A Lost Generation: Myth or Reality? A Study of Pupils of Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham Eligible for Service in the First World War

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Abstract

This thesis evaluates the validity of concepts of a ‘lost generation’ of British men in the context of the First World War, in particular, disproportionate levels of death and dislocation and disillusionment. It does so through a study of alumni of Colfe’s Grammar School, Lewisham eligible for military service that examines their socio-geographic background, pre- and post-war migratory behaviour, service patterns, engagement with commemorative processes and life outcomes. The analysis reveals significant quantities of cohort loss to pre-war outward migration but far lower (and not as disproportionate as some) levels of war-related loss through death. Although those who served and survived largely dissociated themselves from their wartime identities, despite the literature of alumnus Henry Williamson, there is no widespread evidence of disillusionment. Notwithstanding the disruption of the war experience, most men appear to have readjusted to civilian life well in terms of personal relationships and suffered no reduction in life expectancy. The majority resumed the same or similar pre-war employment (often with the same employer), maintaining the same level of social status. In essence they picked up their lives where they had left off. Post-war migratory patterns also suggest enhanced demographic stability and a heightened sense of domestic national identity. It is tenable that the availability of pre-war merit-based public funding for secondary education at Colfe’s for those from modest backgrounds led to a ‘found’ rather than ‘lost’ generation. More generally, the thesis argues the notion of a ‘lost generation’ consequential upon the war is mythical in origin but has taken on the form of a reality connected to the war dead with the passage of time. It also argues this is partly attributable to the influence of popular culture in the latter half of the twentieth century but more significantly to a continuing sense of engagement through familial connection.

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Abbreviations used

Alumnus identity and period at Colfe's—[*name*] ([*year*]–[*year*]).

Army Service Corps—ASC.

Australian Imperial Force—AIF.

British Expeditionary Force—BEF.

Canadian Expeditionary Force—CEF.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission—CWGC.

Honourable Artillery Company—HAC.

London County Council—LCC.

Officer Training Corps—OTC.

Royal Army Medical Corps—RAMC.

Royal Engineers—RE.

Royal Air Force—RAF.

Royal Flying Corps—RFC.

Royal Naval Air Service—RNAS.

Royal Naval Division—RND.

Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve—RNVR.

The National Archives—TNA.

United Kingdom—UK.

United States of America—USA.

Introduction

Overview

It remains a widely-held popular view that the First World War resulted in a ‘lost generation’ of British men. The phrase has assumed a variety of connotations over the course of the last century and been applied in a number of different contexts. This thesis examines whether the perception holds any element of validity or is a fallacy.

The thesis has its origins in a presentational database prepared as a preliminary to the centenary commemorations by the author for Colfe’s School of alumni who served in the armed forces during the war. The material in the school archives lent itself readily to a story of tragic loss. There were the rolls of honour. There was the team photograph of the Old Colfeian 1st soccer XI taken at the end of the 1913–14 season, which consisted entirely of alumni. All served, three died (including the team captain killed on the opening day of the Somme offensive) and four were wounded (one losing his arm). There was a newspaper cutting comprising the scorecards of the Old Colfeian cricket tour to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight from 20–25 July 1914. All six alumni who played in the final game served, with four being killed. These included a promising young surgeon from Guy’s Hospital who died aged 25 serving as a Captain in the RAMC whilst helping to bring in wounded from regimental aid posts under bombardment on the Western Front. They also included the most decorated Colfeian who died aged 23 in July 1918 as an acting Lieutenant-Colonel leaving a widow and small child after a year of marriage having fought in all the major battles on the Western Front. There was the man killed at Festubert in May 1915 aged 21 who on 25 July 1914 had been playing cricket against W. G. Grace in the penultimate game of the latter’s career. There were the three brothers all killed on the Western Front over the course of the war aged 19, 20 and 27 and much more in the same vein. A portrait of halcyon pre-war days juxtaposed with loss and tragedy was hard to avoid and this is the narrative that was presented to mark the centenary. It was only as the author undertook further research extending to all those potentially eligible for service it became apparent the position was far more nuanced than that.

The thesis addresses its central question through a study of a number of interlocking themes ranging from social and educational background to pre-war migration to military experience to post-war lives and attitudes. In doing so it applies some underused statistical approaches to historical analysis and investigates some perspectives that have received limited, if any, attention in the literature to date relating to the war. It also utilises public data only recently released to facilitate an analysis of life outcomes of those who survived the war which is used to assess the extent to which the war altered their life trajectories. The resulting findings provide new insights into the war experience and its impact on those who served.

The cohort is predominantly lower middle class in character. By the time of the 1921 census of England and Wales, the lower middle class accounted for around one in five males aged 20–65

and there is no reason to think this was significantly different in the immediate pre-war period.[1] Despite this substantial societal representation, with the exception of Helen McCartney's Liverpool work,[2] the primary focus of First World War studies has been on the experiences of the working classes (who constituted the vast majority of the balance) on the one hand and, with a disproportionate emphasis given their negligible numerical representation, on the upper and middle classes. In terms of war service, there were higher and earlier rates of enlistment amongst non-manual workers such as those comprising the lower middle class compared with manual workers. Additionally, lower middle-class men tended to be heathier than their working class counterparts and more likely to meet the requisite physical standard and be accepted to serve in a combat environment.[3] The lower middle class is, therefore, an important, if neglected, subject of First World War research. The neglect may be partly explained by the diversity of the grouping. It comprises a wide range of occupations and economic standing and stability. It has also been suggested the neglect of the lower middle class as a focus of study in terms of British social history generally, stems from an emphasis on the working classes coupled with a 'sheer lack of heroism' on the part of the lower middle class. This is not, it should be added, in military terms but in the sense of not being 'active on the historical stage' and failing 'to do anything very striking, it seems'.[4] Put bluntly, the lower middle class have suffered from not appearing at first sight to be a very exciting subject for study. First impressions can, however, be deceptive. Certainly, resilience and continuity are recurring themes as the thesis develops but we will also find there is a great deal to be gained from a detailed study of men who were educated, energetic, technologically aware and mobile during a period of rapid change and upheaval.

The shared element of the cohort is a period of varying length of education at Colfe's. Literature dealing with the war experience from the perspective of educational institutions has largely concentrated on élite institutions and, in particular, public schools and fatalities there. Colfe's was not during at any point during the later nineteenth or early twentieth a public school. It was an endowed grammar school mainly serving the local community. It emerged from the educational reforms of the late 1860s with a broad modern curriculum but also with the retained ability to prepare boys for university unlike some of its peers. From the mid-1890s onwards it also admitted increasing numbers of academically able boys from modest backgrounds who were publicly-funded and whose families would not necessarily have been able to afford an education of this nature. To this extent there is strong sense of pre-war generational discovery rather than loss. The cohort had a very different social and geographic (and, in some cases, educational) profile to the public schools and differing patterns of war experience. It still suffered disproportionate levels of

[1] See Chapter 1.
[2] Helen McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorials in the First World War*, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare; No. 22 (Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[3] J. M. Winter, *The Great War and the British People*, 2nd ed (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) pp. 36–37, 49.
[4] Geoffrey Crossick, 'The Emergence of the Lower Middle Class in Britain', in *The Lower Middle Class in Britain, 1870-1914*, ed. by Geoffrey Crossick (Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 11–60, (p. 11).

loss compared to the population overall. These levels were not, however, as disproportionate as those claimed for élite establishments. A detailed analysis of Colfeian commemorative practices and participation by reference to primary resources does, though, reveal around one in four Colfeians who served were not included in the process. The vast majority of these were men who survived the war. We also find the non-commemorated were more likely to have served in non-combat roles. When viewed through the lens of formal commemoration we are presented with a distorted version of the Colfeian war experience where service participation is understated and levels of loss and the role and significance of combat are overstated. In turn, these findings cast a degree of doubt on the accuracy of the methodology of some of the élite institutional-based research in this area based on secondary evidence in the form of self-generated contemporary records of service and death.

Levels of voluntary pre-war outward migration in the British male population generally were substantial. The Colfeian cohort was no exception to this with between one and a half times and twice as many men migrating abroad during that period as eventually perished in the war. Given the concept of generational loss is by definition a once-off occurrence, to the extent there may have been any element of physical Colfeian generational loss, this strand of the thesis shows it took place before the war began. Without the intervention of war there seems no reason to doubt these high levels of migratory loss would have continued. This being so, the case could be advanced, if not for the war, Colfeian population loss would have been even higher. Counter-factual arguments aside, the war did occur and, despite choosing to move abroad and, on the whole, being free from compulsion to do so, there were high levels of Colfeian migrant military participation. Some returned to serve with domestic UK forces and others served with the forces of their country of residence. The war experience of British pre-war migrants in the context of their migrancy has been overlooked so far in terms of published research despite it offering an alternative narrative to that of the domestic population. The neglect probably stems from the practical difficulties in collating coherent data about the activities of a diverse range of men with wide geographical spread over a prolonged period of time. The cohort approach adopted here overcomes these issues. Where armed forces existed in countries of residence Colfeian migrant enlistment tended to take place there but, where none existed, in UK forces. This enables comparisons to be undertaken as to the extent to which the war experience differed in overseas and domestic forces. The Colfeian experience suggests more service in combat roles and a greater risk of fatality in overseas forces. The experience is also relevant in what it can tell us about the impact of the war on migratory patterns. Leaving aside service fatalities, in terms of the Colfeian cohort, the form and patterns of migratory behaviour established before the war were largely unchanged by the conflict. The same cannot be said for post-war first-time migratory patterns which indicate enhanced domestic demographic stability and a heightened sense of domestic national identity.

There is a lack of official sources providing authoritative data for some important aspects of service patterns. This has led to reliance in the literature on secondary sources to estimate some key quantities and the use of hypothetical modelling to estimate others. Here, the cohort approach enables working with definitive quantities albeit on a much smaller scale. The depth and strength of the Colfeian data also allows a new approach to analysis of data relating to military service. An underemployed approach in the context of studies in this field is used to examine a wide range of risk factors and their statistical association with entry into military service on the one hand and the risk of death and disability on the other. This two-tier framework has not been adopted previously. It reveals, age-related factors apart, the likelihood of entering service is associated with background whilst the likelihood of death and disability (although dependent on entry into service in the first place) is primarily connected to the nature of the service undertaken and, particularly, whether there was any element of service abroad in a combat role. These may not be surprising conclusions but the distinct hierarchical character of the association has not been explicitly recognised or explored before. The analysis also reveals (amongst other matters) claims of higher levels of officer loss in the context of disproportionate loss amongst the élite are not reflected in the Colfeian cohort nor is the common perception of particularly heavy losses amongst the most junior ranks of the cadre. It is argued this may be a consequence of high Colfeian rates of commissioning from the ranks (and associated battlefield experience with enhanced levels of pre-acquired survival skills) and also the timing of Colfeian commissioning, which tended to be later in the war. On an associated note, contrary to suggestions in larger scale studies, there is no evidence from the Colfeian data that length of time on active service led to an increased risk of death. No significant quantitative research has previously been carried out in relation to disability rates. This is probably a consequence a lack of official data and also of any accepted definitional approach as to what constitutes disability. With good levels of data in the cohort and a viable definition we find Colfeian disability rates are lower than might be expected (broadly in line with fatality rates) and primarily caused by illness rather than direct military intervention.

As we will see shortly, a key element of the original framing of the ‘lost’ element of ‘the lost generation’ revolves around post-war dislocation and disorientation. Research to date regarding ex-servicemen in the post-war period has concentrated on their status as veterans rather than their civilian lives. A methodology based on data that have only become available for use recently (over the period from 2012–2022) enables this study to undertake quantitative measurement of change amongst the serving cohort (and, indeed, the non-serving cohort) in a number of key aspects of civilian life (in particular, occupation, social class and marital stability) from before the war until the beginning of the Second World War. The analysis provides very little evidence of dislocation and disorientation with the overall impression being one of remarkable resilience. The vast majority of those that served and survived the war, despite a period of extreme disruption in many cases, appear to have resumed their civilian lives where they had left off, resuming their pre-war life trajectory with no apparent interest in dwelling on their experiences in the war.

The Lost Generation

Perception

The popular perception in Britain is the First World War was a catastrophe from a British perspective—it was a futile, traumatic and tragic disaster (with overtones of disillusionment, disenchantment and betrayal by an older generation) involving widespread death, destruction and maiming and universal bereavement resulting in the loss of a generation of men. Despite strong evidence to the contrary, it is a perception that has become deeply and stubbornly embedded in the public consciousness and has tended to mask the fact the war was fought successfully and resulted in a deserving and deserved victory.

The concept of 'the Lost Generation' is an amorphous one. There has been fluidity in its parameters and constituent elements as it has developed over the course of the last century from a number of distinct but interlinked threads. Robert Wohl traces the origins of the concept to what he terms 'a disillusioning experience shared by many Englishmen of the privileged classes'[5]—the socially and educated élite undoubtedly played a key role in the creation and development of it but there are other contributing factors to the form it has taken and its longevity. Wohl credits the initial framing of the concept in particular to the war poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen with its theme of 'doomed youth led blindly to the slaughter by cruel age'[6] and the subsequent substantive development of this theme by the ex-servicemen prose authors forming part of the 'war books boom' concentrated during the period 1928–30 who focused on motifs of disillusionment, betrayal and futility.[7] He identifies, specifically, the works of Edmund Blunden,[8] Richard Aldington,[9] Robert Graves,[10] Siegfried Sassoon,[11] Frederic Manning[12] and Henry Williamson[13] as well as the German author Erich Maria Remarque whose work was published in translation in Britain in 1929[14] and made into a Hollywood feature film in 1930.

The idea of 'the Lost Generation' gained further momentum in 1933 with the publication in Britain and the United States of *Testament of Youth* by Vera Brittain,[15] which, within six years, had sold 120,000 copies in Britain alone, also possibly reaching a more diverse audience than some of the

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[5] Robert Wohl, *The Generation of 1914* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), p. 86.
[6] Wohl, pp. 95–105.
[7] Wohl, pp. 105–09. For an analysis of this genre of literature and, in particular, its rise to pre-eminence see Janet S. K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory, and the First World War in Britain*, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare (Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 185–218.
[8] Edmund Blunden, *Undertones of War* (Richard Cobden-Sanderson, 1928).
[9] Richard Aldington, *Death of a Hero* (Chatto & Windus, 1929).
[10] Robert Graves, *Good-Bye to All That—an Autobiography* (Jonathan Cape, 1929).
[11] Siegfried Sassoon, *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (Faber and Faber, 1930).
[12] Frederic Manning, *Her Privates We* (Peter Davies, 1930).
[13] Henry Williamson, *The Patriot's Progress* (Geoffrey Bles, 1930).
[14] Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Putnam & Sons, 1929).
[15] Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth: An Autobiographical Study of the Years 1920–1925* (Victor Gollancz, 1933). Also see further Watson, pp. 247–259.

literature that preceded it. As will be seen shortly, this was not the end of Brittain's influence on the development of cultural perceptions of the war. During the course of the 1930s Wohl detects a major shift in emphasis with the connotations of the 'loss' element in the phrase 'the Lost Generation' starting to move from disorientation to actual absence, from loss in the sense of lack of purpose to loss in the sense of no longer being there and thus to the idea the war resulted in the physical destruction of a generation or, at least, the brightest and best of that generation. Wohl sees this gloss essentially as a coping mechanism for the educated élite in adjusting to the realities of post-war life in a period of fundamental social change and decline in global power.[16] It has more recently been suggested the development of this literary construct had, in fact, been preceded by a similar one used to good effect by the Conservative Party in the post-1918 political sphere.[17]

The concept of 'the Lost Generation' does, though, run deeper than these constructs. The theme of war loss will not have been unfamiliar to the contemporary general British public. The war was of a nature and on a scale previously unknown. Over six million men served in the British armed services during the war.[18] The overwhelming majority of these men were not professionals—for example, as at 1 July 1914 the regimental strength of the British army had only been a little over 240,000.[19] The war directly involved many more people and directly affected many more families than previous wars. Partly as a result of this, even with a degree of censorship (whether self-generated by the participants or imposed by the authorities), there was an increased (although by no means compete) civilian awareness of battle conditions and losses—in the public sphere through national and local press reporting and in the private sphere through correspondence and personal contact whilst on leave. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the commemoration of the war had been a cause for both celebration of victory and remembrance but gradually the importance of the celebratory aspects declined.[20] A strong sense of collective memory of loss developed in Britain. There are memorials in most communities in the country, however large or small, whether secular or sacred. There are the detailed records of death and immaculately maintained graveyards and memorials of the CWGC both at home and abroad. There are also memorial rolls recording the dead of many schools, universities, churches, sports and social clubs, workplaces and other institutions. The dead are often memorialised in more than one form, in more than one place and in more than one context, which may, conceivably, be a contributory factor to a sense of overwhelming loss. These manifestations of collective memory often also commemorate subsequent war dead but the majority were initiated in the wake of the First World War. The most significant indicator is, however, the continuing importance of Remembrance Sunday (which

[16] Wohl, pp. 112–16, 120–21.
[17] Richard Carr, *Veteran MPs and Conservative Politics in the Aftermath of the Great War: The Memory of All That* (Ashgate Pub, 2013).
[18] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 71–72, Table 3.2.
[19] Winter, *Great War*, p. 28, Table 2.1.
[20] For an analysis of this process see Daniel Todman, *The Great War: Myth and Memory* (Continuum, 2005), pp. 50–58.

developed after the Second World War) and poppies in the national calendar with their interwoven themes of sacrifice, gratitude and respect.

A revised version of *Goodbye to All That* by Robert Graves was successfully published at the beginning of 1957 but modern public consciousness was primarily shaped in the 1960s by books such as: *The Donkeys*[21] with its less than sympathetic portrayal of the British High Command on the Western Front in 1915; *The First World War—An Illustrated History*[22] with its underlying assumption the war was without purpose; and *Up the Line to Death: The War Poets 1914–1918*[23] (which became a set text in secondary schools for many years), an anthology of war poetry collected to depict an 'unparalleled tragedy'.[24] Books of this kind built upon the criticism of tactics and leadership advanced by military historians like Captain Basil Liddell Hart[25] in the inter-war years. They also developed the themes of disillusionment and futility present in the works of the later war poets and of some of the prose appearing during the late 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, Blunden and Sassoon both encouraged the production of *Up the Line to Death*[26] with Blunden contributing a foreword. Reginald Pound, a veteran and acknowledged biographer, published *The Lost Generation* in 1964.[27] The publicity material on the inside of the front of the dustjacket describes the work as a 'collective biography' of 'the massive loss to the nation of virtually a whole generation of men in the devastating casualties of the first two years of the war, when England's 'citizen soldiers' were cut down like 'the numbered flocks being sent to deliberate slaughter'.' Pound's almost exclusive focus was on the deaths of those forming part of the socially and educated élite and his conclusions provided support for the idea it was the brightest and best who had perished.

The perception promulgated by *The Donkeys* was carried through onto the stage through the musical 'Oh! What a Lovely War' which was performed in the West End in 1963 and on Broadway in 1964 and turned into a film directed by Richard Attenborough in 1969. It was further reinforced in 1989 by the first transmission of the BBC's 'Blackadder Goes Forth', which continues to be repeated on a regular basis. As Adrian Gregory states 'From Robert Graves, through *Oh! What a Lovely War* to *Blackadder Goes Forth*, the criminal idiocy of the British High Command has become an article of faith.'[28] Meanwhile, Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth* was posthumously 'rediscovered' and republished by Virago in hardback in 1978 with a paperback edition being published in 2004 and has never been out of print since. The story was broadcast as a BBC2 television drama series in 1979 and released as a feature film in 2014, accompanied by a further

[21] Alan Clark, *The Donkeys* (Hutchinson, 1961).
[22] A. J. P. Taylor, *The First World War—An Illustrated History* (Hamish Hamilton, 1963).
[23] *Up the Line to Death: The War Poets 1914–1918*, ed. by Brian Gardner (Methuen, 1964).
[24] Gardner, *Up the Line*, p. xix.
[25] B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Real War 1914–1918* (Faber and Faber, 1930).
[26] Gardner, *Up the Line*, p. xxv.
[27] Reginald Pound, *The Lost Generation* (Constable, 1964).
[28] Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 3.

paperback edition of the book. The public appetite for this type of material is further illustrated by the release of a second feature film version of *All Quiet on the Western Front* in 1979 and a third (German language) version by Netflix in 2022.

British Future (an independent thinktank engaging people's hopes and fears about integration and migration and opportunity and identity in Britain) in association with the Imperial War Museum, BBC, the CWGC and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport commissioned YouGov to carry out surveys of public opinion regarding the war's centenary. The results of the first in 2013 were tracked in 2014 after the centenary commenced, in 2016 after the centenary of the Somme and in 2018 after the centenary of the Armistice. Reports of the findings authored by British Future were published in August 2013[29], November 2016[30] and April 2019.[31] One of the statements put to participants was: 'Instead of focusing on the pity of war and loss of life, the central theme of the First World War commemoration should be that this was a just war that was important to Britain to fight and win'. On the most recent occasion in 2018, only 14 per cent of those surveyed agreed with the statement. Interestingly, this proportion had fallen over the course of the centenary period from 23 per cent in 1916 and 28 per cent in 2014. Another statement put to participants in 2016 and 2018 was: 'Understanding and reflecting on the lives of those who were involved in the First World War is the most important aspect of remembering the First World War'. Approximately two-thirds of those surveyed (63 per cent in 2016 and 65 per cent in 2018) agreed with this statement. These findings point to a substantial body of public opinion supporting two of the key components associated with the notion of futility. The first is British involvement in the war was unnecessary. The second is the key significance of the war lies in the pity of war and loss of life and its personal impact rather than victory. The findings also show the impact of the centenary commemorative publicity and activities only served to strengthen this body of opinion.

There are two further aspects of the surveys that are of particular interest. Firstly, participants were asked: 'Would you say the centenary has made you more or less likely to find out more about the involvement of your family or local community in the First World War or has it made no difference'. There was a choice of five answers. Easily the most popular answer (35 per cent in 2014, 40 per cent in 2016 and 39 per cent in 2018) was: 'Has made no difference, I was interested in the First World War before the centenary and still am'. This indicates a high level of continuing interest among the general public in the war. The second relates to relevance. A little over half of the sample (57 per cent in 2016 and 56 per cent in 2018) felt the war was relevant to them and of this

[29] 'Do Mention the War: Will 1914 Matter in 2014?', ed. by Jo Tanner (British Future, 2013) <https://www.britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/BRF_Declaration-of-war-report_P2_Web-1.pdf> [accessed 5 December 2017].
[30] Michael Hough, Steve Ballinger and Sunder Katwala, 'A Centenary Shared: Tracking Public Attitudes to the First World War Centenary 2013–16' (British Future, 2016) <https://www.britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/A-Centenary-Shared.WW1-tracker-report.2016.pdf> [accessed 5 December 2017].
[31] Lucy Buckerfield and Steve Ballinger, 'The People's Centenary: Tracking Public Attitudes to the First World War Centenary 2013–18' (British Future, 2019) <https://www.britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/The-Peoples-Centenary.Final-report-2018.pdf> [accessed 10 November 2022].

cohort just under half (49 per cent in both 2016 and 2018) said the war became relevant to them because, amongst other reasons, of a family connection. Even after the passage of a century since the end of the war, this indicates there remains a significant sense of continuing personal impact even though, as Gregory suggests, close bereaved relatives at the time only amounted to about 10 per cent of the population.[32]

Reality

There is an undoubted and entrenched popular perception the First World War was a futile, traumatic and tragic disaster for the British that resulted in a generational loss. Certainly, there was misery, suffering (both physically and mentally) and death on a scale not previously experienced by the British at war—it cannot be argued otherwise. However, that does not mean the perception represents reality. There is a persuasive view entry into the war was both necessary[33] and morally correct.[34] Admittedly, the war was catastrophic in terms of individual loss and was a major factor in Britain gradually losing its position as the dominant Imperial World power. However, domestically, though economically drained, Britain maintained democracy and the rule of law (there was no revolution or civil war or move to totalitarianism), it survived the depression and the Second World War and introduced far-reaching social reforms from universal suffrage to the NHS and social benefits system. Against the backdrop of half a century of social and military unrest in Europe, Britain came through relatively unscathed and a much improved and balanced society in contrast to that of the pre-war period where Gregory compares the lot of the working class to a contemporary third-world slum.[35] Winter argues social inequality was reduced during the war, establishing there was an improvement in life expectancy for civilians after 1914 that benefited all classes. However, broadly the worse off a section of society was pre-1914, the better the improvement in life expectancy during the war with these gains primarily attributable to increases in earnings and a consequential nutritional improvement amongst the poorer reaches of society—even the mass unemployment that occurred after the war was insufficient to completely reverse the position. He also shows the distance between classes and strata within classes in both economic and demographic terms was reduced—as the poorer became better off the position of those with fixed or savings incomes or incomes derived from property deteriorated as did that of skilled workers and some clerical workers.[36]

The popular perception of the war consists of a number of different threads and it is necessary to try to unpick these in order to analyse what, if any, validity it holds. Some can be dealt with reasonably simply, others are more nuanced.

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[32] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 252.
[33] I. F. W. Beckett, Timothy Bowman, and Mark Connelly, *The British Army and the First World War*, Armies of the Great War (Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 171.
[34] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 294.
[35] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 278.
[36] Winter, *Great War*, chs. 4–7.

Origins of concept of 'the Lost Generation'

A good starting point is Wohl's formulation of the origins of the concept of 'the Lost Generation'. There are two main elements to this. The first is a shared experience undergone by a number of men from an exclusive socially and educated élite section of British society who formed a small minority of the men serving in the armed forces in the war. As seen below, it may be possible to argue this body of men was disproportionately affected by the war, but it does not necessarily follow the shared experience of these men can be universalised or considered typical of British servicemen. The second element of Wohl's formulation is the interpretation through literature of this shared experience. There is a significant degree of academic debate about the extent to which the literary output of those who participated can be used to assess the impact of the war on participants as a whole or on British society more generally. Paul Fussell seeks to explain the impact of the war through the works, in particular, of Blunden, Graves, Owen and Sassoon on the basis they are representative of a collective experience.[37] The key counter-arguments to this approach are the works selected for analysis are not representative (Fussell acknowledges his researches were limited to the British infantry in the trenches in France and Belgium)[38] nor, indeed, are they accurate. In the context of the later War Poets (but his views are equally applicable to their prose counterparts), Gary Sheffield questions the wisdom of relying exclusively or even mainly on literary sources reflecting the personal experience of an individual to understand the war or any other historical event more generally. He also argues the poets were far from being typical of British soldiers and their poems provide 'at best, a very limited and skewed view of both the war as a whole and the experience of the frontline infantryman'.[39] This is a view that has received support recently from elsewhere.[40]

There is a further issue worth mentioning here. Wohl specifically relies on Henry Williamson as being instrumental in the conceptual development of 'the Lost Generation'. Paradoxically, Williamson was not part of the élite class whose disillusionment Wohl argues gave rise to that concept. Williamson (1907–13) was a LCC scholar who received elementary education at a local authority-run school before entering Colfe's as a publicly-funded scholar. As a pre-war Territorial, he was mobilised on 5 August 1914 as a Private in 5th (London Rifle Brigade) Battalion, London Regiment. Commissioned in April 1915, Williamson served as a Second Lieutenant in 10th Battalion, Bedford Regiment and as a Lieutenant with 208th Company, Machine Gun Corps on the Western Front before being gassed and invalided home. Williamson supported two other Colfeian authors who produced war-related works. Herbert Bell (1900–04)[41] and Victor Yeates (1907–12).[42]

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[37] Paul Fussell and J. M. Winter, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press, 2013) originally published in 1975.
[38] Fussell and Winter, *Modern Memory*, p. xvi.
[39] Gary Sheffield, *Forgotten Victory: The First World War: Myths and Realities* (Headline, 2001), p. 16.
[40] Beckett, Bowman, and Connelly, p. 135.
[41] *A Soldier's Diary of the Great War* (Faber & Gwyer, 1929).
[42] Victor Maslin Yeates, *Winged Victory* (Jonathan Cape, 1934).

None of these three men, although recipients of a good secondary education and academically able, were university-educated or from an élite social background. Williamson, the son of a bank clerk, enlisted from being an insurance clerk and Bell, the son of a tax collector, and Yeates, the son of a bank cashier, both enlisted from being bank clerks. Although all three were commissioned during the course of the war, it is highly unlikely any of them would have merited inclusion in Pound's *The Lost Generation* if they had not survived. Neither, we will see in Chapter 5, was their literary output necessarily typical of Colfeian war-related literature of those who served.

Dislocation and disorientation

Initially, the 'loss' element of the concept of 'the Lost Generation' brought with it a sense of the dislocation of those who had served and survived. In the absence of physical or mental impairment, Gregory takes the view the 'vast majority' of returning servicemen 'were reintegrated into civil society remarkably well', essentially picking up their pre-war lives where they had left off.[43] Beckett, Bowman and Connelly also acknowledge, in the absence of physical or mental maiming, it can be argued wartime service was largely neutral in its impact on those who returned.[44] Admittedly in the context of a later and quite different war against a quite different social backdrop, Alan Allport forms a similar view of the experiences of returning British servicemen after the Second World War—although the immediate post-war years were not necessarily easy for returning servicemen, for most it was nothing more than a temporary period of disorientation and readjustment.[45] There is little in the way of published scholarship regarding the post-war life as civilians of British servicemen returning from the First World War. It is clear from a recent work the primary (and probably exclusive) focus of research to date has been on ex-servicemen (and women) in their capacity as veterans.[46] In fact, as Oliver Wilkinson acknowledges, the vast majority of returning servicemen did not participate in formal veterans' associations or seem to have formed any 'lasting, ongoing, collective attachment to their wartime identities'.[47]

Levels of loss

Turning next to actual levels of physical loss, British military fatality levels in the war are an area where relatively significant amounts of quantitative study have been undertaken. One major work has adopted a quantitative approach to measuring First World War-related change in Britain on a general level remains a standard text, decades after it was first published: *The Great War and the British People* by Jay Winter. In this work, Winter undertakes a series of investigations relating to

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[43] Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919–1946*, The Legacy of the Great War (Berg, 1994), pp. 51–52.
[44] Beckett, Bowman, and Connelly, p. 161.
[45] Alan Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home after the Second World War* (Yale University Press, 2009), p. 220.
[46] *Veterans of the First World War: Ex-Servicemen and Ex-Servicewomen in Post-War Britain and Ireland*, ed. by David Swift and Oliver Wilkinson (Routledge, 2020).
[47] Oliver Wilkinson, 'Ex-Prisoners of War, 1914–18: veteran association, assimilation and disassociation after the First World War', in *Veterans of the First World War: Ex-Servicemen and Ex-Servicewomen in Post-War Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Swift and Wilkinson, pp. 172–86 (p. 182).

manpower and military service, civilian heath and the aftermath of the war. One of these investigations involves seeking to calculate the overall level of British war fatalities and the average risk of death among those who served. With no definitive single set of statistics to work with and after analysing the various potential sources and their disadvantages,[48] Winter decides, in the absence of any ideal official source, the most appropriate method of producing a reasonably accurate figure of total fatalities is to aggregate the losses of each of the individual branches of service from the *General Annual Report of the British Army 1913–1919*, *History of the Great War. Naval Operations* vols 4–5 and *History of the Great War. War in the Air* vols 2–6. This methodology gives an overall figure of 722,785 divided as to 673,375 for the army, 43,244 for the navy and 6,166 for the RFC/RAF. Winter uses the same sources to calculate the total number who served giving an overall mortality rate among those who served of 11.76 per cent, broken down as to 12.91 per cent for the army, 6.75 per cent for the navy and 2.12 per cent for the RFC/RAF.[49]

However, that is only one part of the picture. Deaths also need to be considered in the context of the levels of the male population eligible for war service. As with war losses, there is a dearth of official sources providing definitive figures for calculating enlistment rates within the eligible male population of Britain. By using a combination of the results of the1911 census for the age group 15–49 and the *General Annual Report of the British Army 1913–1919*, Winter calculates the enlistment rate for the army (but not including the navy or RFC/RAF) in England was 46.3 per cent, in Scotland 41.5 per cent and in Ireland 12.3 per cent.[50] Although his sources and methodology are not cited, in the context of a comparative study of the impact of the war on Paris, London and Berlin, Gregory puts the overall military participation rate for Britain (but possibly, given the quantum of the figure when compared with Winter's conclusions, excluding Ireland) at 53.0 per cent.[51] In terms of London, by using a combination of the enlistment records that exist and the supplement to the Registrar General's return for July 1918, Gregory estimates the military participation rate was broadly similar at 55.0 per cent. These two strands of research indicate, subject to possible geographical variations, somewhere in the region of half of the eligible population did not even participate in any form of military service.

Clearly, therefore, in general statistical terms and taking average headline figures across the country as a whole, a generation of British men was not destroyed in the war. It was a part of a generation and not as large a part as is the case in respect of most of the other main combatants—the proportionate overall loss for France and Germany is estimated to be potentially around double

[48] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 66–70.
[49] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 66–76.
[50] Winter, *Great War*, p. 28, Table 2.2.
[51] Adrian Gregory, 'Lost generations: the impact of military casualties on Paris, London and Berlin', in *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914–1919*, ed. by J. M. Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare (Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 57–103 (p. 59, Table 3.2).

that of Britain.[52] To put these statistics regarding British loss in further overall perspective, it is worth noting here Winter's short consideration of international migration as part of a wider analysis of whether the war was, in demographic terms, a temporary upheaval or had longer-term repercussions. He argues it is clear the population loss to the UK through out-migration in the pre-war period was substantially greater than the population loss through military combat during 1914–18.[53] There is some debate about the exact figures involved. W. A. Carrothers takes the view the average annual net outward emigration of British nationals to non-European destinations over the first 14 years of the century was 200,000.[54] In relation to the years 1911–14 and on the basis of an analysis of shipping records, Winter puts the annual average of this form of migration at 300,000.[55] Figures advanced by Stephen Constantine indicate annual averages of 103,728 for the period 1900–04, 159,928 for the period 1905–09, 254,668 for the period 1910–12 and 207,058 for the years 1913 and 1914.[56] Whichever approach is adopted, the numbers are clearly substantial. In the absence of the outbreak of war, there appears to be no reason to suppose this would have changed significantly. We consider Colfeian pre-war migratory behaviour in this national context in Chapter 1.

Factors affecting loss

Generalisations about levels of loss at a national level mask the fact that war losses were not necessarily distributed evenly throughout British society. Several of the factors that may have led to departure from the norm have been the subject of specific quantitative research. One of these is the pattern of and motives for early volunteer enlistment. In terms of motivation, Gregory argues persuasively there was no mass enthusiasm for the war at the time of its outbreak—mass enthusiasm was basically an invention of the pacifists—and also, incidentally, that there was a clear understanding of the likely disastrous and horrific consequences. He develops this theme by contending any enthusiasm was generated later and in response to the war and German atrocities.[57] Gregory has found in the period 4–8 August 1914 only 193 men enlisted. Clearly this excludes the mobilisation of Territorials and Reservists, but it supports the notion there was no immediate rush to volunteer. Catriona Pennell attributes this, in part, to what she terms the 'dislocation and uncertainty' caused by the outbreak of war.[58] The enlistment figure had risen to over 100,000 by 22 August but Gregory suggests this included a large number of university

[52] Winter, *Great War*, p. 75, Table 3.4.
[53] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 266–68.
[54] W. A. Carrothers, *Emigration from The British Isles with Special Reference to the Development of the Overseas Dominions* (P. S. King, 1929), pp. 244–45, Appendix IX.
[55] Jay Winter, 'Migration, War and Empire: The British Case', *La population dans la grande guerre*, Annales de démographie historique, 2002/1 no. 103, pp. 143–160 (pp. 146–47).
[56] Stephen Constantine, 'Migrants and Settlers', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire Volume IV: The Twentieth Century*, ed. by Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 163–187 (p. 165).
[57] Gregory, *Last Great War*, chs. 1–2.
[58] Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 144.

students who preferred to enlist rather than go back to university in the autumn term and also clerks and shop assistants in dead-end jobs with poor and diminishing prospects. However, he also argues more powerful reasons to enlist in the early days centred on mass unemployment brought on by the war crisis and the first impact of war, with a massive spike in recruitment at the end of August/beginning of September—nearly 175,000 men alone in the week from 30 August to 5 September—being attributable to fear of defeat and invasion and the confirmation of a separation allowance ensuring the well-being of families of married men.[59] Developing this analysis further, Pennell has studied in detail the enlistment patterns into the regular army between the weeks ending 8 August 1914 and 2 January 1915 and established two matters. The first is of the total number of men recruited up to the end of 1915, 32 per cent volunteered in 1914. The second is rates of enlistment were highest in the month of September 1914, accounting for 16 per cent of the total recruited up to the end of 1915.[60] Pennell, though, believes the fundamental motives behind volunteering went beyond mere enthusiasm or economic conditions and lay in perceptions of national interest and men's socio-geographic backgrounds.[61] More recently, Heather Jones, has highlighted the role of monarchist language (in particular, the use of the phrase 'For King and Country') as a motivational tool in generating popular support for the war.[62] In any event, the analyses point to a relatively measured and reasoned overall response to the outbreak of war. By the end of 1914 the level of volunteers numbered about a million, a figure that increased to two million by September 1915.[63]

Social and occupational background have been examined reasonably extensively as a factor both in the contexts of enlistment and service patterns and in the context of loss. At a national level, Winter contends there were higher enlistment rates amongst self-employed professionals and white-collar workers on the one hand and manual workers on the other—Public Record Office statistics from April 1916 show, in the period August 1914 to February 1916, 28.3 per cent of industrial workers had enlisted compared with 40.1 per cent of workers in finance and commerce, 41.8 per cent of workers in entertainment and 41.7 per cent of professional men. Using statistics from the *Ministry of Reconstruction, 2nd, 3rd ,4th and 5th Interim Reports of the (Civil) War Workers Committee*, Winter shows this pattern of enlistment rates continued post-conscription and by 1917 the combined figure for those working in finance and commerce and entertainment had risen to 58 per cent (split fairly evenly between entertainment and finance and commerce) and the figure for professionals was 56.5 per cent.[64] In the context of his comparative study, Gregory found,

[59] Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 31–32.
[60] Pennell, p. 144.
[61] Pennell, p. 162.
[62] Heather Jones, *For King and Country: The British Monarchy and the First World War*, Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare, 1st ed (Cambridge University Press, 2021), pp. 69–76.
[63] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 30–38.
[64] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 34 and 36–37.

in terms of occupation, the LCC roll of honour shows an enlistment rate split between manual and non-manual workers of 60/40 per cent.[65]

Richard Grayson has studied patterns of recruitment in West Belfast and in Dublin. He establishes two matters by a comparative statistical study of pre-enlistment occupation with the unit of posting. The first is the initial destination of a recruit was not necessarily the infantry—in the region of a third of new recruits were allocated in the first instance to other units such as the RE, ASC or the artillery in both West Belfast[66] and Dublin.[67] The second is it seems likely, at least in relation to non-officers, pre-war work skills helped determine the destination of the initial posting of a recruit from West Belfast[68] or Dublin.[69] Grayson has also studied patterns of service in a largely working-class cohort of men from West Belfast. By analysing data relating to instances (rather than initial destination) of service, Grayson is able to consider patterns of recruitment and service in the relevant Irish army battalions. More generally, he shows approaching 30 per cent of overall service of West Belfast men at some point was with non-infantry army units or the RFC/RAF or Royal Navy/Mercantile Marine.[70]

McCartney has carried out some detailed analysis of the social profile of those enlisting with 1/6th (Liverpool Rifles) and 1/10th (Liverpool Scottish) Battalions, King's Liverpool Regiment. Pre-war and at the outbreak of war, both units had restrictive entrance requirements. The 1/6th were apparently recruited solely on the basis of education, sporting ability and occupation—no man lower down the social scale than a clerk was admitted—whilst the 1/10th required Scottish ancestry, a non-manual occupation and a ten shilling admission fee.[71] The 1/10th kept attestation records for the period from September 1914 to October 1915. Although there are interpretative issues with the data (arising from incomplete, illegible or unclassifiable data and also relating to occupational classification where status depended on whether the individual was an employer or an employee), these records generally included details of the occupation of those enlisting in the ranks as from June 1915 and consistently over the following five months showed a significant majority of the men enlisting with the battalion were from white-collar backgrounds.[72] To support a contention that the social composition of the units retained its initial character until well into the war, McCartney develops this analysis further by comparing the proportion of each social class of those enlisting with the 1/10th between June and October 1915 with the relevant percentage of the male,

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[65] Gregory, 'Lost Generations', p. 79.
[66] Richard S. Grayson, 'Military History from the Street: New Methods for Researching First World War Service in the British Military', *War in History*, 21.4 (2014), pp. 465–95, (p. 483) doi: org/10.1177/0968344513505403,.
[67] Richard S. Grayson, *Dublin's Great Wars: The First World War, the Easter Rising and the Irish Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 41.
[68] Grayson, 'Military History from the Street', pp. 488–92.
[69] Grayson, *Dublin's Great Wars*, p. 43.
[70] Grayson, 'Military History from the Street', pp. 483–85.
[71] McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 29–30.
[72] McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 32–33.

military age Liverpool population of that class in 1911, when the last national census closest to the outbreak of war was undertaken. This further analysis shows although the middle classes formed 22 per cent of that overall population, they formed 50 per cent of the enlistments with the 1/10th. There was also a disparity when comparing proportions of skilled workers but this was much lower (39 per cent as against 30 percent) and there was a negative disparity (46 per cent as against 11 per cent) when it came to partially skilled and unskilled workers.[73]

When considering social and occupational background and rank, Winter contends officers were primarily drawn from a pool of non-manual workers. He bases this on War Office demobilisation records[74] which show: approximately one-third of all officers demobilised from the British army were classified as readily identifiable non-manual workers (professional men, students or teachers); and approximately 44 per cent of all professional men and 38 per cent of all students and teachers (but only 9 per cent of engineering workers) who served in the army were officers—with a similar correlation for the RAF. As Winter mentions, the actual non-manual worker proportions will be significantly higher when men in commercial and clerical occupations (who are not separately identified) are added.[75] It should be noted these statistics relate solely to men in the army (including the RND) and the RFC/RAF demobilised between 11 November 1918 and 12 May 1920. They do not extend to the majority of men in the navy or to those who did not survive or were discharged from service earlier in the war.[76] In terms of social class, Winter concludes there was an unequal distribution of war losses within the population and, specifically, the risk of becoming a casualty increased the higher up the social scale a participant was. Winter argues there were two reasons for this. Firstly, there were proportionately higher numbers of non-manual workers on active service due to higher enlistment rates amongst self-employed professionals and white-collar workers than manual workers[77] in combination with a greater proportion of working-class men being deemed unfit for military service or only considered fit for duty at home.[78] Secondly, casualties suffered by non-manual workers were proportionately higher than those suffered by manual workers because of a combination of officers being drawn from a pool of non-manual workers mainly from the middle and upper classes and the casualty rate, at least amongst army officers, being significantly higher than that of enlisted men.[79] We will find this latter differential is not reflected in the Colfeian dataset where the respective mortality rates were broadly equivalent.[80]

As part of the comparative study referred to earlier, Gregory considered the distribution of mortality rates amongst a number of different pre-war occupations as researched from rolls of honour and

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[73] McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 33–34.
[74] *Statistics of the Military Effort of the British Empire during the Great War*, (HM Stationery Office, 1922), pp. 707, 713.
[75] Winter, *Great War*, p. 90.
[76] *Statistics of the Military Effort*, p. 706.
[77] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 34, 36–37.
[78] Winter, *Great War*, ch. 2 IV generally and pp. 62–63 in particular.
[79] Winter, *Great War* pp. 83–92.
[80] See Chapter 2.

memorials across London and London-based institutions. Amongst other matters, he concludes from this data clerks suffered a disproportionately high proportion of casualties. In general terms, Gregory also concludes the absence of conscription in the first half of the war produced an army with a more middle-class profile in London than the country as a whole.[81] Gregory has subsequently touched upon the question of fatality rates amongst clerks in the specific context of the Roll of Honour of the London Borough of Croydon.[82] This includes details of 2,054 war dead with connections to Croydon (so not necessarily living or working there at the time of the war), 997 of which had identifiable occupations. Although the data overall are not free from issue in terms of bias, of those with identifiable occupations, 20.7 per cent (8.2 per cent of the overall total) were in clerical occupations, which provides an indication clerks were heavily represented in London service.

In terms of age profile, Winter concludes there was an unequal distribution of war losses within the population. There are two aspects to these findings. In both cases, in the absence of useful official statistics, he has recourse to a set of life tables for 1913 and 1915–1917 which set out the 'mortality experience' of the cohort of the 5 million or so working class men in England and Wales insured by the Prudential. They do not directly differentiate between civilian and military deaths. Winter overcomes this by taking the 1913 figures as a 'normal' peacetime base. He then, with adjustments to take account of overall ongoing declining death rates, projects this forward to 1914–1918 to give what he terms a 'hypothetical peace estimate'. To ascertain an 'age structure' of war losses, that is to say, the respective ages at which participants died, Winter compares this estimate with the actual death rates in the Prudential tables for each year with the difference between the two representing an estimate of deaths attributable to the war. It is acknowledged this methodology is not without its issues at various levels. However, Winter believes it is 'reasonably safe to conclude the Prudential data show with some precision the age structure of British and Irish war losses' and, on this basis, calculates over 71 per cent of deaths were suffered by age brackets 16–19 (16.43 per cent), 20–24 (37.15 per cent) and 25–29 (22.31 per cent).[83] He also uses a similar methodology to map the age distribution of fatalities from England and Wales (as he puts it 'to describe the depletion of particular cohorts') by reference to the 1911 census population and concludes although about 35 per cent of men aged 15–49 in 1911 were under 30, 70 per cent of all men in uniform and 74 per cent of the men who died were in that bracket.[84] As part of his comparative study, Gregory has carried out some initial studies as to the average age of death of those mentioned on the LCC roll of honour. Despite a likely bias in the LCC dataset towards an

[81] Gregory, 'Lost Generations', pp. 79–85.
[82] Gregory, *The Last Great War*, pp. 113–15.
[83] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 76–82, Table 3.6.
[84] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 82–83, Table 3.7.

upper age range, Gregory concludes there is evidence to suggest the average age at death of Londoners who died in service was greater (around 27) than the national average (23).[85]

Disproportionate losses and education

In terms of disproportionate levels of loss, two general (as opposed to institution-specific) quantitative studies have been undertaken in relation to two particular groupings of men based on educational background: university undergraduates and graduates; and former pupils of public schools. Winter examines some fatality rates of both these groupings by reference to rolls of honour and service.[86] Although there are potential issues with some of the data, Winter concludes those who had attended Oxford and Cambridge were significantly more likely to be killed during the war (somewhere approaching one in five of those who served rising to one in four for the youngest cohorts) than the general service population (approximately one in eight of those who served) or, indeed, most of those who had attended other universities. It is suggested by Winter the differential between Oxford and Cambridge and other universities could be attributable to smaller numbers of men from the latter serving as officers and financial considerations (due to social background) perhaps delaying entry into service, thus reducing the risk of fatality. Winter acknowledges some of the specific difficulties encountered in analysing the data relating to Oxford and Cambridge universities. Further, it is clear from his research that London City and Guilds College, the Royal School of Mines (both now part of Imperial College, London) and the Royal Technical College Glasgow although with far lower service numbers suffered equivalent or greater overall proportionate losses to Oxford and Cambridge and the overall proportionate losses of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Trinity College Dublin and Wales were not that much lower, all being in the region of one in six.[87] Based on a sample of the alumni of 53 schools (which are not identified), Winter also concludes about one in every five of public school alumni who served was killed. Winter describes this as a much higher mortality rate than that of the army generally or of army officers more specifically, which, although it may simply be an issue of imprecise terminology, suggests the analysis is limited to army service rather than service more generally.[88] There are two further points to be borne in mind in considering these contentions. The first is many graduates from Oxford and Cambridge seem to have been professional soldiers already in service at the outbreak of war.[89] The potential effect of this is considered further in Chapter 2. The second is, as the majority of those attending Oxford and Cambridge were likely to be from public schools, there may be an element of duplication in the two datasets. In any event, Winter's conclusion from these studies is privileged groups bore a disproportionately heavy burden of war losses.

[85] Gregory, 'Lost Generations', p. 76.
[86] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 92–99.
[87] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 94–95, Table 3.12.
[88] Winter, *Great War*, p. 98.
[89] Winter, *Great War*, p. 96.

The loss ratio of around one in five for public school alumni is claimed to be supported by a more detailed analysis undertaken by Anthony Seldon and David Walsh based on data from 164 British schools including Colfe's.[90] The analysis reveals an average fatality rate of between 18 and 19 per cent.[91] Seldon and Walsh also undertake a more detailed comparative analysis of the fatality rates relating to a smaller sample of schools of differing size and nature. This sample comprised: fourteen large boarding schools (400+ boys) (an average fatality rate of 19.9 per cent); fourteen smaller boarding schools (200–400 boys) (an average fatality rate of 18.2 per cent); and fourteen large English day schools (size not given) (an average fatality rate of 17.3 per cent). The tentative suggestion is these distinctions may be a product of differing enlistment patterns, perhaps attributable to the financial means of those attending larger boarding schools and the military ethos and traditions of some institutions.[92] Colfe's is not part of this smaller sample.

Additionally Seldon and Walsh undertake an analysis of the age structure of war losses in the context of a detailed analysis of 6,459 deaths from the rolls of honour of a 'varied selection' of twenty-eight schools. There is no indication in the text as to the basis on which these schools were chosen but, again, Colfe's was not part of this sample.[93] In terms of age, Seldon and Walsh find over 50 per cent of this sample were aged 24 or under (the comparative figure using Winter's methodology referred to above is 48.91 per cent)—nearly 50 per cent of whom were in the age band of 18–20 (the Winter analysis produces no directly comparable figure)—and 75 per cent of the sample were under the age of 30 (the comparative figure using Winter's methodology is 71.22 per cent).[94] Where there are comparative figures, the results of the two pieces of research are reasonably close, which indicates although public school alumni may have carried a greater risk of death, the age at which they were likely to die was reasonably consistent with the rest of the military population (as to which see above). Using this dataset, Seldon and Walsh also carry out some comparative analysis of alumni mortality by general rank in terms of type of school. They find big provincial day schools in the sample had a much higher proportion of alumni dying in the ranks than the boarding schools. They cite Manchester Grammar School which lost 480 former pupils in the war, 375 of whom were of non-officer rank representing a proportion of around 78 per cent. They contrast this with Marlborough which had 27 in the ranks killed out of 733, Charterhouse which had 21 in the ranks killed out of 687 and Harrow which had 20 in the ranks killed out of 644—all proportions broadly around 3 per cent. The contrast is quite stark. It should, however, be remembered some non-regular units were more socially exclusive than others—examples include the HAC, Royal Fusiliers, London Rifle Brigade and 1/6th and 1/10th Battalions, King's Liverpool

[90] Anthony Seldon and David Walsh, *Public Schools and the Great War: The Generation Lost* (Pen & Sword Military, 2013), pp. 254–60. As already mentioned, Colfe's was not contemporaneously recognised as a public school.
[91] Seldon and Walsh, p. 240.
[92] Seldon and Walsh, p. 241.
[93] Seldon and Walsh, pp. 287–88.
[94] Seldon and Walsh, p. 242.

Regiment considered by McCartney and also, in terms of Ireland, 7th and 10th Battalions, Royal Dublin Fusiliers[95]—and would have had a different rank profile from units which were more socially comprehensive, at least in the early days of the war.

At first sight much of these data support the claim those attending élite educational institutions (and, by implication, generally, the most privileged in society—the 'brightest and best') suffered a disproportionate level of losses in the war and, perhaps, help to explain how the perception of 'the Lost Generation' originally took root and has so strongly endured. There are, however, some potential issues with the methodologies adopted and with the integrity of the underlying data, which are examined further in Chapters 2 and 3.

There has been one further area of research relating to public school alumni mortality rates in the war that deserves mention. This comprises an analysis of the risk of death by reference to sporting and academic ability of alumni of Eton undertaken by Carr and Hart.[96] In terms of sporting ability, Carr and Hart examine the fate of the 158 boys selected to row for the Eton Eights between 1872 and 1917 (rowing being considered by the authors a more 'masculine' sport than others such as cricket). Their analysis shows the overall fatality rate for this sample at 19.6 per cent was slightly lower than that for Eton alumni generally but that those in the fastest teams suffered a mortality rate of 37.5 per cent.[97] Seldon and Walsh have also carried out some research in relation to members of the Charterhouse cricket 1st XI between 1901 and 1915. This shows a mortality rate of 26.0 per cent as opposed to a more general death rate amongst alumni of 19.6 per cent.[98] In terms of academic ability, Carr and Hart consider the fate of King's Scholars (a fixed number of 70 at any one time) and Newcastle Prize winners (319 winners between 1871 and 1917) who saw service in the war. Of the former, 25.2 per cent died and of the latter (an even more select sample) 34.3 per cent were to die.[99] All this leads Seldon and Walsh to suggest, if this pattern was replicated across public schools, it would support the argument the brightest and strongest suffered disproportionate losses in the war.[100] In contrast, we will find in Chapter 2 there was no statistically significant association between pre-war academic or sporting ability and death within the Colfeian cohort.

Methodology

A major obstacle in carrying out quantitative studies as to the impact of military service in the First World War at a national or regional level is the dearth of detailed official statistics as to matters

[95] Grayson, *Dublin's Great Wars*, p. 43.
[96] Richard Carr and Bradley W. Hart, 'Old Etonians, Great War Demographics and the Interpretations of British Eugenics, c.1914–1939', *First World War Studies*, 3.2 (2012), pp. 217–39 doi: 10.1080/19475020.2012.728743.
[97] Carr and Hart, pp. 225–27.
[98] Seldon and Walsh, pp. 239, 256.
[99] Carr and Hart, pp. 227–28.
[100] Seldon and Walsh, pp. 239–40.

such as recruitment, casualty rates, rank and cessation of service. As seen above, one approach is to take the most suitable existing figures and use statistical hypotheses to fill the gaps. Another is to use identifiable cohorts with a common theme and seek to generalise the results of interrogation of the dataset concerned to a greater or lesser degree. Traditionally, the common theme through which research has been carried out has tended to be the military unit of service. This is limiting as it largely discounts sociological variables relating to individual background which, in part, may have influenced unit destination in the first place. Some research, such as the work of McCartney already referred to and Mark Connelly,[101] looks to place the units concerned in their local context but the only major studies that have gone further and sought to define the cohort by reference to the geographical area of origin irrespective of service destination are those of Grayson in relation to Belfast and Dublin.[102] This study adapts Grayson's socio-military cohort approach to a complete community of school alumni with a strong geographic commonality and develops it to undertake a largely quantitative study of the background, military experiences (if any) and life outcomes of its members who were eligible for service in the war. The inclusion of both servers and non-servers provides a control group against which it is possible to measure the impact of service. More fundamentally, however, the thesis is framed not, as is so often the case, as a study of men's lives in the context of the war but rather of the war in the context of men's lives.

The research sample consists of 1346 alumni of Colfe's School who were either age-eligible for service during the First World War or did, in fact, undertake service. It is substantial and, in terms of statistical relevance, well capable of bearing meaningful analysis. An extensive range of data have been collected relating to the men within the sample from birth to death. This includes data concerning family background, education, location, social and occupational status, leisure pursuits, marital and other relationships, war service and migratory behaviours at various points during their life cycles. The data have been recorded in a large Excel spreadsheet consisting of over 500,000 individual fields. Not only, in practical terms, does this ease retrieval of information but more significantly it facilitates extensive comparative analysis of relevant characteristics and themes.

Some characteristics and themes are analysed in different contexts and points in time across one or more chapters. To avoid unnecessary duplication, the methodologies adopted and sources used in relation to these areas of commonality are set below. However, where a methodological approach and source is chapter-specific, it is described in the chapter concerned.

Core sources

A contemporaneous handwritten enrolment book documenting all boys entering and leaving Colfe's from January 1884 to 1928 is central to defining the cohort and to many aspects of this research.

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[101] Mark Connelly, *Steady the Buffs! A Regiment, a Region, and the Great War* (Oxford University Press, 2006).
[102] See the studies referenced earlier and also *Belfast Boys: How Unionists and Nationalists Fought and Died Together in the Great War* (Continuum, 2010).

Seemingly designed for a number of administrative and accounting purposes, for most of those with which the thesis is concerned, it records: boy's name; sufficient information to identify date of birth; head of household's name and occupation; address; date of application; previous school; and dates of admission and leaving. In some cases, destination on leaving is also noted. By and large, even with common names, these particulars make identification relatively straightforward. The sample includes earlier pupils where they were potentially eligible for service or undertook service and these have been identified from alumni lists published in the *Colfeian* over a number of years. The *Colfeian* was the official school record, which commenced in December 1900 and continues to this day. This, too, is a core source of information regarding the activities of the school and its alumni along with *Colfensia*, a primarily pupil-led magazine published from 1902–51. There is also a limited amount of contemporary school archival material in terms of correspondence, photographs and newspaper cuttings. This can only be a fraction of what once subsisted. Whether its preservation was a matter of choice (in terms of supporting a narrative) or good fortune is unclear. It is worth noting the original school was completely destroyed by a V1 flying bomb in 1944 so, in many ways, it is surprising any contemporaneous material is available.

Also of key significance to this research has been the public release of primary source census and related material over the last decade or so. Although high level generalised data and analysis relating to the 1911 and 1921 censuses of England and Wales were published reasonably contemporaneously through the Registrar General's office, the detail of the data contained in the returns for the 1911 census (release January 2012) and 1921 census (release January 2022) and the 1939 Register (release November 2015) on which much of this research is based have only become available recently. The thesis in its current form would not have been possible earlier. The release of individual data has been fundamental, in particular, to mapping the life outcomes of the majority of the cohort (especially in terms of occupational and social mobility) from the pre-war period through to the onset of the Second World War. In turn this enables quantitative assessment of the impact of the war (irrespective of service) on men's civilian life trajectory.[103]

Occupation and social class

Occupation and class are analysed in connection with several aspects of this thesis. As government used occupation as a method of social classification for the greater part of the twentieth century, the two are strongly associated. The methodology of classification was developed by T. H. C. Stevenson, a medical statistician in the General Register Office.[104] It was first applied in the specific context of measuring the extent of variation in infant mortality by parental occupational data taken in the 1911 census but the classification adopted proved

[103] See Chapter 5.
[104] As to the origins of this approach see further Simon R. S. Szreter, 'The Genesis of the Registrar-General's Social Classification of Occupations', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 35. No. 4 (1984), pp. 522–46 doi.org/10.2307/590433.

inadequate to distinguish between differing social stations within a specified industry. These shortcomings were rectified and a more sophisticated classification put in place for an analysis of (in addition to infant mortality) occupational mortality and fertility based on the 1921 census data. This new structure remained in use for a variety of governmental purposes essentially unaltered until 1971 but subject to modifications of detail as employment patterns and societal perceptions changed over time. The existence of a relatively settled system of social classification in England and Wales originating from before the First World War and enduring well into the latter third of the twentieth century opens up the potential for a number of levels of direct comparative analysis within the Colfeian cohort. The main difficulty in the way of its use stems from the flaws with the initial 1911 formulation. The remedial action taken for the analysis of the 1921 census data consisted, at least in part, of white-collar workers (who had been categorised for 1911 purposes as belonging to the top-tier of classification and as part of the upper and middle classes) being reallocated to an intermediate class situated immediately below the top-tier and above that for skilled workers. This is potentially significant because white-collar workers (and particularly clerks) constituted a substantial proportion of the Colfeian working population in 1911. At first sight this appears to indicate a significant shift in class profile for the cohort although, in actuality, there had been no substantive alteration in perceived status during the intervening decade—the changes were merely a recognition of reality. The point need not be problematic if the 1921 model is capable of being used to analyse the 1911 data. Previous work indicates this is feasible. W. A. Armstrong, for example, considered the relative merits of the use of the 1911, 1921 and 1951 categorisations as a base for analysing census returns for the City of York from 1841 and 1851 in terms of social stratification.[105] The 1911 classification was dismissed for the reasons outlined above. In the event, Armstrong adopted the 1951 categorisation but concluded there was little to choose between that and the 1921 categorisation. Further, given the shortcomings in the 1911 classification, McCartney in her Liverpool study used the 1921 structure as a base to analyse the pre-war social class of her cohort.[106] The principles of retrospective use of the 1921 model and its general suitability for use in relation to the pre-War period are, therefore, established.

There are three key reference points of assessment for the purposes of this study: the immediate pre-war period; the immediate post-war period; and 1939. For the immediate pre-war period, the default position is that occupation has been assessed by reference to the 1911 census returns accessed through Ancestry. The returns were collated by household address. Columns 1–9 collected personal details of all persons present in the household on 2 April 1911. This included not only the head of the household and relatives but extended to domestic servants, visitors and boarders. Name, age, marital status and relationship to the head of household were to be recorded and, in the case of married women, details of the number of children of the present marriage were

[105] W. A. Armstrong, 'The Use of Information about Occupation', in *Nineteenth Century Society*, ed. by E. A. Wrigley (Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 191–224.
[106] McCartney, pp. 28, 29.

required. Columns 10–13 collected details of the profession or occupation of all members of the household aged ten and over. The personal occupation of each relevant member of the household was to be entered in column 10 whilst columns 11–13 were to be used to record the industry or service with which the worker was connected, whether they were an employer, a worker or working on their own account and whether they worked at home. Birthplace and, if born abroad, nationality were to be included in columns 14 and 15. Column 16 was to be used to record a small number of specified types of serious physical or mental disability. At the foot of the return the number of living rooms in the household (including the kitchen but not including any landing, lobby, closet, bathroom, warehouse, office or shop) was to be specified. The description entered in column 10 is taken as the starting point for assessing pre-war occupation here unless a reliable source closer to the outbreak of war is available or, in the absence of an identifiable return, data are available from another reliable source. The most frequently used alternative sources have been: the school enrolment book; pre-war editions of the *Colfeian* (where changes in employment status were often reported); the London Gazette (where Civil Service appointments were recorded); and service records (especially AIR 76 and 79 records where immediate pre-war employment was almost invariably recorded and often in some detail).

The relevant description has then been used to allocate the individual to a social class by reference to the 1921 census five-tier structure:

Social Class I (Upper and Middle);

Social Class II (Intermediate);

Social Class III (Skilled Workers);

Social Class IV (Intermediate);

Social Class V (Unskilled Workers).[107]

Class II broadly consisted of what would be considered as the lower middle class while Class IV comprised the partially skilled. As discussed, retrospective use of the1921 model is an established form of methodology for analysing earlier data and has been adopted by McCartney in the context of the First World War. McCartney did, however, add a preliminary white-collar/manual worker test prior to the application of the 1921 structure to make the analysis more reflective of contemporary local perceptions of class distinctions of those within her study. In particular, to ensure shop assistants (designated as Class III) were brought within the higher grades of classification. This test is less appropriate in relation to the Colfe's cohort. Its different pre-war occupational profile means a direct application of the 1921 model is suitable. Further, this study is not limited to a

[107] For the detail of the occupational classification and social class allocation see *The Registrar-General's Decennial Supplement England & Wales 1921 Pt II Occupational Mortality, Fertility, and Infant Mortality* Table A (HM Stationery Office, 1927) columns (6) and (7).

consideration of the pre-war position. It extends to analysis of occupation and class at two later reference points, which makes the importance of the adopted model being capable of use over an extended period a more significant factor than minor discrepancies in class allocation at any given point in time.

The 1921 census return data have been adopted as the default position for analysing the immediate post-war position and accessed through Findmypast. Again, the returns were collated by household address. The first seven columns collected personal details of all persons present in the household on 19 June 1921. This included not only the head of the household and relatives but extended to domestic servants, visitors and boarders. Name, relationship to the head of household, age, sex, marital status (and, in the case children, whether their parents were still alive) and birthplace were all to be recorded. The next four columns collected information regarding the personal occupation of all occupants (and, if in education, whether whole-or part-time), employment status (and, if employed, the employer's name and business) and place of work. This requirement was significantly wider than the 1911 census. The final column, to be completed by married men, widowers and widows, collected details of number and ages of children, whether or not they were members of the household. At some point after the collection of the return by the enumerator, this basic occupational data was allocated a three-digit code (which was assigned, in turn, to one of the five social classification groupings referred to above) in green ink. In the absence of an identifiable return, data from any other reliable contemporaneous sources have been utilised and, where appropriate, a suitable social classification code allocated. The most frequently used alternative sources here have been post-war editions of the *Colfeian* and Shipping Passenger Lists.

A further census had been taken in 1931 in England and Wales but the collection returns were destroyed by fire in the Second World War. The data they contained are permanently lost although in 1938 the Registrar-General's office had published the detailed occupational and social class allocation used in connection with their high level analysis of the returns.[108] In 1939 a register of the population of England and Wales was created from information collected on 29 September in the context of declaration of war on Germany. The initial function of the Register was to enable the creation of identity cards although the data were used for a number of other purposes as time passed. By the time the data were taken, the Second World War was underway and the Register does not generally extend to men already serving in the armed forces, whose registration was dealt with by the military. The 1939 Register was made publicly available in a redacted form to omit those then still alive and has been accessed through Ancestry. The data it contains have been used in this thesis as the basis for quantitative study of occupation and social class at the end of the period leading up to the start of the Second World War. The data were collected by reference to

[108] *The Registrar-General's Decennial Supplement England & Wales 1931 Part IIa Occupational Mortality* Table 1 (HM Stationery Office, 1938) pp. 191–210.

postal address but were restricted to details of the occupants' names, sex, date of birth, marital status and personal occupation. The 1939 Register data is very useful but does, therefore, have its limitations. In particular, in terms of employment it only records the occupation of individuals and does not do so with the rigour or consistency of a formal census. In contrast to the 1921 census, it does not extend to recording details of employers. Nor does it attempt to measure social classification. The 1931 census scheme of classification (published the preceding year) is, however, available and, being reasonably close in time, has been adopted for use in connection with the 1939 data for the purposes of this study. The class allocation broadly follows that for 1921 with one major exception. This relates to the lower middle class where the lowest level of clerk was demoted to Class III to join, for example, salesmen (other than commercial travelling salesmen) and non-professional engineers. Those with management roles or technical skills remained within Class II. This does have an affect on the Colfeian data. However, the impact can be adjusted for in terms of comparative purposes with relative ease and precision given the depth of data available.

A further census would have been taken in 1941 but was postponed because of the war. The next census was not carried out until 1951 and, as current policy stands, the data generated will not be released until the middle of this century. The1921 census returns and the 1939 Register do, therefore, represent the only publicly available official source of comprehensive data regarding the population of England and Wales at individual level covering the post-war lifespan of the Colfeian cohort. Availability of data apart, points of reference comprising 1911, 1921 and 1939 are well-suited to the purposes of this analysis. They give perspectives for the periods in the lead-up to the war, in the aftermath of the war and at a time when, although the oldest cohort members might have retired, the majority of men were in the later stages of their working life and the youngest likely to be reasonably settled in their careers.

Marital status

The sources for data relating to marriage are varied and have mainly been accessed through Ancestry or Findmypast. The primary sources are the England and Wales Civil Registration Marriage Index collections 1837–1915 and 1916–2005. In addition to the names of those marrying, these give year, quarter and registration district. These are supplemented by fuller records in some cases (exact location and ages, addresses, occupations of the parties and their fathers) from Church of England parish registers. In terms of England and Wales, marital status is also confirmed in the censuses of 1891, 1901, 1911 (which additionally recorded number of years married) and 1921 and the 1939 Register. Marriages abroad are less easy to identify, but reasonably full records are available for Canada and the USA, again supported by periodic census returns confirming marital status. Shipping Passenger lists are also a useful secondary source of information. Likewise, information in the England & Wales National Probate Calendar until the mid-to-late 1960s often included details of a surviving spouse. All these sources have been supplemented by marriage announcements in the *Colfeian*. In terms of marital break-up, some

divorce records are held by TNA for the period up to 1937. In the absence of divorce records, the date of remarriage during a preceding wife's lifetime has been treated as the date of marital failure and, where separation or co-habitation preceded divorce, the date of the first evidenced instance of this has been used.

Pre-war location

For those who served, pre-war location data have been taken from enlistment records to the extent they are available. In the absence of enlistment records (and for those who did not serve), the data have been taken from an individual's return (if any) for the 1911 census of England and Wales unless there is another reliable source closer to the outbreak of war available. In the absence of a census return, reliance is placed on any other authoritative source. The categorisation of pre-war location that has been adopted for analytical purposes is four-fold: Lewisham (this comprises Lewisham and the surrounding area consisting of the London metropolitan boroughs of Lewisham, Woolwich, Greenwich and Deptford—essentially the main catchment area for Colfe's); the other metropolitan boroughs and all the outer London boroughs;[109] the rest of the United Kingdom (including the island of Ireland); and countries other than the United Kingdom.

Academic ability

There are two methodological difficulties with trying to establish academic ability. Firstly, entrance for public examinations only became a regular occurrence at Colfe's from around 1900 onwards.[110] Prior to that most pupils had received some form of internal prize for a level of educational attainment or effort, which devalues its evidential worth. The second issue is boys came and went from Colfe's during their educational career. So, even in the post-public examination environment, a significant number left before becoming eligible for examination. However, that does not mean they did not take examinations elsewhere or, indeed, go on to enter higher education. The approach that has been adopted is as follows. Boys are treated as able if there is evidence from Colfe's records of academic achievement in the form of a scholarship or success in public examinations or matriculation for university. Boys who were still attending Colfe's at the end of their education are treated as not academically able if there is no record of academic achievement in one or more of these forms. Boys who left Colfe's early (aged 13 or under) are treated as academic ability unknown unless there is a record of subsequent university entrance from other sources. The approach is not perfect and is likely to result in levels of academic ability being understated but it is the best there is.

[109] The metropolitan and outer boroughs have been identified by reference to the map of London administrative areas 1900–64 in Jerry White, *London in the Twentieth Century: A City and Its People* (Vintage, 2008), p. vi.
[110] See Chapter 1.

Outward migration

Outward migration within the Colfe's cohort is one of the core parts of this thesis and is primarily analysed in the context of two periods: before the First World War; and from the end of the First World War until the beginning of the Second World War. A preliminary step to this analysis is defining what is meant by a 'migrant'. The motivating factor for people to travel from their country of birth to other countries may be derived from choice or it may be derived from compulsion and compulsion may be direct or it may be circumstantial. Within these parameters migrancy takes myriad forms. The proximate cause may be as fundamental as survival or as relatively trivial as pleasure. Invariably, however, at its core is a desire to improve quality of life or employment prospects or a combination of both. It may be intended as permanent or as a temporary expedient, whether short term or longer term. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, it became compulsory for passenger lists to be submitted to the Board of Trade in the UK in relation to sea voyages to and from beyond Europe. This practice was originally introduced to safeguard the health and welfare of those travelling by ship. In 1912, however, the Board of Trade started to require statements in passenger lists as to the country of last residence and of intended future permanent residence (defined as intended residence for a year or more), with the purpose of drawing a distinction between migrants and those other passengers who were merely in transit, whether for business or personal reasons.[111] The requirement continued for the greater part of the period covered by this study and it is this definition of migrancy—intended residence for a year or more elsewhere—which is adopted. Indeed, for statistical purposes, a twelve-month move to a country other than that of a person's usual residence remains central to the United Nations' definition of a long-term migrant. A number of sources have been used to identify instances of initial migration, any onward migration and any permanent return to the UK. Board of Trade passenger lists for inward and outward journeys from and to the UK and their equivalent in Australia, Canada and the USA accessed through Ancestry have been key. Canadian and USA census returns (again accessed through Ancestry) have also been important. Another main source of secondary evidence has been the *Colfeian*. From the pre-war period well into the 1950s (although its heyday had probably ended by the early 1930s) there was a section of the magazine dedicated to those abroad. Arrivals and departures were recorded and correspondence published describing life and activities, sometimes accompanied by photography.

Throughout, the statistics generated by this aspect of research are restricted to those for whom migrancy can be definitively evidenced. There are a number of men for whom official records in England and Wales (such as census returns, the 1939 Register, electoral rolls, marriage and death) after leaving school are non-existent or limited in one way or another. This may be as result of moving to other areas of the UK such as Scotland where records are less easily accessible. It

[111] N. H. Carrier and J. R. Jeffrey, *External Migration: A Study of the Available Statistics 1815–1950*, Studies on Medical and Population Subjects, 6 (General Register Office, 1953), pp. 18–19.

may be due to a career at sea (which is not treated as migrancy for the purposes of this study unless it led to residence abroad) or it may be as a consequence of a change of name or what, today, is termed living 'off grid'. Equally, it might be due to migrancy. The figures involved should, therefore, be treated as minimum levels. Further, it has not always proved possible to identify the date of initial date of migration or any permanent return to the UK with precision. Where there is uncertainty, the earliest evidenced date has been adopted even though, often, it is likely migration or return took place before then. In the absence of domestic death records, it is also assumed long-term migrants did not ever return to the UK even if it has not proved possible to confirm their death abroad.

War service

The parameters of 'service' follow those used in *Colfe's Grammar School and The Great War 1914–19*.[112] This means, as well as service in domestic and other allied armed forces, it extends to participation in the Mercantile Marine, colonial local volunteer contingents and non-combatant voluntary services such as the Red Cross. The availability of data to establish service or as to specific constituent elements of service is not consistent and is determined in part by country of service, in part by branch of service and in part by rank. The most comprehensive records at a general (as opposed to unit) level are those for members of the CEF and the AIF, both accessed through Ancestry. Availability of information for other non-domestic forces is generally poor. Data relating to domestic forces are primarily held by TNA. Records of service in the Royal Navy are reasonably complete. Data for officers and warrant officers are found in series ADM 196 and 340 and for ratings in ADM 188. Series ADM 337 contains data for officers and ratings of the RNVR, ADM 339 for officers and ratings of the RND and ADM 273 for officers in the RNAS for the period to 31 March 1918. All these records are supplemented by data found in the medal rolls forming series ADM 171. The position regarding the army is more involved. There are two series of records for non-officer ranks. The first is series WO 363, which extends to RFC non-officer ranks who died or were discharged before 1 April 1918. It is far from complete. Only about a third of these records survived an incendiary bomb in September 1940 and many of the surviving records suffered charring or water damage. The second is series WO 364. This comprises service records of those who claimed disability pensions, which is a restricted subset of men. Both series WO 363 and 364 are accessible through Ancestry and Findmypast. Army officer records (including RFC officers who died or were discharged before 1 April 1918) are comprised in series WO 339 and WO 374. Here availability is good but completeness is variable. The files have been subject to periodic rationalisation over the years and only seem to be at their fullest where there was some particular issue that survived the war. Series WO 372 consists of index cards for army service and award rolls. This is probably the most reliable indicator for the fact of army service although it only

[112] *Colfe's Grammar School and the Great War 1914–19*, ed. by Leland L. Duncan (The Blackheath Press, 1920).

includes men who served in a theatre of war at some point. The information the cards contain is not comprehensive but will normally include rank, unit and regimental number (if applicable). The cards may also specify theatres of war entered. Series AIR 76 and 79 contain reasonably full data respectively for officer ranks and non-officer ranks (including those non-officer ranks who served in the RNAS before 1 April 1918) of the RAF. Information regarding service in the Mercantile Marine is scant but series BT 351 can be used to identify seamen who served at sea for at least six months and on at least one voyage through a danger zone, therefore qualifying for the Mercantile Marine medal and the British War medal. In terms of disability, the Western Front Association's Pension Ledgers and Index Cards collection (available through Ancestry) is another source of useful material.

Most (but not all) of the service analysis is undertaken at branch level rather than type of unit. The categorisation adopted here is four-fold: airborne services; army; navy; and other. 'Airborne services' encompasses the RAF and also the RFC and the RNAS. Although the latter two were strictly part of the army and navy respectively, their service profiles had more in common with the RAF than their parent organisations and it seems sensible for the purposes of analysis to treat all airborne services as one. The category 'Other' comprises the Mercantile Marine, local colonial volunteer contingents, non-combatant voluntary services and men for whom a branch of service could not be identified. Most analysis regarding rank is also at a relatively high level. The primary distinction drawn is between men who were commissioned and men in the ranks although an additional category is adopted for men who served as officer cadets. This latter group needs to be catered for because although most went on to be commissioned, this was not guaranteed and, indeed, some men were still in the process of training at the war's end.

In terms of routes into service, a more detailed system of grouping has been constructed to distinguish between five categories of men with an identifiable enlistment status. Firstly, there is a relatively small number who were already serving as regulars in the armed forces prior to the war. Then there are those described for the purposes of this study as 'pre-war volunteers'—these consist of men who were active members of a British territorial unit and mobilised with the outbreak of war.[113] It includes those serving with the RNVR and also one retired regular who was recalled to serve when the war began. Distinct from pre-war volunteers are 'wartime volunteers'. These are men who volunteered for service after the war began. It includes those who returned from overseas to enlist at any point during the war—these men were generally not subject to any form of domestic compulsion to serve. It also includes men classified as exempt from conscription or who were in reserved occupations and under no obligation to serve. The 'wartime volunteer' category does not include men for whom there is definite evidence of enlistment under the Derby Scheme, who constitute a separate category. The Derby Scheme operated from October to December 1915

[113] For a detailed analysis of the territorial force see Ian F. W. Beckett and Keith Simpson, *A Nation in Arms: A Social Study of the British Army in the First World War* (Tom Donovan, 1990), pp. 127–63.

and was an attempt to preserve voluntary service and avoid the necessity for compulsion. It involved men attesting a willingness to serve on the basis they would only be called up when required, with single men being taken first.[114] Largely, the evidence for this form of enlistment consists of a gap between attestation and mobilisation—typically enlistees were not called up until a later date, sometimes weeks but sometimes months later or, occasionally even longer. It is possible there are men categorised as wartime volunteers here in late 1915/early 1916 (the continued ability to volunteer for immediate service ran in tandem with the Derby Scheme) who attested under the Scheme and were called into service very promptly. The final category consists of men described as 'conscripts' who were called up for service under the Military Service Act 1916. This does not necessarily include any man enlisted after the beginning of 1916—the legislation only came into force on 2 March 1916 and the Derby Scheme and purely voluntary domestic enlistment continued in the interim.

Death and disability in service

The criterion adopted for defining death in service is recognition as war dead by the CWGC. This means a small number of men commemorated as war dead by Colfe's are not treated as having died in service.[115] As a generally accepted standard, it does, however, have the advantage of introducing a degree of certainty even though identification and recognition remains an ongoing process. There is no accepted definitional approach to determining disability in service. Two criteria have been adopted for the purposes of this thesis. Both are based on the assumption the individual concerned is not recognised by the CWGC as war dead. The first is a base level of disability, which is treated as evidenced by one or more of the following: wounding categorised as severe in service records; the grant of a disability pension—availability of detailed records is patchy and awards were notoriously inconsistent but it still remains a valid indicator; the reason given for cessation of service being recorded as infirmity or illness incurred or aggravated by active service; medical classification on demobilisation. The award of a Silver War Badge has not been taken into account as these awards could be issued for a variety of reasons not necessarily involving disability. Not all disability was permanent. No longer fit for military service did not necessarily mean no longer fit to resume civilian life. An enhanced level of disability is, therefore, introduced categorised as 'significant' representing an individual disability that could be considered life-changing as identified by one or more of the following factors: the loss of a limb; a lifelong infirmity; an inability to resume a pre-war occupation; or an early death.

[114] For further details regarding the Scheme see John M. Bourne, *Britain and the Great War: 1914–1918*, Repr. 1991 (with corr.), 1994 (Arnold, 1994), pp. 121–22.
[115] See Chapter 3.

Service in a combat unit

In the absence of detailed service records for each serving individual, specific analysis as to whether a man spent a degree of his service in a combat role is not possible and, inevitably, the analytical process has to involve a degree of generalisation. The approach adopted is to categorise primarily by reference to the role of a man's unit (this is a departure from the general methodology of analysis at branch level) but also by the location of his service. In terms of the British Army, any element of infantry, cavalry or artillery service or service with the RE abroad is treated as combat but exclusively home service with those units as non-combat. Service with the RAMC, Royal Army Veterinary Corps, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, ASC, Labour Corps and the Chaplaincy is treated as non-combat wherever it took place. Service at sea with the Royal Navy (whether in home waters or abroad) is treated as combat even if the individual was not serving in an overtly fighting capacity but service exclusively ashore or in the Mercantile Marine is treated as non-combat. In terms of service in aviation, any element of airborne service is treated as combat with service exclusively in a ground-based role allocated as non-combat. Similar principles have been applied to servicemen from other countries. The distinctions drawn in relation to maritime and aviation service are relatively self-explanatory. In terms of army-based units, most fall fairly easily into one side or the other of a combat/non-combat divide. The respective roles of the ASC and the RE are probably the most problematic. In her study examining the role of the non-commissioned ranks of the RAMC in the First World War in the context of the dominance of 'combat masculinities', Jessica Meyer classifies those serving with that unit and with the ASC and Labour Corps as doing so in a non-combatant role because they 'wore uniforms but did not carry (or manipulate) weapons'.[116] This is a useful perspective for present purposes. The ASC were concerned solely with matters of transport and supply.[117] The RE, on the other hand, were 'fully trained in the use of the rifle, bayonet and bomb' and were armed.[118] They were fighting men (even though they had other skills which meant they were unlikely to be employed as assault troops) rather than purely logistical support. In considering the notion of combat it is important to bear in mind that combat status was a dynamic concept and allocation did not mean a man remained in a combat or non-combat role throughout. Men moved in and out of roles as the war progressed. Injury or sickness incurred in a combat role might result in taking on a non-combat role as might recognition of specialist skills. On the other hand, pressing need for able-bodied men or, indeed, a desire to serve in a combat role might lead to movement in the opposite direction.

[116] Jessica Meyer, *An Equal Burden: The Men of the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War*, First edition (Oxford University Press, 2019), p.12.
[117] For their history from immediately after the Second South African War to the end of the First World War see Col. R. H. Beadon, *The Royal Army Service Corps: A History of Transport and Supply in the British Army*, vol. 2 (1930) (Naval & Military Press reprint [n.d.]).
[118] V. F. Eberle, *With a Royal Engineers Field Company in France and Italy: April 15 to the Armistice* (Pen & Sword Military, 2020), p. 92.

Chapter summary

Chapter 1 examines the pre-war life of the cohort. In terms of social and educational background, it establishes a primarily lower middle class profile heavily weighted towards youth and a broad secondary education at a local endowed grammar school, which mainly served the local community. The cohort was not socially or educationally élite and there was no significant tradition of entry into the armed services in terms of career. All these were factors that played a part in defining the nature and extent of involvement in the war and its subsequent impact. They also helped shape the substantial levels of voluntary pre-war migration this chapter establishes took place within the cohort to a wide variety of destinations.

Chapter 2 studies the war service of the overall cohort in terms of broad patterns. It establishes levels of service were proportionately higher and enlistment was more likely to be earlier (and therefore voluntary in nature) than nationally. Fatality rates were also higher than nationally but lower than those claimed for some élite educational institutions. Rates of disability were equivalent to fatality rates and primarily caused by illness rather than direct military action. A largely statistical assessment of the association between a number of characteristics exhibited by the cohort and the probability of service, death and disability indicates a two-tier structure. The likelihood of entry into service being correlated with background whilst the likelihood of death and disability was primarily connected to service.

Chapter 3 analyses the key characteristics and evolution of Colfe's commemoration of the war, the commemorative patterns that emerged and how participation shaped the institutional memory of the war. It establishes one in four men who served were not commemorated. These were largely men who survived and had not served in combat units. This led to perceptions of Colfeian loss and the role and significance of combat being distorted.

Chapter 4 looks specifically at the pre-war migrant experience of the war. It establishes that, despite their migratory status, substantial numbers of men voluntarily served in the war either in the forces of their country of destination or UK domestic forces. It also points to a greater risk of mortality amongst those serving with overseas forces. Those who did not serve appear to have largely continued with their pre-war lives. Leaving aside war fatalities, pre-war migratory status (and consequential population loss to the UK) was largely unchanged by the war.

Chapter 5 analyses the post-war life outcomes of those who served and survived. It finds no widespread evidence of dislocation or disillusionment but rather of stability and successful transition back into civilian life. Life expectancy and marital relationships seem to have been largely unaffected. Most men returned to their pre-war or similar employment (often with the same employer) and remained in the same social class. First-time post-war migratory behavioural patterns differed from those before the war but these changes, too, are found to be compatible with this framework.

Chapter 1: Pre-War Life

As seen in the Introduction, the origins of the concept of a 'lost generation' are placed by the historiography in the universalised war experiences of a social and educational élite and its evolution in terms of 'loss' traced as moving from disorientation to physical absence. This chapter establishes the Colfe's war generation was neither socially nor educationally élite and had already suffered a disproportionate loss in terms of physical absence to outward migration before the war began. Despite the importance ascribed by Wohl to the fiction of Colfe's alumnus Williamson in the development of the concept of the 'lost' generation, it is established in the chapters that follow that the overall Colfeian experience of the war and its aftermath was not that of a 'lost generation'. It is also found this experience was largely shaped by the cohort's demographic profile at the outbreak of the war. In 1914 we find this profile was predominantly youthful and unmarried of mainly lower middle class status with strong roots in south east London. All its members had received an element of education at Colfe's, an endowed grammar school in Lewisham. Although Colfe's offered a high standard of modern secondary education across a broad range of subjects, allowing pupils the opportunity of qualifications leading to good employment opportunities or higher education, it was not (and was not considered to be at the time) an élite institution. Nor were its pupils by any means members of a social élite. Far from it. In some cases their background was very modest indeed and, without the assistance of public funding, many were unlikely to have received the education they did. In generational terms, the cohort could be described in several ways—emerging, aspirational, dynamic and even possibly 'found' in some cases—but 'élite' is not one of them.

The demographic background of the cohort did, however, produce a set of predominantly confident, resilient and cosmopolitan young men who were capable of flourishing in a changing world whether at home or abroad. This is evidenced by the significant numbers that migrated in the pre-war period. Previous studies have been undertaken of pre-war migratory movements to and from the UK at a national level and it is recognised overall outward migration was substantially larger than population depletion caused by war combat.[1] No work has, however, been undertaken to quantify that relationship in terms of men potentially eligible for war service. This chapter does so within the context of the Colfeian cohort and finds between one and a half to twice as many men migrated pre-war as died in the war. Claims for the physical destruction of a generation by virtue of the war do not sit at all easily with substantial levels of earlier outward migration, which had already resulted in a generational lack of physical presence in the UK. It is argued any generational loss of this nature within the Colfeian cohort had already taken place by the time the war began. Potential motivations for migration are examined with a view to seeing what they can tell us about attitudes and conditions in the UK in the pre-war period and, in turn, factors that may have prompted higher

[1] See Introduction.

and earlier than average domestic Colfeian rates of enlistment once the war began. In addition to motivations relating to family and employment prospects, there are discernible themes of a desire for change and also the attraction of an outdoor life, fitness and adventure all of which may well have been influential in the enthusiasm for service.

Demographic background

Geographic and family background

Colfe's was founded in 1652 by Abraham Colfe, Vicar of Lewisham, under the charitable trusteeship of the Leathersellers' Company with a view to educating the children of the Hundred of Blackheath. The Hundred was a more extensive area than might at first be imagined and included the parishes of Greenwich, Deptford, Charlton, Woolwich, Lewisham, Lee and Eltham. The oldest member of the cohort, Victor Bloxham (1880)[2] was born in 1866. By then, the Hundred of Blackheath had become part of the outer suburban ring of London.[3] The youngest member of the cohort, Harold Robson (1911–17) was born in 1901. By the time Harold entered Colfe's, the area had been transformed. The outer suburban ring had grown from a population of around 400,000 (12 per cent of the total London population) in 1861 to 2.7 million (or 37 per cent of the total) by 1911.[4] The catalyst for this growth was the arrival of the railways coupled with a demand for suburban housing from the lower middle and skilled working classes. From around the 1830s in south east London, stations were built in places like Greenwich (1834), Deptford (1836), New Cross (1839) and Lewisham (1849) and later Lee (1866), Brockley (1872), Catford (1892) and Hither Green (1895). Prior to the arrival of the railways these areas had been generally 'rather elegant and moderately populated' but the railways brought intense levels of construction changing the character of many districts.[5] This process is exemplified by Lewisham itself. Lewisham consisted mainly of large houses with extensive gardens occupied by those with means until the 1870s but by the end of the century these had been replaced by streets of houses for lower middle class and skilled working class commuters.[6] Cheap transport together with increased prosperity and shorter working hours made living in the suburbs a viable and attractive proposition for these cohorts. Suburban settlement also in turn created local employment for those who could not afford to commute, further fuelling the expansion.[7] The Colfeian cohort illustrates these population movements well. Whilst 57 per cent were born in what would have been the Hundred of Blackheath, 97 per cent were living there at their date of entry to Colfe's, with a further 2 per cent living in bordering areas in non-metropolitan Kent. Not only were the cohort geographically close,

[2] Born Milton, father hairdresser. Undistinguished school career.
[3] Stephen Inwood, *A History of London* (Macmillan, 1998), p. 572.
[4] Inwood, *A History*, p. 571.
[5] Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (Hamish Hamilton, 1994), pp. 280–81.
[6] London Borough of Lewisham, 'Ideal Homes: A History of South-East London Suburbs' [n.d.] <https://www.ideal-homes.org.uk/lewisham/assets/histories/lewisham> [accessed 10 December 2017].
[7] Inwood, *A History*, pp. 572–73.

they were also close in familial terms—well over one in three have been identified as being related to one another either through blood ties (as brothers or cousins or, in one instance, uncle and nephew) or through later marriage (as men married the sisters of other men within the cohort). The ties within the alumni community were multi-layered, potentially meaning the intensity of war losses were felt more widely than would otherwise be the case. This aspect is explored further in Chapter 3.

Analysing the familial social background of the men concerned in a coherent quantitative manner is difficult given the age spread across the cohort. However, it is possible to draw some broad qualitative conclusions by considering samples of the occupations of heads of household recorded in the enrolment book forming the basis for this study. Samples have been taken from five points: the first ten entries (these were boys who transferred from the old School to the new School and had been first admitted 1884–87); the first ten admissions in the September term 1895 (which by then was when the majority of admissions were taking place); the first ten admissions in the September term 1900; the first ten admissions in the September term 1905; and the first ten admissions in the September term 1910. The results are as follows:

Sample 1 (initial entry): foreman to miller; gas engineer; commercial clerk; commercial clerk; accountant; commercial clerk; builder; corn merchant's clerk; solicitor; builder and contractor.

Sample 2 (1895): shipbuilder's manager; tea exporter; accountant incorporated; congregational minister; matron; laundress; government writer; veterinary surgeon; wine merchant; royal observatory assistant.

Sample 3 (1900): not identified; printer; wholesale perfumier; engineer; merchant; police superintendent; stockbroker; not identified; not identified; insurance inspector.

Sample 4 (1905): sanitary inspector; clerk; electrical engineer; wine and spirit merchant; editor; pawnbroker; not identified; journalist; secretary; accountant.

Sample 5 (1910): technical chemist; assistant secretary; clerk; pianoforte dealer; electrical engineer; commercial traveller; retired army officer; draper; ironmonger; none recorded.

The lower middle class during this period comprised a fairly wide-ranging and evolving occupational grouping (both in terms of skills and remuneration) but Crossick suggests it can be conveniently divided into two main sub-sets: shopkeepers and small businessmen on the one hand and white-collar salaried employees (such as clerks, managers, commercial travelling salesmen, teachers, some shop assistants and possibly some minor professional people) on the other hand.[8] Adopting this approach, the occupational descriptions contained in the samples suggest a pre-dominant but not exclusively lower middle class upbringing for the cohort coupled with an element

[8] Crossick, Emergence p. 12.

of professional and engineering backgrounds. This is a fair reflection of the general impression of the make-up of the cohort given by the data taken as a whole but there are exceptions.

During this period, Colfe's basic business model was that of a non-selective fee-paying school. Under the terms of the original charitable foundation a limited degree of financial support had always been available to prospective pupils. However, it was the emergence of local authority-funded scholarships for places within the existing school system for the secondary education of the academically talented on the basis of competitive examination that facilitated the admission of some boys from very modest backgrounds. Samuel Moule (1903–06) who entered Colfe's aged 12 from Plassy Road Board School in Catford is an example. Samuel's father was a carpenter with eight other children. Frederick Weller (1903–06) also came to Colfe's from Plassy Road aged 12. His father was a fitter. At the 1911 census a 21 year-old Frederick, his parents, four siblings and a boarder were all living in a house comprised of five rooms (excluding any bathroom and other sanitary facilities), which provides a good indicator of the family's general circumstances. Leslie Hewitt (1909–13) was also admitted to Colfe's from Plassy Road aged 12. Leslie's father was a carman. At the 1911 census, Leslie, his parents and three siblings were living in a three-roomed house. John Buck (1909–13) entered Colfe's at the same age and time as Leslie from Pope Street Board School in Bermondsey. His father was a jobbing gardener and at the 1911 census the family of seven was living in a five-roomed house.

Although these are by no means the only examples that can be taken from the dataset, boys such as this were the exception rather than the rule and do not undermine the overall cultural homogeneity of the cohort—largely lower middle class. However, it should also be appreciated local authority funding was not restricted to the very poorest of households—support was also available for others. For instance, Henry Williamson, already encountered, was a LCC Scholar, entering Colfe's aged 12 from Brockley Road Board School. Williamson's father was a bank clerk and would have been considered as being of a very different social standing to the fathers of the four boys referred to above. This is reinforced by the fact that at the 1911 census Henry, his parents and two sisters were living in an eight-roomed house, very different domestic circumstances to those of Moule, Weller, Hewitt and Buck. These funding mechanisms and their purposes together with their impact on education at Colfe's are considered further in the next section of this chapter.

Education at Colfe's

During the cohort's educational life, Colfe's underwent substantial changes. In 1887, after three years or so of negotiations with the Charity Commissioners, a new scheme for governance and the remodelling and rebuilding of the School under the Endowed Schools Act 1869 received Royal

Assent.[9] It expanded significantly from 44 pupils on the completion of the rebuilding of the School in 1890 to a maximum physical capacity of 290 in 1904. Following over a doubling of numbers by the mid-1890s, five additional classrooms and a workshop were built over the course of 1897 and 1898.[10] This facilitated further expansion but it was not simply a case of additional space being made available. The curriculum was considerably broadened and the number of teaching staff increased appropriately. Whilst Latin retained some importance, classics were no longer as central as they had once been. A prospectus in the Colfe's archive dating from between 1890 and 1895 gives details of the curriculum. It included: religious instruction; reading; writing; shorthand; geography; history, English; French; Latin; arithmetic (including book-keeping); geometry; mathematics; chemistry and physics (including experimental teaching); linear and freehand drawing; drilling; and vocal music. Subject to financial resources being available, the application of relevant principles to industry would also be taught. Further, senior boys had the option of being taught German in place of Latin. The stated objective of this curriculum was to provide a liberal and useful education for boys above the age of seven at as a small a charge as possible. The archive contains two further prospectuses believed to be from 1899 and 1902 confirming this curriculum with the addition of woodwork, gymnastics and optional Greek and expressing an intention to prepare boys for the universities, the legal, medical and other professions, the Civil Service and commercial life. Teaching of science was enhanced by the enlargement of the Chemistry laboratory in 1899 and by the equipping of a dedicated Physics classroom in 1907.

As part of this process of development, internal examinations were replaced by externally administered examinations in the form of the Junior and Senior Cambridge Local Examinations as a measurement of academic achievement. The date of adoption of external examinations is difficult to pinpoint and may well have been a gradual process. A relatively small number of candidates had been entered during the 1890s but it was only from 1900 onwards it became a more regular occurrence. Even then it was only shortly before the outbreak of war numbers of school leavers with an external qualification began to significantly start to outstrip those without one, which may well be a reflection of the increasing numbers of LCC scholars admitted on academic merit from 1903 and, in particular, from 1907 onwards. Extracurricular activities were also extended. In addition to the expansion of inter-school football and cricket, swimming was successfully introduced over this period[11] and a sports ground was acquired in Eltham in 1910.[12] The annual school sports day had been established in 1891 but took on a more significant and competitive role as the number of pupils (and available participants) increased.[13] From pre-war issues of the

[9] Leland Duncan, *History of Colfe's Grammar School Lewisham* (The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers, 1910), pp. 175–76.
[10] Duncan, *History*, p. 194.
[11] Duncan, *History*, pp. 197–201.
[12] H. Beardwood, *The History of Colfe's Grammar School 1652–1952* (University of London Press, 1952), p. 127.
[13] Duncan, *History*, pp. 201–02.

Colfeian, it is apparent interest in organised sport continued post-education with a little under one in five alumni recorded as being involved in recreational sport, primarily but not necessarily within alumni teams. The spirit of competition was further enhanced with the creation of a House system in 1909[14] and the establishment of clubs relating to sketching, photography and Natural History for those boys who were less athletically inclined.[15]

The period was one of significant development in secondary education generally. This stemmed from the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission published in 1868 that led to the Endowed Schools Act 1869 under which the Colfe's 1887 scheme was created. The Report envisaged three broad grades of secondary education. First-grade schools would cater for the children of the upper-middle and professional classes with a primary focus on the Classics. Second-grade education would be directed at the children of the mercantile and trading classes and concentrate on subjects of potential practical use in business such as English, mathematics, science and modern languages. Third-grade education would primarily focus on reading, writing and arithmetic for the children of smaller tenant farmers, small tradesmen and superior artisans.[16] No secondary education was envisaged for children below this social class. It is worthwhile taking a moment to consider where Colfe's (described by the Commission as a 'good and useful' school)[17] was positioned within this proposed hierarchy following the adoption of the 1887 scheme. As adopted, the scheme retained the teaching of Latin as a core subject and extended the upper age limit of pupils to 18—this was intended to ensure university was an available option to those pupils who desired it. These were both characteristics of first-grade secondary education but, in terms of the social class of pupil intake and the curriculum otherwise adopted, a Colfe's education was much more within the second strata. It is apparent the core status of Latin and an upper age limit of 18 did not form part of the draft scheme prepared and issued by the Charity Commissioners but were eventually included after consultation and discussions with stakeholders including the Leathersellers' Company, the relevant local authority (by that time, the Lewisham Vestry), local dignitaries and alumni.[18] This indicates quite clearly the Commission's stratification model was not rigidly applied in all cases and its application in a particular instance could be the result of a negotiated outcome. It is also reasonable to assume that, other than the enhanced role of Latin, the broadened Colfe's curriculum was primarily in a form proposed by the Charity Commissioners.

A more useful perspective from which to obtain some understanding of Colfe's scholastic status in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is freedom from or subjection to control under the Endowed Schools Act 1869 and the legislation which followed. Public schools were characterised

[14] Duncan, *History*, p. 197.
[15] Duncan, *History*, pp. 204–05.
[16] Schools Inquiry Commission, *Report* vol. 1 (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1868), pp. 16–21. See also Brian Simon, *The State and Educational Change: Essays in the History of Education and Pedagogy* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1994), pp. 36–38.
[17] Commission *Report*, pp. 258–59.
[18] Duncan, *History*, pp. 175–76.

by their membership of the Headmasters' Conference and independence from direct governmental control and supervision in that they existed outside the Commission's stratification model.[19] Indeed, some locally-endowed grammar schools used the mechanisms provided by the 1869 Act to achieve public school status and to devolve their historic local responsibilities to newly-formed schools of lower status—more evidence, if it were needed that the Commission's stratification model was not always rigidly imposed.[20] Colfe's did not follow this course. It was not (and was not considered to be)[21] a public school during this period, remaining an endowed grammar school primarily serving the local area. This is important to bear in mind when considering its relationship with the historiography relating to an apparently disproportionately heavy burden of war losses being borne by privileged groups.

One other notable consequence arising from the 1887 scheme was the abolition of the power of the vestries of the parishes within the Hundred of Blackheath to select scholars (known as foundation scholars) for a free education under the original terms of the School's endowment. It was replaced by a new system of foundation scholarships to be awarded in part to boys within the School as a reward for good work and in part to promising boys in elementary schools.[22] The year following the completion of the rebuilding of the School public funding of scholarships also started to make an appearance. A total of 224 publicly-funded scholars have been identified as admitted over the period1891–1913. Table 1.1 shows the annual distribution and the proportion of the intake they constituted. This information is taken from the enrolment book where the individuals concerned were marked as either 'LPS' (standing for Lewisham Parish Scholar—these markings appear in relation to two entrants in 1897 and three entrants in 1898 only)—or 'LCCS' or 'LCS' or 'LCC' (all standing for LCC Scholar). A small number of pupils were also admitted from All Saints Boys Orphanage during this period (three in 1899, four in 1900, two in in each year 1901-05 and one in each year 1906-08). This was presumably with some form of financial support but no further details are available. Exact details of how the public-funding mechanisms operated are not known. In or around 1894, the technical education board of the LCC, under the chairmanship of Sidney Webb, had introduced a limited scholarship scheme (partly funded by money raised by a tax on alcohol known colloquially as 'whisky money')[23] in London to enable 800 children a year aged

[19] Simon, *State and Educational Change*, p. 43.
[20] As to this process and the establishment of independence see Brian Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement 1870–1920* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1965), pp. 97–108.
[21] John Raymond De Symons Honey, *Tom Brown's Universe: The Development of the Victorian Public School* (Millington Books, 1977) Tables 4, 5.
[22] Duncan, *History*, p.176.
[23] For a more detailed analysis of the funding arrangements see A. V. Judges, 'The Educational Influence of the Webbs', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 10. No. 1 (1961), pp. 33–48 (pp. 38–39).

between 11 and 13 (selected by competitive examination from local-authority run elementary schools) to benefit from two to five years of further education.[24]

Table 1.1. Publicly-funded scholars 1891–1913.

Year	Total Intake	Number of Scholars	Proportion of Scholars (%)
1891	25	1	4.0
1892	23	1	4.3
1893	23	1	4.3
1894	28	3	10.7
1895	21	0	0.0
1896	45	5	11.1
1897	63	9	14.3
1898	69	3	4.4
1899	79	1	1.3
1900	73	0	0.0
1901	63	0	0.0
1902	77	0	0.0
1903	77	11	14.30
1904	84	2	2.4
1905	73	13	17.8
1906	68	3	4.4
1907	77	26	33.8
1908	79	30	38.0
1909	77	19	24.7
1910	67	21	31.3
1911	66	30	45.5
1912	57	20	35.1
1913	65	25	38.5

Source: Colfe's School Roll Book January 1884–April 1928.

The power to give assistance of this nature was further enhanced by the Education Act 1902. The endowed secondary schools are recognised as having been beneficiaries of the scheme[25] and much of the scholar entry to the Colfe's during the period from 1894–1906 is likely to have come from this source albeit on a somewhat ad hoc basis. There is a note in the enrolment book at the

[24] Sidney Webb, *London Education* (Longmans Green, 1904), pp. 8, 25–26. At this stage, the purpose was to maximise the contribution of those with the most to offer society by receiving further education, not secondary education for all: see Webb, p.10; Simon, *Education and Labour*, p. 204.
[25] Judges, p. 39.

end of the admissions for 1906 stating ‘Not admitted 7 LCCS and 3 Probationer Scholars—all vacancies filled’. This suggests, at least until then, the practice was to allocate available places to private fee-paying pupils first and only admit publicly-funded scholars to the extent there was a shortfall in those numbers.

Table 1.1 shows from 1907 onwards, the profile of scholar admission underwent a dramatic change and for the remainder of the pre-war period publicly-funded scholars constituted on average over a third of the annual intake. This coincided with the passing of regulations facilitating an increased grant to secondary schools prepared to offer 25 per cent of their places free to pupils coming from elementary schools.[26] The School histories give the impression public funding did not play a significant part during this period.[27] This is, however, clearly not the case. Nor does it accord with the (fictionalised) account by Williamson (a 1907 entrant) of his scholarship examination and interview with a LCC official in *Donkey Boy*.[28] Whatever the precise workings of the funding model, the important point is large numbers of academically able boys from relatively modest backgrounds were given an opportunity to enjoy a subsidised secondary education at Colfe’s of a quality and breadth that would probably not otherwise have been available to them. Some would not make the most of this opportunity but many would, entering employment (and ultimately achieving levels of social standing) that might not otherwise have been open to them. In this sense, especially given the numbers involved significantly outstrip those of the cohort who ultimately died in the war, it could be argued that there are a strong elements of this being a ‘found’ rather than a ‘lost’ generation.

It is interesting not all boys marked as entering Colfe’s from local authority-run elementary schools (known as ‘board schools’ having been originally established under the auspices of the London School Board) are denoted as scholars. In all there were a minimum of 328 (or approximately one in four of the overall cohort) who entered Colfe’s from this source.[29] This suggests there were around a third of board school attendees entering Colfe’s whose parents had chosen to take advantage of the elementary education available there but who had the ability to pay for a private secondary education. This is not the only point of interest arising from these significant levels of early education at board schools. Stephen Heathorn has explored the significance of reading books used widely in local authority-run elementary schools in shaping attitudes of children especially in relation to race, citizenship and empire.[30] His study is specifically placed in the context

[26] See further Simon, *Education and Labour*, pp. 270–73. Although the intention was to open up secondary education to all, it has been argued the effect was to reinforce a selective system: Simon *Education and Labour*, p. 246.
[27] See, in particular, Beardwood, p. 125.
[28] Henry Williamson, *Donkey Boy*, (Macdonald, 1984), pp. 383–84, 391–95, 399.
[29] It should be noted that previous schooling was only consistently recorded in the enrolment book from the autumn term of 1895 onwards.
[30] Stephen J. Heathorn, *For Home, Country, and Race: Constructing Gender, Class, and Englishness in the Elementary School, 1880–1914*, Studies in Gender and History (Toronto University Press, 2000), pp. 7–21, 109–14.

of the working class but its findings are equally capable of application to pupils from other backgrounds. We will return to this in two settings as the thesis develops. The first is the potential role of the retention of a strong sense of British cultural identity in forming pre- and post-war migratory patterns. The second is the part played by duties relating to citizenship in the enlistment patterns displayed by the Colfe's cohort in terms of war service.

The balance of the Colfe's cohort (some of whom were already in secondary education) came from a combination of preparatory, church, other grammar and private (including some public) schools and private tutors. It is worth noting at this juncture that one consequence of the growth in overall pupil numbers taking place from the mid-to-late1890s is the age profile of the cohort is heavily weighted towards youth with about 75 per cent of the cohort being 29 or younger at the outbreak of war.

The length of time spent at Colfe's by pupils and, consequently, the ages at which they joined and left varied widely. For Clarence Prichard it was less than a term. He attended Colfe's aged 14 for two months in 1894 on a temporary basis from boarding at Christ's Hospital School at around the time of his father's death, presumably for compassionate reasons. At the other extreme, Malcolm Moffatt entered the School aged 7 in 1903, leaving eleven years later in July 1914 aged 18—this was the maximum length of time permitted according to the prospectuses referred to earlier. Examples such as this are, though, the exception. The average age at entry to Colfe's was about 11 and the average age of departure about 15, resulting in an average length of time spent at Colfe's of just under four years. Most of the cohort (a little over two-thirds) attended for between two and five years with the distribution of the length of attendance being spread fairly evenly over each of the four periods concerned. A further one in five attended for a period of either one year or six years. In general terms, there is a sense the length of time spent at school increased as the first decade of the twentieth century progressed, perhaps another reflection of the growing importance being attached to secondary education generally. This apart, the factors determining the length of time a boy spent at Colfe's are diverse and numerous and, ultimately, a reflection of individual circumstances. For some, a Colfe's education was a stepping stone to continuing education elsewhere. For others, entry to Colfe's represented an opportunity to take advantage of a subsidised secondary education. For some, financial pressures or other family circumstances (perhaps parental death or a move to or from the locality) led to entry to or departure from Colfe's.

There was no long-standing military tradition at Colfe's. In particular there was no formal pre-war Cadet Force although two companies of about one hundred boys each had started to drill at the Blackheath headquarters of the West Kent Yeomanry in 1905, where some instruction in musketry had been provided. A rifle club affiliated to the National Rifle Association was subsequently formed in 1907 from these companies. 1907 also saw nineteen boys attend a camp under canvas at Bisley, the first of what, in the years leading up to the war, would be regular annual attendance at this event attended by up to forty rival school teams involving drilling and competitive shooting. In

1908, a rifle range was erected at school and a grant of six Martini rifles was received from the National Rifle Association. The detachment of twenty-two boys who went to Bisley Camp that year apparently gave 'a good account of themselves.[31] Eleven boys attended the Camp in 1912, seven of whom obtained a newly-introduced National Rifle Association 'Lord Cheylesmore' certificate issued to those who passed tests on miniature ranges and fired on the open range. One pupil, John Bruster (1909–12), achieved 18th position in the Camp list.[32] The 1914 Camp was cancelled due to the imminent outbreak of war but not before Colfe's and another school, Owen's, who had not received notification in time, had arrived. A long weekend with the camp and shooting ranges to themselves ensued.[33] Four pupils, after hearing loud cheering at Pirbright camp about a mile away, stole away from Bisley camp on the evening of 2 August and visited 1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards who were in the process of mobilisation, spending time with some Sergeants who provided souvenirs in the way of badges and buttons.

Mortality in immediate pre-war period

There was a small degree of pre-war mortality with 38 individuals from the cohort dying prior to the outbreak of the war, a little under 3 per cent of the total cohort. The cause of death is not known in many of those cases but around one in five are recorded as being attributable to tuberculosis, a disease which continued to account for a degree of mortality into the post-war period. Age at death ranged from 12 to 34 although the vast majority were under 25 when they died. As already noted though, the age profile of the cohort is heavily weighted towards youth. The low headline rate of pre-war death could be interpreted as indicating a relatively fit and healthy cohort. This would not be particularly surprising in the light of the social background of those concerned but, given the small size of the sample, it is difficult generally to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data.[34] One point of interest that does arise is the high proportion of men who died abroad or of a disease contracted abroad—approaching one in four. A detailed analysis of pre-war migration patterns follows later in this chapter but for present purposes it is sufficient to note some causes of death abroad could be attributed to environment.[35]

Occupation and social class in immediate pre-war period

For the purposes of several aspects of this thesis, the immediate pre-war period is one of the three key reference points for assessing occupation and class of those of the cohort living and working in England and Wales—the immediate post-war period and 1939 are the others and are subject to

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[31] Duncan, *History*, p. 203.
[32] *Colfensia* 1913 (Issue no. 18), p. 4.
[33] *Colfensia* 1915 (Issue no. 22), p. 9.
[34] See Winter, *Great War*, pp. 110–15 for an analysis indicating that professional and white-collar workers had lower mortality levels than the national average of the population as a whole in the years leading up to the war.
[35] E.g., Henry Sloley (1891–93) died as an accountant in South Africa 1903 aged 25 (typhoid); Jack Bromiley (1891–96) died as a marine engineer in Brazil aged 23 in1904 (yellow fever); Francis Bagnall (1891–95) died as Crown Agents' assistant treasurer in Nigeria aged 27 (blackwater fever).

detailed analysis in Chapter 5. As to the detail of the methodology adopted for the purposes of this exercise see further the Introduction. It should be emphasised the analysis which follows is restricted to those who were living in England and Wales immediately prior to the war. Occupations are recorded in the supporting database where known for those living elsewhere in the UK or abroad but there is no reliable and easily-accessible source that can be used to obtain this information systematically. There is also no allocation of social class to these individuals—the available comparative classification tools are limited to England and Wales. Just over 16 per cent of the cohort remaining alive have been positively identified as living outside the UK immediately pre-war—this excludes a small number of men who had migrated but returned. It has also not been possible to identify the occupation or location of a similar proportion of the cohort. It is possible some of these, too, may have been abroad. Others may have been living in the UK but in Scotland or Ireland and, therefore, outside the scope of the 1911 census of England and Wales, which is the primary source of data for this particular reference point. Equally some living in England and Wales may not have had their details returned (either through choice, indolence, indifference or otherwise) or may have completed returns in a different name or simply not been captured by the Ancestry search engine. Of the remaining two-thirds or so of the cohort who were alive a little over a 100 were still in education or training, with the immediate pre-war identified working population of the cohort in England and Wales amounting to 765. The allocation by social class of these men appears in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2. Pre-war social class of Colfeian working population.

Social Class	Number
I	69
II	556
III	132
IV	8
V	0
Total	**765**

The resulting class profile is striking. Just over 80 per cent of the working population were categorised as being in the first and second tiers of the social strata with those men falling within Social Class II comprising over 70 per cent of the working population, representing a substantial bias towards the lower middle class. Those within Social Class I consisted largely of professional men; medical doctors, dentists, architects, clergymen, lawyers, chartered accountants, consulting engineers and the like. There is no representation of unskilled workers and minimal representation of the partially-skilled which is unsurprising amongst a cohort of men who had completed some degree of secondary education. Skilled workers comprised around 17 per cent of the working

population across a variety of occupations although non-professional engineers accounted for over one in three of this grouping. Those within this strata who might conceivably be described as shop assistants constituted less than 2 per cent of the overall working population. Of those comprising Social Class II, two-thirds were described as clerks. This equates to approximately one in two of the total working population. Again, the completion of a secondary education is likely to have been relevant. Family background may also have been a factor, with sons of clerks following their fathers into the same type of employment, perhaps even with the same employer.[36] It is, however, clear that geographical factors were also important. By 1911 clerks comprised one in ten of the male working population of London and numbered nearly 141,000.[37] It was a common occupation in the country's capital city in the immediate pre-war period. The potential relationship between the class profile of the cohort and the preponderance of clerical occupations on the one hand and patterns of high and early enlistment into military service on the other is explored further in Chapter 2.

Marital status in immediate pre-war period

It has been possible to identify the marital status of most (around 94 per cent) of the cohort. As to the methodology adopted for this purpose see the Introduction. Immediately before the outbreak of war just under one in five of the men in the cohort have been identified as married. This might appear to be a relatively low proportion. We know already the age profile of the cohort is weighted towards youth but, even so, by 1914 well-over two-thirds of the cohort were aged 20 or more and, it could be assumed, approaching marriageable age. Further, at that point, over 40 per cent of the cohort were aged 25 or more. Compared with an identified pre-war marriage rate of less than half that amount, this points to a pattern of relatively late marriage. This accords with the male Singulate Mean Ages at Marriage (an indicator of average age at marriage) of around 28 which have been calculated by the Populations Past project from the 1911 census returns for Lewisham and the immediately surrounding areas based forming the catchment area for Colfe's.[38] Details of the precise figure for each individual registration sub-district are set out in Table 1.3.

[36] As to the significance of a secondary education in securing employment as a clerk in London at this time and the influence of patronage in the financial sector see further Michael Heller, *London Clerical Workers, 1880–1914 : Development of the Labour Market*, Perspectives in Economic and Social History, 8 (Pickering & Chatto, 2011) pp. 147–51.
[37] Heller, p. 1.
[38] Reid, A.M., Arulanantham, S.J., Day, J.D., Garrett, E.M., Jaadla, H., Lucas-Smith, M., 'Populations Past: Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population: Age at Marriage (Male) 1911' 2018 <https://www.populationspast.org/m_smam/1911/#5.33/53.448/-1.177> [accessed 10 November 2023] which also includes on the Overview page an explanation of the Singulate Mean Ages at Marriage methodology.

Table 1.3. Singulate mean ages of marriage in Lewisham and surrounding area in 1911.

Registration Sub-District	Singulate Mean Age at Marriage
Charlton	28.99
Deptford East	27.28
Deptford South	28.67
Eltham	27.77
Greenwich East	27.61
Greenwich West	28.2
Lee	27.99
Lewisham	27.46
Woolwich	28.91

Source: Populations Past—Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population: Age at Marriage (Male) 1911 https://www.populationspast.org/.

Given these statistics, a trend within the Colfeian dataset towards men marrying for the first time in their late 20s is in keeping with local marital patterns generally.

Not every man married. Hajnal has estimated the proportion of the male population of England and Wales aged 35–64 in 1939 ever married was in the range of 86–90 per cent.[39] This age bracket includes almost all those comprised in the Colfe's dataset. Initial analysis of the Colfe's data appears to be at odds with this estimate suggesting around one in five men did not marry. This calculation does, however include the men whose opportunity to marry was curtailed by death in the First World War—an element of premature death is to be expected in any cohort but the circumstances of the war were an exceptional factor. If these men are omitted from the calculation, the proportion reduces to levels in accordance with Hajnal's estimates. Whilst not intended as a precise statistical comparison (amongst other matters it takes no account of migratory factors), this indicates levels of non-marriage amongst the Colfeian cohort were probably not out of step with norms within the general population. Leaving aside loss of opportunity to marry through early death, there were any number of potential reasons why a man might not marry, some related to choice and some relating to circumstance and some to a combination of both. Homosexuality is a possible factor but one not easily to quantifiable with any certainty as, for the vast majority of these men, homosexual activity was illegal in the UK for most if not all of their lives.

[39] J. Hajnal, 'Aspects of Recent Trends in Marriage in England and Wales', *Population Studies*, 1.1 (1947), 72–98 (Table 1).

Military service in immediate pre-war period

Probably not unusually for a local endowed grammar (rather than public) school, Colfe's had no long-standing tradition of entry into the armed services as a career choice. Only fourteen men in the cohort for whom there is firm evidence of service in the war have been identified as pre-war regulars. Of these, seven were commissioned or in training for a commission from the outset, four in the navy and three in the army. There is a common thread throughout all seven men of relatively modest backgrounds and academic and/or technical ability, indicating their commissions were obtained very much on merit. Of the enlisted men, five served in the navy and two in the army. The latter were both commissioned during the course of the war. Interestingly, all the pre-war regulars who served survived the hostilities although the preponderance of naval service was undoubtedly a factor in this.[40]

There was more of a history of pre-enlistment voluntary service amongst School alumni. A small amount of voluntary service in the Second African War has been identified. Two men from the cohort served in a professional capacity, Walter Kidner (1890–94)[41] as a marine engineer and William Milton (1890–92)[42] as a civilian medical officer. The four others, James Hartmann (1887–88),[43] Herbert Chapman (1888–89),[44] Hugh Wood (1892–95)[45] and Harry Allenberg (1893–94)[46] enlisted in the ranks. Hugh was commissioned but died in service as a result of a liver abscess. Stanley Greathead (1897–99)[47] volunteered but was discharged within seven days of enlistment. As already touched upon, although there was a reasonably significant degree of pupil engagement in organised quasi-military activities from the middle of the 1900s, Colfe's did not have a recognised OTC in the pre-war period. More than 40 alumni have, however, been identified as serving in pre-war OTCs. Around 60 per cent of this service arose when boys moved from Colfe's to other schools. The balance of the service took place within university OTCs, primarily at London University. The numbers involved, though, are relatively small—university entrance whilst not unknown was not particularly common during this period and, more often than not, those who became eligible chose (presumably mainly for financial reasons) instead to enter into employment. Significantly more men, around 120, have been identified as serving in pre-war volunteer forces of one form or another. Around one in five of these were migrants and serving in volunteer units scattered around the world from Canada to the West Indies to Africa to India to Malaya to Australasia. The balance served domestically. The territorial infantry battalions of the London Regiment (in particular the London Rifle Brigade) and their pre-Haldane reform predecessor units,

[40] See Introduction.
[41] Born 1879 Lewisham, father grocer. Undistinguished school career.
[42] Born 1876 Portsea, father engineer. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[43] Born 1877 Lewisham, father wine merchant. Undistinguished school career.
[44] Born 1877 Holloway, father warehouseman. Undistinguished school career.
[45] Born 1879 Kensington, father upholsterer. Undistinguished school career.
[46] Born 1880 Hampstead, father's occupation not known. Undistinguished school career.
[47] Born 1882 Medway, father solicitor. Undistinguished school career.

the West Kent Yeomanry and the HAC were all popular but by no means the only destinations. It should be noted there is a degree of fluidity between these figures and the forms of service they represent. For example some men progressed from OTCs to domestic units, some moved from old volunteer units to new territorial units and some moved from domestic units to units abroad.

There is little firm evidence as to motives for pre-war voluntary service amongst the cohort and these will, in any event, have differed from individual to individual. For some, participation in uniformed military activity will have been a sufficient attraction. Herbert Chapman, the South African veteran mentioned above, was serving with the Post Office Rifles from at least 1905 and subsequently with 16th (Queen's Westminster Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment. Having been appointed Sergeant in 1908, he clearly had a liking and aptitude for military life. Chapman was mobilised from employment as a Civil Servant with the Post Office Savings Bank at the age of 37 on 5 August 1914 and served on the Western Front from November of that year until December 1915 when he was invalided back to the UK with what appears to have been trench fever. His territorial engagement expired in March 1916 (by which time he was approaching 39) and, although invited to, he declined to re-engage and returned to his pre-war employment. For others, the opportunity to further refine the shooting skills they had developed at school may have been a significant factor. Horsemanship may have been relevant as well—one in five domestic volunteers served in yeomanry or cavalry units. The opportunities presented for recreational sport and other activities more generally are also likely to have been influential. Sporting and social events were identified by McCartney as major factors in recruitment to the territorial units comprised in her study.[48] Certainly, we know Archibald Costello (1901–03),[49] a keen pre-war sportsman who played football and cricket for Old Colfeians and water polo for Lewisham Swimming Club, also played cricket for his pre-war volunteer unit, the HAC. The fear of existential threats from other countries may, of course, also have played a part but there is little in the way of direct evidence as to this.

Pre-war Migration

Migratory background

Pre-war migration did not begin with the generation forming the basis of this study, 43 of whom have been identified as being born abroad. This suggests their parents had already engaged in migratory behaviour either outwards from or inwards to the UK or, perhaps, both. Perhaps unsurprisingly, countries of birth included most parts of the British Empire—British colonies and dominions such as Australia, Canada, India, Malaya, New Zealand, the West Indies and South Africa and also the USA. However, they also included continental Europe (Belgium, France and Germany), Russia and, less predictably, China, Japan and South America (Argentina and Brazil). Further, 29 of the Colfe's cohort have been identified as second-generation immigrants, with one or

[48] McCartney, pp. 19–20.
[49] Born 1891 Greenwich, father clerk. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.

both of their parents having been born abroad. Although the numbers are not large, when combined with those born abroad, this means the families of around 5 per cent of the total cohort had been involved in some form of migratory behaviour before they were born. In terms of second-generation immigrants, it is worth noting in approaching two-thirds of the families concerned one or both of the parents concerned were of German heritage. This is not necessarily as unexpected as might be thought. There were significant numbers of German nationals who settled in London in the nineteenth century[50] and, by 1911, there was a distinct expatriate community in south east London including close to Lewisham in Forest Hill and Camberwell.[51] The impact of the war on second-generation migrant Colfeians and, in particular, patterns of service within that community is considered further in Chapter 2. As has already been seen, 43 per cent of the cohort generally had been born outside the original Hundred of Blackheath. Of these, 49 per cent had been born in other London Boroughs and 43 per cent elsewhere in the UK. There had, therefore, been a significant amount of in-country movement for many before settling in the Lewisham area either internally within London as part of the drift towards the developing outer suburban ring identified earlier or as part of a more general concentration of the country's population in the capital.[52] The cohort did not, therefore, come from quite as parochial or insular a background as might initially be thought.

Outward migration

The overall number of identified incidences of outward pre-war migrancy is 229.[53] As to the methodology used to calculate this figure see the Introduction. For reasons discussed there, this should be treated as a minimum figure. Even so, it represents 17 per cent of the overall cohort. This is a significant proportion—to put it in perspective within this study, total Colfeian fatalities in the First World War amounted to about 10 per cent of the cohort.[54] The fact the number is high is not surprising. The pre-war period is established as one of very significant male and female migratory movement to and from the UK. Whilst there is some debate about the exact figures involved, they were undoubtedly large. It has also been recognised that overall outward pre-war migration substantially outstripped male population depletion caused by military losses during the war.[55] This study establishes, in the specific context of a male cohort potentially eligible for war service, between one and a half and twice as many men had migrated from the UK prior to the war

[50] They were by far the largest recorded foreign-born population in the censuses carried out in England and Wales in the second half of the nineteenth century until overtaken by a combined Russia, Poland, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania in the 1901 census: see Carrier and Jeffrey, Table 14.
[51] Panikos Panayi, *Migrant City: A New History of London* (Yale University Press, 2022), pp. 16, 51.
[52] As to these national movements see further Porter, p. 259.
[53] It should be noted that this analysis excludes six foreign nationals(three from the US, 1 French, 1 German and 1 Canadian) who returned to their country of origin after schooling.
[54] It is also broadly equivalent to the average rates of war loss that have been attributed to alumni of élite schools: see Introduction.
[55] See Introduction.

as were killed during the course of it.[56] It is clear, in terms of generational depletion of the cohort, pre-war migration was numerically far more impactful than war deaths. Further, it is difficult to see how, if something that could be categorised as a generational loss in terms of physical absence had already taken place by the time the war began, it was possible for a further generational loss of that nature to occur by reason of the war. It is true absence through death and absence as a result of migration have differing qualities. In particular, migration is not necessarily permanent. In an era before widespread international travel and communication, it is, however, likely to have been perceived as having a strong sense of finality in terms of loss of physical contact, especially by those who remained behind. In fact, we will see in Chapter 4 only nine pre-war migrants had returned to the UK by the time the war began. Levels of pre-war migration of this nature run counter to any reality of the hypothesis of a 'lost' war generation based on physical lack of presence.

The amount of Colfeian migration taking place before the beginning of the twentieth century seems to have been very limited. There are only four evidenced instances.[57] Evidenced migration became more regular but remained at low levels during the period 1900–1904 but would not reach double digits until 1905 after which there is a pattern of reasonably steady growth. Table 1.4 shows the numbers of evidenced pre-war migrants from 1900 onwards by year. The discrepancy between this total and the overall number of identified incidences of outward pre-war migrancy of 229 results from the four pre-1900 migrants and a further twelve men for whom it has not proved possible to identify a precise year of pre-war migrancy. Migration from 1905 onwards represents approaching 80 per cent of the total evidenced pre-war migration. Clearly, though, the peak years were from 1910 onwards, which account for over two-thirds of the post-1904 migration. This is broadly in line with the trend identified by Constantine[58] and confirms a pattern of rapidly expanding migratory movement over the twentieth century pre-war years. The odd year out is 1912 which saw a reduction of about a third when compared with the years immediately preceding and following. One possible explanation for this is the sinking of the Titanic in April resulted in a temporary loss of confidence in the safety of ocean-going travel. It can be seen migration continued at significant levels in 1914 with 18 instances of migration recorded prior to the outbreak of war—in the absence of hostilities it is reasonable to assume 1914 would have seen much the same levels of migration as 1913.

[56] Many of these migrants served in the war either with British forces or those of their destination country and around 10 per cent of these would die so there is an element of overlap between the two datasets. This does not, however, affect the validity of the basic argument.
[57] John Ashworth (1888–89) born 1877 to Australia by 1891. Percy Robinson (1882–84) born 1870 to Canada 1892. Albert Knowles (1883–88) born 1875 to South Africa 1897. Frank Ironside (1896–97) born 1880 to Canada 1899.
[58] See Introduction.

Table 1.4. Pre-war migrants by year from 1900.

Year	Number of Migrants
1900	2
1901	9
1902	2
1903	7
1904	9
1905	13
1906	10
1907	10
1908	13
1909	13
1910	22
1911	31
1912	21
1913	33
1914 (part)	18
Total	**213**

Carrothers asserts the onset of war caused emigration to cease.[59] This is an oversimplification. Winter prefers to put it slightly less baldly, talking about out-migration being ‘reduced to a trickle’ or ‘virtually’ ceasing.[60] Figures referred to by Constantine put the average annual net outward emigration to non-European destinations at 6,606 for the period from 1915–1919.[61] There were six outward Colfeian migrants over the course of the war, which supports the idea of reduction to a ‘trickle’.[62] Some of the outward migrants left towards the end of 1914 or early in 1915 to pursue employment abroad, although this is no more than speculation possibly on the assumption the war would be over shortly and there was little point in disrupting their career plans. Seymour Mills (1903–11) is one of these.[63] He sailed for India in November 1914 aged 20 to take up the post of Assistant Superintendent in the Indian Police. There is no direct evidence those who left in 1915 did so to avoid the prospect of military service. The only instance where there is any element of

[59] Carrothers, p. 256.
[60] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 268–69
[61] Constantine, *Oxford History vol IV*, p. 165.
[62] Although, as will be seen in Chapter 4, there would be increased levels of inward migration as men returned to enlist.
[63] Born 1894 Lewisham, father civil service clerk. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.

doubt at all is Ferguson Camroux (1890–92).[64] He arrived in New York in early July 1915 aged 36 (and so towards the upper age limit for service in any event) described as an accountant. However, there are no obvious records for him after that anywhere apart from a registration form for the USA draft completed in December 1918, which described him as unemployed. The timing of his move might give rise to suspicion but it can be no more than that. Table 1.5 sets outs out the main countries of initial destination of pre-war migrants.

Table 1.5. Main countries of initial pre-war migrant destination.

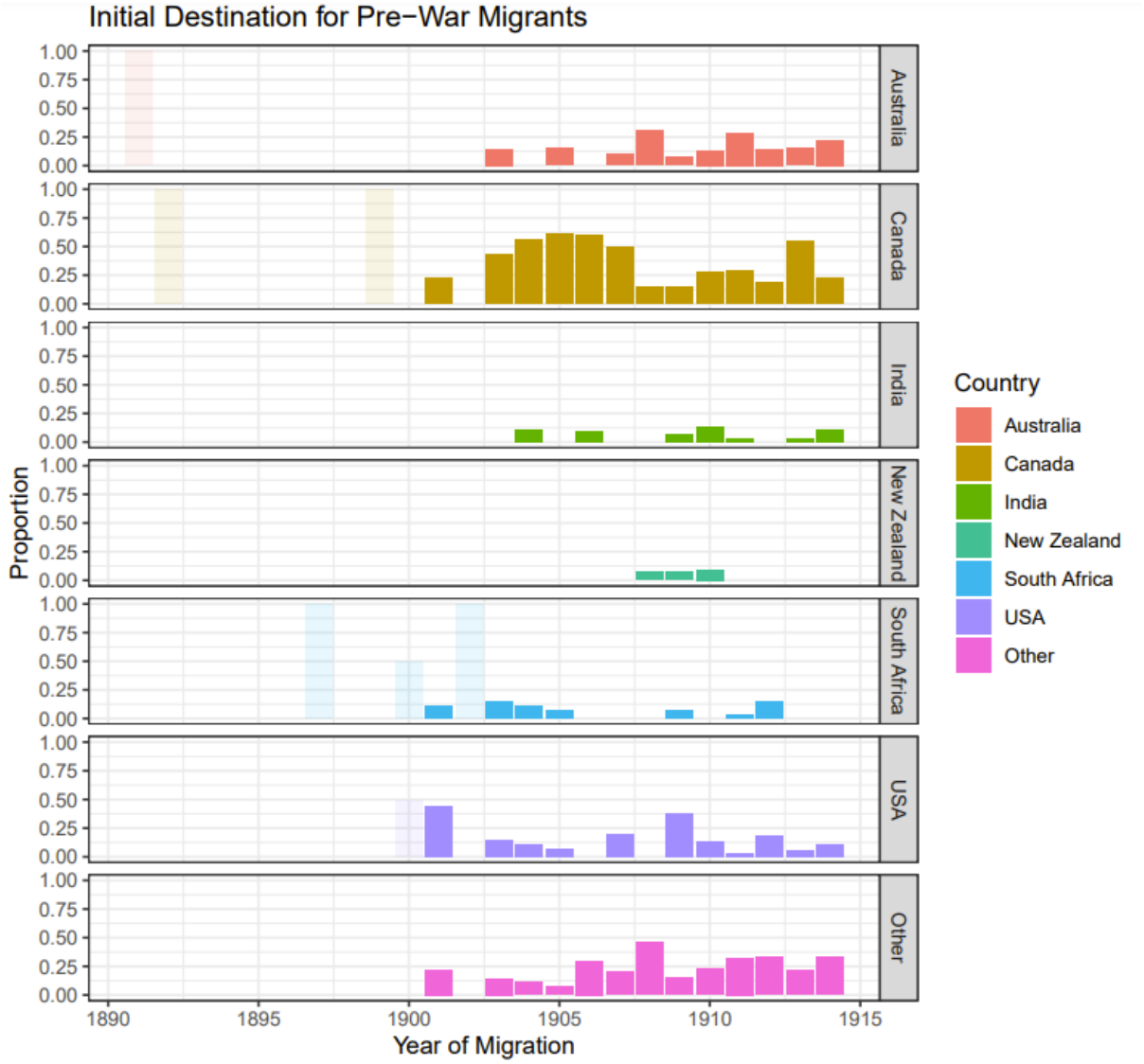
Country	Number of Migrants
Canada	77
Australia and New Zealand	38
USA	29
South Africa	13
India	10

These five countries Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the USA, South Africa and India represent the initial destination for around 75 per cent of the pre-war migrants. Their identity is, perhaps, unsurprising—all either part of the British Empire or with a degree of British heritage. Nearly three-quarters (41) of the balance were in one or other of three main areas of representation: Latin America; Africa (including the Middle East); and South East Asia. Given Britain's traditional colonial spheres of influence, Africa and South East Asia are reasonably predictable. Latin America (and Argentina in particular with 8 identified migrants) less so but in these years there were very significant trading relationships with countries in this region.[65] As already seen, migration was not only a rapidly expanding phenomenon in the early twentieth century but also an evolving one. Table 1.5 shows the overall popularity of the primary initial destinations in absolute terms but takes no account of relative popularity at any given point in time. Figure 1.1 rectifies this by depicting both the distribution of the proportion of annual migration and the initial country of destination against a timeline. There are two points to bear in mind when interpreting this histogram. The first is the statistics for New Zealand have been isolated from those for Australia. Carrothers' analysis and Table 1.5 are based on the combined figures but it is instructive to split them here if only to highlight how relatively small the amount of pre-war migration to New Zealand was. The second is, until the second part of the initial decade, some of the numbers involved were very small. By way of illustration in 1900 there are only two evidenced migrants, one who went to the USA and the other to South Africa each of whom represents a 50

[64] Born 1878 Bromley, father merchant. Undistinguished school career. One of four Colfeian brothers who all settled in North America.
[65] As to the concept of an 'informal empire' founded upon trade and commerce in this region see Wm. M. Brown, 'Introduction', in *Oxford History of the British Empire Vol IV*, ed. by Brown and Louis, pp. 1–46 (p. 40).

per cent proportion of that year's migrancy. This potentially distorts the visual impact of the pattern and although the relevant blocks have been included they have only been included faintly. The same principle, for example, applies to 1902 where there are also only two recorded migrants both of whom went to South Africa. Here, strictly, 100 per cent of that year's migrancy was to South Africa and, again, the block is only included faintly.

FIG. 1.1. Initial destination of pre-war migrants by year.



Constantine suggests in the 1880s and 1890s about two-thirds of migrants from the UK had departed to the USA.[66] In terms of the twentieth century, statistics collated by Carrothers show, in broad terms during 1900–04 the USA was the main destination for migrants from the UK but from 1905 onwards (with the exception of 1909) the number of migrants to Canada exceeded that to the USA.[67] These statistics also show migration to Australia and New Zealand was relatively negligible until 1907, when it started to increase—something Carrothers attributes to a change in Australian

[66] Constantine, *Oxford History vol IV*, p.167.
[67] Carrothers, p. 246, App. IX.

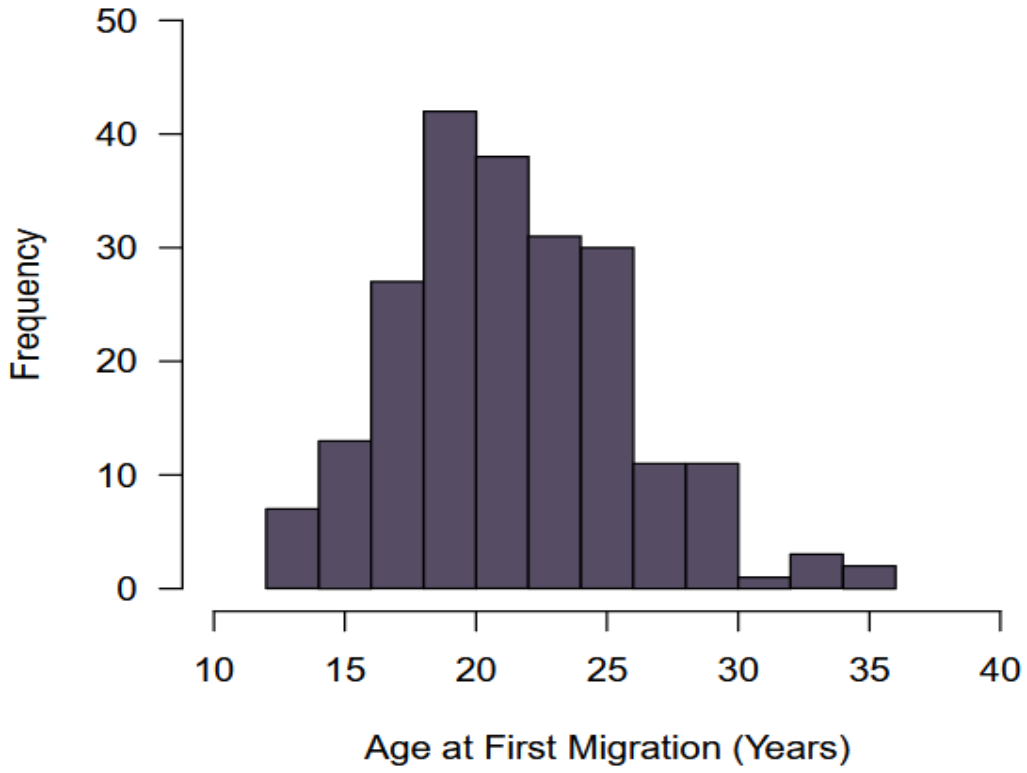
governmental policy, motivated partly by a desire to maintain a largely white ethnic profile. Certainly by 1911/1912 migration to Australia and New Zealand was outstripping that to the USA although still lagging significantly behind that to Canada.[68] To a large degree, Figure 1.1 conforms to these patterns. By 1905, the general dominance of Canada over the USA is clearly established and continues for the rest of the pre-war period except for the year 1909, which we will return to in a moment. Figure 1.1 also bears out the growing emergence in relative popularity of Australia (and to a much lesser extent New Zealand) as a destination for migrants.

The one area where the statistics relating to this study depart significantly from those collated by Carrothers relates to 'Other' countries, which for Carrothers' purposes also included India. Throughout this period, Carrothers' statistics indicate migration to countries other than Australia (and New Zealand), Canada, South Africa and the USA was negligible. Taking, for example, the years 1910, 1911 and 1912, these statistics show the 'Other' countries amounted to less than 2 per cent of the overall migratory totals.[69] By contrast, it can be seen from Figure 1.1 the initial destination of over a third of the Colfeian migrants was either 'Other' or India in each of these years. This is a significant disparity. A plausible explanation is Colfeian migration was more strongly directed towards trade and commerce and colonial administration as opposed to settlement overseas than was the case in relation to the general migrant population at a national level. We will return to potential motives for migration shortly. We will also establish in Chapter 5 this is a departure from national patterns which is not only repeated but becomes much more marked in first-time migration between the wars. This aspect is considered further there and for the moment it is sufficient merely to note the common divergence. Leaving aside the disparity relating to 'Other' destinations, the years 1908 and 1909 throw up a number of anomalies in Figure 1.1. 1908 sees no migration to the USA at all, migration to Canada is much reduced and that to Australia and New Zealand increased whilst for the only time 'Other' destinations become the most popular. In 1909 there is a rebound for the USA, significant declines for Australia and New Zealand and 'Other' destinations whilst low levels in Canada remain static. The answer probably lies in the depression following the banking crisis in the USA of 1907. Clearly this would make the USA less attractive to migrants and other destinations (including Australia) more attractive. Carrothers also proffers the effect of the financial crisis—he states it was 'keenly felt' in Eastern Canada—as an explanation for the sharp fall of 65 per cent in migration from the UK to Canada in 1908, which only started to rectify itself significantly in 1910.[70] Carrothers' statistics also indicate the recovery in migrant numbers started earlier in the USA, which may explain the rebound in numbers there in 1909.

[68] Carrothers, pp. 247–48, App. IX.
[69] Carrothers, App. IX.
[70] Carrothers, p. 245, App. XI.

Carrothers does not analyse the age profile of migrants. Constantine comments after 1900 (as before) they were largely under 30 but develops the point no further than that.[71] Winter concludes, to the extent there was such a person, the typical Edwardian migrant was male, unmarried and between the ages of 18-30.[72] The average age at first migration of the pre-war Colfeian migrant was 22 but the position is more nuanced than that.

FIG. 1.2. Age of pre-war migrants at first migration.



Although the average age may have been 22, Figure 1.2 shows the greatest number of men were aged 18–20 at first migration and the vast majority of men were in the age range 16–26, a younger profile than that identified by Winter. The oldest migrant was Ferguson Camroux (already encountered) aged 36 and the youngest was Frank Burke (1905–09) who migrated to Australia in 1909 aged 13.[73] Very few men, a mere 6 per cent, were already married at the time of migration. This aspect of the migrant cohort is very much in line with Winter's profile. That the overwhelming majority of the pre-war migrants were unmarried men is not necessarily surprising given the pattern of relatively late marriage already identified within the cohort generally and the young age profile of the migrant cohort.

[71] Constantine, *Oxford History vol IV*, p.166.
[72] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 266–68.
[73] Born 1897 Lewisham, father builder. Undistinguished school career.

Factors influencing migration

By any measure, pre-war outward migration within the cohort was substantial. Why was this? The men concerned were educated to a good standard with the prospect of secure, well-paid employment in the UK. Most came from a comfortable, if relatively modest, lower middle class background in the clean and well-ordered suburbs of south east London where they had strong familial and community ties. What prompted them to move to a diverse range of distant destinations? For those with a migratory background, there may have been a reduced sense British cultural identity. Although the sample sizes are not large, there are significantly higher rates of pre-war migration amongst those identified as born abroad (28 per cent) and as second-generation immigrants (approaching 50 per cent) than for the overall cohort (17 per cent). Otherwise, the reasons are ultimately probably as many as the individuals concerned but it is possible to draw out some common threads. The one matter that can be stated with any certainty is there is no evidence of any instances of migration within the cohort being caused by factors such as extreme poverty, financial embarrassment or persecution. All movement appears to have been voluntary and, to that extent, a lifestyle choice. This accords with the patterns identified in the existing literature. Both Carrothers[74] and Carrier and Jeffrey[75] conclude motivating factors for UK migrants in the pre-war years of the twentieth century largely stemmed from a desire for self-improvement rather than to escape from existential domestic problems.

Slightly counter-intuitively, one of the potential motivational threads for migration arises from close domestic familial ties. Several men migrated with or to join family members. Bound for Canada were Herbert Fisher (1902–07) and his brothers, Walter (1901–03), Robert (1901–07) and Henry (1901–09) born in Greenwich in 1887, 1889, 1890 and 1893 respectively to Alfred, an auctioneer. Robert was academically able but the others had undistinguished school careers. There were also two non-Colfeian elder brothers, Grenfell (born in 1884) and Alfred (born in 1886). In 1901 the family were living in Lewisham Hill with a domestic servant. The family home can only have been a short walk from Colfe's. Herbert appears to be the first of the family to migrate in 1905 aged 18 and in 1906/1907 was living in Saskatchewan. According to the 1911 Canadian census, Grenfell arrived in 1906. Walter arrived in Vernon, British Columbia June 1907 to work on a fruit farm. By 1908 he had a homestead about 6 miles from Grande Prairie. He reported, if he lived there six months a year and worked it for three years, ownership passed to him.[76] By the time of his next letter to the *Colfeian*, Walter had been joined by Herbert.[77] Figure 1.3 is a photograph published in the *Colfeian* the following year showing Herbert (although captioned as H. P. Fisher the accompanying letter makes it clear it is Herbert) seated and Walter standing. It is evident from the photograph the life

[74] Carrothers, p. 244.
[75] Carrier and Jeffrey, p. 33.
[76] *Colfeian*, vol. 4, no. 16 (1908), pp. 193–94.
[77] *Colfeian*, vol. 5, no. 17 (1908), pp. 19–21.

they were leading was far removed from that in Lewisham. Walter writes of the extreme cold in winter and the presence of bears on their land, not far from the shack.

FIG. 1.3: Home of Walter and Herbert Fisher, British Columbia.

Colfeian 1909 (No. 19, vol. 5).

Elder brother Alfred had also arrived in Canada in September 1908 aged 22 described as a publisher and headed for the same locality as Walter and Herbert. Henry arrived for the first time in Canada in January 1911 with his parents, described as tourists. All appeared as living in Grande Prairie with Alfred, Herbert and Walter at the time of the 1911 Canadian census. The father was reported as living on income whilst Henry and his mother were returned as having no occupation. Alfred, Herbert and Walter were described as farm labourers. By this time Grenfell was married with a family and living in Toronto. Robert was the last of the brothers to migrate, arriving in Montreal in 1912 aged 22 described as an electrician but with the intended occupation of a farmer.

Another example of family-related migration is the Pynegar brothers: Henry (1898–1903),[78] Edgar (1901–06),[79] Rex (1903–09)[80] and Reginald (1903–09)[81] all born in Lewisham in 1886, 1890, 1891 and 1893 respectively. There were eight siblings in the family, six male and two female. The other two brothers Kemys and Donald (both younger) did not attend Colfe's. The father (also Henry) was the principal of a firm of consulting engineers based in the City of London. The family lived in a large house in Beckenham from at least 1901 with servants. All four elder brothers appear to have been employed in the family business. Edgar and Rex migrated to Australia together in September

[78] Academically able. Sportsman.
[79] Undistinguished school career.
[80] Sportsman.
[81] Sportsman.

1911, described as clerks. By 1913 Rex was in the Outback at Emmet Downs in Queensland and by the beginning of 1915 Edgar was also working in the Outback at Isis Downs . Both were described as pastoral students. There is a good possibility Henry also migrated to Australia the same year but in the absence of definitive evidence he has not been categorised as a migrant for the purposes of this study. There is clear evidence of Reginald having sailed to Australia in March 1914 and, like his brothers, having been employed as a pastoral student but the exact location is unknown.

Similarly, community connections seem to have had an influence on some instances of migration. See, for example, Ernest Reed (1894–95).[82] At the time of the 1901 census of England and Wales Ernest was described as a draper. Ernest migrated to Canada in 1904 aged 25 initially working with Frank Ironside (1896–97),[83] one of the pre-1900 migratory cohort, at Frank's homestead in Alberta. By the 1911 Canadian census Ernest was an employer working on his own account as a rancher at MacLeod, Alberta. Ernest, in turn, provided support for a later migrant, Godfrey Westover (1900–05).[84] Godfrey arrived in Canada in 1909 aged 20. Initially he worked in Ontario on a mixed farm of about 145 acres. He reported milk from the dairy herd went to a factory to become butter or cheese for export to the UK, pigs went to Chicago and Toronto packing houses, crops fed the dairy herd and there was an orchard growing all kinds of fruit.[85] By 1910, Godfrey was in Alberta working on Ernest Read's ranch before starting to farm 500 acres on his own account there following marriage in 1912.

Career prospects and choice were undoubtedly motivational factors in the decision to migrate in some instances—we have already seen a far greater proportion of Colfeian migrants left for destinations other than the Dominions and the USA than would otherwise be expected in the migrant population generally. Many of these took up positions in a colonial or quasi-colonial environment. Leonard Naylor (1900–04) became a colonial administrator.[86] He migrated to Burma in 1906 aged 19, joining the Burma frontier service in 1914, where, by the time of his retirement to the UK after the Second World War, he had risen to the rank of Deputy Commissioner. Employment opportunities in the colonies went beyond administrative duties. Another main sphere of colonial employment related to industries which took or developed natural resources for the purposes of export. Roland Hewitt (1890–98) illustrates this.[87] By 1903 he was working in South Africa aged 21 as a mining engineer. He moved from there to the Gold Coast in 1913 and then to India before retiring in the 1930s and returning to the UK. There were also many supporting service industries in the colonies requiring staffing. From working as a bank clerk in London, Leonard Mote

[82] Born 1879 Lewisham, father draper. Undistinguished school career.
[83] Born 1880 Lewisham, father shipping agent. Sportsman.
[84] Born 1889 Lewisham, father travelling salesman. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman.
[85] *Colfeian*, vol.5, no. 19 (1909), pp. 169–71.
[86] Born 1887 West Derby, father farmer. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[87] Born 1882 Lewisham, father commercial clerk. Academically able. Leadership position.

(1899–1904) migrated to Ceylon in 1912 aged 23 to take up employment with coal exporters, Hull, Blythe & Co of Colombo.[88] Apart from a brief spell of war service with the Chinese Labour Corps on the Western Front, he remained in Ceylon working as a produce broker only returning to the UK in August 1946 very shortly before his death. In cases such as these, it is possible moving abroad resulted in better prospects of advancement or earlier advancement for a grammar school boy than would otherwise have been achievable in the UK. Ernest Briant (1903–06) is an example of a man who migrated to work in a quasi-colonial environment.[89] From working for a London bank by 1914, at the age of 23, he was working for London & Brazilian Bank in Argentina and remained in a banking career in that country, dying there aged 74 in 1965. This divergence from national patterns (which we will find repeated in a much more substantial manner in connection with post-war first-time migration) is the first hint we have of the potential role of a specific social, educational and cultural background in shaping patterns of Colfeian migratory behaviour. This line of argument is developed further in Chapter 5.

The possibility of an improvement in career prospects was not limited to those who pursued life in a colonial or quasi-colonial environment. Harold Brockelbank (1890–92) is an example.[90] At the time of the 1901 census of England and Wales he was a commercial traveller in stationery. Later that year Harold migrated to the USA aged 25 described as a merchant. By 1907 he was the sole representative of a British company for San Francisco and the Western States and by 1909 was the General Manager of the same company in New York. At the time of his death aged 82 in Pennsylvania in 1958 he was described as a paper manufacturer. Frank Mattes (1896–98) is another example.[91] In 1901, at the age of 17, he was appointed an inspector in the engineering department of the Post Office. Newly-married, Frank migrated to Australia in 1910 to set up a large telephone switchboard in Victoria and by the time of his accidental death in the mid-1920s was a director of the British General Electric Company. That is not to say migration necessarily led to improved life prospects. An extreme example of this is Clinton Hammond (1891–92).[92] In 1896 he was carrying on business as an estate agent in Oxford Street and at the time of the 1901 census of England and Wales was living in Hampstead and described as a land and estate agent working on his own account. Clinton migrated to Canada aged 28 in 1903 described as an agent. By 1917 he had onward-migrated to the USA and was working as a utility man in a hospital in Minneapolis. He continued this role interspersed with work as a clerk and as a hospital elevator operator until the beginning of the Second World War, living primarily in rented rooms. From 1948 until his departure to the UK in 1965 to visit relatives, he is recorded as living in a room at the Nordic Hotel, Minneapolis. He died on that visit aged 89 following complications after a fall downstairs.

[88] Born 1889 Lewisham, father solicitor. Sportsman.
[89] Born 1891 Camberwell, father warehouse foreman. LCC scholar. Academically able.
[90] Born 1876 Fulham, father secretary. Undistinguished school career.
[91] Born 1884 Edmonton, father engineer. LCC scholar. Academically able.
[92] Born 1875 Portsea, father bank clerk. Undistinguished school career.

Another common thread that can be identified in terms of migratory motivation centres around an apparent desire to farm. So far as Canadian migration was concerned in particular, farming appears frequently on incoming passenger lists as the intended occupation even though very few of the cohort came from rural or agricultural backgrounds. We have already considered the Fishers, Ernest Reed, Godfrey Westover and Frank Ironside in Canada and also the Pynegars in Australia all of whom (with the exception Reginald Pynegar) became involved in farming to a greater or lesser extent despite a lack of previous experience. This focus on farming may, however, more than anything else represent a means to an end and mask a more fundamental set of motivations. Ernest Read touched upon these aspects in a letter describing how to go about farming in Western Canada.[93] He began with a rhetorical question—who after finishing some 'weary routine work' in London has not wished for the chance to have 'an outdoor life'? According to Ernest, there was plenty of room and opportunity in Canada for those who seek that 'healthy life' and do not mind what they put their hand to. In Canada, he stated, there is 'perfect freedom of action' and 'plenty of scope for the man who is determined to get on'. These themes are echoed by Herbert Ezard (1903–07).[94] He arrived in Canada a couple of days short of his 17th birthday in June 1907, having left Colfe's the month before. By 1909 he was working on a farm in Ancaster, Ontario and described the farmer's life as 'the freest life of all' even though the work was constantly hard. He also wrote being outside all year round exposed to all kinds of weather was the way 'to get as hard as a rock' but emphasised the need to have 'the grit to stick right at it' to be successful. These themes of outdoor life, hard work, physical fitness, determination and freedom were not restricted to farming. In 1908 Eustace Collins (1902–03)[95] was working as a copper smelter in Boundary Falls—a small settlement consisting of a couple of dozen cabins, a storehouse and two saloons—in British Columbia. Eustace had arrived in New York described as a barman the previous year aged 19. He wrote about how much he liked the country and described the life as 'free and easy, plenty of hard work, open air and good food' just 'the thing to make a man healthy and strong'. His spare time (of which there was plenty) was taken up with fishing and hunting a wide range of birds and animals from mountain hares to mountain lions. Eustace also touched upon another potential motivating factor for migration, this time economic. At the time of writing he was earning $4 (16 shillings and 8 pence in sterling according to Eustace) a day. He was living in a self-built log cabin with a fellow Englishman and their joint outgoings to live well were only around $15 a month. Clearly, Eustace was enjoying a substantial level of disposable income whilst still only 20.[96] Harold Brockelbank made the point more directly claiming those migrating to Canada and the USA could earn as much in a week as they would in a month in the UK.[97]

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[93] *Colfeian* vol.3, no. 12 (1906), pp. 180–83
[94] Born 1891 Deptford, father medical practitioner. Academically able. Letter in *Colfeian*, vol. 5, no.18 (1909), pp. 100–01.
[95] Born 1888 Woolwich, father provisions merchant. Undistinguished school career.
[96] *Colfeian*, vol. 4, no. 16 (1908), pp. 194–96.
[97] *Colfeian*, vol. 4, no. 16 (1908), p. 198.

This economic pull may explain the migration of, for example, Harold Robson (1893–97).[98] Harold had migrated to Canada in 1904 aged 22 and was working in 1907 as a clerk for Globe Insurance Company of Montreal, presumably a position equivalent to one he was as qualified to fill in the UK as many of his fellow Colfeians who took up similar positions. Not all migration was, however, necessarily prompted by a reasoned pre-meditated decision. Ernest Kidner (1890–94) illustrates this.[99] Ernest, who was unmarried, arrived in New York for a holiday in 1913, aged 35 having been working as a bank clerk since at least 1901. Apparently 'having tired of banking', at the end of the holiday rather than returning to England he migrated to Canada where he remained until his death in Vancouver aged 83 in 1961.[100]

One potential motivating factor that does not appear to be particularly prevalent is restlessness. The vast majority of the pre-war migrants (over 80 per cent) did not onward migrate from their country of initial destination to another country. Of those who did onward migrate, nearly three-quarters only moved once more and for 25 per cent of those the second move was from Canada to the neighbouring USA. The overall impression, therefore, is one of stability and continuity—having moved abroad, by and large, men settled. There were, of course, exceptions. Frank Ironside mentioned earlier is an example of someone who led a fairly itinerant life—in addition to farming, working at various times as a cook, travel agent, salesman and proprietor of a flower shop—even though he did not stray beyond Canada and the USA. It should be mentioned in assessing onward migration temporary movements between Canada and the USA have been ignored. Certainly in the pre-war and immediate post-war period the border between the two countries appears to have been quite porous with people moving to and fro with relative ease and frequency with no obvious documentation of the movements across borders this must have been involved. Not only were instances of onward migration low, so were instances of pre-war return migration to the UK. In the years up to and including 1913 only 9 (or 4 per cent) of the men within the pre-war migrant cohort returned to the UK. It is only natural some would think better of their decision to move abroad. Edward Maunder (1895–1900),[101] for example, arrived in Canada to farm in Ontario in April 1907 aged 21 but returned to the UK in December of the following year, presumably having decided quite quickly the life was not for him. If anything, it is surprising the figures are so low. Levels of return increased significantly with the outbreak of war—a further 21 per cent of the migratory cohort arrived back in the UK in the years 1914–18. This is considered further in Chapter 4. A significant increase in levels of ultimate return to the UK of men who migrated for the first-time during the period between the wars is also discussed in Chapter 5.

[98] Born 1882 Lewisham, father builder. Undistinguished school career.
[99] Born 1878 Lewisham, father grocer. Undistinguished school career.
[100] *Colfeian* vol. 7, no 28 (1914) pp. 219–22.
[101] Born 1896 Greenwich, father Royal Observatory assistant. Undistinguished school career.

Summary

The cohort which is the subject of this study was largely brought up in the London suburb of Lewisham in the late Victorian/Edwardian era. It came primarily (but not exclusively) from a lower middle class background and had the opportunity of a broad secondary education encompassing the sciences and humanities with exposure to a range of extra-curricular activities—in many ways a 'modern' education—at a local endowed grammar school. They were not socially or educationally élite but this education opened up career opportunities that might not otherwise have been possible and created a cultured, self-assured group of men. Merit-based public funding provided varying degrees of financial support for families that might not otherwise have been able to contemplate such an education. To this extent, there is a strong sense of generational discovery rather than loss. The age profile of the cohort is heavily weighted towards youth—about three-quarters were 29 or less at the outbreak of the war. Pre-war mortality was low indicating a home environment of sufficient affluence to produce fit and healthy young men. These men, in accordance with established patterns, tended not to marry until their late 20s. There was no long-standing tradition of permanent careers in the armed services amongst the cohort. There was more extensive participation in pre-war training and volunteer forces but this was not widespread and likely to have been motivated by a range of matters beyond those of a mere military nature. All these considerations potentially influenced the patterns of war enlistment and service amongst the members of cohort, their approach to commemoration and, for those who survived, adaptation to life in a post-war world. The nature and extent of this influence is explored further in the chapters that follow.

Many of the factors were also relevant to shaping pre-war migratory patterns within the cohort. Migration was not a new phenomenon—some of the cohort had been born abroad and a number were second-generation immigrants. However, the levels of pre-war migration within the cohort itself were substantial—a minimum of 229 (but possibly more) or 17 per cent of the 1346 men comprised in this study. By way of perspective, war fatalities amounted to around 10 per cent of the cohort. The contrast is not as stark as might, at first sight, appear in that some pre-war migrants became war fatalities either serving with British or overseas forces. These nuances are considered further in Chapter 4. They do not, however, alter the substantial amount of migration that took place. Nor that, ultimately, surviving migrants still significantly outnumbered the war dead, in turn, enabling the argument that, to the extent there was a 'generational' loss to the UK in terms of physical absence from the country during the first two decades of the twentieth century, it took place before the war and was due to migratory behaviour. In terms of profile, the Colfeian migrants were generally young and largely unmarried. Other patterns of migration are also generally in line with those identified by the existing literature with one significant exception in terms of destination—there was far greater migration to countries other than Australia and New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and the USA than has been identified in the UK migratory population more

widely. This is possibly a reflection of enhanced employment prospects being available in colonial or quasi-colonial territories for young men from relatively modest backgrounds with a good secondary education. A divergence from national patterns of this nature is a theme repeated in far more marked terms for post-war first-time migrants. We explore this further in Chapter 5 and, in particular, its possible connection in that context with a developed sense of retained British cultural identity. At this stage, however, the only statement that be made with certainty as to motivations for pre-war migration is there is no evidence of any instance of Colfeian pre-war migration being anything other than voluntary. Beyond that the potential motivations were diverse and ultimately, the decision to migrate was an individual one determined by personal circumstances. Often more than one component was in play but the main factors seem to have revolved around issues related to family, employment and the desire for lifestyle change on the part of young men brought up in the confines (physical and otherwise) of Edwardian lower-middle class suburban London. Some of the characteristics evidenced as necessary to migratory success were, though, equally likely to be suited to a military environment. This, in turn, may well have helped shape the specific patterns of war service exhibited by the migrant population as compared to the cohort more generally which are examined further in Chapter 4.

Chapter 2: The War: Service Patterns

This chapter examines in detail the fundamental aspects of Colfeian war service from entry into service through to cessation of service (and, especially, early cessation of service caused by death) including analysis relating to disability resulting from service. The study is based on the experiences of individuals but not at the level of specific units or ranks where sample size would be too small to enable meaningful analysis, rather in terms of broad patterns relating to if, why and how they served and in what capacity. There are a number of aspects around entry into service, rank in service and death that are particularly striking against the background of the historiography. The cohort displays levels of service proportionately higher and wartime enlistment more likely to be earlier (and consequently voluntary in nature) than is the case for the population of the UK more generally. The Colfeian serving cohort also encountered higher rates of death than those estimated for the serving population as a whole but lower rates than those claimed for élite educational institutions. The consideration of disability in service has been undertaken against a background of very little existing published quantitative research. This analysis reveals two matters of significance. The first is overall levels of surviving disability were equivalent to mortality rates for all intents and purposes. In the light of general perceptions of the enduring post-war legacy, this may be considered by some to be a surprising finding. The second relates to causation of disability, which, in a majority of cases, has been found to derive from illness arising from the service environment rather than direct military action.

Statistical analysis has been undertaken to assess the strength of the connection between a number of factors present within the Colfe's data and the probability of entry into service, death and disability. Not all factors are quantifiable and suitable for this form of analysis. In these cases, a qualitative approach has been adopted. The aim of the analysis is to try to explain why the service patterns exhibited by the Colfe's data developed as they did and, in particular, why they depart from some of the more general patterns established by the historiography. It might be expected the risk of death and disability would be conditioned by a combination of factors relating to both enlistment and the nature of the subsequent service and the existing literature is largely based on this assumption. The results of the Colfeian analysis are, however, more nuanced than this, revealing a two-tier system of cause and effect. The probability of serving in the first instance (and, it follows, being placed at risk of death and disability) seems to have been shaped by a range of pre-war factors that can be categorised as predominantly socio-geographic in nature.[1] Once in service, however, the chances of death and disability, with the exception of age-related matters, have been found to be associated with factors relating to that service rather than factors connected with the initial entry into service. Put simply, within the Colfeian cohort at least, the likelihood of entering service was correlated with background whilst the likelihood of death and disability was

[1] As trailed by Pennell, p. 162 in relation to early enlistment patterns.

primarily connected to service—what you did in the war, where you were doing it and when you were doing it. Obviously service and, therefore, resulting death or disability are conditional on entering into service in the first place but any subtleties of a hierarchical nature of the kind exhibited by the Colfeian analysis have a tendency to be blurred in much of the more general historiography.

Disproportionately high levels of enlistment and of mortality have been central to perceptions of a 'lost generation' in whatever context it has been advanced. In the case of the Colfeian cohort, we will see higher rates of enlistment are likely underpinned by an interlinked combination of a number of push and pull factors. Social background (community relationships and education) seem to have been particularly important, along with age (comparative youth, which in turn involved reduced levels of familial obligation) and an openness to embracing the opportunity for change (which we have already seen reflected before the war in high levels of migration). Higher proportionate levels of enlistment than was nationally the case are probably a reflection of a predominantly lower middle class background, which resulted in a cohort more disposed to have an acceptable standard of physical fitness for service abroad and less likely to be service-exempt due to the possession of technical skills capable of being used in reserved civilian occupations. We will also see levels of mortality seem to have been driven (with the exception of age) by war-related factors. It has been argued risk of mortality was affected by the length of time an individual was in service and, more significantly, by rank.[2] The Colfeian data do not support a contention that early enlistment in the war was a factor in the risk of death. At best, they suggest although early enlistment might (but not necessarily) bring prolonged exposure in an operational theatre of war, it might also result in enhanced skills increasing the prospects of survival. Neither do the Colfeian data support the claim serving as an officer brought an increased risk of death—levels of loss amongst officers and other ranks were broadly equivalent. It is possible this is a consequence of enhanced levels of commissioning from the ranks in the Colfeian dataset. This might mean by the time an individual became an officer, he already had substantial military experience and an increased ability to survive in a combat environment. A close reading of the existing literature also indicates disproportionate levels of officer loss were found to be at their highest in the early stages of the war, when most Colfeians were still serving in the ranks. It is possible this might also help explain the differential rates of Colfeian loss when compared to those claimed for élite educational institutions. Equally, however, part of the answer may lie in differing rates of pre-war professional military service and in the impact of commemorative practices on the accuracy of the data which underpin the claims for enhanced levels of loss. These latter issues are explored further in Chapter 3.

[2] Winter, *Great War*, p. 83.

There are no meaningful comparators as to surviving disability and it is difficult to establish whether the levels established by the Colfeian data are disproportionate. Certainly they are low—they are broadly in line with those relating to mortality and a conventional view might be the likelihood of disability could be expected to be greater than that of death. The results of the analysis of the risk factors for the two outcomes are very similar. The one area of divergence relates to the effect of rank on incurring a disability. Whilst service as an officer or in the ranks does not appear to have affected the risk of mortality, it seems those serving the ranks were at significantly higher risk of suffering disability. The reasons for this may well lie in the differential in the standard of their respective living conditions within the service environment. Risks in action may have been similar but the likelihood of illness from the service environment (which was responsible for the majority of disability) more generally might not have been.

Methodology

The total number of men in the Colfe's dataset is 1346, of whom 40 had died prior to the start of the war. The maximum number of men available for analysis in this chapter as available for service is, therefore, 1306. This includes 212 pre-war migrants who remained abroad in August 1914. Not all 1306 men will necessarily feature in all elements of the analysis that follows. Inclusion depends upon the availability of data for the particular factor being examined. Of the 1306 men available for service, 952 have been identified as having served. This figure should be viewed as a minimum figure. It consists of men for whom some form of evidence of service has been established. It is conceivable there are others who served who have not been identified as having served. The other chapters of the thesis are primarily reliant on descriptive statistics in terms of analysis. The sample sizes and levels and complexity of data under consideration here also enables the use of more sophisticated statistical techniques. In purely numeric terms, the database is well capable of supporting these techniques. The data also have the strength and depth to underpin a detailed interrogation of a wide range of matters potentially influencing the likelihood of entry into military service, death and disability. Further, they permit analysis by reference to actual figures rather than needing to have recourse to hypothetical and counter-factual constructs as has been necessary in the case of some previous work. It cannot, however, be claimed the dataset is necessarily representative of the country as a whole. There are two broad areas of difference. The first is social class. The dataset contains a far higher proportion of the lower middle class than the population generally. The second main area of difference relates to age, with the dataset being more skewed towards youth than nationally.

A detailed commentary has already been provided in the Introduction of the methodological approach to a number of thesis-wide matters that are relevant to this chapter, but the more advanced approach of using univariable covariate analysis justifies a degree of explanation in context. This methodology has been used to measure the statistical significance of the association between individual risk factors and the probability of service and death or disability. The analysis

has been undertaken by using Pearson's chi-squared test. This is used to evaluate whether there is an association between variables that can take on one of a limited number of possible values—these are known as categorical variables. For example, the first use of the test in this chapter is to analyse the association between the variables of age at the outbreak of war (by reference to four identified age bands) and service in the war (service or no service). The testing process follows statistical best practice that works on the basis of a preliminary assumption there is no association between the variables, and then seeks to evaluate the evidence refuting this assumption—this is known as null hypothesis testing. The test examines differing proportions of data to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the frequencies of data expected under the null hypothesis and the observed frequencies with a view to identifying whether there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. The test produces a 'p-value'—'p' stands for probability. The null hypothesis is accepted as true (meaning there is no association between the categorical variables) if the p-value is equal to or greater than 0.05 i.e. if there is a 5 per cent chance of observing those frequencies if the null hypothesis is true. If the p-value is less than 0.05, the difference between the variables is treated as statistically significant. The figure of 0.05 is arbitrary (and errs on the side of caution) but is generally accepted under statistical convention. It should be noted the testing process takes account of differing sample sizes. What are termed 'degrees of freedom' are also used in the testing process to control for the number of categories involved—in the example cited of age at the outbreak of war, there are four age band categories and, therefore, 3 degrees of freedom are used. These are recorded alongside the p-value in the report of the test result. If the p-value is significant and there are more than two categories being tested, once the p-value is determined, Tukey's HSD test is carried out to cross-evaluate the relative differences between the categories. This is conventionally reported as a 'post-hoc' analysis. Each individual set of risk factor analysis here follows the same format. The table containing the observed frequencies of data is reported, followed by the chi-squared test results and any post-hoc comparison. This is followed in most instances by commentary on the results. This commentary does not form part of the testing process but seeks to place the findings in the context of any existing literature and the specific circumstances of the Colfeian dataset.

Not all potential risk factors within the Colfeian cohort are necessarily receptive to this form of analysis. There may be insufficient or incomplete data available, the data may not be in a consistent form or the form they take may be inherently flawed. For example, this study has identified 51 Colfeian men who were actively serving in part-time non-educationally-based military volunteer units when the war began. It has also identified a further 62 men who had served but were no longer serving with units of this kind. A strong correlation might be expected between any form of pre-war service and subsequent service in the war and, at first sight, this is borne out by the data, with no evidence of war service for only 7 out of the 113 identified men. The difficulty is the main data source for confirming pre-war volunteer status are records of service in the war and the validity of the data as a predictor of the probability of war service is, as a consequence,

compromised. No further analysis has, therefore, been undertaken. Similarly, it is reasonable to speculate risk profiles for death or disability might differ by operational theatre of war service and location within theatre. The clear sense from the data that are available is most of the service was in Western Europe and most of that service was on the Western Front. However, data as to the theatre and location are not consistently available throughout. Even where data are available, theatre and location are not necessarily static. Men might move for military reasons or wounding or illness could lead to repatriation and then return to the same or a different theatre or location, leading to causal issues in linking specific individuals to specific theatres or locations. These issues are compounded by the fact even less data are consistently available to identify the amount of time a man spent in a particular theatre or location. Given these difficulties, again, deeper analysis has not been pursued.

Univariable covariate analysis is a process restricted to considering the association between individual factors and outcomes. In all likelihood, individual factors will not operate in a vacuum but will interact to influence outcomes. It is possible to analyse these potential interactions and to measure their relative significance by using even more sophisticated statistical models. This process is much more data intensive than univariable covariate analysis, requiring complete information on all factors under consideration for all individuals. Although substantial and with a good degree of strength and depth, the data within this study do not meet this level of particularisation (especially as regards service history) and, accordingly, this additional level of analysis has also not been taken further.

Entry into service

This section begins by examining Colfeian rates of service and the timeline and status of wartime enlistment in the context of the historiography. Leaving aside some differences in methodological approach, in broad terms it will show rates of Colfeian service were proportionately higher and wartime enlistment was more likely to be earlier (and consequently voluntary in nature) than is the case for the serving population of the UK more generally. This will be followed by a statistical analysis of the correlation between some of the factors of potential influence and entry into service, with particular consideration being given to those instances where there are variations from the patterns established by the existing literature. The factors found to be associated with entry into service can be broadly grouped as socio-geographic in nature comprising matters such as age, education, location, marital status and participation in sport. No connection of statistical significance has been found between social class and occupation and the probability of entry into service. However, this, in itself, may be a product of socio-geographic background. The class and occupation profile of the sample analysed is predominantly lower middle class, which is in keeping with that for Lewisham more generally[3] but, as we will see, not reflective of the national population.

[3] See Chapter 1.

Not all factors of potential association with entry into service are capable of quantitative analysis and the section will conclude by considering some of these less quantifiable matters such as a desire for change from the monotony of working life, patriotism and the enthusiasm of youth.

Overall rates of service

Winter has calculated the participatory rate of service in the British army (that is to say excluding service in the navy and airborne services other than those forming part of the army) for males in England and Wales aged 15–49 at the time of the 1911 census was a little over 46 per cent. Using the same age range, Gregory puts the participation rate for Britain as a whole (possibly excluding Ireland) at 53 per cent and a couple of percentage points more for men from London.[4] Winter's calculations (and presumably also those of Gregory) leave out of account men serving in the regular army but seem to include members of the Territorial Force.[5] The Colfe's rate of service (based on 952 men identified as having served out of a total dataset alive at the start of the war of 1306) is far higher standing at 73 per cent. This may, in part, be a product of differing methodologies. At a very minor level, the Colfe's enlistment rate does include thirteen pre-war regulars but only three of these were serving in the British army at the start of the war and its effect can be discounted. More significantly, the Colfe's basic cohort is calculated by reference to men who were aged 40 or less when war broke out and 18 or more when the war ended but also includes a small number of men outside these parameters who saw actual service. The cohort parameters adopted by Winter and Gregory mean its membership were aged 18–52 at the outbreak of war containing more older men (potentially less likely to serve) but on the other hand also fewer younger men (potentially more likely to serve). We will return to examine the statistical significance of age at the outbreak of war a little later. The other main difference in methodology, however, relates to branch of service. Winter's calculations are expressly based solely on service in the British Army. This raises two points of distinction. The first is the Colfe's serving dataset is not domestically restricted and extends to service in Dominion, USA and (in one instance) French forces. The second is, as illustrated by Table 2.1, although service in the army was predominant, it does include other branches as well. The data in Table 2.1 are calculated as at the point of entry of an individual into the war. Branch of service was not, however, necessarily a static data point throughout the war and analysis has also been carried out by reference to final branch of service. In broad terms this shows a 5 per cent shift from army to airborne services (not necessarily unexpected given the development of aviation warfare during the course of the war) but the underlying pattern remains reasonably constant.[6]

[4] See Introduction.
[5] Winter *Great War*, p. 29, Tables 2.1, 2.2.
[6] The relevant figures for final branch of service are: Airborne services (143); Army (705); Navy (65); and Other (39).

Table 2.1. Initial branch of service.

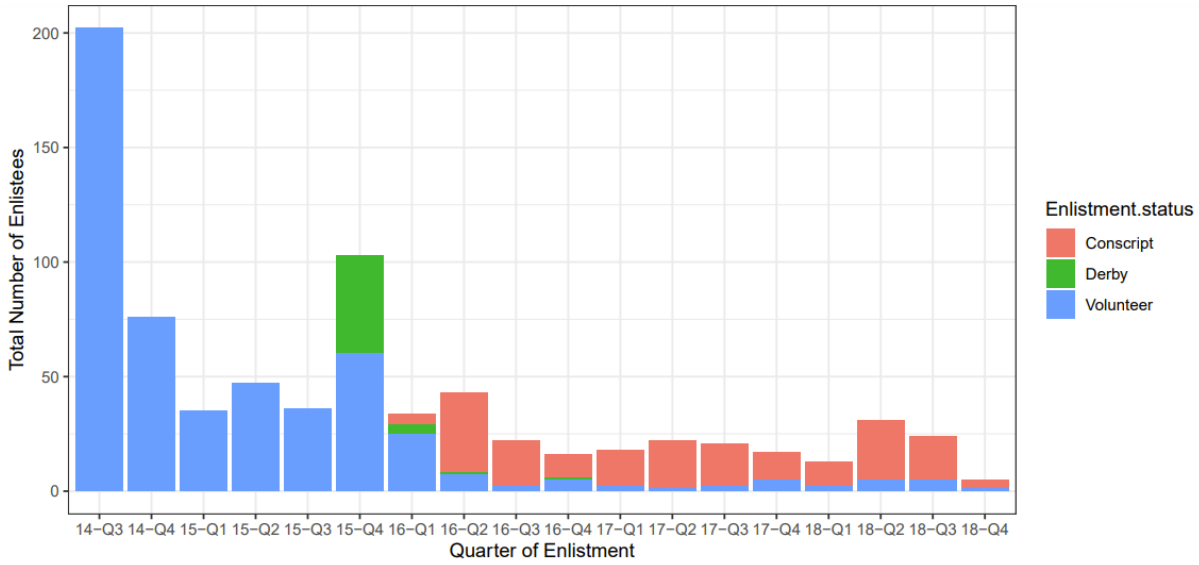
Initial branch of service	Number of men	Percentage (%)
Airborne services	84	9
Army	747	79
Navy	68	7
Other	53	5

The definitional approach adopted is explained in the Introduction. Even if the men comprising 'Other' were to be excluded on the basis their service was either not strictly martial in nature or capable of being identified as such, the Colfeian service rate still stands at around 69 per cent, significantly in excess of that identified by Winter and Gregory. It seems unlikely a differential of this magnitude can be explained solely by differences in methodological approach. We will look at some of the other potentially influential factors later in this section.

Time and status of wartime enlistment

Not only were there high proportionate levels of Colfeian service but wartime enlistment was also early in terms of the timeline of the war and, as a consequence, involved substantial levels of voluntary service. This is illustrated by Figure 2.1, which combines depicting the distribution of individual enlistment on a quarterly basis over the course of the war with the status of that enlistment.

FIG. 2.1. Distribution and time of wartime enlistment and status.



These calculations are based on 765 men for whom this combined data has been identified and on the definitional assumptions referred to in the Introduction. The analysis excludes men who were

already serving as regulars in the armed forces and pre-war volunteers and is solely directed towards establishing the distribution of the time and status of wartime enlistment. We can see 278 men (well over a third of the total wartime enlistees) enlisted in the first five months of the war, with nearly 75 per cent of this enlistment (or just over a quarter of the total wartime enlistment) taking place in August and September 1914 (where the breakdown was 74 and 128 respectively). These levels of early enlistment are striking and we will come back to them in detail in a moment. Figure 2.1 also illustrates a number of other points. Firstly, how voluntary enlistment fell away in 1915 until the fourth quarter, which coincided with the introduction of the Derby Scheme. There is evidence of an earlier and temporary slight upward trajectory in the second quarter. It is possible this may have been prompted by the sinking of the cruise liner Lusitania by a German submarine in early May leading to significant levels of civilian loss of life. However, the numbers involved in the uplift are not large and the timing may be no more than coincidental. Secondly, Figure 2.1 illustrates the working in tandem of the original voluntary scheme and the Derby Scheme. As already touched upon in the Introduction, it is possible the magnitude of the influence of the Derby Scheme in the fourth quarter is understated as a consequence of the definitional approach adopted. Accordingly, the exact positioning of the numeric split between the two regimes needs to be treated with a degree of caution. Incidentally, Figure 2.1 does show the time-lag which occurred between attestation under the Derby Scheme and being called up for service could be quite significant in some isolated cases, with one man not being mobilised until the fourth quarter of 1916. The impact of the introduction of conscription under the Military Service Act 1916 (which came into force on 2 March 1916) can be clearly seen in the second quarter of that year, as can the relatively low numbers of Colfeians who entered service in this way. Only just over a quarter of the men comprised in the analysis depicted by Figure 2.1 were conscripts. But even that does not do full justice to the levels of Colfeian volunteering. Of the 200 Colfeian conscripts, well over half (56 per cent) were called up for service aged either 17 or 18. For these people there was no other route of entry into service. This means only 83 men (just under 11 per cent of the men comprised in the analysis) had the opportunity to volunteer in one form or another and chose not to do so. Once the initial effect of the introduction of conscription had passed, ongoing levels were fairly constant except for a small spike in the second quarter of 1918. This spike probably reflects the passing of the Military Service (No. 2) Act 1918 in April, which extended the upper range of the age limit for conscription to 50.[7] Finally, it is worth noting, despite conscription, a level of ‘pure’ volunteering (primarily by pre-war migrants) continued for as long as the war lasted.

Returning to the high levels of early enlistment depicted by Figure 2.1, as discussed in the Introduction, Pennell has established two matters in relation to recruitment into the regular army. The first is of the total number of men recruited up to the end of 1915, 32 per cent volunteered in 1914. The second is rates of enlistment were highest in the month of September 1914, accounting

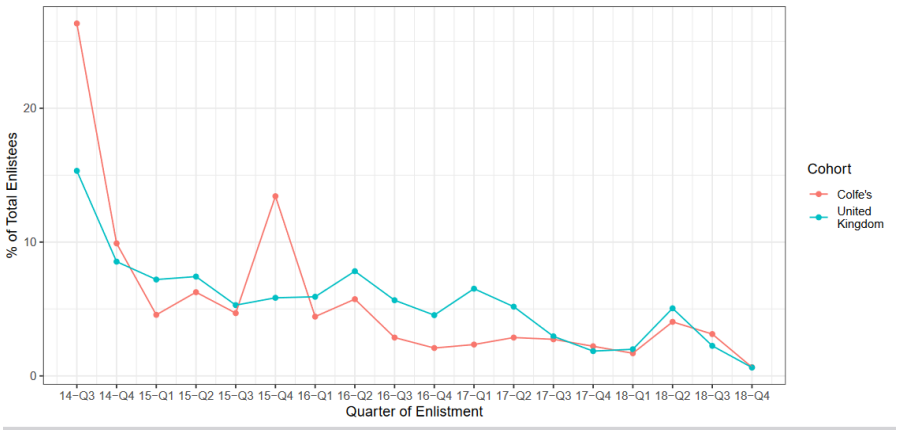
[7] Beckett, Bowman and Connelly, p. 119.

for 16 per cent of the total recruited up to the end of 1915.[8] The data comprised in Figure 2.1 confirm Colfeian enlistment was also highest in September 1914 but show volunteering rates in the war months of 1914 constituted 56 (rather than 32) per cent of the overall enlistment up to the end of 1915. They also show September enlistment comprised 26 (rather than 16) per cent of the overall enlistment up to the end of 1915. At first sight this indicates significantly higher rates of early enlistment than those identified by Pennell but there are methodological differences of approach that need to be borne in mind. In particular, Pennell's analysis is based on recruitment into the regular army alone. By contrast, the Colfeian dataset extends to the navy and air services outside the regular army and also overseas units. More significantly, it includes wartime recruiting into the Territorial Force, which was a distinct entity from the regular army in terms of enlistment until at least mid-December 1915, and later in the case of a small number of specific units.[9] Although it is not always possible to identify the exact identity of a man's initial unit of service, detailed analysis reveals a minimum of 215 Colfeians were recruited into local (and primarily London-situate) territorial units in 1914 and 1915, representing 43 per cent of the total number of men enlisted during that period. This proportion, although noteworthy in itself, masks a more significant distinction that is revealed when each year is considered in isolation. Of the 278 men who enlisted during August–December 1914, 55 per cent joined territorial units—the corresponding figure for 1915 is 28 per cent.

There are War Office statistics available which analyse enlistment on a monthly basis from August 1914 to 11 November 1918 extending to both the regular army and the Territorial Force.[10] Although still not an exact comparator, especially given the strongly weighted early Colfeian enlistment into the Territorial Force, these are a more appropriate match for the Colfeian data. They also allow comparisons to be drawn over the whole period of the war, not just for 1914 and 1915. Figure 2.2 shows the relationship between the two sets of statistics. For these purposes, the War Office monthly data have been consolidated into quarterly figures. There are three main areas of divergence between the two sets of statistics. The first is proportionate enlistment amongst the Colfeian cohort during August and September 1914 was far greater (27 per cent) than overall recruitment into the regular army and the Territorial Force (15 per cent). Again, significantly higher levels of enlistment (and, accordingly, volunteering) than in the general serving population are indicated in the earliest stages of the war. Incidentally, the underlying data confirm there was substantially more enlistment during September than August in both datasets, with broadly a 60/40 split in favour of September.

[8] Pennell, p. 144.
[9] Beckett and Simpson, p. 137.
[10] *Statistics of the Military Effort*, p. 364.

FIG. 2.2. Quarterly wartime enlistment comparison—Colfe's and UK.



The second main point of divergence is the fourth quarter of 1915 when there was a sharp increase in Colfeian enlistment rates whilst overall recruitment rates remained relatively flat. This was the period when the Derby Scheme was in operation. This might be taken as suggesting the scheme was more popular amongst Colfeians than the general serving population. As already mentioned, however, the exact number of Colfeians who enlisted under the scheme is not entirely certain. It is equally probable the possibility of impending conscription may have prompted some of those who had not yet volunteered to do so immediately (rather than on a deferred basis as under the Derby Scheme) whilst there was still the option to do that. The third area of divergence relates to conscription levels. Although the patterns relating to the impact of the introduction of conscription on the two datasets are fairly similar, proportionately lower levels of conscription within the Colfeian dataset are generally demonstrated. It is worth noting the spike in recruitment in the second quarter of 1918 already mentioned is reflected in both sets of data.

Having determined the patterns relating to overall rates of service and the time and status of wartime enlistment within the Colfeian cohort differ from those established for the population more generally, univariable covariate analysis has been undertaken of some of the factors potentially shaping those patterns.

Age at outbreak of war

We turn first to look at the Colfeian age profile at the outbreak of war and to examine the connection of this with the likelihood of entry into service. There were 1306 individuals from the Colfeian cohort alive on 4 August 1914 and potentially capable of entering service. It has been possible to identify the date of birth of all and, therefore, to calculate their age when the war started. For the purposes of this analysis, the dataset of 1306 has been divided into 4 groups according to age on 4 August 1914: those aged under 18; those older than 17 but 22 or under; those older than 22 but 27 or under; and those who were older than 27. Having been created, the

groupings are then analysed by reference to whether or not the individuals entered service. The results of the analysis are depicted in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Entry into service and age at outbreak of war.

Age Group	Number	Service	No service	Percentage (%)
1 (under 18)	296	252	43	85.42
2 (18–22)	272	247	26	90.48
3 (23–27)	332	244	88	73.49
4 (28+)	406	209	197	51.48

The difference between the rates of entry into service is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed Group 1 and Group 2 were both significantly higher than Group 3 and Group 4 was significantly lower than the other Groups. It has been established in Chapter 1 the age distribution of the Colfeian alumni population was weighted towards youth, and so greater levels of service amongst the younger cohorts might be expected. The level of differential is marked. The number of individuals falling within Groups 1 and 2 who did not see service is very low. Indeed, for Group 2 the enlistment rate is almost double that established by Winter for the nation as a whole. The position is, though, more nuanced than this. We find Group 3 is reflective of the average Colfeian service rate identified earlier[11] and even Group 4 is higher than the rate established by Winter's national average. Accordingly, whilst youthfulness may be associated in its own right with the probability of service, it seems age was not necessarily the sole factor involved.

Before leaving this aspect, it should be mentioned Winter has undertaken a similar type of analysis and calculated 70 per cent of the men who saw service in the war were under 30 when the England and Wales census was carried out on 2 April 1911.[12] It can be seen from Table 2.2 that 78 per cent of the serving Colfeian dataset were under the age of 28 when the war began. There are significant differences in methodological approach between the two sets of investigation. Firstly, Winter is relying on historic data from 1911 rather than age when the war started. One consequence of this is the figure of 70 per cent relates to men who were under 33 at the reference date for the Colfeian analysis. Secondly, the research is based on those who served with British forces whilst the Colfeian data include those who were abroad on 4 August 1914,[13] some (but not all) of whom served in overseas forces. Like is not, therefore, being compared with like but it

[11] Which in itself is over 25 percentage points higher than Winter's national average.
[12] Winter *Great War*, p. 83, Table 3.7.
[13] Having said that, it should be borne in mind that approaching half of those abroad at the outbreak of war were recent migrants, having only moved during the 1911–14 period: see Chapter 1.

remains reasonable to conclude the age profile of the Colfe's serving cohort at the outbreak of war was substantially lower than that identified by Winter for British forces as a whole.

Pre-war marital status

The connection between pre-war marital status and entry into service is considered next. Pre-war marital status has been established for 1265 members of the overall Colfeian cohort, 926 of whom have been identified as serving in the war. Table 2.3 shows the results of this analysis. In broad terms a Colfeian married man was half as likely to serve as a single man.

Table 2.3. Effect of pre-war marital status on service.

Pre-war marital status	Number	Service	No service	Percentage service (%)
Married	248	110	138	44.35
Not married	1017	816	201	80.24

The difference between these rates is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001) which confirms there is a correlation between a man being unmarried at the outbreak of war and service. Some of the possible factors associated with this are fairly self-evident. In terms of voluntary service, it stands to reason a married man with steady employment and financial and emotional responsibility for a wife (and probably children) might be less inclined to choose to put not only his life but also the future security of his family in jeopardy. Therefore, he was less likely to enlist than a single man with fewer ties. This did not, though, necessarily prevent married men volunteering for service or, subsequently, enable them to avoid being conscripted. Leaving aside issues of probability, the difference in absolute terms between the numbers of married and single men who served is striking, which indicates there may be other underlying factors involved as well. We can calculate from Table 2.2 over 75 per cent of the men who served were aged 27 or under when the war started. We have seen in Chapter 1, if Colfeian men did marry, it was not likely to be until their late 20s, a trend which seems to have been in line with male marriage patterns in the Lewisham area more generally. This combination of socio-geographic factors and the relative youth of those entering service means a man was less likely to be married when he enlisted. Further, it follows those who were married were likely to be older which, in turn, might point to reduced physical fitness but also more developed occupational skills, both of which may have diminished their desire or suitability for service.

Educational background

The unique characteristic which the men across the cohort shared in common was a period of education at Colfe's. The education was largely (although not exclusively) at secondary level. This was at a time when secondary education was not universal although it was in the process of

becoming publicly-funded for the most academically able, whatever their social background. We have seen in Chapter 1 Colfe's was part of this process from the mid-1890s and from 1907 publicly-funded scholars comprised over a third of the annual pupil intake on average. Much has been written regarding mortality and educational environment in the context of commemoration and memorialisation at individual institution level[14] and there has been some more general analysis of fatality rates suffered by particular parts of the educational sector within cohorts of men identified as having seen service.[15] However, there is no significant historiography regarding rates of service within schools. Presumably this is primarily because of issues surrounding availability of data in what is a fluid population as pupils come and go. Calculating rates of service presupposes two matters, neither of which are necessarily easy to achieve. Firstly, access to data sources that can be used to identify a relatively complete cohort of alumni who may have been eligible for service and, secondly, the ability to identify instances of service within that cohort. Both of these have proved possible in relation to the group of men being studied here.

We examine next whether there are any distinguishing factors arising from a common educational environment that might help to explain the departures from established patterns of entry into service exhibited by the Colfeian data. There are three aspects of school life evidenced in the available archival material capable of being measured in quantitative terms: academic achievement; sporting achievement; and positions of leadership held. We will consider school sporting achievements in the context of overall pre-war engagement with sport a little later and focus for now on academic ability and positions of leadership. Analysis shows both these factors had a statistically significant effect on the prospects of a man entering service. The definitional assumptions adopted in relation to academic ability have been explained in the Introduction. However to recap: ability is assumed if Colfe's records show a scholarship, success in public examinations or matriculation for university; for those still at Colfe's at the end of their education a lack of any of these achievements results in an assumption of lack of ability; for those who left Colfe's early, ability is categorised as unknown in the absence of a record of subsequent university attendance. Table 2.4 shows the effect of academic ability on the likelihood of enlistment in relation to a subset of 1096 members of the overall cohort for whom this combination of information is available. The difference between these rates is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.002).

[14] See Chapter 3.
[15] See Introduction.

Table 2.4. Effect of academic ability on service.

Academic ability	Number	Service	No Service	Percentage service (%)
Academically able	526	413	113	78.52
Not academically able	570	399	171	70

Turning to leadership, for the purposes of this analysis, a boy has been treated as having held a position of leadership at Colfe's if he fulfilled one or more of the following roles: head boy; house captain, vice-captain or secretary; captain, vice-captain or secretary of a sports team; non-commissioned officer in the shooting squad; or editor of *Colfensia*. The analysis has been carried out on all 1306 members of the overall Colfeian cohort who were alive at the start of the war. It is, of necessity, restricted to positions held at Colfe's although some boys moved school to finish their secondary education and may have held leadership positions elsewhere. If anything, therefore, the influence of leadership positions may be understated. The results of the analysis are depicted in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5. Effect of school leadership position on service.

Position of leadership	Number	Service	No service	Percentage service (%)
Held	203	173	30	85.22
Not held	1103	779	324	70.63

The difference between these rates is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001). It should be noted there seems to have been a strong cross-over between the two factors (and, indeed, with sporting achievement) in that leadership positions were generally held by the academically able although not all the academically able necessarily held a leadership position.

Some of the qualities inherent in both factors may help to explain why it might be more probable men possessing these attributes served than those who did not. Academic ability was likely to bring with it an enquiring mind and an interest in current affairs together with the capacity to assess arguments and reach a reasoned conclusion as to their merits whilst leadership roles developed the skills to act decisively on that conclusion. We can see a foretaste of this in a report from the first issue of *Colfensia* in 1902 of a debate in the aftermath of the Second South African War on the

motion ‘That Conscription be introduced into England’ attended by 26 boys.[16] The motion was defeated by 16 votes to 10 after lively discussion. Interestingly, France and Russia were seen by the speakers to be more of a possible threat than Germany. Those in favour of the motion considered conscription would lead to an increase in moral and physical health and discipline as well as available manpower. Those against the motion argued conscription would be disruptive to business, unpopular and produce unsatisfactory recruits. They also considered the strength of the Royal Navy as sufficient safeguard against adverse action by other nations. Of the thirteen boys named as having spoken, all were academically able and six held positions of leadership at some point. All but three of the thirteen entered service. Equally, an explanation for the influence of academic ability and leadership positions might lie partly in a boy’s future employment. Not in terms of the broad nature of that employment (armed with an element of secondary education, most ended up in some form of white-collar occupation), but more in terms of the timing of entry into employment. The cohort of boys under consideration were likely to have stayed at school for longer and perhaps even have entered higher education. They may, therefore, have been less established in their place of work when the time came to enlist. Conversely, for those who, perhaps because of family circumstances, had to leave sooner rather than later, frustration in a resulting entry-level job with limited prospects may have been a push factor towards enlistment. As we shall see shortly, Gregory has suggested this type of motivation may have been influential in early enlistment patterns towards the lower end of the white-collar employment spectrum, so it is not a factor that should be dismissed out of hand. Even if the underlying reasons may not be certain, the empirical evidence is clear: academic ability and leadership positions were associated with the likelihood of a man seeing service.

Pre-war location

Especially given Gregory’s findings relating to rates of service in London, the influence of pre-war location on the probability of a Colfeian entering service has been analysed using the definitional assumptions referred to in the Introduction. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 2.6. The analysis is based on the 1191 individuals for whom a pre-war location has been established. The difference is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed Lewisham men were significantly more likely to serve and those abroad significantly less likely to serve compared to ‘Other London’ and ‘Rest of UK’ which were not significantly different from each other.

[16] *Colfensia*, No. 1 (1902), pp. 11–13. The number of attendees represented about 10% of those then enrolled at the school.

Table 2.6. Pre-war location and service.

Location	Number	Service	No service	Percentage service (%)
Abroad	209	133	76	63.64
Lewisham	708	558	150	78.81
Other London	157	106	51	67.52
Rest of UK	117	81	36	69.23

The association between remaining in the Lewisham area after leaving school and entering into service is unlikely to have been simply a coincidence of location. It is highly probable there were other factors in play. We have seen from Chapter 1 there were strong familial ties within the cohort with well over one in three having been identified as being related to one another either through blood ties (as brothers or cousins or, in one instance, uncle and nephew) or through later marriage (as men married the sisters of other men within the cohort). This would reinforce a sense of local community. Colfeian alumni organisations also maintained strong local connections in terms of social (through the Abraham Colfe Club) and sporting (through the Old Colfeian soccer, cricket and tennis clubs) activities. Additionally, there was a strong Colfeian presence (both organisational and participatory) in the Lewisham Swimming Club and the Curlew Rowing Club which was based (then as now) on the river at Greenwich. The churchgoing profile of the community may also have been influential. Research based on the *Daily News* religious survey of 1902–03 has concluded in the Catford area of Lewisham although churches were less well attended than in more affluent Knightsbridge, there was a far wider denominational spread, particularly in terms of non-conformism. It is argued this resulted in worshipping communities potentially more intimate and where members were more likely to have an active involvement in the running of their church.[17] Strong community ties do not necessarily equate to increased probability of service but multi-layered personal relationships are likely to be influential. Especially in the context of voluntary wartime enlistment, if those around you are joining up, the peer pressure (even if not overt) to also do so must have been strong. The strength of the link between community and wartime enlistment is illustrated by the fact that the largest proportion (just under a quarter) of the 1914 wartime territorial recruitment within the cohort was into 20th (Blackheath and Woolwich) Battalion, London Regiment, whose drill hall was a matter of minutes walk from Colfe's. Interestingly, only one individual out of the 51 men identified as serving as part-time volunteers at the outbreak of war,

[17] Hugh McLeod, 'White Collar Values and the Role of Religion', in *Lower Middle Class in Britain*, ed. by Crossick, pp. 61–88 (p. 67). Religious denomination was a matter often recorded on enlistment. Although there are insufficient consistent data to allow quantitative analysis, there is a sense in the military records that do survive of reasonably widespread non-conformism throughout the Colfeian cohort.

has been identified (and even then only tentatively) as serving with the 20th. There was, therefore, no clear strong pre-war connection with the unit.

In the context of the historiography more generally, given that 865 (just under three-quarters) of this sample analysed here were based in Lewisham or other parts of London prior to the war, on the basis of Gregory's study, a slight uplift in enlistment rates as against the national average could be expected. However, irrespective of where a Colfeian was located pre-war, it is apparent he was far more likely to serve than those in the general population eligible for service. Even a Colfeian pre-war migrant (who could reasonably be expected to have less incentive than most and was not generally subject to any form of compulsion) was around 17 percentage points more likely to serve than the average identified by Winter in relation to the British Army for males in England and Wales. Although of significance, clearly location was not, therefore, the only factor influencing Colfeian recruitment.

Pre-war occupation and social class

Winter and Gregory have also established in different contexts non-manual workers were significantly more likely to serve than manual workers.[18] The methodological approach adopted in determining occupation and social class for the Colfeian dataset has been set out in detail in the Introduction. Of the 1346 men comprised in the dataset, it has not been possible to identify the pre-war occupation of 215. There are also a further 366 men who were not capable of holding an occupation in England and Wales at the start of the war. This was because they had either died or migrated prior to the outbreak of war or were still in education or training at that point. Table 2.7 shows the respective service rates for the remaining 765 men within social class categories I (upper and middle class), II (lower middle class) and III and IV (skilled and partially skilled workers). Category III comprised 132 men and category IV comprised 4 men but they have been combined for statistical simplicity given the very small number of those in category IV. There were no men as identified as being in category V (unskilled workers).

Table 2.7. Pre-war social class and service.

Social class	Number	Service	No service	Percentage service (%)
I	69	53	16	76.81%
II	556	427	129	76.8%
III	140	105	35	75%

The difference is not significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 2 degrees of freedom (p-value = 0.9021). Categories I and II are comprised primarily of non-manual workers and

[18] See Introduction.

categories III and IV of manual workers. The Colfe's data cannot, therefore, be said to demonstrate non-manual workers were significantly more likely to serve than manual workers. It is, however, certain the profile of the sample does not reflect that of the population more generally. For reasons already explained, although the data relate to pre-war occupation, social class has been analysed by reference to the criteria adopted for the 1921 census. At that point in time, categories III and IV comprised 65 per cent and category V 13 per cent of the total occupied and retired males aged 20–65 in England and Wales whilst category II comprised 20 per cent.[19] By contrast, category II represents 73 per cent and categories III and IV represent 18 per cent of the Colfeian sample. Despite different methodologies and the intervention of the war, it is unlikely national proportionate patterns had altered that substantially in the intervening period. As an aside, although the analysis shown in Table 2.7 has been undertaken on a subset (those with an identified pre-war occupation) of the overall Colfeian dataset, it is interesting to note the resulting service rates are very much in line with the rate for the whole cohort described earlier in this section. Although Table 2.7 establishes no significant statistical association between manual/non-manual occupation and service, this does not mean pre-war occupation and social class did not influence the likelihood of Colfeian enlistment. Winter has suggested working-class men were underrepresented in the British forces by as many as a million individuals, partly as a result of manpower requirements in war-related industries and the poor physical condition of many industrial workers.[20] Colfeian men of the lower-middle class were likely to be healthier and fitter than their working-class counterparts and also less likely to have the technical skills required in war-related industries. Given approaching three out of four of the cohort fell outside the working-class categories of social stratification, it is not, therefore, surprising levels of enlistment were disproportionately high in national terms.

In terms of occupation and class, Gregory has also suggested there was a 'rush to the colours' from around mid-August 1914 of clerks and shop assistants from employment positions providing little in the way of job satisfaction and only limited prospects.[21] There are very few shop assistants in the Colfeian cohort but there are substantial numbers of clerks. As part of the analysis of social class in this study, 366 men living and working in England and Wales when the war began have been identified as a having a pre-war occupation of a clerk. The default position is that occupation has been assessed by reference to the 1911 census returns of England and Wales but, if a later reliable source is available for the period between when the census was taken and the outbreak of war, the description in this later source is adopted. Of these 366, 249 men have been identified as having a year of enlistment in the armed forces. Table 2.8 shows the pattern of distribution of that enlistment.

[19] These calculations are based on figures at the beginning of *Decennial Supplement 1921 Pt II* Table A, introductory section, column (1).
[20] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 25–64.
[21] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 31. See also in relation to clerks p. 75.

Table 2.8. Distribution of enlistment of clerks by year.

Year of enlistment	Number	Percentage
1914	98	39.36%
1915	81	32.53%
1916	37	14.86%
1917	20	8.03%
1918	13	5.22%
Total	**249**	**100**

This produces a marginally different profile spread to that depicted in Figure 2.1 where the relevant rounded proportions are: 1914—36%; 1915—29%; 1916—15%; 1917—10%; and 1918—10%. Enlistment is a few percentage points higher for clerks in the first two years of the war and slightly lower in the last two years but the overall pattern is very similar. Certainly, there is nothing to suggest the enlistment behaviour of clerks was very different from those in other occupations but this may be more a reflection of the overall class profile of the dataset already referred to than anything else.

Pre-war participation in organised sport

The potential role of participation in sporting activities in connection with the role of educational background and local community ties has already been touched upon. We now turn to examine the effect of pre-war participation in organised sport on service in any capacity in its own right. Participation has been measured against reported involvement in representative sport at school or in post-education club sport, both of which were described assiduously in *Colfensia* and the *Colfeian* in the pre-war years. A minimum of 395 men from an overall sample of 1306 have been identified as participating in pre-war organised sport. The effect on service is depicted in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9. Pre-war participation in organised sport and service.

Participation in sport	Number	Service	No service	Percentage service (%)
Y	395	324	71	82.03
N	910	628	282	69.01

The difference is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001). There is, therefore, an association between participation in organised sport either at school or post-education and service in the war. The link between sporting participation and service had been recognised in a Colfeian context within the first six months of the war. In his

report of the activities of the Blue House for issue 22 of *Colfensia*, Henry Price (1909–15)[22] named the twenty-seven former house members who were on active service (amongst them his four immediate predecessors), commenting it was 'remarkable' they were all '*keen* [his emphasis] sportsmen'.[23] Some of the qualities associated with competitive organised sport such as physical and mental strength, fitness, determination to succeed, loyalty, the ability to work as part of a team and an understanding of the importance of training are all fairly universal skills amongst sportsmen that are readily transferrable to a military environment. This is especially so when coupled with qualities of leadership such as the ability to encourage, to inspire and to think strategically. Further, not only did sportsmen have an appropriate skillset but they led an active life and were used to the concept of commitment. Taking all this into account, military service may well have seemed a more natural fit for sportsmen than for some other sections of the community. Archibald Costello already encountered in Chapter 1 is a good example of the type of man concerned. Costello had played soccer and cricket for Colfe's, captaining the soccer 2nd XI. He had also passed the Senior Cambridge Local examination, so as well as playing representative sport and having held a position of leadership at school, he was academically able. After leaving school, whilst working as an insurance clerk, Archibald had played Old Colfeian soccer and cricket, captaining the cricket 2nd XI and also played water polo for the Lewisham Swimming Club. Additionally, he had joined the HAC as a territorial in 1909 and was a member of the HAC cricket team. Costello also illustrates the potential influence of community in the enlistment of sportsmen. He was part of the Old Colfeian cricket tour of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight that took place 10–25 July 1914. Of the side fielded against Havant for a ten-a-side game on the final day, all six Colfeians (there were also four non-Colfeians playing) served in the war.[24] The same is also true for all eleven members of the Old Colfeian 1st soccer IX who posed for the 1913–14 end of season photograph.[25] This is not to suggest these sets of men enlisted together—they joined different units at different points of the war—but they would all serve. This may be the result of the operation of a self-imposed peer pressure or it may simply be a case of like-minded men reaching a similar decision independently of each other.

Other factors

Not all factors potentially associated with the prospects of Colfeian service are necessarily capable of quantitative analysis but this does not mean they are not worthy of attention. In considering motivations for voluntary enlistment in the early stages of the war, Gregory has argued lack of availability of work (especially amongst unskilled workers) resulting from economic dislocation in

[22] Born Greenwich 1898, father book edge marbler. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[23] *Colfensia*, No. 22 (1915), p. 5.
[24] Scorecard appeared in *Kent Messenger* 07.08.1914. See also Introduction.
[25] *Colfeian*, June 1914, No. 28, vol. 7, just after p. 230. See also Introduction.

the immediate lead-up and then outbreak of war was influential.[26] Given the social class profile of the Colfeian cohort,[27] it is not surprising there is no Colfeian evidence to support this. The only primary evidence as to the impact of employment on enlistment is a letter in the Colfe's archives from Robert Gant (1909–14)[28] to Leland Duncan. The letter is undated but was probably written in either late 1914 or early 1915 in response to a request for information about serving alumni. After leaving Colfe's in July 1914, Gant had entered employment with P & O Navigation Company on 10 August 1914, shortly after turning 17. Gant writes he was very keen to join the army when war first broke out but having 'only been at business a few days' thought 'it would not be very nice to me to run away so soon'.[29] There is also very little Colfeian support for Gregory's contention that increasing recruitment figures as August 1914 wore on were due to university students preferring to enlist rather than return for the autumn term or, having matriculated, prospective undergraduates not taking up a place at university.[30] There were possibly two men who may enlisted in preference to returning and three men who may have not taken up a place having decided to join up instead. There is, however, no definitive evidence in any of these cases. Again, this is not surprising. Although university entrance did take place from Colfe's, it was not widespread. It is possible rates were greater in relation to boys who completed their secondary education elsewhere but evidence as to this is not consistently available. Matriculation (in particular for London University) was not uncommon at Colfe's but places were often not taken up. This may have been due to individual preference or to family circumstances which required a boy to become income-generating sooner rather than later. In either event, it needs to be remembered at this time (and particularly amongst the lower middle class to which many of these boys belonged) secondary education was frequently seen as an end in itself rather than a preliminary to further academic study.

We have already considered Gregory's contentions relating to the motivations of clerks during the same period. Even if the Colfe's data do not show any distinct patterns of enlistment for those employed as clerks, it is quite plausible the prospect of escaping from the monotony of working life in London was a significant push factor towards voluntary enlistment for some. A desire for change together with the attraction of an outdoor life, fitness and adventure have all been identified in Chapter 1 as potential elements explaining the high levels of pre-war migration within the cohort. It is possible the motivations that persuaded men to take up new lives on the other side of the world during the pre-war period may also help to explain the much higher than average rates of Colfeian war service.[31] There is a hint of this in the use of the phrase 'run away' by Gant in the letter

[26] Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 31–32.
[27] In which no unskilled workers have been identified.
[28] Born 1897 Woolwich, father civil servant. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[29] Entered Inns of Court OTC 11.1915. Qualified as Flight Officer RNAS November 1916. Died 3 August 1918 of illness aged 20 as Lieutenant No. 6 Wing (Malta Seaplanes).
[30] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 31.
[31] It is worthwhile noting that, in terms of profile, both sets of men were generally young and largely unmarried.

referred to above. It has connotations of war being fun and exciting as compared to having to fulfil recently-entered employment obligations. The prospect of adventure may also have been coupled with a well-developed feeling of patriotism, perhaps deriving in part from the shared educational experience of the Colfeian cohort but more fundamentally stemming from their social background and upbringing. Richard Price has argued the lower middle class (to which most of these men and their families belonged) more so than other sectors of society had developed a strong sense of patriotic duty over the latter stages of the nineteenth century.[32] It is also possible the elementary schooling many Colfeians received at publicly-funded board schools may have led to an enhanced sense of duties of citizenship.[33] Although Jones has drawn attention to the part played by monarchist language and especially the use of 'For King and Country' in encouraging support for the war,[34] there is little evidence from Colfe's records of the phrase being expressly used with any frequency in a motivational manner. A search of the digitised archives reveals only four contemporaneous references, three of which are featured in pupil poetry.[35] The fourth is in the context of a letter from an alumnus in military training and strikes what could be interpreted as a slightly sardonic tone. It is not a phrase which seems to have appeared in any other wartime correspondence with the School or in the framing of the various rolls of honour and service generated during the war, where, as will be seen in Chapter 3, the focus was very much on 'Country' rather than 'King'.

What may broadly be described as the enthusiasm of youth may have had a part to play in enlistment. It is already established rates of service within the very youngest elements of the cohort were significantly higher than in older age groups. Eagerness to serve is illustrated by the levels of underage enlistment. In general terms, the minimum age for voluntary enlistment was 18.[36] Despite this there were 54 boys who volunteered and were accepted for service under this age. This represents around one in fourteen of the men for whom age at entry at enlistment has been identified and one in ten of the volunteering cohort within that dataset. This is a notable proportion. The youngest boy to volunteer was Dudley Hoys.[37] Hoys (who was academically able and an accomplished school sportsman) had left Colfe's in July 1914 and entered service as a Gunner with 4th London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery on 1 October 1914 aged 15 years and 8 months. He was commissioned into 10th Battalion, Bedfordshire Regiment in May 1915 aged 16 and promoted to Lieutenant with the Machine Gun Corps at the end of the following year aged 17, still underage. He was not posted abroad until he turned 18 at the beginning of 1918, which indicates, at some

[32] Richard N. Price, 'Society, Status and Jingoism: The Social Roots of Lower Middle Class Patriotism', in *Lower Middle Class in Britain*, ed. by Crossick, pp. 89–112.
[33] See Chapter 1.
[34] Jones, *King and Country*, pp. 69–76.
[35] The only other three references of relevance are also pupil-generated but a century later in the context of centenary activities.
[36] Although enlistment was permitted at 17 in the Territorial Force: see Beckett, Bowman and Connelly, p. 91.
[37] Born Lewisham 1899, father provisions merchant.

point prior to 1918, his true age had been discovered. Thomas Butler (1906–14), also academically able, left school in April 1914 to take up employment.[38] He entered the ranks of 15th (Civil Service Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment on 7 December 1914, having just turned 16. His medical examination at enlistment described his physical development as ‘excellent’. Butler was posted to the Western Front in August 1915 and fought at the Battle of Loos that autumn before he had reached the age of 17. He was invalided back to the United Kingdom in December 1915 and hospitalised for the first half of 1916 initially with typhoid and then with german measles. At some point during this period his true age was discovered and it was ordered at the beginning of 1917 Butler should not be sent overseas until he had reached the proper age. He would not return to the Western Front until January 1918.[39] Both Hoys and Butler survived the war. We will consider their post-war lives in Chapter 5.

There is no direct evidence of youthful enthusiasm in terms of archival contemporary correspondence but some assistance may be found in the attitudes of those who were still at school as expressed in the two issues of the primarily pupil-produced *Colfensia* (issues 22 and 23) appearing in 1915. These were the last editions of this magazine produced until May 1924, well after the war had finished. They are not dated and the date of publication is not easy to identify with precision. Although there is a degree of overlap, judging by their content, in broad terms issue 22 covers the period from the start of the war onwards to spring 1915 and issue 23 the period from there until the end of the summer term. In addition to celebration of service and death at both house and school level and extensive extracts from correspondence of those in service, much enthusiasm and patriotic sentiment is expressed in poetry and prose. House reports are a particularly useful source of material. The report by the captain of Green House in issue 23 juxtaposes reporting the war deaths of three former members with an exhortation to current members to ‘do their bit’ to hold ‘the fort against all comers’ in terms of house sporting competitions after coming top in the current year—an illustration of how the martial spirit infused everyday school life.[40] In the same issue, the Red House captain’s report states ‘and still we live and breathe the atmosphere of war’.[41] It might be thought the exuberance and naiveté of schoolboy writing was of limited relevance to the behaviour of those who had left school. However, as the captain of the Red House, Frank Charlton (1910–15),[42] reminded readers of issue 22 many of those ‘standing face to face with death on the chilly plains of Flanders' had still been at Colfe’s less than two terms

[38] Born Wandsworth 1898, father civil servant.
[39] WO363 records [accessed through Ancestry 9 June 2024] show that he did not take well to enforced service at home. He was charged with number of minor misdemeanours. The most serious were: AWOL for 2 days (96 hours detention); improper conduct returning to camp (72 hours detention); abusive language to sentry (96 hours detention); washing in Company tea dixey (7 days’ FP No 1).
[40] *Colfensia*, No. 23 (1915), p. 8.
[41] *Colfensia*, No. 23 (1915), p. 23.
[42] Born 1898, Greenwich, father gas company official. LCC scholar. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman. Competitive marksman. Leadership position.

before.[43] So, the attitudes of current pupils to the war should not be dismissed as immaterial to the approach to enlistment of at least some of those who preceded them. Indeed, Frank was six months older than Hoys and four months older than Butler, both of whom had probably already entered service by the time Charlton wrote these words. Charlton also assured those serving that 'as we have stepped into their shoes here, so, if necessary, we shall follow to join them'. Charlton did just that. He left Colfe's at the end of 1915 (having passed the Senior Cambridge Local examination and matriculated for London University) and was conscripted as an officer cadet in June of the following year. Charlton died of wounds incurred at Béthune in October 1918 serving attached to a trench mortar battery as a Second Lieutenant with 3rd Battalion, Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire) Regiment.

The interlinked themes of many of the factors which have been discussed in this section including sport, leadership, community, camaraderie, loyalty and duty are quite neatly illustrated by a poem entitled 'One of Ours' contributed by 'A.C.' to *Colfensia* issue 23:

> This the third of July, 1915,
> Our School chum is leaving for France,
> We who are with him are saying farewell,
> For he has been given his chance
> To fight for his King, his Country and School,
> And those who are not quite so old,
> But we know we can trust him his duty to do,
> For he ever was fearless and bold.
>
> The train has departed, our hero has gone
> From our sight, but not from our hearts,
> We will anxiously wait till the War has been won,
> For Colfeians are taking their parts,
> At cricket or football on him we relied
> To show us how medals are won,
> And in fancy we see him again by our side,
> As we shake hands and shout 'Well done!'[44]

[43] *Colfensia*, No. 22 (1915), p. 29.
[44] *Colfensia*, No. 23 (1915), p. 11. The reference to 'his King, his Country and School' is variation on the theme considered earlier in the text but not one apparently repeated elsewhere.

Death

This section begins by examining Colfeian fatality levels and then considers the distribution of age at death and the timing of those deaths against the background of the existing literature. There are differences in the methodologies adopted, which are noted and explored. However, it will be found, in general terms, the Colfeian serving cohort encountered higher rates of death than those estimated for the serving population as a whole but lower rates than those claimed for élite educational institutions. It will also be established the age at which Colfeian men died supports contentions at national level that fatalities were concentrated on the youngest elements but with an even greater emphasis on youth. Finally, it will be found the timing of Colfeian deaths broadly follows that estimated for the nation as a whole rather than analysis undertaken in relation to another London-based cohort. Using univariable covariate analysis we will then turn to look at some of the factors that may have had an effect on the probability of death within the Colfeian cohort and helped form the particular patterns exhibited by the dataset. With the exception of age and marital status at the outbreak of the war, pre-war factors connected with entry into service have not been found to have any direct association of significance with the probability of death. Although, as already identified, death in service was by definition dependent upon entry into service in the first instance, once in service the probability of death was largely associated with factors relating to the service itself. It has been found age at and timing and mode of entry into service, final branch (and, in the case of the army, type of unit) but not final rank were all connected with the chances of dying.

Overall rates of death

Out of the 1346 men in the Colfeian dataset, 1306 were alive at the outbreak of the war. There is evidence of war service for a minimum of 952 of these 1306 men, of whom 140 died.[45] This gives an overall fatality rate of 14.71 per cent. This proportion is higher than Winter's estimate of British military fatality levels, which stands at 11.76 per cent.[46] As with rates of service, it may well be the disparity can be at least partially accounted for by differing methodologies. Winter's figures are based on domestic forces alone whilst the Colfe's dataset extends to service in Dominion and USA (and, in one instance, French forces) which we will see in Chapter 4 suffered higher average levels of proportionate loss than the domestic element of the cohort. The relatively small size of the Colfeian cohort could also be a factor. A fatality rate of 14.71 per cent is, however, far lower than the average loss ratios claimed for alumni of public schools by Winter of around 20 per cent and by Seldon and Walsh of between 18 and 19 per cent.[47] At a superficial level this is easily explained by the fact Colfe's was not contemporaneously recognised as a public school.[48] It does, however,

[45] As to the criterion adopted for death in service see Introduction.
[46] See Introduction.
[47] See Introduction.
[48] See Chapter 1.

form part of the main Seldon and Walsh dataset and the differential merits further examination. Winter appears to have based his data mainly on contemporaneous rolls of honour and service. Further, the conclusions reached by Seldon and Walsh are based on data provided by the schools concerned, most of which were probably compiled during the war or in the years immediately after and reflected rolls of honour and service of the time. The accuracy of this type of data may be open to doubt in some instances. Educational institutions consist of relatively transient populations. It required continuing strong ties and a highly-organised and well-resourced administrative capability to maintain records such as this with accuracy during a time of upheaval especially in what was largely a pre-automated society. Even in the absence of lasting contact, fatalities were probably relatively easy to trace through, for example, the national and local press but service details (equally important to establishing death ratios) less so. For example, an analysis based on the contemporaneous Colfe's rolls of honour and service produces a fatality rate of 16.96 per cent as opposed to 14.71 per cent. In fact, the figure appearing in Seldon and Walsh is even higher, standing at 17.3 per cent. This is based on lower levels of service,[49] which is likely to be a consequence of the adoption by Seldon and Walsh of different definitional assumptions relating to service than those used in compiling the rolls. The reliability (or otherwise) of contemporaneous data of this nature to produce accurate assessments of either mortality or overall service is considered further in detail in Chapter 3.

Levels of pre-war professional military service may also be a distorting factor. Seldon and Walsh identify Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Marlborough, Wellington, Clifton, Cheltenham, Haileybury, Rugby and Winchester as public schools having a strong tradition of providing officers to the professional army. In terms of Wellington, specifically, it is said in the five years immediately prior to the outbreak of war almost half of school leavers were commissioned either directly or from university, with alumni comprising over 10 per cent of the officer corps of the BEF that embarked to fight in France in 1914.[50] Gregory has compared the respective death rates for alumni of Eton and Lancing in 1914. Although their aggregate mortality rates for the war overall are believed to be broadly similar (20.5 per cent and19.9 per cent), 18.6 per cent of the identified Eton combat deaths were incurred by the end of 1914 as opposed to 4.3 per cent of Lancing deaths, reinforcing the idea that Lancing was not seen as having a strong military officer alumni tradition.[51] There are two points to be taken from this. The first is service and fatality patterns of educational institutions with a history of providing men to the professional military can be expected to differ from those without such a tradition. The second is whether it is appropriate to treat regular and volunteer servicemen in the same manner when considering the issue of disproportionate losses or, indeed, other issues relating to war service more generally. The professional entered military service as a pre-war career choice bringing with it the possibility of death and injury as an occupational hazard. Losses

[49] Seldon and Walsh, p. 256.
[50] Seldon and Walsh, pp. 39–40.
[51] Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 124.

in the professional cadre would be expected in the event of war and were primarily dictated by that career choice rather than being a pure function of social privilege or, indeed, education. The position of the volunteer or, indeed, of those who were subsequently conscripted was very different.

Age at death

As seen in the Introduction, Winter has undertaken analysis of the age profile of total estimated British war losses and concluded they were heavily weighted towards those under 30. Adopting the same age groupings as Winter, Table 2.10 compares his findings as to proportions of loss,[52] with those resulting from analysis of the Colfe's data.

Table 2.10. Comparison of age profile of Colfeian and total British war losses.

Age at death	Colfe's (%)	Total British (%)
16–19	16.43	11.76
20–24	47.14	37.15
25–29	24.29	22.31
30–34	10.71	15.17
35–39	0.71	9.18
40–44	0.71	3.07
45–49	0	0.94
50 and over	0	0.42

Source for British war losses: J M Winter *The Great War and the British People* Table 3.7.

There are methodological differences in the analytical approaches adopted. In the absence of definitive official statistics, Winter adopts a hypothetical counterfactual approach to construct his estimate. The Colfeian figures are actual. Further, the exclusive focus of Winter's dataset is British losses whilst the Colfe's data extend to include those from abroad who served. Leaving these issues aside, it can, however, be seen the Colfe's data support Winter's contentions that fatalities were concentrated in the under 30s and, indeed, are even more heavily weighted in that direction with approaching 88 per cent of the Colfeian war dead (as opposed to Winter's figure of 74 per cent) being within that bracket. This is, though, perhaps to be expected given we have already established the Colfe's dataset has a pronounced predisposition towards youth as a consequence of the way in which pupil numbers expanded from the mid-to-late 1890s onwards. We will return to look at the statistical significance of age both at the outbreak of the war and at entry into service on the probability of dying shortly.

[52] As to which see Winter, *Great War*, Table 3.6.

Timing of death

Table 2.11 comprises a table showing the distribution of Colfeian deaths by year.

Table 2.11. Distribution of Colfeian deaths by year.

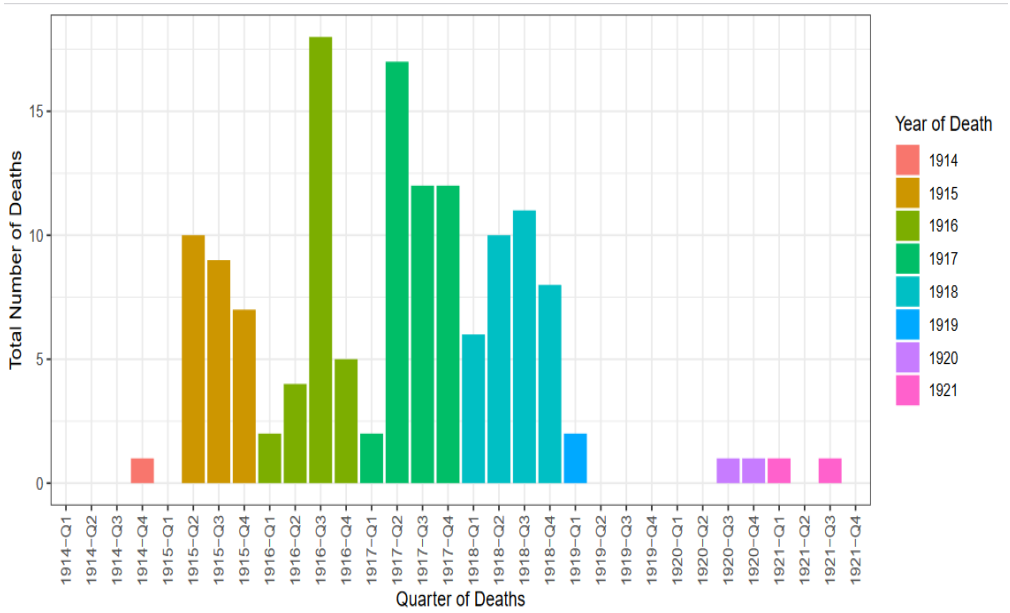
Year	Number	Percentage (rounded)
1914	1	1%
1915	26	19%
1916	29	21%
1917	43	31%
1918 (to 11.11.1918)	33	24%
Post-armistice	8	6%
Total	**140**	**102**

As can be seen, there is only one death in the first five months of the war with numbers steadily increasing over 1915 and 1916 to peak in 1917 and then falling away in the final year of the war. The pattern is reasonably predictable for a cohort primarily comprised of wartime volunteers with relatively low levels of conscription. This is particularly so when it is borne in mind that, except for the very earliest volunteers, there was likely to be a time-lag to allow for adequate training of several months or perhaps even a year or more between enlistment and entry into an operational theatre of war.[53] There is insufficient consistency of data to enable the extent of this delay to be analysed quantitatively in the context of Colfeian service but we will return to examine the relationship between date of enlistment and the probability of death below. The post-armistice deaths, incidentally, are divided equally between the remainder of 1918, 1919, 1920 and 1921 up to 31 August which is the cut-off date for CWGC recognition. Even if these men were to be excluded, it would not make any significant difference to the patterns.

This analysis by year has also been broken down by quarter as depicted in Figure 2.3.

[53] As to the preparation of volunteers for active service overseas see Peter Simkins, *Kitchener's Army: The Raising of the New Armies, 1914-1916* (Pen & Sword Military, 2007), pp. 296–320.

FIG. 2.3. Distribution of Colfeian deaths by year and quarter.



Gregory has carried out a similar exercise by year and month for about 1,000 fatalities comprised in the roll of honour for LCC employees and mapped the resulting distribution against an estimated distribution for the nation as a whole.[54] Gregory argues the chronology of this sample (which covers a wide range of residential areas and occupations in London) matches that of the nation subject to two broad areas of exception. Firstly, higher initial losses. About 32 per cent of LCC fatalities were incurred before 1 July 1916 (the start of the Somme offensive), which is in contrast to the nation as a whole where the proportion is only 20 per cent. Gregory suggests part of the reason for this is the number of reservists (who were called into service immediately prior to war starting) in the sample[55] coupled with high rates of initial volunteering,[56] which in turn led to increased levels of casualties in the first part of the war. The second main area of exception, it is argued, derives from the relatively significant proportions of Londoners who served in the battalions of the London Regiment. This meant when these units were in battle there were disproportionate levels of loss as measured against the national profile.[57]

The Colfe's fatality pattern is much more in line with that estimated by Gregory for the country as a whole than with the profile of the LCC sample. In particular, there is no evidence of excessive initial losses although as we have seen early volunteering rates in the Colfeian sample were substantially higher than the national average. This may be attributable to the training time-lag already referred

[54] Gregory, 'Lost Generations' pp. 72–73,Table 3.2. The estimated national distribution is constructed by combining the monthly military losses of the army in all theatres of war (taken from *Statistics of the Military Effort*) and adding known large incidents of naval loss.
[55] It appears that the LCC employed an unusually high number of army reservists: Gregory, *Last Great War*, p. 116.
[56] Pennell has calculated that Londoners provided about 15% of the country's total recruits to the regular army in August 1914: Pennell, p. 145.
[57] Gregory, 'Lost Generations', pp. 72–76.

to although, in principle, this should also have been applicable to the LCC sample. Presence of reservists is, however, a substantial differentiating feature between the two samples. At most there was one in the Colfeian cohort and it may well be the strong presence of reservists in the LCC sample was the primary influencing factor in the first exception identified by Gregory. Gregory estimates approximately one in five Londoners who died in the war did so serving with one of the battalions of the London Regiment. The same is true (29 out of 140) for the Colfe's sample. However, the Colfe's dataset does not exhibit the fatality peaks identified by Gregory reflecting the casualties incurred by the London Regiment at Festubert and during the battle of Flers-Courcelette in May 1915 and September 1916 respectively. Of the ten Colfeians killed in the second quarter of 1915, three died at Festubert in May but only two of those were serving in a London Regiment battalion. Unsurprisingly, the Colfe's dataset shows a spike of deaths (at eighteen, the most significant during the course of the war) in Q3 of 1916 coinciding with the Somme offensive. Most of these (twelve) were incurred in September but only four (albeit all serving members in a London Regiment battalion) occurred during the battle of Flers-Courcelette. In general terms, the quarterly peaks and troughs in the Colfeian sample are as expected for a serving cohort of this nature. In addition to the spike in Q3 1916, there are further spikes in Q2, Q3 and Q4 1917 coinciding with the Arras, Passchendaele and Cambrai offensives of that year and in Q2 and Q3 1918 with the German spring offensive.

We now move on, using univariable covariate analysis, to examine the statistical significance of a range of factors associated with the probability of death in the Colfeian serving cohort.

Pre-war factors

Earlier in this chapter we considered the connection of a number of pre-war factors with the likelihood of a Colfeian man entering service. Statistical analysis has been run to assess whether those factors are also associated with the prospect of war death. There are only two pre-war factors which have transpired to be statistically significant: age at the outbreak of the war and pre-war marital status.[58] In terms of age at the outbreak of the war, it was possible to undertake analysis on the whole of the serving cohort of 952 men. Table 2.12 contains the resulting data. The difference between the rates of death in service is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value = 0.02). Post-hoc test comparison showed Group 4 was significantly lower than the other 3 groups. This suggests those aged 27 and under on 4 August 1914 were more likely and those aged 28 and over were less likely to die in service.

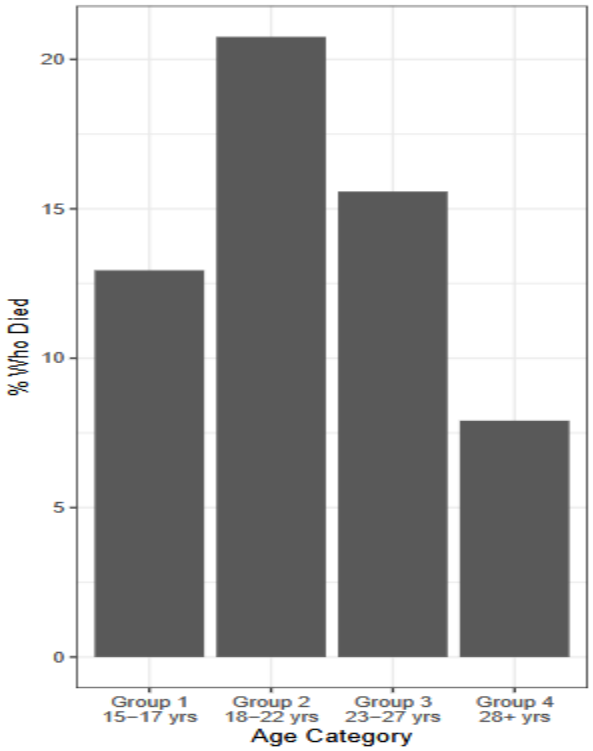
[58] Despite the findings of Carr and Hart (see Introduction), although academic ability (run on a cohort of 815 individuals for whom the relevant information was available) was almost (but not quite) significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom, (p-value = 0.06), neither pre-war academic nor sporting ability have been found to have had significant association with Colfeian death.

Table 2.12. Mortality and age at outbreak of war.

Age Group	Number	Death	No death	Percentage (%)
1 (under 18)	252	38	214	15.08%
2 (18–22)	247	47	200	19.03%
3 (23–27)	244	37	207	15.16%
4 (28+)	209	18	191	8.61%

An analysis relating to age and death from a slightly different perspective has also been carried out based on the age at which an individual entered the war rather than his age when the war began. This analysis has been conducted on 832 men who served and for whom data relating to the timing of their entry into the war are available. For pre-war regulars and pre-war volunteers, mobilisation has been treated as the date of entry into the war. For volunteers, recruits under the Derby Scheme and conscripts, date of entry has been taken as the later of enlistment or mobilisation. The analysis has been undertaken using the same age groups as in Table 2.12 and produces the following death rates: Group 1—12.94 per cent; Group 2—20.75 per cent; Group 3—15.58 per cent; and Group 4—7.91 per cent. The results are depicted in Figure 2.4.

FIG. 2.4. Mortality and age at entry into war.



The difference is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.01). Post-hoc test comparison showed death rates in Group 2 were significantly higher

and significantly lower in Group 4 than the other two age groups. It has already been seen there was a much greater likelihood of entry into service in the first place among those who were youngest when the war began. Both these sets of analysis suggest, once having entered service, they were also at the greatest risk of death, with the second set of figures indicating those aged between 18–22 at entry into the war were most at risk.

The other pre-war factor found to have a statistically significant effect on the prospect of death is marital status. This analysis has been carried out on a dataset of 928 individuals who served and for whom pre-war marital status has been identified. The results are set out in Table 2.13 and show the death rate of a single man was far higher than that of a married man.

Table 2.13. Mortality and pre-war marital status.

Pre-war marital status	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
Married	110	4	106	3.64
Not married	818	135	683	16.5

The difference between these rates of death is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001). We have identified in Chapter 1 marriage within the Colfeian cohort was generally late, not taking place until a man was in his late 20s. As already seen, more Colfeian men who were aged 27 and under on 4 August 1914 and who were aged 18–22 when they entered the war died in service than others. Therefore it would not necessarily be surprising if an unmarried man carried a statistically-enhanced risk of death. We will also see shortly there is a correlation between service in a combat unit and the prospects of death. Although there are insufficient consistent data to allow a quantitative analysis to be undertaken, it is not unreasonable to speculate married men being generally older might mean they were less physically suited to frontline service and also more likely to have developed skills in pre-war civilian life of use in non-combat roles.

Entry into service

Analysis has been carried out as to the correlation of two aspects of entry into service with dying in service where consistent data are available. The first is the year of entry into service and the second is the mode of entry into service i.e. volunteer, conscript etc. Looking first at year of entry, there are 843 individuals from the serving cohort for whom a year of entry into service has been established. For those who were already serving as regulars and as pre-war volunteers, the year of entry has been set at 1914. The resulting data are set out in Table 2.14.

Table 2.14. Mortality and year of entry into service

Year of entry into war	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
1914	348	71	277	20.4
1915	225	36	189	16.0
1916	118	20	98	16.95
1917	78	7	71	8.97
1918	74	0	74	0

The difference between these rates of death is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 4 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed the death rate for those who entered service in 1914 was significantly higher and for those who entered service in 1917 and 1918 significantly lower than for those who entered service in 1915 and 1916. Although not without interest, these results should be interpreted with a degree of caution. The approach of comparing year of entry into service with death in service does not account for the likelihood of differing risk profiles relating to location of service—not all men served abroad and not all men who served abroad did so in an operational theatre of war. An alternative (and, potentially, more useful) approach to assessing the probability of death might be by reference to the length to time men spent on active service to test the association between time spent in an operational theatre of war (and, potentially, in a higher risk setting) and death in service. Unfortunately, the Colfeian data are insufficiently comprehensive or consistently precise to facilitate this in any meaningful comparative manner across the serving dataset.

The one area where the data as to time spent on active service are relatively complete relates to those who died. In nearly all cases, the date of death (and, therefore, the date of cessation of active service) is known and, in many cases, the date of entry into operational theatres of war is also known. An analysis of the 94 men (or just over two-thirds) who died in their first spell of service abroad shows of the 77 men whose details are fully identified 31 (or 40 per cent) did so within the first three months of service. For some death came very quickly. Take, for example, Charles Wogan-Browne (1911–14).[59] Wogan-Browne, a commercial travelling salesman, was conscripted into the army three months short of his 18th birthday from an address in Lee in June 1917, transferring to the cadet wing of the RFC the following October. He joined the Independent Force[60] as a Second Lieutenant Day Bombing Observer in France in September 1918 and died of wounds sustained in his first flight a week later. The life expectancy of new airmen was notoriously

[59] Born 1899 Epping, father's occupation unknown. Board school. LCC scholar. Undistinguished school career.
[60] A strategic bombing unit of the RAF.

short but those serving on the ground might also not survive long. Arnold Ames (1902–04)[61] had migrated to Canada in 1911 and was farming in British Columbia immediately pre-war. He volunteered for service in the ranks with the CEF in early November 1914. He arrived on the Western Front on 7 April 1915 and died just over three weeks later repulsing German attacks around St Julien during the Second Battle of Ypres in the first major appearance on a European battlefield of the Canadian forces. Frederick Wild (1905–07)[62], a jeweller's assistant, meanwhile had volunteered for service in the ranks with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in September 1914. Having arrived on the Western Front with 8th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry on 8 September 1915, he was killed just over a fortnight later probably serving with either A or D Company in the attack on Hill 70 on the opening day of the Battle of Loos. By way of final example, there is George Rigden (1911–15),[63] a student at Imperial College who was conscripted into the army one month short of his 18th birthday in January 1917. He entered service in the ranks on the Western Front on 12 October 1917 with 1st Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) and was killed in action a fortnight later during the first day of the Second Battle of Passchendaele.

Although this analysis tells us nothing about the probability of death as such, it does illustrate substantial levels of death occurred during a man's initial few months at the front. There are two points to be taken from this. The first is, counterintuitively, less time exposed to risk in an operational theatre of war may not necessarily have led to a reduction in the possibility of death. It is conceivable although more time in an operational theatre of war brought with it greater exposure to risk, it also carried benefits in the form of increased experience and military ability that might aid survival. In other words, not being battle-hardened might have been a factor increasing the possibility of death. We will return to this theme a little later in the context of officer fatality levels (which are significantly lower in the Colfeian dataset than more generally) and high rates of commissioning from the ranks. The early deaths of Ames, Wild and Rigden also show the enhanced risks a man faced if his enlistment timing was such that readiness for active service coincided with a major battle. The individuality of risk profiles is brought into stark relief by the contrasting fortunes of brothers, Murray (1904–08) and Graeme (1904–11) Jordan.[64] Both men volunteered for service with 14th (London Scottish) Battalion, London Regiment, less than a week apart, Graeme on 27 August 1914 and Murray on 1 September 1914. Volunteering levels were such (from their respective service numbers over 500 men had volunteered in the interim period), Graeme entered a front-line unit and Murray (who also did not confirm his willingness to serve abroad until 28 September) a reserve unit. As a consequence, Graeme was shipped to France in mid-September 1914. He was wounded by a gunshot wound to the head at Messines Ridge, Ypres

[61] Born 1888 Prescot Lancashire, father manufacturing agent. Undistinguished school career.
[62] Born 1892 Greenwich, father pawnbroker. Undistinguished school career.
[63] Born 1899 Greenwich, father teacher. Board school. Academically able. Leadership position.
[64] Sons of dairy farmer born in Lewisham (Murray 1892), (Graeme 1896). Murray academically able. Graeme undistinguished school career.

during the first charge of the London Scottish on 1 November, taken prisoner and died from his wound in captivity later that month aged 18. Murray meanwhile entered service on the Western Front towards the end of April 1915 and remained there unscathed until the end of the war eventually dying in 1989 aged 97. One of the many improvements in protection Murray would have seen during the course of his military service was the introduction of steel helmets in May 1916 that served to reduce the number of head wounds of the nature which killed Graeme.

The second aspect of entry into service quantitatively analysed for correlation with death in service is the mode of entry. This analysis has been run on 877 members of the serving cohort for whom mode of entry into service has been identified.[65] Table 2.15 contains the results of the analysis.

Table 2.15. Mortality and mode of entry into service.

Mode of entry into service	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
Pre-war regular	13	1	12	7.69
Pre-war volunteer	51	11	40	21.57
Wartime volunteer	533	98	435	18.39
Derby Scheme	50	4	46	8.0
Conscript	200	21	179	10.5
Other	30	2	28	6.67

The statistical testing has been restricted to the categories of Pre-war volunteer, Wartime volunteer, Derby Scheme and Conscript given the small sample sizes of the remaining two categories. The difference between the rates of death for the four categories tested is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value = 0.02). For the purpose of evaluation of post-hoc significance and, again to mitigate issues surrounding small sample sizes, the results for the Derby Scheme and Conscript categories were combined. The results showed Pre-war volunteers and Wartime volunteers had significantly higher rates of death than these other two categories. Pre-war volunteers were mobilised at the outbreak of war and, if an individual had agreed to serve abroad, he could, like Graeme Jordan (who was a Wartime volunteer but in a territorial unit) be in action alongside Pre-war regulars in the very earliest stages of war, facing much the same casualty risks as they did. Given this, it might be expected Pre-war volunteers would display the highest overall rates of death. This does not, however, appear to have

[65] As to the definitional assumptions made as to categorisation see Introduction.

been the case. Many mobilised Pre-war volunteers were sent abroad for garrison duties to replace regulars drafted for service with the BEF and, indeed, Jordan's unit had only originally been sent to France with the intention fulfilling the role of line of communication troops.[66] This may explain the relatively small differential between the respective mortality rates of the Pre-war and Wartime volunteer categories. We have also seen early entry into the war may not necessarily correlate with the possibility of death. The explanation for lower death rates amongst those who entered service through the Derby Scheme or conscription may lie in the high, early and youthful levels of volunteering within the cohort already explored. This may have resulted in most of the youngest and fittest (and most suited for combat and potentially therefore—as we will see in a moment—at a greater risk of death) of those age-eligible already being in service by the time the authorities started to introduce alternative methods of recruitment. This line of argument gains some support from the fact, as we will see shortly, Pre-war and Wartime volunteers were more likely to serve in combat roles than those recruited under the Derby Scheme or through conscription.

Nature of service

We turn now to examine the statistical significance of a number of elements of an individual's service on the prospects of death. Table 2.16 shows mortality rates by reference to a man's final branch of service.[67]

Table 2.16. Mortality and branch of service.

Branch of service	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
Airborne services	143	17	126	11.89
Army	705	117	588	16.6
Navy	65	5	60	7.69
Other	39	1	38	2.56

The difference between the rates of mortality is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value = 0.02). Post-hoc test comparison showed those whose final branch of service was the army had a significantly higher mortality rate than the other three branches. This is not an unexpected finding. Winter has also concluded mortality rates in the army (at 12.91 per cent) were much higher than those for the navy (6.75 per cent) and the RFC/RAF (2.12 per cent).[68] There are methodological differences between how the two sets of figures have been calculated. Winter has allocated RNAS deaths to the navy. The Colfeian data allow the

[66] Beckett and Simpson, pp. 131–32.
[67] As to the definitional assumptions made regarding categorisation see Introduction.
[68] See Introduction.

treatment of all deaths incurred across the airborne services as one, which is likely to produce a better reflection of risk profile. The Colfeian data also allow the separate treatment of the one instance of death (a Red Cross driver) incurred in a non-martial role. We have seen the overall Colfeian mortality rate is higher than Winter's estimate of national British military fatality levels. The differential is, in broad terms, reflected here in the variation between army fatality rates. The divergence in airborne deaths is substantially larger but it is unwise to read too much into this given the small size of the Colfeian sample.

Developing the theme of the association between the type of a man's service and death, analysis has also been undertaken as to whether any element of service in a combat role was statistically significant. As explained, a 'combat role' has been defined using a combination of factors centred around nature of unit and location of service.[69] The analysis has been carried out on the basis of any degree of exposure in a combat role and, in considering the results, it does need to be borne in mind the nature of a man's service was not necessarily static—men moved in and out of various roles as the war progressed for a variety of reasons with the potential for changes in risk profile. Table 2.17 shows the results of analysis based on 941 individuals out of the serving dataset of 952 for whom it is has proved possible to identify service (or not) in a combat role. Not unexpectedly, the mortality rate of those who saw any element of service in a combat role was far more substantial (over 10 times greater) than for those who did not.

Table 2.17. Mortality and service in combat role.

Service in combat role	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
Yes	608	133	475	21.88
No	333	7	326	2.10

The difference between the rates of mortality is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001). The other noteworthy point arising from this analysis (especially in the context of arguments about generational loss) is the substantial proportion of men (around 35 per cent) who have been identified as never having served in any form of combat role with a corresponding exposure to the possibility of death that was much-reduced.

It has also been possible to run some subsidiary analysis to assess the relationship between initial mode of entry into service and an element of service in a combat role. This has been run on a subset of 872 men for whom mode of entry into service and combat status have been identified. The results of the analysis are set out in Table 2.18.

[69] For the details of the definitional assumptions adopted see Introduction.

Table 2.18. Mode of entry into service and service in combat role.

Mode of entry into service	Number	Combat	No combat	Percentage combat (%)
Pre-war regular	13	10	3	76.92
Pre-war volunteer	50	43	7	86.0
Wartime volunteer	532	395	137	74.25
Derby Scheme	49	30	19	61.22
Conscript	198	77	121	38.89
Other	30	7	23	23.33

The statistical testing has been restricted to the categories of Pre-war volunteer, Wartime volunteer, Derby Scheme and Conscript given the small sample sizes of the remaining two categories. The difference between these rates of an element of service in a combat role is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed Pre-war volunteers and Wartime volunteers were significantly more likely to undertake an element of service in a combat role then those enlisting under the Derby Scheme. It also showed Conscripts were significantly less likely to undertake an element of service in a combat role. Although, the datasets are not precisely identical, a comparison between these findings and those contained in Table 2.15 are suggestive that the association between mode of entry into service and death depicted there may have been conditioned by an element of service in a combat role.

This analysis by reference to service in a combat role necessarily involves a degree of generalisation. Just because an individual falls within the relevant definitional category does not mean he necessarily runs the same risk as others. The Colfeian data are sufficient to allow exploration of differing levels of risk profile by reference to final units of service within the army. The categorisation adopted for these purposes is Artillery, Infantry, RE and Other units. The category of ‘Infantry’ includes those nominally in a cavalry unit. The analysis has been carried out on a dataset of 678 individuals. The results are set out in Table 2.19. The difference between the rates of mortality is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001).

Table 2.19. Mortality and final army unit of service.

Army unit of service	Number	Death	No death	Percentage death (%)
Artillery	76	6	70	7.89
Infantry	414	104	310	25.12
RE	47	2	45	4.26
Other	141	5	136	3.55

Post-hoc test comparison showed those serving in an Infantry unit as their final unit of service had significantly higher mortality rates than the other three types of unit and those in Other units as their final unit of service had significantly lower rates of death than the other three branches. Given the analysis undertaken as to service in combat roles, this latter finding is not surprising—service in Other units, by definition, generally constituted a non-combat role. The Colfeian risk profile of serving in the Infantry was, however, quite clearly very different than that applying to service in either the Artillery or the RE.

In support of a contention the British social élite suffered disproportionately in terms of war losses, Winter seeks to establish officers (mainly drawn he argues from the middle and upper classes) were subject to relatively greater mortality rates than those in the ranks.[70] In the absence of direct data, Winter relies on a hypothesis of what are termed 'surplus' officer deaths (the percentage of officer deaths exceeding the percentage of officers in the army) to establish this. Winter calculates, across the combined branches of British forces, 329,771 men (5.37 per cent of the total) served as officers of whom 45,000 were killed (a mortality rate of 13.64 per cent) whilst 5,789,803 (94.2 per cent) men served in the ranks of whom 677,785 (a mortality rate of 11.71 per cent) were killed.[71] This concept of 'surplus' officer deaths is not reflected in the Colfeian data. Analysis has been carried out in connection with the relationship between final rank and mortality by reference to the 895 individuals in the serving dataset for whom a substantive final rank of officer or other rank has been identified. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 2.20. The difference between the rates of mortality is not significant when analysed using a chi-squared test (p-value = 0.70).

[70] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 83–92.
[71] Based on statistics contained in Winter, *Great War*, Table 3.10.

Table 2.20. Mortality and final rank.

Final rank	Number	Death	No death	Percentage (%)
Officer	399	65	334	16.29
Other rank	496	75	421	15.12

As we have already seen, overall Colfeian mortality rates were approaching 3 percentage points higher than those estimated by Winter for British forces generally. It is not, therefore, necessarily surprising to find rates calculated for Colfeian officers (16.29 per cent) and other ranks (15.12 per cent) are also higher. The ratio of officers to other ranks is, however, far higher than that identified by Winter. Of the dataset of 895, 44.58 per cent were officers and 55.42 per cent other ranks compared to the comparative figures from Winter's data of 5.37 per cent and 94.2 per cent. Certainly, therefore, by reference to final rank, there was a far greater officer presence amongst the Colfeian cohort than nationally and this is so even though the dataset extends to Dominion and USA forces where (as we will see in Chapter 4) the vast majority of service was in the ranks. Although the data exhibit slightly higher mortality rates amongst the officer cohort, the chi-squared analysis referred to above indicates there was no statistically significant 'surplus'. Research undertaken by Winter indicates 'surplus' officer deaths were greatest during the earliest parts of the war with the differential being largest in the first year of war and tailing off as the war progressed.[72] This may point to a potential explanation as to why the Colfe's data do not reflect Winter's contentions. The Colfe's data exhibit high levels of commissioning from the ranks. A comparison between the 808 individuals for whom both officer or other rank status at entry into the war and final rank have been identified shows although only 100 individuals entered service with a commission, a further 226 men were commissioned from the ranks during the course of the war, as the differential between overall officer and other rank mortality rates identified by Winter declined. The potential significance of this should not, however, be overstated. Chi-squared analysis shows the difference in mortality rates between those originally and subsequently commissioned is not significant ($p = 0.39$), so there may also be other factors at play.

Although there is no available breakdown of national data by specific rank, Winter also contends it is likely the highest rates of officer fatality fell on those holding the rank of Second Lieutenant.[73] Within the Colfeian dataset it is possible to analyse death by rank. At first sight, the resulting analysis supports this with around 54 per cent of officer fatalities comprising Second Lieutenants and around 46 per cent other officer ranks. The position is, however, more nuanced than these figures suggest. There are two aspects to this. The first is, given military structure, there were likely

[72] Winter, *Great War*, Table 3.8.
[73] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 89–90. This is supported by analysis of rolls of honour of 28 public schools showing that this rank accounted for nearly a third of total deaths: Seldon and Walsh p. 241.

to be far more junior officers in service than senior officers at any one time. Consequently, a higher absolute number of fatalities would be expected. Leading on from this point, Second Lieutenant was the most junior rank where most officers began their military career on active service. More detailed investigation shows a total of 304 Colfeians spent some period serving as a Second Lieutenant during the course of the war, which produces an alternative fatality rate of just under 11 per cent. If the analysis is restricted to Second Lieutenants in the army (as opposed to air services), the rate increases slightly to just over 12 per cent. In either event, this level of fatality rate is lower than that for the dataset as a whole. Service as a Second Lieutenant in itself does not appear, therefore, to have been necessarily as risky as is sometimes portrayed. As with several other aspects of service, the magnitude of the level of risk may depend to a significant degree on issues of timing, that is to say, at what point in the war a man became a Second Lieutenant. As already touched upon, Winter's research suggests officer fatalities were proportionately higher in the early parts of the war. This may have been a consequence of tactics and such matters as officers being readily identifiable to the enemy as leaders. Equally, it may have been a reflection of an improvement in officer training following its formalisation with the introduction of Officer Cadet Battalions from February 1916.[74] This brings us back again to the high levels of commissioning from the ranks in the Colfeian serving cohort. It is certainly arguable those who were commissioned from the ranks were likely to be more skilful at and experienced in modern warfare simply by dint of having experienced combat conditions. If, added to this, by the time they became officers they had undergone a period of time in an Officer Cadet Battalion, it is not hard to see their prospects of survival might have been significantly enhanced.

Disability

Although some work has been undertaken in relation to levels of wounding in comparison to death and being taken prisoner,[75] on the definitional assumptions adopted for the purposes of this thesis, wounding does not, in itself, necessarily constitute disability. We will also see shortly, at least in the Colfeian context, illness (not wounding) was the primary contributory factor to disability amongst survivors of the war. There has been very little in the way of published quantitative research on the levels of disability amongst survivors of British and associated forces or the causes of that disability. The main exception to this is Winter's work in the context of the grant of disability pensions and the causes of disability amongst British First World War pensioners.[76] In practical terms, the reasons for this relative dearth of research probably arise from a combination of the paucity of available official data and the lack of any clear view of what constituted a disability both of which, in turn, may have been a reflection of political reluctance to focus on the issue of ongoing

[74] See Beckett, Bowman and Connelly, pp. 73–74.
[75] Winter, *Great War*, Table 3.3.
[76] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 273–78 and Tables 8.10, 8.11.

disability in the post-war period.[77] The Colfeian dataset offers an opportunity to rectify this in conjunction with a workable definition of disability founded upon a variety of service-record sources.[78] There are two aspects to this section. The first consists of largely descriptive analysis of the Colfeian disability data and the second comprises univariable covariate analysis of individual risk factors and their association with becoming disabled.

The total number of men in the Colfeian dataset identified as having been disabled as a result of service in the war is 137. In the light of the issues surrounding the availability of consistent data as to service already mentioned,[79] this should be viewed as a minimum figure. Given the range of alternative sources used to construct the underlying definitional assumptions, it is, however, considered to be a reasonably full one. The figure is striking for being relatively low. It is broadly in line with the levels of Colfeian war dead but probably much lower than common perceptions of levels of war-related disablement. Further, of these 137 men, only 36 (just over one in four) have been identified as suffering from a significant disability, that is to say, a disability comprising one or more of the loss of a limb, a lifelong infirmity, an inability to resume a pre-war occupation or an early death. Again, these levels are probably much lower than might be expected from generally held impressions. Of the total of 137, it has proved possible to classify 115 men according to whether their disability was caused by wounding or by illness. The cause was found to be wounding in just under 38 per cent of cases. In the majority of instances, therefore, the disability could be categorised as deriving from an individual's interaction with the service environment in its broader sense rather than direct military action. Although, again, perhaps counterintuitive, this reflects Winter's findings that wounds and amputations were responsible for 38 per cent of cases of disability amongst British war pensioners, with the balance being attributable to some form of illness.[80] It is worth noting, here, this causation differential is in stark contrast to death, where direct military action was responsible for over 92 per cent of fatalities.

It has also proved possible to undertake a further level of analysis of the Colfeian data to investigate the connection between the cause of disability and the likelihood of the disability being significant. The results of this analysis appear in Table 2.21 and show that rates of significant disability caused by wounding were over twice as high as those caused by illness. The difference between the rates of significant disability is statistically significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.01). The results must, however, be read with an element of caution. Wounding categorised as severe in service records is used as one of the indicators of disability and might, by definition, tend to lead more long-term issues than other causes.

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[77] See generally Niall Barr, *The Lion and the Poppy: British Veterans, Politics, and Society, 1921–1939* (Praeger Publishers, 2005), pp. 119–49.
[78] As to the detail of the definitional assumptions adopted see Introduction.
[79] See Introduction.
[80] Winter, *Great War*, Table 8.11.

Table 2.21. Cause and significance of disability.

Cause of disability	Number	Significant	Not significant	Percentage (%)
Sickness	72	13	59	18.05
Wounding	43	19	24	44.19

The univariable covariate analysis of disability attributable to service has been undertaken in relation to the same factors as the analysis in respect of death in service. The analysis, however, has been carried out by reference to a base dataset of 812 individuals rather than the full serving cohort of 952. The definition of 'disability' for the purposes of this thesis assumes a degree of post-war survival.[81] Accordingly, in terms of statistical technique, the better approach is to exclude the 140 war dead and to estimate the association between the covariate concerned and disability conditional on survival. In considering the results of these analyses (and, in particular, where comparisons are undertaken with the findings relating to death) it should also be borne in mind the underlying cause of disability was far more likely to be illness than direct military action, which was the overwhelming cause of death.

Pre-war factors

The univariable covariate analysis undertaken in respect of death in service found the majority of pre-war factors identified as having been associated with the entry of a man into service were not directly correlated with death.[82] The two exceptions were age and pre-war marital status at the outbreak of war. Although it is not immediately apparent why this should be the case, pre-war marital status and the risk of disability have not been found to be associated. Analysis undertaken as to age at the outbreak of war indicates this was significant. Table 2.22 contains the relevant data and shows those aged under 18 at the outbreak of war had the lowest rates of disability and the 18–23 age bracket the highest.

Table 2.22. Disability and age at outbreak of war.

Age Group	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage (%)
1 (under 18)	214	23	191	10.75
2 (18–22)	200	51	149	25.5
3 (23–27)	207	36	171	17.39
4 (28+)	191	27	164	14.14

[81] See Introduction.
[82] Although, as already alluded to, resulting deaths were conditional on entry into service in the first place.

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed Group 1 was significantly lower and Group 2 significantly higher than Groups 3 and 4. The alternative analysis carried out in relation to age in respect of death by reference to date of enlistment has been repeated for disability on a cohort of 699 surviving individuals who served and for whom data relating to the timing of their entry into the war are available. The results here do not fall on the side of the dividing line of being statistically significant using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom but reflect the same trends shown in Table 2.22. Undertaking a comparative exercise with the corresponding results relating to death in service, in both cases, however, there is a hint (and it is no more than that) those 28 and over may have been more likely to become disabled than they were to die as a result of service. It is conceivable this could be a reflection of age on levels of physical fitness and capability. Reduced physical fitness and capability might mean a man was less likely to serve in a combat role and we will see shortly there is a correlation between service in a combat role and the risk of disability. It might also result in a diminished resilience to illness arising from the service environment more generally. The data are, though, insufficient to make further analysis possible.

Entry into service

As with death in service, we look here at the statistical significance of year and mode of entry into service. Dealing first with year of entry, there are 709 surviving individuals who served for whom a year of entry into service has been established.

Table 2.23. Disability and year of entry into service.

Year of entry into war	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage disability (%)
1914	277	58	219	20.94
1915	189	45	144	23.81
1916	98	16	82	16.33
1917	71	8	63	11.27
1918	74	2	72	2.7

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 4 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed the rate of disability in 1918 was significantly lower than in the other years. As with the corresponding death in service analysis, the results should be interpreted with a degree of caution because of potential differing risk profiles relating to location of service. The trends in both the death and disability figures are broadly similar apart from for those who entered service in 1915, which exhibits a proportionately greater disability rate than death rate. It needs to be remembered the two sets of

analysis are run on different datasets and so a degree of divergence is not unexpected. Although in the absence of further data it can be no more than conjecture, it is possible the relationship between timing of entry into service and entry into an operational theatre of war may carry different risk weightings for disability and death.

Analysis as to the likelihood of becoming disabled by reference to the mode of entry into service has been undertaken on 740 surviving individuals for whom details are available. Table 2.24 contains the results of the analysis.

Table 2.24. Disability and mode of entry into service.

Mode of entry into service	**Number**	**Disability**	**No disability**	**Percentage disability (%)**
Pre-war regular	12	0	12	0
Pre-war volunteer	40	8	32	20
Wartime volunteer	435	85	350	19.54
Derby Scheme	46	14	32	30.43
Conscript	179	22	157	12.29
Other	28	3	25	10.71

The statistical testing has been restricted to the categories of Pre-war volunteer, Wartime volunteer, Derby Scheme and Conscript given the small sample sizes of the remaining two categories. The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value = 0.03). Post-hoc test comparison was not significant. This contrasts with the corresponding rates for death where the post-hoc test comparison was significant. Despite this, there is some degree of similarity between the trends exhibited by the two sets of analysis. In particular, in both instances, Conscripts had lower rates of death and disability than the other categories. The rates for those who entered service under the Derby Scheme do, however, diverge substantially with the rate for disability being four times higher than that for death. Again, it needs to be remembered the two sets of analysis are run on different datasets and it is not necessarily a question of comparing like with like. We have, however, already established Colfeian volunteering rates were early and high. By the time the Derby Scheme came into operation, it might be, in broad terms, the youngest and fittest had already volunteered. If this was the case, it is possible to speculate those enlisting under the Scheme might be more susceptible to illness (which we have found to be the main cause of disability) through age, general condition or pre-existing medical issues.

Nature of service

Again, we will examine the same covariates in respect of the nature of a man's service as in relation to death in service. Table 2.25 shows disability rates by reference to a man's final branch of service for the 812 serving survivors.

Table 2.25. Disability and final branch of service.

Branch of service	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage disability (%)
Airborne services	126	7	119	5.56
Army	588	127	461	21.60
Navy	60	1	59	1.67
Other	38	2	36	5.26

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.001). Post-hoc test comparison showed those whose final branch of service was the army had a significantly higher disability rate than the other three branches. The post-hoc test comparison in relation to death rates produced the same result indicating the likelihood of disability and death in service were both greatest in the army.

Further analysis has been undertaken as to whether there was a correlation between an element service in a combat role and a man suffering disability during the war. Table 2.26 depicts the results based on analysis of 801 surviving individuals for whom it is has proved possible to identify service (or not) in a combat role.

Table 2.26. Disability and service in combat role.

Service in combat role	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage disability (%)
Yes	475	113	362	23.79
No	326	22	304	6.75

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 1 degree of freedom (p-value < 0.001). As already found with death in service, any element of service in a combat role is associated with disability in service.

Again following on from death in service, analysis has been undertaken in relation to the likelihood of disability being incurred by reference to final units of service within the army. Analysis has been carried out on a dataset of 561 surviving individuals. The results are contained in Table 2.27.

Table 2.27. Disability and final army unit of service.

Army unit of service	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage disability (%)
Artillery	70	14	56	20.00
Infantry	310	85	225	27.42
RE	45	6	39	13.33
Other	136	18	118	13.24

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test with 3 degrees of freedom (p-value < 0.005). Post-hoc test comparison showed those serving in an Infantry unit as their final unit of service had higher rates of disability than those serving in an Artillery unit or the RE and those in Other units as their final unit of service had significantly lower rates of disability. These are similar headline results as for death in service but, in terms of trends, the indications are men in final units other than Infantry may have been comparatively more at risk of becoming disabled than they were of dying. It has to be remembered again the two datasets have a different composition and any comparison is not necessarily comparing like with like. Given, as already established, the majority of disability was caused by illness (which was not necessarily restricted to an environment of direct military interaction) it is not, however, inconceivable the risk profile for death and disability in the context of final units might differ.

Lastly, analysis has been carried out as to the association between final rank and disability in service. It has been undertaken by reference to a dataset of 755 surviving individuals for whom a substantive final rank of officer or other rank has been identified. The results of this analysis are contained in Table 2.28 and show those holding a final rank as a non-officer had a higher disability rate than those who were officers.

Table 2.28. Disability and final rank.

Final rank	Number	Disability	No disability	Percentage disability (%)
Officer	334	46	288	13.77
Other rank	421	89	332	21.14

The difference between the rates of disability is significant when analysed using a chi-squared test (p-value = 0.01). This is in contrast to death in service where it was found whether a man was serving as an officer or in the ranks was not statistically significant. The difference is interesting, particularly once again in the light of the majority of disability being attributable to illness rather than wounding. It is probable, at least for a majority of their time in service, officers enjoyed better

living conditions (in terms of a range of lifestyle matters from accommodation, food and clothing to opportunities for rest and recuperation and privacy) than those in the ranks. This in turn may have led to less exposure to the risk of illness and, indeed, greater resilience if illness was contracted. Mortality risks in action may have been similar but the risks of illness from the service environment more generally might not.

Summary

We have established in this chapter there was a correlation between the socio-geographic background of an individual comprised in the Colfeian dataset and entering the war in military service. It follows from this different socio-geographic backgrounds might produce contrasting patterns. Educational background was a factor in terms of the Colfe's dataset, but by no means the sole determining factor. Participation in pre-war sport (with its core attributes of physical fitness, teamwork and commitment) and age (both in terms of youth and its association with marital status) have also been found to be associated with whether a Colfeian participated in military service. Age continued to be a correlating factor for death in service and, to a lesser extent, disability. Otherwise, although clearly conditional upon entry into service in the first instance, the prospects of death or disability were shaped by the nature of the service an individual undertook and, predominantly, whether there was any element of service abroad in a combat role. Length of time serving abroad in this type of role does not, however, seem to have necessarily increased the risk of death indicating previous combat experience may have influenced chances of survival. The association of age with both entry into service and death or disability in service indicates a generational dimension but does not necessarily support the notion of a 'lost' generation. Contrary to findings in the established literature, officer status (and, more specifically, service as a Second Lieutenant) in the Colfeian dataset did not bring with it an enhanced risk of death. This may be a product of high levels of commissioning from the ranks (potentially bringing battlefield experience and a degree of pre-acquired survival skills) and the timing of being commissioned (previous findings indicate the differential officer/other rank mortality ratio declined as war progressed which, itself, may have been a consequence of improved training regimes). In contrast, this study has found Colfeian other ranks to be at a greater risk of suffering disability than officers. As the primary cause of disability was illness arising from the service environment generally (rather than direct military action), it is conceivable this was a reflection of differences in living conditions on active service.

Chapter 3: The War: Commemoration

This chapter examines Colfe's commemoration of those who served in the First World War. It begins by identifying the key characteristics of the process of commemoration and examining how it evolved during the course of and following the conclusion of the war. The next section analyses the commemorative patterns and some of the potential factors influencing participation in the process. This is followed by an exploration of how participation in the commemorative process and the form of that participation served to shape the collective Colfeian memory of the war.

There is no shortage of historiography regarding commemoration and memorialisation relating to the First World War within educational communities. The predominant (and often exclusive) theme of much of this literature relates to those who died.[1] In a wider context, there has been some passing analysis regarding the contemporary sources used to generate commemorative data. In the case of Uppingham School, for example, there was, at least initially, a reliance on official lists published in the press.[2] For Wakefield Grammar School there was a dependence on alumni and families for information.[3] Similarly in the case of Magdalen College School where, in particular, regular correspondence with serving alumni was considered to be of importance.[4] The study undertaken here apart, there has, however, been little else in the way of detailed analysis of likely sources[5] or of how, if at all, commemorative processes evolved over the course of the war. In the past decade or so there has been a growing realisation that the data used for contemporaneous commemorative records are unlikely to have been complete.[6] This study is, though, the first to systematically map commemorative participation against admission records, identify with a degree of precision significant likely levels of omission and examine the potential reasons for non-participation.

This chapter will establish three matters. The first relates to purpose. It will show how, over the course of time, the scope of Colfeian commemoration narrowed from a recognition of service generally, to one relating to the war dead alone. The second element relates to process and will establish collection of commemorative material was pre-dominantly based on contributions from participants in the war or their families. The third element relates to engagement with the process. Here it will be shown, although pre-war location and service in a combat unit were statistically influential in participation, the decision to engage with the process was fundamentally subjective.

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[1] For recent examples of this see: G. T. Cooper, *Collyer's Casualties: 1914–1919, 1939–1945 : Horsham Grammar School in Two World Wars* (Friends of the Horsham Museum Society, 2019); Matthew Dixon and Simon Batten, *Remember Him at the Altar: Bloxham School and the Great War* (Helion, 2022).
[2] Timothy Halstead, *A School in Arms: Uppingham and the Great War* (Helion, 2017), pp. xiv–xv.
[3] Elaine Merckx and Neal Rigby, *Some Other and Wider Destiny: Wakefield Grammar School Foundation and the Great War* (Helion, 2017), p. 90.
[4] David Bebbington, *Mister Brownrigg's Boys: Magdalen College School and the Great War: The Story of the Fifty Boys from MCS Who Lost Their Lives during the Conflict* (Pen & Sword Military, 2014), pp. 20–25.
[5] Although see Barry Blades, *Roll of Honour: Schooling and the Great War 1914-1919* (Pen & Sword Military, 2015), pp. 35–36 for an outline of the some of the difficulties faced by schools in compiling commemorative details and short case studies relating to Preston and Larne Grammar Schools.
[6] See, e.g., Seldon and Walsh, pp. 254–55; Bebbington, p. 345; Halstead, pp. xiii–xv; Merckx, p. 90.

The cumulative effect of these factors led to 25 per cent of the serving Colfeian alumni not being included in the commemorative process—adopting the language often used in connection with fatality levels, exclusion rates of this magnitude arguably give rise to a 'lost generation' in terms of remembrance. Further, as these 'lost' men were primarily survivors of the war and proportionately more likely to have served in non-combat roles, it is argued this led to a distortion of perceptions of the Colfeian war experience by underrepresenting service participation, exaggerating levels of loss and being overly focused on the role and significance of combat.

Commemorative process

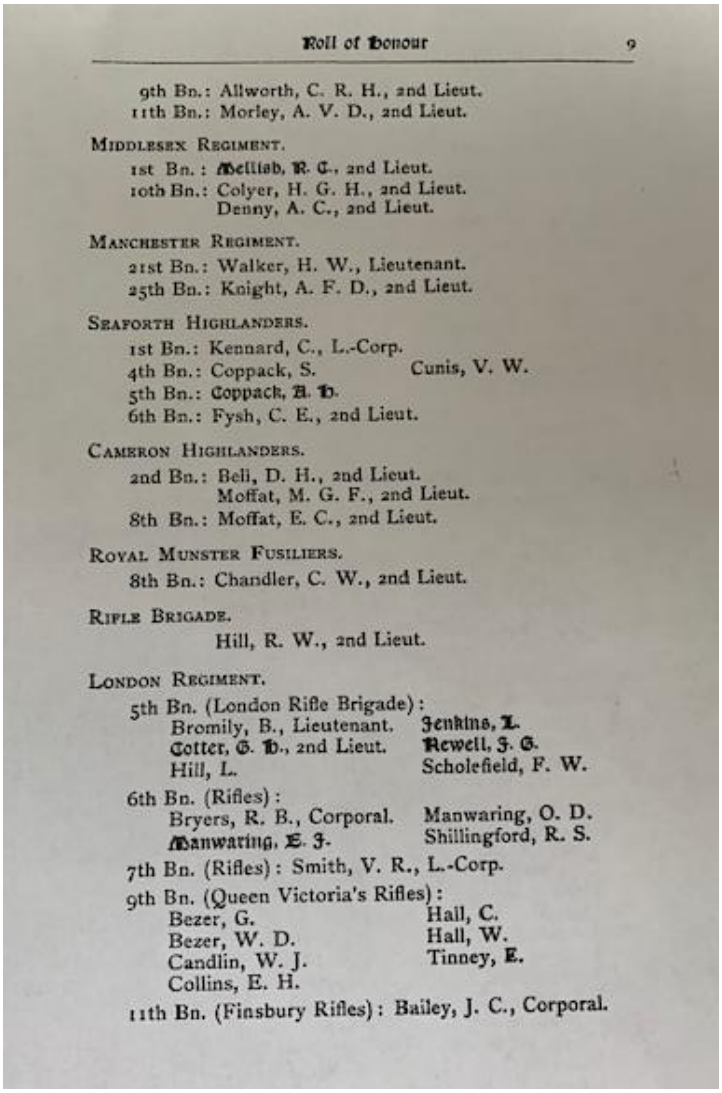
The first commemoration of a death in service appeared in *Colfensia*.[7] The date of publication is uncertain but from its content the edition seems to cover the period from the beginning of the war to spring 1915. On the opening page immediately below the list of contents appears a black-bordered box headed 'In Memoriam' containing the name of Graeme Jordan (already encountered in Chapter 2) and the place, nature and date of death followed by the words 'Thy Will be Done'. This initial commemoration was followed by a 'roll of honour' which appeared in the programme for the School sports day on 1 May 1915. The programme stated about 290–300 alumni were 'fighting for their country' and in a black-bordered box headed 'In Memoriam' named Jordan and also Leslie Jenkins (1906–09)[8] and George Cotter (1891–98).[9] Again, this gave the date and a brief description of death but this time followed by the phrase 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori' ('It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country'). This information was repeated in a slightly different form in the programme for the annual visitation of the School governors on 12 May 1915 underneath the final verse of Rudyard Kipling's 1914 poem 'For All We Have and Are'. The first substantive page of the 1915 summer edition of *Colfensia*—again the precise date of publication is unclear—comprised a black-bordered box headed with a crucifix and the words 'In Memoriam'.[10] This contained the names, unit, any rank of responsibility and, in some cases, brief details of the nature or location of death (presumably where known) of nine alumni killed in action up until mid-June 1915. The men included Cotter and Jenkins but not Jordan and may have been intended as a list of deaths to date in 1915. There is no other obvious reason why Jordan should have been otherwise excluded and, indeed, an article on page four expresses regret 'ten brave fellows have made the great sacrifice and laid down their lives'. This was the last edition of *Colfensia* published until 1924.

In November 1915, the editor of the *Colfeian*, Leland Duncan sent out under cover of a letter a supplement to the magazine consisting of a thirteen-page document described as 'Roll of Honour of Old Boys of Colfe's Grammar School Lewisham'. It is expressed to be a record of those serving

[7] *Colfensia*, No. 22 (1915), p. 1.
[8] Born 1892 Greenwich, father shirt manufacturer. Undistinguished school career.
[9] Born 1882 Whitechapel, father flour carman. Academically able.
[10] *Colfensia*, No. 23 (1915), p. 2.

up to October 1915 and as having been compiled from various sources with recipients being asked to send any corrections and additions to make it an accurate record. All those included were listed grouped firstly by arm of service and then sub-divided into types and units of service and the like. Within the various sub-divisions men were listed in alphabetical order, with those who had been killed delineated in a different typeface but without any indication as to how or when they died. Any rank of responsibility (whether or not involving a commission) was recorded against the name of the man concerned. It is significant at this stage of the war, although the dead were differentiated from the living, mere participation in service was considered sufficiently 'honourable' to justify inclusion in the roll. Figure 3.1 is a sample page taken from the infantry section of the army.

FIG. 3.1. Extract from roll of honour 1915.



Roll of Honour 9

9th Bn.: Allworth, C. R. H., 2nd Lieut.
11th Bn.: Morley, A. V. D., 2nd Lieut.

MIDDLESEX REGIMENT.
1st Bn.: [illegible], 2nd Lieut.
10th Bn.: Colyer, H. G. H., 2nd Lieut.
Denny, A. C., 2nd Lieut.

MANCHESTER REGIMENT.
21st Bn.: Walker, H. W., Lieutenant.
25th Bn.: Knight, A. F. D., 2nd Lieut.

SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS.
1st Bn.: Kennard, C., L.-Corp.
4th Bn.: Coppack, S. Cunis, V. W.
5th Bn.: Coppack, A. E.
6th Bn.: Fysh, C. E., 2nd Lieut.

CAMERON HIGHLANDERS.
2nd Bn.: Bell, D. H., 2nd Lieut.
Moffat, M. G. F., 2nd Lieut.
8th Bn.: Moffat, E. C., 2nd Lieut.

ROYAL MUNSTER FUSILIERS.
8th Bn.: Chandler, C. W., 2nd Lieut.

RIFLE BRIGADE.
Hill, R. W., 2nd Lieut.

LONDON REGIMENT.
5th Bn. (London Rifle Brigade):
Bromily, B., Lieutenant. Jenkins, L.
Cotter, G. E., 2nd Lieut. Rewell, F. G.
Hill, L. Scholefield, F. W.
6th Bn. (Rifles):
Bryers, R. B., Corporal. Manwaring, O. D.
Manwaring, E. J. Shillingford, R. S.
7th Bn. (Rifles): Smith, V. R., L.-Corp.
9th Bn. (Queen Victoria's Rifles):
Bezer, G. Hall, C.
Bezer, W. D. Hall, W.
Candlin, W. J. Tinney, E.
Collins, E. H.
11th Bn. (Finsbury Rifles): Bailey, J. C., Corporal.

There is evidence in the Colfe's archive Duncan's request for corrections, at least, met with a positive response. Harold Basnett (1900–05)[11] wrote on 1 December 1915 to say Charles Kibble (1898–1903)[12] was serving as a motorcycle despatch rider with the Surrey Yeomanry rather than

[11] Born 1889 Lewisham, father insurance inspector. Undistinguished school career.
[12] Born 1885 Chelsea, father grocer. Undistinguished school career.

with the Royal West Kent Yeomanry. The father of Thomas Bugler (1905–08)[13] wrote on 6 December 1915 to confirm Thomas was a motor despatch rider in the RE serving with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. His letter refers to an accompanying extract from a letter received from his son but this has not survived.

The *Colfeian* would not resume publication until November 1921 and no further listings were produced in this format. Further rolls of honour were, however, published in the programme for the School governors' annual visitation in May for each of the years 1916–1920. That for 1916 was headed 'Old Boys' Roll of Honour' and comprised two lists. The first of these was headed 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori' and contained the name, unit and any rank of responsibility of those who had been killed. The second was headed 'Distinctions' and contained the name, unit, any rank of responsibility and details of the award of those who had been granted medals or other recognition of distinguished service. Seemingly almost as something of an afterthought, a footnote to the roll stated 'About 420 Old Boys have joined the fighting force of whom about 120 hold commissions'. This is the first indication of the beginnings of a shift in the emphasis of the concept of 'honour' away from the mere fact of participation in service. With increased numbers of men on active service, it may simply have been the confines of space within the programme did not permit more extensive coverage. On the other hand, the six-month period between the issue of the 1915 roll and the programme had seen significant changes in recruitment patterns with the onset of compulsory military service in England, Wales and Scotland—at least in domestic terms, the days of voluntary enlistment were largely at an end and service was no longer a matter of choice, which may have started to dilute its status in the absence of any other distinguishing feature. The nature of the war itself had also changed. Twenty-one months in, it was no longer simply a war of combat but, equally (if not more) importantly, a war of supply, of transport, of communication and of administration and organisation encompassing a wide range of skills, roles and exposure to enemy forces. As seen in Chapter 2, the risk of death or disability from serving in these support capacities was much reduced.

The 1917 Visitation Day programme roll of honour followed the 1916 form with a further section added for those wounded or missing but believed killed, perhaps an indication of increasing difficulties in definitively confirming death. Significantly, however, there was no footnote about the number in service or holding commissions—service alone no longer qualified a man for inclusion. It is also of interest the rubric 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori' no longer appeared. Approaching three years into the war and especially following the losses the previous year on the Somme, death in action may no longer have seemed as 'sweet and fitting' as it once did. The 1918 and 1919 Visitation Day programme rolls of honour adopted the same format although in 1918 the names of two men were added who were known to be in captivity. This was not repeated in 1919

[13] Born 1892 Greenwich, father wine merchant. Undistinguished school career.

by which time, of course, any captivity had ceased. The 1919 roll was, however, specifically described as being incomplete and the list of the dead was headed 'Pro Patria'—'For Country'. The 1920 Visitation Day programme roll of honour simply comprised a black-bordered box headed 'Roll of Honour' followed by the words 'Pro Patria' containing a list of those who had died with details of their names in alphabetical order of surname, unit and any rank of responsibility. This represents the traditionally accepted list of those who died with the addition of one man, simply described as C. Jordan who was subsequently removed. This may well be a reference to Cecil Jordan (1903–08)[14] who died in Cardiff in 1916 likely from natural causes. There is no evidence of him having undertaken any military service. Indeed, he had arrived in New York in December 1914 described as an engineer, returning from Canada to the UK just over a month before his death.

In July 1919 (the exact date is uncertain) a memorial service for the war dead was held at St Mary, Lewisham attended by the Master and some members of the Leathersellers' Company, masters and current pupils of the School and 'a large number of friends and relatives'.[15] The address was given by a Colfeian, the vicar of Holy Trinity, Woolwich. Emphasis was placed on the way in which the dead had upheld the honour of the School but the main focus of the address was the sacrifice made to allow others to live and the need for spiritual and moral change to ensure this sacrifice was not wasted.[16]

The next step in the development of the commemorative process was the publication of a hardback book comprising 123 pages entitled *Colfe's Grammar School and The Great War 1914–19*. This was the result of the commissioning of Duncan in 1919 by the Leathersellers' Company 'to compile a Roll of Honour of all former pupils who served in the forces'—the use of the words 'all' signals an intention was to produce a complete record. The Leathersellers paid for the publication and a print-run of 500 copies.[17] According to the title page it was printed in 1920 but does not appear to have become available until some point during the first half of 1921 due to delays with binding.[18] The title page of the book is headed 'Colfe's Grammar School and The Great War 1914–1919 with Rolls of Honour and Service'. The book is described there as having been contributed by members of the school and edited by Duncan. Limited amounts of space at the rear are given over to the continuing life of the School during the war. Most of the book, however, relates to the role of alumni in the war and, with the exception of an appendix giving details of six men—including Duncan who was appointed OBE for services at the War Office in connection with army printing and stationery services—who were employed in war work in Government Departments, focuses almost exclusively on men in military (or associated voluntary) service. The details of the men in

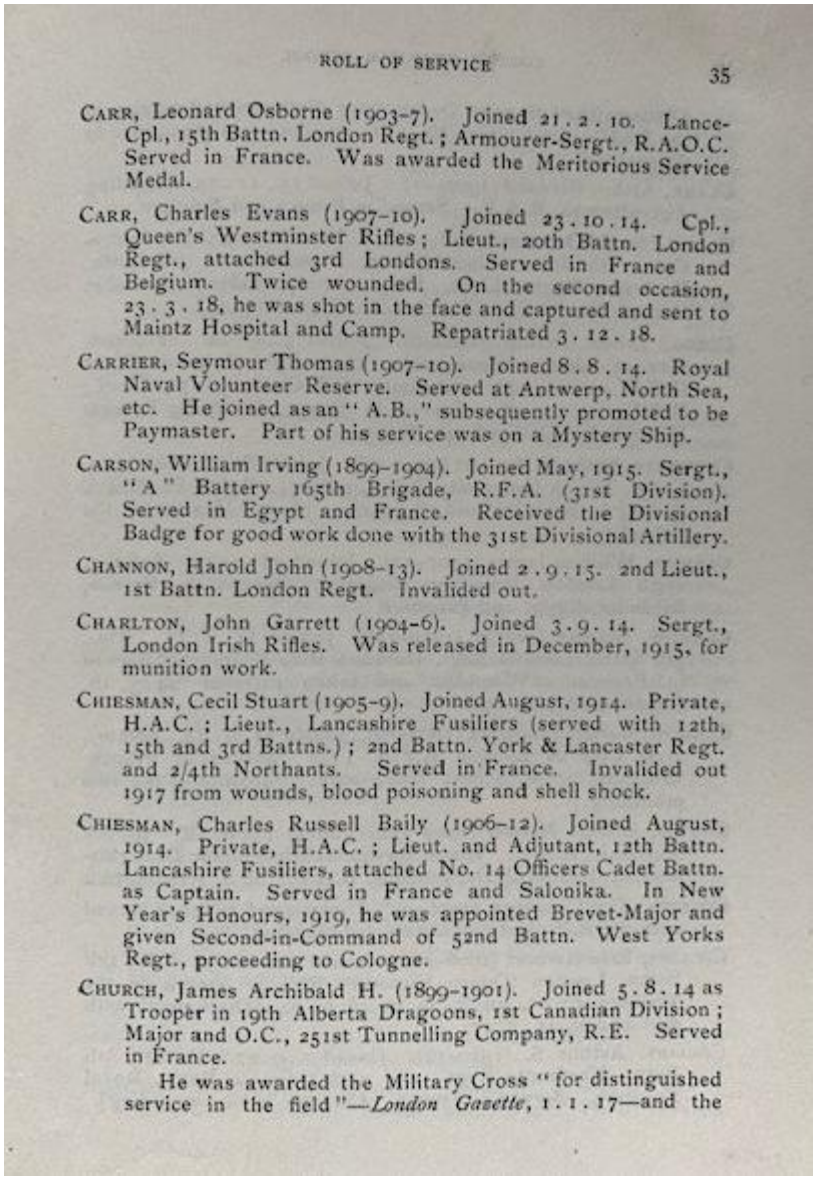
[14] Born 1891 British Guiana, father's occupation unknown.
[15] An extract from a report in *The Kentish Mercury* is reproduced in *Colfe's and The Great War*, pp. 121–23.
[16] This concept of redemptive sacrifice was far from being unique: Gregory, *Last Great War*, pp. 160–73.
[17] Jerome Farrell, *This Ghastly Affair: Great War Letters from the Leathersellers Archives*, (Leathersellers' Company, 2016), p. 222.
[18] *Colfeian*, No.30, vol. 8 (June 1921), p. 47.

military service comprises two separate lists. The first is of those who died and is entitled ‘Roll of Honour’ and subtitled ‘The Roll of Old Colfeians who fell in the Great War’. The second is of those who served and survived and simply headed ‘Roll of Service’, and marks the definitive dissociation of mere participation from the concept of honour. The distinction between ‘honour’ and ‘service’ is not necessarily a unique approach. The neighbouring St Dunstan’s College in Catford seems to have adopted a similar commemorative methodology.[19] Nor, however, does it appear to have been universal. Dulwich College, another (if somewhat larger and more prestigious) neighbour, published the Dulwich College War Record 1914–1919 in 1923, which was intended as a Roll of Honour containing the names all who served.[20] As late as April 1918, the alumni organisation of Wakefield Grammar School was referring in its year book to an ‘ever-growing Roll of Honour’ recording both the living and the dead.[21] It had been proposed this would be published and placed in the School but this does not appear to have come to fruition.[22] By way of contrast, Manchester Grammar School did publish in 1922 a record which was restricted to those who had died but this was described as a ‘Book of Remembrance’ rather than a ‘Roll of Honour’.[23]

In the case of Colfe’s, there is a common broad template for the lists. In each case, men are listed in alphabetical order of surname followed by the range of years of attendance at Colfe’s. More often than not (but not always—in some instances in the Roll of Service there is just a simple entry saying a man was believed to have served with a certain unit, a point we will return to shortly), this is followed by the date of enlistment (which could be the day, month and year or the month and year or just the year). After this there is usually a varying amount of a description of the man’s war service—including rank(s) held, unit(s) of service, theatre(s) of war and any incidents of wounding or decorations. In some cases the description is succinct in the extreme, in others quite full. Overall entries in the Roll of Honour tend to be fuller than those in the Roll of Service. A sample page from the Roll of Service appears as Figure 3.2.

[19] D. W. Collett, *St. Dunstan’s College, Catford, London SE6: Roll of Honour for the First World War 1914–19* (Norman W. Collett, 1988), p. 2.
[20] Dulwich College, ‘The Fallen of the Great War: Memorials, Scholarships and Prizes’ [n.d.] <https://dulwichcollege1914-18.co.uk/essay/memorials-scholarships-and-prizes> [accessed 9 May 2024].
[21] Merckx, p. 453.
[22] Merckx, pp. 90, 348.
[23] Manchester Grammar School, ‘MGS and the Great War—Memorialisation’, ArchivesMGS, 4 December 2018 <https://archivesmgs.wordpress.com/2018/12/04/mgs-and-the-great-war-memorialisation> [accessed 9 May 2024].

FIG. 3.2. Extract from *Colfe's Grammar School and the Great War 1914–1919*.



ROLL OF SERVICE 35

CARR, Leonard Osborne (1903–7). Joined 21.2.10. Lance-Cpl., 15th Battn. London Regt.; Armourer-Sergt., R.A.O.C. Served in France. Was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

CARR, Charles Evans (1907–10). Joined 23.10.14. Cpl., Queen's Westminster Rifles; Lieut., 20th Battn. London Regt., attached 3rd Londons. Served in France and Belgium. Twice wounded. On the second occasion, 23.3.18, he was shot in the face and captured and sent to Maintz Hospital and Camp. Repatriated 3.12.18.

CARRIER, Seymour Thomas (1907–10). Joined 8.8.14. Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. Served at Antwerp, North Sea, etc. He joined as an "A.B.," subsequently promoted to be Paymaster. Part of his service was on a Mystery Ship.

CARSON, William Irving (1899–1904). Joined May, 1915. Sergt., "A" Battery 165th Brigade, R.F.A. (31st Division). Served in Egypt and France. Received the Divisional Badge for good work done with the 31st Divisional Artillery.

CHANNON, Harold John (1908–13). Joined 2.9.15. 2nd Lieut., 1st Battn. London Regt. Invalided out.

CHARLTON, John Garrett (1904–6). Joined 3.9.14. Sergt., London Irish Rifles. Was released in December, 1915, for munition work.

CHIESMAN, Cecil Stuart (1905–9). Joined August, 1914. Private, H.A.C.; Lieut., Lancashire Fusiliers (served with 12th, 15th and 3rd Battns.); 2nd Battn. York & Lancaster Regt. and 2/4th Northants. Served in France. Invalided out 1917 from wounds, blood poisoning and shell shock.

CHIESMAN, Charles Russell Baily (1906–12). Joined August, 1914. Private, H.A.C.; Lieut. and Adjutant, 12th Battn. Lancashire Fusiliers, attached No. 14 Officers Cadet Battn. as Captain. Served in France and Salonika. In New Year's Honours, 1919, he was appointed Brevet-Major and given Second-in-Command of 52nd Battn. West Yorks Regt., proceeding to Cologne.

CHURCH, James Archibald H. (1899–1901). Joined 5.8.14 as Trooper in 19th Alberta Dragoons, 1st Canadian Division; Major and O.C., 251st Tunnelling Company, R.E. Served in France.

He was awarded the Military Cross "for distinguished service in the field"—*London Gazette*, 1.1.17—and the

To the extent no indication is given to the contrary, the Rolls of Honour and of Service give the impression of being complete and, as we have already seen, were commissioned to be so. They have also been accepted as complete without apparent question over the years. An article by P. S. Keyte about the history of the *Colfeian* published in the Spring 1975 edition definitively describes them as being so and ascribes this to Duncan's connection with the War Office.[24] As will be seen later in this chapter, the Roll of Service is far from a being a complete record and even the Roll of Honour does not constitute a full record of those who died. Nor is there any evidence Duncan's wartime role at the War Office was instrumental to the production of *Colfe's and the Great War*.

[24] *Colfeian*, No. 44 (Spring 1975), p. 63.

Duncan states in the foreword details of the citations for the various decorations earned had been extracted from the London Gazette. Otherwise, there is no direct evidence as to how the material in the Rolls of Honour and Service was sourced. There are eleven sheets of foolscap paper (some of which are headed 'Notes') in the Colfe's archive with pasted cuttings primarily from local newspapers recording the enlistment, commissioning, marriage, wounding, death and decoration of and other matters relating to alumni. Some of the cuttings also extend to others in the Lewisham area, possibly collected with the intention of later checking whether the men concerned had attended Colfe's. The cuttings appear to been collated contemporaneously, are largely in chronological order starting in 1914 and finishing in 1919 and have a sense of completeness. There are also a small number of longer individual cuttings with detailed reports of life on active service. It is conceivable the Daily War Office Casualty Lists which were reproduced in many newspapers until mid-1917 may also have been used to help identify, in particular, fatalities. Although there is no evidence to this effect, it is also possible Duncan's work with the War Office may have facilitated access to the Weekly Casualty Lists (only generally available at a cost) that succeeded the Daily Lists. None of these sources are, however, anywhere near comprehensive enough to form the basis of the Rolls of Honour and Service. In any event, as the title page to the book clearly indicates, information was primarily provided by members of the School—Duncan's role was an editorial one, organising and presenting the material which he was given. The fact he feels the need to specifically refer to his own sourcing of decorative citations suggests, this apart, his independent input was limited.

Correspondence is the most likely source of information. It is clear from pre-war issues of the *Colfeian* many alumni chose to keep in contact with the School to give details of their further education, professional qualifications, changes in employment, migration and travels, marriages and the like. There was a developed habit of continuing correspondence and there is no reason to believe this ceased with the outbreak of war. If anything, the volume of correspondence was likely to have increased. The Colfe's archive contains a limited number of preserved wartime letters from alumni. It is unclear why these survived and not others. There are a number of letters referred to in the foreword to *Colfe's and the Great War* that are not in the archive. For example, there is a lengthy quotation in the first two pages from a letter written by Frank Crump (1905–07).[25] The passage describes the sights and sounds of a nighttime journey about a mile behind the front line against the backdrop of a barrage. There is no date ascribed to the letter but we know from his service records until the end of 1917 Crump was serving on the Western Front attached to an ammunition column as a driver and the nature of his description places the letter during that period.[26] Another example is a passage quoted from a letter written by Henry Williamson describing life serving in the trenches in Flanders as a Rifleman with 5th (London Rifle Brigade)

[25] Born 1892 Lewisham, father timber importer. Undistinguished school career.
[26] TNA, WO 374/17044.

Battalion, London Regiment in early 1915.[27] There are also letters mentioned in *Colfensia* (issue 23) that are not in the archive. For example, Leslie Sawell (1910–13)[28] describes involvement in action in 1915 with 1/20th (Blackheath and Woolwich) Battalion, London Regiment in France.[29]

A letter from Dudley Bezer to Duncan dated 17 March 1915 is preserved. Bezer writes with a description of life as a Rifleman on the Western Front with 9th (Queen Victoria's Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment, also mentioning other alumni he has come across. The main interest of his letter for present purposes, though, is the introductory paragraph where he apologises for not writing earlier, stating 'I suppose you have heard from nearly all the OC Soldiers by now ….'. This clearly presupposes the likelihood of significant amounts of correspondence between alumni and the School. Almost all the correspondence retained in the Colfe's archive is from alumni to the School. This is to be expected—correspondence in the opposite direction could generally be expected to remain in the possession of the recipient. There is, however, one example of a letter from the School to an alumnus, evidencing correspondence was a two-way process. The letter was written by the Headmaster to Frank ('Morris') Manning (1907–12)[30] on 13 December 1915. Post-war Manning become a leather merchant and, in later life, a governor of Colfe's until his death in 1972. The letter came to the archive from his widow as a result of this continuing close connection and because of its apparent importance to Manning, who, she indicated, had carried it with him throughout his war service. It is plain from the foreword to *Colfe's and the Great War* this pattern of correspondence continued throughout the war with letters referred to from 1916, 1917 and as late as October 1918. There is also a surviving letter in the Colfe's archive from Ernest Moody (1907–1911)[31] to one of the masters, dated 9 March 1917 written on pages torn from his officer's Report book. Moody tells of the service details of a few alumni he has come across for putting on 'the List' if their service has not already been recorded, which gives a further glimpse into the workings of the process of the collection of commemorative material. He also complains of the extreme cold weather being experienced and apologises for the quality of his handwriting but explains he is writing the letter on his knee with a pen that is running out of ink.

Additionally, it is clear parents of alumni were in correspondence with Colfe's. We have seen Thomas Bugler's father wrote to Duncan to provide confirmatory details of his son's service in December 1915. The Colfe's archive also contains a letter Amelia Gutherie wrote to Duncan on 8 May 1916 with photographs of her sons, Samuel (1903–08) and Walter (1903–1910) in uniform '…. to add to your collection, which I assume you have got….'.[32] Mrs Guthrie reports they are both well

[27] *Colfe's and the Great War*, pp. 2–3.
[28] Born 1897, Kingston Surrey, father commercial traveller. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[29] *Colfensia* No. 23 (1915), pp. 5–6
[30] Born 1895 Woolwich, father clerk. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[31] Born 1897 Lewisham, father garment dyer. Sportsman.
[32] Born 1892 and 1894 both in Lewisham, mother pawnbroker. Both academically able. Samuel competitive marksman and leadership position.

although '…. very weary of the war.' *Colfensia* (issue 23) contains a transcript of a letter from Lieutenant-Commander Wedgwood of the RNVR written to Charles Woolston, the father of Arthur (1903–07).[33] The letter had been published in a local newspaper and tells of the bravery of Arthur in action at Gallipoli. The context of its publication in *Colfensia* makes it clear Charles had been in contact independently with the School to confirm his son's continued well-being up until the end of June 1915.[34] Parental contact with the School does not seem to have been a wartime development. The Colfe's archive contains a letter from John McEwen dated 27 April 1914 written at the request of his son, Clement (1899–1903), to inform Duncan of Clement's activities in South America. Mr McEwen also takes the opportunity to tell Duncan of the imminent return from India for a holiday of his other Colfeian son, Basil (1899–1905).

As already touched upon, there are a small number of entries in *Colfe's and the Great War* (about 5 per cent of the total entries) appearing to be the subject of indirect or partial contribution. Henry Ross (1906–09) is an example.[35] His entry simply reads 'Reported in 1915 as in H.A.C but service not recorded.'. There is no evidence of any form of service other than this entry. Take also, for instance, Harry West (1904–06) whose entry reads 'Reported in 1915 as serving with R.F.C. No further details reported.'.[36] Harry, a motor engineer, had enlisted with the Surrey Yeomanry in October 1914 from his civilian occupation. This was followed by RNAS service as ground crew from February–October 1915, possibly abroad because he was then invalided out of service with bronchitis and neurasthenia. He re-enlisted in the RAF as a fitter in June 1918. Another example is Geoffrey Nichol(l)s (1909–12).[37] Geoffrey's entry reads 'Reported in 1915 to be serving in A.S.C. No further details recorded.' Geoffrey did enlist in November 1914 with the ASC from an occupation in motor transport. He served on the Western Front from the end of November 1914 (in the infantry after a compulsory transfer in 1917) until invalided home in September 1918. He was also awarded the Military Medal. Although there is no definitive evidence as to how these instances of partial or indirect commemorative contributions arose, it is relatively easy to speculate with a degree of confidence from some of the surviving correspondence in the Colfe's archive. As mentioned, Ernest Moody's letter contained the service details of some alumni he had encountered. Although all those mentioned were the subject of substantive entries in *Colfe's and the Great War*, it is not difficult to see how indirect contributions may have arisen. Dudley Bezer's letter, too, gave details of five alumni encountered on the Western Front, four of whom were certainly full participants in the commemorative process. The participatory status of the fifth, simply referred to 'Hall (in our Regt)' is less clear. There were two brothers named 'Hall' who served at the

[33] Born Southwark 1892, father accountant. Undistinguished school career.
[34] *Colfensia* No. 23 (1915), p. 5.
[35] Born Greenwich 1915, father clerk. Surname (anglicised version of Rosz) adopted for commemoration. Board school. Competitive marksman.
[36] Born Edmonton 1892, father insurance clerk. Undistinguished school career.
[37] Born Southwark 1896, father commercial travelling salesman. Board school. Undistinguished school career.

same time as Dudley in Queen Victoria's Rifles. Charles Hall (1903–07) and Walter Hall (1905).[38] Charles, an insurance clerk, enlisted as a Rifleman at the beginning of September 1914. After being wounded at Ypres in April 1915, he was commissioned into 10th (Hackney) Battalion, London Regiment, finishing the war with the rank of Lieutenant. Charles is the subject of a full entry in *Colfe's and the Great War*. Walter is not—his entry reads 'Reported as served in 9th Battn. London Regt., but no details.' It is unusual for the familial connection not to be noted—in nearly all other cases it is. The exact date of enlistment is unclear but, also from being an insurance clerk, he was serving on the Western Front as a Rifleman with Queen Victoria's Rifles by early 1915. He, too, was commissioned into 10th (Hackney) Battalion at about the same time as his brother and finished the war with the rank of Lieutenant. Dudley's letter could be referring to either of them. We will return to the significance of the discrepancy in commemoration of these brothers later.

It is reasonable to conclude from this analysis active engagement in the form of alumni or parental contributions (even at a secondary level) formed a key part of the Colfeian commemorative process and, in particular, the publication of *Colfe's and the Great War*. Some of the potential factors influencing engagement levels and the degree to which lack of engagement may have been a positive decision of choice will be examined shortly. Before doing so, we will look at how the Colfe's commemorative process developed further following the publication of *Colfe's Grammar School and The Great War*. As already mentioned, its structuring into a Roll of Honour for those who died and a Roll of Service for those who served and survived represented the culmination of a gradual uncoupling over the course of the war of the concepts of honour on the one hand and mere service, (however distinguished or disfiguring) on the other—honour had become exclusively associated with death. As if to underline the division further, special leatherbound copies—the standard edition available was clothbound—were sent to each family of those who were recorded as having died. The divorce was complete when surviving alumni were not even invited to the unveiling of the School memorial plaque to the recorded dead at the 1921 Visitation Day. This also marked the assumption of control over 'ownership' of the memorialisation of the dead by the School. A covering letter (albeit in standard form) from the headmaster to next-of-kin dated 12 July 1926 survives in the archives. This letter enclosed a photograph of the plaque draped for a special occasion. It also underlined the ongoing role in school life of commemoration of those 'who made the supreme sacrifice', indicating the process of control was a continuing one.

The extent of alumni concern regarding non-participation in the unveiling ceremony does not appear to have been significant. The unveiling was reported in the June 1921 *Colfeian*.[39] There appeared in the November 1921 issue a short four-line note on the fourth page of the editorial section expressing the 'great' regret of the Abraham Colfe Club committee they were unable to

[38] Born Lewisham and Hastings 1891 and 1893, sons of commercial travelling salesman. Board school pupils. Academically able. Charles also competitive marksman.
[39] *Colfeian* No. 30, vol. 8 (June 1921), p. 43.

give prior notice to members of the ceremony 'owing to lack of information from those responsible'.[40] The notice had little prominence and appeared between longer notices of a forthcoming concert at what was then known as the Goldsmith's Institute conducted by an alumnus and the publication of Henry Williamson's first novel 'The Beautiful Years' and the provenance of the emblem of a Maltese Cross on the Old Colfeian Football Club shirt. The hope was expressed later in the editorial section that 'Our own Roll of Honour will ….. be published ere long' but the matter was not remarked upon further. If feelings had been running high, a degree of published correspondence would be expected or, at the very least, a more fulsome recognition of disappointment.

The apparent disinterest in maintaining a connection with wartime experiences seems to have extended to *Colfe's and the Great War*. As mentioned, the exact date of publication is unclear following binding delays but it was certainly available by the time the June 1921 *Colfeian* went to press because subscribers who wished to obtain a copy were directed to the publisher.[41] There is no cover price for the book and no suggestion of any cost implications, which follows from the fact the Leathersellers' Company paid for the printing and publication (see above). There is also no suggestion of any further print-run than that of the original 500 commissioned by the Leathersellers'. Given 124 of this 500 were bound in leather (which may conceivably have been a factor in the delayed binding process) for distribution to the next-of-kin of the recorded dead, that left 376 available for the recorded surviving alumni, in broad terms one copy for every two men whose details appear in the Roll of Service. If around half of those men had obtained a copy, all would have been taken up. The indications are take-up was far from complete. Nearly half a century later, in 1968, copies remained available[42] and this was still the case, a further half-century on, during the period of the author's research for this thesis. This all points to a reasonably strong element of post-war reluctance to engage with commemoration on the part of men who, by and large, had chosen to engage with the commemoration process during wartime.

The lack of engagement is highlighted by how long it took for the Old Colfeian community to arrange their own memorial, which, as seen, had first been trailed in 1921. It would take a quarter of a century and a further world war to prompt action, with a fund being launched in June 1946 to provide a war memorial 'to perpetuate the memory of those who fell in both the 1914–18 war and that of 1939'. It was reported in June 1947 £350 (towards a target figure of £1,000) had been subscribed from around 160 members and friends of what was, by then, called the Old Colfeian Club. A second round of fund-raising was to be initiated, this time extended to all alumni (not just members of the Old Colfeian Club, who by no means represented the totality of former pupils), relatives of the dead and also parents of current pupils. The detailed objectives were now stated to

[40] *Colfeian* No. 31, vol. 8 (November 1921), p. 74.
[41] *Colfeian* No. 30, vol. 8 (June 1921), p. 37.
[42] *Colfeian* No. 34, (July 1968), p. 59.

be three-fold. Firstly, to place memorial plaques in the club house at Horn Park, Eltham and to plant a garden of remembrance at the entrance; secondly, to improve the amenities of the clubhouse; and thirdly to provide something of utility at the school to provide a permanent memorial there.[43] It should be mentioned it is believed the school memorial plaque of 1921 did not survive the destruction of the original school in Lewisham Hill by a V1 flying bomb in June 1944. Hence, presumably, the perceived need to provide the school with a memorial and one that could be of practical use once rebuilding had taken place. The fund, having reached a total of £647, was placed in trust in January 1949 and a four-sided war memorial made of Portland Stone was constructed at Horn Park at a cost of £248 later that year. The memorial was set within a small garden and each side contained a bronze plaque commemorating the dead, two of which were dedicated to the dead of the First World War and two to the dead of the Second World War. The memorial was unveiled and dedicated on 11 September 1949 at a ceremony attended by around 200 people.[44] There is no detailed list of those who attended but given the recorded number of Second World War fatalities was over 90 and the relatively recent nature of their deaths, it is not unreasonable to suppose the connection of the vast majority of those there was with them rather than those who died over 30 years before. By 1953, taking into account receipts from a war damage claim arising from the use of Horn Park for barrage balloons in the Second World War and interest, a net sum of £576 remained in the fund. It was decided a sum of £200 be set aside for a memorial at the school with the balance being used in improving the clubhouse.[45] It was reported in 1964 the balance of the fund then remaining—it is not clear what the amount was—would be spent on platform furniture for the hall at the new school (which had opened the year before on the site in Lee which it still occupies today) and a memorial book for the dead of both wars although there is no evidence the latter was ever created.[46]

The memorial fund had been established by Major Leonard Miller (1900–05),[47] whose younger brother had died in the war. It seems safe to assume Miller had a keen interest in the project. Out of the four trustees appointed to administer the fund in 1949, however, only the chair, Leslie Hinton (1912–16)[48] was of the First World War generation and even he had not seen active service, finishing the war as an eighteen year-old officer cadet with the RE. When the fund was set up Miller was 57 and age should not have been a factor preventing active participation in the project by others amongst his peers if they had been minded to become involved. Again, there are indications of a lack of engagement. This could be, at least partly, attributable to the nature and framing of the project itself. It was clearly not a success—it needed to be relaunched to a much wider constituency twelve months in, after only raising around a third of its target. Even after that, it

[43] *Colfeian* No. 68, vol. 18 (June 1947), p. 13.
[44] *Colfeian* No. 73, vol. 18 (December 1949), pp. 6–7.
[45] *Colfeian* No. 3, (January 1953), pp. 10–11.
[46] *Colfeian* No. 26, (July 1964), p. 55.
[47] Born 1889 Lewisham, father company director. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[48] Born 1900 Woolwich, father teacher. Academically able. Sportsman.

still fell well short of its initial objective and its implementation lacked impetus. Raising funds to improve social and sporting facilities for the living that were not (and never had been) necessarily used by all alumni does not fit particularly well with memorialisation of the dead and may not have helped to attract engagement. It is also clear from the terms of Hinton's speech at the dedication ceremony the raising of this element of the funds was primarily connected to those who died in the Second World War. This was also unlikely to enhance appeal to earlier veterans and indicates an emphasis to the project on the more recent as opposed to historic dead.

A pattern of lack of engagement with post-war commemorative practices on the part of surviving serving alumni is reflective of the apparent absence amongst veterans more generally of any continuing connection with their wartime identities.[49] The manner in which Colfeian alumni adjusted to post-war life is examined in more detail in Chapter 5 where we will find most survivors appear to have put their war experiences behind them and moved on with their lives.

Commemorative patterns and influencing factors

We have seen *Colfe's and the Great War* was intended, presented and accepted for over a century as a complete record of those who served and died in the war. It is far from being that. This section analyses its shortcomings and explores some of the potential reasons why its intentions were not realised.

The Roll of Honour comprises a list of 124 men who died and the Roll of Service comprises a list of 607 men who survived providing a total commemorated of 731. The Roll of Service includes three masters or former masters who are not relevant to this study, which is concerned solely with former pupils. There are a further five men for whom there is no evidence of service other than the entry in *Colfe's and the Great War*. Only one of these seems likely to have served, John Earnshaw (1889–94)[50] who has a reasonably full entry. One who most certainly did not serve is Harold Ross.[51] Against this there is a man, Oliver Wickham (1897–1902),[52] who appears in the addendum listing those employed in war work in Government Departments who held the rank, albeit, honorary, of Lieutenant in the RAF and was better fitted for inclusion in the Roll of Service. There are also two men named in the Roll of Honour as war dead for whom there is no evidence of any substantive service and who are not recognised as war dead by the CWGC: Harold Campion (1893–98)[53] and Gerald Bayley (1898–1904).[54] Arguably, therefore, the total commemorated for the purposes of this study is probably 722 although this makes no substantive difference to the overall thrust of the

[49] The term 'veteran disassociation' has been used to describe this lack of connection: Swift and Wilkinson, p. 182.
[50] Born 1878 Greenwich, father political registration agent. Academically able.
[51] Born 1882 Greenwich, father cashier. Undistinguished school career. Spent war as civilian internee in German East Africa. See Chapter 4.
[52] Born 1886 Croydon, father agent. Academically able.
[53] Born 1883 Sheppey, father tailor's cutter. Undistinguished school career. Died of pneumonia resulting from trench digging with Royal Defence League.
[54] Born 1887 Lewisham, father dairy farmer. Died of typhoid as civilian cable operator in Chile.

analysis. There are a further 230 men who have been positively identified as having served in the war.[55] This number of non-commemorated should be viewed as a minimum figure—there may well be others who served for whom no evidence of service has been found. This means, at the very least, around one in four of those who served—this also represents just over 17 per cent of the overall cohort, serving and non-serving—were not commemorated by Colfe's. It should also be borne in mind, as mentioned earlier, around 5 per cent of those commemorated appear to have had limited (if any) involvement in their commemoration. If these men are treated as not commemorated (as, in most instances, is effectively the case), the proportion of those who served who are not commemorated increases to 28 per cent. Whatever measure is adopted, it is a substantial amount of men and well-deserving of further investigation.

As seen above, the primary (and ultimately exclusive) focus of Colfeian commemoration evolved into one relating to the war dead. Death was also a publicly recognised rite of passage where there was an increased likelihood of the bereaved (whether family or friends) engaging with memorial processes. As a consequence of these factors it is to be expected commemoration of the dead would be more complete than of those who survived and this is the case. However, although the rate of commemoration of war fatalities is higher, there are still around one in six or seven of those who died in the war who are not commemorated. The uncertainty about the exact figure arises from the commemorative treatment of six men. There are three men, Edward Bowles (1901–03),[56] Douglas Couldrey (1905)[57] and Harold Golding (1909–1916)[58] recognised as war dead by the CWGC who appear in the Roll of Service. Bowles and Golding both died after *Colfe's and the Great War* was printed, which explains the discrepancy. The entry for Couldrey replicates that of his elder brother, Oscar,[59] and simply states 'Served in the West Kent Yeomanry but details not reported'. It is reasonable to assume his omission from the Roll of Honour is a consequence of neither Couldrey nor his family having taken any active part in the Colfeian commemoration process. Strictly, for the purposes of this study all three men should be treated as non-commemorated war dead. Conversely, there are three men who appear in the Roll of Honour (who undoubtedly served unlike Campion and Bayley mentioned above) who are not recognised by the CWGC and, by the criteria of this study, should not be considered as war dead. These men are Howard Low (1903–05),[60] Stanley Bird (1905–08)[61] and Archibald Smith (1907–10)[62]. All three died from tuberculosis either aggravated by or contracted on service. Low was discharged in 1915 and died in 1917. Bird was discharged in February 1918 and died the following month. Smith was discharged in 1917 and died the following year. All three men were awarded pensions, with Bird's

[55] As to the parameters adopted for 'service' see Introduction.
[56] Born 1889 Tendring, father foreman. Board school. Undistinguished school career.
[57] Born 1894 Lewisham, father wholesale stationer. Board school. Undistinguished school career.
[58] Born 1898 Greenwich, father clerk. Academically able. Competitive marksman. Leadership position.
[59] Born 1892 Croydon, father wholesale stationer. Board school. Undistinguished school career.
[60] Born 1893 Greenwich, father solicitor. Undistinguished school career.
[61] Born 1892 Pancras, father meat salesman. Academically able.
[62] Born 1894 Lewisham, father tradesman. Undistinguished school career.

widow becoming entitled to a dependent's pension on his death. These anomalies do not, however, alter the basic finding that although the war dead were more likely to be included in the Colfeian commemorative process than those who survived, there were still a significant proportion that were not.

Pre-war location could conceivably have been an influencing factor in non-commemoration of some of those who died, particularly because of the potential role of domestic local (and also, but to a lesser extent as the war progressed, national) press in reporting and publicising death. It might be thought the further a man had moved away from the Lewisham area (and especially if he had moved abroad), the less likely it was his death would be commemorated. This is not, however, borne out by analysis of the nineteen (leaving out of account Bowles, Couldrey and Golding who, as already explained, were commemorated but not as fatalities) non-commemorated fatalities. For the purposes of the analysis, the men have been allocated to one of four broad pre-war locations: Lewisham and the surrounding area; other parts of London; elsewhere in the UK; or abroad. The results of the analysis are inconclusive: five were located in Lewisham; six in the rest of London; two elsewhere in the UK; and six abroad (although of these six, two were serving with British rather than Dominion forces and, therefore, perhaps more likely to be reported in the domestic press). Admittedly, the sample size is small but there is no evidence pre-war location played a significant part in non-commemoration of war dead.

It might be expected disability resulting from war service, evidencing as it did (like death) tangible evidence of suffering would result in higher levels of commemoration than average. Analysis shows it does, but dependent on the level of disability.[63] The proportion of those categorised as disabled who are not commemorated is broadly in line with the overall serving cohort standing at just under one in four, with there being no significant difference whether the disability was attributable to wounds or to ill health caused by other matters. However, those who incurred a significant disability were over three times more likely to be commemorated, perhaps reflecting a desire for public recognition of the greater impact of having served and the resulting hardship and suffering.

The impact of pre-war location on the likelihood of commemoration of death has already been considered. A similar methodology has been adopted to analyse the impact of pre-war location on commemoration more generally. It has been possible to identify a pre-war location for just under 90 per cent of those who served. The results of this analysis are set out in Table 3.1.

[63] As to the criteria adopted for disability see Introduction.

Table 3.1. Commemoration by reference to pre-war location.

Location	Commemorated	Not commemorated	Likelihood of commemoration
Lewisham area	480	74	86.7%
Rest of London	66	40	62.3%
Rest of UK	44	38	53.7%
Abroad	86	46	62.5%

In considering these figures, the statistical imbalance between Lewisham and the other three areas does need to be borne in mind. In absolute terms, nearly 60 per cent of the serving cohort for whom a pre-war location has been identified were based in Lewisham. Further, the non-commemorated element of the Lewisham serving cohort outstrips the commemorated cohorts for the rest of London and the rest of the UK and is only slightly lower than that for abroad. It is a far larger dataset. However, the figures do strongly indicate a pre-war local connection had a significant influence on whether a man formed part of the Colfeian commemorative process. This is not surprising—a continued presence in the Lewisham area was likely to substantially increase the prospects of an active ongoing connection with Colfe's and other local alumni whether on a personal level or through family and friends, employment or religious, sporting and other social groupings. As a result of a combination of those connections and local press reporting it is also likely a man's wartime activities were common knowledge within the community. It is, at first sight, surprising a man was more likely (slightly) to be commemorated if abroad than if he were located in the rest of London or (by a wider margin) in the rest of the UK. We have, though, already seen in Chapter 1 migrants were regular correspondents with the *Colfeian* during the pre-war period and it is clear there were well-established lines of communication between the School and many of those alumni when war broke out.

There are also three specific aspects of the nature of service at different stages of a man's military career that are capable of statistical analysis and may be informative regarding the likelihood of commemoration. Firstly, enlistment status—the basis on which they entered service. Secondly, type of service—specifically whether they served in a combat unit. Thirdly, final rank—what was achieved in terms of military status. Looking initially at enlistment. As seen in Chapter 2, within the total serving cohort of 952, the enlistment status of 877 men has been identified. Of these: 13 were pre-war regulars; 51 were pre-war volunteers with part-time territorial or yeomanry units and the like who were mobilised as part of the British forces at the outbreak of war; 583 were new volunteers (including 50 who attested under the Derby Scheme); and 200 were conscripts. Table 3.2 shows the likelihood of commemoration by reference to enlistment status.

Table 3.2. Commemoration by mode of entry into service.

Enlistment status	Commemorated	Not commemorated	Likelihood of commemoration
Pre-war regular	8	5	62%
Pre-war volunteer	50	1	98%
Wartime volunteer	473	110	81%
Conscript	154	46	77%

The contrast between the pre-war full and part-time servers is the most immediately striking aspect. Admittedly, there are relatively few pre-war regulars in the overall serving cohort but a commemorative rate of a little over one in two is much lower than that for the pre-war volunteers where levels of commemoration were almost complete. There was only one of these men whose service was not commemorated, Herbert Chapman. Chapman had only attended Colfe's for a year aged 11 and prior to the war was living in Thames Ditton so there are potential issues in terms of commemoration surrounding continued connection with Colfe's and the Lewisham area. Chapman's long history of voluntary service has been considered in Chapter 1. In some ways, despite his civilian background, Chapman had more in common with the pre-war regulars in terms of military pedigree than with the more recent pre-war volunteers. For the pre-war regulars, service was what they were employed and paid to do—it was 'just a job'—and this may have influenced levels of commemoration. The pre-war part-time soldiers did, though, essentially remain civilians in uniform. They were also the earliest of volunteers who had not waited for a declaration of war to put themselves forward for service, as well as being the first volunteer units to see active service. These were all reasons for understandable pride in their involvement, which might lead to a desire for commemoration. The close-knit connections running through the units concerned in terms of shared social and geographical background, employment and commonalty of leisure interests were also likely to be factors influencing levels of commemoration. These factors may not necessarily have been quite as strong in New Army formations.

The adoption of a single category for wartime volunteers masks an interesting nuance. If the volunteers under the Derby Scheme are analysed separately from the balance, it becomes clear these men were significantly less likely to be commemorated, with a commemoration rate of 68 per cent. Given the disparity in the size of the respective datasets, this leads to nothing more than a marginal increase for the remainder of the category but does mean the commemoration rate for the Derby Scheme volunteers becomes 9 per cent less than that for conscripts. It also compares particularly unfavourably with that for the pre-war volunteers on the basis of a very similar sized cohort. It has been suggested for many married men in particular the intention of volunteering

under this scheme was to avoid service.[64] It is possible mixed motives such as this may have had an impact on commemorative participation. What is clear is different tiers of voluntary service attracted different levels of commemorative participation.

It is also clear there was still a significant desire amongst the conscript cohort for their contribution to be recognised. Even though they had no choice but to participate in service, over three out of every four men took part in the commemorative process. It has been established in Chapter 1 the overall cohort here was heavily weighted towards youth. Somewhere in the region of 15 per cent only turned 18 from 1916 onwards, meaning for many conscription was the only effective route into active service. For these men, there could be no question of any possible perception of stigma arising from having failed to volunteer earlier in the war. Even for those who were older, there does not necessarily seem to have been a reluctance to be part of the commemorative process. William Brewster (1898–1901)[65] is an example. His entry in *Colfe's and the Great War* reads: 'Joined 4.8.17, R.N.A.S.; 1st Air Mechanic. Home Service.'. This is factually correct but what it does not reveal is William, a stationer, newsagent and tobacconist with shops in Pinner and Northwood, was a reluctant participant in the war. His applications for exemption from conscription and subsequent appeals began in July 1916. His initial case was primarily financial and centred on the need for him (both on behalf of himself and his family and on behalf of the community he served) to continue to run his business unless a buyer for it could be found as a going concern. This was sufficient after an appeal, an application for an extension of a temporary extension and a further appeal to defer enlistment until the end of 1916. William then contracted pneumonia, when the issue for the tribunal became one of medical fitness, and it was not until July 1917 he was eventually passed fit for service.[66] The reasons for William's decision to participate in the commemorative process are unclear. Given his reluctance to serve, it seems unlikely William valued his service particularly highly. It also seems unlikely he had much of a continuing connection with Colfe's. His service commenced 16 years after leaving, he had married in Aylesbury in 1906 and he had been living in the Pinner area since at least 1911.

Turning now to look at the commemorative significance of an element of service in a combat role.[67] There are 941 serving men for whom a combat status can be identified, 715 of whom are commemorated and 226 of whom are not. This gives a headline commemoration rate of around 75 per cent within the cohort as a whole. However, a secondary level analysis of the commemorated and non-commemorated cohorts shows there are important differences in the commemorative treatment of these two sub-groups of men as illustrated by Table 3.3.

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[64] Winter, *Great War*, p. 38.
[65] Born Greenwich 1886, father publican. Undistinguished school career. Service records under Charles William Newall Brewster.
[66] TNA, MH 47/30/12.
[67] As to the definitional assumptions made in this regard see Introduction.

Table 3.3. Commemoration by reference to combat status.

Identity of cohort	Total number	Combat status	Non-combat status	Likelihood of commemoration
Commemorated cohort	715	490	225	69%
Non-commemorated cohort	226	120	106	53%

Within the commemorated cohort, the commemoration rate of those who did not spend any element of their service in a combat role is a little under one in three whilst that for the non-commemorated cohort is nearer one in two indicating those in non-combat roles were significantly less likely to form part of the Colfe's commemorative process. Or, viewed from a slightly different perspective, that combat roles were overrepresented amongst those who were commemorated. Why might this be the case? We will see shortly lack of engagement with the process is likely to have had a strong subjective element and, this being so, it is possible views of the relative status of service in combat were an influential factor. At its most basic level, this might be characterised as a personal lack of pride in service in a non-combat role, especially against the background of the Colfeian approach to commemoration with its developing focus as the war progressed on death and gallantry, both of which are very closely associated with combat. In a more general sense, it might also be viewed as reflecting a perception of the enhanced standing of those involved in combat, what have been described as 'combat masculinities'.[68] An alternative framing might be found in the concept of 'combat gnosticism' which has been identified by James Campbell as developed in the context of literary criticism by the war poets and their critics (especially Paul Fussell).[69] The basis of the ideology as explained by Campbell is that 'war' is equated with 'combat', with war experience being a secret knowledge only those who have undertaken combat can understand. Service as a non-combatant does not trigger initiation. Within this setting, reluctance to participate in the commemorative process could be viewed as a form of reverse combat gnosticism, a sense of not meriting commemoration because of lack of initiation into the cult of combat.

Edward Stone (1906–09) is a potential example of a man who might have been dissuaded from participation in view of the nature of his service role.[70] In terms of pre-war location, Stone was based in Lewisham and was working as a clerk. Stone entered service in the Army Pay Corps in

[68] Meyer, *An Equal Burden*, pp. 11–12.
[69] James Campbell, 'Combat Gnosticism: The Ideology of First World War Poetry Criticism', *New Literary History*, 30.1 (1999), pp. 203–15.
[70] Born 1894 Woolwich, father clerk. Board school. Academically able.

November 1914 and was, accordingly, a relatively early wartime volunteer, rising through the ranks to Sergeant. He did not serve overseas and, in March 1918, was transferred to the Class W Reserve on the basis his services were more valuable in civil employment. Stone's service seems to have been little more than a continuation of civilian life and it is not unreasonable to speculate this may have influenced non-participation in the Colfe's commemorative process. Contrast Stone, though, with Gilbert Coates (1909–15) who did choose to participate.[71] Coates was conscripted into ground service with the RAF aged 18 from his family home in Lewisham and employment as a draughtsman in June 1918, serving as a Third Air Mechanic lithographic draughtsman and printer until his demobilisation in April 1919. Like Stone, he would not serve overseas. There were subtle differences in social background. Pre-Colfe's, Stone was educated in a LCC board school, Coates privately. Further, at the 1911 census Stone and eight family members were living in a five-roomed house whilst Coates and three family members were living in a six-roomed house with a domestic servant. This apart, the parallels with Stone's service profile are striking—a local man who spent a significant period at Colfe's leaving at the same age to enter employment and, seemingly, having simply continued his civilian career in uniform—but with a different commemorative outcome. As with much of this analysis, identified trends become less persuasive when drilling down to the level of the individual.

The concluding statistical analysis to be considered in terms of nature of service looks at the potential impact of final rank on the likelihood of commemoration. The total cohort of men with an identified final rank is 919 and for present purposes these men have been divided into three broad categories: commissioned officers; men who were still officer cadets at the war's end; and non-commissioned officers and other ranks. The results of the analysis are set out in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Commemoration by reference to final rank.

Final rank	Commemorated	Not commemorated	Likelihood of commemoration
Commissioned officer	324	72	82%
Officer cadet	19	7	76%
Non-commissioned officer or other rank	359	139	72%

[71] Born 1899 Lewisham, father lithographer. Academically able.

The 10 per cent difference between the commemoration rates of officers and of non-commissioned officers and other ranks, whilst relatively small, is deserving of comment. It might be thought to be a consequence of higher rates of death amongst officers and, therefore, an increased prospect of commemoration—war dead were 13 per cent more likely to be commemorated than survivors. It has, however, been established in Chapter 2, whatever the position more generally, there is no significant differential between rates of officer and other mortality within the Colfeian cohort. Issues relating to social capital may, however, be relevant. For instance, pride in having achieved a commission (especially if promoted from the ranks)[72] or a desire to establish status as a former officer in the post-war world. Although admittedly based on a very small sample, the commemoration rate for those who were still officer cadets when hostilities ended is surprisingly high—most, at this stage of war, would not have seen any prior service and, therefore, taken any active part or have anything particularly substantive to commemorate. Again, though, issues around social capital may be influential here.

It has already been established participation in the commemorative process was largely founded on the principle of active engagement. We have also established, although there were substantial numbers of men who did not form part of the process, around three out of four did participate. In general terms, engagement was, therefore, the default position. The statistical analysis which has been undertaken is informative. In particular, pre-war location may have been an existential factor influencing engagement. An element of service in a combat role also looks to have been relevant. For those who survived (for the relatives of the dead different considerations may well have applied, which could be another reason for their higher rates of commemoration), active engagement was, though, probably more often than not a personal decision taken on subjective grounds, not all of which are capable of quantitative assessment. A feeling of continuing connection with the School community had to be of some importance. One factor influencing this could be expected to be the length of time spent within that community. As already seen the average stay at the School across the cohort was four years and around two-thirds of boys remained for between two and five years.[73] These headline figures do, though, conceal a wide durational range from a matter of months to over a decade. The age when a boy left might also be of significance. If a boy entered Colfe's aged nine and left two years later aged eleven to complete his education elsewhere, his connection might be less than a boy who entered at thirteen and left at fifteen to enter the workforce. Further, academic success, sporting achievements, friendships formed and general happiness could all be expected to play a part in fostering a feeling of lasting connection.

However, again, once we start to examine specific individuals, matters become less clear. Eric Johnson (1899–1903) was a boy who spent the average time of four years at Colfe's but was not

[72] We have seen from Chapter 2 that the Colfe's data exhibit high levels of commissioning from the ranks.
[73] See Chapter 1.

commemorated.[74] His case is more unusual than most instances of non-commemoration in that he was a fatality. Johnson entered Colfe's from a private school and was clearly of some academic promise, receiving Colfe's scholarships for two out of the four years of his attendance. He left aged fourteen to enter the City of London School, where he served in their OTC. His immediate pre-war location is not known although he had migrated to Canada in 1911 described as an engineer, returning to the United Kingdom in June 1914. Johnson voluntarily enlisted in the ranks with 9th Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment in October 1914, being commissioned into 8th Battalion, The Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment in January 1915. He served on the Western Front from the end of May 1915 until his death aged 26 on either 25 or 26 September 1915 at Loos. The circumstances of his death are not clear but it seems likely he was wounded, taken prisoner and then killed by British shells.[75] His body was never recovered. It might be thought the lack of Colfeian commemoration was a result of a stronger connection with his final school but Johnson does not appear on the City of London School memorial either.[76] For whatever reason, his parents did not engage with the commemorative process at either school. Johnson can be contrasted with Frederick Jasper (1898–99).[77] He had entered Colfe's from Fossdene Road Board School and left Colfe's aged nine after only six terms to enter Reading School. By the time of the 1911 census, Frederick was living in Bromley with his parents and working as a civil engineer. He voluntarily enlisted in the ranks shortly after war broke out with 1st County of London (Middlesex, Duke of Cambridge's Hussars) Yeomanry, being commissioned into 9th Battery 3rd London Brigade, Royal Field Artillery in October 1914 and serving with them on the Western Front from October 1915 onwards. Frederick was awarded the Military Cross and mentioned in despatches three times. He relinquished his commission on account of ill health caused by wounds with the rank of Captain in April 1919. Despite a short stay at Colfe's at a young age with the majority of his education spent elsewhere (all factors that might be expected to militate against a continuing connection), Frederick appears in the Roll of Service in *Colfe's and the Great War*.

Social and cultural issues may also have been a factor influencing participation in the commemorative process. Returning to Edward Stone, his family seem to have been of more modest means than most. It might be placing it too highly to ascribe his non-commemoration in part to the social standing of his parents but it is not beyond the realms of possibility he may not have felt fully at ease at Colfe's, thus weakening any sense of continuing attachment. More generally at a social and cultural level, a desire to be publicly recorded as having 'done one's bit' or, perhaps more negatively, a wish to avoid being omitted (what might now be termed as a fear of missing out) could have had a bearing on engagement with the commemorative process. We get a

[74] Born 1899 Guildford, father engineer.
[75] TNA, WO 339/31888.
[76] See IWM War Memorials Register, 'City of London School—WW1 and WW2' © WMR–11803, [n.d.] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/item/memorial/11803> [accessed 22 April 2024].
[77] Born 1899 Woolwich, father engineer.

hint of this in relation to the entry in the Roll of Service for Seymour Mills (already encountered in Chapter 1), which records his joining the Indian Army reserve in August 1918 but adds ‘As an officer of the Indian Police he was not permitted to join the army prior to the above date.’. Seymour had attended Colfe’s for eight years and was academically able. He was also a keen sportsman both at school and subsequently with the Old Colfeian football and cricket clubs. So there was already quite a strong attachment to the Colfeian community. Despite this, he clearly thought an explanation for his late enlistment was required to set the record straight.

Familial ties could also be significant. There are a number of sets of siblings within the serving cohort and there is a marked tendency if one brother participates, so do others. However, whatever the apparent strength of a contributory element, there are always exceptions. This is as true for familial ties as for any other factor. Charles and Walter Hall, encountered earlier, are a good illustration of this. From their respective entries in the Roll of Service in *Colfe’s and the Great War* it is quite clear, despite having very similar service profiles in combat roles, Charles engaged with the commemorative process but Walter did not. Cecil (1906–09), Eric (1906–1912) and Arthur (1910–16) Collins are another example. All three men were born locally, the sons of a master tailor. Their parents were divorced in 1902 on the basis of their mother’s adultery and their father was given custody of the boys, bringing them up with the assistance of servants. All were academically able, Arthur particularly so, ultimately becoming a Professor of Languages at Leicester University. All also served in the war in combat roles. Cecil voluntarily enlisted in the ranks with 2/23rd Battalion, London Regiment in September 1914 and then transferred as a regular to the RE Special Brigade in July 1915 as an analytical chemist for duties relating to poison gas, commencing service on the Western Front shortly afterwards. He was wounded in the thigh there in June of the following year, returning to the UK for treatment. During his period of recovery, Cecil was hospitalised with measles for two months and did not return to the Western Front until June 1917 where he remained in service with the Special Brigade until the beginning of April 1918. At that point, he transferred back to the infantry (apparently due to ‘unsuitability’ for the RE) serving with 12th (The Rangers) Battalion, London Regiment on the Western Front for the remainder of the war. Eric, a pre-war territorial serving with 9th (Queen Victoria’s Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment, was mobilised at the outbreak of the war and served in the ranks with them on the Western Front from February 1915 to September 1916. He was discharged in May 1917 with very good character as no longer physically fit for war service as a result of shell shock. Arthur was conscripted from university in September 1917 shortly after turning 18 and served in the ranks with 7th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, 873 Company, the Labour Corps and 44th Garrison Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. At some point, Arthur served on the Western Front but it is not clear exactly when. Arthur is the subject of a reasonably full entry in the Roll of Service in *Colfe’s and the Great War* although his service in the Labour Corps is not mentioned—the potential effect of incomplete entries such as this in shaping collective memory of the war is considered further below. Eric is the subject of a full entry even to the extent of his discharge for shell shock, which

some might have preferred to gloss over given prevailing attitudes (especially mid-war) towards illnesses of this nature. It is reasonably clear both must have actively participated in the commemorative process, given the level of detail in their entries. It is equally clear Cecil, even though having what would be perceived as a 'good war' (leaving aside the unexplained transfer back to the infantry), did not. His entry simply reads 'Understood to have served with the R.E., but particulars not reported.' This is despite the fact he had held a leadership position at Colfe's as house secretary and the reporting of his marriage in the summer of 1920 in the *Colfeian*, which might be taken to suggest an element of continued connection with the School.[78]

As can be seen, often there is no one specific factor identifiable as fully explaining a decision to (or not to) engage with the commemorative process—sometimes there is a range of various potential elements that might have influenced what was, ultimately a personal choice of alumni or their next-of-kin. On occasion that choice defies a reasoned analysis. We considered William Brewster earlier. It is very difficult to see why, on any level, he wished to see his participation in the war commemorated. He was forced to serve against his will in what was a non-combat role at various air bases scattered around the UK and had no obvious continuing connection with Colfe's. Certainly, the decision seems to have done little to improve his life prospects. There are no identifiable public records for him after the 1921 census when he was recorded as working as a builder's carpenter and joiner (which may have been a skill acquired during his war service) and the 1922 electoral roll for the then-current matrimonial home in Waxwell Lane, Pinner. The 1939 Register records his wife, Ellen, still at the Waxwell Lane property as a divorcee undertaking unpaid domestic duties for Christopher Massey (also divorced) described as a novelist and his brother Ernest. The electoral records show Ellen had been living apart from William since at least 1930, the domestic arrangements with the Massey brothers having commenced in 1934.

Shaping collective memory

The final section of this chapter examines how the Colfe's commemorative processes, and in particular the reliance on active engagement, have shaped the Colfeian collective memory of the First World War in terms of the accepted narrative of alumni service experience. As already seen, reliance on active engagement led to significant levels of non-participation. This distorted the collective memory in two ways. Firstly, it gave the impression of excessive levels of death in that a greater proportion of those who did not participate in the commemorative process survived the war, thus reducing the overall fatality rate. The foundations for this differential had already been laid in the growing equivalence of death with the concept of honour during the evolution of the processes. The second element of distortion lay in relying on participants for the accuracy of commemorative detail—this allowed an opportunity for the manipulation of records to portray a different individual narrative than that which had actually occurred.

[78] *Colfeian* No. 30 vol. 8 (June 1921), p. 35.

The issue of perception of excessive levels of death in service is the more straightforward of the two to address. As already seen the Rolls of Honour and of Service in *Colfe's and the Great War* have been accepted for a century or so as a complete record of those connected with the School who died in and who served and survived the First World War respectively. There are 124 men listed in the Roll of Honour and 607 men in the Roll of Service together totalling 731, which gives a fatality rate of just under 17 per cent (around one in six). This is significantly higher than the national average of one in eight and broadly in line with the average of between 18 and 19 per cent claimed for public schools[79] although at the time Colfe's was not (and not considered to be) a school of this kind.[80] Taking account of the minor methodological differences referred to earlier in this chapter, this study places the number of war dead at 140 and the total number of men who served at 952, giving a fatality rate of 14.7 per cent. This remains higher than the national average but much closer to it than previously. The potential reasons for the disparity between the adjusted rate and the national average have been explored in Chapter 2. It is, however, quite clear the degree of war loss to the Colfeian community was significantly less (or, put another way, the prospects of serving in the war and surviving were significantly higher) than conventionally believed.

Multiple memorials in different settings of an individual fatality may only have served to reinforce an impression of excessive rates of death. This study cannot claim to have located all memorials relevant to the Colfeian war dead but has identified nineteen men who were memorialised in at least two places as well as the original Colfe's memorial plaque. This is in addition to any official CWGC memorial. Charles Fysh[81] was remembered on at least five additional memorials: those at the Lee Methodist Church, Blackheath Rugby Club, South London Harriers, Grantown-on-Spey (where his widow was from and returned to following his death) and St Peter's Church, Lee (where he was a member of the congregation) until its destruction in the Second World War. This illustrates how memorialisation could be spread across a range of different communities. This could be a geographic community—where a man lived and/or one to which his next-of-kin lived or later relocated to. It could be his religious community. In the case of Charles, he is memorialised by both a non-conformist and an Anglican church. Mark Connelly has made the point Anglican churches often included all men of the parish regardless of denomination on their memorials.[82] In this case Charles does, however, appear to have been a practising Anglican and the explanation of dual memorialisation is more likely to lie with the religious affiliation of relatives. Educational communities obviously represent another source of possible remembrance both at different levels (primary, secondary and higher) and also different institutions if a boy was educated in more than

[79] See Introduction.
[80] See Chapter 1.
[81] Born 1895 Woolwich, father retired merchant. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[82] Mark Connelly, *The Great War, Memory and Ritual: Commemoration in the City and East London, 1916–1939*, Studies in History New Series (Boydell Press, 2002), p. 38.

one place at any particular level. Sports and other social communities were also potential locations of remembrance, as were workplaces. Contemporaneously, to those who personally knew the dead and their various social and community connections, this multiplicity is likely to have been understood for what it was but, with the passage of time, that understanding may have waned reinforcing the idea of far greater losses than actually occurred.

The second way in which the Colfe's commemorative processes have the potential to distort the collective memory of the war is more subtle. The reliance on active engagement by those who participated means the information in *Colfe's and the Great War* was almost completely dependent for its accuracy on those who provided it. The majority of entries give the impression of being a fair summary of service but it is difficult to be certain of how correct their detail is because service records are not available for all and, where they do exist, are not necessarily complete. Even against this background of inconsistent levels of available data, it is clear some entries are not entirely accurate. There are two levels of inaccuracy, one relatively minor and the other more significant. Looking at inaccuracies of a minor nature first. These primarily revolve around one of three main areas: date of enlistment; omission of an element of service; and final rank. An example of a minor error in the date of commencement of service can be found in the entry for Karl Gammon (1907–10).[83] A pre-war migrant, Gammon enlisted in Canada with the CEF. His entry records he joined in August 1914 and after service in the ranks with the CEF was commissioned into 11th Battalion, Sussex Regiment with whom he was wounded and invalided out after being awarded the Military Cross. This is all confirmed by his service records apart from the enlistment date, which his CEF Personnel file clearly states was 23 September 1914.[84] At most, the difference was a matter of weeks but, at least so far as the official file is concerned and, despite what was a very creditable war record, Gammon was not an August volunteer. We have seen earlier the service of Arthur Collins in the Labour Corps is missing from his entry. In terms of final rank, the entry for Bertram Westbrook (1899–1901)[85] is an example of potential minor overstatement. It records Westbrook achieved the rank of Lance-Corporal whilst his medal records indicate he finished the war as a Private.

There are quite a number of potential errors relating to all three areas but also several plausible reasons for any inaccuracy apart from deliberate misrepresentation. At a basic level, it is possible editorial or transpositional mistakes arose during the compilation of *Colfe's and the Great War*. An example of this is the entry in the Roll of Service for Reginald Boxer (1900–02).[86] This states Boxer joined the RAF on 27 July 1918 although his military records clearly show the actual date of enlistment was exactly twelve months earlier.[87] Further, service records are not always necessarily

[83] Born 1896 Lewisham, father bank clerk. Undistinguished school career.
[84] World War 1 CEF Files Full–Gar, Box 3394 [accessed through Ancestry 23 April 2024].
[85] Born 1885 Lewisham, father music professor. Board school. Undistinguished school career.
[86] Born 1888 Lichfield, father accountant. Undistinguished school career.
[87] TNA, AIR 79/814/89758.

as reliable as they might be, often being compiled after the event from a variety of contemporaneous sources. In terms of enlistment and, in particular during the early rush to volunteer, there could be a degree of confusion as to the precise date involved. So far as units of service are concerned, it may have been the case spells of service were so insignificant as to be considered inconsequential in terms of overall service for the purposes of commemoration. It is worth mentioning in this context, though, the omission of Labour Corps service is, not unique to Arthur Collins. According to their medal records, Sidney Smith (1905–12),[88] Douglas Jacob (1911–13)[89] and Cyril Greenstreet (1911–16)[90] all spent an element of time serving with the Labour Corps but their entries in *Colfe's and The Great War* focus exclusively on their service in combat units. This may be coincidental but, equally, it is conceivable it may be a manifestation of the impact of the concept of 'combat masculinities' discussed earlier. On the other hand, some elements of service and, in particular, incidents of wounding are underreported as against data in service records. It is unclear why this should be so but it is conceivable here the criteria for inclusion of this kind of detail were not made clear to contributors. As with early enlistment, final rank was an area where confusion could arise between individual recollection and service records, particularly if the rank had been an acting one which transpired never to be officially confirmed. There could also be timing issues. An appointment may have post-dated the cessation of hostilities or not been confirmed or notified to Duncan until after *Colfe's and the Great War* had been edited and prepared for print.

Even if incorrect, it seems unlikely there was any significant degree of deliberation surrounding most of these minor inaccuracies. Admittedly, a degree of embellishment cannot be discounted in some cases—it is a not uncommon trait of human nature to slightly embroider the events of the past to fit a desired narrative or even for a desired narrative to become genuinely remembered as true. In any event, not all the inaccuracies consist of matters being overstated. There are also examples of understatement and, in terms of shaping collective memory, the cumulative effects of these and any enhanced reporting ultimately probably balance each other out. Even given the lack of consistently complete data, there are, however, quite a number of instances where it is hard to avoid the conclusion there has been a deliberate attempt to substantively reframe the past. The examples of this that follow are four of the more striking but they are by no means exhaustive.

The first two illustrations have been chosen primarily because they reveal serious disciplinary issues that do not appear in *Colfe's and the Great War*. The men concerned are Reginald Pynegar (encountered in Chapter 1) and Frank Crump (referred to earlier in this chapter). Pynegar's entry in the Roll of Service is relatively succinct. It states he joined the Australian forces in 1915, serving in France '(Menin Road, etc)' with the New South Wales contingent. His AIF service records[91] show,

[88] Born 1896 Tonbridge, father gentleman. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[89] Born 1898 Greenwich, father architect. Undistinguished school career.
[90] Born 1899 Kingston, father clerk. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman.
[91] Australia, World War 1 Service Records, 1914–20 [accessed through Ancestry 23 April 2024].

in fact, Pynegar only enlisted for service in January 1916 and was not an especially early volunteer. He did serve on the Western Front from August to 1917 to March 1918 with the 4th Infantry Battalion and so involvement in the Third Battle of Ypres is quite possible. This, however, is only part of the story. AIF records show Pynegar was court-martialled on 20 May 1918, charged with desertion. It was alleged when returning from duty with 1st Australian Division HQ on 15 March 1918 he absented himself without leave and remained absent until apprehended by the Military Police in Paris at 2.20 pm on 9 April 1918. There is no indication as to how he had spent the intervening time. Pynegar was found guilty and sentenced to five years' imprisonment with hard labour, being admitted to military prison on 12 July 1918 after discharge from hospital following treatment for ringworm and impetigo. A little over a month later, this sentence was commuted to two years' imprisonment with hard labour but, in the event, he was released on 11 April 1919 and the remainder of the sentence remitted. Pynegar was shipped back to Australia in September 1919 and discharged from service in December that year with the award of British War and Victory medals, returning to the UK permanently in February 1921.

We find a similarly incomplete entry for Crump in the Roll of Service. The entry states he joined in February 1915, serving with ammunition columns of the Motor Transport Division of the ASC and the Royal Garrison Artillery. His service is described as being for three years in France, one year in Mesopotamia and in Persia. The entry mentions no rank. Crump's service records[92] state his enlistment with the ASC dated from June and not February 1915. They also show he was a long-standing pre-war territorial having served with the HAC from 1909 to May 1914.[93] The service records broadly confirm where his service took place.[94] Again, though, the main interest in Crump for the purposes of this study is the more significant matters left unsaid. Crump enlisted and initially served as a lorry driver in the ASC but was commissioned from the ranks in February 1918. It was in this capacity as an officer he was tried and convicted by General Court Martial of conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline in July 1919 for improperly fitting out a condemned motor car and reselling it at a large profit to a civilian. He was sentenced to be dismissed from service with forfeiture of medals.[95] Following dismissal, Crump returned to the UK to become company secretary of his father's business.

The second set of examples have been selected because they consist of entries in the Roll of Service that are fuller and superficially complete but where a closer examination of the underlying records reveals a very different narrative. The two men concerned are John Wickham (1900–07)[96]

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[92] TNA, WO 374/17044.
[93] It is unclear why he did not rejoin HAC on outbreak of war. Pre-war he was a salesman for his timber merchant father and commercial considerations resulting from increased wartime demand may have been influential.
[94] Western Front two years six months. Mesopotamia just under a year including four months in hospital (sandfly fever and influenza).
[95] Service record notes indicate the sentence was considered harsh by some.
[96] Born 1893 Lewisham, father salesmaster. Undistinguished school career.

and Cecil Chiesman (1905–09)[97]. In both cases it is important to set out the entries verbatim to appreciate the nuances of the approach adopted to commemoration. Wickham's entry reads:

> Joined January 1912. Cpl., Westminster Dragoons; Uganda Volunteer Reserve (attached King's African Rifles); 2nd Lieut., R.F.A (1st Division); Lieut., Army Pay Dept. Served in Uganda, German East Africa, France. Gassed.

The impression given consists of a number of strands: pre-war voluntary service; service in a combat role both in Africa and on the Western Front; commissioning from the ranks; wounding; leading to service in a non-combat role. A perfectly creditable war record. Wickham's surviving service records show otherwise.[98] There is evidence of the pre-war service claimed with the Westminster Dragoons.[99] There is also evidence of subsequent active service with the Uganda Volunteer Reserve from 24 September 1914, which was followed by being invalided back to the UK in 1915.[100] Wickham was accepted for a commission in the Royal Field Artillery in June 1915. After training, he served on the Western Front but was ordered to return to the UK in February 1917 as 'unfit to serve as an officer'. This was not due to any physical injury (and, in particular, there is no evidence in the records of any exposure to gas) but to ineptitude.[101] He was requested to resign his commission in March 1917. After contesting this, he was transferred to the Army Pay Department on probation but went sick after a fortnight and was hospitalised described as suffering from an 'old complaint'. He was passed for duty in August but said to be suffering from venereal disease and described as 'quite useless as an officer'. Despite this, Wickham seems to have seen out the war with the Army Pay Department, relinquishing his commission there on completion of service in April 1919 described as 'Fit' in terms of medical categorisation—his combatant commission in the artillery had been relinquished at the beginning of 1918. In reality, Wickham saw little in the way of active service and was transferred to the Army Pay Department as an alternative to being discharged due to unsuitability as an officer in a combat-facing role. All this against the background of general debility, potentially originating from a sexually transmitted disease contracted in Africa.

Chiesman's entry in the Roll of Service reads:

> Joined August 1914. Private, H.A.C.; Lieut., Lancashire Fusiliers (served with 12th, 15th and 3rd Battns.); 2nd Battn. York & Lancaster Regt. and 2/4th Northants. Served in France. Invalided out 1917 from wounds, blood poisoning and shell shock.

Again, the entry needs to be stripped back to its constituent parts to test the narrative. Chiesman's surviving service records[102] confirm he enlisted in the ranks with the HAC but on 8 September 1914, not in August. As noted previously, there can be confusion regarding the exact date of

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[97] Born 1895 Lewisham, father draper. Undistinguished school career.
[98] TNA, WO 339/5107.
[99] From 1912 prior to becoming a shipping agent in British East Africa.
[100] The reasons are not recorded although later entries suggest they may have been non-military.
[101] He was described by his C.O. as lacking stamina, of 'colourless' character, no perception of duty and incapable of command. 4th Army Commanding General stated that he was 'quite useless'.
[102] TNA, WO 339/384.

enlistment in the earliest days of the war but it seems reasonably clear he was not an August volunteer. Chiesman was commissioned from the ranks into the Lancashire Fusiliers in November 1914 and promoted to Lieutenant in July 1916. The units of service outside the Lancashire Fusilier battalions are not confirmed by his service records. It is accurate to say Chiesman served on the Western Front but this was for a very limited period of less than two months between July and September 1916. For a number of reasons, he spent most of the war in the UK. Chiesman first appeared before a medical board in August 1915 suffering from neuritis in the right shoulder blade not caused by military service. He was declared fit for light duty the following month. Chiesman appeared before a medical board again in November 1915 after breaking his left hand in a motorcycle accident, again, not caused by military service. He was declared fit for general service from this until the latter part of March 1916. His spell of active service abroad was brought to an end following wounds suffered at La Bassée on 9 September 1916.[103] The wounds were classified as severe but not permanent by a medical board later that month, who estimated Chiesman would be incapacitated for four months. Chiesman did not, in fact, return to active service and was declared permanently unfit for service in July 1918 due to mental instability attributable to the stress of active service conditions on one of unstable mental balance.[104] The Medical Board added, rather damningly, 'his condition is [illegible] by 2 marked tendencies. 1. bid for sympathy 2. dramatisation'. It is clear from this he was not invalided out of service as a result of his physical wounds or blood poisoning and, to the extent there was any element of ‘shell shock’, it was an exacerbation of existing mental instability.

The interesting question in relation to all four of these men is why, given the actuality of their service, they felt it necessary to engage with the commemorative process. There was little, if anything, for them to be proud of in their overall record. In the case of Pynegar and Crump, it is possible they did not actively participate. The entries are brief and the information provided may have originated from their parents, who may not have been aware of the full facts. Otherwise, it is hard to avoid the conclusion the entries were anything other than deliberately obfuscatory. In the case of Pynegar, there may conceivably also have been family pressures involved. His Colfeian brother, Edgar, appears in the Roll of Honour in *Colfe’s and The Great War*, having died of influenza on active service in France just before the end of the war after prior service in Egypt and Gallipoli. Pynegar’s younger non-Colfeian brother, Kemys, had also died in France, killed in action, aged 19 in April 1918. Omission of Pynegar from the Roll of Service might have attracted comment, whilst an accurate entry would have detracted from the deaths of his brothers. In contrast, there can be little doubt Wickham and Chiesman actively participated in the process—both entries are carefully crafted to provide the impression of a positive service record within a plausible (although, in parts, misleading) framework even though, in reality, neither record was

[103] Superficial to left knee, two to left thigh, two shrapnel fragments in left foot.
[104] He had been admitted to a specialist shell shock hospital in February1918 after irresponsible acts and described there as ‘unstable and unreliable’.

particularly creditable and neither man demonstrated any great aptitude or appetite for active service. In the case of Chiesman, as with Pynegar, there may have been family considerations. Chiesman's younger Colfeian brother, Charles, had a fuller involvement in the war—despite his own issues of physical wounds, illness (malaria) and mental health (depression and neurasthenia)—serving on the Western Front, in Salonika and as part of the Army of Occupation of the Rhine, ending the war with the rank of Major. If Charles was to be commemorated (and he is, but without, incidentally, any mention of his wounds etc), it was not surprising Chiesman too would appear in the Roll of Service and in a context not detracting from Charles's wartime career. So far as both Chiesman and Wickham were concerned, establishing or maintaining a narrative of combat masculinity or a degree of social capital may also have had a role in the decision to engage with the commemorative process. Maintaining social capital may have been especially relevant in the case of Chiesman—his father Frank and his uncle Harry were pillars of the local business community owning and operating the large eponymous department store, Chiesmans, in the centre of Lewisham. Added to this, Harry served as mayor of Lewisham in 1919–1920 and was in office at about the time *Colfe's and the Great War* was published.[105]

Summary

This chapter establishes three matters. Firstly, the primary (and ultimately exclusive) focus of Colfeian commemoration evolved into one relating to the war dead. Secondly, the process of commemoration itself was largely participant-led. Thirdly, although pre-war location and service in a combat-facing role were statistically influential in relation to participation, for survivors at least, the decision to engage with the process was essentially a subjective one based on individual circumstances. These factors in combination resulted in the omission of one in four men who served in the war from the commemorative process—in terms of remembrance, effectively equivalent to a 'lost generation'. Those excluded were largely men who survived the war and were proportionately more likely to have served in roles that were not combat-facing. The perception of loss and the role and significance of combat were, therefore, exaggerated.

At a secondary level, the reliance on unverified individual contributions brought with it a risk of misrepresentation of service history. It is difficult to assess with any certainty how widespread the issue of significant misrepresentation was. The necessary level of analysis can only be undertaken where reasonably full service records survive, which is not consistently the case. There is no reason to believe the majority of commemorative entries were anything other than a fair and accurate reflection of service history. However, it is clear, at least in some instances where underlying data are available, a degree of sanitation has been undertaken and not every

[105] See Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre, 'Metropolitan Borough of Lewisham Mayors' [n.d.] <http://lewisham-heritage.wikidot.com/metropolitan-borough-of-lewisham-mayors> [accessed 24 April 2024].

individual's war record is as creditable as might at first sight seem from the Roll of Service, which is a further distorting influence shaping the perception of the Colfeian contribution to the war.

A detailed consideration of the wider potential implications of the Colfe's findings for studies using community-based commemorative records is outside the scope of this thesis. The author did, however, in July 2022 approach the archivists at five schools also appearing in the 2013 study by Seldon and Walsh[106] with a similar geographic and/or demographic profile to Colfe's to enquire how rigorous it was thought the commemorative process had been at their respective institutions. Responses from Emanuel School in Battersea and King's College School, Wimbledon showed new research carried out to mark the centenary of the war had revealed significant levels of non-commemoration. In the case of KCS Wimbledon surviving alumni registers had enabled a detailed forensic analysis of service participation to be undertaken, in much the same way as here. The traditionally-accepted number of men who served was 789, of whom 159 died,[107] figures which increased to 1008 and 173 respectively as a result of the new research. At around 22 per cent, the overall levels of non-commemoration are on a similar scale to Colfe's. If nothing else, this shows at least in terms of secondary educational communities, the Colfe's commemorative experience is not unique.

[106] See Introduction.
[107] Seldon and Walsh, p. 258.

Chapter 4: The War: Pre-War Migrant Experience

We have seen in Chapter 1 a 'generation' equivalent to nearly twice the number of war fatalities was lost to the UK to pre-war migration. This chapter seeks to determine the extent to which the pre-war migrant cohort experience of the war altered that cohort's migratory behaviour and, in particular, whether it had a significant effect on this level of loss. It does so by examining the role pre-war migrants played in the war, their wartime experiences and the effect on their lives. Despite very substantial levels of global migration during the pre-war period there has been little significant published scholarship within the fields of either First World War studies or migration studies relating to these matters in the context of voluntary migrants.[1] Given the potentially very different outlooks, loyalties, priorities and motivations held by migrants in comparison with those who remained within the national borders of their country of birth, it might be expected this would have proved a rewarding area of research across both disciplines in achieving a more nuanced understanding of the conduct and effect of the conflict and of the nature and forms that pre-war migration took. We have established in Chapter 1 the factors motivating the migration of the Colfeian pre-war cohort were firmly rooted in choice and free will. More generally, therefore, the chapter also helps to address this deficiency in the historiography in the context of a cohort of British migrants who were generally under no compulsion to undertake military service.

The study of the wartime role and experiences of the pre-war Colfeian migrant cohort is undertaken from two main perspectives. The first is a military one and consists of an analysis of active migrant participation in the war both in the general sense of the migrant experience as against the overall serving cohort experience and, more specifically in some instances, within the context of the experiences of those migrants who served with British forces and those who served in the forces of their country of destination. This establishes substantial levels of voluntary enlistment early in the war with the likelihood of a higher probability of mortality amongst those serving in overseas forces. The second perspective considers the still significant numbers of men who choose not to engage with military service either in British or overseas forces and the lives they followed during the war years. Overall, we find the war did not have any meaningful effect on migratory behaviour. Leaving aside those who died, irrespective of any military service or the form that service took, levels of migratory status within the cohort did not change significantly. Nor was there any lasting disruption of the pre-war pattern of a small but relatively regular level of annual return to the UK. To the extent the pre-war migrant cohort constituted a 'lost generation' prior to the war, it remained so afterwards.

[1] Selena Daly, 'Friends and Foes: Aliens and Migrants in the Era of the Great War', *The Journal of Modern History*, 95.1 (2023), pp. 149–72 (pp. 149–51), doi: 10.1086/7233415.

Migrant service

The number of pre-war Colfeian migrants for whom there is evidence of war service is 130, representing 13 per cent of the overall serving cohort and 61 per cent of the 212 pre-war migrants who remained alive and still abroad at the time war broke out. Around two out of every three men is a significant proportionate enlistment rate. It is not, in absolute terms, quite as high as that for the UK-based serving cohort, which (after adjustment for pre-war mortality) was 76 per cent but, as discussed in Chapter 2 both these figures far outstrip patterns of enlistment within the UK population more generally. The migrant levels of service are particularly striking given these were men who had left their native country often for distant parts of the World, in some cases a decade or so previously, many with the intention of pursuing a career abroad or of settling permanently there or both. We will return to the potential reasons for these levels of service in more depth later. For the moment, it is sufficient to note, even if some men were operating in a colonial-type environment, they were all at least one step (and, in many instances, several more steps) removed from the factors that might have influenced the decision of the domestic population to actively participate in the war. They were also generally under no immediate obligation to serve, unlike migrants from most other combatant nations where there were pre-war systems of compulsory military service with ongoing reservist commitments in the event of war, irrespective of country of residence.

There are two general points of initial interest revealed by a more detailed analysis of the patterns of enlistment of the migrant cohort. The first is enlistment rates varied by country of residence. This is illustrated by Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Pre-war migrant service by country of residence.

Country of Residence at Outbreak of War	Total Number of Pre-War Migrants	Number of Pre-War Migrants Serving	Proportion of Total (rounded)
Australia and New Zealand	40	25	63%
Canada	70	47	67%
South Africa and Rhodesia	14	6	43%
USA	27	11	41%
British Colonies and possessions	36	26	72%
Other Countries	24	15	62%

The total number of pre-war migrants recorded in this table is 211 rather than the 212 who remained alive and still abroad at the time war broke out. The discrepancy is due to a non-serving individual whose country of residency at the start of the war cannot be identified. Those resident in British colonies and possessions (as opposed to the Dominions) had the highest proportionate enlistment rate at 72 per cent, broadly equivalent to the UK-based cohort. This is not particularly surprising—most would be working for either British administrative or commercial organisations, have kept British nationality and, perhaps, retained a closer connection with domestic affairs and moods than some in other countries. The USA had the lowest proportionate enlistment rate at less than half. As seen in Chapter 1, in terms of general patterns, migration to the USA took place earlier than to other destinations. This might be expected to have two significant consequences in terms of enlistment for war service. Firstly, the passage of time could have reduced any continuing sense of attachment to the UK and perhaps resulted in the acquisition of USA citizenship, distancing the individual even further from their country of birth.[2] Further, earlier migration would tend to lead to an older cohort who might be less likely to volunteer or be called up for service—as will be seen shortly a system for compulsory service was introduced in the USA a month or so after war was declared on Germany in April 1917 but was not extended to those over 30 until the war's latter stages. South Africa and Rhodesia, too, show a lower rate of enlistment. This may simply be a consequence of a smaller, less representative sample but it could conceivably be a reflection of the tension (and resulting uncertainty) existing there between the English-speaking and Boer communities in relation to the war.[3] Australia (including New Zealand), Canada and those who migrated to countries other than those already mentioned (ranging from locations in Europe to the Far East to South America) show enlistment rates much in line with the average for the migrant cohort overall.

The second point of initial interest is migrant service was not restricted to country of residence. Specifically, 48 (over a third) of the serving pre-war migrant cohort voluntarily returned to the UK to serve with domestic forces. This is illustrated by Table 4.2 which contains an analysis of initial country of service of pre-war migrants identified as having served in mainstream regular forces by number and proportion. The analysis is run on 126 men rather than the complete serving cohort of 130. It excludes one man whose country of service has not been identified and three men who spent the war serving (almost certainly part-time) in local colonial volunteer contingent units. There were a number of instances where men such as these progressed to serve with mainstream forces (primarily the UK) and these have been included in the total for the relevant force. In general terms,

[2] Although this does not seem to have been the case in respect of the migrant community of New York (and especially those with German, Eastern European, Italian and Irish roots) for whom it is argued that the war transpired to be a catalyst for confirmation of American identity: see Ross J. Wilson, *New York and the First World War: Shaping an American City*, Ashgate Studies in First World War History (Ashgate, 2014).
[3] See Anne Samson, *Britain, South Africa and the East Africa Campaign 1914-1918: The Union Comes of Age* (TSL Publications, 2020), ch. 5.

these figures remained static throughout the war. There were eight men who did move from one army to another but the impact on the statistics is not significant for the purposes of this study.

Table 4.2. Initial country of service of pre-war migrants.

Country of Service	Number of Pre-War Migrants	Proportion of Total (rounded)
UK	48	38%
Canada	38	30%
Australia and New Zealand	23	18%
USA	9	7%
South Africa and Rhodesia	5	4%
India	3	2%

Country of migrancy appears to have been a key determinant in the return to the UK. The vast majority of returnees (over three-quarters) were from either British colonies and possessions or from countries other than the Dominions and the USA. This is not unexpected. Given a desire to see active service, the alternatives were limited. See, for example, in terms of British colonies and possessions, Herbert (1892–95) and Sydney (1897–99) Hawkes.[4] In 1905 Herbert migrated to Ceylon after resigning as a clerk with London and County Bank to work on a tea plantation. By 1912 he was working as a tea planter in Talawakelle. Sydney followed his brother to Ceylon in 1906 from working as a draper's assistant in London and rose to become acting manager of the Pooprassie tea estate by 1910. By 1912 he was managing the Shelford rubber estate of about 640 acres near Klang, Selangor in Malaya, moving to Perak in 1914. After pre-war service with the Malay States Volunteers, he returned from there to enlist in June 1915 with the HAC, serving in the ranks on the Western Front from October of that year until February 1919. Herbert, meanwhile, had returned from Ceylon to enlist on 2 September 1914 as a Private in 18th (University and Public Schools) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. After service on the Western Front from November 1915 to March 1916, he was commissioned into 53 Squadron, RFC finishing the war as Lieutenant in 20 Squadron, RAF in Afghanistan. In terms of non-colonial countries other than the Dominions and the USA, we find men like, Kenneth Ironside (1896-1902)[5] and Henry Walker (1900–04).[6] Ironside left Colfe's to take up employment at the Thames Ironworks in Greenwich, moving to a shipbuilder in Sunderland in 1905. The following year he left the UK to become a sheep farmer in Patagonia, returning from there in May 1915 to take up a commission with the Royal Artillery. Ironside served on the Western Front from September 1915 onwards, being awarded the Military Cross and

[4] Born 1880 and 1883 Lewisham, sons of publican. Undistinguished school careers.
[5] Born 1886 Lewisham, father shipping agent. Sportsman. Brother of Frank already encountered in Chapter 1.
[6] Born 1890 Lambeth, father wholesale perfumier. Undistinguished school career.

finishing the war with the rank of Lieutenant. On leaving Colfe's, Walker took up employment with T. W. Denny & Co, wine shippers of Margate. By 1911 he was working for New Zealand Insurance Company in Buenos Aries, also writing for newspapers and periodicals there. Later that year he moved to San Pedro di Juju to work as a cashier and under manager on a sugar plantation. He returned to the UK from rearing cattle in Argentina in December 1914 to take up a commission with 21st Battalion, Manchester Regiment. Walker finished the war with the rank of Major, having served on the Western Front from November 1915 onwards (other than time recuperating from the three incidences of wounding) and been awarded the Military Cross as well as being mentioned in Haig's despatches.

As alluded to, high levels of domestic enlistment from the colonies and other countries who did not directly participate in the war were largely predictable. The (albeit small) numbers of those resident in the Dominions and the USA less so. Consisting of ten men only, the sample size is not large and any conclusions must be treated with caution, but there are three potential factors appearing from their patterns of service. The first is centred around timing. Half of the sample have been identified as returning to enlist in the first six months of the war. It is conceivable it was thought the possibility of early action was greater with domestic rather than overseas forces. The distribution of pre-war migrant enlistment is examined further shortly. Two returning men re-enlisted in their pre-migrancy territorial unit, so comradeship and familiarity may also have had a part to play. The third factor relates to prospects. Six out of the ten men either returned as an officer cadet or were subsequently commissioned from the ranks, which raises the possibility enlistment in domestic forces could hold out better prospects of advancement than service with an overseas force. Whether the men concerned were aware of this when making the decision to enlist with UK forces remains to be seen but detailed analysis of the serving migrant cohort shows a very different commissioning profile between domestic and overseas forces. In terms of migrants serving in UK forces, around 40 per cent entered service either as an officer or an officer cadet and approaching the same proportion (around 38 per cent) of the remainder were subsequently commissioned from the ranks. In stark contrast, over 90 per cent of those entering service in overseas forces did so in the ranks and less than one in five of those men went on to take commissions. Even this gives a false impression of the position, in that nearly all of this latter group were commissioned into UK forces rather than the force in which they had enlisted—it seems prospects of advancement were severely restricted in the non-domestic serving environment.

James Church (1899–1902)[7] and Harold Turney (1898–1905)[8] are good examples of men who enlisted in the Canadian army but transferred to domestic forces to become officers. Whilst in Glasgow studying mining engineering, Church served as a territorial with 1st Lanark Royal Fusiliers. He arrived in Canada in April 1907, initially working with the West Canadian Collieries as

[7] Born 1883 India, father coffee planter. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[8] Born 1889 Lewisham, father publisher. Academically able.

an assistant engineer. By 1910 he was working for the American Coal and Coke Company in Alberta and serving with 19th Alberta Dragoons, a cavalry militia unit. He enlisted full-time with this unit in September 1914 as a trooper, sailing for Europe as part of 1st Divisional Cavalry Squadron of the CEF. Church served in this role on the Western Front from the early part of February to late October 1915 when he was commissioned into the British army with 251st Tunnelling Company, RE. He finished the war commanding that unit with the rank of acting Major, having been awarded the Military Cross, mentioned in despatches and awarded the Distinguished Service Order. A confidential report from January 1919 described him as 'A very capable and efficient officer possessing plenty of push and capacity for handling men'. By 1911, Turney was working as a clerk for a mining machinery company and had been serving as a territorial soldier with 16th (Queen's Westminster Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment since before 1909. In March 1913 he sailed for Canada where he worked as a clerk and also joined 19th Alberta Dragoons. From there, he enlisted in the ranks with the CEF in November 1914. He served on the Western Front from September 1915 until September 1916 latterly with 6th Canadian Infantry Brigade Machine Gun Company, reaching the rank of Colour Quarter-Master Sergeant. Accepted for officer training the following month, he was, commissioned into the British Army in January 1917, subsequently transferring to the Indian army in March 1918. He then saw further service in India and Persia. Both men had pre-war military experience and clearly had strong leadership qualities but there was no place for either of them in the officer cadre of the Canadian army.

It is also possible financial considerations may have had an influence in determining whether men returned from abroad to serve with UK forces. It is apparent from WO 339 and 374 officer records there were procedures in place for the reimbursement of incoming passage costs and, indeed, for repatriation costs at the war's end—we know this because in some instances where there were claims these were disputed and the ensuing correspondence has survived culling to remain on file. Even in the absence of dispute, these procedures were, however, only of assistance if a man had sufficient means to fund the costs involved in the first instance. It is possible this may have been sufficient to dissuade some, especially in the Dominions and the USA from travelling independently, particularly in the light of the prospect of subsequent free passage as part of an expeditionary force. It may also be a factor in the higher rates of commissioning amongst UK returnees—as men of some financial substance, it is plausible they were more likely to be considered suitable officer material.

Whatever the nuances of the rates of enlistment, the underlying fact remains the levels of war participation amongst the migrant cohort were high and perhaps unexpectedly so given the men concerned had taken a positive and unforced decision to move to live and work in other countries and were generally under no compulsion to serve. The next part of this chapter seeks to tease out some of the potential reasons for this. Some are capable of greater degrees of measurement than others. Towards the less tangible end of the spectrum lies some degree of continuing sense of

affinity with the UK and preserving its heritage, perceived values and institutions.[9] This may have been driven, at least in part, by personal considerations relating to concerns about the well-being of relatives and friends but there do seem to have been more fundamental considerations at play. Take, for instance, John Hardman (1898–1900).[10] At the time of entry to Colfe's, he was living in Deptford with a guardian. He has no obvious 1901 census records, which suggests he might have returned to Brazil after leaving school. By November 1909 Hardman was definitely living in the UK, enlisting as he did that month as a territorial with the HAC. The 1911 census records him living in Chingford as a boarder described as working as a commercial clerk. He must have gone back to Brazil at some point after that because passenger lists show him returning to the UK from there in April 1914 and then sailing back to Rio in June 1914 with Brazil as his stated country of intended future residence. In both instances Hardman was described as a merchant. By October 1914 he was back in the UK re-enlisting with the HAC. He rose through the ranks being commissioned in the HAC in December 1916 and serving on the Western Front from February 1917 until he was gassed there in May 1917. Hardman returned to Brazil later that year on sick leave and resigned his commission on account of ill-health in April 1918. He married there on 31 December 1918 to a British woman. Little more is definitely known about his post-war life apart from his war medals being sent c/o Hardman & Co to an address in Rio in 1923 and he had two children. Unverified private research indicates he died in Rio in July 1945. Certainly, it is known his wife died there in June 1964. There is no evidence of any close relative connections in the UK. Leaving aside the pre-war association with the HAC, it is reasonable to conclude, for all practical purposes, John was Brazilian. Although he had spent at least part of his schooling and a small part of the early stages of his career in the UK, he was born, married, raised a family, worked and (almost undoubtedly) died in Brazil. Despite all this, it seems likely there must have been strong residual levels of 'Britishness' within John's emotional make-up—he identified as British to the extent he was prepared to return from a neutral county to risk his life in battle, being severely wounded in the process. For many, there were limits to their affinity with the UK. As already mentioned, most migrants resident in the Dominions and the USA (approaching 90 per cent) served in overseas forces rather than return to Britain to serve. This suggests sufficient identification (either directly or through the lens of opinion within their country of residence) with the British cause to serve but also a strong sense of connection with their adopted country. This theme of connection is developed later in the context of examining the impact of the war on the cohort.

In a more quantifiable sense, it is possible previous military experience played a role in the high levels of enlistment. Of the 130 migrants who served in the war, over a quarter have been identified as undertaking an element of pre-war service with territorial, militia or other volunteer contingents—service of this type is not consistently recorded and this must be viewed as a

[9] Continuing cultural identity with the UK is explored in greater detail in Chapter 5.
[10] Born 1881 Rio de Janeiro, father's occupation unknown. Undistinguished school career.

minimum figure. The analysis has also been restricted to post-educational service. Of those with previous military experience, around a third had served in the UK, over half abroad and three men in units both at home and abroad. Only two of the men identified as having engaged in pre-war service would not enlist for war service. The nature of the units and the form of service varied but it is reasonably safe to assume the men concerned were at least partially trained. They were also used to a quasi-military environment and presumably attracted to all that entailed. For those still with their units in the summer of 1914, full-time service may have been unavoidable. The figures suggest though even if the pre-war service was historic, enlistment in the event of war was almost inevitable.

The high levels of enlistment were also probably partly a reflection of age profile. There are two aspects to this. The first is the profile of the cohort overall which, as seen from Chapter 1, was heavily weighted towards youth with about 75 per cent of the men being 29 or younger at the outbreak of war. The second is, again as already seen in Chapter 1, the average migrant age as at the date of first migration was 22. It follows migrants were more likely to be towards the upper end of the majority age range when war began. This is supported by analysis which shows the average age of migrants at enlistment was 27, whether in domestic or overseas forces. In several ways this was a prime age for military service—men were physically developed and emotionally mature with experience of the world but as also seen from Chapter 1, at least in terms of the Colfe's cohort, not necessarily yet married with a family. Migrants were, by definition, also experienced travellers. Added to this some of the attributes that were necessary to a successful migrant life and lifestyle were eminently transferrable to military service such as openness to change, adjustment to new environments, self-sufficiency and a determination to succeed. We have seen evidence in Chapter 1 that outdoor life, hard work and physical fitness were recurring themes in migrant life—again, all qualities lending themselves to military service. Migrant status did not, however, necessarily equate to military suitability. Percival Denny (1900–03) is an example.[11] On leaving school, he took up employment as boy clerk in the Post Office, subsequently moving to a firm of ship owners and brokers. In 1912 he migrated to Australia where he continued to work as a clerk. Denny returned to the UK in 1914 enlisting in the ranks with 6th (Service) Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment on 31 August 1914. He was discharged a little over a month later as not likely to be become an efficient soldier due to tuberculosis in both lungs. He returned to Australia the following year, where he died in 1926 aged 39 of that disease. Another illustration of a migrant who transpired to be less than suitable for active service is John Wickham whose military career has already been explored in some detail in Chapter 3. Men like this were, though, the exceptions to the rule.

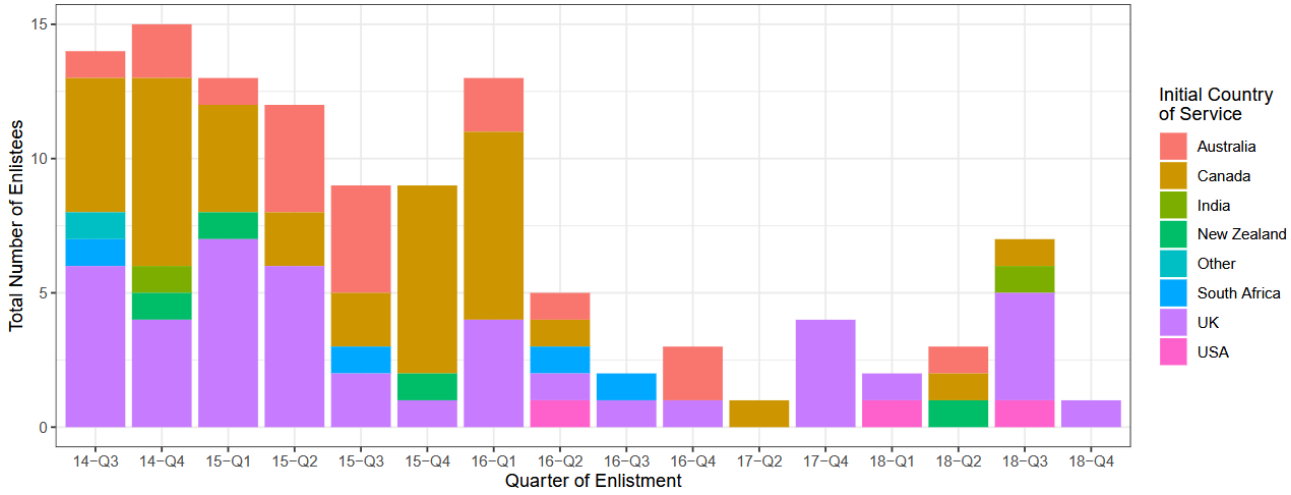
It might be thought length of time abroad also influenced the likelihood of service in that the longer the time spent in a destination the more settled a migrant might have become and the more likely

[11] Born 1887 Lewisham, father secretary and youngest of three Colfeian brothers. Sportsman.

he might have been to marry and start a family. However, there is no evidence of this being a significant factor. An analysis of the men who migrated in the years 1911, 1912, 1913 and 1914 shows an enlistment rate a few percentage points higher than that for the cohort generally but nothing particularly noteworthy.

There are two further striking (and to an extent interlinked) patterns relating to enlistment. The first relates to the distribution of enlistment and the second to lack of coercion. Figure 4.1 combines analysis of the distribution of pre-war migrant enlistment on a quarterly basis over the course of the war by reference to initial country of enlistment. The analysis is carried out on a dataset of 113. Of the 130 men identified as having served, two men are excluded who were already regulars in armed forces, the analysis being only concerned with wartime enlistment. Also excluded are thirteen men for whom the year or quarter of enlistment are not known.

FIG. 4.1. Distribution and time of pre-war migrant wartime enlistment by country of service.



The vast majority of enlistment (around 75 per cent) was by the end of March 1916 with approaching 50 per cent being in the period from August 1914–June 1915 with the primary focus being on enlistment in UK and Canadian forces. Recruitment then fades subject to small (and they are very small in terms of absolute numbers) spikes from the autumn of 1917 onwards. Even for the UK and Canada the sample sizes of distribution by country of enlistment on a quarterly basis are generally small and it is unwise to read too much into the contrasting profiles. There is, however, an indication of potentially slower initial migrant enlistment rates in Australian forces than was the case for those enlisting in UK and Canadian forces. This may be a reflection of Australian enlistment patterns more generally, where only about 12 per cent of the total number of men who served were recruited in the first five months of the war.[12] By the second quarter of 1915, when Figure 4.1 shows the beginnings of a short trend towards slightly increased levels of enlistment in Australian forces, the earliest of the Canadian migrant Colfeian volunteers, having arrived in the

[12] This calculation is made from data at Australian War Memorial, 'Enlistment Statistics, First World War' [n.d.] <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/enlistment/ww1#year> [accessed 27 December 2024].

UK in October 1914, were already in service on the Western Front. We can also see from Figure 4.1 declining levels of migrant enlistment in Canada from the second quarter of 1916, which is in line with the position more generally in Canada.[13] The overall pattern shown by Figure 4.1 is not dissimilar in broad terms to that for the cohort as a whole (see Figure 2.1) with high early levels and a pattern of gradual tailing off. The steepness of the initial rise is less pronounced in the migrant group but, at least for those returning to the UK to enlist, this is likely to be consequence of the time lag resulting from having to travel home. There is also no corresponding resurgence in the final quarter of 1915 reflecting the purely domestic impact of the introduction of the Derby Scheme in the UK amongst the cohort as a whole. The other key distinction is a more marked decline in enlistment as the war progressed within the migrant grouping. For example, there was no migrant enlistment at all in the first and third quarters of 1917 and only five instances during the remainder of that year. This is likely to be the result of a shrinking pool of men willing to volunteer for service, which brings us to the second noteworthy characteristic of migrant service, lack of coercion.

Not only was most pre-war migrant enlistment relatively early in the war but it was also generally voluntary. There are two aspects to this requiring consideration. The first is the initial absence of any form of compulsion and the second is the limited impact on the migrant cohort of measures of compulsion that were introduced as the war progressed. As touched on earlier, the UK was something of an outlier in terms of pre-war military structuring. The established model in most European nations was for all young men to undergo compulsory military training followed by a period in reserve when they could be called up for service if required. This enabled large armies of trained men to be raised at short notice. Reservist obligations applied irrespective of country of current residence. This has been illustrated recently by Selena Daly who has calculated over 300,000 Italian reservists returned from abroad to serve after Italy's entry into the war in May 1915.[14] British men (whether migrants or otherwise) were subject to no such obligations when the war commenced. Conscription was introduced by the UK in 1916 but this system only applied to men who at any time since 14 August 1915 had been, or for the time being were, ordinarily resident in Great Britain.[15] Men ordinarily resident in the Dominions were also specifically excepted from the system.[16] Pre-war migrants who returned to the UK to serve were, therefore, doing so voluntarily, whatever the date of their return. In Australia and South Africa[17] no system of conscription was ever introduced so anyone serving in those countries' forces was also doing so

[13] J. L. Granatstein, 'Conscription in the Great War' in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. by David Clark MacKenzie and Robert Craig Brown, Second Edition (University of Toronto Press, 2018), pp. 62–75 (p. 64).
[14] Selena Daly, '"The Loneliest of the War's Victims": Wives and Families of Italian Emigrant Soldiers in the First World War', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 42.3 (2024), pp. 275–302 (p. 276), doi:10.1080/02619288.2024.2399558.
[15] Military Service Act 1916 s 1(1)(a) as extended by the Military Service Act 1916 (Session 2) s 1(1).
[16] Military Service Act 1916 s 1, sch 1 para 1.
[17] The exception to this was conscription within the Boer community for the campaign in German South West Africa in 1915. See Samson, p.128.

voluntarily. New Zealand effectively introduced conscription by establishing on 1 August 1916 an Expeditionary Force Reserve consisting of all male natural-born British subjects between the ages of 20–45.[18] However, there are very few New Zealand migrants in the Colfe's cohort and so the potential impact of the legislation concerned is limited for present purposes.

The only countries with compulsory service structures capable of applying to the pre-war migrant cohort were the USA and Canada. The USA passed the Selective Service Act on 18 May 1917. This eventually took the form of compulsory registration for military service for all those between the ages of 18–45 although only a small proportion of those registered were ultimately drafted for service. Canada was the last to introduce compulsory service on 29 August 1917. On that date it made every male British subject between the ages of 20–45 ordinarily resident in Canada or who had been resident in Canada at any time since 4 August 1914 potentially liable to be called up, with call-up being sequenced by a combination of age and marital status.[19] As Table 4.1 shows these were countries hosting approaching half of the surviving pre-war migrant cohort who remained abroad at the outbreak of war. It might, therefore, be expected a reasonable degree of compulsory service would be encountered. However, there are only two identified instances of conscripted service within the Colfe's pre-war migrant cohort, the first from the USA and the second from Canada: Alan Cobbett (1900–01)[20] and Walter Smith (1907–11).[21] Cobbett was not at Colfe's for long, leaving for another school after little more than a term. He sailed for Canada in 1907, where he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway before moving to the USA in 1913 to work as a freight brakeman. He was conscripted into the ASC of the American Expeditionary Force aged 30 (the upper end of the age limit for registration for service at the time) in July 1918. He served on the Western Front, reaching the rank of Sergeant 1st Class before returning to the USA in March 1920 after a period of service with the American Red Cross following demobilisation. Smith sailed for Canada in March 1914. After a medical review board (suggesting he was not, perhaps, enthusiastic about service), described as a farmer, he was conscripted into the infantry in August 1918 aged 22 as suitable for overseas service once trained. As it transpired, the war ended before he could be sent abroad.

Why was there so little apparent coerced service in the USA and Canada? In the case of Canada, in particular, patterns of high and early enlistment may have meant those who were primarily liable for the first rounds of conscription, being the younger, single and fitter element of the cohort, were already in service.[22] As already seen, migration to the USA generally took place earlier than to other destinations so, here, the age factor has the potential for being more prominent. Whilst little

[18] Expeditionary Forces Act 1915 as extended by the Military Service Act 1916 (New Zealand).
[19] Military Service Act 1917 ss 2, 3.
[20] Born 1887 Lewisham, father journalist. Undistinguished school career.
[21] Born 1895 Lewisham, father provisions merchant. Academically able. Sportsman.
[22] Approaching 70 and 60 per cent of the volunteers in the first and second contingents of the CEF respectively are thought to have been born in the UK. See Terry Copp, 'The Military Effort, 1914–1918' in *Canada and the First World War*, ed. by MacKenzie and Brown, pp. 37–61 (pp. 37–38).

in the way of evidence has been found amongst the cohort as to the operation of the compulsory system in Canada, draft registration cards are available for men who settled in the USA, some of which shed a degree of light on how the arrangements were utilised there. For example, Frank Symons (1899–1902)[23] who migrated to Canada in 1903 shortly after leaving school, and then to the USA seems to have been exempted from service on the grounds of weak wrists. He spent the war years working as a loss adjuster. Another example is Gilbert Moody (1899–1900)[24] who arrived in New York in 1911. Gilbert seems to have successfully gained exemption on the basis of being married with two children and spent the war years working on Wall Street as a clerk with Bank of America. Another illustration from the draft registration cards is Charles Cossey (1899–1901).[25] Cossey arrived initially in Canada in August 1908, moving to work as a machinist in the automobile industry in Detroit, where he spent the rest of his working life. He was exempted from service on the basis of being short-sighted. There is also Ernest Browne (1902–05).[26] He probably first arrived in the USA in 1909. In 1915 he was working in Minnesota as a clerk for NW National Bank and seems to have successfully claimed exemption on the basis of having dependants. None of the men cited as examples were particularly early migrants and all were 30 or under at the outbreak of war which runs contrary to any argument based around age and date of migrancy and points to a more selective conscription system than, say, in the UK.

In passing, it should be noted the existence of the draft registration system did not prevent voluntary service with British forces from the USA. Take, for example, Basil Brereton (1900–01).[27] Arriving in the USA in 1907, he enlisted in the British forces in Los Angeles from working as a machinist (fitter, turner and electrician) in Yuma, Arizona in July 1918, taking up a posting in the Tank Corps in the UK the following month and transferring to the Central Workshops Training Centre in September 1918. Basil did not serve abroad but finished the war with the rank of acting Sergeant.

Migrant deaths in the war totalled 22, giving a fatality rate amongst the serving cohort of 16.9 per cent. This is higher than that for the non-migrant serving cohort, which is 14.3 per cent. Of the 22 fatalities, 17 (77 per cent) were incurred with overseas forces and 5 (23 per cent) with domestic forces. We have seen in Table 4.2 the comparable service rate proportions by initial country of service on a rounded basis were 61 per cent and 38 per cent and we also know these did not change significantly during the war. Bearing in mind the caution that should be adopted when dealing with relatively small sample sets, the indications are death was more likely for migrants serving in overseas as opposed to domestic forces. This may also help to point to a reason why the headline fatality rates between the migrant and non-migrant cohorts vary. We have established

[23] Born 1887 Bromley, father insurance agent. Undistinguished school career.
[24] Born 1891 Lewisham, father architect. Undistinguished school career.
[25] Born 1884 Dublin, father retired army officer. Undistinguished school career.
[26] Born 1890 Dublin. Entered Colfe's from All Saints Boys Orphanage. Undistinguished school career.
[27] Born 1885 Mitford, father clergyman. Undistinguished school career.

in Chapter 2 the probability of death of Colfeians in service was largely associated with factors relating to that service. There are two principal areas of differentiation relating to service in overseas forces and UK forces which might help to explain possible variations in risk profile between the migrant and non-migrant cohorts. The first is rank. We have seen earlier here men in overseas forces were more likely to be serving in the ranks than those in domestic forces. It has, though, been established in Chapter 2 (at least within the Colfeian cohort) there was no significant association between rank and death. The second differentiating factor is service in a combat role. We know from Chapter 2 there was a statistically significant association between this and death within the overall Colfeian cohort. Further analysis (by reference to final branch of service based on a dataset of 926 where appropriate information is available) shows approximately three out of every five men in UK forces had undertaken an element of service in a combat role. The corresponding figure for those serving in overseas forces is four out of five giving around 20 per cent more exposure to a factor associated with an enhanced risk of mortality. It is plausible this provides an explanation for the differences in overall mortality rates between the migrant and non-migrant cohorts.

Migrant non-service

There are a wide variety of sources available to establish the fact of military service and to flesh out the wartime careers of those who served. It is less easy to definitively prove non-service and even more difficult to establish with certainty how those who did not serve spent the war years. Although levels of enlistment among the surviving pre-war migrant cohort who were still abroad at the outset of the war were high, there remain about a third for whom there is no evidence of service. The main contemporaneous source of information about pre-war migrant activity had been the *Colfeian* but this ceased publication after June 1914 and would not resume until November 1920. Added to this, correspondence and other material from the war years held in the Colfe's archives is almost completely focussed on military activity or the prospect of military activity. The one exception to this is a three or four page handwritten account by Harold Ross (1896–98)[28] of his time as a civilian internee from August 1914–September 1916 in East Africa. It is unclear how and when this document found its way into the archives but quite conceivably it had been generated as part of the same process that gathered details of military service considered in Chapter 3. At the time of the 1901 census Ross was working as an auctioneer's clerk. By 1910 he was working in Nyasaland as a planter and spending his spare time hunting animals. He was a regular pre-war correspondent to the *Colfeian* although the main focus of his letters and photographs tended to be his hunting expeditions. Figure 4.2 shows Harold at camp by the River Shire on one of these expeditions.

[28] Born 1882 Greenwich, father cashier. Undistinguished school career.

FIG.4.2. Harold Ross in Nyasaland

Harold Ross camping

Colfeian 1912 (No. 24 vol. 6)

Three weeks before the outbreak of war, Harold became plantation manager on the Kilulu Rubber Estates in German East Africa. He was interned shortly after war was declared and treated quite harshly over a couple of years or so. He was eventually released by Belgian forces and travelled to Nairobi with a view to contacting his employers for instructions—the journey involved a 220 mile trek on foot and two boat trips—only to find they were in liquidation.

As seen from Chapter 3, the focus of alumni activity during the war and in the immediate post-war period was directed towards commemoration, particularly of those who died. By the time the *Colfeian* resumed publication two years after the cessation of hostilities, people had largely moved on and, certainly, there was little interest in how pre-war migrants who did not serve spent the war years. The commemorative records do extend to include the death of a pre-war migrant civilian worker, Gerald Bayley(1898–1904).[29] On leaving school he took up a position with the Local Government Board but in 1907 entered the London Telegraph Training College. The following year he began work for West Coast of America Telegraph Company in Chile where he remained until his death in 1916 from typhoid. Gerald is not recognised by the CWGC and despite his commemoration by Colfe's is excluded from the war dead for the purposes of this study. Even so, he is one of the few pre-war migrant civilians whose wartime activities can be definitively confirmed.

It is possible to glean some evidence about others from mid-war public administrative records in some countries. The draft registration cards in the USA referred to earlier are also a useful source

[29] Born 1887 Lewisham, father dairy farmer. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.

of information about late war employment. So, for example, we know William Everard (1896–97)[30] who arrived in the USA in 1907 was living in Missouri and working as a travelling auditor for General Accident Insurance Company in September 1918. We also know Charles Gale (1899–1904)[31] who arrived in the USA in 1912 was living in New York City and working for Touche, Niven & Co as an office manager in September 1918. There is no realistic prospect of either of them, even if selected for the draft, having seen active service that late in the war. For migrants to Canada who lived in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta there was a mid-war census in 1916. This shows, for example, Ernest Reed (encountered earlier) was still living and working as a farmer in Macleod, Alberta. It also shows in 1916 William Burgess (1895–98)[32] was living in Gladstone, Manitoba working as a travelling salesman. This was the same occupation he was following when he arrived in Canada in 1907. Horace (1908–12) and Henry (1908–12) Taylor[33] are recorded as living in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan in 1916 although their occupations are unclear. Horace had arrived in Canada in September 1913 and Henry at the beginning of 1914 with his parents. In Australia electoral records can occasionally give some assistance. For example, George Beyer (1901–06)[34] having set sail for Australia in 1912 after gaining farming experience in Scheda, Westphalia, is shown on electoral roll records for the years 1913–17 on a farm about 200 miles south east of Perth. Electoral records also show Rex Pynegar (introduced in Chapter 1) living in Toowoomba, Queensland in 1915 and back in Emmet Downs again in 1916 and 1917 working as a pastoral student. Directory entries can also be of help. Edmund Weber (1900–03)[35] had spent time in Germany, France and London working in the fur trade before travelling to Australia in 1912. He married in Sydney in 1912 and established a business there. It is known from military records he was rejected for service with the AIF as unfit and corroboration for non-service is provided by Sands Directories which show him carrying on trade as a furrier in Sydney in 1918. Another example from Australia shows how even freemasonry records can place a man in a particular location mid-war. Arthur Deakin (1903–04)[36] was working as a solicitor's clerk in Croydon in 1911. Deakin joined his family who had migrated to Australia in May 1911 later that year. Electoral records show him living with his elder brother and sister in Brisbane in 1915. Freemasonry records then show him being initiated into the Brisbane Lodge in April 1917 described as a civil servant.

Even where extensive evidence is lacking, it is possible to offer some consideration of possibilities. Harold Robson was introduced in Chapter 1. At the time of the 1911 Canadian census, Harold, who had married in 1907, was recorded as still living in Montreal and earning $1,000 pa working as an insurance clerk. The 1921 census shows him remaining in Montreal but working as a chief clerk

[30] Born 1884 Barbados, father colonial civil servant. Undistinguished school career.
[31] Born 1886 Southwark, father travelling salesman. Academically able.
[32] Born 1883 Lambeth, father wine merchant. Undistinguished school career.
[33] Born 1897 Brighton and 1899 West Ham, father contractor. Horace sportsman. Henry undistinguished school career.
[34] Born 1897 Lewisham, father merchant. Parents German-born. Undistinguished school career.
[35] Born 1888 Lewisham, father merchant. Father German-born. Undistinguished school career.
[36] Born 1890 Lewisham, father carpenter. Board school. LCC scholar. Academically able.

earning $2,400 pa. This does not the suggest the career progression of a man who has spent several years in the interim in the armed services. In the absence of any military record and especially given his age (32 at the outbreak of war) and marital status, service seems unlikely but that is the most that can be said.

In the absence of consistent definitive sources as to the mid-war life and activities of those for whom there is no record of service, it is difficult to identify with any confidence potential patterns of reasons for non-service. Clearly, as seen above, some men were officially adjudged to be unfit for service but there is no way of knowing how many more records there are which have not been found or, indeed, how prevalent unfitness for service was in jurisdictions where there was no element of compulsion to participate. As well as fitness, factors such as age, date of migration, marital status and business interests might all be expected to have a degree of bearing on participation. Ernest Reed, for example, had been in Canada for ten years, married to a woman originally from the USA for seven years (although with no family), had an established farming business and was in his mid-30s when war broke out. William Burgess was just coming up to 31. He had been in Canada for over seven years in August 1914 and was also married. By contrast however, the Taylor brothers were young, single, in employment and had been in Canada for less than a year by then although it is worth noting Henry was too young to be compulsorily called up for service in any event. As it transpired, they both returned to the UK permanently in 1921. Reed, too (perhaps slightly more unexpectedly) returned permanently to the UK with his wife in 1925, shortly after the death of his mother. On his return he developed a career selling house furnishings and resumed a close and active relationship with the Old Colfeian community after an absence of approaching twenty years. The issue of post-war return to the UK is examined further in a moment. For now, it is sufficient to note neither in the case of Reed nor the Taylors does it seem there was any lack of continuing affinity with the UK. Even given the willingness of Edmund Weber (who was from a similar background) to serve, it might be tempting to try to attribute George Beyer's lack of service to a German heritage. There does not, however, appear to have been any family antipathy towards the British cause—his parents had been living in the UK since at least 1891 and his younger brother, Frederick (1901–08)[37] served abroad in the Middlesex Regiment during the war. It is equally (if not more) likely George simply preferred farming to fighting at the time.

Post-war migrant status

There is more in the way of empirical evidence when it comes to considering the impact of the war on the pre-war migrant community. Even then the availability of official data relating to the post-war activities of pre-war migrants is inconsistent, a situation not helped by a substantial decline in overseas correspondence with the *Colfeian* from the early 1930s onwards. For some (and especially those in the USA and Canada where a significant amount of information is available to

[37] Born 1891 Lewisham. Academically able.

the researcher on digital platforms), it is reasonably easy to piece together a life history. For example, the 1921 Canadian census shows Ernest Reed was still a farmer in Macleod and Horace Taylor was working as a motor engineer and Henry as a clerk in Moose Jaw, their subsequent respective returns to the UK being documented by shipping records. We also know from the census Burgess had moved to Winnipeg by 1921 and was working as an office manger for a firm of wholesale agents. For others the trail goes cold. Harold Ross is a good illustration. It is known in the aftermath of the war he was Assistant Inspector of Plantations in former German territory. In 1924 he bought an estate in Tanganyika from the Custodian of Enemy Property with a view to growing cotton. It is also known he married in Tanga in 1926 and the following year was making a living primarily shooting elephants for their tusks. He was a regular correspondent with the *Colfeian* from Tanganyika during the remainder of the inter-war years, primarily in relation to economic and political matters in East Africa. In particular, he adopted a hard-line anti-German approach in the lead-up to the Second World War. His last correspondence was in May 1939. There is no further trace of Harold or his wife after this and, in particular, no evidence of a return to the UK on their part.

Representing around 10 per cent of the overall migrant community alive and still abroad at the outset of war, service fatality levels were substantial.[38] There is also one further post-war fatality, probably directly linked to war service. Percy Robinson (1882–84)[39] had migrated to Canada in 1892 as a labourer. Despite being over age and blind in his left eye, from working as a clerk he had been passed fit for service with the CEF. He served in the ranks on the Western Front with 5th Canadian Mounted Rifles from October 1915 until seriously injuring his knee after falling off a transport wagon in April 1916. Robinson was discharged as permanently unfit for service by reason of injury received in the presence of the enemy in August 1917. He was awarded a disability pension primarily relating to permanent deafness and what appears to be shell shock. He died aged 54 in 1925 in a military hospital of unspecified causes. None of the war-related fatalities must, or should, be forgotten, but this section has a specific focus on the impact of the war on the migrant status of the whole of the surviving pre-war cohort. The analysis extends to all survivors irrespective of military service and tries to gauge the extent to which the war was a dislocating factor in their lives and, in particular, whether it prompted any fundamental change in their established migrancy. It does not examine the extent to which the migrancy patterns that had been established pre-war continued into the post-war period—patterns of first-time post-war migration and the relationship they bear to pre-war patterns and what this can tell us about differing forms and qualities of migration are explored in Chapter 5.

Fatality levels during the war were obviously greater than pre-war natural deaths but, leaving this aside, can it be argued the migrancy status of pre-war migrants was largely unaffected? In high

[38] Although in line with those for the overall cohort. See Chapter 1.
[39] Born 1870 Medway, father surgeon. Undistinguished school career.

level terms, the answer is yes. Most migrants continued or resumed a migrant lifestyle. Figure 4.3 depicts patterns of pre-war migrant return to the UK during the pre-war, mid-war and inter-war periods. At first sight, it might be thought these patterns run counter to the idea of a continuation or resumption of migrancy.

FIG.4.3. Pre-war migrant return to UK.

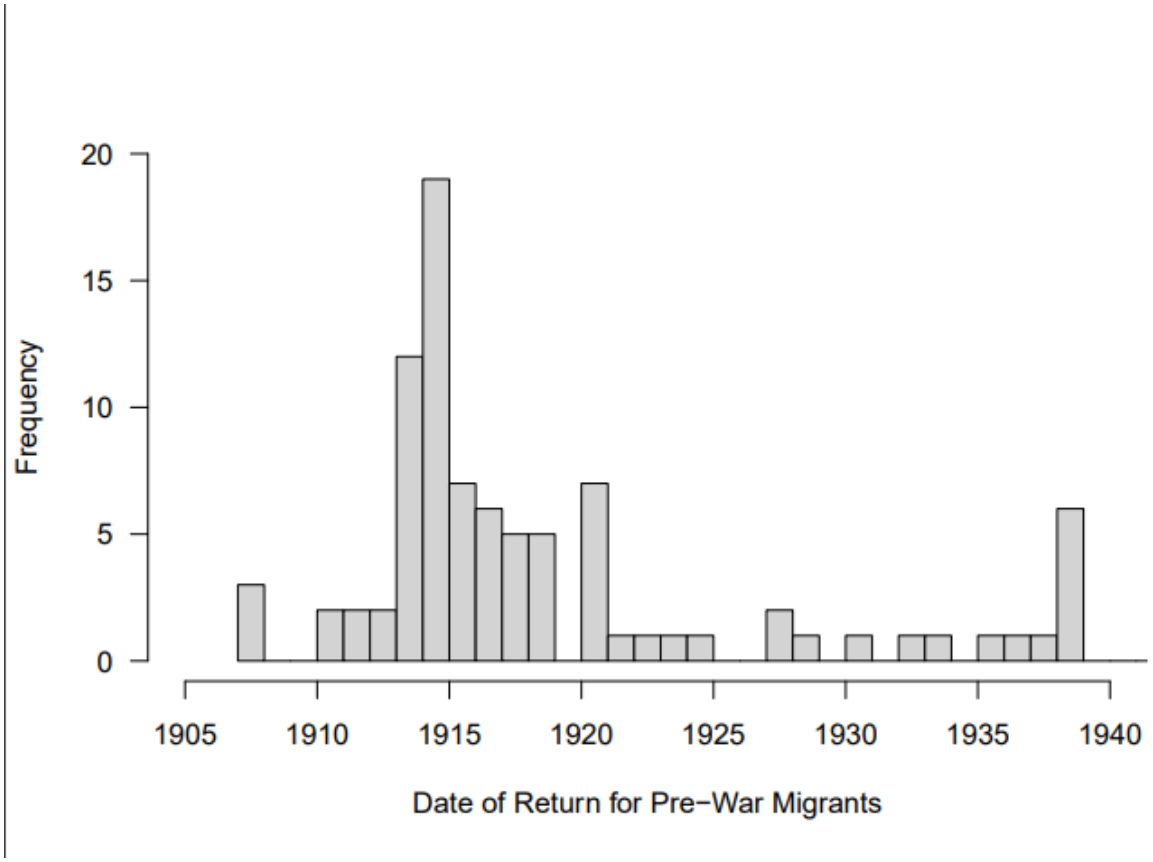


Figure 4.3 shows three main distortions in what is basically a reasonably constant pattern of small-scale levels of return. However, the apparent distortions for 1921 and 1939 are not necessarily accurate. Precise information of date of return is not always available and the first official evidence of a man's presence in the UK may sometimes post-date actual arrival. The figures for 1921 include four men who had returned during the immediate post-war period but where the 1921 census return is the first authentication of their presence. The same applies to five of the men recorded as returning 1939—their return was at some point during the inter-war period but the 1939 Register is the first official record of their being back in the UK. The main distorting feature relates to the war period and is a reflection of the men referred to earlier who returned from overseas to enlist in domestic forces. In fact only five of these together with a further three men who had served in Europe with overseas forces remained permanently in the UK after the cessation of hostilities. In reality, therefore, the underlying pattern of reasonably constant low levels of return is steady throughout, which, in turn, supports the contention the war did not lead to any significant cessation of migrancy.

The headline patterns do, though, mask a range of anomalies. It is true most men who had served simply returned to their adopted country and resumed their pre-war activities. We came across James Church earlier. After demobilisation from the British forces in 1919, following his successful wartime military career, Church returned to working as a mining engineer in Alberta, married and raised a family and eventually died in Nova Scotia aged 83 in 1967. William Dove (1905–07)[40] who left Colfe's to join South British Insurance Company is another example. He migrated to work in the company's Calcutta branch in 1911 and saw pre-war voluntary service as a trooper with the Calcutta Light Horse and the Hong Kong Volunteer Scouts. He returned to the UK in March 1915 from Hong Kong to take up a commission with 9th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent) Regiment. Dove ended the war with the rank of Captain, having served on the Western Front between August 1915 and December 1917 and, again after being wounded, in 1918. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1917 and then a bar to that Military Cross the following year. On demobilisation in February 1919, he returned to his position with South British Insurance Company abroad. He married in Shanghai in 1921,spending the rest of the inter-war period working for that company in south east Asia. Although his wife and two daughters had already been evacuated to Australia, Dove was in Singapore when it fell to Japanese forces in February 1942 and incarcerated as a civilian internee in Changi for the rest of the war. The date of his permanent return to the UK is not known but he was living in Sussex by 1954, where he died aged 82 in 1974. Henry Walker referred to earlier after a successful wartime career returned to Argentina on demobilisation in March 1919. His immediate post-war activities are not known but by the 1930s he had resumed regular correspondence with the *Colfeian* and was earning a living as a rancher in a remote part of British Guiana where he was found dead in 1938 aged 48 apparently 'murdered by natives'.[41]

For some who served, a return to their country of migrancy prompted a change in career. See, for example, Godfrey Westover encountered in Chapter 1. Westover enlisted in the CEF in January 1916 from being a rancher and served in the ranks on the Western Front from February 1918, being wounded in the right arm in October. On his return, he and his family moved to Vancouver and by 1921 Godfrey was working as a credit manager there. The extent of his war wound is not known, but it is conceivable it prevented him continuing to farm. Godfrey was working as an accountant in Vancouver by the time of the Second World War and died in 1989 aged 83 on Vancouver Island. Wilton Rainer (1891–95)[42] is almost the mirror image of Godfrey in some ways. A bank cashier and married man with a family, he migrated to Australia at some point between the 1911 census and the outbreak of war. A longstanding pre-war volunteer in the UK, Wilton enlisted with the AIF shortly after war broke out described as a clerk. He served in the ranks at Gallipoli from March–August 1915 where he developed a hernia from digging trenches followed by

[40] Born 1891 Lewisham, father master mariner. Undistinguished school career.
[41] *Colfeian* No. 65, vol. 17 (December 1938), p. 5.
[42] Born 1897 Manchester, father accountant. Undistinguished school career.

debilitation and neurasthenia as a result of active service. He returned to Australia in November 1915 and was discharged as permanently unfit as a result of rheumatism and sciatica in both legs the following October. He initially returned to being a clerk and then, despite the terms of his discharge, took up farming. He died in an accident with a wheat loader at the beginning of 1924.

Some, although returning abroad on demobilisation, took the opportunity to move on elsewhere and to start afresh. This is not necessarily surprising—this is a cohort of men who had previously demonstrated a willingness to change location and lifestyle. On demobilisation in September 1919, Kenneth Ironside (introduced earlier), instead of returning to sheep farming in Patagonia, migrated to Kenya to become a coffee planter. By the early 1930s he was reporting to the *Colfeian* he had 'been badly bitten by the slump, and it's a desperate struggle to live at present'. It was about this time he took over the alcohol licence for The Savoy Hotel in Nairobi, reputed to have been a celebrity destination of the time. There is little in the way of post-Second World War information to be found about him except he died in Nairobi in 1963 aged 78. Another example of this behaviour is Eric Morgan (1904–10)[43] who left Colfe's to work on a farm in Devon as a pupil. He sailed for Australia in April 1914 returning to the UK described as a farmer to enlist in October 1916 with the Artists' Rifles OTC. He was commissioned into the artillery the following year finishing the war with the rank of Lieutenant having served on the Western Front from April 1917–August 1918. Following demobilisation instead of returning to Australia, he became a tea planter in Assam, India for at least the next twenty years. Nothing is definitively known about his life after the end of the 1930s.

It might be expected service with an overseas force, evidencing as it did a strong sense of identification with the destination country, would result in continued residence there and, on the whole, this proved to be the case. There were exceptions to this general principle though. As mentioned earlier, three men who served with overseas forces in Europe remained in the UK at the war's end. All three had been members of the CEF. The first is Harold Turney already encountered in the context of transferring to domestic forces to become an officer. This transfer alone might have thought of as potentially significant in the decision to remain in the UK. Of more persuasive influence, though, is likely to have been Harold's marriage in early 1917 in Lewisham to Muriel Wogan-Browne, the sister of Charles Wogan-Browne.[44] Harold's younger brother, Stuart (1903–07)[45] married another Wogan-Browne sister in Lee after the war further consolidating family, school and community ties. The second of these three men was not strictly a migrant. Wilfrid Pope (1905–09)[46] was resident in the UK at the outbreak of war but, as a Canadian national, enlisted in the CEF in June 1916 being discharged with very good military character due to chronic constipation without having served abroad. He married in Lewisham in 1921, in all likelihood having met his

[43] Born 1894 Lewisham, father clerk. Undistinguished school career.
[44] Already encountered as a war fatality in Chapter 2.
[45] Born 1893 Lewisham, father publisher. Undistinguished school career.
[46] Born 1893 British Columbia, father non-conformist minister. Undistinguished school career.

wife, a nurse, whilst hospitalised. The third man, Francis Collins (1908–13),[47] had moved to Canada with his parents and siblings in 1913 shortly after leaving school. Francis enlisted with the CEF aged 17 from working as a bank clerk in Ontario. He was another example of a man who transferred from the CEF to become an officer, being commissioned into the RAF a matter of days before the war ended. Despite his family being settled in Canada, Francis remained in the UK. By the time of the 1921 census, he was employed as an audit clerk and staying with his future in-laws.

Romantic interests incidental to war service are a recurring theme in connection with the resumption of residence in the UK by overseas servers. William Davis (1905–10)[48] is an unusual example of this. He migrated to Australia as a labourer in 1913. At the second attempt (initially being rejected on the grounds of height), Davis enlisted in the AIF in June 1915. He served with the infantry in the latter stages of the Gallipoli campaign and then on the Western Front from May 1916 until May 1917 when he was severely wounded in the chest. Having been repatriated to Australia in September 1917, he was discharged as medically unfit at the beginning of 1918. Davis returned to the UK in July 1919, marrying 19 year-old Milbro Jones in Birmingham (where he had been hospitalised after his wounding) later that year. Shortly after, he was charged in Australia with deserting an illegitimate child in Melbourne. Perhaps unsurprisingly given this, he remained in the West Midlands for the rest of his life, dying there in 1979 aged 85. Romantic interests were not, however, the only potential factor. We left Reginald Pynegar in Chapter 3 as he departed Australia in 1921 after being released from imprisonment for desertion from the AIF. He returned described as an engineer to live with his parents, later marrying and raising a family and dying in Beckenham aged 71 in 1964. It is no more than speculation but it is not unreasonable to conclude it might have been easier for Reginald to put his war record behind him in the UK than it would have been in Australia. All these men are, though, very much the exceptions. Generally, service with an overseas force led to continued residence in the country concerned.

Those in the pre-war migrant community who did not undertake military service were, by definition, less likely to be affected by the war and, indeed, it seemed to pass many of them by. Claude Camroux (1890–92)[49] had arrived in New York in January 1913 described as a clerk. In his registration card for the military draft completed shortly before the end of the war, he is described as a golf professional, a career he was still pursuing ten years later when he returned married to the UK for good in 1928. He died in Chelsea in 1953 aged 75. We have already seen Ernest Reed and the Taylor brothers returned to the UK during the first half of the 1920s. The reasons why are unknown but there is no evidence they were war-related. The one instance where the war may have been influential relates to the Fisher family last encountered in Chapter 1. At that point in time the whole family comprising Colfeian brothers Herbert, Walter, Robert, Henry, their two elder

[47] Born 1899 Lewisham, father brewer. Undistinguished school career.
[48] Born 1893 Greenwich, father travelling salesman. Undistinguished school career.
[49] Born 1878 Bromley, father merchant. Twin brother of Ferguson encountered in Chapter 1. Undistinguished school career.

brothers and their parents were living in British Columbia. Robert returned to the UK pre-war in 1913. Herbert and Henry both enlisted in the CEF in autumn 1915, Herbert as an officer given his previous service with the Canadian ASC. Neither survived the war. Both died near Courcelette on the Western Front in October 1916. Herbert died on 2 October aged 29 of wounds caused by a machine gun bullet to the thigh inflicted whilst he was leading his men to capture an enemy trench. Henry was killed in action on 22 October aged 23. Walter returned to the UK with his parents and elder brother Alfred towards the end of 1919. Walter then became a missionary in Northern Rhodesia where he spent the rest of his life. Whilst Walter continued as a migrant, it is clear the family Canadian venture was at an end and it is hard not to think the death of the two brothers was a factor in this.

Summary

Despite having moved away from the UK to live and work in another country, there were high levels of military enlistment amongst the pre-war migrant cohort. It is notable enlistment was generally early in the war and almost completely voluntary. In terms of migrants to the Dominions and the USA, enlistment was generally in the domestic forces of those countries. In the case of migrants to British colonies and possessions and other third party countries where there was no relevant domestic force, in UK forces. It seems probable those serving in the forces of their country of migrancy were more likely to die than those serving in UK forces. This may be attributable to higher proportions of elements of service in combat roles. With the occasional exception, there is much less in the way of definitive evidence regarding the war-time activities of those migrants who did not enlist for military service or the reasons for their non-enlistment. In the cases where it is possible to piece together some form of possible narrative from a range of sources, the men concerned simply continued with their pre-war lives.

Leaving out of account temporary returns to the UK for war service in domestic forces (and, of course, those who died in the war), the impact of the war on pre-war migrancy appears to have been minimal. Most of the surviving cohort either resumed (if they undertook military service) or continued their migrant lifestyle although sometimes with a change of employment or destination country. There was no substantive change in levels of migrant status and no significant disturbance of the overall pre-war pattern of a reasonably constant but small level of annual return to the UK. This chapter does not examine the extent to which the war altered new (as opposed to existing) migratory behaviour. Patterns of first-time post-war migration, how they differ from pre-war patterns and what this can tell us about differing forms and qualities of migration are analysed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Post-War Life

The historiography to date relating to the transition to civilian life of those who served and survived the war has concentrated on the activities and views of formal veterans' associations, in which (as has already been noted) only a small minority of returning servicemen (and women) participated.[1] Further studies have been called for that go beyond these unrepresentative bodies and concentrate on the veteran experience by reference to the civilian lives to which they returned.[2] This chapter goes some way towards meeting this call. It does so by analysing the post-war life outcomes of those serving members of the Colfeian cohort who remained alive at the war's end in the specific context of seeking to establish whether there is any widespread evidence of post-war dislocation and disillusionment. It will be recalled these are considered to be key elements in the development of the notion of a 'lost generation'.[3] There is no such evidence. The pervading themes are of continuity and stability and smooth re-integration into civilian life. Those who served could expect to live as long as their peers who did not serve and generally continue to enjoy or (for those who were single) establish lasting marital relationships. For those who were of working age pre-war, most returned to their pre-war or a similar kind of employment (often with the same employers), remaining in those careers for the whole of the period up until the start of the Second World War. They also largely remained in the same social class. There are differences in first-time pre- and post-war outward migratory patterns both in terms of quantity and permanence but it is argued the nature of these changes are such that they, too, are compatible with the overall thematic framework that has been identified. As is only to be expected, there were individual exceptions to successful re-integration. The most well-publicised is the novelist Henry Williamson who is considered to have been influential in the development of the concept of the 'lost generation' but is neither representative of his alumni peers nor necessarily of Colfeian authors who used their war experiences for literary purposes.

Longevity

The first aspect of post-war life for those who survived the war to be examined is age at death and, in particular, whether war service had any significant effect on longevity. This analysis has been undertaken on a dataset of 1059 men by reference to whether or not they saw war service. The dataset excludes those who died pre-war, those who died during the war and those for whom a date of death cannot be identified. The results are contained in Table 5.1.

[1] See Introduction.
[2] Swift and Wilkinson, p. 12.
[3] See Introduction.

Table 5.1. Distribution of age of death of post-war survivors.

Age group	Service	Percentage service (rounded) (%)	No service	Percentage no service (rounded) (%)
20–29	10	1.3	6	1.9
30–39	19	2.5	13	4.2
40-49	39	5.2	13	4.2
50–59	70	9.4	24	7.7
60–69	159	21.3	74	23.8
70–70	218	29.1	90	29.0
80 and over	233	31.2	91	29.3
Total	**748**	**100**	**311**	**100.1**

There is no significant difference in the distribution between the serving and non-serving cohorts and it can be concluded, in overall terms, the fact of war service had no substantial effect on the age at which a man who was still alive at the end of the war died. Leaving service aside, as can be seen, there was an element of risk of death at a relatively young age in any event. This had been equally true pre-war.[4] That is not to deny the possibility of war service being a factor in shortening a man's life. See, for instance, George Bell (1900–04)[5] who was conscripted into the ranks at the end of 1916. After serving on the Western Front and rising to Sergeant in the Royal Sussex Regiment, he died in 1923 working as a brewer's manager in Exeter aged 33. The cause of death has not been identified but his widow received a war pension following his death, which indicates it was service-related. There are other examples in the dataset where illness (and especially tuberculosis) arising during service is identified more directly as leading to an early death. Take, for example, Howard Low (1903–05).[6] A pre-war Territorial serving in the ranks with 28th (Artists Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment, he was mobilised at the outbreak of war from working as a solicitor's articled clerk. He served on the Western Front from October 1914–April 1915 but was discharged as no longer physically fit the following month. According to his pension records he was totally incapacitated by tuberculosis aggravated by active service, from which he died aged 24 in September 1917. The existence of service as an identified contributory factor to death does not, however, necessarily mean death would have been avoided in the absence of service. The use of the word 'aggravated' in Low's records points to a pre-existing condition.

[4] See Chapter 1.
[5] Born Camberwell 1889, father brewer's agent. Undistinguished school career.
[6] Already encountered in Chapter 3.

Working life

Analysis has also been undertaken to consider the extent to which the civilian employment patterns of those who served and survived were affected by their service. This is achieved by carrying out a comparison between the employment patterns of the serving and non-serving cohorts at three points in time. These points in time are centred around major national data collection events in England and Wales during the pre- and post-war periods: the 1911 census, the1921 census and the 1939 Register. The basic methodology adopted has already been set out in some detail in the Introduction. Two specific categories of analysis are undertaken. The first focuses on fluctuations in work patterns over the period of the war and has two aspects. On the one hand, it looks at the extent to which, following discharge, serving men returned to the same type of employment they had undertaken before the war and, if they did so, whether it was with the same employer. It also examines the extent to which non-serving men had continued in the same type of employment and whether it was with the same employer. The second category of analysis looks at the degree of change in these matters during the period between the First and Second World Wars.

In terms of the pre- and immediate post-war analysis, we have already seen in the Introduction although the 1921 census recorded an individual's employer, these data were not automatically collected for the 1911 census. Despite this, the wealth of secondary sources available during the pre-war period is such it has often proved possible for pre-war employers to be identified. The analysis is not necessarily restricted to employment in England and Wales although information regarding employment elsewhere is not always consistently available. For all purposes, 'employment' is deemed to include self-employment. Those who were no longer alive at the 1921 data point have been excluded from the analysis, as have those for whom pre- or post-war employment cannot be identified or who had no recorded occupation (such as invalids and the retired). The analysis concerns return to pre-war civilian employment so pre-war military regulars and those who remained in the services post-war are excluded. Also excluded are those who had no civilian employment pre-war because they were still in education or training and those who were unemployed either pre- or post-war.

Taking these factors into account, it has proved possible to identify the nature of the pre- and post-war employment of 697 men, 504 of whom served in the war and survived and 193 who did not serve in the war. Analysis shows non-servers were approximately 10 per cent more likely to continue in the same type of employment than surviving servers were to return to the same type of employment. However, in both instances the proportions of continuity were very high, around 80 per cent (155 men) for non-servers and 70 per cent (354 men) for servers, leading to the conclusion there was no fundamental shift in the nature of employment as result of the war and, more specifically, war service. The theme of continuity does, however, run deeper than this. Of these 509 men who continued in or returned to their pre-war employment, 80 per cent of both

serving and non-serving cohorts either continued in or returned to work with the same employer or in the same self-employed capacity. There is no Colfeian archival evidence as to how this process of return to pre-war employment operated either in specific or general terms. Clearly, though, there were two distinct elements: a desire to return and, where a man was employed, a willingness to take him back on the part of employers. In this latter regard, it is quite possible in substantial private sector organisations (especially in the financial services industry) and public sector bodies arrangements for return had been made by employers at the outset to encourage enlistment.[7] No specific evidence of arrangements of this type has been found amongst the cohort. However, many serving Colfeians worked in these types of organisation before the war and any such arrangements would certainly have eased the transition back to civilian life (in particular, providing a degree of financial security) and enhanced the probability of return to employment with the same pre-war employer. Even with the benefit of provisions of this nature, though, resuming previous employment still required a degree of contentment (or at least no overwhelming discontentment) with that prospect on the part of those returning.

Unemployment was not uncommon in the immediate aftermath of the war amongst ex-servicemen generally.[8] By the time the 1921 census was taken in June, the British Legion estimated the number of unemployed veterans stood at 472,374, comprising 23,000 men who were disabled and 449,374 who were non-disabled.[9] Approaching half a million men is a significant number by any measure. On Winter's assessment of the total number of men who served in the British forces (6,146,574) and the number of men who died (722,782), 5,423,789 men served and survived.[10] Applying the British Legion estimate to this figure gives an unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent amongst ex-servicemen. Instances of unemployment recorded in the 1921 census amongst Colfeians returned from service amount to 25 men out of a total of 504. This produces a lower rate than that nationally but, given the huge disparity in sample size, it is unwise to read too much into this. It is, however, reasonable to conclude, in terms of absolute numbers, unemployment was not a matter of major concern amongst the Colfeian ex-serving cohort by mid-1921. There are two potential reasons why this may be the case. The first is geographic. In general terms, London seems to have initially followed national unemployment patterns with an increase as the war ended then followed by improvement in a period of economic expansion which took place during the twelve-month period from April 1919 onwards. It has, however, been suggested London enjoyed fuller levels of employment than the country as a whole in the depression that followed later in 1920 by reason of its economic diversity.[11] The Colfeian ex-serving cohort may, therefore, have

[7] As to encouragement from employers to enlist see, for instance, the examples cited by Simkins, p. 65, Gregory *Last Great War*, pp. 74–5 and Meyer, p. 53.
[8] Joshua Cole, 'The transition to peace, 1918–1919' in *Capital Cities* ed. by Winter & Robert, pp. 196–226 (p. 208).
[9] Barr, p. 93.
[10] Winter, *Great War*, Tables 3.2, 3.10.
[11] Cole, pp. 220, 209, 226.

benefited from a more benign employment environment due to many still being based in London. The second reason is more specific and relates to the particular social stratification of the Colfe's cohort. We have already seen from Chapter 1 prior to the war the cohort was predominantly lower middle class in nature with minimal levels of partially or unskilled working class representation. We will find in the next section this social classification profile was largely unaffected by the war. The profile is far from reflective of the population of England and Wales generally in 1921. An overview of the 1921 census shows, in national terms, the male population aged 20–65 was predominantly working class and divided fairly evenly between skilled workers on the one hand and partially skilled and unskilled workers on the other.[12] At least so far as the employed (as opposed to the self-employed) were concerned, lower middle class occupations were likely to be more secure in times of economic hardship then working class occupations. They were generally salaried rather than waged and focused on the service rather than manufacturing and production industries. This may also have created a more benign employment environment for the Colfeian ex-serving cohort during this period.

The second broad area of analysis, which examines the degree of change in employment patterns during the period between the First and Second World Wars, adopts a slightly different methodology. The analysis excludes the predeceased (whose numbers had grown to 274 by the time of the 1939 Register) and those described in the 1939 Register as retired. It is also restricted to those identified as living in England and Wales in both 1921 and 1939. If an individual was abroad in 1921 but not 1939 or vice versa, it becomes increasingly difficult to make meaningful comparisons regarding the nature of employment because of the very different profiles of the labour markets in England and Wales and elsewhere. Additionally, there is no consistently available comparable data point for those abroad in 1939. This issue is compounded by the much reduced levels of information for these men that becomes available from secondary sources as the period progresses and, in particular, as ties with the School community increasingly fade. Although the 1939 Register may sometimes indicate a man was self-employed, in contrast to the 1921 census where this was a requirement, it does not generally include details of his employer if employed. This means it is not possible to undertake any meaningful quantitative analysis as to the proportions of men who were still working for the same employer in 1939 as they had been in the immediate post-war period. This is illustrative of a wider potential issue regarding inconsistency. Under the census processes, occupational information was collected against defined criteria or categories. Understandably given the purpose of its creation, the 1939 Register procedure was less rigorous and there is little in the way of uniformity of description. Given this, the comparative exercise undertaken here is slightly broader than that used for the pre- and post-war period analysis. Rather than analysing whether a man returned to or continued in the same type of

[12] See *Decennial Supplement 1921 Pt II* Table A, introductory section, column (1).

employment, the question posed is framed more widely as whether a man was still working in the same role or industry in 1939 as he had been in the immediate post-war period.

These parameters produce a reduced (but still sizeable) dataset of 513 men. Of these 513 men, three out of every four (382),have been identified as still employed in the same role or industry as they had been in the immediate post-war period. Again, as with the pre- and immediate post-war analysis, we find a strong theme of continuity. Taking the 382 men identified as still employed in the same role or industry as they had been in the immediate post-war period, it is possible to carry out a further level of analysis. This shows two out of every three of these men (254) were identified in the immediate post-war period as having continued in or returned to their pre-war type of employment. In turn, this means around 50 per cent of the dataset of 513 were still working in the same role or industry in 1939 as they had been a quarter of a century earlier, when the First World War commenced. If the 254 men are then analysed to distinguish between those who served in the war and those who did not, we find the relative proportions (72.1 per cent/27.9 per cent) are in line with the enlistment/non-enlistment split for the overall cohort.[13] Again, we find no evidence of war service having been disruptive to employment patterns.

As already mentioned, the limitations of the 1939 Register data mean it is not possible to quantitatively analyse continuity of employment with the same employer throughout. Four men have, though, been selected to illustrate the strength and depth of some of these ties. The selection does not pretend to be representative but the four men are reasonably typical of the core Colfeian dataset in terms of age, background, education, employment and war service. Importantly in terms of selection, reasonably full service, employment and life details are available. The men are: Bernard Penford (1895–1900);[14] Stuart Davey (1898–1903);[15] William Dry (1905–10);[16] and Harold Moorcock (1907–11).[17] Penford left Colfe's aged 14. By 1908 he was working as a clerk for the Prudential Assurance Company. Penford volunteered for service aged 29 in August 1915 as a gunner in A Battery of the HAC and served in that capacity with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force from November 1915 until March 1919. Apart from this, he remained with the Prudential for all of his working life, rising to Departmental Manager in the 1940s until his retirement at some point between 1944 and his death in 1951 aged 65. Davey left Colfe's aged 15. By 1909 he was working as a civil service clerk in the General Post Office. The 1911 census describes Davey as a Civil Servant and Second Division Clerk in the General Post Office. He volunteered for service in the ranks of the infantry in December 1914 aged 26, joining 15th (Civil Service Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment. He served with that unit throughout the war rising to Sergeant and seeing two spells of action on the Western Front as well as further periods abroad in Salonika and Egypt,

[13] See Chapter 2.
[14] Born 1886 Lewisham, father congregational minister. Academically able and sportsman.
[15] Born 1888 Lewisham, father commercial travelling salesman. Academically able and sportsman.
[16] Born 1893 Lewisham, father clerk. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position.
[17] Born 1896, father clerk. Board school. Undistinguished school career.

being mentioned in despatches in 1918. He was demobilised at the beginning of 1919 and returned to the Civil Service as a staff clerk in the Air Ministry. By 1948 he had risen to be Director of Contracts (Air) at the Ministry of Supply and by 1953 retired having been appointed both MBE and CBE—a career of between 39 and 44 years in the civil service. Davey died aged 70 in December 1958. Dry left Colfe's in 1910 aged 16 to take up a position with London County & Westminster Bank. He enlisted from the Bank as a clerk in the early part of September 1914 aged 21 in the infantry of the HAC and served on the Western Front with the 1st Battalion from December of that year until commissioned into the Rifle Brigade in March 1916. He had three more spells of service on the Western Front before being demobilised in February 1919 with the rank of Lieutenant and resuming his old position in the Bank. By 1942 Dry had risen to become the Secretary of what by then was the Westminster Bank. His date of retirement is not known but there is no evidence of him working elsewhere. He died aged 85 in 1978. Moorcock left Colfe's aged 14 in 1911. By the following year he was working in the Stores Department of the South Metropolitan Gas Company. He enlisted in the ranks of the infantry with 20th (Blackheath and Woolwich) Battalion, London Regiment aged 18 within a week of the outbreak of war described as a clerk with the South Metropolitan Gas Company. He saw active service on the Western Front from March 1915 until wounded in the left arm at the Battle of Loos in September of that year. The resulting medical examination revealed a pre-existing valvular heart condition, which had been aggravated by service and he was discharged as no longer physically fit for war service in June 1916. His disability pension records show he then resumed his pre-war employment and by the time of the 1921 census his job title was that of wages clerk. By 1953, after over 40 years employment broken only by two years of war service, he had risen to be Chief Wages Clerk although he died only two years later aged 59. There is no indication at all of the working lives or careers of any of these men having suffered any lasting disruption as a result of their war service. They served, they returned and they resumed their pre-war occupations, following them with an element of natural career progression for the rest of their working lives.

There is a strong thread throughout this section of continuity and stability coupled with, for those who served, a successful re-integration into civilian life. Given the role of occupation in determining social stratification, it is not perhaps surprising we will see these themes repeated when examining the effect of the war on social mobility in the section that follows.

Social mobility

This section examines the extent to which the war affected the social class profile of the Colfeian cohort and the extent to which, if at all, it prompted any degree of lasting social mobility. Applying the social stratification used to analyse the results of the 1921 census of England and Wales, we have already established in Chapter 1, based on pre-war occupation, the overwhelming majority of the men (72.7 per cent) in the immediate pre-war period fell within class II, (lower middle class), 17.3 per cent fell within class III (skilled working class) and 9 per cent within class I (upper and

middle class) with minimal and no representation amongst class IV (partially skilled working class) and class V (unskilled working class) respectively. We have also found in Chapter 2 enlistment rates across all three of the substantive class groupings were constant at or around 75 per cent. We can, therefore, conclude the pre-war class profile was replicated in the cohort's basic service profile. Analysis of the impact of the war on social mobility is undertaken by reference to two separate sets of comparative exercises. Central to both of these is the social class allocated to men participating in the 1921 census of England and Wales. Of necessity, therefore, the analysis is restricted to those alive and resident in England and Wales at the time that census was taken. Each return required amongst other matters the insertion of details of the personal occupation of each individual occupant of the property against which the return was being made. Different types of occupation were distinguished by an individual code, which was allocated after the completion and collection of the return and assigned, in turn, to one of the five social classification groupings.[18] The somewhat arbitrary nature of the assignment of classification could lead to a degree of inconsistency. See, for example, George Lockyer (1892)[19] who was described as a stockbroker's clerk in the 1911 census (and thus within social class II according to the 1921 census stratification) but as an insurance broker in 1921 (which meant an assignment to social class III even though it is likely the two occupations were of similar social standing). It is also apparent there could be a degree of ambiguity around the allocation of an occupational code to a particular employment and, occasionally, the allocation is questionable. Wilfred Moore (1904–07) is an illustration of this.[20] In 1911 he was described as articled clerk to an accountant (which brought him within social class I) but in 1921, although referred to as an incorporated (and, therefore, now fully qualified) accountant, he was allocated as a civil service official or clerk (which was within social class II) as he was working in the public sector for the Board of Trade rather than in the private sector. These instances are, though, few and far between with minimal impact on the overall analysis.

The first comparative exercise is intended to assess the degree of social mobility over the period of the war and measures a man's social class as determined by the 1921 census against the pre-war social class assigned to him by this research in accordance with the process described in the Introduction. The analysis has been carried out on a dataset of 536 men in England and Wales for whom it has proved possible to identify a social classification both pre-war and in 1921, 392 of whom undertook war service. The analysis reveals two main findings. The first is just under 80 per cent (or four out of five) of the 536 men retained the same social classification in 1921 that they had held pre-war. This indicates there was limited social mobility of any permanence generated over the period of the war. The second main finding is there was no distinction of consequence (less than 2 percentage points) in terms of mobility rates between those who served (392 men) and

[18] For the coding and classification details see *Decennial Supplement 1921* Pt II Table A columns (6) and (7).
[19] Born 1878 Greenwich, father solicitor. Academically able.
[20] Born 1894 Jamaica, father medical practitioner. Undistinguished school career.

those who did not (144 men). Accordingly, it seems highly unlikely that the restricted amount of permanent mobility occurring was attributable to war service. The lack of causal connection is reinforced by the very similar trends relating to the mobility that took place exhibited by the serving and non-serving cohorts. Although the sample sizes are small, in both cases, the majority of mobility was divided fairly evenly between movements from classes II–I (lower middle class to upper and middle class), II–III (lower middle class to skilled working class) and III–II (skilled working class to lower middle class). Movement from class II–I might be explained as the product of natural career progression, for example from insurance clerk (class II) to insurance inspector (class I). Movement between classes II–III could be attributed to the vagaries of the arbitrary aspects of the classification system, for example clerks who changed career to become non-professional engineers would move from class II to class III whilst non-professional engineers who moved to become commercial travelling salesmen (perhaps with the same employer) would move from class III to II. None of these marginal movements were likely to have resulted in any significant alterations in individual circumstances or standing. In other words, what lasting changes there were (and it must be remembered there was no mobility for the vast majority of men) tended to be at the margins.

This is not to say, particularly for those who served, there was no temporary wartime disruption to a man's social standing. It is significant the 1921 stratification classified commissioned officers in the army, navy and RAF as class I, other ranks in the navy and RAF as class III and other ranks in the army as class IV. This suggests there was no tradition of a recognised lower middle class role within the armed forces. This is illustrated in part by those granted wartime commissions (whether at the outset or from the ranks) sometimes being referred to contemporaneously (and perhaps contemptuously) as 'temporary gentlemen'. In terms of social classification, commissioning signified social 'promotion' or, at least, an element of enhancement in perceived social standing for those who enlisted from pre-war class II occupations. We also know rates of commissioning within the serving Colfeian cohort were substantial.[21] More men, however, remained in the ranks than were commissioned and it should be borne in mind that service in the ranks (especially in the army) represented adopting a lower social standing for nearly all men within the Colfeian cohort, whatever their pre-war class profile. For the educated lower middle classes from settled and relatively sheltered backgrounds (and often with strong religious convictions), co-existing with men two or three rungs below them on the social ladder could well have been equally, if not more, disquieting than having to share a living and working environment with regular officers who might perceive you as socially inferior. An exclusive focus on upward movement is not, therefore, necessarily helpful. More aptly, in terms of social classification, war service might be better framed as involving an overall temporary shift (both upwards and downwards) for the Colfeian serving

[21] Somewhere approaching 50% would hold a commission by the time their service ended. Further, the vast majority were not permanent commissions with over two-thirds of the men being commissioned from the ranks. See Chapter 2.

cohort which was naturally righted with a return to civilian life. Social class profile may, therefore, have been disrupted by the war but (despite contentions to the contrary regarding those holding wartime commissions)[22] there is no evidence from this analysis of any strong sense of social dislocation on resumption of civilian life.

The second comparative exercise in this section is intended to assess the longer-term degree of social mobility within the Colfeian cohort. This measures a man's estimated social class at the time of the 1939 Register against his social class as determined by the 1921 census. The 1939 Register was not created with any intention of analysing social classification but, as explained in the Introduction, it is possible to classify the occupational data it contains against the stratification adopted for use in connection with the 1931 census. The analysis has been carried out on a dataset of 515 men in England and Wales for whom it has proved possible to identify a social classification both in 1921 and 1939, 387 of whom undertook war service. The dataset is very similar in terms of size to that used in the analysis relating to the pre-war/1921 period. However, it should be borne in mind it is a different dataset and like is not necessarily being compared with like. The analysis is undertaken over a much longer period, eighteen years as opposed to between seven and ten years. Further, it bears a different age profile, reflecting the effect in the primary cohort of death and retirement between 1921 and 1939 and also including men who did not form part of the first set of analysis because they were still in education or training at the outbreak of war. Despite these matters, if the theoretical existential changes introduced in connection with the 1931 census relating to clerks are left out of account,[23] we find very similar patterns to those exhibited by the immediate post-war comparison. The vast majority of men (around 71 per cent) made no change in the nature of their employment resulting in an alteration in social classification. The levels of movement are slightly higher than those found earlier but, again, are largely centred on marginal movements between classes I, II and III. Adjustments were generally slight. Once more, we find there is no substantial distinction (less than a percentage point) in terms of mobility rates between those who served (387 men) and those who did not (128 men). Accordingly, whatever the reason for the very slight differential in levels of movement between 1921 and 1939, it is most improbable it arises from having served in the war.

Marital relationships

It might be anticipated an indicator of issues in adjusting to post-war civilian life amongst those who served and survived would be difficulties in resuming (for those already married) or establishing (for those still single at the end of the war) lasting marital relationships. Levels of data regarding the matrimonial experience within the Colfeian cohort are high. Marital status has been established for 1286 out of the 1346 men within the cohort. The strength of the Colfeian data enables

[22] Martin Petter, '"Temporary Gentlemen" in the Aftermath of the Great War: Rank, Status and the Ex-Officer Problem', *The Historical Journal*, 37.1 (1994), pp. 127–52, doi:10.1017/S0018246X00014734.
[23] As to these changes see further Introduction.

comparative rates of post-war marriage break-up to be established between the serving and non-serving cohorts. In general terms, the rates of marriage were substantial within both cohorts, the overwhelming majority of men (just over 90 per cent in each instance) marrying at least once. Evidenced incidences of separation were not, however, at all substantial, totalling a mere 55. The rates of separation were marginally higher amongst those who served (6.5 per cent as compared to 3.2 per cent) but, with such small sample sizes (46 who served and 9 who did not serve), it is unwise to draw any definitive conclusions from this.[24] Further analysis between individual break-up rates of pre-war, war and post-war marriages would only dilute sample size further and has not been pursued. The timing of marriage break-up overall (including pre-war) has, though, been analysed further. The results of that analysis are set out in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. Timing of break-up of Colfeian marriages.

Period	Number of broken marriages
Pre-war	4
1914–19	2
1920–29	14
1930–39	29
1940–49	6
1950 and later	4

The issue with sample size remains but the steep rise in marriage break-up during the 1920s and 1930s is striking (with approaching three-quarters of separations taking place then) and worthy of further comment. It is possible, in some instances, this was due to the inability of an ex-serviceman to settle although, as we have seen, there is little in the way of evidence to support this contention in other contexts. It is more likely to be reflective of a combination of two broader factors. The first is changes precipitated by the war to societal perceptions of gender roles and behavioural norms.[25] The second is the enactment of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1923 in England and Wales. Even though adultery remained the sole ground for divorce, this legislation established equality between husband and wife in terms of availability. Previously, a husband could obtain a divorce on the basis of the mere fact of a wife's adultery but a wife could only obtain a decree if the husband's adultery were aggravated by a range of illegal sexual behaviour, cruelty or two years' desertion. Research indicates similar patterns of increase in matrimonial proceedings during this period and provides

[24] Analysis is restricted to those remaining alive at the war's end and excludes those whose marriages failed pre-war.
[25] For a recent review of the literature in this respect see Alison S. Fell, *Women as Veterans in Britain and France after the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 10–14.

some quantitative support for the influence of the introduction of the legislation.[26] The decline in instances of separation from the 1940s onwards is likely to be the product of an ageing cohort.

Post-war outward migration

We have already examined pre-war outward migration patterns and the effect of the war on pre-war migrants in Chapters 1 and 4 respectively. This section analyses first-time post-war migration patterns. In particular, it looks at the extent to which the post-war migrancy behaviour exhibited by the cohort differs from that before the war and may be attributable to the Colfeian war experience. This includes a very brief examination of the far more limited amount of first-time outward migration that took place following the Second World War in the latter stages of the lives of those within the cohort.[27]

Turning first to migration between the First and Second World Wars. The number of identified first-time migrants during this period is 121, which represents 13 per cent or so of a cohort of 888 after adjusting for two matters. The first is mortality up to the beginning of this period. The second adjustment is for surviving pre-war migrants. This includes not only those who remained abroad at the end of the war and but also those who, having returned to the UK to serve in British forces or for other reasons, resumed pre-war migrancy in one form or another. This is lower than migration rates during the pre-war period, which stood at around 17 per cent of the overall cohort.[28] At first sight, this is unexpected. It might be thought the high levels of war participation would have increased the attraction of starting a new life elsewhere rather than leading to reduced levels of migration. There is, however, little sense of the war being a catalyst for permanent change. Employment levels remained fairly full, often with the same employer and a strong theme of continuity suggests less dissatisfaction with the domestic status quo than before the war. Counter-intuitively, it is possible experiences in the war may have dulled the more widespread appetite for change evidenced by the levels of pre-war migration. We have already seen, more generally, the pre-war period was a time of very substantial migratory movement from the UK.[29] Equally, it is established, despite government measures to encourage migration (in particular to the Dominions),[30] post-war levels of migration never came close to matching those pre-war levels.[31] To that extent, a reduction in levels of Colfeian migration reflects trends more generally.

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[26] Griselda Rowntree and Norman H. Carrier, 'The Resort to Divorce in England and Wales, 1858–1957', *Population Studies*, 11.3 (1958), pp. 188–233 (pp.189–191, Table 1), doi:10.2307/2172528.
[27] The analysis in this section adopts the same definitional assumptions and uses the same sources as in the earlier chapters.
[28] See Chapter 1.
[29] See Chapter 1.
[30] See, for example, the Free Passage Scheme to the Dominions introduced in 1919 for ex-service personnel and their families, the Empire Settlement Act 1922 and support for concessionary fares to Canada 1929–31. For a more detailed analysis of the various post-war schemes to encourage migration to parts of the Empire up to the 1960s see Constantine pp. 172–75.
[31] Carrier and Jeffrey, pp. 34–37.

As already noted in respect of employment patterns, the amount of data for members of the Colfeian cohort available from secondary sources reduces after the war. One of the consequences of this is it becomes progressively more difficult to track precise (as opposed to broad) dates of migratory movement. This issue is exacerbated by changing patterns of migration, which, as we will see shortly, led to lower levels of movement to the Dominions and the USA where accessible records tend to be more readily and consistently available then elsewhere. To overcome this, analysis of the distribution of timing of migration has been undertaken by reference to periods rather than individual years. It has not proved possible to identify even an approximate date of migration for two known migrants and, so, analysis is restricted to 119 men out of the dataset of 121. The results of this analysis are set out in Table 5.3

Table 5.3. Distribution of timing of first-time post-war migrancy.

Period	**Number of migrants**
Pre-1920	20
1920–24	63
1925–29	21
1930–34	8
1935–39	7
Total	**119**

There are two striking aspects of this analysis. The first is very little (12 per cent) of the migrancy between the First and Second World Wars took place in the 1930s. The second is over half of the migrancy took place in the first five years of the 1920s. Both these characteristics seem to be, though, broadly reflective of the position at a national level.[32] Carrier and Jeffrey have suggested the decline in migration during the 1930s was essentially caused by a combination of migrancy becoming less economically attractive and destination countries becoming less receptive to inward migration. They argue economic conditions were now no better elsewhere than they were in the UK, whilst at the same time the domestic development of social security support meant there was more protection against financial hardship. They also point to the USA introducing a requirement of substantial pre-existing financial resources as a condition of admission, Australia only offering financial assistance to families of established settlers and the UK government withdrawing support for a scheme of concessionary fares to Canada around this time.[33] Underpinning both these strands of argument is a presupposition immediate post-war migration was largely motivated by financial insecurity.

[32] Constantine, pp. 164–65, Table 7.2.
[33] Carrier and Jeffrey, p. 37.

There is little evidence of this being the case within the Colfeian cohort. We have seen earlier that levels of domestic employment were high and most men had little apparent difficulty in finding jobs in the post-war environment. There were exceptions but they were few and far between. Frank Woodman (1906–10) is an example.[34] At the 1911 census he was recorded as an apprentice engineer, probably with the East Ferry Road Engineering Works at Millwall. Although records are scanty, he seems to have spent at least part of the war (probably on home service) as a driver in the Royal Field Artillery. Frank was described as an out of work self-employed fitter in the 1921 census. The next records found relate to his return to the UK from Australia in 1932 described as a labourer. It is possible he had migrated there in the 1920s to find work and equally possibly he did so with some form of official assistance but there is no evidence to support this and it can be no more than speculation. There is a strong sense (as there was pre-war) most Colfeian migration was more a matter of choice than necessity. It might lead to an improvement in circumstances but there is a significant difference between seeking to enhance life prospects and the amelioration of hardship. We will return to this but for now it is sufficient to note it is unlikely the divergence between the Colfeian pre- and post-war patterns are shaped by the factors identified by Carrier and Jeffrey in relation to the migrant population more generally.

In Chapter 1 we established Canada was by far the single most popular country in terms of Colfeian pre-war migratory initial destination, followed by Australia and New Zealand, the USA and South Africa, with these four areas accounting for over two-thirds of the total. Analysis of migratory patterns between the First and Second World Wars shows a distinct shift from this position with the British colonies and possessions other than the Dominions becoming the most significant destination. Table 5.4 sets out the results of this analysis by reference to three main groupings: British Colonies and Possessions; British Dominions (comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa) and the USA; and other destinations.[35]

Table 5.4. Main areas of initial destination of inter-war migrants.

Area	Number of migrants	Percentage (%)
British Colonies and Possessions	58	47.9
British Dominions and USA	36	29.8
Other	27	22.3
Total	**121**	**100.00**

[34] Born Hackney 1895, father civil servant. Academically able.
[35] It should be noted that ‘Other’ includes the international settlement of Shanghai which, whilst sharing many similar characteristics to the colonies and possessions, was strictly Chinese territory. This affects seven migrants.

This shows the initial destination of approximately one in two migrants between the First and Second World Wars was to the Colonies and other possessions. It also shows, in a reversal of the pre-war position, these areas and destinations other than the Dominions and the USA accounted for over two-thirds of the overall total. Although some of the sample sizes become quite small and less reliable in statistical terms, further investigation of the high level analysis indicates some interesting trends. In particular, it reveals over 50 per cent of the migration to the British Colonies was to the Indian sub-continent with the overwhelming majority of the balance divided between Middle and Far Eastern colonies on the one hand and African colonies on the other. Further, most of the Dominion and USA migration was mainly focused on Australasia with only single figure levels of initial migration to Canada, South Africa and the USA. We also find migration to other areas was broadly evenly divided between Europe, the non-colonial Far East and South America.

Although, as already seen, the distribution of the timing of Colfeian first-time migration between the First and Second World Wars seems to be in line with national trends, the same cannot necessarily be said for the destination of that migration. This contention is based on a comparison between the statistics contained in Table 5.4 and analysis of data compiled at the beginning of the 1950s from shipping passenger list returns to the Board of Trade for the relevant period.[36] The results of this latter analysis are set out in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5. Main areas of destination of British inter-war migrants.

Area	Number of migrants	Percentage (%)
British North America and Australia and New Zealand	1,307,333	57.0
Other parts of the Empire	382,454	16.7
Foreign countries	603,153	26.3
Total	**2,292,940**	**100.00**

Source: G.F. Plant, *Oversea Settlement* (Oxford University Press, 1951), App. I, Tables III–VI.

From this we can see, at a national level, the Dominions were the migratory destination of choice between the First and Second World Wars,[37] with other parts of the Empire constituting a relatively minor option. It must be recognised there are differences in the methodological approach adopted in compiling the two sets of statistics. In terms of destination areas, for the purposes of Table 5.5, South Africa is treated as another part of the Empire and the USA as a foreign country. The Colfeian analysis takes a different approach to enable more meaningful comparison with the pre-war position and treats all the Dominions and the USA as one, representing as they do the four most popular pre-war destinations. Also, the passenger list returns on which the national data are

[36] These data are also relied upon for related analysis over different time frames in Constantine: see Tables 7.2, 7.4.
[37] The term ‘British North America’ is used in the source material and merely recognises that Newfoundland was strictly a separate Dominion until 1949 when it became part of Canada.

based were not required for voyages exclusively European in nature or to destinations within the Mediterranean Sea. Migratory movements of this nature are not, therefore, taken into account although they are included in the Colfeian analysis. Further, in terms of nationality, the distinction required to be drawn by the passenger returns was between British subjects (which during this period extended beyond domestic borders to most within the Empire) and aliens. The Colfeian data are, by contrast, largely restricted to those who were brought up within domestic borders. Perhaps the most significant potential divergence, though, lies in the purpose of this aspect of the Colfeian research which is exclusively focused on first-time migration. In contrast, the national figures will undoubtedly include, for example, pre-war migrants who had returned to Britain to serve in the war and were resuming migrancy. Like is not, therefore, necessarily being compared with like. The differential profile between the two sets of distribution patterns is so marked however, even leaving aside these issues, it is suggested Colfeian migratory behaviour during this period exhibited specific distinguishing qualities. We will return to this point.

In terms of age at the point of migration, we found in Chapter 1 the greatest number of pre-war Colfeian migrants were aged 18–20 and the vast majority were aged 16–26. As already mentioned, identification of precise dates of migratory movement in this period is not always easy. In turn, this impacts on the ability to determine the exact age at which migration took place. Again, though, it is possible to establish a reasonably accurate analysis that can be used for the purposes of comparison by adopting periods rather than individual years as units of measurement. The results of the analysis undertaken are set out in Table 5.6. As with the distribution of timing, the analysis is restricted to 119 out of the dataset of 121 men.

Table 5.6. Distribution of age at first-time inter-war migrancy.

Age group	Number	Percentage (%)
20–24	30	25.2
25–29	34	28.6
30–34	31	26.1
35–39	13	10.9
40 and over	11	9.2
Total	**119**	**100.00**

It is immediately apparent we are dealing with a more mature cohort than was the case pre-war with over 46 per cent of the cohort aged 30 or over at the point of first migration. We also find no significant concentration in the youngest age groups with just under 80 per cent of the migrants fairly evenly distributed between the ages of 20–34. An element of increase in age profile would be expected as result of the war with young men who would have been the most likely to migrate pre-war either volunteering for or being conscripted into service during the war years as soon as (or,

indeed, in some cases before) they reached the requisite age. This does not, however, explain the enhanced weighting in the older age groups or the extended age range—we will see in a moment the oldest migrant was 62—and suggests other factors were also likely to be of significance. We will be examining likely motivations for migratory behaviour in this cohort in a moment but for now it is sufficient to note a degree of discontinuity (although not quite as pronounced) between pre- and post-war outward migratory age structures at a national level over the period to 1929 has been remarked upon elsewhere.[38]

The nature and range of the age structure of the migratory cohort between the First and Second World Wars can be usefully illustrated by four case studies. The first relates to Malcolm Moffatt (1903–14) already briefly encountered in Chapter 1.[39] Moffatt enlisted for service straight from school as an 18-year old in September 1914 in the ranks of 4th Battalion, Seaforth Highlanders. He was subsequently commissioned into 6th Battalion, Cameron Highlanders being promoted to Captain and awarded the Military Cross in 1916, serving throughout the war including post-Armistice with the Army of Occupation. Following demobilisation, he sailed for Malaya aged 24 in June 1920 to become a rubber planter. In the pre-war period, it is not inconceivable he would have followed a similar course, but at a much younger age. Richard Tims (1899–1903) was a slightly older migrant.[40] A pre-war clerk and insurance agent who volunteered twice for service and was discharged twice on account of poor eyesight, Tims migrated to West Africa aged 32 to work as a bookkeeper. William Murray (1897–98) was older again.[41] Murray was conscripted in 1917 described as an accountant for (as a result of his medical categorisation) home service in the ranks of Headquarters Company, Machine Gun Company. Having attended evening classes in pottery at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts before the war, he became an influential potter of the post-war period. He settled in Southern Rhodesia aged 58 after apparently being stranded there by the onset of the Second World War whilst travelling. The oldest migrant, at 62, was Herbert Chapman (1888–89), whose war service has already been encountered in Chapter 1. Having retired from the Post Office Savings Bank, he sailed alone for Australia in November 1939.

These four men also demonstrate motivations for migration could differ and how it could take different forms. There is no evidence of Chapman ever marrying but notification of his death aged 76 in 1954 in New South Wales was given to the authorities by a nephew. Against this background, it is plausible one of the reasons he moved abroad was to be near family who were already established in Australia. Familial factors do not, however, seem to have been at play in the case of Murray. Indeed, his migration seems to have been largely accidental. Despite this (and having apparently ceased to pot) he remained in South Rhodesia for close to a quarter of a century before

[38] Winter, *Great War*, pp. 267–68, Table 8.7.
[39] Born 1896 Bromley, father master mariner. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position. One of five Colfeian brothers. All would serve in the war and two would be killed.
[40] Born 1888 Woolwich, father army ordnance officer. Undistinguished school career.
[41] Born 1881 Greenwich, father miller. Undistinguished school career.

dying there aged 80 in 1962. Moffatt and Tims were men who left the UK to work abroad in the Colonies and possessions (albeit in different types of role) but eventually returned. Tims came back to the UK in 1938 and was described in the 1939 Register as a 'Company Accountant West Africa (retired)'. He died in 1977 nearly 40 years later in Lewisham aged 89. There is no evidence of any employment in the interim but it is not a period for which consistently accessible records are generally available. Moffatt's route back to the UK was less straightforward. Having served with the Malay States Volunteer Regiment post-war, he was recalled from the Reserve in 1940 to become a Staff Captain and was involved in the evacuation of Penang and the retreat to Singapore. He was promoted to Major in January 1942, awarded the MBE and appointed Deputy Adjutant Quartermaster General of Singapore Fortress. Taken prisoner when it surrendered the following month, he spent the rest of the war in a succession of POW camps. Released from service in May 1946, he assisted in the re-establishment of the Malayan rubber plantations before returning to the UK aged 51 in 1947 to become a fruit farmer. He died in rural Essex aged 69 in 1965.

We will specifically examine levels of permanence of migration between the First and Second World Wars in a moment but it is worth developing the point here that the experience of Tims and Moffatt is not, in general terms, untypical of those significant numbers of Colfeians who migrated to the Colonies and similar destinations during this period—a career abroad of varying length followed by eventual retirement either in the UK or a destination other than the career location. The literature establishes there was undoubtedly a wide range and also probably increased numbers of positions available in the Colonies and possessions across the public, private and third sectors following the First World War.[42] It seems unlikely similar considerations did not also apply to other foreign trading destinations. However, what led to Colfeians take up this type of position in greater proportions than the general population? In terms of pre-war background, we have already seen imperialistic affinity may have been strong especially amongst those Colfeians (approximately one in four) who had received their primary education in local authority-run primary schools and been exposed to the reading books in common use there.[43] We have also seen in Chapter 1 enhanced prospects of career advancement were a likely motivation for pre-war migration both to the Colonies and possessions and elsewhere. There is no reason to doubt this factor was any less strong following the war but we have also established earlier in this chapter there were relatively full levels of employment within the cohort in 1921. Of course, it is possible this is because some men with limited prospects of post-war employment had already migrated by the time of the census resulting in an element of statistical distortion. There is, though, no sense of lack of employment for Colfeians in the domestic environment being a driving factor for migration during this period. Whether that employment offered sufficient opportunity for career growth for the ambitious remains to be seen. It should be borne in mind, by the standards of the time, the Colfeian alumni comprised

[42] Constantine, pp. 170–71.
[43] See Chapter 1 and Heathorn, pp. 7–21, 109–14.

an unusually well-educated cohort. It was also a cohort of varied social standing, a good proportion of whom stood to gain significantly in terms of meritocratic advancement from working overseas. It is quite plausible these factors are related and distinguish the Colfeian migrant from the British migrant population more generally during this period.

It is instructive here to study the lives of six young men who took up employment with Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark Ltd in Poplar shortly before the war began. The firm was a long-established manufacturer of paint, colour and varnishes, traditionally for coach builders but more latterly for railways both at home and abroad. They seem to have undergone a period of significant expansion during the early part of the twentieth century. By 1912 they had a paint and colour factory in Bootle, a varnish factory at West Drayton, a depot and store on the Caledonian Road and offices and three factories at Poplar on a site of 10 acres with 900 feet of continuous frontage to the Thames. By 1914 they were employing 1,000 people.[44] The men concerned are: Harold Gebbett (1908–13), son of a travelling salesman;[45] Henry Sanders (1908–13), son of a dock foreman;[46] Charles Macarthy (1908–13), son of a master mariner who does not seem to have remained part of the family unit;[47] John Fletcher (1909–14), son of a builder and decorator;[48] Harry Maxted (1909–14), son of a bootmaker;[49] and Sidney Hughes (1910–14), son of a carpenter.[50] Gebbett, Sanders and Macarthy all took up positions together in 1913, being joined later by the remaining three. We know from military records Sanders and Maxted were clerks and Macarthy an analytical chemist but the pre-war roles of the other three are not known. The men have a number of shared characteristics.[51] Firstly, they were from relatively humble family backgrounds and received their primary education at local authority-run board schools. Further, all but Fletcher are noted in the school admission roll book as having been publicly-funded as LCC scholars.[52] All achieved significant levels of academic attainment, passing the Senior Cambridge Local Examination. Gebbett, Sanders, Macarthy and Maxted also became eligible for matriculation to the University of London as a result of their performance. Fletcher, Hughes and Macarthy held leadership positions at Colfe's and Hughes was also a talented sportsman. They were a very able group of young men. However, in view of their social background, it was unlikely they had the benefit of extensive parental networks to assist in obtaining post-education employment.[53] This may explain why, at

[44] Grace's Guide to British Industrial History, 'Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark' [n.d.] <https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Wilkinson,_Heywood_and_Clark> [accessed 11 October 2024].
[45] Born 1897 Camberwell.
[46] Born 1896 Greenwich.
[47] Born 1896 Stepney.
[48] Born 1897 Lewisham.
[49] Born 1898 Greenwich.
[50] Born 1899 Lewisham.
[51] James Bonner Smith (1904–10) born 1894 Greenwich also joined Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark in 1913. It is unclear whether he was still there at the war's outbreak but it is irrelevant to this analysis in any event as he died in service.
[52] As to this scholarship system see Chapter 1.
[53] An element of support for this can be found in correspondence from Fletcher late on in life where there is a hint that the headmaster played a direct role in the recruitment process: *Colfeian* (1979) Issue 48 pp. 65–66.

least for those who were clerks, despite their obvious ability they found themselves working in the industrial sector rather than in more prestigious positions in the financial sector as did many of their peers. All six men served in the ranks with the armed forces during the war.[54] Gebbett and Fletcher were conscripted, the rest were volunteers with Maxted and Hughes only being 16 when they enlisted. With the exception of Macarthy (who was discharged fairly promptly as medically unfit by virtue of a pre-existing heart condition), the men served in at least one theatre of war or at sea but without any particular distinction. All survived and continued in employment with Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark.

Hughes seems to have remained in the UK and by 1939 was an area office manager based in Northumberland. The others spent at least an element of their careers abroad. By 1923 Gebbett was in Bombay. He remained working for the company and its successor Pinchin, Johnson & Co in India until retirement to Sudbury, Suffolk in 1954. He died aged 76 in 1973 described as a retired company executive. It is known Sanders was working for Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark in Shanghai by 1922 and it has been established that by 1939 at the latest he was working as a representative for a paint and varnish manufacturer in Switzerland. It is also established he had returned to the UK by the end of the Second World War, settling in New Eltham in 1951 where he died aged 87 in 1984. At the time of the 1921 census, Macarthy was working as an assistant manager for Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark at the Poplar site. By 1922 he was also working for the company in Shanghai. Macarthy is said to have returned to the UK in 1924. By 1927 he was employed by others firstly as an engineer and latterly as a salesman in South Africa. Having married in Woolwich in 1936, by the time of the 1939 Register, Macarthy was living in Eltham and working as an electrical engineer. There are no identifiable domestic records for Macarthy or his wife after 1949, which suggests further migration but no evidence has been found to confirm this. Certainly, when Macarthy's mother died in 1966, probate of the estate was granted to an unmarried cousin of hers rather than to Macarthy. In 1922, Fletcher and Maxted were also in Shanghai with Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark.[55] Fletcher was transferred to join Gebbett in India in 1924 and retired from there to Australia in 1952, where he died at some point around 1980. Maxted remained in Shanghai and was a director of Pinchin, Johnson & Co there at the outbreak of the Second World War, being interned with his wife in Pootung following the Japanese invasion.[56] In 1949, Maxted moved to South Africa after being appointed a director of a joint venture created between Pinchin Johnson and a South African company, later becoming the administrative officer and

[54] Gebbett 5th (London Rifle Brigade) Battalion, London Regiment; Sanders mechanic RFC/RAF; Macarthy 18th (London Irish Rifles) Battalion, London Regiment; Fletcher victualler's assistant Royal Navy; Maxted 20th (Blackheath and Woolwich) Battalion, London Regiment; and Hughes Royal Engineers.
[55] In later life, Fletcher would fondly remember those days with Sanders, Macarthy and Maxted referring to 'those halcyon days in Shanghai in the early twenties': *Colfeian* (1979) Issue 48, p. 66.
[56] Maxted was apparently the inspiration for the character 'Mr. Maxted' in *Empire of the Sun* by J. G. Ballard who was interned as a child in the same camp as Maxted and his wife: email Ian Maxted to Judy Cardnell (Colfe's archivist) 20 May 2021.

secretary of the Natal Blood Transfusion Service. Although it is not clear exactly when, he and his wife returned to the UK to retire to Torquay, where Maxted died aged 84 in 1982.

The case study illustrates a number of themes. There is the thread of continuity of pre-war employment despite varying degrees of war service and a high degree of migration. There is also the element of association between migration and the prospects of upwards social mobility for those with ambition and ability. Despite the backdrop of migration, though, there is also a clear indication of a significant level of continuing cultural identity with the UK—we know for certain three out of the five who went abroad returned to retire in the UK and one did not. The fifth (Macarthy) returned relatively soon after migrating and remained in the UK for a quarter of a century although he cannot be traced in England and Wales after 1949. This pattern is replicated more widely across the post-war first-time migrant cohort. Disregarding 11 men for whom data are not available, analysis of the remaining cohort of 110 shows, in broad terms, two-thirds eventually returned to the UK and one-third remained abroad. A corresponding exercise has been undertaken in relation to the 231 men of the pre-war migrant cohort for whom return (or not) has been definitively established.[57] This shows approximately two-thirds remained abroad and one-third eventually returned, indicating a significant change in the durability of Colfeian migratory behaviour either side of the war.[58] Among pre-war migrants, lifelong relocation was far more common, among first-time post-war migrants much less so. Interestingly, this alteration in behaviour corresponds with the two-thirds/one third shift noted above in the initial destination of Colfeian migrants during this period away from the Dominions and the USA to the colonies and possessions and other locations.[59] This suggests a strong correlation between lasting Colfeian migration and movement to the Dominions and the USA and conversely between less enduring migration and movement to other destinations. In turn, this raises the prospect of two quite different forms of migration with distinct qualities. The precise nature of those qualities is not, however, straightforward to categorise. Although migration studies are essentially an analysis of mass movements, ultimately they are based on the stories of individuals each motivated by a specific range of circumstances and considerations at any given point in time. Further, the concept of voluntary migration is a fluid one—there is an ebb and flow, people come, people go—that does not easily lend itself to rigid definitional distinctions as to destination, purpose or outcome. The tensions involved in trying to drawing generalised conclusions from individual experiences are compounded by two factors in

[57] The six men who migrated mid-war have been included in the second analysis. For the purposes of the analysis, some assumptions have had to be made to deal with the impact of the war and war service. In terms of migrants who came back to the UK to serve in British forces, uninterrupted migrancy has been assumed for those who survived and returned abroad. Those who died in service or chose not to continue their migrant status post-war are treated as having returned. On the other hand, those who died in service with their country of migrancy are categorised as not having returned.
[58] Although some work has been undertaken on average net flows of migration to and from the UK at a national level (see, e.g., Constantine pp. 165–66, Tables 7.1, 7.2) there has been no previous study of this kind relating to permanence of cohort migration.
[59] See Table 5.4 and associated commentary.

particular. Firstly, the difficulty in establishing the initial motivations of an individual, which were rarely clear-cut at the outset and, in any event, not necessarily determinative, being subject to modification over the course of the migrancy experience. Secondly, there was a large degree of commonality in outcome. All migration involved travel, a change of environment and, more often than not, a change in occupation and opportunity for advancement.

The analysis does, however, clearly indicate, in general terms, migration to the Dominions and the USA was significantly more likely to be permanent than migration to the colonies and possessions and other destinations. In terms of pre-war migration, we have already seen in earlier chapters examples of Colfeians in various roles who took part in the opening up of the Western Provinces in Canada and the agricultural development of the outback in Australia and did not return to the UK. There is an attraction in seeking to rely on a differentiation between this pioneering-type role and migrant participation in British-based international trade and commerce and colonial administration elsewhere to establish a fundamental connection between destination and purpose and durability of migration. There is an element of association but it is by no means definitive. In particular, the other main destination for pre-war permanent migration was the USA, which by this time was essentially 'settled' and those who migrated there were joining a heavily and rapidly-expanding industrialised rather than a pioneering society. We also find pioneering activity did not necessarily exclude return to the UK. Ernest Reed[60] came back permanently in his mid-40s after 20 years of ranching in Alberta and took up another career selling house furnishings in London. Equally, a career abroad in commerce or administration did not preclude permanent migration. Ernest Briant,[61] a pre-war Argentinian migrant in banking, remained for over 50 years and died there in his mid-70s. We have also seen above John Fletcher eventually retired to Australia rather than the UK. There will, of course, always be exceptions to any pattern but a 'settler'/'non-settler' distinction is not quite as definitive as might at first appear.

Rather than focusing on categorisation of migration by destination and purpose, a more useful approach may be to frame the essence of return (or not) in terms of self-identification with the country of location. A distinction between migration as a fundamental change in identity by starting a new life and migration as a step along the way in return to a previous life. The latter involved the retention of a strong cultural sense of 'Britishness', working and socialising in British expatriate communities within the context of a nomenclature of 'postings' and periodic journeys back to the UK 'on leave', perhaps educating children and maintaining a residential base there. This retention of cultural identity is clearly illustrated in the announcements and letters relating to migrants published in the 'Outpost Notes' section of the *Colfeian* during the 1920s and 1930s. See, for example, a five-page spread of the 'Outpost Notes' section of the June 1926 edition focusing

[60] See further Chapters 1 and 4.
[61] See Chapter 1.

primarily on Colfeians in Asia.[62] We see mention of Douglas Meikle (1903–10)[63] being home 'on leave' from Rangoon. Robert Baker (1903–07)[64] writing from Rangoon mentions he does not think he will be able to 'take leave this year'. Another Burmese migrant (but this time in Upper Burma), Charles Allworth (1908–12)[65] is described as 'probably being home on leave' by the time of publication and had previously expressed the hope of getting 'a little cricket' with the Old Colfeian Cricket Club during the summer. Osmond Skinner (1909-16)[66] writing from Hong Kong said he was 'due for leave this year'. On a slightly different note, Arthur Poole (1914–18)[67] reports from Colombo, Ceylon they have 'several jolly good clubs' and there are 'many more facilities for sport than at home', with him playing two or three soccer games a week and golf most of the remaining evenings. Percy (aka Peter) Filmer's (1904–06)[68] time in Kenya in the 1930s provides a more extreme (and notorious) illustration of the insularity of some British expatriate communities in the period between the First and Second World Wars. By the late 1930s Peter was the Managing Director of Shell East Africa and he and his wife Phyllis were living in the Kenyan Highlands. This is known because Phyllis, at least, was part of the Happy Valley 'set' there. Following the death of his second wife through drink and drugs, Phyllis began an affair with Lord Erroll which ended with the arrival in Kenya of Sir Jock and Lady Diana Broughton towards the end of 1940 when the latter supplanted Phyllis as Erroll's mistress. By the end of January 1941, Erroll was dead, found shot in his car. Sir Jock was tried and acquitted of his murder and the case was never solved.[69]

This is not to say the concept of residual 'Britishness' precluded long-term absence. We can see from the earlier case study in this chapter Sanders spent at least 20 years abroad and Maxted significantly longer. Of the *Colfeian* correspondents mentioned above we know Meikle spent over twenty years in Burma before returning to the UK and Allworth a similar length of time. Skinner remained for 35 years in Hong Kong (including 4 years in a Japanese prisoner camp during the Second World War) and Poole spent over a quarter of a century in the Indian subcontinent. The exact date of Filmer's return to the UK is unclear but he seems to have (re)married Phyllis

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[62] *Colfeian*, vol.10, no. 40 (1926), pp. 179–83. This edition was selected at random from the mid-decade period for analysis.
[63] Born 1893 Greenwich, father clerk. Board school. Sportsman. Sailed for Burma November 1914 to work as a merchant. Commissioned in Indian army during war.
[64] Born 1891 Lewisham, father grocer. Board school. Academically able. Sportsman. Competitive marksman. Migrated to Burma 1911 to work as merchant. Commissioned in Indian army during war.
[65] Born 1897 Lewisham, father civil servant. Sportsman. Commissioned into Royal West Kent Regiment during war. Migrated to Burma 1920 to work in forestry.
[66] Born 1900 Lewisham, father grocer. Academically able. Sportsman. Leadership position. Pilot cadet at end of war. Migrated to Hong Kong 1921 to work with Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. Grandson is actor Mark Rylance.
[67] Born 1902 Woolwich, father schoolmaster. Board school. Undistinguished school career. Served in Royal Navy Transport Service at end of war. Migrated to Ceylon 1924 to work with Imperial Bank.
[68] Born 1893 Wandsworth, father hosier. Academically able. From Colfe's to scholarship at Christ's Hospital. Migrated to Singapore 1912 to work with Asiatic Petroleum. War service in Singapore with Royal Garrison Artillery reported.
[69] Juliet Barnes, *The Ghosts of Happy Valley: Searching for the Lost World of Africa's Infamous Aristocrats* (Aurum Press, 2014), p.6.

(presumably the events in Kenya had led to a divorce) in 1952 in Devon (40 years after his initial migration), where he died aged 65 in 1958. We have also seen in earlier chapters other incidences of 'temporary' migration starting pre-war and spanning well over 30 years.[70] Self-identification, however, cannot operate in a vacuum and it must be recognised original intentions can be modified by existential influences. The outbreak of the First and Second World Wars are obvious examples.[71] As indeed are more natural life events such as marriage and death. The latter, in particular, could preclude an anticipated eventual return to the UK. An extreme example of this is Arthur Horton (1901–08).[72] Arthur migrated to India and joined the Indian Police in 1910. He spent the war years serving on the North-West Frontier, rising to the rank of superintendent before being killed with a number of his men in the Punjab in1923 by a pro-independence suicide bomber. In the absence of this, it is not improbable his life would have followed much the same course as that of Seymour Mills last encountered in Chapter 3. Seymour migrated to join the Indian Police in late 1914, returning to the UK for good in 1933 where he married twice before dying aged 76 in 1970. For migrants to the colonies and possessions, the accelerating movement towards independence in the post-Second World War period may also have been a factor in a decision to return to the UK. This would have resulted in those destinations no longer necessarily representing the benign environments they once were and, in some cases, becoming increasingly hostile.[73] Within this framing, however, significantly higher levels of ultimate return to the UK amongst first-time post-war migrants, can be viewed as reflecting an enhanced sense of British identity and continuity (rather than discontinuity) with the pre-war period.

Before leaving this subject, brief mention should be made of the post-Second World War Colfeian migrancy experience. The sample is not large (just 31 men) and, accordingly it is wrong to read anything definitive into the resulting analysis. The indicative trends are, though, of interest. Overall levels were small but this is not surprising in the context of an ageing population. In terms of destination around two-thirds, moved to either Australia or South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Of the 27 individuals for whom return (or not) to the UK can be established, the vast majority remained abroad suggesting, given the age profile of the cohort, the primary motive for migration was connected with retirement.

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[70] See William Dove (Chapter 4)—over 34 years in the Far East excluding First World War service. Also see in Chapter 1 Leonard Naylor (at least 37 years in Burma) and Leonard Mote (34 years in Ceylon).
[71] The effect of the former on pre-war migrancy status has already been considered in Chapter 4.
[72] Born 1889 Woolwich, father government inspector. Academically able. Competitive marksman.
[73] Definitive links are not easy to establish but Leonard Mote's return to the UK in 1946 may not be unrelated to Ceylon's independence in 1948 although it may equally be attributable to deteriorating health—he died in early 1947. Burma too achieved independence in 1948 and we know that Leonard Naylor had returned to the UK by 1950 at the latest. Although the exact date of Filmer's return and from where he returned are not known, it is possible that it may not have been unrelated to the Mau Mau uprising that began in Kenya in the early 1950s. It is equally plausible, though, that it may have been a result of the publicity surrounding the murder trial.

Dislocation and disillusionment: the reality

Henry Williamson is considered by Wohl to have been instrumental in the development of the original concept of a 'lost' war generation founded in disillusionment and dislocation.[74] Leaving aside the two other recognised Colfeian war authors he supported,[75] there is little sense of these characteristics being exhibited by his fellow post-war alumni. The principal recurring themes of this chapter are ones of stability rather than dislocation and continuity rather than discontinuity.

This is not to say all serving Colfeians who survived made a smooth transition to post-war life. Leonard Levinson (1894-95) is an example of this.[76] The son of a naturalised Russian migrant, from working as a clerk, he enlisted as a trooper in the Life Guards for 12 years in 1901. Although by then a reservist, he was mobilised at the outbreak of war and commissioned from the ranks into the 5th Dragoon Guards in December 1914. He married in Bromley the following year. Levinson was awarded the Military Cross as well as being mentioned in despatches in 1916 and retired with the rank of Captain in September 1922. Very little is known of his life after that. At the time of the 1939 Register, he was recorded as a male nurse, he and his wife probably working as live-in carers. No grants of representation were apparently obtained in relation to the estates of either of them on death, which usually indicates limited means. Levinson's initial move from employment as a clerk to the cavalry was unusual—unlike clerking, service in the ranks of the regular pre-war army was not generally seen as an attractive proposition.[77] It was also considered to be significantly inferior in terms of social status. Although he enjoyed, by any criteria, what would be considered to be a 'good' war, this does not seem to have led to any lasting improvement in social standing. Harold Hatcher (1900–03) is another illustration.[78] His domestic background may not have been straightforward. In 1905 Hatcher's parents were involved in divorce proceedings on the basis of his father's adultery. The pleadings also alleged alcoholism on the part of his mother. Reconciliation must have followed as they were still living as a couple at the time of the 1939 Register. Hatcher was mobilised in the ranks of the territorial artillery from working at his father's firm at the outbreak of war and commissioned in 1916, rising to the rank of Captain. Curiously, he seems to have re-enlisted in the territorial ranks with the HAC on demobilisation. The 1921 census records both he and his father as being managing directors of the family printing firm. Hatcher migrated to New Zealand at the end of 1923 travelling third class (indicating limited means) described as a printer and farmer. The next (and final) public record found for him is a Police notice he was wanted for questioning in relation to the possible theft of a pawned fountain pen, silver watch and leather gloves with rabbit-skin lining in Rotorua, New Zealand in early 1925. There is no further trace of him after that either in New Zealand or elsewhere abroad or in the UK.

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[74] See Introduction.
[75] Bell and Yeates: see Introduction.
[76] Born 1881 Lewisham, father Baptist minister. Undistinguished school career.
[77] As to the reasons for this unpopularity see Beckett, Bowman & Connelly, pp. 31–39.
[78] Born 1892 Lewisham, father printer and local newspaper proprietor. Undistinguished school career.

A final example of a serving alumni who did not adapt well to post-war life is Harman Barnett (1905–10) who left Colfe's to complete his education in Belgium.[79] He enlisted in the ranks with the ASC in November 1914 from being a motor mechanic and garage owner and was commissioned in August 1916 after being invalided home from the Western Front following a motorcycle accident. Barnett returned to the Western Front in January 1917 and married for the first time later that year. He was promoted to Lieutenant in February 1918, relinquishing his commission due to ill-health the following September. At the time of the 1921 census Barnett was carrying on his pre-war trade in Lewisham but became subject to bankruptcy proceedings in 1924, by which time he was living in Brighton. In 1925 he was sentenced to six months' hard labour for non-payment of maintenance arrears to his first wife—he remarried (probably twice) and possibly cohabited with a fourth woman. In 1927 he was convicted of theft of a car in Brighton and bound over for six months, which led to him losing the rank of Lieutenant. He had previously been convicted of three traffic offences and of plying for hire with an unlicensed vehicle in Brighton and fined on each occasion. By 1930 Barnett was working as a café proprietor in Hindhead, Surrey. The 1939 Register recorded him as living in Paddington and working as a Civil Instructor in RAF Transport. Little more is known about him until 1958 when he migrated alone to Australia, dying there the following year. It should be emphasised these men were very much the exception rather the rule—it is necessary to work quite hard to find them. Besides originating from Lewisham and an element of education at Colfe's, the other common factor all three men share is being commissioned from the ranks. This may be coincidental. Equally, it might suggest a correlation between commissioning from the ranks and difficulty to adapting to post-war life. There are, however, insufficient data to enable a convincing case to be made for this.

We have already encountered Dudley Hoys and Thomas Butler in Chapter 2. Given their early and extremely youthful enlistment and having experienced four years of military service, a degree of disillusionment might be expected. Hoys had also lost his elder (and only) brother, Cecil (Colfe's 1907–11) serving as a Second Lieutenant on the Somme in September 1916. Having no established adult pre-war life to return to, it would also not have been surprising to find the transition to civilian life for Hoys and Butler was less than easy. This is particularly true for Hoys. He had entered service as a 15 year-old boy and left five or six years later holding the rank of Lieutenant, having been in command of significant numbers of men in the most challenging of circumstances. Both, however, seem to have adjusted without undue difficulty. Hoys obtained a journalistic diploma from London University and became a professional author (especially of short stories which were popular in many countries) and playwright. He also re-integrated into the Colfeian community, being active in Old Colfeian sporting and social activities in the 1920s and editing the *Colfeian* from 1920–28. Hoys' sister, May, married another active Old Colfeian and contemporary of Hoys, Ray Hichisson (1909–15), in 1921. Hoys married in Chislehurst in 1929.

[79] Born 1894 Lewisham, father boot seller. Sportsman. Competitive marksman.

Shortly afterwards, he published two novels—*Ecstasy*[80] and *The Quiet Man*.[81] His war experiences form the backdrop to both. Hoys does not shy away from themes common to many of the other novels of this 'war books boom' period—the horror of war, the betrayal of ideals and poor employment prospects for returning servicemen—but there is none of the futility of those other works. Good triumphs over evil. In both instances, the outcome for the central character is positive, a settled and successful life with no lasting dislocation. Neither book, however, achieved any lasting critical acclaim or become part of the recognised canon of war literature. The following years were not necessarily emotionally easy for Hoys. Hichisson died of heart disease aged 36 in 1935. Hoys' wife died 4 years later in a nursing home in Hastings. There were no children and he never remarried. After service in the Home Guard in the Second World War, Hoys moved to Cumberland to farm and publish books about the Lake District, also regularly contributing to *Country Life* and combining these activities with acting as churchwarden of St Catherine, Boot in Eskdale. He died in a nursing home in Henley-on-Thames in 1980 aged 81. Butler, meanwhile, after demobilisation at the end of 1919 from the ranks of 6th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment entered Guy's Hospital to study dentistry. After qualification in 1923, he initially set up practice in the West End of London. Following his marriage in 1927, he relocated to Slough where he practiced and lived for the rest of his life, dying there coincidentally also in 1980 aged 81. Not as varied, by any means, as Hoys' life but, to outside appearances at least, perfectly settled.

It is interesting to compare Hoys with Williamson, who, although a few years older than Hoys, attended Colfe's at much the same time. Both were professional writers—Hoys professionally trained, Williamson not. Williamson was (and still is) critically acclaimed, Hoys was not. Williamson's work is recognised as an important part of the literature generated by the First World War. Hoys, however, is now largely remembered for his non-fiction work relating to the Lake District after the Second World War. Hoys was commercially successful in the years between the First and Second World Wars, Williamson less so although ultimately he achieved more both in material terms and in the way of a lasting legacy. Both had also spent part of their post-war lives farming, Williamson in Norfolk and Hoys in the Lake District. Despite the loss of his elder brother in the war, there is, however, little sense of dislocation or continuity in Hoys' life. After the war he retained a close connection with Colfe's and with the local area. The years between the First and Second World Wars were ones of success for him, marred only by his wife's early death in 1939. Although it cannot be more than speculation, it seems reasonable to assume the one point of major upheaval in his life (the move to the Lake District) was a consequence of that bereavement rather than any lingering after-effects of the First World War. In contrast Williamson's life was less settled. He cut his ties with the Lewisham area fairly soon after the war ended, moving to Devon in 1921 and, except for ten years' farming (largely unsuccessfully) in Norfolk, spending most of his life

[80] Dudley Hoys, *Ecstasy* (Jarrolds, 1930).
[81] Dudley Hoys, *The Quiet Man* ([n. pub.], probably 1931).

there. On a personal basis, he was married twice and fathered seven children and had at least two documented affairs. His political views were also extreme. He was an early admirer of Hitler, a member of the British Union of Fascists and a close friend of Oswald Mosley.

Williamson's political leanings were at stark variance with those of another Colfeian author unrecognised in terms of war literature who used his service experiences in print. Frank (aka Peter) Lucas (1902–09)[82] was academically gifted and (via Rugby School) a Classics undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge at the outbreak of war. He was commissioned into 7th Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment in November 1914 and had three periods of service on the Western Front punctuated by two relatively serious incidences of wounding. The second led to lung issues and eventual surgery at the end of the war. He spent the final part of his service as a Lieutenant in the Intelligence Corps. Lucas returned to Cambridge after the war, becoming a Fellow at King's before finishing his undergraduate degree, eventually moving from Classics to English. He became a leading literary academic in addition to being a novelist, poet and playwright in his own right. Lucas's first novel *The River Flows*[83] is semi-autobiographical and contains a limited amount of material drawing on his experiences on the Western Front. Its use is, however, little more than a plot device. Although there is some cursory discussion around motives for enlistment and the merits of pacifism and some description of life in the trenches, the book is not about the war but, first and foremost, a love story based in the immediate pre-war period. The work does not appear to have been a critical or popular success and, as with Hoys, does not feature in the historiography relating to war literature. It was not a genre Lucas returned to, his future fictional output being largely set in the 18th century. Superficially, Lucas's life had similar elements to that of Williamson. He was married three times and held extreme political views, which were probably as far to the left as Williamson's were to the right. He was, though, very much a member of the establishment. He remained at King's for the rest of his life. His bohemianism was within the confines of the Bloomsbury Group. His pre-Second World War anti-fascism and opposition to appeasement became national policy. He was an Intelligence Officer at Bletchley Park (being one of the original four members of Hut 3), worked throughout the Second World War on the Enigma decodes and was awarded an OBE in 1946. His life reveals no fundamental sense of lasting war-related disillusionment or dislocation, something that is probably underscored by the fact he was able to utilise his experiences in the way he did in *The River Flows* so soon after the war's end.

There are two points to be taken from all this. The first is it is reasonably safe to conclude the writing of Williamson and those he directly influenced was not necessarily representative of his literary peers at Colfe's[84] and certainly not of fellow surviving alumni more generally. This feeds into

[82] Born Halifax 1894, father Colfe's headmaster.
[83] F. L. Lucas *The River Flows* (Hogarth Press, 1926).
[84] It is worth noting if the literary reviews in the *Colfeian* during the 1920s and 1930s are anything to go by that Williamson, Hoys and Lucas were considered to be equally newsworthy although Hoys was, of course, editor of the magazine 1920–28.

the wider debate about the merits of relying on literary sources reflecting the personal experience of an individual to understand the war more generally and supports those who contend it is not necessarily wise to do so.[85] The second is the plausibility of post-war dislocation and disillusionment being primarily conditioned by the nature of the individual (character, social background, upbringing and the like) rather than the war more generally. War experiences were undoubtedly a factor but essentially the reaction to and the extent of their effect was specific to the individual concerned rather than a more widespread phenomenon. It is, perhaps, no coincidence Williamson seems to have been something of an outsider during his time at Colfe's and not particularly popular amongst the majority of his peers or with staff. An anonymous reviewer (under the nom de plume 'The Gentleman with a Cane', so presumably a member of staff) of the initial versions of his early novels 'The Beautiful Years' and 'Dandelion Years' (which were fairly clearly based on his time at Colfe's) comments about Williamson:

> We remember a perpetual desire on the part of masters to be rid of his presence in the class-rooms. He seemed to possess an unfortunate habit of making himself objectionable to comrades and tutors; and yet regaining their affections. We remember a leather satchel inside his trousers; and his tears. And the frequency with which he said things that were not.[86]

Summary

This chapter establishes those Colfeians who survived to return from war service generally experienced much the same life outcomes as those who did not undertake service. Despite the undoubted upheaval of the war years (especially but not exclusively for those who served), the overall impression is one of continuity and stability. There is no evidence of widespread dislocation or disillusionment—no sense of a 'lost generation'. Far from it. Despite their experiences, the war generation seem to have proved to be settled and well-adjusted. There were generally no dramatic changes in lifestyle, life expectancy, social standing or personal relationships. There was a reduction in and realignment of outward migratory behaviour but it is argued this too is indicative of enhanced stability and national identity. Men largely picked up their pre-war lives where they left off in what seems to have been an uneventful transition back into civilian life. They moved on, leaving their wartime identities behind with their uniforms at demobilisation.[87] Against a background of the popular perception of the war as a futile, traumatic and tragic disaster resulting in generational loss,[88] this conclusion may seem surprising although it certainly helps to explain the lack of engagement of surviving alumni with post-war commemoration already noted in Chapter 3. Is it

[85] See Introduction.
[86] *Colfeian*, vol 9, no. 34 (June 1923) pp. 67–70. The two novels concerned were subsequently revised and reissued in 1929 and 1930. The satchel mentioned was presumably an attempt to mitigate the effect of corporal punishment.
[87] A process which has been framed as 'veteran disassociation': Swift and Wilkinson, p. 182.
[88] See Introduction.

that surprising though? Particularly given the profile of the Colfeian cohort, it is argued not. As seen from previous chapters, there were strong common pre-war geographic and community roots. There was also a strong middle class (and especially lower middle class) thread running through the cohort. This thread was largely second generational but does include men born into working class families who with the benefit of a secondary education had already achieved a degree of social advancement before the war began. Prospects would generally have seemed reasonably good for men of working age of this class in the immediate post-war period and it is not unreasonable to assume there would have been fairly high levels of life satisfaction with no strong motivation to seek change. For those who did seek further advancement, given the level of educational attainment, there seem to have been ample opportunities abroad especially in the colonies and possessions that did not necessarily involve the loss of British cultural identity.

Conclusion

This study comprises the complete generation of Colfe's alumni who were age-eligible for military service (and those who were not but did serve) in the First World War and follows their lives from birth to death. It is a generation that saw higher and earlier levels of participation in the war and suffered greater rates of fatality than the general population but it is difficult to find evidence of it being 'lost' in any sense of the word. There are many adjectives that could be applied. 'Well-educated', 'resilient', 'adaptable', 'aspirational' are but a few. However, 'lost' is not one of them. In relation to those younger elements of the cohort who would not have received a secondary education of the quality and breadth available at Colfe's if not for the increasing availability of public funding, it might even be argued that they were a 'found' generation. 'Found' in the sense that they were selected from local authority-run elementary schools by competitive examination as academically able and deserving of a financially-supported secondary education. The consequence of this is in some instances was employment opportunities (and, ultimately, social status) not otherwise likely to have been open to them.

The concept of 'the lost generation' is a nebulous one that has taken on different meanings to different sets of people at different times. Even literal interpretations equating loss to physical absence through war death reveal multi-dimensional perspectives. For instance, the population loss in the Colfeian cohort as a consequence of pre-war migration was far higher than the fatalities incurred during the war. It can be argued with some justification, in the absence of the war, migratory behaviour is likely to have continued at pre-war levels. The analysis in this thesis is very much grounded in evidence-based fact, but if a counter-factual approach were to be adopted here, it could be suggested, at least in terms of the Colfeian cohort, the war had the effect of reducing that loss and resulted in a net population gain. An argument of this nature risks losing sight of the fact that death has different connotations to migration. It is a rite of passage and has an enhanced sense of significance in the lives of those left behind. Granted, in an era before global travel was speedy and commonplace and, where to the extent it was possible, communication was far from being immediate, lifelong migration could be as permanent in terms of absence but, even so, it lacks the quality of finality associated with death. This does not alter the fact that pre-war migration (both at a Colfeian and national level) was substantial in terms of net population outflow and it can be argued with more confidence, to the extent there was a 'generational' loss to the UK in terms of physical absence from the country during the first two decades of the twentieth century, it took place before the war and was due to migratory behaviour. As it was, the war would lead to a reduction in first-time outward migration. Certainly, in terms of the Colfeian cohort, this led to a long-term realignment of migratory behaviour not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of permanence, as a consequence, it is argued of enhanced domestic stability and national self-identification resulting from the war.

None of this is to suggest levels of fatality in the war were anything other than significant. They were substantial and resulted in a permanent loss in terms of physical absence for the families, communities and other groupings of which the dead formed part. A desire for commemoration was only natural. It was also only natural losses would form the focus of the commemorative activities but this, too, could lead to another layer of absence, this time in terms of remembrance. This study shows, for various reasons, one in four Colfeian alumni who served in the war would not be commemorated by the School, the vast majority of whom were men who had served and survived. Again, it is a significantly greater proportion of the serving cohort than those who died, potentially comprising another ‘lost’ generational perspective. Perhaps more significantly, we find not only does this result in an underrepresentation of the prospects of survival but also these men were more likely than most to have served exclusively in roles that were not combat-facing. An undue emphasis on death and combat seriously distorts the portrayal of the Colfeian war experience.

Less literal interpretations of the ‘loss’ element of ‘the lost generation’ tend to centre around the post-war dislocation and disenchantment of those who served and survived. Colfeian author Henry Williamson is credited through his writing with a key role in developing this aspect of the concept. However, neither he nor the two other Colfeian authors he supported are representative of the Colfeian post-war narrative generally or, indeed, of the contemporary output of other Colfeian writers who used their war experiences in fiction. Although there are individual exceptions, the overwhelming narrative for those who survived is one of uneventful readjustment to civilian life. In the home, lasting marital relationships were resumed or established for those who had been single before the war. Most of those who were of working age before the war returned to their previous employment or something similar, often with the same employers with little movement of significance in social standing. Those who had been too young to work pre-war do not appear to have struggled to find satisfactory employment. These employment patterns generally continued for the remainder of the 1920s and 1930s. It is misleading, though, to view the war experience of those who served and survived as one of continuity—pre-war life to service to resumption of pre-war life. The position is more nuanced than that and underestimates the effect of the war on those concerned. There can be no question it was a period of disruption, undoubtedly severe in some instances although in other cases less so. It is more helpful to frame the post-war experience of the vast majority as a return to order rather than pure continuity on the one hand and pure rupture on the other. Put another way, the war was not a break with the past but an interlude before a return of order and the resumption of pre-war life trajectories.

Lack of participation in the Colfeian commemorative processes by those who served and survived seems to have been largely a matter of choice. It could be argued this dissociation is illustrative of a degree of disillusionment with the war and all it entailed. There is, however, generally no evidence to support this. A more likely framing is it simply reflects a desire to move on and leave the war behind. This does not necessarily bring with it negative implications, particularly if those

returning, as appears to be the case here, attached little or no value to their wartime identities. Admittedly, the war had monopolised these men's existence, in some cases for four or five years, and some had proved to be very successful at it. They did not, however, see themselves as soldiers, sailors or airmen. Wartime identities were not core to their lives. They were not, and generally seemed to have no desire to be, defined by the war. Much as McCartney found to be the case in her Liverpool study, the identities of the returning men were defined by their families, by their communities and by their employment, not by their wartime experiences. They were largely shaped by what had gone before and, in particular for many Colfeians, this included having had the opportunity of a good, broad secondary education at a time when this was far from universal. Within this context, moving forward and not dwelling on the past can be viewed as a positive part of the process of readjustment and the return to normality.

Of course, they were fortunate their pre-war lives were there to be resumed. This would not necessarily be the case for all returning servicemen which leads on to the issue of the extent to which the findings arising from the Colfeian dataset are capable of wider application. The sample is a strong one of good size and statistical relevance and reveals a different experience of the war in many respects to that of some other groupings which have been the subject of study. There is a geographical bias towards London that needs to be borne in mind but, more significantly, the sample is drawn primarily from the lower middle class. This is, however, a social grouping that comprised somewhere around one in five of a major part of the adult male population pre-war. In terms of numeric representation it was nearly ten times larger than the equivalent constituent element of the social and educational élite. The experiences of the Colfeian cohort cannot tell us much about the experiences of the latter (and, it is argued, vice versa) or, indeed, of the far more numerous working classes. They are, however, potentially informative about the war participation of a significant proportion of the male population of the largest conurbation in the country. More generally it is contended they are of equal, if not greater relevance, than the experiences of a far smaller and less representative social and educational élite from whom so many findings (including the development of the notion of 'the Lost Generation') have been drawn.

So, returning to the central issue of the thesis, is the concept of a lost generation consequential upon the war a myth or reality? The short answer is it is both. It began as a myth but has assumed a degree of reality. The development of the myth was the result of constructs primarily arising from a deep and understandable sense of familial loss through all ranks of British society but especially amongst its élite echelons. The 'brightest and best' is often used to describe this latter loss but the phraseology is overused in that context and overlooks the fact that all the young men who died were someone's 'brightest and best'. The myth was initially literary in origin but then developed by a combination of military historians and the performing arts from the 1960s onwards as popular attitudes towards armed conflict generally also started to undergo significant changes. There is a deep irony Colfeian Henry Williamson is identified in the literature as being instrumental in the

development of the myth even though in its original iteration focusing on the cream of society, had he been killed in the war he would not have qualified for inclusion within its ranks. Although mythical in origin, the concept has over the years taken on the form for reality for many. The influence of popular culture and, in particular, entertainment media in this process should not be underestimated. Nor should the presence of war poetry on the GCSE English literature syllabus (and its predecessors) for the best part of half a century until two or three years ago. However, the most compelling factor probably lies in the results of the British Future surveys in 2016 and 2018 undertaken in the context of the centenary of war referred to the early part of the thesis. Whatever a man's social standing, his loss was most acutely felt in the family environment. The survey results tell us even after three or four generations there is still a strong feeling of familial connection with the war running through contemporary society. Clearly any sense of resulting loss in relation to the war dead does not have the same immediacy as it would have done a century or so ago. It is not the direct loss and grief of immediate bereavement. It is also not loss in terms of physical absence as no physical presence was ever experienced. Equally, it is not manufactured. There is a familial connection remaining of direct relevance, which is probably why the myth has taken hold so strongly—it has become real to many.

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