Guerrilla Memoirists: Recovering Intimacy in the Margins of First World War Memoirs

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This article offers a reflection on a found object: a heavily annotated copy of *Storm of Steel*, the 1929 American edition of Ernst Jünger's First World War memoir *In Stahlgewittern*. The author of the marginalia was Bartus Baggott MD, an American physician who had served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in France between August 1917 and the end of the War. Jünger and Baggott both took part in the first Battle of Cambrai (August–December 1917) (though on different sides), and *Storm of Steel* includes a detailed account of that battle. Baggott's marginalia turn the relevant pages into a kind of virtual conversation about a shared experience, though he also uses the space to record his personal reflections and observations about the nature of trench warfare. Among his contributions to the conversation is a fragment of a battlefield map, pasted into the back of the book, and also annotated; this is itself an implicit response to Jünger's prefatory remarks about ways of knowing the front experience, in which he compares his memoir to 'a trench map [read] years after the event' (Jünger 1929, xi).

Captain Baggott's marginalia invite analysis in terms of what they tell us about the construction of masculine personae, identities, and comradeship, in and especially after combat. Here it is important to bear in mind that Baggott's experience was that of a plural 'insider outsider': an American in a British unit, a medic among combat soldiers, and, in his encounter with Jünger, someone commenting from 'across enemy lines'. Beyond their contents, though, which are relatively unsurprising, the fact of Baggott's annotations (both marginalia and map) itself calls for consideration. In the growing scholarship on marginalia, relatively little attention has been given to their function in military memoirs. I propose here that modern military marginalia have a quality of their own and call for a very particular

reading. I use the term ‘modern’ advisedly. My proposition (at this stage really a hypothesis) draws on an approach to reading and writing practices that presumes that the same practices may have different functions and valences in different periods, as cultural understandings of the relationship between experience and individuality change along with modes of communication (including the ways books are produced and used) (Chartier 2018). In critical military studies, a key intervention here has been Yuval Noah Harari’s diagnosis of a ‘modern war culture’ (Harari 2008) emerging from the concurrent developments of an expanding book market and a post-Enlightenment epistemology that attributes special significance to the experience and remembrance of combat.

The character of the war memoir as personal testimony on the part of ‘the man who was there’ (Hynes 1995) has in the past been associated with a vision of the memoirist as untutored, unambitious, innocent of the world of publishing and composing in private essentially for his[1] personal satisfaction. In his groundbreaking study of military memoirs, Samuel Hynes confesses a preference for the ‘one-book’ memoirist (Hynes 1997). There is plenty of evidence, however, that combat memories themselves are shaped in conversation between veterans, and a published memoir is necessarily the product of a communal effort, which often involves drawing on those conversations in its preparation and always calls for cooperation between author, editor, and publisher as it advances into print. The collaboration – sometimes a contest – among comrades has often continued in private and public conversations about the texts as published. But the veteran who records in private his comments on the writings of another is doing something quite distinct and potentially subversive of the purposes of the publication, and it is in this sense that I use the term ‘guerrilla memoirist’ in my title. Among other things, he is claiming the front experience as his own and yet simultaneously as one that is shared in a special way with his interlocutor, implicitly against the claims of those who were *not* there as well as those who have packaged

that experience for the market, and this is what I mean by 'recovering intimacy'. One way of approaching the affective dimension of such marginalia, their role in maintaining the bonds of community among combat veterans and their potential as a challenge to commodification of memory is to think of them in terms of a gift relationship. And to return to the specific case of Bartus Baggott's annotations, the combination of pencilled marginalia and the trench map, each offered up for the purposes of sealing the conversational bond, also allows some insights into the complexity of post-war memory practices, with the map serving as a portable 'lieu de mémoire' (cf Nora 1989) and bearer of affect in its own right.

Lives

As it happens, Ernst Jünger and Bartus Baggott were, by background and upbringing, the kinds of men who might have met in real life. Jünger was the restless son of a Heidelberg pharmacist who enlisted for service in 1914 at the age of 19. He served with an infantry unit on the Western Front for the entire duration of the War, and survived to develop a successful career as an entomologist; he died in 1998. He was and remains best known for the writings that reflect his combat experience, and which place him among a pan-European generation of radical nationalists who viewed violent struggle as necessary and ennobling; he was admired by the Nazis though he rejected National Socialism itself. *Storm of Steel* was his earliest and best known work, though he continued to produce fiction and essays whose literary and philosophical merit have been acknowledged in their frequent republication and a body of critical scholarship (Noack 1998; Schöning 2014).

Bartus Baggott was born in Baltimore, a port and the principal city of the American state of Maryland, in 1893. His father, the son of an immigrant dock worker, rose to become the co-proprietor of a wire-working firm.[2] Bartus trained in medicine at the University of Maryland, and was working at Baltimore's Mercy Hospital as an intern when the United

States declared war on Germany in the spring of 1917. He enlisted and underwent training for service in the medical corps, becoming one of some 1600 American medical officers who were assigned to take over and staff British front hospitals in the summer of 1917 (Bulletin of the University of Maryland School of Medicine 1919, 29; Rauer n.d.; Chapin 1926). In July of that year he arrived in London and began familiarizing himself with British medical procedures, and in late August he shipped out to join the 2/1st London Field Ambulance, a front line mobile medical unit attached to the 56th Division of the British Expeditionary Forces. He ended his tour of duty as a Captain, and returned to Baltimore in May 1919. There he worked for ten years as head of tuberculosis services in the City Health Department before going into private practice as a general practitioner (Obituary for Dr Bartus T. Baggott 1967; Maryland War Records Commission 1933). He married in 1923, and he and his wife Elizabeth were pillars of their community. Reports in the society pages of his high-circulation hometown newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun*, show that he followed his father into the Masonic Lodge, and Elizabeth was active in the Delphian Society, a national women's organization promoting female education. The marriage survived until her death, in spite of the fact that relatively early on he fell in love with one of his co-workers in the public health department; they maintained a clandestine relationship until they were able to marry in 1957. Both marriages were childless, and Bartus Baggott died in 1966.

Jünger and Baggott both saw combat in the trenches of northwestern France. None of Baggott's personal papers have survived; apart from the marginalia, his front service is documented entirely by sources on the history of the 2/1st London Field Ambulance, including the unit's War Diary.[3] He joined the Field Ambulance at Éperlecques at the end of August 1917, when the Division was resting after the Battle of Ypres. The Ambulance proceeded to set up a Main Dressing Station – or field hospital – at Beugny, between Arras and Cambrai, and remained there until July 1918. During this time, Baggott moved between

the main dressing station, a casualty clearing station, and a series of advanced dressing stations, and also took command of stretcher-bearers on the battlefield. In his annotations he mentions specifically being in the trenches during the Battle of Cambrai, which lasted from November to December 1917, and in the German counteroffensive of March to April 1918, which became known as the second Battle of Arras. After mid-August, he seems to have moved ever further from the front, as a period of leave was followed by deployments in the main dressing station, a corps rest station, and a stationary hospital, before he was demobilized following the armistice.

When Baggott arrived at that part of the front, Jünger had by his own account already spent two periods of service there: between September 1915 and November 1916, when he witnessed the first stages of trench warfare and its human and environmental costs, and again from April to June 1917. Accordingly, some of Baggott's annotations refer to places he visited (or where he experienced combat in the same trenches) well after the moments Jünger describes. In mid-November 1917, Jünger's unit was deployed back to Artois, and it was at this point – in the Battle of Cambrai – that the two soldiers were actually in the same place at the same time.

Wars in the margins - with an excursion into the canon

No general study of military marginalia has yet been published, and the reasons for this are obvious. When asked, collectors and scholars of militaria and military memoirs can report the existence of many annotated copies, but these tend to appear at random. Annotations are not systematically recorded by holding libraries, and it is not always clear who the annotator is: occasional reader, fellow-combatant, or scholar. Heather Jackson, in her monograph *Romantic Readers*, cites marginalia in published accounts of the siege of Gibraltar and the conquest of Mauritius, as well as in George Elliott's 1816 biography of the Duke of

Wellington, which she offers as examples of ‘eyewitness annotations’ (Jackson 2005, 242–3, 246). P. J. O. Taylor has analysed the very dense marginalia left in an account of the Indian Mutiny of 1857 by an officer who had been there, which by way of the additional detail and the critical comments it offers provides both ‘a remarkably accurate statement not only of a famous military event, but also of the rivalry between the Company’s army and the Queen’s army’ (Taylor 1998, 366; cf. Jackson 2001, 258).

Both Jackson and Taylor focus on the ways in which marginalia in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century military memoirs amplify or seek to correct the information in the printed text, and both treat the facticity of the marginalia as their defining quality. Jackson writes, ‘They were surely composed with the idea that they might someday be called on’ (Jackson 2005, 242). A pocket bible, in which a Canadian stretcher-bearer on the Western Front in the First World War inscribed an index that cross-referenced key front experiences with biblical passages, has been read as an artefact of faith in active engagement with the meaning and purpose of the War (Fowler 2006). But in fact it seems likely that the marginalia of war veterans, like other people’s marginalia, have multiple functions. Such annotations serve as a form of life writing (Smyth 2008; Woster 2014) and an assertion of identity, which involve appropriating the text in a simultaneous intimacy and rivalry with the author (Jackson 2001, 87, 90).

At the same time, following Yuval Noah Harari’s observations about the revelatory character that modern culture attributes to the combat experience (Harari 2008), it seems reasonable to propose that when combat veterans are commenting on each other’s accounts of a shared experience, the functions of marginalia are exercised in particular ways and have a particular valence. That is, the facticity emphasized by Jackson and Taylor does seem characteristic of this kind of annotation, but it is about more than preserving (or correcting) the record. In this context, and perhaps counterintuitively, marginalia may be said to be part

of a set of practices through which people seek affirmation of the ‘authenticity’ of their personal experience in interaction with others who have had that experience. Today, this effort of affirmation is apparent to those who have access to the (mainly closed) social media platforms on which combat veterans debate ‘how it really was’ in a particular engagement or in a particular theatre.[4] In these practices, which are certainly not universal but seem characteristic of a culture of ‘combat gnosticism’ (Campbell 1999), we can see the experience itself being constructed collectively or in collaboration among veterans.

The visceral meaning of ‘how it really was’ is documented in print in what is probably the best known case of a conversation between the authors of competing memoirs, namely the exchange of letters between Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves, who had served together in France. The letters were sent in early 1930, and began with Sassoon challenging the accuracy of the details Graves provided in his First World War memoir *Goodbye to All That* (1929). As Allyson Booth points out in her account of this exchange (Booth 1996, 83–5), the preoccupation with accuracy that Sassoon in particular displays is closely associated with his sense that the best, most appropriate, and actually intended reader of a front memoir is another front soldier; he writes:

> I am testing your book as a private matter between you and me, which is perhaps more important than the momentary curiosity of 50,000 strangers. If such chapters are any good as evidence about the war, they should be valid against the criticisms of your ‘former comrades’. (7 February 1930, Graves 1982, 200)

In spite of the fact that both *Goodbye to All That* and Sassoon’s own *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928) were understood by their authors as works of literature, the extent to

which asserting the truth of their respective 'flesh-witnessing' (Harari 2008) was crucial to each man's (gendered) sense of self is reflected in the climax of the dispute. In an irritable exchange over whether, as Graves claims in his book, officers would have had time to travel to a bordello and back, Graves jibes, 'It doesn't take long to fuck; but perhaps you don't know about that', before following it up more explicitly:

> The friendship that was between us was always disturbed by several cross-currents; your homosexual leanings and I believe your jealousy of Nancy [Graves' wife] in some way or other; later Nancy being in love with you (which no doubt you noticed and were afraid of) for several years (until 1923 or so). (20 February, 1930; Graves 1982, 202–03)

Four years later Graves, in a conciliatory mood, wrote to Sassoon of the 'hysterias of 1918–29' that were 'now [of] less than historical interest' (8 June, 1933; Graves 1982, 221). Addressed to Sassoon, who had spent time in Craiglockhart Military Hospital under suspicion (or on the pretext) of shell-shock, the use of the term 'hysterias' can hardly have been accidental. In recalling the attribution of a gender-marked mental disorder to Craiglockhart's soldier patients, it also reminds us of the therapeutic or sublimatory purpose – locking 'the madwoman … back in the attic' – that has been attributed to war memoirs (Vernon 2005, 20–21).

The Sassoon of Craiglockhart is also the author of a set of marginalia that is relatively well known though little analysed. In October 1917, he gave his fellow-patient Wilfred Owen a copy of Bernard Adams's front memoir *Nothing of Importance*. Adams, who was killed in February 1917, had served with Sassoon during the latter's first tour of duty, and Sassoon himself features in the book, though, like all the named individuals, under a pseudonym. It

seems likely that this was Sassoon's own copy and that he annotated it for his own purposes, before inscribing it to Owen as he was leaving Craiglockhart to return to the front.[5] On the recto of the front flyleaf, Sassoon has provided a key to the pseudonyms, adding the dates of death of individual soldiers. On the verso he lists by company all the officers of the VIIth Division, 22nd Brigade, First Royal Welch Fusiliers as of January 1916, noting the dates (and sometimes circumstances) of their wounding and death. In the body of the text there are brief marginalia on eight pages. Five of them identify people and places (17, 32, 36, 63, 66), on a sixth page '"The Redeemer"' is pencilled next to a description of a spell of icy winter weather (57), on a seventh 'the band' in the text is glossed '(fife and drums)' (67), and on an eighth Sassoon contradicts the author's statement that there was not much game to be had: '(Partridges & Hares in profusion!)' (71). In these relatively few annotations, Sassoon is engaging in conversation both with himself – reminding himself of events, and recreating mood and sensory impressions – and with Adams, his former comrade. In making a gift of the book to another front soldier, Owen, he drew a third, uniquely qualified person into that conversation.

Given Sassoon's role in encouraging and promoting Owen's poetry and the affectionate terms in which the two wrote of one another, we can also see in that gift of an object, both personal and personalized, a gesture of intimacy. And not least because of its context in a relationship between two creative artists, this specific act of giving allows us to think about the circulation of memoirs and marginalia among veterans in terms of Lewis Hyde's analysis of the gift as a social practice (Hyde 2012). One of the features of the gift that Hyde identifies is its rootedness in affective relationships.

Central to Hyde's understanding of the gift is that gifts exist to be passed on; they must remain in motion in order to fulfil their social function, which is that of sustaining – possibly extending – community. Our canonical nest of fusilier poets and their associates

provides multiple examples of the communal quality of combat memoirs. The published memoir is subject to comment and challenge by fellow combatants even before it goes into print, and veterans sharpen – or 'test' – their own memories in engagement with the published memories of others. There are other examples of collaboration in this circle. Graves described himself 'privately' as 'godfather' to Frank Richards' 1933 memoir *Old Soldiers Never Die* (Graves to Liddell Hart, December 12, 1935, Graves 1981, 261. The language of affinity here is revealing.). And like other members of the regiment, Graves and Sassoon contributed to *The War the Infantry Knew*, written by J. C. Dunn, the Second Battalion's Medical Officer, and published in 1938. The book was a compilation of soldiers' experiences rather than a personal memoir; tellingly, Dunn's authority as fellow-witness was invoked by both poets in their 1930 exchange.

At the same time, and this was certainly one of the irritations in the relationship between the published writers Sassoon and Graves, the introduction of the publisher into this collaboration changes its character. Anticipating Harari's analysis in his diagnosis of the 'combat gnosticism' of the war poets (and challenging critics like Paul Fussell who continued to reproduce that ideology), James Campbell pointed out the contradiction inherent in the 'trench lyric' as a project in communicating the ineffable to civilian readers (Campbell 1999, 209–10; cf Fussell 1975). Commercial publication places the notion of a unique and exclusive community of experience under further tension by introducing a market element, appropriating that combat experience for the consumption of non-combatants. It involves a process of alienation. To be sure, what appears in published memoirs does not generally falsify the experiences recorded in unpublished notes, letters, and diaries. And the agency of the memoirist remains, perhaps paradoxically exemplified in those cases where the author publishes one or more revised versions of a memoir. This is likely to be a response to perceived reader expectations (or more broadly, to the perceived needs of a public) as much

as it records the author's personal reflection on a retreating past; indeed, since the author is normally a reader himself, the two processes are necessarily in dialogue with one another (cf. Meyer 2009, 128–29; Plowman 2018). The commodity character of the publication remains; in the case of First World War writing, recent research in book history has illuminated the care with which British publishers of the 1920s selected, packaged and marketed new books, sometimes deliberately misrepresenting their contents in cover art, blurbs and advertising copy (Trott 2018, 21–27). In Hyde's terms, this commodification removes the memoir, or recorded memory from the realm of gifts; although it may circulate more widely thanks to the market, it no longer moves freely, following the principle that 'when the gift stops moving … one man's gift becomes another man's capital' (11), and accordingly can no longer fulfil its community-sustaining function.

The process of commodification is nowhere more obvious than in Ernst Jünger's *Storm of Steel.* The first edition of the German original, *In Stahlgewittern* (a reworking of war diaries that were later themselves published), came out in 1920. Jünger revised the text at least six times for subsequent editions, in 1922, 1924, 1934, 1935, 1961, and 1978. The revisions reflected changing political circumstances as well as Jünger's own changing perspective; while the first edition was self-published, the second and subsequent editions had commercial publishers and reflect Jünger's consciousness of writing for a growing audience that included non-combatants (Kiesel 2014). At the same time, elements of the text respond directly to other veterans, and specifically to former adversaries. Thus in the editions of the 1930s and later, he corrects his characterization of the opposing troops in the Battle of Cambrai: 'the Englishmen or rather the New Zealanders … because here we were fighting against a unit from New Zealand, as I learned after the war from letters that reached me from the Antipodes' (Jünger 1937, 299).

In the English and American editions, this simultaneity of the commodity character and the direct address to fellow-combatants was given added force by paratextual elements and by the reception context. The translation (from the 1924 German edition) by Basil Creighton, which came onto the market in England in the spring of 1929 and appeared in its American edition in September of the same year, was commissioned to catch the wave of reader interest provoked by the publication of a crop of newer English and European memoirs at the end of the 1920s (cf. Müller 1993). The British and American press swiftly reviewed it, commonly in combination with other German memoirs such as Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Ludwig Renn's *War*, Ernst Glaeser's *Class of 1902*, and the anonymously published *Schlumpf* (for a summary example, see Butcher 1929). The publishers, Chatto & Windus in Britain and Doubleday Doran in the United States, made an event of the publication. They solicited publishable comments from the likes of wartime Prime Minister Lloyd George, which featured in an aggressive advertising campaign (for example in *The Observer* of 14 July, 1929). An interview with Jünger by a United Press correspondent was syndicated for publication in newspapers all over the United States, with the earliest identifiable dateline 11 December, 1929 (in Indiana's *Muncie Evening Press*) (War viewed as "necessary" 1929). All of this stimulated widespread reader demand, and as early as December 1929 it was available in American public libraries.

Figure 1

Jünger's interview combines the key themes that were central to the way the book was marketed: the celebration of combat and the direct address to a non-German readership. Dismissing Remarque's celebrated anti-war novel as 'camouflage', he reportedly said:

> My book … was written to make it clear that we combatants are not so awfully unhappy. My feeling that wartime life is heroic is not restricted to

> Germany, but is shared by many ex-enemies from whom I have frequently received letters. My correspondents are particularly numerous among former members of Scottish regiments whom I encountered during the great German offensive of March 1918 (War viewed as "necessary" 1929).

The preface that he wrote for the English edition similarly addresses his readers as fellow veterans: 'It is not impossible that among the readers of this book there may be one who in 1915 and 1916 was in one of those trenches that were woven like a web among the ruins of Monchy-au-Bois'. At the same time, he reminds them that his own regiment was one that won its banner in the successful defence of Gibraltar in 1783, when Hanoverian and English troops stood together against a common enemy, and closes with the sentence, 'Warlike achievements are enhanced by the inherent worth of the enemy' (Jünger 1929, ix, xi). Whatever else it was, the direct outreach to fellow combatants was in part a marketing strategy, and the terms in which the book was advertised, including the book jacket text (Fig. 1), did not fail to acknowledge and even emphasize the fact that Jünger (unlike most competing authors) celebrated the war experience.

But as if to contain or detoxify this, by then, relatively unpopular message, the book was also supplied with a brief introduction by the English writer R. H. Mottram. Mottram's *Spanish Farm Trilogy* (1924–1927), based on his own wartime experience, was among the fictional works that had 'helped introduce the disenchantment of combatants to a wider audience' (Frayn 2014, 193) in the mid-1920s. His introduction to *Storm of Steel* fulfils the marketing function that scholars attribute to epitexts like forewords (cf. Genette 1997; Kleinreesink 2017), but in a counterintuitive way: Mottram, whose novels were not combat stories but accounts of the frustrations of life behind the lines, seeks to distance readers from the excitements of the narrative and guide them to the vision of the futility of combat which

was by then the dominant theme in war writing and the stock-in-trade of Chatto & Windus (Trott 2018, 28). In a passage that wilfully suppresses the upbeat tone of the novel's closing pages, he writes:

> The whole is stamped with truth … It comes most opportunely now, when there are signs of an attempt to resurrect the God of War … To discredit such an attempt nothing could be better than the diary of this high-minded devotee of personal combat … [Jünger] was nearly as good a specimen as ever worshiped Mars, and to what did he come? To that unescapable doom that brings to meet violence precisely such a resistance as shall cancel and annul it. (Mottram 1929, vii)

Those who had actually been in combat may have thought they knew better, or rather, the multiple political messages of the book may have been irrelevant to their interest in the text as a record of experience shared. Siegfried Sassoon recorded in his diary that he was 'reading Jünger's book with enjoyable stirrings of war memories' (MS diary entry of 18 December 1929, cited by Trott 2018, 61). Annotation was a way of actively re-appropriating the text and the direct relationship with the author that it promised. To put it another way, through marginalia they could rebrand the artefactual memoir, reclaiming it for the gift relation; beyond resisting commodification, annotation made it possible to set the gift in motion again in ways that might serve to maintain the community of veterans.

Bartus Baggott as guerrilla memoirist

Given the publicity that surrounded the publication of *Storm of Steel*, it is more than likely that Bartus Baggott bought his copy new soon after it was published. The fact that it is still in

its original jacket also seems to confirm that. As noted above, neither personal papers nor the rest of his library have survived to contextualize the marginalia.[6] However, evidence of Baggott's career scattered in his hometown press suggests that the War was on the whole a positive experience for him and one about which he was happy to reminisce. In October 1917, after his first six weeks' experience of serving at a casualty clearing station, he sent a letter home to his high school English teacher that was published in the *Baltimore Sun* the following Christmas Eve. Anticipating Jünger's interview comments, he wrote:

> I must admit that I don't find war such a terrible business after all, and rather enjoy the life. I am living in a dugout 30 or 40 foot under ground and working at a regimental aid post when there is actual fighting going on. I've had an opportunity of seeing a good deal of the latter in all its exciting phases and have liked it so well I hardly expect to regret my joining the service.

In later years he had a collection of weapons, the beginnings of which may have been two defused grenades that he had brought back from France. He liked to show them off in company, and to recall the incident when he was stunned and briefly buried by a shell strike, which also features in his annotations (*Baltimore Sun*, 14 June, 1966).

Maps

There are two identifiable phases of annotation in Baggott's copy of Jünger: there are a few words in ink, while the rest of the marginalia are in pencil in a single, recognisable hand. The words in ink mark the moment at which he pasted a trench map onto the inside back cover (Fig. 2), and one of the effects of that act is to 'claim' the book for his souvenir collection, since the map is something that he would certainly have intended to keep.

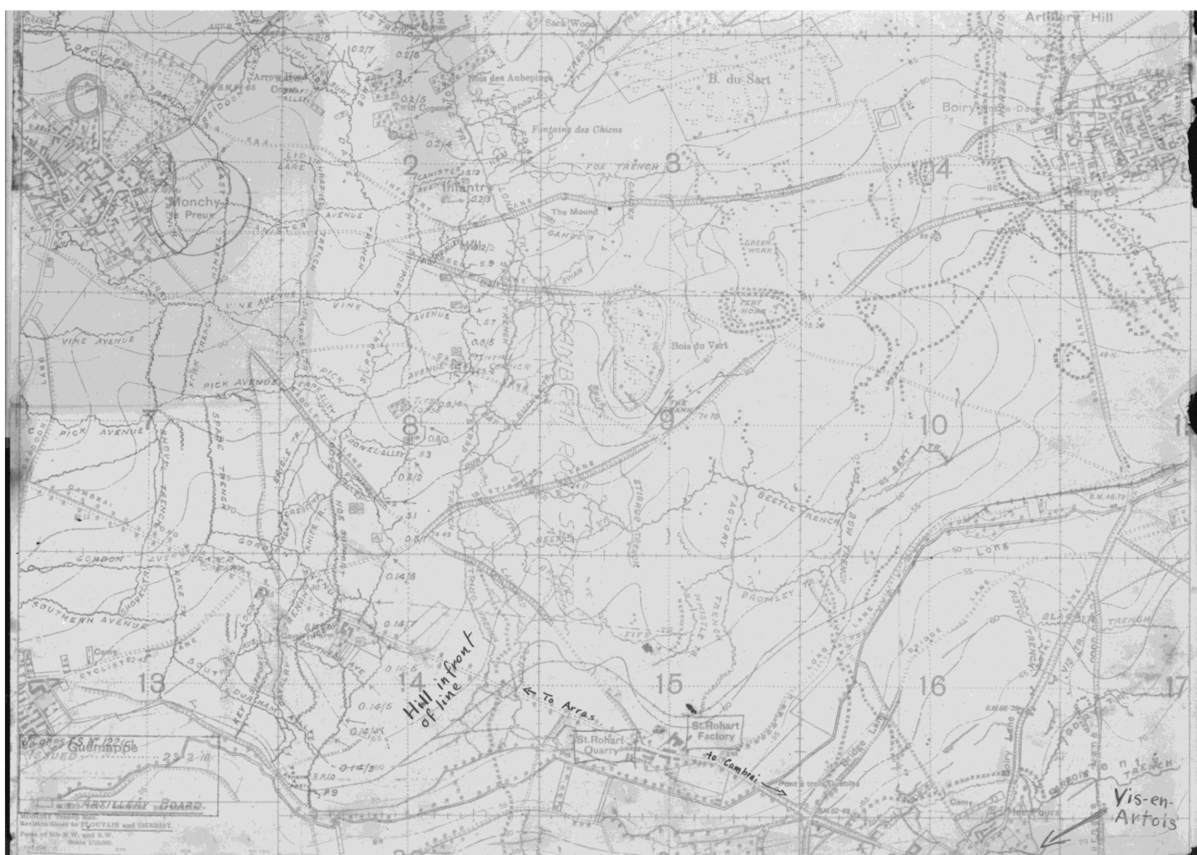
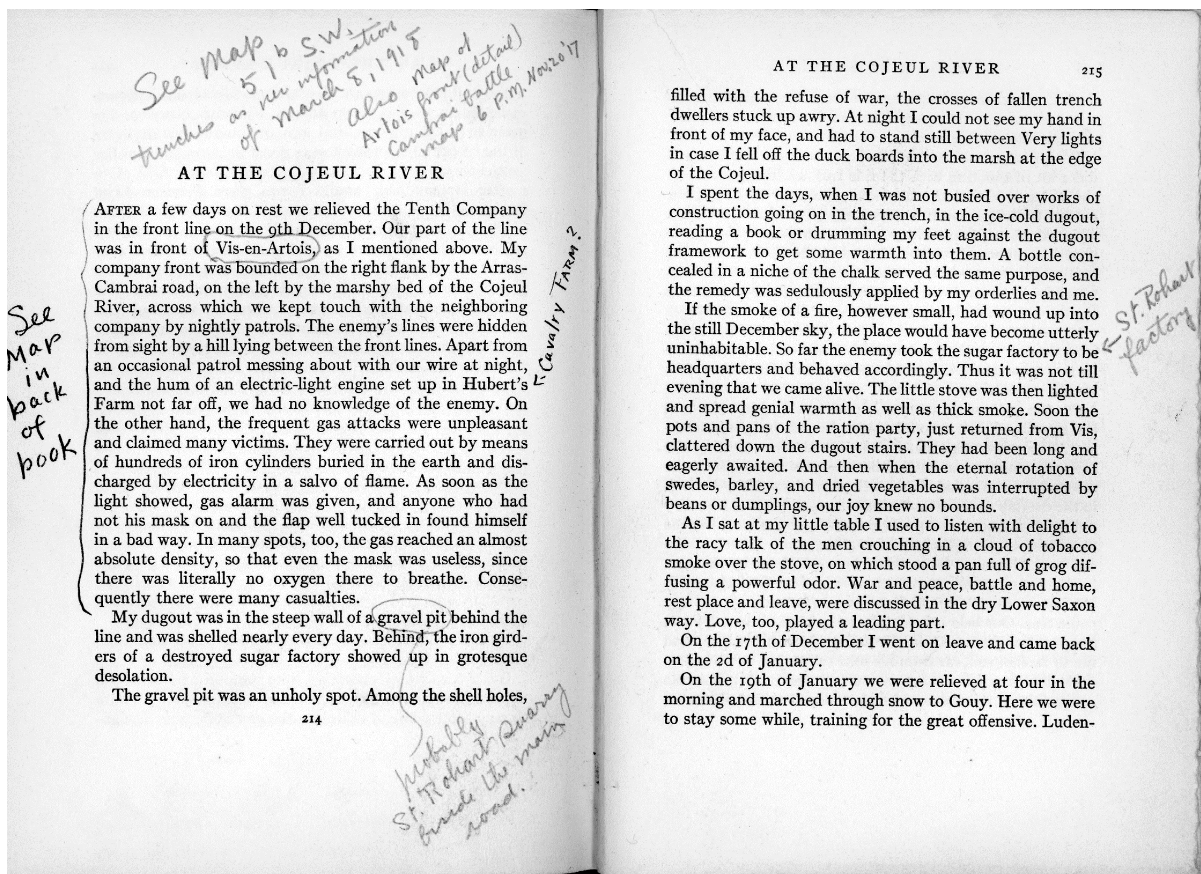


Figure 2

Further annotations on the same page, in pencil, refer to three maps, including two more British Ordnance Survey trench maps identified by map coordinates and/or dates. The third, ‘Also map of Artois Front (detail)’, looks like a reference to a published map, probably in a general history of the War. It is not possible to identify the relevant publication, but the reference does suggest that the annotations were part of a general process of reflection on the War on Baggott’s part, which also involved the reading of different kinds of historical accounts.



AT THE COJEUL RIVER

AFTER a few days on rest we relieved the Tenth Company in the front line on the 9th December. Our part of the line was in front of Vis-en-Artois, as I mentioned above. My company front was bounded on the right flank by the Arras-Cambrai road, on the left by the marshy bed of the Cojeul River, across which we kept touch with the neighboring company by nightly patrols. The enemy's lines were hidden from sight by a hill lying between the front lines. Apart from an occasional patrol messing about with our wire at night, and the hum of an electric-light engine set up in Hubert's Farm not far off, we had no knowledge of the enemy. On the other hand, the frequent gas attacks were unpleasant and claimed many victims. They were carried out by means of hundreds of iron cylinders buried in the earth and discharged by electricity in a salvo of flame. As soon as the light showed, gas alarm was given, and anyone who had not his mask on and the flap well tucked in found himself in a bad way. In many spots, too, the gas reached an almost absolute density, so that even the mask was useless, since there was literally no oxygen there to breathe. Consequently there were many casualties.

My dugout was in the steep wall of a gravel pit behind the line and was shelled nearly every day. Behind, the iron girders of a destroyed sugar factory showed up in grotesque desolation.

The gravel pit was an unholy spot. Among the shell holes,

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filled with the refuse of war, the crosses of fallen trench dwellers stuck up awry. At night I could not see my hand in front of my face, and had to stand still between Very lights in case I fell off the duck boards into the marsh at the edge of the Cojeul.

I spent the days, when I was not busied over works of construction going on in the trench, in the ice-cold dugout, reading a book or drumming my feet against the dugout framework to get some warmth into them. A bottle concealed in a niche of the chalk served the same purpose, and the remedy was sedulously applied by my orderlies and me.

If the smoke of a fire, however small, had wound up into the still December sky, the place would have become utterly uninhabitable. So far the enemy took the sugar factory to be headquarters and behaved accordingly. Thus it was not till evening that we came alive. The little stove was then lighted and spread genial warmth as well as thick smoke. Soon the pots and pans of the ration party, just returned from Vis, clattered down the dugout stairs. They had been long and eagerly awaited. And then when the eternal rotation of swedes, barley, and dried vegetables was interrupted by beans or dumplings, our joy knew no bounds.

As I sat at my little table I used to listen with delight to the racy talk of the men crouching in a cloud of tobacco smoke over the stove, on which stood a pan full of grog diffusing a powerful odor. War and peace, battle and home, rest place and leave, were discussed in the dry Lower Saxon way. Love, too, played a leading part.

On the 17th of December I went on leave and came back on the 2d of January.

On the 19th of January we were relieved at four in the morning and marched through snow to Gouy. Here we were to stay some while, training for the great offensive. Luden-

Figure 3

The character of military maps carried home from the front as personal souvenirs or objects of memory is well attested, though as in the case of military marginalia, the evidence is largely anecdotal. To return briefly to the canon, both Ernst Jünger and Siegfried Sassoon left government-issue trench maps of the fronts on which they had fought among their papers.[7] In the British case, as Peter Chasseaud records, Ordnance Survey, War Office, and field survey units published a combined total of 34 million maps of the Western Front (Chasseaud 1999, 499), and in conversation in March 2016 he confirmed that many of the ones that survived made their way into the households of returning veterans to be kept, shared, and sometimes pasted into albums. In *Front Lines of Modernism*, Mark Larabee writes of the 'ubiquitous objecthood' of battlefield maps (Larabee 2011, 15). So far, it has been literary scholars like Larabee and Allyson Booth who have begun to explore the

significance of maps and the character of the landscape to the First World War experience, its recording, and memory, and in this context maps have been read as more than simply souvenirs. Larabee argues persuasively and at length that modernist representations of war and the techniques of literary modernism more generally were informed by the scepticism that was honed on the disconnect between what a map told its reader about the terrain, the reality of an ever-changing landscape, and the fact that those who were stuck in a trench or dugout could not see the landscape anyway; as Jünger observes, in a passage that Larabee quotes and Baggott confirms with brackets pencilled in the margin, they could not even see the enemy (Jünger 1929, 28; cf. Larabee 2011, 8).

However, Larabee's emphasis on uncertainty and indeterminacy should not distract us from the materiality of the front experience itself and the function of the map as an artefact and representation of that experience. Officers were trained to draw and read maps under circumstances in which the topographical challenges were a matter of life and death, and the expectation was that the maps would do their job, even if that was not always the reality (see for example Chasseaud [1997]). While a map was always at least either a souvenir or trophy once it had served (or failed to serve) its purpose, it was also a medium of communication, first among combatants, and later among veterans and also between ex-combatants and non-combatants. In conversation or in print, a map could be deployed to make clear to one's interlocutor exactly what was going on in a combat story; in an exchange between combatants, it was a means among other things of fixing those details that are so much the preoccupation of military annotators. Chapter VI of *Nothing of Importance* opens with the following lines:

> This is a chapter of maps, diagrams and technicalities. There are people, I know, who do not want maps, to whom maps convey practically nothing.

> These people can skip this chapter … Now to work. We understand each other, we map-lovers. The other folk have gone on to the next chapter, so we can take our time. (Adams 1917, 101–02)

In his preface for English readers, Jünger invokes more emphatically the vision of the map as a place of encounter between veterans:

> To-day there is no secret about what those trenches concealed, and a book such as this may, like a trench map years after the event, be read with sympathy and interest by the other side. But here not only the blue and red lines of the trenches are shown, but the blood that beat and the life that lay hid in them. (Jünger 1929, xi)

'The other side' here seems to mean the enemy, but it may also point to the experiential front line between combatants and civilians. In conversation with his fellow veterans, Jünger's answer to the presumption of indeterminacy is: Non-combatants may be perplexed or intrigued by these apparently meaningless lines, but we who were there *know*.

It is tempting to imagine that Bartus Baggott's very first 'annotation' was the insertion of his own trench map, a direct response to Jünger's implicit invitation to share memories. But in Baggott's case, we have an example not only of the map *as* annotation, but also of annotations to the map. Peter Chasseaud reports that surviving military maps often carry annotations, but unsurprisingly most of the annotations date from their use at the front. Baggott has retrospectively annotated the map itself (in the same ink as he uses in the marginalia directing us to the map) so as to make it an explicit illustration of the passages in Jünger's text that refer to the days when the two men's units were facing each other across

the lines. Later in the annotations (261), reference to a map is deployed in a more explicitly dialogic way, as part of a wider conversation about lions and donkeys. Jünger uses the example of a misconceived deployment of his own unit to comment on the tendencies of the officers in command to go by maps rather than the soldier's knowledge of the terrain; they had been ordered to occupy a trench that was on low ground and overlooked from all sides. Baggott concurs, writing: 'The bed of a small brook should have told this, even on the map' (underlining in the original annotation).

Marginalia: acknowledging comrades and getting intimate with the enemy

Such points of topography constitute a recurrent theme in Baggott's annotations, in keeping with the interest in accurate detail that is familiar from other military marginalia. However, Baggott's words merge into a complex of observations that have the wider function of positioning the annotator in relation to the wartime experience, his own fellow-combatants, and his direct interlocutor, Jünger. In the body of the book, Baggott has made pencil annotations on 92 of the 295 pages, a total of 115 annotations in all. Twenty-seven of these do no more than elaborate, confirm, or correct the name or location of places mentioned by Jünger. He corrects the date of Jünger's arrival at a new battle sector from July to August (172) – evidence not of any preternatural knowledge of the author's movements, but of the care with which he is reading the book and spotting misprints as he maps Jünger's experiences onto his own. Otherwise, the most common *form* of annotation is a simple sidebar, line, or bracket in the margin, or sometimes in the text. Implicitly, of course, these all signal a link between annotator and author or a recognition of shared experience; 27 of the non-verbal markers seem simply to be confirming statements of fact such as descriptions of the devastated landscape, in the sense of 'that is how it was'. But some 30 of them make this explicit in words, with simple remarks such as 'I often passed here', 'often noticed this bit of

luck', 'this is quite true', or the elegiac comment on Jünger's 'The sunken ground and the ground behind were full of German dead; the ground in front, of English': 'They laid there all summer' (90). There are still more elaborate statements such as Baggott's gloss on Jünger's observation about battlefield acoustics (94): Where Jünger writes 'Whoee! Another volley! We stopped breathless, for I knew a fraction of a second in advance, from the sharpening intensity of sound, that the descending curve of the shell would end just where I stood', Baggott has underlined 'sharpening intensity of the sound' and comments: 'Shells that come very close have a certain screech that one soon learns'. This is one of nine annotations that mark or comment on sensory experiences, whereas there are a further 20 that note psychological aspects or a combination of the sensory and psychological, as when Baggott marks this passage with a sidebar (163):

> You feel that all your intelligence, your capacities, your bodily and spiritual characteristics, have become utterly meaningless and absurd. While you think it, the lump of metal that will crush you to a shapeless nothing may have started on its course. Your discomfort is concentrated in your ear, that tries to distinguish amid the uproar the swirl of your own death rushing near. It is dark, too; and you must find in yourself alone all the strength for holding out. You can't get up and with a blasé laugh light a cigarette in the wondering sight of your companions.

There are three points at which Baggott uses the margin to elucidate Jünger's references to ordnance, by translating the German metric appellations; Jünger's 'thirty-eight centimeter shell', for example, is glossed '15 inch naval howitzer' (87). As with the topographical references, this is partly about facticity, but we might also associate these with

other comments in which he demonstrates that in this war he has become not only an experienced medical practitioner but a soldier. He was trained as an officer, and in general (as the 24-year-old writing home from the front at the beginning of his service did) he articulates himself as part of the combat units to which he was attached – commonly through the use of the first person plural. Thus, he pencils a ring around Jünger's reference to Douai Station and comments: 'We shelled this station with a 15" naval gun' (127). Similarly, in his marginalia to Jünger's account of the battle for Tadpole Copse (30 November – 2 December 1917), in which they were both engaged, he responds to Jünger's 'Unhappily, we, too, had a casualty list of 50 per cent' with 'So did we, and were relieved on Sunday, Dec 2nd by the 51st Scottish Division. I was blown up by a shell on the Bapaume Rd. in the afternoon' (212).

In this sense he does not differentiate himself from combatant soldiers. And in spite of the reservations that combat troops had about their medical comrades (see Jessica Meyer's article in the first part of this special issue), this perspective on the part of the medics themselves seems characteristic. They shared trenches and dugouts with combatants, and they could also be more exposed; of nearly 7,000 Royal Army Medical Corps casualties in World War I, some 4,000 were killed in action or died of wounds. Baggott was seconded to three different units between March and July 1918 as a Regimental Medical Officer (RMO), a front-line role with a high casualty rate and one in which medics sometimes adopted combat leadership positions under fire (Acton and Potter 2015, 43; Whitehead 2013, 182–4). He records his involvement in the defence of the village of Arleux, 'where we were attacked 3:00 a.m. March 28, 1918' (118; see Fig. 3) and '[w]e held a trench … which we called "Arleux-loop"' (120).

At the same time there is evidence of the field medic's eye in some of the marginalia. Baggott marks two references to stretcher bearers in his annotations in *Storm of Steel*. The

first refers to Jünger's very first experience of combat, in 1915 – a critical moment and one that any soldier would recognize (19). Jünger writes:

> 'Stretcher bearers!' We had our first casualty. A shrapnel bullet had severed Fusilier Stoller's carotid artery. Three bandages were saturated instantly, and within a few seconds he had bled to death. Near by were two guns that could not keep quiet and drew on us even heavier fire.

Baggott has underlined the words from 'guns' to 'fire', seemingly acknowledging the baptism of fire from the perspective of the endangered stretcher bearer. The second (197) refers to Flanders in October 1917. The passage in the printed text reads:

> That day, for the only time in the war, I saw small bodies of stretcher bearers moving about in the open with the Red Cross flag without a shot being fired. Such a sight was unknown to the front-line soldier in this subterranean war except when matters were very desperate. Nevertheless, I heard later on that some of our stretcher bearers had been shot by English snipers.

Baggott has bracketed the whole paragraph and underlined the second sentence, commencing 'Such a sight', perhaps in order to emphasize the difference in situation between the exposed bearers and the submerged combatants. We are also reminded that Baggott is a medic when he marks, with a bracket and a rare exclamation point, a passage in which Jünger, seriously injured by shots to the chest, is in hospital counting his wounds (280). What Baggott doesn't comment on at all is the passage at the top of the same page, in which the author declares: 'Though I am no misogynist, I was always irritated by the presence of women every time that

the fate of battle threw me into the bed of a hospital ward. One sank, after the manly and purposeful activities of the war, into a vague atmosphere of warmth.'

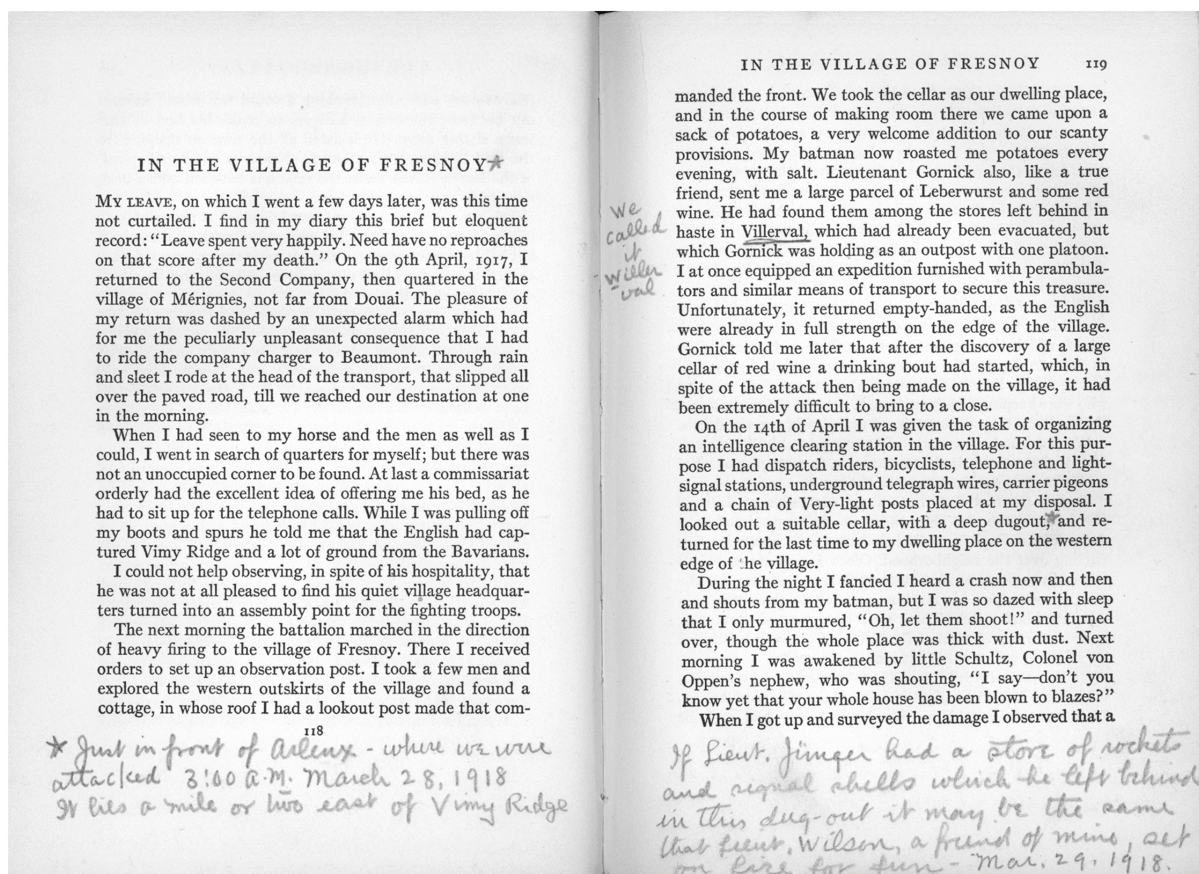
This is the one place in the book where Jünger makes his programmatic masculinity explicit through a rejection of the feminine. For Jünger, it is significant that the rejection of femininity is directly linked with a moment in which he is at leisure (provided for and no doubt intruded on by the nurses) to take stock of his own body. The memoir as a whole is graphic about the actual experience of being shot, and of seeing other men's bodies brutalized, but the hospital scene is a uniquely self-conscious reflection on war and the masculine body (cf. Lunn 2005; Weisbrod 2000).

Unfortunately, all we have by way of comment from Baggott is that exclamation point. Similarly, he leaves us guessing about what it *felt* like to be blown up by a shell on the Bapaume Road, though presumably he told others about it in postwar conversations (coincidentally, that annotation is on the same page as Jünger's more vivid description of being nicked and bloodied by the fragment of a bullet that killed another soldier). Baggott's note about his own wounding echoes the stoicism of the American doctor Grover Carter, who wrote in his diary:

> Went to 'C' Battery about 10 am. Place was immediately shelled, two hit about 8 or 10 yds from me. Was hit all over by clods of earth. Was expecting to be wounded any minute. Got in a shell hole for 30 min. Went to 'B' Battery and it was shelled also. Was chased all over the place. Kept falling on ground when heard shells coming and running between times. Real hot day, too. (cited by Acton and Potter 2015, 43)

Carol Acton and Jane Potter, who cite Grover's diary, point out that American war memoirs place a particular emphasis on articulating physical and psychological resilience (73). But they also identify a more general refusal of World War One medical memoirists to claim trauma for themselves in the light of the suffering of their patients, 'a determination to make meaning out of their experiences … challenging any attempt to understand this experience in terms of an either/or narrative' (33). In this respect, too, Bartus Baggott's annotations seem characteristic.

That said, there is no evidence in the marginalia of the kind of reflections on Americanness that characterized at least some published American memoirs (Acton and Potter 2015, 55-78), and none of distancing (or being distanced) from his British comrades. Rather, the 'we' who shelled Douai station, who defended the trench at Arleux, who had 50% casualties, and who were relieved by the 51st Scottish Division, is an inclusive one, signalling Baggott's attachment to his units and the sense of a common cause. A brief reference to his appearance in amateur theatricals in the published history of the Field Ambulance seems to confirm that he was relatively well integrated into a unit in which the late-arriving American soldiers and medics were often seen as comic outsiders: 'Mr Baggott, as a witness [in a mock trial] also enlivened the proceedings by working off in the course of his evidence some highly irreverent but decidedly amusing sallies at the expense of the A.D.M.S. [Assistant Director Medical Services] which, needless to say, were much appreciated' (Chase 1924, 7, 82–3). In an annotation to Jünger's description of a dugout in the village of Fresnoy, which the author used in April 1917, Baggott explicitly refers to an English comrade as a friend. He puts an asterisk next to 'dugout' and writes (119): 'If Lieut. Jünger had a store of rockets and signal shells which he left behind in this dug-out it may be the same that Lieut. Wilson, a friend of mine, set on fire for fun – Mar. 29, 1918' (Fig. 4).



IN THE VILLAGE OF FRESNOY*

MY LEAVE, on which I went a few days later, was this time not curtailed. I find in my diary this brief but eloquent record: "Leave spent very happily. Need have no reproaches on that score after my death." On the 9th April, 1917, I returned to the Second Company, then quartered in the village of Mérignies, not far from Douai. The pleasure of my return was dashed by an unexpected alarm which had for me the peculiarly unpleasant consequence that I had to ride the company charger to Beaumont. Through rain and sleet I rode at the head of the transport, that slipped all over the paved road, till we reached our destination at one in the morning.

When I had seen to my horse and the men as well as I could, I went in search of quarters for myself; but there was not an unoccupied corner to be found. At last a commissariat orderly had the excellent idea of offering me his bed, as he had to sit up for the telephone calls. While I was pulling off my boots and spurs he told me that the English had captured Vimy Ridge and a lot of ground from the Bavarians.

I could not help observing, in spite of his hospitality, that he was not at all pleased to find his quiet village headquarters turned into an assembly point for the fighting troops.

The next morning the battalion marched in the direction of heavy firing to the village of Fresnoy. There I received orders to set up an observation post. I took a few men and explored the western outskirts of the village and found a cottage, in whose roof I had a lookout post made that com-

118

* Just in front of Arleux - where we were attacked 3:00 a.m. March 28, 1918
It lies a mile or two east of Vimy Ridge

IN THE VILLAGE OF FRESNOY 119

manded the front. We took the cellar as our dwelling place, and in the course of making room there we came upon a sack of potatoes, a very welcome addition to our scanty provisions. My batman now roasted me potatoes every evening, with salt. Lieutenant Gornick also, like a true friend, sent me a large parcel of Leberwurst and some red wine. He had found them among the stores left behind in haste in Villerval, which had already been evacuated, but which Gornick was holding as an outpost with one platoon. I at once equipped an expedition furnished with perambulators and similar means of transport to secure this treasure. Unfortunately, it returned empty-handed, as the English were already in full strength on the edge of the village. Gornick told me later that after the discovery of a large cellar of red wine a drinking bout had started, which, in spite of the attack then being made on the village, it had been extremely difficult to bring to a close.

We called it Willer-val

On the 14th of April I was given the task of organizing an intelligence clearing station in the village. For this purpose I had dispatch riders, bicyclists, telephone and light-signal stations, underground telegraph wires, carrier pigeons and a chain of Very-light posts placed at my disposal. I looked out a suitable cellar, with a deep dugout,* and returned for the last time to my dwelling place on the western edge of the village.

During the night I fancied I heard a crash now and then and shouts from my batman, but I was so dazed with sleep that I only murmured, "Oh, let them shoot!" and turned over, though the whole place was thick with dust. Next morning I was awakened by little Schultz, Colonel von Oppen's nephew, who was shouting, "I say—don't you know yet that your whole house has been blown to blazes?"

When I got up and surveyed the damage I observed that a

* If Lieut. Jünger had a store of rockets and signal shells which he left behind in this dug-out it may be the same that Lieut. Wilson, a friend of mine, set on fire for fun - Mar. 29, 1918.

Figure 4

But this annotation is also a reminder that Baggott's references to 'we' occur most often in contexts where he is simultaneously acknowledging *Jünger's* experience as his own and even (as in this case, where they were in the same place but not at the same time) *constructing* a shared moment retrospectively. The comment on the fireworks cache seems to me to express an emphatic recognition of Jünger as a fellow-officer. The emphasis on his title here – 'Lieut. Jünger' – may be jocular (given the nature of the observation), but there is no point at which Baggott expresses disrespect or criticism of Jünger himself. His only comment on Germany, the Germans (both his wife and his lover were descended from German immigrants), or the politics of the War comes at the very end (284), when Jünger's patriotic coda, 'Germany lives and Germany shall never go under!' offers an irresistible opportunity for irony, and Baggott seizes the last word with 'Hoch! der Kaiser!' Earlier in the book, there

is another hint of that same ironic distance, or perhaps a rare moment of critique, when Jünger writes (100), ‘Those fine qualities which had raised the German race to greatness leaped up once more in dazzling flame and then slowly went out in a sea of mud and blood’, and Baggott adds, ‘as did Lord Kitchener’s army’. Twenty years after the end of the War, then, that ‘we’ includes ‘them’ (the former enemy) implicitly addressed as ‘you’: if Jünger is hailing his English-speaking readers across the lines, then Baggott is waving back, and over the head of critics like Mottram.

Apart from the coda, the last passage that Baggott marks is the one in which Jünger reflects on the War as a generational experience (282): ‘Hardened as scarcely another generation ever was in fire and flame, we could go into life as though from the anvil; into friendship, love, politics, professions, into all that destiny had in store. It is not every generation that is so favored’. Baggott has underlined the second sentence, and the gesture seems affirmative; he did after all go on to build a private life and a professional career after the War. Through this affirmation, Baggott associates himself implicitly with the notions of duty and service with which men went to the front and of affective comradeship that came to define manliness in the trenches. What Baggott’s marginalia do is to extend a gesture of comradeship across the trenches and across the decade. To be sure, his conversation with Jünger is one-sided, or rather prejudiced by its context; Jünger has set the terms, drawing on a lexicon of martial masculinity. But Baggott seems satisfied to reply in kind, though among the varieties of masculinity tested and affirmed by the experience of war (Meyer 2009), the script that he followed after 1919 was one of domestic duty and community service. If his annotations are almost disappointing in the way they affirm a familiar catalogue of positive tropes about trench warfare on the Western Front, it is worth remembering that that positive vision of combat was under challenge at the time the book was published; when Baggott endorses it we are at least seeing an authentic moment of reception. However, Baggott is

doing more than ‘receive’ or even respond to the text; in deploying his pencil, he is making the margin into a space of active intervention as well as of personal creativity, creating his own memoir in a process of excerpting.

Conclusion: a guerrilla memoir?

In this article I have proposed that Bartus Baggott’s marginalia are an example of a ‘guerrilla memoir’ – the logical manoeuvre, perhaps, of a particular kind of resisting reader (cf Fetterley 1977). They constitute an intervention in the circulation of published war memories that implicitly challenges their marketization and reclaims the remembered experience for the veteran who ‘was there’; specifically, we find Baggott siding with his fellow combat veteran Jünger against the imputation of futility contained in Mottram’s epitext. I have proposed that this is a quality specific to and characteristic of modern military marginalia. Sometimes in association with physical mementos like the totemic trench map, these marginalia serve to recreate the experience shared only by combatants and unavailable to ‘those who were not there’ as an experience of intimacy; they recall or construct moments of physical proximity that are emotionally charged. And in the case of Bartus Baggott, the terms of intimacy extend across the lines, to assert a shared generational experience and a community of veterans that transcend national difference, even between enemies. The element of facticity remains, of course. There are moments in Baggott’s marginalia where he is simply noting information whose function in a conversation between himself and Jünger is unclear. That is, there is, after all, an implicit third party – a potential reader who is not Bartus himself, waiting to receive the gift from his hands. This is the paradox of the guerrilla memoir: unlike a published memoir, it may never be read. Or, like this one, it may be read more closely, and through different eyes, than its author ever intended.

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Notes

[1] We might presume that women in the military engage in the same practice of annotation, but the field is still too fresh to make definite statements. The cases I am exploring here are those of men.

[2] Entry for Charles Baggott, Fourteenth United States Federal Census (1920), Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[3] 2/1st London Field Ambulance, War Diary, The National Archives, Kew, WO 95/2944/1.

[4] I am grateful to Major Rob Ridley, Royal Engineers, for this observation.

[5] The annotated copy is in the Wilfred Owen Collections, Bodleian Library, Oxford [Owen HO227]. Neither Owen's letters nor Sassoon's letters and diaries make reference to the gift, though Sassoon confirmed that he had read Adams' book in a letter of 3 October, 1917, to Robbie Ross (Sassoon 1983, 188).

[6] I begged *Storm of Steel* from his widow, my great-aunt, on a visit to her Baltimore home in 1974. Any other books that belonged to him were presumably sold or discarded when the contents of her house were auctioned following her death in 1976 (Notice of sale of the estate of Pauline K. Baggott, *Baltimore Sun*, 27 June, 1976).

[7] See <http://www.army.mod.uk/firstworldwarresources/archives/661/trench-map-captain-siegfried-sassoon> accessed 16 April 2017, and 20 maps listed among Jünger's papers in the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, of which seven are annotated in various hands.