Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain

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With the outbreak of World War I, the novelist and playwright John Galsworthy struggled to comprehend its "monstrous calamity and evil" and to decide what his role in the war effort should be. He confided to his diary that "the heart searchings of this War are terrible . . . I think and think what is my duty."1 For the next four years, Galsworthy tried to answer this question. The mangled and immobilized bodies returning home seemed to mock his conviction that the Allies were fighting a war to defend freedom and played powerfully on his imagination and conscience. In the spring of 1918, he finally found a way to reconcile his hatred for war with his duty to serve his country: he agreed to edit a small journal for the Ministry of Pensions about and for disabled soldiers, Recalled to Life, which he renamed Reveille. He would use it to awaken the nation to its obligations to the war wounded.

Granted complete editorial liberty (or so he believed) and generous funding by the ministry, Galsworthy was determined that Reveille would be no mere mouthpiece to disseminate reassuring platitudes. (See Figure 1.) In addition to soliciting articles by experts on disability, he enlisted an extraordinary array of artistic talent and transformed the publication of an obscure technical journal on military orthopedics and disability pensions into a minor literary event.2 Galsworthy's passionate introductory editorial is perhaps the journal's most remarkable docu-

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2 Contributors included Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, and Edith Wharton. Soon after the release of its first number in August 1918, all 30,000 copies sold out.
Figure 1: This image captures the tone of the journal, *Reveille*, which passionately argued for the rights of disabled veterans and refused to gloss over their problems at home. The implications of the veteran’s amputation are amplified by the darkly satanic scene in the background in which the industrial labor depicted demands the use of both arms—and hence underscores the veteran’s exclusion from such work. *Reveille*, 1 (August 1918), opposite p. 39.

ment, not the least because of its bleak candor at a time when the war’s outcome was still uncertain. “In every street, on every road and village-green we meet them—crippled, half crippled, or showing little outward trace, though none the less secretly deprived of health,” he observed. Those who encouraged such men
to "drift" into shiftless despair were "guilty of ingratitude, and will be the first to show impatience and heartlessness, when, five or ten years hence, we see him cumbering the ground, hopeless and embittered, often out of work, and always an eyesore to a nation which will wish to forget there ever was this war." Galsworthy predicted that even the zeal and energy of men and women on Local Committees overseeing the care of disabled veterans in their communities "will rapidly evaporate when the war is over and we are no longer in danger, and moreover have become troubled by a new crop of economic difficulties." "Human memory is very short," Galsworthy sadly confessed, "and human gratitude not too long."

For Galsworthy, the fate of Britain's disabled war veterans was linked to the intertwined politics of remembering and forgetting the war itself. (See Figure 2.) He keenly appreciated the fact that the maimed bodies of countless soldiers signified the ambiguities of the end of war for victors and losers alike, or, rather, that the official cessation of hostilities between nations did not coincide with the end of war's consequences for its victims.

Societies in Western Europe and North America, not just Great Britain, attempted to accommodate the political and emotional demand to memorialize those who sacrificed their lives or limbs for the country. At the same time, postwar reconstruction required that societies allow themselves to forget the wounds of war so that these could begin to close, to be concealed. In some sense, many acts of remembering war are fundamentally dishonest. By materializing memory in statues and parks, we satisfy our sentimental and nationalist cravings and allow ourselves to displace bodily pain and ignore the presence of the tens of thousands of disabled victims of wars.

The British state and society constructed institutions and discourses that allowed them simultaneously to remember and forget, depending on political circumstances, two classes of ostensibly unrelated persons: child victims of crippling poverty-related illness at home and adult male victims of the battlefields of Europe and empire. The deformed children of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Britain and the tens of thousands of men who returned home from the battlefronts of World War I permanently disabled, many lacking arms and legs, were dismembered persons in a literal sense but also in a social, economic, political, and sexual sense.

I have not adopted a double focus on crippled children and soldiers out of a playful sense of analogy or fondness for metaphor. To my great surprise, the histories of these two groups of disabled persons are often so closely interwoven that the one cannot be fully understood without the other. The war produced unique historical and representational convergences between crippled children and wounded soldiers. However, there are also surprising continuities and similarities between wartime images and policies for wounded soldiers and pre-war rhetorical conventions and programs for crippled children.

Several literary critics, foremost among them Paul Fussell, Sandra Gilbert and

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Susan Gubar, have brilliantly explored the relationships among wounded soldiers, children, gender relations, and sexuality in terms of the discursive emasculation and homoeroticization of wounded soldiers as "soldier boys." In poems

8 See Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Soldier's Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women and
such as Wilfred Owen's "Disabled," adult male soldiers ironically are repositioned as children but children without prospects of achieving potent maturity. In much war poetry, the highest form of serving the nation and fulfilling one's obligations as a male citizen—death or dismemberment in war—is instantly translated into a loss of masculinity and a loss of full citizenship. The experience of war bitterly reimplies on wounded male soldiers the dependence, but not the innocence, of childhood.

This essay builds on but also diverges sharply from the work of literary scholars by connecting close readings of texts with the political and social histories of crippled children and wounded soldiers. The interplay of representations, politics, institutions, and social policies is central to my essay. I want to begin the process of recovering the history of two important groups of disabled people but also demonstrate how disability, as an analytic tool, can be used to illuminate issues of gender and sexuality, war and its memories, work, the body, and the nation.

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7 For several reasons, I have chosen to use the imprecise word "cripple" favored by the Victorians to describe those persons whose physical mobility was impaired by birth, disease, or accident. The term carried with it the force of sentiment and pathos that informed the way men and women confronted cripples. By using "cripple" instead of contemporary terms such as "disabled" or "handicapped" or "differently abled," I am not making a value judgment. The word "cripple" calls attention to itself as anachronistic and therefore underscores my contention that the definition of what it meant to be "crippled" evolved over time and was historically contingent. More recently, the term "cripple" has been deftly reappropriated by those to whom it has historically been applied and invested with new meanings reflecting at once a rejection of euphemism and a commitment to securing full rights of citizenship.


Much less work has been done on the history of disabled people in Great Britain. An important, broad-ranging, and thoughtful book on the history of orthopedics, Roger Cooter's Surgery and Society in Peace and War: Orthopaedics and the Organisation of Modern Medicine, 1880–1948 (Manchester, 1995), is by far the most significant contribution to this literature. Unfortunately, I have been unable to incorporate fully its provocative findings into this essay, which was completed before the book's publication. Earlier works include D. G. Pritchard's Education and the Handicapped, 1760–1960 (London, 1963), which gives a helpful overview of one area of disability policy. There are also a few institutional histories such as Joan Anderson, A Record of Fifty Years Service to the Disabled 1919–1969 by the Central Council for the Disabled (London, 1969); and Kate Rackham, Invalid Children's Aid Association: The First Ninety Years (London, 1978).

9 My ideas about deformity and disability have been influenced by several important works

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In recent years, scholars have been attentive to many of these themes, though not to their connections with disability. For example, while many have usefully studied the impact on women of the male breadwinner ideal, its implications for able-bodied and disabled men have not been explored. Most male politicians, civil servants, and reformers contrasted the welfare needs and claims of undeserving able-bodied men with those of deserving disabled men; they tended to assume that women, regardless of their actual financial contributions to their households and their work-force participation, were dependents. Social policies were consciously designed not only to exclude women but to force able-bodied men into the labor market to take on their "natural" rights and duties as heads of families. The proper policy response to the demands of disabled men defied so ready a solution. Their presence challenged Victorian ideas about masculine independence, work, citizenship, and the state's obligations to assist those who, through no failing of their own, could not provide for themselves.

This essay offers a preliminary exploration of a history that places disability and the disabled person at its center. I analyze shifts in the discourse as well as in social policy and institutional setting used to describe and assist crippled children and wounded soldiers from the 1880s until the 1930s. World War I is the pivot on which many of my arguments turn. This essay makes no attempt to offer a comprehensive survey of either crippled children or wounded soldiers. At different points in this essay, the logic of my argument leads me to focus more on one group than the other.

Children were the first category of persons to receive the "protection" of state welfare measures, beginning with Peel's Factory Act of 1802, which limited the conditions and hours of labor of Poor Law Apprentices. Although disabled and deformed children figured prominently in parliamentary inquiries into the exploitation of child labor in the 1830s and 1840s, reformers sought to protect healthy children from disabling labor, not to provide for those who were already permanently injured. Visual and written images of children maimed by industrial workplace conditions contributed to the process of pathologizing the bodies of working-class children in the nineteenth century. However, the state assumed no obligation for crippled children until the passage of the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act in 1899. Crippled children became a protected category of persons not as victims of industrial accident but within the context of broader concerns about disease. From mid-century onward, Victorian social reformers and educationists appealed to the self-interest of the nation in improving the lives of "normal" children, who, they argued, were future citizens


See Clark Nardinelli, Child Labor and the Industrial Revolution (Bloomington, Ind., 1990).

and workers. In stark contrast, they justified the training and education of "physically defective" children (called "P.D.'s" in bureaucratic reports) in the 1880s and 1890s as a cost-effective prophylaxis against a lifetime of dependence on public welfare.\(^\text{12}\)

"Defective" children first gained recognition and rights from the state as dependents, not as citizens; in the name of limited government, social discipline, and reduced spending, not humanitarianism and social justice; and inscribed within the rhetorical and ideological framework of eugenics, in which their very existence signified danger to race vitality and purity. Victorian reformers and educationists saw unmistakable evidence of race devolution in the thousands of defective slum children they discovered.\(^\text{13}\) "Cripples are but one form of slum fruit," observed Lionel Smith after a visit to the Swinton School for Cripples in Manchester in 1908. The success of doctors and philanthropists in extending the lives of the unfit had left educationists with the unwanted burden of bearing the cost of providing for them.\(^\text{14}\)

In the absence of state intervention, middle-class reformers in Victorian Britain used mixed-sex but usually female-dominated networks of private benevolence to develop and implement social welfare programs for cripples. In the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s, charitable organizations such as the Ragged School Union of the Shaftesbury Society and Dr. Barnardo's Homes sheltered cripples in the course of their rescue efforts for able-bodied poor children. But it was only in the 1880s that reformers systematically began to distinguish cripples from other groups of disabled children—the blind, deaf, idiots and imbeciles, epileptics—and create organizations solely committed to them.\(^\text{15}\) In part, this increased awareness of the existence of variously "defective" children grew out of the emergence of a national system of mandatory public education in the 1870s that forced policy makers to decide which children could be educated and under what conditions.\(^\text{16}\)

The Invalid Children's Aid Association (ICAA) and the Guilds of the Brave Poor Things were two particularly influential organizations for the welfare of crippled children to emerge in London in the 1880s and 1890s.

The Invalid Children's Aid Association began in 1888 as an offshoot of the Charity Organisation Society (COS). The COS championed a parsimonious approach to charity that substituted the personal advice of middle-class visitors in place of "outdoor relief" (benefits in cash or kind). Members of the ICAA Executive, twenty women and four men, recognized the compelling needs of morally blameless crippled children and chose to contradict COS first principles by offering material assistance: free or subsidized splints, carriages, home visits by

12 On the importance of educating cripples and on their potential disciplinary threat to society, see R. J. Lloyd, "The Education of Physically and Mentally Defective Children," Westminster Review, 159 (June 1903): 663.


15 One of the earliest examples was the Cripplegate and Christian Mission for Watercress and Flower Girls begun in the 1860s.

16 In the early 1880s, the London School Board established a committee to investigate its obligations to cripples but decided that such work lay outside the scope of its mandate. See Minutes of a meeting of the SubCommittee of the School Management Committee on the Instruction of Crippled Children, February 1881, SBL 790, Greater London Record Office.
nurses, and hospital care. As if to excuse their extraordinary actions, the ICAA explained that "sick children cannot be imposters" and therefore "what we do for [them] need never cause regret." "It is our special business," the First Annual Report declared, to plead that the invalid children "may not be forgotten."

For members of the ICAA, "not forgetting" cripples meant defining them as a distinct category of poor persons whose differences from the rest of the population justified violating their parent organization's shibboleths of self-help for the poor. By the end of the century, the ICAA had branches throughout London and other parts of England, linked together in a decentralized network overseen by the original executive committee in London.

In 1895, the ICAA established contact with the Sisters of the Wesleyan Methodist West London Mission to coordinate their efforts to relieve the suffering of cripples. "Sister Grace" was the leader of this work, which she called by the sentimental and condescending name of the Guild of Brave Poor Things. The only requirement for membership in the guild was "the possession of a suffering, crippled, deformed, or in some way maimed body," although, in practice, members were "almost all very poor as well as crippled." At the outset, the guild only met once a week for "farthing teas," games, dancing, mutual support, and limited vocational training.

Grace Hannam, the daughter of a substantial tradesman from the Sussex town of Lewes, founded the first of many Guilds of Brave Poor Things nationwide in 1893. In 1896, she transferred the guild's headquarters to the Bermondsey Settlement, where two years later she met and married a pioneering child

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17 These conflicts are recorded in detail in the Executive Committee Minute Books, Invalid Children's Aid Association Archives, London. See Volume 1, March 13, 1894, for an extended analysis of the disagreements between the ICAA and the COS.


20 The name, Guild of the Brave Poor Things, remained a point of contention for years, as local branches felt it was too maudlin and misrepresented the character of their work. One investigator for the Charity Organisation Society noted, "The title is enough to prejudice any reasonable people." C. S. Loch, COS secretary, to Le Marchant, May 26, 1906, COS Archives, Family Welfare Association, A/FWA/C/D279/1, Greater London Record Office. The Kingston Branch finally changed its name in 1907, despite the unease of the Executive Council. See Minutes of Governing Body, Executive Council and Committees, March 22, 1907, Archives of Chalae Heritage, HB 121/1, East Sussex Record Office.


22 For the COS's harsh assessment of the guild, see Ella Holmes to COS, June 2, 1904, COS Archives, Family Welfare Association, A/FWA/C/D279/1, Greater London Record Office.

23 Juliana Horatia Ewing's tale The Story of a Short Life (London, 1889) gave Kimmis inspiration for the guild and later for Chalae. The story follows the tragic life of a wealthy but badly crippled boy, Leonard, who learns what it means to be brave from a soldier recipient of the Victoria Cross, presumably himself the victim of a disabling act of heroism. Thus Ewing's story participates in the circulation of disability between children and soldiers (see below).

Obscure today, Dame Grace was a much-honored (C.B.E., 1927; D.B.E., 1950) and admired figure in her lifetime. Initial supporters of the Guild of the Brave Poor Things included Millicent Fawcett and Emmeline Pethick and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, leading advocates of women's suffrage. Royal family members were devoted supporters of Chalae in the interwar years. Her admiring obituary in The Times declared, in reference to Chalae, that "no great charity in British history has had warmer or more generous support, or a greater variety of well-wishers." London Times, March 4, 1954.
psychologist, Dr. Charles Kimmins. Grace Kimmins flatly rejected the vision of cripples as shameful and useless products of race degeneration. The guilds insisted that cripples could be taught to overcome their disabilities and achieve self-respect and independence.

In 1903, Grace Kimmins left South London to establish the Heritage Craft Schools and Hospital at Chailey in the Sussex countryside. She likened Chailey to Eton, Harrow, and Rugby and insisted that it was the "public school of crippledom." The school and hospital were ambitious and innovative attempts to integrate recreation, education, and vocational training of the disabled with advanced ideas about medical care, including open-air and light therapies, new forms of orthopedic treatment, and physical rehabilitation through dance and play therapies.

By any standards, Chailey was an extraordinary success. Like most initiatives in the welfare of crippled children, it offered not intellectual but vocational skills such as caning, leather work, weaving, cobbling, wood carving, and other handicrafts that, it was hoped, would enable children to compete in the workplace. Training at Chailey combined the ideals of handicraft associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement with widely shared Victorian notions about work as a cure for social and economic ills. The process of producing work and its impact on the worker were as important as the production of salable commodities. Reformers expected work to benefit cripples in several different but interconnected ways. Physically, work was occupational therapy to unlock and develop bodily powers; economically, it was thought to promise cripples financial independence; morally, it promoted the self-help essential to combat self-pity.

In investigating the causes of crippling in late Victorian Britain, reformers were startled to discover that most cripples were not born physically impaired but that their impairments were produced by chronic poverty and its attendant endemic childhood diseases, such as tuberculosis, marasmus, and rickets. Reformers began to challenge the notion that the term "cripple" was a natural category describing a person suffering from a preordained physical disability. Instead, welfare advocates from the 1890s onward increasingly recognized the term cripple and the people it described as a loosely defined, socially constructed category. This shift in perception was part of a larger trend away from explana-

24 A leading London County Council bureaucrat, Charles's contacts with fellow educationists proved very helpful for advancing his wife's work for crippled children. See Minutes of Governing Body of Chailey Heritage, Executive Council, HB 121/1, East Sussex Record Office.
25 A middle-class spinster, Alice Rennie, helped Kimmins in this venture. While Rennie was officially Kimmins's equal partner, her role at Chailey remains shadowy since very little about her survives in reports and correspondence.
26 These included Dr. Barnardo's Children's Fold and the Manchester and Salford Crippled Children's Help Society, begun in the 1880s, the St. Crispin's workshop founded by the Women's University Settlement in 1894, and the Schools for Invalid Children established by Mrs. Humphry Ward in 1898.
27 These diseases were not wholly class-specific and sometimes claimed well-to-do children. But their incidence among the children of the poor was striking.
28 This attitude had been widely, albeit sympathetically, popularized by Charles Dickens. For analysis of Dickens' cripples as "emblems of inevitable fate," see C. P. Gasquone, "The Cripple in Literature," Cripples' Journal, 1, no. 3 (October 1925): 98.
tions of social problems that focused on innate or moral failings of individuals, toward ones that focused on social, environmental, and epidemiological factors.

If cripples were made, welfare advocates reasoned, then they could also be remade. Grace Kimmins prominently displayed a sign painted by an armless boy proclaiming "Men Made Here" and frequently used photographs of him making this sign in publicity materials. The sign thus doubled as a means of conveying her message and as proof of the efficacy of her programs. In making men, Kimmins's goal was to transform her boy graduates into productive members of the work force and society. Although girl cripples were admitted to Chailey within a few years of its founding, their presence did little to alter the overwhelmingly masculine character of both the institution and its self-representations to the public. And, while the children were trained apart from their able-bodied peers, Kimmins aimed to minimize their sense of being abnormal and to integrate them into society.

The issue of integrating or segregating crippled children from their peers was hotly debated from the 1890s onward and was closely linked to perceptions of cripples as similar to but also different from normal people. The renowned child rescuer Dr. Thomas Barnardo believed "it disadvantageous to fill a house only with children who are deformed or crippled" and instead "mingle[d] them with hale children." But his views were exceptional. After the passage of the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act granting local governments permission to set up special schools for cripples, most reformers favored segregation over integration. The terms of the act virtually required segregation by defining "defective children" as children who "by reason of physical or mental defect are incapable of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in the ordinary public elementary schools." A network of publicly managed and funded schools devoted exclusively to physically defective children developed rapidly after 1899.

Letitia Fairchild, a lifelong activist on public health issues, explained the rationale for segregating children: "We have got to help the child forget he is a cripple but he can only forget if we remember." Fairchild's words seem purposefully confused. After all, segregation in "P.D." schools allowed most people to forget cripples by placing them out of view. A leading promoter of segregated schools underlined this point: "the public conscience has failed to grasp the case [of defective children] chiefly because so many of these unfortunates live entirely out of sight." Institutional segregation reinforced perceptions

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32 Letitia Fairchild, untitled article, Cripples' Journal, 1, no. 4 (April 1925): 286. Rebecca West's remarkable older sister, Fairchild was both a medical doctor and a lawyer.
of cripples as different from and inferior to normal children, even as it galvanized the development of specialized technologies and curricula for them.

Scattered evidence suggests that policy makers' preferences to support segregated schools for cripples and, whenever possible, to place cripples apart from their families in residential facilities such as Chailey reflected elite cultural biases. Margaret Loane, a Queen's Nurse, insisted that attitudes toward "personal deformity" were touchstones of larger cultural differences between the classes. The poor indulged crippled children, even "boasted" of them, and made them the center of family life. In any case, most poor households lacked space and privacy to hide a deformed child from view. Among the elite, Loane explained, congenital defects and "disfigurement or loss of limb, even if the result of a wound received in battle or in the attempt to save life," were viewed as disgraceful. The rich closeted their crippled children out of shame.34 In spite of their own awareness of the social, industrial, and environmental origins of disability, advocates for the education of poor cripples often manifested this class view by tracing the origins of individual cases of disability to working-class family life, especially maternal ignorance.35 Not surprisingly, then, many reformers preferred to place children in institutions far from the corrupting influences of their families.

Contrary to Fairchild's hopes, it seems unlikely that the children were able to "forget" their disabilities even in the company of other cripples. They were reminded of their "deformities" by the physical limitations they encountered daily and by the ways in which they were asked to present themselves to the public. Cripples were deeply aware of being placed on view for the sympathy, admiration, and amazement of others. It was a recurring complaint of reformers that some working-class parents exploited their maimed children through begging to supplement family incomes.36 By and large, however, reformers' fears about the commodification and exploitation of disability more accurately reflected their own attitudes and practices than those of the poor.

Reformers were much more likely than the working-class families they condemned to display cripples to the public for financial gain, albeit for benevolent

34 Margaret Loane, The Next Street but One (London, 1907), 5–6. See also A. Elkin, "The Invalid Schools of the L.C.C.," Charity Organisation Review (October 1906): 189. See Frances Hodgson Burnett, The Secret Garden (New York, 1987), first published in 1911, for a classic literary description of a disabled child hidden by his wealthy father. The cultural logic linking crippled children and wounded soldiers remains so powerful that a 1987 film version of The Secret Garden directed by Alan Grint concludes with the erstwhile cripple Colin going off to war only to return as a wounded soldier to be rehabilitated once again by the love of Mary Lennox. This ending is wholly a creation of the filmmakers, since Burnett's book was written before the war had begun. (Videocassette available from Republic Pictures, 1992.)

35 For one such example, see G. Holden Pike, Pity for the Perishing: The Power of the Bible in London (London, 1884), 82.

36 On the commodification of disability, see John Law, pseud. [Margaret Harkness], Captain Lobe (London, 1891), 69–71. Slum journalists such as James Greenwood noted that sometimes beggars wore costumes to pose as disabled soldiers and solicit alms. According to his autobiography, the badly lamed Joseph Merrick (better known as the Elephant Man) believed that joining a freak show was the best way to secure his own fortunes. See The Autobiography of Joseph Carey Merrick, reprinted in Michael Howell and Peter Ford, The True History of the Elephant Man (London, 1980).
ends. Agnes Hunt, a contemporary of Grace Kimmins who pioneered orthopedic nursing for cripples at Baschurch in Shropshire\textsuperscript{37} and was herself made lame in childhood, used crippled children at her hospital as actors in a Christmas fund-raising performance of "Beauty and the Beast" in 1903. She noted later with satisfaction, "The Fairy Queen was blind and on crutches; she was guided by a pair of reins from behind the scenes."\textsuperscript{38}

While such spectacles were exceptional events at Baschurch, they were part of daily life at Chailey. Grace Kimmins had a rich background in children's theater as the author of a series of remarkable books on singing and dancing for poor children.\textsuperscript{39} Oral historical evidence indicates that the Brave Poor Things at Chailey resented being put on display to satisfy the benevolent curiosity of high society visitors whose generous donations fueled the institution's expansion.\textsuperscript{40}

The children at Chailey were constantly engaged in rehearsing theatrical and dance events intended to amuse them, encourage their physical development, and gratify financial supporters. Dance therapy and fund raising went hand in hand at Chailey. Perhaps the most stunning example of this was an elaborately staged dance concert of crippled children at the Savoy Theatre. The show was sentimentally applauded by the London press. The \textit{Daily Herald} reported, "Men coughed ... and women shed unashamed tears ... It was the climax to an extraordinary display of thwarted child grace."\textsuperscript{41} The attention that the reporter paid to the responses of the audience illuminates the audience's uncomfortable double role as spectator and participant in this event. The audience watched the cripples perform for their gratification, while the reporter captured the audience performing a role in the unfolding of the evening's drama that effaced the differences between audience and performers.

In the 1890s and 1900s, the leaders of the crippled children welfare movement claimed rights for crippled children based on their differences from "hale children" even as they struggled to provide cripples with resources that would allow them to be integrated into society. For all that Kimmins repudiated sentimentality and self-pity in her treatment of the crippled children themselves, she masterfully manipulated the sympathies of the able-bodied to excite their support for her schemes. Both Hunt and Kimmins consciously made cripples into public spectacles to raise money. Kimmins, in particular, choreographed every

\textsuperscript{37} See Agnes Hunt, \textit{This Is My Life} (London, 1938). This is a second edition of her \textit{Reminiscences} that appeared in 1935.
\textsuperscript{38} Agnes Hunt, "Baschurch and After," \textit{Cripples' Journal}, 1, no. 1 (July 1924): 22.
\textsuperscript{39} See \textit{The Guild of Play Book of Festival and Dance}, which appeared in two volumes in 1907 and 1909, \textit{The Guild of Play Book of National Dances} (1910), and the most overtly nationalist and militarist volume, the \textit{National Songs and Dances of the Allies} (1915), written during the war. The only surviving set of these books is in the Chailey Heritage Craft School Archives, Chailey, Sussex.
\textsuperscript{40} For a crippled Cockney child's perspective on Chailey and its elite visitors circa 1906, see the chapter on Tommy Morgan in Thea Thompson, ed., \textit{Edwardian Childhoods} (London, 1981), 9–35. Tommy Morgan was interviewed by Trevor Lummis in the spring of 1971. Some staff members also objected to the constant display of children. In her resignation letter, Vera Lake, headmistress of the school at Chailey, wrote that "I am strongly of the opinion that if the children were taken out for the day into the country instead of being in perpetual motion in preparation of visits from monied people, conditions would be happier." Vera Lake to Grace Kimmins, June 14, 1946, folder marked "Staff Testimonials," Chailey Heritage Craft School Archives.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Daily Herald}, June 21, 1933.
aspect of life at Chailey. Chailey was a well-intentioned carnival that simultaneously showcased and denied the bodily deformities of its students.

In the 1890s, Grace (Hannam) Kimmins had been affectionately called Sister Grace by the children of Bermondsey and Rotherhithe in South London. Around Chailey, by contrast, she was called the Commandant, a name she relished. Surviving letters and recollections of students, staff, and family suggest that many found the name an all-too-apt reflection of her uncompromising style of management. The transformation of Sister Grace into “the Commandant” is less surprising than it might at first appear. Even during her earliest days in London, Kimmins couched her efforts for cripples in unabashedly patriotic and militaristic terms. She described the Guild of Brave Poor Things as a “military-religious order” and insisted that “the flag of our religion is indeed a Union Jack, whereon the chivalry to the weak is emblazoned in letters of gold.” Kimmins shared with many other Victorian child welfare advocates a tendency to seek in the purity of childhood an antidote to the corruption of adult life. “Our great crusade,” she proclaimed, “which is war to the knife, [is] to rescue for our children their right to their childhood.”

Ada Vachell, head of the Bristol Branch of the Guild of the Brave Poor Things, was even more emphatic in likening the Brave Poor Things to soldiers:

strange as it may seem, this unwarlike company considered themselves a regiment of soldiers, and they were proud of their flag as soldiers should be proud. They were a small battalion, but they belonged to a great army of suffering ones. They had all fallen on life’s battlefield, wounded and maimed . . . [but] the sword was gripped afresh by feeble hands . . . The thought of bearing suffering as a soldier . . . meant much to the children.

What are we to make of this rhetorical refashioning of cripples into soldiers? It recalls the pervasiveness of militarist and imperialist tropes in the language of social reclamation in late Victorian Britain. Several analogies implicitly undergird the connection between cripples and soldiers: first, that the conditions of life for the poor and the impact of these conditions on the bodily integrity of their children resembled the violence of actual battlefields; second, that the suffering of cripples was commensurate in its pain and, in the dignity of its transcendence, to the heroism of wounded soldiers; finally, that the strength of

42 Her son, Anthony Kimmins, described his mother as having “little in common with my father’s retiring, happy-go-lucky way . . . she was a woman of tremendous personality and colossal drive.” Anthony Kimmins, Half Time (London, 1947), 8. Dame Grace’s papers are divided into two collections reflecting the history of the institutions she founded. Most of the hospital’s records have recently been moved to the East Sussex Record Office; the school’s archives remain at Chailey Heritage in Chailey, Sussex. Her personal correspondence runs throughout both collections.
45 Grace Hannam, Bermondsey Settlement Magazine, 2, no. 8 (November 1896): 87.
the British nation rested as much on its ability to win the wars against crippling poverty at the heart of its empire as on actual military engagements in distant corners of the globe.

The militarist imagery anticipated and deflected eugenicist criticisms of cripples as embodiments of race degeneration and national shame by linking their rehabilitation and training to patriotic duty and honor. The description of cripples as soldiers was also an effective strategy for claiming rights of social citizenship for cripples. After all, the soldier was the supreme realization of Victorian expectations about manliness and about the mutual obligations of citizens and state to one another.\textsuperscript{47} By enfolding cripples within the rhetoric of soldiering, reformers were able to offer a critique of social and economic conditions at home while at the same time emphasizing their patriotic love of country. If the cripple's brave and stoic confrontation with pain was similar to the soldier's heroism in the field of battle, then, surely, reformers argued, the cripple deserved the full rights of the citizen-soldier.

The beginning of World War I brought many changes to Chailey and to other major hospitals and schools for crippled children in Britain. By 1915, both Chailey and Agnes Hunt's Orthopaedic Hospital had become headquarters for the treatment and rehabilitation of wounded soldiers returning from the Continent.\textsuperscript{48} At these hospitals, along with many others newly established for this purpose, wounded soldiers began the arduous process of relearning the use of their bodies. Many were literally re-membered in the sense that they were fitted with prostheses and other instruments that restored some measure of physical mobility to them.\textsuperscript{49}

The treatment that wounded soldiers received at hospitals and schools for crippled children was attentive to the psychological aspects of war wounds. Kimmins believed that the vitality of crippled children would boost the morale of wounded soldiers. She paired each wounded soldier who arrived at Chailey with a crippled boy to serve as his "batman."\textsuperscript{50} This scheme received wide publicity. The American Journal of Care for Cripples published a rapturous account written by Kimmins describing a joyous homecoming in which each member of the community performed the role for which he or she was best suited. (See Figure 3.)


\textsuperscript{48} Historian Robin Kilson has examined the ways in which war wounds exempted British prisoners of war from having to justify the conditions surrounding their act of surrender at the time of their return home. In other words, a war wound served to guarantee repatriation; the uninjured were prima facie a suspect class who had to prove their valor before being granted their citizenship rights. See Robin Kilson, "The Politics of Captivity: The British State and Prisoners of War in World War I," unpublished paper presented at Social Science History Association, October 1991, New Orleans.

\textsuperscript{49} The War Office and the Ministry of Pensions developed a complex hospital-administrative structure to treat disabled men, amputees in particular. Fittings for prostheses usually took place at a few centers, foremost among them the Queen Mary Convalescent Centre at Roehampton.

\textsuperscript{50} See "Wounded Heroes Go to School with Cripples," Daily Mirror (March 15, 1915): 8.
Figure 3: This photograph captures one of the many joyous homecomings crippled children staged for wounded soldiers when they arrived at Chailey. Douglas McMurtrie, *The Disabled Soldier* (New York, 1919), frontispiece.
How the crutches of the boys tapped untiringly up and down, as the joyous orderlies to the wounded men sped hither and thither, helping, explaining, sharing; how the needles of the cripple girls flew in and out, making, mending for the men, and the laundry girls and housewifery all doing their share . . . To see the more helpless boys cleaning the wheel chairs of the men, and the whole colony positively glittering with happiness, on each face shining their Prince’s motto, “I serve,” has been one long joy and inspiration to all concerned.51

Remembering and forgetting were at the heart of this novel therapeutic relationship between men and children. In the buoyant atmosphere of Chailey, Kimmins contended, “the men have forgotten their own loss of limb and pain to a large extent in watching the children.” At the same time, however, the heroic deeds of war emphatically were not forgotten. “Many a great battle has been lived over again, trenches dug—tactics and positions explained by wounded men to breathless, open-mouthed boys—and the daily saluting of the flag and the singing of the National Anthem means much more now than could otherwise have been the case.”52 The erasure of the body in pain is thus accompanied by the production of oral narratives that glamorize war and reinforce its role in serving the patriotic needs of the nation. The enterprise of remembering and reliving battle is exclusively male. Apparently, Chailey’s crippled girls, engaged in mending for the men, were not told these stories, only the “breathless, open-mouthed boys,” who hoped to surmount their disabilities so they too might serve their country in battle.

Capitalizing on the visual images produced by war, Kimmins offered postcards to visitors depicting a wounded soldier on crutches resting on a boy, who also walks on crutches but is missing a leg. (See Figure 4.) As they look admiringly into each other’s eyes, the soldier says to the boy, “you and your buck, me lad, are the best pair of crutches for me.”53 The war, then, dramatically redefined the roles of cripples and soldiers. Now it was the soldiers who looked to the cripples for inspiration and courage. The regime at Chailey reversed the roles of children and adults by making children not the objects but the agents of rescue.

Perhaps the most insightful discussion of Chailey’s wartime work for soldiers appeared in the Sussex Express in the autumn of 1918.

War between nation and nation may cease. But the war against misfortune of mind, body, or estate must still go on . . . With disease and deformity there can be no armistice . . . If we spend thousands of millions to fight tyranny beyond the seas, can we not spare a few thousands to fight the tyranny of crippledom at home—itself to a great degree the consequence and outcome of the battles now so triumphantly concluded.54

The article explicitly likened the destruction wrought by German tyranny with those social and economic structures within Britain that produced cripples. The

51 Excerpts from Kimmins’s article were published in the Ministry of Pensions journal on disability, Recalled to Life (June 1917): 192–93.
52 Kimmins, Recalled to Life (June 1917): 192–93.
53 The word “buck” has a wide range of connotations. In this case, it primarily refers to the body or back of the child, which will “buck up” the soldier physically by holding him up or bracing him and psychologically by elevating his spirits. The term also carries heavily masculine connotations since it was commonly used to refer to male animals, especially deer.
radical critique of British society implicit in this argument could only be articulated through the concealment of an analogy that appears to be unwavering in its patriotism. It was one, however, that recurred throughout the war and in its immediate aftermath as different social groups, including workers disabled by industrial accidents, laid claim to the largesse of the state.
Rhetorical fashioning of Brave Poor Things into exemplary soldiers in the 1890s and 1900s was made all too literal in World War I. As the need for men increased and physical entrance requirements loosened, graduates of Chailey and former clients of the ICAA passed the army's inspection standards, served in battle, and gave their lives for their country. Even as wounded soldiers returned to Britain twisted by the injuries of war, Chailey continued to prepare its most physically fit boys for active service. Kimmins succeeded so well in making Brave Poor Things into whole men that twenty-eight were killed in action. Far from seeing their deaths as a negation of her efforts, Kimmins exulted in them. Their sacrifice underscored Chailey's ability to make functional the arms and legs of its children. Having rescued their bodies from the ravages of poverty, Kimmins celebrated their destruction as the realization of the highest duty and privilege of able-bodied male citizens.

The ICAA, like Kimmins, also proudly reported on the wartime exploits of the cripples it had made into soldiers. Its annual reports included separate sections on former members "on active service" and the "Roll of Honour" for those who had died for the nation. One lame sixteen-year-old boy with a tubercular knee, Walter Whitehorn, gave evidence of his "splendid courage and cheerfulness" before his heroic death at Loos.55

Not all workers on behalf of crippled children and wounded soldiers shared the ICAA's and Kimmins's sense of accomplishment. Some refused to glorify the state's right to rehabilitate the bodily resources of its citizens only to squander them in war. Frances Margaret Taylor, who trained with Agnes Hunt at the outset of World War I at the Baschurch Orthopaedic Hospital, recalled vividly "the ambulances rolling in, and the men with great gaping holes where a shell had torn their flesh away." The experience convinced Taylor that "it was frightful to cure men and send them back to that hell of trench warfare, where they lived in stinking mud, among the rats and decaying corpses, and then went 'over the top' to be machine gunned as they were caught in the barbed wire."56

At a time of feverish patriotism, however, Kimmins's response was more typical than Taylor's. Lest anyone forget Chailey's contributions to the war, Kimmins obsessively memorialized Chailey's war dead and the war itself with sculptures, a German mortar gun, and a Road or Walk of Remembrance, presumably paved for the enjoyment of the crippled residents.57 Each Armistice Day, the crippled children planted apple trees along the walk to commemorate the war dead.58 Chailey's Road of Remembrance transformed the violence and pain of war into an organic ritual of renewal and fruitfulness. The memorials aimed to inspire crippled children to achieve the glory of becoming whole men and true citizens by dying in battle.

56 Frances Margaret Taylor, "Memories," typescript memoirs, Volume 1, pp. 123–25, 126, in author's possession. My thanks to Joy Martin and Humphry Taylor for granting me access to their mother's papers.
57 The German gun also served as a trophy that symbolically transferred the masculine power of the vanquished German army to those the gun had previously helped to destroy and dismember.
58 For a rich discussion of similar memorials in Germany, see George L. Mosse, Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars (New York, 1990), 43, 87.
Robert Jones, the foremost orthopedist of his day, a renowned and long-time champion of crippled children, and the chief inspector of military orthopedics during the war, challenged the authenticity of war memorials such as those erected at Chailey. Even in the midst of the war, in 1917, he ruminated on the hollowness of most such monuments.

When the end comes and Peace is declared the cry will be for War Memorials. Is not now the time to decide on these? You do not want to wait until the dead are forgotten. Are our memorials to be spiritual or material, living and permanent, or dead and cold: For my part I have no hesitation in saying that marble or brass has no re-echoing voice in me. My feeling is, that the heroic spirit that sent our beloved dead to their end should be reflected in an equally heroic effort on our part to make and keep the nation efficient.59

For Jones, the only true way to memorialize the war dead was to guarantee the health and well-being of those who had survived. Jones's criticisms of war memorials grew out of his impatience with the War Office's treatment of the men whose wounds were so severe that they could not be returned to active duty. As the inspector of military orthopedics for the Army Medical Services, Jones had consistently demanded comprehensive treatment for the war wounded, despite opposition on grounds of economy from within the War Office.60

His vision of how "broken soldiers" should be treated, from the moment they were carried from the field of battle until their ultimate discharge back into civilian life, was profoundly molded by nearly three decades of pioneering work for crippled children.61 One newspaper succinctly remarked, "the special pre-war experience gained from many years work with crippled children is put at the service of the crippled soldier."62

The links between crippled children and wounded soldiers operated not only at the level of discourse and representation but also institutionally and medically.

The casualties of World War I were unprecedented in terms of sheer numbers and the rate and character of the injuries sustained.63 H. S. Souttar, the leading medical adviser to the ICAA before and after the war, served in Belgium in the early months of the conflict and saw the horrific bodily damage inflicted by a new kind of bullet used by the Germans. This bullet, like the outlawed dumdum, broke into small but destructive pieces of shrapnel that shattered bones and destroyed muscles as they entered the body.64 Furthermore, the open countryside that became the first battlefields of World War I was heavily manured and thus rich in bacteria that caused deadly infections. Antiseptic techniques were still primitive. According to statistics compiled by the Disabled Society, 41,050 surviving British

60 On these tensions, see "Broken Soldiers," London Times (March 2, 1917): 3.
61 See Cooter, Surgery and Society, esp. 30–52, for a critical examination of Jones's work and some of the myths surrounding it.
62 Sussex Express, November 29, 1918.
war veterans had at least one limb amputated because of injuries sustained in battle. A census of cripples, not just amputees, taken in 1920 claimed that the war created at least 10 million cripples in the belligerent nations, in addition to millions of civilian "peace" cripples.

At the outset of war, the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) was unprepared for the demands made on it. In the first major engagements of 1914, wounded soldiers were still transported by horse-drawn ambulances, whose pace and violence of movement aggravated unstable fractures and caused hundreds of deaths. Given the magnitude of the challenge confronting Britain's wartime medical corps, the improved level of medical services provided only one year later at the front and at home was impressive. An exceptionally high percentage (at least one-third) of the wounded required orthopedic care—so many that it is fair to say that the war transformed orthopedics from a medical backwater associated with bone setting into a respected and established field of modern medicine.

Orthopedics was still in its infancy in Britain in 1913. Few general surgeons at home or in the army had received training of any kind in orthopedics, and their lack of familiarity with either effective splints or the elementary principles of orthopedic surgery and postoperative care needlessly crippled thousands of men during the first years of the war. American orthopedic surgeons, under the leadership of Joel Goldthwait, provided important personnel and expertise to augment the handful of experienced British orthopedists available at the war's outset. Most of the British surgeons who transformed the Army Medical Corps' treatment of wounded soldiers had trained in hospitals and clinics for crippled children in the decades before the war. The surgical techniques, hospital organization and management, and physical and psychological therapies devised for cripples in the 1890s and 1900s by men and women such as Robert Jones, Grace Kimmins, and Agnes Hunt contributed significantly to the foundations on which the wartime treatment for amputees and disabled veterans were built.

The Central Council for the Care of Cripples, a quasi-governmental advisory body established in 1919, acknowledged this work in the introduction to its First Annual Report: "it was, perhaps, too little recognised that much of the work then done for the soldier was based upon the experience of a small group of people

66 Cripples' Journal, 3, no. 10 (October 1926): 114. The Ministry of Labour reported to the International Labour Office in July 1923 that there were 900,000 disabled ex-servicemen in receipt of pensions in Great Britain. See Employment of Disabled Men, ILO Report (Geneva, 1923), 15.
67 For a vivid account of the RAMC's desperate struggle to surmount obstacles posed by the first three major battles of the war, see Frederick S. Brereton, The Great War and the R.A.M.C. (London, 1919). Brereton argued that the absence of motor ambulances "crippled" and "paralysed" units otherwise "soundly organised and equipped." p. 48.
68 Jay M. Winter has ably told the story of how the medical corps was recruited and organized during the war, although little attention has been paid to where these doctors first gained the surgical skills and technologies necessary to treat the victims of war. See J. M. Winter, The Great War and the British People (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), chap. 5. While Roger Cooter challenges the centrality of the war in the history of orthopedics, he nonetheless concludes that only if by the making of orthopedics "is meant the process by which professional identity is attained can the war be said to have performed this function for orthopaedists on both sides of the Atlantic." Cooter, Surgery and Society, 136.
69 Because Cooter's central story is the emergence of the profession of orthopedics, he somewhat minimizes the creative contributions of non-orthopedists such as Hunt and Kimmins to the psychological, social, and vocational rehabilitation of the disabled.
who had for years been doing their best towards alleviating the sufferings and assisting in the education of civilian cripples, more particularly of crippled children."

Robert Jones was handed the task of organizing the army's medical treatment of "crippled and deformed" soldiers after "letters poured in" to the director general of the Army Medical Services decrying the army's complete failure to provide for these heroes. Jones's chief qualification for this monumental task was his work for impoverished cripples in Liverpool in the 1880s, under the guidance of the legendary orthopedic surgeon, his uncle, Hugh Owen Thomas. By the turn of the century, Jones's reputation had spread throughout Britain, and all the leading advocates of the rights of crippled children, including Hunt, Kimmins, and the ICAA, worked closely with him in developing their programs.

The history of the introduction of the Thomas splint into the RAMC illustrates the magnitude of the debt that the wartime care of soldiers owed to orthopedic technologies developed for crippled children. Jones and his colleague at the clearing station for war injured in Bologne, Major Meurice Sinclair, were the most vocal and influential advocates of the use of the Thomas splint during the war. Developed by Hugh Owen Thomas and refined by Jones in Liverpool in the 1880s and 1890s, the splint revolutionized the treatment of injured soldiers during World War I. Unlike the Liston splint that it superseded, it could be applied before moving the soldier or ripping open his trousers, and its use thereby greatly reduced further injuries during transport. The Thomas splint could be put on "in a few minutes, usually without an anaesthetic," and mortality from fractures dropped from 80 percent in 1916 (before its widespread introduction) to 20 percent in 1918. Appreciative soldiers nicknamed the splints "Tommies," playing on a popular term for enlisted men.

Also, Jones insisted that the army establish comprehensive orthopedic care institutions modeled on those he had developed at Liverpool's Royal Southern Hospital and the Royal Liverpool Country Hospital for Children at Heswall. As Jones explained to Sir Alfred Keogh, the director general of the RAMC, in February 1916, existing army surgical hospitals suffered from a "want of cohesion" between the different departments—surgery, massage, physical therapy—needed to ensure "success in orthopaedic surgery." The integration of orthopedic medical services and the segregation of orthopedic patients by injury

70 First Annual Report, Central Committee for the Care of Cripples (1921), 5, CCCC Archives of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation, London.
71 Robert Jones to Sir George Makin, May 1918, in Watson, Life of Sir Robert Jones, 147.
72 There are several biographies and works recounting the histories of both men. On Thomas, see David Le Vay, Hugh Owen Thomas (Edinburgh, 1956); Sir Arthur Keith devoted a chapter to Thomas in his Menders of the Maimed: The Anatomical & Physiological Principles Underlying the Treatment of Injuries to Muscles, Nerves, Bones & Joints (London, 1919). Thomas and Jones are treated together in H. Winnett Orr, On the Contributions of Hugh Owen Thomas of Liverpool, Sir Robert Jones of Liverpool and London, and John Ridlon, M.D., of New York and Chicago, to Modern Orthopaedic Surgery (Springfield, Ill., 1949).
76 Jones to Alfred Keogh, as quoted in Watson, Life of Sir Robert Jones, 165.
from other patients were key principles in the care of cripples that Jones sought to make standard during and after the war.

Jones also incorporated lessons he had learned from his close association with the work of Agnes Hunt and Grace Kimmins. Jones, like Hunt and Kimmins, believed that orthopedic care comprehended not only the needs of the body but those of the mind and spirit as well. In his *Notes on Military Orthopaedics* (a training manual for the new doctors called into orthopedics by the war), Jones focused on the psychology of dismemberment as well as its surgical treatment. He pioneered the creation of a network of "curative workshops," which combined the open-air therapies used so effectively by Hunt at Baschurch with Kimmins's workshop training in handicrafts. Jones maintained that his experiments at Alders Hey, Liverpool, and Shepherd's Bush, Hammersmith, amply proved the benefits of his holistic approach to disability. In language that echoed Kimmins's rhetoric at Chailey, Jones extolled the virtues of curative workshops: regular, skilled work "fosters habits of diligence and self-respect, and converts indolent and often discontented patients into happy men who soon begin to feel that they are becoming useful members of society and not mere derelicts." Work, then, was the means by which the dismembered could become full citizens again. The army's and the nation's obligations to its broken soldiers necessarily extended over the whole course of these soldiers' lives.

**World War I was the first truly national war** in British history. In the past, the army had been a "separate caste," explained Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, the parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Pensions. Now, it was co-extensive with "the nation in arms" and touched nearly every household in Great Britain. By 1918, the government was providing medical care and pensions for over 400,000 disabled soldiers and sailors, who were, *The Times* insisted, the "cream of our race." "In their bodies they bear the heritage of all our endeavours since we became a people; the qualities they incarnate are those that have upheld our name in strength and honour . . . they must be won back from despondency and incapacity, restored to independence and usefulness." The disabled soldier's body was a repository of the nation's identity, its past, present, and future.

Restoring wounded soldiers to their masculine roles as heads of households, independent wage earners, and fathers was a major task of the postwar reconstructions of men's bodies, gender relations, the economy, and the nation. The success of these multiple reconstructions depended in part on the character of the "home lives" awaiting disabled men. "Home and home life and home ways are his [the disabled soldier's] first and strongest desire," claimed Lord Charnwood, at the time editor of *Recalled to Life*. "[V]ery soon there will be added to that the desire to do the best with himself as a man; for a disabled sailor or soldier is not

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less of a man, but more of a man than he was before the War.”

Few of Charnwood’s contemporaries shared this roseate view linking war wounds and lost limbs with heightened masculinity. Many more were troubled by the dissonant conjunction of youthful manhood with the helplessness of childhood and the impotence of old age.

“Home life” was convenient shorthand for an array of social problems awaiting disabled soldiers and sailors upon their return to civil life: not just jobs and housing but their reproductive and sexual fortunes as well. Anxiety over disabled veterans’ “home lives” was so great that as early as 1914 one well-intentioned clergyman established an agency to procure wives for them. By marrying them and bearing their children, the handpicked brides were meant to give back to “wounded heroes” their manliness and save themselves from an “unwholesome” and selfish single life. This scenario drew on mythic structures about the powers of women’s self-sacrificial love to redeem and transform even monstrously disfigured manhood, myths invoked repeatedly by late Victorian advocates for crippled children. (See Figure 5.) The clergyman’s bishop compelled him to abandon his plan but not before it became the occasion for a fascinating exchange between the Eugenics Review and the Charity Organisation Review.

“A particularly malignant falsehood is being propogated in the name of ‘pacifism,’” the Eugenics Review noted, “to the effect that the wounds and nervous shock inflicted upon soldiers by the experience of war constituted an injury to racial qualities . . . Let it at least be firmly understood by the noble women who choose to espouse these men that the injuries of war last but for one generation, and that their children will receive, as a natural dower, a constitution unimpaired, and the power to become all that their father might have been.” The article contended that “their father’s courage may grow again in a new and uninjured body.”

Why were the sex lives and fertility of disabled soldiers and their spouses such serious matters for the distinguished members of the Eugenics Society? Their offspring, the society’s president explained in 1917, were “necessary to safeguard the future of the nation.” The war endangered “the racial qualities” of the British nation by allowing moral and physical degenerates—“deliberate shirkers” and unfit men—to propagate the race. Disabled soldiers, by contrast, “constitute[d] a class above the average in civic worth” for two reasons. “In the earlier days of the war all who enlisted were volunteers, in itself a guarantee that they possessed certain high qualities; and it was the earliest to join who suffered the most . . . of

82 For an example, see Recalled to Life (June 1917): 76.
83 On the evils of women’s eschewal of marriage, see J. Arthur Thomson, “Eugenics and War,” the Second Galton Lecture, presented on February 16, 1915, and published in Eugenics Review, 7 (April 1915): 2, 3. There were many schemes that aimed to restore the masculinity of disabled sailors and soldiers. See, for example, T. H. Mawson, An Imperial Obligation: Industrial Villages for Partially Disabled Soldiers and Sailors (London, 1917).
Figure 5: Most of the works of art Galsworthy reproduced in *Reveille* reflected his own critical patriotism. By contrast, the sole representation in the journal of a woman at the home front, Leon de Smet’s “Waiting,” is sentimental and idealized. By depicting women’s rehabilitative fecundity, it reinforced government policies that coerced soldiers’ and sailors’ wives, through financial sanctions against infidelity, to remain faithful and “wait” for disabled men to return. *Reveille* (November 1918), opposite p. 322.

those who went abroad, the boldest and those with the strongest sense of duty generally forced their way into the fighting line.”

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The society called on the state to provide generous financial benefits that would allow disabled men to compete on equal terms with their "stay-at-home neighbors" in the marriage market. While applauding the extension of pensions to soldiers' wives and children, it deplored the exclusion of these benefits to all children born to injured soldiers after their return home. By so doing, the state was wasting eugenically desirable reproductive powers of "the disabled bachelor soldier" by saying to him, "Marry or not, just as you please, but mind you don't have any children."

Worse yet, the pension system failed to protect disabled men from the wiles of "an undesirable class of women . . . seek[ing] to entrap the soldiers for the sake of their money value." The Eugenics Society fantasized that the best way to distinguish between the "noble" women it had praised in 1915 and the "undesirable" women it feared in 1917 was to link pension benefits to maternity, not matrimony. Graduated pension allowances for children fathered by disabled men after their return home—and emphatically not for their mothers—were an indispensable part of the Eugenics Society's vision of reconstructing soldiers, families, and the nation.87

Consistent with its pre-war social policies, the Charity Organisation Society offered a very different vision. It condemned allowances for wives and children as undue state interference in the economy and in the private affairs of families. The proper role of the state was not to encourage men to have children they could not support but rather to help such men become "self-supporting citizens."88 Making disabled soldiers into economically independent and self-supporting workers, not fathers, was the measure of true manliness for the COS.

On one point, the two societies agreed completely: work was the key to transforming helpless and unproductive cripples into independent, manly citizens. Drawing on the long association between skilled labor and masculine identity forged in the nineteenth century, the promoters of the Ministry of Pensions curative workshops stressed that their courses would equip disabled soldiers with highly specialized job skills for life and labor in the modern world.89 They proudly published letters from men who before the war had engaged in unskilled, badly paid labor and after the workshops possessed skills and high wages.

Several peculiarities of the wartime labor market simultaneously facilitated and complicated the reestablishment of gender hierarchies in the workplace for disabled men. Wartime demand for labor opened up new avenues of employment for women and drew tens of thousands into the paid labor market for the first time.90 The staff of the Ministry of Pensions in 1918, for example, consisted of

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89 The workshops offered training in new technologies such as operating movie projectors and telephone switchboards, in electrical and mechanical engineering, along with more traditional fields for the disabled including shoe making and repair, cabinetmaking and woodwork.
90 There is a great deal of excellent work on women's wartime experiences, their gains and losses, in Britain. Deborah Thom's "Women and Work in Wartime Britain," in Richard Wall and Jay Winter, eds., The Upheaval of War: Family, Work, and Welfare in Europe (Cambridge, 1988), is...
approximately 6,500 women, 200 able-bodied men, and 300 disabled soldiers. Voracious demand for labor combined with the negligible supply of able-bodied men to produce an extremely favorable short-term employment environment for disabled soldiers, even double amputees. But the presence of women in many heretofore male jobs made it more difficult to ensure that disabled men were restored to the work force not just as workers but as men. Anxiety was so great to differentiate between manly and effeminate labor that “strong men” whose injuries forced them to remain on their backs were only allowed to do “feminine fancy work” for purposes of recreation and solace and not as training to earn a living.

Godfrey Buckley, writing “From the Man’s Point of View,” posed “a question agitating the minds of many of the disabled”: “Why, if they [disabled men] are able to do the work, should women be employed?” Some disabled men felt that women in the workplace were aberrations as well as stumbling blocks to the recovery of proper male roles. Far from acknowledging women’s contributions to the war effort as workers behind the lines, Buckley highlighted an argument that would dominate postwar debates about employment for disabled men: loss of limb in the face of battle entitled these men to preferential treatment. Even as some advocates for disabled people attempted to produce a rights-based discourse of social welfare encompassing all disabled people (regardless of the cause of disability), some wounded soldiers called for a hierarchy of entitlements that would favor them over other classes of marginal citizens.

“There is no question of greater national importance,” declared Sir William Osler, “than how to make these men again effective citizens, capable of earning their own living.” However, the stated goals of policy makers to safeguard race and nation by transforming child-like cripples into manly citizens often collided with their own pervasive representations of wounded soldiers not as men but as “maimed soldier boys.” A Ministry of Pensions pamphlet titled “Good News for the Disabled Sailor or Soldier” suggests that such figures of speech were far from benign and sometimes shaped the ways in which policy makers envisioned their relationship with their clients. The tone of the pamphlet is unmistakably condescending and patronizing; the writer assumes the privileged position of a father sharing intimate wisdom with his son. “By means of this little booklet I want to


93 Godfrey Buckley, “From the Man’s Point of View,” Reveille (November 1918): 296.
94 See, for example, His Honour Judge A. Gwynne James, “Orthopaedics in Industrial Life,” Recalled to Life (September 1917): 300.
have a little chat with you on matters which affect your future welfare." Then, as if to allay a child's needless fears, the author offers reassurance, "Now, do not be alarmed. I merely want to point out to you how to make the best of your future, and though now you may scarcely feel it possible, yet I will explain how you may be able once more to take your place as a wage-earner and become a productive member of the community." 96 This proved to be no simple matter.

World War I had a profound and enduring impact on cripples—children and soldiers alike—and on policies and cultural perceptions of physical disability in twentieth-century Britain. Disabled soldiers, or more accurately, images of them, have shaped how we have chosen to remember and represent the war. It is almost a cliché of textbooks to include a photograph of amputees in the section treating the first world war. 97 Such photographs are powerful because they appear to telegraph all their meanings to the viewer; they are immediately identifiable signifiers and substitutes for the war itself. The dismembered veteran embodies the ambiguous meanings and memories of the war.

The war amplified an argument put forward by advocates of the rights of crippled children more than two decades earlier: most cripples were manufactured by human circumstances, through the violence and neglect of war, industrial capitalism, and poverty. Warrior cripples and cripple warriors were actually brought together between 1914 and 1918 at places such as Baschurch and Chailey. The infrastructure for the wartime care of maimed soldiers drew on the expertise developed by pioneers in the movement to care for crippled children. War precipitated an uncanny convergence of rhetoric and policy as children became brave soldiers and "soldier boys" became childlike victims.

Making men, not women, lay at the heart of all the enterprises examined in this essay. Policy makers and reformers alike focused their efforts on transforming crippled boys and wounded soldiers into economically independent males. The needs and interests of female cripples remained on the fringe of public discussions of disability in part because most policy makers assumed that all females, regardless of their physical status, ought to be dependent on fathers, brothers, or husbands. Thus the war reinforced the masculine character of the discursive frameworks that shaped representations and policies for disabled people from the 1880s onward.

On a scale previously unimagined, the war stimulated the production of new technologies of mechanized violence. But it was also accompanied by extraordinary advances in the dissemination of therapeutic, rehabilitative, and surgical technologies for all cripples—male and female, adult and child, soldier and civilian. 98 (See Figure 6.) "In the midst of this world war it would seem grotesque to refer to possible benefits therefrom," Major Herbert Evans, the chief inspector

96 "Good News for the Disabled Sailor or Soldier," reprinted in Recalled to Life (June 1917): 60.
97 For one recent example, see Richard L. Greaves, Robert Zaller, and Jennifer Tolbert Roberts, Civilizations of the West: the Human Adventure, 2 vols. (New York, 1992), 876. The caption used for this image invokes the trope of soldiers as schoolboys: it reads, "The Class of 1914–1918." This same image was used by Gilbert and Gubar in "Soldier's Heart," 268.
98 On the impact of war on improving care for cripples, see Jones, "Crippling," 912.
of the Ministry of Pensions, remarked.\footnote{Evans, "Development of the Work," \textit{Reveille}, 231.} Nonetheless, Evans believed that the war offered unprecedented opportunities for transforming entrenched social, ideological, and economic systems that worked against disabled people. More con-
cretely, the huge demand for artificial limbs generated by the war led to rapid improvements in design, materials, and techniques for their use. Heavy and cumbersome artificial legs were replaced by much lighter and more durable wooden and metal ones, and, with the prodding of the Ministry of Pensions, private manufacturers reduced the costs for such limbs from an average of £80 to £30 between 1918 and 1920.

Prostheses had two main functions: to restore useful function and to achieve the "nearest approach to normal appearance." The requirements of form and function were not always compatible. Artificial arms best suited for highly skilled labor usually bore little resemblance to the limbs they replaced. The most effective arms resembled complicated pieces of machinery that were individually adapted to the particular industrial task and set of movements the disabled worker performed. Prosthetic arms or "artificial members" literally joined the working man to his machine and hence made his body an extension of the machine he used. (See Figure 7.) This union of machine and man, while rehabilitating him to labor, eerily recalled the intimate albeit violent confrontation between bodies and machines of war that caused the loss of limb.

Some amputees wore mechanically inefficient "show" or "dress" arms and legs when they wished to make their injuries as invisible as possible. One amputee confessed that "all we crooks are rather sensitive about our physical deformities and scars, and want to cover them up, and it is the same with our mental ones." Prostheses were intended to make it possible for those who wore them and those who saw them to forget the trauma of amputation. Horace V. Duncan, a London prosthesis manufacturer, advertised a new line of artificial legs he patriotically called "our Victor models," which were, he claimed, "comfortable, silent and perfect in movement." One of his rivals used a similar pitch and insisted that his prostheses would ensure "victory over empty sleeves." (See Figure 8.)

Physical deformity became a familiar part of day-to-day life in Britain, and war veterans formed a large group of voters with powerful emotional, social, and economic claims on the state and the public. In the immediate euphoria of the war's end, the possibilities of fully integrating cripples into the life of the nation seemed limitless. "It is an established fact that with proper artificial limbs and a little training in their use," a Handbook for the Limbless distributed by the Disabled Society explained, "there are practically no limits to what a man can achieve in all departments of life, whether in business or in sport."

The Handbook celebrated the ability of limbless men to enjoy an extraordinary range of leisure activities from motoring and horseback riding to cricket and billiards. Its explicit aim was to force the reader to see these men as unchangeable and undaunted by their amputations and to encourage the limbless themselves to "forget" their missing limbs. Photographs (many sent in by wounded soldiers themselves) and texts emphasized over and over that these men were returning to

102 For one interesting account of the "body-machine complex," see Mark Seltzer, Bodies and Machines (New York, 1992).
104 Howson, Handbook for the Limbless, xii.
Figure 7: This photograph celebrates the efficiency of wartime medical services in restoring wounded soldiers' capacity to labor on behalf of the warfare state. Specially fitted prostheses enabled even severely injured soldiers, including this amputee making submarine fittings, to return to national service in the fight against the enemy. Douglas McMurtrie, *The Disabled Soldier* (New York, 1919), opposite p. 194.

the robust pleasures and pursuits of their pre-war lives. (See Figures 9, 10, 11.) But the meticulous details that the men themselves offered about how to adapt their artificial limbs—as well as various machines and sporting devices to suit their requirements as amputees—overwhelm and undermine the attempt by both the
Remembering and Dismemberment

VICTORY OVER EMPTY SLEEVES.

THE NEW

STeeper “IDEAL” Arms.

A real ADVANCE in ARTIFICIAL ARMS.

Designed to suggestions from the Limbless themselves, who alone are the judges of what is required to assist them.

Indispensable,
Durable,
Easy in operation,
Adaptability,
Light.

Ask to see them, and let your next be one of them.

HUGH STEEPER, Limited,
(Successors to the “PROTHESIA CO.”)
ROEHAMPTON HOUSE,
LONDON, S.W. 15.

Manufacturers of Artificial Arms and Mechanical Hands.

FIGURE 8: Advertisements disingenuously and cheerfully insisted that prostheses could transform bodily “loss” of limb into patriotic “victory.” This victory was presumably not only over soldiers’ “empty sleeves” and reduced self-esteem but also over Britain’s enemies. G. Howson, ed., Handbook for the Limbless (London, circa 1921), 230.

Letter writers and readers to “forget” dismemberment. Bodily deformity remains an inerasable sign of difference.

Like many other publications about disabled soldiers, this Handbook was heavily illustrated by photographs accompanying testimonial letters from “limbless” men.
FIGURES 9, 10, 11: These photographs were submitted by veteran amputees themselves for publication in the Disabled Society's *Handbook for the Limbless*. The photographs were meant to convince incredulous readers that amputees could return to physically demanding pursuits such as cricket that defined them not only as full men but as Englishmen. The photographs were accompanied by copiously detailed instructions to other amputees about how to modify their own prostheses and the apparatus on automobiles, bicycles, etc. to suit their needs. G. Howson, *Handbook for the Limbless*, 26, 127, 136.

The photographs and letters were intended to lend authority and veracity to the "facts" presented in the text, which otherwise, the authors assumed, would seem too fantastic to be trusted. These illustrations drew on two discrete but also interconnected documentary traditions: the use of photographic illustrations by medical
Mr. Keith Jopp, who has lost his left arm and left eye, drove an A.B.C. (with left-hand control) by bringing his right hand over to the levers as shown.
researchers presenting case studies of unusual diseases and deformities; and the "autobiographies" used by freak show proprietors to convince audiences that their exhibits were genuine. The newly restored disabled man was a human novelty produced by the new mechanisms of warfare and the new technologies of medicine and science. Manly but tragically also still a "soldier boy," he was part man, part machine.

Those men most badly disabled by the war were those least likely to be hired by employers. "They have the greatest claim on the country, and yet many able to do a day's work are not able to get it. Who can blame them if, instead of being honoured and contented, they become broken wanderers with curses on their lips." Frederick Watson, Robert Jones's son-in-law and editor of the Cripples' Journal, bitterly contemplated the impact of the war.

During the later stages of the War, the attitude of the public mind towards the disabled was complex enough, but was not beyond understanding. It was moved by the moral debt of obligation to injuries received in the war; it was felt that the problem was after all temporary, and finally the conflict between commercial efficiency and patriotic motives was sufficiently trying . . . It is open to question whether the public introduction to deformity in war has done very much toward a better understanding of the more insidious causes of deformity in peace.

In yet another ironic shift in the relationship between wounded soldiers and cripples, the war constructed two competing categories of disabled persons: "peace" and "war" cripples. In a moving autobiographical essay titled "The Making of a Cripple," the anonymous author explained the ways in which ostentatious but pitiful attempts to remember "war" cripples became an excuse to ignore "peace" cripples. "When I was selling chocolates I had often to compete with these men at theatres . . . They wear their medals and have 'Disabled Ex-Service Man' notices on their caps or on the tray. A civilian cripple has no chance beside them." He concluded that, "in these days of reforms, pensions, and National Insurance, somebody might have thought of us."

During the war, policy makers and propagandists reiterated that wounded soldiers and their dependents were entitled by right and not by charity to the extensive benefits offered by the Ministry of Pensions. The wartime expansion of soldiers' rights and benefits was paralleled by substantially increased provisions for children, the nation's future soldiers and mothers. Between 1915 and 1920, Parliament voted to establish two powerful new ministries, the Ministry of

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107 Frederick Watson, untitled essay, Cripples' Journal, 1, no. 3 (January 1925): 121–22.
Pensions (1916) and the Ministry of Health (1919), in part to respond to the perceived social welfare needs of disabled soldiers and children.110

But the wartime impulse to remove the stigma of charity from social welfare soon lost strength. And wounded soldiers, as a group, were exceptionally sensitive to the erosion of their rights in postwar rhetoric and policy.111 The rough treatment they received at the hands of Labour Bureaus and the humiliation and inconvenience they felt at having to stand in line for unemployment and insurance benefits alongside the able-bodied poor who had not served their nation produced disillusion and despair.

These developments must have given John Galsworthy grim satisfaction. In 1918, he had demanded that the state devise a comprehensive plan for "securing justice and contentment to the great unabsorbed residue of the injured." Failure to do so, he predicted, would lead in five or ten years to a shameful situation. "Men in workhouses, men at street corners, men on tubs, men miserably idle on pensions which barely keep the life in them; bitter men and justly bitter; young men with long years of disillusionment and resentfulness before them, the centre of little swirls of discontent and revolution."112

In what proved to be the last issue of Reveille, Galsworthy returned to these themes.

The State, like the humblest citizen, cannot have it both ways. If it talks—as talk it does, with the mouth of every public man who speaks on this subject—of heroes, and of doing all it can for them, then it must not cheese-pare as well, for that makes it ridiculous. Britain has climbed the high moral horse—as usual—over the great question of our disabled; she cannot stay in that saddle if she rides like a slippery lawyer.113

It is not difficult to understand why many officials at the Ministry of Pensions had grown uncomfortable with their celebrated editor. With the signing of the armistice and mounting pressure of censorship by ministry officials on him, Galsworthy resigned his duties, and the journal closed down.114

Galsworthy's words were prophetic of developments in the 1920s and 1930s. As disabled veterans were lumped together with other poor and vulnerable social groups in interwar Britain,115 they had to decide whether to advance their claims in concert with or in opposition to these groups. The Disabled Society of the British Legion, while non-partisan, actively lobbied all levels of government and sent questionnaires to elected officials soliciting their positions on issues affecting


114 Ginden, John Galsworthy's Life and Art, 399.

115 The Labour Party, for example, regularly grouped discussions of pensions and concerns of disabled veterans with those of old age pensioners, widows, and mothers, and victims of work-related accidents in its party conferences. It proposed pensions of £2 per week for "all incurable invalids and permanently disabled persons regardless of the causes of invalidity or disablement." Report of the 25th Conference of the Labour Party (Liverpool, September 29, 30, and October 1, 2, 1925), 362.
their constituents.\textsuperscript{116} By the mid-1930s, a new organization of largely rank-and-file soldiers emerged to challenge the leadership of the Disabled Society. The British Limbless Ex-Servicemen Association's (BLESMA) strongholds were in southeast Lancashire, in towns such as Manchester and Salford, where traditions of non-deferential, working-class political activism ran deep. Its activities initially alarmed civil servants and members of Stanley Baldwin's conservative ministry, who wrongly identified BLESMA as a subversive political group and who discredited the organization's findings in extensive internal memos.\textsuperscript{117} On November 30, 1935, J. V. Bell, BLESMA's general secretary, presented his case to the minister of Pensions.

[T]he present assistance granted through the Unemployment Assistance Board or Public Assistance Committees are [sic] causing much anxiety for those who have in spite of their disability successfully held positions and appointments of an important character and provided for themselves a high standard of citizenship, but who have now through age and the cavalcade of time, lost their positions, and the internal home life of these pensioners is now, very sad and regrettable due to one thing, the shameful results after facing the Public Assistance and Unemployment Boards.\textsuperscript{118}

The words and symbols adorning Bell's stationery are at least as remarkable as his letter. The slogan "Others May Forget We Cannot 1914–1918" appears on the upper left corner of the page, and, on the upper right, "The wearer of our Badge is worthy of your greatest consideration." BLESMA meetings always began with members at attention "In Silent Memory of Fallen Comrades." Precisely because these dismembered soldiers could never forget their losses, they understood the profound significance of shaping their countrymen's remembrance of the Great War. And we are obliged to acknowledge our investment in the politics of forgetting.

\textsuperscript{116} Graham Wootton has reproduced these questionnaires and Stanley Baldwin's responses in late 1923 before the General Election in appendix 1 of The Politics of Influence, 269–72.

\textsuperscript{117} For correspondence and memos about BLESMA, see PIN 15/1409–1417, Public Record Office.

\textsuperscript{118} J. V. Bell to Minister of Pensions, November 30, 1935, PIN 15/1409, Public Record Office.