

Welcome to Draycot.com

This site contains two articles on the representation of 'self' in autobiographical writing. After a short introduction to the four autobiographical media reviewed here and the nature of the narrating 'I', I discuss a private soldier's records of four years' service on the western front during World War One.

Two questions are addressed: 'How much and in what ways are the contents influenced by their creator's purpose and the period when they were produced?' and 'How and in what ways do the different media reveal different facets of their creator's identity as producer and subject?' These questions are discussed in:

['Memoir & Sketches'](#)
and
['Diaries & Photographs'](#)

My study demonstrates that publishing on the World Wide Web offers many advantages for the 21st century scholar (see ['The Four Media'](#)).

~ Jane Mattisson, Senior Lecturer in English, Kristianstad University, Sweden

[Click here to start.](#)

The Four Media

Draycot'sⁱ memoir and sketches constitute narratives with a specific purpose, namely to put an end to war (memoir) and assist soldiers in the field (sketches). They employ words and symbols that are recognised and interpreted by the reader and both narratives require careful revision. The diaries and photographs, on the other hand, are slices of time and space that accept 'now'; they may or may not be edited or annotated. While the memoir and sketches provide a coherent story, the diaries and photographs are snapshots without context.

The different representations of 'self' in the four media are revealed to particularly good effect when published electronically. Images can be enlarged to display differences in handwriting, as well as revisions and/or additions. Hyperlinks provide instant additional contextual information and can include other media such as film. Texts can easily be compared, printed and annotated by the reader, and recurring features of texts (including repetition of key words or phrases, specific use of literary devices such as metaphor or simile, and unusual application of punctuation marks such as question or exclamation marks) can be identified more easily than in printed sources. Finally, texts can be revised on a regular basis, incorporating new insights and research.

Electronic publication is an excellent option when geographical distance or time constraints make it impossible to consult documents at first-hand. Researchers can discuss the same text simultaneously and irrespective of physical location. A website also offers greater flexibility than publication in e-journals because it enables one to enlarge images separately, allowing the scholar to work between both text and image; e-journals, on the other hand, use PDF files, where the entire file must be enhanced. This makes it difficult to view both text and image at the same time. The credibility of the World Wide Web as a scholarly tool has increased greatly in the past few years. Growing numbers of scholars are realising that the ideals of scholarship are more quickly achieved in this environment, particularly the principle that scholarly response should drive and refine one's research.ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Draycot preferred to spell his name with a single 't' but on occasions, and for no apparent reason, he used double 'tt'. Here, single 't' is used throughout. Draycot does not address the difference in spelling in either his diaries or memoir.

ⁱⁱ I receive between three and five e-mails a week from visitors to this website. Many come from scholars who make helpful comments on my articles, give suggestions for further reading and inform me of interesting conferences and symposia. The World Wide Web is becoming a significant arena for the dissemination of knowledge for different kinds of users. This has prompted important research into how it is perceived as a source of knowledge by both general users and scholars. A good place to start is 'the Web Credibility Project' at Stanford University. This addresses such questions as: What causes people to believe (or not believe) what they find on the World Wide Web? What strategies do users employ in evaluating the credibility of online sources? What contextual and design factors influence these assessments and strategies? How and why are credibility evaluation processes on the Web different from those made in face-to-face human interaction, or in other offline contexts? For further information on the project and its relevance for the academic credibility of online publications, see [Stanford Web Credibility Research](#). Last accessed on 5 April 2012.

The Four Media - Part Two

The World Wide Web requires viewers to navigate websites by clicking on hyperlinks that reveal new features and facts. This process facilitates self-reflection as the scholar considers the processes required to uncover the ‘self’ of the text. ‘The viewer acknowledges that she is in the presence of a medium and learns through acts of mediation ... the experience of the medium is itself an experience of the real’.ⁱ This is a consequence of what Bolter and Grusin term ‘remediation’, that is the publication of old texts in new media.

Remediation offers special advantages for the scholar of autobiography because it increases our awareness of the kinds of questions we ask of the text, thereby enabling us to shift our attention to the process as well as the final product. This gives us insights into two distinct but complementary processes: how the creator of the text acted *upon* as well as *in* the text, and how we analyse autobiographical texts.

By focusing on both process and product, it becomes possible to identify the ‘I’ behind and in the text. In the two articles published here, two forms of the narrative ‘I’ are singled out for special attention: the ‘narrating’ and the ‘narrated’. The narrated ‘I’ represents two different kinds of hero: the memoir, sketches and diaries depict a soldier in bondage, bravely struggling for survival but powerless to influence his circumstances. The photographs, on the other hand, present a hero who transcends his situation. He is a sergeant, in control of others as well as his environment, and invariably the central figure. He is almost always in the foreground.

Draycot’s representations of war should be viewed as fiction, not least because, as autobiographical texts, they are designed to conceal as well as reveal.ⁱⁱ The exclusion of the element of fear is a particularly pertinent example.ⁱⁱⁱ As will be discussed in the ‘Narrating “I”’ section, the memoir, sketches and diaries belong to the low-mimetic mode of fiction as defined by Northrop Frye, while the photographs belong to the myth/romance mode. The narrating and narrated ‘I’ of the different modes reflect what ‘was’ as well as what ‘could have been’. Both are rooted in disappointment. All four representations were preserved with pride by their creator and, with the exception of the photographs, underwent several revisions until very late in life.

The Four Media - Part Three

An earlier version of this website, designed for a more general (non-academic) public, was published in 2007. The present website takes advantage of recent technical developments in Web design. It also benefits from recent research into how we read a web page, as it incorporates the results of eye-tracking and text-chunking studies,^{iv} as well as modern ideas on information architecture, including how to lay out information in a user-friendly manner.^v

ⁱ Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999).

ⁱⁱ ‘Autobiography and the Cultural Moment: A Thematic, Historical, and Bibliographical Introduction’, in James Olney (Ed.), *Autobiography. Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

ⁱⁱⁱ Fear is an important element in many of the war memoirs, both earlier and later. See, for example, Captain A.O. Pollard, *Fire-Eater. The Memoirs of a V.C.* (London: Hutchinson, 1932); Wilfred R. Bion, *War Memoirs 1917-1919*, edited by Francesca Bion (London: Karnac Books, 1997); and Harry Patch, *The Last Fighting Tommy. The Life of Harry Patch, the Only Surviving Veteran of the Trenches* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008). Further examples of fear are discussed in the ‘Autobiography, Identity and Fiction’ section, footnote ii.

^{iv} Jakob Nielsen and Kara Pernice, *Eyetracking Web Usability* (Berkeley, CA: New Riders, 2009).

^v Patrick J. Lynch and Sarah Horton, *Web Style Guide, 3rd Edition: Basic Design Principles for Creating Web Sites* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2009).

Recent technological developments have also been introduced to allow, for example, for the application of screen readers, that is, web browsers for the visually disabled. Images have been reduced for speedy downloading (these are still available in full size by clicking on them). Text coding has been simplified to facilitate efficient downloading of text pages. The visitor's forum in the original site has been removed in accordance with modern thinking about the layout and content of scholarly sites. Textual revisions in content and style have also been incorporated, most notably in the section on memory (in the article on memory and sketches,) and in the theoretical section on diaries and photographs in the second article.

Secondary sources published after 2007 have also been taken into consideration. At the request of scholars, I have added a section providing an annotated list of recommended scholarly works on autobiography, selected memoirs and diaries from World War One, as well as articles and books discussing the advantages of electronic publication. My website has given rise to invitations to give public talks at among others, the [University of British Columbia](#), Vancouver, Canada; the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#), Vancouver; [Capilano University](#), Vancouver; the [British Columbia Genealogical Society](#), Vancouver; [Ningbo University](#), China; and [Kristianstad County Museum](#), Kristianstad, Sweden. The website itself is used as teaching material on an archive management course at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#) and is included in the reading list for an introductory course on autobiography at Capilano University, Vancouver. The texts are the culmination of three years' research on the life and writings of Walter MacKay Draycot. I gratefully acknowledge the contributions of John Stuart, M.A., Curator of the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#), who took all the digital photographs reproduced here. My sincere thanks also go to Teri Schamp-Bjerede, M.Sc., who has re-designed the present website to take advantage of new developments in electronic publication and [W3C standards](#).

Thanks also go to Captain Colin M. Stevens, CD, Canadian Army, Reserve Intelligence Officer for the [Seaforth Highlanders of Canada](#), for invaluable assistance with interpreting Draycot's sketches. Finally, I wish to thank the [The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education](#) for its generous grant, the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada (where as visiting scholar I was given access to valuable archival material), and [Kristianstad University](#) (where I am a Senior Lecturer in English) for their generous support of my project.

The Narrating and Narrated 'I'

Walter MacKay Draycot served in the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment between 1914 and 1917. The Draycot collection is particularly interesting to scholars of autobiography owing to its unusual richness: in addition to a complete set of diaries (1907–1985) covering Draycot's life in Canada and participation in World War One, and a comprehensive memoir, it contains many well-preserved sketches and photographs. A comparison of the textual and pictorial media reveals different and conflicting facets of the identity of the narrating and narrated 'I'.

Autobiography, identity and fiction

Oliver Sacks argues that 'each of us constructs and lives a "narrative," and ... this narrative is us, our identities ... for each of us is a biography, a story'.ⁱ Textual and pictorial media represent different modes of referentiality that present opportunities for, as well as limitations to the enactment of 'self';ⁱⁱ all autobiographical writing is to a greater or lesser extent fiction.

In each of the four autobiographical media, Draycot is a hero: he demonstrates bravery and suffers ordeals (memoir and diaries), produces detailed sketches close to enemy lines (sketches and topographical charts) and is in the foreground of the action but successfully eludes death (photographs). He is a hero without fear. Yet the types of hero represented in Draycot's narratives belong to different modes of fiction as proposed by Northrop Frye (*Anatomy of Criticism*) and later adopted by the World War One scholar Paul Fussell (*The Great War and Modern Memory*). Frye defines these modes in terms of the hero's power of action: if this is greater than ours, it is classified as myth or romance; if it is similar, it belongs to the low-mimetic mode of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel; if the hero's power is less than others', it belongs to the ironic mode, which is characterised by bondage and suffering and relies on demonic imagery. The memoir, diary and charts are on the knife-edge between the low-mimetic and ironic modes; the photographs of Draycot (as opposed to those taken by him), on the other hand, belong to the myth/romance mode.

The 'I' of Autobiographical Narrative

The 'autos' is the 'I' that awakens to its own being. It determines the nature of the autobiography, as it half discovers, half creates itself. The 'bios' of an autobiography is what the 'I' makes of it. In the finished work, however, neither the 'autos' nor the 'bios' is there at the very beginning as a known 'self' or a history that can be resurrected. It is in the act of writing itself, the third element of autobiography, that the 'self' and the life, 'complexly intertwined and entangled, take on a certain form, assume a particular shape and image, and endlessly reflect that image back and forth between themselves as between two mirrors'.ⁱⁱⁱ

It is how the 'I' acts upon the text as well as in it that is in focus here, as Draycot's texts are viewed from the perspective of process as well as product. As autobiographical scholars, we have access to different versions of the

ⁱ Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (New York: Summit, 1985), 105.

ⁱⁱ Timothy Dow Adams, *Light Writing and Life Writing: Photography in Autobiography* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xxi.

ⁱⁱⁱ James Olney, 'Autobiography and the Cultural Moment', in James Olney (ed.), *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 3–28 at 22.

creator/subject. These may be termed the real 'I', the narrating 'I', the narrated 'I' and the ideological 'I'.^{iv} The real or historical 'I' is the soldier who signed up in 1914 and whose records are available from the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment; he is the fifty-three-year-old author whose name appears on the front cover of the memoir, a respected member of the Lynn Valley community, and a war veteran. The real 'I' is of special interest to the historian and biographer. Here, on the other hand, the focus is on the narrating and narrated 'I' as producer and product of a fictional, as opposed to historically verifiable 'self'.

The narrating 'I' is the teller of the narrative, the agent of discourse, who 'calls forth only that part of the experiential history linked to the story he is telling'.^v The narrating 'I' of the textual media describes a variety of roles with distinct duties, possibilities and limitations: he is a private soldier, regimental barber, sniper, Sergeant, and Acting Intelligence Officer, among others. His voice bears the authority of experience. The narrating 'I' of the textual media is the one to whom things are done, a pawn on the chessboard of war. He has a number, 883, and thus an identity, but no real power. It is probable that his lack of control over his destiny increased his sense of fear. The absence of the latter in the textual representations is thus all the more remarkable, unless we view it as part of the fictional purpose of the teller of the narrative.^{vi}

The narrating 'I' of the photographs, on the other hand, attempts to take charge of his destiny. He tells a story based more on myth than reality. His posture and facial expression give no indication of fear. He controls the characters that enter his story and what the viewer sees. He even provides annotations below and around the photographs to reinforce the image of the fearless hero who is in charge not only of himself but those around him.

The narrated 'I', or subject of history, is 'the version of the self that the narrating "I" chooses to constitute through recollection for the reader'.^{vii} Take the example of Draycot's sketches and topographical charts, the work of a trained, experienced and meticulous sketcher. Whenever the accuracy of his sketches was contested, Draycot was at pains to prove that they were faithful representations of reality. He was proud of his charts and sketches: they are important validations of the scope and importance of his intelligence work during the war, and excellent demonstrations of his rare sketching skill. They are also important indications of how he wished to be remembered: it was not only financial gain which led Draycot to sell his sketches to local and national museums; he wished to be seen as one of the great sketchers/topographers of the war.

While Draycot never believed that his memoir would be a significant source of income, he did hope that it would be published. A letter from the Regimental Adjutant of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment dated 18 June 1973 confirms that Draycot submitted his typewritten manuscript for publication in the Regiment's journal,

^{iv} Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 49–81.

^v *Ibid.*, 61.

^{vi} World War One memoirs by private soldiers contain many references to fear. Guy Chapman's *A Passionate Prodigality: Fragments of Autobiography* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1965; first published 1933) is a case in point. Chapman writes: 'I was loath to go [to the front]. I had no romantic illusions. I was not eager, or even resigned to self-sacrifice, and my heart gave back no answering throb to the thoughts of England. In fact, I was very much afraid; and again, afraid of being afraid, anxious lest I should show it' (13). Chapman's memoir contains several references to fear of combat. W.H.A. Groom, another World War One memoirist, describes the soldiers' fear as follows: 'For most of the time in the front line under fire the soldier is a frightened man and the glossy stories of patient cheerful front line soldiers dying gaily must be refuted' (*Poor Bloody Infantry: A Memoir of the First World War* (London: William Kimber, 1976), 20).

^{vii} Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography*, 60.

The Patrician (it appears that the application was subsequently rejected, as neither the complete memoir nor extracts from it were ever published). The different chapters create a picture of a soldier who always did his best, was not fully appreciated by others (especially, according to Draycot, by his commanding officers) and was denied the recognition he felt he so richly deserved.

A similar picture is presented in the diaries, which were the primary source of information for the memoir. Meanwhile, the different image of the narrated 'I' presented in the photographs is more readily accessible to the reader/viewer because it is more immediate and requires less effort to interpret. It is also more likely to be viewed as a faithful representation of the truth, as editing of photographs was in its infancy at the beginning of the twentieth century.

While the ideological 'I', namely the concept of 'self' culturally available to the narrator at the time of narration,^{viii} is beyond the scope of the present study, it will be briefly mentioned here for the sake of clarity. There was a particular notion in 1914 and 1937 as to how a soldier (1914) and ex-soldier (1937) should act.^{ix} However, with respect to the influence of the ideological 'I' on Draycot's writing, the evidence is scanty: few letters written by Draycot survive as they were kept in his house, which burned down before all his belongings could be transferred to the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#); and his diary entries for the post-war years are of a primarily practical and factual nature, dealing with everyday events rather than reflections on the nature of war and how to describe it (occasional references, on the other hand, are made to illnesses and nightmares, which Draycot relates to his experiences at the front, of which more later). Any discussion of the influence of the ideological 'I' on Draycot's writings must therefore be highly speculative and of limited value to the present discussion.

The 'I' of Websites

The 'I' in texts published on the Web is a product of remediation, i.e. 'the importation of earlier media into a digital space in order to critique and refashion them'.^x There are two fundamental aspects of remediation which influence how the reader perceives texts published in new media such as the World Wide Web: readers may focus on the texts presented and ignore the medium of representation (this is termed 'immediacy'), or the medium may draw attention to itself by requiring users to implement special functions such as clicking on images, scrolling, etc. (known as 'hypermediacy').^{xi} Both approaches appeal to the authenticity of experience, as the reader perceives the observed text or image as genuine. The 'I' of the autobiographical text is identical in both kinds of user, though the sense of immediacy is different.

For both users, Web images and texts are more than pictures: they are objects to be moved around and examined from all perspectives, thereby enhancing opportunities to critique both the content of the autobiographical text and

^{viii} Ibid., 61.

^{ix} Much interesting scholarly work has been done on the cultural background of World War One memoirs, most notably by Jay Winter (with Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)) and *Remembering War: The Great War Between Memory and History in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), and George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

^x Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999), 53.

^{xi} For a more detailed discussion of the concepts of 'immediacy' and 'hypermediacy', see *ibid.*, 20–64.

the process by which it was produced. Because website publication allows one to place different texts side by side, the various facets of the different forms of 'I' can be more easily revealed. While this site compares Draycot's memoirs with his sketches and charts, and his photographs with his diaries,^{xii} it would also be possible to compare the memoir and diaries, focusing on their accounts of battles, trench life, relations between soldiers and officers, etc.

Such a comparison would necessarily involve a greater emphasis on the issue of reliability – particularly the effects of memory – on the identity of the narrating and narrated 'I'. The photographs and sketches/charts could also be compared. This would entail focusing on Draycot's photographs of the environment rather than on those taken of and directed by him. The issue of practical relevance regarding the conduct of battle would overshadow any consideration of the identity of the narrating and narrated 'I'. The detail revealed and variety of comparisons made possible by the Web are thus useful measures of the possibilities as well as limitations of autobiographical texts as indicators of the different forms of the autobiographical 'I'.

Draycot's continued preoccupation with World War One

It is significant that Draycot continued into old age to see his identity in terms of his experiences and achievements in World War One. At the outbreak of World War Two, the photograph to the right was taken, presumably at the instigation of Draycot himself (this photograph is discussed in the section entitled '[Diaries & Photographs](#)'). It is Draycot's decision to 'keep out of it': he has done his duty, is in charge of his destiny and has proved his ability not only to his fellow countrymen but more importantly, to himself. World War Two is not his war. World War One, on the other hand, remained in his memory and thoughts until his death in 1985.

Walter MacKay Draycot. A short biography

In December 1983, at the age of 100, Draycot produced the Christmas card below to the right? for distribution to his friends and relatives. War is the dominant motif. His experiences as a marksman and photographer during the Boer War and World War One filled him with horror and continued to haunt him until his death. After his discharge from hospital in England in 1918, Draycot dedicated his life to peace. In his short autobiography, published in *Early Days in Lynn Valley*, he portrays himself as a loyal, talented and energetic soldier, as well as a sketcher/writer who has fulfilled his duty to his country. The paragraph on World War One (quoted on the following page of this short biography) is one of the longest in *Early Days in Lynn Valley*.

Draycot was born on 24 February 1883 in Belgrave, Leicestershire, England. He attended schools in Derby and Liverpool. His short autobiography does not include details of how he earned his living after leaving school. It does, however, record that he took part in the Boer War between 1901 and 1904, where he served as a member of the 60th Rifles and Engineers. As the second son, he could not inherit from his parents; he thus decided to emigrate. Responding to a recruitment campaign by the Canadian Pacific Railway, Draycot arrived in Canada in 1907. Railroad work was harder than he had expected, however, and after only a few months he decided to set up business

^{xii} The memoir and sketches, as already established, are similar in that they constitute narratives with a specific purpose, employ conventional devices (words and symbols, for example, that are recognised and interpreted by the reader) and require careful revision. The diaries and photographs, on the other hand, are slices of time and space which accept 'now' and are not designed to bring about change. Neither do they require revision. While the memoir and sketches provide a coherent story, the diaries and photographs are snapshots without context.

as a farmer/merchant in Fort William, Ontario. In 1910, he sold his 147-acre farm and used the proceeds to fund an eleven-month trip to England. It was during this period that he began to research his family history – a passion which remained with him until his death in 1985.

On returning to Canada in 1911, Draycot settled on the West Coast, as he found the mild climate particularly congenial. His first home was on Vancouver Island, where he ran a shoe-repair and taxidermy business. Later the same year, he visited Lynn Valley, on Vancouver's north shore, which became his home until his death in 1985. His autobiography describes his first impressions of the Valley:

There were the snow-capped and forested slopes of mountains, the rivers in which hundreds of salmon cavorted, trees of astounding height and girth, waterpools and the pools below were alive with leaping salmon, deep rock canyons that beckoned the venturesome, skidroads, and the main Tote-road, 'V' shaped flumes whose running waters floated shingle-bolts down to Moodyville area; bears, deer, cougar, racoon and the delightful squirrel. The 'baldheaded' eagle and smaller birds, guillemots, gulls, herons and passerines.^{xiii}

Biography - Part Two

In May 1912, Draycot bought three plots of land on what was later to become known as Draycot Road. Like other early pioneers, he had to rely on his own building skills; he was proud that he had built his home 'alone'. This ingenuity and independence were to serve him well on the western front.

Draycot's short autobiography contains the following summary of his career in World War One, written in the third person:

On the outbreak of the 1914–18 War he was back again in England with his old regiment. While waiting to be Commissioned as an officer he was claimed by Colonel Farquar of the Famous Princess Patricia's on the grounds he was a Canadian Citizen. His exploits have been written in an unpublished typed book. Appointed Military Topographer. Being the only exponent of that art in the Brigade of 4,000 men, he was sought by General Macdonnel for service in the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade. Both the Division and Corps wanted his services, but Macdonnel retained him. Appointed the only Official Sketcher in the Canadian Army with credentials. Thrice wounded. Arrested several times as a spy, when sketching. Twice 'gassed'; the last dose sent him to England where, after recovering, he conducted a school to teach officers the art of Military Sketching and Topography. After the War, some of his sketches were printed – see his book; it tells all.^{xiv}

As the son of working-class parents, Draycot had little chance of becoming an officer at the beginning of the war (the situation had changed by 1916 owing to the high mortality rate among officers). He was convinced, however, that his special qualifications and skills as a topographer warranted promotion. Nonetheless, his official rank by the end of the war remained 'Private', though he had been appointed both Corporal and Acting Intelligence Officer at

^{xiii} Walter MacKay Draycot, *Early Days in Lynn Valley* (North Vancouver, BC: District of North Vancouver, 2000), 26.

^{xiv} *Ibid.* 26.

different periods while on temporary loan to other regiments. Draycot deeply resented the fact that his temporary promotions never became permanent. As I argue in the section on the memoir and topographical charts, one of the reasons he wrote his memoir was to demonstrate that his qualifications, experience, skills and contributions to the war effort clearly justified a more senior rank than 'private'.

Many of the projects in which Draycot became involved on his return from the front were attempts to gain the public recognition he felt he had been denied during the war. He was, for example, president of various youth clubs and Chairman of the 5th Vancouver Boy Scout Committee for many years.

On 23 February 1923, Draycot was appointed Justice of the Peace, a position he held until 1975. As such, he was one of the most prominent members of the Lynn Valley community. He became the official historian of the Valley, recording its early history, the development of the lumber industry, the building of schools and the provision of services such as the fire department. He also documented the flora and fauna of the area. His maps are the earliest surviving records of the topography of the North Shore. He interviewed early pioneers, took photographs and contributed articles on the early history of the Valley and the North Shore to local newspapers.

For his services to the Lynn Valley Community, Draycot received 'the Lynn Valley Good Citizen of the Year' award in 1974. *Early Days in Lynn Valley* concludes with the following lines:

For his valuable contributions to the local community, Mr Draycot was honored as the Lynn Valley Good Citizen of the Year at the Lynn Valley Day Celebrations on May 18, 1974, when he received a commemorative plaque. His surname is perpetuated by the road he dwells on, thus – Draycot Road; also Draycot Place, Draycot Park and Draycot Gardens.^{xv}

Draycot died on 21 October 1985. A [statue](#) was erected in his memory on the corner of Lynn Valley Road and Mountain Highway, Lynn Valley, in November 1986. This website is dedicated to the memory of a soldier who made a difference both in war and peace.

^{xv} Ibid. 14.

The Memoir

Draycot began his memoir in 1937 (the diary entry for 20 October reads: 'I start to write my story of the Great War'). Entitled 'Pawn No. 883. Being the Adventures of a Pawn of War in the Affair of 1914–18. Recollections of My Activities during the First World War, 1914–1918', it took over a year to complete. Written by hand, it was subsequently typed by Draycot himself. Only parts of the hand-written script have survived. The primary purpose of the memoir is to reveal the horror and futility of war.

It is important to consider what differentiates the memoir from the other media discussed here. It emphasises the situation of the subject in a social environment, directing the reader's attention to the lives of others and how their actions influence the narrator. Lacking the interiority and subjectivity of other autobiographical texts, it features a subject that is constituted in the verbal statements and actions of others: the 'I' of the memoir is 'externalized and ... dialogical'.ⁱ Draycot's memoir is concerned with the influence of authority on the private soldier's actions. It contains repeated references to orders from above and reflections on the competence, or lack thereof, of the commanding officers. The narrated 'I' is a 'pawn' in the service of others, a number to be manipulated.

Memory is clearly an important factor in memoirs. It is no coincidence that Draycot subtitled his memoir 'Recollections of My Activities'. The capital letter in the possessive pronoun stresses that they are Draycot's recollections and no one else's. 'Pawn No. 883' is a series of reminiscences supported by his diary entries (of which more in the second article). It is an attempt to create a coherent story that makes sense of experiences and motives that appeared to be bizarre at best, and downright evil at worst.

Memories are 'records of how we have experienced events, not replicas of the events themselves'.ⁱⁱ The context in which we recall how we experience events is politically charged: which memories was Draycot 'permitted' to record? What did he forget or deliberately omit, and why? How did his intended readers (members of the Lynn Valley community in which he lived, and fellow ex-soldiers) influence the content and style of the memoir? How outspoken could he be about the conduct of others, especially that of his superior officers? While it is impossible to answer such questions without access to Draycot himself or his contemporaries, they should be borne in mind in discussing the fictional nature of his textual and pictorial representations. '

Draycot's recollections purport to be the truthful reflections of a private soldier. As Jean Norton Cru argues, military history has misrepresented reality through misguided motives of patriotism, glory and tradition: 'If anyone knows war, it is the lower ranks, from private to captain'.ⁱⁱⁱ The voice of the private soldier is absent from many historical accounts. Memoirs by famous public figures such as David Lloyd George (penned at the same time as Draycot's

ⁱ Lee Quinby, 'The Subject of Memoirs: The Woman Warrior's Technology of Ideographic Selfhood', in Daniel Schacter, *Searching for Memory: The Brain, Mind and the Past* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 297–320.

ⁱⁱ Daniel L. Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory* (Chicago: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 16.

ⁱⁱⁱ Jean Norton Cru, *War Books: A Study in Historical Criticism* (San Diego, CA: San Diego State University Press, 1985), 1 and 8.

memoir) were often written in the spirit of self-vindication rather than out of a desire for truthful documentation.^{iv} Meanwhile, official histories by commanding officers were criticised for their inaccuracies.

One such history is [Lord Beaverbrook's *Canada in Flanders*](#), published in 1917 (Draycot refers to Beaverbrook's memoir in 'Pawn No. 883'). Beaverbrook admits in his preface to the fifth edition that the earlier editions contained a number of factual errors. His response to the critics is interesting. He admits to methodological problems as he confesses 'it was not until long afterwards that it was possible to collect and collate the whole of the battalion diaries'. He acknowledges that Canada's involvement in Flanders was both 'great and confused', and, although fresh evidence had come to light, he decided against reconstructing his narrative in order to avoid spoiling 'whatever merit it may possess'.^v He confesses that even the new volume contains inaccuracies and that his account is in part fictional.

The Memoir - Part Two

Draycot's memoir is by his own definition a 'story' of his experiences during the war. It covers, in chronological order, his enlistment, journey to Europe, arrival in France, the battles in which he took part (Ypres, the Somme and Vimy Ridge in particular), his sick leave, and demobilisation in 1919. It is based in part on his diary entries but also on memory. In assessing the historical value of the memoir, it is necessary to take into consideration the state of his memory at the time of writing.

There is no reference to memory problems in Draycot's diaries or private letters; his official post-war records, on the other hand, make several references to 'loss of memory'. The Overseas Board Report of 3 July 1918, for example, includes a neurological report dated 1 February 1919 that describes Draycot as follows:

Patient is a man apparently in middle life who looks to be at least 5 years older than his stated age of 35. He has an anxious expression of face but colour is average. Looks somewhat reduced in flesh and is not very brisk in his movements. Intellect normal, memory poor (n.p.).

From 1919 onwards, Draycot's diaries make repeated references to physical and mental disorders that the narrating 'I' relates specifically to war trauma. His recollections are thus the product of a memory that, if we are to believe the medical reports and later diaries, was not always reliable. As the purpose of the present discussion is to ascertain the identity of the narrating 'I' at the time of writing, the effects of memory do not need to be discussed at length here. They are, however, of significance in assessing the fictional content of Draycot's memoir. The memoir is a record of how the narrating 'I' experienced different events twenty years after their actual occurrence; it is also a demonstration of how the narrated 'I' wished to be remembered.

Draycot subjected his memoir to a series of revisions (see above image). These were clearly made at different times, as the handwriting changes. Some of the handwritten alterations in the typewritten script suggest that he continued to revise his account until he was quite elderly. He corrected place-names and added facts and adverbs for extra

^{iv} Andrew Suttle, *Rewriting the First World War: Lloyd George, Politics and Strategy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 196 and 202.

^v Max Aitken, Lord Beaverbrook, *Canada in Flanders* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1917), v. Available at [OnRead.com](#).

effect. Interestingly, the majority of the corrections/additions are to be found in the first half of the memoir. A possible explanation is that the details of the earlier events of the war had become less clear in his mind; in checking the facts, he had been forced to return to the diary entries and discovered some infelicities. Also, the events of the second half of the memoir, and particularly the [Battle of Vimy Ridge](#), had already been thoroughly processed by Draycot during his sick leave.

Draycot's recollections were therapeutic, as they helped him to come to terms with four traumatic years at the front. The few inhabitants of Lynn Valley who still remember Draycot confirm that he was reluctant to speak of the war. His memoir was a farewell to a period of life that he wished to forget. It was also an appeal to end all wars. The final words of the memoir, capitalised in places, are a direct challenge: 'To you who will not think ... Go to WAR, and Taste its Bitter Cup! What? You don't want to? Then THINK, AND YOU WON'T' (255). The memoir is thus the only autobiographical medium employed by Draycot that combines the past, present and future.

At the same time as he reviewed his memoir, Draycot made minor alterations to the diary entries that he consulted. To the left is a typical example of a revised entry from Draycot's 1915 diary (8 and 9 October): the focus is on improving the handwriting rather than on making any changes in content. The aim is to make events clear not only to himself but to anyone who might read his diaries. The handwriting is clearly that of an older man.

The memoir, by Draycot's own admission, was also an attempt to answer a painful and constantly recurring question among his acquaintances, namely 'why did you not receive a commission?' He was promoted to Sergeant and Acting Intelligence Officer in 1917. These titles were not formally recognised at the end of the war, and despite repeated attempts by Draycot to have his rank officially confirmed, his title, as already established, remained 'Private Draycot'.

In his memoir he offers two explanations as to why his promotion was never confirmed: he was only on loan from the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment while producing his sketches and reports and was thus not eligible for promotion by other regiments; and his requests to make permanent his promotion were turned down on the grounds that he had left his application too late (the memoir contains copies of the official letters of refusal). The memoir also implies a third, more insidious reason: social class. As a member of the working class, it was difficult for Draycot to gain promotion. The bitterness that this created permeates the memoir. The narrated 'I' wishes to be remembered as one worthy of officer status: it is the memoir and not the official military records that 'tells the truth'.

Of the four media discussed here, the memoir is the medium which best enables a scholar to understand the relationship between the different accounts of Draycot's war career: it addresses the production of the different representations, textual as well as pictorial, and the circumstances under which they were created. Before comparing Draycot's memoir and sketches, I give a brief introduction to the production and distinguishing features of military sketches.

The Military Sketch: Types, Techniques and Uses

Draycot began his career as a topographer in the Boer War (1901–1904). No details are available as regards the extent of his experience and skill, nor did he mention his special expertise when he enlisted in 1914. It seems likely, however, that he acquired his sketching skills from the scouting movement. The founder of the movement, Lord Baden-Powell, was responsible for training scouts during the Boer War, and Draycot certainly shared a number of ideals with the scouting movement, including a readiness for action and a desire to think for himself.

It is no coincidence that he became a scout leader after the war (he was Chairman of the 5th North Vancouver Boy Scout Committee from 1928). It is likely that he read Baden-Powell's [*Aids to Scouting for N.-C.Os. & Men*](#) as this was a standard work for military scouts during World War One. From this manual he could glean the basic principles of drawing sketches to scale, producing eye sketches at speed by 'guessing the distances, angles, heights, etc. without accurately measuring them',^{vi} drawing memory sketches, and measuring the heights of trees and width of rivers.

Similar details are included in Baden-Powell's more popular [*Scouting for Boys. A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship*](#). Published in 1908, the handbook was one of the best-selling Anglophone works of the twentieth century, its publishing figures until after World War Two only being exceeded by the Bible in the English-speaking world. *Scouting for Boys* taught boys how to be good observers, how to track and how to record their observations in simple sketches.

A review of the techniques applied in military sketching is provided below. These are described in detail because they illustrate the importance of accuracy as well as compliance with accepted conventions. The Draycot collection at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#) contains *The Complete Guide to Military Map Reading. Specially Suitable for the New Army* (1917, n.a.). The book is well used and includes Draycot's own annotations on a variety of tasks, including how to calculate distances and the water supply of a stream measured in feet, breadth, depth and velocity per minute.

Draycot continued to produce maps and sketches after the war; his maps of the Lynn Valley area, for example, are the sole surviving source of information on the early days of the Valley and the surrounding area. They were drawn to scale using the so-called Whirter Retractor, which was developed specifically for military sketching (one of Draycot's books of local sketches in which he acknowledges his use of the retractor has survived and is housed at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#)). An advertisement for the retractor is found at the back of the above-mentioned *Complete Guide to Military Map Reading* (see image below).

This instrument will simplify military sketching to those that have not had the training in drawing and perspective, and is useful for panorama work, detail sketching, range cards and general military drawing. When held up to the eye it at once gives the angles and relative positions of objects on a landscape. It is simple and can be used without elaborate instruction. For Platoon commanders, Scouts and Machine Gun Sections it will be found invaluable.

^{vi} Robert Baden-Powell, *Aids to Scouting, for N.C.Os. & Men* (London: Gale & Polden, 1906), 92.

Draycot's memoir shows that he was responsible for a broad range of sketches and charts. These included surveys of roads and damage to trenches, sketches for new designs of dugouts and nose caps, panorama sketches of battlefields, plans of villages and towns, and detailed sketches of specific localities such as the ramparts at Ypres.

The military sketch, or field sketch, was intended for presentation to a commanding officer and contained information required for troop deployment and other military purposes. As specified in an official manual, 'No false information, nothing but what has been seen should be represented, and the tendency to sacrifice truth to effect must be guarded against'.^{vii}

What, one wonders, is meant by 'truth' in the context of a sketch? What should be included or excluded to provide a 'true' picture, and who determines its selection? On two occasions in his memoir, the narrating 'I' describes in detail how the 'truth' of his sketches is contested by a superior officer, and how on both occasions he refused to make amendments; instead, he insisted that the officer concerned check his facts. He notes with satisfaction that his version of 'the truth' was eventually acknowledged to be the correct one. This was a form of validation that gave extra satisfaction because it was given by a high-ranking officer.

Draycot's Military Sketches

The detailed military sketch, which was often based on a simple sketch such as the one of Observation Ridge on the following page (discussed in the section ['Sketches vs Photographs'](#)), was intended as a complement to a map; while a sketch shows the contours of hills, for example, the map frequently omits these. Such details could make the difference between life and death. As Legge observes:

There are several reasons why ordinary maps of the country are not sufficient; one is because the contours are not generally shown, and even where they are shown, as is the case with ordnance maps, the vertical interval, or rise from one contour to another, is so great as to render the map of little real value for tactical purposes, when dealing with a small piece of country such as that on which a batttalion would have to manoeuvre.^{viii}

With a rise of 50 feet, there could be small hills, for example, behind which troops could be hidden. New roads could also have been constructed since the original production of the map. Important details are also omitted from a map: it will not, for example, show whether the land is cultivated. This could be of prime importance when planning troop movements. Nor does a map indicate whether there are ditches by fences or hedges. This could be an important omission, as ditches were invaluable as fire trenches.

Draycot produced primarily military and field sketches. One surprising feature of his sketches is that they do not contain a scale. This was a fundamental requirement. It was not always possible to include a scale while under battle conditions, however, because measuring instruments might not be available. While an official manual notes that

^{vii} R.F. Legge, *Military Sketching and Map Reading for Non-Coms. & Men* (London: Gale & Polden, 1916), 1.

^{viii} *Ibid.*, 1.

ranges may be of the utmost value to an officer later on, and if no instrument is available to get an accurate estimate and the sketcher is unable to pace to these objects, their ranges must be judged, a note to this effect being entered on the sketch^{ix}

there are no such notifications or measurements on Draycot's sketches. A notebook in which he sketched in the 1950s, however, does contain the scales shown immediately below. An intriguing question is, 'Why did Draycot omit the scale, one of the most fundamental features of a military sketch?' A possible explanation is provided by Captain Colin M. Stevens CD below.

What is equally interesting is the fact that Draycot rarely included the second basic feature of a military sketch: the true and magnetic north. It is these two details that enable one to 'set' the sketch, that is to 'lay it out in the same position as the ground it illustrates, or is going to illustrate, so that the north point on it, [sic] actually points to the north, etc'.^x It cannot be assumed that the north is at the top of the sketch, as the sketch should be drawn with its top facing the direction in which troops were moving; North can thus face the bottom edge or the side of a sketch. Why did Draycot not indicate the direction of north on his sketches? Only two surviving sketches indicate north (one, called 'Sketch of Pozieres', is reproduced below; the other is ['Battle of Ypres'](#)).

I discussed the questions of scale and marking north with Captain Colin M. Stevens CD, Canadian Army, Reserve Intelligence Officer for the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. Captain Stevens explained that, since soldiers in World War One tended to remain in the same position for long periods of time and thus knew the directions of the compass, it was not always necessary to mark these on sketches. Soldiers were also familiar with distances because they were well acquainted with the specific area in which they were entrenched.

Judging from descriptions in his memoir, one of Draycot's specialities was eye sketching (as seen in the sketch of Pozieres below), a form of military sketching without the aid of special instruments, which uses only a board, paper, pencil and flat ruler. The eye sketcher must pay special attention to perspective. As with a map, an eye sketch must be set. During World War One, this was accomplished as follows:

a ruler is placed on the sketch on a line which joins two stations, the distance between which the sketcher has already paced. The sketch is then twisted without moving the ruler until the edge of the ruler is in line with the road between the station at which the sketcher has arrived and the station s/he has just left.^{xi}

Good eye sketches call for attention to detail and considerable accuracy. The 'truth' which Draycot's sketches portray is based not only on accurate observation but also on the meticulous application of military sketching technique. To emphasise just how accurate this technique was, it is necessary to give a brief account of the sketching process.^{xii}

^{ix} Ibid., 2.

^x Ibid., 26.

^{xi} Ibid., 48.

^{xii} A more detailed description can be found in *ibid.*, ch. 8.

Once the scale was drawn and the sketch set, the first station on the sketch was marked and the ruler aligned on it. A plumb line was used to ensure that the ruler was correctly placed. The latter was aligned on any objects required in the sketch. The position of these objects was fixed by intersecting lines drawn from another station. The distance was then paced to the second station and marked off according to scale along the line drawn from the first to the second station.

In this way, the position of the second station was fixed. The sketcher proceeded in a similar fashion to include all the stations and objects on the sketch. Thus, eye sketchers such as Draycot must have a great deal of patience, not to mention technical and mathematical knowledge.

Draycot's Military Sketches - Part Two

Where possible, sketches were coloured in accordance with specific rules: black for villages and houses, blue for water, green for woods, burnt sienna for contours, red for railways, entrenchments and British troops.^{xiii} Of the surviving sketches by Draycot, none was coloured, and there is no reference in the memoir to using coloured pencils. It is clear, however, as the drawings published on this website indicate, that Draycot was very skilful in using ink.

A number of Draycot's sketches are so-called panorama sketches (right), which reproduce on paper 'the view obtained by an observer from any given point'.^{xiv} Official map books identify five basic principles of panorama sketches: the ground should be thoroughly studied with the naked eye and with binoculars before starting to sketch; the principles of perspective should be followed; simplicity is a guiding rule (it must be clear what each line represents); conventional outlines only should be used for natural objects such as trees, roads and buildings; and a firm, continuous line should be used at all times.

When Captain Colin Stevens was asked to assess the quality of Draycot's sketches – eye and panorama – he confirmed that it is 'very good': the sketches are simple, they use proportion, all points in the landscape are in their correct relative positions, the lines are firm, and there are no artistic flourishes to confuse the user. Captain Stevens also observed that Draycot had a particularly keen eye for detail, noting, for example, the meticulous depiction of trees, where each individual branch is clearly reproduced. Broken branches were excellent points of recognition for soldiers.

Like the memoir discussed in [The Memoir](#) and [The Memoir - Part 2](#), military sketches and charts have a distinctive and coherent structure that relies on a special language whose object is to enable the reader/viewer to make sense of what is being observed. While the memoirist relies on linguistic and stylistic devices, the sketcher employs specialist terminology such as 'cols', 'nullahs' and 'underfeatures'. A sketcher also employs a variety of technical terms, including 'base', 'bearing', 'horizontal equivalent', 'meridian' and 'ray'.^{xv}

^{xiii} Ibid., 44.

^{xiv} Ibid., 69

^{xv} For those interested in sketching terminology, examples and explanations are provided in Ibid., ch. 3.

As part of his task as a sketcher, Draycot went on regular reconnaissance trips. He obtained and recorded information regarding the nature and resources of the country and, more particularly, communications or facilities for the movement of troops. The information gathered was presented not only in sketch but also report form. The latter was an important complement to the sketch. It had to conform to strict formal requirements regarding content and language/terminology. Chapter IX of *Aids to Scouting* provides valuable advice on the content and style of reports at the time of World War One: the writer should, for example, use as few words as possible, keep to the point, write clearly so the report could be read even at night, assume that the commanding officer may not be fully conversant with all details, stick to the facts, and record the date and time of writing.

Chapter X of *Aids to Scouting* identifies thirty-five headings for the report, all of which had to be memorised. Reports had to note, among other things, roads, rivers, railways, woods, villages, bridges and the enemy's position. With respect to roads, gradients, road surface, halting places and crossroads must be identified. Considerable detail was required when describing rivers, including the direction of the current, nature of the banks, character of the country by the side of the river, liability to flooding, whether it was navigable or tidal, depth of water, and breadth. When reporting on railways, it was necessary to note the features of the countryside transected, as well as details of the line and stations, including facilities provided. As regards woods, the war sketcher was required to report on details of the type and density of the trees, anything which could serve as a landmark for the troops passing through, and whether the woods were exposed to artillery fire or not.

Reports on villages had to include the nature of the houses, suitability as a defence post, communications within the village, and the number of troops that could be billeted. Details about bridges included their width and length, material from which they were constructed, and whether they could be commanded from the ground near at hand. Finally, with respect to the enemy's position, the report needed to note its strengths and weaknesses, approaches and cover, lines of attack, location of guns, obstacles erected, numbers, and the existence of any intermediate points which might or might not need to be captured before attacking.

Draycot's memoir refers to reconnaissance trips made both during the day and at night. Unfortunately, no reports are to be found among the papers housed at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#). While military sketches and reports complemented each other, they were designed to be used independently. Where time permitted, reports could also be consulted, but in the field it was the sketch that was of paramount importance. No report or photograph can reproduce the detail found in a sketch.

Sketches vs. Photographs

The sketch is of much greater use to a commanding officer than a photograph, as it highlights the features of relevance in a potential attack. Photographs, as official sources noted, were only of use in illustrating a small local area: ‘cameras will be found most useful for the illustration of local detail, but will be of little use for distant views’.ⁱ The photograph to the right, of Shrapnell Corner, Ypres, from Draycot’s personal photograph album, is an example. It would have been of little value in planning or executing an attack: the salient features of the landscape are not highlighted, and the sharpness of detail found in a sketch is missing. It serves as a memory jogger or a souvenir; as a practical document, however, it has very little value. Even allowing for age deterioration, this photograph gives little detail of the terrain.

Similarities between the memoir and sketches

Both media are narratives that use conventional devices such as words and symbols. And both adopt specific principles of organisation, including arrangement of information and techniques that are recognised by the reader/user. The memoir and sketches have a specific purpose, and both narratives can be revised in order to correct or add details. The military sketch not only re-creates the features of the landscape but also the preparations for and details of events that will take place or have already occurred. These details require the reader to make a concerted effort to understand the message. As already established, whereas the diary and photograph are slices of time and space which accept ‘now’ and which do not have as their aim to bring about change, the memoir and sketches provide a coherent story that aims to promote understanding and, ultimately, to stimulate change. Below, three battles are compared as they are described in Draycot’s sketches and memoir.

Three Battles: Ypres, Somme and Vimy Ridge - Sketches and Memoir

Draycot’s sketches were made in small field sketch books. The title page from his sole surviving book is shown to the right. The handwriting is that of an older man, suggesting that he edited his work later in life. The book contains four pencil sketches. These would have been transferred to linen or paper; linen was particularly useful on the front line, as it was waterproof and durable. It also permitted a high degree of accuracy. Draycot’s sketches would have been used in conjunction with a map containing grid references and been complemented by reports from patrols. Aerial photographs would also have been used to supplement the information from the sketches. A number of aerial photographs survive and are included in the Draycot collection at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#). It is not clear how Draycot came by these.

An example of an aerial photograph, entitled ‘Bird’s Eye View of Ypres, 1916’, is included to the left here. The lines show the main trenches as well as the communication trenches connecting these. The photograph is mounted in Draycot’s personal photograph album, suggesting that it had some personal value. The memoir makes little reference to aerial photographs (the only reference is to be found on p. 185, which describes an aerial reconnaissance trip in preparation for the Battle of Vimy Ridge); but it does describe in detail the circumstances

ⁱ R.F. Legge, *Military Sketching and Map Reading for Non-Coms. & Men* (London: Gale & Polden, 1916), 75.

under which he made his sketches. The sketches discussed here cover battles in which Draycot fought as well as sketched.

The preliminary sketch to the right is in the sole surviving sketch book. The position and relative size of the main features of the landscape are clearly shown, as well as more minor details such as the number of trees in the foreground, and branches on the tree in the bottom right corner. The name 'Ypres' has clearly been added at a much later date, as the handwriting is that of an older man. Unfortunately, an insufficient number of sketches and charts have survived to be able to show the progression from sketch to printed chart. This is not important for the present discussion, however, as the emphasis is on what the sketches, charts and memoir can tell us about Draycot the soldier, the sketcher and the man. It should be noted that at this point Draycot claimed authorship of all surviving sketches, both hand-produced and printed. He consistently recorded his name and regimental affiliation at the time of production. He sometimes included his title too. The exact date of production was also noted on his sketches.

The image of text below – taken from the sketch of the 'Country to North of Pozieres' – demonstrates that Draycot was convinced that his sketches provided a more readily understandable picture of the terrain than a map or plan. As previously established (in the interview with Captain Colin Stevens of the Seaforth Highlanders), a sketcher highlights the features of significance for battle and rejects all superfluous detail.

Ypres

The memoir provides important background details about the production of the sketches and charts made at the Second (1915) and Third (1917) [Battle of Ypres](#) (the third battle was also known as 'Passchendaele'). It focuses on the third battle, emphasising the dangerous aspects of sketching at the front, with constant exposure to enemy fire from both sky and ground.

The picture of the sketcher presented in the memoir is that of a dedicated soldier who understands that it is necessary to run risks in the line of duty. He was, for example, given the task of producing a secret map in preparation for the Third Battle of Ypres. He is portrayed as brave but also human: '[A]lways did believe in short cuts – most of us do!'ⁱⁱ His route was over open fields, so he was forced to lie flat on the ground as he was being shelled. The force of a shell and its close proximity were such 'that my feet were lifted up by the push of the displaced earth.'ⁱⁱⁱ The following detailed description is of Hooze Sector:

That night [the same day as he was making the sketch for the Third Battle of Ypres], with an Intelligence Officer, examination is made of the Hooze Sector. We just crossed over the Menin Road as a stray rifle bullet strikes Pte. Peart in the right eye. I examined the huge mine crater created when the enemy occupied the ground. All trenches in bad shape. Stench from decaying corpses, mostly Germans, almost unbearable. Sections of the line are without trenches. Shell holes answer that purpose. Several Listening Posts form a link in the line. Travelling by daylight in this area impossible. The boys

ⁱⁱ Draycot, Walter MacKay. 'Pawn No. 883. Being the Adventures of a Pawn of War in the Affair of 1914-18. Recollections of My Activities during the First World War, 1914-1918.' Unpublished memoir. North Vancouver Museum & Archives' (1938), 96.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, 97.

are placed in a large shell hole and stay there 48 hours before being relieved! I return to Headquarters having now an idea of the lay of the land, then proceed to make map of Hooge Sector.^{iv}

The drama of the situation is highlighted by the fact that it is night, verbs are omitted ('all trenches in bad shape') and an exclamation mark is added. The narrated 'I' is one of the boys, but at the same time he has a skill which sets him apart. It is clear from the above extract that only a rudimentary sketch at best could be produced under such conditions. Interestingly, the word 'map' is used rather than sketch.

Draycot's position with regard to the accompanying intelligence officer is not made clear in the memoir. At this point in the war he felt it was necessary to demonstrate the extent of his skills. However, the memoir was written at a time when no such demonstration was necessary. The reader, on the other hand, is introduced to this aspect of Draycot's war career for the first time. It is the drama and danger of the situation that are emphasised.

The sketch of No Man's Land below was made at Hooge Ridge. The text accompanying the sketch reads:

DURING THE THIRD BATTLE OF YPRES, June 2nd to 16th, the Germans came over and occupied the ground shown here. On the extreme left is the 'Birdcage,' a disappearing pill-box, which was raised during the night-time and lowered in early morning. It contained many machine guns. A barrier of closely-packed sandbags was placed across the trench (in left hand corner) to stop enfilading fire from the 'Birdcage'; this doubtless saved many lives. The famous Loop, or Trench 62 – where a company of Princess Pats under Major Jones (afterwards died of wounds in Germany) were taken prisoners after desperate resistance – and part of the 'Appendix' Trench (63-66) is situated immediately under the 'Birdcage.' The whole ground, trenches, trees etc. are correctly represented as they appeared when the sketch was taken. This sketch was made for Colonel Buller, of the 'Princess Patricias,' who was unfortunately killed in a trench near left corner of sketch. It was made under difficult conditions; Sergeant Draycot, of the Intelligence Department, using a sack over his head, with two holes pierced in it for the eyes.^{iv}

This sketch is one of the few to be signed twice, by hand and in printed form. The printed version describes Draycot as 'sergeant' and 'intelligence officer'. By comparing the memoir with the signature on the sketch, it becomes clear that Draycot was promoted from corporal to sergeant, and from regimental topographer to intelligence officer in the space of twenty-six days. The memoir dates Draycot's promotion to 24 May. It also explains that he gained his promotion on being transferred to the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade (he was officially a member of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment at the time).

The memoir explains Draycot's frustration at being taken advantage of without being given either proper recognition or pay: 'there is no reference to special service pay – for my rate was ALWAYS \$1.10 per day. The same rate of pay as a private soldier'.^v As the use of underlining and capital letters indicates, the narrated 'I' of the memoir is a deeply disappointed man with a split identity as regards regimental allegiance and rank. The sketcher chose the part of his identity that satisfied him most and which was verified in the printed signature. The hand-

^{iv} Ibid., 97.

^v Ibid., 103

written signature bears witness to his most widely recognised identity, 'WMcKL Draycot, PPCLI' ('L' stands for Langdale). It is with some bitterness that the narrator records, 'you shall keep your identity with the Princess Patricias'.^{vi} As already established, this decision ensured that Draycot would never be eligible for promotion in any regiment other than his own. Ironically, and tragically for Draycot himself, his greatest services were performed when on temporary loan to other regiments.

Two more details are worthy of note: the personal tone of the sentence relating to the death of Colonel Buller, and the details about the 'Birdcage' (enlarged in the sketch to the right). With regard to the former, the memoir makes clear that Draycot resented the system of social privilege and nepotism that led to the granting of a commission. 'Pawn 883' demonstrates that he felt most officers were incompetent and overbearing. There were exceptions, however: Colonel Buller, for example, was one of the few to win Draycot's admiration and sympathy.

The 'Birdcage', in the upper left-hand corner of the sketch, is described in detail in the memoir. While the text accompanying the sketch focuses on the construction of the cage itself – information which the memoir shows was gained some time later and probably from German prisoners^{vii} – the memoir relates incidents that were specifically connected with being in close proximity to the cage. The emphasis is on human response rather than physical construction:

A small brook flowed through Sanctuary Wood. Any activity in this area could be seen by the observer in the Bird Cage. However, it was necessary to obtain information during daylight. Forgetful, as we all become when engrossed in a subject, my mind being on my work led me forward scanning here and there taking notes and measurements. Something compelled me to turn round. Horrors of Horrors! There was the Bird Cage – in full view! Stupefied, my blood froze at the sight. He could see me! My position was likened to an oasis in the desert.^{viii}

Ypres - Part Two

The full horror of the situation remained with Draycot long after the events themselves. The narrator attempts to account for his apparent carelessness. His explanation is not entirely convincing, however, as it is difficult to believe that one could be unaware of such danger. On the other hand, it is equally hard to believe that the German observer in the Birdcage did not see Draycot! Perhaps only those who have lived through the stress and chaos of war can understand both Draycot and the German guard's oversight. The description of Draycot's stealthy retreat, slithering like an animal at snail's pace through the foul mud, is reminiscent of Northrop Frye's ironic hero in bondage. As the sketch of 'No Man's Land' shows, this is a demonic world of iron stakes, barbed wire, machine-gun embankments, tunnels, and dead and broken trees. The 'Sanctuary' of 'Sanctuary Wood' suggests a world in which there is still a God; the landscape of No Man's Land, on the other hand, belongs to Hell.

The memoir adds to the demonic picture by incorporating the human element. It describes numerous scenes of death and destruction. The style is economical and stimulates the reader's imagination. While trying to locate Colonel

^{vi} Ibid., 103

^{vii} Ibid., 101.

^{viii} Ibid., 101.

Gascoigne, for example, Draycot was involved in a desperate search: ‘owing to the trench being shallow at this stretch and the many dead lying therein, it necessitated a journey on hands and knees – peering into the ghastly contorted faces of the dead for half a mile or so’.^{ix} ‘Peering’ suggests sustained and concentrated observation, a gruelling task at the best of times, but for half a mile on hands and knees, it must have been a nightmare. Draycot’s knowledge of the terrain proved invaluable, as he was able to make use of a disused trench known only to himself, in order to reach Colonel Gascoigne quickly and safely.

Damage caused to trenches during the Third Battle of Ypres necessitated an update of topographical information. The memoir describes how Draycot was called upon to investigate and record the extent of the destruction in the frontline area. He filled a notebook with his sketches. The memoir includes events that are not specifically related to Draycot’s drawings but influenced his ability to work safely and speedily. One such event relates to when he was almost killed by a fellow soldier: ‘as he came alongside a shot rang out from his rifle which caused the bullet to send my steel helmet spinning off my head’.^x

The sketch below is a panorama of the northern end of Ypres Salient. The accompanying text reads:

The ridge at Hooge was held by Canadians during the third battle of Ypres. This sketch was, fortunately, made on the afternoon prior to the attack and proved invaluable. The Chateau at Hooge is completely destroyed, and, therefore, cannot be seen; the wooded grounds have also suffered heavily by shell fire. The Menin Road, which runs through Hooge and the ‘Front Line’ of trenches, was not traceable owing to shell fire and trench work.^{xi}

Because the sketch is described as ‘invaluable’, it suggests that the features that are highlighted were the very ones required to ensure the Canadians’ victory. It is also clear that Draycot evaluated them in relation to what existed before the actual time of sketching. While he was not able to depict earlier conditions, he could refer to them in his commentary. The sketch itself was made at a very specific physical location and could only record what was visible at the time. In other words, Draycot’s sketch fulfilled the primary purpose of such a work: to assist the commanding officer and troops in the field.

The above image (when enlarged) clearly shows the British and German front lines and also marks the strong point in the enemy lines. A section of the sketch is enlarged and shown below, demonstrating details of the ‘Old Wheat [that] hides trench from view of Enemy’. The construction of the duckboard walk is clearly reproduced to warn the troops about the kind of surface to expect. The ends of the resistance line and Bond Street trench are marked by trees that would have been easily recognisable thanks to the accurate delineation of their size and number of branches. A stream is also clearly demarcated as a potential obstacle.

The sketches of the [moat at Ypres](#) and [Ypres Salient](#) (reproduced in full on the following page) provide a rare opportunity to see how Draycot touched up some of his sketches for sale after the war (they were sold to officers, historians and museum directors for five dollars each). The first sketch contains a faint inscription in pencil that

^{ix} Ibid. 111.

^x Ibid., 116.

^{xi} 2 June 1917.

reads 'As the sketch appeared before being touched up. You will now realise the difficulty and time spent on the copy'. Draycot added shading to the sketch of the moat, giving it the appearance of a work of art rather than a military sketch. As such, it breaks the basic rule of sketching as outlined by Legge in *Military Sketching and Map Reading*: 'the tendency to sacrifice truth to effect must be guarded against' as 'sketches should contain nothing except what is absolutely necessary for military work'.^{xii} The sketches would now perform work of another kind, to augment Draycot's post-war income.

The memoir provides interesting insights into the production of the two sketches. As the text underneath them indicates, they were commissioned by Sir Max Aitken, better known as [Lord Beaverbrook](#). As the memoir explains briefly, Beaverbrook required the services of 'an artist'^{xiii} to produce a sketch of the ramparts and moat for possible inclusion in his book. Draycot was confused about his position and function at this point in time: was he a sketcher, an artist or perhaps even a replacement for a photographer? The narrating 'I' asks: '[W]hy not send a photographer? Had none!'^{xiv} Underlying this question is the disappointment deriving from the recognition that not even his commanding officer appeared to appreciate the special value of his sketches.

The memoir includes an intriguing detail: as Draycot proceeded to the ramparts, he was arrested as a spy. This irritated him as it cost him valuable time to sort out the misunderstanding. A second attempt, this time with an official pass signed by General Macdonell, proved more successful. The narrator emphasises the danger of his mission:

That sketching was no pleasant task. The enemy shells were falling into the moat and smashing the masonry of the Ramparts ... The sketch was made while sitting in a gun pit wherein were hundreds of shells! Intensity of shell fire increased. My orderly paced up and down. 'Got it finished yet?' he kept saying.^{xv}

The omission of the definite article in the sentence 'Intensity of shell fire increased' heightens the drama, while the repetition of the orderly's question demonstrates the urgency of the situation. The sketch, a section of which is reproduced below, includes the introduction of life and a semblance of normality in the form of a family of swans. The inclusion of this detail is clearly described in the memoir: '[T]wo swans, with their family of two cygnets hastily swam to cover around a bend in the moat'.^{xvi} Even the innocent swans perceived the danger of the situation. The ramparts are associated with war and bondage; cygnets swimming innocently in a moat belong to the pre-war world of peace and harmony. The explanation in the memoir is reminiscent of Paul Fussell's argument that memoirs exist on the knife-edge between the low-mimetic and ironic modes of fiction, as they illustrate a rite of passage from pre-war freedom to wartime bondage. The narrator could, of course, have omitted the swans but decided against it. Their inclusion clearly has no military purpose.

^{xii} R.F. Legge, *Military Sketching and Map Reading for Non-Coms. & Men* (London: Gale & Polden, 1916), 1.

^{xiii} Draycot, Walter MacKay. 'Pawn No. 883. Being the Adventures of a Pawn of War in the Affair of 1914-18. Recollections of My Activities during the First World War, 1914-1918.' Unpublished memoir. North Vancouver Museum & Archives' (1938, 120.

^{xiv} Ibid., 120.

^{xv} Ibid., 120.

^{xvi} Ibid., 121

Ypres - Part Three

At the time of drawing the sketch on the previous page, it is unlikely that Draycot had any idea that his work might be included in a book, let alone in one by as eminent an officer/writer as Lord Beaverbrook. The narrating 'I' of the memoir, however, records the following comment: 'So two men had to risk their life to appease a "gallant" Knight in London! for what? for his book *Canada in Flanders*!'^{xvii} The memoir confirms that the sketch was presented to Sir Max Aitken. It was, however, as already established, never published. The narrator remarks:

Sir Max got his sketch. He probably never knew who did it for him, nor the danger incurred in getting it. A little out of the ordinary for a civilian to be so favoured! – don't you think? A copy was also made for General Macdonnel – who thanked me!^{xviii}

The bitterness towards men of title that permeates the memoir is extra powerful here and reinforced by the contrast between military and civilian.^{xix} As his memoir records, Draycot produced maps and sketches throughout the war but felt growing frustration as his workload increased: 'The Canadian Division calls for tracings of maps made by me. Why the devil don't they send their own polished boots, extra paid, draughtsmen into the trenches to get the information? Why harass a one-man Brigade Office?'^{xx} The work was endless because enemy damage necessitated a constant supply of new sketches and maps.

As enemy bombardment increased, it was also necessary to produce sketches using different perspectives: '[E]very angle of rifle fire taken by the enemy had to be considered, enfilading and such. Perspective and sectional view'.^{xxi} Draycot even found himself compiling reports on 'the condition of ... projected trenches. Strictly, this is an Engineers [sic] job. Not mine, but – orders'.^{xxii} The narrated 'I' of the memoir is thus a sketcher, artist, tracer and engineer. All these qualities are evident in the sketches themselves, particularly those that were touched up for sale after the war. The text under the above, touched-up sketch to the left reads:

PART OF THE RUINS of houses and of St. Peter's Church in the City can be seen on the other side of the Rampart walls. The Ramparts and Moat were built during the 16th century, having withstood many an assault. It will be noticed that they are pitted and broken by shells of large calibre. They stand about 20 to 25 feet in height, being 15 feet thick at the top, brick being used for their construction. Following the Sally Port Bridge from near the bank of the Moat, we land on a parcel of land at the foot of the Rampart walls and, turning to the left, enter the Sally Port and proceed through a long tunnel which brings us within the City. Two swans with their two cygnets are seen on the Moat going towards the left in the sketch [as seen in the repeated image below]. These were mentioned in Headquarters despatches! A swan at Ypres gave birth to two cygnets, all doing well. Large trees will be noticed growing on the Rampart walls, but many have fallen victims to German shellfire.

^{xvii} Ibid., 121.

^{xviii} Ibid., 121.

^{xix} Ibid., 121.

^{xx} Ibid., 122

^{xxi} Ibid., 124.

^{xxii} Ibid., 124.

The tone and style of the above text are literary. They tell a story that has a past and in which specific events, major and minor, take place. Attention is paid to punctuation. The capitalisation of the first four words suggests the beginning of a new chapter. There is an underlying sense of humour, as witnessed in the comment about the disappearance of the swans (discussed earlier). Draycot clearly did not expect the reader to notice details of battle damage or be able to estimate the height, thickness and construction of the walls. The narrator is an experienced sketcher who has a clear idea of what to expect of his reader. At the same time, the attention to detail in the original sketch (above) complies with the formal criteria for a military sketch: gaps in the foliage are made clear, the shapes and number of branches on the trees are clearly delineated, and the construction of the wooden bridge indicates what kind of surface to expect as well as the angle of the planking. The only difference between the original and the touched-up version is the degree of shading, which is for artistic effect only.

Some of the most important sketches of the three battles from a military point of view were reproduced using blueprints, such as the one to the right. In the section on Vimy Ridge in the memoir, Draycot notes that plans to be blueprinted needed to be of a particularly fine quality.^{xxiii} Some were made on linen, which, as already pointed out, was very durable and also waterproof. They were particularly useful in waterlogged trenches.

The Somme

The second major battle in which Draycot took part was the [Somme](#). Only one of his sketches of the battle remains. Entitled 'View taken from junction of Sudbury and Kenora trench', it is in his only surviving sketchbook and is shown below. The contours of the hills are clearly marked, as well as several trenches, a valley, a few buildings and a dugout. When the picture is magnified, dugouts can also be discovered in the top left corner, hidden among the trees. The German line is also marked in this area. The sketch is produced on linen.

Two other sketches, one of Ypres and the other of Vimy, are reproduced on the same linen. There is no accompanying text. It is possible that Draycot transferred the three sketches to linen with a view to using them for publication purposes. Potential sources of danger, such as a ravine and woods where the enemy might hide, are clearly indicated. Paynsely Farm, a possible refuge, is marked; this detail might not have been picked up in a photograph. The 'lone tree' to the east of the farm is a useful point of orientation. There are no embellishments: the sketch is highly functional.

The memoir provides a number of interesting details about Draycot's work as a sketcher at the Somme. The chapter describing this part of his war career begins with the task of training eight observers in 'field sketching and general observation work'.^{xxiv} The narrator describes the men's lack of talent, acknowledging at the same time that they were faced with an impossible task: in addition to producing accurate sketches with a minimum of training, they were expected to learn basic intelligence work in one day. Significantly, nothing is said about the men's subsequent war career. For the remainder of the section on the Somme, Draycot was clearly alone when sketching on a mission.

He bemoans the fact that there was no suitable draughting room for him, and no equipment; at one point, he is reduced to stripping the local church to procure a makeshift sketching board. He is highly resourceful and willing to

^{xxiii} Ibid., 171.

^{xxiv} Ibid., 135.

bend the rules to gain secret information: on one occasion he even bribes a staff sergeant with a tin of sardines.^{xxv} He stresses the danger of making sketches at the front: '[W]hile standing, taking notes and making sketches, four shells came over in rapid succession bursting but 20 yards away from us, scattering the fragments of dead humans in all directions'.^{xxvi} He presents himself as a man to be relied upon, one who can acquire information and sketch under the most dangerous circumstances, and who can be depended upon to gather up-to-date information where all others have failed.^{xxvii}

While attempting to provide sketches before the battle of the Somme, Draycot was wounded in the leg. He used his diary to record this detail. His memoir reads: '[W]hat of that as long as my leg is not removed! However, it delayed me until the evening, when, my latest data was entered onto maps and written up as my weight was borne on one foot – same like stork!'^{xxviii} It seems that his primary task at the Somme was to gather information with which to update existing maps. There is less emphasis than at Ypres on the task of sketching. He clearly had a number of such maps beside him as he wrote his memoir. He drew plans of towns and villages, as well as trenches, in order to plot the location of respective battalion headquarters.

In relation to the town of [Albert](#), the memoir records: '[My] copy - in front of me at present, brings back memories!'^{xxix} These plans were an integral part of the writing process, as not only the topographical details but also the circumstances under which the plans were produced were recalled. The quality of the plans and sketches bears witness to Draycot's skill as a draughtsman; the stories behind the production of such plans and sketches are those of a hero who was exposed to danger and horror, constantly at the beck and call of his commanding officers, and for whom there was little reward. There is little rest to be had: sketching and intelligence work are carried out night and day, in torrential rain and thick mud, and, as already established, alone much of the time.

Towards the end of the section on the Somme, the memoir provides important details about how Draycot's sketches and plans were utilised. He was requested to produce a 'panorama sketch of the battlefield and terrain in rear of the enemy'.^{xxx} On completion of this, he

sat with the General for an hour or more poring over the Sketch, aeroplane photographs, and maps, working out objectives, and possible attacks and counter attacks that the enemy might make, enfilading-fire, contours, height and depression of ground advantageous or otherwise to us, and information taken from prisoners.^{xxxi}

The capital 'S' in 'Sketch' suggests that the narrator regarded his drawing as a vital source of information. It is also the first to be mentioned, taking precedence over all others. Not only does he present himself as a sketcher, he is part of the planning operation. He interprets visual representations in terms of their practical value in the field. Accuracy is of primary importance. This is emphasised in the final section of the memoir, describing the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the most important victory of the war for the Canadian forces.

^{xxv} Ibid., 141.

^{xxvi} Ibid., 143.

^{xxvii} Ibid., 143.

^{xxviii} Ibid., 145.

^{xxix} Ibid., 146.

^{xxx} Ibid., 145.

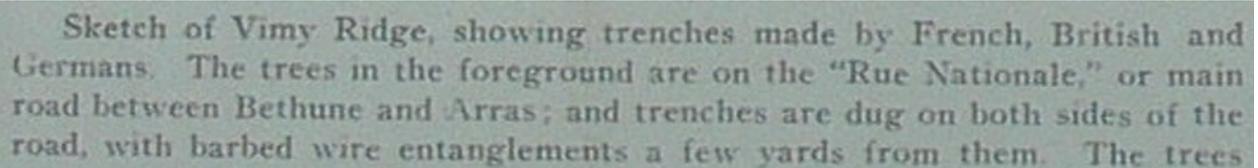
^{xxxi} Ibid., 153.

Vimy Ridge

The sketch to the right appears in the field sketch book mentioned on the previous page. It is particularly interesting because much of the detail has a clear practical application. A steep bank, for example, is marked as both a point of reference and a potential difficulty. Hedges for shelter or behind which the enemy might be hiding are clearly delineated. Features which are easily recognisable are marked in larger letters, such as 'look like steps', 'low ground', 'possibly very wet'. The point of view from which the sketch is drawn is identified in the observation 'looking south'.

Almost one quarter of the memoir is devoted to Vimy Ridge, Draycot's final battle. Some of his finest sketches also date from this period. Below right is a panorama sketch of Vimy Ridge made on 30 March 1917. The attention to detail is vastly superior to that of a photograph: features of the terrain in the foreground and background are clearly reproduced, mine craters are marked in two places, wire entanglements are identified, the trees in the background are drawn both with and without foliage, the twists and turns of the various trenches, even old ones such as the French trench in the foreground, are reproduced, and there is a broken cart in the foreground.

The typewritten text below is an example of the detailed descriptions that accompanied Draycot's sketches; it is taken from the panorama ink sketch of Vimy Ridge seen on the previous page. Draycot was responsible for both the text and sketch (click on image for full text). It provides details of importance to a sketcher, including dimensions and trench construction. It also reveals the narrator's sympathy for the tragic deaths of fellow soldiers who had been left 'just as they fell'. This abandonment is symbolised by the broken French wagon, which, as it is placed in the foreground of the sketch, has little practical value as a landmark. The landscape is pitted and scarred. It evokes powerful memories: the physical and mental landscapes merge, landscape becomes 'memoryscape'. Draycot could not look at this sketch without remembering the stories of suffering that are hidden behind it. As the most important battle for the allies, as well as for Draycot himself (he was, in fact, mentioned in despatches), it is not surprising that it is described in greater detail than either the Battles of Ypres or the Somme.



Sketch of Vimy Ridge, showing trenches made by French, British and Germans. The trees in the foreground are on the "Rue Nationale," or main road between Bethune and Arras; and trenches are dug on both sides of the road, with barbed wire entanglements a few yards from them. The trees

The preparations for Vimy Ridge were made months in advance. The memoir account begins with a few details of the initial advance towards the battlefield on 22 October 1916. During the months leading up to the battle in April 1917, Draycot was busy with intelligence work. Much of this was top secret, as his diary entry for Monday 19 February demonstrates: 'Very busy with secret maps "pour le grand avance."' The narrator of the memoir describes how he drew plans of observation posts, updated maps, surveyed No Man's Land, plotted trench attacks, drew enemy nose caps for division headquarters, surveyed the condition of roads, designed special message forms for use during attack, and – once victory was gained – sketched the country over which the enemy had retreated.

Some of the most interesting observations are those which relate to Draycot's relations with others, especially his commanding officers and fellow soldiers. The section on Vimy Ridge is particularly revealing with respect to the

human side of intelligence work: Draycot is both isolated and a team member. He is subject to rules but defies these in the service of truth. He understands both the German and Canadian points of view, and clearly has some sympathy for the Germans ('They are but pawns of war, like ourselves', he notes; for the first time, Draycot gains access to enemy diaries and reads them).^{xxxii} The Vimy section of the memoir records meetings with people from very different walks of life. Each meeting reveals a new facet of the narrating 'I's character and philosophy. The memoir demonstrates that the recorder of the landscape is also a keen observer of humanity.

Vimy Ridge - Part Two

On two occasions during the preparations for battle Draycot was called upon to draw plans of the trenches. He was, as mentioned earlier, challenged by a commanding officer, who claimed that his plans were inaccurate. In the interests of truth, Draycot refused to make any changes, even when threatened with punishment. On both occasions, he was proved correct. In the earlier sections of the memoir there are numerous comments about the overbearing attitude or incompetence of commanding officers, but Draycot never dared to defy them. It was not until the Battle of Vimy Ridge that he was sufficiently secure in his role of Intelligence Officer to challenge his superiors in the interest of accuracy.^{xxxiii}

Draycot knew that lives were at stake: inaccurate plans lead to unnecessary death. The narrating 'I' notes that there was reluctance among other intelligence officers towards comparing maps and plans. Only on one occasion did a fellow intelligence officer check his map against Draycot's: 'Lieut Henry of the 49th an intelligence officer believes in getting information himself, so comes to my dugout where his map is corrected to date. Wish the others would do likewise'.^{xxxiv} Draycot consistently worked to produce the best sketches and plans possible; the mental stimulation helped him to counteract the loneliness of his position. He was interested in the latest ideas and endeavoured to become part of the planning as well as drawing operations: '[T]he General, quite naturally, brings back the latest ideas for trench warfare. Plotting and planning them keeps me active'.^{xxxv} Great emphasis was placed on quality, or 'fine work';^{xxxvi} indeed, Draycot's plans were of such high quality that most were made into blueprints like the one displayed earlier, in the section on Ypres.

The descriptions of Vimy Ridge reveal particularly clearly Draycot's sense of responsibility for his fellow man. Earlier in his memoir, it is noted that he took great risks in order to gain information. In the Vimy section, the same phenomenon appears, but now there is an important addition: he notes that he was 'worried', he could not rest until 'the wanted information' was gathered, even when it necessitated entering No Man's Land in broad daylight. On this particular occasion Draycot was nearly killed.^{xxxvii}

^{xxxii} 181 and 205-8.

^{xxxiii} Ibid., 162

^{xxxiv} Ibid. 162.

^{xxxv} Ibid., 170.

^{xxxvi} Ibid., 171.

^{xxxvii} Ibid., 174.

There was no necessity to repeat such a performance, nor take such a silly risk – to make perfection. But, of course, that conscientious trend of thought impelled me. It must be just so! That it was and that *THAT* worried me – until rectified.^{xxxviii}

The inclusion of ‘of course’ suggests that perfection is a natural and inevitable aspect of sketching as the narrator sees it. The capital letters emphasise the point. The excellence of Draycot’s work was indeed recognised by General Macdonnel, as evidenced in the statement: ‘Your draughting, sketching, and general Intelligence work has placed my Brigade far above all others. No one can even touch us in that special work’.^{xxxix} The compliment was associated with disappointment, however, as the General informed Draycot that he could not promote him while he was still formally a member of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regiment. Not surprisingly, the proffering of a £5 note did little to compensate in Draycot’s eyes.

Sunday 25 March 1917 proved to be an important day for Draycot. The sudden appearance of a minister of the cloth prompted him to reflect on the human condition, the minister’s Maltese Cross causing him to recall the Crusades. The Cross also brought back to him his service during the Boer War (the Maltese Cross was worn on Boer War caps). Draycot led the minister to safety. As they clambered through the trenches, the two discussed the atrocities of war. The narrator comments: ‘His Reverence represented Peace: Myself, Art and War’.^{xl}

It is significant that ‘art’ is placed first and ‘war’ second. The cruelty of war is deplored by soldier and minister alike. This section of the memoir emphasises the gulf between God and Hell; the front is the region of the Devil (‘surely Hell’s flames were not meant for such brave men’).^{xli} Art is one way to reduce suffering and bring the war to an end: ‘accurate, detailed, plans and miniature maps made up from my surveys’,^{xlii} and because they were reproduced on hectographs they were the ‘most outstanding common-sense feature of the whole war ... There was some encouragement to get the damn thing over ... and done with’.^{xliii}

Art raises man above the animal kingdom. On the day of the taking of Vimy Ridge, Monday 9 April, the narrator records:

That madness which we thoughtlessly attribute to the ‘lower’ animal, the dog, bull, and the non-domestic would be demonstrated by another form of ‘lower animal’ at dawn and with the same degree of ferocity. That, the trenchman, on both sides, temporarily transformed into that very ‘animal kingdom’ the government over which God is supposed to have conferred upon him is, to the thinker, a hideous conception. Too true is the phrase ‘The Dogs of War’ . . . not of their own choosing, but that of the Master Animals who dominate and concoct vile excuses for human sacrifice.^{xliv}

Through his art Draycot could raise himself above the misery and foulness of war. While he could not escape its injustice or atrocities – he had to operate in the demonic world of the trenches, kill or be killed – his skill as a

^{xxxviii} Ibid., 175.

^{xxxix} Ibid., 176.

^{xl} Ibid., 188.

^{xli} Ibid., 195.

^{xlii} Ibid., 182.

^{xliii} Ibid., 182.

^{xliv} Ibid., 196.

topographer and artist enabled him to keep one foot in the civilised world, where fineness and perfection were still appreciated. The panorama sketch of Vimy Ridge (shown again to the right) belongs to this world. The landscape is meticulously reproduced, but it is empty; the text underneath explains what is missing: obliterated buildings and, above all, the skeletons of the Frenchmen who had fallen in an earlier battle.

To these skeletons would be added those who lost their lives to take Vimy Ridge, most of whom were Canadians. Twenty-five days later, Draycot was gassed. It was concern for his fellow soldiers that caused the accident: in trying to warn them of a gas attack, he was not quick enough to put on his own mask. So ended his four years at the front. He was shipped back to England and hospitalised until the end of the war.

Draycot returned to the land of his birth as a hero. As the memoir demonstrates, however, his new-found status was not to last, hence the comment: '[O]f all those people whom it was a pleasure to see and be in their company none correspond today ... over twenty years ago! The public soon forget. Hero-worship, like snow, soon melts'.^{xlv} All that remains of the hero is his memoir, sketches, diaries and photographs.

^{xlv} Ibid., 221.

Diaries and Photographs

This article continues the discussion of the hero begun in the first article, on Draycot's [memoir](#) and [military sketches](#). While the latter were seen to complement each other, the diaries and photographs cannot be so easily compared because they have no chronological equivalents (Draycot's photographs are often undated), they were taken for different purposes, and they belong to different fictional modes, as defined by [Northrop Frye](#). There are, nonetheless, sufficient common features to make a comparison productive.

The photographs and diaries are viewed here as disconnected stories, frozen in time and space. Both are autobiographical texts in the sense defined by Oliver Sacks and reproduced in the section 'Autobiography, identity and fiction': 'each of us constructs and lives a "narrative," and ... this narrative is us, our identities ... for each of us is a biography, a story'.ⁱ At the same time, textual and pictorial media represent different modes of referentiality that are not necessarily mutually supportive: 'reference is not secure in either, neither can it compensate for lack of stability in the other'.ⁱⁱ As I will show, a comparison of textual and pictorial evidence highlights inconsistencies and ambiguities, pointing to a vision of 'self' which could never be realised because it is based on a myth.

As in the earlier discussion, the focus is on the 'I' who narrates and is narrated. I have already demonstrated that the memoir and military sketches belong on the knife-edge between the low-mimetic and ironic modes of fiction as defined by Northrop Frye: they depict a soldier in bondage, living in a world of disharmony and disruption, where demonic images abound. Draycot is trapped in a maze of water-logged trenches lined with the bodies of dead soldiers. Subject to the whims of his commanding officers and the vagaries of fate, there is little room for personal initiative.

The photographs present a different reality, as they portray an individual who transcends his circumstances, is in command, ready for action, and defies death. The photographs of Draycot discussed here (the photographer is anonymous) present a consistent view of their subject, suggesting that he is also the director. They provide an alternative view of the 'self', where the suggestion of order is no longer a function of the genre but an integral part of the picture presented.

The photographs are carefully mounted in an album that bears evidence of having been frequently consulted. As the Draycot collection at the [North Vancouver Museum & Archives](#) has received little scholarly attention to date, it must be assumed that it was primarily Draycot himself who turned the pages of his World War One album. The present text focuses on the photographs *of* Draycot rather than those *by* him, as the former are particularly important to the discussion of Draycot's status as a hero.

As a fragmentary account, the narrative of Draycot's diary inevitably lacks coherence. It is an autobiographical medium whose purpose is to conceal as well as reveal. The information provided in Draycot's war diaries is necessarily brief, owing to the shortage of space and circumstances of writing. As there was a danger that a diary

ⁱ Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (New York: Summit, 1985), 105.

ⁱⁱ Timothy Dow Adams, *Light Writing and Life Writing: Photography in Autobiography* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xxi.

would be read by other soldiers, it is likely that sensitive or controversial information was deliberately excluded. The photographs, on the other hand, deliberately misrepresent reality: the cleanliness, orderliness, defiance and authoritative nature of the subject of the photograph present an idealised view which belongs more to the world of myth and romance. Whereas the memoir belongs on the knife-edge between the realistic and ironic modes, the photograph belongs very clearly to the mythical/romantic mode.

Text and Image

Before examining Draycot's diaries and photographs it is necessary to consider the relationship between text and image. It is also important to take into consideration the specific features of the two media discussed here. In the final section of the article, selected diary entries and photographs are discussed alongside each other. Text and image are different in terms of the vision of the 'self' projected and the kinds of experience to be represented. As W.J.T. Mitchell argues, text and image reflect

the difference between the (speaking) self and the (seen) other; between telling and showing; between 'hearsay' and 'eyewitness' testimony; between words (heard, quoted, inscribed) and objects or actions (seen, depicted, described); between sensory channels, traditions of representation, and modes of experience.ⁱⁱⁱ

Difference is as important as similarity when studying autobiographical texts. Draycot's records of the war both reinforce and contradict each other because they present two different subjects: one in bondage (memoir, sketches and diaries), and the other seemingly in control (photographs). The following discussion accounts for some of the differences in the nature of representation in the diaries and photographs and the consequences of these for the autobiographical subject.

The Diary

A diary records events and observations on a daily basis. The accounts, fragmentary by nature, are chronological and based on experience. They can be consulted and reviewed at a later date. As Margo Culley argues, a diary is 'a text in process' where the outcome of the plot, that is the diarist's life, is unknown; it is 'always in some sense a fragment'.^{iv} There is no definite end to the story. A diary thus contains a series of surprises not only for the reader but also for the writer him- or herself.

Diaries are essentially private and intimate, and distinguish themselves from the more public memoir or photograph. While autobiographical texts such as the memoir are based on a preconceived idea of individual development and are written from a 'position of historical superiority', a diary 'charts the fluctuations of temperament on a daily basis without the benefits of hindsight. To some extent it is this very regularity which also functions as a stabiliser, endowing the diary with its identifiable voice'.^v A similar effect may be achieved when photographs from a

ⁱⁱⁱ W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5.

^{iv} Margo Culley, *A Day at a Time: Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present* (New York: Feminist Press, 1985), 19.

^v Judy Simons, *Diaries and Journals of Literary Women from Fanny Burney to Virginia Woolf* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), 197.

particular period or place and/or with the same subject are collected together in an album. At the same time, a diary contains formal tensions and ironies not found in other autobiographical texts owing to the writer's relationship to 'real time' and his or her representation of 'time passing', creating an illusion of a fixed chronological point. The unique dynamic nature of the periodic text is underlined by the juxtaposition of what is known with what is unknown to the writer. The diary contains silences and mysteries that require the reader to be unusually active in his or her attempts to identify the world within the diary and thereby the 'I' of the text.

This is a complex process, as the diarist usually has more knowledge about his or her world than the reader; the latter, on the other hand, has knowledge which was not available to the diarist. As Culley argues, '[A]ll diarists operate within the limits of their own self-knowledge, limits the reader may be able to transcend'.^{vi} One way to transcend these limits is to compare different autobiographical narratives with themselves and/or other, related accounts, such as those provided by biographers or historians. The Internet greatly facilitates such comparisons.

Much scholarship on diaries has focused on female rather than male writers. Critics such as Cynthia Huff, Margo Culley, Elizabeth Hampsten and Helen Buss have emphasised that the diary has traditionally been a means for women to record and give meaning to daily experience, a kind of reprieve from basic daily chores. This was particularly true of nineteenth-century emigrant diary writers.^{vii}

For Draycot, too, diary writing was a daily ritual, a space – temporal as well as physical – that was separate from the horrors of war. While women have used diaries to escape from the routine nature of their daily existence, Draycot used his to distance himself from the demonic world of bombs, death, gas and mechanical destruction. He did not attempt to transcend this world, neither did he try to transform it. The pages of his diary are records of selected events and phenomena that he regarded as important at the time and which were accessible to the narrating 'I', who subsequently revised them for his own satisfaction. They are not staged observations because they have no audience: they are by and for the writer, and reflect what Steven Kagle terms 'the gradual acquisition of knowledge and shifting of values that occur in life'.^{viii} The photographs of Draycot, on the other hand, are intended to be exhibited, and reflect a reality that is immediate and conclusive; it is also one that is desired rather than actually experienced.

The photograph on the previous page, taken at Vimy Ridge in 1917, is an excellent example of the representation of desired reality. The world of death, physical hardship and mud is gone. Instead, Draycot is standing bolt upright with what looks like a grenade in his hand. He has a superior look on his face, and the text around the edge of the photograph – in his own handwriting – describes him as 'Sergeant Draycot' who is 'going my rounds when i/c [in charge] of intelligence' He gives the impression of being in control of both his own destiny and that of those whose lives depend on his intelligence reports and military sketches. It is thus not surprising that the feature that is highlighted is the steel observation tower. To ensure that future viewers of the photograph understand what they are looking at, there is a typewritten explanation (right). This makes clear that Draycot is in charge of a number of observers, referred to as 'my observers', and that he reports directly to General Macdonnell.

^{vi} Margo Culley, *A Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women Writers from 1764 to the Present* (New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY), 22.

^{vii} See for example, Jane Mattisson, 'The Journey through Selfhood in *The Journals of Mary O'Brien 1828–1838* and *A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals of Ann Langton*', *Prose Studies* 25:2 (Autumn 2002): 51–78.

^{viii} Steven Kagle, *American Diary Literature 1620–1799* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979), 15.

Draycot's observations are crucial for keeping the general up-to-date. The map referred to was drawn by Draycot himself. The work of an intelligence officer was dangerous: Draycot was constantly required to go to the front line and report on damage to trenches, as well as on enemy troop movements. The narrating 'I' of the memoir records that he has luck on his side and constantly escapes death by the skin of his teeth. While this reality could be reproduced in print, it was impossible in photographs as photography was still in its infancy during World War One.

Early Photography

Until the advent of Kodak cameras in the 1880s, photography was only for professionals and the rich. This was changing by the turn of the century. [Kodak cameras](#) used flexible roll film that did not require the constant changing of solid plates, as was the case with earlier cameras. The firm invented a self-contained box camera that held 100 exposures of film (larger than more modern 35-mm film) and was fitted with a small single lens with no focusing adjustment. It seems likely that Draycot used such a camera during the war. None of Draycot's cameras has survived but there are mentions in his diaries of sending his camera back to the factory for the film to be developed (he did this when he returned to England on leave; occasionally he sent his camera home with a trusted friend).

The Draycot collection contains no colour photographs. The [first practical colour photographic plates](#), invented in France, were not introduced until 1907, and it was primarily the French army who used them. Autochrome film was expensive, slow and rare at the time of World War One. Meanwhile, only posed portraits could be taken with the early cameras. The limitations of technology thus account for Draycot's photographs being portraits; they do not, however, explain why he is invariably in the foreground. Reality in the photographs is 'staged' either by the photographer at his own discretion or under the instructions of Draycot himself. The consistency of Draycot's foreground placement suggests that he was normally the director of his photographs.

Photographic Truth

As a visible testimony to something that exists or existed, the photograph has traditionally been associated with truth.^{ix} It is 'a certificate of presence'^x or, as Rosalind Krauss suggests, an index of reality. Krauss describes a photograph as:

an imprint or transfer off the real; it is a photochemically processed trace causally connected to that thing in the world to which it refers in a manner parallel to that of fingerprints or footprints or the rings of water that cold glasses leave on tables ... On the family tree of images it is closer to palm prints,

^{ix} Roland Barthes, for example, argues that '[m]ore than other arts, photography offers an immediate presence to the world' (*Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 84). He claims that '[t]he photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there, proceed radiations which ultimately touch me, who am here' (*ibid.*, 80). For Barthes, a photograph is always an expression (not a representation) of loss or of death because it is an emanation of a past that cannot be retrieved (this aspect of photography is discussed by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin in *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1999), 110–112). See also Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 16–22. Sturken and Cartwright challenge the concept of photographic truth, claiming that it is a myth.

^x Paul John Eakin, 'Touching the World', cited in Timothy Dow Adams, *Light Writing and Life Writing: Photography in Autobiography* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xiv.

death masks, the Shroud of Turin, or the tracks of gulls on beaches... Technically and semiologically speaking, drawings and paintings are icons, while photographs are indexes.^{xi}

Photographic truth has been a disputed issue for more than a century: the Impressionists, for example, claimed that their paintings captured the truth of light better than photographs could. For Westerners, transparency was long regarded as unproblematic. As Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin demonstrate, this is only because we have learned to overlook, or 'look through' the conventions which represent a static, monocular view. While experimentation with the representation of reality in photographic images was initially rare and limited by technical knowledge, combination printing was well known (having existed since the early nineteenth century). Two young girls, for example, had taken pictures with cardboard cut-outs, convincing some Englishmen that fairies exist.^{xii} With the advent of digital photography, the opportunities for modifying reality have become almost endless.

As discussed earlier (in the section on the autobiographical 'I' in websites), the Web enables photography and digital technologies to [remediate](#) each other. The immediacy of the photograph is no longer taken for granted, as current ideas on hypermediacy have increased viewers' awareness of the process of representation and how it influences our perception of images. Not only does photography represent a different form of seeing, as it 'peel[s] away the dry wrappers of habitual seeing ...' both intense and cool, solicitous and detached; charmed by the insignificant detail, addicted to incongruity';^{xiii} it also becomes possible in its remediated form on the Web to explore new ways of studying both the narration process and the different facets of the narrated 'I'. While Draycot's diary entries suggest immediacy and transparency by revealing 'what was', the photographs reflect what 'could have been'; they are expressions of a desire which was just as real to their director as the physical reality perceived by others. By enlarging the images on the Web to reveal body posture and facial expression, it is possible to see just as real to their director as the physical reality perceived by others. By enlarging the images on the Web to reveal body posture and facial expression, it is possible to see just how strong this desire was.

Diary Entries and Photographs Compared

Photographs and diary entries are compared here on the basis of subject rather than chronology. There are five areas of comparison: bathing and cleanliness, dugouts and trenches, defiance of death, authority and control, and sick leave. The annotations on Draycot's photographs are included in the discussion, where relevant. All the photographs can be enlarged. The diary entries are not reproduced here; instead, the relevant sections are quoted in order to save space.

Bathing and cleanliness

The photograph to the left shows Draycot in his usual position, in the foreground. He does not appear to be posing, unlike his fellow soldier. Rather, he is seen to be active, in motion and has a sense of purpose (the photographer appears to have interrupted him). The crouching position accentuates his arm muscles and detracts attention from

^{xi} Rosalind Krauss, 'The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism', cited in Adams, *Light Writing and Life Writing*, xv.

^{xii} See [The Cottingley Fairies](#) for a history of the photograph and its reception. Accessed on 10 April 2012.

^{xiii} Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1989), 99.

the slightness of his build. His hair is short and his moustache well trimmed. There is a gleam in his eyes and a smile on his face. He attempts to transcend the filth of the trenches and maintain dignity by attending to personal hygiene.

One may wonder how effective a wash might be in the sewers; clearly Draycot and his companion felt that it was better than nothing. In his right hand Draycot is holding something, perhaps a tablet of soap. Soap was hard to come by, at least the disinfectant variety, as his diary entry for 5 September 1915 demonstrates: 'Church parade at 10.15 a.m. Afternoon Wallach, Brozon, Driscoll & self went to Erquingham, entirely reserved for officers. I experience great difficulty in getting lifebuoy or any disinfectant soap.'

The use of the personal pronoun 'I' suggests that it was only Draycot who was interested in buying soap. It is significant that there are only two soldiers in the photograph, suggesting that it was Draycot and his companion's decision to have a bath and not an official order. Indeed, Draycot was clearly sceptical of such orders; the diary entry for 10 December 1915, for example, reads: 'The company march to Baillet (16 or 18 kilometres return) for purpose of having a bath!!!!!! A wast [sic] of time & shoe leather as the men will need another bath at the end thro' perspiring on return journey.'

This entry shows that Draycot not only had a concern for hygiene but was also critical of authority. The addition of six exclamation marks emphasises his scepticism. The spelling mistake and the abbreviation of 'through', both unusual for Draycot, may reflect his tiredness after a long march.

It seems that baths that were officially ordered could, but did not necessarily lead to a change of underwear, as the diary entry for 17 January 1915 demonstrates: 'some get clean change of underwear'. The implication is that Draycot was not one of the lucky ones. Whereas the photograph from Ypres suggests that he could take matters into his own hands, the diary entries demonstrate that personal initiative could have only a limited effect: Draycot is not in total control of even the most basic human needs.

Dugouts and Trenches

The photograph to the left depicts a dugout. It is not annotated. Draycot is sitting in the foreground, again his moustache is well trimmed and his left leg is stretched across the entrance to assert control over all who enter or leave. Unlike his fellow soldiers, he is not sitting comfortably but leaning forwards, and appears to be ready to move at short notice. By sitting on the outside, he has left all his options open and can act independently of the soldiers with whom he is sharing the dugout.

There is little detail in the diaries of life in the dugouts. The entry for 26 September 1915, for example, describes a dugout near the Somme Canal as 'very cleverly made', but the details are conspicuous by their absence. The entry for 14 January 1916 records that the troops were 'fairly comfortable save for the mud'. A different picture is given of the dugouts at Zillebeke, where accommodation was shared with 'thousands of rats' (12 February 1916). The style of the handwriting suggests that the annotation was added late in life.

There is, however, more detail about conditions in the trenches. Draycot's World War One album contains the photograph to the left, depicting a spacious, clean and orderly trench at Ypres. We cannot be sure that his memory

served him correctly when identifying the place, but we understand that the photograph continued to be important to him until late in life. Why did he take it? The focus is on the destruction outside rather than on any activity within. While the trench is clean and orderly, it does not provide a great deal of protection. At the same time, the photographer (who was, we must assume, Draycot himself) is not threatened, and is able to keep a distance from any unpleasant events in the past. Draycot has survived where others have fallen.

The world of the trenches as it is described in the diaries is much harsher than the photograph would suggest. For example, the entry for 2 January 1915 reads:

Another wet miserable day with high wind. Major Gault arrives back from the trenches. He says the men are being pulled out of the muddy trenches, being unable to get out themselves, legs swollen with rhumatics [sic]. Men in trenches standing on their fallen dead comrades to avoid standing in the water which is thigh deep. (Your King & country needs you?).

The narrator refers to the men as if he were not one of them. The question in parenthesis suggests that he believes that the suffering of the soldiers was beyond the call of patriotic duty. It is reminiscent of the last two lines of Wilfred Owen's well-known poem '[Dulce Et Decorum Est](#).' The misery was enhanced by coldness and vermin; rats, mice, frogs & worms were their constant companions.

The final photograph here excludes all such discomforts; this is the world of myth/romance. While there is water in the trench, the image suggests an organised existence. Draycot is the centre of attention and ready for action, as demonstrated by his resolute look and the grenade clasped firmly in both hands. This is the soldier who is determined to be in control of his destiny.

Draycot Defies Death

In the photograph to the right, Draycot is standing at the edge of a ditch and higher than the crosses that represent death. His rifle is grasped firmly in his right hand, and although he is standing upright he is ready to move, as his right leg is behind his left, poised for action. He is both rigid and in motion; he belongs to the world of death and yet has not succumbed to it; he is in what appears to be a trench (it is difficult to see if this is a trench or a crater) and yet above it. He has turned his back on death and is looking towards life, represented by the photographer. He is a hero of the myth/romance mode of fiction. The photograph is emotionally charged. It seems to be saying, 'I too may be dead soon but I shall certainly do my utmost to escape the fate of my fellow soldiers'.

The diary entries that refer to close shaves with death are more detailed than any others. They are also more dramatic in style, as evidenced by the use of such verbs as 'pierce', 'batter', 'smash' and 'burst'. The situation in the trenches is frequently compared to Hell – the demonic world of Frye's ironic hero. At the same time, Draycot has survived while others are dying around him.

The most detailed descriptions of narrow escapes from death are to be found in the diaries from 1916 and 1917, when Draycot was at the Somme and Vimy Ridge. On 19 February 1916, for example, reference is made to German sniper fire giving rise to 'a few close calls'. Draycot's 'waterproof is pierced by bullets'. The following month there

is severe battering of the dugouts: 'The Huns rain shells in on us' (22 March). Three days later, 'Hell let loose. Hundreds of casualties. Dugouts blown up in the air. Trees smashed down ... The bursting of trench mortar bombs & grenades made vivid flashes & a deafening noise' (25 March 1916). The entry for 27 March captures the full extent of the hell in which the soldiers were fighting:

Absolutely the most wretched weather last night. Boys outside all night. Rain, snow, sleet and driving wind. Hand grenades, rifle grenades & trench mortar bombs are sent over in profusion. Hell opens again at 11.30 a.m. by our artillery at Hill Co. A most hideous and frightful roar & noise. A rifle shot can scarce be heard. Aeroplanes very active, fly low. Our feet are wet & life almost unbearable. As I am standing outside the dugout a shrapnel bullet passes my neck and buries itself deep into the sandbag. Again I miss death by a rifle grenade. 3 burst simultaneously near dugout in fire trench. All night there is a terrible hell & din going on. It rains all night and the misery – pitiful as we stand outside in it all thro' the night.

The Hell described here is particularly menacing because it starts at a specific point in time and is created by a combination of natural forces and technology. This is not the place for an upright, well-shaven, smartly dressed soldier such as the one depicted in the photographs on the previous page.

In the photograph below, Draycot is positioned in the centre (denoted by the letter 'O'). He takes the liberty of sitting (the only other soldier who is sitting is anonymous and in the shade). His posture suggests composure, self-assurance and a sense of belonging. Draycot is in charge; hence the repetition of 'my' in relation to headquarters and observers. The headquarters provide little real protection but do give the impression of being organised, albeit rather primitively: the bicycle is placed under cover, part of the surface is cobbled, and there is seating accommodation of a sort.

Draycot is 'Sergt'. The other soldiers are not given titles; the diaries reveal, however, that they are privates. Draycot's diaries mention but do not describe the headquarters at La Targette. Instead, they focus on constant movement, requests to make sketches in different locations and a feeling of being pulled in all directions. While the photograph reflects some stability and order, the diaries paint a picture of chaos, frustration and transition. In the diary, Draycot is in bondage, fulfilling interminable requests for new maps and sketches, constantly risking his life. In the photograph, he is calm, has time to sit and is in control.

War's End: Diaries and Photographs

The photograph to the right is the only one in the collection dating from Draycot's period of convalescence in England. He is in the front row, furthest to the right. Although he is one of the soldiers wearing a party hat, he does not look as if he has reason to celebrate. Away from the front, he does not attempt to project an image of authority; in this photograph, the subject is not in charge of his destiny. His diaries bear witness to repeated requests to return to the front. All were denied. Draycot was broken both in body and spirit. Although he ensures that he is in the foreground, he is content to sit with the other soldiers. The photograph is not annotated, nor does Draycot draw attention to himself. He is anonymous and does not wish to be distinguished from the other soldiers.

The diaries reveal very little about Draycot's time in England. The entries are short and refer primarily to repeated medical examinations. On being discharged from hospital, Draycot visited relatives. Only occasional references to battles and troop movements, gleaned from reading newspapers, are given. Draycot's war is over; and his memoir will not be written for another twenty years.

Draycot's Post-war Photographs

The two photographs below were taken during or just before World War Two. The captions, written in Draycot's own handwriting, make his standpoint clear: two major wars (Boer and World War One) were enough for him. The caption under the first suggests that his memories of World War One were revived as he listened to the war news on the radio. At the age of fifty-nine, there was no danger that he would be called up. The photograph contrasts the productiveness of Draycot's garden with the destruction of the battlefield. In his own garden, he does not have to take orders from anyone; he takes pleasure in being his own master.

In the second photograph, Draycot is again in the foreground, looking alert. The caption 'Keep out of it Draycot' suggests that the old soldier was still drawn towards active service. Why is he wearing his uniform? What is he thinking about as he looks into the distance? His memoir makes it quite clear that, like many veterans, he regarded war as a tragic waste of human life and resources. Draycot's figure and posture are those of a fit man who has made a good physical recovery from the privations of war. The diaries give another picture, however: there are repeated references to nervous problems, nightmares, post-war trauma and recurring bouts of illness related to gas poisoning.

The photographs depict a man as he wanted to be seen: the narrated 'I' is in charge of his situation and fate, a hero of myth and romance, who could transcend the atrocities of war. The narrated 'I' of the diaries, however, is a hero in bondage, threatened with death, at the beck and call of commanding officers and 'lady luck': this Draycot belongs to the ironic mode of fiction. In both media, the narrated 'I' is fictional: one medium tells the story as the narrating 'I' wanted it to be told, the other as it needed to be told.

The photographs of Draycot are taken from a distance, but the diaries are written in the middle of the action. The photographs are supported by text; the diary text stands alone. It is clear that Draycot valued both media: the photographs are painstakingly mounted in an album, while the diaries were edited and consulted as well as quoted from extensively while writing 'Pawn 883'. Both the photographs and diaries are 'one-off' accounts in the sense that they have never been reproduced. The memoir, on the other hand, was typed and copied (there are four copies in the Draycot collection; others may have been given to friends). The sketches were also reproduced, both for use in the war and as souvenirs to be sold at the end of it.

The diaries and photographs are vulnerable: they will continue to tell their special story only for as long as their colour or pages survive. They were Draycot's most long-term commitment to recording the war, and he returned to them over and over again. They continued to capture his imagination and stimulate his memory for many years. While the recording of events on a daily basis may have had a therapeutic effect at the time, reading and editing the diaries in later years rekindled unpleasant memories that continued to haunt him. The handwriting under the photographs is neat and orderly and shows no signs of deterioration due to old age. In contrast, many of the revisions in the diaries are made by an elderly man whose handwriting has become very uneven. It is significant that

Draycot's interest in his diaries was life-long: the narrative to which he returned in later life was that of the ironic hero and not the hero of myth and romance. The latter is the creation of art; the former, the product of experience.

Final Remarks

The two articles discussed on my website focus on how and in what ways the four media – memoir, sketches, diaries and photographs – reveal different facets of Walter MacKay Draycot's identity as both producer and subject.

Draycot is a hero: he demonstrates bravery and suffers ordeals (memoir and diaries), produces detailed sketches close to enemy lines (sketches and topographical charts), and is in the foreground of the action but determined to elude death (photographs). The types of hero represented in Draycot's narratives belong to different modes of fiction as defined by Northrop Frye. Fiction, according to Frye, can be defined in terms of the hero's power of action. The memoir, diary and charts are on the knife-edge between the low-mimetic/ironic modes, revealing a hero whose power is similar to ours but who also suffers as he finds himself in bondage in the demonic world of the western front; the photographs of Draycot, on the other hand, belong to the myth/romance mode because they reveal a subject who apparently transcends his circumstances and is in control of his environment.

The different representations of 'self' in the four media are shown to particularly good effect when published electronically. Images can be enlarged to display differences in handwriting, and revisions and/or additions. Hyperlinks provide instant additional contextual information and can include other media such as film. Texts can easily be compared, printed and annotated by the reader. Identification of recurring features of texts (repetition of key words or phrases), specific use of literary devices such as metaphor or simile, and unusual application of punctuation marks (question and exclamation marks, for example) can be noted more easily than in printed sources. Finally, texts can be revised on a regular basis, incorporating new insights and research. The richness of the Draycot collection is such that it deserves to be published in full on the World Wide Web. This would also lead to the acquisition of additional documents; several letters both by and from Draycot, for example, have been sent to the author by Britons and Canadians.

The author is pleased to receive comments and questions by e-mail.

~ Jane Mattisson

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