

JOURNEY'S END

Education Pack



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Front cover photograph from left to right: William Postlethwaite, Jim Creighton, James Mack, Jonathan Dryden Taylor, and Ben Worth.

All production photographs by **Philip Tull**

Introduction

This education pack has been designed to support your visit to see *Journey's End* at The Watermill Theatre in 2014.

The pack is aimed primarily at those studying Drama or English, with articles of interest for anyone with a curiosity about the play. While there are some images, the pack has been deliberately kept simple from a graphic point of view so that most pages can easily be photocopied for use in the classroom.

Your feedback is most welcome, please email (beth@watermill.org.uk) or call me on 01635 570927.

Don't forget that we offer workshops on most aspects of drama, and visit many schools in the surrounding area to work with hundreds of students every year. For a workshop menu, please visit the Outreach pages on our website, or contact me.

I hope you find the pack useful.

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About the Playwright

Rober Cedric Sherriff was born on 6 June 1896 in Hampton Wick, Surrey, and attended Kingston Grammar School until the age of eighteen. Sherriff maintained strong links with his school throughout his life; he sent a copy of *Journey's End* to the Headmaster when it was published, donated a considerable amount towards the construction of a new rowing club and remained a benefactor for the school until his death in 1975.

On leaving school in 1914, just after the outbreak of the First World War, Sherriff responded to the British Army's call for men to serve as Officers in the conflict. Sherriff enthusiastically applied, but his application was rejected because the army did not approve of his Grammar School education – Officers at the time were expected to have been educated at public schools. Instead he worked as an insurance clerk, alongside his father, for the Sun Insurance Company. However, within a year the British Army lost many junior Officers and subsequently accepted more applications. Sherriff reapplied and joined up as an Officer in the East Surrey regiment in 1915. He arrived on the Front Line of the Western Front on 17th October 1916 and served for the next four months at Vimy Ridge. He documents the horror and trauma that he experienced during this time in *Journey's End*. The play was written ten years after World War One and records, almost verbatim, the lives of the men serving their country.

On the 31 July 1917, Sherriff and his regiment were called forward to attack German positions in Passchendale near Ypres. It was during this advancement that Sherriff was severely wounded; a shell had hit his pill box and the concrete collapsed

around him. He was sent home to recover and demobbed in March 1919.

To support his rehabilitation and recovery, Sherriff joined Kingston Rowing Club and later became its Captain. He wrote his first play, *A Hitch in the Proceedings*, to raise funds for the Club. The experience gave him the desire to continue writing and, as his works became more successful, he was keen to get his plays produced professionally, but was continually unsuccessful.

On a number of occasions, Sherriff tried to write novels about his experiences of war, but his natural propensity and talent for writing dialogue meant he struggled to complete a full novel. He completed *Journey's End* in 1928 and sent it to his agent Curtis Brown, who approached the Incorporated Stage Society (ISS). Despite their initial reservations, the ISS premiered the show on 9th December 1928, with Lawrence Olivier playing Dennis Stanhope. It was a resounding success, but still didn't secure a place in the West End. Producers were cautious, thanks to the play's sensitive subject matter in a country still not recovered from the ravages of war. Eventually, producer, Maurice Browne organised its West End premiere in the Savoy Theatre in 1929. The play performed to packed houses for two years.

The success of *Journey's End* opened up a lucrative writing career for Sherriff. He studied at New College, Oxford between 1931 and 1934 and became a member of the Royal Society of Literature and the Society of Antiquaries of London. He went on to write material for screen, theatre and, despite the earlier failed attempts, his novels also became well received. And

English Film Director, James Whale, approached Sherriff to write the script for *The Invisible Man*, which was a great success and opened opportunities for Sherriff to write other films including *Goodbye Mr Chips* (1939), *Four Feathers* (1939) and *Lady Hamilton* (1941).

Sherriff had a skill for documenting social issues and observations of ordinary people's lives, such as in *Journey's End*. He used this skill to achieve his first successful novel, *A Fortnight in September* (1931); the story simply documented a family's annual holiday in Bognor. He used this style in his

future plays including *Miss Mabel* (1948), *Home at Seven* (1950) and *White Carnation* (1953).

Sherriff was awarded the Military Cross for his involvement in the World War One. He died in Kingston Hospital, London on 13th November, 1975.

HEIDI BIRD

Life in the Trenches

Three hours ago he blundered up the trench,
Sliding and poising, groping with his boots;
Sometimes he tripped and lurched against the walls
With hands that pawed the sodden bags of chalk.
He couldn't see the man who walked in front;
Only he heard the drum and rattle of feet
Stepping along barred trench boards, often splashing
Wretchedly where the sludge was ankle-deep.

From 'A Working Party' by Siegfried Sassoon

Journey's End is set towards the end of March 1918 in a British dugout in St Quentin, in France. Specific dates are not given but it probably refers to the three days of 19th – 21st March, the run up to the start of Germany's spring offensive, Operation Michael, which caused many casualties and led to retreat by the British for several days. The morning of March 21st marked the first day of this offensive, on this day many British battle positions were compromised, especially in the area of St Quentin which was part of the 50 miles of Front that felt the force of the German attack.

Trenches were long narrow ditches dug into the ground, large enough for soldiers to live in and providing some level of protection from enemy fire. During the First World War there were lines of trenches containing Germans on one side and the Allied forces on the other. In between them was No Man's Land, which was where the fighting mainly took place.

The trench at Ypres, near where *Journey's End* is set, was built on naturally boggy ground and the water table very high, so the trenches were very damp and used sandbags and wood to try and keep the water out.



Most activity took place during the night, so soldiers tried to rest during the day.

Usually there would be several lines of trenches; of which the **Front Line** was the first trench to face the enemy. It wouldn't have been straight, instead following contours of land and dug in sections so that if one section was attacked it wouldn't compromise the others. Behind this was the **Support Line**, which had positions for telephones and space for a company headquarters. The lines were connected by communication trenches, along which men could carry supplies, equipment or messages. By 1918, when *Journey's End* is set, the trench system had become more complex and ran several miles deep.

Everyday Life

Generally men spent four days in the front line, four days nearby, and then four days resting, but the system of rotation varied according to the conditions and availability of soldiers. In *Journey's End* the rota for the officers has been extended to six days.

The military historian Chris Baker describes conditions in the trenches:

'Trench life was always one of considerable squalor, with so many men living in a very constrained space. Scraps of discarded food, empty tins and other waste, the nearby presence of the latrine, the general dirt of living half underground and being unable to wash or change for days or weeks at a time created conditions of severe health risk (and that is not counting the military risks). Vermin including rats and lice were very numerous; disease was spread both by them, and by the maggots and flies that thrived on the nearby remains of decomposing human and animal corpses.

Troops in the trenches were also subjected to the weather the trenches flooded in the wet, sometimes to waist height, whenever it rained. Men suffered from exposure, frostbite, trench foot (a wasting disease of the flesh caused by the foot being wet and cold, constrained into boots and puttees, for days on end, that would cripple a man), and many diseases brought on or made worse by living in such a way.'

(Chris Baker, *The Long, Long Trail*, www.1914-18.net)



Sheltering in dugouts: these ones are particularly small.

Men did not usually change their clothes or wash at the Front Line, and had a regular on-off duty rota, as Osborne explains in Act 1:

OSBORNE: We never undress when we're in the line. You can take your boots off now and then in the daytime, but it's better to keep pretty well dressed always.

RALEIGH: I see. Thanks.

OSBORNE: I expect we shall each do about three hours on duty at a time and then six off. We all go on duty at stand-to. That's at dawn and dusk.



Soldiers were at risk from 'trench foot' caused by continually wearing tight, cold and wet boots. If untreated, it could lead to gangrene. It could be prevented by regularly changing socks and foot inspections like this one.

A daily routine for a private might have looked like this:

Dawn:	'Stand-to' – short for 'Stand-to-Arms,' meaning be ready for enemy attack
5.30am	Rum Ration
6.00am	'Stand-to' half an hour after daylight
7.00am	Breakfast (usually bacon and tea)
After 8am	Cleaning (themselves, weapons and the trench)
Noon	Dinner
After dinner	Sleep and down time (one man per ten on duty)
5pm	Tea
6pm	'Stand-to' half an hour before dusk
6.30pm	'Stand-to' half an hour after dusk
After 6.30pm	Work all night with some time for rest: patrols, digging trenches, putting up barbed wire, getting stores (Source: BBC)



Hot food was not supplied to front line soldiers until late 1915 and even then it wasn't always a regular occurrence. Troops in the front line had a repetitive diet of tinned food, sometimes served cold.

Photographs and some labelling text from the Imperial War Museum(www.iwm.org.uk)

BETH FLINTOFF

Terms and References

Megan Kerrigan explains some of the locations, terms and references in the play.

Vimy Ridge

Vimy Ridge was a strategic stronghold on the Western Front that was held and reinforced with German defences from 1914. Many attempts were made to force the Germans out of their deeply embedded fortifications in 1915, but this incurred 150,000 casualties. Tunnels were used to transport men across No Man's Land in 1917 when the Canadian troops took the Ridge into Allied hands, with German casualties at 20,000 and Allied at over 10,000. Sherriff himself served here and in *Journey's End* Stanhope refers to 'that awful affair on Vimy Ridge'.

Phosgene

Among the first of the poisonous gases to be used as a weapon of war was chlorine, but phosgene was soon developed as its replacement. The colourless to white gas caused less coughing than chlorine and so was more effective, causing casualties up to 48 hours after being inhaled. As Trotter mentions, likening it to pear drops, the odour was deceptively pleasant.

Very Lights

Flares fired from a pistol in order to give a signal or temporarily light No Man's Land were often visible from the dugouts. Raleigh describes seeing them on his journey to the dugout, "green lights bobbing up and down... all along the front".

'Minnies'

In *Journey's End* the officers make several references to Minnies, which is a slang term for Minenwerfer, a type of short range trench mortar used by the Germans. Minenwerfer literally means 'mine launcher'.

"Up Wipers Way"

Osborne describes the sound of guns coming from "up Wipers way"; he in fact means that they come from Ypres, a Belgian town lending its name to a section of the front. Men often invented slang terms for locations that they found difficult to pronounce and this is no doubt a detail from Sherriff's own experience.

Sap

When briefing Osborne about the raid, Stanhope mentions that they must leave the trenches "out of the sap on our left". A sap was a trench which extended out into No Man's Land at a large angle to existing trenches. The intention of creating such trenches was to slowly advance the line without so much danger to the men.

Neuralgia

Hibbert's eternal excuse for returning home is that he is suffering from Neuralgia, a condition which Sherriff himself experienced. A person with Neuralgia can experience sharp and sudden bursts of pain usually in one side of the face. It is normally caused by a damaged nerve, although Trauma can affect the condition.

Ranks

The majority of characters in *Journey's End* are not private soldiers but Officers, this means that they have a commission and are responsible and in command of other men. An Officer receives his commission directly from a sovereign power, while those below Second Lieutenant are non-commissioned.

Ranking in *Journey's End*:

Captain – Stanhope

Second Lieutenants – Osborne, Hibbert, Trotter and Raleigh

Private – Mason - Servant soldier

Rank	Command	Approximate number of men under command
Field-Marshal	Army Group	2,000,000
General	Army	300,000
Lieutenant-General	Corps	60,000
Major-General	Division	12,000
Brigadier-General	Brigade	3,500
Major	Battalion second in command	
Captain	Company	200
Lieutenant or Second Lieutenant	Platoon	50
Sergeant	Platoon second in command	
Corporal or Lance Corporal	Section	12
Private	None	0

The Psychological Effects of War

Sherriff's personal involvement in the trenches gives the audience an excellent and detailed view of the realities of war and the effects of warfare on the men; this forms one of the main themes in *Journey's End*. We witness how, within days of becoming an officer, Raleigh is a changed man, war-wearied, beaten and horrified. Such was the fate of many optimistic fresh-faced boys that entered the trenches, never to return home the same. The slow passage of time, lack of knowledge of their surroundings and the overpowering awareness of death took a devastating mental toll. The tough physical conditions caused such anxiety that many developed PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), or 'Shell Shock' as it was known.

Trauma and its effect

Trauma is caused by the rational and primitive areas of the brain momentarily disconnecting because a threat has been detected. This threat is usually handled by an instinctive fight or flight response. But if we are unable to respond we become frozen in the moment of fear and are traumatised by it. Memories of being in danger are subconsciously stored throughout our lives and our own personal experiences will trigger responses, but we cannot always remember the source of these triggers, making it impossible to rationalise our own reactions.

The trenches put the men in a constant state of danger making them highly sensitive and overly aware of their potential dangers. It might take only the smallest trigger to send a soldier into

Trauma and to cause them to develop PTSD.

Deserting

Desertion - abandoning your post at war - was a court martial offence and one of the most serious military crimes, equal to assisting the enemy. The first executed British soldier was a 19 year old called Thomas Highgate, shot for cowardice and desertion on 8th September 1914.

Highgate fled the Battle of Marne and was discovered dressed in civilian clothes hours later. Within days he was tried and executed, the first of 306 men to be shot at dawn for the same offence. This was a time of limited understanding of mental health conditions and patients were rarely treated properly. As a result, the symptoms of PTSD were not understood and seen as a sign of weak character. The threats that Stanhope makes to Hibbert are very real: "better die of the pain than be shot for deserting".

Men and Alcohol

It doesn't come as a surprise that many officers turned to drink to strengthen their nerves. Drinking affected officers more than private soldiers due to their higher disposable income. Front Line British soldiers were rationed with 2.5 fluid ounces of rum twice a week, with a double ration for those going over the top. Most soldiers approved of the ration, considering it such a boost in morale that any negative side effects were justified. Rather than sending men home, whisky was often used to treat cases of shell shock on the Front Line. Debate still continues as to whether alcoholism was a symptom or a cause of mental breakdown in the trenches, but it is

certain that alcohol dependency became a reality of trench life. As Stanhope says, "Without being doped with whisky - I'd go mad with fright".

Stanhope drinks heavily in an attempt to mentally escape an unavoidable situation. It's the best he can make of his flight reaction without deserting.

'Shell Shock' then and now

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder was originally given the name 'Shell Shock' because it was associated with the persistent sound of shelling, wearing away a soldier's sanity. The name made a psychological issue seem more physical and therefore more acceptable. However men often struck out at those showing vulnerability as there was a fear and hatred of fear itself. Stanhope sees in

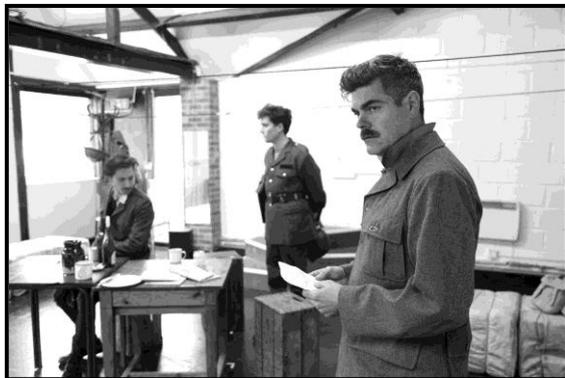
Hibbert what he despises in himself and this is why he lashes out.

It is now the military's job to remove the stigma that surrounds PTSD and offer treatment to those who suffer from the disorder rather than "hush it up". Due to our more developed understanding of the disorder, through technological advances such as the ability to scan the brain and track brain function, it has become much easier to treat, though it can still be a life-long issue for some. Modern troops are now taught to identify the triggers and process of PTSD. They are reassured that post-traumatic stress disorder isn't and never has been cowardice.

MEGAN KERRIGAN

The Psychologist in the Rehearsal Room

The cast and Director of *Journey's End* spent an afternoon with Integrative Arts Psychotherapist, Polly Irvin, in order to get to grips with the depths of their characters. First of all, the stages of trauma were explained to us, how mild to severe anxiety affects the mind and body.



The cast in rehearsals:

Top: William Postlethwaite, James Mack and Jim Creighton.
Bottom: William Postlethwaite and James Mack

We then discussed the subconscious storage of memories that constantly provide our brain with examples of threatening scenarios. The cast began to relate aspects of their own characters to the symptoms and causes of PTSD. Edward Killingback (playing Hibbert) was astounded by the sheer quantity of PTSD symptoms that his character displays and

began to empathise more with his character's desperate situation. The cast debated whose reaction and coping strategies are better, Stanhope or Hibbert. They concluded that drinking yourself to death, (Stanhope's method), is actually considerably less logical than Hibbert's plan to return home. In fact, the majority of the cast admitted to being a Hibbert and not a Stanhope; they would rather escape the trenches than find a way to carry on.

It was time for the first exercise. The actors were instructed to find a space in the room and imagine "the safest place in the world". They imagined this in great detail, each sense involved in the process. (If you want to try it yourself, be sure to spend several minutes thinking about this place and note how it makes you feel). A range of physical changes were noted but it was the next exercise that began to replicate the trenches. They were then asked to pace around the room and imagine a time when something had gone wrong or when they had been anxious and to notice the changes in their bodies. This mild, prolonged anxiety would have been the general state of the men in the trenches as they were permanently in a place of danger. Again, a mixture of responses were reported: restless hands, tightness in the chest and shoulders and a marked increase in breathing speed.

A second exercise reinforced the feeling of being on edge. Each actor was given a balloon to blow up and place between their teeth. They were then shown a pin

and told to close their eyes as the psychologist walked between them, selecting a victim. As an observer I could see the varying reactions of those in danger; some calmly convincing themselves that they weren't in danger at all, others comically calling for their wives and some remaining silent but tense. No balloons were popped - there was no need (although William Postlethwaite (playing Stanhope) couldn't resist popping his for his own amusement!).

Now that they had all felt mild anxiety, we returned to the characters and the text.

One of the main questions for the cast was why Stanhope reacts as he does to Hibbert's seemingly logical need to return home. Our conclusion was that Stanhope hates to see vulnerability because it reminds him of his own and also that he is scared of fear itself. This seemed to be the biggest challenge for the cast, not to put themselves in the position of the men but to understand the stigma that surrounded psychological struggles.

MEGAN KERRIGAN



Above left: James Mack and Jim Creighton. Below left: William Postlethwaite and Robert Fitch.
Right: Jonathan Dryden Taylor and Ben Worth.

Theatre from the 1890s - 1930

Beth Flintoff sketches an outline of developments in theatre across the period at which Sherriff was writing.

From the start of the 20th Century, theatre in Europe underwent a series of 'movements' or periods when a particular idea or style causes a stir and then becomes popular. Often these movements were sharp reactions to those that had gone before: theatre makers like to challenge each other, to spark debate, even controversy, constantly seeking new ways of expressing themselves.

Towards the end of the 19th Century, the new idea of the age was Naturalism. Since the days of Shakespeare, theatre had been primarily a source of entertainment – making people laugh and cry in an enjoyable way to get them through the long evenings. But these new playwrights began to ask searching questions about life and society, to challenge the way we behave, and create a perfect illusion of reality. Instead of focussing on the rich and powerful, these plays featured ordinary people in ordinary circumstances.

An important writer in this tradition was a Norwegian, Henrik Ibsen. Ibsen's plays were mostly set in living rooms, immaculately recreated to look as realistic as possible, so that the audience would feel as if they were in the room with the characters – almost as if they were spying. His plays must have seemed incredibly realistic compared to the overly dramatic plays the audience were used to. And their content was extremely shocking. In *A Doll's House* (1879) the central character, Nora, decides she must leave her suffocating, controlling husband. The play ends with the slam of the door, her confused partner left alone onstage. The idea of a woman

wanting to separate from her husband was seen as profoundly disturbing – the fact that she walks out on her children even more so. Reviews were vicious, but the play became the hot topic for discussion at dinner parties around Europe.

Another play of Ibsen's, *Ghosts*, caused a scandal and was described in *The Daily Telegraph* as 'a dirty act done publicly'. It tells the story of a widow, Helene Alving, who discovers that her unfaithful husband passed on a hereditary sexually transmitted disease to their son, Oswald. Even worse, Oswald has fallen in love with Helene's maid Regine, who turns out to be his own half sister. Here, Helene describes how she felt when she found this out:

'When I heard Regine and Oswald in there, it was just like seeing ghosts. But then I'm inclined to think that we are all ghosts, every one of us. It's not just what we inherit from our fathers and mothers that haunts us.... It's not that they actually *live* on in us; they are simply lodged there, and we cannot get rid of them. I've only to pick up a newspaper and I seem to see ghosts gliding between the lines. Over the whole country there must be ghosts, as numerous as the sands of the sea. And here we are all of us, abysmally afraid of the light.'

Other writers came hot on the heels of Ibsen: George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde in this country, and the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov. People started to see theatre as "art". Plays began to have directors, who would organise the actors and creative team, and students studied

the art of acting and learnt techniques to improve. As plays became more realistic, actors had to be more realistic too – instead of big speeches and gestures, they had to be more conversational.

One of the most important people involved in this was the Russian director Konstantin Stanislavski, who came up with a ‘method’ for acting, demanding that actors study and train rigorously. Stanislavski’s ‘system’ is still taught in drama schools in this country, and many actors find it incredibly useful, although all sorts of other methods have also been devised since then.

Reacting against Naturalism, the next movement was Expressionism. Starting just before the start of the First World War, Expressionistic Theatre abandoned realistic, lifelike scenery and dialogue, instead going for large, symbolic sets, interesting lighting, and sequences of movement.

But then war broke out, and theatre suddenly took on a new role: it must distract and amuse people who were in a permanent state of fear and tragedy. Refugees travelled from one country to the next, taking their cultural traditions with them, so influences spread quickly. After the war was over, governments began to see theatre as a means of developing expression which everyone could take part in. Public money was spent on creating new theatre buildings, setting up drama classes for children, and training in universities.

In England, national pride was important, and alongside plays about the soldiers’ suffering, like Sheriff’s *Journey’s End*, playwrights such as George Bernard Shaw and Somerset Maugham celebrated traditional society and ‘Britishness’. Shaw’s 1925 play *Saint Joan*, for example, told the story of Joan of Arc, the peasant girl who heard voices she believed to be from God telling her to lead the French into battle against the English. Although *Saint Joan* was a tragedy, because Joan dies at the end, it was a play celebrating the goodness of human nature, and Shaw himself said ‘there are no villains’.

Meanwhile Noel Coward, famous for his breezy, slightly sarcastic songs, wrote brittle, slightly unnerving plays such as *The Vortex* in 1924, about a drug addicted young man and his adulterous mother, or the comedy *Hay Fever* in 1925, about two newly married couples on their honeymoon. *Hay Fever* was in some ways a bit like a Restoration Comedy, but with a stronger sense of uneasiness underneath. In the aftermath of the war, people were trying to come to terms with what had happened: the world had changed and art changed with it.

BETH FLINTOFF

British Art and Literature during WWI

A Brief Introduction to WWI and its Representation

When shots rang out in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, Europe began hurtling towards one of the deadliest conflicts the world has ever seen. Gavrilo Princip's assassination of Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, brought long-brewing political tension to a head. By August 4, 1914, the Central Powers (Germany, Bulgaria, Austro-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire) and the Entente or Allied Powers (France, Britain, Russia, Italy, and later the United States), were officially engaged in the First World War.

The crisis would last until November 11, 1918 and claim millions of lives, with battlefronts in Europe, European waters, and in the Middle and Near East. World War I, also known as the Great War, was a distinctly modern conflict in many ways. However, like wars throughout history, it inspired a tremendous amount of creative output from artists and writers, civilians and combatants, men and women.

Though we may read about dates and numbers when we study historic conflicts, the lived reality of a war becomes much more vivid when we look at the diverse creative expressions it inspires. The varied perspectives represented in the First World War art show us that there was not one single uniform war experience for Britons, whether on the battlefield or at home. In fact, we could say that British artists and writers witnessed and experienced different wars even though only one conflict is recorded in history. War-related art also had many purposes, whether to document, commemorate, appeal, revise, expose, obscure, or protest.



Photograph from the Imperial War Museum

The Conflict Between Real and Ideal

Propaganda posters often urged men to enlist in the British Army by appealing to ideals of masculinity, heroism, pride, and loyalty. These widely circulated posters relied on a viewer's positive response to imagery of healthy, stalwart soldiers or emblems of the British nation. A propaganda poster asks its viewer to identify with what is depicted, which usually concerns political, gender, and/or social identity. As part of making such an appeal, propagandists often obscure more realistic aspects of combat or service.



C.R.W. Nevinson, *Paths of Glory*, 1917, oil on canvas, 467 x 609 mm (Imperial War Museum, London)

In contrast, many war artists offered harsh but realistic visual depictions of the death and destruction that resulted from combat. For example, when we look at C.R.W. Nevinson's stark painting, *Paths of Glory*, irony comes to the forefront. Though the piece has an idealistic-sounding title, we shudder at the sight of two dead soldiers lying in the battlefield mud. We cannot identify with, or even identify these soldiers at all. Their faces are obscured and their bodies merge with the murky earth, suggesting the loss of identity and the waste of young lives. The brownish grey mud almost threatens to rise up and swallow the entire scene.



Paul Nash, *The Menin Road*, 1919, oil on canvas, 1828 x 3175 mm (Imperial War Museum, London)

Paul Nash's 1917 work, *The Menin Road*, depicts a ruined Belgian landscape. Before us, dead tree trunks rise in a wasteland of mud and standing water. This spooky, alienating, place includes strange clouds of smoke penetrated here and there by searchlights. Despite these beams of light, we cannot see anything past the immediate scene. Here is chaos, irrevocable change, and devastation.

Carrying poetry to war

First World War literature also presents a range of perspectives. Rupert Brooke's patriotic '1914' sonnet sequence became hugely popular in the early years of the war. At the outset of the war, many Britons were touched by the heroic sentiments of the poems, in particular, "The Soldier." This poem's combatant speaker assures the reader that his death in battle will mean that "there's some corner of a foreign field/That is forever England." Brooke's poems pictured military service and death as purifying and noble. At the start of the war, when such nationalistic feeling was strong, many British soldiers departed for training with a copy of Brooke's poems tucked into their kits.

However, after years of devastating losses and with no clear resolution to the seemingly endless fighting, poets depicting the hard reality of the soldier's experience gained more recognition. Wilfred Owen's gloomy 1917 "Anthem for Doomed Youth" pictures the war's fallen "d[ying] as cattle," for example. Siegfried Sassoon's 1918 piece, "Counter-Attack," offers us the gruesome vision of a battlefield "place rotten with dead" where corpses "face downward, in the sucking mud,/Wallow..." Sassoon's shocking verbal image recalls the horrible tableau of Nevinson's dead soldiers lying facedown in the mud.

A Note on WWI and Modernism

During the years leading up to the war, many modernists began to turn their attention to their media; writers and authors broke free of traditional parameters of form and imagery and brought the very materials of their crafts to the forefront. They questioned the solidity of the bond between representation and meaning. Works like T.S. Eliot's poem, "The Waste Land," Mark Gertler's *Merry-Go-Round* (Tate Britain), or Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* sought to shock, alienate, or provoke audiences and to thereby explore new sensory and intellectual effects in art and literature.

While the modernist movement had begun prior to the war, the conflict's vast scale, brutality, and costs fascinated many artists and writers. The war definitively ended many social and cultural traditions that survived the nineteenth century and made clear the modern, mechanized world we were entering, a world where the older expressive forms and techniques no longer seemed adequate, appropriate, or compelling.

Women Writers and Artists

Women artists and writers played a significant role in documenting civilian and service experiences. Vera Brittain, who volunteered as a nurse, recorded her impressions of work and loss in her memoir, *Testament of Youth*, one of the war's most recognized autobiographical works. Women artists documented other civilian realities such as female workers in factories—doing jobs vacated by men in the military— who had become crucial for war-related production.



Flora Lion, *Women's Canteen at Phoenix Works, Bradford*, 1918, oil on canvas, 1066 x 1828 mm (Imperial War Museum)

Flora Lion for example, shows us a canteen for women munitions (weapons) workers in her painting, *Women's Canteen at Phoenix Works, Bradford*. We can see the exhaustion that the workers are feeling. The women here look somewhat relieved for their tea break. Their resigned expressions and slouching posture underscore the mental and physical fatigue of this critical but dangerous line of work, but they also make us recognize the more emotional weariness of the civilian war experience.

WWI's Aftermath: Public and Private Commemoration

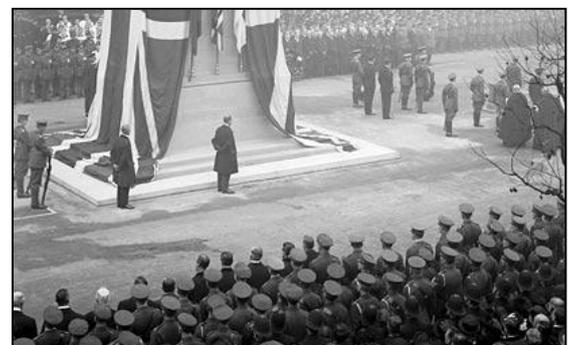
When the war concluded in November 1918, nearly a million Britons were dead. British soldiers killed in action were buried overseas, so that public officials and grieving families were challenged to represent both personal and national losses. To recognize individual sacrifices, the British government issued memorial bronze plaques and paper scrolls to the family of each serviceman who died as a result of the war. And, on November 11, 1920, a solemn ceremony dedicated two of Britain's most famous public war monuments, Edward Luytens's *Whitehall Cenotaph* and the *Unknown Soldier*, buried in Westminster Abbey.

The creative work of giving textual, visual, or plastic form to First World War experiences would go on into the 1930s and after. Even as Britain neared the fearful prospect of a second major international conflict, the Great War continued to haunt those who had lived through it.

By Dr. Fiona Robinson



Edward Luytens, Whitehall Cenotaph, unveiled 1920, portland stone, London



Unveiling of the permanent Cenotaph in Whitehall by His Majesty King George V, 11 November 1920 © Imperial War Museum

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The Journey of a Production

The Watermill Theatre is a producing house, which means the vast majority of our shows are produced in-house, and we have a different cast and creative team for every new production we put on. Work on each show begins several months before the actors take to the stage on opening night, and it's a long road from choosing a show to perform, to the curtain call on first night.

The first step of putting on any production starts with finding a good script. Of course, there are a lot around to choose from, spanning hundreds of years and several continents, but selecting those plays that fit with The Watermill's intimate nature, have something relevant and compelling to say to a modern audience, and can be performed in new and interesting ways, often presents quite a challenge.

You can always commission a writer to produce an entirely original script, one that suits the kind of production you're looking for. Indeed, The Watermill often takes this route – in 2014 so far we have had *Sense and Sensibility*, a new adaptation of the classic Austen novel by Jessica Swale; *A Bunch of Amateurs*, a new play by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, and *Hardboiled*, an entirely original piece written by Beth Flintoff with Rhum and Clay Theatre Company.

In tandem with finding the perfect script is the search for a director who can bring the show to life, who has their own personal take on the play, and can bring their unique vision to the table. Once the script has been married to a director, designers and lighting designers begin to come on

board, and the visual nature of the play starts to be developed. A set design is created, first through sketches and drawings, culminating in a model box, illustrating how the set will appear on the Watermill stage.

The designer also creates costume designs for each character, in line with the overall design of the show. Once the actors are cast (and forced to hand over their measurements!) our Wardrobe department gets to work sewing and stitching to create the costumes you'll see on stage.

The casting process can vary greatly depending on the size of the cast and the skills required from the actors in each role. For actor-musician productions one of the biggest challenges is forming a cast with the right balance of instruments. Other productions require actors to double as several characters throughout the course of the show, often a tricky proposition! Actors will often attend an initial audition and follow that up with one or more recalls, in order to demonstrate different talents, read for a different character, or audition with an actor already cast to test their chemistry together.

Rehearsals usually begin three or four weeks before the show is set to open. The actors – recruited from all over the country – all live on site at The Watermill or in the surrounding area throughout the rehearsal and performance periods. On the first day of rehearsals the cast meet each other for the first time, and work begins on everything from costume fittings and dialect coaching, to instrument

practice and fight choreography – along with learning all their lines of course!

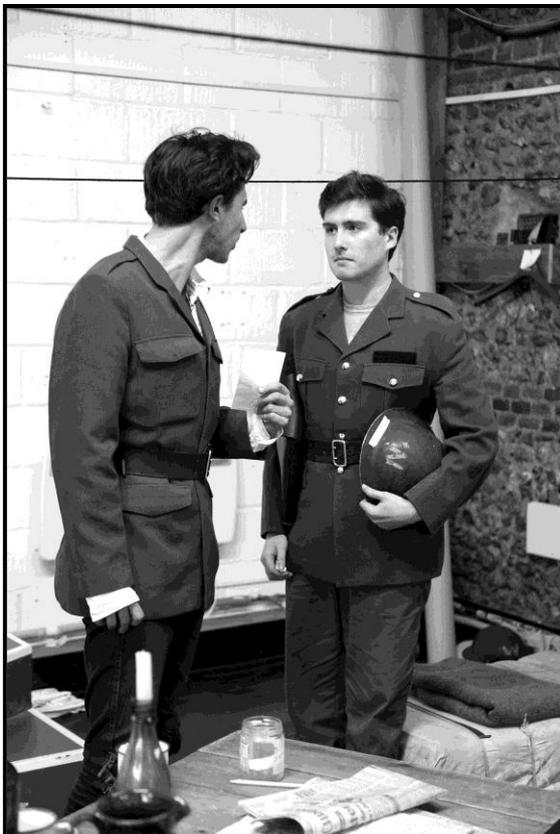
During the rehearsal process all aspects of the production begin to come together. Our Stage Management team assist the director in blocking the show – figuring out how the characters move around the stage and interact with one another in each scene. There are also many requests for props – from old-fashioned typewriters to stuffed animals – which we source from our own prop store, e-bay, flea markets, and occasionally the homes of Watermill staff members!

In the days leading up to opening night, rehearsals move into the theatre itself. Often just a day or two after the previous show has finished, our dedicated Production team will have spent that brief

window performing the ‘get-out’ of the last set, and the ‘get-in’ of the new one. The actors can now step onto the stage they’ll be performing on, interact with the scenery and props, and come to terms with just how close the audience in the front row will be!

The dress rehearsal takes place on the afternoon of opening night, and it is the cast, crew and stage management’s final opportunity to make any changes, or correct any problems. The actors are all in full costume, props are set, lighting and sound cues finalised, and hopefully everything goes off without a hitch. A few hours later the first audience members will begin to arrive, and from then... the show must go on!

By Matt Ray



Journey's End in rehearsals. Left: William Postlethwaite and James Mack. Above from left to right: Director, Paul Hart, Assistant Director Neil Bull and Deputy Stage Manager Sara Shardlow. Below right: William Postlethwaite and David Broughton-Davies.

The Cast of *Journey's End*



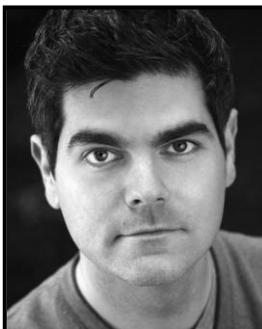
David Broughton-Davies (Hardy / Sergeant Major)

Originally from North Wales, David had various careers before graduating from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

David's most recent screen work includes the multi award winning feature *OXV- The Manual* which received its British premiere this May after a year of global film festivals and is now released in the US (under the new title *Frequencies*).

David's most recent stage appearances have been at Testbed 1, in Battersea, where he portrayed King Agememnon in Brian Woolland's *This Flesh is Mine*, the White Bear, Kennington with John Osbourne's *The Devil Inside Him* and the Finborough Theatre in Zoe Lafferty's *The Fear of Breathing*. He has performed with The Royal Shakespeare Company, Young Vic, The national Theatre Studio, English Shakespeare Company, Salisbury Playhouse, Cheltenham Everyman, Oldham Coliseum, Theatr Clwyd, Sherman Theatr, Cardiff. Aarhus Theatre, Denmark, Playhouse Theatre, New York and Steppenwolf in Chicago, and at nearly every No 1 touring house across the UK with various musicals.

TV appearances include *Shameless*, *Casualty*, *Doctors* and he was most recently seen in a *Holby City* Special.



Jim Creighton (Osborne)

Theatre credits include: *The Silver Tassie*, *Fram*, *Market Boy*, *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Money*, *Summerfolk*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Peter Pan*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Skylight* (Royal National Theatre); *Brand*, *The Merchant of Venice* (RSC); *Richard III* (Nottingham Playhouse); *Overruled* (Wilmington Theatre Co.); *Desire Under Elms* (Lyric Hammersmith); *The Tempest*, *Flarepath* (Theatre Royal Haymarket); *1936* (Arcola); *Loot* (Tricycle); *On the Middle Day* (Old Vic); *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Three Sisters* (Chichester Festival Theatre).

Television credits include: *WPC 56*, *Doctors*, *The Hour*, *King Lear*, *Ashes to Ashes*, *Emergency Rescue*, *The Estate*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Perfect Crime*.



Jonathan Dryden Taylor (Trotter)

Jon was born in London and trained with the National Youth Music Theatre and at Cambridge University.

Theatre includes: *King Lear*, *Othello*, *The Captain of Kopenick* (National Theatre); *Toxic Bankers* (Leicester Square/Lowry); *Jump* (Edinburgh); *Scott Mills The Musical* (BBC Radio 1/ Pleasance); *Lend me a Tenor*, *A Small Family Business*, *The Government Inspector*, *Chimneys*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Hamlet* (Pitlochry); *The Beggars' Opera*, *The Road to the Sea* (Orange Tree); *The Inland Sea* (OSC at Wilton's); *Troilus and Cressida* (Old Vic); *50 Revolutions*, *Penny For A Song* (Whitehall).

TV: *That Mitchell and Webb Look*

Radio: Over 20 plays and series for BBC Radio 3, 4 and World Service.

Jon also writes extensively for TV and Radio, including five series of *That Mitchell and Webb Sound* (Radio 4), four of *That Mitchell and Webb Look* (BBC2), *Ten Things I Hate About...* (C5), *Great Movie Mistakes 4* (BBC3), *The Eliza Stories*, *The Death of Grass*, and *Love Lessons* (all Radio 4).



Robert Fitch (The Colonel)

Robert trained at ALRA.

Theatre includes: *Oberon/Theseus* (Stafford Shakespeare Festival); *Anne Boleyn* (The Globe and ETT); *Edward II* (The Rose); *Terms of Endearment* (York Theatre Royal and tour); *The Wings of the Dove* (on tour); *Dangerous Corner*, *Ten Times Table*, *Intimate Exchanges*, *Stage Struck*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Deadly Nightcap*, *One For The Pot* (Theatre Royal Windsor); *Marrying the Mistress* (on tour); *Over The Moon* (The Old Vic); *Wait Until Dark* (The Garrick).

Film includes: *Day of the Flowers*, *Shaun of the Dead*, *There's No 'I' In Team*, *The Virus*, *Citizen vs Kane* (winner Prix Canal Plus at Clermont Ferrand short film festival 2009).

Television includes: *Doctors*, *The Queen's Sister*, *London's Burning*.

Narrations for television include: *Ask Lara* (animation), *Mummy Mysteries*, *Secrets of Stalingrad*, *The Last Voyage of the Empress*, *Animal Armageddon*, *Ultimate Battles* and *Quest for Sunken Warships* for Discovery channel and a cookery show for Sky TV called *Zumbo*.

Radio includes: *Time to Move*, *Telling It The Way It Is* and *Together* for the BBC.

Robert has recorded numerous educational tapes. In addition he has toured with his band 'Zed' playing bass and harmonica, and played session bass for various solo performers including Dyan Cannon in her brief foray into music.



Edward Killingback (Hibbert)

Edward trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes: *Versailles* (Donmar Warehouse); *The Low Road* (Royal Court); *Posh* (ATG/Royal Court); *Clybourne Park*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Arabian Nights*, *Night Must Fall* (Richard Burton Company/RWCMD); *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Under Milk Wood*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Richard III* (RWCMD).

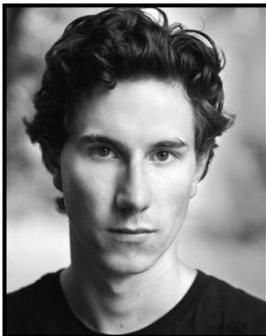
Film includes: *Girls' Night Out*, *Would Like To Meet*.

Radio includes: *Under Milk Wood* (RWCMD).



James Mack (Raleigh)

Theatre: Terry in *Confusions* (Theatre Royal Haymarket Youth Company); Traveller in *The Insect Play* (Theatre Haymarket Youth Company).
Parts at Guildhall: Aaron Kreifels in *The Laramie Project*; Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*; Arthur Gride in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*; Cecil in *Toast*; Duke Frederick/Duke Senior in *As You Like It*.



William Postlethwaite (Stanhope)

William graduated from LAMDA in 2011.

Theatre: *Our Ajax* (Southwark Playhouse); *King Lear* (Bath Theatre Royal)
Longing (Hampstead Theatre); *Cinderella The Midnight Princess* (Rose Theatre Kingston); *Collaborators* (The National Theatre); *Fireface* (Young Vic Theatre)
As You Like It (Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester).
Television: *Foyle's War*; *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*; *Midsomer Murders*; *Holby City*
Film: *Containment*



Ryan Van Champion (English Soldier/German Soldier)

Ryan trained at Guildhall and recently graduated.
Theatre credits whilst training include: Ben in *Rags*; *May '08* directed by Richard Wilson; Matt in *The Laramie Project*; Bridegroom *A Respectable Wedding*;
Tim Linkinwater in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*; Peter in *Toast*.
On television, Ryan has played Liam in *Casualty* for the BBC.
Radio credits include: Georges in *The Boneless Wonder*.
Ryan is pleased to be making his professional theatre debut in *Journey's End*.



Ben Worth (Mason)

Ben trained at Rose Bruford.
Theatre includes: *Street in the Sky* (Encounter Theatre Company); *The Room Inside* (Leicester Curve); *Face to Face* (Park Theatre); *Thatcherwrite* (Theatre 503); *A Misunderstanding* (Southwark Playhouse); *I Believe In Unicorns* (Theatre Alibi).
Television Includes: *Just Us* (ITV) *Being Human* (BBC3).

Interview with the Cast



William Postlethwaite as Dennis Stanhope

Could you tell us a little bit more about your characters?

James: Raleigh is an eighteen year old boy who comes straight from school and is thrown into trench life. He works his way into his long-time friend's regiment and expects the war to be like a big rugby game, just like being back at public school, but when he arrives he is shocked by the realities of trench warfare.

William: Dennis Stanhope is company commander. Dennis has been in the trenches for three years and it's starting to take its toll.

The Watermill is producing this play in the Centenary year of 1914, but are there themes in the play that are still relevant today?

James: It is mainly about war because it is set in the war, but there are other themes as well. There is a lot about friendship and the camaraderie of the men. It's about how friendships change, especially when external pressures are put on the men,

how they deal with the atrocity of what happened in the trenches, and what they did to survive.

As actors how do you approach something that happened 100 years ago?

James: A lot of research.

William: The big thing I am battling with is what it actually would have been like.

James: We have thought and discussed a lot about, "if it were us going off to war". A hundred years ago it was a different world because the social environment was so different; now it wouldn't happen in the same way. The bravery and courage of those men is something that is extremely difficult to relate to.

You talk about Sherriff's writing, what can the audience expect coming to see this piece of theatre? How would you sum up *Journey's End*?

James: It's a great play, which it is fantastically written. It's a window into what life in World War One trenches was like. Come and see it to remember, but also because it is a really good piece of theatre.

William: The relationships within the play, because Sherriff was actually there, feel so real and from a place of truth. As long as we say the lines as Sherriff meant them, I feel we will be giving a respectful representation of people who went through this situation.

Interview with the Director

Could you explain a little bit about *Journey's End*?

It is set in the trenches in St Quentin towards the end of First World War. This is where the big German attack took place at the point when there was a real danger that the British and the Allies could lose the war before the Americans came and helped.

What was it that specifically drew you to this play; was it the Centenary or is it a play you have always had in mind?

I first encountered the play at school. Discovering a play at school seems to do one of two things; put you off completely or make you more interested. For me it did the latter. It is a play that I have come back to quite a lot because it fascinates me. It's the naturalism of the play that I am especially gripped by. It feels like a very early kitchen sink drama; it is real people, in a real environment and I think that is the most exciting thing you can watch in a theatre.

Why do you think it is important that we re-interrogate it now?

It questions the nature of war, but it doesn't tell you what to think. It allows you to make up your own mind. I personally find that more engaging than a piece that is pro-war or anti-war. It sets up a scenario and you have to make your own decision. This is important in any conflict and unfortunately, since that battle 100 years ago, we're still in an environment where wars happen very often. To see what it

does to the people who experience it first-hand I think is really important.

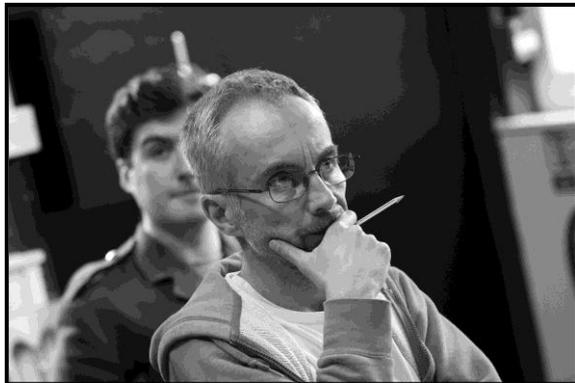
You have worked at The Watermill several times both with Propeller and on other plays. When you read *Journey's End*, did you decide this was the place you wanted to direct it for?

I'd been thinking about *Journey's End* for The Watermill for a very long time; it seems to be the perfect marriage. Although The Watermill obviously isn't a trench, there is something natural about its existence, which absolutely feeds into the nature of this play. The Watermill is a real place; it is not constructed to be a theatre, so there is an essence of that which hangs in the air. It's also quirky as a building, and I love it for all its quirks; it's



Above: William Postlethwaite and Director, Paul Hart.

got funny little nooks and crannies where you can hide things and action can take place. In terms of designing the set, it was all about stripping the space back to its bare bones, which is what felt right for this play.



Above: Jim Creighton and William Postlethwaite.
Below: Assistant Director, Neil Bull.

Have there been any specific challenges from a director's point of view?

Sherriff is very specific in his stage directions and demands of his actors. He is

someone who really understood the theatre and wanted to push it to its absolute limits. There is just so much detail within the play that you have to achieve. Whenever you take your foot off the gas, ultimately you realise that you are not serving the play to as great a degree as you could if you really pushed everyone (not that I have to with this cast because they are hard workers!). This is something that leads me around the rehearsal room. I never feel really in control of the play, which is really exciting.

Are there some key things you have brought into the rehearsal process to investigate the play on a deeper level?

As you can imagine, this is the year to do the play because there is so much resource out there at the moment. Our rehearsal room is littered with all sorts of images, books and podcasts. We also had a psychiatrist come in to talk about the effect of trauma, which was really fascinating. It was really interesting to get into the head space of someone who's in that environment. I was very conscious that the Somme was seven days and nights of continual bombardment. Getting a sense of what it must have been like to live in that extraordinary environment, and understanding the effect on the human body was very difficult. Exploring that was a starting point for me.

The Design Process

1. Research

The first step in creating the set is for the Designer to research the era of the piece. Often the Designer will create a scrap book of images, materials and textures that may inspire their design. Initial ideas are discussed with the Director to make sure they fit with the Director's overall vision.



Journey's End White Card model

2. White Card

The White Card is an unpainted model of the set which is sent to the production team who make sure it fits the space and the budget that is available.

3. Model Box

The designer then creates a model box. This is made on a 1:25 scale to give the team a clear picture of the set. The production team use the model for the building process, ensuring that the final set replicates exactly the designer's original model.



Journey's End Model Box

3. Scale Drawings

The designer then draws a ground plan of the model box to the scale of the theatre. This gives the carpenter the exact dimensions to work from.

4. Building The Set

The carpenter then starts to make the set. At The Watermill the set is built off-site in a large barn and then brought to the theatre and constructed during the weekend before the show opens.



Final set for *Journey's End*

5. The Final Set

The final set is fitted into the theatre. During the fit-up the designer will work with the production team to ensure that all the final details are perfected on the set before the show opens.

Designing the Costumes



Colonel

The Designer starts by gathering images or creating designs of how s/he sees the characters. The wardrobe team then try to make or source the costumes, remaining as close to the Designer's drawings as possible. For *Journey's End* the Designer, Katie Lias researched World War One uniform to achieve the most historically accurate portrayal.

Different ranks have individual signifiers to distinguish their status within the army. The soldier's rank was sewn onto the upper tunic sleeves, while trade badges, long service and good conduct stripes were placed on the lower sleeves.



Captain

Even though some characters carry the same rank they each have their own individual look, which needs to be incorporated into the uniforms. For example, Raleigh and Trotter are both Officers, yet whilst Raleigh's uniform is new, Trotter's tunic is clearly too small for him.

Facts about British World War 1 Uniforms

- British soldiers wore the 1902 pattern service dress tunic and trousers. This was a thick woollen tunic, dyed khaki green.
- It was the most expensive uniform to produce in Europe, costing over twice the price of the simpler German uniform.
- The British uniforms were khaki, a type of green which allowed them to blend into the terrain. However the French did not comprehend this concept so quickly and retained highly visible blue coats and red trousers for active service several months into the war.
- Most British soldiers wore puttees, which are long strips of cloth wrapped around the lower leg, closing off the bottom of the trousers, to prevent mud and bugs getting up the trouser legs.



Lieutenant



2nd Lieutenant

Credits for *Journey's End*

Written by R. C. Sherriff

Director Paul Hart

Designer Katie Lias

Sound Design Steve Mayo

Lighting Design David Holmes

Musical Supervisor/Arranger Paul Herbert

Assistant Director Neil Bull

Fight Director Paul Benzing

Dialect Coach Cathy Weate

Flute and Clarinet Matthew James Hinchcliffe

CAST in alphabetical order

Hardy/Sergeant Major David Broughton-Davies

Osborne Jim Creighton

Trotter Jonathan Dryden Taylor

The Colonel Robert Fitch

Hibbert Edward Killingback

Raleigh James Mack

Stanhope William Postlethwaite

English Soldier/German Soldier Ryan Van Champion

Mason Ben Worth

Company Stage Manager Ami-Jayne Steele-Childe

Production Manager Lawrence T Doyle

Assistant Production Manager Nelly Chauvet

Theatre Technician Josh Robinson

Deputy Stage Manager Sara Shardlow

Assistant Stage Manager Luis Henson

Wardrobe Supervisor Amanda Dooley

Wardrobe Assistant Eloise Short

Set Construction Belgrade Production Services

Production Photographer Philip Tull

National Press and Publicity Mark Senior