In this chapter, there is a discussion of manliness, its origins and its development, with a particular focus on Christian manliness. Its adoption by Christian Socialists is considered together with its subsequent use by Evangelical Christians given the context of the School, its foundation and ethos. Possible points at which these approaches meet in the context of the School Magazine, together with the curriculum, are then explored in *The Decanian*.

The Development of Christian Manliness and *The Decanian*

In December 1750, the Academy of Belles Lettres of Corsica set an essay title: 'What is the virtue most necessary to the Hero?' It was eventually tackled by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in an essay that

suggested 'manliness'. By that, Rousseau suggested, a person's moral principles created emotions that precipitated courage, the masculine 'executive virtue' which carried out the promptings of the emotion.¹ Less than fifty years later, the ideal of manliness as symbolic of personal and national regeneration through the use and fulfilment of volunteers was widespread in both the French Revolutionary Wars by the French and by the Germans in their Wars of Liberation.²

In '*On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*,' Thomas Carlyle felt that 'manliness' was the quality most conferring leadership. In his lecture on 'The Hero as King', Carlyle took two leaders – Cromwell and Napoleon – who had become national leaders through leading revolutionary movements, as his examples.³ Carlyle suggested that manliness consists not so much of fighting valiantly but of 'trusting imperturbably in [.....] the upper Power which will allow one to fight valiantly.'⁴ For Carlyle, 'manliness' produces the belief in a higher being that in turn produces the valour. Kingsley used some of Carlyle's ideas, such as that masculinity holds the key to solving social problems. He also used the idea that men naturally

¹ David Rosen 'The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness' in David E. Hall (Ed) *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.20.

² Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, p.22.

³ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (New York; Thomas Crowell, 1841). See also A.L. Le Quesne, 'Carlyle' in Keith Thomas, (Gen Ed) *Victorian Thinkers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.70.

⁴ Iyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, pp. 44-5.

belong in groups, such as the team, the army or the classroom.

Kingsley further took the idea that men are violent and even at bottom bestial and, most important, the idea that no particular behaviour but something in men makes them 'manly'.⁵

A second source for specifically Christian manliness comes from Coleridge. This can be seen in two parts, both found in Coleridge's *'Aids for Reflection'*. The first is his understanding of how to live the Christian life as set out by St Paul in 1 Timothy, Chapter 6 verses 9 to 12.⁶ There is the juxtaposition of someone who is gentle who is also able to 'fight the good fight.' To some, there are faint echoes of chivalry and knightly contest but from within the Bible, which gives it added authority. For Coleridge, it is a classic statement of Christian manliness and how Christians should live their lives. Secondly, there is the translation of St. Peter's Second Epistle, Chapter One, part of verse five. In the Authorized (i.e. King James) Bible, the passage concerned discusses steps on the way to a full Christian discipleship. In that verse it states 'join moreover virtue with your faith; and with virtue, knowledge.' The original 1611 edition adds a footnote to 'virtue', suggesting an alternative translation might be 'Godly manners'. It stemmed from how the Greek word '*arete*' was translated. Coleridge chose to translate it as 'manly energy'; modern

⁵ Rosen 'The Volcano and the Cathedral', p.20. The original reference to 'Muscular Christianity' was made by T.C. Sanders in his review of Kingsley's novel *Two Years Ago* in the 21 February 1857 issue of *The Saturday Review*., which Kingsley initially thought 'painful if not offensive.'

⁶ S.T. Coleridge, *'Aids to Reflection'*, Introductory Aphorisms XXX and XXXI and comments; Second Edition; (Burlington; Chauncey Goodrich, 1840).

translations suggest 'goodness'.⁷

Dr. Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby, theologically Broad Church, neither Evangelical nor Tractarian, proposed a rather austere Christian manliness as his educational objective. His aims were often stated to boys: 'I repeat now: what we must look for here is, first, religious and moral principle; secondly, gentlemanly conduct, and thirdly, intellectual ability'.⁸ As Vance notes: 'not the physically vigorous manliness of Tom Brown and Tom Hughes but a self-reliant moral maturity which recalled the Coleridgian ideal of self-superintendent virtue'.⁹ How this was to be inculcated was explained in part by Arnold in his discussion 'On the Discipline of Public Schools', written in 1835. He suggested that when small boys did something wrong, they should be physically punished. As they grew older, 'the fear of punishment should be appealed to less and less as the moral principle becomes stronger with advancing age'.¹⁰ To help

⁷ Norman Vance: *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religion*; (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.48. This can be seen in Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* in the Introduction to the comment section of Introductory Aphorism XII. For translations, see *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV); (London; HarperCollins 1998 Ed) New Testament p235; Also new international version (NIV)(Colorado Springs USA; International Bible Society; 1984 Ed) p1222

⁸ Lytton Strachey 'Dr Thomas Arnold' from *Eminent Victorians* (London; Chatto, 1918) para 10.

⁹ Vance; *Sinews of the Spirit*, p.71 The reference to Tom Brown and Tom Hughes is to *Tom Brown's Schooldays* written by Tom Hughes, (London; Macmillan and Co, 1857). The book discusses Arnold's work and Rugby School in the 1830s. Tom Hughes was a pupil there under Arnold from 1834-42.

¹⁰ Thomas Arnold and Arthur Penrhyn Stanley; *The Miscellaneous Works of Thomas Arnold Collected and Republished*; (London; T. Fellowes, 1858), p.366. 'On the Discipline of Public Schools' was originally written for the *Quarterly Journal on Education*. Arnold signed himself 'A Wykehamist'. For a

this process among the more senior boys Arnold introduced the 'Praeposter' or prefect system where all sixth formers had to take responsibility for looking after more junior boys. As Seldon and Walsh have observed, '(Arnold's) regime included...the virtues of community life, character.¹¹ At Rugby, Arnold 'transformed what had been a fair specimen of the debauched and riotous establishments known as public schools into the character-building, God-fearing, scholarship-winning model for the reform in the 1840s and 1850s of other schools of its type'.¹² In addition, although Arnold allowed organized games, he was never particularly keen on athleticism. Nevertheless, Lytton Strachey's comment has some truth in it when he asserts that 'The earnest enthusiast who strove to make his pupils Christian gentlemen [...] has proved to be the founder of the worship of athletics and the worship of good form'.¹³ Arnold's perceived legacy was to encourage others to attempt to develop boys to be classically erudite, thinking, Christian, moral intellectuals who were also sportsmen, however misplaced on the 'sportsmen' count. It was a manifestation of Christian manliness and a model for other public

sympathetic biography, see Dean Arthur Penrhyn, *Stanley Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold DD Sometime Head-Master of Rugby School and Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford*; (London: Ward Lock, 1980 edition). For a shorter, more psychological, irreverent and wittier biography, see Lytton Strachey, 'Dr Thomas Arnold', in *Eminent Victorians* (London: Chatto, 1918).

¹¹ Anthony Seldon & David Walsh *Public Schools and the Great War; The Generation Lost*; (Barnsley; Pen & Sword Books Ltd., 2013,), p.11.

¹² Stefan Collini, 'Arnold' in Keith Thomas (Gen Ed) *Victorian Thinkers*; (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 221.

¹³ Lytton Strachey, 'Dr Thomas Arnold' in *Eminent Victorians*, (London: Chatto, 1918,), last para.

schools to emulate.

F.D. Maurice was also a Broad Church clergyman, and an admirer of Coleridge. Maurice was to take Coleridge's version of the Biblical verses from 2 Peter, verses 5 to 7, and see it as a Biblical exhortation to what was effectively his interpretation of Christian manliness. The devout Maurice's theology saw God as a God of love who would be unlikely to condemn anyone to everlasting punishment. This comes out in his *Theological Essays* and the essay on the Athanasian Creed.¹⁴ He believed Christ to be the champion of energy, manliness, nobility and true freedom in men, women and the nations. He imparted to admirers such as Kingsley and Hughes a hopeful doctrine of man partly derived from Coleridge, 'a view of human society as the Kingdom of Christ upon earth, and an urgent sense of social and moral purpose deriving from that insight'.¹⁵

For Kingsley, Christian manliness possessed four fundamentals. First, physical strength, courage and health that are attractive, valuable and useful both to the individual and God. Second, emotional ties of family, romantic and married love are natural and pleasing to God and should help give an adult a just set of values and responsibilities. Third, the natural world was created for man to

14 F.D. Maurice, *Theological Essays*; (New York: Redfield, Second Edition, 1854), p.364.

15 Vance, *Sinews of the Spirit*, p.54.

admire, understand and subdue through sustained intellectual and scientific enquiry. For Kingsley, it would disclose the pattern of the moral universe underlying the natural world. Finally, man, endowed with strength, natural affections and the capacity to explore and understand the natural and moral order, should put all these gifts to work in the service of humanity and God. He should act as patriot, social reformer or crusading doctor. In short, Christianity must be expressed by worship and living a Christian life which involved helping your neighbour.¹⁶

More to do with helping the poor, and alongside ideas found in Christian manliness, Maurice, aided by Kingsley and Hughes, set up the Christian Socialists in 1848. They sought to work out the practical implications of their approach to Christianity. It was an individual offering of themselves, through faith, to bring about greater equality among the population rather than mass appeal and mobilisation of the working classes of political socialists. Among other projects, Christian socialists set up workshops as co-operatives and also the Working Man's College in London.¹⁷

In contrast, fervent Evangelicals and committed Tractarians were concerned to show that humanity was sufficiently bad that few would

¹⁶ Ibid, p.105.

¹⁷ L.E. Elliott-Binns, *Religion in the Victorian Era*; (London: Lutterworth Press, Second Ed., 1946), pp. 250, 265.

ever receive divine commendation. Only those who through prayer and Bible study, if Evangelicals, or constant devotions, if Tractarians, might lift themselves heavenward. A part of Holy Communion in the traditional *Book of Common Prayer* and also Order One in *Common Worship* today, is the Summary of the Law. The Evangelicals and Tractarians' zeal seemed concentrated on 'loving God', the first of the two great commandments, through worship. However, more extreme Evangelicals and Tractarians opened up the possibility of failing the second great commandment, to 'love your neighbour as yourself.'

¹⁸What this led to is well illustrated when the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Church of Scotland, and the Evangelical newspaper, the *Record*, wrote to Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister, in October 1853. They asked him to proclaim a national fast-day with public prayers against the cholera epidemic. Although the *Record* and the Church of Scotland were furious with Palmerston, Kingsley and Hughes agreed with the Prime Minister's response that, in his view, scientific measures to check the disease seemed nearer the spirit of practical Christianity, that is, 'loving your neighbour'.¹⁹

However, some Evangelicals realised that they must interact with ordinary adults and seek to influence them. Pre-eminent among them

¹⁸ *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, (London: Church House Publishing; 2000), p.163. Praying for their neighbour was seen as helping him, however, most Christians take the view, based on Scripture, that 'help' also implies practical action.

¹⁹ Vance: *Sinews of the Spirit*, p.92. See also L. Woodward, *The Age of Reform, 11815-1870*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; Second Ed.,1962), pp.463 – 465.

was, in Kingsley's eyes, the Earl of Shaftesbury, formerly Lord Ashley. He was President of the Board of Health during earlier cholera epidemics of the nineteenth century and did what he could to alleviate suffering, especially among the poor. As late as 1869, the Earl commented: 'the coldness and insincerity of the bulk of the Evangelicals, their disunion, their separation in place and action' left him in despair.²⁰ In 1884 he became Inaugural President of Dean Close School, just before that institution's opening but died the following year.²¹

Another Evangelical who combined devout religious conviction with social action was Francis Close of Cheltenham.²² In Cheltenham he ran a benevolent society for the town's poor from 1827 and he opened a lending library of religious books in 1829. For Close, Christian education was fundamental. He was among the first to actively support or set up infant, national and Sunday schools, schools for the middle classes and training colleges for teachers. His preferment to Carlisle Deanery occurred in 1856.²³ But Close was not alone. The foundation of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in 1858, for example, was part of the realization that Evangelicals had to interact with society and help provide for its

²⁰ Elliott-Binns, *Religion in the Victorian Era*, p.205.

²¹ C.E. Whitney, *At Close Quarters, Dean Close School 1884-2009* (Hereford: Logaston Press, 2009), p.305.

²² Alan Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1997), pp. 27-28; 35-45.

²³ For an outline biography of Francis Close, see Chapter 1, pp.32-33.

perceived needs. In a sense, the Evangelicals and, later, the Tractarians, too, came to appreciate what Maurice, Kingsley, Hughes and others had been attempting to do both through Christian Socialism and through Christian manliness.

Many years later, the concept of Christian manliness was still strong. It is noteworthy that in the first issue of *The Decanian*, the School magazine that he allowed to be established in January 1892, edited by his friend and colleague Thomas M. A. Cooper, Headmaster Flecker was thinking along the lines of Christian manliness. He wrote: 'May God bless every [boy] who has striven and will strive to preserve in our midst [...] a reverence for all that is manly and pure...'.²⁴ This was a sentiment to which he would return at the end of his Headship. Flecker also occasionally referred to people who he thought exemplified 'manliness'. During Prize Day, 1896, Flecker, spoke of the Revd. J.H. Harvey, his first assistant teacher at the School, who was leaving. Flecker said of him, 'a consistent Christian gentleman, a scholar in the classroom, an athlete who had devoted much of his great powers in those pursuits to bring the school games to their present prosperous state'.²⁵ Effectively, he was a role-model of Christian manliness.²⁶ This was specifically referred to by Flecker in his Prize Day speech the following year (1897) when he 'described

²⁴ *Decanian*, January 1892, P.7. See a second reference to this remark in this chapter, p.73

²⁵ *Decanian*, August 1896, p.182.

²⁶ Rosen, 'The Volcano and the Cathedral', p.182.

his satisfaction and thankfulness that[...]at the present there should be so many among [the pupils] affording examples of true Christian manliness'.²⁷ It was also hinted at in a personal letter Flecker sent to a newly appointed prefect, in which he said that: '...I know that as a prefect you will be on the side of what is right, but I am anxious for more than that...You have an opportunity of helping raise the whole tone of the school – you must seize it, humbly, prayerfully, manfully or you will ever regret it.'²⁸ It has been said of Dean Close School under Flecker that: 'The fact is that all aspects of life consciously flowed from the religion expounded at the school'.²⁹

At the 1902 Prize Day, the guest of honour, the Dean of Peterborough, said that ideas 'stamped upon [boys'] minds should be wholesome and right ideas, when all influences surrounding them should be manly, truthful, beautiful and Christ-like.' He went on to entreat parents to support the School's religious teaching.³⁰

In July 1909, the Headmaster on Prize Day announced that the School had started an OTC ' [but] in so doing [the School] was not in any way untrue to their bounden duty and allegiance to the Prince of Peace [i.e. Jesus Christ].' The Guest of Honour was Sir John Kennaway, MP, President of the School, and a prominent

²⁷ Rosen, 'The Volcano and the Cathedral', p.182.

²⁸ L.M.J. Kramer, *Another Look at Dr W.H. Flecker*, (Cheltenham: privately

²⁹ *ibid*, p.15.

³⁰ *Decanian*, August 1902, pp.175 – 180

Evangelical.³¹ He felt that war between two essentially Protestant nations, Germany and England, would be 'a crime'. He quoted from King Edward VII's speech at Rugby School; 'Take care that your School is notable for [...] the high ideals of honour and manliness and public spirit'. It was the same year that the School's Debating Society had decided, on the Chairman's casting vote, 'That an immediate war with Germany would be advantageous to England'³² Reported in the February 1916 World War I *Decanion*, was the Revd. William Temple's visit and hour long address to the School, justifying the war and Britain's part in it.³³

Flecker was not the only one at Dean Close School pointing out the merits of Christian manliness. For example, a sermon by the Revd. W.H. Isaacs, a former member of staff, on being 'A Christian Gentleman' that was very close to 'Christian Manliness', was, unusually, virtually printed verbatim.³⁴

When Flecker finally retired after 38 years as Headmaster, he said at

³¹ R.J.W. Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth: An Essay on the Foundation of the School' in *Dean Close School: The First Hundred Years*, ed. by J. Hooper and M. A. Girling Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1966), pp. 27 & 29

³² R.J.W. Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth: An Essay on the Foundation of the School' in *Dean Close School: The First Hundred Years*, ed. by J. Hooper and M. A. Girling Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1966), pp. 27 & 29

³³ *Decanion*, February 1916, pp.150-155. Temple became Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 until his death in 1944. Formerly President of Workers Educational Association movement. Some social reformers saw Temple as F.D. Maurice's true successor. See F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple*,

³⁴ *Decanion*, February 1916, pp.150-155. Temple became Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 until his death in 1944. Formerly President of Workers Educational Association movement. Some social reformers saw Temple as F.D. Maurice's true successor. See F.A. Iremonger, *William Temple*,

his final Speech Day in July 1924 that there were two points he wanted to mention. 'One was the religious teaching of the School; and in that respect I thank God that I have been able conscientiously to give a liberal teaching on the principles of Protestant Evangelicalism.' He claimed as a result the School had been a happy place. 'The second was the achievement of the boys'.³⁵ The key words here are 'able conscientiously to give a liberal teaching on the Principles of Protestant Evangelicalism'. He was echoing a remark he wrote at the end of his first article in *The Decanian* in January 1892, thirty-two years before. He had written, as indicated earlier, 'May God bless every one of [the boys] who has striven and will strive to preserve in our midst a high tone of thinking, speaking and living [and] a reverence for all that is manly and pure.'³⁶ He was articulating afresh to a new generation his Christian and educational beliefs. What he had perceived as 'liberal teaching on the principles of Protestant Evangelicalism' could be interpreted as inculcation of Christian manliness.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth the form of Christianity that Christian manliness represented was losing its distinctiveness. From a position where only the comparatively small group of Broad Church clergy, including some Christian Socialists, had espoused it, now both Evangelicals

³⁵ *Decanian*, December 1924, pp. 60-61.

³⁶ *Decanian*, January 1892, p.7. See also a reference on p.70 of this chapter.

and Tractarians began to invade its ground, claiming it as their own. As Vance has put it, those who had supported Christian manliness did not die out, rather 'their liberal religious impulse[.....]was widely diffused and assimilated into other things', one of them being the more liberal end of Evangelicalism, of which Flecker was a part.³⁷ To say that Flecker embraced Christian manliness would be going a little far, as its proponents tended not to be Evangelicals themselves, but his remarks show that he was very sympathetic. And that had largely been at a time when the School was being prepared, under Flecker's very real authority, consciously or unconsciously, for World War I.

The School Curriculum, Models of Masculinity and Christian Manliness

At the beginning of the first known School prospectus of 1899, it made clear that everything done at the School was based upon 'the Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant Principles of the Church of England.' Further, directly after a brief survey of the School buildings, the blunt statement is made that: 'No boy is allowed to enter or remain in the school whose moral character is not, to the best of the

³⁷ Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit*, p.167.

Head Master's belief, above reproach.' Moreover, 'throughout his school career a careful watch is kept over his moral and spiritual interests.'

The very first subject mentioned is Religious Instruction. Prospective parents were assured their sons would be taught 'the Holy Scriptures, the Thirty-Nine Articles [of the Book of Common Prayer], the Catechism, the Liturgy and the History of the Church of England – especially the period of the Reformation.'³⁸ The Head Master gave Religious teaching daily. More was said on that subject than any other. Boys would know the major Old and especially New Testament Bible stories. It being an Evangelical school, boys would also be familiar with St. Paul's teaching in the Epistles. Here they would find various masculinities expressed as models of forms of Christian manliness – life as a race, for example, from the Epistles to the Corinthians (1 Cor: 9:24-25) and Timothy (2 Tim.2:5) and the importance of training and adhering to the rules. Another model is a militaristic perspective – the 'whole armour of God', as in the Epistle to the Ephesians, complete with the belt of truth, breast-plate of righteousness, shield of faith, helmet of salvation and so on. While the armour includes the sword of the spirit, it also mentions shoes which allow the wearer to 'proclaim the gospel of peace (Eph.6:13-17).' There is also the model of a 'good soldier of Christ' who is out to

³⁸ *Dean Close Memorial School Prospectus* (Cambridge: Printed by the Cambridge University Press; 1899), pp. 6-7.

' please the enlisting officer', as in the Second Epistle to Timothy (2:3-4). There would be calls to be gentle, as in the Epistles to Ephesians, Galations, Philippians and elsewhere, and loving – as St. Paul as well as Gospel writers mention on numerous occasions. All this, both physical and moral, would have been at the heart of Christian manliness, especially that as perceived by Kingsley, Hughes and Maurice.

In the prospectus, there was a 'firm adherence to the classical curriculum, with little stress on 'modern' disciplines like living languages or science.'³⁹ The academic curriculum included English, French, Mathematics, Physical Science, Natural Science, Greek and Latin that included Ancient History. The last two, forming the Classics, were held to be very important at the School, as elsewhere, and a significant amount of time was given over to them. Effectively, more than mere lesson time was given to Divinity and Christianity because of services and other encouragements in faith. McNeile, Dean Close School's first historian, one of its earliest pupils and himself later an Evangelical clergyman and missionary, has written that talks were given to the senior half of the School on Sunday mornings between breakfast and Morning Service. ' [Dr Flecker} was able to pass on the results of profound study of the history and structure of every part of the Liturgy. Only when he came to the

³⁹ Evans, ' Town, Gown and Cloth ', p.22.

Communion Service did he introduce strong propaganda on the 'Protestant' behalf.⁴⁰ In addition to the lecture before Morning Service at St. Marks there was an Evening Service on Sundays. During the week the School had daily prayers. There were also Bible reading sessions conducted by boys, with the Headmaster's permission, in the evenings. However, 'more frequently, ' as McNeile puts it, those sessions were taken ' by junior Masters who gathered groups together in a boarding cubicle before lights were put out.'⁴¹

The Classics at Dean Close were principally taught by Edward Ellam from 1891, who terrified younger boys. However, like Dr Arnold of Rugby, Ellam mellowed towards his pupils as they grew older, until by the time they left, many former pupils were quite close friends of his. Ellam would have agreed with Edward Copleston, sometime Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, who found in classical studies a high practical value and morality, too. There was 'A high sense of honour, a disdain of death in a good cause, a passionate devotion to the welfare of one's country[...] (they) are all among the first sentiments which those studies communicate to the mind.'⁴² These were concepts of manliness that Decanians would have internalized. There are echoes here with Meyer's comments about 'wartime

⁴⁰ R.F. Mc Neile, *A History of Dean Close School*, (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1966), pp.13-14.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 13.

⁴² Quoted by Richard Jenkyns, in *The Victorians and Ancient Greece*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p.60.

masculinities' and the 'self-respect and self-sacrifice of the playing field.'⁴³ Those that died are echoed in their sacrifice and how it was perceived in Mosse's concept of the 'new martyrs'.⁴⁴ Then again, in considering Christian manliness, there is Coleridge's juxtaposition of someone who is gentle with someone who can 'fight the good fight'.⁴⁵

Turning to Rome, Decanians would have been taught ancient Rome as a disciplined imperial power. They would have understood, as Vance indicates, that 'men of affairs came to respect the Romans for their sheer administrative competence [...] and [...] understood Virgil's confident claim that while other nations might excel in the fine arts, it was the Roman privilege to perfect the art of government.'

⁴⁶This would have been a further masculinity of which to be aware. Pupils studied Horace and his injunction to 'Seize the Day' – or take your opportunities. Vance quotes Sir Charles Lucas, of the Colonial Office, who observed that "All -or nearly all the terms which indicate the political status of Greater Britain and its component parts are a legacy of Rome."⁴⁷ Decanians comparing Imperial Rome with the British Empire in the late Victorian, early Edwardian era might have felt they were being prepared to be part of that enterprise. Service

⁴³ Quoted by Richard Jenkyns, in *The Victorians and Ancient Greece*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p.60.

⁴⁴ Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, p.35.

⁴⁵ Vance; *The Sinews of the Spirit*, p.48.

⁴⁶ Norman Vance; *The Victorians and Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), p.141.

⁴⁷ *ibid*

might be military, administrative, legal or serving Church and Empire through missionary work.

In History, the topics studied tended to be British History or that of Empire. Methven has suggested that the History textbooks used generally in public schools promoted feelings of loyalty to the monarch (George V from 1910) and nationalism. 'British warfare descriptions and images constantly cemented impressions of noble endeavour, heroic sacrifice, and just causes bravely fought for.'⁴⁸ His was a perceived praiseworthy masculinity, an example of manliness – often perceived as Christian manliness – worth striving for. The same situation was also true for Geography that 'emphasized the need for Empire unity as a response to Boer War controversy.'⁴⁹ One popular Geography textbook author was Lionel Lyde, whose *A Geography of the British Empire* was widely used. Lyde's books tended to be concerned with the physical features of countries, and those that were colonies also emphasized the economic benefits to Britain of the colonies' natural resources.⁵⁰

In English, little is known about the early days at Dean Close School, especially grammar. Shakespeare was seldom mentioned until the

⁴⁸ Paul Methven, '*Children Ardent for Some Desperate Glory: Public Schools and First World War Volunteering*' (unpublished M. Phil thesis, Cardiff University, Cardiff, 2013), p.69.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ ibid. See also L.W. Lyde, *A Geography of the British Empire*: (Edinburgh: A & C Black: 1905 (4th Ed)). Lyde wrote at least six Geography text-books.

1920s. However, reading in general was encouraged, including poetry. Prizes were offered at the School for poetry and essay writing. Whitney notes how the tone of the poetry written and published in *The Decanian* was almost jingoistic before the second Boer War of 1899-1902. However, the mood and style changed markedly, becoming far more sombre once the death in action of Old Decanian Roland Brooke had been announced.⁵¹ In a very small way it mirrored poetry written in the first months of World War I. Jingoistic poems, such as Jessie Pope's *The Call* were soon being superseded by poems such as Laurence Binyon's *For the Fallen*.

Paul Fussell in *The Great War And Modern Memory* suggests that in the two generations leading up to World War I, particular language was used which 'readers had been accustomed to associate with the quiet action of personal control and Christian self-abnegation ("sacrifice"), as well as with more violent actions of aggression and defence.'⁵² Fussell cites the works, among others, of Henty, Rider Haggard and the Arthurian poems of Arthur Tennyson, all of which were read at Dean Close School. Indeed, Henty's books were accepted by the Library on several occasions while Tennyson's death in October 1892 was followed by a fulsome obituary in the January 1893 edition of *The Decanian*.⁵³ Fussell gives forty examples of the

⁵¹ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp. 34-36`

⁵² Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp..21-2.

⁵³ *Decanian*, January 1893 edition, pp.103-105. Alfred, Lord Tennyson was Poet

vocabulary used: a friend is described as 'a comrade'; danger is written as 'peril', to conquer is 'to vanquish', obedient soldiers are 'the brave'; not to complain is to be 'manly'; a soldier is a 'warrior'; warfare is 'strife'. Fussell might have added that some of that vocabulary was also used in martial sounding hymns of the period, such as 'For All the Saints.'

Some insight is gained into what was read from *The Decanian's* book list purchased for the Library in 1892 that would have undoubtedly been vetted by Flecker.⁵⁴ Eleven were non-fiction, of whom four were geographic or travel, including Irving Montagu's *Wanderings of a War Artist*, published in 1889, covering the Franco-Prussian, Spanish and Serbian wars; three books on Biology and one on Physics. The other three were on cricket, a biography of Admiral Sir John Franklin, explorer and Governor of Tasmania, an example of real 'manliness', and *Pericles and the Golden Age of Athens* by Oxford Classicist Evelyn Abbott. It would have reminded readers of historic and moral values that the Greek city states had. The first Bishop of Liverpool, Dr Ryle's book, *Light from Old Times*, extolled the Evangelical approach to Christianity, and could have informed and encouraged future Evangelical clergymen. The main novels were full of 'derring do' and romantic manliness. *John Herring* was one, by S. Baring-

Laureate and a well-known literary figure. He is said to have referred to Francis Close teasingly as 'The Pope of Cheltenham'.

⁵⁴ *Decanian*, May, 1892, pp.82-3.

Gould, the prolific clerical theologian, author, novelist, archaeologist and historian who also wrote militaristic hymns, notably 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. *Eric Brighteyes* was an epic Viking novel by Rider Haggard. *The White Company*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was about the fourteenth century Black Prince. *Stories of Whitminster* were Gloucestershire tales while *The Arabian Nights Entertainment* was, effectively, a collection of Middle Eastern folk tales. The selection indicates what was thought appropriate reading matter for boys. Over half the books added were factual. At a time when boys were interested in travel, the empire and recent warfare, these tastes were catered for together with biology, including flora and fauna. On other occasions, poetry by Pope, Shelley, Byron and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were acquired as were works by Ruskin, Thackeray, Thomas Ingoldsby and R.L. Stevenson.

The 1899 prospectus made much of a newly opened Engineering class. There were options in German, Shorthand and Drawing, Instrumental Music and Handicrafts – in reality carpentry under the School joiner, W. Page.⁵⁵ The 'Junior Curriculum', for those aged 12 years or under, was remarkably similar to that of the older boys. Science was barely acknowledged, not least because the Science Master, Thomas Cooper, taught in what was effectively a hut until two purpose built laboratories – one each for Physics and Chemistry-

⁵⁵ 1899 *Prospectus*, fourth page. See also Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.5.

were opened in 1908.⁵⁶ For those interested in matters scientific, there were further opportunities as members of the Field Club. Displays, talks and visits were arranged to stimulate scientific interest and it met once or twice a term. Although begun in 1893, it was not mentioned in the prospectus. Sport merited little space, being given only a line more than the Library. The hour long drill sessions taken two or three times a week by former senior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) of the British Army – called 'Visiting Masters' – were entirely absent from the prospectus.⁵⁷

Some boys, who were thought less able, received 'vocational' preparation, typically to enter the Army or colonial service. Flecker allowed some flexibility and sanctioned subjects being dropped in favour of more time being given to Mathematics, Classics or Science. French could be substituted for Latin, more German or physics instead of Greek. Broadly, boys were distributed in classes according to ability rather than age. The ratio of Masters to boys was roughly 1/20.⁵⁸

Games and sport were mentioned but initially not taken very seriously, other than on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons when matches were played. However, in January, 1895, the Headmaster

⁵⁶ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp.39-40.

⁵⁷ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, p.15.

⁵⁸ Evans, 'Town, Gown and Cloth', p. 23.

declared to an OD meeting that 'a scheme has been drawn up by which nearly every boy has been assigned to some definite football set; the boys played in their sets with spirit and vigour, and never before has loafing been at such a low ebb at the School.'⁵⁹ Flecker had begun to appreciate that:

'the underlying philosophy of all our National games is not only to produce skill, discipline, loyalty, endurance, steadiness in attack, patience in misfortune and other physical and mental qualities, but to encourage unselfishness, which is synonymous with good temper, a sense of humour and honour.'⁶⁰

Sports development is discussed in the next chapter in the section dealing with the School's ethos. The arrival of the OTC in 1909, at government expense, gave pupils the opportunity of experiencing moderated military discipline. During World War I, the time given to the School OTC expanded considerably, to the point where one master, invalided out of the Army, observed, 'This place isn't a school, it's a depot.'⁶¹ Both Games and the OTC, being team or unit orientated, encouraged selflessness for the good of the whole- not only a practical application of Christian manliness but imparting

⁵⁹ *Decanian*, January 1895, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁰ John Astley Cooper's lecture 'The British Imperial Spirit of Sport and War' published in *United Empire*, Vol. VII, 1916, p. 581, quoted in J.A. Mangan *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal* (First Published Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986: this edition London: Frank Cass, 1998), p. 55.

⁶¹ Whitney, *At Close Quarters*, pp.46-7.

useful skills and attitudes for those entering the Armed Services.

History and Geography, allied to Classics and in large part backed up by Divinity and associated activities inculcated enthusiastic, patriotic endeavour as well as selflessness in many boys. Properly organized team games and the OTC helped internalize these values. Culturally, this was underlined by English work and books available for reading. Effectively, they were being encouraged to embrace Christian manliness. The curriculum tended to be backward looking to perceived glories of the past. Boys were seemingly being prepared for the possibility of a 'civilised', nineteenth-century style 'romantic' war. They were not prepared for the industrial carnage that early twentieth century ODs were to face. On Prize Day 1901, Flecker indicated how successful the school's teaching methods were in his view: '15% of the boys know their work well, 10% know it not at all, the remaining 75% know a little about their work [...] but make haste to forget all they have learnt.'⁶²

Conclusion

In this chapter, various models of masculinities were found to help understand patterns of behaviour on the battlefield. Links with

⁶² *Decanian*, August 1901, pp.78-81.

Christian perceptions and traditions seen in contemporary, secular terms was found to be helpful.

The development of ideas of Christian manliness through Christian Socialism and its diffusion into modified social action by both Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics was found to be revealing. It helped explain the attitude and work of Francis Close and the School named after him. The values and speeches of the School's Headmaster, William Flecker, showed that he was sympathetic to the ideals of Christian manliness. That concept was also found helpful in explaining Dean Close School's pro-war stance in 1914.

Through the Curriculum section was found an important key to explaining why ODs were prepared to go to war. Almost all lessons, games, the OTC, even Chapel, the general ethos of the School including *The Decanian* imbued boys with the virtues of duty, loyalty, courage, self-sacrifice, stoicism, team playing yet capacity for leadership, in short, Christian manliness. All this was to be severely tested in World War I.

CHAPTER 3

OD WORLD WAR 1 RECRUITMENT; ODS' CONDUCT, AS REPORTED BY *THE DECANIAN*; OD CIVILIAN CONTRIBUTION UNTIL 1916.

Introduction

This Chapter looks at combatant and non-combatant ODS' recruitment to the Armed Forces both until conscription began on 2 March 1916 and throughout the war.¹ Recruitment and fatalities suffered subsequently are seen against the experiences of other public schools. There is also discussion about ODS' conduct in World War I according to *The Decanian* and consideration as to how such reports could be perceived in terms of possible role models to impressionable schoolboy readers. It also suggests to what extent the ODS' reported actions could be seen to marry with concepts of masculinities or Christian manliness, sometimes referred to as 'muscular Christianity'. Only those ODS who appeared in the forces list of the June 1916 edition of *The Decanian* are known to have

¹ See A.J.P. Taylor, *English History 1914 – 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) pp 53-4. The First Military Service Act of January 1916 conscripted unmarried men aged between 18 and 41. Conscription began on 2 March 1916; for married men from 25 May 1916.

entered the Armed Services as volunteers. The contribution of those ODs who were not in uniform is also discussed.

OD Recruitment in World War I

Approximately 1,780 boys left Dean Close School between May 1886 when the School opened and July 1918, just before the official end of the War. Of them, 23 had died previously (three as a result of the Boer War) and a further two died of natural causes in the war's opening months. At present, the School has no information on about 854 of them, the vast majority of whom left before 1905. It is only possible to say something about the remaining 903.² Over eighty remained civilians during the War, mostly in reserved occupations, although 17 clergymen served as Chaplains to the Forces, of whom two were decorated for bravery, two served with New Zealand forces and one with the Indian Expeditionary Force. Moreover, at least a dozen OD teachers forsook classrooms to volunteer, as well as ten farmers.

At present, according to *The Decanian*, 330 ODs joined the Armed Forces before conscription came in.³ However, it is evident that the actual number was significantly higher- believed to be c.500 -

² R.C. Padfield, (Ed), *The Old Decanian Register 1886-1948* (Dean Close School, 1995), pp. 2-70.

³ *Decanian*, June 1915, 'The War & War Notes' pp.1-24.

because of those ODs whose details were not known to the School at first or those ODs who lost touch completely throughout the War. Overall, 771 ODs (660 according to *The Decanian*) are known to have been in the Armed Services during World War I between 1914 and 1918.⁴ Of them, 136 died in action, were mortally wounded or died through illness or accident while on active service. In addition, the School knows the names of 115 other ODs who were wounded, some more than once. *The Decanian* (March 1919 edition) claimed to know of 140 ODs who were wounded, although they do not appear to have named them all. If correct, which is possible, ODs sustained a total of 276 casualties (136 known dead; 140 wounded).

Every year of leaving boys, from the School's opening term onwards, sent ODs to the War. Every year, apart from 1886, 1887 and 1888, at least one OD leaver died as a direct result of the War. Two of the original boys who entered the School on its opening in May 1886, Edgar Vickers, who left in December 1889, and James Wardroper, a leaver in July 1892, were among those who perished. The worst year was 1912, when of 63 leavers, 48 went into the Armed Forces of whom 13 were killed and 14 wounded. Thus almost half the year's leavers were casualties. The worst term was Summer (Trinity) 1913. Of the 30 leavers, close to half – fourteen – were known casualties,

⁴ *Decanian*, a full list of 650 ODs published March 1919, pp.80-100. Six more added in July 1919, p.2, two more in March 1920, p.51 and a further two in March 1922, p.53.

nine dying with a further five being wounded, one of them twice over.⁵

There appear to be no records concerning conscientious objectors from the School – although a 'Bevin Boy' was identified in World War II. There were some instances where potential recruits were initially refused but recruited later. One was Lionel Halse, who volunteered at least twice but was refused because of poor eyesight. He eventually received 'call up papers' in June 1917. Subsequently, he was mortally wounded in the leg on 21 August 1918. He eventually died on 17th October.⁶

In World War I, the vast majority of ODs entering the Armed Forces chose the Army in this country or elsewhere, totalling 674 altogether. Many ODs were abroad, and while some came home to join British units, just over 90 joined units appropriate to their location. At present, of 903 leavers of which we know something of their careers after leaving the School, at least 220 ODs either went to work in, or emigrated to, 26 countries. The biggest contingent that returned to fight was from Canada with 31, out of some 44 that are known to have gone to live there. This was followed by India with 24 plus two from the Gurkhas in Nepal – almost all those who had gone out

⁵ C.E. Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, (Hereford: Logaston Press, 2014), p.3, amended as a result of more recent research.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 22.

there. Ten are known to have joined Australian forces.

Of those ODs who joined the British Army, over 80 opted for the Royal Artillery; 14 joined the Machine Gun Corps; 36 the Army Service Corps, while over 40 became Royal Engineers that still included the Royal Signals. Among county regiments, 35 enlisted in Gloucestershire regiments; 10 in the Somerset Light Infantry; 9 in the Worcestershire Regiment.

(Table 1)

Boys' Evangelical Public Schools' (HMC) Contribution and Sacrifice in World War I

School	Number of pupils in 1914	Number of former pupils who served	Number of former pupils who died in the War	% of former pupils who died
Dean Close School	195	771	136	17.6
Monkton Combe Sch	78	454	64	14.1
St. Lawrence College	211	735	131	17.8
Trent College	144	514	97	18.9

Weymouth College – Unknown, as the College closed in the Lent Term of 1940.

(Source: Seldon A and Walsh D 'Appendix: List of Public Schools War Statistics ' in *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2013), pp. 255 – 260).

Altogether, ODs were to be represented in at least 22 county regiments, although transfers in and out meant that it was a constantly shifting number. London Regiments proved quite popular, eight joining the London Regiment and another seven the Royal Fusiliers. Twenty-four ODs joined the Royal Army Medical Corps, most as doctors, a few as dentists and one or two as orderlies or similar.

The contribution of ODs to World War I compared to other Evangelical public schools that were members of Headmasters' Conference (HMC) makes interesting reading (See Table1 above on p.91).

It can be seen that the two most similar schools in terms of pupil numbers – Dean Close and St. Lawrence- are also very similar in terms of those that volunteered to fight and subsequent fatalities. Monkton Combe had not grown as fast as other schools but its contribution in terms of those who served is impressive. The cost to Trent College's former pupils is particularly severe when set against the others.

However, if the contribution of the 'great Clarendon Schools' is

examined, it is seen that, proportionately, their sacrifice, generally speaking, was even greater (See Table.2 below):

(Table 2)

**'Clarendon' Public Schools' (HMC) Contribution and Sacrifice in
World War I**

School	Number of pupils, 1914	Number of pupils who served	Number of those pupils who died in the War	% of former pupils who died
Charterhouse	579	3,500	687	19.6
Eton College	1,028	5,656	1,157	20.5
Harrow	504	2,917	644	22.1
Merchant Taylor's	443	1,820	297	16.3
Rugby	555	3,244	686	21.1
Shrewsbury	386	1,820	321	17.6
St Paul's	574	2,917	490	16.8
Westminster	308	1,400	222	15.9
Winchester	445	2,418	505	20.9

(Source: Seldon A and Walsh D, 'Appendix: List of Public Schools War Statistics ' in *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2013), pp. 255 – 260.)

Looking at the record of the 'great Clarendon Schools' and comparing them with the Evangelical schools, the difference in size is striking, as is the number of former pupils who served in World War I. This is because no Evangelical school was running before the second half of the nineteenth century, by which time each Clarendon school had been founded for 250 years, and so was thoroughly established. What is also marked is the proportion of former pupils who died; in five cases greater than for the Evangelical schools.

(Table 3)

Boys' Public Schools' (HMC) of a similar age and size to Dean Close School. World War I Contribution and Sacrifice

School	Date of Foundation	Number of pupils, 1914	Number of pupils who served	Number of those pupils who died in the War	% of former pupils who died
Bishop's Stortford Coll.	1868	196	456	61	13.4
Dean Close School	1886	195	771	136	17.6
Eastbourne College	1867	201	879	164	18.7
Fettes College	1870	200	1,094	246	22.5
Merchiston Castle Sch.	1833	196	851	168	19.7

(Source: Seldon A and Walsh D 'Appendix: List of Public Schools War Statistics ' in *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2013), pp. 255 – 260; adjusted in the light of 2015 research; also the websites of the schools concerned)

It is also helpful to look at public schools who, like Dean Close School, were founded in the nineteenth century and who were all members of Headmasters' Conference in 1914. Their similarity to the Dean Close School situation is accentuated by their pupil numbers at the beginning of World War I, see (Table 3 above):

Even though the dates of foundation are roughly the same and the size of the schools in question similar in the table above, nevertheless it is evident that there is a wide discrepancy not only in the numbers of former pupils that served in the Armed Forces but also in the fatality rate. It would be a mistake to deduce from the tables above that Dean Close School's level of fatalities was close to the lowest. The following HMC schools at the time who are in that category include (See Table. 4 below):

It is worth noting that in the two schools quoted in Table 4, the school communities are significantly smaller in size than in the case of the Evangelical and similar sized schools quoted in Table 3. Again, the 'Clarendon' Schools of Table 2 are bigger still. In very general terms, the proportionate size of the sacrifice of lives suffered by each institution appears to rise with the increased size of school and response by its alumni to the appeal for recruits. Exactly why this should be is not clear at present.

(Table 4)

**Public Schools (HMC) who contributed to World War I but
whose sacrifice was proportionately the lowest.**

School	Number of pupils, 1914	Number of pupils who served	Number of those pupils who died in the War	% of former former pupils who died
Christ's College, Brecon	120	447	55	12.3
St Peter's School, York	102	540	68	12.6

(Source: Seldon A and Walsh D 'Appendix: List of Public Schools War Statistics ' in *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Barnsley: South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military, 2013), pp 255 – 260)

A lower rate still is found in some schools aspiring to be members of HMC but did not succeed until after the War. A contributory factor here probably was that pupils of such schools, not having 'public school' status at the War's beginning, would have found it more difficult to be recommended as potential officers, especially if their

schools were without an OTC. Thus boys would not have gained 'Certificate A', the passport to selection as potential officers. This would have reduced their casualty figures.

Another way of studying a school's commitment and its old boys' participation in World War I is to take a school size in 1914 and the number of those entering the forces and compare the two proportionately against the same figures for other schools. Dean Close School was 195 strong with 771 ODs joining the forces. This was compared to all those UK schools that were members of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC) in 1914.⁷ There were 95 schools in all. Of them, 7 did not have the appropriate figures. Of the remaining 88, 39 (44.8%), had proportionately more old boys joining the forces than Dean Close School, given the size of school. Conversely, there were 48 (55.2%) that had proportionately fewer old boys joining the forces than Dean Close School. While that School was above average in numbers of former pupils in the forces, it is stretching a point to suggest that its mildly enhanced performance in this area was due to the Evangelical Christian stance of the School. Two factors tend to confirm this. The first is that of the other three Evangelical public schools for which there are appropriate records,

⁷ These figures were extrapolated from Seldon, Anthony & Walsh, David *Public Schools and The Great War* (Barnsley: Sword and Pen Military, 2013), pp.255 - 260 (Appendix). Attention is drawn to Dean Close School's entry. The figure for those entering the Armed Forces in the Appendix is given as 695, which was correct at the time of the survey in 2012. However, more recent evidence has shown that the figure is 771. This is the figure used in these calculations.

Monkton Combe 'performed' proportionately significantly better than Dean Close School, while St Lawrence, Ramsgate and Trent College did not perform as well. Figures are not available for Weymouth College. All this suggests that the Evangelical stance was not a major contributory element to the numbers in the forces. The second factor is that Cheltenham College, just over a mile from Dean Close School, proportionately contributed significantly more former pupils than Dean Close School did to World War I.⁸ Perhaps the College's traditionally strong ties to the military were responsible.⁹

During World War I, at least 136 ODs died as a result of hostilities. On land, apart from Gallipoli, where seven were lost, most died on the Western Front. The Second Battle of Ypres cost four OD lives, the Battle of Loos another three while the Somme offensive cost eighteen lives, four being casualties on the first day. Various attacks on Vimy Ridge cost a further three lives and the Battle of Arras, two. The Third Battle of Ypres, also called Passchendaele, took another ten OD lives in all, as did 'Operation 'Michael', the breakout by German forces in 1918. The rest were lost mostly in single incidents

⁸ In 1914, Dean Close School's size was 195 boys. Cheltenham College's was 584. 771 ODs from Dean Close School served whereas Cheltenham College sent 3,540. A third of Cheltenham College's size just happens to be 195 – the same as Dean Close School's size – but a third of the College's total who served is 1,180 which is far more than Dean Close School's 771.

⁹ Cheltenham College was founded by two former military men, G.S. Harcourt and J.S. Iredell, and opened in 1841. Its initial Evangelical stance was ensured by Francis Close's Chairmanship of the Board of Directors. However, after his departure to Carlyle in 1856, the Evangelical tradition lapsed. See Alan Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham*, (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1997), pp.38-40

in trenches or in skirmishes. The Battles of Ancre, Aisne, Amiens and Cambrai each took a couple of ODs' lives. Three were lost in Middle East fighting. Five were lost in the air, six at sea. However, one of the biggest losses of men was disease and illness where sixteen died, many to influenza that struck all over Europe in 1918. A further six were lost through accidents in the UK and abroad. All the recorded losses were faithfully noted in *The Decanian*. If more was known, such as a colleague, army chaplain or commanding officer writing explaining the circumstances, then extracts from their letters might be included, too. Nevertheless, these obituaries did not seem to affect Armed Services' recruitment, and at no point was the subject of conscientious objection raised in *The Decanian*.

The way in which *The Decanian* dealt with its war news changed between the first issue in which the war was the main and leading article, that of February 1915, and all issues thereafter until the end of the war. The February edition began with printing OD James Elroy Flecker's version of the National Anthem which he wrote just before he died of tuberculosis on 3 January 1915. It had already been taken up by the national press and published in *The Sphere* on 16 January 1915. It tended towards being jingoistic. The first verse ran:

'God Save Our Gracious King
Nations and state and King
God Save the King!
Grant him good Peace Divine

But if his wars be Thine,
Flash on his fighting line
Victory's wing.¹⁰

There followed another four verses in similar style with comment on how it had been received and how the national press had reacted to his death. The next page began with a heading, 'War'. *The Decanian* effectively announced its perceived, self-appointed role as a conduit of news between the School and the ODs in the Armed Forces. After an appeal for any information to be sent to the Headmaster about commissions, deployment, regiments and other news, what was happening to teaching staff was next reported. Four of them had already signed up, three with commissions.¹¹ At least another two were to go later, reducing numbers of teachers in the School by almost a third.¹² It was as though the teaching staff were being seen to set examples of personal sacrifice to the ODs. Sadly, of the six who volunteered, it is known that three were killed. The fate of the other three is not clear.¹³

The February issue of *The Decanian* then followed with a section

¹⁰ Cheltenham College was founded by two former military men, G.S. Harcourt and J.S. Iredell, and opened in 1841. Its initial Evangelical stance was ensured by Francis Close's Chairmanship of the Board of Directors. However, after his departure to Carlyle in 1856, the Evangelical tradition lapsed. See Alan Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham*, (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 1997), pp.38-40

¹¹ *ibid*, p.341.

¹² *Decanian*, June 1915, p.3.

¹³ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.80.

detailing casualties as they were known at that point. There was one death and five wounded, missing or captured. What is noticeable is that all six were reported as positively as possible. Lt Walker's death aboard *HMS Good Hope* off Chile on 1 November 1914 was stated a little ambiguously. It was said that he 'was aboard the "Good Hope" when it was sunk.' The words 'death', 'drowned' or 'killed' were avoided and perhaps the very slightest hope of survival maintained. Each of the other five ODs had something positive mentioned. Major Wilson had been missing – but was now known to be a Prisoner of War; Rene Langer had been missing, too – but was now known to be fighting in another part of the French line. Lieutenant S. W. Saxton, RN, Assistant Paymaster on *HMS Formidable*, had been one of only 199 rescued out of a total crew of about 750 when it was blown up by German Submarine U24's torpedoes on 1 January 1915. Captain J. T. Waller, wounded at Armentieres, hoped to be back soon at the front and the same was true for a similarly wounded Lieutenant R. S. Scholefield.¹⁴ In the event, both men succeeded in returning to the front, R. S. Schofield, promoted Captain, to be wounded a second time and become a POW. His safe return to England was announced late in 1918.¹⁵ Captain J.T. Waller was also wounded a second time but in addition was awarded an MC.¹⁶ Both were clearly demonstrating the perseverance and determination that were a part

¹⁴ *Decanian*, February 1915, pp. 341-2.

¹⁵ *Decanian*, November 1918, p.32.

¹⁶ *Decanian*, March 1919, pp. 95 and 98.

of Christian manliness, while also showing team loyalty to their comrades on the front line, a feature of the general public school ethos. Moreover, they were each showing an 'heroic' masculinity as suggested by Jessica Meyer.¹⁷

There followed a list of all those known to have volunteered for the Armed Services at that point, what units they were in and when they had entered Dean Close School— some 224 of them. However, it is almost certain that many more had already joined up about which the School did not know.¹⁸ Further on in that issue, *Decanians* were being wished 'good luck' as they left school and entered the forces.¹⁹ It was as though *The Decanian* was gently trying to encourage ODs to join up, wanting to know all about how they were getting on but almost attempting to shield its readers from at least some of the more brutal truths of what was occurring. After all, many had felt that the war would be over in the first six months or so, and thus there was something to be positive about which should not be dulled by over-grim reporting. The notion that the war would be 'over by Christmas' appears to have been a fabrication of post-war myth, according to Mark Bostridge.²⁰ Yet Captain Basil H. Liddell Hart,

¹⁷ See Chapter 2, p. 55 of this thesis. See also Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.2.

¹⁸ *Decanian*, March 1919, pp. 342-351.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 352.

²⁰ Mark Bostridge, *The Fateful Year: England 1914* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2014), pp.237-8.

regarded by many as one of the great military historians of his time, refers to 'the general belief that the war would be finished by Christmas!' in his *Memoirs*.²¹ Many experts at the time, including the military correspondent of *The Times*, had argued on 8 August 1914 that a 'short, sharp' war' was 'probable' because it was essential for Germany to deliver a swift, devastating blow against France.²² However, by November 1914, just before the February 1915 edition of *The Decanian* was sent off to be printed, the perception had begun to change. It was slowly becoming evident that 'with the opposing armies embedded in trenches running from the Alps to the English Channel, there could be no expectation any longer of a short war'.²³

In subsequent issues of *The Decanian*, factual details about deaths in the hostilities were reported, usually without comment, on the front page and subsequent pages with far less concern about readers' feelings. The limited jingoistic element had disappeared entirely and no-one was being wished 'good luck' in print. *The Decanian* became much more concerned to report the basic facts and leave others – Commanding Officers, chaplains, comrades-in-arms – to add their

²¹ B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Memoirs of Captain Liddell Hart, volume 1* (London: Cassell, 1965), p.11. Such was Liddell Hart's work, ideas and reputation that he was knighted in 1966.

²² Mark Bostridge, *The Fateful Year*, pp.237-8. Archbishop of York Cosmo Lang suggested to Lord Robert Cecil that 'At present, I do not think that [the population] realize how long and exacting [the war] will be.'

²³ *Ibid*, p.238.

comments. This approach was maintained right up to 1919 and beyond. It is noteworthy that OTC training in 1918 became increasingly belligerent. 'Bayonet Training' as a lesson became 'Bayonet Fighting', along with reports that contained comments such as 'how we longed for a few real Boches to withdraw [our bayonets] from.'²⁴

However, while general terminology had become more realistic and OTC language more antagonistic, it did not stop the School from being positively concerned for its ODs and their responsibilities at the front. When Lieutenant J.E.L. Warren OD wrote to Headmaster Flecker in November 1914 saying that his men were suffering from a shortage of socks, the School raised a 'sum of money' and sent him a parcel of goods for his men. He responded by saying how pleased they were with their gift and quoting the grateful remarks of one of his NCOs.²⁵ Being concerned for those around Lt Warren for whom he was responsible was part of the ethos the School had taught him – one of the elements of manliness.

²⁴ *Decanian*, March 1918, p.299. The reports were written by H.L. O. Flecker, younger son of the DCS Headmaster, who had been wounded and sent home, where he was put in charge of Dean Close OTC. It is possible that his aggressive remarks were borne out of his frustration at being unable to return to the front line. He later became Headmaster of Christ's Hospital, Horsham, and later still Principal of a College in Achimota, Ghana, for which he was awarded a CBE.

²⁵ *Decanian*, October 1915, pp.95-6. NCO stands for a Non-Commissioned Officer, in this case a corporal.

OD Combat Arms in the Army

Many ODs volunteered early for the Armed Services.²⁶ Some were eager to return to England, including Ernest Panes, at Dean Close School from 1901 to 1911. He won a Mathematical Scholarship to Brasenose College, Oxford where he took a First. Also interested in History, he arrived in Berlin to study in 1914 when war was declared. He narrowly avoided arrest by secret police and had several adventures before reaching England. By December he was a second lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. Sadly, he was mortally wounded not long after at Hooge during the Second Battle of Ypres.²⁷ In the six weeks before he died, Lt. Panes sent several letters to England, extracts appearing in the issue of *The Decanian* that also announced his death. In his letters, he saw his new existence as a riddle in that '[it] becomes increasingly perplexing to conceive how it is that men tolerate this sort of thing for a moment.' He considered that 'we are in the hands of the scheming, the ambitious and the selfish who rule the earth, and cannot as yet escape.'²⁸ A little later he exclaimed that 'I would give everything to have no connection with this macabre and ludicrous affair.' Presently, his natural sense of humour returned, and he observed: 'I have come

²⁶ Up to June 1916, *The Decanian* notes a total of 482 ODs joining up. Since 2003 additional names have emerged. Approximately 500 ODs appear to have volunteered. Younger and/or later recruits, however enthusiastic, were conscripts, of which there were approximately 271 ODs of which 178 were recorded in *The Decanian*..

²⁷ *Decanian*, October 1915, pp.44-5, letters from, pp. 50-52.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.50.

to admire [my men] [...] They suffer rather more than I do from the hardships of the trenches. I always praise the excellent regime at school which fitted me admirably to endure this sort of thing.'²⁹ His strong sense of duty and determination, coupled with his stoicism, humour and concern for his men provides an excellent example of Christian manliness in action. He shared with several other ODs distaste for the war he volunteered to join. *The Decanian* neither sought to criticise nor alter his views, thereby giving readers of Lt Panes' letters a heightened awareness of both his disillusionment yet sense of duty.

Further information comes in an extract from the 'Occasional Notes' Column from *The Decanian*, February 1915, written by its editor, Thomas Cooper:

The list [of those who had already volunteered for the Army] contains four names which would in the ordinary course of events have been in last term's school list – Banting, Burghope, Davis and Topley. A. Topley, after an arduous experience as a private, eventually entered Sandhurst; M. Meredith and E. Holland entered Sandhurst after previously serving in the UPS Forces. Many of the letters which Dr Flecker [the Headmaster] received from ODs serving spoke with gratitude of the benefit they had received from

²⁹ Ibid, p.51.

Mr Mountfort's training in the OTC. Other letters told stories of hardship cheerfully endured...'.³⁰

This passage indicates much about the boys themselves. First, clearly some were leaving School early to volunteer. Second, they were prepared to serve anywhere to join— one serving as an 'ordinary' private. Two served as privates in the University and Public School Battalion of an unspecified regiment before eventually entering Sandhurst for officer training. Third, there are the appreciative letters of what the OTC had taught ODs. The letters recounted stories of 'hardship cheerfully endured'. They have an air not only of determination to serve and the stoical, taught in Classics lessons, but also of Christianity that has stoicism in it, taught by School Chapel services and Religious Instruction. It is a reminder of Thomas Carlyle's Abbot Samson who, in Herbert Sussman's words, 'exemplifies a Manliness that reconciles "self-denial and strenuous effort" that becomes "self-forgetting" '.³¹ That, together, with the lessons of History and sports field must have inculcated a deep sense of duty that overrode any inclination to try to dodge the War.

One OD for whom this was true was Murray Blumer, who left Dean

³⁰ *Decanian*, February 1915, p.391. 'Mr Mountfort' was the Revd. Charles Mountfort (at Dean Close 1907-17). He formed an OTC at the School in 1909 once the War Office had agreed with HMC Schools that government would pay most of the cost. It began at the School during Trinity Term 1909 with 50 cadets.

³¹ Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1995) pp. 25, 27-8.

Close School in 1906 and was 25 years old when he volunteered. A stockbroker's clerk, he became a Private in the 16th (Public School) Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. The battalion Chaplain later referred to his 'gentleness of manner, love of music and hatred of war,' when writing to Blumer's father. He continued: 'it is a strange irony that in this conflict of ideals, even more than of nations, your son, like thousands of others who have given their lives for a cause worth more than their life, should have fallen in the strife'.³² Blumer died on the Somme offensive's second day, in July 1916, being mortally wounded on the first. The Chaplain's letter shows Blumer's reluctance to be involved with war, let alone trench warfare. His views had less to do with that part of Kingsley and Hughes' notions of Christian manliness concerning physical courage and rather more with concern for the state of the world and its natural order. His views reflect those of Lt Panes earlier. Yet Blumer volunteered early nevertheless, seeing it as his duty to offer himself.

The Decanian was implicitly rather than explicitly suggesting that many who volunteered for the Armed Forces did so out of duty rather than any sense of adventure or a 'gung-ho' attitude. The point is not laboured. Murray Blumer's death and the manner of his dying is mentioned eighth in a list of sixteen fatalities in that edition of *The Decanian*.

³² *Decanian*, October 1916, pp.166-7.

Vernon Caley, born in 1895, left Dean Close School in 1912. He was an early volunteer for the Armed Services, promoted Captain in 7th Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment and won a Military Cross (MC) for Gallantry. He was killed, aged 21, during the Third Battle of Ypres 'fearlessly leading his men', according to an eye-witness. He was an example of what Hagermann refers to as a 'Hero-martyr', the masculinity that is concerned with physical courage and the Christian manliness that sees God in a martial role – 'Blessed be the Lord my rock who trains my hands for war'.³³ Near St. Julien, a shell exploded immediately behind him, killing him instantly.³⁴ Many felt he should have been awarded a posthumous gallantry decoration. Other than Mentioned-in-Despatches, there was only one gallantry decoration awarded posthumously at that time, the Victoria Cross (VC). Although a telling comment is again a part of the *Decanian's* report, the focus is a little different. Here the report's emphasis is on bravery, courage and gallantry. 'He feared nothing, and always thought of his men before himself,' wrote his commanding officer.³⁵ He was like a Greek or Roman hero of old, seeking death or glory but, in the best traditions of Christian manliness, he was always thinking of his neighbour.

³³ Psalm 144 verse 1.

³⁴ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.13.

³⁵ *Decanian*, November 1917, pp.257-8.

At the beginning of World War I there were few gallantry or meritorious service awards. The VC, instituted in 1856, was for extreme bravery, open to any soldier or sailor of any rank.³⁶ Senior officers were awarded Knight Commander or Commander of the Order of the Bath (KCB or CB), usually for meritorious service. The Distinguished Conduct Medal, (DCM) instituted in 1854 in the Crimea War, was for acts of outstanding gallantry by any non-commissioned soldier not quite meriting a VC. The Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM) was the Royal Navy equivalent. There was nothing else except the Distinguished Service Order (DSO), instituted in 1886 for comparatively junior officers, for both distinguished service or gallantry against the enemy. It tended to be awarded to majors or possibly captains. Exceptionally, it was awarded to lieutenants at one end of the command structure and colonels at the other. During World War I, 8,981 were awarded.

In 1914, the Military Cross (MC) was instituted, a gallantry medal awarded to junior army officers up to the rank of captain (occasionally temporary major). In World War I, 37,081 were awarded among 247,061 officers commissioned during the War. The Royal Navy equivalent was the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC).

³⁶ For gallantry awards in World War I, see P.E. Abbott, and J.M.A. Tamplin, *British Gallantry Awards*; (Enfield; Guinness Superlatives Ltd., 1971); For DSO see pp.138-150; for MC pp.209-217; for DFC pp.110-117; for DSC pp.125-131. Mentioned-in-Despatches are discussed pp.331 – 338.

The Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) was also instituted for the fledgling Royal Air Force (RAF) that officially began on 1st April 1918. The 'other ranks' equivalent in the Army was the Military Medal (MM), the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) in the Royal Navy and the Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM) in the RAF.

Since before World War I, superior officers sending in reports to high command also sent a list of those regardless of rank who displayed 'gallant or meritorious action in the face of the enemy' but not quite qualifying for a gallantry medal. Eventually, those winning a 'Mention-in-Despatches' received a certificate and wore a decoration of a spray of oak leaves in bronze. Established in 1919, it was retroactive to 1914, and was pinned or sewn onto the World War I Victory Medal ribbon. Even if it was won more than once – and one OD, Major F. Agg, DSO, won it five times – only one spray of oak leaves could be worn.

Major, acting Lt-Colonel Cyril Bartlett, MC of 13th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment, left Dean Close School in 1910, working in French hospitals before being commissioned in 1915. On one occasion, being Battalion Adjutant, he was wounded for the sixth time when his Battalion Headquarters was destroyed. Yet, for the rest of the three-day battle he remained cheerful, attending to many wounded, while all were under heavy fire. Here is an example of a man displaying

many of the qualities of Christian manliness: physical bravery, humour, concern for the welfare of others, stoicism. He won an MC then that was presented to him by the King on 19th October 1917.³⁷ Within a month he was mortally wounded on 9th November, dying two days later.

A glance at awards given to ODs during World War I suggests that many, if not most, given an appropriate opportunity, demonstrated significant levels of gallantry. Of 771 who signed up, 120 won some form of recognition of their courage under fire.³⁸ A total of 81 won Military Crosses of whom six won it twice over. Twelve won DSOs and a further 29 won the Mentioned in Despatches award. Four others won the Military Medal (MM), one an early Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), another a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) and a third a Distinguished Service Cross (DSC). Some won more than one award. For example, Captain George Parker, Royal Flying Corps (RFC), won a DSO, an MC and was also Mentioned-in-Despatches before being shot down in November 1916.³⁹ These all tally in with Meyer's concept of the 'heroic' identity.⁴⁰ They would all have also 'qualified' under the banner of 'manliness', their actions

³⁷ *Decanian*, March 1918, p.287 and also p.289 for an account of how Major Bartlett won his MC

³⁸ For Gallantry and Service Awards made to ODs, including those awarded during World War I, See C.E. Whitney, *Distinguished Old Decanians* (Cheltenham; Dean Close School, 2017), pp.15 -20. See also E-book version attached to the School website.

³⁹ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.34.

⁴⁰ Jessica Meyer, *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)

echoing the classical heroes of old.

A different heroism is suggested by the sacrifice of Private C.H. Hall, of 10th Battalion, King's Shropshire Light Infantry.⁴¹ Volunteering in August 1914, he was sent to Egypt and later Palestine where he was wounded and caught malaria in October 1917. Yet by May 1918 he was on the Western Front, and saw further action, including the Battle of Epehy. He was probably not totally fit, for on 15th October he died of pneumonia in a Casualty Clearing Camp in France. Here, the hint is of a different bravery – overcoming debilitating illness to be back in the front line – seeking to be back with his 'team', not wishing to let his fellow soldiers down. In the same way, years before at school, he would have been inculcated into team support and loyalty for one another in games. His teachers at Dean Close School might not have agreed with Vance's view that 'games were exploited as a method of occupying and controlling the boys, a necessary instrument of discipline. The healthy mind in the healthy body supplanted more academic or religious objectives.'⁴² The teachers would have agreed rather more with Rosen's portrayal of Kingsley's Christian manliness requiring 'boldness, honesty and plainness, defiance of authority, stoic patience and violent energy.'⁴³

⁴¹ *Decanian*, November 1918, p.31.

⁴² Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p190.

⁴³ David Rosen 'The Volcano and the Cathedral: Muscular Christianity and the Origins of Primal Manliness', in *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian*

In the cases of the ODs described above, most were tempted to be defiant of authority, though in a perceived acceptable way. This could be achieved by such actions as volunteering for further service when previously wounded, or returning to the front line before entirely fit. This would appear to be an area where there is little if any research.

Other examples offer both the stoicism and extreme perseverance of manliness, drawing on Christian and Classical traditions. Captain Reginald Dunsford left Dean Close School in 1903.⁴⁴ A married man, he joined the County of London Regiment (Queen 's Westminster Rifles) on the outbreak of war, aged 28. He served as a private until selected for a commission and was sent as a second lieutenant to the Royal Garrison Artillery in March 1915. He survived Western Front battles but died from 'septic pneumonia' on leave four weeks before the Armistice. It suggests that he kept himself going through nearly four years of war until his body could take it no longer. A similar approach but of a significantly older man was that of Captain Spencer Hadland.⁴⁵ An athlete and musician while at Dean Close School, he had completed fifteen years' teaching at Cranleigh, Surrey, where he was a Housemaster. Nevertheless, he volunteered immediately in 1914, although 37, was commissioned, joining the

Age ed. By David E. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.19.

⁴⁴ *Decanian*, November 1918, p.31.

⁴⁵ *Decanian*, November 1918, p.31.

Rifle Brigade. He survived Gallipoli but was wounded on the Western Front in 1917. He returned to the front line but was mortally wounded during the German 'Michael' offensive in March 1918. In these instances, both men felt it a duty to volunteer straight away, even though one was married and the other was no longer youthful, and managed to keep going throughout the War. They both persevered through difficulties and setbacks- until eventually they died. They were manliness personified.

Notwithstanding the Greek dramatist Aeschylus' famous observation that 'In war, truth is the first casualty,' there appears to be little if any evidence of those deaths being fictionalised or mythologised.

Siegfried Sassoon's Poem '*The Hero*' in which a brother officer gives a white-haired mother a fictitious, almost heroic account of her officer son's death at the front appears to be far from the actuality of ODs' deaths.⁴⁶

One OD who was stoical and persevered in a very different way during the war, yet survived, was Captain E. D. Spackman, RAMC. He had barely qualified as a doctor from Cambridge and had been working at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He wrote to senior Classics master Edward Ellam in October 1915, telling of his

⁴⁶ Extracts from the poem quoted in Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.7. The poem originally in Siegfried Sassoon, *The Hero* (New York City USA: Henry Holt, 1918)

experiences on the Italian /Austrian border in a town in Venetia. Italy was in the war on the Allies' side while Austria was aligned with Germany. There had been considerable fighting in a mountainous area. He and a number of colleagues attended to '1,000 patients a week', having turned a roomy villa into a makeshift hospital. They had to go out, find those that required treatment and bring them in at night, as they were shot at during the day if they could be seen.

'Some of the roads were perfectly awful,' he reported, 'just narrow mountain passes, with a nice drop of two or three hundred feet, with no wall, of course. It was not easy to come down from those places with no lights, no guide, nine or ten patients, not knowing much Italian, and very aware that for much of the time you were in Austria.'⁴⁷ He demonstrated not only stoicism and perseverance but also courage and a concern for his fellows that were the embodiment of Christian manliness.

Wilfred Hensley showed that ODs were not just dutiful and courageous but also humane and able to lead by example of a high order and in so doing showing true Christian manliness.⁴⁸ He left Dean Close School in 1913, entering Emmanuel College, Cambridge as a Thorpe Scholar to study Theology. It was presumed he would follow his father into the Church. Having only completed his first year,

⁴⁷ *Decanian*, February 1916, pp. 92-93.

⁴⁸ *Decanian*, November 1918, pp.27-8. See also Lt C.G. Couldrey's tribute *Decanian* (June 1918), p. 23.

he volunteered in September 1914, joining the University and Public School (UPS) Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. Later commissioned, he joined 6th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry. Although promoted to Captain, he made a point of always volunteering to do the 'dirty', dangerous or disagreeable jobs, such as additional patrols, 'wiring' and 'fatigues'. Wounded in April 1917, he was back within months. He was killed in action on the first day of the German 'Operation Michael' in 1918. There are echoes here of the 'moral manliness' of Hughes, Kingsley and others such as Charles Spurgeon commented on by Andrew Bradstock.⁴⁹ Hensley's actions in being close to his men and asking as much of himself as he did of them invites comparisons with a 'soldier-saint' of the Crimea War, Captain Hedley Vicars. That officer, an acknowledged exemplary soldier, also made his faith clear to all.⁵⁰ This included giving up his tent to his men and sleeping himself in the open before Sebastopol. Captain Vicars' gallantry in the night attack was of a very high order and he died a hero-martyr.

Another survivor of the war, H.A. Sawtell, sent a letter to his Headmaster on 28th May 1915 that was published in *The Decanian*. He had been given a little 'relief' having been for three months the

⁴⁹ *Decanian*, November 1918, pp.27-8. See also Lt C.G. Couldrey's tribute *Decanian* (June 1918), p. 23.

⁵⁰ J.R. Watson, "Soldiers and Saints' The Fighting Man and the Christian Life" in A. Bradstock, S. Gill, A. Hogan and S. Morgan (eds), *Masculinity and Spirituality in Victorian Culture* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 10-25.

only despatch rider available for his brigade. They had been holding part of the trenches around Ypres. The Germans had 'the range of every road round for practically miles and the amount of ammunition they used was enormous.'⁵¹ Sawtell recounted that while riding he was slightly wounded three times but that liberal applications of 'Boracic Ointment' helped recovery. The letter presented the masculinity of a 'dashing young hero'. However, the last three sentences were darker, more reminiscent of Arthur Conan-Doyle, Rider Haggard or S. Baring-Gould. The hero was facing a form of darkness that included fear – which was what Christian manliness was also seeking to combat. Sawtell commented: 'By far the worst horror we had to put up with was their appalling gas. To see a greenish yellow cloud of that rise out of their trenches and creep slowly towards you gives you a feeling impossible to describe. Some of the sights produced by it I shall never forget'.

The Decanian could easily have left out the implied horrors of gas warfare, concentrating on the more appealing aspects of the letter. This was shown again in a letter to Classics master Edward Ellam, written on 27th September 1915, by another survivor, Second - Lieutenant C. Duke-Baker, part of which was published.⁵² In it, he wrote of books he used to read in class: 'It's surprising how bits of it all – Horace, Aeschylus and the rest – come back to one out here, '

⁵¹ *Decanian*, June 1915, pp. 23-4.

⁵² *Decanian*, October 1915, p.53.

he continued;' and then the contrast strikes one – what a fearful cold-blooded massacre this war really is: machines matched against machines, instead of the swift and glorious clash of arms in the olden days.' Here again, *The Decanian* prints the passage without comment. Lt Duke-Baker's observation, like Lt Panes and Private Murray Blumer's earlier, show some ODs appalled by the trench warfare but saw no way out for themselves other than that which duty demanded. All three show perception and some disillusionment; war was no longer 'romantic'. They would have agreed with Malcolm Tozer; 'There was nothing chivalrous about chlorine gas; there was nothing heroic about dying under bombardment; and there was nothing idealistic in inhuman mechanistic warfare.'⁵³

Different hazards were faced by Lieutenant W. H. Anderson, a career soldier, who was with a battalion of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. They were the only British part of a British/Indian Expeditionary Force sent to invade Tanga in German East Africa in November 1914. A comparatively small German force, skilfully led, repulsed the invaders, aided by swarms of local bees.⁵⁴ Some referred to it as 'The Battle of the Bees'. Moreover, as Anderson noted in his letter home on 15 April 1915, ' Since we arrived [in the

⁵³ Malcolm Tozer 'A Sacred Trinity – Cricket, School, Empire: E.W. Hornung and his Young Guard' in J.A. Mangan (editor) *The Cultural Bond: Sport, Empire, Society* (London: Frank Cass, 1992), p 21.

⁵⁴ B. H. Liddell Hart, *History of the First World War* (London: Originally published by Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1934; this edition by Book Club Associates, 1973), p.107.

previous November] we have had 300 cases of fever and 35 cases of beri-beri', in a 'double company' of perhaps as many as 300 soldiers – so most must have had fever at least once. Nevertheless, Anderson remained optimistic, praising his men. 'I don't know if you know the Lancashire man at all, but he is an awfully good fellow and the most unpleasant circumstances seldom upset him'.⁵⁵

Here is an officer who, with his troops, had to withdraw from Tanga through no fault of theirs; had seen many of his men go down with disease – it is not clear whether or not he suffered with them – but only sees the positive qualities of his men. The diseases endemic in the area and the thorn bushes that caused such problems were merely part of what was 'not a nice country'. Once more there is the stoicism, the under playing of problems together with leadership skills that are all a part of someone imbued with the qualities of Christian manliness. What is also noticeable is what Michael Roper referred to when discussing the masculinities involved when writing home.⁵⁶ The question for Anderson was whether he should discuss the reality of the retreat from Tanga or the deadly situation of the enemy ambushes in thorn bushes or what it was like being in a contingent when so many had fever or beri-beri. Anderson clearly opted for the diminution of self in order to make his news palatable to

⁵⁵ *Decanion*, June 1915, p.23

⁵⁶ See the reference on p.17.

those who would read it at home.⁵⁷ In so doing his approach was different from Captain Hadland, discussed below. Anderson was to successfully survive the war as a Captain.

Captain S. A. Hadland has been mentioned earlier in this chapter. A part of his war experience was his participation in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, about which he wrote to the Headmaster.⁵⁸ He and his company were required to take over some trenches. 'The conditions were dreadful', he wrote, 'the flies, heat and smell were indescribable. In front of the line my company held were dozens of Royal Scots, lying black and swollen where they had fallen when they had tried to advance on 28 June. We were in a trench that had been taken from the Turks and the parapets and floors were full of their bodies.[...] While I was up there we made no advance, and to that circumstance I probably owe my life, for the Turks' orders are, "shoot the officers and run." They do it well.' Clearly, Hadland chose 'reality' masculinity over sparing his readers' feelings, as opposed to Lieutenant Anderson, above. Perhaps he was expressing his need to describe both danger and horror that Meyer suggests is part of a 'heroic' masculinity.⁵⁹ Yet the markedly different approaches offered by Anderson and Hadland, *The Decanian* refused to make a

⁵⁷ Michael Roper, 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War' in S. Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (Eds) *Masculinities in Politics and War* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 311-312.

⁵⁸ *Decanian*, October 1915, pp. 56-7.

⁵⁹ Meyer, *Men of War*, p.2.

choice. All that the school magazine did was to try to help the reader work out the location of Tanga, which today is Tanzania's most northerly sea port.

A final example of *The Decanian's* refusal to censor material was its publication of a letter from Captain Stainton. Writing to the Headmaster on 17th March 1915, he told of his time as transport officer for the Indian Ferozapore Brigade, Lahore Division, from September 1914 to February 1915.⁶⁰ He wrote that the Brigade started with 3,500 men, of whom 2,800 were now casualties. He made no comment on those huge losses. Future losses in pushing the enemy back would be 'tremendous' but Stainton ends by stating that the "Tommies" are 'simply wonderful'. Possibly the only way that he could deal with the appalling slaughter was to acknowledge it but not discuss it or comment. *The Decanian* made no comment either but any reader must have been shocked that the Brigade had lost four-fifths of its men.

Different perspectives are again evident in a letter from D. Johnston, writing to the Headmaster from British East Africa on 25 April 1915.⁶¹ He wanted to know how 'the old School' was getting on, and 'what

⁶⁰ *Decanian*, June 1915, p.19.

⁶¹ *Decanian*, October 1915, pp. 53-54. British East Africa, a British Protectorate, formed in 1895, consisted of modern Kenya and Uganda with land from the former Sultanate of Zanzibar. It was North of German East Africa, consisting of present day Tanzania, which was transferred to Britain as the result of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The Protectorate was dissolved in 1920.

the Old Boys were doing to help the country'. He said that 'on hearing the news [of war], we got on our horses and mules [...] and made for [...] Nairobi [to enlist].[...] I am quite content with my lot, which is that of a despatch rider [with East African Forces]...[On recruitment] in my own district, out of 25 settlers, 21 immediately left their farms and joined the colours, and it has been more or less the same throughout the Protectorate.' Here the correspondent wants to know that everyone else is doing 'their bit' as well as his brother and himself. There is the suspicion that the perceptions that he has are of the 'dashing cavalryman' masculinity, charging around on his horse – somewhat different than the situation on the Western Front. *The Decanian's* inclusion of this letter underlines that readiness to join the Colours was world-wide. The take-up rate at well over 80% must have been seen by government, teachers and Decanians alike as being impressive.

It may have been careful editorial choice or possibly self-selection but there are no instances in *The Decanian* of ODs doing other than conducting themselves positively. Stories of sloth, laziness or self-indulgence are simply not present. Self-promotion and self-congratulation were usually absent; modesty noticeable. While not hiding grim situations, most ODs in the front line must have been seen by boys back at School as eminently worthwhile role-models.

Yet perhaps this wasn't the whole story. Michael Roper, in his essay 'Maternal Relations: Moral Manliness and Emotional Survival in Letters Home During the First World War,' discussed on p.17, drew attention to the conflict in masculinities within each soldier when they wrote home - or to their old school. There was the pain of reliving appalling memories in writing, yet they also often felt a need to protect those at home from the sheer horror of what was experienced. Apart from Sawtell's reference to mustard gas – about which he is reticent anyway – there is not much said about hellish situations on the Western Front. Hadland's discussion of the trenches above Gallipoli are in contrast to the muted descriptions of others. *The Decanian* may have decided simply to print what it received. It may not have been sent the full horror of what ODs – and so many others – were enduring.

OD Combat Arms in other Branches of the Armed Forces

Only 49 ODs joined the Royal Navy, of whom 22 were in the main service. Two died on active service.⁶² The first was Lt Hugh Bennett, RNR, who was torpedoed aboard HMS Cressy within six weeks of the war's beginning, 22nd September 1914. An experienced

⁶² Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.6.

merchant seaman, he was chief officer on the S.S. Palma. However, he was at sea as a Royal Navy officer at the first opportunity after hostilities broke out.⁶³ The second was Commander David Stocks, RN, who left Dean Close School in 1896. As a submarine commander in the Sea of Marmara off Turkey, he was awarded a DSO and decorated by France.⁶⁴ He was lost with all hands in the new 'K4' submarine in a collision at night in January 1918 with submarines K6 and K7. The incident was called 'The Battle of May Island'.

The fledgling Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS), later the Fleet Air Arm attracted eight ODs of whom one was killed in action, another died in a fatal flying accident while a third died of meningitis.⁶⁵

The other area involving combatants were the members of the Royal Flying Corps, later the Royal Air Force (RAF) from 1st April 1918. During World War I it attracted 45 ODs although not all were pilots or observers. Nevertheless, their casualty rate was alarmingly high.⁶⁶ All were volunteers. Four were killed in action; another died of wounds as a Prisoner-of-War (POW) and a sixth died of pneumonia on active service. A further eight were wounded, making 14 casualties in all. Six became POWs. A flavour of the wartime

⁶³ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.6.

⁶⁴ *Decanian*, pp.287-8.

⁶⁵ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.6.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

airman's life was given by Lt. George J. Malcolm, MC, RFC. In a letter to the Headmaster dated 4 March 1915, he described his aerial reconnaissance role. He wrote: 'I am piloting an 80hp Bleriot parasol monoplane. The machine is a single-seater, and is equipped with a wireless telegraphy transmitting set. The great drawback to it is the activity of the German anti-aircraft guns – universally named 'Archies'- as one gives them a rather good target circling round all the time.'⁶⁷ He was very enthusiastic, and later on in his letter, Malcolm remarked:

'Many thanks for the Magazine [*The Decanian*] – it is a topping good list [referring to the list of over 200 OD War volunteers given in the February 1915 edition] and there will be a lot of fellows in it who will *really* distinguish themselves when the show starts in May...' ⁶⁸

This was possibly a reference to the Second Battle of Ypres that began at the end of April 1915. Having won his MC, been Mentioned-in-Despatches and wounded, all in 1915, Malcolm became commander of 20 Squadron as a major. He was killed on 9th July 1916 – a few days after the start of the Somme offensive. Again there is the reminder of Hagermann's concept of the 'Hero-martyr'. However, the end of Malcolm's letter is interesting in its Athleticist enthusiasm and its positive anticipation of the contributions that ODs would be bound to make once they reached the Front. In printing it,

⁶⁷ A 'wireless telegraphy set' was a primitive radio so 'up to the moment' that few aeroplanes had them. *Decanian*, June 1915, p.18.

⁶⁸ *Decanian*, June 1915, p.19.

The Decanian, too, was seeking to be positive about the War.

Two OD pilots of the Royal Flying Corps were deemed 'air aces' because they won five victories or more in aerial combat. Lt. Roger Hay, MC, of 48 Squadron was one, but he was subsequently wounded and died in a POW Camp. The second was Lt Henry Crowe MC, who achieved eight victories. In April 1918, after one aerial combat he crash landed, eased himself out of the cockpit and walked back to base. He eventually became an Air Commodore in World War II. Again, as the contributions of men such as Malcolm, Hay and Crowe are examined, there is much that serves as a reminder of Meyer's concept of 'heroic' masculinity. In it, men associated themselves with and were a part of the battlefield and the homosocial society of the military.⁶⁹ There are, too, echoes of games field masculinities – the perception of victories leading to entry to a particularly exclusive group – the 'air aces', a little like public school 'colours' for sporting achievement, leading to particular 'martial masculinity'.⁷⁰ Further, there is also an element of Hagemann's masculinities that accept the real possibility of dying for one's country and thus becoming a 'warrior hero'.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Meyer, *Men of War*, p.2.

⁷⁰ E. Riedi, and Tony Mason, ' " Leather and the Fighting Spirit": Sport in the British Army in World War I' *Canadian Journal of History* XLI, Winter, 2006, particularly p.496 but also pp. 485-516.

⁷¹ Hagemann, Karen: 'German Heroes: The Cult of the Death for the Fatherland in Nineteenth-Century Germany', in *Masculinities in Politics and War*, ed. by S, Dudink, K. Hagemann and J. Tosh (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp.116-7.

It takes a particular type of courage to be prepared to face the enemy using comparatively 'cutting edge' technology, such as the K4 submarine and the aeroplanes of World War I used not only at the front but by the RNAS, too. Safety levels were low while an error or confrontation with the enemy meant that death was highly likely. Clearly, not all ODs who joined the Royal Navy or Royal Flying Corps were exposed to the same risks. Even so, some died, such as Royal Marine Light Infantryman Lieutenant Harold Walker, who was drowned with 900 others when his ship, *HMS Good Hope*, was sunk in the Battle of Coronel off the coast of Chile in November 1914.⁷² Whether or not they survived the war, those who contributed to the war effort other than in armies clearly demonstrated the same qualities of 'manliness' as defined by Kingsley.

OD Support Arms in the Army

Not all ODs involved in World War I were combatants, yet if gallantry awards are any measure, those that were non-combatant did not lack 'manliness' however perceived. Forty ODs joined The Royal

⁷² *Decanlan*, June 1915, pp.1-2. See also Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p.45. *HMS Good Hope* was Flagship of 4th Cruiser Squadron (Rear Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock) His ships were slower and out gunned by the German cruiser squadron under Vice Admiral von Spee.

Engineers incorporating the Royal Signals.⁷³ In terms of acknowledged courage, this OD contingent received eleven gallantry medals and at least a further five Mentions-in -Despatches.⁷⁴ ODs that used their skills in the Army, notably the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC), numbered 23. They won seven gallantry medals, notably Major Arthur Richmond who won the MC and Bar. They were also awarded nine Mentions-in -Despatches. One of them was Captain Henry Freat, RAMC, an eye surgery specialist. A married man when he volunteered, he was sent to a hospital in Alexandria, Egypt in 1916, where he caught TB⁷⁵ Having partly recovered, he was sent to Salonika and later the Caucasus. Although he later convalesced in Switzerland, he died from TB early in 1922. Here again was a man of whom little was said, even in *The Decanian*. In volunteering, clearly returning to duty before fully fit and working until the end of the war, he had endangered his own life for others. The precepts of manliness were evidently a part of his life.

Seventeen ODs were Chaplains to the Forces, including two with New Zealand Forces and one with the Indian Expeditionary Force. Robert Graves' dismissive picture of them in his autobiographical '*Goodbye to All That*' published in 1929 was '...frequently quoted as

⁷³ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*, p. 4.

⁷⁴ C.E. Whitney, *Distinguished Old Decanians*, (Cheltenham: Dean Close School, 2017) pp. 15-18.

⁷⁵ *Decanian*, June 1915, P8.

the standard verdict...' according to Alan Wilkinson.⁷⁶ Yet Wilkinson has pointed out that such Anglican Chaplains, unlike the Roman Catholic and other denomination padres, were ordered to avoid the fighting, a point amplified by Professor Guy Chapman of Leeds University, who served in the trenches in World War I. In his book '*A Passionate Prodigality*' published in 1933, he wrote that;

The Church of England forbade [their clergy] forward of Brigade Headquarters, and though many, realizing the fatal blunder of such an order, came [forward] just the same, the publication of that injunction had its effect.⁷⁷

Anglican Chaplains, faced by men who saw them as virtually irrelevant, ignored orders and were active in the front line. Paul Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* says of *Goodbye to All That* that Graves' book is '...a satire, built out of anecdotes heavily influenced by the techniques of stage comedy...'.⁷⁸ Perhaps Graves' remarks are somewhat overblown and Wilkinson's reaction a little too sensitive. The best-known OD Chaplain was the Revd. Victor Tanner who won the Military Cross and Bar for conspicuous bravery under fire.⁷⁹ Another OD Chaplain, the Revd. Rowland Dodd, also won an

⁷⁶ Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and The First World War*, (London: SCM Press, 1978: 1996 ed.), p.111.

⁷⁷ Guy P. Chambers, *Echoes of War: A Passionate Prodigality: Fragments of Autobiography*, (London: MacGibbon and Kee Ltd, 1965 ed.), p.117.

⁷⁸ Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 206-7.

⁷⁹ *Decanion*, November 1918, the award of the Bar to his MC, p.32; details of his active

MC.⁸⁰ Two other OD Chaplains were wounded and another became a POW. Arthur Wilcox, barely old enough to be ordained, volunteer and be a Chaplain to the Forces by October 1915, was a POW by Easter 1916 in Asia Minor near Angora.⁸¹ He later proved his own gallantry by winning a Mentioned-in-Despatches twice and becoming deputy Chaplain General in World War II. It is evident that for a large minority, possibly a majority of OD Chaplains, being with the men in the front line was where they felt they should be. Given that their School embraced Christian manliness, they would have agreed with Vance that Kingsley, Hughes and others of the mid-Victorian period were right when they felt 'manliness' was synonymous with strength, both physical and moral.⁸²

In a letter to the Headmaster dated 21 April 1915, OD the Revd. W. Money was working away from the front line, at a British Expeditionary Force Hospital in France, and speaking with large numbers of troops. He commented, 'if any one says Christianity is played out let him come here and he will quickly alter his opinions. Never have I seen men in large numbers so unselfish, so noble, so quietly and patiently bearing hardships, wounds, loss of chums, all for their country's sake.'⁸³ It is noticeable that among the many

⁸⁰ *Decanian*, March 1918, p.289, though no details are given. See also March 1919, p.79.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, October 1916, p.203.

⁸² Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit*, pp. 11-13, 26-28.

⁸³ *Decanian*, June 1915, pp 21-22

virtues that Money mentioned among the men, all were consistent with Christian manliness. The casualties of whom Money spoke had been wounded at Mons, Le Cateau or possibly the Marne. In including that quotation, both Money himself and *The Decanian's* editor, Thomas Cooper, were perhaps seeking to encourage not just other ODs elsewhere in the services but also School pupils.

There were other non-combatants, such as those few ODs in the Army Pay Corps. However, it should not be suggested that such soldiers were any less 'manly' or courageous than someone in the trenches. A senior army officer, a World War II veteran decorated for bravery, once observed that bravery or courage is not an absolute. It depends upon circumstances, not upon physique or character type. Someone might be brave at one point in a day but not at another. He had seen big, powerful men show reluctance to act in the field while someone else, perhaps slightly built, display remarkable acts of self-sacrifice and bravery. You could never tell how people would perform under fire until the moment for action arrived.⁸⁴

There were also some ODs who volunteered to help in a non-combatant role before joining the Armed services. Such a person was C.L. Hare, who served with the Red Cross in the Duchess of Westminster's hospital in France before joining the Royal Field

⁸⁴ Brigadier-General James Rundall, OBE, MC, RA, in conversation with Charles Whitney, c. 2001.

Artillery.

OD Support Other than in the Army

There were comparatively few OD non-combatants in the Armed Services who were not in the Army. However, there were five naval surgeons, of whom one was Surgeon-Lt C. Avarne, RN. Writing to the Headmaster in April 1915 he discussed his ship, *HMS Goliath*.⁸⁵ He was on board during the bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam and afterwards took part in the blockade of the German light cruiser *Konigsberg* on the East coast of Africa at the mouth of the R. Rufiji, which he referred to as 'a most noisome pest-hole.' He wrote, 'The hot air was vapour-sodden and pestilential. Wounds which should have taken only a day or two to heal there remained open for weeks. Malaria I came to look upon as a minor ailment; with beri-beri I could do nothing. Cases of smallpox occurred, although earlier in the voyage I had vaccinated all the officers and crew.' It is evident from this that 'manliness' involved withstanding trials not entirely driven by war. Eventually, *HMS Goliath* moved to Mombasa and Lt Avarne's immediate problems were over.

⁸⁵ *Decanian*, June 1915, pp.2-24. *HMS Goliath*, commissioned in 1900, was a pre-Dreadnought battleship. It was sunk in the Dardenelles in 1915 soon after Lt Avarne left it. Over 500 men were lost. The *Konigsberg*, launched in 1906, was eventually scuttled.

ODs Who did War Work but were not in the Forces.

There were comparatively few in this category. One was P.H. Earle, who began a marine engineering apprenticeship in 1914 before the War.⁸⁶ There is no query or comment in *The Decanian* or elsewhere about his work. A letter sent to Edward Ellam in 1916, reprinted in *The Decanian*, detailed Earle's daily timetable. He built engines for warships, and manufactured guns and ammunition. Almost certainly he had to 'attest', that is, declare readiness to fight for his country under the Lord Derby scheme in November 1916. It would have been difficult for him to have left under the Munitions Act, 1915. However, his skills being needed, he would have been exempted conscription.⁸⁷ Every week- day, he worked from 6.00 am to 5.00 pm with 90 minutes for meal breaks. Three evenings a week, he went to night school from 7.00 pm to 9.30 pm. There are only four other ODs known to have been employed in similar war work, all older than Earle. Henry Vick and Hubert Flower were also building ships.⁸⁸ Dr Oswald Silberrad was the Superintendent, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, who developed TNT for high explosive use and invented flashless powder for howitzers. Finally, Edward Talbot, later knighted, was

⁸⁶ *Decanian*, October 1916, pp.197-8.

⁸⁷ Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, reissued second ed., 2006), pp. 99-100, 116-7. B.H. Liddell Hart, in his *History of the First World War* (London: Cassell and Co., 1934: this ed., Book Club Associates, 1973) pp.193-4, notes the 'neglect to organise the industrial resources of the country' before and at the beginning of World War I and the problems that flowed from that.

⁸⁸ Whitney, *We Will Remember Them*. See Footnote 3 on p.3.

Deputy Director of Scientific Research, Ministry of Supply. While those five ODs may not have been engaged in martial Christian manliness, nevertheless it could be suggested that their contribution equated with a Coleridgean view of Christian manliness. This was discussed earlier, based on the Second Epistle General of Peter, Chapter One, embracing, virtue, knowledge and manly energy rather than having to physically 'fight valiantly' as in Carlyle.⁸⁹ While these five men did not face similar dangers as those in the armed forces – although marine engineering, armaments and munitions manufacture and experimentation were not without risk – nevertheless, their contribution to the war effort was essential.

Conclusion

The contribution of *The Decanian* was evident from a study of ODs and their recruitment and record in World War I. *The Decanian* also included extracts from letters written by those at the front to the Headmaster and other teachers. From these can be gleaned something of the state of mind of the writers which was found to vary from those who were appalled at what was happening to those who were quite excited.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 1 of this thesis.

Statistics presented in this chapter showed that the contribution that the School made to the total of those who volunteered to join the Armed Forces in World War I was broadly equivalent to other public schools of similar size and age. The findings were also similar when it came to those former pupils who died as the result of the war.

This chapter has also shown how combatant and non-combatant ODs responded to front-line situations as well as ODs who were not in uniform seen against concepts of Masculinities and Christian manliness. While those mentioned can only be seen as a representative sample, nevertheless it has shown that the ODs involved were all displaying elements if not the totality of what Kingsley and Hughes defined as Christian Manliness. It has shown, too, that some ODs continued to participate in the War as a matter of duty, a key part of Christian Manliness, even when they were questioning how it was that the War itself was occurring.

CONCLUSIONS

While there have been studies previously concerning public schools and World War I, this is a case study about a specifically Evangelical Christian public school in that context. The study focused on Dean Close School, Cheltenham, and the role played in this instance by its school magazine, *The Decanian*, especially in terms of the influences and values that affected volunteering for the war.

The influences that brought about the opening of Dean Close School were not only to be found within Evangelicalism but also owed something to Christian Socialism and also Christian manliness. Further, Dean Close School was part of an informal grouping of Evangelical public schools. While they were broadly similar in ethos and approach and co-operative at an individual level, they found working together at institutional level sufficiently challenging that they never formalized the grouping. Although what these difficulties were was never articulated in writing, possible differences in educational, doctrinal or scriptural nuances could have been perceived by them at the time as matters of sufficient importance that working closely together was not thought a practical idea.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ For an example of a nuanced difference in approach between Weymouth College and Dean Close School, see Chapter 1 Page 39 footnote.

As an Evangelical Christian School, the impact of World War I was that while the School was in favour of peaceful solutions where possible, it supported the decision to go to war as being a 'just war' in Christian terms as set out by St Thomas Aquinas. As the war progressed, the impact was seen in the School in the considerable interest in those who had enlisted, noted by *The Decanian*. The magazine printed nothing specifically anti-war. It was implicit in its support rather than explicit. This was achieved through reporting extra time given to Officer Training Corps (OTC) activities, full reports on speakers in favour of the war who visited the School and the extension of pages given to war news. *The Decanian* printed extracts from letters from the front line to the Headmaster and other staff. Visits from ODs in the Armed Forces were positively reported.

Masculinities and manliness, particularly Christian manliness, provided insights against which to see actions of ODs covered by this thesis. Christian manliness was also a yardstick against which to measure the School. Christian manliness included Coleridgean views that juxtaposed 'gentleness' on one hand and the ability to 'fight the good fight' on the other. There were Arnoldian concepts of religious and moral principle, gentlemanly conduct and intellectual ability. Christian manliness also drew on Kingsleyan notions of physical strength, love of family, admiration, understanding and love for the natural world as well as devotion to the service of God and humanity.

There were instances of such beliefs and behaviour being perceived both within Dean Close School and on the battlefield.⁹¹

It is clear from evidence supplied by *The Decanian* that the ethos and underlying principles within the curriculum at Dean Close School were of an explicitly Evangelical nature. However, the 'liberal Evangelical teaching' to which the Headmaster, Dr Flecker, referred seemed very similar if not identical to notions of Christian manliness explored in this thesis.

One of the key reasons that the Evangelical Christian ethos ran consistently throughout Dean Close School was that Dr Flecker was committed to it himself. During his Headship, almost everything that happened in the School was either at his wish or with his agreement as he was highly resistant to any delegation or devolution of his authority. He would brook no dissent.

The ethos of Dean Close School required that the injunction 'Love God and your neighbour' was taken seriously. Serving God might well be seen as helping to defeat Germany. Helping your neighbour – Belgium – was seen as being neighbourly even though the treaty 'obligations' might be questionable to some. The concept of obedience to seniors was an important part of the ethos and this was

⁹¹ Within Dean Close School, see Chapter 2, footnotes 50 and 52. On the battlefield, see Chapter 3 footnote 31.

clearly significant in the context of World War I, whether seen at the individual combatant level or right up to national direction. The Protestant work ethic had its importance, too. Playing hard, in the context of playing team games, also underlined the importance of physical well-being as well as subjugating self, selflessness and self-discipline in order to play as an effective team member whether as captain or player.

The broad school curriculum at Dean Close School, like many other public schools, encouraged patriotism through studying British History and Empire-sympathetic Geography. English teaching tended to emphasize the perceived romanticism of warfare, seen through Tennyson's Arthurian Legend and the books of authors such as Henty and Rider Haggard. Further romantic war perceptions together with qualities of valour, stoicism, preparedness to die for a perceived good cause and again the principles of duty, selflessness and self-discipline in life and in war were all internalized by pupils from Classics and Ancient History. This was reinforced by the way public schools, including Dean Close School, were run, especially on the games field. Classics and Ancient History also offered a blue-print for what was perceived by public schools as successfully running an Empire. These topics, values and qualities were supported and reinforced by Christianity as expressed through Church/Chapel services and other Christian activities.

Social Darwinism expressed as Athleticism became pronounced at some public schools at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. It inculcated many of the values admired by Christian manliness, such as strength and agility, but without the faith and spirituality and therefore distinctive motivation. At Dean Close School, while games became increasingly important, the growth of Athleticism's influence was countered by the all-pervading influence of the Evangelical Christian approach and Christian manliness. This all prepared boys at Dean Close School – possibly conditioned them – to wanting to volunteer for the Colours at the first opportunity when war broke out. In the recruiting rooms and on the front line, Christian manliness and Athleticism, in both cases backed up by the broad curricula of public schools in general, inculcated the qualities and attitudes to life and war that were what those running the British war effort so badly wanted to see in recruits.

The evidence presented in this study suggests that former pupils of Dean Close School and, to a certain extent, four other like-minded schools, were eager to volunteer for service in very roughly equal numbers to those in less evangelical public schools. It also suggests that ODs who volunteered or were conscripted died in very similar proportions to those from other public schools.

The Decanian clearly did its best to gather in as much information as possible with regard to recruitment, deployment, who had won gallantry awards and medals, who had been promoted and who had been killed or wounded. Initially, the first war issue in February 1915 was mildly jingoistic with its printing of the Flecker version of the National Anthem. It seemed to be adroitly encouraging ODs to join up on the 'come and join what everyone else is doing' principle by printing a list of those known to have already volunteered. It seems to have deliberately set out to be an instrument of communication between the School and ODs at the front in both directions.

The Decanian seemed somewhat restrained in its reporting of casualties but that had changed to greater realism by June 1915. Dean Close School was comparatively small in comparison to some other public schools, and its resources were decidedly meagre, yet it discovered something about, and reported on, over 85% of those ODs known to have been caught up in the hostilities. While its record on reporting those who were wounded is uncertain at best, nevertheless it managed to find out and publish details of the passing of nearly 90% of those known to have died as a result of the War. In many instances the announcement was accompanied by tributes from Commanding Officers, Chaplains, colleagues or friends whose remarks often gave helpful insights into the character of the person who had died. Communications and information generally were

largely either by letter or via the press. Much of what was learnt was during the stress of battle when observations could be inaccurate, perceptions distorted and situations change swiftly. Nevertheless, the vast majority of the factual information presented by *The Decanian* has been shown to have been accurate subsequently.

What cannot be measured is the individual OD's attitudes and behaviour towards other combatants and non-combatants set against those from other public schools and institutions.

Correspondence from the front line as revealed in *The Decanian* found ODs with a range of attitudes regarding the War. Comments of others on ODs in the front line also reported in *The Decanian* showed good and often exemplary behaviour. However, how selective those comments were is clearly open to question.

In acting as a key method of communication between ODs, the School, staff and pupils still there, *The Decanian* had an important supportive role in the War. It reported, usually without comment, presentations, such as that by Miss Hawley of the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organization, who emphatically supported the war.⁹² The Revd William Temple's talk that the war was justified and that it was 'a Christian duty to take part' was reported sympathetically.⁹³ Yet even on that occasion, no independent

⁹² *Decanian* June 1915, pp. 25 – 27.

⁹³ *Decanian*, June 1916, pp. 161-2.

comment was offered.

Notwithstanding the constant reports of deaths of those who until recently had been familiar faces at the School, the morale boost of receiving editions of *The Decanian* to those in the trenches must have been significant. This was because through it, Dr Flecker, the Headmaster who had been a key influence in all Decanian school careers, was able to speak to them. One clear example was in January 1918 when, unveiling a monument to one of the fallen, William Gardner, in the 'Temporary Chapel', Flecker said;

And since I know that these few words of mine will be read by Old Boys in the trenches [...] I take the opportunity of sending them in the name of us all an earnest affectionate message of love and gratitude and pride. You can scarcely realize how deep is our interest in you, how constantly we think of you, how thankful we are for you, and how we never tire of praying for you.⁹⁴

To what extent *The Decanian* encouraged Decanians to sign up for the war is unclear as it did not shrink from detailing some grim aspects of what was occurring. However, its use as a communicator and morale booster to those already in the field probably cannot be over-estimated.

⁹⁴ *Decanian*, March 1918, pp 294-5. Flecker's words were at the conclusion of Morning Service on Sunday 27th January 1918.

The evidence also suggests that the Evangelical Christian stance of the School did not appear to significantly affect Services recruitment on the one hand, nor conduct in battle on the other when seen against the World War I experience of other schools. This was because Dean Close School's Evangelicalism and Christian manliness in general were similar to each other. Dean Close School put its Christian stance alongside its wholesale promotion of the public school curriculum in its widest sense other than acceptance of Athleticism. The cumulative effect of values taught in English, Ancient History, Classics, Geography, History, Sport, Library reading and OTC activities seem little affected by what occurred in Chapel and other School Christian groups, other than to confirm values already being inculcated. Therefore, it is perhaps less than surprising that Dean Close School's contribution and sacrifice in World War I is so similar to other public schools whose Christian ethos may not have been so clearly pronounced.

This case study has shown that the influences and values of an Evangelical Christian public school as expressed in *The Decanian* tended to be implicit rather than explicit but that they were real nonetheless. Such influences and values were a factor informing volunteering for World War I which was firmly supported. The contribution of *The Decanian* was not only informative to those at

School but also morale boosting to ODs in the front line. *The Decanian* has also proven invaluable to anyone seeking to have insights into how it was that so many ODs offered themselves to the Armed Services at the beginning of World War I.

The Christian values and influences on ODs as evident from *The Decanian* showed above all that ODs were serious in wishing to do what they perceived as their duty when it came to World War I. This was whatever their views on the War itself and whatever the cost to them, a direct result of their education and inculcation at Dean Close School.

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