

Literature (Great Britain and Ireland)

By [Jane Potter](#)

Summary

The literature produced in Great Britain and Ireland during and after the First World War spanned a wide range of genres and styles. Popular fiction and poetry were written and avidly read by combatants and non-combatants alike. The Modernists and the Georgians interpreted the war in their unique ways, while less consciously literary writers provided escapist, reassuring and entertaining stories for a captive market. This article seeks to show the variety of that literary output which attempted to come to terms with the century's first total war.

Table of contents

- [1 Introduction](#)
- [2 The War Effort in Words](#)
- [3 Popular Fiction](#)
- [4 Memoir](#)
- [5 Poetry](#)
- [6 Literature after the Armistice](#)
- [7 Conclusion](#)
- [Notes](#)
- [Selected Bibliography](#)
- [Citation](#)

Introduction

The [literature](#) of the First World War is as varied as the fronts on which it was fought. This article will explore the range of popular novels, Modernist and Georgian poetry and active service memoir, all of which served to entertain and enlighten, inform and reassure, but also unsettle a voracious reading public. While the war “shook the book trade like everything else to its foundations,” according to [Frank A. Mumby \(1872-1954\)](#), publishers were pleasantly surprised when their initial fears about a lack of public interest in books proved unfounded.^{[1](#)} Demand for a novelist, poet or memoirist who could help interpret what was happening was high. Literacy levels, which had steadily increased as a result of successive education acts since the 1870s, meant that soldiers and civilians were almost universally able to participate in print culture whether as writers or as readers. With little competition from other media, literature was an important source of distraction from the hardships of war as well as

important way to connect with the larger public consciousness, one that was traditional and modern, idealistic and censorious.

The War Effort in Words

The demand for books and other reading material soon after the outbreak of war was eagerly fulfilled by writers and their publishers, many of whom worked in consort with the [government](#) to produce texts that espoused the nation's cause. Notable literary figures of the day, including [Arthur Conan Doyle \(1859-1930\)](#), [Florence Barclay \(1862-1921\)](#), [Mary Augusta Ward \(1851-1920\)](#), who wrote under the name Mrs. Humphry Ward, [May Sinclair \(1863-1946\)](#), [Laurence Binyon \(1869-1943\)](#) and [Rudyard Kipling \(1865-1936\)](#) penned work on behalf part of the government's then-secret [propaganda bureau](#) situated at Wellington House in London under the direction of [Charles G.F. Masterman \(1873-1927\)](#), liberal politician and author. Having put their signatures to the Authors' Manifesto, published in *The Times* and *The New York Times* in September 1914, these luminaries of early 20th century literature pledged their support for Britain's war effort under the guise of individual effort and commercial publishing. In fact, publishers that printed material for Wellington House were paid for the use of their imprint so that the texts would seem independent of any government influence. Masterman argued that such secrecy was necessary in order "to get our literature into the hands of those who will read it: We have endeavoured throughout [...] never to thrust it or force it upon those who resent its gifts, or who will merely treat it as waste paper."² Books such as Mrs. Humphry Ward's *England's Effort* (1916) and *Towards the Goal* (1917), Conan Doyle's *The German War* (1915) and [Ford Madox Ford's \(1873-1939\)](#) *When Blood is Their Argument: An Analysis of Prussian Culture* (1915) and *Between St Dennis and St George* (1915) were all Wellington House publications. Although intended to counter German propaganda abroad, especially in the then-neutral [United States](#), which had a large [German immigrant population](#), these books were in circulation in [Britain](#) as well. In the interwar period the unmasking of this scheme by such books as *The Secrets of Crewe House* (1920) added to the post-war disillusionment so characteristic of the literature of the 1920s and 1930s, as will be discussed below. A current of protest and [pacifism](#) did exist during the war, but it was subject to severe scrutiny and [censorship](#). [D.H. Lawrence's \(1885-1930\)](#) *The Rainbow* (1915) was banned under the [Defence of the Realm Act](#) in 1915 and [C.W. Daniel \(1871-1955\)](#) was imprisoned for publishing *Despised and Rejected* (1918) by [A.T. Fitzroy \(1890-1980\)](#), the pseudonym of Rose Allatini. Yet the majority of writers, readers and members of the book trade fulfilled a public demand for literature about the war that was part of a culture of consent, of a drive "to see it through" despite the horrors, loss and grief brought by four years of [warfare](#). Even without official sanction and coercion, publishers and writers contributed to the war effort with words, with texts that ranged from novels of romance,

adventure and [espionage](#) to first-hand journalistic accounts from the war zones.

Popular Fiction

Writers of popular fiction engaged with the concerns and preoccupations of the day from the duty of men to enlist and the duty of women to support them to the fear of German spies and the threat of pessimistic thinking to the national character. [Ruby M. Ayres \(1881-1955\)](#) in *Richard Chatterton V.C.* and [Joseph Keating \(1871-1934\)](#) in *Tipperary Tommy* (1915) are just two novelists who depicted how being a soldier and donning the khaki uniform confers robust manhood. *Khaki and Kisses* by [Berta Ruck \(1878-1978\)](#) and *A Girl Munition Worker* by [Bessie Marchant \(1862-1941\)](#) were among the plethora of stories that appealed to young women seeking to define their role in conflict both as home front patriots and active service participants. Fears of espionage and invasion, which had their roots in the late-19th century, continued and novels such as *His German Wife* (1915) by [Douglas Sladen \(1856-1947\)](#), *Good Old Anna* (1915) by [Marie Belloc Lowndes \(1868-1947\)](#) and *The Spy in Black* (1917) by [J. Storer Clouston \(1870-1944\)](#) were published. [John Buchan's \(1875-1940\)](#) *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) is among the few that have stood the test of time.

Soldiers, too, turned their hand to fiction. [Herman Cyril McNeile \(1888-1937\)](#), under the pseudonym Sapper, wrote enormously popular stories, published first in periodicals such as the *Daily Mail* and *Blackwood's Magazine* and then collected in volumes that included *The Lieutenant and Other Stories* (1915), *Sergeant Michael Cassidy R.E.* (1915), *Men, Women and Guns* (1916) and *No Man's Land* (1917). As Ann-Marie Einhaus observes, "popular literature was crucial in creating the horizon of expectations against which modernist and disillusioned war writing went on to gradually alter and adapt."³

Memoir

Those on active service, whether as soldiers or medical personnel, were in equal demand for their first-hand accounts in the age before radio, television and rolling internet news. [Philip Gibbs \(1877-1962\)](#) *The Soul of War* is an unsparing account of the suffering of the troops. Its candour was echoed in women's nursing memoirs such as *Field Hospital and Flying Column* (Violetta Thurston, 1915), *Diary of a Nursing Sister on the Western Front* (K. Luard, 1915), *Eighteen Months in the War Zone* (Kate Finzi, 1916), *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere* (Mabel Sinclair Stobart, 1916), and *A VAD in France* (Olive Dent, 1917). That these were not censored has much to do with the explicit message of the valour of suffering portrayed in them and the belief they ultimately convey the war's just cause. These stand in contrast to the starker narrative provided by [Enid Bagnold \(1889-1981\)](#) in *A Diary Without Dates*. Its publication in 1918 it resulted in Bagnold's dismissal from her job as a VAD [nurse](#)

for breaching military discipline. It is an imagistic narrative of her wartime nursing experience which frequently uses ellipses, terse sentences and short paragraphs divided by typographical spaces to appear as impressions almost independent of each other. The narrative progression is not linear and even the table of contents suggests fluid and illusive meaning: Part I-“Outside the Glass Doors,” Part II-“Inside the Glass Doors,” Part III-“The Boys.” The authorial voice is at once detached from and preoccupied by the hospital work which can be overwhelming, chaotic, mesmerising and sickening:

It was all very fine for the theatre people to fill his shoulder chock full of pluggings while he lay unconscious on the table; they had packed it as you might stuff linen into a bag: it was another matter to get it out.⁴

In its refusal to impose poetic rhetoric on horror and sadness, the memoir bridges the divide between the literature of the war years themselves and that of its aftermath and the ascendancy of Modernism.

Poetry

As Samuel Hynes and others have argued, Modernism was not created by the First World War, but it was invigorated by it. Modernism’s emphasis on fragmentation fitted the emotional experience of mechanised, modern war and in “little magazines” such as *Blast*, *The New Age*, and *The Egoist*, the Modernist vision was articulated by poets and writers such as [T.S. Eliot \(1888-1965\)](#), [Wyndham Lewis \(1882-1957\)](#), [T.E. Hulme \(1883-1917\)](#), who was killed in Flanders, [Ezra Pound \(1885-1972\)](#), [James Joyce \(1882-1941\)](#) and [Katherine Mansfield \(1888-1923\)](#).

The Modernists shared the literary stage with the Georgians, who articulated their vision through such publications as *Georgian Poetry*, edited by [Edward Marsh \(1872-1953\)](#) and published by [Harold Monro \(1879-1932\)](#) at the Poetry Bookshop, the epicentre of the movement in London. Often seen as the naïve opposite of Modernism, Georgianism was far from simplistic. While steeped in the pastoral, Georgian poets were concerned with sweeping away the excesses of Victorian verse and focused instead on the elements of everyday life, writing with an ear for direct speech, often with elements of satire. It could be argued that had Georgians such as [Edward Thomas \(1878-1917\)](#), [Rupert Brooke \(1887-1914\)](#) and [Wilfred Owen \(1893-1918\)](#) survived, they might have challenged the supremacy of the Modernists, shaping English poetry in ways very different from what it became in the interwar period and beyond. As George Simmers has observed, “it comes to the war, both popular and literary writers were facing the same problem – How do you find ways of representing something new and unprecedented in British History – a war involving a mass citizen army?”⁵

Ezra Pound may have angrily declared that “a myriad,/and of the best, among them” had been slaughtered “for an old bitch gone in the teeth,/For a botched civilization” in *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920), but not all remembered the Great War in this way. The poet [May Wedderburn Cannan \(1893-1973\)](#) remarked, “I did not believe the dead had died for nothing [...] the dead had kept faith, and so, if we did not grudge it, had we.” She echoes the sentiments of the lines from Laurence Binyon’s “For the Fallen”:

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

Proclaimed at every Remembrance service and inscribed on countless memorials in Britain, the full poem was published in *The Times* on 21 September 1914, just over a month after the start of the Great War.

That such an expression of [remembrance](#) is enshrined in verse is not a surprise when one considers the ways in which poetry had a currency in the early years of the 20th century that it lacks today. The years of the First World War were awash with poetry. Newspapers, magazines and edited collections made verse available to a mass reading public. Older generation poets such as Kipling mixed with contemporary voices like Brooke in anthologies published for charity such as *The Fiery Cross* (1915) and hundreds of individual volumes fed a market demand for the solace and inspiration that poetry uniquely seemed to provide. Much of what was published was doggerel, unsophisticated, mawkish, even, and it is not a surprise that much has fallen into obscurity. What has continued to be read and taught, however, is marked not only by arresting images and experiments with sound, rhythm and form but by a timeless appeal to the human condition in wartime.

Elegies for a lost pastoral world and protests against the ravages inflicted on men and the land permeate and, in many cases, define much of Great War poetry. [Edmund Blunden’s \(1896-1974\)](#) poems appended to his memoir *Undertones of War* (1928) bear witness to the destruction of the Picardy countryside and memorialize it through the naming of its towns and villages: “Vlamertinghe: Passing the Château,” “A House at Festaubert,” “Third Ypres” and “The Zonnebeke Road.” Edward Thomas’ “As the Team’s Head Brass” quietly evokes a lost Eden, while [Ivor Gurney’s \(1890-1937\)](#) “To His Love” is striking in its juxtaposition of unscarred pastoral and violent death. The epic proportions of the war are communicated by [Charles Hamilton Sorley \(1895-1915\)](#) in “When you see millions of the mouthless dead” and

by [Isaac Rosenberg \(1890-1918\)](#) in "Dead Man's Dump." The shared pain of "friend and foeman" is forcefully evoked by Wilfred Owen in "Strange Meeting," in which a reconciliation of sorts takes place between two enemies, one based on the recognition that the hopes and desires of soldiers of both sides of the conflict, both killers equally, were essentially the same – "Whatever hope is yours,/Was my life also." In "Strange Meeting" Owen also points to another key theme of Great War literature, that of mental injury: "Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were." In "Mental Cases" Owen is even more direct in his evocation of pity for the suffering souls that have been "dealt" "war and madness" and who have witnessed "multitudinous murders." Whether wounded in body and/or traumatized in mind, the men and women who served and survived, came home very different in spirit from when they "marched away."

[W.B. Yeats \(1865-1939\)](#) (in)famously deemed Owen "unworthy of the poet's corner of a country newspaper" and therefore did not include him (or Sassoon, Blunden, Rosenberg) in the 1936 edition of the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. Yeats himself between 1914 and 1918 was less concerned with events in Europe than he was with the struggle for [Irish independence](#), which he interpreted through such poems as "Easter 1916" and "Byzantium." In "On Being Asked for a War Poem," Yeats declared that "I think it better that in times like these/A poet's mouth be silent, for in truth/We have no gift to set a statesman right." His Irish countrymen and women, however, were not silent, although their contributions to the literature of 1914-1918 have been largely overlooked, caught up in the cultural amnesia about and antipathy towards Irish participation in the First World War, whether as soldiers or nurses. [Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, Lord Dunsany \(1878-1957\)](#), [Thomas MacGreevy \(1893-1967\)](#), [Stephen Gwynn \(1864-1950\)](#) and [Patrick MacGill \(1890-1963\)](#) are just a few of the names that have suffered critical neglect. [Francis Ledwidge \(1869-1944\)](#), killed by a shell at the Third [Battle of Ypres](#), in particular has become, as Gerald Dawes has shown, "a symbol of Ireland's 'other' history – not the history of cultural [nationalism](#) and the struggle for Irish independence, but the history of Irish men who, for a multiplicity of reasons, fought and died in foreign fields."⁶

David Goldie has argued that

those from the state's smaller nations were subject to [...] countervailing anxieties [...] the concern that their distinctive national identity and rights to self-determination might be stifled rather than enabled by the vast machinery of the war effort driven from the English metropolitan centre.⁷

Among Welsh-language poets, perhaps best known by their bardic names, are [Ellis Humphrey Evans \(1887-1917\)](#), known as Hedd Wyn, and [Albert Evans-Jones \(1895-1970\)](#), known as

Cynan, both of whom won the national *eisteddfod*: Hedd Wyn for his poem “*Yr Arwr*” (“The Hero”) in 1917 (sent in before his death but awarded posthumously) and Cynan for “*Mab y Bwthyn*” (“Son of the Cottage”) in 1921, which depicts not the glory but the horror of war and its impact on a young countryman. Whilst Cynan survived the war to become a respected and influential poet and playwright, Hedd Wyn was killed on the same day and buried in the same military cemetery at Artillery Wood near Boesinghe as Francis Ledwidge, his tombstone engraved with the words “*Y Prifardd Hedd Wyn*” (“The chief poet Hedd Wyn”).

In Scottish Gaelic poetry and song “*Dòmhnall Ruadh Chorùna*” by [Donald MacDonald \(1887-1967\)](#) and “*Iain Rothach*” by [John Munro \(1889-1917\)](#) stand out. Written for his fiancée during the [Battle of the Somme](#), Dòmhnall’s “*An Eala Bhàn*” (“The White Swan”) wistfully declares “*Air m’uilinn anns a triunnsichean/Tha m’inntinn ort, a ghràidh*” (“Crouched in the trenches/My mind is fixed on you, love”), while Rothach’s “*Ar Gaisgich a Thuirt sna Blàir*” (“Our Heroes Who Fell in Battle”) mourns the “Many a handsome young man full of energy” (“*S imomadh fear àlainn òg sgairteil*”),

Who went to face death—
Often sensing it beforehand —
Who went up to the battlefield
(chaidh a choinneamh a’ bhàis
tric ga fhaireach’ roimh-làimh—
a chaidh suas chum a bhlàir)

Literature after the Armistice

[Rebecca West’s \(1892-1983\) *Return of the Soldier* \(1918\)](#), [A.P. Herbert’s \(1890-1971\) *The Secret Battle* \(1919\)](#) and [Virginia Woolf’s \(1882-1941\) *Mrs Dalloway* \(1925\)](#) are just three of the many novels that deal with the psychic wounds of war. The title of [C.E. Montague’s \(1867-1928\) *Disenchantment* \(1922\)](#) provided a label for what seemed the prevailing mood of war literature after the Armistice. As Montague wrote, “glad as we all were to be done with the war, its end left even the strongest of us a little let down.”⁸ The understatement that is the phrase “a little let down” belies the vitriol that Montague elsewhere in the memoir hurls at politicians and the propaganda machine.

The middlebrow novel attempted to reconcile such disenchantment with a sense of continuity in fiction that eschewed modernist experimentation in favor of a well-told, sometimes

sentimental narrative. Coined in the early 1920s to describe novels that were neither formulaic (low) nor experimental (high), but respectable, “good” books, the term “middlebrow” denoted an engrossing story, aimed at a middle-class audience with middle-class values, and books that were the staple of the circulating library and often bestsellers for the book trade in the interwar period. Like popular novelists of the war years (and many overlapped), middlebrow writers of the 1920s and 1930s have largely been forgotten. Authors such as [Gilbert Frankau \(1884-1952\)](#), [Ernest Raymond \(1888-1974\)](#) and [Warwick Deeping \(1877-1950\)](#) sought to reassure their readers, to find continuity amidst the changes wrought by modernity and the world war.

These authors stood in stark contrast to Ford Madox Ford in his *Parade's End* tetralogy (1924-28), [R.H. Mottram \(1883-1971\)](#) in his *Spanish Farm Trilogy* (1928) and particularly those works which constitute what has become known as the second “war books boom” of the late 1920 and early 1930s. In this period, the majority of books which have become part of the canon of First World War literature were published: the epic poem *In Parenthesis* (1928) by [David Jones \(1895-1974\)](#), *Undertones of War* (1928) by Edmund Blunden, *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928) by [Siegfried Sassoon \(1886-1967\)](#), *Goodbye to All That* (1929) by [Robert Graves \(1895-1985\)](#), *Death of a Hero* (1929) by [Richard Aldington \(1892-1962\)](#), *The Middle Parts of Fortune* (1929, an unexpurgated version of the original *Her Private's We* of 1928) by [Frederic Manning \(1882-1935\)](#), and *All Our Yesterdays* (1930) by [H.M. Tomlinson \(1873-1958\)](#).

[Vera Brittain's \(1893-1970\)](#) *Testament of Youth* (1933) established her as the woman's voice of the Great War, though she was only one among millions of female survivors of the war, many of whom themselves saw active service as VADs or as ambulance drivers and military nurses. Helen Zenna Smith's, the pseudonym of [Evadne Price \(1896-1985\)](#), *Not So Quiet: Stepdaughters of War* (1929) was written and received as the women's version of Erich Maria Remarque's (1898-1970) [All Quiet on the Western Front](#). While it intentionally shares the narrative trajectory and character types of Remarque's novel, the end comes not with the physical but the emotional death of the main character:

Her soul died under a radiant silver moon in the spring of 1918 on the side of a blood-spattered trench. Around her lay the mangled dead and the dying. Her body was untouched, her heart beat calmly, the blood coursed as ever through her veins. But looking into those emotionless eyes one wondered if they had suffered much before the soul had left them. Her face held an expression of resignation, as though she had ceased to hope that the end might come.⁹

For many women this was the reality of what May Wedderburn Cannan called “your war” in

her poem "When the vision dies."

Conclusion

Both tradition and modernity co-existed during the First World War in society as in its literature. Now in the early 21st century, with experience of another world war and other international conflicts from Vietnam to the so-called "war on terror," people are suspicious of politicians, patriotic rhetoric and idealistic notions of the "glory" of war. It is therefore also not surprising that the literature which creatively renders the experience of 1914-1918 as a narrative of futility and suffering has become prioritised and valorised over the poetry and prose that offered a more hopeful or at least consolatory message in which the [losses of the war](#) were not entirely in vain. The works of, for instance, Wilfred Owen and Isaac Rosenberg, or Vera Brittain and Virginia Woolf, which depict the horrific nature of [mechanised warfare](#) and the physical and mental ravages it inflicted, speak to a world disillusioned by the unfulfilled promises of "the war to end all war." Even contemporary literary renderings of the First World War by, among others, Pat Barker, Sebastian Faulks and Michael Morpurgo situate themselves within this disillusioned category.

Such a view has been largely shaped by Paul Fussell and his literary study *The Great War and Modern Memory* (1975). With its focus primarily on male, educated middle-class soldier-poets who fought on the [Western Front](#), *The Great War and Modern Memory* emphasised irony and suffering as key interpretations of the experience of 1914-18. Fussell's arguments, though powerfully conveyed, have come under fire from both historians and literary scholars who have wrestled with this hugely influential text since its original publication, "obsessively, with a mixture of admiration and irritation."¹⁰ However much they may disagree with Fussell and point out the flaws and narrowness of his study, later scholars of the war cannot seem to ignore his compelling presence even as they attempt to widen the focus. For, as [Leonard V. Smith](#) argued, the book has itself become "a *lieu de memoire* or 'site of memory' of the Great War."¹¹

In keeping with these newer studies of the literature of 1914-1918, this article has tried to show that the corpus is far more complex and varied, and indeed interesting, than a limited perspective on the irony and suffering would suggest. With various memoirs and novels of the era back in print or available digitally, readers are now more than ever able to discover, as their Great War counterparts did 100 years ago, a vibrant and complex range of writing about this defining event of the 20th century.

Jane Potter, Oxford Brookes University

Notes

1. Mumby, Frank A.: Publishing and Bookselling in London, London 1930, p. 370. ↑
2. Masterman, C.F.G.: Second Report on the Work Conducted for the Government at Wellington House, London 1916, p. 6. ↑
3. Einhaus, Ann-Marie: The Short Story and the First World War, Cambridge 2013, p. 56. ↑
4. Bagnold, Enid: A Diary without Dates, London 1918, p. 140. ↑
5. Simmers, George: Great War Fiction blog, online: <https://greatwarfiction.wordpress.com/> (retrieved 11 August 2015). ↑
6. Dawe, Gerald (ed.): Earth Voices Whispering: An Anthology of Irish War Poetry, 1914-1945, Belfast 2008, p. xviii. ↑
7. Goldie, David: Archipelagic Poetry of the First World War, in: Das, Santanu (ed.): The Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of the First World War, Cambridge 2014, p. 160. ↑
8. Montague, C.E.: Disenchantment, London 1924, p. 209. ↑
9. Smith, Helen Zenna: Not So Quiet: Stepdaughters of War, New York 1989, p. 239. ↑
10. McLoughlin, Kate: The Great War and Modern Memory, Essays in Criticism 64/4 (2014), p. 436. ↑
11. Smith, Leonard V., 'Paul Fussell's The Great War and Modern Memory: Twenty-Five Years Later', History and Theory 40 (May 2001), pp. 241-260, p. 242. ↑

Selected Bibliography

- [Buitenhuis, Peter: **The great war of words. Literature as propaganda, 1914-18 and after**, London, 1989: B.T. Batsford.](#)
- [Das, Santanu \(ed.\): **The Cambridge companion to the poetry of the First World War**, Cambridge, 2013: Cambridge University Press.](#)
- [Dawe, Gerald \(ed.\): **Earth voices whispering. An anthology of Irish war poetry, 1914-1945**, Belfast, 2008: Blackstaff Press.](#)
- [Einhaus, Ann-Marie: **The short story and the First World War**, Cambridge, 2013: Cambridge University Press.](#)
- [Frayn, Andrew: **Writing disenchantment. British First World War prose, 1914-30**, Manchester, 2014: Manchester University Press.](#)
- [Hammond, Mary / Towheed, Shafquat \(eds.\): **Publishing in the First World War**.](#)

[**Essays in book history**](#), Houndmills; New York; London, 2007: Palgrave Macmillan.

- [Hibberd, Dominic / Onions, John \(eds.\): **The winter of the world. Poems of the First World War**, London, 2007: Constable.](#)
- [Hynes, Samuel Lynn: **A war imagined. The First World War and English culture**, New York, 1991: Maxwell Macmillan International.](#)
- [Kendall, Tim \(ed.\): **Poetry of the First World War. An anthology**, Oxford, 2013: Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Korte, Barbara / Einhaus, Ann-Marie \(eds.\): **The Penguin book of First World War stories**, London; New York, 2007: Penguin Books.](#)
- [Maunder, Andrew et al. \(eds.\): **British literature of World War I, 5 volumes**, London, 2011: Pickering & Chatto.](#)
- [Noakes, Vivien \(ed.\): **Voices of silence. The alternative book of First World War poetry**, Stroud, 2006: Sutton Publishing.](#)
- [Potter, Jane: **Boys in khaki, girls in print. Women's literary responses to the Great War, 1914-1918**, Oxford; New York, 2005: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Smith, Angela K.: **The second battlefield. Women, modernism and the First World War**, Manchester, 2000: Manchester University Press.](#)
- [Stallworthy, Jon: **Survivors' songs. From Maldon to the Somme**, Cambridge, 2008: Cambridge University Press.](#)
- [Tate, Trudi: **Modernism, history and the First World War**, Manchester; New York, 1998: Manchester University Press.](#)
- [Towheed, Shafquat / King, Edmund G. C \(eds.\): **Reading and the First World War. Readers, texts, archives**, Basingstoke, 2015: Palgrave Macmillan.](#)

Citation

Jane Potter: Literature (Great Britain and Ireland), in: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather

Jones, Jennifer D. Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2015-11-04. DOI: [10.15463/ie1418.10759](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:5:1-63864-p0101-9)

External Links

- [Ayres, Ruby Mildred: Richard Chatterton, V.C., New York 1919 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Bagnold, Enid: A diary without dates, London 1918 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Binyon, Robert Laurence: For the Fallen, published in The Times newspaper on 21 September 1914 \(The Great War 1914-1918\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Blunden, Edmund: Undertones of war, New York 1929 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Brooke, Rupert: War Sonnets \(Fordham University\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Doyle, Arthur Conan: The German war, New York 1914 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Finzi, Kate John: Eighteen months in the war zone, London etc. 1916 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Ford, Ford Madox: Between St. Dennis and St. George; a sketch of three civilisations, London etc. 1915 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Gibbs, Philip: The soul of the war, London 1916 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Kipling, Rudyard: For All We Have And Are, 1914 \(Poetry Foundation\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Ledwidge, Francis: The complete poems of Francis Ledwidge, New York 1919 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Lowndes, Marie Belloc: Good old Anna, New York: George H. Doran Company \(HathiTrust\) \(Book\)](#)
- [McNeile, H. C. \(Sapper\): Men, women and guns, New York 1916 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [McNeile, H. C. \(Sapper\): The lieutenant and others, London, New York, Toronto 1915 \(HathiTrust\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Nick Milne: 1914 Authors' Manifesto Defending Britain's Involvement in WWI, Signed by H.G. Wells and Arthur Conan Doyle, The New York Times, 18 October 1914, 20 October](#)

[2014 \(Slate\) \(Article\)](#)

- [Poetry Manuscripts of Wilfred Owen \(British Library\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Potter, Jane: Popular Fiction in World War One, 10 December 2012 \(University of Oxford\) \(Video\)](#)
- [Simmers, George: Great War Fiction blog \(Database\)](#)
- [Stuart, Campbell: Secrets of Crewe house. The Story of a Famous Campaign, London/New York 1921 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Thurstan, Violetta: Field hospital and flying column: being the journal of an English nursing sister in Belgium & Russia, London, New York 1915 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Ward, Humphry: Towards the goal, New York 1917 \(Internet Archive\) \(Book\)](#)
- [West, Rebecca: The Return of the Soldier, New York 1918 \(University of Pennsylvania\) \(Book\)](#)
- [Wilfred Owen, Strange Meeting \(Poetry Foundation\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Yeats, William Butler: Byzantium \(Poetry Foundation\) \(Primary Source\)](#)
- [Yeats, William Butler: Easter, 1916 \(The Atlantic online\) \(Primary Source\)](#)

Metadata

Regional Section(s)

[Western Europe](#) > [Great Britain and Ireland](#) > [Great Britain](#)

[Western Europe](#) > [Great Britain and Ireland](#) > [Ireland](#)

Thematic Section(s)

[Media](#)

Subjects

[Culture](#) > [Literature and poetry](#)

[Culture](#) > [Mobilization, cultural](#) > [Intellectuals](#)

[Culture](#) > [Mobilization, cultural](#) > [Interpretations of war](#)

[Memory and historiography](#) > [Memoirs and testimonies](#)

[The media](#) > [Censorship](#)

[The media](#) > [Propaganda](#) > [Propaganda, domestic Warfare and the military](#) > [Battles, battlefields and campaigns](#) > [Battles, battlefields and campaigns, Western Front Warfare and the military](#) > [Trauma and medical care](#) > [Nurses](#)

Author Keywords

fiction; poetry; memoir; modernist; popular

GND Subject Headings

[Großbritannien ; Weltkrieg \[1914-1918, Motiv\] ; Literatur](#)

LC Subject Headings

[World War, 1914-1918--Great Britain--Literature and the war](#)

Rameau Subject Headings

[Guerre mondiale \(1914-1918\) -- Littérature et guerre ; Grande-Bretagne ; Irlande](#)

Key Person(s)

[Masterman, Charles](#); [Buchan, John](#); [Doyle, Arthur Conan](#); [Blunden, Edmund](#); [Aldington, Richard](#); [Raymond, Ernest](#); [McNeile, Herman Cyril](#); [Woolf, Virginia](#); [Jones, David](#); [Lewis, Wyndham](#); [Manning, Frederic](#); [Kipling, Rudyard](#); [Hueffer, Ford Madox](#); [Mansfield, Katherine](#); [Binyon, Laurence](#); [Mumby, Frank A.](#); [Barclay, Florence](#); [Ward, Mary Augusta](#); [Sinclair, May](#); [Lawrence, D.H.](#); [Daniel, C.W.](#); [Fitzroy, A.T.](#); [Ayres, Ruby M.](#); [Keating, Joseph](#); [Ruck, Berta](#); [Marchant, Bessie](#); [Sladen, Douglas](#); [Lowndes, Marie Belloc](#); [Clouston, J. Storer](#); [Bagnold, Enid](#); [Eliot, T.S.](#); [Hulme, T.E.](#); [Pound, Ezra](#); [Joyce, James](#); [Marsh, Edward](#); [Monro, Harold](#); [Thomas, Edward](#); [Brooke, Rupert](#); [Cannan, May Wedderburn](#); [Gurney, Ivor](#); [Sorley, Charles Hamilton](#); [Rosenberg, Isaac](#); [Yeats, W.B.](#); [Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, Lord Dunsany](#); [MacGreevy, Thomas](#); [Gwynn, Stephen](#); [MacGill, Patrick](#); [Ledwidge, Francis](#); [Evans, Ellis Humphrey](#); [Evans-Jones, Albert](#); [MacDonald, Donald](#); [Munro, John](#); [West, Rebecca](#); [Herbert, A.P.](#); [Montague, C.E.](#); [Frankau, Gilbert](#); [Deeping, Warwick](#); [Mottram, R.H.](#); [Tomlinson, H.M.](#); [Price, Evadne](#); [Remarque, Erich Maria](#); [Graves, Robert](#); [Sassoon, Siegfried Loraine](#); [Brittain, Vera](#); [Owen, Wilfred](#); [Gibbs, Philip](#); [Lutyens, Edwin](#); [nurse](#)

Key Location(s)

Title

Literature (Great Britain and Ireland)

Author(s)

[Jane Potter](#)

Article Type

Handbook Article

Classification Group

Regional Thematic Article

Articles That Link Here

[Literature](#); [Literature](#); [Literature \(Russian Empire\)](#); [Historiography 1918-Today \(Great Britain\)](#); [War Poetry](#); [Literature \(Australia\)](#); [Nicaragua](#); [Children's Literature](#) and [Centenary \(South Africa\)](#)