

The Invasion of Childhood
Militarism and Imperialism in British and German
Childhoods, 1880-1918

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I, Leslie Michael Newsom, confirm that the work presented in my thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

By August 1914, the middle-class populations of Britain and Germany supported their respective militaries and empire to such an extent that they enthusiastically enlisted to fight for and defend the nation and empire. This middle-class support and enthusiasm for empire building and the military's role in it will be demonstrated by looking through childhood, education, literature, toys, and games. Parents and teachers aimed to educate and influence their children and students to ensure they follow their world views, and for this reason childhood materials such as books and playthings reflect the interests and ambitions of society and the state. This study also aims to demonstrate how individuals and groups who wished to promote their idea about the 'correct' way to view, support, and engage with imperialism and the military, were able to use children's literature and toys to invade the safe spaces of the classroom and playroom. Through a comparative approach it becomes evident that British and German middle-class society in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries harboured similarly high levels of support for imperialism and esteem for the military. These similarities undermine existing ideas of an overly militarised German society and a British society that was anti-militarist. Many of the themes of military and empire illuminated by this thesis are still present in twenty-first century childhoods.

Impact Statement

This thesis, by using an approach argued for by Sara Maza of looking through childhood, looks at childhood experiences, education, and products to demonstrate the high levels of support and esteem for the military and empire in British and German middle-class society. Many previous studies of childhood, children's literature, playthings have focused on reconstructing the experience of children, an analysis of the content of literature, or presenting a history of toys and games. These approaches often avoid using childhood sources and artifacts to engage with the wider historical context and debate – and restrict their use to only using them to present a view of childhood or a child's experience.

Due to the comparison of Britain and Germany from 1880-1918, this thesis is of interest to historians and other scholars in the field of European empire building in the late nineteenth century, and the field of Anglo-German relations in the decades before the First World War. Not only are high levels of militarism in society reflected in children's products, but also similarities and ties are evident between Britain and Germany. These findings support the growing number of scholars that argue that the two societies demonstrate more similarities, ties, and interdependency than previously accepted, this also adds complexity to the period of Anglo-German antagonism. The British and German children that read and played with the material researched for this thesis were adults in the turbulent and often violent years Europe witnessed between 1918-45. Due to the influence of childhood experience on those adults who fought for and led their nations in that period this thesis would also be of interest to those scholars researching the inter-war period and the events of 1939-45 – how did their childhood experiences and playthings influence their adult decisions?

More widely, the thesis' focus on childhood will be of interest to those in the field of childhood studies, educational history, and the use of cultural artifacts in historical research. The research into the role of children's literature and playthings in promoting interest, support, and engagement will be of interest to those concerned with the continued use of childhood materials to promote the military today. The long-term legacies of the invasion of childhood this thesis identifies will be of interest to those concerned with child psychology, commentators on children's behaviour, and museum curators. The content of the games and the themes of the toys included in this thesis will also be interest to the expanding number of people concerned about the military and colonial content in many contemporary board and computer games.

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'I was now embarked on a military career. This orientation was entirely due to my collection of soldiers. I had ultimately nearly fifteen hundred. They were all of one size, all British, and organised as an infantry division with a cavalry brigade. My brother Jack commanded the hostile army. But by a Treaty for the Limitation of Armaments he was only allowed to have coloured troops, and they were not allowed to have artillery. Very important! I could muster myself only eighteen field-guns – besides fortress pieces... the toy soldiers turned the current of my life.'

Winston Churchill.¹

Introduction

Winston Churchill, like many of his contemporaries, discovered the world not only formally through education, but with playthings and children's literature. Many of Europe's political and military leaders who led their nation's war efforts during the 1930s and 1940's would have read and played with similar items. Hermann Göring, one of Churchill's adversaries in the Second World War also recollected his toy soldier collection with fondness,² and toy soldiers and playing wargames were reportedly a popular pastime of Göring's party leader, Adolf Hitler.³ Churchill's memories of his childhood clearly demonstrate how education and play had informed his world view, even at that young age.

The thirteen-year-old Winston was fortunate to have a family who could afford to buy him fifteen hundred, German-made, metal toy soldiers.⁴ The soldiers were organised into military formations and all British, something that indicates exposure to military and nationalist ideas which the teenage boy clearly demonstrates. The enemy was Winston's brother Jack, the younger sibling was 'only allowed' to command 'coloured troops' without artillery. These toys, unlike the collection representing the British have not been identified but one can assume that they were a colonial enemy. Both Winston and Jack would have been fully aware of the British Empire and the military engagements taking place. The choice of the type of enemy also reveals other characteristics of Churchill's beliefs. The enemy are ambiguously described as 'coloured' and it was 'very important' they did not have artillery. The 'coloured' enemy were a reflection of European attitudes to their superiority over the generic 'other', and it was 'very important' that they did not have access to technology, military or otherwise, in order

¹ Winston Churchill, *My Early Life: 1874-1904* (Butterworth, 1930), pp.24-25

² Roger Manvell & Heinrich Fraenkel, *Goering: The Rise and Fall of the Notorious Nazi Leader* (London, 1962), pp.24-25

³ Norbert Bromberg, "Hitler's Childhood", *The International Review of Psycho-Analysis*, Vol.1 (1974), pp.227-244, p.235

⁴ Kenneth D. Brown, "Modelling for War? Toy Soldiers in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain", *Journal of Social History*, Winter (1990), Vol.24, No.2, pp.237-254, p.238

maintain that supremacy. Winston Churchill's toy soldier battles did not only shape his beliefs but also his adult life, on seeing the boys playing at war their father, who knew they 'lacked the intellectual capability' to pass the Bar, suggested they pursued a military career.⁵ Churchill's grandmother also commented on her grandson's obsession with toy soldiers, who, in her opinion was a 'naughty, little sandy-haired bulldog – backward except for complicated games with toy soldiers.



I.1 HG Wells Playing 'Little Wars' in his Garden, his regular gaming partners were Jerome K. Jerome, G.K. Chesterton and Winston Churchill. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/04/09/hg-wells-little-wars-how_n_3044934.html

Like many other young men and women growing up at the end of the nineteenth century Winston Churchill went on to play a role, great or small, in the events of the twentieth century and he took with him, as others did, the lessons he had learnt from his education and play. These lessons informed their attitudes and approach to imperial administration, military service and conduct during the colonial wars and the European and global conflicts between 1914 -1945. Throughout much of his life Winston continued his passion for playing with toy soldiers, often with H.G. Wells. The author later published *Little Wars: A game for boys from twelve years of age to one hundred and fifty and for that more intelligent sort of girl who likes boys' games and books* in 1913, which contained early rules for wargaming as a fun activity. The two men would build battlefields and fight miniature battles in Wells' garden.⁶ H.G. Wells described himself and his fellow wargamers, which also included Charles Masterman and Charles Trevelyan, both members of the British government in August 1914 along with Churchill, as 'war fantasists' and attributed the games to them remaining 'puerile in their political

⁵ Churchill, *My Early Life*, p.25

⁶ Herbert G. Wells, *Little Wars: A game for boys from twelve years of age to one hundred and fifty and for that more intelligent sort of girl who likes boys' games and books* (London, 1913)

outlook'.⁷ H.G. Wells also writes often about his childhood and toys in his autobiography, at sixteen he would refight battles using painted corks as soldiers and wander the countryside by himself fighting imaginary battles. The young Wells thought himself 'a great military dictator', for him writing in 1934, 'Adolf Hitler is nothing more than one of my thirteen-year-old reveries come true'.⁸ For H.G. Wells, his English education had led him to his 'Adolf Hitler' stage of development, the writer describes himself as a 'sentimental, moralist, paternal, racist... pasty-faced little English Nazi'.⁹

Churchill was not the only future premier to have famously played with toys that had military, nationalist, or racist themes. In Germany toys of that nature were just as popular and equally available, even more so as the majority of the global production of playthings was from a few regions in the *Kaiserreich*.¹⁰ One such future leader was Kaiser Wilhelm II. The picture below depicts a young Wilhelm



1.2 'Der Jüngste Heerführer' in, Heinz-Peter Mielke, Aggression, Gewalt, Kriegspiel: Tagungsband des Internationalen Symposions vom 23. Und 24. Oktober 1999 aus Anlaß der Ausstellung „Krieg in der Kinderstube. Zur Geschichte des Kriegsspielzeugs“ im Neiderrheinischen Freilichtmuseum, Grefrath/Kries Viersen, Dorenburg, 2001, p.10

⁷ Herbert G. Wells, *Experiment in Biography* (London, 1934), p.102. It must be noted that H.G. Wells and Trevelyan both claimed to be anti-war. H.G. Wells hoped that *Little Wars* would demonstrate what a 'blundering thing great war' must be, see: Wells, *Little Wars*, p.100, and Trevelyan resigned from the Cabinet in 1914 because he 'hated war', see Brown, "Modelling for War?", p.246.

⁸ Wells, *An Experiment*, p.100

⁹ Wells, *An Experiment*, p.102

¹⁰ See, David D. Hamlin, *Work and Play: The Production and Consumption of Toys in Germany, 1870-1914* (University of Michigan Press, 2007), Introduction.

practising his future role and reviewing a miniature troop of lancers in Prussian uniforms, something he would continue in a serious way in the future. Pictures of the Crown Prince playing with domestically produced toy soldiers were used to promote both the German toy trade and the young prince's military interests.¹¹ Wargaming in Germany was by far a more professional tool than H.G. Wells' *Little Wars*. Unlike in Britain where wargames remained an amateur pastime,¹² the Prussian military had been using wargames from the eighteenth century to train officers and plan for war – often with the Kaiser in attendance.¹³



I.3 Military Manoeuvres on a Dining-Table, the Man as Expert as the Officer, *Illustrated London News* (6th March, 1909), (BNA). Image shows officers and civilians wargaming together at a private club, unlike the German military wargaming was strictly an amateur pastime in Britain.

Wargaming and planning for a possible conflict continued throughout this period when both empires competed economically, strategically, and militarily in both arms races and open warfare. This period of Anglo-German antagonism has been well researched and has gone through some recent revision.¹⁴

¹¹ Heinz-Peter Mielke, „Aggression, Gewalt, Kriegspiel: Tagungsband des Internationalen Symposions vom 23. Und 24. Oktober 1999 aus Anlaß der Ausstellung Krieg“ in *der Kinderstube. Zur Geschichte des Kriegsspielzeugs*“ im *Neiderrheinischen Freilichtmuseum, Grefrath/Kries Viersen* (Grefrath, 2001), p.10

¹² For British military resistance to the adoption of professional wargaming as a training too see, Richard Brooks, *Fred T Jane: An Eccentric Visionary* (Janes Information Group, 1997)

¹³ Terence Zuber, *German War Planning 1891-1914* (Boydell, 2004)

¹⁴ For Anglo-German antagonism see, Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (Allen & Unwin, 1980); Jan Rüger, *Heligoland: Britain, Germany, and the Struggle for the North Sea* (Oxford University Press, 2017); and Klaus Hildebrand, “Zwischen Allianz und Antagonismus. Das Problem bilateraler Normalität in den britisch-deutschen Beziehungen des 19. Jahrhunderts (1870-1914)“, in Heinz Dollinger, *Weltpolitik, Europagedanke, Regionalismus* (Aschendorff, 1982), pp.305-31.

Earlier work on late nineteenth-century Anglo-German relations was based on economic competition and naval rivalry, most noteworthy here is Paul Kennedy's work from the early 1980's. Recently research has focused on the '*geteilte Geschichten*' or 'shared histories' as portrayed by Shalini Randeria.¹⁵ This work has highlighted a 'complex web' of transnational connections between Britain and Germany which endured throughout the period.¹⁶ Was the antagonism and conflict between the two nations, as so often claimed and argued, simply a result of Prussian-German militaristic aggression competing with anti-militarist British liberalism? Or did they share far more than colonial ambition, with the transnational exchange of goods including childhood playthings, ideologies and culture? Did the rivals display more in commonalities than differences?¹⁷

Do the childhood experiences of Winston Churchill, H.G. Wells, Hermann Göring, and their contemporaries demonstrate shared histories and ideals? Wells explicitly links his play and education to the military and right-wing political ideas such as nationalism and racism, Churchill's description of playing with toy soldiers implies similar interests. If military themes in childhood play and education were a common experience throughout pre-First World War Britain, would this indicate the existence of militarism in society that undermines the common claim that Britain was anti-militarist?¹⁸

Militarism in Britain and Germany

The most common types of toys and play referred to by autobiographies of both social elites such as Churchill and those from society in general are toy soldiers and playing at conflict.¹⁹ 'Playing war' crossed class and gender divides - although the economic realities meant that manufactured toy soldiers and toy weapons would be most common in the hands of middle-class children. This did not mean playing at war was restricted to the middle-classes, H.G. Wells describes using painted corks as

¹⁵ Shalini Randeria, „Geteilte Geschichten und verwobene Moderne“, in Jörn Rüsen, Hanna Leitgeb and Norbert Jegelka (eds.), *Zukunftsentwürfe: Ideen für eine Kultur der Veränderung* (De Gruyter, 1999), pp.87-96

¹⁶ Sebastian Conrad, *Globalisation and the Nation in Imperial Germany*, Trans., Sorch O'Hagan (Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.5

¹⁷ For commentary on social, political, and economic similarities see, Steven W. Siak, "The Blood That is in Our Veins Comes from German Ancestors': British Historians and the Coming of the First World War", *Albion*, 30(2), pp.221-52; Christine Lattek, *Revolutionary Refugees: German Socialism in Britain, 1840-1860* (Routledge, 2006); Jan Rüger, "OXO: or the challenges of Transnational History", *European History Quarterly*, 40(4) (2010), pp.656-68; and David Blackbourn, "As dependent on each other as man and wife: Cultural Contacts and Transfers", in Dominik Geppert & Robert Gerwarth, *Germany and Edwardian Britain: Essays on Cultural Affinity* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁸ It must be made clear, as David Edgerton states in *England and the Aeroplane*, that British anti-militarism does not mean pacifism, see David Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane, Militarism, Modernity and Machines*, New Edition (Penguin, 2013), p.xx

¹⁹ Many of the recollections of toys in Brunel University's collection of working-class auto biographies refer to buying toy soldiers including 'cowboys and Indians', playing with, or collecting them, and playing at war in the streets or fields with improvised weapons. This is also mirrored in recollections from Germany such as Pieter Kühr, *Then We'll Meet Again: Young Girl's Diary of the First World War*, Trans. Walter G. Wright (Walter Wright, 1988).

toy soldiers, sticks could proxy swords and rifles, and girls could play male roles.²⁰ The military, militarism, and war all featured heavily in the day-to-day lives of British and German children in their play and education, which is unsurprising given the high levels of militarism in Europe at the time.

Militarism remains one of the most debated factors of German history, although recent scholarship has moved on from earlier established views of a *Sonderweg* or exceptionalism.²¹ Placing the German Empire in a pan-European context demonstrates the transnational nature of many of the ideas and problems previously argued as evidence of either a positive or negative 'special-path' - these political and military decisions by Germany are now argued to be part of a wider set of influences and concerns.²² The influences of Prussian militarism have long been linked to the aggression displayed by the state from before the formation of the *Kaiserreich*.²³ So linked was Prussian tradition, and the idea of the 'militarist 'bad German'' to the 'German malaise that had afflicted Europe' that the state was abolished by the victorious Allied Powers in 1947.²⁴ Revisions in the arguments about German aggression, especially in 1914, are now based in German concerns about geographic position,²⁵ and fears of diminishing military supremacy.²⁶ The type of militarism that the above refers to is that which Nicholas Stargardt defines as 'about institutions and power' and focused on 'hard structures'.²⁷

Britain also demonstrated hard militarist structures in a form David Edgerton describes as 'liberal militarism' in which the lack of manpower is countered with technology.²⁸ This Edgerton argues contradicts 'the standard view of England... that [it is] liberal, civil, and anti-militaristic'.²⁹ Although the

²⁰ Piete Kühr describes an ongoing game in which she played as a fictional Oberleutnant Von Yellenic.

²¹ David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley were early leaders in revising how German history was viewed and moving away from a thesis of *Sonderweg*. They argued that German history was often about what Germany *was not* and not about what it *was*. This approach, which avoids comparing the development of the German state to an 'ideal' norm of Britain or France to identify how it failed, allows for research into in peculiarities in Germany history and not aberrations. See David Blackbourn & Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: bourgeois society and politics in nineteenth-century Germany* (Oxford University Press, 1984); however the idea of a *Sonderweg* remains present in historiography. For examples see: Jurgen Kocka, "German History Before Hitler: The Debate about the German Sonderweg", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23(1) (1988), pp.3-16.

²² See Jan Rüger & Nikolaus Wachsmann (eds.), *Rewriting Germany History: New Perspectives on Modern Germany* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and Jan Rüger, 'Revisiting the Anglo-German Antagonism', *The Journal of Modern History* 83.3 (2011), pp.579-617.

²³ See, Alan J.P. Taylor, *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of German History Since 1815* (Oxford University Press, 1961), ch.6; and Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (Norton, 1967), ch.1

²⁴ For the 'bad German' see: Blackbourn & Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History*, p.6; for 'post-war 'deprussianisation' see: Christopher Clark *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia 1600-1947* (Penguin, 2006), p.xix

²⁵ See Clark, *Iron Kingdom*

²⁶ Mark Hewitson, *Germany and the Causes of the First World War* (Oxford University Press, 2004), p.113

²⁷ Nicholas Stargardt, *The German Idea of Militarism: Radical and Socialist Critics, 1866-1914*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.5

²⁸ Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, p.xxxiii

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.xxxiii

argument for liberal militarism is based on the development of the aeroplane as a weapon of war, the battleship fits equally as well into the thesis, especially during the height of Anglo-German antagonism. The 'standard view' of Britain is also undermined by historical studies of earlier periods.³⁰ John Brewer's argument for Britain as a fiscal-military state also shows a form of militarism present in Britain from the seventeenth century.³¹



I.4 A steam-powered metal toy ship of the Kriegsschiff M.S. Marrenberg, made in Germany (1908), DSM-N, photo from author's collection. Made at the height of the Anglo-German naval arms race, the model not only demonstrated German naval power, but the superior quality of German toys.

However, as Stargardt clarifies militarism is not only about those hard structures, but also 'culture and ideas'.³² Popular support for the military and military spending in Germany is demonstrated by the campaign to continue the Zeppelin project and the enthusiasm for naval expansion and rearmament, both were supported by the issue of toys, games, and literature to increase interest from the public.³³

³⁰ John M. Mackenzie, (ed.), *Popular Imperialism and the Military, 1850-1950* (Manchester University Press, 1992), p.19

³¹ John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (Harvard University Press, 1990)

³² Stargardt, *The German Idea*, p.5

³³ For the Zeppelin project see, Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination* (Harvard University Press, 1992), and on the Navy, Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

This 'cultural militarisation' has also been identified in Germany by Jörn Leonhard, Jakob Vogel, and Thomas Rohkrämer, especially in institutions such as the *Deutscher Flottenverein* who will be introduced in Chapter Four.³⁴ This type of popular support for and interest in the military is also identified as a form of militarism in early twentieth-century Britain in Matthew Johnson's study of militarism and its supporters in British left-wing politics.³⁵ For him societies which harbour 'militaristic sentiment' inflate the prestige of the military - Johnson does distinguish this soft power from the hard power of the Prussian military.³⁶ However, in either case the military had influence within the population and policy making, even if it was in a perceived 'soft' form. A similar form of militarism is defined by Thomas Weber in his comparative history of British and German universities. Here militarism is defined broadly as the 'celebration of armed forces.'³⁷ This shift towards celebrating the military in society is demonstrated well by the reputation of the British Army in the nineteenth century.

Although the military was, and remained, unpopular in British society throughout the Napoleonic Wars, by the late nineteenth Century the army especially was becoming reformed in the eyes of the British public leading to 'an extraordinary resurgence of militarism.'³⁸ The Army's role in expanding and defending the British empire transformed it from a playground for the second-sons of the rich and a dumping ground for the unwanted poor of Britain, to a Christian middle-class crusading force.³⁹ In reaction to the Prussian Army's performance in the 1860-70s, the British Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell, initiated reforms in the army, many of which were intended to create bonds in society. These reforms included the abolishment of flogging in times of peace, the removal of 'bad characters' from units, and regiments were to recruit from their local areas. This localisation made service in the reserve battalions especially appealing to middle-class men.⁴⁰

However, the British army's recruitment demographic remained dominantly working class until August 1914.⁴¹ This 'muscular-Christian' form of militarism drove the renewed expansion of the

³⁴ See: Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora: Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Beck, 2014), p.33; Thomas Rohkrämer, *Der Militarismus der „kleinen Leute“: Die Kriegervereine im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1871-1914* (De Gruyter, 1990), pp.37-55; Jakob Vogel, *Nationsein im Gleichschritt: Der Kult der Nation in Waffen“ in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871-1914*, (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), pp.279-91.

³⁵ Matthew Johnson, *Militarism and the British Left, 1902-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.9

³⁷ Thomas Weber, *Our Friend "The Enemy", Elite Education in Britain and Germany Before World War I* (Stanford University Press, 2008), p.99

³⁸ John Peck, *War, The Army and Victorian Literature* (Palgrave, 1998), p.xi

³⁹ *Ibid*, pp.11-18

⁴⁰ For more on the Cardwell Reforms and the impact on the army and society see: David French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People c.1870-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2005); and Richard Hart Sinnreich, "An Army Apart: The Influence of Culture on the Victorian British Army", in *The Culture of Military Organizations* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

⁴¹ Johnson, *Militarism*, p.140

empire in the new wave of European imperialism in the last half of the nineteenth century.⁴² The link between colonialism and militarism was highlighted at the time by Edward Beesly, a Positivist and historian who wrote that colonialism tended to 'prolong militarism'.⁴³ The development of British militarism demonstrates how, in both Britain and Germany, militarism and imperialism are interwoven - much of the material referred to throughout this study are linked to both.

Although this thesis focuses on material that supported and promoted militarism and the military, support for the armed forces and their use was far from absolute. Socialists and Marxists, especially Karl Liebknecht, promoted anti-militarism in Britain and Germany.⁴⁴ In his 1907 work, *Militarismus und Antimilitarismus*, Liebknecht discusses the importance of Germany's youth – 'He who has the youth, has the future'.⁴⁵ Although here he is referring to the need for socialists to educate the children it highlights the focus in many ideologies on capturing the attention of the nation's young people. For Liebknecht, anti-militarism was not about any moral concern for children being exposed to violence and weapons. He argued that capitalists and militarism exploited the proletariat, threatening the existence of Marxist-Socialism through its ability to control and inspire the working class and the army's ability to undermine or break strikes. Socialists in Britain also shared strong anti-militarist sentiment, these are evident in many of the working-class autobiographies accessed. Again, much of this opposition is to the state and 'hard' militarism.⁴⁶ Opposition to militarism and war also existed in many non-conformist Christian groups, notably the Quakers.⁴⁷ Much this anti-militarist sentiment was from a moral-pacifist stance and not always opposition to the military as an institution. This position is demonstrated in the case of the *Boys' Own Paper*, an open supporter of both the British military

⁴² For debates of 'muscular Christianity' and the evangelisation of the British army see, Michael Brown, "'Like a Devoted Army': Medicine, Heroic Masculinity, and the Military Paradigm in Victorian Britain", *Journal of British Studies*, Vol.49, No.3 (July 2010), pp.592-622, Rosemary Burrow, "Faithful unto Death: Militarism, Masculinity and National Identity in Victorian Britain", in Thorsten Fögen & Richard Warren (eds.), *Graeco-Roman Antiquity and the Idea of Nationalism in the 19th Century* (De Gruyter, 2016); John M. Mackenzie, *Popular Imperialism and the Military, 1850-1950* (Manchester University Press, 1992), and Anne Summers, "Militarism in Britain Before the Great War", *History Workshop* (1976), No.2, pp.104-23.

⁴³ Johnson, *Militarism*, p.11

⁴⁴ For more on socialist anti-militarism see: Nicholas Stargardt, *The German Idea of Militarism: Radical and Socialist Critics 1866-1914*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁴⁵ Karl Liebknecht, *Militarismus und Antimilitarismus: unter besonder Berücksichtigung der internationalen Jugendbewegung* (Leipzig, 1907) Marxists.org/deutsch/archiv/leibknecht/1907/mil-antimil/index.htm (accessed 25/9/2024)

⁴⁶ Autobiographies from the Burnett Archive of Working-Class Autobiographies, Brunel University; for more on British Socialist anti militarism see: Kevin Morgan, 'Militarism and Anti-militarism: Socialists, Communism and conscription in France and Britain 1900-1940, *Past & Present*, (2009), Vol.202 (1), pp.207-244

⁴⁷ Daniel Dombrowski & Andrew Fiala, *The Routledge Handbook of Pacifism and Nonviolence* (Routledge, 2018), pp.43-53

and imperialism which features heavily in the following chapters, which was published by the Religious Tract Society - an interdenominational Protestant society which included Quakers.⁴⁸

This study will use a broad definition, as defined above, identifying militarism in the form which exists in societies that celebrate and hold the military in high esteem. These societies use the place military action in the centre of national historical narrative, and service in the military was key to demonstrating one's commitment to the duties of a citizen of the nation or empire. In Imperial Germany the esteem for the military was evident to its contemporaries and in the work of historians. However, this late-nineteenth century shift towards celebrating the military is clearly demonstrated in Britain when the army's role in the empire alters how the public view it. It is in this space that the toys, games, and literature that this thesis will examine exist.

The extent that European imperialism and militarism are interwoven during this period requires that children's play and education which contains those themes are also an important part of this thesis - as Jürgen Osterhammel argues, any attempt at European social history which attempts to remove the colonial context risks being 'incomplete and incomprehensible'.⁴⁹ The decades between 1870 and 1914, and the children that grew up in them, witnessed the busiest period of global European colonialism. Britain, who already had established a significant overseas empire joined the 'scramble' for Africa, competing with other European powers to seize as much territory as possible. By 1880, many of the most important colonies, especially in the British case, had already been established. France, Belgium, and the Netherlands had also acquired most of their empires' more profitable colonies. Britain by this time had colonised large areas of North America, Australasia, India, the Middle East, and Africa.⁵⁰ Germany was late in starting its colonial project, only pursuing it in 1884 when Bismarck needed to use it for domestic political reasons.⁵¹ This view that European colonialism was driven by the need to alleviate internal social pressures, as John Mackenzie argues, has been controversial, especially when applied to Germany.⁵²

The expansion of empire, and the securing of global trade it allowed, increased the tensions and antagonism between Britain and Germany.⁵³ Competition over colonial possessions, trade, and

⁴⁸ Aileen Fyfe, *Science and Salvation: Evangelical Popular Science Writing in Victorian Britain* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), p.10

⁴⁹ Jürgen Osterhammel, „Transnationale Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Erweiterung oder Alternative?“, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* (Jul.-Sep., 2001), 27, Jahrg, H.3, pp.464-79, p.468

⁵⁰ Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, Trans P. Camiller (Princeton University Press, 2014), pp.400-1

⁵¹ David Blackbourn, *History of Germany: 1780-1918*, Second Edition (Oxford University Press, 2003), p.305

⁵² John M. Mackenzie, J.M. & Giuseppe Finaldi (Eds.), *European Empires and the People: Popular Responses to Imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy* (Manchester University Press, 2011)

⁵³ See Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*.

military alliances would lead both heavily militarised empires into a naval arms race with popular support from taxpayers.⁵⁴ Children and young adults were targeted by both navies with toys, games, and educational materials with the intention of influencing support for naval spending.⁵⁵

Throughout the European imperialist nations empire would become a 'mundane' familiarity, imperialism an everyday feature through advertising, groceries, literature, and news.⁵⁶ Exposure to colonial goods, imagery and culture would transform the coloniser as much as the colonised,⁵⁷ something that John Mackenzie refers to as the 'colonisation of the consciousness'.⁵⁸ One major transformation is that imperialism and the metropolitan experience for it drove a change from an English identity to a British one- this growing nationalism in Britain and Germany will be discussed within the chapters.⁵⁹ For pro-colonial organisations, including commercial enterprises, importing goods from across the globe colonising the consciousness of children was paramount. British and German children not only experienced empire through items related to adult life, for them this everyday 'mundanity' was present in their schooling and play.

However, British and German children did not always see empire as mundane. The process of indoctrinating Britain's youth was so extreme that by 1902 a supplement to *Boys of Our Empire* could claim that 'the imperial faith' had become so ingrained that 'no youth would enter a school and speak against the Empire', to do so would result in 'being knocked down'⁶⁰ – something the author Frank Bullen strongly approved of.⁶¹ In Germany the enthusiasm for empire was not as physical, but it was still deeply engrained into children's lives. For children not only in Germany, but also Britain, the empire and the colonies supplied through descriptions and images in books, toys, and games an imagined environment for play which could be used, as Jeff Bowersox highlights, to escape the mundane at home with a 'flair of the exotic'.⁶²

Part of the exotic were the native people in the colonised lands, and central to the moral justification of European colonialism was the idea of white European supremacy over them. White-European

⁵⁴ See Jan Rüger, *Heligoland*.

⁵⁵ For Germany see "The German Naval Office and Public Opinion (September 24, 1900)", https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=763, accessed 2/7/21, for Britain see, Rüger, *The Great Naval Game*, p.13 & pp.72-82.

⁵⁶ Catherine Hall & Sonya Rose, *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.22

⁵⁷ John Gascoigne, "The Expanding History of British Imperialism", *The Historical Journal*, 49(2) (2006), pp.577-92, p.578

⁵⁸ Mackenzie & Finaldi, *European Empires*, p.1

⁵⁹ Gascoigne, "The Expanding History", p.578

⁶⁰ Frank Bullen, "Supplement", *Boys of Our Empire*, 3, 6th December 1902, p.iv

⁶¹ Patrick A. Duane, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire, 1870-1914", *Victorian Studies*, (Autumn, 1980), Vol.24, No.1, Victorian Imperialism, pp.105-121

⁶² Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, p.11

racism had a stereotypical racist views of the native populations in the colonies, in the case of Black Africans it was: backwards, savage, lazy and child-like, irrational, criminal, filthy, sexual, and amoral.⁶³ The racist view of natives, especially Africans, would be the justification for establishing colonies, white-European imperialists believed they had the moral duty to bring Christian religion, morals and work and improve the lives of their colonial subjects.⁶⁴ Much of the material, militaristic or imperialistic, produced for children clearly promotes racial ideas and racist stereotypes. In some cases, the images are in context, such as cowboy and Indian figures and comics, some due to the exotic nature of the images, and at times reflecting racist views of inferiority.⁶⁵ These racist images in children's play have proved enduring and still problematic today.

Competition over empire, national and racial supremacy, and military dominance would continue up until August 1914. When in the summer of that year both Britain and Germany called for volunteers, both populations reacted with enthusiasm. Anne Summers points out there must have been a high level of militarism in Britain for one and a half million men to join the army between 1914-16, and German public support, although far from unanimous, demonstrates the levels of militarism and national sentiment that existed.⁶⁶ Thomas Weber explicitly links the high levels of volunteers seen in Britain and Germany in the first years of the war to societies that 'celebrated military culture'.⁶⁷ It has already been highlighted that a higher proportion of these young men who enlisted were middle class – especially in Britain. The men, now soldiers, would have been the boys playing with the toys, playing the games, and reading the books that promoted the military and service in it. However, in the end the war in which they all willingly enlisted to fight was so devastating that it destroyed popular militarist sentiment across Europe.⁶⁸

Methodology

This thesis will demonstrate the existence of a 'soft' form of militarism in British and German society by conducting a comparative study of British and German childhood at the height of European imperialism. The military in this period existed alongside empire and colonialism, and often are present in the same spaces. Therefore, this thesis will focus on a period from 1884, when the start of formal German overseas empire building brought the *Kaiserreich* into direct territorial and economic

⁶³ Johnson, *British Imperialism*, p.91

⁶⁴ See, Anandi Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders: Images of Africa and Asia in British Advertising* (Manchester University Press, 2003); and Annie Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination* (Yale University Press, 1994).

⁶⁵ Examples of the latter include games in which you throw balls at targets, often these would be targets, animals or clowns, but images of Africans were also popular.

⁶⁶ Summers, "Militarism in Britain", pp.120-1

⁶⁷ Weber, *Our Friend "The Enemy"*, p.99

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.122

competition with Britain, to 1919 when a defeated German nation was stripped of its colonies. It will investigate how children from both imperial metropolises were exposed to militarist and imperialist ideologies through toys, games, and children's literature. How did the imperial, economic, and military rivals operating within the space of 'soft' militarism actively use childhood playthings and literature to promote the agendas of the various groups lobbying for the expansion of empire, rearmament, and development of industries? To what extent was the sale and publication of material designed for the consumption of middle-class children organised for this purpose? Can we observe the influence of militarism in middle-class childhood on adult lives as in the example of Winston Churchill? In what ways do the experience of middle-class girls and working-class children differ, and what are the consequences, if any? Does the research demonstrate differences in the form and concentration of material between Britain and Germany and how does this relate to the historiography of militarism, imperialism, and racism? The research will assess the extent to which these questions are still relevant, leaving an enduring and problematic legacy.

Primary evidence in the form of cultural artifacts including toys, games, and images will be 'read' by observations on what they depict,⁶⁹ communicate in text, and intended use in relation to the central themes to this research: the military, empire, and race. How do these artifacts relate to the existing scholarship around these themes? Do they reflect racial stereotypes, society's relationship with the military and wider colonial imagery? Evidence will also be sought on political, societal, and religious influences in the production, distribution, and use of these artifacts. Can patterns of influence over the toy industry and publishers of this material be observed? Were the items driving the increased interest and popularity of empire and the military or was the industry simply reacting to consumer demand generated by other forms of propaganda and wider interest in the military and empire?

Although the scholarly debates around this study's subject are primarily from the discipline of historical research, the thesis will necessitate the use of material from various other disciplines including that of children's literature and the psychology of childhood and play, using contemporary and historical material in English and German.⁷⁰ This multi-disciplinary and transnational approach will

⁶⁹ The challenges of using images and placing them in historical context are addressed by Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders* p.10; David Nye, *Image Worlds: Corporate Identities at General Electric, 1890-1930* (M.I.T Press, 1985), pp.52-54; and Richard Scully, *British Images of Germany: Admiration, Antagonism & Ambivalence, 1860-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁷⁰ For play and education see, Paul Hildebrandt, *Das Spielzeug im Leben des Kindes*, (Berlin, 1904); R.E. Herron, & Brian Sutton-Smith, *Child's Play* (Wiley, 1971); Ulrich Bendele, *Krieg, Kopf, und Körper, Lernen für das Leben – Erziehung zum Tod* (Ullstein, 1984); Brian Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play* (Harvard University Press, 1997); Stephanie Olsen, "Children's Emotional Formations in Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, around the First World War", *Cultural and Social History*, 17:5, pp.643-57; and Joanna Bourke, *Wounding the World: How Military Violence and War-Play Invade our Lives* (Virago, 2014). For literature see, Patrick Duane, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire, 1870-1914", *Victorian Studies* (Autumn, 1980), Vol.24, No.1, Victorian

allow an in-depth analysis of the material, both cultural artifacts and written, to develop an understanding of its use, influence, and place between the experiences of the two European imperial competitors.

British and German children and their books and playthings are central to this thesis, as are the influences on childhood from adult, military, government, religious, economic, and educational institutions. Evidence of how adults intended the use of playthings can be found in the toy trade journals, educational material, and newspaper columns discussed throughout this thesis. This material also includes adult observations on how children played and how it reflected current events, such as 'W.M.' voicing their concerns over children playing at gas warfare in the nursery which is discussed in Chapter Five. Material evidence in the form of children's magazines can be found in archives and museums such as the V&A Museum of Childhood, the British Library, Berlin state library, and the Georg-Eckert institute, as well as numerous digital collections. Relevant toys and games are commonly found in the collections of many museums including specialist museums that focus on collections of toys and/or games. Despite this range of diverse sources of artifacts of childhood and commentary on children the study of children and childhood remains problematic. These challenges and the methodology used in approaching the use of the history of children and childhood in this thesis must be addressed.

The history of children and childhood, especially during conflict, has been the subject of increasing academic interest.⁷¹ However, the subfield has not had as much impact as other similar approaches such as race or gender, this apparent condition of the history of children and childhood being 'on the rise and not quite risen' has been identified by the historian Sarah Maza.⁷² Maza argues that the default approach of attempting to study children's history by studying children is the root of this failure to make any 'discipline-shaking impact'. The 'political impotence of children' and a perception

Imperialism, pp.105-121; Kevin Carpenter, *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics: English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to the Present Day* (V&A Museum, 1983); and Kara L. Ritzheimer, "Forging a Patriotic Youth: Penny Dreadfuls and Military Censorship in World War I Germany", in Mischa Honeck & James Marten (eds), *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).

⁷¹ For children's experience during war see, Honeck, & Marten, *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars*; Rosie Kennedy, *The Children's War, Britain 1914-1918* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); and Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914-1918* (Harvard University Press, 2010). For pre-First World War see, Jeff Bowersox, *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire: Youth and Colonial Culture, 1871-1914* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Katherine Castle, *Britannia's Children: Reading Colonialism Through Children's Books and Magazines* (Manchester University Press, 1996); Paula S. Fass, (ed.), *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World* (Routledge, 2013); Brian Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (Oxford University Press, 2009); and Eric Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working-Class Children in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester University Press, 1994).

⁷² Sarah Maza, "The Kids Aren't All Right: Historians and the Problem of Childhood", *The American Historical Review*, Vol.125 (4) (2020), pp.1261-85, p.1261

of a lack of agency on the part of the child, along with a limited quantity of historical evidence produced by children has meant the study of children lacks impact.⁷³ Also, childhood as an identity ‘vanishes’ at some point in our lives, this is unlike other identities which endure into adulthood and have representation within academic historical study.⁷⁴

Although it could be true that children lack agency in the traditional sense of having direct impact on history,⁷⁵ a period existing as child is a universal experience that despite ‘vanishing’ does influence the life of an adult – ‘childhood a sort of stealth force acting on adult agency’.⁷⁶ How and with what children play informs and influences their lives as adults, relevant to the themes of this thesis is the work of Joanna Bourke who in *Wounding the World* identifies the use of violent toys and play and discusses the consequences of those childhood experiences on adult lives and human histories.⁷⁷ This theory of childhood experience being a force on adult agency and its consequences highlights the importance of studying childhood and the focus of this thesis – the books, comics, games, and toys found throughout the following chapters were played with by children that were then adults with agency throughout the eventful years of the first half of the twentieth century. This material also reveals what messaging adults wanted to promote or censor.

The above challenges for those who study the history of children and childhood can be addressed by alternative approaches. If the fact that children and childhood do have an impact on history the challenge created by the limited number of sources produced by children remains, this can restrict any understanding how children are engaging with childhood materials and events around them. However, as James Martin points out, armed conflict generates ‘unusual amounts of child-related and child-produced evidence,’⁷⁸ this is demonstrated by the amount of work published on children in the time of war – and is evident in the material used for this thesis. The military and conflict inspired, and continues to inspire, children to write and draw about what they had experienced and heard, this is evident for the First World War especially - this richer source of materials will be used to determine if and how the conflict ‘invaded’ children’s lives.

The ‘invasion’ of childhood by the military, empire, and conflict can be discovered through children’s reception of toys and how they viewed them. This can be shown using published and unpublished

⁷³ *Ibid*, p.1271

⁷⁴ *Ibid*

⁷⁵ Arguably children, especially older ones, can and do have historical agency through protests, fashion, and consumer demand.

⁷⁶ Maza, “The Kids Aren’t Alright”, p.1271

⁷⁷ See: Bourke, *Wounding the World*.

⁷⁸ James Martin, “Childhood Studies and History: Catching a Culture in High Relief”, in Anna Mae Duane (ed.), *The Children’s Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities* (University of Georgia Press, 2013), pp.52-67. P.60

diaries, letters, and collections such as the Burnett Archive of Working-Class Biographies held by Brunel University. Through these comments, observations, and memories, a picture of what was being played will be built and compared to the messaging intended for children and that which adults wanted to restrict - such as the use of gas in warfare. Children's reception and understanding of the messaging and material can be observed in school essays and children's drawings in which the themes of militarism, imperialism, and racism appear.⁷⁹ Through this method, observations can be made about the extent children and their play reflected the ideologies of militarism, imperialism, racism, and world events which will allow an exploration of 'history from a child's point of view'.⁸⁰ This is something achieved by Nicholas Stargardt who captures the experience of childhood in *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis* in which he utilises childhood memories and adult observations.⁸¹

That children lack agency in the way historians usually seek to identify with history's actors remains, especially for Sarah Maza and Ishita Pande, an obstacle for the future of the history of children and childhood. Their proposed approach is to not attempt to identify or study children as agents, but to write 'history *through* children'.⁸² For as Maza argues 'The story of what people have done, or tried to do, with children, can be particularly illuminating in that it offers ways for historians to bridge the world between private emotion and public policy'.⁸³ Brian Ganaway also argues the precise appeal of studying childhood is that we can 'see how adults have remade it to meet changing cultural values'.⁸⁴ This thesis will use this approach of using children and childhood as a 'lens' to identify militarism and imperialism in Britain and Germany along with the more established approach of studying children and childhood in a more direct way.

Childhood and Playthings

Childhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not a universal experience. Often it was one only available to any extent to middle- and upper-class families. The middle class in Victorian Britain and Wilhelmine Germany was a diverse group with varied levels of income and

⁷⁹ The use of this type of material as historical sources is discussed by Nicholas Stargardt in "Children's Art of the Holocaust", *Past and Present*, Vol.161, No.1 (Oxford, 1998).

⁸⁰ Nicholas Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis*, (Cape, 2005), p.xi-xii

⁸¹ *Ibid*

⁸² See Maza, "The Kids Aren't Alright", p.1284; and Ishita Pande, "Is the History of Childhood Ready for the World? A Response to 'The Kids Aren't All Right'", *The American Historical Review*, Vol.125 (4) (2020), pp.1300-1305.

⁸³ Maza, "The Kids Aren't Alright", p.1284

⁸⁴ Brian Ganaway, "The unexpected victory of *Charakter-Puppen*: Dolls, Artists, Aesthetics and Identity in Early 20th-Century Germany", in Megan Brandow-Faller (ed.), *Childhood by Design: Toys and the Material Culture of Childhood, 1700-Present* (Bloomsbury, 2019), pp.133-53, p.138

resources. For the purposes of this thesis the middle-class are defined as a single group based on their aspirations, salaried income, and level of education – with the ability, as Homi Kharas writes, to ‘live the good life’.⁸⁵ This ‘ability’ made this part of British and German society a target for commercialism and advertising which is closely linked with the increasing interest in childhood,⁸⁶ and a part of the population that required encouragement to do their duty to the state through paying tax, engagement with empire, or military service.

This study will follow the parameters set by Rosie Kennedy and others and consider ‘childhood’ to be the time from birth until leaving full-time education.⁸⁷ In both Britain and Germany primary education was compulsory up to the age of between twelve and fourteen when many, especially from the working-class would enter full-time employment.⁸⁸ For families that could afford it, such as many of the middle-class, education and therefore childhood would continue into secondary education, and for the most well-off childhood could last into their twenties.⁸⁹ Decreasing levels of child mortality, education and child-labour laws, and increased interest and understanding in the role of play in a child’s development would prolong childhood.⁹⁰ Nineteenth-century childhood was created to ‘cosset’ children ‘far removed from the realities of adult life’.⁹¹ However, a childhood was fragile, and social and economic pressures could and would end it early. For this reason childhood flourished amongst the middle classes who could afford to create this protected space in which their moral values and aspirations could be passed down to the next generation.⁹² However, the sanctity of this protected space was dependent on adults to maintain its purity, this dependence meant that it was open to influence by the adults who supplied and purchased the childhood products.

Conditions in the second half of the nineteenth century in which the young Winston Churchill and his family lived allowed middle-class adults, and those of the elites to control and organise play. Smaller ‘two children’ families meant increased disposable income, and access to mass-produced toys and games meant nurseries in Britain and Germany would be home to more and more toys of greater variety.⁹³ The limitations of understanding the extent to which the intended message was accepted by the child must be acknowledged. In 1853 the philosopher and poet Charles Baudelaire reflected on his relationship with toys in childhood, for him toys are a ‘whole life in miniature’ where children ‘find

⁸⁵ Homi Kharas, *The Rise of the Global Middle Class: How the Search for the Good Life Can Change the World* (Brookings Institution Press, 2024), pp.v-xii

⁸⁶ See: Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*.

⁸⁷ See: Rosie Kennedy, *The Children’s War*.

⁸⁸ Sally Shuttleworth, “Victorian Childhood”, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, No.9 (2004), pp.107-13, p.108

⁸⁹ Dennis Denisoff, (Ed.), *The Nineteenth-Century Child and Consumer Culture* (Routledge, 2008), p.4

⁹⁰ Peter N. Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, 2nd Edition (Routledge, 2011), p.78

⁹¹ Paula S. Fass, *Encyclopaedia of Children and Childhood: in history and society* (Macmillan, 2004), p.333

⁹² Fass, *Encyclopaedia of Children*, P.333

⁹³ Gary Cross, “Play, Games, and Toys”, in Fass, *The Routledge History of Childhood*, pp.267-82, p.270

their souls' through play,⁹⁴ developing how the child will interact with people later in life.⁹⁵ He also observed how children talk to their toys, allowing them to 'become actors in the great drama of life' and in the child's mind come to life.⁹⁶ Through play, children could develop their awareness of themselves and the world around them. Play as Victor Turner calls it, is 'liminal', or 'that it occupies a threshold between reality and unreality'⁹⁷ – a space between the child's imagination and the real world. Children used toys to mimic the real world and learn how to interact with it, which for Philippe Ariés is the primary form of play for both genders.⁹⁸ Patricia Simpson identifies this space as the *Spielwelt* or 'Play world' which exists not only physically but also in the mind of the child.⁹⁹ For adults wishing to influence children this mimicry was the intended result. However, children do not always use toys as adults have intended, the toy intended for war-play can also end up at a teddy-bear's picnic, just as the porcelain doll can find itself in a child's imagined war zone. Insights into children's actual use of toys and their games can be made through primary source material including diaries, autobiographies, schoolwork, and eye-witness accounts of children at play by adults in newspapers and journals which this thesis will make use of.

How adults intended the form of play, and the preferred message, is often clearer and less ambiguous – even if the child did not always follow the instruction. The influence toys, games, and literature had on young minds was neither coincidental or without purpose, adults had long been aware of it and shaped it for their own ambitions for the next generation.¹⁰⁰ The use of games as a pedagogical tool was also pioneered in the nineteenth century, especially when teaching geography and history.¹⁰¹ Games were used extensively in the education of nationalist ideas - the mid-eighteenth-century political philosopher and writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau had believed this vital for the development of patriotism and the nation.¹⁰² At the beginning of the twentieth century Paul Hildebrandt, the German school reformer and humanist educator, considered that 'The only toy that has value for our children

⁹⁴ Charles Baudelaire, "A Philosophy of Toys", in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, Trans. Mayne, J. (London, 1964), p.199

⁹⁵ *Ibid* p.199

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p.198

⁹⁷ Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play*, p.1

⁹⁸ Philippe Ariés, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, Trans. Robert Baldrick (New York, 1962), p.68

⁹⁹ Patricia A. Simpson, *Play World: Toys, Text, and the Transatlantic German Childhood* (Penn State University Press, 2020), p.3

¹⁰⁰ Cross, "Play, Games, and Toys", p.275

¹⁰¹ See, Rachel Bryant Davies & Barbara Gribling (eds.), *Pasts at Play: Childhood Encounters with History in British Culture, 1750-1914* (Manchester, 2021); Paul Hildebrandt, *Das Spielzeug im Leben des Kindes*, (Berlin, 1904); and Ulrich Herrmann, 'Pädagogisches Denken and Anfänge der Reformpädagogik', in Christa Berg, *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte*, Vol.4 (De Gruyter, 1991).

¹⁰² Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Political Economy*, (1755), Trans. On https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/125495/5020_Rousseau_A_Discourse_on_Political_Economy.pdf accessed 27/11/2019

is one that corresponds to their interest or one that we are absolutely certain can influence the interests of our children in a way that benefits their upbringing.¹⁰³ The military, churches, and political lobbying groups all courted the attention of children through games, toys, literature, and education,¹⁰⁴ and in an age of mass consumerism the toy industries and publishers supplied the material to support them.¹⁰⁵

Childhood, and middle-class consumerism and consumption have been directly linked in both Britain and Germany.¹⁰⁶ Middle-class consumption was fuelled by the 'needs and desires' of the consumer, which, along with consumerism, the creation of the 'needs and desires' by advertising, display, and promotion through other media such as literature, created demand.¹⁰⁷ As Brian Ganaway argues in the context of German society: the middle-classes define themselves via commodities - this observation applies equally well to the middle classes of Britain and other western nations.¹⁰⁸

Attention will be made to a broader experience of childhood that will include boys and girls of middle-class and working-class families in Britain and Germany. A study of children in late nineteenth-century America demonstrates that more boys had commercially produced toys than girls, sixty-six percent of boys compared to twenty percent of girls in 1870. The figures were likely to be higher in Europe due to easier access to the market; however, a similar case would have been the evident in Britain and Germany – especially as the majority of the toys in the world market were German.¹⁰⁹

As the work of Gary Cross demonstrates, access to childhood playthings depended greatly on class and gender, this study will primarily focus on middle-class boys as much of the material was intended for that demographic, a reflection of the preoccupation with bourgeoisie masculinity in the age of imperialism. Central to British and German society in the late nineteenth century was the clearly defined gendering of roles – 'Men make their living and their reputation in the world; women tend the hearth and raise the children'.¹¹⁰ As John Tosh highlights in his study of Victorian masculinity, the middle-class man was the defender of the home. He achieves this through economic or military success and was expected to 'gift' a masculine status on his sons through education and childhood

¹⁰³ Paul Hildebrandt, *Das Spielzeug im Leben des Kindes* (Berlin, 1904), p.xii, quoted and translated in Bowersox, *Raising Germans*.

¹⁰⁴ Military careers, rearmament, Christian duty, and political movements such as the Suffragettes and Pro-Imperialist lobbying organisations all feature in children's play.

¹⁰⁵ See: Denisoff, *The Nineteenth-Century Child*; and Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*; and Hamlin, *Work and Play*.

¹⁰⁶ See: Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*; and Hamlin, *Work and Play*.

¹⁰⁷ Denisoff, *The Nineteenth-Century Child*, p.7

¹⁰⁸ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*, p.249

¹⁰⁹ Cross, "Play, Games, and Toys", p.270

¹¹⁰ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (Yale University Press, 1999), p.1

experiences that encouraged 'manly independence'.¹¹¹ This 'gift' was achieved by training by the father, or a father figure,¹¹² which was facilitated by childhood literature and playthings that informed a boy on how society expected him to behave. The demand for these childhood goods was something that toymakers and publishers would happily meet the demand for. For girls, for whom their future lives were expected to be within the home, education was perceived to be 'relatively straightforward' if they were raised in a domestic environment.¹¹³ Girls, it was believed, did not need any special attention, or 'gift' to achieve their feminine status - existing in the home and taking part in domestic activities was enough. Despite the training within the home, a girl's childhood offered an economic opportunity to toymakers to provide goods the same type of 'character-moulding' intentions as boys. Miniature mops and buckets, irons, and life-like dolls would ensure a middle-class girl would be familiar with such items even if closeted in a nursery.

The use of dolls in the 'fight over female middle-class identity' is noted by Brian Ganaway in his chapter on German dolls.¹¹⁴ The dolls are presented as part of the material-feminist view of 'women as nurturing, artistically creative mothers possessing particular cultural skills unavailable to men'. Playthings were not the only commodity available to the youth of Britain and Germany. Books, magazines, and comics became increasingly popular and affordable. However, girls' interests were unlikely to have been restricted to toys that society decided were suitable for female children. The creation of religious and nationalist youth groups at the beginning of the twentieth century proved the folly of restricting girls' activities. Low participation in the girl's youth groups required the introduction of more adventurous activities akin to those the boys enjoyed.¹¹⁵

It was not only gender differences that toys were able to appeal across: toys and toy stores were symbols of the middle class that others could view and aspire to.¹¹⁶ Many toys were not out of reach for the working-class child; wooden toys like the type common in Britain were affordable, or able to be made at home, and the German tin toys made in the Nuremberg area were accessible to families with limited incomes, even after they had been imported. Catalogues from wholesalers in London advertise many lines of these 'penny toys' made from tin or paper.¹¹⁷ However, class was a significant factor in a child's experience and development and often the poor were denied the same childhood

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, pp.3-4

¹¹² *Ibid*, p.4

¹¹³ *Ibid*

¹¹⁴ Ganaway, "The Unexpected Victory", p.134

¹¹⁵ Kennedy, *The Children's War*, pp.110-11

¹¹⁶ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*, p.66

¹¹⁷ The V&A Museum of Childhood hold catalogues from this period from manufacturers such as Cuno & Otto Dressel, Nuremberg, 1905, (MoC/DIST/83), Insam & Prinoth, Nuremberg, 1888, (MoC/DIST/63), and C. Greenwood & Co, Imports, London, 1900, (MoC/DIST/24)

as the middle and upper classes benefited from.¹¹⁸ This thesis will also demonstrate how working-class children were often deliberately over-looked or subjected to limited education. For many educators, toy makers, and publishers producing material for working-class consumption was not a primary consideration – either it was not profitable or any use as propaganda was not needed to target a social-economic group who benefited little directly from empire and in times of war had little choice about serving in the military. However, as previously noted children do not require commercially available toys to play and the working classes would have been able to play at war if they had the appropriate context and narrative to play ‘in’ – although the type of material the working-class children had access to raised concerns about its immoral and violent nature.¹¹⁹

Patricia Simpson has recently pointed out that although play is ‘transhistorical’ playthings are often produced in an historical context.¹²⁰ Military toys usually had an historical theme: in Britain colonial conflicts and the Napoleonic wars were popular, in Germany the recent unification wars, medieval knights, and Germanic tribes fighting Romans were all popular and nationally themed. Children’s playthings and literature did not just mimic the real world. Towards the end of the nineteenth century fantasy toys and literature would become popular; the ‘teddy-bear’, tales of dolls like the ‘Golliwogg’ coming to life and invasion literature based on extra-terrestrial races as in H.G. Wells’ *War of the Worlds* (1898) would add a new dimension to childhood. These ‘fantasies’ did not develop in isolation from the ideologies of the late nineteenth century: as with the play and education based on real-life themes fantasy toys had their roots in colonialism, racial theory, and militarism.

Not all toys contained the above themes, as Sonja Müller argues in her study of wartime toys, games, and literature, the majority of games produced before the First World War were not militaristic.¹²¹ However, to rely on the percentage of militaristic games produced, as she does, risks underestimating the impact of combined influences of toys, games, literature, and education. Christian Büttner argues that children, especially boys, find ‘aggressive play’ appealing,¹²² and questions why children often chose war toys over others.¹²³ Toy stores and playrooms would have been home to toy soldiers including the very popular cowboys and Indians, cannons, model warships, aircraft, Zeppelins, toy guns, swords, armour and even machine guns. Manufactured toys were not even needed to play war,

¹¹⁸ Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed*, pp.313-14

¹¹⁹ The fears about ‘trash literature’ and ‘Penny Dreadfuls’ will be discussed throughout this thesis.

¹²⁰ Simpson, *Play World*, p.6

¹²¹ Sonja Müller, “Toys, Games and Juvenile Literature”, in, Heather Jones, Jennifer O’Brien & Christoph Schmidt-Supprian, (eds.), *Untold War: New Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Brill, 2008), pp.233-57, pp.234-35

¹²² Christian Büttner, *Kriegsangst bei Kindern* (Brill, 1982), p.8

¹²³ Christian Büttner, *Kinder und Krieg: zum pädagogischen Umgang mit Haß und Feindseligkeit* (Campus, 1984), p.23

sticks and imagination were more than sufficient when the child was supplied with a conflict-filled, militaristic narrative space to set their play in.¹²⁴ This narrative was supplied primarily by children's literature containing histories of conflict, tales of war, heroes and heroines, and adventures set in colonial environments along with the racist images of the populations.

The importance that authors of material that promoted war play put on an adult-supplied narrative to moderate the themes of children's play is well demonstrated in the instructions for 'playing at soldiers'. The book, *Buch der Spiele* (1910), which after insisting that the game 'needs the participants to be practised in all the various movements and exercises of the military', then goes on to warn that 'Games like these need to be played with great caution because they can easily degenerate into suspicious scuffles and otherwise have a bad effect on children's spirits'.¹²⁵

The Toy Industry and Children's Literature

Childhood in the late nineteenth century drove, and was fuelled by rapidly growing toy industries, especially in Germany. In 1913 the industry, which was mainly concentrated around Nuremberg, was still dominant.¹²⁶ In Britain most of the toymaking industry was little more than a cottage industry, the wooden toy workshops of North London used offcuts of material from the nearby piano makers. The small manufacturing base does not reflect the demand for toys or the size of the toy industry as a whole, in 1908 Britain imported £1 million of German toys and games, far exceeding the total £171,000 worth of toys produced in Britain in 1907.¹²⁷ The area around Houndsditch in the east of London was home to numerous warehouses owned by toy importers and wholesalers and Holborn and Regent Street in the West End was home to the large toy stores of Hamleys and Gamages. German agents would travel the country with catalogues of German toys, games, and dolls and from early in the twentieth century industries in both Britain and Germany had dedicated trade journals covering manufacturing, trade, and retail of childhood playthings - childhood had become big business.¹²⁸

The industry was not just an Anglo-German affair - German toys were popular throughout Europe and the Americas, especially the USA, and although the German sector accounted for the majority, there was competition from France and later America and Britain. In France especially the resistance to

¹²⁴ For Büttner the appeal of 'Aggressive play' is not only limited to war and the military but also 'plastic monsters to the wild west, sheriffs and criminals, cowboys or gangster bosses', See Büttner, *Kriegsorgst bei Kindern*, p.8

¹²⁵ Wilhelm Kuban, *Buch der Spiele: Gesellschaftsspiele im Zimmer und im Freien für Erwachsene und Kinder* (Bonn, 1910), p.77 (1:0s10755)

¹²⁶ David Hamlin, "Flexible Specialisation and the German Toy Industry, 1870-1914", *Social History*, Vol.29, No.1 (Feb 2004), p.34

¹²⁷ Kenneth D. Brown, *The British Toy Industry* (Shire, 2001), pp.12-13, Brown does point out that the figure does not include dolls, nor considers the amateur nature of the British industry.

¹²⁸ Journals such as *Games & Toys*, London, and *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, Nuremberg.

imported German toys was not only from economic sources, but fears of an invasion of German culture through toys was also paramount.¹²⁹ German 'Saxon' toys were seen as racially incompatible with French 'Latin' culture.¹³⁰ Cultural differences were later used by the British toy industry in an attempt to dissuade consumers from continuing to buy German toys after the outbreak of the First World War.¹³¹ It is important to consider the transnational aspect of the toy industry, especially in a comparative study. Many of the artifacts for which the context and representations will be read, critically those with nationalist or militarist themes will have been produced in a different region to



I.5 Advert from *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, Issue 8 (January 1915), advertising toy ships for the *Fred Jane Naval Wargame*. The advert avoids the fact they are likely to have been made in Nuremberg the year before.

that which it represents. As an example, Churchill's patriotism towards his collection of British soldiers is somewhat confused when the likelihood is that they are of German manufacture and design; or the battleships used for the *Fred Jane Naval Wargame*, which will be discussed in Chapter Four, were designed in Northampton, using Royal Navy blue prints, the designs were then sent to Nuremberg to be manufactured and the completed models shipped back to London to be sold.

¹²⁹ Sarah Curtis, "The (Play)things of Childhood: Mass Consumption and Its Critics in Belle Epoque France", in Megan Brandow-Faller (ed.), *Childhood by Design: Toys and the Material Culture of Childhood, 1700-Present* (Bloomsbury, 2019), pp.67-88, pp.82-3

¹³⁰ Curtis, "The (Play)things of Childhood", pp.82-3

¹³¹ See Chapter Five

Children's literature reached a 'golden age' before the First World War, the youth of both empires had access to large amounts and varied themes in printed material.¹³² Again, the wealthier child would have a wider variety, but schools distributed intentionally moralising, educational, and instructive children's literature with the aim of establishing behaviour codes along with tales of military and colonial heroic personalities and events.¹³³ Children's literature with a few exceptions did not mirror the transnational nature of toys and games, possibly due to the complications of different languages. One exception to this is the widespread influence of 'wild west' tales from North America which had become popular in Britain and Germany. The literature included magazines and journals, often published by religious organisations or those with an agenda of national or colonial interest.

The material available was not always as wholesome as parents and educators wished, one of the most widely available and affordable forms of literature for children was the 'penny dreadful' or '*Schundliteratur*'. This 'trash' or 'gallows' literature outraged society in both Britain and Germany in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with stories of immoral heroes, sexual adventures, and needless violence.¹³⁴ In Germany the campaigns against such material continued into the First World War. However, in Britain the popularity of the penny dreadful had been ended by a move against the immoral literature by Alfred Harmsworth. The notorious newspaper publisher had achieved this by publishing his own version of children's comics which contained extremely high levels of racism and xenophobia, claiming a racial and cultural military supremacy - one such publication, *Comic Cuts* was described by Harmsworth's school friend H.G. Wells as 'enormously profitable, nasty, [and] taste-destroying'.¹³⁵

Plan of the Study

The first part of this study will focus on how British and German children experienced imperialism in their education and play and how publishers, toy makers, religious groups, and the military used childhood materials to influence and inform children. Playthings, literature, and schools in Britain all supported the development of the 'muscular Christian' crusading soldier and expanding the empire. German children's toys and literature not only continued to reflect Prussian militarism but also developed German historical themes and the increasingly national German character of military organisations such as the navy; and although post-unification Germany was not immediately actively pursuing an overseas empire, German children followed adventures in Africa and beyond. Does the

¹³² Denisoff, *The Nineteenth-Century Child*, p.7

¹³³ Maria Nikolajeva, "Children's Literature", in Fass, *The Routledge History of Childhood*, pp.313-28, p.313

¹³⁴ See Kevin Carpenter, *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics*, and Kara L. Ritzheimer, "Forging a Patriotic Youth: Penny Dreadfuls and Military Censorship in World War I Germany", in Honeck & Marten, *War and Childhood*.

¹³⁵ Wells, *Experiment in Autobiography*, p.328

material reflect the support for the militaries and imperialism that the military and civilian organisations wanted and needed?

How empire was taught in schools will be the focus of Chapter one which will identify the ways in which education authorities, teachers, and authors of school textbooks wanted to portray imperialism and colonialism to their pupils. The 1880s brought Germany into direct competition with the well-established British Empire during the 'scramble for Africa', and both of the European metropolises needed to explain, justify, and encourage support and participation from their populations. The educators of both Britain and Germany were heavily involved in encouraging support from within the classroom. However, the education provided to school children was not universal and a focus on educating the middle classes is evident. This chapter will identify how the different social-economic classes experienced empire in schools, and ask why a variation in levels of engagement was fostered by the education systems?

Schools provided a view of empire through history and geography classes - the materials used in class were often textbooks, maps, and histories of exploration and conquest. Chapter Two will demonstrate how children's literature provided the description and background that children could use to create an imagined empire, one of adventure, exotic lands, and mysterious savage tribes. Children's literature had to cover many aspects of empire and target a broad audience with different messages and images for each. How did editors and writers encourage support and interest from their readers? How did they deal with the challenges to European military and racial supremacy in Africa?

Children's toys and play require context to provide structure to play to ensure it is replicating the real world as closely as possible – or as near to the real world as the image provided by education and literature allowed. Chapter Three introduces the games and toys which families purchased for their children. Careful selections of playthings would guide the child to play in the way in which the family thought correct and would allow the child to mimic the actions and events of adults operating within the empire. What types of toys and games did parents buy for their children, and how do those choices reflect middle-class ambitions and anxieties about empire? Through education, reading, and play, middle-class children were exposed to an exotic image of an empire full of adventure backed up by a European imperial ideology that justified its existence and morally demanded participation in it.

This sense of adventure and the appeal of the chance to share in it was also a strong motivation for many young middle-class men to enlist in the empire's army or navy. The second part of this thesis will look at the growing military tensions between Britain and Germany which has been argued to have contributed to a European war in 1914. Chapter Four will discuss why military service, especially in the navy, appealed to boys and young men and how they were targeted and encouraged to do so

through schools, literature, and play. The two decades before the outbreak of the First World War was a period of technological advancement in both civilian and military spheres, new engines, ships, and aircraft required educated men to maintain and operate them and recruiting from the middle classes became increasingly essential for the militaries of Britain and Germany. How did the British and German Navies target and appeal to prospective recruits – and taxpayers?

The militarisation of the middle classes of Britain and Germany was very successful, when war broke out between the two empires in August 1914, more young middle-class men enlisted in the military than in any previous conflict. Chapter Five will focus on the first half of the war when volunteers flocked to fight for their country in the belief their sides' moral and national superiority would defeat the other 'by Christmas'. Literature and playthings would adapt quickly to the events in Europe and across the European Empires to allow children to follow and recreate the conflict in their homes or on the streets. The conflict inspired many textual and material sources produced by children and this chapter will use these to demonstrate how the news of the war, education, literature, and games depicted war to the girls and boys of Britain and Germany.

As the First World War dragged on into 1917, the populations of the belligerent empires would begin to become disenchanted with the sacrifices the war demanded. Chapter Six will identify how children's material was used to encourage continued support for the war and engagement with it. It will also demonstrate how the loss and sacrifice were explained to children who had experienced the death of fathers or brothers. Does the change in tone of children's literature provide evidence for a weakening of militarist sentiment in British and German society?

This thesis will demonstrate that children's educational materials, literature, and toys closely follow the interests, demands, and anxieties of the wider populations and political and military institutions. It will also demonstrate that both British and German institutions, both civilian and military, courted middle-class interest and engagement with imperialism and militarism. It did this through appealing to middle-class morals, sense of duty, nationalism, sense of adventure, and interests which were present in children's literature and reflected in children's play. The study will ask who were the driving forces behind the availability of these children's materials? To what extent can we identify how successful they were? What are the differences, if any, between the experiences of British and German children and the educational materials, magazines, books, comics, games, and toys they had access to? Finally, it will ask what the experience of children and the availability and type of children's literature and cultural artifacts demonstrate about militarism and imperialism in British and German society.

Part One: Imperial Rivals

'In the Old World and in the New, in the Northern Hemisphere and in the Southern; from the Seven Stars to the Southern Cross, the Queen of England's head represents that empire on which the sun never sets. The flag of England floats o'er "regions Caesar never knew." By the way, do all you boys know where that line comes from – "Regions Caesar never knew"? Let them find out if they do not remember, and learn the grand ode in which it occurs. Let us all, too, while proud of the greatness of England's power remember that "Empire is on us bestowed" not for pride, but for a good purpose, and that England's highest mission is to spread the word of God and Christian civilisation through the world.'

Stamp Collecting British Stamps, *The Boys' Own Annual*, 1879 Vol.1, London, 1879, p.156

*'What is there to see in this book?
Trees and fruit of a strange kind,
Ships and wagons on the way,
Black men and black women.
Self-built houses and huts,
Fierce warriors, sharp weapons,
Elephants, birds, oxen,
Bullock-trains, hanging bridges.
Everything we and you need.
Page by page our beautiful colonies pass by,
So they are as well known to you as your own fatherland.'*

Rudolf Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (Dresden, 1901) ,p.2

Chapter One: Educating Future Imperialists

Introduction

The schools of Britain and Germany were integral to the promotion of the European project of imperialism. Politicians, school boards, lobbying groups, and the military, all saw the potential in large numbers of young people and the opportunity to indoctrinate them in the ideologies of empire. Expanding empire also required a larger bureaucracy, in Britain, and to a limited extent in Germany, middle-class children would fill the future demand for educated workers.¹ For many children, school would be their introduction to the ideologies and justifications for imperialism – especially those from the working class who may not have had contact with adults who had experience of it. For many, schools would be amongst the few places they had access to the more expensive reading materials, not just school texts but also a place where books, comics, and annuals would have been shared amongst classmates.

Educators in both countries were expected to inform and enthuse their pupils about empire, many were willing and supported imperialism themselves, but there was resistance from some teachers – in both Britain and Germany, this was from within the elementary schools.² In Britain this was manifested in concerns about working-class children being given ‘ideas above their station’, arguing that too much non-essential education such as history and geography would put them off taking up manual work.³ In Germany the resistance was from those elementary-school teachers who supported socialist anti-imperialist politics.⁴ However, this resistance does not indicate any significant differences in classroom teaching on the subject of empire which, as evident later in this chapter, was limited to awareness of its existence.

Secondary school teachers demonstrated higher levels of support for imperialism and the teaching of it in class, in Germany many supported the national-liberal agenda and belonged to one of the many nationalist leagues promoting German expansion.⁵ In Britain, secondary-school education was far more exclusive and generally restricted to older, middle and upper-class children. British teachers had

¹ For middle-class involvement in imperial bureaucracy see: Kris Manjapra, “The Semiperipheral Hand; Middle-Class Service Professionals of Imperial Capitalism”, in Christof DeJung, David Motadel & Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Global Bourgeoisie: The Rise of the Middle Classes in the Age of Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2019), pp.184-204.

² Pupil, student, and scholar are all used in the material to refer to children attending school, and these will be used interchangeably.

³ Pamela Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild* (Sutton, 1989), pp.41-2

⁴ Jeff Bowersox, *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire: Youth and Colonial Culture, 1871-1914* (Oxford University Press, 2013)

p.65

⁵ *Ibid*

been educated in the ideologies and history of the British empire while at school themselves and in many cases, had experience of empire through work in the civil service, missionary work, or in the military.⁶

Empire was primarily taught in schools through the discipline of geography. Maps of the world indicated the areas of the globe held by each imperial power, different populations and racial ideologies could be studied, and the benefits of the natural resources available would be demonstrated. History also had content about empire, especially in Britain where a history of the development of the empire could be taught. This disparity in longevity and geographical extent of empire would mean that the experience of children, and the content of education, books, and play, would differ between Britain and Germany as well as social-economic demographics. For some, empire was real, and they could expect engagement with it as adults, for others empire would remain a fantastical place that remained out of reach.

Schooling in Wilhelmine Germany and Victorian and Edwardian Britain has been subject of much academic work, this chapter will introduce the themes relevant to this study to supply context to the cultural artefacts - the literature, games, and toys – which are the subject of the following two chapters. It will demonstrate the links and similarities in what was being taught to British and German school children, but also the differences in the relationship between social-economic classes, metropole, and empire.

Promotion and Justification of Imperialism in British schools

In Britain, middle-class children were the future administrators, military officers, politicians, and teachers of the empire, and working-class children would be the soldiers, sailors, builders, and industrial or agricultural workers maintaining it - as the Earl of Meath wrote in 1910:

In former years the burdens of Empire or of the State fell on the shoulders of a few - now the humblest child to be found on the benches of a primary school will in a few years' time be called upon to influence the destinies of not only fifty four millions of white, but also three hundred and fifty millions of coloured men and women, his fellow subjects scattered throughout five continents of the world. Such overwhelming responsibilities have never before in the history of this world fallen upon any people. If the white men and women of the British Empire are idle, soft, selfish, hysterical and undisciplined, are they likely to rule well?⁷

⁶ Military veterans were regarded as particularly suitable school masters, especially for boys' schools where a firmer hand was needed.

⁷ The Earl of Meath, *Essays on Duty and Discipline*, London, 1910, p. 59, quoted in Kathryn Castle, "The Imperial Indian: India in British History Textbooks 1890-1914", James A. Mangan, (ed.), *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and education in the British Colonial Experience* (Routledge, 1993), pp.23-39, p.23

By the mid-1880s, imperialism was far more present in British schooling than in Germany – no surprise given the differences in development of overseas empire. As previously mentioned, a strong and aggressive pro-imperialist sentiment existed in schools amongst the majority of middle-class students and secondary school teachers.⁸ This was most evident in the schooling system for the country's elite - preparatory and public schools.⁹ Although, a similar sentiment existed in schools attended by middle-class students. In the same years Winston Churchill was playing war with his toy soldier collection, he would have been learning about the British Empire at Brunswick House preparatory school and later Harrow.¹⁰ Churchill and his peers had an education intended to create the next generation of British imperialists, and one based on the ideology of Muscular Christianity. For upper and middle-class students schooling would last into the late teens, possibly longer if attending a university. Pupils were taught the expected 'classical' education and observed religious activity at the school chapel,¹¹ alongside this geography, and later, history classes would introduce the British Empire and Britain's 'destiny' to civilise the world.¹²

Classroom education alone would not create the desired masculine, Christian, English crusading soldier, and so sports were also an important part of elite education. Cricket and rugby were regarded as training in teamwork, discipline, manoeuvre, and aggression – simulation for the battlefield.¹³ Inter-school leagues and matches were hard fought and followed closely with reports in the magazines such as *Boys Own Paper*. Following the victories of the Zulu army in South Africa and later the poor performance of the British army in the Boer Wars, parade ground 'drill' sessions were introduced along with rifle shooting – competitions in schools were another popular feature in children's periodicals.¹⁴ The concern over the state of the British army was evident in correspondence within British newspapers. One example of a series of these exchanges from *The Times*, was initiated by the publication of *The Islanders* a poem by Rudyard Kipling which lamented the poor condition of the

⁸ See: Mangan, *The Imperial Curriculum*, p.12

⁹ 'Public Schools' refers to the British system of private schools, to avoid confusion schools funded by the state and receiving Board of Education grants will be referred to as 'state schools'.

¹⁰ Donald Leinster-Mackay, "The Nineteenth-Century English preparatory school: cradle and creche of Empire?", in James A. Mangan, (ed.), *'Benefits Bestowed' Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester University Press, 1988), pp.56-75, & pp.59-60

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.62

¹² *Ibid*, p.63

¹³ See James A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*, London, 1986, and *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* (London, 1981)

¹⁴ Leinster-Mackay, "The Nineteenth-Century English preparatory school", pp.71-2

British population to fight a war.¹⁵ In the poem Kipling warned of British complacency and the poor state of young Britons to fight a war – and were too preoccupied with leisure and play:

Fenced by your careful fathers, ringed by your leaden seas,
Long did ye wake in quiet and long lie down at ease;
Till ye said of Strife, "What is it?" of the Sword, "It is far from our ken":
Till ye made a sport of your shrunken hosts and a toy of your armed men.
Ye stopped your ears to the warning—ye would neither look nor heed—
Ye set your leisure before their toil and your lusts above their need.¹⁶

The exchange of letters which followed the publication of Kipling's poem called for a greater militarisation of British society, more military education in schools, and increased encouragement for children to play at war.¹⁷ One correspondent suggested games and play would counter the 'deplorable' lack of interest in the 'engagement in South Africa' by the population of England.¹⁸ Not all correspondence to *The Times* regarding the poem supported Kipling, a letter from a German reader defends the reputation of the British soldiers ability and behaviour in South Africa. They do continue to comment that another German witness who claims that the 'English officers did not seem to take war seriously enough' and that they regarded it as a '*Landpartie*'.¹⁹

Most British middle-class families could also expect to be able to afford to pay for their children to attend schools with better resources in staff, educational material, and sports facilities – possibly the well-known boarding schools previously mentioned. These boys and some girls could expect a similar education which could extend into late teens with secondary schooling and universities, or professional careers and military commissions.

For young British men who wanted to take up the careers they had been prepared for, the final stage was attending a military college or the colonial training college in Hollesley Bay. The political socialisation of the pupils appears to have succeeded, Churchill's military and political career would have been one approved of by the school's Headmaster. H.G. Wells' claim that he was turned into an 'English Nazi and a racist' attests to how the author regarded this type of education which consisted of the history of English wars and imperialism which reinforced the idea of English racial-national supremacy.²⁰ Richard Meinertzhagen, who had a career as an officer in the army (with a very dubious

¹⁵ Rudyard Kipling, "The Islanders", *The Times*, Issue.36656 (4th January 1902), p.9; the poem was later included in an anthology of poems *The Five Nations* (1903) which contained a series of warnings of future catastrophe for England.

¹⁶ Kipling, *The Islanders*, 1902

¹⁷ For some examples see: A Volunteer Officer. "The Islanders", *The Times*, Issue.36658, (7th January 1902), p.10; Alfred Ainger, "The Islanders", *The Times*, Issue.36659 (8th January 1902), p.6; and Newton, *The Times*, Issue.36661 (8th January 1902), p.10.

¹⁸ L.B., "War Games for Children", *The Times*, Issue.36658 (7th January 1902), p.10

¹⁹ S. Schidrowitz, "The Slanders Against British Soldiers", *The Times*, Issue.36662 (11th January 1902), p.7

²⁰ It is important to note here that although H.G. Wells did pen articles arguing against discrimination based on skin colour (see H.G. Wells, *What is Coming? A forecast of things after the war* (London, 1916); and H.G. Wells,

record) claims that 'While I was at Harrow I awakened to the glorious magnificence of the British Empire. It filled me with immense satisfaction and pride'.²¹ However, preparing the upper and middle classes to be the future leaders of the British empire would only be successful if the men they commanded, and the women supporting them understood imperialism and were loyal to the British Empire.

This access to private schooling and higher education did not mean that academic success was valued by those leading and running the British Empire. The middle-class children, especially boys, attending these schools were subject to an education that was intended to produce young men that were reliable, trustworthy, dedicated to British imperialism, and not educated to a point where they could challenge these ideas.²² Intelligence was distrusted and needed to be disguised in order to achieved success in the Empire. This British attitude to intelligence and academia in particular was reflected in the type of people authoring children's textbooks and literature. As will become apparent later in this chapter, School books were often written by novelists such as G.A. Henty or Rudyard Kipling, and the articles in children's literature, which will be introduced in Chapter Two, are often penned by churchmen or those with connections to the military. This is in comparison to examples from Germany in which the academic qualifications of the authors are frequently advertised. It must be noted that the above type of education was only available to a very limited number of children, at the turn of the nineteenth century only fifteen percent of the population could be regarded as middle-class and the children of these families would have been a high proportion of the population of British schools – especially secondary schools.

As European imperialism entered its 'new' phase, and the scramble for Africa had begun, those promoting the imperialist cause focused on working-class children in the expanding British schooling system. The introduction of the Forster's Education Act (1870) would increase capacity in schools by one million by 1880.²³ Elementary education was intended to be universal, by 1890 the majority of British boys and girls up to the age of ten would have been expected to have attended elementary

The Future in America (London, 1906), he did advocate for some aspects of fascism, expertism in particular, and called for summer-school students at Oxford to transform themselves into "Liberal Fascisti" and 'enlightened Nazis' (Quoted in Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (Penguin, 1998), p.21). Wells also commented on social-economic class and highlighted the dangers of the division widening, although Wells was sympathetic to socialism, he called for an alternative to Marxism to avoid a class war (see H.G. Wells, *The Way the World is Going* (London, 1928).

²¹ Richard Meinertzhagen, *Diary of a Black Sheep* (Edinburgh, 1964), p.210, quoted in Stanley Blakeley Winslow Jr., *A Boy's Empire: The British Public school as imperial training ground, 1850-1918*, unpublished PhD. Thesis (University of Virginia, 2010), p.4

²² Sathnam Sanghera, *Empireland: How Imperialism Has Shaped Modern Britain* (London, 2021), p.185

²³ Patrick A. Duane, "New Grub Street for Boys", in Jeffery Richards (ed), *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester University Press, 1989), p.14

school.²⁴ However, geographical differences and variations in fees led to a tiered system of schools which, possibly by design, separated the pupils by social-economic background.²⁵ The form and aim of education for the lower classes was set by the government's Board of Education (BoE) who periodically published '*suggestions for the consideration of teachers*' which supplied guidance to state schools. However, the wording of the 'suggestions' makes it clear that the expectation was that the 'guidance' to produce good, loyal, and obedient citizens was followed:

Many teachers may disagree with some of the suggestions in the following chapters; in that event they should ask themselves whether their own procedure, however sanctioned by convention, may not after all be open to question.'²⁶

The stated intention of the BoE was to:

Prepare the child for the life of a good citizen, to create or foster the aptitude for work and the intelligent use of leisure, and develop those features of character which are most readily influenced by school life, such as loyalty to comrades, loyalty to institutions, unselfishness and orderly and disciplined in body and mind.²⁷

The instruction was not intended to encourage any form of social mobility but to prepare the child for adult life, education was to prepare, as claimed by H.G. Wells, 'the lower classes for employment on lower class lines'²⁸ – to do their duty and demonstrate loyalty to the institution of the British Empire. The BoE's expectations for this and empire in the curriculum of elementary schools is clear from the subjects that schools were inspected on in order to be awarded grants with a focus on the three 'R's'.²⁹ The 1899-1900 Board of Education report states that:

'The course of instruction in schools... will, as a rule, be required to include English (by which it is to be understood reading, reciting, writing, composition and grammar in so far as it bears upon the correct use of the language), arithmetic, drawing for boys, needlework for girls, lessons (including object lessons) on geography, history and common things, singing and physical exercises.'³⁰

The curriculum does not appear dominated by empire, but it was heavily present in the teaching of geography and history, the 1904 Elementary School Code clarifies the imperial content:

(4) *Geography*, advancing from first notions to outline knowledge of the chief physical features of the earth, and especially of the British Isles, and the British Dominions beyond the seas.

²⁴ In 1895 4.2 million British children were attending a school of some kind, see Horn, p.16

²⁵ Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild*, p.22

²⁶ *Suggestions for the consideration of teachers and others concerned in the work of public elementary schools*, (HMSO, 1905), p.6

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.8

²⁸ H.G. Wells, quoted in Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild*, p.35

²⁹ Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild*, p.40

³⁰ *The Report of the Board of Education 1899-1900*, Vol.I – The Report (HMSO, 1900), p.10

(5) *History*, Comprising a general knowledge of the great persons and events in British History and the growth of the British Empire.³¹

History was to be taught through the 'biographies of typical heroes and heroines', who furnished 'the most impressive examples of obedience, loyalty, courage, strenuous effort, serviceableness...'.³² The principle purpose of teaching history was, as the BoE suggests, to teach British boys and girls the 'rights and duties' they inherited by 'the mere fact of birth', and understand how they came to be.³³ British heroes and wars were to be focused on, although it is suggested that some 'triumphs of peace' such as the printing press and the abolition of slavery be included.³⁴ The BoE also suggest that the heroes of other nations be introduced, especially in times of conflict.³⁵

Recommended printed material for classroom use was a book 'illustrated with bright pictures' of 'people, soldiers, ships' for younger scholars,³⁶ and a 'good history of England' for older scholars – one which would also encourage the habit of reading.³⁷ Even the instruction of English had imperial themes, in the appendix to the code it states that reading ability should be measured by the use of 'Shakespeare's historical plays or a *History of England*'.³⁸ In this way reading practice led to further exposure to imperialism and nationalism – and given the material, often violence.

Race and nationalism were introduced through geography. British school children were to be shown pictures of, and told tales about, 'Red Indians and their wigwams, Eskimos and their snow huts, Arabs and their desert home.'³⁹ The stereotypical images of native peoples and homes were contrasted with the 'civilised' British way of life.⁴⁰ Pupils were introduced to Britain's urban areas and their relation to where natural resources were to be found,⁴¹ this was intended to compare the African 'natives' underuse of natural resources – demonstration of their 'backwardness and idleness'.

As with the children of wealthier British families, knowledge and enthusiasm for nation and empire needed to be backed up with physical strength. Unlike the public-school obsession for competitive sports, the state schools, likely due to the lack of playing fields and equipment, relied on physical training. The 'Kindergarten System', which many elementary schools followed, allowed for the

³¹ *Code of Regulations for Elementary Schools*, 1904 (HMSO, 1904), p.9

³² *Ibid*, p.9

³³ *Ibid*, p.61

³⁴ *Ibid*, p.62

³⁵ *Ibid*, p.63

³⁶ *Ibid*

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.64

³⁸ *Code of Regulations*, p.43

³⁹ *Ibid*, p.55

⁴⁰ The use of stereotypes is discussed more in the next chapter.

⁴¹ *Code of Regulations*, p.58

introduction of 'exercise of the hands and eyes',⁴² and even for the youngest of school children this often came in the form of military style exercise, or drill, along with the expected singing, 'games with music', sand drawing, and 'building with bricks'.⁴³ Older elementary children would follow training drills from instructional books such as *The Model Course for Physical Training* (1901). The distinction between physical training and drill is not always clearly made, but in the third volume of the 1899-1900 report's 'revised Instructions 1900' section 'drill' is added alongside physical exercises,⁴⁴ the outbreak of the Second Boer War in late 1899 refocusing the emphasis from exercise to drill.

The British experience of the Second Boer War also changed the way in which the BoE wished to gender education. Previously differences in boys' and girls' elementary education had been limited to drawing for boys, needlework for girls, and an expectation of leniency in grading girls' examinations.⁴⁵ After 1899 there was an increased focus on instruction for girls in domestic skills such as cooking, cleaning, and child welfare,⁴⁶ reinforcing their role as mothers and carers of the nation's men. For boys, time was increasingly spent conducting drill and competitive sports and shooting, which already popular in public schools, was becoming introduced more widely.⁴⁷ This was noticed by some German publications and offered as evidence of Britain militarising its youth.⁴⁸

Another consequence of the fears and experience of the Boer Wars was the introduction of Empire Day in 1904. Promoted by Reginald Brabazon, the seventh Earl of Meath, Empire Day was intended to encourage awareness and support for British imperialism in schools so that school children would develop a greater awareness and knowledge of the British empire and thereby 'perceive the advantages of a closer federation'.⁴⁹ The day, celebrated at schools, was full of jingoistic rhetoric, flag-waving, and reinforcement of the 'superiority' of the British and their moral right, and duty to empire.⁵⁰ Jim English argues that the success of Empire Day, full of 'militaristic and patriotic cultural idioms' is significant in the research of imperialism in British society.⁵¹ The celebration took place across the British schooling system for over five decades, and involved children and teachers from different classes and regions.⁵² Schools, parents, teachers, and students were enthusiastic about the

⁴² Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild*, p.41

⁴³ *Suggestions*, p.23

⁴⁴ *The Report of the Board of Education 1899-1900*, Vol.III – Appendix (HMSO, 1900), p.619

⁴⁵ *Code of Regulations*, p.62

⁴⁶ Horn, *The Victorian and Edwardian Schoolchild*, pp.54-5

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp.55-7

⁴⁸ See Englische Jugendwehr, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.247, discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

⁴⁹ Meath to Joseph Chamberlain, 13th July 1902, quoted in Jim English, "Empire Day in Britain, 1904-1958", *The Historical Journal*, 49, 1 (2006), pp.247-76, p.247

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp.248-52

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.247

⁵² *Ibid*, p.249

event with over one thousand schools in 1908 within just the London area taking part in the celebrations.⁵³

However, as English points out, the model for the celebrations reflected the ‘traditions, customs, and ethos of public-school education’.⁵⁴ British children appear to have looked forwards to, and remembered the event fondly, but for many it was more about the change of pace from the mundane school lessons, the opportunity to dress up colourfully, and the food and drink – ‘one of the rare childhood treats’.⁵⁵ The extent to which the children received the imperialist and patriotic messaging is varied. Autobiography and recollections indicate a varying degree of impact which roughly follow class divisions. Stephen Humphries notes how indifferent many working-class children were about the British Empire,⁵⁶ an observation that is reflected in the content of the working-class autobiographies accessed for this study - few of which comment on empire.

However, there is evidence of the impact of imperialist and militarist content in the classroom on children. Walter Southgate, from a politically active working-class family in the East End of London, recalls military style drill at school,⁵⁷ as does Mrs. F.M. Gough who remembers the severity of the discipline.⁵⁸ Walter comments on the ‘enthusiasm, rejoicings, flag waving, patriotic fervour and drunkenness’ that accompanied the outbreak of the Second Boer War.⁵⁹ As a boy he appears to have struggled with the juxtaposition between his father’s anti-war, anti-imperialist stance and the patriotic enthusiasm he witnessed with his friends and at school. At school Walter and his friends celebrated English victories, sang patriotic songs, and played ‘Boers and English’ wargames in the school playground.⁶⁰ At home he discussed politics with his father and is aware that in order to pay for Empire Day celebrations and new flags for schools so ‘scholars could salute the Union Jack’, the local council had voted to end prizes and medals in schools and also ended provision for free school meals.⁶¹ English also highlights how others also questioned the way in which they as working-class children viewed imperialism; Rosie, after enjoying Empire Day, claims ‘no understanding of anything we had done’, and Elsie remembers how ‘it was pointed out what an important day it was’ but mentions no

⁵³ English, “Empire Day”, p.249

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶ Stephen Humphries, *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-Class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939* (Blackwell, 1981), pp.41-2

⁵⁷ Walter Southgate, *That’s the Way it Was: A Working Class Autobiography 1890-1950* (New Clarion, 1982), p.21

⁵⁸ Mrs. F.M. Gough, “When I Was Young”, in *Rhyme@Reason: Thoughts in prose and verse. Extracts from original writing by the old people of Kingston upon Thames hobbies and handicrafts exhibition* (unpublished typescript, 1973), p.11

⁵⁹ Southgate, *That’s the Way it Was*, pp.32-3

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pp.54-6

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p.56

understanding of the context.⁶² What Walter, Rosie, Elise and many others have in common with their memories is a sense of British supremacy. Elise Goodhead alludes to the limited successes of schools to instil enthusiasm for imperialism and militarism in schools, especially those with working-class scholars when she writes ‘I remember how proud we children were to be British’,⁶³ the sense of patriotism limited to her days at school.

By the early twentieth century compulsory education in Britain, in most cases, had been extended to children up to thirteen years old. After this age, unlike for the middle- and upper-class children, education was unlikely to continue,⁶⁴ and childhood would end as the young working-class Briton entered the adult world with an expectation of full-time employment. For in many working-class and rural areas there was no provision for secondary education, nor the wish to continue. J.R. Anderson, a farmer from Gateshead remembered that ‘When you got to be 14, we village children only thought of leaving school & starting work. In the towns there were Higher Grade Schools. But where we were, to my knowledge these places were not for us’.⁶⁵

In Britain the attempt to engage schoolchildren with empire and the military was more successful within the middle-class and intended to be so. Middle-class children had a greater chance to engage with empire, through consumerism of commodities from the colonies, reading about colonial adventures in books and periodicals, or knowing friends and family who worked in imperial bureaucracy or serving in the military. They also had an expectation of similar in their adult lives. Working-class children would have had limited access to the colonial goods, the reading material, or knowing someone with first-hand experience of empire – unless there was someone who had returned home from military service. With limited context of what the British Empire actually was, they translated the messaging as pride in British national supremacy. For many of the British working class, like Walter Southgate, the British Empire was ‘their [the middle class] great British Empire’, an institution that existed to make money.⁶⁶

One area of children’s lives what was not intended to separate middle- and working-class boys was in youth groups such as the Boys Brigade and the Boy Scout movement, the latter especially

⁶² See English, “Empire Day”, p.250

⁶³ Elise Elizabeth Goodhead, *The West End Story* (Matlock, 1983), p.48, quoted in English, “Empire Day”, p.250

⁶⁴ In 1899-1900 5,290,431 children between five and thirteen years old were registered at an elementary school of which, on average 4,636,938 attended. Based on the population size it was estimated by the BoE that 6,348,517 children should have been registered, data from *The Report of the Board of Education 1899-1900*, Vol.I – The Report (HMSO, 1900), p.97. Secondary schooling was not a focus of the BoE reports until 1904 the annual report 1909 gives a retrospective figure of 85,358 scholars at secondary schools funded by BoE grants (increasing to 135,776 in 1908), see *The Report of the Board of Education 1908-1909* (HMSO, 1909), p.38

⁶⁵ J.R. Anderson, *Vapcurings of an old Ploughman: Memoirs of 1892-1914*, Unpublished Manuscript, (Brunel AWCA)

⁶⁶ Southgate, *That’s the Way it Was*, p.94

‘experimented’ with bringing boys from different classes together.⁶⁷ The Boy Scout movement, which will be discussed further later in this thesis, started in 1907 in response to Baden-Powell’s and wider societies anxieties from the experience of fighting the Boer War. Although it welcomed working-class boys its ideology was entirely based on middle-class views on empire, the military, gender, and sexuality. Its founder wrote frequently on his opinion that the male body and masculine activities were ‘beautiful’ and ‘clean’, whereas women and especially the female body was ‘ugly’ and ‘vulgar’.⁶⁸ In *Scouting for Boys* (1908) Baden-Powell was explicit in his intention that the Boy Scouts were part of a ‘Great National Work’ to reverse the ‘deterioration of our [British] race’.⁶⁹ Baden-Powell argues that a deterioration of an imperial race ‘contributed’ to the fall of the Roman Empire and that the British Empire could fall to the same fate.⁷⁰ *Scouting for Boys* included the ‘Scout Law’, a set of rules for British boys to follow, which mirrored closely the expectations of the British schooling in producing loyal, dutiful, healthy supporters of British imperialism. The Boy Scouts, as highlighted by Brian Ganaway, were an ‘effective means’ to encourage, as Brian Bond argues, young British men to ‘be prepared to die for your country... so that when the time comes you may charge home with confidence, not caring whether you are to be killed or not’.⁷¹

The Boy Scouts were intended to create the next generation of young men to fight for the British Empire and due to this were exclusively a male-only organisation. To ensure the young women were also suitably dutiful supporters of Britain and its empire the Girl Guides were created in 1910 with a similar mandate to the Boy Scouts to create good citizens. However, in the case of the girls it was to create fit and healthy mothers to future members of the ‘imperial race’.⁷²

The Imagined Empire in German Schools

The German educational system, although not uniform or under any form of central control as in Britain,⁷³ was more developed with all children between six and fourteen able to attend an elementary school (*Volksschule*) – education after this was mostly limited to those of middle- or upper-class backgrounds. Also, as in Britain, the church and the state were both involved in the education of Germany’s young people, and both promoted their agendas through the schooling system. The

⁶⁷ John Fox, “Lord Robert Baden-Powell”, *Prospects*, Vol.43, No.2 (June 2013), pp.251-63, p.257

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.253

⁶⁹ Robert Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys* (London, 1908), p.184

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ Ganaway, p.37; quoting Brian Bond, *War and Society in Europe, 1870-1970* (Oxford, 1986), p.67.

⁷² Fox, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, p.259

⁷³ Despite many attempts any ‘School Law’ was not passed in Germany until 1906, see Marjorie Lamberti, *State Society, and the Elementary School in Imperial Germany* (Oxford, 1989), pp.3-5. Individual states retained control over schools in the *Kaiserreich*, however two thirds of schools came under the control of Prussian state authorities. See James C. Albisetti, *Secondary School Reform in Imperial Germany* (Princetown, 1983), p.142.

willingness of the state and churches to use the education and the collaboration of the educators is evident in attempts to limit the influence of socialism, remove catholic connections to education, and promote German nationalism.⁷⁴ By the mid-1880s, children not only had the attention of those involved in religious dominance and German nationalism, but also those who were lobbying for overseas expansion and the health of future generations.

Traditional German education was 'dry', classical and European-focused, especially in the field of geography.⁷⁵ By the late 1880s, German educational reformers were lobbying for a change from this to a new German-focused curriculum – especially in the expanding secondary school system.⁷⁶ These demands for reform were reinforced by the direct intervention of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1890 when he spoke at a conference for the Prussian Ministry of Religion.⁷⁷ The Kaiser called for less 'mental work' and more 'training for a practical life',⁷⁸ arguing that 'only with technical and educational measures...' could German education 'meet the demands of our growing youth, the world view of our Fatherland, and be trained accordingly'.⁷⁹ He called for German to be a focus in schools as they should be educating 'national young Germans and not young Greeks and Romans... to promote the nation in questions of history, geography, and tales'.⁸⁰ His goal was to 'search for soldiers... a strong generation... [who would] serve as intellectual leaders and officers'.⁸¹

James Albisetti argues that the Kaiser's concerns were 'not unfounded'.⁸² German educators had been calling for various types of reform for many years even though Germany was regarded as 'the great home of pedagogy'.⁸³ Many considered the approach to education in Germany unsuitable for the new unified state and needed more focus on promoting German nationalism and attending to the health and fitness of young German people – commentary from Britain and America pointed out that there was little in the way of gymnastics in German *Gymnasiums*.⁸⁴ The same commentators also referred to the lack of *esprit d'corps* that British schools had and the lack of sentiment to school ex-pupils had.⁸⁵

⁷⁴ Marjorie Lamberti, *State, Society, and the Elementary School in Imperial Germany* (Oxford University Press, 1989), ch.1,2 & 3

⁷⁵ Jeff Bowersox, Classroom Colonialism: Race, Pedagogy, and Patriotism in Imperial Germany, in Bradley Naranch & Geoff Eley, *German Colonialism in a Global Age* (M.I.T. Press, 2014), p.249

⁷⁶ See Albisetti, *Secondary School Reform*

⁷⁷ Wilhelm II quoted in *Verhandlungen über Fragen des höheren Unterrichts, Berlin 4 bis 17 December 1890*, (Berlin, 1891), pp.70-75

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p.75

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p.70

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, pp.72-3

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p.75

⁸² Albisetti, *Secondary School Reform*, p.5

⁸³ *Ibid*, p.39

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p.41

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p.41

Given the amount of negative comments found in English working-class autobiographies, it has to be assumed they are referring to public schools and not the wider school population.

For German children empire was not present in their lives in the same way as in Britain, not least because Germany had not established any formal overseas colonies until 1884. Despite this, the subjects of empire, colonisation, and race were not absent from German society. Interest and discourse about other European empires, exploration in Africa, emigration to North America, and concerns over the loss of 'German Work', are all evidence of the presence of empire in the German people's imagination – in a form that was also 'confused, contradictory, and even conflicting'.⁸⁶ This changed with the start of formal German imperialism; in many regions, including Prussia, Imperial Germany's largest state, pro-imperialists became involved with educationalists in a move to introduce empire into the curriculum.⁸⁷

This move, as demonstrated by Jeff Bowersox's work, was driven by school geographers, and the primary motivation was education reform to promote their academic field and not an institutional wish to promote imperialism – although as already pointed out many secondary school educators supported German overseas expansion.⁸⁸ For many German children, as for the British, geography would have been their introduction to empire and colonialism. Teachers used empire and exploration to promote their field of study which had been regarded as little more than a sub-field of history. By teaching about empire school geographers not only legitimised their subject, but they could also make the traditionally mundane subject more appealing to the students – all with the support and backing of groups lobbying for German imperialism.⁸⁹ It was hoped that the exotic and adventurous nature of the new German colonies would inspire and interest children. Geography lessons would introduce regions of the globe, often European colonies and make the connections between the environment and the people that lived on them,⁹⁰ - often making comparisons with Germany. This approach was referred to as *Land-und-Leute*,⁹¹ use of this approach will be evident in later sections of this study which looks at textbooks and children's literature, as will the portrayal of German colonies as an extension of the German *Heimat*.⁹² Students would learn about European colonies, the resources they provided, and the people that lived in them. They also were made aware of the importance of empire and colonies to Germany, how the resources and manpower would increase international power and

⁸⁶ Bowersox, "Classroom Colonialism", p.252

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p.255

⁸⁸ Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, pp.54-80

⁸⁹ *Ibid*

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.60

⁹¹ *Ibid*

⁹² For more on the concept of *Heimat* see Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, 1990).

prestige for the *Kaiserreich* – in the same way it did for Britain.⁹³ Empire was present in German schooling; however it was not as overpowering as in British schools, as Andrew Donson argues, due to the Reich Law of Association educators were not permitted to engage with politics in the classroom which limited what they could instruct on.⁹⁴ Although these restrictions did exist they were intended as anti-socialist measures and left plenty of scope for nation-building and German history in line with Wilhelm II's wishes.

The debate over which topics were appropriate for German schools remained disputed in the early twentieth century. Although the Law of Association restricted the influences of militarism and the politics of imperialism, many educators, lobbyists, and the military argued for its inclusion. It was believed both inside and outside the *Kaiserreich* that Prussian military success and later German industrial strength was partly due to German education.⁹⁵ The majority of German teachers were not pro-militarists, the opportunity that war gave for not only instructing their students about duty, patriotism, and global history, but also a topic that captured the interest and excited was clear.⁹⁶ Andreas Weiß' study of German school textbooks reveals the extent of the use of war in classrooms.⁹⁷ However, Weiß argues that the intention was not to glorify war and the teachers also taught the negative aspects of conflict – loss of life and property.⁹⁸ Unlike the fantasy image of empire that German children were exposed to, the realities of military life and war were clearly communicated to them, this approach to the military and conflict will be apparent in the following chapters of this thesis – especially with material dealing with the First World War.

Because German educational policy was not as centralised as in Britain the curriculum varied between states, however a survey of *Lehrpläne* (curricula) demonstrates that there were significant similarities. The primary teaching focus was on German language, history, religion, and geography. The curriculum were evident of an education which promoted nationalism through military history, empire and colonialism were not as explicitly promoted, but were present in the subject of geography – as previously discussed. A comparison of the *Lehrpläne* from 1880 and 1910 for Munich schools show consistency in the content of history. The lessons contained histories of the conflicts between Romans and ancient German tribes, the Thirty Years War, Frederick the Great, the French Revolution and

⁹³ For a more detailed study of imperialism and colonialism in German geography lessons see Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, ch.2.

⁹⁴ Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914–1918* (Harvard University Press, 2010), p.48

⁹⁵ Andreas Weiß, "The World and War in German Textbooks: Knowledge of the World Conveyed in Representations of War", in Simone Lässig & Andreas Weiß (eds.), *The World of Children: Foreign Cultures in Nineteenth-Century German Education and Entertainment* (Berghahn, 2020), pp.93-112, p.96

⁹⁶ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.5

⁹⁷ See Weiß, "The World and War in German Textbooks".

⁹⁸ Weiß, "The World and War in German Textbooks", p.97

Napoleonic invasion of Germany, as well the recent wars with Austria and France which led to unification.⁹⁹ The same curriculum also showed little change in the anticipated content of geography classes, with any colonial content included in lessons about the natural world, ethnicity, climate, wildlife, and the resources and produce originating from those areas.

The expanding school systems in Britain and Germany meant that schoolbooks were in high demand and many publishers specialised in their production.¹⁰⁰ Weiß, in his work on war in German textbooks, argues for the importance of school books which for many children, especially those from the lower classes, were the only books they owned.¹⁰¹ He also point out that because this material was state-approved they are a good source for identifying how the state wanted to indoctrinate its children -¹⁰² although this does assume that the educational authorities and publishers were in-tune with the intentions of those who were setting the content of the curricula across Germany.

Empire in British and German School Books

Children's literature will be dealt with in more detail in the next chapter. However, the study of school textbooks as a separate subject from children's books and periodicals has seen significant recent attention. Many libraries and museums hold children's schoolbooks and archives such as the Georg Eckert Institute ensuring that accessing the material is possible. Much of the work has a regional focus (England, Germany), themed (empire, race, military), or is included, as here, in a wider study of childhood. These demonstrate how schooling materials were used to transmit and reinforce ideas supported by the state and organisations such as the military.

In Britain, the Scottish publisher Blackie & Sons became the largest supplier of educational and non-fictional material and remained so well into the twentieth century. Blackies published schoolbooks on geography and history which supported the British imperialism and nationalist histories taught in schools alongside the novels of authors like G.A. Henty, who will be introduced in the next chapter.¹⁰³ As Kathryn Castle points out, these books were expected to 'produce support for, not difficult

⁹⁹ For examples see: *Lehrplan für die Werktags-Volks-Schulen der kgl. Haupt- und Residenzstadt München* (Munich, 1890); and *Lehrplan Geschichte für die Werktags-Volks-Schulen der kgl. Haupt- und Residenzstadt München* (Munich, 1910).

¹⁰⁰ M. Daphne Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books* (Taylor & Francis, 2000), p.15

¹⁰¹ Weiß, "The World and War in German Textbooks", p.93

¹⁰² *Ibid*

¹⁰³ A survey of Blackies catalogues demonstrates dozens of books, published every year and also how dominant Henty's books were.

questions about' the British Empire, the guiding principle being 'Education for Empire'.¹⁰⁴ Castle also highlights the role school textbooks took in establishing the fantastical myth of Empire as a factual image.¹⁰⁵

Some of the most popular and approved by the education board were those by C.R.L. Fletcher and Rudyard Kipling, who wrote histories that promoted and defended British imperialism and ridiculed others. In *Introductory History of England, Vol.III 1660-1792* (1909), which focuses on the British in India and the American Revolution, Fletcher introduces Benjamin Franklin as 'The most disgusting hypocrite of the lot', and ponders that the Americans 'never pretended to be grateful to the Mother Country, and they had never been really loyal to her'.¹⁰⁶ Throughout the text the military are the heroes, especially Clive in India, and the Royal Navy, the enemy are the American traitors and at home the 'dirty political squabbles' which undermined the true strengths of England.¹⁰⁷

Not all British children's textbooks contained as accessible and colourful language as those by Kipling, *The History of the British Empire* (1871), penned before the later, increasingly jingoistic, phase of British Imperialism took a more matter-of-fact approach to describing British colonies, for example: '**Gambia** and the **Gold Coast** – Settlements dating from 16th century. The former at the mouth of the Gambia, the latter in Guinea. Chief productions, gold-dust and rice'.¹⁰⁸

Young German readers also had access to similar educational material. The school textbooks and other non-fictional books focus on Germans and other European settlers, their attempts at recreating a 'German' way of life, and the sacrifices needed to succeed.¹⁰⁹ The populations of Africans in many school books were 'invisible' or 'an inconvenient aspect' to the ideal of new space for Germans to live, and the 'brutal reality' of colonial life needed to be disguised.¹¹⁰ Publications by Carl Falkenhorst were amongst the most common and included titles such as *Jung-Deutschland in Afrika: Kolonial Erzählügen für Jung und Alt* (1890), *Der Baumtöter: Kameruner Pflanzergeschichte* (1915), and *Der Fürst des Mondlandes: Ostafrikanische* (1913). Katharine Kennedy, in her study of *Volksschulen* reading books, identifies the fantastical and exotic theme of the content that this chapter has already discussed,¹¹¹ often this was due to the author's lack of first-hand experience of what the colonies actually looked

¹⁰⁴ Kathryn Castle, "The Imperial Indian", James A. Mangan, (ed.), *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and education in the British Colonial Experience* (Routledge, 1993), p.23

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁶ C.R.L. Fletcher, *Introductory History of England, Vol.III 1660-1792* (London, 1909), pp.290-1

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p.209 & p.266

¹⁰⁸ William F. Collier, *History of the British Empire* (Toronto, 1871), p.342

¹⁰⁹ Katherine Kennedy, "African Heimat: German colonies in Wilhelmine and Weimar reading books", *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, Vol.24, No.1 Afrika/Africa (2002), pp.7-26, pp.11-12

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.21

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p.7

like which required an imaginary approach. However, as Kennedy argues, the lack of experience is not a hindrance as is allowed the authors of the school textbooks to portray the German colonies as an extension of the German *Heimat*.¹¹²

Geography lessons and textbooks were the most useful way for empire to enter the German classroom. German geography textbooks about the German empire discussed the German overseas possessions in depth, detailing population sizes, and economic value.¹¹³ Although much of the content supplied details and facts about the colonies, the authors did, frequently, add negative comments which reflects the 'inconvenient' view of the local populations. This is demonstrated below with a comment about the economic challenges in 'German South Sea' region:

Economic assessment of the entire area: The [low] Production in the German South Sea regions is initially due to the few (hardly 2 million inhabitants) and the population is also not keen on working, this is the case because of the lack of needs of the residents, and the ability to accept European ones. In addition, the remote location of the island world makes trade relations more difficult with the motherland.¹¹⁴

German history textbooks did not offer the same fantastical or exotic experience as the reading books accessed by Kennedy. The content of the books was concise and covers a broad period of history. 'Stage one' history covered from biblical history to the fall of Rome, evidence that despite the Kaiser's wishes classical history remained a large part of the curriculum.¹¹⁵ 'Stage two' history covered the later period and had a focus much more in line with Wilhelm II's wishes, the book covered German history from the Reformation to the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm I.¹¹⁶ The two previous examples, although not explicitly stated are for the use of boys, Dr. Neubauer, without the aid of Dr. Rösinger, authored a separate history book for girls' schools which, although containing far fewer pages than the two above volumes, combined the content of both. The educational content offered was far more basic than that for the boys and unlike the previous two volumes the textbook contains no pictures.¹¹⁷ German girls, it appears, did not need to have the same amount of educational depth as German boys. This difference in expectations of abilities between boys and girls, similar to that seen in Britain, where girls were to be graded more leniently.

¹¹² Kennedy, „African Heimat“, pp.7-8

¹¹³ For an example see: Michael Geistbeck & Alois Geistbeck, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien mit besonderer Hervorhebung der natürlichen Erwerbsquellen und der industriellen Betätigung, Deutschlands Anteil am Welthandel und Weltverkehr* (Munich, 1911), P.58

¹¹⁴ Geistbeck & Geistbeck, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien*, P.58

¹¹⁵ Dr. Freidrich Neubauer & Dr. Ferdinand Rösinger, *Lehrbuch der Geshichte für der hohen lehrenstaten in Südwest deutschland, I Tiel* (Munich, 1909)

¹¹⁶ Dr. Freidrich Neubauer & Dr. Ferdinand Rösinger, *Lehrbuch der Geshichte für Realschulen und verwandte Lehrenstaten, II Tiel* (Munich, 1906)

¹¹⁷ Dr. Freidrich Neubauer, *Geshichlichs Lehrbuch für here Mädchenschulen* (Munich, 1906)

Conclusion

In both Britain and Germany, the school system was utilised by governments, militaries, and interest groups to promote their agendas of imperialism and duty. In Britain empire stands out as an ever-present and explicit subject in which children were taught to understand its scope, history, and importance of Britain's 'greatness'. For many British children, that their understanding was limited to support and pride in Britain, as Kathryn Castle argues, enthusiasm and support for empire was enough, and this was promoted through a fantasy image of the colonies. An in-depth knowledge and education in the realities of empire was generally only taught to children who in the future would either be engaged with empire, or who the state would require financial support from in the form of tax revenues – the British middle-class. As Hobson points out the British system 'indoctrinat[ed] British public schoolboys with military values and 'primitive lusts of struggle, domination and acquisitiveness''.¹¹⁸ These differences in the image portrayed and the level of detail based on the social-economic class of the student and consumer will be seen again in the following chapters on literature and playthings. In British schools the military were an intrinsic part of imperialism – those that expanded and defended it with a justification of a national, racial, and moral Christian mission. This was in contrast to the way in which the military and empire were connected in Germany.

In Germany empire and imperialism were not promoted in the same way in school. This was due to the limited, in time and scope, German experience of empire and restrictions on what could be taught. The focus was the teaching of German language and history to promote a greater national identity. Because of the role of the military in the creation of Imperial Germany it took a dominant position in the teaching of German history – assisted by the appeal of war and conflict for children. Although German empire expansion and empire building was not explicitly taught in schools in the same way as in Britain, geography teachers could encourage students' enthusiasm through images of an exotic and adventurous world in which there was a population, resources, and products from which benefits could be gained. German children's education about empire was intended to demonstrate that it existed and therefore was evidence of Imperial Germany's position as a European 'great power' alongside Britain and France.

For children in Britain and Germany school may have been some of the earliest occasions they encountered imperialism and militarism - but not the only space in which they would have the opportunity. Alongside the increased interest in educating children adults, especially those from the middle-class families were increasingly aware of the benefits and need to provide a space for play and

¹¹⁸ J.A. Hobson, quoted in Judith Brown (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1999), p.190

leisure reading, and the resources for it. The following chapters will focus on this material beginning with children's reading material which along with education provided a context and background for children's play

Chapter Two: Empire, Real and Imagined in Children's Literature

*'Images of imperialism... an instrument of siren-like propaganda leading youth persuasively to the holocaust of the Great War: a means of controlling the nascent proletarian consciousness... and educational rationale for an upper-middle-class...'*¹

Introduction

Children's play reflects the world around them and in late nineteenth-century Britain and Germany their world was dominated by imperialism and the forces that forged and defended it. The previous chapter has demonstrated that through compulsory education the majority of children would have some understanding of at least the existence of 'their' empire, if not its extent, and how they and the metropole benefited from it.

The British Empire had long been established, but the first formal German colony, German South-West Africa, was not established until 1884 at the height of the 'scramble for Africa' during which the European empires seized parts of Africa that had been subject to informal economic control previously. The difference in longevity, scope, and function between the British and German experience and how it is portrayed will become evident in the material accessed for this and the following chapters. This 'scramble' and the entry of the German Empire into overseas empire building was a focus of conversations in parliaments, newspapers, public and private spaces, including those inhabited by children. Young Britons and Germans could look, read, and play with material which related directly to European imperialism and the use of the military to build and maintain it.

Much of this material used empire and the military as themes because they appealed to the consumer and profits drove the choice of subject – as also highlighted by Jeff Bowersox, profit was often the driving force for producers of this material over any ideological claims.² This implies that the children's literature was not driving an interest, but, in part, was a response to demands from the middle-class consumer. However, this does not mean the material passively reflected society's views of empire, through supplying the material the consumer demanded about empire, the publishers could influence the views and opinions of the young readers. This chapter will demonstrate how some of the most

¹ James A. Mangan (ed.), *'Benefits Bestowed' Education and British Imperialism* (Manchester University Press, 1988), p.10

² Bowersox, *Raising Germans in the Age of Empire: Youth and Colonial Culture, 1871-1914* (Oxford University Press, 2013) p.128

popular publications were actively 'politically socialising' children,³ promoting the correct way to think about empire and informing young people on how to play a role in it for what Jeffrey Richards claims, in the case of the British press, is a 'clearly stated' aim lasting a century.⁴

This period of 'new imperialism' coincided with education reforms highlighted in Chapter One which would bring large numbers of British and German boys and girls into formal education. In Germany where education had been more accessible across many of the pre-unification states much earlier in the century, discussions about the balance of classroom and play led to greater interest in indoor play.⁵ Education was regarded as in the national interest; in the 1860s the Prussian military establishment regarded schools essential to keep young German men out of the factories and fit for military service,⁶ a role British schools would only take on over three decades later – the increasing role of education in promoting the imperial projects of Britain and Germany will be further explored in Chapter Two. In Britain, Germany, and across many other western regions this increase in schooling provision led to a huge increase in those who could experience a 'childhood' which needed to be supplied with suitable literature and playthings. For those who wanted to promote empire and military, the demand for children's goods created a space to fill with 'educational' and informative material. As Maria Nikolajeva argues, the use of storytelling in children's literature is a 'powerful factor in ideology and education',⁷ for which children have little resistance to due to their social-economic status-⁸ although this could also be a consequence of a developmental immaturity.⁹

Imperialism in children's literature has been the subject of recent research and scholarship as the history of children and childhood becomes increasingly important. Much of the work highlights that empire inhabited children's literature in many ways - from supplying a background to it being the subject. Monographs such as Kelly Boyd's *Manliness and the Boy's Story Paper* (2003) and M. Daphne Kutzer's *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books* (2000) focus on the material available in Britain and German children's literature, and books in an educational environment have been introduced in the previous chapter. These studies focus on how the children of the metropole observed their empire, when viewed side-by-side how do they compare? Do children from Britain and Germany, middle class and working class, boys and girls have the same image of

³ Jeffery Richards (ed.), *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester University Press, 1989), p.5

⁴ Richards, *Imperialism*, p.5

⁵ Brian Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.40

⁶ *Ibid*, p.36

⁷ Maria Nikolajeva, Children's Literature, in Paula S. Fass (ed.), *The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World* (Routledge, 2013), pp.313-26, p.313

⁸ *Ibid*, p.314

⁹ These could be linked due to the differences in access and type of education which would lead to different levels of development between these groups.

empire and colony? How are they similar, or not? How do they observe each other? What image of empire are they expected to have?

This chapter will introduce literature produced for children in Britain and Germany and demonstrate how they influenced children's imagined military and empire. The imagery will be the subject of the first section which will investigate how the use of stereotypes in picture books reflected nationalist and racist images and created a 'lens' for children to view the world through. Next, examples of material published by groups and individuals that wanted to actively promote empire and the military will be introduced. This material attempted to instruct the young readers on how to engage with empire in childhood and later adult careers in civilian and military roles. Such publications were relatively costly and targeted at the more affluent parts of society, they also reflected parents' gendered ambitions for the next generation. A comparison will be made with this material aimed at the middle classes in Britain and Germany and the cheaper and popular material published alongside it. Although more accessible, this material still claimed to morally guide the young readers and protect them from the corrupting influences of 'trash literature' and penny dreadfuls. Finally, children's fiction and non-fiction books will be introduced, many of which contained similar themes as the periodical material.

Together the images, descriptions, tales, and educational material formed how children who were very unlikely to have first-hand experience of empire would regard it. This image would create the imaginary world, the *Spielwelt*,¹⁰ in which would create the setting and space in which children would play with toys and games – the subject of Chapter Two.

Starting Early with Children's Picture Books

A child's introduction to empire started early in both Britain and Germany, a first book would have likely been a picture book introducing the alphabet, colours, or situations. Pictures are obviously the primary tool in such material, such images are ideal for the use of stereotypes – bold, clear images which are intended to 'rigidly order' the world in a way Richard Dyer argues 'expresses "our" [Western-European] values'.¹¹ As Dyer points out, stereotypes are never neutral,¹² the presence of the imagery in children's literature is because of the effectiveness of the message - the stereotype is also, as J.A. Mangan points out, an indication of insecurity.¹³ In this case, the insecurity of the colonisers,

¹⁰ See: Patricia A. Simpson, *Play World: Toys, Text, and the Transatlantic German Childhood* (Penn State University Press, 2020).

¹¹ Richard Dyer, *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representation*, (second edition) (Routledge, 2002), pp.14-16

¹² *Ibid*, p.11

¹³ James A. Mangan, "Images for Confident Control: Stereotypes in Imperial Discourse", in James A. Mangan (ed.), *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and education in the British Colonial Experience* (Routledge, 1993), pp.6-23, p.8

who require an ordered image to impose control over a disparate empire and 'an attempt to civilise the savage'.¹⁴ Historians such as J.A. Mangan and Kathryn Castle who have researched the creation of stereotypes within the context of British imperialism agree that the creation of both positive and negative stereotypes were used to 'manipulate reality' and create an 'imperial image' which 'exhorted the colonizer and humbl[ed] the colonized'.¹⁵

A European 'fantasy' of empire and colony which was portrayed to the populations of British and German metropolises will be evident throughout this thesis, a fantasy which was deliberately propagated by some and unwittingly replicated by others. That empire existed was more important than any accurate depiction of it.



2.1 Front cover, Florence Upton, *The Adventures of two Dutch Dolls and a Golliwogg* (Boston, 1895)

One of the most enduring stereotypes which continues to demonstrate the strength of an image, especially a racialised one, is Florence and Bertha Upton's *The Adventures of Two Dutch Dolls and a 'Golliwogg'* (1895), introducing the Golliwogg to Victorian Britain and later the world. Since then, the doll, 'a type of rag doll... made from black fabric and has black eyes bordered with white, red lips with

¹⁴ Mangan, "Images for Confident Control", p.9

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp.7-8

white teeth and frizzy hair'¹⁶, has created controversy and continues to do so up until today.¹⁷ The stereotype of the African American minstrel, that the Uptons used in their material, became globally popular, and appears throughout this study and therefore requires some additional focus.

Florence's paintings are based on the childhood fantasy of toys coming to life, in this case a minstrel doll and a collection of wooden 'Dutch' dolls which she owned. Florence and her mother, Bertha, who wrote the text, had created a personality for the dolls; the Golliwogg's personality as many have pointed out was not a negative one, he was portrayed as 'a big thinker and go-getter, is also a thoughtful and considerate friend'.¹⁸ However, despite the positive nature of Florence Upton's Golliwogg, the character was an anthropomorphised version of a black minstrel doll that had been produced and sold before the invention of the Golliwogg.¹⁹ Florence Upton asserted that the character was free from the outside influence,²⁰ even though the doll reflected an extensive 'American and British racist popular culture... which would have been impossible to miss'.²¹

The obvious link between the Golliwogg, racial and racist ideology is the replication of the image of the minstrel. Minstrel shows were popular in the USA throughout the nineteenth century and were soon exported to Europe – especially Britain where it endured well into the twentieth century.²² The minstrel was traditionally a white male who had 'black-faced' with burnt cork and took part in shows in which exaggerated performances replicated stereotypes of black culture. The shows and performers portrayed Africans and African Americans as dim-witted, lazy, and happy-go-lucky.²³ Minstrels were a popular character for dolls in the United States, copying the stereotype into a children's toy.²⁴ A doll of this type is likely what the young Florence Upton purchased from the 'American Fair', which then became the blueprint for her Golliwogg and all its later copies. The argument that the 'lovable Golliwogg'²⁵ has nothing to do with racial ideas is severely weakened if it is a doll based on fictional character of a minstrel doll that 'comes to life'.

¹⁶ Introduction to the History of Golliwogg, Historyofdolls.com (accessed 20th November 2023)

¹⁷ For examples of this see: Louise Ford, "Shameful BNP sells Golliwogs race dolls to its supporters", *The Mirror* (3rd February 2009); and "Carol Thatcher made other offensive remarks in 'golliwogg' incident", *The Guardian* (6th February 2009).

¹⁸ Upton, *The Adventures*

¹⁹ The Upton family moved between London and New York during Florence's childhood, and it is unclear in which country it was purchased. Although Florence claims to have purchased it at 'an American Fair'

²⁰ Donna Varga & Zuk Rhoda, "Golliwogs and Teddy Bears: Embodied Racism in Children's Popular Culture", *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Vol.46, No.3 (2013), pp.647-71, p.653

²¹ *Ibid*

²² Michael Pickering, *Blackface Minstrelsy in Britain* (Ashgate, 2008)

²³ Varga & Rhoda, "Golliwogs and Teddy Bears", p.650

²⁴ Anthony Martin, "Toys with Professions: Racialized Black Dolls, 1850-1940", *Journal of African Diaspora Archaeology and Heritage*, 3:2 (2014), pp.137-158

²⁵ Dee Hockenberry, *Collecting Golliwogs: Teddy Bear's Best Friends* (Schiffer, 2003)

The Golliwogg's depiction of the minstrel is not the only link to racial ideology and racism. Donna Varga and Rhoda Zuk highlight the way in which the Golliwogg as a child's doll replicates early childhood dependency.²⁶ This link to childhood dependency mirrored the common way in which Europeans viewed black Africans as child-like, clumsy, and dependent on European guidance - for European colonisers part of the mission was a moral one to civilise and guide.²⁷ Although, at times the Golliwogg and its companions do become the explorers in Upton's stories.

Child-like dependency is not the only trait applied to Africans by Europeans that exists in Florence and Bertha Upton's tales. When the two dolls first meet the Golliwogg, they are scared by its black face:

Then all look round, as well they may
To see a horrid sight!
The blackest gnome
Stands there alone,
They scatter in their fright.²⁸



2.2 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16770/16770-h/16770-h.htm>, accessed 26/11/20

For white Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century the dark skin of Africans was not only frightening but was a symbol of dirtiness and disease,²⁹ a message commonly repeated in British soap adverts at the time.³⁰ These adverts also used the previous message of the dependency of Africans on the European colonisers and the dominance of the latter. The dolls soon discover the Golliwogg has a 'kindly smile'³¹ and instantly change tack to flirting with the Golliwogg.

Their fears allayed--each takes an arm,
While up and down they walk;
With sidelong glance
Each tries her chance,
And charms him with "small talk"



2.3 <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16770/16770-h/16770-h.htm>, accessed 26/11/20

²⁶ Varga & Rhoda, "Golliwogs and Teddy Bears", p.648

²⁷ Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.91

²⁸ Florence Upton, *The Adventures of Two Dutch Dolls and a 'Golliwogg'* (London, 1895)

²⁹ Varga & Rhoda, "Golliwogs and Teddy Bears", p.654

³⁰ Anandi Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders, Images of Africa and Asia in British Advertising* (Manchester, 2003), Ch.2

³¹ Upton, *The Adventures*

Here, so conclude Varga and Zuk, the stereotype of the 'African male's desire for white women' is being tested -³² although, this time the Golliwogg is 'a good 'boy'".³³ This action demonstrates the Golliwogg is a 'safe nursery companion' for white children.³⁴ The Dutch Dolls' adventure does not only bring them into contact with a Golliwogg, further into the tale they discover other racial stereotypes.



2.4 The 'Japanese Magnate' and 'Jovial African' from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16770/16770-h/16770-h.htm>, accessed 26/11/20

Florence and Bertha Upton's characters demonstrate that the two authors had a greater awareness of the political and racial world around them that they, or those that defend them, and Golliwogg, attribute to them. However, more obvious are the other characters that display racial features. The dolls with their new companion meet a 'jovial African, with large admiring eyes' and also a 'Japanese Magnate' who is immediately described as a 'Poor harmless little man',³⁵ both demonstrate racial stereotypes present in racist imperialist propaganda and rhetoric in the text and images – and toys that share the toybox with the Golliwogg.

³² The desire of For African men for European women, or 'Black Peril' is linked to the establishment and reinforcement of white masculine dominance in European colonies as well as the fetishization of the African male's body. European women that chose to have a relationship with an African man undermined the superiority of the male colonisers, in response it was assumed that the African male had raped or assaulted the women. For more see: Christina Bazzaroni & Julia Meszaros, "From Taboo to Tourist Industry: The Construction of Interracial Intimacies between Black Men and White Women in Colonial and Contemporary Times", *Sociology Compass*, Vol.8, No.11 (2014), pp.1256-68; and John Pape, "The 'Perils of Sex' in Colonial Zimbabwe", *Journal of South African Studies*, Vol.16, No.4 (1990), pp.699-720.

³³ Upton, *The Adventures*

³⁴ Varga & Rhoda, *Golliwogs and Teddy Bears*, p.656

³⁵ *Ibid*, p.656

The 'Jovial African' although having less pronounced features than the Golliwogg is instantly racialised as having big eyes, and jovial, both following the common racial stereotypes of Africans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – although not to the same extent as in some other images.³⁶ The 'Japanese Magnate' is viewed through the romanticised lens of Orientalism, fitting the fantasy of the east as seen by Europeans.³⁷ The Oriental character also fits the established effeminised racial type assigned by white Europeans to the people of the near and far east: large eyes, colourful lips and face, and feminine clothing – this instantly belittles the character as 'poor', 'harmless' and 'little'.³⁸



2.5 Lothar Meggendorfer, *Des Kindes erstes Buch: ein Bilderbuch* (1894)

The Upton's did not create the stereotypes evident in their work, but they do use the common racist characteristics of the stereotype. Awareness of the use of stereotypes is crucial when accessing children's material and assessing the message the publisher, author, and illustrators wish to convey. Picture books were published in many forms in Britain and Germany, empire and the military provided varied and interesting images to fill the pages. The inclusion of such images appears random at times, images with colonial and military themes intermixed with other mundane ones. One example is Lothar Meggendorfer's *Des Kindes erstes Buch: ein Bilderbuch* (1894) in which an African riding a bicycle and

³⁶ For more on stereotypes of Africans and Africa see: Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *White on Black: Images of Africa and blacks in western popular culture* (Yale University Press, 1992).

³⁷ See: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin, 1978); and Chizuko Ueno, "In the Feminine Guise: A Trap of Reverse Orientalism", *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal. English Supplement*, No. 13 (1997), pp. 3-25, p.3

³⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, p.207

a lion appear alongside musical instruments and kitchen utensils.³⁹ Instant similarities can be observed with the image of the woman on the previous page, one of the most obvious is the bright striped clothing often seen in racialised images of African and African American people. Although, there are some important differences, the woman is riding a bicycle and is carrying a handbag – European products which do not fit the stereotype. What is Meggendorfer's intention? Is this image a norm, or because he sees an African woman riding a bicycle as exotic? Or is it comical trope of 'backward' Africans using European goods and technology.⁴⁰



2.6A Lothar Meggendorfer, *Nur für brave Kinder* (Eßlingen, 1896), p.12

Meggendorfer's books, published in both Britain and Germany, have been the focus of a study by Amanda Brian in which she highlights the illustrator's problematical use of animals to explain racial hierarchy and educate children on the correct way to behave as Europeans.⁴¹ Meggendorfer's widespread use of ethnic stereotypes and colonial images in his work is also evident in the material accessed for this study. Examples of this include *Nur für brave Kinder* (1896) which contains a 'moving' image that changes from a scene of African men and a woman relaxing to one of them under attack from a tiger.

³⁹ Lothar Meggendorfer, *Des Kindes erstes Buch, ein Bilderbuch* (Munich, 1894), p.3

⁴⁰ For further examples of this see a later section in this chapter discussing Alfred Harmsworth's *Comic Cuts*.

⁴¹ Amanda M. Brian, "Beasts Within and Beasts Without: Colonial Themes in Lothar Meggendorfer's Children's Books", *German Studies Review*, Vol.37, No.2 (May 2014), pp.253-74

The images at first glance are not offensively racist and appear to be a family group taking rest and food after a period of toil. Their meal is interrupted by a tiger (on the wrong continent) demonstrating



2.6B Lothar Meggendorfer, *Nur für brave Kinder* (Eßlingen, 1896), p.12

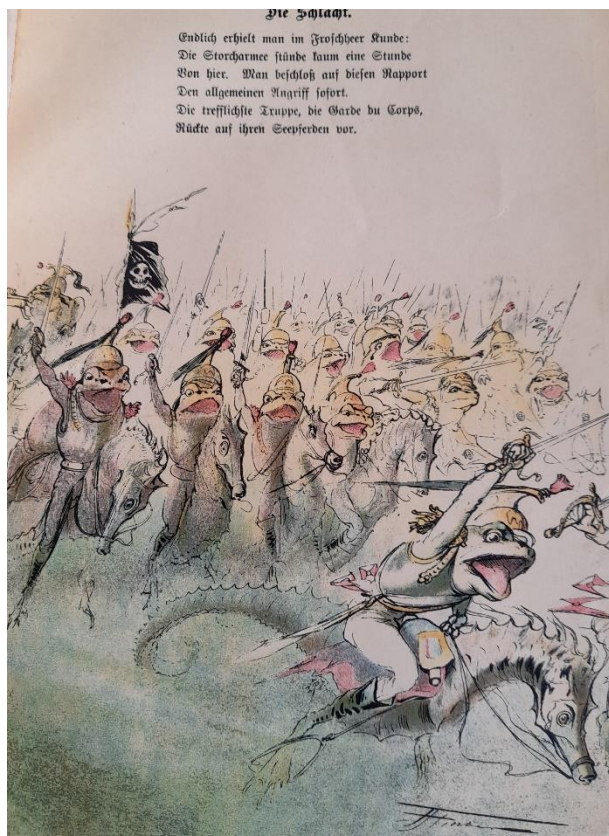
the dangers of life in Africa – shooting big cats will be a recurring theme in this chapter. The forest the scene is set in is ambiguous and could easily be a wooded area in North America, Europe, or Africa – the assumption is that it is the latter due to the nature of the stereotype of an African used. This confusion and mixed imagery was common in depictions of colonies which portrayed the fantasy of empire, that Europeans wanted and expected, over the reality. The images of the people feature racialised stereotypical facial features, the men are wearing the bright-stripes and check pattern associated with *Hosenneger*: the clothes show signs of wear and tear, and the figures are barefoot – symbols of this groups partially-civilised status.

Similar racialised stereotypes are found in *Lothar Meggendorfer's internationaler Circus* which depicts Chinese actors at a circus,⁴² *Der Japanese und sein Kind* contains the expected feminine and colourful European view of the orient. The drawings in both books, although of common scenes of performers and everyday life use the stereotypical features and clothing already seen in Upton's work. Another

⁴² Lothar Meggendorfer, *Lothar Meggendorfer's internationaler Circus* (Eßlingen, 1887), pp.4-5

publication, *Der Russe und der Bar* uses the Russian 'bear' imagery,⁴³ a stereotype which becomes increasingly used in 1914 to demonstrate the 'savage' character of the enemy.

Brian, in her work, highlights other examples of Meggendorfer's racial messaging; in *Immer Lustig!* (1886) an African child holding a tortoise is described as 'so black and hungry' and *fressen* (a verb used for an animal eating) is used when referring to the child,⁴⁴ and in *Lustiges Automaten-Theater* (1890) a reference is made to white child scrubbing a *Mohrin*, who was caring for a white baby 'clean and white'⁴⁵ – a reflection of the Pears Soap adverts highlighted by Ramamurthy.⁴⁶



Finally, the Frog Army received news: The Stork Army was scarcely an hour from here. On the basis of this report, it was decided immediately to launch a general attack. The toughest troop, the Garde du corps advanced on their seahorses.

2.7 Lothar Meggendorfer, *Der Gänsegeneral und seine Soldaten* (Munich, 1890)

Meggendorfer did not just use empire and race in his illustrations, one notable diversion from the colonial theme is the *Der Gänsegeneral und seine Soldaten* series of three books.⁴⁷ These publications depict a conflict between armies of animals dressed and equipped as European soldiers (see below image). The style was not as comical and fun as expected, the armies are serious and competent, and the hardships of war are not avoided. The images not only depict battles but also a horse-sentry duty in the snow and the misfortune of an ox-soldier imprisoned for failing in his duty.⁴⁸ The seriousness of

⁴³ Lothar Meggendorfer, *Der Russe und der Bar* (Munich, 1895)

⁴⁴ Brian, "Beasts Within and Beasts Without", p.253

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.265

⁴⁶ Ramamurthy, *Imperial Persuaders*, ch.2

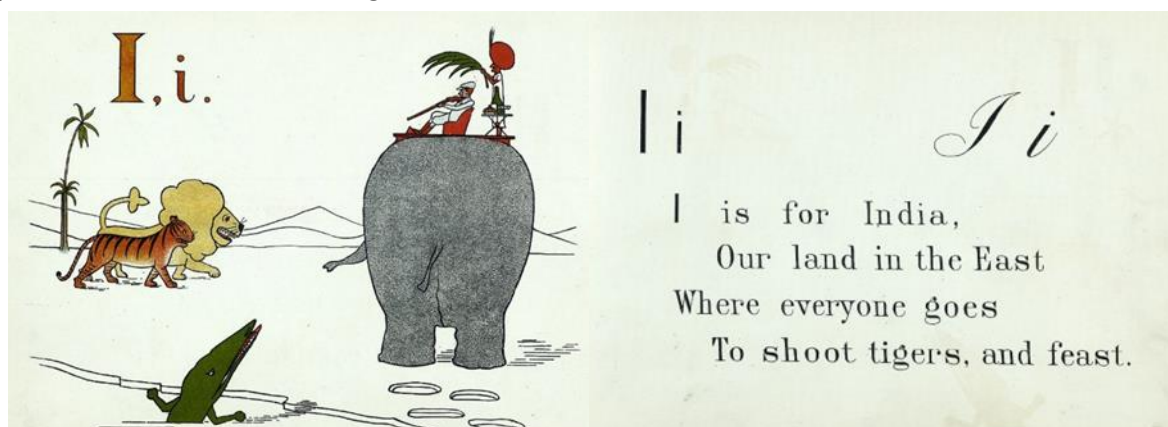
⁴⁷ Lothar Meggendorfer, *Der Gänsegeneral und seine Soldaten: 3 Lustige Geschichten* (Munich, 1890)

⁴⁸ *Ibid*

war and the collective duty of the soldier is clear, a theme also observed later in the chapter with photos of soldiers in *Der gute Kamerad*. This messaging is in stark contrast to comical images of lone, red-coated soldiers heroically chasing groups of the enemy way seen in British examples.⁴⁹

British picture books also contained similar racial stereotypes as those drawn by Meggendorfer and much of the illustrator's work was available in Britain. This type of material often required the participation of an adult as the reader of the material and here it becomes necessary to understand the intended audience of children's literature is not always as obvious as can be assumed. The content may not be as simple as would be expected from a publication intended for the consumption of very young children.

One example of this is Mary Francis Ames' (writing as Ernest Ames) *An ABC For Baby Patriots*,⁵⁰ which is often offered as an example of extreme nationalism and colonialism in childhood.⁵¹ The example below, I is for India, a comical image of a European hunter with an Indian servant on an elephant is shooting the dangerous wildlife. As in the previous appearance of big cats the presence of a lion is evident of the fantasy of empire and colonial life,⁵² stereotypes are also present in the character of the Indian servant and the European (English) hunter. However, a more critical reading of what appears to be a serious attempt at promoting the British Empire and its ideals uncovers a work of political satire, in this case the preoccupation of Englishmen and hunting - again the imagery misplaces the wildlife.⁵³ The satirical message is obviously not intended for the 'baby patriot' learning the alphabet but for the adult reading it with the child.⁵⁴



2.8 'I is for India', *An ABC for Baby Patriots* (1899)

⁴⁹ Mrs. Ernest Ames, *An ABC for Baby Patriots* (London, 1899), p.5

⁵⁰ *Ibid*

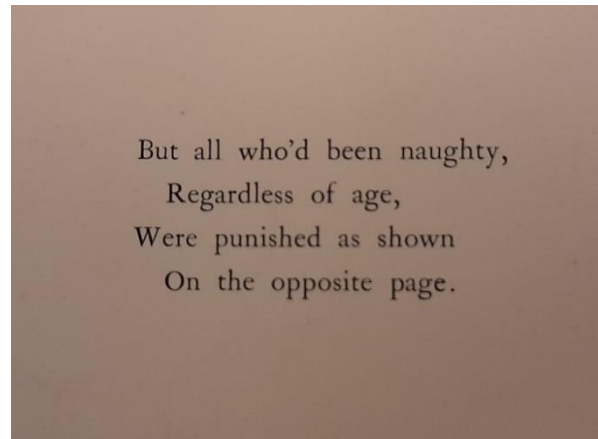
⁵¹ <https://mashable.com/feature/abc-for-baby-patriots>, (Accessed 1st March 2022)

⁵² Although the Asiatic Lion exists it would be very unlikely to have been in the same region as a tiger and a crocodile.

⁵³ This preoccupation will become more evident later in this chapter.

⁵⁴ For a complete analysis of the book as a satirical work see: Megan A. Norcia, "'E' Is for Empire? Challenging the Imperial Legacy of *An ABC for Baby Patriots* (1899)", *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* (2017), pp.125-148

Another example of Ernest Ames' satirical material in the guise of children's books are *The Tremendous Twins, or How the Boers Were Beaten* (1900) and *Pictures for Little Englanders* (1901). *Tremendous Twins* tells a tale of two small boys who after reading about the disasters in the Boer war travel to South Africa to secure victory. They defeat the enemy and then punish those responsible for the early losses in the below way. *Little Englanders* focuses on politics in the British metropole and highlights the xenophobia, British pride in technology, empire, and military spending.⁵⁵



2.9 Ernest Ames, *The Tremendous Twins, or How the Boers Were Beaten* (London, 1900), pp.60-61

Not all picture books were intended for the youngest of readers, many were appropriate for, and had content which would appeal to school-aged children. A notable example of these is the *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (1901), a book which self-consciously educates the reader in a variety of images from German colonies, and introduces itself as below:

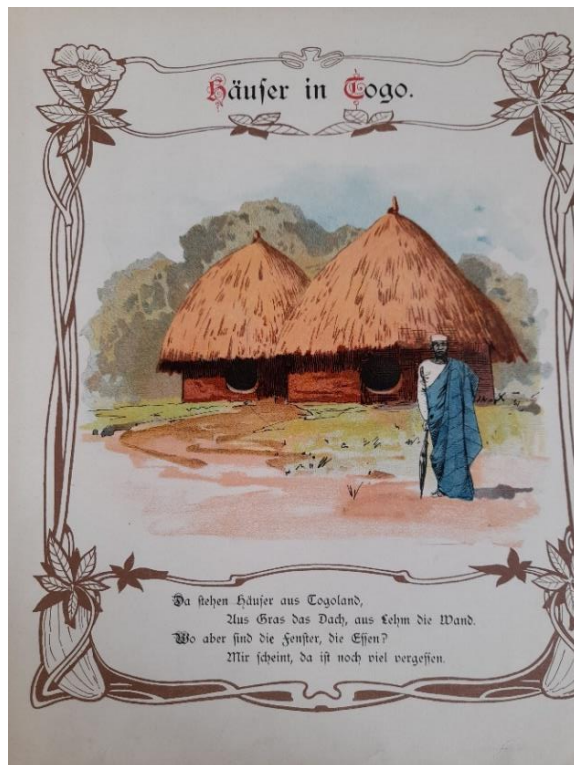
'What is there to see in this book?
Trees and fruit of a strange kind,
Ships and wagons on the way,
Black men and black women.
Self-built houses and huts,
Fierce warriors, sharp weapons,
Elephants, birds, oxen,
Bullock-trains, hanging bridges.
Everything we and you need.
Page by page our beautiful colonies pass by,
So they are as well known to you as your own fatherland.'⁵⁶

The book has pages that alternate between colour plates depicting a 'colonial' scene or event and a simple black and white line drawing of a contrasting image, often one of life in the German metropole.

⁵⁵ Ernest Ames, *Little Englanders* (London, 1899)

⁵⁶ Rudolf Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (Dresden, 1901), p.2

The colour images are detailed and provide a less reductionist view of empire than some of the simple stereotyped images already seen. For example, the below images of a 'Togoland' house and text explain about the houses, even that the builders had 'forgotten' the windows with an expectation that homes in Togo followed the same requirements as those in Germany. The standing man is dressed very differently from the stipes and leggings seen in the above examples, he is also holding an



2.10 „Häuser in Togo“, in Rudolf Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (Dresden, 1901), pp.14-5

umbrella, a very European accessory. The African villager carrying a European umbrella is an example of some colonised people wanting to demonstrate their collaboration with the colonisers by mimicking them.⁵⁷ The colonial image is accompanied by a line drawing of a German city street, the intention to demonstrate the comparison between the civilised metropole and the primitiveness of life in Togo. Other sets of images which make the same point are comparisons of German iron bridges with African 'hanging bridges',⁵⁸ and railways in Germany and Africa -the latter surrounded by stampeding elephants and amazed locals.⁵⁹

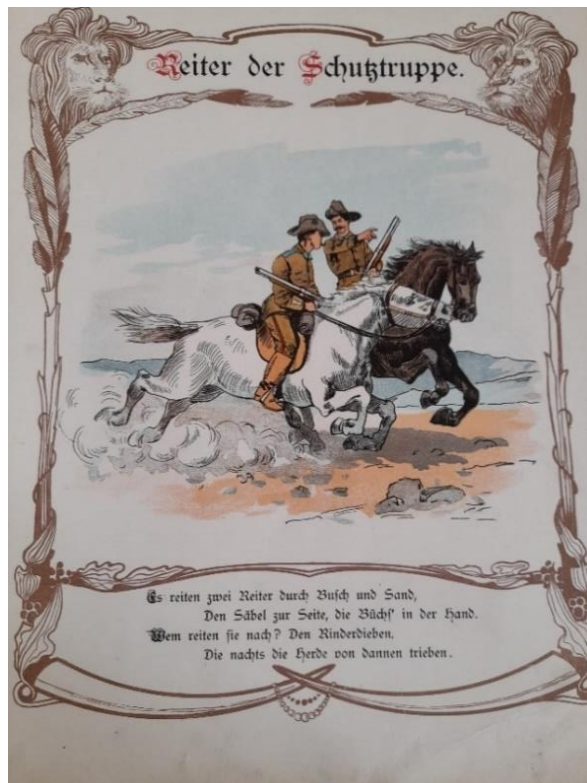
One of the more troubling comparisons is that of German cavalry hunting 'thieves' below, here the actual comparison is not as clear but the message the image conveys is unambiguous. In this pair of

⁵⁷ Albert Gouaffo, "Enacting Identity: Individuals, Families, and Communities", in Eve Rosenhaft & Robbie Aitken (eds.), *Africa in Europe: Studies in Transnational Practice in the Long Twentieth Century* (Liverpool University Press, 2013), p.19

⁵⁸ Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch*, pp.12-3

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pp.10-1.

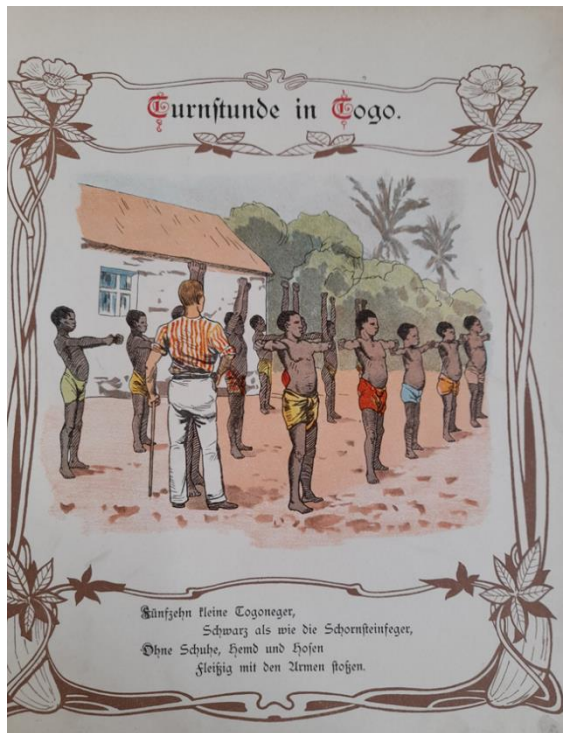
images the German *Schutztruppen* are the deliverers of order and justice to the colony, the 'thieves' are hunted down, bound, and dragged back to the camp in a way that would be more appropriate for hunting big game - a prized hunting trophy may well have been treated with more respect. Guilt is assumed avoiding any concerns for due legal process. The way in which the men are treated like animals is in the same vein as Meggendorfer writing of the African boy 'feeding' as an animal.



2.11 „Reiter der Schusstruppe“, in Rudolf Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (Dresden, 1901), pp.16-7

The images in the *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* were used as evidence to support the need to 'civilise' the colonies by introducing German ways of life, morals, and work. Another pair of images from the same publication also appear to make a connection to the theme of 'German work'. The first in the pair is a illustration of young boys in Togoland exercising under the instruction of a European adult, the image demonstrating that presence of Germans brought the benefits of discipline and fitness to a population racially regarded as being lazy. The accompanying line drawing is of two men dancing. The figure on the left unambiguous with racial imagery of a 'savage' African dancing when he should be hard at work or exercising properly, the figure on the right is not as clear. He is carrying chimney sweeping equipment, a reference to the text in the previous picture that describes the boys, as did the common joke, 'as black as chimney sweeps'. The figure is dressed in European clothes, and due to the work tools could be regarded as a German chimney sweep, if so, here the illustrator is

making a connection between ‘lazy’ Africans and working-class Germans – a theme that did exist in this period.⁶⁰



2.12 „Turnstunde in Togo“, in Rudolf Hellgrewe, *Deutsches Kolonial-Bilderbuch* (Dresden, 1901), pp.18-9

The above publications demonstrate how even the youngest of readers were exposed to images and rhetoric relating to empire and the military, even if it was also intended as satire for adults. The comical pictures and rhymes follow the nationality-focused, overtly patriotic, heroic, and tongue-in-cheek tone found throughout British material that will become evident in this chapter. The German material however, although using comic illustrations will continue to carry the message of duty, discipline, and the seriousness of imperialism and the military – although this is not always present and challenged by the cheap and popular ‘trash’ literature that will be seen later in this thesis. Not all British material contrasted so starkly with its German equivalent, material published by organisations with religious, moral, and instructional intentions could demonstrate a similar seriousness in the messaging.

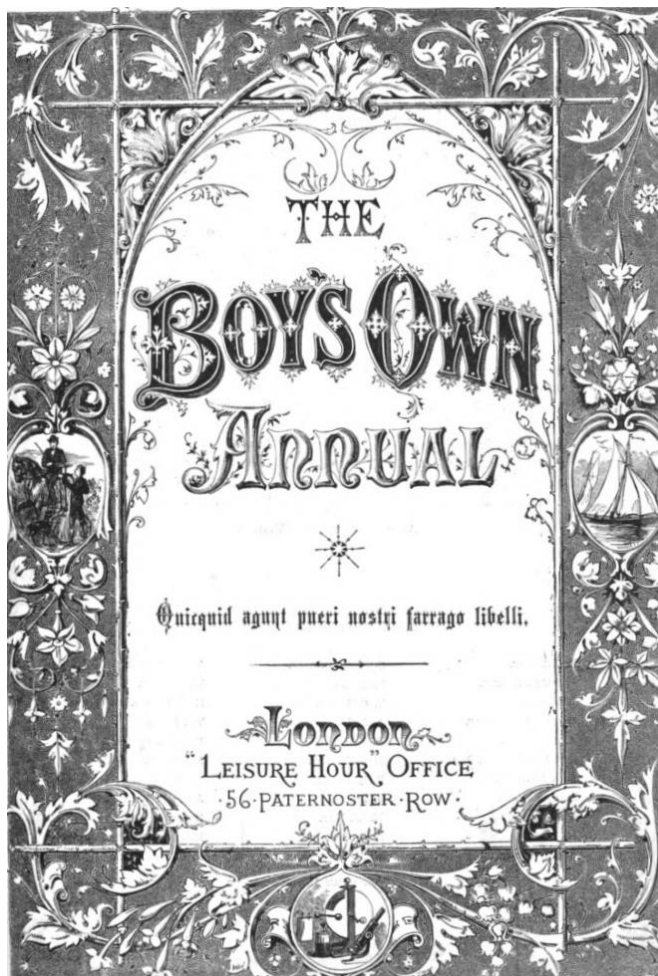
Promoting Empire to British and German Middle-Class Boys and Girls

British and German children were catered for by numerous periodical journal titles during this period, two of the most enduring British publications were the *Boys' Own Paper* and *The Girls' Own Paper*. Published by the Religious Tract Society (RTS). The RTS was formed by members of the London

⁶⁰ See: Bradley Naranch, “Introduction: German Colonialism Made Simple”, in Geoff Eley & Bradley Naranch, (eds.) *German Colonialism in a Global Age* (MIT. Press., 2015), p.7 in which early twentieth-century comparisons between African slaves and German working-class ‘slavery’ are discussed.

Missionary Society in 1799 as a for-profit evangelical publisher initially specialising in pamphlets of Anglican and non-conformist religious tracts. Tensions between religious beliefs and a commercial enterprise existed throughout the organisation's history. The extent of the society's commercial success is unclear although they appear to have struggled. In 1932 the publisher was reorganised and continued to exist as The Lutterworth Press. (*Boy's Own* was published between 1879-1967 and the *Girl's Own* from 1880).

The impact of the *Boy's Own* on British children is not clear; the target audience was not large, but the RTS claimed circulation figures of 500,000 to 650,000 per week in the late nineteenth century.⁶¹ However, these figures have been questioned by historians of children's literature. Joseph A. McAleer has compared the circulation figures of other popular publications discussed later in this chapter, such as *Marvel* and *Boy's Friend*, both creations of Harmsworth. The publisher claimed circulation figures of 120,000 per week for *Marvel* and 205,000 per week for *Boy's Friend*, both these figures for popular publications are far below those claimed by the RTS for the *Boy's Own*.⁶² The RTS claims have also



2.13 Front cover, *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.2 (London, 1880)

⁶¹ Kelly Boyd, *Manliness and the Boys' Story Paper in Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.34

⁶² Joseph A McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain 1914-1950* (Oxford University Press, 1992), p.215-9

been questioned by Kelly Boyd who through looking at the organisation's records that the *Girls' Own Paper* was far more successful and was used to subsidise the *Boy's Own*.⁶³

The *Boy's Own* contained articles and serialised stories from many of the popular authors and personalities of the late nineteenth-century including Arthur Conan-Doyle, G.A. Henty, Jules Verne, and Robert Baden-Powell, as well as many members with religious and military backgrounds. The intended readership for the *Boy's Own* is clear from the contents, the many articles dedicated to careers in banking, the civil service, colonial administration, and how to join the military as an officer indicate a middle-class, male readership. In her studies of children's writing Siân Pooley categorises the paper as an 'adult-content dominate[d]', 'elite periodical',⁶⁴ this characteristic makes the study of this publication ideal for the theme of this thesis. The type of content in the BOP demonstrates well the ideas, morals, pastimes, and careers middle-class adults considered appropriate for young British males. The *Girl's Own*, aimed at young female readers, retained the RTS's focus on moral-instructional material and promoted traditional values based on gender.

German readers also had access to similar 'elite' material, although not published by a religious organisation such as the RTS. *Der Gute Kamerad* and *Das Kränzchen*, aimed at boys and girls respectively, were published by Wilhelm Spemann the owner of a Stuttgart publishing house which



2.14 Image from J.W.H Stobart, B.A., *Adventure with a Tiger in Central India*, *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1889), pp.462-463

⁶³ Boyd, *Manliness*, p.31

⁶⁴ Siân Pooley, "Children's Writing and the Popular Press in England 1876-1914", *History Workshop Journal*, No.80 (Autumn 2015), pp.75-98, p.82

specialised in German history and literature books. Both publications started in the late nineteenth century, as did their British equivalents, and contained very similar material.

The content of the boy's literature, as expected, is varied, and covers topics such as hobbies and pastimes which included, cricket, boat-racing, bug collecting, cycling, and shooting; careers advice as mentioned previously; and fiction which included adventure and moral dilemmas. What makes the content of the British publication of interest is the high proportion of material which contain colonial and military themes, the empire and the military are either the topic of the article or present as the background.⁶⁵

Of this content in the *Boy's Own* the British Empire and colonies are the most common theme, the extent to which empire had penetrated culture and society has been discussed in the introduction and it is clear throughout the pages. Tales of adventure are the most frequent reference to British colonies; these stories often emphasise the good actions of the British military officers and civilian administrators which, in the view of the colonisers, would benefit the local populations. Examples of this would be religion, education, improved agricultural management, and one of the most frequently mentioned ways the British occupation could improve the lives of the populations was through hunting big cats. Often a military officer must venture into the jungle to hunt down a troublesome animal that has been attacking villagers. Amongst the greatest of the British hunters was a Major Probyn who claimed to have killed 'no less than 400' of 'these unwelcome visitors', the *Boy's Own* states this deed 'secured immunity' from 'the ravages of these animals' for the local inhabitants and helped 'overcome the suspicion of Englishmen'.⁶⁶ The author does point out that Major Probyn still lagged behind the self-appointed French Tiger-Slayer-in-General M. d'Harnencourt who could claim over 500 tigers slain.⁶⁷

German boys also read about the same big-game hunting adventures in the pages of *gute Kamerad*. The depictions of the dangers of colonial life, especially in Africa, supply the narrative to many stories which demonstrate the threat to life to indigenous populations and the chance for Europeans to demonstrate superiority over the local populations and mastering the environment by exterminating

⁶⁵ A survey of the content pages of *The Boys' Own Annual*, the annually bound version of the year's editions, demonstrates that between fifteen to twenty percent of the articles every year are directly addressing the themes of the military or empire. This figure does not include the articles, mostly fiction, which feature the same themes as the background. The *gute Kamerad* content of the same themes does not come close to this figure.

⁶⁶ "Mighty Hunters", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1897), p.32

⁶⁷ Other examples of this type of story include, "'An Officer of Engineers', A Tiger Story", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.1, pg.21; J.W.H Stobart, B.A., "Adventure with a Tiger in Central India", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1889), pp.462-3; Major-General R.C. Money, "How I Shot a Tiger in a House: A True Story", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1891), pp.12-14; and William Johnston, "A Jungle Tiger", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.24 (London, 1902), pp.197-8

it. Local populations were not only 'saved' from tigers by European colonists, but also lions,⁶⁸ elephants,⁶⁹ snakes,⁷⁰ rhinoceros,⁷¹ along with many other animals. Through fictional and reported 'real' stories which depicted these types of events boys would learn how they were expected to act if they found themselves in the empire's colonies as adults - or even as children. The role of European boys is portrayed in *Der gute Kamerad's* first serialised story *Der Sohn des Bärenjägers*. The American west story, which follows the formulative structure of similar stories in *Boys' Own*,⁷² includes the description and image of a young white boy saving a scared adult black man from an aggressive bear.⁷³ This reflects the racist narrative propagated across Europe and North America that the superiority of the 'white race' extended to European children over adults from 'inferior races' as well as the self-imposed 'burden' of saving the latter from the dangers around them and improving their lives as well as mastering the dangerous environment.



2.15 Illustration for *Der Sohn des Bärenjägers*, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.1 (Stuttgart, 1886), p.267

⁶⁸ Image: „Der Beberfall der Lümen“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.1 (Stuttgart, 1887), p.10

⁶⁹ „Our Note-Book“, *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.15 (London, 1893), p.127

⁷⁰ Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Middleton, „Life and Adventures in India“, *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.18 (London, 1896), pp.127-28

⁷¹ Lieut.-Col. Lowis, „My First and Only Rhinoceros Hunt“, *The Boys' Own Paper*, Vol.15 (London, 1893), p.810

⁷² The plots, themes, and images in serial stories set in the American west in both the *Boys' Own Paper* and *Der Gute Kamerad* are so similar that the authors, although different, could have been adapted from the same originals – which was common in 'penny dreadful' type publications.

⁷³ Illustration for „Der Sohn des Bärenjägers“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.1 (Stuttgart, 1887), p.267

Shooting dangerous animals was not the only benefit of British imperialism the readers of *Boys' Own* had the chance to learn. The editors and authors of the paper emphasised infrastructure projects such as railways and exploration to 'silence the 'Little Englanders' who... endeavour to make us all believe that all out work in Africa has been for harm and for no profit'.⁷⁴ British boys, the intended readers of the publication, could look forwards to taking part in the empire-building project. The writers of *Boy's Own* did their best to encourage and ready them with articles about life in Africa and Asia, from mundane day-to-day life to holidays and adventure. 'Boy Life in Australia' is one such article, the author, Reginald Horsley tells the tale of a young English boy who has moved to Australia and is encountering the wildlife, the native populations, and the opportunities for adventure both afford.⁷⁵ The boy's uncle who has been resident for longer explains the experiences as 'normal' for Australia and advises the boy in local dialect, how to interact with the Aborigines, and the best way to explore the 'bush' and hunt. Other stories from 'veterans' of civilian service in the British Empire frequently emphasise, the adventurous nature of colonial life as well as the proper way to act and engage with the local populations.⁷⁶ Although there is little of the racist language seen in the non-religious publications to be discussed later there is an implied paternal view of the indigenous populations. This view reflects the Christian-missionary imperial project and English racial supremacy, ideas which the readers of *Boy's Own* would take into adult life.

Possible future careers in Britain's colonial possessions were also a topic the writers of *Boy's Own* addressed frequently. 'How to' articles and questions would instruct the young readers on the qualifications for entry into the Colonial Civil Service (which was not as competitive as the English Civil Service),⁷⁷ what to expect during training at Britain's only colonial training college, Hollesley Bay in Suffolk,⁷⁸ and the possible roles in colonial service.⁷⁹ The editors and writers for the *Boy's Own* were keen to direct their young readers into careers in the administration of the British empire, emphasising the range of possible careers, the opportunities for advancement and adventure, along with the possibility of an easier route to entry for those who may lack the elite education needed for similar roles in the metropole. Civilian administration was far from the only type of roles in the empire, for

⁷⁴ "A Story of English Achievements in Africa", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.19 (London, 1897), p.303

⁷⁵ Reginald Horsley, "Boy Life in Australia", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.15 (London, 1893), p.346, p.363, p.392, p.421, p.600, p.694, & p.710

⁷⁶ For examples see: Hendrik B. Knoblauch, "Queer Sport: A Barrister's Experiences in South Africa", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1891), pp.132-134; J.C. Burnaby-Lake, "What Shall I Be? Practical Advice to Intending Colonists", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1899), pp.510-1; and David Ker, "In the Capital of Burmah", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), pp.376-8

⁷⁷ "'By an Assistant Resident Magistrate', What Shall I Be? Have you Thought of the Colonial Civil Service?", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.27 (London, 1905), p.367

⁷⁸ "Training for the Colonies", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.111

⁷⁹ "The Professions in the Colonies", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1891), p.591

those who craved more excitement, or those like the young Churchill who would still not have the academic ability to pass the exams, the military was an appealing career.

This content in the *Boys' Own* demonstrates the connection discussed in the introduction of a growing connection between the military and religion in late-Victorian Britain. The military, military equipment, and war are present throughout the pages. In many cases in a similar way to empire, as the background to other tales of adventure - the protagonist in many of the stories of colonial adventure is a serving military officer. However, articles which have a direct military topic are more common than those addressing imperial issues. The approach to military is similar to how the *Boys' Own* attempts to influence the reader about empire, tales of the military and war, stories of military life, and then instruction on how to enlist or gain a commission. The overt focus on the middle-class soldier was intentional and as others have also observed an attempt to 'establish a place in society for the rapidly expanding class',⁸⁰ and 'crystalise the link between masculinity and class status'.⁸¹

An example of the ever-present link between the military and empire in these stories is 'An Afghan Robber', here in a similar narrative to that of the Englishman saving the local population from a dangerous animal the British army, led by Colonel Wheeler, save the local villagers from 'Muslem bandits'.⁸² The story compares the European view of the Hindus (commercially minded which led them



2.16 Ein Sklaventransport im Sudan, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.4 (Stuttgart, 1890), p.415

⁸⁰ Boyd, *Manliness*, pp.46-7

⁸¹ *Ibid*

⁸² "An Afghan Robber", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.1, (London, 1879), pp.5-6

to be vulnerable to robbery), the recently defeated Sikh's, and those who followed 'Mohammedanism'.⁸³ The author warns of the contents of the Koran which 'makes light of robbing or killing an "infidel" and contains 'many wild legends and lying fables' which 'cannot stand examination of reason and learning as the book of the Christians does.'⁸⁴ The Brigand leader, Dilàwar Khan, finds his activities bring the attention of the new British rulers of the region who summon him. Dilàwar's contact with the English exposes him to Christian soldiers for the first time, surprised that the British had a reputation 'of not killing women in war'.⁸⁵ Furthermore, on hearing Wheeler preach from the Bible he instantly sees the Koran for what it is and declares himself a Christian. Now on the right moral path he stops his life of robbery and becomes an ally of the British, even fighting for them and becoming a 'favourite of the officers'. The author observes the 'Afghans are a sociable race... [as] are all Orientals' who are open to European (Christian) influence given the chance.⁸⁶ In one story the young readers of the *Boy's Own* are reminded of the superiority of the English race, the Christian faith, and the British army.

The depiction of Islam as an evil, barbaric religion is also evident in the pages of *Der gute Kamerad* which shares *Boys' Own's* use of Arabs and Muslims as a dangerous immoral enemy. Arab 'Muslim' slavers, for both the British and German writers and editors were the ideal enemy. The Arab slaver represented not only an inferior violent race, but also a target for the Christian crusading armies in Africa and offered the chance to demonstrate the Christian-European moral superiority by rescuing the slaves. This narrative is present in different forms, the serialised story *Die Sklavenkaravane* by one of Germany's most popular children's authors at the time, Karl May,⁸⁷ which appeared in 1889 was an example which contained all the above narratives. The explorer-hero encounters the brutal Arab slave traders and after the expected trials and setbacks finally demonstrates his racial and moral supremacy by defeating the slavers and freeing their captives.⁸⁸ More documentary 'real-life' examples include the above illustration of a 'slave transport' in the same volume, and the account of a naval action hunting slave traders along the African coast.⁸⁹ Arabic slave traders and pirates were also a popular topic in the BOP, these 'enemies' often were treated far more harshly than natives in colonial fiction.⁹⁰

⁸³ "An Afghan Robber", p.5

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁸⁵ The article does point out that at one time Dilàwar did witness the British killing a woman but it in fact was a man dressed as a woman.

⁸⁶ "An Afghan Robber", p.5

⁸⁷ Karl May and his work will be discussed later in this chapter.

⁸⁸ Karl May, „Die SklavenKaravane“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.4 (Stuttgart, 1890), weekly parts.

⁸⁹ Illustration: „Jagd auf ein Sklavenschiff“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.1 (Stuttgart, 1887), pp.200-01

⁹⁰ Daphne Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books* (Taylor & Francis, 2000), pp.9-10

The theme of Arab slavers also appeared in school textbooks, including those co-authored by C.R.L. Fletcher and Rudyard Kipling introduced in the previous chapter.⁹¹

The messaging about 'racial' superiority, both English and German, is explicit throughout both publications. However, both empires are forced to reassert the dominance of the Europeans during conflicts with the native colonial populations. The Superiority of the British Army and English masculinity was challenged in 1879, the same year as *Dilàwar's* tale is published, by the outbreak of the Anglo-Zulu War in South Africa and the initial successes of King Cetshwayo kaMpande. The defeat of British troops by an enemy regarded as 'savages' seriously undermined British claims to 'superior soldiery'.⁹² The response from those most threatened by this turn, the church and military, was to fetishize the body of the Zulu warrior and create the idea of the 'noble savage'.⁹³ Efforts were made to present the Zulus as fearsome warriors, savage, bloodthirsty, and a worthy opponent for the British soldier. The image appealed to the young British readers, the 'noble savage', as M. Daphne Kutzer also points out, demonstrated the experience of 'escaping the constraints of society' which attracted many Europeans to colonial life.⁹⁴ 'The British press responded to the outbreak of conflict between the British and Zulus with outrage, the Zulu's were portrayed as ungrateful savages who had rejected the British. Churchill reflected on his emotions on reading the news of the 'black and naked' Zulus and recalled feeling 'Very angry at the Zulus, [and] glad to hear they were being killed.'⁹⁵

The pages of the *Boy's Own* in 1879 support the effort to explain the Zulu victory. 'Cetewayo', an unnamed author explains, is the 'chief of this warlike race, is of the line of Chaka, and still retains the same severe regimental discipline over his warriors'.⁹⁶ Previously the article links the Zulu king Chaka with historical tyrants, Chaka is called 'the Napoleon of South Africa' and his kingdom is described as being under 'Spartan rule' and 'subordinated... to the aims of military conquest'.⁹⁷ The author does stress the differences between the 'civilised' Zulus 'of the colony' who were likable people 'as picturesque in their way as they are peculiar', and the 'Zulu of Zululand' who are 'not as pleasant to contemplate'.⁹⁸ The article explains the reason they rejected British rule was that they were 'a savage pure and simple, absolutely submissive to the superstitions of the witch-finder and rain-doctor, and

⁹¹ See also Donald Leinster-Mackay, "The Nineteenth-Century English Preparatory School: Cradle and Creche of Empire?", in Mangan, *Benefits Bestowed*, pp.56-75, p.63

⁹² Michael Brown, "Cold Steel, Weak Flesh: Mechanism, Masculinity and the Anxieties of the Late Victorian Empire", *Cultural and Social History* (2017), p.9

⁹³ *Ibid*, p.10

⁹⁴ Kutzer, *Empire's Children*, p.8

⁹⁵ Churchill, *My Early Life*, p.14

⁹⁶ "With the Zulus", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1879), pp.148-9, p.149

⁹⁷ *Ibid*

⁹⁸ *Ibid*

with his life and belongings entirely at the will of his king'.⁹⁹ The savagery of the Zulus of Zululand is reinforced in a later article which laments the 'Martyring' of the Zulus who had chosen to be baptised, killed by the Zulu king. The remaining Christian converts had to flee to British protection and freedom, the BOP explained that they were 'Slaves to the Zulu king, only Christianity and the English can free them'.¹⁰⁰

The Anglo-Zulu war soon disappears from the pages of the *Boy's Own* by the end of the year, the final articles ensuring that its young readers were aware of a final British and Christian victory. Articles cover the recovery of the twenty-fourth Regiments colours,¹⁰¹ and that the 'cruel military system of the Zulu nation has been ended' and Cetewayo 'the ex-king of Zululand seems to be taking kindly to his captivity in Cape Town'.¹⁰² The author states that it is with 'regret that a warlike solution was needed' in this case.¹⁰³ The Zulu warrior may have been a challenge the British soldier had to face, but the boys and girls reading the *Boy's Own* could be assured of the superiority of the crusading British soldier and his Christian mission.

The events of 1879 do not feature so frequently in later volumes of the *Boy's Own* but the military and its role in imperialism do make up a large part of the content. The history of the British army is told in stories about historical wars, especially the Peninsular War, Crimean War, and the Indian Mutiny.¹⁰⁴ Ongoing conflicts in British colonies are rarely mentioned again until the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899, this shifted the focus of the British public, and the *Boy's Own*, from the navy to the Army. The coverage in the *Boy's Own* strongly reflect the shift seen in British society towards the army and individual soldiers who are regarded as Christian soldiers and martyrs.¹⁰⁵

As with the Zulus the editors of *Boy's Own* first addressed the character of the enemy, the reader could learn of the Boer's loneliness as children and how they are introduced to weapons at an early age,¹⁰⁶ how to pronounce Boer words,¹⁰⁷ the origin of Natal names,¹⁰⁸ and a glossary intended to help 'B.O.P. readers' with accounts of operations found in other publications. One character who comes to

⁹⁹ "With the Zulus", p.149

¹⁰⁰ "The Future of Zululand", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1879), p.463

¹⁰¹ "Cetewayo", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.2 (London, 1880), p.235

¹⁰² "Recovery of the colours of the 24th", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1879), p.269

¹⁰³ "Cetewayo", p.235

¹⁰⁴ For examples see: Rear-Admiral W.R. Kennedy, "Notes from My Log: or True Stories of Adventure and Peril", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1892), pp.502-4; Capt. John G. Simkins, "A Peninsular Skirmish", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.16 (London, 1894), pp.760-3; Rev. Charles Merk, "An Old Battle-Field of Heroes", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.9 (London, 1887), pp.724-5

¹⁰⁵ John Peck, *War, The Army and Victorian Literature*, (Palgrave, 1998), pp.165-6

¹⁰⁶ Ormond Lodge, "The Boer Boy", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.286

¹⁰⁷ "Pronunciation of Boer Words", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.581

¹⁰⁸ "The Derivation of Natal Names", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.303

the fore is Robert Baden-Powell, later to be the founder of the Scout Movement, who gained fame due to his actions at the siege of Mafeking in 1899-1900. Baden-Powell's experiences of scouting and the use of boys for assisting the military led to the creation of the Scouts in 1909.¹⁰⁹ Already in 1900, the military officer was turning his attention to the British youth offering advice on 'health and manliness' and the evils of smoking tobacco.

A feeble youth, who smokes because he thinks it is manly, is just as liable to drink or to swear because he has known grown-up men do it -not because it is any pleasure to him: then he gets into the habit of it, and the fault becomes part of him for the rest of his life...

Baden-Powell then continues his advice by linking good habits and duty using the soldier as the correct male role model.

Your recognition of the good work being done by the soldiers out here [Transvaal] in their devotion to their duty shows that you are looking in the right direction to see what is the proper example of a man to follow. And I think that if boys would take the line of always trying to do what is their duty, it would become, in a short time, part of their nature...¹¹⁰

The example set by the soldier, which Baden-Powell advised to follow, was duty and not an example of how to live. Even in B-P's middle-class crusading army it is hard to believe that bad habits such as smoking, drinking, and swearing were absent.

Baden-Powell's character was regarded as the ideal role model for the readers of BOP and his life story (and his poetry) was used to demonstrate this.¹¹¹ Baden-Powell and others within the military and church emphasised the need for duty, heroism, and sacrifice in England's imperialist mission in what they regarded as a character-building environment – one that countered the detrimental consequences of urban living. This messaging also was present in the pages of the *Boy's Own*, in 'Duty: A Straight Talk with "B.O.P." Boys' the author 'An old ex-soldier' tells boys of their duties in life, from 'be kind at home, especially to you mother' to treating and defending comrades-in-arms kindly while on duty in the empire's frontiers.¹¹² Heroism and sacrifice were lauded in tales of those who received the Victoria Cross in the battles against the Zulu and Boer,¹¹³ and the new fashion for war memorials was demonstrated in a series of articles on the different memorial installations at public schools and

¹⁰⁹ John Fox, "Lord Robert Baden-Powell", *Prospects*, Vol.43, No.2 (June 2013), pp.251-63, p.258

¹¹⁰ "Baden-Powell's Advice to England's Boys", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.367

¹¹¹ See: "B-P. At it Again", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.751; "Baden-Powell", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.221; and Baden-Powell and His Schoolboy Friend, *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.255.

¹¹² "Duty: A Straight Talk with "B.O.P." Boys", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.330

¹¹³ Amongst many articles see: "The V.C. Roll of Honour", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.495

universities.¹¹⁴ For the readers who wanted to embark on a career in the army the BOP supplied advice on what army life was like,¹¹⁵ and the qualifications required for entry.¹¹⁶ All the advice was aimed at receiving commissions as officers, an indication of the readership the publication was aimed at.

It was not only in Britain that conflict between the colonised and the coloniser challenged the racial narrative in children's literature, the Herero Wars 1904-08 required the *gute Kamerad* in 1904 to address the question about why the German military appeared to struggle against the 'savage' Herero 'rebels'.¹¹⁷ The military response to the 'uprising' in German Southwest Africa, so the editors and writers argued, was slowed by the difficult terrain and that it was a 'fundamentally different war' to that seen in Europe.¹¹⁸ They then state that the way the army fought the 'rebellious Herero' who organised themselves like a 'crowd' was akin to 'hunters in the wild'.¹¹⁹ The article included a photo of the terrain found in the German colony to demonstrate how rocky and rough it was.¹²⁰ A later article in the 1908 annual provided evidence to the young readers that the four-year struggle to re-establish control was worth the effort with an article about diamond mining in the colony.¹²¹

From the above it is clear that empire was continuously present in both *Boy's Own* and *Der gute Kamerad* the themes do diverge. Where the *gute Kamerad* differs from the *Boy's Own* is in the anticipated levels of engagement with empire and colonies. Given the difference in numbers of British and German citizens who travelled to, served, or who settled in overseas colonies this is no surprise.¹²² Whereas the British publication not only promotes the adventurous nature of empire, the material benefits, and moral-religious justifications for imperialism it also promotes direct involvement with it. This is not so evident in the German equivalent, a reflection of the much newer, smaller scale of German colonialism, and the manpower required to maintain it. These differences are reflected in which regions and populations the publications focused on.

¹¹⁴ For examples see: "The Charterhouse Memorial", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.27 (London, 1905), p.188; "The Eton War Memorial", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.27 (London, 1905), p.344; and "The Harrow War Memorial", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.27 (London, 1905), p.254

¹¹⁵ Guy Shepperton, "Soldiers and Their Equipment", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.25 (London, 1903), p.440, and Rev. E.J. Hardy, M.A., Chaplain to the Forces, "The Humour of Our Soldiers", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.24 (London, 1902), p.14

¹¹⁶ "Examinations for Officers", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.9 (London, 1887), p.80

¹¹⁷ The 'savage' nature that the German colonists and military wanted to portray to German children is evident in a series of collectable cards which depict events from the initial uprising, images of these can be found in Appendix D.

¹¹⁸ „Zum Aufstande in Deutsch-Südwestafrika“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.23 (Stuttgart, 1908), pp.575-6

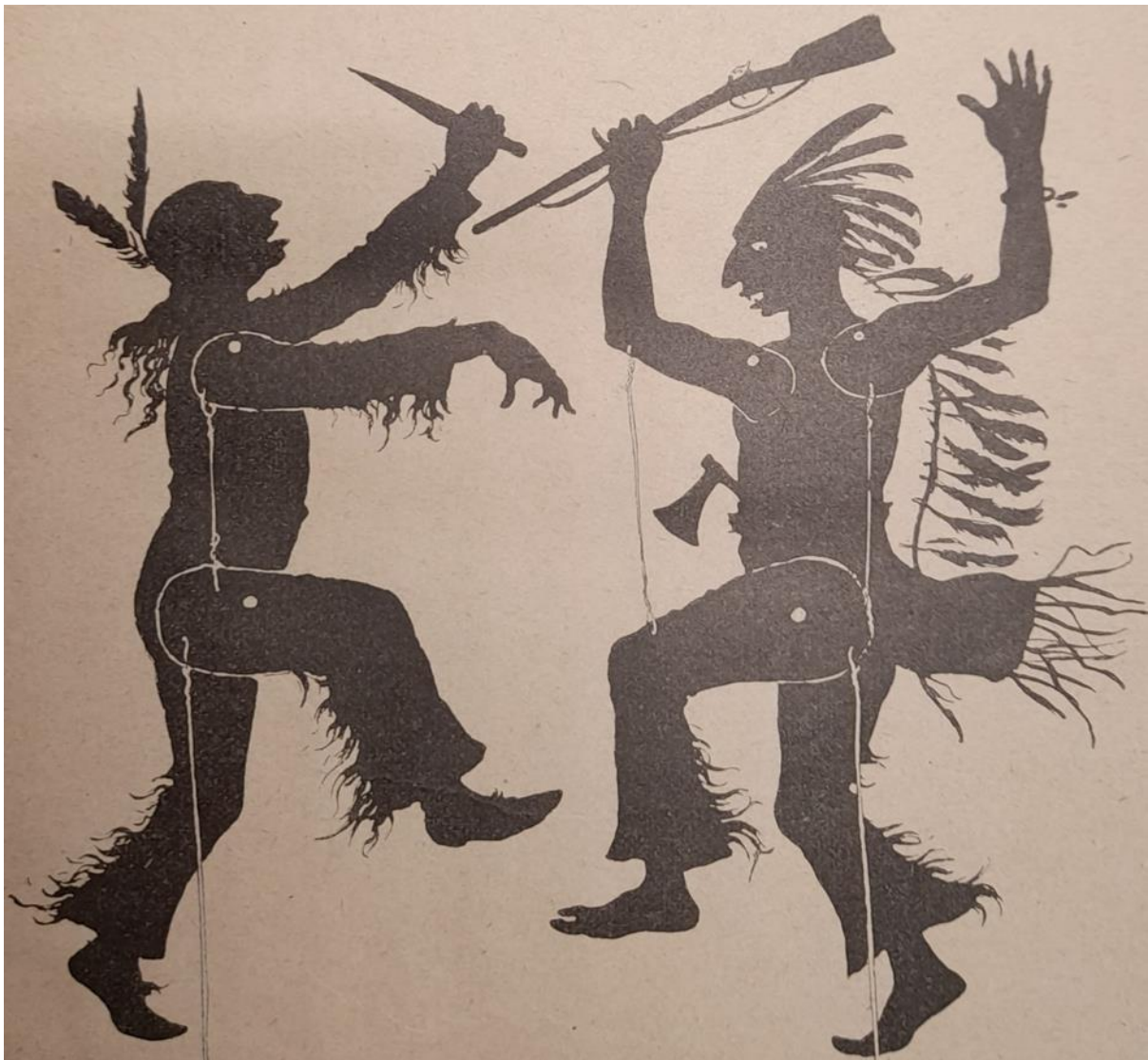
¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp.575-6

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p.576

¹²¹ „Von den Diamantenfeldern in Deutsch-Südwestafrika“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.18 (Stuttgart, 1904), p.432

¹²² Katharine Kennedy, "African Heimat: German colonies in Wilhelmine and Weimar reading books", *Internationale Schulbuchforschung*, Vol.24, No.1, Afrika/Africa (2002), pp.7-26, no.7

The young German readers of *gute Kamerad* had access to articles about different colonies and frontiers from other European and North American regions. Exotic examples from around the globe are present, not just the wildlife which is commonly seen as the subject of a hunt,¹²³ but also the people. Stereotypical racialised images of African and Chinese people are common, often related to playthings for children's games. One of the articles on *Schaffenspiel* instruct the reader how to make puppets depicting these types of images, dancing native Americans,¹²⁴ an African child on an Ostrich,¹²⁵ and an African warrior battling with a European soldier are all subjects of this children's craft-play.¹²⁶ A later article also contains the instructions to construct a kite with the stereotypical



2.17 Silhouette to create puppets, *Schaffenspiel*, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.7 (Stuttgart, 1895), p.13

¹²³ For examples see: „Der Veteran und die Tigerin“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.2 (Stuttgart, 1888), p.353; „Der indische Tiger“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.10 (Stuttgart, 1897), p.567; and „Patherjäger“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1909), p.216

¹²⁴ „Schaffenspiel“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.7, (Stuttgart, 1895), p.13

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p.12

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, p.25

image of a Chinese man.¹²⁷ Racialised images of Africans also appear in sections dedicated to decorating Easter eggs and making masks.¹²⁸ The exotic nature of empire is also reflected in two articles about the shortest and tallest people in the world. The first, in the 'questions and answers' section of the publication, uses an illustration of two men, apparently from China, at opposite ends of the height scale.¹²⁹ A later photo depicts an African man of small stature balanced on the outstretched hand of a much larger man¹³⁰ – both examples of extremes in height stand out with the use of non-Europeans as an oddity. The depictions of people from European colonies or other regions of interest are not always as offensively stereotypical, often they would be the loyal but subservient companion to the hero or the enemy.

African troops in German service were occasionally referred to, something absent from the BOP who only discussed Indians in British service. The demonstrated role of the native support varied from porters carrying heavy weaponry through the jungle to a heliograph unit.¹³¹ The below image of African men proficiently using military technology an image that does not collaborate with the comical images of black men and women with European technology and fashion.



2.18 „Eine farbige herliographenabteilung in Deutsch-Ostafrika“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.22 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.540

¹²⁷ *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.10 (Stuttgart, 1897), p.47

¹²⁸ „Ostereier“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.3 (Stuttgart, 1889), p.296

¹²⁹ „Der chinesische riese Chang und sein Landsmann Cheh-Mah“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.1 (Stuttgart, 1887), p.256

¹³⁰ „Der kleinste Mann der Welt“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1909), p.247

¹³¹ See illustration: „Überschreiten eines flusses im Nigergebiet“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.10 (Stuttgart, 1897), p.735; and „Eine farbige herliographenabteilung in Deutsch-Ostafrika“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.22 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.540

The military and its presence in the metropole and colonies are present in *Der gute Kamerad* but not in the same quantity as its British equivalent, nor in the same exclusively nationally focused way.¹³² This wider view of European soldiery as well as a continued focus on the exotic nature of empire apparent with inclusion of a photograph of British soldiers on camels.¹³³ German military in Africa was presented by images or stories of colonial units led by German officers, or members of the *Schutztruppen* parading or working together – demonstrating the comradeship and collective duty Germany expected from its soldiers.

The military presence in Germany was approached differently and references to soldiers on duty are rare, one exception to this were articles on the annual ‘*Kaisermanövers*’ which contained reports and images of the army exercises often with the Kaiser overseeing them.¹³⁴ The monarch and the royal family’s military connections are also referred to in articles dedicated to the Kaiser’s household. The first edition of *Der gute Kamerad* contained an article celebrating Wilhelm I’s ninetieth birthday, the below image depicts the members of the royal family, young and old, ‘exercising’ in military uniforms.



2.19 ‘Prinz Wilhelm und seine Brüder beim Exerzieren, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1909), p.146

The boys, even though they were princes, were not exemptional in wearing full military uniforms, boys are often pictured wearing military uniform in the pages of the publication. The readers were

¹³² This was likely a reflection of the far fewer numbers of white military personnel in German colonies.

¹³³ Image of: „englische Kamelreiter in somaliland“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.28 (Stuttgart, 1914), p.32

¹³⁴ „Kaisermanöver“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), pp.111-2

depicted, as below, at 'soldier-play',¹³⁵ or participating in military manoeuvres as part of youth organisations.¹³⁶

In the same volume, despite the tales and images of boys playing at war and taking part in military-style manoeuvres, the editors published a short comment about 'English [youth] in the grip of militarism'.¹³⁷ The article claims that at the 'constant encouragement of Lord Roberts' and the press, schools were introducing shooting clubs and military training to create '*Jugendwehren*'.¹³⁸ Given the popularity of shooting in British schools and the content of publications such as *Boys' Own* this conclusion is not an impossible one - only a year later Baden-Powell created the military-themed Scout movement. An increased attention to the British military is evident in the volumes of *Der gute Kamerad* in the first decade of the twentieth century, especially military and naval technology. This, and the attention on warfare in the publication will be examined in more detail in section two.



2.20 'Gefangen', *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.10

Although the vast majority of the content of the *Boys' Own* is about the British empire and the British military it is not entirely so. Many tales of adventure and stories of encounters with 'savages' take place in North America, the Native Americans popular subjects not only in literature but games and toys as well.¹³⁹ The *Boys' Own* contains more articles on the 'Red Indian' than on the African

¹³⁵ „Gefangen“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.10

¹³⁶ „Feind in Sicht!“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.28 (Stuttgart, 1914), inside cover.

¹³⁷ „Englische Jugendwehr“, *Der gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.247

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p.247

¹³⁹ The popularity of 'cowboys and Indians' will be discussed later.

population of Britain's colonies, although more attention is paid to the population of India.¹⁴⁰ The *Boys' Own* infrequently turns to England's European neighbours for content, exceptions are the coronation of Wilhelm II,¹⁴¹ and the occasional look at Germany in the early twentieth century as the naval competition was reaching its zenith.

Unlike for the army, which only peaked during the larger military operations, interest in the Royal Navy remained high throughout this period. Testament to the esteem the service held in British society and the importance it had in the maintenance of empire. Akin to the empire, the navy and naval officers frequently play a part in the tales of adventure throughout the pages of the BOP.¹⁴² The Royal Navy's warships were subject to scrutiny, overwhelmingly positive, by the contributors to the paper. The size of the navy was often mentioned,¹⁴³ as were the size of the weapons onboard¹⁴⁴ – not just the Royal Navy but for the Merchant Navy also.¹⁴⁵ Concerns and questions about the navy and service in it were also addressed; one in-depth article explained why 'ironclads' floated.¹⁴⁶ Other more practical subjects included examinations for the navy,¹⁴⁷ naval payrates,¹⁴⁸ fitness standards required,¹⁴⁹ and what to expect during training.¹⁵⁰ As with the subjects of empire and the army discussed above, the message from the editors, authors, and contributors to the BOP is one of Christian duty, service to England, and the opportunity for adventure and enrichment. However, although these themes exist side-by-side in the pages of the material there existed a tension between the two, duty and obedience cannot always exist in the same space as freedom and adventure. The role the draw of adventure played alongside messages about military duty to the nation will become increasingly important for the navy and the growing naval arms race which will be discussed in depth in Chapter Four along with how it is depicted in the *Boys' Own*, *gute Kamerad*, and other publications.

¹⁴⁰ Articles on North America include, "Why the Indian Paints His Face", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.25, (London, 1903), p.648; "The Texas Rangers", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.24 (London, 1902), p.760; and M. Rutherford, "A Captivity Amongst the North-American Indians", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), pp.648-651.

¹⁴¹ "The Emperor William", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1891), p.31 (Illustration)

¹⁴² For examples see: S. Whitchurch Sadler, R.N., "How I captured My First Slaver", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.2 (London, 1880), p.689; and Admiral Kennedy, "Adventures in H.M.S. Wasp", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.4 (London, 1892), pp.365-7, pp.392-5, & pp.410-3

¹⁴³ "Our Great Guns", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.4 (London, 1882), p.321

¹⁴⁴ For example: "The Navy in 1882", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.4 (London, 1882), p.383

¹⁴⁵ "Our Merchant Navy", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.9 (London, 1887), p.334, & p.342

¹⁴⁶ Nathaniel Barnaby, C.B., Director of Naval Construction, "Our Ironclads, and Why They Float", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.4 (London, 1882), p.820.

¹⁴⁷ "Naval Examinations", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1889), p.656

¹⁴⁸ "Naval Payrates", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1889), p.14

¹⁴⁹ "Standards for Navy", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.17 (London, 1895), p.96; and "Measurement for the Navy", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.18 (London, 1890), p.704

¹⁵⁰ "How to Enter the Royal Navy", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1899), p.799; "Boys of the Greenwich Naval School at Play", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1899), p.5; and "Gun Practice on a Training Ship", *The Boys' Own Annual*, Vol.23 (London, 1901), p.372

The contents of the *Boys' Own* and *Der gute Kamerad* are obviously authored and chosen by adults who given the nature of organisations and individuals such as the RTS and Wilhelm Spemann are following an agenda, an agenda which is clear from the above, Christian missionary duty, patriotic military duty, imperialism as a vehicle for the spread of Christianity and the military as the tool for empire building and the defeat of those who resist. This was alongside, and part of, the 'tightly-focus editorial agendas centred on showing readers how to grow into more moral, strongly gendered adults' that has been highlighted by other scholarship which includes the *Boys' Own*.¹⁵¹

Of great interest in the *Boys' Own* and *Der gute Kamerad* are the weekly 'Correspondence' or 'Questions and Answers' pages in which the editors reply to letters from the paper's readers. Unfortunately, only the replies are published but it is not difficult to work out what the original question could have been. Many questions address the mundane - where to buy certain books, the best cycle to purchase, and how to keep pets. However, many others address the topics central to this thesis, readers write in asking for advice on joining the military, with worries about suitability for service abroad, questions about pay and career prospects in the military and colonial civil service, and queries about warships, individual army regiments, and global events. These questions from the BOP's readership demonstrate an engagement with the subject and signals that the military, colonial, and imperial content is popular and stimulates responses, further questions, and a wish to take part in adult life. The responses are short and instructional, ensuring the reader continues to receive the intended moral, duty-focused, and highly gendered message - One reply dismissively asks, 'Are you a girl?'

Both the RTS and Wilhelm Spemann publications for the young female market offered an equally gendered message for girls. The *Girls' Own Paper* which was first published a year after the *Boys' Own* retained the RTS's focus on moral-instructional material which promoted traditional values based on gender. Although the target audience remains the middle-class children of Britain the gender differences are immediately obvious, the military and empire are not present in the same 'omni-present' way as the *Boys' Own*. References to the military are near non-existent, any appearances mostly restricted to the uniform of an adult male in the serialised stories. Empire is present in a few articles about life in the colonies,¹⁵² opportunities for employment,¹⁵³ or notably during 1901,

¹⁵¹ Pooley, "Children's Writing", p.82

¹⁵² For examples see: Julia Lawrason, "Summer in Muskoka, the Free Grant District of Canada", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.3 (London, 1882), p.720; A Zenana Missionary, "Girl-Life in India", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.5 (London, 1885), p.492; Dora de Blaquiére, "On the Purchase of Outfits for India and the Colonies", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1890), p.68, p.212, & p.498; and "A High School Girl, Camping in the New Zealand Bush", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.29 (London, 1908), p.438

¹⁵³ For examples see: E.B.S., "On Emigrating as Domestic Servant to New Zealand", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.6 (London, 1885), p.492; The Hon. Emily Kinnaird, "In India with the Medical Missionaries", *Girls' Own Annual*,

important events.¹⁵⁴ Empire, when mentioned, is almost always referring to the colonies of European populations – Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. The exception to this is India and African colonies are rarely mentioned. The *Girls' Own* editor's focus is not on 'creating a space' in British society as the RTS did for its male middle-class readers but reinforcing the middle-class vision for how their young girls should behave and their ambitions- or 'Shaping the "useful" girl' in the words of the *Girls' Own* editors.¹⁵⁵

The 'Useful girl' was shaped by the attitudes of the *Girls' Own* editors and writers to the role of girls and women. These change over time, reflecting the developments in broader society. During the first decade of publication many articles promote (or dissuade) the readers from certain pastimes and life choices. The 1880 annual, the collection of the first year's weekly papers, contains articles on bread making,¹⁵⁶ Etiquette,¹⁵⁷ and nursing.¹⁵⁸ Other examples from the 1880s include articles on washing and ironing,¹⁵⁹ life in service,¹⁶⁰ and a warning about the disadvantages for girls with higher education.¹⁶¹ Attitudes change quickly - by 1892 the readers could learn about 'Trained Intelligence, and what it will do for girls',¹⁶² and in 1895 the idea of 'university degrees for women' is being discussed.¹⁶³ One particularly adventurous article published in 1901 encouraged girls to try 'some foreign sauces' which were in greater demand on the continent where 'scarcely a single dish... has not its accompanying sauce'.¹⁶⁴ The article introduced such exotic condiments as horseradish, garlic, chive, and mustard sauces.¹⁶⁵

The rapid change in content may be due to the unpopularity of material that promoted such a gendered world view – similar to the early experience of the Girl Guides movement discussed later. That the *Girls' Own* proved to be more profitable than the BOP demonstrates the more adventurous content seen later was popular amongst the readers. By the turn of the century the readers of the

Vol.12 (London, 1891), p.686; and Jeanie Rose Brewer, "The Opening for Teachers in Canada", *Girl's Own Annual*, Vol.32 (London, 1911), p.101.

¹⁵⁴ For examples see: The Rev. E. Hardy, "Soldiers Wives", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1900), p.665; and "One Who Knows Her, The Boer Vrouw", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.22 (Extra Summer Part) (London, 1901), p.526.

¹⁵⁵ "Shaping the 'Useful' Girl", *Girls Own Paper*, Vol.28 (London, 1907), p.23

¹⁵⁶ Ruth Lamb, "Bread and Bread Making", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1880), p.350, & p.439

¹⁵⁷ Arden Loft, "Etiquette for Ladies and Girls", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1880), p.211, & p.407

¹⁵⁸ S.F.A. Caulfield, "Nursing as a Profession", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.1 (London, 1880), p.454

¹⁵⁹ Ruth Lamb, "How to Wash and Iron", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.2 (London, 1881), p.18, p.107, & p.219

¹⁶⁰ Ruth Lamb, "Servants and Service", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.4 (London, 1883), p.150, p.234, p.330, p.358, & p.486

¹⁶¹ "The Disadvantages of Higher Education", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.3 (London, 1883), p.333

¹⁶² The Ven. Archdeacon Wilson, "Trained Intelligence, and what it will do for girls", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.13 (London, 1892), p.561

¹⁶³ Katherine St. John Conway, "University Degrees for Women", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.5 (London, 1885),

¹⁶⁴ "Some Foreign Sauces", *Girls Own Paper*, Vol.22 (London, 1901), pp.363-4

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*

Girls' Own had access to articles about 'politics for girls',¹⁶⁶ 'physical training',¹⁶⁷ global travel,¹⁶⁸ and aircraft.¹⁶⁹ One theme that does stand out in the *Girls' Own* that is absent from the *Boys' Own* is the engagement with Germany. From the earliest editions the paper contains regular articles on how girls and women live in Germany, German life, and the German royal family.¹⁷⁰ Given some of the subjects it is suggested that some young women would be expected to marry and move abroad. The depiction of Germany and the life of German women appears at odds with the expectations for young British women and the comparisons made are not entirely positive. German women, one article states, are 'not so fresh and dainty-looking as ours in England' but, the author continues, they are 'good hard-working people'.¹⁷¹ The article also warns of the hard beds, short blankets, and hard lives of the reader's German counterparts.¹⁷²

Das Kränzchen demonstrates the same gendered content differences as that of the *Girls' Own Paper*. Evident is the wish to shield German girls from the dangers and violence of colonial life. The content of the publication was of the same 'feminine' topics as the British equivalent. The contents of one typical annual would include: how to do hair, dolls house kitchens, dancing, kites, and charity work.¹⁷³ On the rare occasions when empire and colony did appear it was in a safe form, an image of a tiger which readers of the *Der gute Kamerad* would have seen wild, dangerous, and likely attacking a defenceless African native was instead illustrated locked in a cage, the perceived threat of the wild animal removed but requiring sympathy for the noble beast which now lacked its freedom.¹⁷⁴

All four of the above 'middle-class' publications demonstrate common ideals. For boys the opportunity for adventure, self-improvement, and employment were important messages, alongside the reinforcement of ideas of European racial and national, moral, physical, and intellectual supremacy which justified European imperialism. Tales and images of military life normalised the experiences and informed the young readers in what to expect if and when they embarked on a military or colonial career. For girls the message was about remaining at home and observing the empire safely, protected

¹⁶⁶ Fredrick Ryland, "Politics for Girls", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.17 (London, 1886), p.86, p.118, p.374, p.519, & p.547

¹⁶⁷ The Editor of Physical Culture, "The Physical Training of Girls", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1900), p.422

¹⁶⁸ One Who Has Seen Them, "How to see Foreign Countries", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.29 (London, 1908), p.452

¹⁶⁹ Lilian Todd, "How I Built My Aeroplane", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.31 (London, 1910), p.294

¹⁷⁰ For examples see: Emma Brewer, "Girl-Life in Germany", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.5 (London, 1884), p.148; W.A.H. Legg, "A German Nuptial Eve", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.8 (London, 1887), p.351; and Countess A. von Bothar, "German Women: Their Infancy, Girlhood and Married Life", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.11 (London, 1890), p.56

¹⁷¹ An English Girl, "Our German Kranzchen", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.28 (London, 1907), p.30

¹⁷² *Ibid*, p.30

¹⁷³ For examples see: *Das Kränzchen*, Vol. 11, (Stuttgart, 1902), p.76, p.77, p.121, p.133, & p.234

¹⁷⁴ „Ein Strolzer Sklave“, *Das Kränzchen*, Vol. 11, (Stuttgart, 1902), p.313

from it by their men, and able to benefit from the luxuries it provided. Although young British and German women were often discouraged from active engagement with colonial adventures, they were encouraged to remember that if they did it was in an auxiliary role.

The financial cost and the content of these publications implies a middle-class readership of a publication paid for by an adult who wanted the appropriate messaging for their child, and the content chosen to guide the reader in a way that was deemed correct by the editors and writers. A wider range of material in both content and quality was also available to young readers in both metropolises.

‘Popular’ Children’s Periodical Literature

The majority of reading material was not as pointedly aimed at middle-class consumers, weekly magazines, papers, and later comics contained less instructional and more popular material. Although not intended for the same limited market as *Boys’ Own* or *Der gute Kamerad*, the publications still had a financial cost which, although not as high as the novels to be discussed later, still limited access to it. The very popular and affordable ‘penny dreadfuls’ or ‘*schundliteratur*’ were the most easily access but contained the most problematical material which challenged even the ‘jingoistic’ British sentiment. This led to campaigns against the publications which portrayed:

‘a world of dormant peerages, of murderous baronets, and ladies of title addicted to the study of toxicology, of gipsies and brigand-chiefs, men with masks and women with daggers, of stolen children, withered hags, heartless gamesters, nefarious roués, foreign princesses.’¹⁷⁵

Pamphlet fiction of this type had been regularly available in Britain from the first half of the nineteenth century,¹⁷⁶ by the 1880’s ‘hero-centred’ stories, especially tales of the American frontier had become very popular in Britain and were a source of concern in Germany from the end of the century.¹⁷⁷ In Germany a series of campaigns were launched by politicians and pedagogists to ban or limit the access to material they deemed morally corruptive.¹⁷⁸ They were accused of popularising crime, society’s outsiders, sexual immorality, and dishonesty – themes that educators and some publishers on both sides of the North Sea could agree were inappropriate for their youth. Campaigns in both Britain and Germany attempted to end the popularity of the ‘dreadful’ with young readers. By the end of the century the publisher Alfred Harmsworth claimed that he had ended their ‘poison’ influence in Britain

¹⁷⁵ George Augustus Sala, *The Seven Sons of Mammon: a story*, 3 vols. (London, 1862), ii, pp. 22–3

¹⁷⁶ Judith Flanders, “Penny Dreadfuls”, British Library online (15th May 2014), www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/penny-dreadfuls, Accessed 3rd May 2022

¹⁷⁷ See: Kara L. Ritzheimer, “Forging a Patriotic Youth: Penny Dreadfuls and Military Censorship in World War I Germany”, in Mischa Honeck & James Marten (eds), *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), p.37; and Kaspar Maase, *Die Kinder der Massenkultur: Kontroversen um Schmutz und Schund seit dem Kaiserreich* (Campus, 2012).

¹⁷⁸ Maase, *Die Kinder*, Ch.II

by offering his 'healthy' alternative weekly publications,¹⁷⁹ in Germany the crusade against the material would continue into the First World War.¹⁸⁰

Harmsworth was able to claim his victory over the penny dreadfuls by, in the words of A.A. Milne, 'the simple process of producing the ha'penny dreadfuller [sic]'.¹⁸¹ A survey of the material published by Harmsworth's company supports Milne's claim.¹⁸² *The Halfpenny Marvel* (1893-1922 in various forms) was advertised 'Founded to kill the 'Penny Dreadful'' and a 'High-class weekly library of adventure at home and abroad, on land and sea. Founded to counteract the pernicious influence of the 'Penny Dreadful'',¹⁸³ the illustration that shared the page with these statements was one of a woman in a leopard print dress throttling an African man wielding a spear.¹⁸⁴ The violence portrayed in this picture was the norm, every cover image introducing the first of two short stories depicted a violent scene from an escaped prisoner strangling a bed-ridden patient,¹⁸⁵ to highland soldiers storming a hill position.¹⁸⁶ The stories contained brigands, women with daggers, crime, and gamblers akin to the 'pernicious' material the publisher wanted to 'kill'.

Of interest is how these self-claimed 'high-class' publications introduced increasingly jingoistic nationalist, xenophobic, and racist themes to its readers. Weekly tales of how other empires threatened the safety of the British Empire including a fantastical example of Napoleon Buonaparte using airships and electric weapons to conquer not just Britain but the whole of Europe,¹⁸⁷ and another in which 'anarchists' used submarines to attack the Royal Navy. The latter story also reflects Harmsworth's politics and distaste for anarchists – in the tale the Guards are called in to clear anarchist mobs in Downing Street by bayonet.¹⁸⁸ Other stories of highlighting England's vulnerability can be found in *Funny Wonder*,¹⁸⁹ and *Boy's Friend*.¹⁹⁰ The theme of invasion and 'invasion stories' will be further discussed in Chapter Four. In the first twenty years of *The Marvel* the content although of similar themes was varied in narrative, the tales included plots about adventures at home, the colonies, and civilian and military life. The Boer War witnessed the height of tales about the military –

¹⁷⁹ John Springhall, *Youth Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996* (Macmillan, 1998), p.75

¹⁸⁰ See Chapter Five

¹⁸¹ Alan A. Milne, "Blood and Thunder", *Sunday Times* (10th October 1948), p.2

¹⁸² Harmsworth's weekly children's papers were numerous and different publications were available on almost every day of the week. For this study *Funny Wonder*, *The Marvel*, *Empire*, *Boy's Friend*, *Boy's Herald*, *Pluck*, *Union Jack*, *Comic Cuts*, *Illustrated Chips*, and *The Girl's Friend* were surveyed.

¹⁸³ *The Marvel*, Vol. XI, No.270 (London, 1890), p.1

¹⁸⁴ *The Marvel*, Vol. XI, No.270, p.1

¹⁸⁵ *The Marvel*, Vol. XI, No.263 (London, 1890), p.1

¹⁸⁶ *The Marvel*, New Series, No. 320 (London, 1890), p.1

¹⁸⁷ "The Lightning King – A Warning to England", *The Marvel*, Vol.IX, No.209 (London, 1898), pp.1-16

¹⁸⁸ "Rule Britannia", *The Marvel*, Vol.IX, No.213 (London, 1898), p.4

¹⁸⁹ "Could Britain be Invaded?", *Funny Wonder*, New Series, No.47 (London, 1900), pg.3

¹⁹⁰ "Britain at Bay", *Boy's Friend*, No.118 (London, 1910), p.3

especially the army, the stories and illustrations also took on a more serious tone of duty and sacrifice which reflects the sentiment displayed in society during the conflict.¹⁹¹

By 1910 the content was less varied, the editors of the *Marvel* appear to have purchased two series of short stories from North America,¹⁹² the stories were still violent but based around the adventures of the same antagonists. One series was based on boxing champion Tom Sayer,¹⁹³ and the other featured the tribulations of three dubious characters, Jack, Sam, and Pete.¹⁹⁴ The character Pete stands out as one of the few African, or African American 'heroes' of the stories. Pete appears to be of equal status to his companions but is the more outrageous, spontaneous, and clumsy of them, often pushing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour – even for a gang of suspicious characters.¹⁹⁵ This characterisation follows the racial stereotypes often seen in this period; however, the portrayal is very different from the treatment of Africans which will be discussed next. The difference likely a consequence of the origins of the story in a post-emancipation America.

Where Harmsworth's publications stand out is the use of racism and racialisation in its contents, especially the comic strips. The use of stereotypes is evident throughout, inept officers, mischievous soldiers, fat Germans, gossiping ladies, money-obsessed Jews, and dirty and indigent working-class people are all commonly used. However, Africans are subject to the most extreme racist stereotyping, often comic strips are about comical, bungling, straw-skirted characters achieving something despite their incompetence, or as in a regular feature in *Comic Cuts* humorously attempting to recreate a typically 'English' event such as a tea party or building a navy.¹⁹⁶ The form of racism in these British alternatives to the 'dreadfuls' is noticeably different to the view of the exotic found in the publications already discussed. The racial stereotypes present in images promoting the exotic nature of empire use the images, which are negative and offensive, because they are established and recognisable to the reader. Harmsworth's material actively uses and develops the racist stereotyping in the publications to promote his, the editors', and writers' racist and xenophobic world views. This was not the only form of racism found, along with the xenophobic, often Germanophobic, content jokes using

¹⁹¹ For examples see: Captain B. Powell, "Marksmen of the Veldt", *The Marvel*, Vol.XIII, No.320 (London, 1900), p.2; "To Crush Mafeking", *The Marvel*, Vol.XIII, No.321 (London, 1900), p.1; and "A Tale of Gordon Gay & CO. at Rylcombe Grammar School", *The Empire Library*, Vol.I, No.15 (London, 1910).

¹⁹² The stories state they are 'Copyright in the United States of America'.

¹⁹³ For example: Arthur S. Hardy, "The Substitute", *The Marvel*, Vol.11, No.303 (London, 1910), pp.1-16

¹⁹⁴ For example: S. Clark Hook, "The Cattle Raiders", *The Marvel*, Vol.11, No.302 (London, 1910), pp.17-27

¹⁹⁵ In one example Pete loses his clothes and has to resort to raiding a wardrobe belonging to a woman and quickly gets caught in a dress by its owner. See: S. Clarke Hook, "Saving His Tie", *The Marvel*, Vol.11, No.328 (London, 1900), p.20

¹⁹⁶ For examples see: "'Comic Cuts' Colony Fire Brigade to the Rescue", *Comic Cuts*, No.1025 (1st January 1910), p.8; "The Cricket Season Opens in 'Comic Cuts' Colony", *Comic Cuts*, No.1027 (14th January 1910), p.8; and "The 'Comic Cuts' Colony Surgery Starts Operations This Week", *Comic Cuts*, No.1028 (21st January 1910), p.8. More examples can be found in Appendix A

stereotypes of the character of Jewish people are also evident. One example has a Jewish boy taking a beating from a 'gentile' boy because he is unable to move due to his foot being on a coin.¹⁹⁷ The contents of Harmsworth's publications proved popular with readers, the editors of *Chips*, another comic strip weekly, claimed that it was not only 'the best comic paper in the world' but also it had 'the highest circulation in the world'.¹⁹⁸ As soon as December 1897 the 'editor' of *The Marvel* announced victory in the battle against the penny dreadful.¹⁹⁹

The Harmsworth publications above were all intended to 'save' boys from the dreadfuls; although the advertising often used images of girls reading and stories were labelled 'Man and Woman, Boy and Girl, can read this story and enjoy it'.²⁰⁰ However Girls were catered for with weeklies such as *Girl's Best Friend* which claimed to be the 'Brightest, Daintiest, and the Best Paper for all Girls'.²⁰¹ An advertisement for paper enticed the young female readers with tales of 'Madge O' the Mill: A Grand Story of Factory Life' and 'Utterly Alone: A true Story of Shop-Life Revelations'.²⁰² The range of material for girls was not as extensive as for the young male market, although much of the boy's material appears to have been popular with female readers. Kelly Boyd makes an observation that explains this imbalance; Harmsworth's publications and others like when were not intended for middle-class 'public school' children, but the working-class boys many who had an income from working and spare time to read the material which at a halfpenny was well within their means.²⁰³ She also points out that working-class girls, even if they had a small income, were unlikely to have the equivalent amount of time for leisure activities as they would have been expected to help out with domestic chores.²⁰⁴

Although, in Germany, the attempt to replace *Schundliteratur* was not as 'successful' as in Britain as Harmsworth claimed, attempts were made to tame the genre. A critic of children's literature, Ludwig Göhring highlighted the appeal of the adventure stories, especially those based on the North American plains, and argued they could be used to promote German ideals.²⁰⁵ By the mid-1890s, there was a wide range of material targeted at a wider audience than *Der Gute Kamerad* or *Das Kränzchen* which although carrying similar themes were not as jingoistic as their British equivalents. An example of this material is *Auerbachs Deutscher Kinder-Kalendar*, which remained in publication between 1863 until

¹⁹⁷ "Natural Instinct", *The Marvel*, Vol.XII, No.290 (London, 1896), p.1

¹⁹⁸ Advert for *Chips*, in *The Marvel*, Vol.XI, No.263 (London, 1896), p.4

¹⁹⁹ The Editor Speaks, *The Marvel*, Vol.IX, No.215 (London, 1895), p.16

²⁰⁰ *The Marvel*, Vol.XII No.320 (London, 1897), p.16

²⁰¹ Advert for *Girl's Best Friend* in *The Marvel*, Vol.XI, No.263 (London, 1896), p.2

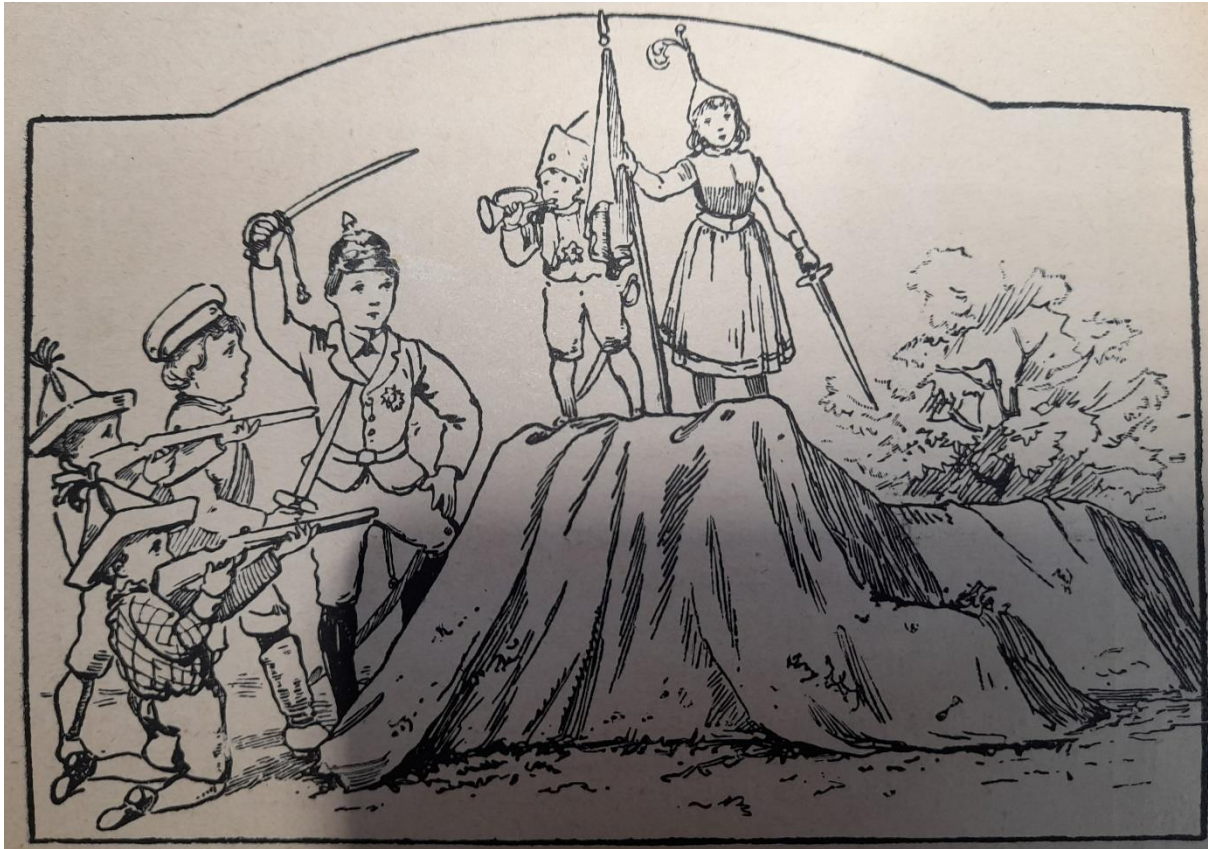
²⁰² *Ibid*

²⁰³ Boyd, *Manliness*, p.23

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p.22

²⁰⁵ For an in-depth introduction to Göhring see Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, pp.119-21

the 1960s. The content is not dissimilar to that above; adventure stories set in Africa and North America, tales of heroism in the wilderness, and historical tales set in German history.



2.21, Illustration of opening scene from M. Reymond, *Die Zigeuner Sind Da! Ein Kinderlustspiel in drei Zügen*, *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender: Ein fesrgabe für Knaben und Madchen jeden Alters* (Stuttgart, 1895), p.81

Many of the stories have similar narratives, the American West stories especially closely resemble the material found in Britain and Germany previously referred to. *Auerbachs Kinder-Kalender* stands out at first for its extensive use of colour in the images but also it offers suggestions and also the material to influence play. The annual was known for containing boards for dice games, cards, and pictures to 'colour-in'. However, there is one form of intervention in children's play the publication introduces which is of interest to this project – the supply of a script for a play the children can perform. The children are playing the role of other children and adults are only mentioned in passing, in the story there appears to be no adult authority.²⁰⁶

The play, 'The Gypsies are here' (*Die Zigeuner Sind Da!*), was set in a forest and included characters for up to seven child actors, six boys and one girl, and follows the adventures of Wilhelmine, Erich,

²⁰⁶ See: Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914-1918* (Harvard University Press, 2010), p.29 for the challenge to adult authority in Germany.

Adolf, Hans, Meiner, Heiner, and Mischka.²⁰⁷ The plot follows six of the children playing at war and the opening scenes are the finale of a game of storming a fortress and planting a flag.²⁰⁸

To take part in this play the children were expected to have access to a range of toy or real weapons, as well as uniforms and other equipment.²⁰⁹ This expectation was mainly for the older children who also took the roles of the senior military ranks. The first act replicated military life for the children; once the rampart had been stormed the older children, Erich and Wilhelmine, order their 'troops' ready for inspection, for which the script offers detailed instructions for correct movements of the sword when saluting and a dialogue which 'dressed-down' the 'soldiers'. The older children then deliver speeches which praise bravery and duty:

Wilhelmine: You have done your job well, held yourself well in battle; however, in the point of battle there is still much to be desired...

Adolf: Laughs briefly but loud.

Wilhelmine: (Strictly): Hey look, the left wingman thinks he can laugh about it!

Erich: The trousers, which I mended myself only yesterday, have a snag; my tousled head is missing brush and comb, and my face is missing the sponge, and my hands - what a horror! They look like Moor hands!

Adolf: (looking at his hands, speaks): No wonder, after such a hot fight; It's from the powder vapor!

Wilhelmine: (roaring): Do you want to be silent in rank and file? Shall I show you who is the master?

Adolf: I...

Wilhelmine: (To Adolf cutting him off): Quiet, otherwise they'll take him away and put you under arrest as a mutineer!

Erich: (Steps out of the front in an elegant posture and with masterly militarily taut steps and stands in front of Wilhelmine, raising his sabre in salute, first with the hands turned inwards against his chest and then, stretching his arm downwards, against the ground then lowers so that the sabre's spike is slightly level). To order!

Wilhelmine: The troops in the camp may now rest from their won laurels; But the coffee is waiting for me, which is why I go home. I hereby cede my general's baton to you, Herr Lieutenant, only I want to do it as usual - Review the army.²¹⁰

The above scene not only emulates the expected duty and bravery of German soldiers, but also instructs on military discipline, cleanliness, and rank. The comment about Erich's dirty hands being 'like Moor hands' also reflects the previously mentioned link between dark skin colour and the lack of cleanliness. At this point Wilhelmine, the only female character, leaves and the boys continue with the next scene in which they play building a military camp and defences.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ Heiner and Meiner appear to be auxiliary characters for younger children that can easily be excluded, the script offers alternative versions for this situation.

²⁰⁸ M. Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal: Ein Kinderlustspiel in drei Zügen“, *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender: Ein fesrgabe für Knaben und Mädchen jeden Alters* (Stuttgart, 1895), pp.81-103

²⁰⁹ A mention of acquiring 'fowl-guns' from a father's shed is present, along with a description on how to make your own gunpowder. See Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal“, p.99

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.83

²¹¹ *Ibid*, pp.84-8

Scene three introduces the 'villain' a Gypsy boy named Mischka; common racial stereotypes are immediately evident: dark skin, short, tangled curly hair, poor, and a traveller. The following is the instructions for Mischka's costume for a boy would requires their skin to be 'dyed brown' for the part:

'Mischka is a bit younger than Hans, taller than Heiner and Meiner, but shorter than the other boys. Arms and legs dyed brown, women's hair, tangled and dark, shirt open on the chest, arms in rags, pants down to a little below the knee, also in rags, fastened with a string diagonally over one shoulder, barefoot. On his head he wears a very small felt hat or fur muzzle, or nothing at all, over his shoulder hangs a snap bag made of coarse linen on a similar belt, in his hand a branch as a walking stick.'²¹²

The character Mischka speaks in the third person, narrating his mischievous thoughts out loud. The instructions for the dialogue often refer to Mischka as 'sneering', threatening', or 'half mocking, half humble'.²¹³

In the play's plot Mischka finds, spies on, and then attempts to rob the boys at play. He is initially caught and integrated into the war-game which becomes increasingly less of a 'game':

'**Mischka:** (Who meanwhile has penetrated the ramparts raises his head towards the camp building to looking out from the rampart, but then quickly hides himself behind the ramparts again). What are they doing there to sleep? Heaps of earth - flag - and so many weapons - Aha! Mischka can already guess: They are definitely playing soldiers! Would like to see a little play! But can't! Must go begging! O poor Mischka! He's already come a long way and gets a lot of blows when it comes back to the camp and doesn't bring a single piece of copper! But they won't want to give him; well - that's the way he has to take it. what he finds on the way. (And tapping the knapsack, with a mischievous expression) They have something too! But it tastes so good that he prefers to eat it alone; It could not be enough for all! But there was still more to be had here, if the boys could be driven away; The colourful flag - the weapons - how easy it was to get that, once you could chase the boys away! (Thinking for a moment) Stop Mischka! - Yes, you can dare like this: You aim your stick at them, that will surely frighten them, and if they run away in fear, then you've already won! (He climbs onto the rampart and aims over the ramparts and leans towards the camp): Piff Paff!'²¹⁴

The play has the boys initially fleeing but using a 'military circumvention' they capture Mischka and debate what to do with him:

Heiner and Meiner or Hans: Hold on, you black villain, you have to face a court-martial!

Erich: (hurrying up, followed by Adolf and Hans) Where is he! ha - let him tremble! I'll embitter his cheek.

Mischka: (who tried in vain to shake off the two little boys, lamentably): Let poor Mischka go, he just watched the game!

Erich: (strict) Who are you?

Mischka: (half mocking, half humble) Who can Mischka be? A small Gypsy boy

Erich: (quietly to Adolf) Very dangerous! Most of all I would like - that I honestly admit it - let the boy go, because the people are not to be trifled with!

²¹² Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal“, p.88

²¹³ *Ibid*, pp.88-9

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.89

Adolf: It was even safer to leave straight away and take him with you as a prisoner of war to the edge of the forest, otherwise the rascal could see the cunning to have the gypsies on our necks, who in any case would then take us prisoner ourselves!

Erich: Alas, if we were caught! Yes you are right! He remains captive, Until we escape pursuit. (loud to Mischka) You rascal have been spying here, and whoever does that will be shot?

Erich: Be quiet - nothing shall happen to you, but you must willingly go with us as a prisoner of war!

Mischka: (screaming half angry, half afraid) Don't catch Mischka! Mischka free!

Erich (to Adolf): What are we going to do? He lures the gang over with his shouting! (to Mischka, threateningly) Will you be quiet right away, stupid bastard? Do you want me to shut your mouth?²¹⁵

In this scene the play's characters use military tactics to quickly apprehend the enemy, the dialogue again reflects racist views and language, referring to Mischka as a 'black' villain a reflection of the binary views of European racial views.



1.22 Illustration from *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender 1895*, p.103

The play's script continues with Mischka escaping and the boys splitting up to hunt him down in the forest. Here the war-game the play's characters were playing comes to an end, the boys one by one face the dangers of the forest and the enemy, most fail the test and return home. Erich the oldest of the male characters remains in the forest searching for his comrades unaware they have returned home. The character of Erich encounters Mischka who has returned to the now abandoned camp to pillage it, the older boy negotiates with the gypsy boy and, in a surprisingly humanising way, offers a solution to Mischka's need to prove himself to his 'tribe'. This seemingly empathic decision on the part of the group demonstrates some willingness to work with those considered inferior to gain support or

²¹⁵ Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal“, pp.90-1

advantage. However, Mischka narrates out loud his intention to break his promises – a warning to the readers and actors on the risks of negotiating with ‘uncivilised’ peoples.²¹⁶

The second act of the play sees the female character of Wilhelmine take on a moral and guiding role as she rallies the rest of the child characters and explains their responsibility and duty to their missing comrade and the ‘honourable’ need to regain their stolen property - especially a ‘battle’ flag which the gypsies are now in possession of:

Wilhelmine: Hey, Adolf, it almost seems to me that there was a row!

Adolf: I, where! Why?

Wilhelmine: Because you just separated, instead of returning, as usual, with honour as warriors!

Adolf: The game went smoothly. It was just a coincidence that separated us.

Wilhelmine: Tell me!

Meiner: (excited) Isn't he home [Erich]?

Hans: I was just there to look for him; he's still gone!

Heiner: (very dismayed): Oh shock! Then in the end it was what that rascal said, wasn't it?

All: what? What then?

Heiner: (reluctant to say the terrible thing) He said that...

Meiner: (Soothingly): I guess it was just a silly joke

Adolf: (to Heiner) Oh, say it out frankly and freely!

Heiner: That Erich...

Wilhelmine: Well?

Heiner: Was caught!

Wilhelmine: How terrible!

Meiner: Oh, I still don't believe it; The brown fellow lied, to chase us right in forest and then carry the flag away.

Heiner: Now I believe it! Erich isn't there, so I think something happened to him.

Adolf: (aside) I thought so straight away: not only difficult, this hunt is also dangerous!

Hans: (looking very upset) If only I hadn't run away; I could never get over it if something happened to him!

Wilhelmine: We must go to the forest and look after the poor boy!

Hans, Heiner and Meiner: Yes, yes!

Adolf: It's not that easy! If there really are gypsies there, they would all catch us!

Wilhelmine: Do you want to leave your friend in danger?

Hans: Shame on you!

Heiner: Shame on you!

Meiner: Shame on you! Make yourself comfortable in the armchair while we rescue our lieutenant from the gypsy slavers.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal“, pp.93-5

²¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp.95-8

The character of Wilhelmine is depicted in either a 'Valkyrie' costume of winged helmet and cuirass, or in a more traditional 'German' girl's dress. In the former she takes on the role of 'victory' and military leader of the group, in the latter she is a more maternal figure offering guidance and reminders of duty and honour – the male characters are far more successful in their endeavours when she is present. Wilhelmine leads the group into the forest to rescue Erich and then execute a plan to retrieve the stolen flag to regain the lost honour of the 'troop'. This is finally achieved through cunning (they darken their skin and pretend to be gypsies) and bravely (they enter the gypsy camp, retrieve the flag and other stolen goods). They also capture Mischka which allows for the victory of justice and law.

By writing this script for children to act out the author is able to put ideas and words which would be more commonly found in the adult world directly into the mouths of the children. The script instructs on military life, not just playing at war, but also camp life, the chain of command, and how rank and file interact are expected to interact with each other. The use of weapons and tactics are introduced, as are the challenges of duty and honour to your comrades, the military, and the nation. The use of a gypsy boy as the enemy also legitimises and informs the young readers on adult ideas of race, gender, and European supremacy – although this play is set in a German forest with gypsies as the antagonists, it is not too far removed from a colonial setting, it also demonstrates the racialisation taking place in Europe.

Much of the remaining content of *Auerbachs Deutscher Kinder-Kalender* follows the same themes as the material already introduced throughout this chapter, the same volume which contains the about play also contains a section on *Ostereierporträts* which contain similar easily-recognisable stereotypical images as in other publications.²¹⁸ Later volumes increasingly include tales of the American frontier and the native Americans alongside the images of colonies and the military,²¹⁹ racist stereotypes in the same for as discussed earlier in this chapter appear in picture-stories such as 'Mungo or the Unlucky Wildebeest Hunt' which follows an unfortunate Mungo from hunter to entertainer at a fair.²²⁰

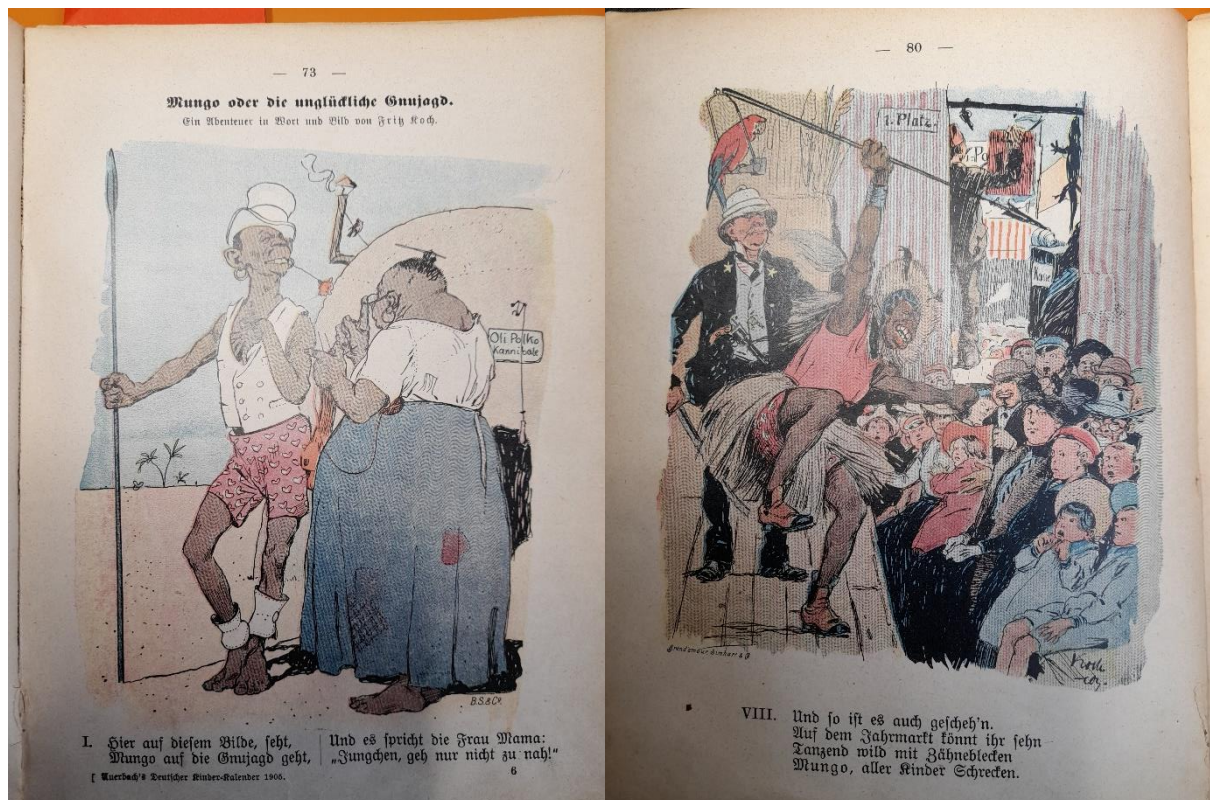
The below images from the story clearly demonstrate the use of racial and racist imagery, from mocking the use of European clothing, the reference to cannibalism, to 'Mungo' performing on stage frightening women and children. The character 'Mungo', in the latter image, is now dressed in the

²¹⁸ Reymond, „Die Zigeuner Sind Dal“, p.45

²¹⁹ For example see: „Eine Indianergeschichte“, *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender: Ein fesrgabe für Knaben und Madchen jeden Alters* (Stuttgart, 1904), p.89

²²⁰ Fritz Koch, „Mungo oder die unglückliche Gnujagd“, *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender: Ein fesrgabe für Knaben und Madchen jeden Alters* (Stuttgart, 1905), pp.73-80

stereotypical 'traditional' dress that Europeans expected to witness, he is also performing exaggerating play at being savage – exactly the European idea of authentic exoticism that the organisers of *Völkerschauen* or 'human zoos' wanted to show: the image of the 'authentic' African savage scaring the women and children in the audience and providing evidence to the audience of their European 'cultural supremacy'.



1.23 Fritz Koch, „Mungo oder die unglückliche Gnujagd“, *Auerbachs deutscher Kinder-Kalender: Ein fesrgabe für Knaben und Madchen jeden Alters* (Stuttgart, 1905, pp.73-80), pages 73 & 80

An idea of cultural superiority also influenced the image of the exotic presented to an audience in Britain or Germany. Images of empire, and its exotic nature, appeared on a spectrum of levels of 'authenticity', from attempts to present a faithful image of the people, flora, and fauna as they appeared in European colonies to one that was only intended to be a spectacle that played up to the racial stereotypes. Mungo's story appears to be satire of the *Völkerschauen* which often had to coerce its 'native' human exhibits to act in a way that Europeans expected to see, but also those which cared little about presenting a faithful image – Mungo, while acting as the savage is still wearing his European-looking underwear and shoes. The material presented in this thesis demonstrates that material intended for middle-class consumers attempted to present an 'authentic' exotic image in most examples. The 'authentic' image was one that the middle classes of Britain and German perceived as one that required an exclusive and 'superior' understanding of Empire that belonged to the middle class, for them, reading or viewing, the less-refined spectacle of the exotic, as performed by Mungo in *Auerbachs Kinder-Kalender*, was an indication of a lack of education and culture. The

inclusion of Fritz Koch's story of Mungo in the *Kinder Kalender*, a periodical intended for middle-class readers, is reinforcing middle-class views on not only the empire but German society.

Auerbach's periodical is not explicitly advertised as for boys, but the content and language indicate that young males were the target audience, although not exclusively. As with the British equivalent the female readers could find content which appealed to them. However, also mirroring the British examples, gender specific publications were available for German girls to read.

Young female readers in Germany had access to periodicals and annuals with content which the editors considered appropriate for them. An example of this is *Töchter Album*, which although containing 'gender-appropriate' material following the example of British publications such as *Girls' Best Friend* does refer to empire and conflict to a greater extent. Examples from the publication include an article on Dar es Salaam in East Africa which describes the details of life in the region as



1.24 „Von den Buren in Südafrika“, *Töchter Album*, Vol.41 (Stuttgart, 1885), p.218

well as the dangers. The article is accompanied by images of local rituals, hunting, and the ever-present European big-game hunters.²²¹ The 1902 edition offers a very different image of the Boers seen in British material with a colour illustration of a Boer family scene. However, the picture (below) does include an armed Boer patrolling the camp and what appears to be an African servant. The setting providing a clear picture of the colonial-racial order with an armed white man, defending the camp, the white women caring for the children, and the poorly clothed black African cooking the dinner.

²²¹ „Dar es Salaam, Leben und Treiben“, *Töchter Album*, Vol.41 (Stuttgart, 1885), pp.253-7

The *Kinder-Kalender* and *Töchter Album* will be revisited in chapters three and four as their content takes on increasingly militaristic themes as war approaches in 1914. The majority of the above material were weekly or annual publications which could reflect current events and thoughts and changes in those themes, the last type of publication that this chapter will look at is the novel or book which due to its form tended to take a longer period of time to be published and not able to respond as quickly to events.

Colonial and Military Adventures in British and German Novels

Children's books were more expensive than the periodicals previously mentioned, the cost, as with other material, would limit the readership to those with families that could afford it. However, given their value they were also likely to be available in libraries, school rooms, and given away as prizes.²²² The most prolific and popular authors of children's literature in Britain and Germany from 1880 were G.A. Henty and Karl May.²²³ Both authors had much of their work serialised before it was published in novel form. A lot of scholarship and biography has already been carried out on both the character of the authors, the content of the stories, and the reception of the material.²²⁴ The content of the novels was similar in theme to much of the serialised stories in *Boys' Own* and *Der gute Kamerad*, in many cases the material is the same.²²⁵ Both authors, along with many others, wrote adventure stories which used empire, colony, and the frontier as a background. However, both authors had difficult reviews from critics and scholars, Henty for the quality of his writing and May for his lack of real experience of his subject. Henty had first-hand experience of the military and empire during military service and a following career in war reporting,²²⁶ whereas it has been argued that May never travelled despite claiming to have done so.²²⁷ In another comparison May is considered 'the most read German author',²²⁸ and Henty struggled to make a living churning out 'uninspired', 'wooden', and 'rambled' books for a tenth of the commission than other authors at the time.²²⁹ Henty and May both capitalised

²²² See: Jeffery Richards, "Introduction", in Jeffery Richards (ed), *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester University Press, 1989), pp.1-11; and Hans-Josef Steinberg & Nicholas Jacobs, "Worker's Libraries in Germany before 1914", *History Workshop*, No.1 (Spring, 1976), pp.166-80.

²²³ See above.

²²⁴ For examples see: Duane, "Boy's Literature and the Idea of Empire"; Pooley, "Children's Writing and the Popular Press"; Richards, *Imperialism*.

²²⁵ One example of this is Karl May's *Der Sohn des Bärenjägers* (Stuttgart, 1887)

²²⁶ Patrick A. Duane, "New Grub Street for boys", in Richards, *Imperialism*, p.19

²²⁷ It is thought Karl May explained his frequent absences whilst in prison for petty crimes by claiming he had been traveling, Susanne Spröer, "Who was Karl May? Facts and myths surrounding the creator of Winnetou", DW.com, (24.2.2017) (accessed 30th June 2022)

²²⁸ Spröer, "Who was Karl May?"

²²⁹ Duane, "New Grub Street", pp.21-2

on the interest in conflict and empire to sell their books to children and adults, evidence that the theme appealed to consumers.

Henty's approach, the mass production of material which he dictated and delegated much of the work to his secretary, reflects the 'everyday' and 'mundane' feature of empire in late Victorian Britain. Henty although apparently unenthusiastic himself about the novels was able to use his experience and the interest present in British society for adventurous tales about empire,²³⁰ no matter how poorly written, to become a widely read, although poorly paid, author. The themes of Henty's material would mean that his novels were often the ideal candidates for the prizes rewarded to children at schools in Britain.

May however is regarded as a far more accomplished author who despite his lack of first-hand knowledge of the themes was able to use his imagination, no doubt influenced by other writing, pictures, and reports to create a convincing picture for the consumers of his output. This reflects the lack of experience Germany and Germans had of empire and colonisation. Again, the popularity of May's stories demonstrates the interest in material about it - even if 'second-hand'. The lack of direct experience was not a hindrance to authors in Germany or Britain, the western stories from both sides of the North Sea were equally second-hand and this strengthened the fantasy nature of the image of empire they described. This lack of authentic representation of colony and wilderness is highlighted by Patricia Simpson's analysis of *Die Kleine Urwälderin*, a 1902 story published in *Auerbachs Deutscher Kinder-Kalender*, which offers a fantastical image of the Brazilian jungle which May had no experience of.²³¹ May's attitude to the subjects of his tales, as Henty's, may not be as simple as first assumed as some work has argued that his writing was 'spiked with satire and humour' and 'tongue-in-cheek' - for Henty and May the primary motivation was profit.²³²

Henty and May were far from the only authors of fiction with colonial and military themes, many studies have highlighted other popular authors such as W.H.G Kingston, R.M. Ballantyne,²³³ Sophie Wörishöffer, and August Niemann.²³⁴ The dominance of colonialism and empire as a setting are also evident in the works of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells, and empire and imperialism are also present in the novels by Francis Hodgson Burnett such as *A Little Princess* (1905) and *The Secret Garden* (1911),

²³⁰ Duane, "New Grub Street", pp.21-2

²³¹ Patricia Anne Simpson, "Colonising the Play World: Texts, Toys and Colonial Fantasies in German Children's Stories around 1900", *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für Kinder und Jugendliteraturforschung* (2019), pp.133-45.

²³² Marlies Bugmann, *Savage to Saint: The Karl May Story*, (2019 Edition), (North Carolina 2019), p.118

²³³ Simpson, "Colonising the Play World", p.18

²³⁴ Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, p.122

it has also been read as present in Kenneth Graham's *Wind in the Willows* (1908).²³⁵ In Britain especially, empire was almost a constant in children's literature.

Conclusion

British and German authors and publishers took full advantage of the increase in young readers driven by educational reforms, attitudes to childhood, and the expansion of the middle classes. In most cases the motivation was profit through sales and the use of the military, empire, and colonial adventure was due to the existing popular appeal of the subjects. Many common themes exist in the material: patriotism, European racial and cultural superiority, big-game hunting, interest in the exotic, and European racial stereotypes – evidence of the European view and attitude to imperialism and race. The material intended for a broader readership, the 'popular' material, demonstrate these commonalities to a greater extent than the 'elite' and educational material. For the former entertainment and sales paramount over ideology. Negative stereotypes are frequently present, not only in reference to colonial populations but also within the European context – especially minority communities. Casual references to violence, the military, and conflict are also common, often in a comical form. Gender roles, although present are not as rigidly adhered to in the material targeted at a wider audience. Even though young women had periodicals dedicated to topics regarded by the editors and authors as suitable for female readers, the content of publications such as *Auerbach's Kinder-Kalender* and *The Halfpenny Marvel* does not exclusively speak to young male children. Although of an adventurous nature, which was intended to appeal to boys, female readers are also welcomed – unlike the dismissive tone of *Boys' Own*.

Where this material does diverge is in the geographical scope, British material focuses on the British Empire with occasional diversions into the American west; German material has a wider global gaze - of course, this may be due to the differences in the size and duration of the respective empires. The engagement across the North Sea is also comparably different; within the popular children's publications xenophobic material is more likely to appear most notably in British material published by Harmsworth,²³⁶ whereas German material depicts the British Empire as a place of interest and a comparative tool for German colonialism with only infrequent negative comment.

The publications aimed at the young middle-class readers, Pooley's 'elite' material, demonstrate an active intention to influence children's choices and reinforce societies expectation of gender and class roles. For middle-class boys this was as the builders and administrators of empire through roles in the

²³⁵ Kutzer, *Empire's Children*, p.80

²³⁶ This xenophobia and antagonism will be addressed in Part Two of this thesis.

military, church, or civil service - girls were expected to support, and bear and raise, the young men of the empire and nation. For boys the military and colonies were a space for adventure, character-building, and forging their masculine identity; for girls it was an exotic place of danger best observed from a distance, through the filter of publications such as the *Girls' Own* or *Das Kränzchen*. These publications also make it clear that although the military and empire are full of adventure the task of building and defending it is a serious, and Godly task – their duty to it is clear.

This chapter demonstrates that the portrayal of empire was similar in both Britain and Germany and reflected the European view of imperialism and race, promoting 'white' supremacy along with moral and religious duty. Both attempted to justify colonialism by demonstrating the benefits it brings to the colonised through protection, religion, and education. The message changes not between metropolises but within their populations; in Germany the content remains broadly similar and portrays the ideal 'fantasy' of empire to all readers, although a gendered version is available for boys and girls. In Britain the type of empire portrayed depends on class; material targeted at working-class children contained a fantasy image which demonstrated the existence and 'greatness' of the British Empire, the material intended for the middle-class readers offered more in-depth view of the empire and how it functioned.

The military is treated differently, German publications rarely ridicule the military and the need for discipline and duty is a frequent theme, in Britain although duty is expected the military are often the subject of a joke, or the military man is depicted as the rogue adventurer.

Ultimately all these publications achieve the same result of informing children about the world – the military, empire, colony, race, and gender roles. This creates the background and context for children play at school and home, the next chapter will look at the products produced and purchased for this purpose.

Chapter Three: War Play

*The nation mattered at the turn of the century; while the scouts taught the nation by camping in the wilderness, many military toys developed to meet the martial needs of the playroom.*¹

Children's play emulates what they perceive as the lives and routines of the adults around them, for the British and German children in the late nineteenth century who had read the material from the previous chapter that was one which contained the over present themes of the military and imperialism. Play is ambiguous, anything can be used as a toy and toys intended by adults for a type of play can easily be used by children in a different way, as Brian Sutton-Smith states 'practically anything can become an agency for some kind of play'.² As play is ambiguous it requires 'boundaries' set by the player or player's imaginations,³ the play boundaries this study will focus on is those set by the material previously discussed. Children played imperialism, colonialism, and the military by setting it within the imagined world they created, and created for them, by education and from reading and looking at comics, magazines, books, and other literature.

The literature children read supplied the background to children's play and education in both countries, influencing the toys and games children requested and which adults chose to purchase for them. Although children did have some spending-power and independence in choice of weekly comic or penny-toy, few would have had the ability to purchase the far more expensive games and toys available without some mediation from an adult. Many children's toys and games were expensive and were only within the means of middle- and upper-class families, meaning as with literature most of the material was demanded by and intended for those consumers.

The production and consumption of children's playthings are of importance to this thesis due to the transnational nature of the industry and trade between the two regions of interest, and in the way that childhood and consumerism are linked. The dominance of the German toy and games industry, economically, in quantity, and quality, in this period is without doubt. Late nineteenth-century commentators such as E.E. Williams highlighted this at the time and popular and academic work on the history of toys and toy production all demonstrate this clearly.⁴ Consumerism, consumption, and

¹ Bryan Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.37

² Brian Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play* (Harvard University Press, 2001), p.6

³ Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity*, p.3

⁴ See Edwin.E. Williams, *Made in Germany* (London, 1896), pp.110-4; Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood*; and David D. Hamlin, *Work and Play: The Production and Consumption of Toys in Germany, 1870-1914* (University of Michigan Press, 2007).

their links to childhood are subject to less agreement, with different interpretations on who are the active and passive parties. William Leach argues that the consumer, in this case American, was passive and enslaved to following the trends set by 'elites',⁵ John H. Plumb offers a more positive point of view and argues that consumption of children's books and toys was part of the rise of the consumer and a 'new non-mobile elite'.⁶ Plumb's work focuses on the consumption of children's literature in the eighteenth century, but also comments on the popularity of toys including toy soldiers,⁷ he places the creation of this phenomenon to mid-eighteenth century England claiming that 'In 1730 there were no specialized toy-shops of any kind, whereas by 1780 toy-shops everywhere abounded'.⁸ For Plumb the supply was driven by the demands of the new middle-class consumers, however this does ignore the fact that much of the material in these new toy shops would have been imported from Bavaria and other German states where an established toy industry and consumer base already existed.

More recent work on childhood and consumption, especially that focused on Imperial Germany, demonstrates a more symbiotic relationship between the state, toy industry, and middle-class consumers with the toy industry meeting the demands of the consumers (middle-class parents) who wished to educate their children in a way that met their perceived social expectations.⁹ Brian Ganaway stressed these connections in his work on childhood in Imperial Germany:

Toys, a distinctly consumer item, developed into a prime means of disseminating the values of control, progress, order and mastery associated with the playroom. Because parents brought these items at set prices in specialty shops or department stores, toys provide the link between new ideas about childhood and their consumption in the child's room. They allow us to see how adults negotiated visions of middle-class childhood at the fin-de-siecle. Catering to parental desires, toy producers introduced an entirely new set of expensive miniatures designed specifically for use in the home by middle-class youngsters. This further expanded the market, because most parents feared the social opprobrium heaped on fathers and mothers who did not have a well-stocked playroom. For many Germans, the act of purchasing a toy at Christmas or for a birthday also meant buying into a set of values regarding class, gender, technology and the importance of the nation...¹⁰

Games and toys are direct interventions in how children play, the design, manufacture, and choice of purchase all choices designed to impose the boundaries of play – not that children always followed them. This adult intervention in play is explored explicitly in Diana Garvin's study of Italian toys and games of the 1930's which instructed players in the Italian empire and its reconquest.¹¹ Garvin

⁵ William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (Pantheon, 1993), pp.85-7

⁶ See Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, p.17

⁷ John H. Plumb, "The New World of Children in Nineteenth-Century England", *Past & Present*, No.67 (May 1975), pp.64-95, p.90

⁸ *Ibid*, p.90

⁹ See Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*; and Hamlin, *Work and Play*.

¹⁰ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, pp.28-9

¹¹ Diana Garvin, "Paper Soldiers on the March: Colonial Toys for Imperial Play", *Issues*, Vol.38, No.3 (MIT Summer 2022)

concludes, in the Italian case, that through 'mimicry of fascist occupation', children were instructed in military conquest and 'saw themselves as future foot soldiers'.¹² This chapter will argue the same in the case of British and German toys and games by introducing a range of British and German toys and games which relate to imperialism and colonialism. It will then investigate how the background and 'boundaries' set by the literature is reflected and used in children's play and playthings. These boundaries were not always adhered to, and the chapter will also explore if and how they were crossed. The theme of the toys and games, as introduced above, is the choice of the industry based on the demands of the consumers, of course we cannot discount the pressure of demands from the children for certain items. Given Ganaway's observance that the choice was heavily influenced by middle-class values it can be reasonably accepted that the toys available and purchased reflected trends in both adult and youth middle-class society and those that aspired to it.

Conflict in Miniature: Toy Soldiers

Alongside generic toys such as spinning tops, hoops, and bat & balls, toy designers and makers made and supplied toys which reflected every aspect of adult life. Play could initiate the domestic with dolls, dolls houses, toy kitchens, miniature cleaning and gardening equipment; work life with toy steam engines, construction sets, chemistry sets, and costumes; and the military with toy weapons, uniforms, and toy soldiers. It cannot be ignored that the toys that allow the mimicking of adult life reflect mainly middle-class occupations, even that of the military where toy officer's equipment was more common than of the rank and file. Military toys were available in many forms, from the stick picked from the ground to represent a sword or rifle through to detailed models and miniature working weapons. The following cultural artifacts: toys, games, and other children's playthings have been selected as they reflect military, imperial, or nationalist themes in Britain or Germany. It is important to note that the majority of this material, especially from before 1900, was produced by German manufacturers who responded to demand for goods with military and national themes, that did not reflect German values, from many parts of the world.

A common toy found in many nurseries and playrooms in Britain, Germany, and worldwide was the toy soldier. Many images of playrooms or collections of toys include a toy soldier, often alongside other popular toys relevant to this thesis – most commonly the Golliwogg.¹³ Toy soldiers are a broad category of toy which can range from simple paper or card cut outs through to detailed lead figurines.

¹² Garvin, "Paper Soldiers on the March", pp.55-6

¹³ For examples see: Ernest Nister, "Royal Opera House" (Britain, 1890), V&A 0119255 (Drawing of five children in a nursery including a toy soldier and Golliwogg; Ernest Nister, Father Christmas hanging toys over a fireplace (Britain, 1890), V&A 0147815 (Toy soldier falling out of sack); Father Christmas also appears in a late nineteenth-century card found at the V&A which depicts him standing to attention, saluting with a Golliwogg hanging out of his pocket, artist unknown, V&A 089307

The figures could also represent a broad range of antagonists, from tribes of North American Natives to disciplined ranks of European soldiery. Germany in the late nineteenth century dominated the market with ranges made from metal or a mix of sawdust and glue.¹⁴ British manufacturers began to develop a successful industry in the early twentieth century using German casting methods, although the results did not reach the same standards until after the First World War.¹⁵ The most detailed German toy soldiers were expensive, even more so when imported for the British market, and were only available to families with higher incomes. Before the late nineteenth century toy soldiers were almost exclusively the playthings of upper-class families, but developments in the manufacturing process, a growing middle class, and increasing interest in current affairs led to a dramatic rise in the numbers of military toys being produced and sold.¹⁶ Estimates put the German production of toy soldiers at around twenty million per year by the end of the nineteenth century,¹⁷ and although the British industry was in its infancy at that point by 1914 Britain's toy soldiers were producing between ten and eleven million figures per year.¹⁸

In both Brian Ganaway's study of the German and Kenneth Brown's work on the British industries the question of to what extent these numbers influenced or reflected militarism in society is raised – the conclusion is that there must be. Ganaway argues that toy soldiers allowed children to engage with the German history taught in schools and also current events, refighting battles with miniature armies given children some sense of agency over the outcome.¹⁹ Many of the ranges were historical, but manufacturers could quickly re-tool or change the paint scheme to supply models to fight battles in conflicts children were reading about in newspaper or hearing their parents discuss – some of these ranges will be discussed later in this chapter. The Germany toy industry, as Ganaway suggests, fuelled a middle-class demand for toy soldiers created by an interest in the military within society. Whereas Brown argues that playing with toy soldiers, along with the rise in membership of youth groups such as the Scouts, 'contributed to that build-up of aggression' that led to the 'rush to the colours in 1914'.²⁰ Antonia Fraser also addresses this problem, for her the answer is not clear:

¹⁴ Kenneth D. Brown, "Modelling for War? Toy Soldiers in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain", *Journal of Social History* (Winter, 1990), Vol.24, No.2, pp.237-54, p.241

¹⁵ For the development of the British toy industry see Kenneth D. Brown, *The British Toy Industry* (Shire, 2011).

¹⁶ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, pp.205-10

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.210

¹⁸ Brown, "Modelling for War?", p.244

¹⁹ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, p.210

²⁰ Brown, "Modelling for War?", p.245

As long as men go to war and armies exist children will want to play with soldiers, and therefore one can scarcely blame the manufacturers for trying to fill the need. At the same time one the principle of the chicken and the egg, it might be argued that as long as children are given soldiers to play with, they themselves will grow up prepared to be soldiers...²¹

Although Fraser could be correct that children ‘will always want to play with toy soldiers, her statement is too simplistic and the connection between real armies and toy armies is not as determinist as this.²² Many young men and women join the military never having played with a toy soldier, and many young people enthusiastic about toy soldiers have no intention of enlisting in the military.²³ However, this is not to deny any significant connection and this chapter will demonstrate how military toys could and did promote the military as a necessity and possible career to many consumers.

Whether toy soldiers created interest in the military or were a reflection of it, the popularity of them, the numbers sold, and the ranges available indicate a strong link between play, militarism, and the middle-class consumers – although toy soldiers appealed across social-economic groups. Many recollections of childhood include mentions of toy soldiers, already highlighted in the introduction were Churchill and H.G. Wells, but others also fondly remember their collections.²⁴ The power and appeal of the toy soldier in a child’s imagination is reflected in Robert Lewis Stephenson’s poem *The Counterpane* (1885), in which a child uses his imagination to escape from his sick bed. The imaginary world instantly full of military fantasies:

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.²⁵

²¹ Antonia Fraser, *A History of Toys* (Spring Books, 1966), p.231

²² Although this cannot be conclusively demonstrated evidence of military toys for children including toy soldiers and miniature weapons have been found by archaeologists in locations linked with the Roman Empire, see: Daniel Mackley, *The City in the Roman Empire* (Cavendish Square, 2016), p.49; and Paul Roberts, *The Ancient Romans: Their Lives and Their World* (Getty, 2009), p.49.

²³ Although often easily assumed war play is not an exclusively masculine activity, for recent work on this see: Jennine Hurl-Eamon, “Girls Playing at Soldiers: Destablizing the Masculinity of War Play in Georgian Britain”, *Jeueness, Young People, Texts, Cultures*, Vol.12(1) (2020), p.39-62; also the experience of Pietie Kuhr referred to later in this thesis is evidence of girls playing at war.

²⁴ See: Pietie Kuhr, *Then We’ll Meet Again: Young Girl’s Diary of the First World War*, Trans. Walter G. Wright (Walter Wright, 1988)

²⁵ Robert Lewis Stephenson, “The Counterpane”, in *A Children’s Garden of Verses* (London, 1885), p.31

Unsurprisingly, given the material seen in previous chapter, empire and conflict were popular subjects for toys and games. As with imagery in the literature the use of stereotypes is evident, one of the most enduring of these is that of the Cowboy and Indian, an image that still exists to the present. The popularity of the 'Wild West' in children's literature is evident from the previous chapter and the appeal of the image extended into toys and games. One of the most common 'toy soldier' type found in collections are cowboys, Indians, along with tepees and pioneer camps. Although representing a different form of conflict to the traditional ranks of drilled European soldiery fighting each other on a field of battle, these toy figures are still intended to be used to recreate armed conflict.



3.1 lead toy soldiers 'flats' representing American 'cowboys' and Native Americans (Germany, circa 1900), DSM-1968.64, image from www.museen.nuernberg.de/spielzeugmuseum

Sets of toy figures representing 'cowboys and Indians' would have been found in nurseries and playrooms across Britain and Germany and remained popular throughout the twentieth century.²⁶ The American frontier supplied children with a topic which was exotic, colourful, adventurous, and celebrated the heroism of the American soldier or settler. Children were able not only to play with toys that represented the two antagonists but would also dress up, role play, and fight battles taking on the role of the native or the coloniser. For most European children the 'Wild West' was a fantasy world they would never encounter, the colonial violence even more detached than that in African and

²⁶ The Spielzeugmuseen Nürnberg also holds a collection of plastic toys of stereotypical 'Red Indians' from the 1970s and 1980s produced by Playmobil. For more on Playmobil toys see: Jeff Bowersox, "Playing with diversity: racial and ethnic difference in Playmobil toys, *Consumption, markets and culture*, Vol.25(2) (2022-03), pp.139-58

other European colonies. This detachment and perceived fantasy, possibly the reason for the genre's continued popularity, despite its colonial and genocidal themes, as sociologist Michael Yellow Bird asks, 'Imagine if children could also buy bags of little toy African-American slaves and their white slave masters; or Jewish holocaust prisoners and their SS Nazi guards; or undocumented Mexicans and their INS border control guards.'²⁷ Another possible reason for the popularity of the Native American, especially in Germany, is offered by H. Glenn Penny who argues for an ingrained fascination of Germans with 'Indians'. Penny compares how late-nineteenth-century historians and nationalist view their ancient past as the 'noble savage' fighting the Roman Empire in the same way as the Native American defending their way of life from the persecution of the European settlers.²⁸

Some of the autobiographies accessed for this study mention cowboy and Indian figures, the 'white' cowboy and the 'black' Indian binary represented other coloniser and colonised fantasies in a child's imagined world - world heavily influenced by boundaries and stereotyped imagery set by adults in an attempt to structure children's play. This interchangeability was also exploited by the industry, many of the less detailed representations of soldiers and other military equipment, could be rapidly adapted



3.2 Card 'flat' toy soldiers representing German and Herero combatants. Image: Deutsche Marinemuseum, Wilhelmshaven.

²⁷ Michael Yellow Bird, "Cowboys and Indians: Toys of Genocide, Icons of American Colonialism", *Wicazo Sa Review*, 19, no 2. (2004), pp.33-46, p.35

²⁸ H. Glenn Penny, *Kindred by Choice: Germans and American Indians since 1800* (University of North Carolina Press, 2013), pp.30-3

to the latest events or changes in demand by simply painting the uniforms a different colour – even less alteration was required for many of the toys of native warriors.²⁹

The most affordable type of toy soldier was the ‘flat’ which could be made from paper, card, wood, or metal the below example is from card and intended for the consumer to cut out. These card ‘flats’ represent images from the Herero Wars in German South-West Africa and the imagery is strikingly similar to the ‘Cowboys and Indians’ in image 3.1. European soldiers, uniformed and armed with modern weaponry; stereotypical natives in ‘traditional’ dress, some with rifles, others with spears; and some local flora to set the battlefield. The above cut-outs also include dead and injured Herero, and notably no defeated Germans. As with many other depictions of colonised populations the choice



3.3 Tin Flat of European Soldier fighting an African ‘Savage’ (Germany, 1906), Image: www.museen.nuernberg.de/spielzeugmuseum

²⁹ See: David D. Hamlin, “Flexible Specialisation and the German Toy Industry, 1870-1914”, *Social History*, Vol.29, No.1 (Feb 2004), pp.30-40

to illustrate them in 'grass skirts' is an attempt to emphasise the savageness of the enemy, not a reflection of the reality.³⁰

The release of toys enabling children to refight the conflicts in German and British colonies was often within a couple of weeks of the first reports appearing in newspapers, manufacturers able repaint and repurpose existing ranges to meet the new demand for toys to re-enact violence against colonised populations.³¹ The violent, dead, or wounded toy soldiers were not uncommon the toy above is another representation from the Herero Wars, the figure is a German-made lead 'flat' painted on one side and depicts another German soldier and two Africans. Again, as in the previous example the imagery of the Africans is highly racialised, they are represented in near-naked savage dress and inferior to the German soldier who appears to have defeated two of them despite being outnumbered – and grabbing what appears to be a firearm contemptuously and using a sword. The below German-made toy soldier battle set for the British market allows children to refight the Battle of El-Teb between the Sudanese and the British. As with the card flats in the previous picture the selection of toys represents both the Europeans, this time British in red coats, and the native warriors in loin cloths. A range of camels, dead or wounded fighters, palm trees, and cannons complete the battle scene.

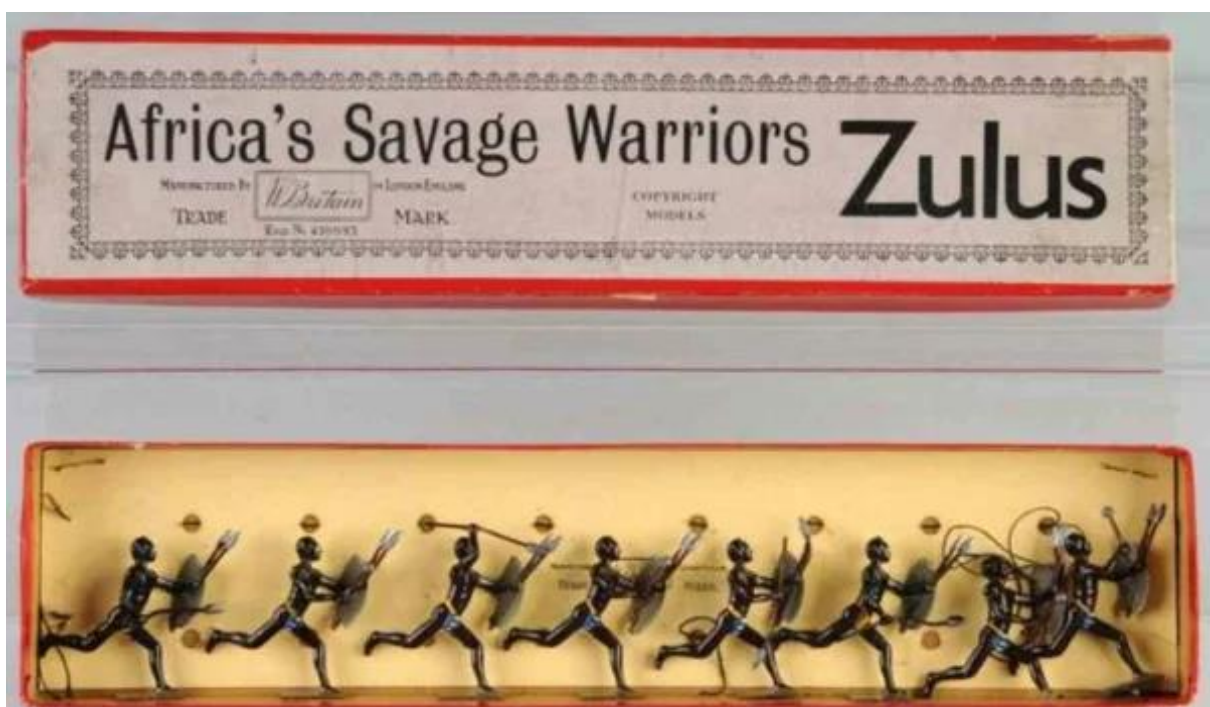


3.4 Heinrichsen, Battle of El-Teb (Germany, 1890), V&A 01194275, Image from vam.ac.uk

³⁰ Photographs and many other illustrations show Herero and Nama people dressed in European-style clothing or in some cases *Hosenneger*.

³¹ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, p.215

Stereotypes which reinforced the 'savage' image of colonised populations were used heavily by manufacturers in both Britain and Germany. As previously noted, German toy makers dominated the market, however British designs were increasingly popular.³² An early set of William Britain figures represented 'Africa's Savage Warriors: Zulus', the box of eight figures depicting a crude image of Zulu fighters wearing little in the way of clothing and carrying spears and shields.³³ Toy soldiers similar to these would have filled Jack Churchill's 'Coloured' miniature army when he played with his older brother – although they would have been of a German origin. The Churchills conforming to the European racist messaging children in Britain and Germany consigned 'Red Indians', Herero, and Zulus to the generic other – the enemy, 'bad-guy', savage or 'boogiemán'. However, this is not always the case, and the toy figures of non-Europeans may have appealed to children to who the exotic appealed,



3.5, W. Britains, Africa's Savage Warriors – Zulus (Britain, 1906), Image: www.liveauctioneers.com

especially the 'Indians' who for many young people offered an escapist fantasy from European society.³⁴

None of the sources accessed for this thesis refer to a preference for native warrior when refiguring battles during play. The appeal of toys representing 'savages' is the exotic imagery, colours, and clear

³² Kenneth D. Brown, "Models in History: A Micro-Study of Late Nineteenth-Century British Entrepreneurship", *The Economic History Review*, Vol.42, No.4 (Nov. 1989) pp528-37, p.531

³³ William Britain's toy soldiers, sold from 1893 were the first British challenge to German dominance in the market. Britain developed a 'hollow cast' system that reduced the amount of metal needed to produce the figures allowing him to sell his products at half the cost of the imported German ones. See: Brown, "Modelling for War?"

³⁴ Penny, *Kindred by Choice*, p.25

binary to the European soldiery that was often lined-up on the playroom floor before them. The nationalist and colonial influences over choice of which 'side' to play were strong and enduring, the legacy of colonialism and racism in boardgames and computer games still a theme of research and concern today.³⁵



3.6 Heinrichsen, African Soldiers (Germany, 1908), Image: www.museen.nuernberg.de/spielzeugmuseum

Not all toys which represented colonial fighters as savages, ranges from Britain and Germany represented troops that fought for the European colonists. The German market appears to have a wider range of these with figures that represent not only units from German colonies but many other empires and independent regions of Africa. British manufacturers appeared to focus on British colonies or allied regions. This disparity may be just due to the size of the toy industries, the more developed German toy makers able to produce wider ranges for a broader international market rather than any ideological reasons. Collections of toy soldiers from either region do not contain any more than a sample of these representations in toys, due to this it can be assumed that they were not one of the most popular ranges. However, they were designed and produced which is evident of a demand – however limited. The demand possibly driven by a collectors need for completism or accuracy in their collection or recreation of battles.³⁶

Ranges of toys which represented armies from the past promoted nationalism as well as militarism, racism, and aggression. Children could refight the battles from their nations past, inspired by the content of lessons at school or the short stories in the literature they read at home. Ranges of toys which covered the Napoleonic, the Crimean, Austro-Prussian, and Franco-Prussian Wars allowed children to engage in the national histories, commanding the armies which forged their nations, and

³⁵ For more about colonialism and post-colonial gaming see: "Postcolonial Perspectives in Game Studies" (Special Collection), *Open Library of Humanities*, Vol.4, No.1 (2018); and Mary Flanagan & Mikael Jakobsson, *Playing Oppression: The Legacy of Conquest and Empire in Colonialist Board Games* (MIT Press, 2023).

³⁶ For an insight into the wargamer see: Donald Featherstone, *Featherstone's Complete Wargaming* (David & Charles, 1989).

righting the wrong historical decisions and outcomes. Toy makers advertised their products as accurate representations of the real soldiery, Heinrichsen of Nuremberg even going so far as to claim to 'employ history professors' to advise on and certify the products.³⁷ Through playing with toy armies, young boys and girls could learn about their and other nations history. Many manufacturers sold 'battle sets' which included two forces as well as some scenery such as trees and buildings including the example below. The battle set contains toys soldiers and scenery that represent the armies that fought in the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian war, a key conflict in the creation of the German Empire and an important part of the German historical narrative. Young Germans, aware of these events from their schooling and reading could refight the battles which created a Germany through military conquest – a narrative that many nationalists wanted to promote over others.



3.7 Georg Heyde, *French and Prussian battle set* (Dresden 1886), Image: German Toy Museum, Nuremberg.

The nineteenth century was not the only source of inspiration for toy soldiers to encourage nationalist sentiment in children. Both Britain and Germany educated children in ancient Greek and Roman history and the interaction with both ancient cultures were important parts of the national myth. As previously mentioned in this chapter the interaction between the ancient Roman Empire and Germania was a source of inspiration for Germans interested in the nation's history.³⁸ Unlike British national and imperial history which relies heavily on its Roman past to justify empire building and

³⁷ Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood*, p.215

³⁸ See: Penny, *Kindred by Choice*.

ideas of national supremacy,³⁹ the German national identity is rooted in its opposition to Roman occupation and victories against the Roman armies.

Toy figures of Romans and to a lesser extent ancient Greeks were popular in Britain and Germany. In Britain the similarities between the legions of Rome lined up in ranks of red-clothed legionaries and the red-coats of the British army was easy to see and claim, but in Germany the nation-builders focused on the Germanic tribes as the predecessors to national continuity – for many German children the Roman legionary would have been the enemy. To emphasis this the German toy industry also supplied suitable products to support the myth of a link to an ancient German past and defence of German lands, as in the image below which shows a toy of two Germanic women killing a Roman soldier with a knife and large stone – an image that would have demonstrated the perceived superior martial prowess and ferocity of the native Germans, even amongst women, over areas of Europe that had fallen to the Romans.



3.8 Lead 'Flat' toy figures representing two female Germanic tribes people attacking a Roman soldier (Germany, 1881), Image from author's collection.

³⁹ For recent work undermining these cultural links between the English and the Roman Empire see: John Lambhead, *The Fall of Roman Britain and Why We Speak English* (Pen & Sword, 2022).

In Britain, the use of past wars was not to encourage nation-building sentiment to the same degree as in Germany, although jingoistic celebration of past wars was frequently used. The popularity of the Napoleonic Wars as a subject for toy soldiers was due to a wish to demonstrate Britain's military supremacy and place in the world as a great power. As previously mentioned, the British toy industry was not as well developed as its German counterpart and the majority of toy soldiers would have been imported from the continent. The ranges found in the catalogues of British importers and retailers demonstrate the popularity of toy soldiers in early nineteenth century uniforms, and the dominance of toys representing British armies.⁴⁰ The visual appeal of these uniforms needs to be considered, as the bright and bold colours were attractive to the consumer in addition to any national sentiment.⁴¹

William Britain took the lead in British toy soldier production by replicating German manufacturing methods and reducing the cost by producing hollow lead figures. Initial ranges focused almost exclusively on the British imperial armies and their foes, popular sets included infantry in red coats and pith helmets, British camel riders, and guardsmen in bear-skin shakos.⁴² Later ranges of colonial



3.9 J.W. Spears wooden skittle sets, advertised in the British and German versions of the 1904 catalogue, Image from author's collection

⁴⁰ See: Brown, "Modelling for War?"

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.248

⁴² For examples see: James Onie, *Britains Toy Soldiers: The History and Handbook, 1893-2013* (Pen & Sword, 2016).

soldiers were added as foes for the toy battles. This limited range of figures, focused on British interests, an indication of the limited exports of British toys in this period.

Race and racialisation were not only present in toys with military or colonial themes. The appeal of the exotic nature of the colonies was often used to make toys of a more neutral character more appealing. Two examples of these, both produced by J.W. Spears for both British and German markets are a range of 'Fancy Skittles' which amongst bright and bold images of soldiers and policemen racial



3.10 British and German versions of the J.W. Spears ball game (1907) Image from author's collection

stereotypical images of Africans and Chinese people are present.⁴³ Here the only reason for the use of these images is the visual appeal of them, chosen because they are exotic and comical. This is also the case for the next product which is from the J.W. Spears 1907 range, again for both the British and German. This range is a target game for the player to throw a ball through the mouths of comical depictions of either a comical monkey's or a racialised image of an African face's mouth. Here, as before, the only reason for this choice is the exotic and comical nature of the imagery especially that linked to imagery of 'Hosenneger' such as the striped shirt collar. – there are no European faces to throw balls at.

⁴³ The same products are advertised in both the *Reich illustrierte Preisliste von J.W. Spear & Söhne 1904* and the *J.W. Spear & Sons Export Catalogue 1904*. A similar game of skittles advertised in the same English version of the catalogue is advertised as 'Ten Little Niggers', this version does not appear in the German catalogue.

British and German toys demonstrate the same themes and stereotypes. This is a consequence of European racial ideas created for the justification of imperialism? Or the trans-national nature of the toy industry which responded to markets which demanded goods with similar themes? – this especially the case with the dominant nature of the German toy industry. British-made toys were limited in scope, focused on British interests, this is evident of the much smaller scale of the industry, not a lack of demand from the British consumer. The products available in each region do vary and are evident of an anticipated demand for military and colonial-themed toys which portray interest from adult buyers or child players in their national history and current events. This demand created by the content of school lessons and written material examined in the previous chapters, and children were able to recreate the national histories they had been taught or read about.

Although the international scope of the European toy trade and demands of consumers meant that many of the toys purchased and played with in Britain and German had the same origins a comparison in the way they were advertised locally demonstrates some interesting variations. Listings for a toy cannon in J.W. Spears wholesale catalogues for the British and German markets in 1904 (shown above) are an example of these differences. The toy cannon, which came supplied with targets representing cavalrymen, was listed in the German version of the catalogue as simply: 'Artillery Gun' and described as supplied with 'Lithographed Cavalry on a wooden base and a good breech loading cannon with projectiles'; the listing in the British catalogue is more 'jingoistic' and labelled as "'Our Boys'" Cannon'



3.11 Two listings from J.W. Spears 1904 wholesale catalogues, the first for the German market, the second for the British market demonstrating the differences in how they are advertised and promoted.

and ‘A delightful toy for boys’. This variation in how the same product is promoted in Germany and Britain reflects how the military and children’s playthings and literature with a military theme appear throughout this thesis – a more matter-of-fact approach in Germany compared with the emotive and celebrative language in Britain.

Whether advertised with sober or emotive language, how to recreate battles with toys was often left to the imagination of the child. Formal sets of wargaming rules existed for war planning, most notably German *Kriegspiel*, but a set of gaming rules for children’s play would not be available until H.G. Wells’ *Little Wars* published in 1913 – this game will be discussed later in this chapter. Most structured games with rules and objectives were in the form of boardgames which were increasingly popular in the early twentieth century.

Gaming Empire on the Tabletop

The formative and educational value of boardgames has been evident throughout human history, board games have been identified by archaeologists existing as far back as the Iron Age.⁴⁴ Examples from Iron-Age Africa, carved in stone, have been demonstrated to have been used to not only entertain but also develop skills.⁴⁵ Other examples include carved games on Neo-Assyrian sculptures,⁴⁶ numerous chess sets, and variants of Snakes and Ladders which have existed in many societies. Snakes and Ladders originated from the Indian game *Moksha Patam* or Kismet and was introduced to Europe by Victorian Britons in the 1890s who were attracted by the moral teachings of the game – up the ladder for good deeds, down the slide for bad ones – and an example of the empire influencing the metropole.⁴⁷

Games that taught children morals were already present in European society before the introduction of the Indian game, one of the most popular throughout Europe was *The Game of Goose*, a simple race game that depicted good and bad deeds along the game’s path. The simple design allowed publishers to produce versions in different languages.⁴⁸ The Game of Goose was a form of travel game on which many variations exist, the game easily adapted to many forms of instruction, promotion, or advertising. Due to this adaptability and popularity the games they, as also argued by Adrian Seville,

⁴⁴ Eric N. Mathoho, Shadreck Chirikure, & Robert T. Nyamushosho, “Board games and social life in Iron Age southern Africa”, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, No.66 (2022)

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.1

⁴⁶ See https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1850-1228-4_1, accessed 2nd January 2023

⁴⁷ For an example: *Kismet*, designed in England, manufactured in Germany, 1895

⁴⁸ British and German versions can be found in the British Museum, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/top-10-historical-board-games> accessed 2/1/23

can ‘convey the “feel” of an era’ for cultural histories.⁴⁹ Games of this type were produced across Europe and adapted to meet the local cultural, political, and consumer demands.

In the late nineteenth century German publishers and manufacturers dominated the board game market, with companies such as J.W. Spear and Ravensburger supplying products for the domestic and export markets in the same way as the toy industry. The British publishers scope reflected the toy industry with a focus on the British market. There are examples of the transnational nature of the industry with products that are designed in Britain and then manufactured in Germany before being exported for the British market. In both markets the military, colonialism, and trade were popular topics, as they still are today,⁵⁰ the themes lending themselves well to map-based boards and images – the idea that politics, war, and imperialism themselves were a game was an established and popular view in Victorian Britain.⁵¹ At the time Rudyard Kipling makes this clear in his novels, especially *Kim* (1901),⁵² repeating an earlier description of the imperialist competition between Britain and Russia in central Asia by the British explorer and army captain Arthur Conolly who called it ‘the Great Game’.⁵³ In Kipling’s novel, the hero Kimball is caught up in the ‘game’ of espionage which played out as the European competitors attempted to control the region and its inhabitants – for Kipling the empire, as for many, offered an excitement not found in, what he describes, as a boring and mundane metropole. Although, despite this connection between imperialism and the game, the majority of games found during the research for this thesis are not about the ‘Great Game’ in Asia, but the European imperialist efforts in Africa and the Pacific.

The games available ranged from simple race or travel games to complex games that introduced mechanics that simulated economic or military actions, however they had the same intention, to introduce empire and teach young people to engage with it. Board games, especially the more complex ones are more likely to have involved older family members playing with younger children, here an opportunity to share ideas, educate, and experience the game together. In Britain the promotion, and satire, of empire had been present in board game design from the early nineteenth century and games published in this period have been the subject of research by Megan A. Norcia correctly highlights the focus on commerce in the games to highlight the benefits of imperialism to

⁴⁹ Adrian Seville, *The Cultural Legacy of the Royal Game of the Goose: 400 Years of Printed Board Games* (Amsterdam University Press, 2019), p.334

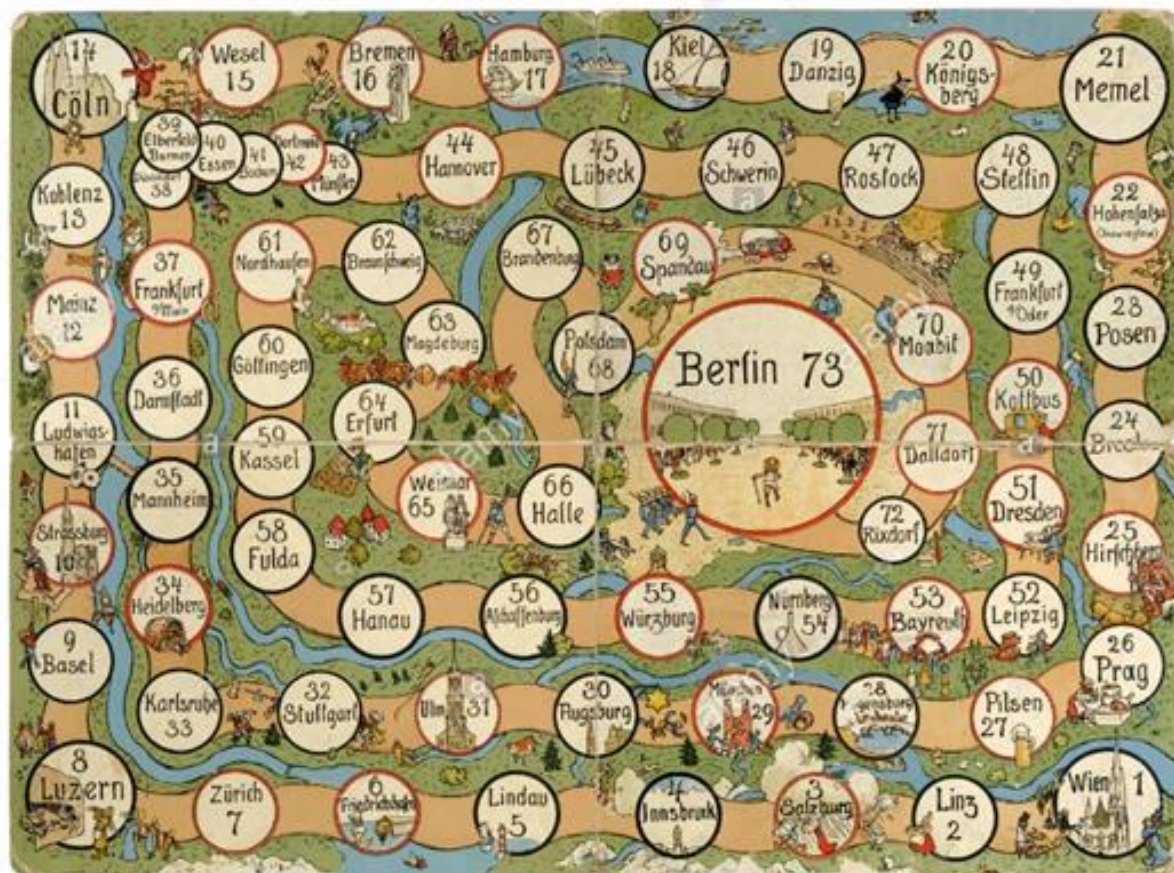
⁵⁰ For more on contemporary board games and imperialist and colonialist themes see: Cornel Borit, Melania Borit & Petter Olsen, “Representations of Colonialism in Three Popular, Modern Board Games: Puerto Rico, Struggle of Empires, and Archipelago”, *Open Library of Humanities*, Vol.4, No.1 (2018)

⁵¹ Megan A. Norcia, *Gaming Empire in Children’s British Board Games, 1836-1860* (Routledge, 2019), p.37

⁵² Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London, 1901)

⁵³ Arthur Conolly, *Journey to the North of India, Overland from England, Through Russia, Persia, and Affghaunistaun* (London, 1834)

the British public.⁵⁴ The games analysed by Norica engage with an established British empire with little reference to international competition, a notable exception to this are games published in Britain, post-abolition of slavery, that take a righteous critical view of the continued use of slaves in North America.⁵⁵ Without an overseas empire to promote, German games in the mid-eighteenth century promoted Germanism and culture, travel games such as the below game introduced the German cities and states of Europe from a Pan-German view point. The game promotes Greater Berlin, the final five spaces, as the centre of the German world, and the start of the 'race' is Vienna which up until 1866 was the rival for the centre of a united Germany.



3.12 Allerneuestes Jägerspiel. Image:Alamy.com

When Germany entered the scramble for the remaining uncolonized regions of Africa and other parts of the globe the topics and themes in the games of interest to this study changed. Britain now had another imperial competitor in colonising new regions of the globe, and Germany had to promote the creation and existence of its new imperialist project. Travel games were the most popular format for games that introduced and informed the players about their nation's empire. German children could

⁵⁴ Norica, *Gaming Empire*, ch.2

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, ch.4

travel through the German colonies by playing games such as *In die Deutschen Kolonien* (1890), *Durch Deutschlands Kolonien* (1890), and *Kreuz und quer durch Africa* (1884). Most of these games follow a similar route from the German coast, through the German African colonies, then towards China and the Pacific. Along the route the players are told of the history of the colony and shown images of the resources, people, and wildlife of the area.



3.13 Box art for *Deutschland's Kolonien Spiel* (Germany, 1890), Image from getty.edu

Another example of a travel game with a colonial theme is *Deutschland's Kolonien-Spiel*, produced in Germany 1890. The cover of the game's box portrays a youthful German in a naval uniform, itself a symbol of militarism and nationalism, surrounded by racialised native people, they look savage and primitive, armed with spears, clubs and axes. The figure on the far right appears to be a female caricature and is dressed in a grass skirt and is bare-chested, this apparent attempt at offering an 'authentic' image of colonial life can also be an example of the fetishization of the African female body by European colonists and the consumer in the metropole. Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann demonstrates the sexualisation of West African women in images taken by British photographers in the 1880's.⁵⁶ The

⁵⁶ Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann, "Under Imperial Eyes, Black Bodies, Buttocks, and Breasts: British Colonial Photography and Asante "Fetish Girls"", Coleman African Studies Center (UCLA, 2012)

images, claimed as anthropological ones were fetishized by the European gaze, as an example of a lack of Victorian modesty, the exotic, and the forbidden.⁵⁷ The characters representing the native populations of the German empire are, although armed and savage in appearance, curious, apprehensive to approach and all depicted as hunched below the height of what appears to be a German boy. The boy is smiling and appears to be confident in his interaction with the group around him, here he demonstrates the racial hierarchical expectations Europeans already discussed in this thesis - this racialised imagery is continued on the gaming board. After setting sail from Hamburg, along with the risk of getting seasick, the players travel through Togo, Cameroon, German Southwest Africa, and German East Africa before setting sail to the Pacific.

3.14 Game Board for *Deutschland's Kolonien Spiel* (Germany, 1890) Image from getty.edu

⁵⁷ Engmann, "Under Imperial Eyes", pp.9-10

and see racialised images of tribal people cooking, dancing, performing a ritual, and trying on European clothing. The journey ends in China, the first player to arrive the winner.

Players of *Deutschland's Kolonien-Spiel* were taught the world-wide scope of the German possessions, the European image of them, and the costs and benefits of empire. Travelling costs money, three Marks per ticket, as does sight-seeing in certain locations. Lucky players can make money on the way, if they land in Damaraland the local leader offers a three Mark gift, and the women of Samoa, known for their business skills, grant the player another three Marks.⁵⁸ There are also the dangers of illness, spear wounds, and getting lost, reminders that the empire was not just exotic but offered adventure and risk as well.



3.15 *Deutschland braucht Kolonien* (Germany, circa.1900), image from boardgamegeek.com

A German game *Deutschland braucht Kolonien* (1900) which, although more complex than a simple puzzle, used puzzles to promote German colonialism by creating images of the colonies alongside map boards of colonised regions which explained how Germany benefited from the resources found in each. The box art for the game offers hopeful and generic images of colonies full of German industries and railroads, another fantasy-filled image of the German colonies alongside the stereotypes of men and women in grass skirts and loin cloths carrying spears living in huts amongst palm trees.

⁵⁸ Game rules for *Deutschland's Kolonien-Spiel* printed on the inside of the box lid. (Getty.edu)

One exception found is the *Aeroplane Race Round the British Empire* (1910), a game that embraces the new technologies of aviation to create a new way of travelling around the world, although if this was a possibility in 1910 is doubtful.⁶¹ However, this does reflect the early interest in the possibilities of aircraft in the control of empire and in military use as demonstrated by David Edgerton.⁶² This game does not offer the same comprehensive tour of an empire as the German example, the journey travels a very indirect route through the 'jewels' of the British Empire: Gibraltar, Canada, Malta, Egypt, Ceylon, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the West Indies before returning to London. The dangers are from technology not the natural world, and players risk collisions, running out of fuel, and mechanical problems. Britain's more established empire, along with other children's material meant that a detailed trip around the world was of secondary importance to introducing the possibilities of technology in maintaining the empire.⁶³ This difference in the themes of British games with a colonial topic compared to the German examples are found in other similar games, travel in Europe was an increasingly popular topic – possibly an indication of a growing interest in Europe from Britain in the early twentieth century.⁶⁴ Technological innovation and national superiority in that field are an important theme in types of non-military toys which will be investigated later in this chapter.

The other growing interest in late nineteenth-century Britain was the army, military reforms, the recruitment of more middle-class soldiers, and the growing crusading mission of the army in the British empire required a rebranding of the image of the army.⁶⁵ One example of a game which uses the British army as its background is *Despatch Runners* (1910), players have to race along the gaming board from London to Edinburgh via various British cities. The rules a simple dice roll to move along the game board, with a few pitfalls along the way; landing on a city delays the player as they need to rest, and landing on a river requires the unlucky player to start the game again. Players would not only learn about the military but also the geography of Britain promoting the nation through awareness of its cities. Of interest is the imagery on the board which contains scenes of British soldiery: guardsmen in bearskins, rifles dressed in green, and infantry wearing the spiked, Prussian-style helmet that was only used by territorial units. Through this imagery the players could learn to identify the different regiments, also the order in which they appear reflects the regiments seniority in the British military – this as Garvin points out in her study of Italian toy soldiers helps the players, Britain's future soldiers

⁶¹ A later edition in 1920 updates the images of aircraft to those that would be capable of travelling the distance, however the first circumnavigation of the globe by aircraft was only achieved in 1924.

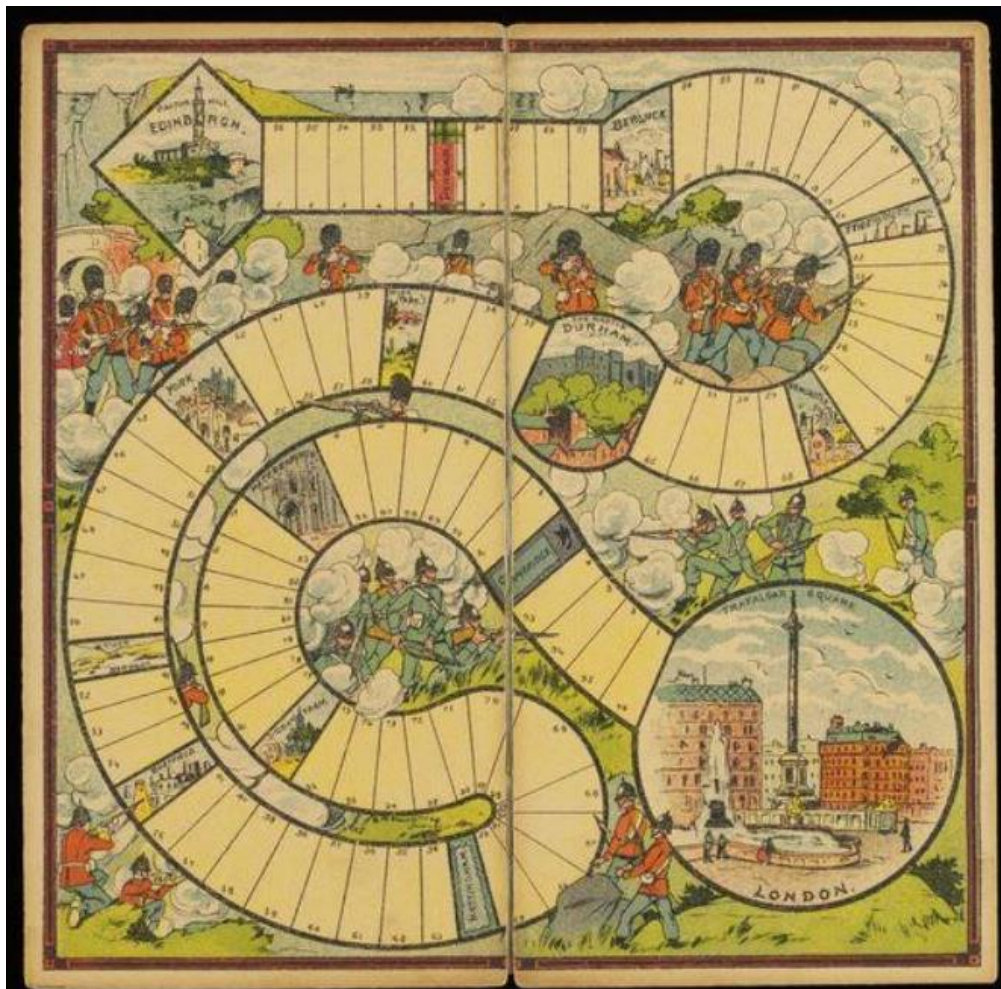
⁶² David Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane, Militarism, Modernity and Machines, New Edition* (Penguin, 2013)

⁶³ This increasing focus on technology will be further examined in the next chapter.

⁶⁴ For example: *A Trip on the Continent*, Spears Games (Germany, 1900), (English Edition)

⁶⁵ John Peck, *War, The Army and Victorian Literature* (Palgrave, 1998), p.xi

to familiarise themselves with the structure of the military and the different uniforms.⁶⁶ Of note are the scenes of soldiers are firing their weapons in what looks like a battle – is this meant to be a battle, or some training exercise? There are no enemy present so presumably the latter.⁶⁷



3.17 *Despatch Runners* (Britain, 1910), Image from vam.ac.uk

Imperial themes were as present in other forms of British games, in the case of *With "Our BOBs" to Pretoria* (1900). Although still a travel game, it takes players on a journey through South Africa on a board featuring portraits of famous British Generals, each numbered space on the gaming board is linked to an event from the Boer War described in the rules section. The rules printed on the side of the gaming board also state that 'At the distribution of the pool [of gaming tokens], it is requested to sing "God Save the Queen",'⁶⁸ although this is a game it is instructing the young players on British imperial history, the military, and jingoistic nationalism. The conflict in South Africa was also the background to puzzle games such as *The Great Transvaal War Puzzle*, published in *The Herald*

⁶⁶ Garvin, "Paper Soldiers on the March", p.60

⁶⁷ *Despatch Runners* (Britain, 1910)

⁶⁸ *With "Our BOBs" to Pretoria* (London, 1900)

newspaper in 1900. In this game there is little visual reference to the conflict, just a central square in which ‘Ladysmith’ is printed, the title chosen to attract players to what is a simple and generic puzzle.⁶⁹

German games also used colonial and overseas conflicts as a theme to inform, instruct, and appeal to the consumer and players. Research for this has not discovered any games that use the conflict in German Southwest Africa as a background, but games about battles in China were available – possibly due to the more tactical and strategic battles in the east more appropriate for interesting gameplay and international sales opportunities than any moral or ethical reasons. Games such as *Die Eroberung von Peking und befreiung der Gestandten Gesellschaftsspiel* (*The Conquest of Peking and the Freeing of the Ambassadors*) published in 1900 demonstrate the German military’s overseas activity, and successes, as well as Germany working alongside other nations (The Eight-Nation Alliance) in a mission to free their besieged embassies. The familiar race-game format takes place on land and sea with each of the eight allied powers racing to capture Peking. The gaming board does not just show the Peking region, the geographical context was supplied by a map of the Far East as well as a global one so the



3.18 Gaming board for *Die Eroberung von Peking und befreiung der Gestandten Gesellschaftsspiel* (Leipzig, 1900), Image: RPG.net

players could locate where the action took place. The sea racing tracks on the board also indicated where the various allied forces travelled from, including those from the nearby German territorial possession of Kiautschou Bay.⁷⁰ The game, produced by Hartmann & Wolf, had the rules published in

⁶⁹ The Great Transvaal War Puzzle, *The Herald* (1900)

⁷⁰ *Die Eroberung von Peking und befreiung der Gestandten Gesellschaftsspiel* (Leipzig, 1900)

five different languages,⁷¹ enough for all but Japanese players to refight the battle and evidence of the international market for German games. Games produced in Germany also used overseas battles between other empires, evidence of a broad interest within the German population, or export opportunities for the manufacturer – although the next example is a from a page cut out from a German newspaper which implies export was not anticipated.



3.19 *Die Einnahme von Port Arthur* (Augsburg, 1905), Image: RPG.net

Die Einnahme von Port Arthur, (*The Capture of Port Arthur*), published in Augsburg 1905 uses the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 as the background to another race game. The gaming board in this case takes a spiral route to the Russian base at Port Arthur with various places on the track explaining the events of the war, often accompanied by pictures of sinking ships and land battles. The playing surface also have representations of the Russian and Japanese admirals and a couple of soldiers, it also shows the geographic location of Port Arthur as well as a panoramic illustration of the landscape so players can visualise the location. As this example is printed in the same way as a page in a newspaper, this demonstrates the speed that designers, publishers, and manufacturers were able to release new material in response to events and consumer demand in the same way the toy industry

⁷¹ Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, p.37

was also able to – this led to the comment that the toy and game industry were like ‘newspapers in tin’.⁷²

Another use of board games, and one in which Britain has a use for in other periods than Germany is in nation building. A previous example from Britain, *Despatch Runners*, has some agency in the aim of nation-building through awareness of the geography of the region – the earlier German example of a race game (figure 3.12) also aims to educate the player in the nation’s geography in the same but less militaristic way. German nationalists also used the history of German states to create a unifying German historical narrative, especially that of the Wars of Liberation which have been traditionally seen to have sparked the move towards German nationalism.⁷³ *Mit Blücher von Breslau bis Leipzig* (1910) makes a connection between the Prussian army’s success in 1813-15 with the new German nation. The game box features the Monument to the Battle of the Nations at Leipzig with an image of



3.20 *Mit Blücher von Breslau bis Leipzig* (1910), Image: German Toy Museum, Nuremberg.

⁷² Bowersox, *Raising Germans*, p.38

⁷³ See: Friedrich Meinecke, *The Age of German Liberation, 1795-1815*, Trans. Peter Paret & Helmuth Fischer (Berkeley, 1977). For more recent work on the development of German nationalism which challenges this view see: John Breuilly, “Nation and Nationalism in Modern German History”, *The Historical Journal*, Vol.33, No.3 (1990), pp.659-75

Blücher, the link to the *Kaiserreich* is made with the new German flag, not the Prussian flag that would have been carried by the regiments in 1813. The game, sponsored by the *Deutschen Patrioten Bundes* (German Patriotic Association),⁷⁴ imposing Prussian history as definition of German history in the same vein as Treitschke's teleological and 'determinist and Prussocentric' work.⁷⁵ Here, the selection of which Prussian history to absorb into the history of the new German nation is selective, obvious omissions from the topics of board games of this type are the wars which preceded the creation of the German Empire which featured Germans fighting Germans.⁷⁶

By adapting the simple travel game, British and German games publishers were able to respond quickly to changes in consumer demand driven by global events, or to anticipate the demand. They could also support the activities of nationalist, militarist, and imperialist groups with games that promoted their ambitions as in the example of *Mit Blücher von Breslau bis Leipzig* and the *Deutschen Patrioten Bundes*. The types of games produced in Britain and Germany are similar and mirror the scope of the toy industry – Britain focused on Britain, and Germany with the export as well as the domestic market in mind.

The themes of the games were also similar, they reflect the different development stages in nation and empire between Britain and Germany. Most British games that support nation- and empire-building were published before 1860 and outside the scope of this study, by the late nineteenth century the games, and the demand they reflect are on maintaining the empire, new technologies, and recruitment into the military. At the same time in Germany the imperial project has only recently been established and this is reflected in the larger numbers of games that wish to introduce the players to the new German overseas possessions and images from them.

Almost all the games take advantage of the travel game format which takes the players on a journey through the topic of the game, nation, empire, or military; this allows the games designer to immerse the participants in the story they want to tell through imagery and text which expands their knowledge of geography, global events, or military life. Unlike recreating conflict with toy soldiers, board games do not allow the same level of freedom in how to play which is formalised through the game's rules – although children could create their own rules. This formality on how to play means that the writer, designer, publisher, or sponsor of the game has more influence over the message and lesson conveyed

⁷⁴ Inside of box lid, *Mit Blücher von Breslau bis Leipzig* (Germany, 1910)

⁷⁵ James J. Sheehan, "What is German History? Reflections on the Role of Nation in German History and Historiography", *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol.53, No.1 (1981), pp.1-23

⁷⁶ These wars are not absent from the archives, pre-1871 examples published in Prussia can be found. For an example see: https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=1297 A children's board game depicting the Austro-Prussian War (title unknown), published in 1866 (Accessed 1st March 2023)

by the game. The format of the game also means that the player has no agency in the events, they are just following the narrative in a race to the conclusion – unlike playing with toys where the player can imagine themselves participating in the event and influencing its outcome. Miniature wargames or *Kriegspiel* allowed children (and adults) to recreate battles with toy soldiers that had results dictated by a set of rules.

H.G. Wells' *Little Wars* was one of the earliest examples of a wargame that children could access. The author claimed that this wargame was an alternative to the 'dull and unsatisfactory' German examples and suitable for '...boys of every age from twelve to one hundred and fifty – and even later if the limbs remain sufficiently supple, - by girls of the better sort, and by a few rare and gifted women.'⁷⁷ However, although *Little Wars* was a game that allowed children and adults to play at war with their collections of toy soldiers and toy cannons it was intended as a critical lesson on war. Wells' political views and ideas about the dangers of militarism were evident within the book which, he hoped, would demonstrate:

How much better is this amiable miniature [game] than the real thing!... no smashed or sanguinary bodies, no shattered fine buildings nor devastated country sides, not petty cruelties, none of that awful boredom and embitterment... all of us in every country, except a few dull-witted, energetic bores, what to see the manhood of the world at something better than apeing [sic] the little lead toys our children buy in boxes...

... You only have to play at Little Wars three or four times to realise what a blundering thing Great War must be. Great war is at present, I am convinced, not only the most expensive game in the universe, but it is a game out of all proportion. Not only are the masses of men and material and suffering and inconvenience too monstrously big for reason, but the available heads we have for it, are too small. That, I think, is the most pacific realisation conceivable, and Little War brings you to it as nothing else but a Great War can do.⁷⁸

Wells', in *Little Wars*, contradicts himself and presents the book as both anti-war, and a useful tool for the military. Initially he claims his wargame could replace war and that the pre-disposition for conflict and warfare demonstrated by men and boys could be channelled, and in some way sated, by fighting battles with toy soldiers. He then presents it as a demonstration of the wastefulness of war and a visualisation of the casualties that traditional *Kriegspiel* avoided. Players of *Little Wars* could replicate the results of combat by removing the toy soldiers from the 'melee', or using some form of projectile such as a sling, air rifle, marbles, or one of the 'working' toys with fired miniature projectiles – the approach Wells would take for calculating the results of artillery fire.⁷⁹ This was intended to

⁷⁷ H.G. Wells, *Little Wars: A game for boys from twelve years of age to one hundred and fifty and for that more intelligent sort of girl who likes boys' games and books* (London, 1913), p.1

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, pp.97-100

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp.44-6

demonstrate the wastefulness of conflict between European armies – the rules did not take into account any imbalance in military technology which implies he may have had a different attitude to colonial conflicts. However, in the ‘Appendix’ of *Little Wars*, and despite Wells claims that the game is to demonstrate the futility of war, he appeared enthusiastic about some ‘considerable correspondence with military people’ who with a ‘very friendly spirit’ inquired about the possibilities of developing the game into a ‘vivid and inspiring Kriegspiel’ for military use – which he then muses over and offers extra rules that expand the simulation of battle.⁸⁰ The existence and use of *Little Wars* demonstrates the strength of the appeal of the military and war in British and German society, Wells who frequently criticises militarism and imperialism in Britain accepts that this interest cannot, or should not, be suppressed but channelled into a form that avoids the expensive losses of men and equipment. It also demonstrates how the military are able to co-opt the game to for training officers to fight a real war – something that Wells easily concedes to due to the esteem he holds the army and military officers in.

Although *Little Wars* is regarded as the first set of popular wargaming rules, versions of those intended for naval and military use were increasingly available for adults and older children to play, these will be introduced in the next two chapters. Games such as *Little Wars* blur the line between the play of children and adults, Wells’ set of gaming rules are simple and accessible to a child player and intended to be an enjoyable pass time although his ambition for the book and the future of mankind were dashed by the outbreak of war a year after its publication.

H.G. Wells was not the only voice challenging the growing militarism and imperialism of childhood in pre-First World War Britain. Strong, and more consistent, concern over the militarisation of children’s play was expressed in Britain, but it was often negatively reported by and in the press. A meeting of the Peace Association that took place in 1888 was mocked by the *Cambridge Independent Press* for supporting views that ‘war-like toys, such as soldiers, guns, swords, &c. [Sic]’ should not be given to children,⁸¹ and the ‘Children’s Hour’ section of the *Aberdeen Journal* of the same year stressed that banishing military toys would be a mistake because ‘We ought to be ready always to bear arms in a good cause...’ and that ‘every little soldier should be taught that to preserve peace is his first duty, and as noble a duty as to fight bravely’.⁸² Although this was responding to a comment from a ‘lady’ that within the nursery environment it ‘would be easy’ to start training children in politics and ‘familiarise

⁸⁰ Wells, *Little Wars*, pp.101-11

⁸¹ “Comic Clippings”, *Cambridge Independent Press*, Vol.83, Issue.3745 (24th February, 1888), p.3; another Peace Association meeting that took place in Leicester was also reported as demanding that children were not given military toys in Peace and War, *Leicester Chronicle*, Vol.79, Issue.4072 (23rd February, 1889), p.10

⁸² “The Children’s Hour”, *Aberdeen Journal*, Issue.10395 (2nd June 1888), p.2

them with the great questions of the day', an idea that leads the column's author to 'feel sorry' for any children that lady was a mother to.⁸³ It must be acknowledged that the all commentary expressing concern over war-like toys originates in Britain and efforts to find similar commentary in pre-1914 German sources has been unsuccessful and often regarded as impossible by archivists and librarians consulted – the laws and control over anti-militarist comment in German publications meaning it is absent.

Play which mimics adult life is one of the most common forms of play, and one that this thesis has introduced earlier, this form of play also frequently includes play acting as a soldier, warrior, or adventurer. This form of play, which often does not include props or direction as previously examined in this chapter, can be evidence of what children have been exposed to and informed about, and how they have accepted the information. That children play out events around them, even from the darkest periods of history has been demonstrated by historians researching various events and regions. Catherine Merridale discusses children playing 'Reds and Whites' in Russia,⁸⁴ German children playing 'Gestapo and Jews' is highlighted in Nicholas Stargardt's work on German children in the Second World War,⁸⁵ and Jewish children recreating events in concentration camps while imprisoned is the subject of George Eisen's work.⁸⁶ H.G. Wells' memories of imagining commanding troops whilst out playing in the woods has already been highlighted in the introduction, in his case a solitary activity using a wooden stick.

Playing at war was not commonly a solo activity, nor one that only used improvised props. The example in the previous chapter of a play for German children anticipates that the young actors have access to appropriate uniforms and toy weapons and there are many examples of such products in catalogues from the period and current collections of toys in museums and archives. Examples of these include toy pistols and rifles, many of which fired projectiles, swords, and child-sized uniforms.⁸⁷ In Britain the popularity of military toys as Christmas presents in 1890 was demonstrated by the 'piles' of 'military toys, rifles, and carbines growing larger and larger every year'.⁸⁸ This form of play was seen as essential by some, in 1902 'L.B.' wrote to *The Times* calling for an increased interest in children's 'war games' and that 'childish games' such as 'French and English' (possibly another adaption of the games mentioned above) to be updated for modern warfare. The author of the letter also demands

⁸³ "The Children's Hour", p.2

⁸⁴ Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia*, (Allen Lane, 2007), pp.24-5

⁸⁵ Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis* (Cape, 2005), pp.114-5

⁸⁶ George Eisen, *Children and Play in the Holocaust* (Massachusetts, 1989)

⁸⁷ Not included in this are the air-rifles, and small weapons that were used by children in shooting clubs and schools throughout this period (see Chapter One).

⁸⁸ "Christmas in the Shops", *Bristol Mercury*, Issue.13292 (18th December 1890), p.3

that schools facilitate this through play and work.⁸⁹ Through supplying miniature weapons and uniforms adults could attempt to influence the war-play of their children and encouraging them to enact topical conflicts with appropriate combatants. The results could be dangerous, as in the case reported from Middlesbrough where two boys were charged with shooting a third playmate in the throat with toys pistols whilst playing war – he survived but with ‘injuries of a serious nature’.⁹⁰

Conclusion

Children’s toys and games allowed, and still do, adults to influence and create boundaries for play by focusing the young players minds on the themes and subjects of the playthings supplied. British and German parents and educators were able to reinforce the militarist, imperialist, or nationalist messaging already propagated through education and literature with products that aided children to set their play within those backgrounds. This continuity between education, reading, and play created an overbearing influence on a child who was brought up and educated in an environment that was able to provide these educational and recreational items, most notably those in the middle classes – although not exclusively so as working-class families would have also had access through schools and charity.

Despite having different requirements for education about, and promotion of, the military, empire, and nation, Britain and German children had access to very similar material with similar content. Across the various literature, games, and toys examined in the three chapters of the first part of this thesis the messaging has been consistent.

In Britain it is focused on the British empire and the civilian and military participation in it, especially with the material aimed at those who could expect to participate in the empire’s running or defence. The focus is on presenting an image of empire and the military that informs the child in what to expect if and when they experience them – to familiarise them, so as they find life in the military, or empire, familiar. The images of the military at this point are that of British soldiers and their opponents within the British colonies which reflects the anticipated conflicts that the army would face. The primary focus is on empire and not nation, any focus on British nationalism, where it is present, celebrates British achievements – including those in technology.⁹¹

⁸⁹ L.B., “War Games for Children”, *The Times*, Issue.36658 (7th January 1902), p.10

⁹⁰ “Boy’s Mimic War with Toy Pistols, Fatal Result Feared”, *Daily Gazette For Middlesbrough* (1st April 1892), p.3

⁹¹ For the use of technology in nation building see: Bolin Göran, “Visions of Europe: Cultural technologies of nation-states”, *International Journal of cultural studies*, Vol.9 (2) (2006), pp.189-206; Edgerton, *England and*

In Germany, without an existing large overseas empire to fixate on the focus is different, the depiction of empire is more fantasy seen in British material, demonstrating that that Germany had overseas colonies of more importance than any true representation of them. There are, as portrayed in the material used some exceptions to this notably when referring to the military – something that German children would be familiar with given the visibility of the military in German society. German children had a broader view of militaries and conflict than their British counterparts, German armies had been in conflict with other major powers during the creation of the new German state in 1871. These and earlier conflicts were important events for building and promoting a German identity amongst the population. This importance was reflected in much of the material for young Germans that depicts the conflicts between Prussia and France in 1812 and 1870. The German army's role in multinational conflicts such as seen in China is also an important topic, one which demonstrates Germany's position as a global power able to use overseas territories in order to project influence.

Conflict in the colonies, especially those that involve racial violence were a feature of both the British and German empires, and neither metropole shy away from representing it to its youth. The violence is commented on, as is the character of the enemy, and toys allow children to re-enact it the playrooms with miniature armies and outside with child-sized weapons and uniforms. The presentation of this and negatively racist images of colonial populations equal on both sides of the North Sea. In both metropolises the young were made aware of the imperial competitor, either as the example to be emulated or the new upstart attempting to forge its place in the global order. Some negative commentary did exist, notably from the British side, however there is little in the way of antagonism or aggression present in the children's literature and playthings.

The primary motivation for the production of most of these toys and games, as with much of the printed material in the previous chapter, was for commercial reasons and, as demonstrated by the work of Kenneth Brown, Bryan Ganaway, and David Hamlin in response to consumer demands. This is evidence of the middle classes, as the social-economic group able to afford such consumer goods, interest in empire and technology. Groups who had an interest in promoting imperialism and the military could use this interest as a vehicle to spread their perceived 'correct' way of viewing the empire. As demonstrated in this thesis, especially this chapter, resistance to the invasion of childhood was often undermined and weakened by the high levels of interest in the military and the esteem that it had from society. Due to the militaries position in society, the links between the duties of a citizen, the importance and role of the army and navy in empire building and the growing link between the

middle classes, religion, national identity, and cultural supremacy – any objection would be countered with accusations of weakness or a lack of patriotism.

The relationship would change as Germany's international political focus returned to the European continent and foreign policy actively attempted to antagonise Britain. This change in the relationship between Britain and Germany, which was played out in increasing economic and naval antagonism between the two powers, and how the antagonists used children's education and play to promote and expand it will be the subject of part two of this thesis. It will introduce children's material with increasingly militaristic themes and examine the actions of lobbying organisations, such as the British Navy League and the *Deutscher Flottenverein*, who were able to use the middle-classes interest in technology, the exotic nature of the empire, and the adventurous opportunities offered by the military to attract them to military and imperial service. Those who were attracted found themselves, along with millions of other young men, fighting in the First World War where the promise of adventure and national supremacy quickly failed to live up to expectations.

Part Two: Military Rivals

'German youth, can you remain unaffected by the description of the terrible battles that your people are fighting for the freedom of the fatherland? If you want to experience them, if you want to find out about their courage to die, their incomparable loyalty and bravery, then follow us through a series of exciting stories that will put you right in the middle of enemy territory, into the turmoil of glorious battles. 'With Flying Flags' They take you to the blood-soaked battlefields of France, to Russia's steppes and deserts and to the roaring ocean where our navy, the 'good blue 'boys' of the treacherous Englishmen, await.'

Quote from an unnamed publication in Paul Samuleit, *Kriegsschundliteratur: Vortrag, gehalten in der öffentlichen Versammlung der Zentralstelle zur Bekämpfung der Schundliteratur zu Berlin am 25. März 1916* (Berlin, 1916), p.14.

'N is for the Navy we keep at Spithead. It is a sight that makes the foreigners wish they were dead.'

Mrs. Ernest Ames, *An ABC for Baby Patriots* (London, 1899)

Chapter Four: Technology and 'The Great Naval Game', 1898-1914

Introduction

Many of the games, toys, and literature in Part One demonstrate the growing importance of technology in the military and maintaining an empire. Toy weapons, or toy soldiers armed with increasingly advanced weaponry, which, along with board games that reflect the use of steamships and aircraft to travel and defend empire, promote the benefits of technology and their metropole's adoption of it. British and German middle-class adults and children were attracted to these new technologies which required advanced education to understand and engage with and could be used to demonstrate a national superiority.¹ Children's play, and the toys supplied for them to play with, demonstrated their empire's technological advancements.

Toy weapons, especially warships and aircraft share the military theme, but miniature examples of civilian technologies are also heavily used in both Britain and Germany. Of these, the most commonly seen are toy trains. Railways and the locomotives that operated across them were an important part of the success of nation-building in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and a focus of national prestige for many.² Railways were also in the interest of the nation when they become integral to the defence of the nation, in 1914-18 strategists relied on railways for the movement of armies and supplies.³ The rapid expansion of railways were not only a European phenomenon, across many British and German colonies railways were being constructed. These railways made travel through the colonies easier and more comfortable for the colonists, more importantly, it allowed the export of natural resources and import of finished goods a more efficient operation.⁴

¹ For more on this see: Marta Macedo & Jaume Valentines-Álvarez, "Technology and the Nation: Learning from the Periphery", *Technology and Culture*, Vol.57, No.4 (October 2016), pp.989-97; Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane: Militarism, Modernity and Machines*, New Edition (Penguin, 2013); and Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination* (Harvard University Press, 1992).

² For more on the link between nation, nation-building, and the railways see: Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise: Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit im 19. Jahrhundert*, 5th edition (Fischer, 2011); Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Harvard University Press, 1996); Alexandra L. Cermeño, Kerstin Enflo, & Johannes Lindvall, "Railroads and reform: How trains strengthened the nation state", *British Journal of Political Science*, 52(2) (2022), 715-773; and Felix Konrad Jeschke, "Iron Landscapes: Nation-Building and the Railways in Czechoslovakia", 1918-1938, Unpublished Thesis (UCL, 2016).

³ For the importance of the nation's railways in wartime see: Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin*, pp.265-69; and Anthony J. Lambert, *Britain's Railways in Wartime: The Nations Lifeline* (Historic England, 2018).

⁴ For more on railways and colonisation see: Michael W. Charney, "Railways and Empire", in John Mackenzie, *The Encyclopaedia of Empire*, (Manchester University Press, 2016), pp.1-16; Edward M. Spiers & Emma Brennan, *Engines for Empire: The Victorian Army and Its Use of Railways* (Manchester University Press, 2017); Sathnam Sanghera, *Empireland: How Imperialism Has Shaped Modern Britain* (Penguin, 2021), p.202; and Murat Özyüksel, *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Industrialisation, Imperial Germany and the Middle East* (Tauris, 2016).

Many examples of toy trains and railways exist and range from simple wooden representations of locomotives to detailed miniature replicas of the engines. When children played with these toy trains it was likely that it was not explicitly in any of the above scenarios, none of the advertising shows the featured trainset in anything but the usual ambiguous setting – one advertisement does appeal to a seemingly universal childhood fantasy and shows the model trains scattered as if set at a post-railway disaster scene.⁵ Furthermore, children playing, and understanding how this miniature engines worked aligned with, as Ganaway highlights, ‘the notion that engineers... represented the ideal middle-class citizen’.⁶ This fascination with engineering and machines is also reflected in ranges of working, miniature breweries in Germany and the British Meccano.⁷

Middle class interest in engineering was important in the ‘arena’ of naval competition between Britain and Germany. In the space of the growing Anglo-German naval arms race, middle-class fascination for technology and the military would become intrinsically linked. Interest in naval technology and its use to demonstrate the national supremacy in that area, the power, and imagery of modern naval warships, and the draw of the sea as a challenge of man against nature was deliberately turned into a public spectacle but the navies of Britain and Germany and their supporters.⁸ This ‘naval theatre’, as described and demonstrated by Jan Rüger, appealed to the public in Britain and Germany who were attracted by the ships as impressive ‘symbols of modernity’ and the danger involved in their launch.⁹ The navy especially appealed to the middle classes who, due to their greater access to education, had a greater awareness of technology and science. Many others were drawn to life at sea by the fascination of the use of technology to overcome nature and tame the seas.¹⁰ The ships also represented all that nation and empire building demanded of men, and now machine: ‘bravery, discipline, stamina, will-power, and readiness to die’.¹¹ Also, as with empire and the colonies, the sea offered the chance of adventure, risk, and an escape from the constraints of European society. In

⁵ Advert for “Chemin de Fer”, in *Grands Magasins Du Louvre 1897* (Paris, 1987), p.15

⁶ Brian Ganaway, *Toys, Consumption, and Middle-class Childhood in Imperial Germany, 1871-1918* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p.120-1

⁷ Meccano was patented as a ‘Toy or Educational Device for Children and Young People in 1901 and claimed that ‘A child of ordinary ingenuity can with the same pieces and parts build a toy railway station, signal boxes, lines, points and other railway accessories without the use of special tools’, Patent No. GB190100587A, Espacenet.com (accessed 24th January 2023). It is also one of the few examples of British-made toys frequently found in German toy museums. For images of miniature breweries see: Appendix C.

⁸ Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.12-49

⁹ *Ibid*, pp.110-2

¹⁰ David Blackbourn, *The Conquest of Nature, Landscape and the Making of Modern Germany* (Jonathan Cape, 2006), p.121

¹¹ Rüger, *The Great Naval Game*, p.194

Germany the navy offered a more modern, German, alternative form of military service than offered by the more traditional, Prussian-dominated, army.

This chapter will discuss the literature, games, and toys that were produced in response to this interest in technology, warships, and later aircraft and what messages about the benefits and use of military and civilian they conveyed to the children who enjoyed them. It will also investigate the targeting of children's playthings and education by the naval offices and naval leagues and associations of both Britain and Germany. The involvement of manufacturers and publishers to support their efforts and capitalise on the increased interest in military technology such as warships, airships, and aircraft will also be discussed. This increased focus on gaining the interest of children, and of the wider public, in military technology and state spending related to it is linked to the increasing antagonism and military competition between Britain and Germany from 1898 until the outbreak of the First World War.

Military intervention in Childhood and Education

In the late summer of 1900, a *Reichsmarineamt* (German Naval Office) memorandum reviewed the work of its *Nachrichtenbureau* (News Office) established three years earlier. One of the conclusions was that had been a 'Great success – as can be inferred from all kinds of small indications – as attended the agitation of the younger generation, which has been undertaken on a small scale', the report recommended continued and expanded efforts to engage Germany's youth in the Navy who appeared, in the Naval Office's opinion, to be lacking the enthusiasm already demonstrated by their British and American peers:

An attempt must be made to instil in the next generation an interest in the navy by giving suitable support to youth publications, providing these to educational institutions, and creating cheap, illustrated printed matter concerning naval themes, wall maps (e.g. world maps for municipal schools), postcards, and other paper articles that are suitable for public libraries and schools. Important in this regard is that, along with the growing interest, greater knowledge is spread about technical naval matters as well as the economic foundations. The goal is for the future generation to be just as educated about these questions as the English and American populations.¹²

This memo demonstrates the importance that the Navies of Britain and Germany placed on the future interest and support of the younger generations, and that by the turn of the century the German Navy already considered itself lagging behind the efforts of British Royal Navy. Highlighting the importance of the navy and attracting young, educated men to serve became increasingly important in the late nineteenth century as the focus of the competition between Britain and Germany moved from influence and trade in the distant colonies of their empires to military competition in northern European seas and skies. Children in both metropolises no longer only had images of the exotic people

¹² The German Naval Office and Public Opinion (September 24, 1900), text printed in Volker Berghahn and Wilhelm Diest, *Rüstung im Zeichen der wilhelminischen Weltpolitik: Grundlegende Dokumente 1890-1914* (De Gruyter, 1988), pp.201-11.

and lands of the European empires, nor just the soldiers forging and policing those lands and people - now industrial images of iron battleships, large calibre guns, and flying machines were added to the picture.

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the focus of Britain and Germany before 1898 was on their empires and the competition between them, both economic and political, was acted out on that stage, an example being the ill-worded 'Kruger Telegram' in 1896. The message from Kaiser Wilhelm II to the President of the Transvaal Republic, Paul Kruger, was seen by some as evidence that Germany was 'fundamentally hostile' towards England in the late nineteenth century.¹³ However, not all Anglo-German interactions over empire were negative or aggressive, the negotiations and agreement around the handover of the North-Sea island of Heligoland in 1890 is an example of this.¹⁴ The 1896 incident did herald in a more directly antagonistic relationship between the two powers, the most high-profile and visible being the naval arms race.

In little over a month after the Kruger Telegram had been sent Alfred von Tirpitz, then a Rear Admiral, renewed previous attempts at lobbying for an expanded Imperial German Navy. The Senate of the United States of America had sent a similar message congratulating Paul Kruger which had not inspired the same reaction from the British Government and press as its German equivalent.¹⁵ For Tirpitz the reason for this was the level of threat that the US Navy represented to the Royal Navy, a level that the German navy did not – an increased naval presence would allow Germany greater political power and make them a viable ally to other European states.¹⁶ This strategy of the *Risikoflotte* (risk fleet) would, it was believed by Tirpitz and the German naval department, improve Germany's political leverage by threatening the British metropole and trade.¹⁷ The German naval planners expected that this would lead Britain to reconsider its approach to Germany and possibly a military alliance with new naval power in preference over the French.¹⁸ The German Naval Office were under no illusions about the cost of such an undertaking and the need to gain the support of the German tax payer, to these ends the News Office of the German Naval Office was set up in 1897 with the mandate to ensure support for naval expansion and understanding of the reasons for it by the German public.

¹³ Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism 1860-1914* (Allen & Unwin, 1980), pp.247-8

¹⁴ Jan Rüger, *Heligoland: Britain, Germany, and the Struggle for the North Sea* (Oxford University Press, 2017)

¹⁵ For more on the US reaction to the Jameson Raid see: C. Tsehloane Keto, *The Aftermath of the Jameson Raid and American Decision Making in Foreign Affairs, 1896*, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol.70, Part 8 (1980), pp.1-46

¹⁶ The Fleet and Anglo-German Relations: Rear Admiral Tirpitz to Admiral von Stosch (February 13, 1896), text printed in Berghahn & Diest, *Rüstung im Zeichen der wilhelminischen Weltpolitik*, pp.114-7

¹⁷ The "Risk Fleet:" Excerpt from a Draft Memo from the Budget Department of the Imperial Naval Office (February 1900), trans. Adam Blauhut, GHDI (accessed 2nd March 2023)

¹⁸ The Goals of the German Battle Fleet: Vice Admiral Eduard von Capelle (October 1911), Trans. Adam Blauhut, GHDI, (accessed 2nd March 2023)

The News Office was expected to engage with the already established nationalist associations which shared the Naval Office's *Weltpolitik* ambitions which included the Colonial Society, Pan-German League, The Navy League (*Deutscher Flottenverein*), and the Foreign Association – the Navy League was regarded as a possible rogue group which did not always follow the directives or wishes of the Naval Office and could 'end up harming naval matters' if its leadership made 'errors in judgement'.¹⁹ Through these organisations and the German press the Naval Office hoped to promote the navy to the population, especially boys who would be needed to crew the new ships – one of the recommendations the memo of 1900 gave was to issue 'Briefer [than the official regulations] and clear' instructions on the hiring of ship boys.²⁰ It was hoped that:

If a well-known and widely-read author writing for young people could be prompted to create naval works for youngsters, then great benefits could be expected. Moreover, a sensational novel or play intended for adults would also be exceedingly useful for stimulating interest in the navy. It is regrettable that modern German history offers little suitable material on such topics.²¹

In 1898 the first in a series of five *Flottengesetze* (Naval Laws) was passed by the Reichstag, it secured funding to build sixteen new warships in three years - an increase of approximately twenty-five percent to the Navy's strength.²² The bill was not passed without serious opposition and only after Tirpitz made some concessions on possible future taxation did it pass nineteen votes to eight by the budget committee, with the opposition coming from the socialist party.²³ Evidently the propaganda issued by the News Office and the nationalist associations was considered essential to maintain and increase support for the project going forward. Tirpitz and others in the German Naval Office seriously miscalculated the British response to their *Risikoflotte* strategy, instead of responding with fear, respect, and an offer of alliance, the British government and navy responded by increasing the fleet size triggering an expensive naval arms race and an era of 'New Navalism'.²⁴

British use of the newspapers to gain and improve public support of naval expansion had, as hinted in the previous memo from the German naval news office, started a little earlier when Royal Navy officers had contributed articles to the British press revealing 'The Truth About the Navy' after a

¹⁹ "The German Naval Office and Public Opinion" (September 24, 1900) (GHDI)

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ *Ibid*

²² The increases brought German naval strength to nineteen battleships, twelve large cruisers, thirty light cruisers, and eight coastal vessels. In comparison the British ships reviewed at Spithead the year before which were only drawn from units around the British Isles consisted of: twenty-one battleships, fifty-three cruisers of all types, thirty destroyers, and twenty-four coastal vessels. See Peter Padfield, *The Great Naval Race: Anglo-German Rivalry 1900-1914* (Hart-Davis MacGibbon, 1974), p.48.

²³ Padfield, *The Great Naval Race*, p.64

²⁴ For more on New Navalism in the late nineteenth century see: Roger Parkinson, "The Origins of the Naval Defence Act of 1889 and the New Navalism of the 1890s" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Exeter, 2006)

lacklustre action off the coast of Egypt.²⁵ The 'Truth About the Navy' would become a regular column in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and contributed to the Admiralty increasing funding for the navy by the end of 1884.²⁶ This flurry of newspaper articles, not just seen in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the increased public interest in the navy also led to the formation of the navalist organisation, the Navy League of Great Britain, in October of the same year by a group of senior officers and Members of Parliament.²⁷ The Royal Navy was well placed to promote naval expansion and increased spending to the British taxpayers in response to the German Naval Laws of 1898. Interestingly the Royal Navy was able to distance itself from fears of 'continental militarism' during this period. The extensive participation of the British Liberal Party in maintaining the dominance of the British fleet over the political right allowed, as Michael Johnson demonstrates, present a 'particularly *liberal* form of militarism'.²⁸ The British fleet, it was argued, was for defence of the empire and protection of Britain's essential overseas supply lines, of the British a large navy was 'a matter of life and death' and not an expression of militarism or expansionism.²⁹ Although, this does not mean there was no right-wing involvement in British militarism, the Navy League and other groups had many members from the political right and were supported by newspapers such as the *Daily Mail*.³⁰

The Navy League of Great Britain was formed during a period which witnessed a 'clear upsurge' in Radical Nationalism throughout Britain, identified by Geoffrey Searle as a 'revolt from the right', and was a response to the Liberal Government's policies over Parliament and Ireland.³¹ The Navy League's declared aims were primarily about educating the public about their 'six aims' which were published in the league's periodical the *Navy League Journal*. These aims were to: increase awareness of Britain's reliance on imports, to promote naval spending as insurance for British security, to gain support from across British society, remove party politics from naval matters, link naval might with British ideals of liberty, and bring the whole of the British Empire behind their cause.³² The Navy League also helped

²⁵ For examples of a series of articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette* see: "What is the Truth About the Navy?", *Pall Mall Gazette*, Issue:6089 (15th September 1884); "A Startling Revelation", *Pall Mall Gazette*, Issue:6092 (18th September 1884); "The Truth About the Navy. By One Who Knows the Facts", *Pall Mall Gazette*, Issue:6092 (18th September 1884); and "The Truth About the Navy. By Admiral Sir John Hay, Bart., M.P.", *Pall Mall Gazette*, Issue:6093 (19th September 1884).

²⁶ Bradley Cesario, *New Crusade: The Royal Navy and British Navalism, 1884-1914* (De Gruyter, 2021), pp.5-7

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.29

²⁸ Michael Johnson, *Militarism and the British Left, 1902-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.17; see also: Matthew Johnson, "The Liberal Party and the Navy League in Britain before the Great War", *20th Century British History*, Vol.22 (2) (2011), pp-137-63.

²⁹ Johnson, *Militarism and the British Left*, p.67

³⁰ *Ibid*, p.68

³¹ Geoffrey Searle, "The Revolt from the Right", in Paul Kennedy & Anthony Nicholls, *Nationalist and Racist Movements in Britain and Germany Before 1914* (Macmillan, 1981), pp.21-36, p.22

³² *Navy League Journal*, No.VI, December 1895

develop training ships for boys and later took over the management of the Sea Cadets.³³ This self-appointed educational aim made liaising with schools essential for the league, a connection which was made more obvious given the high number of members that were employed by public schools.³⁴

Both the British and German navies efforts to engage the public were very successful and public support for the naval matters increased to a point where, in 1909, the British popular press and public were demanding 'We want eight and we won't wait' in reference to the proposed ship building to keep up with the perceived expansion of the German Imperial Navy.³⁵ The success did not come without complications, as Jan Rüger argues 'while attempting to exploit the modern mass market, the Admiralty and the *Reichsmarineamt* ran the risk of being overtaken by it' and both Naval offices lost control over the activities of the nationalist naval leagues and the levels of antagonistic excitement in the press and public.³⁶ The loss of control in Britain is clearly demonstrated in the *Manchester Guardian* which frequently reported on the activities of the Navy League, at one meeting in 1909 a 'Mr. Seymour Trower declared that we are practically at war with Germany', and at another meeting in 1911 the Navy League voted to increase the training of 'boys for sea work' paid from the league's own funds and outside the budgets (and control) of the government and navy.³⁷ The mass market responded to the demand from the consumers for more navy-themed products which were supplied not only by the navy and naval leagues but across industries who responded with a wide variety of products ranging from battle-ship themed soap to complex games, model warships, and literature. Of course, given the importance of the child in the late-nineteenth century, mass consumer market children's playthings and literature will feature in this study. However, firstly the focus will be on how the navies through the naval leagues engaged with children within the education systems.

British schools and school boards welcomed working with the Navy League to promote the Royal Navy. The Bristol School Board are reported to have been at the 'to the fore' in its willingness to collude with the Navy League in reversing the 'weak and decaying state of our Navy' and were commended by the later, in 1902 for its early adoption of Navy League text books and running an essay competition – both the text book and essays were criticised for being 'largely a history of battles' something the board and the *Western Daily Press* took offence to.³⁸ This however reflects the difference in the

³³ The History of the Sea Cadets, www.sea-cadets.org, (accessed 7th March 2023)

³⁴ N.C., Fleming, "The Imperial Maritime League", *War in History*, Vol.23, No.3 (July 2016), pp.296-322, p.301

³⁵ Matthew Seligmann, "Intelligence Information and the 1909 Naval Scare: The Secret Foundations of a Public Panic." *War in History*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2010), pp. 37–59, p.38

³⁶ Rüger, *The Great Naval Game*.221

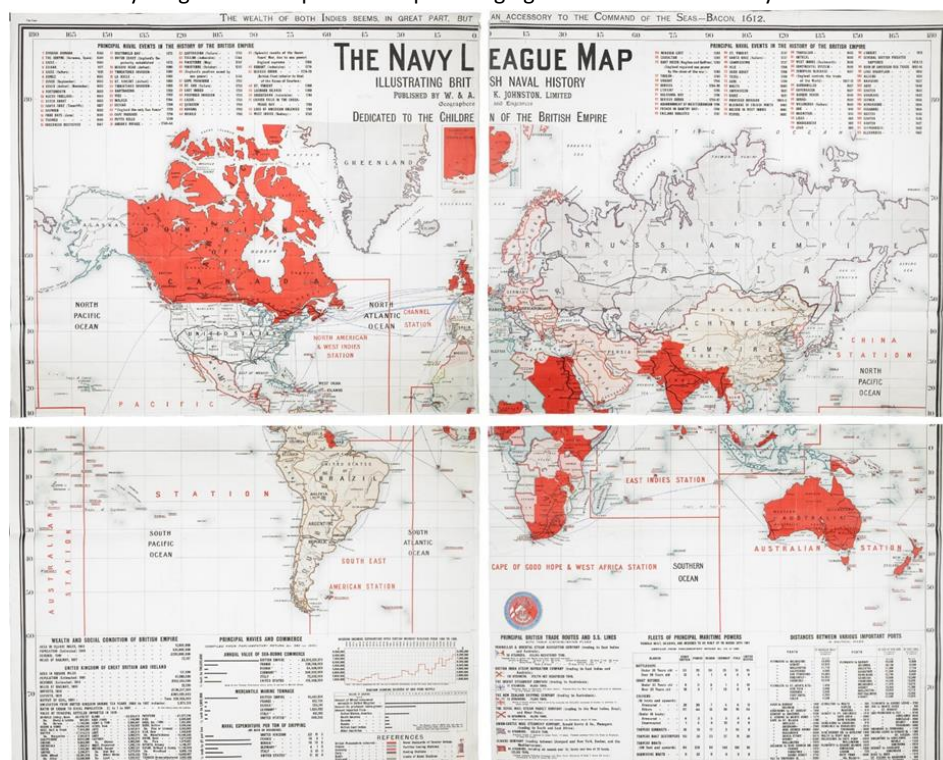
³⁷ "Practically at War with Germany", *Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, 13th May 1909), p.7; and "The Navy League: Training Boys for Sea Work", *Manchester Guardian* (Manchester, 25th May 1911), p.11;

³⁸ "Bristol School Board and the Navy League: Patriotism and Christianity", *Western Daily Press*, Vol.88, Iss.13719, Yeovil (27th May 1902), p.6

material released by the British and German naval and colonial groups, British propaganda was focused on the past and history of the Royal Navy and in Germany it was in the possibilities and future.³⁹

One of the more overt products produced for the Navy League for use in British classrooms is the *Navy League Map of the World* (1901) shown below. The map, published by W. and A.K. Johnston on behalf of the Navy League was 'some six feet or more square' and 'dedicated to the Children of the British Empire'.⁴⁰ The map which included 'the area, population, revenue, railway mileage, exports and imports of the Empire', compared the 'Navies of the world' and was considered so useful that *The Spectator* insisted that it 'should be in every public office, and all private individuals who care to study the growth and configuration of the Empire should acquire it'.⁴¹ The map was accompanied by *Britain on and Beyond the Sea: Being a Handbook to the Navy League Map of the World* (1904) which contained a smaller version of the map and quoted the Earl of Meath's view on the handbook and map:

This little work should be in the hands of every young Briton, and no school should be considered properly equipped which has not the full-sized Navy League Wall Map of the Empire hanging on the walls within easy view of the scholars.⁴²



4.1 The Navy League Map of the World (1901), Image: British Library

³⁹ John M. Mackenzie, "Empire and Popular Culture", in Dominik Geppert & Robert Gerwarth (eds.), *Wilhelmine Germany and Edwardian Britain: Essays on Cultural Affinity* (Oxford University Press, 2008), p.106

⁴⁰ "The Navy League Map (Book Review)", in *The Spectator*, Vol.82 (3686) (London, 1899), p.247

⁴¹ *Ibid*

⁴² Cecil H. Crofts, *Britain on and Beyond the Sea: Being a Handbook to the Navy League Map of the World* (London, 1904), p.viii

The map remained published and in circulation from 1899 and throughout the first few decades of the twentieth century. By 1925 it was published by George Philip and Son, still on behalf of the Navy League. *The Times* insisted that 'it is safe to prophesy that wherever this large, handsome, and attractive map is hung up little boys and girls also will gravitate and teach themselves a great deal'.⁴³ The map, although promoting the British Empire at the turn of the century looked back at one thousand years of 'British' naval history and was updated frequently with recent events and battles – this is especially evident in the 1925 edition which included naval engagements from the Great War.

The German Naval League's focus was on the future, and in particular the future crews of the new warships. The league's annual *Kalenders* and *Handbuchs* often highlight the groups involvement in running tours of school ships and visits to naval bases and fleet reviews.⁴⁴ However, no examples of direct liaison with German schools have been found in the same way as in Britain, this is likely due to the laws regarding association with politics in schools. Any lack of direct access to schools did not stop the promotion of the naval matters in the classroom as evidenced by the content of German school curriculum.

Included in a 1921 collection of 1911-1912 school reports is a curriculum for state *Realschule* in Waldenburg, the entry for world history which is structured around personalities and covers subjects from ancient Persia (Cyrus) to Imperial Germany (Wilhelm II), a note is made that 'special attention' should be made towards histories that are relevant to Germany national history.⁴⁵ One of these subjects is the history of Brandenburg and its fleet in the seventeenth century, this is a history also included in the 1901 *Kalender des Deutschen Flottenvereins* as an important link to make between the new navy and the German past.⁴⁶ The navy and the importance in Imperial Germany is also the subject of a 1906 school history textbook in which Wilhelm II is placed within the lineage of German leaders going back to the Thirty Years War. It is pointed out that although Wilhelm is 'intimately connected' to the army he is paying 'special attention' to the navy, and he has 'great interest in the size of the navy'.⁴⁷

As with empire and colonialism, geography lessons and textbooks were a route for navalism to enter the classroom. Geography textbooks contained details of harbours which were needed for the

⁴³ "Navy League Map", in *The Times Educational Supplement* (Saturday, August 22, 1925), p.363

⁴⁴ For examples see: „Das kriegsschiff auf der Reise“, in *Kalender des Deutschen Flottenvereins* (Minden, 1901), pp.56-69; and „Die Schülerfahrer“, in *Handbuch des Deutschen Flotten-vereins* (Berlin, 1909), pp.345-50.

⁴⁵ *Stadt Realschule I.E. Waldenburg*, p.10, in Richard Pope, *Jung-Deutschland* (Germany, 1921)

⁴⁶ „Brandenburg landug auf den insel Rügen im Jahre 1678“, in *Kalender des Deutschen Flottenvereins* (Minden, 1901), pp.73-6

⁴⁷ Dr. Friedrich Neubauer & Dr. Bernhard Seyfort, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte für Realschulen* (Germany, 1906), p.204

maintenance of the navy alongside details of the resources and value of the Germany overseas possessions, as well as details of the size of the German merchant and military fleets which served and policed them.⁴⁸ Despite the rules restricting politics in the classroom, content that restricted itself to the facts about the navy, its size, and comparison to the British strengths appear in the school material. However, the content is still restricted, and other forms of children's literature, games, and toys were used to promote the navy, naval expansion, and service at sea in a more explicit, and entertaining way.

The Navy and Air warfare in Children's Periodicals

The content of literature available to children outside the classroom does not demonstrate the same level of restrictions on content, especially the examples from Germany. The naval leagues and other supporters of naval expansion had a free hand in the publication of relevant material, and as already evident in the previous chapters children's periodicals – magazines and comics played a leading role in spreading a pro-naval message. However, the content is extremely gendered, and the vast majority of material found was within the pages of the publications targeting British and German boys. A survey of the *Girls' Own Paper's* index from 1880-1914 revealed only four items loosely related to this chapter's topic – one of those was in the form of romantic fiction.⁴⁹ The following quantity of material from *Boys' Own* and *Gute Kamerad (GK)* demonstrates this imbalance and is evidence of the focus on influencing boys and young men as future sailors, airmen, taxpayers, and voters.

The *Gute Kamerad's* military-themed content is noticeably increased at the height of the Anglo-German naval arms race, especially from 1905 when it introduces a new category of '*Militärisches, Marine, Aeronautik*' in the index. This category full of articles on news about the army in German – the latter an important part of Southwest Africa, naval expansion, and naval and aeronautical technological advancements - the modern and forward-looking nature of the German naval project is reflected in the content with a focus on the development of naval and aviation technology. These developments are closely linked with the modern military and industry in both Britain and Germany during this period so military airpower will also be a topic within this chapter.

⁴⁸ For examples see: Michael Geistbeck & Alois Geistbeck, *Deutschland und seine Kolonien mit besonderer Hervorhebung der natürlichen Erwerbsquellen und der industriellen Betätigung, Deutschlands Anteil am Welthandel und Weltverkehr* (Munich, 1911), P.58; and Heinrich Harms & August Sievert, *Erkundliches Lernbuch für Mittelschulen und verwandte Anstalten; ein Hilfsbuch für den einprägenden Unterricht* (Leipzig, 1911)

⁴⁹ Gertrude Page, "Her Sailor Lover", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1900), p.556, p.566, & p.590; "Ladies Work Amongst Sailors and Soldiers", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.2 (London, 1881), p.811; Lilian Todd, "How I Built My Aeroplane", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.31 (London, 1910), p.294, Harry N. Atwood, "A Study of Air Currents For those Who are Interested in Airships", *Girls' Own Annual*, Vol.34 (London, 1913), p.581

The lack of a German naval tradition, in the same way as present in Britain, meant that the content was not the criticised 'history of battles'. Also, the dominance of the battleship that will be demonstrated later in the British material is not present, although the new dreadnoughts are promoted, they share the limelight with smaller short-range support craft – an indication of the



4.2 'Hochseetorpedobootdivision', *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.23 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.7

expected role and zone of operations for the German war fleet. Many of the articles in *GK* are about torpedo boats and submarines and cover topics such as design, tactics, and life aboard them,⁵⁰ the use of torpedoes and mines in China are also discussed.⁵¹ The development of these smaller craft and latest weapons are presented as the solution to the British superiority in numbers of traditional warships and a 'new way of fighting [a naval] war'.⁵²

The big ships were not ignored by the editors of *GK* and were given near equal space to the new fighting boats. The magazine's young readers were kept up to date with the latest launches of new

⁵⁰ For examples see: „Das Unterseeboot“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.20 (Stuttgart, 1906), p.53; „Torpedobootfahren in sturm und schnee“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.20 (Stuttgart, 1906), pp.270-1; „Eine deutsche Torpedoboots halb flottille“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.22 (Stuttgart, 1908), p.344; „Hochseetorpedoboote“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.23 (Stuttgart, 1909), p.53; and „Torpedobootmanöver in der Ost See“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.27 (Stuttgart, 1912), p.46

⁵¹ „Torpedos und seeminen“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.18 (Stuttgart, 1904), p.574

⁵² „Das Unterseeboot“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.53

ships, the rapidly expanding fleet explained as essential 'in case of a war'.⁵³ The completion of the first 'Dreadnought' class of warship was subject to a special article ensuring young Germans were confident in understanding the world-class standing of the empire's battlefleet.⁵⁴ Naval strategy and tactics for the bigger ships were also introduced in the same way as for the torpedo boats with articles on fleet formations and reports on the fleet's manoeuvres.⁵⁵ The expanding fleet also needed an increased recruitment of young men to crew the ships and the editors of *GK* assisted in encouraging their readers to enlist with articles on training ships, the life of cadets, and nautical skills such as signalling.⁵⁶

The readership of the *GK* was an ideal recruiting ground for the German navy who needed educated young men to crew the increasingly complex ships and appealed to the middle-class for officers as an alternative to the traditionally elite officer class found in the army. The imagery of the impressive warships, articles about the technology and its uses appealed to these future recruits – especially the ways that 'German' technology could be used to overcome the numerical advantage the British and French navies had. However, the navy also appealed to patriotic German boys as there was real expectation of a naval conflict with another empire – although not necessarily and Anglo-German one.⁵⁷

The navies of Germany's allies and competitors were not neglected by *Der Gute Kamerad*. The development of Germany's future wartime ally was the subject of some articles which introduced new Austrian-Hungarian Dreadnoughts, demonstrating the international context and need for German naval expansion.⁵⁸ The navies of future enemies are covered in slightly more detail, British naval developments such as new ships and submarines are covered, as are the trials and tribulations of the Royal Navy including an account of a British 'dynamite ship' which sunk and blocked the Suez Canal.⁵⁹ Reports of incidents such as this helping to reinforce confidence in the German fleet – it was not a German ship stuck in the canal. Other international developments in naval warfare are also covered

⁵³ „Das neue deutsche linienschiff 'Schlesien'“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.22 (Stuttgart, 1908), p.672; see also „Die neuesten schiffe unserer hochsee flotte“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.27 (Stuttgart, 1912), p.519.

⁵⁴ „Westfalen“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.24 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.80

⁵⁵ For examples see: „Die deutsche Kriegsflotte“ and „Von den deutschen Flottenmanövern“, both in *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.27 (Stuttgart, 1912), p.76 and p.214; and „Marinemanövers“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.28 (Stuttgart, 1913), pp.294-7

⁵⁶ For examples see: „Die Ausbildung der Seeleute in der deutschenkriegsmarine“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.26 (Stuttgart, 1911), pp.150-3 & pp.166-8; „Schiffsjungenausbildung“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.27 (Stuttgart, 1912), p.64; a fictional tale of the life of a cadet is found in a serialised story: „Willi, der Schiffsjunge“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), which is followed by an article on the real life of a cadet in „Marinejugend“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.774.

⁵⁷ Reference in children's artifacts to the expected enemy of the future will be demonstrated by the toys and games referenced later in this chapter.

⁵⁸ „Die neuen österreichisch-ungarischen Dreadnoughts“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.624

⁵⁹ For examples see: „Das englische unterseeboot 'AR'“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.20 (Stuttgart, 1906), p.454; and an image of the „Chatham“ sunk in the Suez Canal, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.20 (Stuttgart, 1906), p.144

in the pages of *GK* one of note is an article on the US Navy's attempts to launch an aircraft off a warship – a reflection of an increased interest in the possibilities of military aviation.⁶⁰

The successful Wright brother's experiments in the early 1900s alongside the mixed fortunes of Ferdinand von Zeppelin's airships leads to a lot of commentary, fantasy, and expectations for the future of aviation and warfare. Early focus is on airships, especially those designed and built by von Zeppelin, this interest is no surprise given the public support and popularity of the Zeppelins in Germany and across the world at the time.⁶¹ The first mentions of airships appear in 1906, around the time of Zeppelin's LZ1 flight with a brief article on airship designs. Over the next two years the view of *GK* becomes centred on Zeppelin almost exclusively, this national fascination with Zeppelin's airships is also evident in the toys and games introduced later in this chapter.⁶² Initially the articles are about the technology but slowly the possibilities of airships for the military, especially the navy. In one article published in the *GK*, 'Panzerturm un Flugzeug', the possibilities of neutralising the fortifications of Spithead using airpower is introduced as a solution to a pre-emptive attack on the British home fleet at port.⁶³ The growing anticipation of a conflict with Britain obvious in this type of narrative found in the literature which not only focuses on the Royal Navy as a potential opponent but actively discusses how to attack Britain. The popularity of articles about airships remains high after 1910 but they must share page space with the new aeroplanes and the possibilities they promise.

By the turn of the century British children were already familiar with articles promoting the navy and naval service contained in the *Boy's Own Paper*. As with the promotion of serving in imperial administration and the army, already discussed in previous chapters, the publication's editors actively promoted service in the Royal Navy with articles such as 'How to enter the Navy' which explained the different trades and routes into them, the conditions and educational requirements were also laid out for any aspiring naval officer.⁶⁴ Evidence that these articles encouraged interest in a naval career can be found in the 'Correspondence' sections of the *Boys' Own* with replies to enquires about the requirements to enter the navy as a midshipman (you cannot, you must attend naval academy as a cadet first),⁶⁵ or as a naval engineer.⁶⁶ Both replies list the requirements of being physically fit, and the ability to pass an entry examination which tests knowledge of 'mathematics, English, geography,

⁶⁰ „Flugmaschine und Kriegsschiff“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.416

⁶¹ Fritzsche, *A nation of Fliers*, pp.22-35

⁶² See: „Graf Zeppelins neues Listschiffs“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.20 (Stuttgart, 1906), p.304; „Miliärlistschiffs“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.21 (Stuttgart, 1907), p.816; and „Graf Zeppelins neues listschiff“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.22 (Stuttgart, 1908), p.720.

⁶³ „Panzerturm un Flugzeug“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.27 (Stuttgart, 1912), p.503

⁶⁴ „How to Enter the Navy“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.21 (London, 1899), p.799. The *Boy's Own* editors continued to assume their readers would only aspire to be officers and not naval ratings.

⁶⁵ „Correspondence“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), p.128

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p.144

English history, French, mechanics, physics, chemistry, with drawing and extra mathematics, German or Latin' – much higher expectations than required for the army.⁶⁷ It was not only academic requirements that the *Boys' Own* readers were concerned about, many of the replies in the correspondence sections were about worries of physical fitness for service, for which it seems dumb-bells were a cure-all. The editors recommend exercise with dumb-bells as solutions to round shoulders, weak arms, and short stature, they also recommend the exercise to 'nervous and feeble' alongside '[giving] up all bad habits, even smoking, and live well, taking the morning tub and lots of outdoor exercise, dumb-bells, etc.' also to 'Read no filthy advertisements or pamphlets'.⁶⁸ These types of naval-career articles appear regularly in every *Boys' Own* annual throughout the period and their purpose. As with those about imperial service, or a career in the army, these articles were intended to make the transition from schooling as easy as possible both for the child, by familiarising them with the institution, and for the institution, by ensuring any prospective recruit would already be familiar with the entry requirements. Of course, the British readers, as with their German counterparts were not only informed in how to serve in the navy, they also were able to read about the military hardware itself.

In comparison to those about careers in the navy, until 1906 the *Boys' Own* dedicates surprising little space to British naval hardware and even less to the navies of other powers. There is the occasional introduction to a new ship or as history of the development of British warships, but even these are often just photographs.⁶⁹ The launch of HMS Dreadnought demanded increased space on the pages of the *BOP* which celebrated the completion of the Dreadnought with an article about 'the most powerful and remarkable war-vessel in the world'.⁷⁰ The same *Boys' Own* Annual also contains an article introducing the German navy in a negative way despite acknowledging the huge funding the naval building project is receiving. In a comparison to the life of adventure the editors and writers of *Boys' Own* promise naval cadets joining the Royal Navy, life for a newly qualified *Leutenant[sic]-zur-See* is described as 'dreary in the extreme when not at sea' which is common in the winter months. This 'dreariness' was explained as a consequence of the German navy's operational area of 'The ugly collection of river mouths and sandy islets which the German navy has to 'protect'' - the article is clear on the exceptionalism of not only the Royal Navy but the coastline of the British Isles.⁷¹ The writer's bias against the German fleet and sailors is also clear in their reporting of a 'continuous list of damages

⁶⁷ "Correspondence", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.22, p.144

⁶⁸ *Ibid*

⁶⁹ For example, see "British Battleships Past and Present", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.22 (London, 1900), pp.344-51.

⁷⁰ F.M. Holmes, "The New 'Dreadnought': With a Glance at the Fastest Vessel in the World, the 36-knot Destroyer *Swift*", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.29 (London, 1907), p.30

⁷¹ Jack Maitland, "Facts About the German Navy", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.29 (London, 1907), p.14

and accidents to ships' and the problems with officers taking part in duels because, as the article argues, of a lack of 'amusements'.⁷² The same article also points out a difference in the reception of foreign visitors to naval facilities and warns of the dangers of German naval officers would be given leave and extra pay to visit England and '(incidentally) pick up as much information as he can' while freely visiting British dockyards and ports. This freedom, the author argues, is not shared with British visitors to German dockyards where foreign visitors are likely to be arrested and imprisoned.⁷³ The message to the young British readers was that the German navy was new, inexperienced, unnecessary with a false mission (if there was only one hundred miles of dreary sandbanks to protect why have a battlefleet, what is the true purpose), and of dubious morals (spying), the opposite of the Royal Navy's mission of protecting a glorious empire.

A later article on the Royal Navy paints this contrasting picture by demonstrating British naval history (Nelson) and pointing out continuities with the navy of 1907. The operational use of cruisers is the subject, but the language is emotive and romantic, describing the 'mighty engines throbbing' and the bow of the ship '[rending waves] asunder'. The article is a thinly disguised attempt to romanticise the role of an engineer, which, given its inherent risks and poor working conditions,⁷⁴ was unlikely to be high in the list of preferred careers for the *Boys' Own* middle-class readers. The narrative in the article also describes an action by cruisers to protect a mail ship from the enemy written in a way that suggests a report, the enemy is 'driven off' by the British cruisers but the 'enemy' remains unnamed – although the options are limited for an action in the Bay of Biscay.⁷⁵ Whereas the *BOP* contains much of the same type of material as the *GK* about sea-going ships, recruitment, life at sea, and naval developments it does not share the latter's interest in airships. Zeppelins are almost absent from the pages of the British publication until the outbreak of the First World War, the only references found are comments within articles and stories: an article on kite building comments on the difficulty of making a Zeppelin box kite,⁷⁶ fictional tale contains a mention of a Zeppelin toy,⁷⁷ and an article on cycling past Friedrichshafen makes a comment that is where the airships were built.⁷⁸ It can be assumed from the mention of these that the readers would have been aware of the existence of the German airships, although it is surprising the editors of *Boys' Own* choose not to cover them in any further detail – the German nation-building project of little interest to them. The publication only

⁷² Maitland, "Facts About the German Navy", p.14

⁷³ *Ibid*

⁷⁴ The article describes the conditions as 'cramped steamy space' and 'stifling hole'.

⁷⁵ Charles J. De Lacy, "Our Navy – Past and Present", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.29 (London, 1907), pp.795-6

⁷⁶ W.J. Gordon, "Kites of 1908-1909", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.31 (London, 1909), pp.156-7

⁷⁷ Charles Edwards, "A Hundred Pounds Reward!", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.34 (London, 1912), pp.598-600

⁷⁸ G.W. Lloyd, "With Bicycle to Milan: The Record of an Unconventional Holiday", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.36 (London, 1914), pp.535-9

becomes interested in aircraft with the arrival of aeroplanes and at the same time as evident in the *GK* aeroplanes start to appear on the pages of *Boys' Own*.

Boys' Own, Gute Kamerad and the Aeroplane

The increased interest in the aeroplane evident in both the *GK* and *Boys' Own* reflects the levels of engagement with the new technology in the wider society and the militaries in both Britain and Germany. The first powered flight was in 1903 and within two years the Wright brothers had courted the financial interest of the British, American, and French militaries, followed a year later by those of Germany, Japan, and other major military powers.⁷⁹ As David Edgerton demonstrates, the British War Office, supported by now familiar names such as Lord Northcliffe, Asquith, and Haldane led the way in developing military airpower.⁸⁰ However, it was not until 1908 that the experimental aircraft started to become a viable tool, a year that also saw the publication of H.G. Wells' *The War in the Air* (1908). Between 1908 and 1914 the British War Office and private individuals put considerable effort into the development of aviation technologies alongside the promotion of military aviation, and some considerable scaremongering by the press.⁸¹ In 1909 the right-wing lobbying group, The Aerial League of the British Empire, was created and dedicated itself to 'patriotic and education matters'.⁸² In Germany the development of aircraft, in the same way as the Zeppelins, was driven by the private sector and universities. Gustav Weißkopf, an early German pioneer of flight, claimed to have made the first powered flight in 1901, however no evidence of this exists. However, German designers, engineers, and scientists continued to advance aviation technologies in the years before the outbreak of war in Europe with the creation of academic institutions and success in producing viable machines in 1907-1909.⁸³

Although both British and German militaries were interested in the possibilities offered by the aeroplane it is the fact that in Britain that the funding and drive for advancements came from the Government and those involved in it that is of interest and demonstrates the levels of interest and commitment to the military and policing of the empire. This imbalance in interest from the state was not repeated in the children's literature where it is evident that adults and children were interested in aviation and especially military applications.

⁷⁹ Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, pp.3-4

⁸⁰ *Ibid*

⁸¹ For a detailed narrative of these developments see Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, Ch.1.

⁸² Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, pp.20-21

⁸³ <https://www.dlr.de/de/das-dlr/ueber-uns/geschichte-des-dlr/die-geschichte-der-luftfahrtforschung-in-deutschland> (accessed 25th August 2023)

By 1910 the aeroplane had successfully infiltrated the content of children's periodicals, in 1910 the *GK* contained articles on air warfare and how the aeroplane could be used to counter the Zeppelin,⁸⁴ experimental flying machines,⁸⁵ flight schools,⁸⁶ and an extensive article on how the aeroplane works.⁸⁷ The next year's *GK Jahrbuch* celebrates the launch of an airmail service,⁸⁸ and calls for fewer Zeppelins and more aircraft to be built arguing that, for every Zeppelin built at a cost of 40 million Marks fifty two balloons and two hundred and thirty five aircraft could be built.⁸⁹ The latter article raising the question of why, in a publication intended for children, would the editors choose to publish an article about military spending? Why does a child need to be made aware of this? Is it to ensure future taxpayers and decision makers were influenced early, or was there a level of political 'pester power' from the young readers towards their parents which could be taken advantage of? The awareness children would have about the debate, and the conversations they had with peers and adults, would keep the discussion in the public sphere and influence the decision makers.

Boys' Own embraces the aeroplane in the same way as its German counterpart with articles on how aircraft fly,⁹⁰ examples of British pilots,⁹¹ and a humorous comic exploring the consequences of staring up into the sky to look at the new flying machines.⁹² However, the initial enthusiasm appears to wane quickly into an interest in flying models in the same way as kites, an early signal of this trend is an advertisement for 'up-to-date' and 'practically unbreakable' model aircraft made by the Clyde Model Dockyard and Engine Depot.⁹³ Model aircraft and how schools promoted aircraft to pupils is highlighted in the *Boys' Own* with an article on an 'Aëro Club' at a school in Surbiton where, it was claimed, children could learn how aeroplanes work and the principles of flight without the inherent risk of actually getting into a flying machine⁹⁴- this safe way of exploring flight is supported by a series of articles on how to model flying machines.⁹⁵ This exploration of the aircraft using models is also evident in the approach to airships discussed earlier. This is not to say that the editors of *BOP* were discouraging young Britons from flying, model aeroplanes were a way to get children interested in flying and the mechanics of the machines. This link, made in an interview published in 1913, where a

⁸⁴ „Kämpfe in der Luft“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), pp.44-5

⁸⁵ „Flugmaschine“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.119

⁸⁶ „Die Fliegerschule in Mainz“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), p.251

⁸⁷ „Von der Flugtechnik“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.25 (Stuttgart, 1910), pp.523-7 & pp.589-92

⁸⁸ „Die rheinische Luftpost“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.26 (Stuttgart, 1911), p.720

⁸⁹ „See- und Luftflotte“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.26 (Stuttgart, 1911), p.219

⁹⁰ „Aeroplanes and How They Fly“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.32 (London, 1910), p.346

⁹¹ „Colonel Cody's Aeroplane in Flight“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.32 (London, 1910), p.176

⁹² „The Aeroplane Neck“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.32 (London, 1910), p.768

⁹³ „Model Aeroplanes, etc“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.32 (London, 1910), p.720

⁹⁴ Robert P. Grimmer, „The Achievements of a School Aëro Club“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.33 (London, 1911), pp.488-9

⁹⁵ H.F. Hobden, „Model Flying Machines: How to Make Them“, *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.33 (London, 1910), p.188, p.220, p.237, p.285, p.317, p.334, p.349, & p.382

young Frenchman living in London claims his interest is from building model aeroplanes.⁹⁶ The pilot, Marcel Desoutter was considered young at eighteen but the year beforehand the *BOP* reported on Naval Cadet R.P. Wheeler who at fourteen was the youngest pilot at the time.⁹⁷

Boys' Own did not explicitly discuss the offensive or combat possibilities of military aircraft, the implication was that they are useful for naval patrols and spotting, or travelling across the empire – there was no commentary about aircraft attacking forts, ships, or airships in the same way as seen in *GK*. This difference is a reflection of the varying approaches between Britain and Germany; the British approach was based around technological developments to produce a stable platform for spotting and transport, German aircraft development was more focused on producing offensive aircraft. These different approaches lead to serious losses of British aircraft in 1914.⁹⁸

Both the *Boys's Own* and the *GK* reflect the development in technology and interest in naval and aviation affairs, closely following the narrative found in wider society. The British publication, not having the need to promote the well-established and well-regarded Royal Navy was able to focus on encouraging boys to consider careers at sea. By describing conditions in the schools and on the ships potential recruits would know what to expect, and due to the many articles on ship design and technology they would already have some familiarity with their new environments. The German periodical faced the same difficulties as when promoting empire, the German battlefleet was relatively new and needed more space dedicated to justifying its existence and possibilities before attracting recruits. The way in which the two navies are portrayed also reflects the realities, the British with a long history and a clear role of policing the empire, the German the younger upstart with the knowledge its purpose was to threaten and possibly go to war. These differences can also be seen in the way the periodicals discuss air power, again the British looking for a stable and reliable patrol aircraft to service the needs of imperial policing and administration, and a military aircraft to support the established strategies of the navy, the German military looking to use airships and aeroplanes offensively to challenge the British (and French) navies in new ways. However, the *Boys' Own Paper* and *Gute Kamerad* are only two publications and portray a more serious message to their readers, many other publications and books existed who also wanted to influence and educate children.

⁹⁶ "An Aviator at Eighteen", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.35 (London, 1913), p.56

⁹⁷ "The World's Youngest Certificated Aviator", *Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.34 (London, 1912), p.112

⁹⁸ Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, p.12

Navy and Aircraft in Children's Books

Books published for children in Germany about naval and air power follow similar themes to those found in *GK*. Much of the commentary was focused on justifying the existence of an expanded navy and the budget required to build it and most of the publications follow the same narrative – that empire requires a larger navy and aircraft to encourage peace. Much of the material relating to empire and the navy has previously been covered in other chapters and intrinsically links naval power and empire. From 1908-1909 the narrative, although still predominately about empire, starts to become openly hostile to Britain.

One such publication, *Die Eroberung der Luft* (1909), contained examples of these contradictory narratives of the peaceful and hostile used for naval and especially air power. Airships, the writer argued, would hail in period of extended peace in Europe and predicted that the Zeppelins will connect the world (airships to New York by 1920), and this connectivity would mean there will be no European war until at least 1935⁹⁹ – they also predicted that the airship would be celebrating its fiftieth jubilee in 1960.¹⁰⁰ The author then continued their analysis of the uses of the Zeppelins with a description of how they can be used for bombing warships,¹⁰¹ something the book returned to towards the end with a call to send 'one thousand airships to England to attack their sea power'.¹⁰² The author did muse on the future of the new 'flying machines' something they were dismissive of, the 'too new' machines would, in their opinion be useful for sports and culture.¹⁰³ This dual, and at times contradictory, explanation of the role that aircraft, especially airships, had for the future of Germany and Europe is mirrored in other publications.

A book published just before the outbreak of war in Europe, *Vom Luftballon zum Zeppelin* (1914), praises the Zeppelins for connecting German families to each other and the world, and promoting peace on the same page as pointing out their use for bombing enemy armies and navies, as well as being able to transport troops.¹⁰⁴ The Zeppelin, the author pointed out, '[is] a name that little children already know, and whoever has not seen one of his many airships at least knows what they look like from pictures'.¹⁰⁵ As with *GK's* approach, the authors and publishers of children's books could safely assume their readers knew what a Zeppelin was and looked like. Von Zeppelin's heroic status, and the

⁹⁹ *Die Eroberung der Luft: Ein Handbuch der Luftschiffahrt und Flugtecricf, nach den neuestern Erfindugen und Erfahrungen gemenverständlich dargestellt für Alt und Jung* (Stuttgart, 1909), p.33

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p.30

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.34

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p.319

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p.321

¹⁰⁴ *Vom Luftballon zum Zeppelin* (Leipzig, 1914), p.145

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p.121

perceived importance of his airships to the future of the German empire are constant narratives in many other books which pointed out that 'progress in the air was slow until Zeppelin came and conquered the skies',¹⁰⁶ and that 'parents should support Zeppelin for the sake of their children'.¹⁰⁷ Airships appear to have taken centre-stage in the imagination of old and young Germans interested in the nation, empire, and the military, however the navy and its warships still occupied plenty of space in children's books.

German children's introduction to navy started early with themed 'ABC' books, these books introduced the image of warships and life aboard them – some with surprisingly complex imagery.¹⁰⁸ The images in these books would have been more appropriate for older readers, the possibility that this was deliberate to appeal to older readers who would be reading to or with their younger children or siblings. Picture books also introduced the navy to younger children, many of this type of material discussed in the previous chapters include the navy alongside images of colonies – the two intrinsically linked. However, some had a primarily naval theme, although they almost always included mention of the exotic in the overseas empire such as the mention of 'black-female cannibals' in a 1901 *Struwwelpeter* book.¹⁰⁹

Older German children were not only exposed to images of the navy, the content of many books promoting the navy and empire described detailed parts of life onboard, the working of the ships, and supported the arguments for an expanded navy and the costs involved. One example, *Unter dem Dreizack neues Marine- und Kolonialbuch für Jung und Alt* (1902), included sections on the career of naval officers, life on board warships, an inspirational tale of a ship's boy becoming a captain, how ships were built, communication by flags, images of the latest ships, the role of the navy in defending Germany's mercantile fleet, and a comparison of size and cost of the British and German fleets. That the author considered that navy and empire went hand-in-hand is obvious throughout the book, as is the anticipation of a clash between Britain and Germany.¹¹⁰ The need for German colonies and territories around the globe is argued in *Unsere Marine in China, 1900/01* (1911), the author claims that the German squadron's performance was 'behind' that of the other nations due to the lack of supply bases in the region. Germany's great nation status required it to be involved in such international efforts in the future and this required more naval bases in German territories to ensure they could operate properly. The link between naval matters and empire continues in *Deutsche*

¹⁰⁶ *Zeppelin ihr Beherrscher* (Stuttgart, 1908), p.2

¹⁰⁷ *Das Zeppelinbuch für die Deutschland Jugend* (Stuttgart, 1909), pp.8-9

¹⁰⁸ Willy Stöwer, *Marine ABC von Willy Stöwer* (Leipzig, 1901)

¹⁰⁹ „Die Geschichte von dem Schwarzen Mädchen“, in *Marine-Struwwelpeter* (Leipzig, 1901)

¹¹⁰ Julius Kohmeyer, *Unter dem Dreizack neues Marine- und Kolonialbuch für Jung und Alt* (Leipzig, 1902), pp.33-44, p.45, p.72, p.78, pp.194-208, pp.327-28, p.436, & p.438

Seebücherei: wie unsere Südwestafrika, Kamerun u. Togo erworben werden (1910) which introduces the history of German colonisation and the need for ships.

Although most of the content found about the navy in German children's books looked at the navy as primarily an essential part of empire building, an exception to this was the *Marine-Jahrbuch für Deutschlands Jugend* (1909) in which the focus was on the German war fleet in the North Sea. The author wrote of the importance of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and its importance for the German fleet in responding to an enemy attack,¹¹¹ the crucial defensive position of Heligoland and its newly built torpedo-boat bases¹¹², and how torpedoes and torpedo boats would have been the deciding factor in any fleet action.¹¹³ The 'enemy' was never named but the area of anticipated operations left little to the imagination. This move towards openly referring to a naval conflict in the North Sea and open war will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The future enemy was often ambiguous in literature and games, this is demonstrated by the popular 'invasion literature' that, although intended for a wider audience than just the youth market would have been accessible and read by many young people. Many of these publications focused on a conflict between Britain and Germany: Erskine Childer's *Riddle in the Sands* (1902) and John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (1915) highlighted the risks of German spies and secret naval building.¹¹⁴ August Niemann and William Le Queux went further and wrote tales of a German invasion of Britain, *The Coming Conquest of Britain* (1904) and *The Invasion of 1910* (1906) were published in both Britain and Germany and offer a commentary on the poor state of British preparation for war – although they have been claimed to be evidence of a hatred of Germans as the 'inevitable enemy'.¹¹⁵

A wider survey of invasion literature demonstrates that the focus was not on an inevitable conflict between Britain and Germany, a situation that is evident from the literature already introduced in this chapter and in the games and toys in the next section. A conflict between Britain was regarded as one of the possibilities and scenarios in fiction that commented in military preparedness, this is demonstrated in other works, especially by Le Queux. Le Queux regarded France and Russia as the main potential threat to Britain, and in *The Great War in England* (1894) the French and Russian militaries invade Britain. H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds* (1898) demonstrates this ambiguity in defining the enemy, aliens from Mars invaded Britain and expose the need for Britain to be prepared for a war in an increasingly technological world. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, although much of

¹¹¹ *Marine-Jahrbuch für Deutschlands Jugend* (Germany, 1909), p.91

¹¹² *Ibid*, pp.134-5

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p.69, & p.144

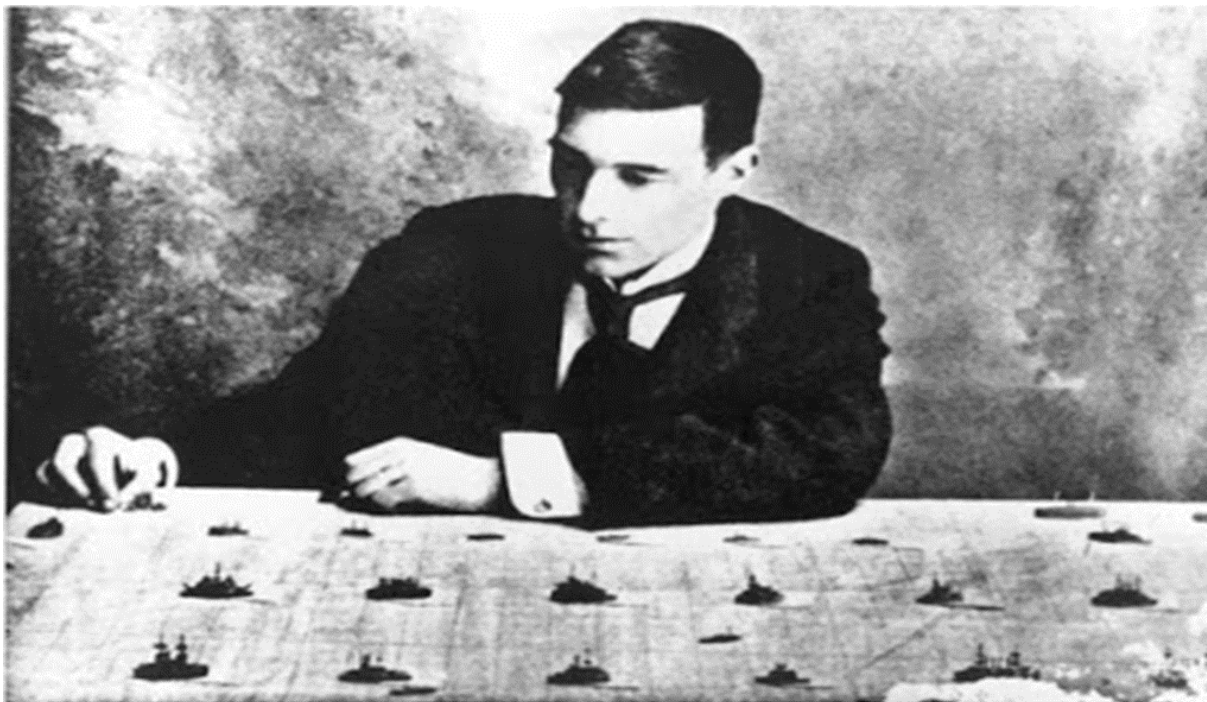
¹¹⁴ Although *The Thirty-Nine Steps* was not published until 1915 it was written before the outbreak of war in August 1914.

¹¹⁵ Ignatius F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War, 1763-1984* (Panther Arts, 1970), p.143

the material is not explicitly referring to a conflict between Britain and Germany it was a topic of discussion in Germanophobic publications such as the *Daily Mail* and in meetings of organisations such as the Navy League and *Deutscher Flottenverein*. A future conflict between the navies of Europe was considered increasingly likely in the early twentieth century and children's play would also reflect these fears.

Playing the 'Great Naval Game'

Toys which replicated technology and machinery were a popular choice for many consumers in Britain and Germany. As discussed in at the beginning of this chapter toy trains were dominant in this market with the majority made in Germany and battleships, Zeppelins, and aeroplanes were ideal inspiration for toys and games of this type. Many examples of varying origins, quality, and purpose exist in archives, museums, and catalogues demonstrating the items' popularity and impact on society. As with H.G. Wells' *Little Wars* interest in 'playing' at naval and air warfare was shared by young and old, one successful wargame which demonstrates the ties in manufacturing, commerce, and interests between Britain and Germany is the *Fred Jane Naval Wargame* (1898). Fred Jane, an English naval journalist, published the set of rules alongside a companion book *Jane's Fighting Ships* to encourage naval officers to use wargaming as a training tool, although they were available to all to buy. Many



4.3 Fred T. Jane and his Naval Wargame (Circa 1900), <http://wargamingmiscellany.blogspot.co.uk/2016/03/fred-jane-one-hundred-years-on.html>

navies purchased the game with the notable exception of the British Royal Navy, although many British officers purchased their own copies.¹¹⁶

Jane's game, although available to families and children, was primarily aimed at military use, however of interest are the ties Jane had with other navies around the world, including the German, through which he compiled extensive data on the latest ships and technologies which were integrated into annual versions of *Fighting Ships*. The London publisher Sampson Low Marston & Co. published the printed material, and the miniature ships were designed by the British company Bassett-Lowke but manufactured by Bing who were based in Nuremberg. The design, capabilities, and latest technologies from rival navies were being shared to create a game designed to teach officers how to wage naval war.

Not all games were as complex as Jane's and were produced for families and children in mind, board games based on chess appear frequently in archives, especially those with a war theme. Later examples of these easily designed games appear in 1914 but examples are found during the period of Anglo-German naval antagonism. *Moderner Seekrieg* (1907) used a very slightly modified chess board with generic battleship 'flats' to recreate a conflict between two navies. In this example, even though it is produced during the naval arms race with Britain the 'enemy' fleet is painted with French tricolour flags.

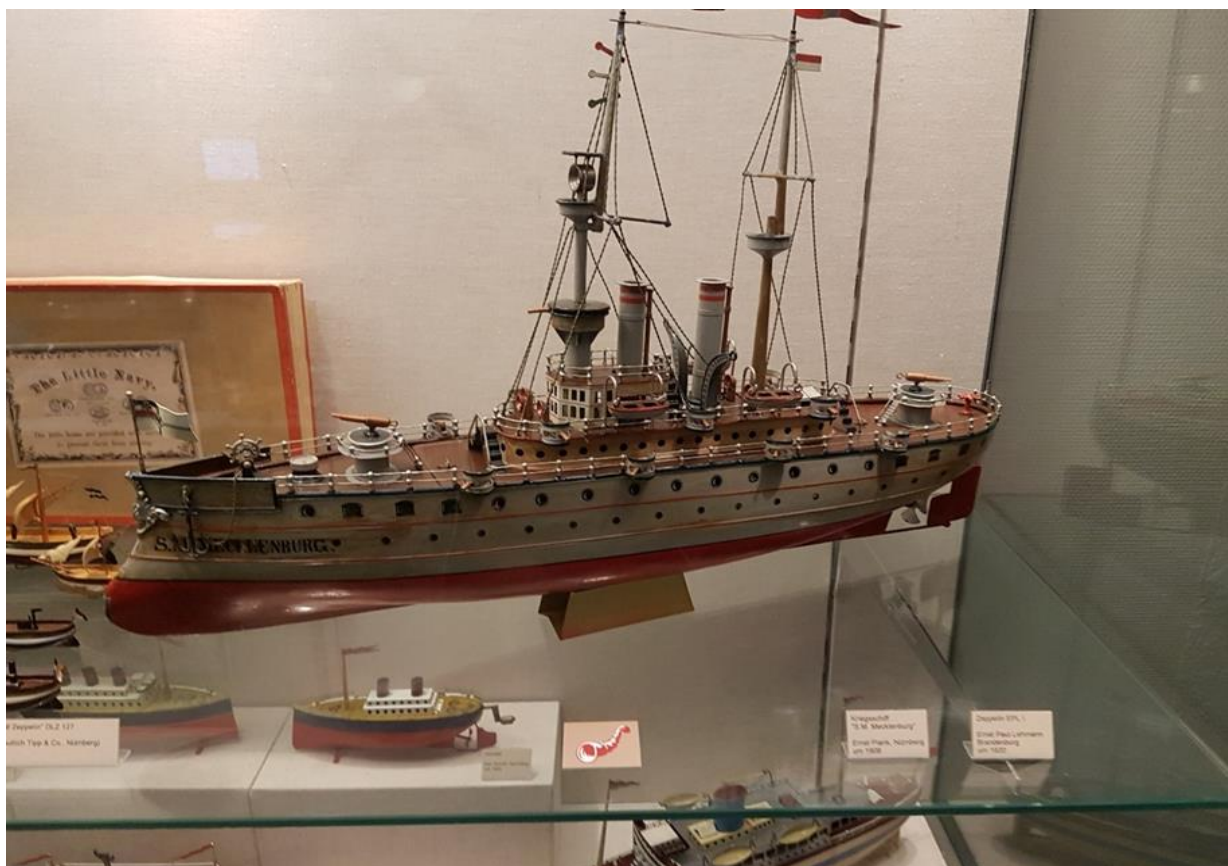


4.4 *Moderner Seekrieg* (Ludwigsburg, 1907), Image from Deutsche Spielezeugmuseum Nürnberg.

¹¹⁶ Richard Brooks, *Fred T Jane, An Eccentric Visionary* (Janes Information Group, 1997), P.83

Another well-known type of naval game, ‘battleships’ was also available during this period for children and families to recreate naval battles. These games often offer neutral sides to play, the model ships often displaying no more than red or blue flags to identify them.¹¹⁷ The toy ships in these games are equally as generic and are little more than representations of the chosen ship class – often battleships.

Due to their larger size, toys which were intended to be played with allowed for more detail and identification with real warships. As with all previous examples, the German industry produced significantly more detailed goods and toy ships allowed for German toy makers to not only demonstrate their superiority as toy makers but also to promote the latest in German naval hardware. Bing Brothers of Nuremberg, as previously mentioned, designed, and manufactured detailed railway



4.5 Model of Kriegsschiff M.S. Marrenberg, Bing Brothers (Nuremberg, 1908), Spielzeugmuseum Nuremberg, Photo: author's collection.

engines, miniature ships for Jane's naval game, and a range of detailed mechanical toy warships such as the example below.

These toys, advertised as ‘built from original dockyard designs’, could be clockwork or steam powered and ‘fire’ its guns using crackers. They had a price tag that made them beyond the means of many

¹¹⁷ An early example of the battleships game found in the Deutsches Spielarchiv Nürnberg contains a selection of miniature wooden ships painted white with a band of colour to indicate a side. The game appears to have been produced around the mid-1870s from the markings inside the box.

families, over £300 in comparable prices today, and something only wealthier middle-class consumers could afford.¹¹⁸ Bing's range of toy ships included representations of warships from around the world but focused on those of Britain and Germany – the company's principal markets. These middle-class consumers were the families that would supply the manpower, especially the officers, to the expanding navies, modernising forces that required increased levels of education and technological expertise. The access to higher education that these families had meant that they were ideal candidates for the British and German naval forces – logical targets for toys that influenced the interest in the navy. Large, impressive, toys that utilised technologies that enabled them to move under their own steam and have 'firing' weapons also mirrored the warships they represented – objects intended to impress and intimidate.

Not all toy ships were as elaborate or as expensive as the above example, German manufacturers, including Bing, mass produced cheap tin 'penny toys' of generic representations of warships which could be painted or lithographed with appropriate national flags. These often were of the 'flat' type, the examples below painted to represent German navy vessels. Although known for their metal toys, German toy makers also produced wooden toy warships, as did many British manufacturers, which were less detailed but affordable toys. The availability of these less-expensive toys meant that images of the navy were available to a wider section of the population and able to inform and influence a greater number of possible supporters of the navies and future sailors.



4.6 Tin 'flat' toy ships produced in Nuremberg by Georg Spenkuch around 1900, image from Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum Nürnberg

¹¹⁸ Bing Brothers of Nuremberg, 'Special Catalogue 1906', pp.123-32

Playing a New Dimension of War

As evident in the 'invasion literature' discussed earlier in the chapter and popular at the time, aircraft and airships as symbols of technology heightened the fears of a successful invasion of the British Isles by a military force that could bypass the protection offered by the Royal Navy and expose the weaknesses of the British land forces present in England. Akin to many of the other themes covered, these fears and anxieties which existed in the adult world were mirrored in children's play and games.

One example of the fear of invasion is evident in *War Tactics, or Can Great Britain Be Invaded?*, a British boardgame published in 1911. The game, which presents a conflict between Britain and Germany across the North Sea, focuses on naval combat with gaming counters that represent 'Cruiser' and 'Dreadnought' units as well as 'Sub' and 'Torpedo boat' units on a gaming board that places naval ports as important targets. However, in addition to naval units the game also includes counters for army units and aircraft, the latter adding a new dimension to the threat. Interestingly the counters for air units represent stylised silhouettes of aeroplanes and not the airships that often were characteristic of the perceived threat of German airpower.

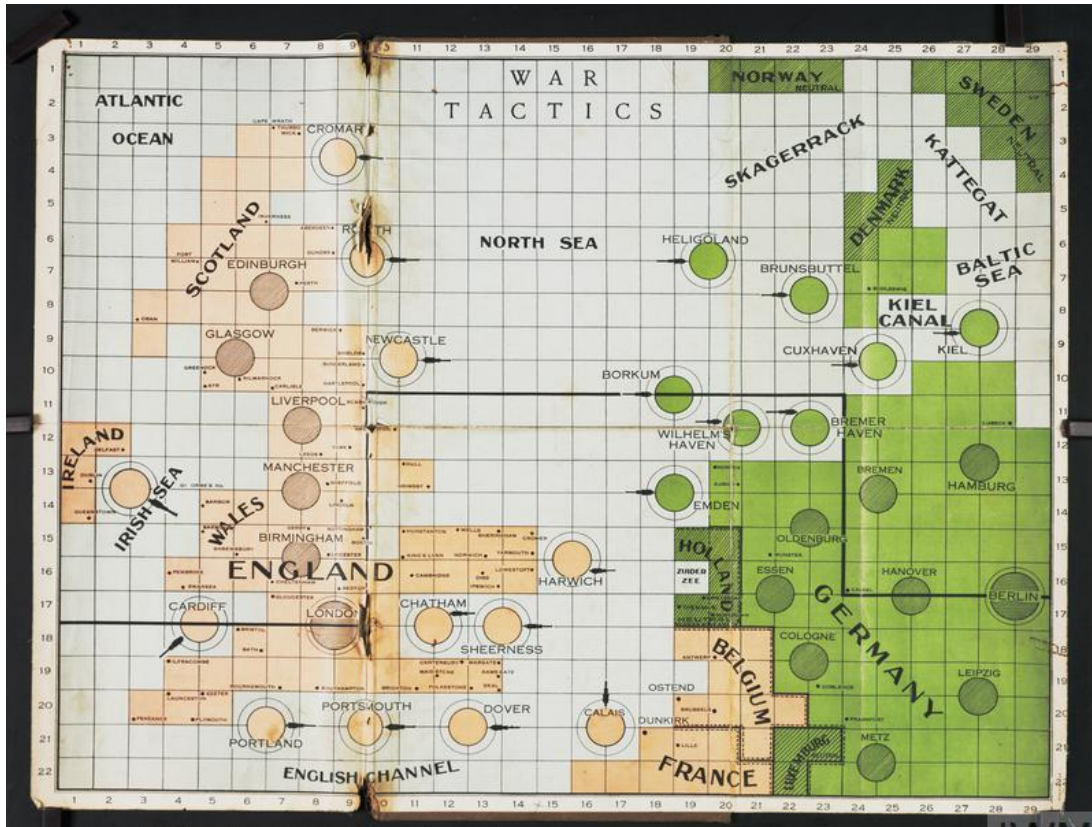
The game was later re-released in time for Christmas 1915 as *War Tactics, or Can Great Britain Be Invaded – The New War Game* and claimed to be endorsed by Lord Kitchener and claimed that it was 'the game to be in every household – with 'liberal discounts' it also offer the retailer a good profit.¹¹⁹

Despite the existence of games such as the above example, the majority of games and toys relating to aircraft and airships appear to promote the peaceful applications for air travel, especially those that aid communication, connect cities, and connect empire – examples of these appear in the previous chapter. Many of the articles on flying machines discussed in this chapter also portray a more optimistic and positive role for technology, another hint that not all technological advancements were regarded as military advantages.

Toys representing airships such as those designed and built by Zeppelin also do not appear explicitly military or threatening.¹²⁰ The airships are presented in a neutral way which does not hint at any expectation of purpose, perhaps leaving it up to the imagination of the child as to the mission of their toy, as influenced by their chosen reading material – one of peace and communication or one of aggression and war.

¹¹⁹ Advertisement for '*War Tactics, or Can Great Britain Be Invaded – The New War Game* (Leicester, 1915), in *Toys and Games*, Vol.II, No.6 (November, 1915), p.293

¹²⁰ For an example see 'Zeppelin' model produced by Ernst Paul Lehmann in Brandenburg, in the virtual catalogue of Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum Nürnberg



4.7 Image of the gaming board from *War Tactics, or Can Great Britain Be Invaded* (Leicester, 1911), image from Imperial War Museum, EPH2702

Conclusion

Those in Britain and Germany who supported naval matters and naval building clearly used, by their own stated intentions, childhood materials to influence and inform the young people of the metropolises. They did so to gain support for the expansion of the fleets, the advancement of naval technology, and to encourage suitably educated and interested young men into naval service. As with the army the changing character of navy required the courting of the middle classes and their educated youth to lead the modernising fleets. Advances in technology and the opportunities to engage with it were used to attract the required type of candidate, and those who heeded the call were aware of the nature of the navy, a military force that had a purpose to police empires and defend the metropole.

The advancement of aviation technologies did not have the same explicit military connections as those found at sea, although the possibilities, both positive and negative, of the military applications of airpower were discussed and propagated the focus remained on the peaceful possibilities of air travel. It was hoped that the improved communications and travel opportunities would unite the globe and make war less likely. However, the military applications were considered, and feared and although before 1914 children's exposure to aviation mostly promoted peaceful applications it did not take long for that narrative to change.



5.1, AWAY WITH TOYS - GIVE ME A GUN! British postcard issued in 1914 by Fred Spurgin. From author's collection

Chapter Five: The Clash of Militarism(s)

Introduction

The years preceding the outbreak of the First World War were business as usual for the toy industries in Britain and Germany, conflict, empire, and the navy continued to be the theme of the toys and games relevant to this thesis. British commentators continued to be concerned with the growing industrial power of the *Kaiserreich*, while toy importers and sellers in London made profits from the popular German toys and games from companies such as Spears Games and Ravensburger.

Children would continue to read about empire, the nation's history, and anticipated European conflict, their toys and games supplied the props to play-out the events in their homes, classrooms and out in the streets and playgrounds. Toy ships and airships along with the boardgames that simulated naval combat reflected the continued focus on the naval arms race and technology. However, toy soldiers remained popular, the variety and style expanding as technology and innovation changed the image of the armies the toys represented.

The German toy and games industry remained dominant globally, British trade journals from the months before the outbreak of hostilities remained full of adverts for German goods and traders with little hint of any antagonism.¹ British toy sellers, like many other sectors of the British economy, thrived off the profits from trading in German goods.² The possibility of war, it would seem, was far from the thoughts of many British and German businessmen, even though a European war had been predicted by many.

Politically as the Anglo-German naval rivalry waned the focus turned back to Europe, especially in the *Kaiserreich* which had become increasingly surrounded by treaties between Britain, France, and Russia over the first decade of the twentieth century. For the Prussian-led German Empire the fears over multiple open land borders were resurrected.³ The Navy, which had absorbed so much of the military budget since the 1890s would be little help in defending the borders with France and Russia. The focus for military strategy and spending would return to the traditionally Prussian army and the Schlieffen plan, which had been updated by Moltke in 1906 to counter the new political situation.⁴ Politically

¹ Trade Journals such as the August 1914 *Games and toys*, had up to 75% of advertising space dedicated to German goods.

² Many other industries benefited from German trade, Lloyds of London underwrote the insurance on German shipping and British shipping carried German goods, see Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (Allen & Unwin, 1980), p.295, and joint ventures like that of the OXO company, see Jan Rüger, "OXO: or, the Challenges of Transnational History", *European History Quarterly*, 40(4) (2010), pp.656-68.

³ See Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia 1600-1947* (Penguin, 2006).

⁴ Terrence Zuber, *Inventing the Schlieffen Plan: German War Planning 1871-1914* (Oxford University Press, 2014), Ch.5

attempts were made to de-escalate tensions between Britain and Germany and increase cooperation. The stalled attempt to work together on the Berlin-Bagdad railway is one example.⁵ However, the economic threat from Germany and British public opinion created an anti-German atmosphere, even though the two empires were still socially, and growing increasingly economically interconnected at the start of the new century.

The ambivalence displayed by the businessmen and wider population supports Christopher Clark's thesis that Britain, Germany, and the rest of Europe were 'Sleepwalkers' into war in 1914.⁶ Clark highlights many factors in European politics and society that could explain 'how Europe went to war in 1914'. Although he does not make a definitive conclusion on the 'how', among the medium-term factors Clark highlights are the previous reluctance for Europe to go to war and the levels of militarism present in society - the Agadir Crisis of 1911 is an example of a European 'war-scare'. Despite the coverage in newspapers the Agadir Crisis or *Panthersprung* did little to change the Anglo-German antagonistic rhetoric from the now well-established form in adult and children's literature. In 1911, the only mention of Morocco in *Boys' Own* is in an article about photography. The author does mention that 'Morocco is very much before the world just now' hinting that the reader would be



5.2 THE BLESSINGS OF PEACE, *Punch* cartoon from 1913 depicting Germany and France and soldiers weighed down by military hardware. Bernard Partridge, *Punch*, Vol.144, Issue.3768 (26th February 1913).

⁵ Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (Allen & Unwin, 1980), pp.253-61

⁶ Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (Penguin, 2012)

aware of events.⁷ As demonstrated in previous chapters the levels of militarism in British and German life were extremely high and akin to imperialism was an everyday feature, especially for children with nurseries and schools full of educational and informative literature, toys, and games - much of it with a military theme. An American colonel wrote that 'militarism [in Europe had] run stark mad', although his observation was tainted by his reception in Berlin,⁸ militarism, political tensions, and the Anglo-German naval arms race had left Europe heavily armed and with a well indoctrinated population; a situation which many commentators in newspapers and journals viewed as a powder keg awaiting a spark which Europe's leaders could not extinguish in time.

When war did break out between the two empires the patriotic sentiment was obvious in both, especially in the sphere of childhood where publishers and the toy industry responded with nationalist, militarist, and pro-war materials. This dominant pro-war and patriotic sentiment in children's playthings and literature is unsurprising given the legal action by both the British and German governments and militaries to suppress any anti-war messages.⁹ In Britain, the Defence of the Realm Act, 1914 (DORA) restricted what could be published,¹⁰ and the newly formed Press Bureau controlled the information disseminated leading editors to self-censor the messages their publications carried. Florian Altenhöner highlights the 'Britishness' of DORA and the Press Bureau's approach of censorship – 'the minimum of rules and the maximum of state intrusion'.¹¹ In practice this led to few changes as British children's literature already supported militarism and nationalism. In Germany, the authorities had more direct control and influence over what was published after the *Gesetz über den Belagerungszustand vom 4. Juni 1851* (Law of a State of Siege), was activated. This gave the commanders of army districts far-reaching powers which included censorship and the ability to intervene in family life.¹² One shared characteristic of both British and German censorship is the lack of pre-war discussion on it, and the few resources given to the departments responsible for it.¹³ Alongside this, the Kaiser's call for '*Burgfrieden*' led to the left-wing press, directed by the Social

⁷ David McLellan, "Morocco and the Moors", *Boys' Own Annual* 34 (London 1912), p.145

⁸ Colonel Edward House, May 1914, quoted in, Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, p.214

⁹ For a comparison of British and German censorship in the First World War see, Florian Altenhöner, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle: Gerüchte und städtische Öffentlichkeiten in Berlin und London 1914/1918* (De Gruyter, 2008)

¹⁰ Defence of the Realm Act 1914, 8th August 1914, Additional Regulations, 1st September 1914, Amendment 4 added the regulation: 'No person shall by word of mouth or in writing spread reports likely to cause disaffection or alarm among any of His Majesty's forces or among the civilian population.' NA-Kew, HO45/10690

¹¹ Altenhöner, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle*, p.86

¹² See, Altenhöner, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle*, ch.II

¹³ Some discussion around censorship appeared during the Agadir Crisis in 1913 but no action was taken until the outbreak of war, see Altenhöner, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle*, p.61

democrats (SPD), ceasing anti-war publications – at least for the first years of conflict.¹⁴ The outbreak of war also ended legal direct trade between Britain and Germany due to trading with the enemy legislation.

The introduction of wartime restrictions in trade highlighted the high level of Anglo-German trade and economic interdependency. The August 1914 edition of the new London-based industry journal *Games and Toys* was full of adverts, most of them from German manufacturers or exporters. The front cover of issue three displayed an almost full-page advert for the Nuremberg based Fleischmann & Bloedel, 'specialists in dressed and undressed dolls. Felt animals and figures. All kinds of mechanical toys. Trains. General toys.'¹⁵ No comment is made of the deteriorating political situation in Central Europe, as the issue was likely to have been compiled at least a month earlier - testament to the rapid development of the 'July Crisis' and the declaration of war by Britain.

The *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung* does show an awareness of an approaching conflict, or the hope for one. The previous year had not been as profitable as hoped,¹⁶ and the 1st August issue commented that a conflict would bring a welcome boost to the industry (*ungeahnten Blüte*), although no indication of Germany's or Britain's involvement in that conflict.¹⁷ The journal comments on the growing threat of the North American toy industry,¹⁸ compares export and import figures,¹⁹ and adverts for toy guns aimed at both the German and British markets²⁰ - that rapidly changed in early August 1914.

The toy industries responded quickly to the outbreak of hostilities, both the rhetoric and the products changed to reflect the new relationship between the two powers. On the front page of the 21st September 1914 issue of *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung* is printed the war poem, *Uns Wird der Sieg*,²¹ while the front of the September issue of *Games and Toys* displayed an advert for Good Bros. Ltd.'s range of 'Silk & Satin Flags', 'Mounted on Fancy Pine, nicely scented' and available with the 'Union Jack, French, Belgian and Russian' flags²² - both promoted the nationalist sentiment in both populations at the time.

¹⁴ Andrew Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land: War Pedagogy, Nationalism, and Authority in Germany, 1914-1918* (Harvard University Press, 2010), p.92

¹⁵ *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.3, London, August 1914, p.1

¹⁶ „Die Lage des Spielwarengeschäfts“, *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, no.14 (1st July 1913), p.11

¹⁷ *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, No.16 (1st August 1914), p.3.

¹⁸ „American Dolls“, *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, No.1 (1st January 1914), p.9

¹⁹ „Der deutsche Export an Kinderspielwaren im ersten Halbjahr 1914“ *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, No.6, (1st March 1914), p.5

²⁰ Advert for J.G. Schrödel, *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, No.6 (1 March 1914), p.12

²¹ „Uns Wird der Sieg“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, No.17 (21 August 1914), p.1

²² *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.4, (London, September 1914) p.i

The content of the journals also reflected the changed situation; the German commentary concerned itself with how to continue business and exports,²³ especially to the American markets where demand for German goods would remain high.²⁴ Whereas the British plotted the destruction of their German competitors and the expansion of their industry as it took over the global market from the enemy. The industry, led by their press, believed wartime pressures on the German competition and the blockade

**CAPTURE
GERMAN
TRADE !!**

—————Germany cannot Export!—————
British Manufacturers must supply the want.

£1,500 to £3,000

required at once by an established manufacturing firm for the
purpose of developing the Toy business.

This firm is in an unique position and have excellent and
unusual facilities for dealing with this class of manufacture.

Reply **O.C. c/o "Games & Toys," Sicilian House, Southampton Row,
LONDON, W.C.**

5.3 Advert requesting funding for a business venture to 'Capture German Trade' in *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.6 (London, November/December 1914), p.209

would destroy German companies, all the British needed to do was to fill the gap.²⁵ The British 'toy men' would call this the campaign to 'Capture German Trade', whereas the German industry would refer to it as '*Englischer Vernichtungskrieg gegen deutsche Spielwaren*'.²⁶

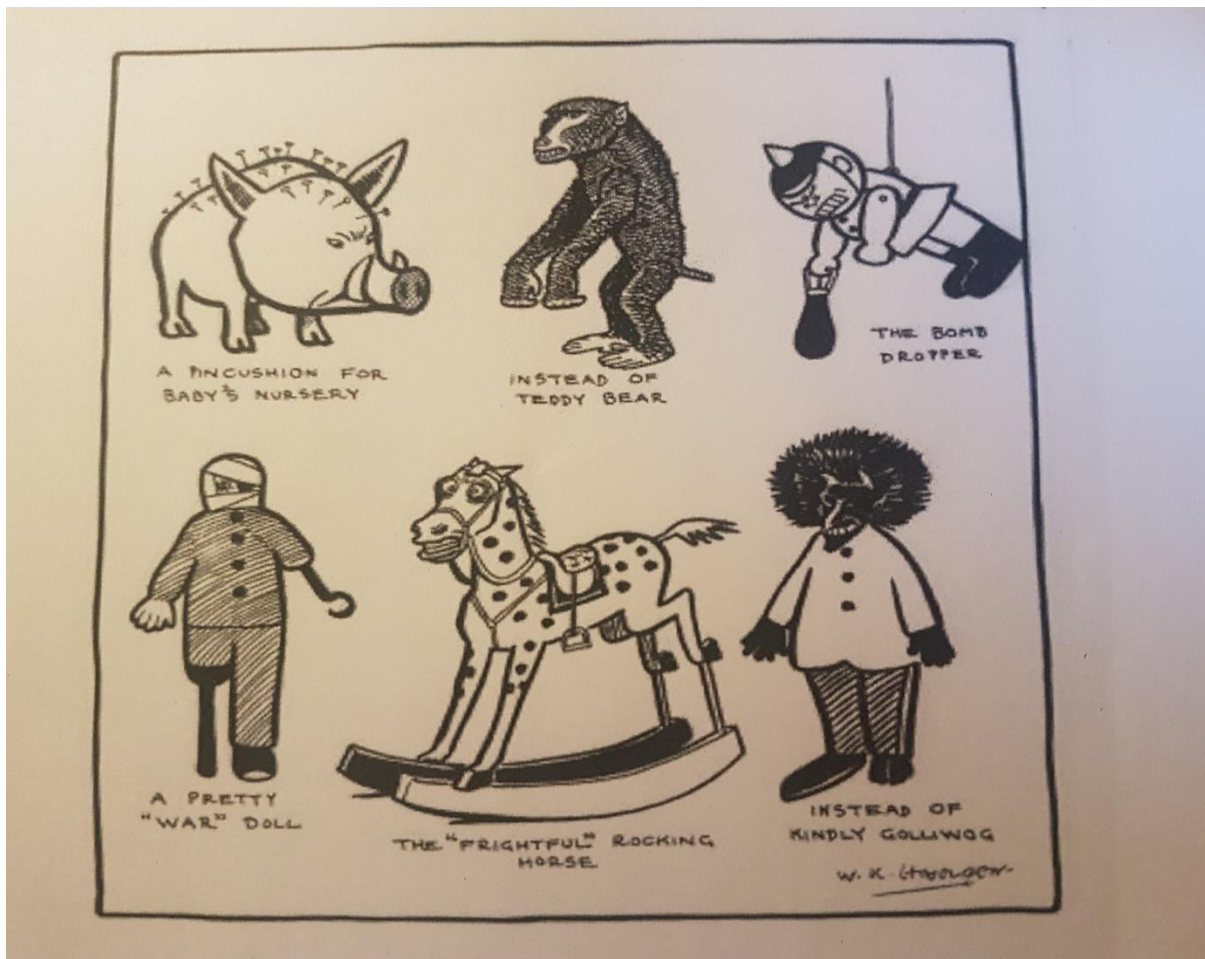
Many other British industries used the war to initiate a similar campaign to 'capture German trade'. All these sectors, from beer brewers to tyre manufacturers, had to deal with the same underlying problem – continued British public demand for German goods. Patriotic advertising demanded the British consumer bought British, but the existence of significant quantities of German-made products

²³ „Geschäftsleben und Krieg“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, No.18 (10 September 1914), p.1

²⁴ „Unsere Spielwaren in Amerika“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, No.3/4 (1 February 1915), p.3

²⁵ „Britain's Chance“, *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.4, London (September, 1914), p.122

²⁶ „Englischer Vernichtungskrieg gegen deutsche Spielwaren“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, No.24/26 (10 December 1914), p.1



5.4, 'Some "Kultur" Toys German Children, Cartoon by W.K. Hazeldon, *Daily Mirror* (3rd December 1915), Archive.cartoons.ac.uk

in country, in transit through neutral Holland, or re-exported through neutral states continued to feed the demand.²⁷ Despite continued anti-German propaganda, fines, arrests and convictions, the sale of German goods continued throughout the war.²⁸ The example above is an attempt by the British press to deter British consumers buying 'ugly' German toys 'made with hate', unlike the British ones which they claim, although poorer quality, were made with love. The British industry resorted to vilifying German toys after it became apparent that the British consumer, even during a war with Germany, still regarded German toys (and other goods) as superior and enthusiastically purchased any that became available, usually from intercepted blockade runners.²⁹

²⁷ German estimates from mid-1915 put the value of German toys stored in Rotterdam as 150 million dollars, this is likely an exaggeration, but the huge quantity caused serious concern in the British industry who feared post-war dumping of the goods onto the market. See, „Für 150 Millionen Dollar deutsche Spielwaren lagern in den Docks von Rotterdam“, *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung*, Nuremberg (September 1915), p.5

²⁸ 'Trading with the Enemy' reports appeared frequently in *Games and Toys* throughout the war, For examples see: "Trading with the Enemy", *Games and Toys*, Vol.I, No.5 (London, October 1914), p.164; and "Illegal Trading", *Games and Toys*, Vol.I, No.6 (London, November 1914), p.21

²⁹ See, "Remarkable!", *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.8 (London, January 1916), p.382

Despite the British campaign the German industry remained confident, the autumn issue of *Wegweiser für die Spielwarenindustrie* congratulated the German toy makers on their proactive response to the situation and the role it had played:

The toy and fancy goods industry's adaptability in these critical times is paying off, for the number of practical war articles, patriotic items and items for special occasions, as well as saleable war joke articles which has been brought to the market, is now considerable. The eyes of the Fatherland are now especially turned to Germany's youth. They are our pride, and our hope for the future. Our young people do not want to sit back, though, while their fathers are out on the battlefield and their mothers are looking after the sick and offering comfort to the wounded. The warlike element in German children's toys, which well-informed manufacturers have always cultivated, is bearing rich fruits now.³⁰

The German industry clearly believed they had played a part in shaping the young men that were fighting for the fatherland, the journal editors saw a continued role for themselves during wartime which extended beyond profit. This continued educational and informative role was repeated in other journals such as the *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*.³¹ Notably, any discussion of this educational role is absent from the British industry press which is increasingly focused on demanding concessions from the government as it believed it was a critical war industry.³²

The battlefields of Europe required changes in messaging and imagery in many ways, how could children be made aware of the realities of twentieth-century warfare? The war was novel not just in the form of the battlefield, but also with the introduction of mass conscription,³³ high levels of casualties, and the reports of atrocities.³⁴ How was the reality of war conveyed to children? Easier, and a welcome opportunity for the toy industry and publishers, was the portrayal of soldiers and new weapon technologies such as tanks, aircraft, and submarines. Although the battlefields of Belgium and France were the focal point in the clash of British and German militarism, they were not the only ones. Both combatants would use colonial troops in smaller clashes across the globe, and Germany would face Russia on its Eastern Borders, the various fronts required not only different portrayals of the enemy, but also racialisation which would continue to play an important part in policy making and debate.³⁵ This chapter will demonstrate these changes, from patriotic-jingoistic support for a war that

³⁰ *Wegweiser für die Spielwarenindustrie*, No.679 (Autumn 1914), p.6

³¹ See, Sonja Müller, "Toys, Games and Juvenile Literature", in, Heather Jones, Jennifer O'Brien & Christoph Schmidt-Supprian, (eds.), *Untold War: New Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Brill, 2008).

³² The British toy industry demanded concessions on exemptions from conscription, access to war materials such as wood and exemptions from the Factory Workers Act, See, *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.11 (London, April 1916), p.616,

³³ Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge, British Society and the First World War* (Macmillan, 1965), pp.76-85

³⁴ See, Alan Kramer, *The Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford University Press, 2007)

³⁵ See the Introduction for debates over the use of colonial troops in Europe and against European troops.

was expected to be short, to a growing disillusionment amongst all sections of society which is reflected in children's playthings and literature.

The First World War did not only involve a military struggle but was the first to involve the populations of the belligerent nations, countries, and empires in a 'total' war. This required not only military conflict but economic and propaganda efforts as well, which would affect all sections of society.³⁶ Children would be drastically impacted by it in all aspects, for as in previous chapters, children continued to be exposed to, as Andrew Donson expresses surprise at, 'crass jingoism, violence, and radical politics'³⁷ - given the evidence it would have been more surprising if they had not been. The propaganda was often aimed directly at children through their reading material and playthings, even the industry that supplied these items became involved.

The First World War did not only invade children's lives in the home, British and German children were also exposed to the war in the classroom and at youth groups where they were not only taught about the conflict but were expected to actively play a role in it. What they were taught in classrooms also supplied the background to their play and supplied the context to what they read.

War Pedagogy, a Return to Work, and the Boy Scouts at War

The education of British and German children was changed drastically by the outbreak of war, most markedly in Germany where it allowed teachers greater freedom to introduce new educational methods. Education in Germany after 1910 continued in the same vein as described in the previous chapters, strict, regimented, and universal up to the age of fourteen. However, before August 1914 the established pedagogy was increasingly challenged by the progressive *Reformpädagogik* (reform pedagogy), the movement promoted a more inclusive schooling system that could combat class differences, increase social mobility, and improve access to universities.³⁸ The strict, regimented style of teaching was also challenged by increased membership of youth movements such as the Boy Scouts, the nationalist Free German Youth, and the socialist Association of Young Workers. Andrew Donson highlights the peculiarity found in some German youth movements, such as the *Wandervogel* that challenged adult authority and promoted the leadership of other children over adults who only

³⁶ Eberhard Demm, "Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.28 (1993), pp.163-93, p.163

³⁷ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.1

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.26

retained involvement as mentors.³⁹ The groups, who welcomed boys and girls, promoted German-nationalist ideals of interest in the *Heimat*, Folklore, and nature.⁴⁰

The outbreak of war, activation of the Law of a State of Siege, and *Burgfrieden* allowed adults to regain more control over youth organisations and the classroom. Teachers and university lecturers found themselves free of the constraints of the Law of Association,⁴¹ now they were able to share their political views in support of the war in the classroom – although, at the same time any critical views were silenced.⁴² What was taught in the classroom was also dramatically and rapidly changed,⁴³ by the end of October, schools throughout Germany had been ordered by state education ministers and departments to promote the war and patriotism at every opportunity – a direct challenge to the pre-war reforms.⁴⁴ Influenced by the ‘Ten Commandments’ of War Pedagogy laid down by Theobald Ziegler in September 1914 school children would include the war in all subjects, from calculating amounts of munitions required in mathematics to discussing experiences and writing free compositions about the war for assessments.⁴⁵ The Ten Commandments are as follows:

Thou shalt attend to discipline and order among the schoolchildren and continue to fulfil your duty now as before because you are responsible to your people more than ever for the next generation. But don't be a school-tyrant, today less so than ever, and also understand the art of looking the other way. And don't give them too much homework: They have to read the newspaper daily.

Thou shalt not let the war become an amusement for the schoolchildren because it is indeed a serious matter. Therefore don't celebrate every victory with a day off from school, and don't think that you have to make a festival out of every collection drive or other contribution to the war by your pupils.

Thou shalt raise your schoolchildren to be citizens. You now have the best opportunity to do that because the war is a teacher of the first rank.

Thou shalt teach more interestingly than it has been your duty because the thoughts of schoolchildren now easily wander. Therefore relate all instruction to the daily and hourly events. Don't let the easy opportunity slip by. When it is difficult, go ahead and do it anyway.

Thou shalt more than before make every lesson a German lesson and teach your schoolchildren the style of General-Quartermaster von Stein.⁴⁶ You can do this in Latin and mathematics too.

Thou Shalt read Schiller in German lessons, as much as you can and want because he is the manliest of our poets. For the moment, raising aesthetes no longer has any value.

Thou shalt speak of battles in history class and be happy – knock on wood – that you are allowed to do that again. Your boys are interested in them and can put them to good use right away during breaks between classes. And you should gently point out the march of God in history being revealed to us today so amazingly and wonderfully.

³⁹ Although Donson highlights the *Wandervogel* as an example it must be noted that the organisation was a minority in the youth movements of Germany.

⁴⁰ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.35

⁴¹ Paragraph 17 of the The Reich Law of Association 1908 forbade youth organisations from being political.

⁴² Joachim Scholz & Katherine Berdelmann, “The quotidianisation of the war in everyday life at German schools during the First World War”, *Paedagogica Historica*, Vol.52, No.1-2 (2016), pp.92-103, p.95

⁴³ Some academic research has been carried out into the importance of ‘War Pedagogy’ on the development of education in Germany. However, education historians such as Andreas von Prondczynsky, Joachim Scholz, and Kathrin Berdelmann all agree there is much more needed.

⁴⁴ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, pp.61-2

⁴⁵ Max Reiniger, *Der Weltkrieg im persönlichen Ausdruck der Kinder : 150 Schülerkriegsaufsätze*, (Langensalza, 1915), https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN715919075&PHYSID=PHYS_0005&DMDID=DMDLOG_0001, Accessed 18/4/21

⁴⁶ General-Quartermaster von Stein was General of the Artillery, Quartermaster General until October 1914. Then Prussian Minister for War 1916-1918

Thou shalt not fret nervously about the prescribed lesson plans. If it is prescribed to discuss rural India, then make a war lesson out of it and lead your fifth graders on the path from Metz to Paris or the Masurian Lakes. Not barbarians but reasonable and patriotic men run the school administrations.

Thou shalt think about whether there is not truly a difference between man and woman and between the heroism of man and the heroism of woman. Therefore, if you are already the state education counsellor, you may ask yourself whether co-education is again a problem because we need masculine men and feminine women. Every group has its particular gift and task in the war.

Thou shalt be happy that the 'Century of the Child' is out because that was a totally foolish slogan. The leaders of our army are men between the ages of fifty and seventy, and the touching boys who marched to war as the youngest will from tough manly work return home as serious men and place their stamp on the time afterwards.⁴⁷

The 'Ten Commandments' which were published in almost all educational journals in Germany,⁴⁸ clearly show that those leading the course of German education reforms supported the Kaiser's call for *Burgfrieden*. They also demonstrate the freedom teachers now enjoyed, with commandment eight seemingly giving licence to ignore the curriculum in favour of the war – not with official agreement from the school administrators, but an expected 'blind-eye'. Other strongly emphasised war-time themes appear in the commandments, the seriousness of the war, the need for children to keep up with the progress of the war, duty, and a return to assigned roles for different genders and the differences between them. The commandments also express some conflict between teachers and the established restrictive curriculum, they can now 'be happy' at the opportunity to teach about battles as well as include war in other lessons with an expectation of physical re-enactments of the battles by the children during breaktimes.⁴⁹ Military manoeuvres were not just left to the students to organise, many schools held 'Defence Exercises' (*Wehrübungen*) in place of physical exercise sessions.⁵⁰

The new freedom to include war in the classroom is apparent in the collections of free composition assessments. These essays demonstrate the level to which the conflict had infiltrated children's lives. The subject of the essays, although all war-related, is broad. Duty is the subject of many, including analysing a picture of a mother and father saying farewell to a son heading to war,⁵¹ and asking the question 'For what are our soldiers dying for?' – the answer, bright enthusiasm (*Heller Begeisterung*), Kaiser and fatherland, and to humiliate England.⁵² England is the most frequently named enemy and cause of the war. The students focus Britain's desire to destroy German world trade as a reason for the declaration of war on Germany, then the need to humiliate England by defeat primarily through use of the submarine to counter British naval supremacy.⁵³ The German use of U-boats is often

⁴⁷ Theobald Zieger, "The Ten Commandments of a War Pedagogy", *Schwäbische Merkur* (10 September 1914), quoted and translated in Donson, *Youth in a Fatherless Land*, pp.243-4

⁴⁸ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.243

⁴⁹ Here Zieger mentions 'boys' but playing war was not exclusive to male children. In the diary of Piete Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*, 1982, the twelve-year-old girl describes a wargame in which she roleplayed an officer throughout the war.

⁵⁰ Scholz & Berdelmann, "The quotidianisation of the war", p.97

⁵¹ Reiniger, *Der Weltkrieg im persönlichen Ausdruck der Kinder*, Essays 1-3, "Des Kriegers Abschied", p.1

⁵² Reiniger, *Der Weltkrieg*, Essays 10 and 45, "Wofür Sterben unsere Soldaten?", p.5 and p.18

⁵³ Reiniger, *Der Weltkrieg*, Essays 10, 45, 58, 60, 109, p.5, p.18, p.22, and p.109

referred to as 'England's Sickness' (*Englands Krankheit*). The success of the enemy (again England's) blockade as early as 1915 is also evident in essays on *Kriegsbrot*, which although nutritious is best eaten stale as the freshly baked bread sits heavy in the stomach.⁵⁴

Another collection of essays and pictures demonstrates a more graphic awareness of the conditions on the frontline. *Die Kinder und der Krieg* (1915) contains pictures drawn by German children early in the war. The images are very graphic and violent, one example depicting a battle between German and French soldiers, the depictions of uniforms and flags accurate enough to be able to identify this, shows the French being defeated by the Germans. The young artist has drawn French dead scattered on the floor, one with blood pouring out of his head. The sky is full of explosions and aircraft, one which appears to be on fire after being hit by a machine gunner.⁵⁵ Another drawing in the collection depicts a unit of Germans ambushing a unit of lancers, the scene is one of dead cavalymen but none of the horses are wounded.⁵⁶ Such images, deprivations, continuing losses, and war-weariness quickly ended teachers' enthusiasm for war-related teaching, by mid-1916 some teachers were calling for a return to pre-war subjects and teaching methods.⁵⁷

The deteriorating conditions on the German home front and the continued conscription of men, including many teachers, into the military led to weakening of adult authority over children's education, reading, and leisure.⁵⁸ The lack of male authority figures, the continued availability of sensational war literature, and the jingoistic image painted about the violence of war would lead to a radicalisation of the German youth, which as Donson argues had a profound influence on post-war Germany which will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

British schooling also changed with the outbreak of war and reversed years of reforms in education and children's working hours. Schools and schoolchildren were expected to contribute to the war effort from the start, research of educational records in Hertfordshire shows a drastic fall in attendance figures at elementary schools after August 1914.⁵⁹ Many exemptions were granted to children across all classes from attending school to look after younger siblings due to absent parents,⁶⁰ also many children returned to work either part time or full time.⁶¹ Older children at elementary

⁵⁴ Reiniger, *Der Weltkrieg*, Essay 80, *Kriegsbrot*, p.29

⁵⁵ Eduard Golias, *Die Kinder und der Krieg: Ernstes und Heiteres aus der Welt der Kleinen* (Vienna, 1915), p.15

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p.11

⁵⁷ Scholz & Berdelmann, "The quotidianisation of the war", p.100

⁵⁸ Half of all teachers in Germany were conscripted, and ten percent of them were killed, see Scholz & Berdelmann, "The quotidianisation of the war", p.96

⁵⁹ See David Parker, *Hertfordshire Children in War and Peace 1914-1939* (Hertfordshire Publications, 2007), and David Parker, "Talent at Its Command": The First World War and the Vocational Aspect of Education, 1914-39, *History of Education Quarterly* (Autumn 1995), Vol.35, No.3, pp.237-259

⁶⁰ Parker, *Talent at Its Command*, p.244

⁶¹ Parker, *Hertfordshire Children*, pp.97-124

schools were expected to work in many industries and in commerce, David Parker argues that the return of child labour was more to do with self-interest than 'pious sentiments of patriotism'.⁶² The number of children working instead of attending school was 'observed with special regret' by the Board of Education, the figures the report referred to were just those in agricultural work as the numbers of children working in industry were unavailable.⁶³ The students that remained at school did not escape war work, schools made collections, made items of clothing, and planted crops.⁶⁴ Further disruption was caused by schools being commandeered to billet troops and to convert to hospitals.⁶⁵ By the end of 1914 the numbers of injured soldiers was becoming clear to children who not only had their childhood disrupted by them, but would also have the worry of the same happening to fathers and brothers.⁶⁶

The disruption of school life and the loss of teachers to the military or war production led to a concerning fall in the standards of education and discipline in and out of school.⁶⁷ Juvenile theft and violence increased, playing at war spilled over into actual aggression such as in Manchester after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. After the news of the sinking, a gang of children attacked a shop owned by a German shopkeeper, then others that had 'foreign-sounding' names.⁶⁸

Anti-German sentiment in Britain was not only realised outside of school, as in Germany lessons became war related. A series of 1915 essays are cited by David Parker who points out their 'rabid anti-German feelings' with titles such as "What I Would do With the Kaiser". The resulting short essays suggest everything from imprisonment on St. Helena, being forced to rebuild Belgium, pulling out his moustache, or feeding him only bread and dirty water.⁶⁹ The content of the essays demonstrates that British children, as with their German counterparts, were engaged with the adult conversations about the war, especially with the idea of repeating Napoleon's imprisonment on St. Helena and the atrocities in Belgium. However, many of the essays, as with the German examples, can be read as basic reciting of ideas and information, not all of the children would have understood the information in the same way – the need to punish the Kaiser, or England can be proposed without understanding the details of why they need punishing.

⁶² Parker, *Hertfordshire Children*, p.97

⁶³ Board of Education, *Board of Education Report, 1915-1916*, HMSO, Cd.8594 (1917), p.8

⁶⁴ Board of Education, *Board of Education Report, 1914-15*, HMSO, Cd.8274 (1916), p.11

⁶⁵ The BoE reported that 155,421 children had been displaced from their schools by military occupation in 1915, see Board of Education, *Board of Education Report, 1916-1917*, HMSO, Cd.9045 (1918), p.10

⁶⁶ Gertrude Freeman, "Recollections of My Childhood and Later Days" (Unpublished biography), p.24

⁶⁷ Parker, "Talent at Its Command", p.247

⁶⁸ Stephen Humphries, *Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working-Class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939* (Wiley, 1981), pp.199-200

⁶⁹ Parker, *Hertfordshire Children*, pp.81-2

Militarism, in a form already present in public schools, crept into some elementary schools with pupils performing drill and military-style exercises.⁷⁰ Enthusiasm for such exercises no doubt influenced by the proximity of soldiers in and around the schools. One area of schooling that appears to have retained higher levels of discipline are Sunday schools. Here, argues Caitriona McCartney, the military retained close connections through letters from past pupils now fighting in the war, students responded to these letters and sent parcels to soldiers who had attended their institutions.⁷¹ As McCartney points out, this continued communication from the front with religious groups represents a continuation of the 'muscular-Christian' militarism promoted in the nineteenth century.

Christian militarism was not only present in education, the recently founded Boy Scouts were also expected, and were enthusiastic, about active involvement. At the outbreak of war Baden-Powell, who regarded the organisation as a military one,⁷² offered the assistance of the Scout Movement for the war effort.⁷³ Up until November 1914 many Boy Scouts eagerly worked full time in a variety of roles



5.5 'The Despatch-Just in Time' by A. Chevallier Tayler, in Elizabeth O'Neill, *The War 1914, A History and Explanation for Boys and Girls* (London, 1914), p.17

⁷⁰ Parker, *Hertfordshire Children*, p.83

⁷¹ Caitriona McCartney, „British Sunday Schools and the First World War“, *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte*, Vol.31, No.1, Glaube und der Erste Weltkrieg (2018), pp.107-17, p.113

⁷² Baden-Powell argued that the Scouts uniform should offer the same legal protections as the uniform of military or police personnel and for them not be regarded as spies in the case of capture by the enemy, see Rosie Kennedy, *The Children's War, Britain 1914-1918* (London, 2014), p.105

⁷³ <https://heritage.scouts.org.uk/exhibitions/scouting-in-the-first-world-war/scouting-on-the-home-front-1914-1918/> (accessed 25th April 2021)

from cleaning and painting to carrying messages and money.⁷⁴ The children had to return to schooling on 5th November 1914 but the Scouts would continue to provide the military with manpower throughout the war, carrying messages, assisting with medical care, fundraising, coastal watch duties, and keeping an eye out for the ever-elusive German spies.⁷⁵ The role of the Scouts was lauded by many, the *Empire Annual for Boys* contained many stories and articles about the Boy Scouts at war,⁷⁶ and *The War 1914* pictured Boy Scouts acting as despatch runners. The Boy Scouts role in actively supporting the military to defend Britain was not shared with other youth organisations such as the Boys' Brigade, and the Girl Guides. Both were expected to fund raise, collect, deliver messages and in the case of the Girl Guides, knit and sew to support the war effort – although those with first aid training could help at hospitals.

Children were not expected to take on a military role in Germany; although the German Boy Scout movement (*Pfadfinder*) were heavily militarised in the pre-war period, as were many other German youth organisations for boys and girls, they do not appear to have been utilised in the same way as their British counterparts. Their role limited to fundraising and collections, not unlike the peacetime duties. The exclusion of German youth groups in directly assisting the military may be explained by the Prussia military model that expected civilians to play no part in warfare.⁷⁷

Children's Literature: Justification and Explanation of War

British children's literature in the years before the First World War followed the same themes as discussed previously.⁷⁸ *Boy's Own* demonstrates little interest in Germany outside the naval rivalry which was the focus of the previous chapter and concerns itself with its regular subjects;⁷⁹ as do most of the magazines and annuals dedicated to the Christian teenage middle-class readers such as *The Empire Annual for Boys* which continues to promote cricket and publish tales of 'escapes' and 'close

⁷⁴ Parker, *Hertfordshire Children*, p.102

⁷⁵ <https://heritage.scouts.org.uk/exhibitions/scouting-in-the-first-world-war/scouting-on-the-home-front-1914-1918/> (accessed 25th April 2021)

⁷⁶ The *Empire Annual for Boys* had contained articles on the expected role of the Scouts in war from 1912, the role described in 'On Manoeuvres' in the 1912 edition was almost the actual role in 1914, except that Britain had not been invaded and they were not used as reconnaissance assets, see *Empire Annual for Boys 1912*, pp.9-20

⁷⁷ Bastian Matteo Scianna, "A predisposition to brutality? German practices against civilians and francs-tireurs during the Franco-Prussian war 1870–1871 and their relevance for the German 'military Sonderweg' debate", *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol.30 (4-5) (July 2019), pp.968-93, pp.977-8

⁷⁸ As with previous chapters, much of the literature was written by, for, and read by middle-class children, and the heroes and heroines were often relatable individuals. Most of the literature referred to in this section is of that type. The cheaper 'penny-dreadful' type will be discussed later.

⁷⁹ Novels and short stories of the type discussed in Chapter Three continued into 1914. Percy F. Westerman, *The Sea-Girl Fortress* and *Dreadnought of the Air* were both published in 1914 but written before the war – See David Budgen, *British Children's Literature and the First World War: Representations since 1914* (Bloomsbury, 2018), p.17.

encounters' with natives throughout the empire, little is mentioned of Europe.⁸⁰ However, not all publications followed their example. *The Half-Penny Marvel*, *Union Jack*, and *Comic Cuts* the children's papers founded by Alfred Harmsworth,⁸¹ followed the same Germanophobic, antagonistic, jingo-laden editorial style as Harmsworth's other publications – *The Times*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Mirror*, which gave him access to a broad readership across British society. In 1906 Harmsworth had commissioned and published William Le Queux, *The Invasion of 1910* and serialised it in the *Daily Mail* causing mass concern amongst the readers. The theme of defending Britain was repeated in Harmsworth's children's magazines, an example is the *Boys' Friend* article on 'The Peril to Come!' about 'A Fleet of Foreign Zeppelin Airships' in the skies above London.⁸² It is said of Harmsworth that 'Next to the Kaiser, Lord Northcliffe has done more than any living man to bring about the war',⁸³ he later was appointed to lead the British government's war-time propaganda. British boys by 1914 had been well prepared for a conflict with Germany,⁸⁴ although the war, when it did come, was not the one that had been predicted or so well described.

The outbreak of war led to a reorientation of the focus of *Boy's Own Magazine* and other British children's magazines to Europe – but not entirely. The tales of colonial adventure, past and present continued, as did the features on sport, school life and careers advice, but now with a war-themed twist. In one, *The Boy's Own Annual, 1914-1915* tackles the problematical term 'imperialism', a word the author of the article claimed would 'stump' the reader's 'wise fathers' if they questioned them on it. The author continues to explain that imperialism in the context of Britain's historical enemies, is a product of misguided 'conquerors such as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Napoleon I' – unlike the benevolent form of imperialism promoted by the British Empire. The author of the piece then adds that it 'seems almost incredible' that such misguided ideals are still pursued 'in a Christian land [Germany]', and then praises Italy for not choosing to fight Britain.⁸⁵ Even columns about bicycle maintenance looked to the war, one article compares the bicycle troops of different nations identifying those with a national cycling tradition as being particularly effective.⁸⁶

The magazines aimed to instruct on the reasons for the war, military matters, and the history of Germany. *The Boy's Own Annual 1914-1915* clarifies what it believes is the German's true war aim –

⁸⁰ *Empire Annual for Boys*, collection of 1910–1914

⁸¹ *Comic Cuts* was described by Harmsworth's school friend H.G. Wells as 'enormously profitable, nasty, [and] taste-destroying', see Wells. H.G., *Experiment in Autobiography*, Vol.1 (London, 1934), p.328

⁸² *Boys' Friend* (12 June 1909)

⁸³ Adrian Bingham, Monitoring the popular press: an historical perspective, *History & Policy* (May 2005)

⁸⁴ Budgen, *British Children's Literature*, p.62

⁸⁵ Thinking Imperially, *The Boy's Own Annual, 1914-1915* (London, 1915), p.285

⁸⁶ For example, see Raymond Raife, Cycling for the Month: Note and Novelties for the "B.O.P." Wheelman, in *The Boy's Own Annual, 1914-1915* (London, 1915), pp.245-6.

the destruction of England. In a multi-part tale 'For England and the Right!', Roddy Markham, an ex-Brackenhurst School boy, now in the British Army fighting in Belgium encounters Herr Karl Dorbacher, his old master, now a German Uhlan officer. Markham is captured and learns the truth that Dorbacher was a German spy working on secret weapons while at the school, the ex-master despises England and through a series of conversations of the German plans - in his distinctive German accent:

'I hate you! How I hate you! You are all hateful in your insolence. We have stood it for many years, and have kept our tongues still, and hands still, but we have comforted ourselves with the knowledge that the day of reckoning would come. And the 'Day' has come. Have we not drunk to it over and over again? – 'the Day' The Day! It is you English that we want to conquer and humiliate... I tell you, and as we have the greatest army, finest soldiers and the biggest guns, we cannot but win!'⁸⁷

Dorbacher then reveals he was working on a new more powerful torpedo explosive while in England, a 'deciding factor' against the Royal Navy.⁸⁸ The young readers of *The Boy's Own Magazine* were left with no doubt about the intentions and character of their German enemy, Dorbacher's hate-filled words spoken on behalf of all Germans; as Rosie Kennedy points out this contrast of cruel German and decent British characters was common throughout British literature, as is the portrayal of the British as competent professional, moral and not sneaky as German soldiers were often cast - or spies in the case of German civilians.⁸⁹

An article about collecting stamps and coins is typically infiltrated by war, the author anticipating an influx of German items as 'war souvenirs' in the coming months and welcomed the issue of new stamps for military use such as 'I.E.F.' marked stamps for use by the Indian forces now on the Western Front.⁹⁰ In an earlier piece by the same name special reference is made to 'medieval coins' issued at the time of the Normans which emphasised the historic connect between English and their French allies.⁹¹ The author, Fred W. Burgess, also looks forwards to a future in which the ancient coins celebrating Rome's victory over the 'tribes of Germania' can be emulated by the British with the legend 'Germania Capta'.⁹²

Other articles in the magazine instructed the reader on military developments. A feature called 'War Notes and Pictures' highlighted distinctive features of German aircraft and instructed how to spot a submarines periscope wake.⁹³ News on the technological advances in warfare were continued with an article on 'The Aeroplane in War', which introduced the use of aircraft for observation and the

⁸⁷ "For England and the Right! Part VIII", in *The Boy's Own Annual, 1914-1915* (London, 1915), p.486

⁸⁸ *Ibid*

⁸⁹ Kennedy, *The Children's War*, pp.74-5

⁹⁰ Fred W. Burgess, 'The Boy's Own Hobbies Page, Photography, Stamps, Coins, Medals, etc.', *Boy's Own Annual 1914-1915* (London, 1915), p.509

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p.253

⁹² *Ibid*, p.510

⁹³ *Ibid*, p.504

dropping of bombs and darts, which it reported the British were far more effective at than the German Zeppelins. Through reading articles such as these the young readers were informed about the wider conflict outside of the European theatre and advances in warfare on land, sea, and in the air. German as well as British technological advances were both discussed, although there is an implication that the British capabilities were naturally greater. Another article describes trench warfare, comparing the designs of British versus German examples and warning of the 'slow' form of 'underground warfare'. The hardships are also described – shifts of twenty-four hours with only tea to keep them warm.⁹⁴

The literature which is targeted at teenagers introduces the background to the conflict, the history of both allies, and enemy frequently - along with the moral right of Britain to defend itself, empire, and its allies against German aggression and 'hate'. One series of publications, *The War 1914, A History and an Explanation for Boys and Girls* (1914), delivers the information in a surprisingly matter of fact fashion. The author explains the alliance system by an analogy with 'friends' and explains that 'for some years now Germany and Austria have been a little unfriendly'.⁹⁵ The 1914 edition also introduces the use of Indian troops in Europe:

England has a fine army of native soldiers in India, and 70,000 of these were actually brought over from India early in the war, and joined the British force in France to do their part to defend the British Empire. The Indian Princes and Indian people were so eager to give money and lend men to Great Britain, and as in India Britain are ruling over millions of men of quite another colour and race, and the fact that they love Great Britain so much, shows how successful the British government has been.⁹⁶

The author then continues to explain that an 'arrogant' Germany does not want to let Britain have an empire and was trying to encourage the Indians to rebel.⁹⁷ The colonial aspect to the war is continued in the 1914-1915 edition of *The War*, in which an entire chapter is dedicated to the history of German colonialism and its quest for a 'place in the sun' - from which Germans are being expelled.⁹⁸

O'Neill continues with levelheadedness, although with the expected bias, to narrate the events of the war in 1916, here the tone has changed. *The War 1916* covered the subject of 'How the war has changed England' which included the Irish rebellion,⁹⁹ and the loss of working-class 'privilege' when the trade unions agreed to suspend their rules.¹⁰⁰ Chapter XI, 'The wear and tear of war' highlighted the suffering and increased infant mortality in Germany caused by the blockade.¹⁰¹ The latter chapter

⁹⁴ T.W. Wilkinson, "In the Trenches: How the Modern Soldier "goes to earth" when he fights, and how he lives and fights underground", *Boy's Own Annual 1914-1915* (London, 1915), pp.261-3

⁹⁵ Elizabeth O'Neill, *The War 1914, A History and Explanation for Boys and Girls* (London, 1914), p.3

⁹⁶ *Ibid* p.18

⁹⁷ *Ibid*

⁹⁸ Elizabeth O'Neill, *The War 1914-1915, A History and Explanation for Boys and Girls* (London, 1915), Ch.VI

⁹⁹ Elizabeth O'Neill, *The War 1916, A History and Explanation for Boys and Girls* (London, 1916), Ch.X

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p.84

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.93

placed the hardships seen in Germany alongside those of England where 'everyone is feeling the shortage of everyday comforts'.¹⁰²

Literature intended for a young British female readership lagged in its response to the declaration of war and continued with pre-war themes for the first few months,¹⁰³ some such as the *Empire Annual for Girls* hardly mentioned the conflict well into 1915.¹⁰⁴ When they did, the literature followed a similar course to that for the consumption of boys in the way it directed its readers into appropriate war-work. For the boys it was the military, or for those too young for service it advised on how, as members of youth organisations, they could protect the country against enemy spies. Girls were encouraged into feminine ways to contribute to the war effort, dedicating their spare time to making items, such as 'knitted chest protectors' needed by the soldiers on the front lines.¹⁰⁵ One of the publications which contained more war-time content, the *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915*, published an article titled 'Women and the war. Help they can render; follies they can avoid!' in which the author, gave advice to the readers on facing the outbreak of war.

'Perhaps the ordinary woman does not quite understand how men view the war... But the consciously loyal woman, to whom patriotism is, next to her faith, her deepest sense, has sometimes a curious feeling of impotence in a great national crisis 'How can I help she asks...'¹⁰⁶

The author adds that the most useful way in which women could help was to 'send them [the men] comforts and pictures to help them harry your foes'.¹⁰⁷ Further articles in the 1914-1915 annual tackle shortages of goods such as toys and blankets following 'the disappearance of cheap rubbish made in Germany...',¹⁰⁸ the difficulty of ordering meat,¹⁰⁹ 'Why Britain is Predominant in Europe',¹¹⁰ and a review of girl's wartime novels in which the popular type of 'new hero' is a young man who after wasting away his youth is redeemed by the experience of war.¹¹¹

The emphasis on feminine ways to help the war effort is in stark contrast to the Christian hyper-masculinity expected of the young men of Britain (and Germany). 'Knitting and sewing for soldiers'

¹⁰² O'Neill, *The War 1916*, p.94

¹⁰³ Budgen, *British Children's Literature*, p.62

¹⁰⁴ The contents pages of the *Empire Annual for Girls* demonstrate a continuity of themes from the pre-war period into 1915. Many articles dedicated to home keeping, descriptions of colonial life from a British child's point of view, and colonial fiction which generally followed the theme of European women escaping from 'savages'.

¹⁰⁵ Kristine Moruzi, "Feminine Bravery: The Girl's Realm (1898-1915) and the Second Boer War", *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, Vol.34, No.3 (Fall 2009), pp.241-254, p.252.

¹⁰⁶ Mary Frances Billington, "Women and the war. Help they can render; follies they can avoid", *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915* (London, 1915), pp.34-6, p.34

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁸ "The passing of a Harmful phase", *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915*, p.117

¹⁰⁹ "Studies in House Keeping", *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915*, p.240

¹¹⁰ Roland G. Usher, "Why Britain is Predominant in Europe", *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915*, pp.277-85

¹¹¹ "Proportions and Perspectives", *Girls Own Annual 1914-1915*, p.463

was a popular theme in many girls' magazines and books, not only in Britain, German girls were also encouraged to make items for the men fighting at the fronts.¹¹² Other traditionally feminine activities were also promoted to both British and German girls, they were encouraged to emulate the heroines in tales who economised at home and practiced motherhood.¹¹³

Magazines and authors who were regarded as more progressive, such as the *Girl's Realm*, guided young women into the nursing profession – as Kristine Moruzi points out, still a very modern idea at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹¹⁴ British girls could also read about role models, notably only those of middle-class origin, who had crossed the traditional gender roles and took part in adventures on the sea and in the air.¹¹⁵ The latter is experienced by 'Pickles' a daring Red Cross nurse.¹¹⁶ Generally, the literature supports the war in the same way as boys' literature does, along with the prevailing negative view of Germans.

However, a more sympathetic portrayal of Germans and Germany can be found in literature intended for young female readers such as Mary Littlefair's, *An English Girl's Adventures in Hostile Germany*, 1915. The tale, based on the author's experiences of being trapped in Germany after the start of hostilities describes a background hostility to the English visitors, but a disbelief amongst the German people they encounter at the situation:

"Aeh, it is terrible," said a shopwoman [sic] to the two of the English ladies one day. "We never wanted this war, and I am sure you did not either. You and I are not enemies; it is ridiculous. Let us shake hands to show we are friends – yes!"¹¹⁷

A review for the novel in *The Spectator* welcomes the 'refreshing' way the book does not have 'tales to tell of German brutality', but of 'German kindness and consideration'¹¹⁸ - an attitude to the English young very different from that of Herr Dorbacher. Littlefair's story describes a Germany in which the anti-English rhetoric is applied to the enemy state and not the people, especially women and children who are treated well and helped. In the end the men of military age in the 'English colony' in Nauheim are interred but everyone else is allowed to travel back to England before Christmas 1914. The author recites some German observations on the war – England forcing France to fight, and how paranoid Britain was about German spies.¹¹⁹ An interesting observation in the story is that English newspapers

¹¹² Jennifer Redmann, "Doing Her Bit: German and Anglo-American Girls' Literature of the First World War", *Girlhood Studies*, 4(1) (Summer 2011), pp.10-29, p.18.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, pp.19-20

¹¹⁴ Moruzi, "Feminine Bravery", p.252

¹¹⁵ Redmann, "Doing Her Bit", pp.24-5

¹¹⁶ See, Redmann, "Doing Her Bit", who focuses on this character.

¹¹⁷ Mary Littlefair, *An English Girl's Adventurers in Hostile Germany*, (London, 1915), p.42

¹¹⁸ 'An English Girl's Adventures in Hostile Germany. by Mary Littlefair (Book Review)', *The Spectator* (6th November 1915), pp.630-631, ProQuest. Web, Accessed, 26/2/2021

¹¹⁹ Littlefair, *An English Girl's Adventurers*, p.78

were still obtainable in Germany, the men and women detained in Germany were able to read the *Express, Daily News, and Daily Mail*.¹²⁰

Even though the content had been ‘infiltrated’ by the war the dominant themes of it remained consistent with those of the pre-war period, Christian duty to empire, British national superiority in history, race, religion, skill, and technology. The literature discussed so far was intended for a teenage audience and was written and contained themes considered appropriate for the reader who would soon become a young adult. Literature intended for younger readers was also subject to the same infiltration by the Great War, including nursery rhymes and books instructing the ABCs. The evil character of the Germans was emphasised, as was the right for vengeance. This is vividly communicated in a wartime version of ‘The House that Jack Built’:

This is the House that Jack built
This is the bomb
That fell on the house that Jack built.
This is the Hun
That dropped the bomb
That fell on the house that Jack built.
This is the gun
That killed the Hun,
That dropped the bomb,
That fell on the house that Jack built
This is the man in Navy-blue,
That fired the gun,
That killed the Hun,
That dropped the bomb,
That fell on the house that Jack built...¹²¹

Young Britons were also taught the reasons for the outbreak of war, weapons, allies, and enemies, often through books teaching the ‘ABC’, picture books, and colouring books.¹²² Eberhard Demm rightly points out that books for the younger children would have been chosen and purchased by the parents, who would have then read the book aloud and been exposed to its message.¹²³ Similarly to the literature for teenagers not all the content was themed to the current war, literature which contained the themes discussed in previous chapters were still widely available and being published - as were the cheap, popular, less-moralising reading materials.¹²⁴ It is important to point out that although the war had ‘infiltrated’ the themes of younger children’s books, it did not dominate it throughout the war.

¹²⁰ Littlefair, *An English Girl’s Adventurers*, p.97

¹²¹ Nina MacDonald, *War-Time Nursery Rhymes*, Quoted in R. Kennedy, *Children’s War*, p.79

¹²² For examples of these see Kennedy, *Children’s War*, pp.77-80.

¹²³ Eberhard Demm, „Kinder und Propaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg: Eine transnational Perspektive“, in Alexander Denzler, Stefan Grüner, and Markus Raasch, *Kinder und Krieg* (De Gruyter, 2016), p.117

¹²⁴ For example, Cecil H. Crofts, *The ABC of the Union Jack* (London, 1915)

German children were also recipients of similar material to that of their British counterparts.¹²⁵ Almost all the magazines published in 1915 were war-themed, and many books and novels also followed their example. The agreements around *Burgfrieden*, as Andrew Donson argues led to ‘The nationalism and militarism in youth literature [resonating] in a brasher key’ and isolating many middle-class educators and authors.¹²⁶ Further, editors who had previously avoided the ‘taboo’ overtly nationalist and political subjects now embraced them for ‘patriotic reasons’.¹²⁷ As in Britain, much of the material offered moral and religious justification for the conflict, patriotic messages and tales of heroism and sacrifice, but the German message replaced the heroism with collective duty. However, as will become clear in the artefacts discussed in the following section the reoccurring, moralising themes of duty and sacrifice should not be regarded as replacing the cruder jingoism, nationalism, and violence. Racial hatred and stereotypes toward European and colonial enemy populations were increased as were the levels of violence described and pictured – although, the image was still ‘distorted’ as censorship and taste blurred the ‘horrors too hard to swallow’.¹²⁸

The editors and writers of *Der gute Kamerad* called their reader’s attention to the war, and attempted to rouse their patriotism and enthusiasm with the following verse:

Germany’s Youth
 Germany’s pride and Germany’s joy.
 German boys, Greetings!
 The Most beautiful ‘posture’ in our eyes,
 That age sweetens us!
 When we see you blooming like that
 Powerful with fresh courage.
 We would like to trust one day,
 You with the Fatherlands good.

Ours is to receive,
 What our father once did,
 To shape Germany’s future
 Lays in our youth’s vigor
 Exercise your hand, exercise your senses,
 Expose the body to the cleaner air
 All this will be the benefit to you
 When the Fatherland calls you!

Noble shoots that sprouted
 Our native womb.
 Think, the blood that once flowed
 Made us free and great.
 Then we can go

¹²⁵ As for the British material and, much of the literature was written by, for, and read by middle-class families, and the heroes and heroines were often relatable individuals. Most of the literature referred to in this section is of that type. The cheaper ‘penny-dreadful’ type will be discussed later.

¹²⁶ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.92

¹²⁷ From a comment from the editor of *Der gute Kamerad*, quoted in, Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.93.

¹²⁸ Donson, *Youth in the Fatherless Land*, p.91

When the cloth is tired and old
When the travellers will arise
Once in a German forest of oak.¹²⁹

The 1914 *Gute Kamerad* annual included maps of the frontlines and German advances,¹³⁰ along with a report of the first French flag to be captured.¹³¹ The editors also made sure the readers were clear about French and Belgian atrocities against German soldiers with reports and images of Belgian ‘civilian’ attacks on German trains and French partisan fighters.¹³² The British use of aircraft to spot for artillery fire is also regarded as underhand – an unfair advantage breaking the rules of war.¹³³ These perceived infringements of the rules of war as the German army understood them, were soon to be used as justifications for the murders and other atrocities committed by German soldiers behind the trench line and laid the groundwork for the narrative for the need for revenge against the ‘traitorous’ British.

The British and French use of soldiery from their respective empires on European soil was also seen as evidence of moral inferiority in war.¹³⁴ France recruited around half a million men from its colonies and many served in Europe,¹³⁵ whereas Britain continued to refuse to allow black Africans to fight white Europeans – a decision highlighted in the first volume of *The Times History of the War* (1914) which stated ‘The instinct which made us such sticklers for propriety in all our dealings made us more reluctant than other nations would feel to employ coloured troops against a white enemy’.¹³⁶ The British did make use of troops from India in Europe which *The Gute Kamerad* reported,¹³⁷ along with comments and illustrations of the French employing Senegalese and Algerian troops against German soldiers.¹³⁸

Other publications reminded readers about the history of defending the fatherland. *Freiheit und Vaterland!* (1915) tells the story of the fight back against French invasion almost a century earlier by the Prussian army and its allies.¹³⁹ The history is written to emphasise the German, rather than

¹²⁹ „Un Deutschlands Jugend“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29 (Stuttgart, 1914), p.3

¹³⁰ *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29 (Stuttgart, 1914), pp.30-1

¹³¹ *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29 p.41

¹³² See: *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29, p.167, p.169, & p.197

¹³³ „Ein Kampf in der Luft“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29 (Stuttgart, 1914), p.79

¹³⁴ For discussions around the use of non-European troops in Europe during the First World War see: Christian Koller, *Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt: Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial und Militärpolitik 1914–1930*, (De Gruyter, 2001); and Dick van Galen Last & Ralf Futselaar, *Black Shame: African Soldiers in Europe 1914-1922*, Trans. Marjolijn de Jager, (Bloomsbury, 2015).

¹³⁵ Sanatanu Das, *Race, Empire, and First World War Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p.4

¹³⁶ *The Times History of the War*, Vol.1 (London, 1914), p.155

¹³⁷ *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29, p.165

¹³⁸ *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29, p.47

¹³⁹ Franz Drexler, *Freiheit und Vaterland!* (Regensburg, 1915)

Prussian, nationality of the army no doubt to demonstrate parallels with the current situation – this use of historical ‘defence of the fatherland’ would be seen again in the propaganda of the Third Reich.



5.6 Illustration of French-Algerian troops in Belgium, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.29 (Stuttgart, 1914), pp.152-3

Other German achievements and events were also the theme of books away from that of the *Weltkrieg*; European explorers would continue to be celebrated,¹⁴⁰ and tales of colonial adventures and conflict were still popular subjects - as were images of brutality against the native populations of German territories.¹⁴¹ Current events in the colonies were not neglected either, *Unter Kriegswettern in Ostafrika* (1917) describes the events and combatants, both colonial and European in German East Africa.¹⁴² Although the author does acknowledge the contribution of the black-African troops she still does so in disparaging terms, describing them as ‘skilled and reliable native warriors’, but only after observing that ‘even the little black guys play soldier all day’.¹⁴³

The war ‘infiltrated’ German children’s lives just as it had in Britain, the war featured not only in the war-books telling stories of the conflict and adventures. The front cover of the 1916 *Deutscher*

¹⁴⁰ For example: Sven Hedin, *Von Pol zu Pol* (Leipzig, 1915)

¹⁴¹ For example: Ludwig Föhse, *König Kitafu* (Leipzig, 1915)

¹⁴² Agnes von Lewinski, *Unter Kriegswettern in Ostafrika* (Leipzig, 1917),

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p.2, quoted on, <https://staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/die-staatsbibliothek/abteilungen/kinder-und-jugendbuecher/sammlungen/online-ausstellungen/das-kinderbuch-erklart-den-krieg/galerie/kinder-und-jugendbuecher-ueber-den-weltkrieg-in-der-zeit-von-1914-bis-1918/> (accessed 13th March 2021)

Tierschutz-Kalender pictures a cavalryman tending his horse,¹⁴⁴ the war-theme continues with a passage on rescue dogs on the front line.¹⁴⁵ The next year's edition reflects the conditions on Germany's home front, the cover pictures a dog sat obediently with a child next to a crying woman who is carrying a few possessions and sitting on the ruined remains of a house.¹⁴⁶

Books also addressed the absence and loss of fathers in the war, Agnes Sapper, *Ohne is Vater*, Stuttgart, 1915, and Rudolf Presber, *Vater ist im Kriege: Ein Bilderbuch für Kinder*, Berlin, 1915, try to explain the losses and heroic sacrifice of the family. Although the books do contain pictures, each is accompanied by text which could be read aloud to the child. However, the text would seem more appropriate as reassurance to the adult, or older child, of the moral need for the father's sacrifice and heroic status:

His heart was young, and his animal was proud,
And victory and glory, that was his goal.
He was a brave officer,
Who gladly fell for his king!¹⁴⁷

The need for such literature highlights the 'disappearance of men' from the German home front,¹⁴⁸ and the high attrition rate required that older men be conscripted into the military. Already by 1915 up to six million men with families were fighting in the army leaving millions of children without fathers for the duration of the war, and for many it was forever.¹⁴⁹ The loss of not only fathers, but both parents were another theme of books for German girls, *Nesthäkchen und der Weltkrieg* tackled the subject of war orphans when the heroine discovers a small boy that needs care.¹⁵⁰ This storyline is repeated by other authors and intended to demonstrate the importance of motherhood and sacrifice of independence to it.¹⁵¹

German literature written for girl's otherwise followed the example of the British with encouraging 'feminine' ways of contributing to the war effort – practicing motherhood, sewing, knitting, and learning to economise at home. However, the heroines in German stories did not have the freedom of many of their British equivalents to blur traditional gender roles and their adventures at the front

¹⁴⁴ *Deutscher Tierschutz-Kalender* (Würzburg, 1916), front cover

¹⁴⁵ *Deutscher Tierschutz-Kalender* (1916), p.23

¹⁴⁶ *Deutscher Tierschutz-Kalender* (Würzburg, 1917), front cover

¹⁴⁷ Rudolf Presber, *Vater ist im Kriege: Ein Bilderbuch für Kinder* (Berlin, 1915)

¹⁴⁸ See Elizabeth Domansky, "Militarisation and Reproduction in World War I Germany", in Geoff Eley (Ed.), *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870-1930* (University of Michigan Press, 1996), p.138.

¹⁴⁹ Kara L. Ritzheimer, "Forging a Patriotic Youth: Penny Dreadfuls and Military Censorship in World War I Germany", in Mischa Honeck & James Marten (eds), *War and Childhood in the Era of the Two World Wars* (Cambridge, 2019), p.41.

¹⁵⁰ Else Ury, *Nesthäkchen und der Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1917)

¹⁵¹ Redmann, "Doing Her Bit", pp.19-21

are mostly restricted to nursing duties.¹⁵² However, this did not stop young German girls from blurring them, Piete Kuhr wrote in her diary descriptions of a fantasy game where she role-played an army officer.¹⁵³

Younger children in Germany were an important audience for the authors and publishers, even more so than in Britain. Extensive use of caricatures of the enemy were present in the picture and colouring books of both countries,¹⁵⁴ as was the imagery of children dressed as little soldiers, but the German publications depicted friend, foe, and children in a more comical fashion. Picture books such as *Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein!* (1915),¹⁵⁵ *Die Geschichte von General Hindenburg* (1915),¹⁵⁶ and *Ran an den Feind!* (1915),¹⁵⁷ all depicted young boys, and occasionally girls dressed in military uniforms and in wartime scenarios. Conflict is often portrayed as playful brawls, battles against toy soldiers or as a



5.7, *Ran an den Feind!* (1915)

¹⁵² Redmann, "Doing Her Bit", p.25

¹⁵³ Piete Kuhr, *Then We'll Meet Again: Young Girl's Diary of the First World War*, Trans. Walter G. Wright (Walter Wright, 1988). The game almost lasted the entire war, only ending when Piete became disillusioned and killed off the character.

¹⁵⁴ Demm, „Kinder und Propaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg“, p.116

¹⁵⁵ Arpad Schmidhammer, *Lieb Vaterland, magst ruhig sein!* (Mainz, 1915)

¹⁵⁶ Arpad Schmidhammer, *Die Geschichte von General Hindenburg* (Mainz, 1915)

¹⁵⁷ *Ran an den Feind!* (1915)

fantasy, as in Herbert Rikli, *Hurra! Ein Kriegs-Bilderbuch*, Stuttgart, 1915, where the hero 'Little Willi' in a *Feldgrau* uniform defeats Russians, French and British – even German children playing at war can defeat the enemy. Although Willi does not do so alone, in line with the collective duty over heroism message he shares victory and injury with his canine companion. Willi believes his adventures are real until he wakes, then with disappointment realises they were just a dream - he must wait until he can do his duty.

The quality of literature was a concern in both Britain and Germany. In Britain, the 'Penny Dreadfuls' had been replaced by Alfred Harmsworth's crusade against them, but he had only replaced them with his vision of cheap literature which continued to be extremely popular. In Germany *Kriegsschundliteratur* would supply young Germans with the sensational, individualist heroics they craved. American-style fiction had become increasingly popular in the decade before the outbreak of war and German publishers had obtained the rights to many, as well as creating local equivalents of the heroes and protagonists.¹⁵⁸ It would be the latter that quickly transferred their talents to the war effort in heroic frontline adventures.¹⁵⁹ German educators were concerned that the empire's children were being morally corrupted by the material which encouraged them to behave in a way which was counter to the image the army and the propagandists wanted to portray – 'selflessness, loyalty, and patriotism'.¹⁶⁰ A teacher from Berlin, Paul Samuleit, was at the forefront of the calls for more censorship over the 'trash literature', through a lecture which was subsequently published in 1916 he highlighted the content of the widespread, cheap, and popular material.¹⁶¹ The material not only appealed to boys with its descriptions of heroic, blood-soaked battlefields such as in the passage below:

German youth, can you remain unaffected by the description of the terrible battles that your people are fighting for the freedom of the fatherland? If you want to experience them, if you want to find out about their courage to die, their incomparable loyalty and bravery, then follow us through a series of exciting stories that will put you right in the middle of enemy territory, into the turmoil of glorious battles. 'With Flying Flags' They take you to the blood-soaked battlefields of France, to Russia's steppes and deserts and to the roaring ocean where our navy, the 'good blue 'boys' of the treacherous Englishmen, await.¹⁶²

The material also appealed to girls who not only enjoyed the sensational descriptions and images of war, but also the romantic tales such as the *Krieg und Liebe* series that Samuleit considered

¹⁵⁸ Ritzheimer, „Forging a Patriotic Youth“, p.45

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p.37

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.35

¹⁶¹ Paul Samuleit, *Kriegsschundliteratur: Vortrag, gehalten in der öffentlichen Versammlung der Zentralstelle zur Bekämpfung der Schundliteratur zu Berlin am 25. März 1916* (Berlin, 1916)

¹⁶² Quote from an unnamed publication in Samuleit, p.14

pornographic which was found in the possession of many young women in schools, on public transport, and in workplaces.¹⁶³

Children's literature played an important role in both Britain and Germany in informing children about the relationship between the two antagonists. The British literature continued the same jingoistic rhetoric as previously and through the publications of Alfred Harmsworth the attention was kept on the threat of the German Empire even after the era of Anglo-German naval competition had waned. Once the conflict that Harmsworth's publications predicted did break out, although as discussed not in the form they described, both Britain and Germany started censoring and exerting some control over what was published. In Britain, the ban on dissent and anti-war messages did not lead to much change as the literature was already dominantly supportive. However, in Germany it led to restrictions, often self-imposed, on socialist and liberal publications as well as a clamp down on trash literature which undermined the moral and religious aspects to the war. German children's literature was subject to control by civilian and military authorities who restricted and dictated what could be published, the content was to support the idea of national sacrifice for the greater good and promote teamwork and duty over heroics and glory.

As the conflict developed into a war of attrition with the mounting numbers of casualties and conscription of the population the literature reflected this, the stories and articles addressed the hardships of war – absent fathers and brothers, the dead and injured, orphans, and even those who could not fight. There is no evidence that this was in anyway guided by government or educational policy and appears to be a response to the situation by the editors and authors. Despite the continuing sacrifice and hardships, most of the readers accessed material that supported the war, its justifications, and the need for continued sacrifice up until the end of 1916. As the war entered its final years the mood changes, especially in Germany where the self-imposed restriction on anti-war material was broken. The next chapter will discuss these changes in attitude to the war.

Education and children's literature supplied the background and context to children which they could use in their games, using toys from before the war and those that the toy makers responded to the conflict with.

¹⁶³ For *Krieg und Liebe*, see Samuleit, p.12, for his opinion of the content read by young women see, p.32.

Images of War Time Military Life in Toys and Play

Children's toys and play also reflected the changes seen in education and literature. The military toys and games played with before the war were militaristic but usually with historic, or nationalist references, after August 1914 the toys and games would clearly depict the enemy and the contemporary events. The initial examples are quickly produced and crude, in Germany existing products were militarised such as the J.W. Spear & Söhne toy post office which was rebranded as 'The Little Forces' Post Office', and the card game 'Happy Families' became 'Army Commander Happy Families'.¹⁶⁴ British publishers quickly released mostly paper products, *The Way to Berlin*, a boardgame printed on paper with cut-out pieces, was included with the December issue of *The Children's Magazine*.¹⁶⁵ Many British companies supplied flags, and other paper products like J.H. Butcher & Co, of Birmingham's 'Patriotic Transfers... suitable for toys and games',¹⁶⁶ presumably for applying to existing stock to make it fit for wartime play. This first wave of war-themed toys was a response to the outbreak of war, the rise in patriotic sentiment and demand for toys and games that cater for this – by early 1915 the toy makers had got their act together and were selling products that related to the war.

In Britain, Messrs. Peacock Bros. of Islington, London, quickly produced copies of the popular 'ABC' games previously produced in Germany,¹⁶⁷ the first releases included 'Our Little Folks ABC', 'Our Pets ABC', 'The Pictorial ABC', and a topical 'Army and Navy ABC', ideal for introducing the alphabet and images of military uniforms at a young age.¹⁶⁸ Other British toy manufacturers also responded to the 'warlike spirit amongst the youngsters' with dressing-up items like toy tin helmets so children could re-enact the struggle against the enemy on their own streets,¹⁶⁹ and the trade journals highlighted the opportunity of equipping the children playing at soldiers.¹⁷⁰ The Crabat Shape Co. of North London reported 'magnificent' sales of their 'Khaki Territorial' hat as well as French and Belgian styles.¹⁷¹ Children could complete the look of their dress-up uniforms with a 'Finbat' wooden rifle from C.E.

¹⁶⁴ Helmut Schwarz & Marion Faber, *Die Spielmacher: J. W. Spear & Söhne, Geschichte einer Spielefabrik* (Spear Charitable Trust, 1997), p.60

¹⁶⁵ *The Way to Berlin*, Published by *The Children's Magazine* (December 1914)

¹⁶⁶ *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.7 (London, January 1915), p.275

¹⁶⁷ The legality of producing copies of German products no longer available was challenged in British and German courts through hostilities. The courts often ruled that patents were still valid and any payments due had to be made, but not transferred to the enemy. Frequently special permission was sought and granted for the transfer of patents. For articles debating the legality at the time see, "Patents of the Enemy", *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.6 (London, November 1915), p.296; and "Englische Patente zur Kriegszeit", *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung* (Nuremberg, 20th October 1915)

¹⁶⁸ *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.7 (London, January 1915), p.264

¹⁶⁹ *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.7, p.270

¹⁷⁰ Kennedy, *The Children's War*, p.70

¹⁷¹ *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.7, p.270

Richardson & Co. of Sheffield who list both rifles and bayonets as specialities alongside puzzles, 'Skacycles', and sailing boats.¹⁷² The advert for the wooden rifle features a photo of a young child holding the toy rifle and bears a striking similarity to the postcard in image 5.1.



5.8, Child's 'Feldjager' uniform, circa 1916, image courtesy of Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum Nuremberg



5.9, Home-made child's costume uniform purchased in Bedfordshire around 1915-1916. Maker unknown, photo courtesy of V&A Museum
<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1458368/fancy-dress-costume-unknown/>

Adults could and would facilitate the dressing up by buying or making uniforms such as the examples above (images 5.8 & 5.9) from Britain and Germany much in the same way as described in earlier chapters, and Dean's 'Patriotic Pinafores' continued to be available for a more practical alternative.¹⁷³ Children would use the streets to create the fighting in the fronts and even bring the latest events into their play. Dressing up, as discussed in previous chapters, remained a popular form of play for children wanting to emulate adult behaviour. Children did not have to purchase, or have purchased for them, the above manufactured products. A stick could always substitute for a gun and uniforms could be fashioned at home. 'W.M.' writing a column for *The Times* in December 1915 laments the arrival of the war in British nurseries despite their determination to allow children to 'play on' and not become 'depressed' with events. However, the conflict has crept into the playroom and the children in the nursery have fashioned puttees out of paper as part of an ad hoc costume uniform.¹⁷⁴ This anti-war

¹⁷² *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.12 (London, June 1915), p.iv

¹⁷³ Kennedy, *The Children's War*, p.70

¹⁷⁴ W.M., "Warlike Children", *The Times*, Issue 41025 (London, Thursday 23rd December 1915), p.11

comment was a minority, most newspaper content supported the war or followed the conditions set by war-time legislation. However, this desire to keep the war out of nurseries is reflective of the comparatively fewer publications with war content for younger children in Britain than Germany that is highlighted in the previous section.

The British toy industry press was always keen to link stories of German children playing at war with the menace of German militarism, one 'witness report' from Christmas 1914 describes the level to which the celebration had been militarised:

A new [Santa Claus] greets the German child... he has come with swords, Zeppelins, with his bag full of '42 centimetres' He is breathing into the child's mind the very spirit of militarism, poisoning, not uplifting. And in the Christmas card shops the Star of Bethlehem has disappeared from the frosted greetings, and the Kaiser's Iron Cross is to be seen rusting in its place!¹⁷⁵

In the same issue of the trade journal another article covers the enthusiasm with which British consumers have been buying military toys, the article points out the profits that can be made by selling toy soldier helmets which are among the best-selling ranges over the holiday period.¹⁷⁶ Profits were an important motivation for the industry, war had created a demand for toys with a war theme and the toy makers of Britain and Germany responded quickly – especially for the Christmas season. This is evident in an advert for *North Sea Tactics: Or the Blue Water Battle* (London, 1915) which claimed to be 'a fascinating, topical game of absorbing interest to young and old, to soldier and sailor alike'. The largest and boldest lettering on the advert claims 'BIG PROFITS-QUICK SALES' - the motivation for producing and selling this game clear.¹⁷⁷

The *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung* responded to comments about German children's military play with an article about British children playing with stink bombs on the streets of London, mirroring the use of gas in the trenches, surely, they argued, this was an indication of the level of militarism in Britain?¹⁷⁸ Playing at chemical warfare was not only taking place outside, in *The Times* Column by 'W.M.', published less than six months after the gas had been used against actual allied troops,¹⁷⁹ the author recalls a conversation with the children in their nursery who, when asked about the condition of broken toy soldiers on the floor replied that they had all been gassed.¹⁸⁰ Children appear to be aware of not only the war and battles but also the events and technologies used. The toys described in the

¹⁷⁵ "Toy Stores in Germany", *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.7 (London, January 1915), p.250

¹⁷⁶ "Toy Stores in Germany", *Games and Toys*, p.270

¹⁷⁷ Advertisement for *North Sea Tactics: Or the Blue Water Battle*, in *Toys and Games*, Vol.II, No.6 (November 1915), p.353

¹⁷⁸ Stinkbomben als Kinderspielzeug in England, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung* (Nuremberg, March 1916), p.17. The origins of stink bombs are unclear but appear to have been available before the introduction of gas on the western front, if the British children were using them to replicate gas attacks it is highly unlikely to have been the toy's original purpose.

¹⁷⁹ Joanna Bourke, *Wounding the world: How Military Violence and War-Play Invade our Lives* (Virago, 2014), p.170.

¹⁸⁰ W.M., "Warlike Children", p.11

article would appear to represent the ever-popular Napoleonic soldiers, not the type of soldier fighting on the Western Front. The continued use of this traditional image of a soldier may demonstrate a disconnect between how children replicate what they learn about events and the reality of who was involved; but equally it could indicate a lack of appropriate toys, or as Kenneth Brown observes,¹⁸¹ that children just preferred the colourfully painted historical toys over the drab colours of First World War uniforms.¹⁸² As Rosie Kennedy points out, children do not need toys to re-enact war and can use anything as props. The war was a narrative that the children could place their games in, and adults intervened and moderated this play by purchasing the uniforms, weapons, and other toys.¹⁸³

Adults, as mentioned in previous chapters also used toys to educate and inform children of the 'correct' image of events and the First World War was no different. Toy soldiers in the correct uniforms for the new conflict, either in lead, wood, or the much cheaper paper cut outs, were readily available to children in Britain and Germany. By Christmas 1914 J.H.M. & Mann of Fürth had released *Deutsch-russische Schlachten 1914*, a set of over seventy tin 'flats' representing German and Russian forces fighting on the eastern front.¹⁸⁴

Elastolin had also released a large range of models of German soldier types by the end of the year giving German children plenty of choice when recreating battles. Missing from the 1914 ranges viewed are any figures representing German or other soldiers in the colonies. However, British and French colonial troops as used in Europe were depicted. British toy soldier manufacturers also released new toys representing allied and enemy soldiers, Gamages, the Holborn-based toy seller, invited parents to 'Bring the children to see' 'The Great Miniature Battle' between 'English and Allies' and 'The German Army'.¹⁸⁵ The display which was advertised to be 'The most realistic thing in Toy Warfare the world has ever seen', featured 'Field Guns and Howitzers fired by real gunpowder, trenches and barbed wire',¹⁸⁶ was put on display at the beginning of December 1914 after the front line had stagnated into the trench warfare that characterised the next four years and defined a 'brutalised' generation.¹⁸⁷ The store used the display to recreate the Battle of Yser four times a day which attracted

¹⁸¹ Brown, "Modelling for war?", p.248

¹⁸² Unlike in Germany where the imagery was of the soldier in *Feldgrau*, the dominant image of the British soldier retained the redcoat which had been rarely used in combat since the turn of the century. The more colourful representation was preferred by the children, as discussed by Brown, however the continued image of the redcoat should also be seen as an attempt to retain the connection between the khaki uniformed soldier of 1914 and the Christian soldier hero of late nineteenth-century colonial expansion.

¹⁸³ Kennedy, *The Children's War*, p.70

¹⁸⁴ *Deutsch-russische Schlachten 1914*, J.H.M. & Mann (Fürth, 1914)

¹⁸⁵ *Daily Mirror* (Friday 04 December 1914)

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁸⁷ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (Michael Joseph, 1994), p.26

large crowds, and large profits.¹⁸⁸ The spectacle was not only about consumerism, for many it was amongst the few images of the front that they could witness.¹⁸⁹

The range of toy soldiers available to British and especially German children was extensive, toy soldiers lost their role of 'military and cultural history training', now they took on an instructional aspect.¹⁹⁰ Detailed figures that represented different armies and types of soldiers allowed the re-enactment of battles with precise models of soldiers from *Feldgrau* uniformed Germans and British in Khaki,¹⁹¹ through to the colourful uniforms of the cavalry and French *Zouaves*. The choice did not stop at different infantry, cavalry or artillery, all types of auxiliary troop types were available. Alongside the combat orientated figures, some of which modelled the bayoneting of enemies on the ground along with dead and wounded figures, toy figures and models representing mobile army bakeries,¹⁹² field forges,¹⁹³ observation balloons and military aviation,¹⁹⁴ soldiers relaxing and working in camp settings, exercising, and ambulances and medical staff, the latter appearing in almost every collection of toy soldiers researched – notably, most of these variants are seen from German manufacturers.¹⁹⁵ These representations of military life were no different in theme to those seen in previous chapters, but they were historical representations, or events that had taken place. From 1914 to 1918 children were playing with military toys that replicated the men and events, toys of dead and dying soldiers were possibly being played with as the soldiers they represented fought and died.

The toy-men from both sides of the North Sea made sure to supply plenty of toy soldiers from both friendly and enemy sides to enable the recreation of battles, along with explosions, barbed wire, artillery, the dead and wounded – children could even recreate the action with the Britain's 'Exploding Trench'.¹⁹⁶ Even the more mundane camp work and exercise between the brutal battles could be recreated ensuring the child playing with them would experience all of army life in miniature including the possibility of injury, hospitalisation, or death – they would be very familiar with the images, weapons, and routines of life on the front-line trenches, but not the reality witnessed by those in the trenches and camps that the toys represented. The experience needed not just to be on land, naval

¹⁸⁸ *Dundee Courier* (Saturday 12 December 1914)

¹⁸⁹ Not until the 1916 film *The Battle of the Somme* did the British public get to see graphic images of the suffering and death in the trenches, see Altenhöner, p.84.

¹⁹⁰ Hieke Hoffmann, „Erziehung zur Moderne: Ein Branchenportrait der deutschen Spielwarenindustrie in der entstehenden Massenkonsumentengesellschaft“, PhD dissertation (Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen, 1998), p.155

¹⁹¹ For examples see Elastolin, 'Soldat' from 1914, (DZM-N 1981.1794 & 1981.1796) and Krause, 'Englische Infanterie' from 1916, in Hans Henning Roer, *Spielfiguren* (Palagonia, 1993), p.194

¹⁹² Heyde, 'Feldbäckeri' (1916), in Roer, *Spielfiguren*, p.48

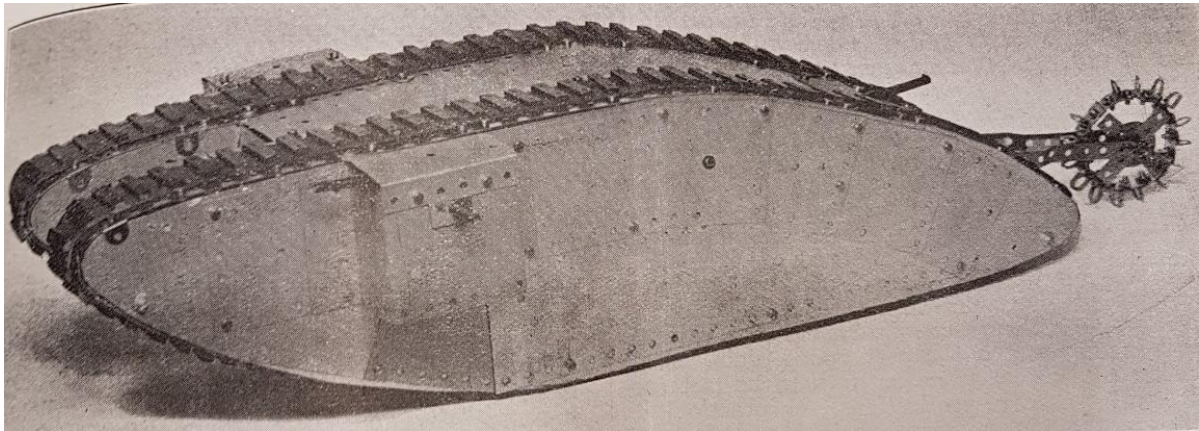
¹⁹³ See, Haffner, 'Fleigerabteilung' (1917), in Roer, *Spielfiguren*, p.134, and 'Fesselballoon', in Roer, p.158

¹⁹⁴ Heyde, 'Feldschmiede', in Roer, *Spielfiguren*, p.48

¹⁹⁵ See Appendix B for examples.

¹⁹⁶ Advert for Hamley Bros. Ltd, in *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.II (London, July 1915), p.101

battle sets, such as Georg Spenkuch's, 'No.1061, *Der Seekrieg zwischen Deutschland und England*', 1916. As many of the ship types involved existed before the war the toy ships are the same as those seen in the previous chapter, but with appropriate ensigns painted on.¹⁹⁷



5.10, British toy tank made from the 'Primus' metal construction set. Image from *Games and Toys*, Vol.III, No.XXXI (London, December 1916), p.305

Military technology was a popular theme for toys and a good way to generate sales. Children, as in the example of gas warfare, were kept up to date with the latest developments on the battlefield and armoured cars, tanks, and aircraft were all available to buy soon after they appeared in combat. Mechanical Maxim guns and Zeppelins were already available before the outbreak of war, and British children did not have to wait long after the tank was first seen at the battle of the Somme – a metal toy made from 'Primus' parts made by Gamages was ready to be pictured in the *Daily Mirror* on the 23rd November issue.¹⁹⁸ The toy tank then features in the commentary and also an advert for 'Primus' Engineering in the December 1916 edition of *Games and Toys*, the advert introduces the 'Famous Tank, made with a British toy, for British Boy'.¹⁹⁹ German examples found are not so elaborate but not only represent German tanks,²⁰⁰ but also the British type,²⁰¹ the models are basic tin 'flats' very plainly decorated, possibly a result of material shortages in the last year of the war or it may reflect the different levels of success seen with early tank warfare. The British example with its obvious pride in the tank, the model, and the engineering toy it was constructed from reflects Edgerton's technological-based liberal-militarism discussed in the previous chapter.²⁰² Edgerton's thesis relies heavily on the aeroplane, technology surrounding it, and the British military's enthusiastic early adoption of it, is reflected in the range of military aircraft models available.²⁰³ The military technology

¹⁹⁷ Roer, *Spielfiguren*, p.102

¹⁹⁸ *Daily Mirror* (23rd November 1916)

¹⁹⁹ Advertisement for 'Primus' Engineering, *Games and Toys*, Vol.III, No.XXXI (London, December 1916), p.290

²⁰⁰ Tin 'Panzer', (Germany, 1918) (DZM-N GS9.719)

²⁰¹ Tin 'Panzer', (Germany, 1918) (DZM-N GS9.728)

²⁰² See, Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*.

²⁰³ Antonia Fraser, *The History of Toys* (Delacorte, 1972), pp.194-5

and the toys that represented it also demonstrated the national superiority in that field in both Britain and Germany.

The influence of the toy soldier and its image were not only on the child, childhood war-play was also used in propaganda aimed at adults. The poster below pictures a father with his children, his daughter points at a book and asks, 'Daddy what did YOU do in the Great War?', the book is presumably a book about the conflict. The question is asked as his son sits on the floor playing with his toy soldiers, he knows what the man's role is – does his father?²⁰⁴



5.11, Recruitment Poster from 1915, by Savile Lumley, IWM PST8696

The First World War did not take place in Europe alone or waged exclusively by white-European soldiery. The British and French Empires used units recruited from 'non-white' colonies, racial ideas were ever-present, including with decisions on which units were used on the Western Front. Units from India were used, the racial idea of the martial prowess of the Indian's, especially the Ghurkha, persisted and Indian soldiers were the only units from outside the white-British self-governing

²⁰⁴ The poster was printed by Johnson Riddle & Co. who based it in their director's own guilt for not enlisting. He later did and this poster became infamous for its use of emotional blackmail. Poster by Savile Lumley who later disowned it, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17054>, (accessed 22nd March 2021)

colonies, or dominions. Troops from India and the middle east were also included in many toy-soldier ranges from both British and German suppliers, the Britain's range included 'Egyptian Camel Corps' as a boxed set,²⁰⁵ but again the German manufacturers had the widest range and included toys depicting British Indian Army soldiers,²⁰⁶ Africans in French uniforms in both Khaki,²⁰⁷ and the more colourful uniforms of the Zouave - these types reflected how the European armies recruited and used colonial troops in different ways.²⁰⁸



5.12, Elastolin toy soldiers depicting French and British colonial troops. Images Courtesy of Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum Nuremberg

Battles outside of Europe do not seem to be as well catered for by toy soldier manufacturers, this possibly could be because they did not need new ranges of figures as pre-war releases already did so, such as the box sets from the German company Bischoff which included the '*Italienisch-Türkischer-Krieg*' issued in 1913.²⁰⁹ However the conflicts in the colonies were not the main focus in any news stories so children may not have wanted to set their play in that backdrop, adults also would likely been more attracted to buying toys based on the geographically closer and more immediate events on the Western and Eastern fronts. Racist views could have influenced decisions when it came to the purchase and use of toys for and by children. Although military toys did become far more popular between 1914-1917, many other toys, including the type featuring and propagating racist stereotypes discussed in the chapters one and two were still available throughout the war across Europe. This can be seen in the advert above with a 'Clockwork Nigger and Motor' alongside the '75mm Cannon'.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ http://www.britains-toy-soldiers.com/archive/britains_lead.htm, Accessed 18/2/2021

²⁰⁶ Elastolin toy soldiers representing Indian Troops, (DZM-N 1984.1397 & 1984.1398)

²⁰⁷ Elastolin toy soldiers representing an African in French uniform (DZM-N 1984.630 & 1984.631)

²⁰⁸ Elastolin toy soldiers representing an African in French 'Zouave' uniform (DZM-N 1984.1360 & 1984.136)

²⁰⁹ Roer, *Spielfiguren*, p.174

²¹⁰ Advertisement for Whyte, Ridsdale & Co., in *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.4 (London, October 1915), p.231



5.13, Advert featuring toys with racist imagery alongside a wartime toy, in *Games and Toys*, Vol.x, No.X (London, October 1915), p.231

Racial nationalist stereotypes were apparent in the above type of toy discussed in earlier chapters, but they also influenced images in children's war-themed toys such as dolls and other soft toys which would have appealed more to a younger consumer than the toy soldiers may have. In Germany Margarete Steiff, the famous Teddy Bear maker, released soft-toy figures representing French and German infantrymen, the advertisement for them depicts a scene with the French soldiers clumsily fighting with their German opponents.²¹¹

Fleischmann & Blödel's new 'war novelties' included fabric toys of German soldiers and 'Karitaturpuppen' of a French soldier and another soldier, possibly of eastern origin, both with exaggerated stereotypical features. On the same page as the above advert, another for Dr. P. Hunaeus of Hannover-Linden pictures a set of caricature toys, possibly skittles, of 'unsere "Brummer", unsere Feldgrauen' and 'unsere Fiende', - the latter represented by French, Russian, and a British soldier in a kilt.²¹² British companies also produced soft toys in the same war themes. Harwin & Co. of Finsbury Park, North London, released what *The Ladies Field* called 'The most Fascinating Toys of the Season',

²¹¹ Advertisement for Margarete Steiff, G.m.b.H., *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung* (Nuremberg, 14th February 1915), p.2

²¹² Advertisement for Dr. Hunaeus, *Deutsche Spielwarenzeitung* (14th February 1915), p.6

a range of militarised bears called 'Ally-Bears' which were dressed in the various uniforms of the Allied Power's soldiery – unlike the German equivalents there are no enemy bears.²¹³

Like the toy soldiers the soft toys also represented the non-combatant aspect of the war. Children could play with bears and dolls dressed as doctors and nurses such as the Paul Leonhardt G.m.b.H. realistic looking set of nurses, orderlies, and casualty dolls, complete with stretcher. Numerous other examples of bears, dolls, ragdolls, paper dolls, and other soft toys dressed as nurses can also be found, indication of the war-time role assigned to young women in the same way the young man was expected to enlist and fight. The British made 'National Doll League Children's Unconscious Doll Exerciser' even provided a set of twenty-one exercises to do with the doll which represented a convalescing injured soldier, the dolls also took centre stage in the British toy industries attempt to 'capture German trade' in toys. The British toy-men could not deny the superior skill and craft that the German doll makers had, instead, to undermine the popularity of the continental dolls they emphasised the patriotic, loving way in which the flawed British dolls were made, compared to the industrial way in which the German dolls were reportedly made.²¹⁴ Some commentary in the industry press even suggested that German companies employed child labour.

Efforts to demonise German toys also appear to be made towards the children, who in turn would insist their parents brought only British goods. Stories appeared of 'horrified' children who received gifts still marked 'Made in Germany' appeared in newspapers and journals, especially around holiday seasons and when German goods became available legally such as an incident with a captured German blockade runner laden with toys for North America. The expected response to this propaganda is portrayed in a *Punch* cartoon from October 1914 which pictures a nursery nurse and a small girl who is holding an arm full of broken dolls, when asked what has happened, she replied 'Charlie's [her brother] killed them! He said they were made in Germany, and how were we to know they weren't spies?'²¹⁵

Whatever the origin, toys, as observed previously, were often repurposed by children to fit the narrative of their play which clouds any measurement attempted of the amount of war play based on the quantity of war toys available. However, it must also be noted that the opposite is also true, toys

²¹³ Advertisement for Harwin & Co., *Games and Toys*, Vol.II, No.9 (March 1916), p.543

²¹⁴ German War Aims, *The Times*, Issue 41664 (24th November 1917), p.3

²¹⁵ Frank Hart, Nurse. "Goodness Me! What 'Ave You Been Doing to your Dolls?", *Punch*, Vol. 147, No.3854 (21st October 1914)

intended for war play could also be used to play at peace. The next artefacts discussed are boardgames which are far less ambiguous in their intended use.



5.14, Frank Hart, Nurse. "Goodness Me! What 'Ave You Been Doing to your Dolls?", *Punch*, Vol. 147, No.3854 (21st October 1914), Gale Primary Sources

Boardgames and Tabletop Games: Playing Generals and Admirals

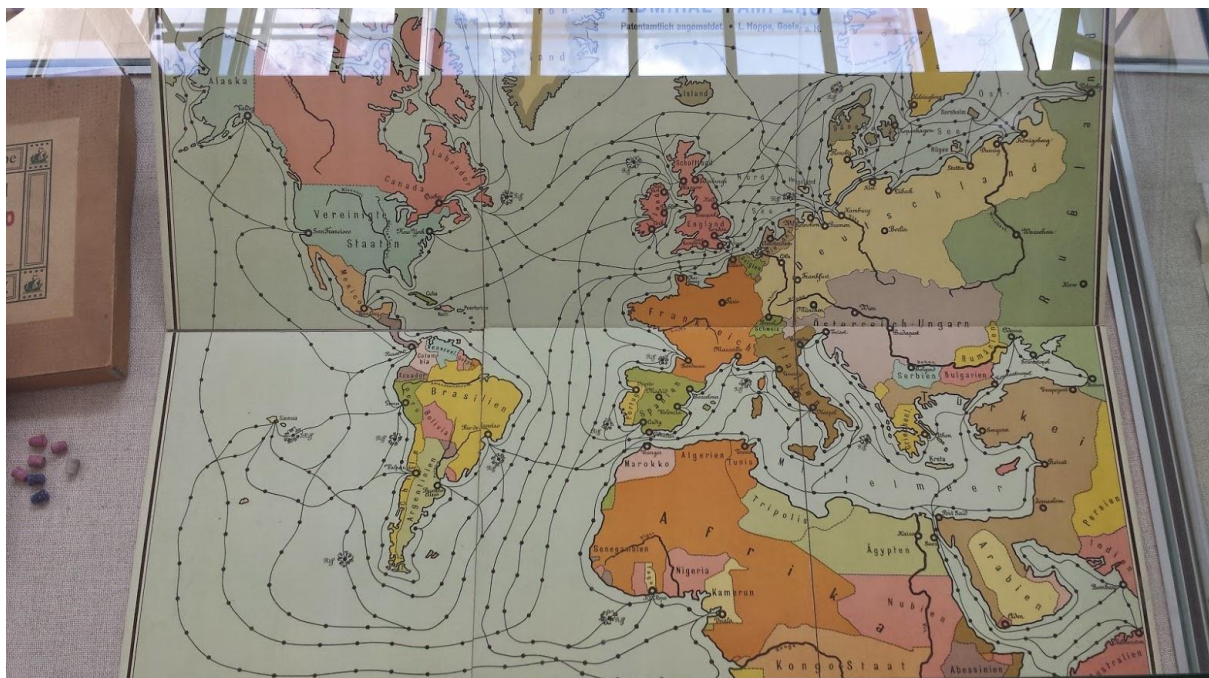
Boardgames followed the thematic trends of the early twentieth century and were often quickly published as cut-out pages in magazines and newspapers, and German imports remained dominant in the market, although not to such a great degree as toys. In Britain empire and the military continued to be popular subjects for games of all types,²¹⁶ from simple maze games to the complex *Fred Jane Naval Wargame* which continued to be updated yearly with new ships and weaponry.²¹⁷ German game designers and manufacturers continued in a similar way with nation-building games like *Schwarz, Weiss, Rot. Deutsches Roulette* (1910) in which the colours of the flag of the *Kaiserreich* were represented in a simple roulette game,²¹⁸ and wargames based on historical events such as *Jung-Deutschland Pfadfinderspiel* (1912), a strategy game in which players had to solve battlefield problems

²¹⁶ See Chapters Three and Four for the types of games.

²¹⁷ The game is covered in the previous chapter, yearly updates in the form of the handbook *Jane's Fighting Ships* would be released throughout the war. The updated editions rarely included new ships, and each edition included more ships marked 'SUNK'.

²¹⁸ Spear & Söhne, *Schwarz, Weiss, Rot. Deutsches Roulette* (Nuremberg, 1910)

from German history including the Seven-Years War, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Wars of German Unification.²¹⁹ One theme that stands out in games published in Germany is that of geography, which followed the importance given to the subject in schools. Travelling games titled *Durch die weite Welt* (1910),²²⁰ and picture games such as *Geographisches Lotto* (1910) and *Rund in die Erde* (1911) all portrayed the geography and images of distant lands.²²¹ Some of these games continued to casually show racial imagery, *Bilderlotto* (1911) consisted of images of animals from around the world, mixed in with the twenty-four picture cards were four depicting people from different regions of the world including stereotypes of a native American, a Chinese man, a Turk, and a south American woman.²²²



5.15, Louis Hoppe, *Admiral Pampero, Neues See-Krieg-Spiel* (Goslar am Harz, 1910), SM 2002, Cat. No. unknown, image from forum.rpg.net

A game that stands out in complexity and topical theme for pre-war Germany is *Admiral Pampero, Neues See-Krieg-Spiel* (1910). The game has a large board representing the world, with sea lanes marked on it. Each player chooses an empire to play, Germany, England, United States of America, Italy, or France. Each has a number of tokens related to the perceived power of the country, in this game the designer has identified Britain and Germany as equals, the US as of a little less power and France and Italy considered under half the power of the main players. The game requires the control of sea lanes to conquer and control colonies to win the game.²²³ The game design conveys the perceived threat from different imperial powers, and Germany's place amongst them in the struggle

²¹⁹ Otto & Max Hausser, *Jung-Deutschland Pfadfinderspiel* (Ludwigsberg, 1912)

²²⁰ Spear & Söhne, *Durch die weite Welt* (Nuremberg, 1910)

²²¹ C.H. Schulze, *Geographisches Lotto* (Thüringen, 1910), DSM-N 1986, and Joseph Schulz, *Rund in die Erde* (Mainz, 1911)

²²² *Bilderlotto* (Germany, 1911)

²²³ Louis Hoppe, *Admiral Pampero, Neues See-Krieg-Spiel* (Goslar am Harz, 1910)

to control colonies and trade routes. The complexity of the game would mean that it was aimed at older children and adults who could understand the rules and the context of the game.

Games publishers responded in a similar way to the outbreak of war as others who supplied children's playthings, war-themed games were quickly produced, or others repurposed to cater for the demand for topical playthings. Many British games focused on the anticipated quick victory over Germany, *The Silver Bullet, or the Road to Berlin* (1914-15) was a simple game in which the player had to roll a ball bearing along 'roads' and avoiding holes representing German towns until they reached Berlin,²²⁴ and *The Way to Berlin* (1914), printed in the *Children's Magazine* to cut out was a race game that involved players racing French and British flags to the enemy capital.²²⁵ These early games were just a page in a magazine,²²⁶ or cheap to produce so would have been accessible to the majority of British households, as was *Waiting for the Willies* which the player had to move (bully) counters with the images of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Crown Prince onto the island of St. Helena, making connections with the defeat of Napoleon I and his exile.²²⁷ The allied war effort was also represented in *The Strand War Game* (1915), a more expensively produced game which used draught counters with pictures of



5.16, *Waiting for the Willies* (Britain, Circa 1914), IWM EPH 2587, Image courtesy of Imperial War Museum London

²²⁴ *The Silver Bullet, or the Road to Berlin* (England, 1914-15)

²²⁵ *The Way to Berlin, The Children's Magazine*, London (December 1914)

²²⁶ One source of games that did not continue were the maze and puzzle games which had a military or topical theme, games of this type were banned in Britain due to the concern that they could be used to send coded messages to spies, see Altenhören, *Kommunikation und Kontrolle*, p.67

²²⁷ *Waiting for the Willies*, (Britain, 1914-18)



5.17, *From the Ranks to Field Marshal* (England, 1914), IWM EPH 2926, image: Imperial War Museum London.

French and British troops opposite to German soldiers in a game of Halma, similar to draughts.²²⁸ Unlike the other British games the objective is not Berlin but fighting over north-eastern France, by the date of its publication the dream of a quick victory had been lost. A game which has middle-class aspirations of a military career as a theme is *From the Ranks to Field Marshal* (1914), the players had to race their way through a military career to reach the rank of Field Marshal after being 'made a peer and voted £50,000 by Parliament'. The game required players not only to enjoy the rewards of a military career but also the pitfalls, these included being wounded, illness and having your horse shot from under you.²²⁹ The imagery of the soldier in the game is not the khaki uniformed soldiers but the ever popular scarlet and white uniforms of the past which reflected the unpopularity of the khaki soldier in children's play – although a link between the two is made on the box art.

One British game that did not anticipate a quick victory was *War Tactics, or Can Britain be Invaded?* (1915), in this game the players had to defend the coastline of Britain from German attack by sea, air and land.²³⁰ The naval campaign, or the possibility of it was a popular subject for German games in the years before the war and during it. *Marinespiel* (1913) allowed young Germans to fight battles

²²⁸ *The Strand War Game* (London, 1916)

²²⁹ *From the Ranks to Field Marshal* (England, 1914)

²³⁰ *War Tactics, or Can Britain be Invaded?* (Leicester, 1915)

between the German and French fleets,²³¹ and *Der Weltkrieg zur See* (1915) updated the enemy to the British.²³² Britain was not Germany's only war-time enemy, and games reflected this, *Der Völkerkrieg* (1916) consisted of models of Zeppelins, soldiers, aircraft, and playing cards which carried the images of troops and units from all the combatants around the world, from the western front to African colonial campaigns.²³³ The variety of combatants, aircraft and regions of conflict is comprehensive in *Der Völkerkrieg*, and the lack of any tanks in the game would indicate it was printed before the British used them in combat. Tanks do feature in *Belagerungsspiel* (1916), a simple board game which looks similar to Ludo. The box art shows what looks like a British tank, but fighting with soldiers in *Feldgrau*, more ambiguous designs of tanks but again on the side of the soldiers in grey.²³⁴ This could be an attempt by the artist or designers to ensure the players that Germany also had tanks, but the British type was the only reference point.



5.18, Joseph Schulz, *Der Völkerkrieg* (Mainz, 1916), SM 2002, Cat. No. unknown, image from forum.rpg.net

These boardgames were likely to have been played by children of an age where they could have understood the rules, and therefore been able to relate more to the context of the game – or played with adults who would have guided the play. The war focused the subjects of the games on the present more than they had been previously, due to the length of the war and its proximity, children, and adults, could play out battles as the men fought them for real on the fronts in the same way toys allowed.

²³¹ *Marinespiel* (Nuremberg, 1913)

²³² *Der Weltkrieg zur See* (Germany, 1915)

²³³ Joseph Schulz, *Der Völkerkrieg* (Mainz, 1916)

²³⁴ *Belagerungsspiel* (Germany, 1916)

Conclusion

Children and their play were heavily informed by war-time propaganda directed at them in Britain and Germany. The intended messaging about war guilt, sacrifice, duty, and some of the 'realities of war', injury, death, and violence, was present in play, reading, and education. The extent of understanding was varied, and many of the British and German school essays demonstrate a repetition of the information not always understanding – the message did get through though. The legacies of the pre-war antagonistic propaganda are also present. From the British side, German deviousness, aggression, and the regularly repeated idea that any German (or someone with a Germanic name) was a spy, and from the German, British jealousy over the growing power of the *Kaiserreich* both at home and abroad.

When playing, children demonstrate the use of the war as a background to their games, although not always in a way adults would have expected or in a way that fitted what they considered 'norms'. Recreating the violence of the front with exploding trench models and acting out battles in playgrounds appears to have been a widely accepted and encouraged by adults, whereas destroying toys in a recreation of gas warfare was not. This could be due to considerations over the cost of the ruined toys, but the event does indicate a concern shown by some adults towards possible childhood psychological trauma.

Gendered role assignment was not always followed by children when playing. Diary entries and autobiography from both Britain and Germany include recollections of girls playing male roles or participating in activities considered masculine. Piete Kuhr's role play throughout the war was as a male soldier and in an autobiographical essay an English school girl, Betty Anderson, recalls digging trenches and defending them.²³⁵ The appeal of 'boys' activities' to girls is unsurprising with the previously mentioned experience of the Girl Guides and the need to introduce more activities like those in the Boy Scouts.

Not all play and activities rebelled against the approved forms, children absorbed xenophobic and nationalist ideas and recite and act on them – at times violently. Whether acting as a sentry or despatcher in the Boy Scouts, collecting war materials, or knitting warm items, children also demonstrated enthusiasm by in participating in activities supporting the war and men fighting in it.

The experience and reception of children is not universal, and the official messaging and propaganda not always received as intended – or at all. The transmission of information through literature and playthings requires access to it, cost and availability restricts its impact, such as in the case of the twelve-year-old Edna Bold, who was living a heavily religious life on the outskirts of Manchester. Her

²³⁵ Betty Anderson, untitled (unpublished autobiography, date unknown)

father was granted exemption from service due to health and from that point on ‘...the war ceased to exist... the discomforts of shortages, rationings and queueings [sic] made little impact... the war seemed fictional, spurious, compared with the reality of the ‘grind’’.²³⁶ Edna does mention that she still held an ‘irrational hatred’ of Germany, something she may have already been influenced with before August 1914. As Edna’s account demonstrates, without access to war-toys, games, and literature, and without a personal connection to the war, such as having a father in the military, the war, or any conflict could seem ‘fictional’ or ‘remote’ and having no real impact on the child’s life – an experience which in part demonstrates why childhood propaganda of the type discussed in this thesis was believed to be required by state, military, and religious organisations.

Attempts at promoting the war and explaining the need for sacrifice often failed. Many of the autobiographies in Brunel Universities Burnett Archive recount witnessing the return of injured men to hospitals set up in schools and the impact of lost relatives. Arthur Jacobs, a schoolboy from Hampstead having started his recollection with fond memories of his toy soldier collection, excitement about aircraft and ships, and memories of war being remote, recalls:

‘...the war became increasingly a personal menace. Children in Mr Hill’s class... brought their domestic burdens to school to be shared. Fathers and brothers were “missing” – fathers and brothers were dead. Some of the children seemed stunned and uncomprehending; others – sensitive and afraid – were told to put their heads on their arms and “rest”. Sometimes their sobbings became unbearable and a prelude to the despairing youngsters being sent home – to what additional misery?’²³⁷

The experience was mirrored by the schoolgirl Piete Kuhr in Germany, in her diary kept during the war she starts an enthusiastic supporter of the war and eager recipient of news about victories, enemy atrocities, and anti-British propaganda.²³⁸ By mid-1915 she also is writing about the increasing numbers of wounded, they as in Britain, are housed in or near schools.²³⁹ As with Arthur, by the end of the year she is becoming disillusioned with a war which is not meeting expectations – Arthur and Piete will be visited again in the next chapter.

Children’s disillusionment with the war was shared with adults throughout Europe, most of the cultural artifacts discussed in this chapter were only produced in 1914-1915, by 1916 the toy and publishing industries were returning to more traditional, pre-war themes for their products, a reflection in the change in public opinion in Britain and Germany. The causes of this change, the

²³⁶ Edna Bold, the long and the short of it being the recollections of and reminiscences of Edna Bold (unpublished Autobiography, 1985)

²³⁷ Arthur P. Jacobs, “Just Take A Look At These!” (unpublished autobiography, date unknown), p.58

²³⁸ See Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*.

²³⁹ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, p.131

influence it had on children, education, and whether the industries catering for childhood were leading or responding to the change will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Despite the examples above, large numbers of young men did enthusiastically march off to war, as did young women who also responded to calls to support the fighting. A large proportion of these young people cited duty, patriotism, and adventure as reasons – all themes propagated by pre-war and wartime children's literature and play. Many of these young men were from the middle-classes who were able to enjoy extended childhoods and have access to a wide range of toys, games, and books which promoted an ideological reasoning for fighting for your country or fatherland. The enthusiasm demonstrated for the conflict by young middle-class adults in Britain and Germany, some still existing in an extended childhood, is evidence of the success in the use of childhood toys, games, and literature to promote militarism and nationalist patriotism in that demographic.

Chapter Six: A Militarism Extinguished? 1916-1919

*'A war that dragged on and was showing itself in its true and unexciting colour, so different – so vastly different - from the dazzlingly false opening display...'*¹

Introduction

By 1916, the initial enthusiasm and optimism for war witnessed in British and German society, especially that within the middle classes had begun to wane.² This shift in public opinion is clearly evident in the types of material published and produced by those supplying children's literature and playthings – and also in the words and memories of the children themselves. The above quote, from Arthur Jacob's autobiography, demonstrates the disillusionment about a war that had dragged on way past the Christmas of 1914 and shattered the romantic and heroic image created by children's stories and play. The young German diarist Piete Kuhr also writes of her frustration in the ongoing conflict as well:

1st September, 1916

I've finished with the war diary! I really cannot bear it any longer. The war is never-ending. I can't go on writing when my hair is grey. Now on 27th August Rumania declared war on Austro-Hungary. Just a day later we on our side declared war on Rumania. Then on 30th August our ally Turkey followed suit, declaring war on Rumania, and to-day come Bulgaria's declaration of war on Russia.

In former times, when we were something like 'a great family', there was a silver bowl in our drawing-room in which visitors put their visiting-cards. That's how it seems to me with all these everlasting declarations of war – every one declaring war on every one else. The only thing missing is the bowing and the kissing of hands. 'Allow me please my declaration of war!' - 'Respectful thanks! Allow me – here is mine!'³

Three days later Piete writes another entry about her imagining the numbers of soldiers dying everywhere and states that she 'no longer has any enthusiasm for the war' and continues with a comment about the lack of food.⁴ The experience and anxieties created by the length of the war, the noticeable increase in casualties, and the shortages of food and other commodities seriously undermined the support that the war had from the middle-classes of Britain and Germany so carefully courted by ideology and propaganda, both government sponsored wartime propaganda, and the 'softer' form that has been the subject of the publications and artifacts in this thesis - the type aimed

¹ Arthur P. Jacobs, "Just Take A Look At These!" [unpublished autobiography, date unknown], p.77

² In Britain this waning of enthusiasm can be linked to the introduction of conscription, See: Conscription: The First World War, Parliament.uk, (accessed 30th April 2024)

³ Peite Kuhr, *Then We'll Meet Again: Young Girl's Diary of the First World War*, Trans. Walter G. Wright (Walter Wright, 1988), p.187

⁴ *Ibid*, pp.190-1

at children. The high casualty numbers on both sides not only directly impacted these families through loss but also challenged ideas of national supremacy and religious and moral righteousness.

The shortages of food in Germany undermined middle-class securities created by their financial position, and the shortage of consumer goods created concerns amongst an economic class used to being able to provide what their families demanded – in Germany and Britain toy trade papers discussed the problems of supplying enough toys for the Christmas demand and the consumer continuing to access the black market. In Britain, in order to ensure they were about to meet the demands of their children, and the expectations of middle-class consumerism shoppers flocked to an auction of German made toys seized by the Royal Navy – the willingness of the British consumer to buy goods made by the enemy instead of those by the fledgling home toy industry seen as ‘remarkable!’ by an indignant British trade press.⁵ British consumers were more interested in acquiring a superior ‘German-made’ product over any moral considerations in opting for an inferior British version.⁶ This preference for quality over moral (or legal) considerations meant that towards the end of the war British manufacturers were more concerned with legislation continuing to ban the import of German toys after an end of hostilities than improving the British industry.⁷

In addition to the continued consumer demand for products, from whichever origin, it will become evident from the material discussed in this chapter that the producers of promoters of children’s literature and playthings quickly rejected military themes from either a wish to influence the nation’s youth, or in response to consumer demands. Were the changes in attitude in British and German society towards the continuing war reflected in the demands of the consumer? Or was the change in availability of products driven by wartime shortages of materials such as wood and lead and the loss of workforce to the war industries?

This chapter will demonstrate that although the publishers and manufacturers in Britain and Germany were struggling with shortages of labour and materials, they were still producing toys throughout the First World War. However, the war and the military became increasingly less-common themes in children’s toys and books, which along with evidence of disillusionment amongst the populations of the combatants indicates a rejection of this type of material and play by the consumer and a reluctance on the part of the producer to keep supplying them.

The material will demonstrate that the content of children’s (and adult) publications in Germany hint at an awareness of the poor progress of the war. Messages of duty, sacrifice, and the difficulties

⁵ “Remarkable!”, *Games and Toys*, Vol.IV, No.XL, London (September 1917), p.154

⁶ “The Public and German Toys”, *Games and Toys*, Vol.IV, No.XLIII, London (December 1917), p.288

⁷ *Ibid*

German soldiers faced with the enemy's underhand use of 'savages' are evidence of the shift from a positive, 'glorious' view of war, to an attitude of grim determination. It will also show that it was important to demonstrate how Germany, and Germans, were revenging themselves against the British and French using technology.

Shortages and Disenchantment

Both the British and German public had been promised a quick victory by their governments, but by late 1916 they had proven to be empty promises. 1916 witnessed some of the largest and bloodiest battles up to that day, millions of men had fought in single battles and, in one example, over a million had been killed, wounded, or taken into captivity.⁸ By the end of the year, very little had changed in the situation on the battlefields of northern France and Belgium, and the end to the conflict seemed no closer.

In Britain, the last two years of the war had seen a 'season of discontent' set in.⁹ The entry of the USA into the war had, ultimately, guaranteed victory over Germany and her allies, but had also demonstrated Britain's weaknesses and the fact that it could not win a war in Europe unaided.¹⁰ Britain had also ceded leadership in naval matters to the USA who required much of the merchant fleet and joined the military campaign at sea in significant strength.¹¹ The naval campaign was going poorly for the British, and the German submarine campaign was having a serious impact on shipping and trade.¹² Due to the German success the end of 1916 had also seen shortages directly impact the consumer, at the end of 1916 restrictions in railway services were announced and in 1917 shortages of food led to 'something approaching food panic'.¹³ In addition to this, continued Zeppelin raids and the start of aeroplane raids had demonstrated Britain's vulnerability in the air,¹⁴ and the revolutions in Russia had agitated the already discontent working class.¹⁵

The threat of a 'revolutionary' British working class was a serious source of anxiety for the British elites and middle classes in addition to the disillusionment in the progress of the war. One working class

⁸ Thomas Kühne, "War, Peace, and the Experience of Mass Death, 1914-1945", in Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.525-47, p.529

⁹ Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge, British Society and the First World War* (Macmillan, 1965), p.189

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ More the blockade of Germany and its legality see: Marc Frey, "Trade, Ships, and the Neutrality of the Netherlands in the First World War", *International History Review*, Vol.19, No.3 (Aug. 1997), pp.541-62, p.557; and Isabel V. Hull, *A Scrap of Paper: Breaking and Making International Law During the Great War* (Routledge, 2015), ch.5.

¹² Marwick, *The Deluge*, p.190

¹³ John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-1945* (Pelican, 1984), p.73

¹⁴ The first aeroplane raid on London took place on Tuesday, *The Spectator*, No.4614 (London, 2nd December 1916), p.1

¹⁵ Marwick, *The Deluge*, p.203

activist and conscientious objector, Walter Southgate, sums up the differences in attitudes to the reasons for war, and to fight in it when he wrote ‘it was “our duty” to be used as cannon fodder’ and that, unlike the middle classes and elite families in Britain, the working class ‘conscripts had no votes or property to defend’.¹⁶ When recollecting the last two years of the war he recalls asking himself ‘Would the carnage ever end? Had the civilised world gone stark, raving mad?... It struck me then, as it did many other young proletarians, that we were in a world of chaos, a steaming cauldron of patriotism, heroism, imbecility, sadism, greed, self-righteousness, cant and humbug’.¹⁷ As with empire the middle classes were more invested in the First World War than the working classes, and it was amongst the middle classes that any disillusionment was acutest.

In Germany shortages created by the British and later US blockade were seen much earlier and acutely felt, and by early 1917 the young Piete Kuhr was writing in her diary about queues outside the butchers,¹⁸ and asking what happens when the ‘few potatoes in the cellar’ run out?’.¹⁹ Her diary entries increasingly mention the lack of food, how they lived on a diet of mainly turnips,²⁰ and made cakes with artificial nuts and grated potato.²¹ The young German girl’s earlier hatred of the enemy had also changed, her earlier anti-Russian comments replaced with concern over the wellbeing of the Russian prisoners of war in the nearby camp – even going as far as pushing ‘eatables’ through the perimeter fence.²² The impact of the blockade was also evident from the windows of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin’s ‘sealed train’ across Germany, after having most their food stores confiscated on the border in accordance with Swiss rules,²³ the passengers witnessed the ‘thin, tired faces’ of the German civilians ‘pale, haggard and unsmiling after years of war’.²⁴

The German population was not only suffering from the lack of food, the numbers of casualties and the loss to families was taking its toll on morale. German propaganda tried to respond to this by trying to create the image of a ‘steely, cold-bloodied, male super-warrior... stoically [accepting] his destiny’, but this fantasy was not reflected in the letters and diaries of front-line soldiers.²⁵ Reluctance to accept this image is evident in Kuhr’s diaries, her family actively trying to keep her brother Willi out of the army: firstly by enrolling him as an officer cadet in the hope that by the time he was trained the war

¹⁶ Walter Southgate, *That’s the Way it Was: A Working Class Autobiography 1890-1950* (New Clarion, 1982), pp.117-8

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.122

¹⁸ Kuhr, *There We’ll Meet Again*, p.219

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.227

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ *Ibid*, p.233

²² *Ibid*, p.227

²³ Catherine Merridale, *Lenin on the Train*, (Allen Lane, 2016), pp.147-8

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.153

²⁵ Kühne, “War, Peace, and the Experience of Mass Death”, p.529

would be over, and then claiming that 'water on the knee' and 'weakness of the heart caused by scarlet fever' would mean he could not serve.²⁶ However, by February 1918 these excuses were no longer enough as Willi was called-up. The young diarist reported that her brother responded that the staff-doctor who proclaimed him fit 'just wants fresh cannon fodder for the Emperor Wilhelm!'.²⁷

On 29th August 1918 Piete Kuhr killed off Lieutenant von Yellenic, the lead character in her wartime play-fantasies. Kuhr and her friends role-played a series of events from the delivery of the message reporting the pilot's death, through the mourning of the family, and then the military funeral of the fantasy German hero – all in great detail.²⁸ Piete decided to end the play due to her disillusionment in the war which shattered her heroic imagery of the soldier and challenged the middle-class moral high ground justifying and supporting the conflict. The detail in the events also demonstrate that young Germans were very aware of their environment and the progress of the war. Not only are the diary entries evidence that she was acutely aware of the progress of the war, but also that she and her friends had enough experience to recreate the moment the news of the death of a soldier, a middle-class officer-pilot, was delivered, play at mourning the loss of the family member, and put on a full military funeral.

Both British and German children demonstrate this knowledge of the war's progress which indicates that they were being informed by some means. One can assume that adults especially parents and teachers, spoke to their children, or their conversations and comments overheard, also that children had access to newspapers and other sources of news. Next, this chapter will investigate the extent to which children's literature and play reflected the growing disillusionment of the war's progress and played a role in informing its young readers.

The Military in Late-War Children's Literature

As the war progressed the number of military-themed articles in British boys' magazines did not noticeably increase from the pre-war period. These articles do become focused on the events of the First World War, although they do not appear to be more prevalent as the war progresses. The majority of listings in the index of the *Boy's Own Annual 1916-1917* demonstrate continuity with issues from before the First World War, topics as diverse as 'Career in Banking', 'Winter Games of the 'North American Indians'', and Bible reading. There is, as expected, wartime articles covering tank warfare, shell manufacture and submarines, although not all are about the First World War, there are military

²⁶ Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*, p.216

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.260

²⁸ *Ibid*, pp.293-4

themed articles referring to historic conflicts.²⁹ This interest in the past victories of the British was possibly to inspire faith that victory would happen, as it had in previous conflicts. The 1918 annual continues in the same way, but with some reference to the difficulties of the war. An article on the difficulties of transporting the wounded is included,³⁰ along with an editorial about ‘what is to be done with the hundreds of boys (and girls, too) whose fathers have given their lives in the Great War?’ titled ‘The Father of “Nobody’s Children”’,³¹ as is the poem ‘Unfit’ by Constance L. Smith which laments the men who cannot fight in the trenches due to being unfit for service:

Unfit

Not his to bear the battle brunt,
To hear the deep-mouthed cannon shake
The Troubled air on Flanders front
Not his to take,
A gun and bravely do his part
With Steadfast eye and fearless heart

And yet in dream
He treads where transport wagons are
Lining those blackened fields afar
He sees the deadly bayonet’s gleam
And, unafraid,
Charges across the thunderous zone
And with one splendid deed has made
Th’ applause of men his own!...

The mirage fades away!
He sees the light upon his books,
On meadowed peace and beauty looks,
And knows that day by day
‘Mid these quiet scenes his life must be.
To die for England gallantly
Fortune did not on him confer-
He can *live* and *Work* for her!

Constance L. Smith³²

These articles demonstrated an increasingly sober view of the war portrayed to the young readers than in previous years, this reflects the weariness with the war demonstrated in other parts of British society.³³ However, it is important to note that none of the articles referred to above are anti-war and do retain the message of duty to, and sacrifice for the British empire – although support for the war is still present it is not the jingoist form seen in 1914-15. One article explicitly appealing to a sense of duty was ‘Keeping Your End Up’ in which the author, ‘an old one’, makes an analogy between the

²⁹ See index of *Boy’s Own Annual, 1916-1917*, (London, 1917), pp.v-ix

³⁰ *Boy’s Own Annual, 1917-1918*, (London, 1918), p.143

³¹ *Ibid*, pp.143-4

³² Constance L. Smith, “Unfit!”, *Boy’s Own Annual, 1917-1918* (London, 1918), p.134

³³ See Marwick, *The Deluge*, pp.217-23

progress of the war and a cricket match which 'looked lost'.³⁴ The author laments the poor character of people who 'decline the task of keeping the end up...' and continues:

Every schoolboy knows the value of the chap who can keep his end up. And he knows another thing – that the time will come when that chap will make runs. The watchfulness and care and patience necessary for keeping the end up against all sorts of bowling – fast, medium, slow, googly, donkey-drops, yorkers, off-breaks, leg-breaks, full-pitchers – develop capacity, and when the man who has kept his end up begins to let out he makes the fur fly.

There was a man detailed top keep a corner of a trench intact, and when the enemy approached he threw bombs, and when a Hun or two tried take his flank he bayoneted one and pistolled another, and gave a third a crack over the head with the butt, and another a knock-out blow with his fist.

He couldn't see any other man of his side about, but he was determined to keep his end up. He had that little section of the trench to defend and he was just trying to do it. Night came on and he was unrelieved, and the foe bombarded him and bombed him and grenade him, and tried to rush him, but this fellow kept his end up.³⁵

The author then moves on to talk about a 'little cog-wheel' in a munitions factory that decides to take a break bringing the whole production line to a halt,³⁶ the author then argued that the stoppage 'cost the lives of a hundred mother's sons on the Somme' due to the lack of shells it would have caused.³⁷ The author appears to be addressing a lack of motivation or enthusiasm in the war, calling on young British men to do their duty, and despite any fatigue continue the fight. As many readers of *Boys' Own* would have been too young to enlist, the expectation could have also been that they would have reminded fathers and older brothers to do their part – similarly to the 'How can I Enlist' story in *The Empire Annual for Girls* commented on later in this chapter.

Other war time articles in the 1918-1919 annual look at advancements in technology and its uses, a lot of the attention is on the creation of the Royal Air Force,³⁸ the aircraft the force was equipped with,³⁹ and the heroes that fought in them.⁴⁰ This interest and promotion of the new arm of the British military offered an exciting and adventurous alternative to the static and dirty experience of the army or the uninspiring 'passive' naval campaign – the latter a source of disappointment to many in both Britain and Germany who had supported expansion of the war fleets.⁴¹ Other articles look at the use of 'Q-Ships' to trick and then destroy German submarines.⁴² The pages of the *Boys' Own* contained no articles on the end of the war, but instead these articles all comment on how the armistice had ended

³⁴ An Old One, "Keeping Your End Up", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41, (London 1919), p.19

³⁵ *Ibid*

³⁶ This reference to 'little cog' is strikingly similar to Josef Stalin's famous 'little screws' toast of 24th May 1945

³⁷ An Old One, "Keeping Your End Up", p.19

³⁸ "The Royal Airforce", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41 (London 1919), p.24

³⁹ The *Boys' Own Paper*, 1918-1919 annual contained many different articles on different aircraft.

⁴⁰ "Heroes of the Air Service", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41 (London 1919), p.549

⁴¹ Rüger, *The Great Naval Game*, pp.256-8

⁴² "Camouflage and Q-Boats", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41 (London 1919), p.456 & p.627

the opportunities for the British airmen to 'run riot with the foe',⁴³ or how the end of fighting had made the development of the Q-Ships 'futile'.⁴⁴ There is no explicit commemoration or celebration about the end of hostilities in the *Boys' Own*, just comments on lost opportunities of enacting retribution on the enemy.

The lost opportunities for vengeance are not present in periodicals produced for British girls, however the stress of war on British society is reflected. By 1916 *Girl's Own* is promoting the mobilisation of women workers, although 'for the duration of the war only',⁴⁵ and how to make up for shortages in toys for Christmas by making them at home,⁴⁶ - evidence of the failed British attempt to 'capture German trade'. Even the *Empire Annual for Girls* contained more war-themed material by 1916. Articles in the edition published in 1916 include 'When the Invader came', a 'real-life' story of a Belgian officer's wife escaping the crimes of German soldiers demonstrating the moral duty to continue the war against an 'evil' enemy;⁴⁷ another tale about a girl who convinces her brother to go to war,⁴⁸ the young man reluctant to 'do his duty' and needs to be reminded of why he needs to; and a cautionary tale about 'A Girl in the Trenches' in which the heroine dies 'a soldier's death'. The moral of the last story is that a girl's trenches 'are at home' and not at the front and 'perhaps the most heroic thing is not what [women] should like to do, but the duty that is thrown our way' - a note must be made that the author writing this 'sisterly' message is male.⁴⁹ The editors and writers of the both boys' and girls' literature used their platform to support the war effort and address the anxieties of their readers with the above material. However, the tone is very different from that of late 1914, no longer is war an adventure but now a duty that you must not shirk from – a duty that the nation's women and girls had to encourage men to continue to commit to.

Duty and sacrifice also became a more common theme in children's books, but publications with a war theme did remain popular. A sample of children's book reviews in *The Spectator* demonstrates that, although in December 1914, almost all the new books reviewed had a war theme,⁵⁰ by the end of 1916 they did not dominate the 'new book' sections to the same extent. The recommendations for Christmas 1916 include various annuals, a book on ancient Assyria, and a book of ancient legends

⁴³ "The Royal Airforce", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41 (London 1919), p.24

⁴⁴ "Camouflage and Q-Boats", *Boys Own Annual 1918-1919*, Vol.41 (London 1919), p.456

⁴⁵ *Girl's Own Annual, 1915-1916* (London, 1916), p.226

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.63

⁴⁷ "When the Invader Came", *Empire Annual for Girls 1915* (London, 1916), pp.35-44

⁴⁸ Watkin Watkins, "How I Came to Enlist", *Empire Annual for Girls 1915*, pp.86-90

⁴⁹ William Carter, "A Girl in the Trenches" *Empire Annual for Girls 1915*, pp.180-5

⁵⁰ The reviewer for *The Spectator* observes that 'the war is not naturally calculated to inspire the writers of children's Christmas books, but...' then goes on to list five new books with a war theme and one, a reprint of *Alice in Wonderland*, that is not. See *The Spectator*, No.4512 (Dec. 19, 1914), p.896

alongside *Princess Marie-José's Childrens Book* which contains a story about taming a Zeppelin,⁵¹ *Collins Children's Annual* in which the story of a father returning from a German prison is told, and *Peek-a-Boos in War Time* which, as the *Spectator's* reviewer writes 'our old acquaintances... are now busily engaged in seeking war work' – a reflection of the needs of the war and a clear message to children and adult readers of the duty of women.⁵² Later, in December 1917, there are roughly equal numbers of books with or without war-themes, noticeably most of the war-themed titles are in the 'Books for boys' section, the reviewer does mention that one of the girls' books contains an 'encounter with an enemy patrol' but is 'only a minor episode'.⁵³ Any shortages in war-time Britain do not appear to have impacted the production, quantity, or quality of magazines or books to any significant extent. Both the *Boys' Own* and *Girls' Own* are printed regularly throughout the war, books of all types are continued to be sold – the reviewer in the *Spectator* even comments on the 'good quality paper' used in some of the books.⁵⁴ Also, the British toy industry trade journal *Games and Toys*, has continuous publication throughout the war.

Despite more acute shortages of materials in Germany the publication of magazines, books, and the toy trade journals were uninterrupted. Similarly, to the British examples, children's magazines and books also changed how they discussed the war, and in many cases the use of technology is the main theme – although its use to attack Britain and British shipping. This emphasis on the use of technology demonstrated to the readers how their military was using technological advances to overcome the stalemate. From the 1916 annual most of *Der Gute Kamerad* articles on the conflict focus on U-boats, tanks, and aircraft. The 1916 annual, published at the end of the year introduces the British use of the 'famous tanks' on the battlefield, and quickly pointing out their weakness by informing the readers that three were destroyed by artillery fire'.⁵⁵ The 1917 Annual focuses more on attacks on Britain, stories about U-boats come to the fore with articles on how they operate, their objective, and that they are retribution for the traitorous British actions.⁵⁶ The use of submarines to attack British ships, especially merchant ships, was openly and enthusiastically supported by the industrial and commercial sectors in Germany – including the toy and games industry. The German toy industry leaders believed that the continued sinking of British merchant vessels would leave the British ability to trade globally diminished after any post-war settlement.⁵⁷

⁵¹ This book will be looked at later in this chapter.

⁵² "More Children's Books", *The Spectator*, No. 4614 (Dec. 2, 1916), p. 37

⁵³ *The Spectator*, No. 4667 (Dec. 8, 1917), pp.18-9

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ „Englisch Panzerauto“, *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.31 (Stuttgart, 1916), pp.309-311

⁵⁶ See: *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.32 (Stuttgart, 1917), p.94, p.254 & p.390

⁵⁷ „Der Tauchbootkrieg – Ein Krieg für die Zukunft“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, Nr.3/4 (Nuremberg, 10 February 1917), p.3

Attacks on Britain which used of Zeppelins are also highlighted in the article '*Luftschiffe über England*' which tells the tale of a November evening raid over London in which buildings were destroyed and set on fire.⁵⁸ The theme of revenge is also continued in a later illustration of a German A7V tank scattering a unit of French infantry as it advances through an urban area, the French soldiers looking on it terror as the armoured vehicle, complete with a skull and crossbones painted on the hull moves forward.⁵⁹ A lighter look at the war is seen in an article about soldiers' humour which discusses terms used in the trenches, this possibly an attempt to reassure the readers that morale in the trenches was holding up.⁶⁰

Compared to material from earlier in the war, the content about the conflict was scarce in the later annuals, however military-themed articles still appeared, for instance stories of medieval knights and articles about their weapons and armour appear in *GK*'s 1917 annual.⁶¹ Other publications also mirrored the change in type and lower frequency of content about the First World War, or in the case of publications targeted at girls' it almost disappears completely.

As with the British examples, the end of the war was not directly addressed in the pages of *GK*, the 1918 annual no longer had 'military' as a category in the index and only contained a couple of mentions of the military. In one, the difficulties of clearing mines were discussed,⁶² and an image of 'welcoming the Generals back' is presented without any comment.⁶³ Another article discusses the success and boom of rabbit breeding for food during the war and comments that it is still popular,⁶⁴ but this is the extent of the coverage of the last months of the First World War. The other significant events of 1918 are also absent from the pages, there is no mention of revolution or unrest, or change in government. One exception to this appeared in the 1918 *Auerbach* annual which contained a script for a play in which children acted out a scene welcoming home a father from the war, the script full of messages of duty and appropriate affection to the father.⁶⁵

Both British and German children's periodicals demonstrate a change in mood within the content of war-related material. They are evidence of a move away from articles that previously courted interest in war and the technologies involved to towards a message of struggle and the duty to continue the fight whatever the dangers. In an attempt to encourage a sense that Germany was still in the fight,

⁵⁸ *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.32, p.94

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pp.106-7

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p.390

⁶¹ See: *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.32

⁶² *Der Gute Kamerad*, Vol.33, (Stuttgart, 1918), p.452

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.521

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.492

⁶⁵ „Vater Kommt auf Urlaub hiem“, *Auerbach nr.36*, (Stuttgart, 1918), pp.72-7

and able to strike at Britain, German children were able to read stories of Zeppelin and aircraft raids on English cities, and U-Boat operations at sea. These also demonstrated that the 'traitorous' British were being punished. On the other hand, British children were reading articles about how the military were countering these underhand and spiteful threats alongside reminders about German atrocities in Belgium.

British and German editors appear to gloss-over the end of the war, this could demonstrate a weariness with the war on behalf of the reader, or in the case of German publications an inability or lack of willingness to explain defeat to their young readers – in both cases it indicates that the publishers are responding to what they believe the consumer demands, and therefore, will sell products. However, it could be partly a consequence of the time it takes to publish an issue, the events happening so quick that they would be out of date by the time the readers could purchase the paper. The latter is more likely in the case of the British, who as part of the victorious powers could start to reflect on the success of the war and reflect on the sacrifices of its heroes. However, the content, or lack of military content in the German children's periodicals indicate it was an editorial decision to not cover such topics.

In the 1919-20 *Boys' Own Annual*, military themes and articles about the war continue to be present in the pages, although not to the extent seen in 1914-15. The pages of the *Boys' Own* contain many articles on medals and those British officers that were awarded one – especially the Victoria Cross.⁶⁶ Remembrance of the sacrifice of national heroes is a reflection of the post-war trend of memorials and remembrance.⁶⁷ Examples of other military themed articles in the annual cover naval developments with the use of aircraft,⁶⁸ and how a Naval career is good for boys - the editors appear not to consider that a career in the newly-formed Royal Air Force or the Army are worth promoting.⁶⁹ In reply to a letter about learning to fly the readers are reminded that 'you can learn to fly without joining the R.A.F.'⁷⁰ The agenda of the Royal Navy remaining a strong theme in British post-war middle-class religious society. Another war-time development the *Boys' Own* editors feel needed to be addressed was Russian politics with a correspondence reply on the origins of the name Bolshevik – a group the writer describes as using 'revolutionary methods' in opposition to 'constitutional

⁶⁶ See: *The Boy's Own Annual, 1919-1920*, Vol.42 (London 1919), p. 30, p.36, pp.50-1, p.179, p.180, p.181, & p.354.

⁶⁷ For more on 'nationalist remembrance' and the trend for war memorials after the First World War see: Frank Jacob & Kenneth Pearl (eds.), *War and Memorials: The Age of Nationalism and the Great War* (Brill, 2019); and Marco Borghi, "On war and memory: First World War memorials and collective memory in Britain, France, and Germany", *National Identities*, Vol.23 (5) (2021), pp.555-71.

⁶⁸ "Battleships and Aeroplanes", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.42, p.22

⁶⁹ "The Navy as a Career for Boys", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.42, p.485

⁷⁰ "Reply to C.W.Bert", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.42, p.383

methods'.⁷¹ Another region's participation in the war is also commented on in the pages of the *Boys' Own*, this time that of the United States of America's entry into the war:

GETTING HIS OWN BACK.

An American 'Sammy' and an English 'Tommy' were one day arguing about their various countries, the American boasting about the big things which happened continually in America.

'Do you know' said the American, 'we have a clock so immense that when it strikes the hour it is heard hours later five miles away?'

'That's nothing.' Replied the Tommy. 'I can do better than that. A bugle call sounded in England in 1914 and wasn't heard in America until three years later!'

The American withdrew.⁷²

As with many other examples of commentary about the war, British children were aware of the progress, developments, and politics of the war – in this case the comments on the USA's late-entry into the war. Akin to many other topics that were not directly discussed in the children's literature, there is an expectation that the young reader has read, or heard, about the topic from elsewhere – adults talking, or newspapers and books intended for children and adult consumers.

Duty, Revenge, and the End of the Great War in Children's Books

As already noted above, the time required to write, edit, and publish printed material means that they can struggle to keep up with events. Although, in the case of many wartime books the period taken to commission, write, and publish a book is surprisingly quick – in 1914 books about the outbreak of war were on the shelves by the beginning of Christmas of the same year. The books from both Britain and Germany in late 1916 reflected the same messaging as seen in the periodicals discussed above, the content noticeably different from that of 1914-15.

German books published for the children's market focused on two themes - duty and revenge. Duty was evident in publications such as *Die Fahnen hoch: Ein Bilderbuch für Jung = Deutschland* (1916) and *Deutschlandsjugend in großer Zeit* (1916). *Ein Bilderbuch für Jung = Deutschland* was a typical children's picture book with colourful images of children in the roles of young men going to war. The pictures portrayed stages of the experience of the soldiers such as lining up to enlist with other volunteers all dressed in typical civilian clothes, saying farewell to mothers, girlfriends, and wives, and marching to the front in uniform with the route lined with young women paying the soldiers attention.⁷³ This image reflects many of the themes found in late-war literature: The girls are encouraging the boys to march off to war and to their duty, the boys and girls have an innocence

⁷¹ "Reply to E.C.D.", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.42, p.383

⁷² "In a Lighter Mood", *The Boy's Own Annual*, Vol.42, p.384

⁷³ *Die fahnen hoch: Ein Bilderbuch für Jung = Deutschland* (1916)

about them, possibly unaware of the true implications of their destination, in the background an older couple are embracing – adults grieving the loss of their children to war. In the distance there is the



6.1, *Die Fahnen hoch: Ein Bilderbuch für Jung = Deutschland* (Germany, 1916), SBB (53BB501050)

ambiguous German village, the *Heimat* that needs to be fought for. The message that this book intended to send was one of duty, but one that emphasised the comradeship of doing your duty and the 'appreciation' of the nation (through the attention and encouragement of its young women) – but it also acknowledges the sacrifice.

Deutschlandsjugend in großer Zeit contained a far more sombre message about duty and sacrifice, first it called on the historic ‘spirit of 1813’ which led to victory in the Prussian-led Wars of Liberation against Napoleonic France as an inspiration for the defence of Germany one-hundred years later – the following pages contained verse such as:⁷⁴

On the Death of the Young Volunteers on the Front of Sperrn

We dug a grave
For nothing but young boys
Is everyone still a child?
They lie in long rows
And also in twos and threes
How they fell.

They have been so brave
And suffered the bitter death
Drank it like it was wine
They ran with songs
-They were not afraid-
Far into the enemy

The drove him across the river,
There blooded laurel veins.
Rings on the Flanders field
And still in the frenzy of the fall,
Sound: Germany above all!
Above anything in the world!

And not a handful of earth
Should they now get away with it.
They are not in a foreign country,
That doesn't bother them so much.
Because everyone is in a deep slumber,
Now an eternal homeland.

Will Vesper⁷⁵

As with some of the content in the German children's magazines the content of books such as the above addressed the losses, especially the youth of the German Empire. The message clear that although it was a tragedy, they died brave and doing their duty. Another poem later in the book addressed the reasons for going to war, and the role of German youth in it:

A July Day in Berlin (28 July 1914)

There was jubilation in Berlin,
When Austria wanted to take to the field.
The hearts of old and young jumped for joy,
The youth all in step.
Austrian brother, we are with you!
It was as if the whole of Germany was already marching,
Austrian brother, we will help you.

⁷⁴ *Deutschlandsjugend in großer Zeit* (Potsdam, 1916), p.18

⁷⁵ Will Vesper, “On the Death of the Young Volunteers on the Front of Sperrn”, *Deutschlandsjugend*, p.41

Berlin Children grasp quickly,
 The location and find the time is not so blind.
 That's what I saw here in Schöneberg today,
 Six boys practice warfare.
 'Austria and Serbia!' I heard them scream.
 But nobody wanted to be a Serb,
 And who should surrender.
 They fought back and growled and pouted.

We don't want king's murderers!
 Not mutton thieves!
 So I hear them scream.
 Then the wisest cried out in haste.
 This is how we play Austrians and Russians!
 And because other liked the suggestion
 Also started the wargame immediately.
 After ten minutes, I hear them say
 Was already beaten by the Russian, totally defeated.

And even if it was just a child's soldier game,
 It gave me a lot to think about.
 I saw a strong bond entwined,
 Everything that is German, feels German, speaks German,
 It applies against cowardly murderers.
 Unanimous to put yourself on the map,
 Germany marching with a threatening step..
 Austrian brother we fight with you.

15 August 1914

And today? Eighteen days went by
 The whole world is on fire.
 Youth no longer play soldier games
 The little ones now moving in earnest.
 You practice as a spy hunter,
 As a bridge guard
 And a postman's assistant
 Everyone shows what they can and learned.
 And may go to the harvest
 When big and small are also enthusiastic
 Good will be on our side!⁷⁶

The above verse again talked about the German youth going to war – an end to childhood. Those who could not enlist yet, the author suggested, could help in other ways, from looking out for spies to helping with the harvest. Interestingly, this poem also demonstrated a view of why Germany supported the Austrians who, without German support, would struggle against the Russian Empire. The poem calls for pan-German solidarity and defending 'German bothers' against the crimes of the Serbian 'king's murderers' and 'mutton thieves'. For the author of this verse the war was just and in defence of aggression from Russia. This narrative and the idea that the British declaration of war was 'traitorous' and based on gaining economic advantage is the basis for the topic of Richard Wagner's *Mein Vaterland Deutsche Jugendbücher zur pflege der Vaterlandsliebe: Der Deutschen Flotten heldentaten* (1916).

⁷⁶ „A July day in Berlin“, *Deutschlandsjugend*, pp.73-4

Wagner was clear in his opinion that England was the aggressor and had no excuse to declare war on Germany – only because Belgium had ‘secretly joined our enemies’ could England find an excuse to do so.⁷⁷ The author declared that only meant that the German navy could then operate without the difficulties that would have been present if Britain had not declared war.⁷⁸ The book then highlighted the different ways in which Germany had been punishing the British at sea for the perceived ‘traitorous’ decision to declare war: by the shelling of Scarborough and Great Yarmouth,⁷⁹ the naval action at Dogger Bank,⁸⁰ (the book appears to have been written before the Battle of Jutland as there is no comment on it), and operations exacting revenge against British shipping in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans with included both surface ships and submarines.⁸¹

A German book published late in the war, *Mein Vaterland: Unsere braven landstürmer* (1918) also commented on the actions of the British alongside their French allies, although in this book the focus is not on the ‘traitorous’ actions of the British but their use of colonial troops. After calling on the spirit of another war in German history, this time the ‘war of 1870’ the author, Adolf Olt, then attacks the British and French use of colonial troops in Europe:

The French and English keep safe the blood of their own countrymen... They are all the more generous with that of their white and coloured auxiliary people.

They remained true to their friend habit even today: the first storm waves to break through to German positions were black regiments who came from Senegal or the Congo.

The wild behaviour of the blacks, their undoubted bravery and contempt for death, then the thought that those people in particular were more or less cannibals, perhaps still, are given the right opportunity could trigger a fear among the defenders.⁸²

There the author repeats the accusations of the British (and French) actions being underhand, in this case their use of African colonial troops. This broke the European imperialist view that ‘lesser’ races should not fight on European soil against European men discussed in the previous chapter. The author also made excuses for the poor performance of German conscripts against these troops, who following the racial stereotypes were seen as aggressive and savage warriors who had an inclination for cannibalism – of course decent German soldiers feared facing such horror. This narrative of justifying and explaining the challenges of ‘civilised’ German troops struggling to fight the ‘savage’ African warrior is a repetition of the content of children’s material about the Herero Wars seen previously.

⁷⁷ Richard Wagner, *Mein Vaterland Deutsche Jugendbücher zur pflege der Vaterlandsliebe: Der Deutschen Flotten heldentaten* (Germany, 1916), p.5

⁷⁸ *Ibid*

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp.20-1

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.24

⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp.52-5

⁸² Adolf Olt, *Mein Vaterland: Unsere braven landstürmer* (Germany, 1918), p.49

These horrors would be overcome, as Adolf Olt believed, and Germany would be victorious despite the grim state of the war in 1918:

The tears that flow now dry up and our dear Fatherland will rise from this peoples-war [*Volkskampf*] like a newborn to fresh energy, to victories of knowledge and work.⁸³

The *Landsturm*, the German reserve regiments consisting of men too old to serve in the regular units, were the topic of this book. The participation of these men fits the author's view of the First World War as a 'peoples-war'. His despairing question at the end, a possibly commonly repeated one by these and many other men and women - the author ended the book by asking 'What is God doing?'⁸⁴

This rhetoric around the 'correct' way of fighting a war and the use of non-European soldiery in a European war is also present in material for adults. Towards the end of the war, *Kieler Hausfrau* (*KH*) focused more on the topics about the conduct of war as well as containing the patriotic advice for managing the home – 'buy German Cognac' and advice on *Ersatz Kaffee*.⁸⁵ The editions of the magazine published in late 1917 and into 1918 often comment on the United States of America's entry into the war and the inappropriate employment of parts of their population in war. The use of women as flyers in the US Army is a concern for the editors and writers of *KH* who consider it a dangerous prescient for the future,⁸⁶ and the use of 'Sioux Indians' is seen as a threat to the German men on the front lines – these 'Dangerous Americans' depicted by an image of an American Indian in stereotypical 'traditional' dress.⁸⁷ The British use of colonial troops was depicted in an image of the 'first interrogation of a 'coloured' English Prisoner' in which an African soldier is seen sat in front of an German officer with a large audience looking on.⁸⁸ German successes were also highlighted to the readers of *KH* which covers the sinking of a British warship by U-boats,⁸⁹ destroyed Italian equipment,⁹⁰ a captured British tank,⁹¹ and images of British and Russian prisoners.⁹² However, some articles addressed the hardships of war, for example advice on the latest mourning fashions.⁹³

In the later-war editions of *KH* there was not the same amount of content regarding children and education as was seen in 1914-5, the *Für unsere Kinder* section absent most of the time. One comment on education does note that students are now working 'mainly in ammunition' and that many teachers

⁸³ Olt, *Mein Vaterland*, p.68

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁸⁵ Advertisements in *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.265, (Kiel, 14 October 1917), p.1

⁸⁶ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.160 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.265 (Kiel, 14 October 1917)

⁸⁷ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.180 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.305 (Kiel, 21 July 1918)

⁸⁸ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.181 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.309 (Kiel, 18 August 1918)

⁸⁹ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.161 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.266 (Kiel, 21 October 1917)

⁹⁰ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.165 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.265 (Kiel, 14 October 1917)

⁹¹ „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.167 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.279 (Kiel, 20 January 1918)

⁹² „Illustrier Kriegskronik“ nr.166 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.276 (Kiel, 30 December 1917)

⁹³ *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.312 (Kiel, 8 September 1918)

and lecturers have now gone to war in reserve units.⁹⁴ However, the education of German children did continue, Piete Kuhr often wrote about classes at school (although she did also increasingly refer to the school being used as a hospital, or the students collecting materials or helping with care).⁹⁵

The belief that the justification of Britain's entry into the war in August was weak and 'traitorous' was repeated frequently in many types of children's books. The above books would have been accessed outside of education, although they may well have also been used in classrooms, schoolbooks also contained similar material. As an example, a book for use by high-school girls stated:

The world war was a result of England's many years of entrenchment; and so the English government, faithful to the secret agreement with France, was resolved from the outset to enter the struggle.⁹⁶

The content of children's (and adult) publications in Germany demonstrates the change in tone in publications about the war which hint at an awareness of the poor progress of the war. The messages of duty, the need for sacrifice, and highlighting the difficulties German soldiers faced with the enemy's use of 'savages' in their armies are consistent and are evidence of the shift from a positive 'glorious' view of war to an attitude of grim determination. However, as already demonstrated with German children's periodicals, the topic of war suddenly disappears from the titles and pages of children's books after 1918. It can be assumed that given the time required to write and publish a book about the end of the war it would not be published until 1919, but a survey of the holdings of Children's books in the *Kinder-und Jugendbuchabteilung* at the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin* does not show any evidence of books about the First World War or its end. The catalogue is dominated by new editions or reprints of Grimm's Fairytales and books about children and the church - the importance of defining German nationhood increasingly vital in a post-defeat and politically tumultuous Germany.

As commented on earlier in this chapter, British children's books with a war theme became less common and changed emphasis in the last couple of years of the First World War. However, books were still published, many of them histories of the war by educational publishing houses such as Blackies & Sons in Glasgow.⁹⁷ Examples of these include George Townsend Warner, *Notes on European history for army candidates* (1917); and P.R. Clauss, *Sketch maps illustrating important phases in the Great War with historical notes: August, 1914 – May, 1916* (1917) both titles with very obvious uses in schools.

⁹⁴ „Illustrierung Kriegskronik“ nr.165 in, *Kieler Hausfrau*, Nr.265 (Kiel, 14 October 1917)

⁹⁵ See Kuhr, *There We'll Meet Again*

⁹⁶ *Neubauer: Geschichtliches Lehrbuch für höhere Mädchenschulen, Ausgang A, II Teil* (Germany, 1917) (1:ARKs:N.16/1555-2)

⁹⁷ This is evident from the holdings of the University of Glasgow's Blackie & Son Archive.

One publication which was not a school textbook reviewed by the spectator and mentioned earlier in this chapter is *Princess Marie-José's Children's Book* (1916). Published in time for Christmas 1916 the self-proclaimed purpose of the book is to raise awareness and funds for 'A society for providing Milk Food and Clothes to the Babies behind the firing line in Flanders', their homes 'destroyed by German shells'.⁹⁸ The book was a collection of submissions from prominent writers in Britain including H.G. Wells and William Le Queux. Many of the stories, verses, and pictures do not have a war-related theme, others introduce Belgium to the British readers through stories and fairy tales, and there are some that directly engage with the war.

The first of these was a selection of eight 'War Limericks for the Little Ones' by the Author Israel Zangwill which mocked the Germans and praised the allies, examples of this include:

II

There was a conceited old Kaiser,
Of his army a great advertiser,
His moustaches he twirled
And demanded the world,
But now he is sadder and wiser.

V

There was a bold army of snipers,
Tommies sent to save Belgium from vipers,
They gained great renown
By holding a town,
But greater by calling it 'Wipers'

VIII

There was a gross people called Hun,
Whose god was the sin of a gun,
They marched with elation
To murder a nation,
But they dug their own grave in the sun.⁹⁹

The narrative of the poor character of Germans was present throughout the book, although much of the content is not war related. A lot of the material in the book promoted awareness of Belgium as a nation and the culture found there, it achieved this through translations of fairy tales and myths. The book also attempted to educate the reader on ways to support the children of Belgium and the importance of continued patriotism and commitment to the nation and war. One example of this was the story of 'Piccninny' in which a young English boy, Donald, faced having to give up his beloved doll

⁹⁸ C. Haden Guest (ed.), *Princess Marie-José's Children's Book* (London, 1916), Frontispiece

⁹⁹ Israel Zangwill, "War Limericks for the Little Ones", in Guest (ed.), *Princess Marie-José's Children's Book*, pp.11-2

for a raffle to support the troops on the front line.¹⁰⁰ This the writer explained to the young readers was an example of patriotism.¹⁰¹ Of note here, is the doll itself, who is described as:

...not a pure-bred Golliwog, but it has something of the same, half grotesque character... Piccaninny was made of chocolate-coloured stockings, stuffed with more than common cunning. It had a large, round face and a little snub nose, a tight smiling mouth and two wonderful upcast eyes made of boot-buttons stuck to white linen. For all costume it wore a brown and white check shirt to its waist, and a large orange handkerchief knotted round its head. One fat bolster-like army hung down by its side; the other was fastened by the thumb onto its mouth, giving the creature an air of coyness.¹⁰²

The doll was described in terms that appeared to imply that it was in some way inferior to a Golliwog, a poor copy, 'not a pure-bred' – a 'creature'. However, the doll was considered more cunning than common and coy, in some way the inanimate doll having agency, maybe just in the imagination of Donald who was reluctant to part with his beloved companion.

Donald who 'liked hearing about soldiers' wanted his doll to become a soldier (Donald did not seem to consider that his toy's appearance would be a hinderance), something that caused his mother to exclaim 'Thank Heaven that won't be [until] after the war is over!' the story explains that she is 'thinking of someone else' – obviously reluctant to consider her own son fighting in the war.¹⁰³ Donald's sister then stated that he 'Won't ever be a soldier', 'because he is a slacker' and did not contribute to supporting the war or the soldiers – here the duty of women and girls to encourage men and boys to make the correct, patriotic, decisions is reinforced.¹⁰⁴ The young boy did, after some encouragement, give up his beloved doll for the raffle where it was won by a 'Russian woman' who then returns it to its owner. This happy reunion was concluded with Donald sharing an 'unworthy sentiment' that he 'Did try to be a pattiot [sic], but I don't want to be one again.'¹⁰⁵

This story, although it is evidence of continued negative racial imagery in children's material and promotion of patriotic support of the war and the soldiers, does also demonstrate a reluctance, on the part of adults, to send their own sons to war – even if it was a hope that the war would be over before that would be a possibility.

The above examples of children's periodicals and books demonstrate the shift in the narrative from a glorious adventure and opportunity to demonstrate national-racial supremacy to one of getting the job finished, duty, sacrifice, and revenge. They are also evidence that this material was still being

¹⁰⁰ 'Piccaninny' was a commonly used racialised stereotype for referring to black children, especially those who danced, see: Liz Conor, "The 'Piccaninny': racialized childhood, disinheritance, acquisition and child beauty", *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol.15, No.1, pp.45-68, pp.47-8

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.57

¹⁰² *Ibid*

¹⁰³ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p.64

produced in Britain and Germany throughout the last years of the First World War despite shortages of material and a loss of manpower to war-time industries. However, this continued output was not seen to the same extent in the toy industries of Britain and Germany.

The Challenges to Toy Production

Examples of late-war toys are rare, and from the end of 1917 the pages of trade journals for the British and German toy industries are filled with noticeably fewer adverts for military toys. The commentary in the articles had turned to how to survive the shortages of material as a consequence of the war. By mid-1917 the British toy industry was struggling to operate due to restrictions on the use of metals including lead and wood for non-wartime production. In July 1917 it was reported in *Games and Toys* that stocks of tin soldiers had 'run out', and the industry was suffering from a shortage of workers and wood.¹⁰⁶ Attempts were made to exempt from skilled toy makers conscription and access to material; but, as the war continued into 1918, this became an increasingly difficult argument to make in courts.¹⁰⁷ By late 1918 the industry journal was reporting that the only materials intermittently available were off-cuts of wood from the aircraft industry and rough papyrus.¹⁰⁸

In a war-time environment the continued production of toys was challenging for the British toy makers which would explain the reduction in the availability of war toys in Britain, those that were being produced were basic wooden toy ships and castles. This type of wooden toy often from workshops staffed by wounded veterans such as the Lord Robert's Memorial Workshop.¹⁰⁹ The idea, already used earlier in the war, that these often inferior toys were 'produced with love' by British veterans and not 'with hate' by 'poor miserable... hardly human children' in Germany was used to dissuade the British consumer from buying the superior German products that were still finding their way into the British market despite wartime restrictions on 'Enemy goods'.¹¹⁰ Given the trade in German toys was illegal it is not possible to identify what type of toys were available or popular. However, due to the concerns about the industry running out of toy soldiers it can be assumed that military-themed toys remained in demand in Britain and that adults still wanted to purchase them for their children. In Germany the

¹⁰⁶ *Games and Toys*, Vol.IV, No.XLIV (London, January 1918), p.299

¹⁰⁷ The British toy industry repeatedly lobbied the British Government to include them as an essential war-time industry with some success in 1914-15, for this see: *Games and Toys*, Vol.1, No.5 (London, October 1914), p.128. However, by mid-1917 the courts were refusing to regard the toy industry as essential to the war effort, see: *Games and Toys*, Vol.III, No.XXXV (London, April 1917), p.534.

¹⁰⁸ *Games and Toys*, Vol.V, No.LII (London, October 1918), p.205

¹⁰⁹ For an example see: advertisement for The Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops, in *Toys and Games*, Vol.II, No.1 (London, June 1915), p.19.

¹¹⁰ *Games and Toys*, Vol.III, No.XXXVI (London, May 1917), p.574

situation was different, the toy industry continued to produce toys and hold its annual trade fair in Leipzig – much to the disconcertion and disbelief of their British counterparts.¹¹¹

The German toy industry was able to continue producing products throughout the war and given the fact they continued to be available in Britain (and North America), still had enough for the domestic market and for export. However, the industry still had to adapt to shortages of materials in the same way the British toy makers had to. The conversations and articles printed in the German trade journals looked at alternatives to these materials and also the advantages of turning their factories to war production – something that was possible given the scale of industry around Nuremberg.¹¹² Unsurprisingly the quality of the materials used deteriorated, this is evident from examples of a ‘fishing game’ produced by Spears & Sohne. The game remained in production throughout this period but reflects the diminishing availability of material in the quality of the components, which become thinner, and only printed on one side.¹¹³

Spears’ fishing game is an example of a toy without military themes, however, up until late 1917, adverts were still appearing in journals for war-toys – especially U-Boat games.¹¹⁴ Military toys and games do become less evident in adverts throughout 1918, although other toys and games do still appear in adverts in *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*. This continued availability of toys alongside a drop in the number of war-toys advertised an indication that either toy-makers were turning away from producing them either as a response to consumer demand or a reluctance on their part to produce them – given the nature of consumerism this as a response to demand would seem the more likely and therefore evidence of a turn-away from toys with military themes towards the end of the First World War.

Despite the disbelief of British toy-industry commentators, the German toy industry did continue and survive. German toy makers such as Bing and J.W. Spear reported as being in ‘good financial state’ at the end of 1918,¹¹⁵ the latter attributing their financial success to an early move from selling war-toys and games to family-friendly ones.¹¹⁶ The continued existence of the German toy industry and the

¹¹¹ *Games and Toys*, Vol.III, No.XXXVI, p.574

¹¹² For examples of this see: “Ersatz für Garne”, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, Nr.3/4, (Nuremberg, 10 February 1917), p.1; and a Transcript of an interview with Richard Spears regarding the company history (Enfield, 3rd January 1974), (Uncatalogued document in the Spears Archive, Deutsche Spielzeug Museum Nuremberg)

¹¹³ Examples of *Angelspiel* found in the Spears Archive, uncatalogued at the time of research.

¹¹⁴ See: „Der Tauchbootkrieg – Ein Krieg für die Zukunft“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, Nr.3/4 (Nuremberg, 10 February 1917), p.3 and „Zur Stunde“, *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung*, Nr.3/4 (Nuremberg, 10 February 1917), p.1.

¹¹⁵ “Toy industry in Germany”, *Games and Toys*, Vol.V, No.LIV (London, January 1919), p.246

¹¹⁶ Transcript of an interview with Richard Spears.

production of toys and games is also demonstrated by the report of relief that a shipment of German toys had arrived in New York in time for Christmas 1918.¹¹⁷

The types of toys available in Britain and Germany for Christmas, in 1918 and beyond, reflect the opposing fortunes of war that each region experienced. In Germany the evidence demonstrates that the experience of defeat made playing war unpopular with the pages of *Deutsche Spielwaren Zeitung* and the catalogues of J.W. Spears advertising no military toys for Christmas 1918 and throughout 1919-20. In Britain, traders reported that, despite their fears, the sales of military toys remained high.¹¹⁸ The availability of toys boosted by companies that did produce war-materiel turning to toy production as demonstrated by toy aircraft from the factories of Vickers Aviation.¹¹⁹ This continued interest in military toys evidence that, even though the rhetoric about war had changed to a narrative of duty and sacrifice and parents feared the possibility of their children going to war, the interest and demand for war-toys and games remained high.

Conclusion

The continued demand for literature, toys, and games that related to war is evident from the material discussed in this chapter, as is the change in tone to one of endurance, duty, and continued sacrifice. Even when materials were in short supply, and in demand for war industries, magazines, comics, books, toys, and games were still being produced. This indicates that not only the demand from the consumer remained but also the on-going awareness of the importance of these materials of childhood in educating children in the correct way to behave and think, and to encourage continued support for the war.

Although the messaging in the written material demonstrates a weariness with the war, the support for the war does not wane. The tone moves away from glorifying war and the opportunity for glory and morphs into one of continued duty and sacrifice in what had become a long war of attrition. How this is portrayed is different in Britain and Germany and reflects the wider middle-class narrative of the war – an important narrative to maintain the support as part of the population which included the majority of voters, taxpayers and those with professions that would exempt them from conscription. In Britain it is one of honouring the commitment to defending the nations of north-western Europe, especially Belgium and that continued commitment to the cause, and not ‘shirking’ one’s duty was the path to victory. On the other hand, German children’s literature, and games, while still emphasising

¹¹⁷ *Games and Toys*, Vol.V, No.LIII, London (November 1918, p.218)

¹¹⁸ *Games and Toys*, Vol.V, No.LIV (London, January 1919), p.248

¹¹⁹ Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane*, p.22

the importance of duty and sacrifice blame British 'traitorous' actions for the state of the war and promote the use of submarines and aircraft to exact revenge on their enemy.

Both the British and German narratives are clear and consistent in the respective material with it being present across many of the sources and across those intended for different ages and gender. The material also demonstrates continued themes introduced in earlier chapters such as anxieties over the use of colonial troops, negative racial images, and a focus on the middle-class youth in both Britain and Germany. Of course, as mentioned in other chapters, this is partly due to the audience of the material which although widely available was out of the financial reach of many families and their children unless they accessed it through schools, libraries, or shared amongst peers which limits the possible audience. However, the target audience also reflects the need to ensure the continued support for war from the social-economic group that support was most needed from, the tax-payers, the people with the financial means to contribute to war-time charities, and the families that would be in a more favourable position to delay service in the military until an older age or avoid it all together – and also those required to lead the army. Continued middle-class engagement with the military was essential at a time when service was becoming less appealing.

Not all the content of the material would have been only intended for the middle-classes, nor was it inaccessible or irrelevant. Children from all social-economic backgrounds had an interest in the progress of the war, the new technologies, and the reasons given for continuing the conflict, but also the message regarding duty and the call not to shirk it would resonate with all – and one also targeted at conscientious objectors like Walter Southgate.

Through the children's literature and playthings from 1917-18, it is evident that the attitude to the First World War changed as the conflict dragged on and support for the continued war was challenged, although evidence of this is limited, especially in Germany where it would have been heavily censored. This apparent weariness with the war which both British and German material demonstrates had very different conclusions depending on the experience of the outcome of the war. In Britain victory appears to have rekindled interest in the military and playthings that mimicked it, in Germany interest in playing war appears to have disappeared along with hopes of a German victory – although this rejection was short lived.

Conclusion – The Successful Invasion of Childhood

When the young Winston Churchill sat on the floor playing war with his little brother Jack, the rows of lead toys had meaning because of their education and reading through which imperialism and militarism had invaded their childhood and childhood spaces. The battles, the opposing armies, the limits and knowledge of weapons, knowledge of military formations and tactics, and the racialised language were all products of influences from outside childhood. The choices made by their parents, or nanny, about which types of childhood literature, games, and toys to buy them, the decisions made by educators about the subjects to teach them, the commercial influences on the type of material the manufacturers and publishers produced, and the deliberate use of this material by groups such as the Religious Tract Society and the Navy League all contributed to this invasion.

British and German adults welcomed such incursions into their homes, and this was used to the advantage of those who wanted to ensure a particular message was present. The late-nineteenth century middle-class society's embrace of a need for a protected childhood space, the enthusiasm for consumerism, the need to demonstrate their 'correct' world view and status as citizens, created the demand for childhood products. Alongside this demand, the reform and rehabilitation of the military, formed a synergy that created the perfect conditions to allow childhood material with military and colonial themes to surge into the classrooms and playrooms of Britain and Germany.

The image of empire, especially as seen through childhood, is a middle-class one. For many, imperialism was for the middle classes, and a project which benefited them to a greater extent than other sections of the population. Middle-class consumerism drove both imperialism - through commercial interests and demand for colonial products, and the childhood products that promoted it through demand for products that were about empire. Consequently, the majority of the literature and playthings introduced in this thesis reflect the middle-class view of empire and their desires for it.

The Churchills and many other families in Britain and Germany had access to these books, magazines, comics, boardgames, and toys because they could afford them - an advantage of a higher social-economic status of the middle classes. The products chosen were a reflection of the world views of the middle classes and the intentional way they chose products to define themselves – and to ensure their children developed those same values and shared the ambitions of their parents. The outlook and anxieties of the middle classes of Britain and Germany demonstrate a lot of similarities: support of, and commitment to maintaining, the empire and the 'imperial' or 'national' race, acknowledgement of how they benefit, or could benefit from empire, a religion that requires missionary work, commitment to duty including military service, an interest in technology and science,

and interest in the exotic and sense of adventure that contrasts with their lives in the metropole and, for some, offered an escape. Childhood playthings and toys which engage with these middle-class preoccupations have been the subject of this thesis, and by using these sources to look through childhood it has demonstrated how the state, military, society, and individuals wanted children, especially the middle class, to view empire and the military.

The view of the military and empire that the childhood literature and playthings presented was one that used the existing middle-class interest to appeal to the consumer. The exotic nature of Africa, India, and the Pacific Islands appealed to many across all social-economic groups who, eager to escape the restraints of European life, sought adventure – something the European colonies offered, and the service in the military would supply the opportunity for. Much of the material that portrays the military, or empire, presents colonies and the people inhabiting them as exotic and dangerous and the military as a means to engage with it and tame it through the use of technology. How this is achieved varies depending on the intended audience and region. Much of the British material aimed at middle-class children, especially the boys, presented a fairly accurate picture of life in the military and empire. For many a career in imperial administration or the military was a realistic ambition. Therefore, the image presented needed to convey a realistic image that would acclimatise the reader to a possible future experience, this is also especially the case in the ‘life in the military’ articles found in many of the British and German periodicals. For those with fewer opportunities to engage directly with empire the content only had to demonstrate empire existed, this often resulted in a confused depiction which was near fantastical. However, the lack of reality did not matter, the message was that an empire did exist and that it made the metropole greater.

Despite the instructive nature of much of the material, consumerism and money were the primary focus of the people who produced these items. This is obvious from the personalities of writers such as Genty and May who prolifically wrote novels and stories about adventures in European colonial possessions because they knew they would sell – as did their publishers. The primacy of economic considerations was also evident in the British and German toy industry’s discussions about their role in the First World War, which, although justified by claims that they were supporting the war effort by encouraging young men to enlist was about the future success of the industry – survival in the case of Germany and growth for the British. However, the fact that British and German consumers were purchasing these items and bringing them into the home, for their children to read and play with, meant that the gates to the perceived protected space of childhood were able to be pushed open by those who wanted to define their, often competing, ‘correct’ middle-class way to view and engage with the military and empire. This opening into the protected space of childhood required adults, who

wanted to ensure their agenda had a monopoly on influencing children to restrict access to this space by materials, such as *Schundliteratur* and penny dreadfuls, which would undermine their world view.

Education, and control of the curriculum, allowed the British and German governments, militaries, imperial bureaucracies, churches, and interest groups which lobbied for military and imperial expansion to create an awareness and support for empire and the military's role in creating and defending it. In Germany this was to a more limited scale to the openly pro-imperialism and jingoistic content in British schools. However, school children in both imperial metropolises were, to various extents, aware of the existence and scope of 'their' empire. History and geography classes, and in Britain, Empire Day, ensured there was interest and demand for toys, games, and literature that engaged with military and imperial themes. Children's playthings and literature were not constrained by curriculum and laws that defined and restricted the content of school lessons.

Outside the school, and inside their homes, British children were exposed to material that not only supported the 'official' view of the military and empire which explained how it looked, how to engage with it, the benefits of empire, and the military's role in building and defending it, but also material that portrayed a far more jingoistic, violent, and racist view. In the case of *Schundliteratur* and penny dreadfuls, this undermined the message that the majority of imperialists and militarists wanted to transmit to children, to such an extent that various campaigns were initiated in both Britain and Germany to restrict children's access to the material.

The 'official' message is obvious from the material discussed in this thesis and is similar in both metropolises. The periodicals and books offered the context, demonstrated the benefits of empire, and reinforced ideas of European racial supremacy and the 'burden' that empire-building placed on white Europeans. The content was highly gendered. For boys it promoted service in the military or imperial administration placing on them the 'burden' of expanding, defending, and running the empire. This 'burden' also took on the role of 'improving' the lives of the colonial populations through the spreading of European ideas on work, religion, and taming the environment for the benefit of the local populace. For girls the burden was to ensure their generation of empire builders and defenders were supported and cared for, and to be the mothers, wives, and care givers to the next generation of their respective imperial race. For those young women who craved more than that, empire offered the chance of adventure, as it did for young men. However, in the case of young women it was restricted to missionary work, nursing, or as servants to European households who had moved to one of the colonies. The above content about empire and the military are evident throughout the previous chapters and demonstrate the success in invading British and German middle-class childhoods. However, the middle classes of Britain and Germany were a minority, and the overwhelmingly

working-class section of the population needed to be persuaded to support the empire-building projects of Britain and Germany.

The working classes of Britain and Germany were not the target of much of the material which was intended to encourage the future support and engagement from the middle classes with the empire and military. However, this does not mean that working-class children did not have access to or were even barred from access to the material. Imperialists believed that working-class children had to be aware of empire but not educated far beyond that, empire building was an exclusive middle-class project that working classes would only be needed to engage with to benefit the project – as soldiers, sailors, and working in industries that used the resources gained from the colonies. Working-class children could engage with the material, through schools or by purchasing the cheaper items such as penny toys and the popular material created to replace the trash literature – middle-class anxiety did not hinder making a profit from working-class money. For working-class children who were, unwilling or unable, to access childhood playthings and literature with military or imperialist themes middle-class imperialists the working classes only needed to them to understand that empire made the metropole great and to believe they benefited from it. Despite attempts to ensure working-class support for empire-building it was not universally successful, as this thesis has discussed in Chapter One, working-class people were aware of that they were working for the benefit of the working class, and some considered themselves outside the imperialists project.

This thesis has demonstrated that empire and the military did invade middle-class childhoods in Britain and Germany, often by the invitation of the consumer. The success of this is difficult to quantify, however, the extent of the availability of material about the military and empire is evidence in the range and variety of cultural artifacts and literature researched for this thesis. The production of this material was driven by consumer demand, and this demand is indication of a high level of interest from those who chose to purchase these products. The demand for toys, games, and books which catered for this middle-class demand was met by manufacturers and publishers who, as typically middle class themselves, supplied products which reflected the same expectations and views on empire and the military. Empire and the military appealed to the middle-class populations of Britain and Germany, the literature and playthings that were purchased for children did not create this interest. However, it did ensure continued interest and support and educated and reinforced the ways in which it was deemed correct to do so, as well as ways in which young Britons and Germans could actively engage in it.

By looking through childhood, this thesis has shown that British and German middle-class society between 1880-1918 both harboured extensive sentiment and support for the military and

imperialism. The presence and number of cultural artifacts researched support the argument for 'cultural militarisation' as presented by Jörn Leonhard, Jakob Vogel, Thomas Rohkrämer, and Matthew Johnson.¹ They also demonstrate that high levels of militarisation of this cultural type were present in both British and German society. Although the way in which the militaries are portrayed is different in both empires, the level of interest, enthusiasm, and support is comparable. When support for imperialism is also viewed along with militarism it is evident that Britain demonstrates higher levels for support and enthusiasm for imperialism and the military's involvement in it – and frequently this involved high levels of jingoism.

Similarities can also be observed in the rhetoric that justified imperialism and is a reflection of a European attitude to colonialism and the populations of the colonies. The propagation of the idea of 'the white man's burden' and the racialisation of the colonial populations was also a shared experience of Britain and Germany, as were the challenges to that ideology when confronted with defeat and opposition by the armies of these 'inferior' peoples. The response is a violent exaggeration of the savageness of the enemy and the terrain which, in response, required a religious and physically strong European soldiery that could overcome the 'savage' with a sense of duty and technology.

The extent of success in the use of children's playthings and literature to promote support for, to justify, and to inform children in the actions of their country and to educate them in the correct way to engage with it is put to the test in August 1914. At the outbreak of the First World War, the cultural militarisation of British and German society appeared successful when young middle-class men volunteered for service in numbers never witnessed before. As this thesis identifies in Chapter Five, the toy industries and publishers in both Britain and Germany take responsibility for this 'success' in encouraging support for the war. They also take the decision to openly support and encourage participation in the war, as well as openly declaring that they would be actively supporting the war - although profit and the expansion of the industry was still the main focus. Again, throughout the early part of the war both empires demonstrate a similar level of militarism in childhood materials that reflect the sentiment in the wider society, and in the same way as evident in the pre-war children's materials, the British examples often display a more jingoist message compared to the German examples.

¹ See: Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora: Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Munich, 2014), p.33; Thomas Rohkrämer, *Der Militarismus der „kleinen Leute“: Die Kriegervereine im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1871-1914* (De Gruyter, 1990), pp.37-55; Jakob Vogel, *Nationsein im Gleichschritt: Der Kult der Nation in Waffen“ in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871-1914* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), pp.279-91; and Matthew Johnson, *Militarism and the British Left, 1902-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Such active support of the war is evident in both British and German material from the latter half of the war when they produced material that supported the calls for continued sacrifice and a commitment to one's duty to finish the task. From late 1916 the literature especially is used to maintain support for the war and to ensure young men did their duty- often by encouraging girls and young women to shame them into doing so. The written material also assigned blame for the conflict to justify the need to continue fighting. British children could read about German atrocities in Belgium, and their counterparts in Germany were instructed on how Britain betrayed Germany in 1914 and undermined European racial superiority by 'unfairly' using colonial troops on European battlefields. This content clearly demonstrates how children's literature was directly used as propaganda during the First World War, this was distinctly different from how the military were present in pre-1914 publications.

Ultimately, the reason children's literature needed to be explicitly used as pro-war propaganda was the failure of the progress of the war to keep the promises of cultural and military superiority that the pre-war material had argued and shown its readers and players was the case. The games, toys, and literature researched for this thesis clearly reflect a level of disillusionment within the middle-classes (who, as children, would have read and played with much of the material in this thesis) in Britain and Germany at the progress of the war that needed to be addressed. Victory in 1918 meant that British society recovered from this disillusionment, although the increased participation and sacrifice of the middle-class in the conflict means that those young men and women who answered the call to duty present in children's material felt that the state was indebted to them. The pre-war British middle-classes had been seriously diminished by the First World War which had relied heavily on them. As John Stevenson argued, British middle-class men were more likely to be enlisted to fight because many working-class jobs, such as farming and mining, were 'Protected Occupations', Stevenson's research puts the discrepancy between the two classes as forty percent of 'professional men' enlisted compared to twenty-five percent of miners.² The losses of young middle-class men meant that a 'new', larger middle class appeared as working-class men moved into the vacant professional occupations including being trained and commissioned as British Army officers.³ This, as Marwick argues, blurred the barriers between the classes with the new middle class growing from a pre-war figure of twelve percent of the population to twenty-two percent of the 1921 population.⁴

² John Stevenson, *British Society 1914-45* (Pelican, 1984), p.95

³ See: Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (Macmillan, 1965), pp.302-3

⁴ *Ibid*, p.303

For Germans, defeat did not end disillusionment in civilian society or within the military and the consequences of this would lead to revolutionary violence throughout Germany. Middle-class Germans who had believed in a similar narrative of military and cultural superiority as present in Britain were 'desperate and bewildered' at the news of Germany's defeat.⁵ German society and the military showed little of the 'blurring' of class lines as working-class veterans formed revolutionary soldier's councils and increasingly mutinied or deserted the trenches leaving the Prussian-German officer corps an 'officer corps without troops'.⁶ By 1917, in a similar response to that of the British to the mounting losses of the traditional class of officers, the German officer corps turned to commissioning middle-class men, including those from the lower middle class – to ensure there was no blurring of the class barriers the training included "inoculating' officers with the aristocratic 'caste consciousness'.⁷ It was these disillusioned middle-class men who formed the paramilitary units that destabilised democracy in Weimar Germany, the Right-wing *Freikorps* (Free Corps) were the most well-known of these and were used by the new socialist-led German government to suppress left-wing mercenaries.⁸ However, they were not the only paramilitary group in post-war Germany, nor the most numerous, other disillusioned and politically motivated young men fought in the streets in the left-wing *Frontkämpferbund* (Red Front), and republican *Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold* (Reichs Banner Black-Red-Gold).⁹

Despite popular myth, post-war paramilitaries in Germany were not exclusively formed of demoralised and brutalised veterans of the trenches, although some such as the 'Iron Division' were formed of veterans, recent research has demonstrated that the majority of members of paramilitary groups in Weimar Germany had not seen active service in the First World War.¹⁰ If not veterans, these men must have been the young civilians that had watched, read about, and played out the conflict between 1914-1918.

⁵ Jeremy Noakes & Geoffrey Pridham (eds.), *Nazism 1919-1945, Volume 1: The Rise to Power 1919-1934, A Documentary Reader* (Exeter University Press, 1982), p.8

⁶ Benjamin Ziemann, *Violence and the German Soldier in the Great War: Killing, Dying, Surviving* (Bloomsbury, 2013), p.121

⁷ Alexander Watson, "Junior Officership in the German Army during the Great war, 1914-1918", *War in History*, Vol.14, No.4 (November 2007), pp.429-53, p.437

⁸ Noakes & Pridham, *Nazism*, p.8

⁹ For more on paramilitaries in Weimar Germany see: James Diehl, *Paramilitary Politics in Weimar Germany* (Indiana University Press, 1977); Nigel Jones, *The Birth of the Nazis: How the Freikorps blazed a trail for Hitler* (Constable & Robinson, 2004); and David Ellis, "Zeitfreiwillige and Freikorpskämpfer: Paramilitaries of Early Weimar Germany" (unpublished PhD. Dissertation, Florida State University, 2019)

¹⁰ Christoph Koenig, "Loose Cannons: War Veterans and the Erosion of Democracy in Weimar Germany", *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol.83, No.1 (March 2023), pp.167-202, pp.172-3

The children that went to school, read the books and periodicals, and played with the toys and games between 1880-1918 would become the adults that lived and worked a turbulent and violent Europe between 1919-1945. They were the pro-imperialists that continued to justify, maintain, and defend the British Empire, or call for the return of German colonies. They were the disillusioned and angry young men that joined the NSDAP and the *Sturmabteilung* or the Communist militias.¹¹ They were the politicians and officers who led their nations in the lead up to the outbreak of another world war, and those who fought across the world between 1939-1945. In addition, the justification for imperialism, based on the racialisation of the world's populations, and depicted in the negative and often violent stereotypes found in the children's materials continued to influence government policy and cultural views after 1918 – and still do to this day.

The invasion of childhood by the military and empire was successful, it encouraged a middle-class who supported and were enthusiastic about imperialism and the role the military played in it to not only actively participate in maintaining and defending empires but also to flock to the recruiting stations when war broke out in 1914. The short-term consequences of this were a fundamental change in British society due to the losses of British middle-class men and a fracturing of German society on the interwar years that were the foundations of the rise of extremist parties in Germany that contributed to undermining of the Weimar Republic and led to the Nazi Party seizing power in 1933.

The military's invasion of childhood did not finish in 1918, nor 1945. The Nazi party made extensive use of toys and games as propaganda in the Third Reich, and throughout the twentieth century wargames, toy soldiers, toy weapons, and games remained popular.¹² In post-Second World War Britain the nation's involvement, and victory in the conflict became an important part of the historical narrative of the nation and alongside books, movies, and history documentaries toys and games continued to be used to inform and reinforce the narrative. Games such as *The Battle of Britain* (TSR, 1970), *Escape from Colditz* (Gibson, 1973), and *Axis and Allies* (Milton Bradley, 1981) ensure Britain's involvement in the war was highlighted and recreated in homes, and toys such as packets of plain green plastic soldiers, Action Man, and countless toy weapons kept the image of the Second World War 'Tommy' in children's lives. In the twenty-first century video games are at the vanguard of this invasion and are used to recruit into the militaries of the western world and into military intelligence.¹³

¹¹ Noakes & Pridham, *Nazism*, pp.50-52

¹² See: Joanna Bourke, *Wounding the world: How Military Violence and War-Play Invade our Lives* (Virago, 2014).

¹³ For examples see: James McMahon, "The US military is using video games and esports to recruit – it's downright immoral", Independent.co.uk, 23 November 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/army-military-video-game-fortnite-battlegrounds-call-duty-esports-defence-a8648656.html> (accessed 22nd April

The humble toy soldier is still serving in the campaign to ensure the military keeps its presence in childhood. Many twentieth-century conflicts spawn toys that enable children to recreate the conflicts they see on the television, news, and social media platforms. It is clear that the military will continue its occupation of childhood for the foreseeable future, especially after the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in early 2022.¹⁴

Open Russian state aggression towards its neighbour, and increasingly threatening rhetoric towards the European and North American states that support and arm Ukraine, has heightened fears about the condition and preparedness of states and their militaries to fight a war.¹⁵ One of the common anxieties found in the press, especially from the political right, is a perceived unwillingness amongst the nation's youth to fight for their country. In Germany a recent survey indicated that only thirty percent of the population would fight to defend the nation;¹⁶ in Britain a similar survey reports that a mere seven percent of eighteen- to forty-year-old Britons would freely volunteer to fight in a world war, this increases to twenty-one percent if service was compulsory.¹⁷ For some commentators this reluctance to fight is due to a lack of pride in the nation and its history created by a 'woke' agenda and unpatriotic teaching – as the *Telegraph* asks, why would someone fight for a country they have been taught to hate?¹⁸ For Simon Heffer, the *Telegraph* journalist, the fact that children are made aware of the legacies of imperialism and slavery is the root of this reluctance to fight for one's nation. Instead, he argues, they need to be taught to be proud of the British involvement in the First World War, or

2024); and Martin Hodgson, "Secret service turns to video games to recruit future spies", *theguardian.com*, 18th October 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2007/oct/18/4> (accessed 22nd April 2024).

¹⁴ For examples from the Ukraine-Russia conflict see: Les Newsom, "Toys and European Wars", *ucleuropeblog.com*, 4th August 2023, <https://ucleuropeblog.com/2023/08/04/toys-and-european-wars/> (accessed 22nd April 2024)

¹⁵ For media commentary in Britain see: Johnathan Beale, 'UK must be ready to fight war in three years, says Army head', *BBC News*, 23 July 2024, www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c035d05je2jo (accessed 28th September 2024); Stuart Crawford, 'UK 'not prepared' to fight ground war in Europe', *UK Defence Journal*, 25 July 2024, <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/uk-not-prepared-to-fight-ground-war-in-europe/> (accessed 28th September 2024); Edward Malnick, 'Britain's 'hollowed out' Armed Forces not ready to fight Russia', *Telegraph*, 4 February 2024, www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/02/04/britains-hollowed-out-armed-forces-not-ready-fight-russia/ (accessed 28th September 2024). For media commentary about Germany see: Kate Connolly, 'German defence minister says military is unfit for problems Europe faces', *Guardian*, 25 Jan 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/25/german-defence-minister-boris-pistorius-military-unfit-europe-problems> (accessed 28th September 2024); and Richard Connor, 'German defense minister calls for war readiness by 2029', *DW*, 5/6/2024, <https://www.dw.com/en/german-defense-minister-calls-for-war-readiness-by-2029/a-69276059>, (accessed 28th September 2024).

¹⁶ Christoph Hasselbach, 'Germans not worried about war – but should they be?', *DW*, 22/5/24, <https://www.dw.com/en/germans-not-worried-about-war-but-should-they-be/a-69148738>, (accessed 28th September 2024)

¹⁷ <https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/48473-more-than-a-third-of-under-40s-would-refuse-conscription-in-the-event-of-a-world-war> (accessed 28th September 2024)

¹⁸ Simon Heffer, 'Young people will not fight to save a country they've been taught to hate', *Telegraph*, 8th September 2024, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/09/08/young-people-will-not-save-a-country-been-taught-to-hate, (accessed 28th September 2024)

the liberation of Bergen Belsen.¹⁹ As in the late nineteenth century, those who believe that young people should be willing to 'do their duty' think the solution is an education that promotes the 'correct' way to view the nation's history²⁰ – a policy that the British Government has promoted for over a decade and a half.²¹

Given that the British and German surveys above are evidence of a very low level of enthusiasm to fight for a nation it can be accepted that the invasion of childhood by the military is not as successful as it has been in the past. One reason is the increasing number of other influences and sources of information young people now have access to. Childhood is no longer a protected space that parents and educators have guardianship over and a monopoly on the ability to influence it, access to smart phones and social media effectively dilutes the influence of a single narrative. Of course, the unfiltered influences are a source of concern to adults who wish to 'protect' children from material they regard as inappropriate, much in the same way as early twentieth century moralists and publishers viewed penny dreadfuls and trash literature – however, now much of this 'trash' material is produced by antagonistic states who create social media content and attempt to recreate conflict in online games.

Karl Liebknecht's observation that 'He who has the youth, has the future' is still relevant in the twenty-first century and the battle for control of childhood will continue. The literature, games, toys, and now digital materials produced for the consumption of children will continue to be in the frontline for the struggle to influence and educate a nation's citizens and provide us a lens to view society through.

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ Hamish de Bretton-Gordon, 'Young people should welcome National Service', *Telegraph*, 29 May 2024, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/05/28/national-service-lockdown-furlough-thank-you, (accessed 28th September 2024)

²¹ For the British Conservative Government's policy and attitude towards History in school curriculum see: Matthew Watson, 'Michael Gove's war on professional historical expertise: conservative curriculum reform, extreme whig history and the place of imperial heroes in modern multicultural Britain', *British Politics* 15 (2020), pp.271-90; and Charlotte Higgins, 'Rightwing historian Niall Ferguson given school curriculum role', *Guardian*, 30th May 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/may/30/niall-ferguson-school-curriculum-role>, (accessed 28th September 2024).

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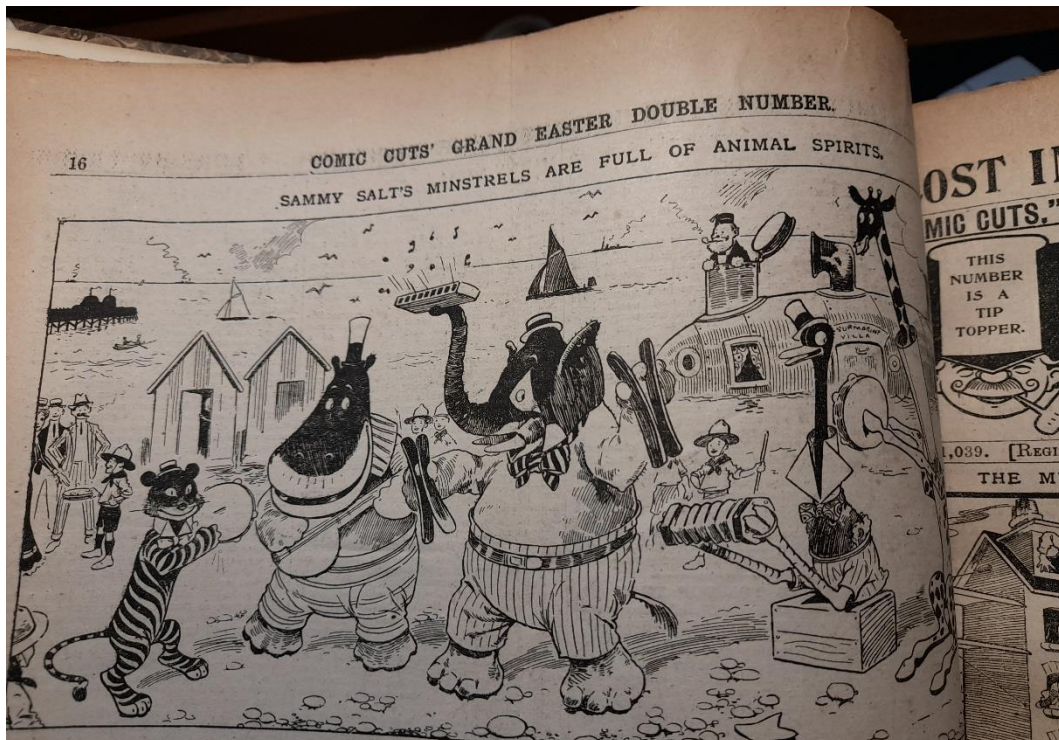
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Appendix A – Comic Cuts



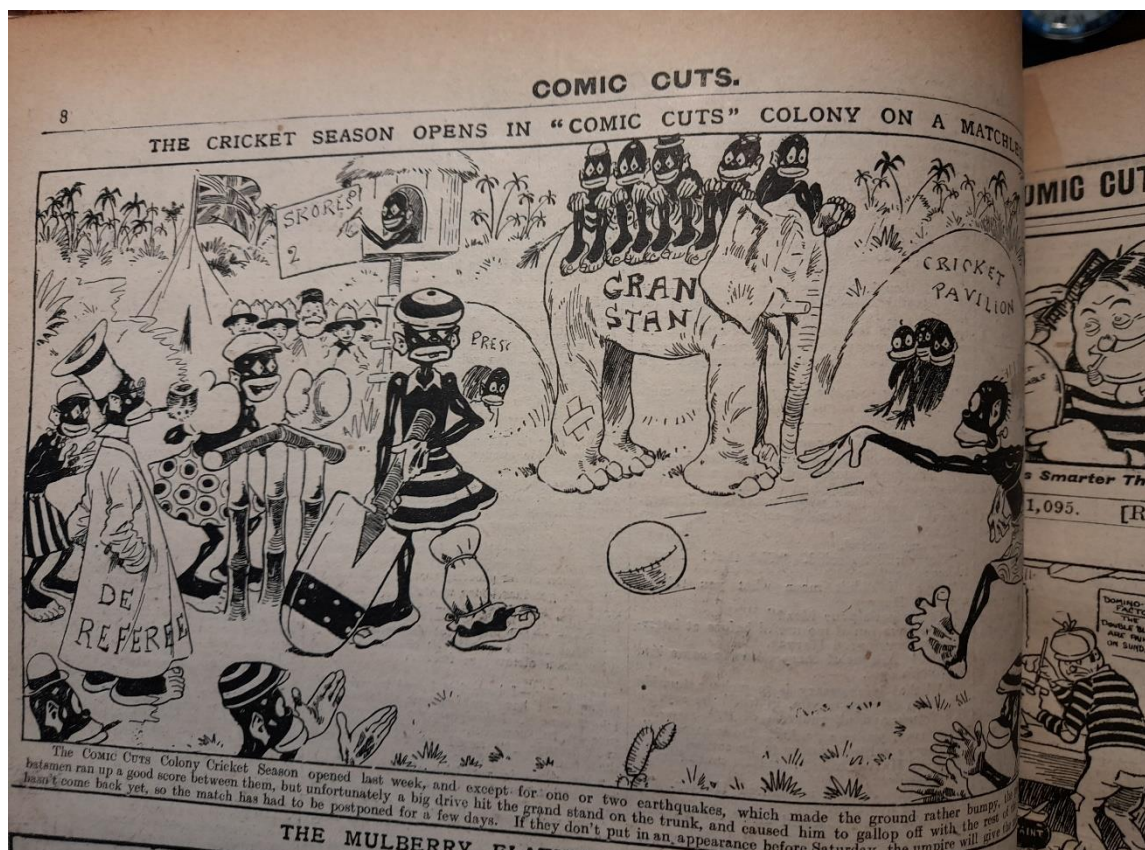
"Sammy Salt's Minstrels are Full of Animal Spirits", in *Comic Cuts*, No.1038 (London, 9th April 1910), p.16



"COMIC CUTS" COLONY FIRE BRIGADE TO THE RESCUE", in *Comic Cuts*, No.1090 (London, 8th April 1911), p.8



"THE "COMIC CUTS" COLONY ARISTOCRACY NOW GALLOP IN THE ROW" in *Comic Cuts*, No.1091 (London, 15th April 1911), p.8



"THE CRICKET SEASON OPENS IN "COMIC CUTS" COLONY ON A MATCHLEG" in *Comic Cuts*, No.1095 (London, 13th May 1911), p.8



"THE "COMIC CUTS" COLONY SURGERY STARTS OPERATIONS THIS WEEK" in *Comic Cuts*, No.1096, (London 18th May 1911), p.8



"THE "COMIC CUTS" COLONY SURGERY STARTS OPERATIONS THIS WEEK" in *Comic Cuts*, No.1096 (London, 25th May 1911), p.8

Appendix B – Toy German Soldiers in Camp Settings

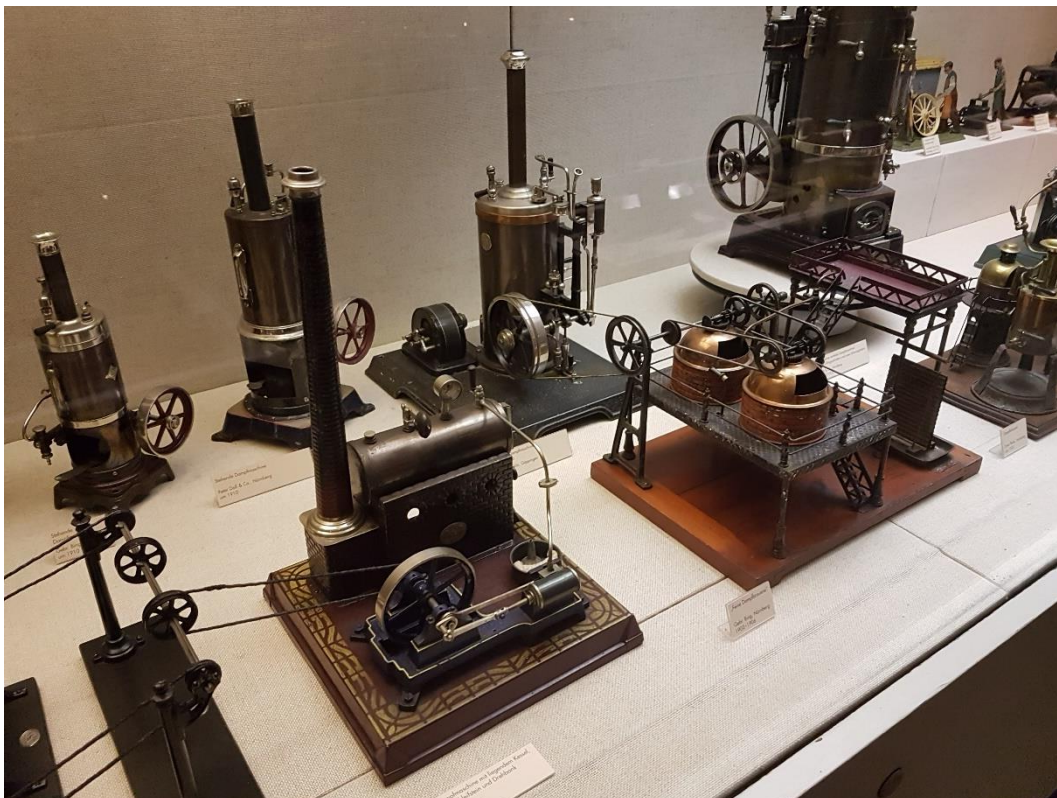
All images are of Elastolin toy soldiers produced in Germany 1914-1916. Images from Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum, Nuremberg.



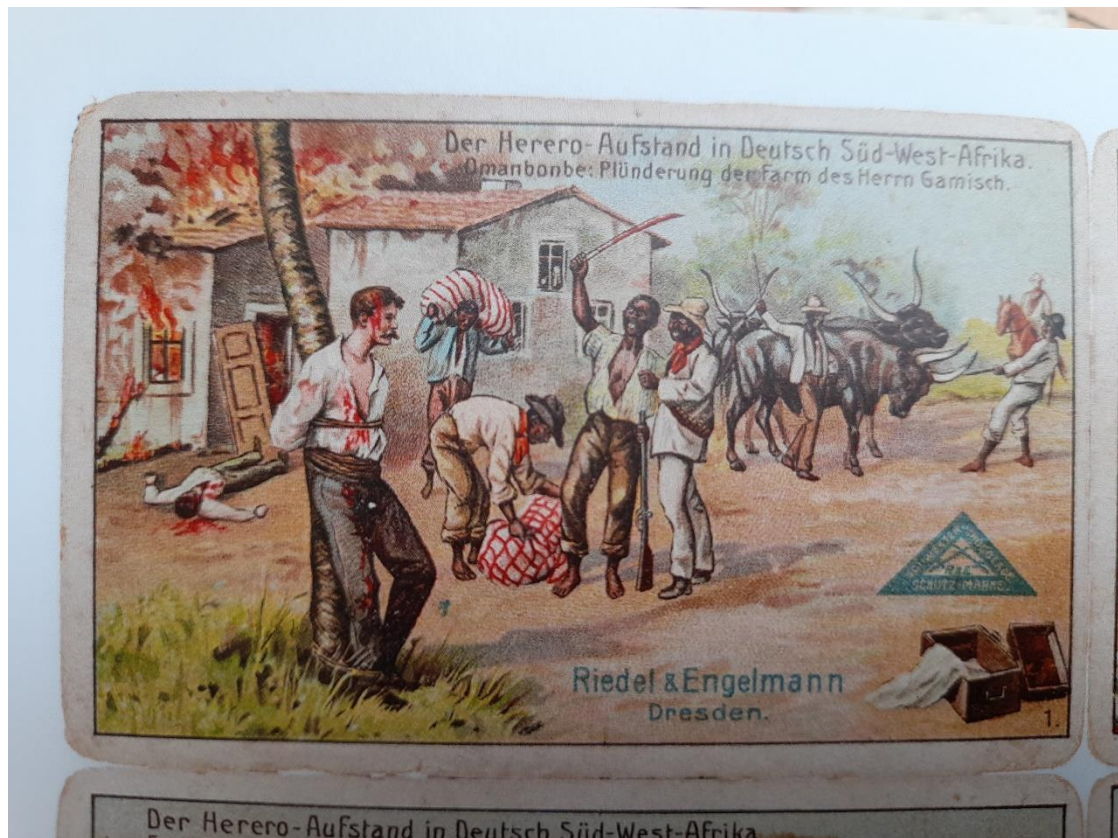


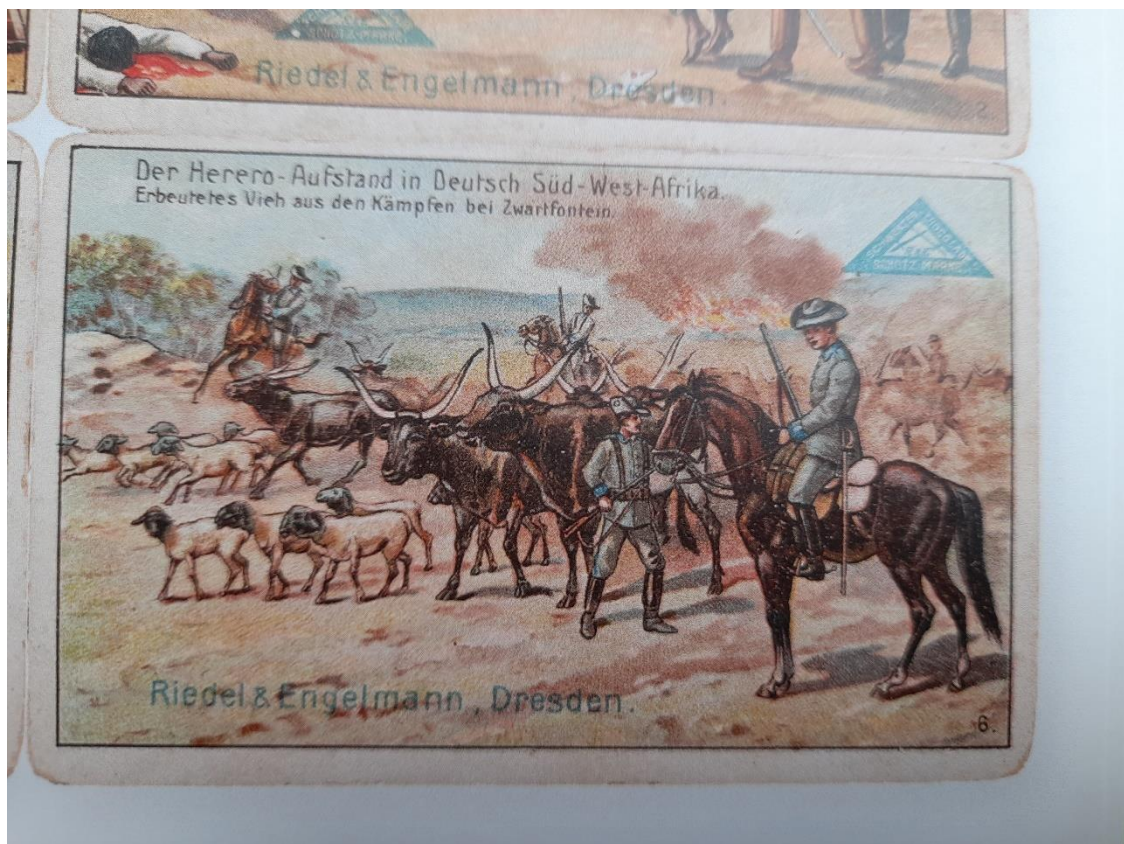
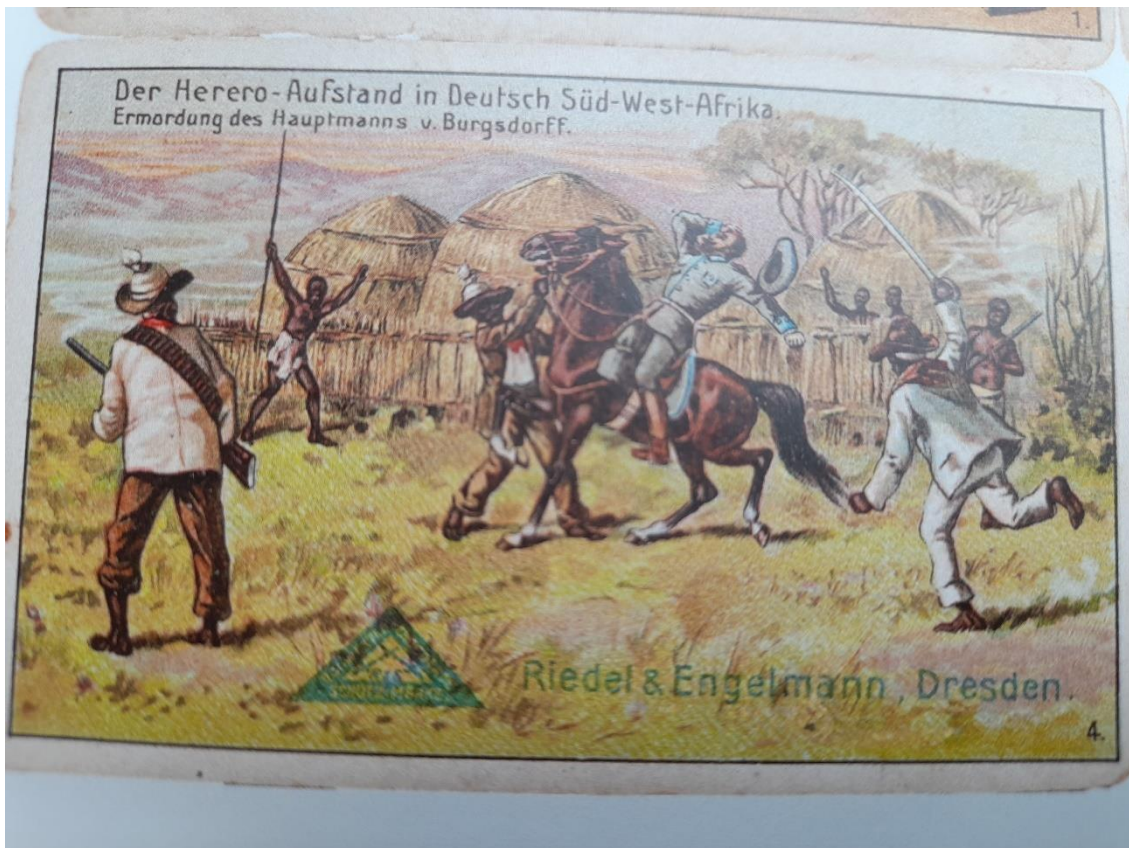
Appendix C – Miniature Breweries

All images are of miniature steam-powered breweries produced in Germany between 1880-1914. Images by author from the collections of the Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum, Nuremberg.



Appendix D – Collectable cards depicting scenes from the Herero Uprising





Images by author, from the collections of the Deutsche Spielzeugmuseum, Nuremberg.