THE CHURCH AND THE SWORD: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN A TIME OF WAR

A Guide to the Exhibition at Chester Cathedral Library to Mark the Centenary of The Battle of Jutland (31st May – 1st June) & The Battle of the Somme (1st July – 18th November) 1916

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in collaboration with
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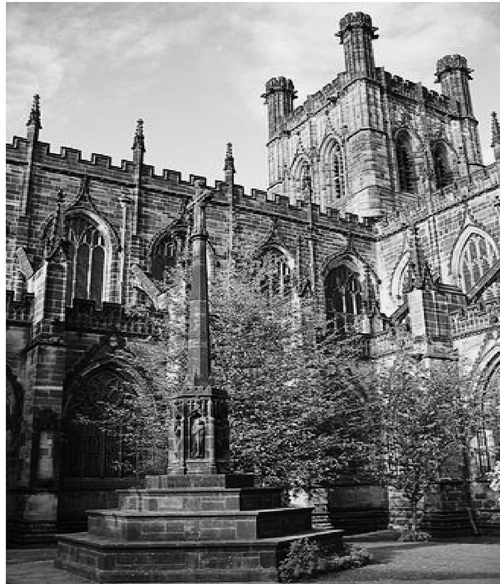

Put on the whole armour of God
Ephesians 6:11

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares
Isaiah 2:4

CHESTER CATHEDRAL LIBRARY
MMXVI

PREFACE

This is the sixth in a series of exhibitions at Chester Cathedral Library in which we have exploited significant anniversaries to stimulate reflection on issues of importance to the Church. In 2011 (the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible) the theme was Bible translation; in 2012 (the 350th anniversary of current Book of Common Prayer) liturgy; in 2013 (the 450th anniversary of the Thirty Nine Articles) doctrine; in 2014 (the 300th anniversary of the death of Matthew Henry) Bible commentary; in 2015 (the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta) the Church and the State. And this year, 2016, we mark the centenary of two of the most momentous battles of World War I – Jutland and the Somme – by offering some reflections on the theme of the Church and war.

The Church of England has been involved in war in one way or another ever since it came into being as the national church in the sixteenth century. Memorials to both Jutland and the Somme are in the Cathedral. What are they doing there? Doesn't the Church acknowledge as its Master and Lord the Prince of Peace, so what is it doing memorializing, possibly glorifying war? There seems to be widespread confusion and uncertainty in the minds of Christians about war. Many are reluctant and embarrassed to talk about it, defensive and apologetic if they are involved in Remembrance Sunday, glad to get it over with. But war is an appalling fact of our lives, brought to us nightly on our television screens. We need to face up to it and think about it, to clear our heads a little. It may come as a surprise to some that there is a rich vein of Christian thinking about war as well as about peace. What we present here are some resources for reflection on the subject. Our aim is to stimulate thinking not to offer cut-and-dried answers. The issues are highly sensitive. We hope we have got the tone right, and give no offence. The opinions expressed in this Guide are personal to its author. It should not be assumed that they represent the views of the Dean and Chapter.

The exhibition is in some ways an extension of last year's exhibition on "The Church and the State", because the answer one gives to the question of the Church's role in war is determined by the relationship one conceives to exist between the Church and the State. If Church and State are two different agents in the scheme of things, each with its own sphere of activity, and if the state wields the sword, then what business has the Church with war?

We would like to thank the Dean and Chapter, and above all the Canon Chancellor and Canon Librarian, Jane Brooke, for their continuing support for our efforts to integrate the Library into the mission of the Cathedral. Nick Fry offered some useful information out of his vast knowledge of the Cathedral's history. Caroline Chamberlain at the Cheshire Military Museum has been very helpful and generously loaned us some items to enrich our display. But once again we owe special thanks to the library helpers for the work they have done in suggesting and finding items as well as helping to mount the display.

Finally we would like to note that the exhibition supports the Cathedral's Wednesday Bible Talks, which this year are on "The Bible, War, Violence and Peace", and the programme of the Chester Theological Society which will include a talk on Chaplaincy to the Armed Forces.

Philip Alexander 17th February 2016

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Scheme of the Exhibition

CASE ONE
THE CHURCH AND THE COMMEMORATION OF WAR

The Cathedral War Memorials
Jutland (HMS Chester)
The Somme (The Cheshires)
The Egerton Family at War

CASE TWO
THE CHURCH'S DOCTRINE OF WAR

Top Shelf
(a) Just War
(b) Holy War

Bottom Shelf
(c) Spiritual Warfare
(d) Armageddon

CASE THREE
LITURGIES AND RITUALS OF WAR

Top Shelf
(a) War Prayers
(b) War Hymns

Bottom Shelf
(c) War Sermons
(d) Chaplaincy

THE CHURCH AND THE SWORD: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN A TIME OF WAR

This year (2016) marks the mid-point in the centenary commemorations of the First World War (1914-18). Two momentous events that took place one hundred years ago will in particular be remembered – the Battle of Jutland and the Battle of the Somme. The Battle of Jutland was fought between the British Grand Fleet, under Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, and the German High Seas Fleet, under Vice-Admiral Reinhard Scheer, over a wide area of the north North Sea, on 31st May and 1st June 1916. Germany had built up a powerful, modern navy in the years leading up to the First World War, but when the war broke out it was still smaller than the British fleet, and Britain ruled the waves. The British were able to blockade Germany and by 1916 the blockade was beginning to hurt. The Germans decided to risk an engagement. Their plan was not at first to engage the whole British Grand Fleet, but to try and lure part of it into a battle where, having local superiority, they would be able to sink a significant number of British ships. Having evened up the odds in this way, they could then take on the main fleet with more hope of success. Both fleets engaged in running skirmishes over two days in which heavy loses were inflicted on both sides. The German fleet managed in the end to withdraw back to its home port and avoid an all-out confrontation. The Germans claimed victory. They had sunk more British ships and inflicted about twice as many casualties, but they never again ventured out of port in numbers; the Royal Navy still remained the larger and stronger force, and continued its blockade of Germany.

Jutland came as a profound shock to the British who had been brought up to believe in the superiority, the invincibility, almost, of the Royal Navy. The Royal Navy had only to get the German navy in its sights and it would give it an almighty drubbing. The heavier British losses, the performance of the German ships, the skill of the German gunners, the seamanship and bravery of the German captains, was an unpleasant surprise to the general public.

The Battle of the Somme broke out a month later on the 1st July and continued to the 18th November. It was an assault on the entrenched German lines by an Anglo-French force on a wide front along the River Somme in North Eastern France. The strategic purpose was to relieve pressure on the beleaguered French divisions at Verdun, to the south-east, and to make a decisive break through at the strongest sector of the German defences, thus forcing the German army into retreat. It was the bloodiest battle in history, with around one million men killed or wounded. On 1st July alone the British suffered 57,470 casualties, the army's heaviest losses ever on a single day. When the

offensive ended the Allies had made only limited gains, and had failed to achieve their main objectives. The Somme has lodged deep in the British national consciousness in a way that Jutland has not. It went on longer, and the heavy losses are etched on the war memorials of every small town and village in the country. The losses at Jutland on the British side (6945), though still appalling, were dwarfed by those at the Somme, and so the impact was less.

The Church – and particularly the Church of England, the national church – will be involved in the services of remembrance for these two great national events. Why? Surely war is the business of the state, not of the Church, so why should the Church get involved? Isn't war the antithesis of all that the Church stands for? Doesn't the Church proclaim Christ the Prince of Peace, who said "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you"? The Church's role during war, and afterwards in the commemoration of war is not an easy one. It has a powerful voice, and a ready platform from which to influence public opinion. Inevitably it comes under intense pressure to rally the people in the time of war, to stiffen their resolve, to assure them that their cause is just and God is on their side, and afterwards to commemorate the glorious dead and to insist that they have not sacrificed their lives in vain – to become, in effect, an instrument of state propaganda. But what if the war is unjust – a war of aggression – and the state is evil? This was the dilemma that faced the Church in Nazi Germany, and there were Christians, like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who refused to support the state, and the war it was waging, and who paid for their opposition with their lives.

Closer to home, and much less dramatically, in 1982, when the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, in a sermon at a service in St Paul's Cathedral to give thanks for victory in the Falklands, remembered the Argentinian as well as the British dead, and affirmed that "those who dare interpret God's will must never claim him as an asset for one nation or group rather than another," the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was, according to Dennis Thatcher, "spitting blood". The incident was said to have soured the relationship between the Church and the State for the rest of her time in office. It has often been difficult for politicians to accept that while the Church acknowledges it has a duty in relation to war, it has to play its role in accordance with its own beliefs and principles. It cannot simply be the state's servant. Incidentally it is worth noting, as some papers did at the time, that Runcie's moral right to say what he said was enhanced by the fact that he had known war first-hand. He had served with distinction as a tank commander in World War II, and won the Military Cross. The Church, then, has a role to play in relation to war. What should that role be, and what principles can it

draw on from its own rich traditions to guide how it acts? These are the big questions which this little exhibition seeks to explore.

Case One
The Church and the Commemoration of War

Walk round any cathedral in England and it will become quickly apparent just how intimately the Church is linked to this country's experience of war. Chester Cathedral is no exception. There are numerous war memorials of various kinds scattered across the site (the main ones are marked on a plan of the Cathedral in **Exhibit 1.1**). All three services are represented – army, navy and air force. The memorials are of various kinds – stained glass, stone plaques, chapels, and a memorial garden. They commemorate individuals, larger groups and whole regiments. We have designed this case as a "portal" to the war memorials in the church, and would invite you, after your tour of the exhibition, to go to the Cathedral, to seek them out and to study them carefully. Each tells it own story.

Out of these many memorials we have highlighted here three as particularly relevant to our exhibition. The first is the small memorial case commemorating HMS Chester, a town-class light cruiser which saw hard fighting in the Battle of Jutland. She was build locally at the Cammell Laird shipyard at Birkenhead, initially for the Greek Navy, but was taken over by the Royal Navy when it became clear that the war was not going to end quickly. Commissioned in May 1916, she was involved in action in the Battle of Jutland only a few weeks later. Scouting ahead of her squadron she ran into four German battleships. Outgunned, she took a battering, but stayed afloat. She lost 29 men, including her chaplain the Revd Cyril Ambrose Walton.

Her most famous crew member was also one of her youngest, the sixteen year old Boy Cornwell. Boy (First Class) Jack Cornwell was a sight-setter on the Chester's forward gun. A series of hits in the vicinity of the gun killed or mortally wounded the gun-crew, the lethal damage being done by flying splinters which the gun's inadequate shielding failed to stop. Cornwell, though himself wounded, was found by the medics still standing at his post. Taken ashore to Grimsby hospital he died of his wounds. He was recommended by Admiral Beatty for a posthumous award of the Victoria Cross, which was in the end granted. The citation read: "Mortally wounded early in the action, Boy, First Class, Jack Travers Cornwell remained standing alone at a most exposed post, quietly awaiting orders, until the end of the action, with the gun's crew dead and wounded all round him. His age was under sixteen and a half years." The story fired the public imagination. It was a glimmer of light,

something for people to hold on to, in the dark days after Jutland. The government shamelessly exploited it. Sir Edward Carson, who became First Lord of the Admiralty on 10th December 1916, declared: "I feel this boy, who died at the post of duty, sends this message, through me as First Lord of the Admiralty for the moment, to the people of the Empire, – 'Obey your orders: cling to your post: don't grumble: *stick it out!*'" In much the same vein is the biography of Boy Cornwell written by Sir John Ernest Hodder-Williams, first published in 1917, but reprinted this year for the centenary (**Exhibit 1.2**).

On display is a photo of a painting of the Chester commissioned by Cammell Laird from the Australian naval artist Arthur James Wetherall Burgess (**Exhibit 1.3**). It was donated by the shipyard to the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum, Birkenhead, in 1993. Chester is shown with her sister ship, HMS Birkenhead, and a number of other ships, both naval and civilian (all presumably built by Cammell Laird). Another painting of the Chester in the Mersey off New Brighton by the same artist hangs in Chester Town Hall.

The second memorial we have singled out relates to the Cheshire Regiment. On display is a photo of a plaque in the Cathedral dedicated to the Cheshires who died in South Africa between 1899 and 1902 during the Boer War (**Exhibit 1.6**). The names of the fallen are flanked on the left side by the statue of a pike-man of the late 17th century, and on the right side by an infantryman of the late 19th century. The Cheshire Regiment goes back to a regiment of foot raised on the Roodee Chester in 1689 to help defend the country against attack by the forces of James II, as he attempted to regain his throne. The Cheshire Regiment saw action all over the world down to 1st September 2007, when it merged with several other regiments to form the Mercian Regiment, becoming the 1st Battalion of the new entity. It saw fierce action at the Battle of the Somme at La Boiselle. On display is a remarkable photograph of a trench at the Somme, manned by Cheshires (**Exhibit 1.7**). One soldier is on the fire-step, keeping guard. The others are lying about trying to get some rest. The bodies slumped in contorted positions, the tense but tired alertness of the sentry, the ramshackle trench, the worn fire-step, which has almost crumbled away, convey an air of utter exhaustion and desolation. The links between the Cheshires and the Cathedral are particularly close. They are commemorated not only by a regimental chapel full of regimental flags and memorial plaques of many kinds, but by a memorial garden to the south-east of the Cathedral.

The third memorial we have singled out is the window dedicated to the men of the well-known Egerton family of Cheshire who died in World War I. We exhibit a reproduction of the cartoon for this taken from a small volume called *The Egerton Memorial in Chester Cathedral*, produced for the dedication of the window on 26th July, 1921 (**Exhibit 1.4**). The volume was intended for

private distribution, and only one hundred copies were printed, two of which are in the Cathedral Library. Besides the reproduction and description of the window, it contains a photo and biographies of each of the dead. The window was produced by Messrs Kempe & Co., a well-known stained-glass designer and manufacturer of the time, whose work adorns many English churches. Mr Tower of Kempe & Co., explained the design as follows:

> "The composition represents 'The Tree of the Cross,' – the Living Lord appearing as the chief Figure in the upper branches of the Tree, – 'reigning from the Tree of the Cross,' – with a crown upon His head. Amid the foliage and in the subordinate branches of the Tree are figures of some of the soldier martyrs of Christendom: – S.S. George, Louis King of France, – Oswald King of Northumbria, – Edmund King of East Anglia, – and Martin, Bishop of Tours.
>
> At the foot of the Tree a full length figure of St. Michael (who fought against Satan and his angels and overthrew them) is shewn, with his feet upon the dragon. On either side of S. Michael are shewn seated allegorical figures, representing the Virtues of 'Fortitude,' (with the pillar), and 'Obedience' (carrying on a tablet the words – 'The Lord became obedient unto death.')
>
> Small figures of angels also appear in the foliage, carrying the words of the Te Deum – 'We pray Thee help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed.'
>
> At the bottom of the right hand light is a tablet, surmounted with the Coat of Arms of the Egerton family, and carrying the following words: – 'In praise of Our Holy Redeemer triumphant over death, and in memory of those descendants of Philip Egerton (1728-86), of Egerton and Oulton, in this County, who laid down their lives in the War 1914-18, this window, and the tablet beneath it are dedicated.'
>
> In the tracery lights in the head of the window are small figures of S.S. Alban, Maurice, Eustace, Longinus the Centurion, Sebastian, and Constantine; and in the topmost panels the doctrine of the Resurrection is illustrated by the small picture scene representing Our Lord appearing to St. Mary Magdalene after His resurrection."

Most of the themes of the present exhibition are alluded to in the iconography in this richly symbolic work.

Beneath the window is a plaque commemorating by name the Egertons who fell in war, and beneath that a tablet to Vice-Admiral Wion de Malpas Egerton, born 1879, killed in action 1 January 1943 – a long-serving and distinguished officer of the Royal Navy.

The final item on display is a family tree of the Egertons showing in red those who died in the war (**Exhibit 1.5**) – twelve in all, spanning three generations, a tremendous blow to the family, but one repeated in countless homes across the land.

The memorials of war are inscribed into the very fabric of the Cathedral, and this striking fact raises once again the question, What are they doing there? What is the Church's attitude towards and role in war? This is the subject we will explore in the remaining two cases of the exhibition. First we will look at what might be called the Church's *doctrine* of war (**Case 2**). The Church has a doctrine of war and peace. It is not set out straightforwardly anywhere, but comprises a set of interlocking ideas and principles expounded in the Bible and other texts which the Church holds as authoritative. It is on this tradition that the Church draws to guide its actions during wartime and later in the commemoration of war. War is not the Church's business, though it has sometimes forgotten this and actually launched wars (as in the Crusades). For the Church of England, following both the Protestant and Catholic view, the Church's proper sphere is the spiritual welfare of people. This separation of powers is not inevitable. In classical Islam the Prophet and his Caliphs function as *both* the military *and* the spiritual leaders of the Muslim Community (the *Ummah*). War in Christianity is the business of the State. But the Church cannot avoid war. Its members will be called upon to fight for their country, and if it is a national church, as the Church of England is, it will be expected to provide moral guidance, and spiritual comfort and support, to the nation as it faces danger, defeat or triumph.

Having looked at the *doctrine* of war we will then (**Case 3**) look at the Church's practice relating to war. The Church has devised forms of service for various occasions related to war. These give vivid, public expression to its understanding of war. Three key elements of these are explored – prayers, hymns and sermons. Finally we look at military chaplaincy. For many years ministers of religion have been embedded in the armed forces and even gone into battle with them, not as combatants but to cater for their spiritual needs – to support the living, attend the wounded and dying, bury the dead and comfort the bereaved. Military chaplaincy marks the point of the Church's closest engagement with war – not just offering support on the home front, but in the thick of the action, putting itself in harm's way for the spiritual good of others. The dedication of some chaplains in war has been extraordinary, and been recognized by awards for bravery. In situations which called not only for raw physical courage, but which must have challenged almost to destruction their own religious faith, they held steadfast and fulfilled their calling.

Case Two
The Church's Doctrine of War

(a) Just War

The obvious place to start when considering the Church's doctrine of war is the Bible and within the Bible Deuteronomy chapter 20, which sets out laws for waging war (**Exhibit 2.1,** KJV). The passage opens with an assurance that when the people go into battle with their enemies, they should not be afraid, even if the forces ranged against them are greater than their own, because they have God on their side and he will give them victory, a message which should be conveyed to the people by the high priest just before they go into battle (an early instance of chaplaincy!). Then the officers are instructed to weed out from the people any who are not fully committed to the fight, either because they are distracted by personal circumstances (they have just built a house and not dedicated it; or planted a vineyard and not yet enjoyed its fruit; or just been betrothed and not consummated the marriage), or because they are just plain "fearful and fainthearted", and might by their fear affect the morale of the other troops. The conduct of war is then defined in terms of capturing cities. These are divided into two categories: cities which lie within the Promised Land "that the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance", and "cities which are far off," i.e. cities which lie beyond its borders. In the case of the latter terms of surrender must first be offered, and if accepted the people are enslaved. If the terms are not accepted the city is stormed and all the men put to sword, but the women, children, cattle and property are spared and taken as spoils of war. In the case of cities within the Promised Land no terms can be offered: they must be stormed and everything in the city that breathes killed. Then, in a kind of codicil, the case of a long siege, whether of a city inside or outside the Land, is considered, and it is legislated that fruit-trees outside the city walls may not be chopped down, though their fruit may be eaten. Ordinary trees may be felled, for example to build siege-works, but fruit trees must not be harmed.

This is a quite extraordinary passage – a veritable "text of terror" – and there is no way that the Church today would see it as its stands as a valid basis for conducting a war. It would be utterly abhorrent to its most fundamental principles to condone a war of extermination, no matter who was the foe. But the text belongs to Scripture and the Church regards Scripture as the Word of God, and authoritative for its doctrine and practice. So what can be done with it? The Church applies to such texts principles of interpretation which neutralize their terror, and indeed maybe even turn them to some good. There is nothing "tricky" or dishonest about this. This is what all Religions of the Book (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) do with their sacred texts. They

simply don't take *everything* in them literally and at face value, and they construct careful doctrines of Scripture which allow them *not* to do so.

So what principles might be applied here? We could begin by arguing that these laws were not meant to be universal and applicable for all time. They relate to a very specific time and a very specific situation – the conquest of the land of Canaan by the covenant people of Israel. God sanctioned them for that people and that situation, and for no other. That would still leave a moral problem about the genocide of the indigenous, Canaanite nations, but at least it would stop anyone arguing that the rules could still apply today. We could also argue that these rules belong to the Old Covenant which has been superseded by the New Covenant in Christ who taught us to love our enemies. So in fact in the new revelation brought in Christ these rules have been abolished. That would still leave the moral problem of why they were ever promulgated. Was genocide *ever* acceptable? But at least it would once again relieve the Church from any obligation to advocate the implementation of these laws of war now. No part of Scripture should be read in isolation. Each passage, each verse, must be read in its canonic context, and when read within the Bible as a whole Deuteronomy 20 stands in acute tension with other Biblical teaching, and this tension has to be negotiated. In this process of negotiation we are entitled, if need be, to prioritize other, contradictory, passages. We could also spiritualize the text, and use it to make homiletic points about the Christian life, which, as we will see in a moment, is often compared to warfare. And if all else fails we can read the text selectively and simply ignore the bits that are problematic and unacceptable.

We represent this commentary tradition by displaying the notes on Deuteronomy 20 by the great Bible commentator Adam Clarke (1760-1832) (**Exhibit 2.2**). Adam Clarke published his complete commentary on the Bible in six volumes in 1831. It took him forty years to complete, and is one of the largest and most impressive Bible commentaries ever produced by one person. Clarke was a Methodist and his commentary was a staple of Methodist ministerial training for well over a hundred years. It is still valued today, and can be easily accessed in its entirety online. Clarke immediately limits the scope of the laws: they apply only to the conquest of Canaan: "*When thou goest into battle* (ver. 1). This refers chiefly to the battles they were to have with the Canaanites, in order to get possession of the promised land; for it cannot be considered to apply to any wars which they might have had with the surrounding nations for political reasons, as the Divine assistance could not be expected in wars which were not undertaken by Divine command." He claims that "many plausible arguments have been brought that even [the] seven Canaanitish nations might be received into mercy, provided they, 1. Renounced their idolatry; 2. Became subject to the Jews; and, 3. Paid annual

tribute: and that it was only in case these terms were rejected, that they were not to leave alive in such a city any thing that breathed (ver. 16).” But his boldest move is to argue that when ver. 17 talks about utterly destroying the Canaanite nations it means to destroy them *politically*, not annihilate them *physically*. He points out that, in fact, not all the Canaanite nations were destroyed in the conquest. Peace was made with the Gibeonites, and although the Israelites were tricked into this, having made a treaty they honoured their oath. Clarke goes on: “That many of the Canaanites continued in the land to the days of Solomon, we have the fullest proof; for we read, 2 Chron. viii.7: ‘All the people of the land that were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were left in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute to this day.’ Thus Solomon destroyed their political existence, but did not consider himself bound by the law of God to put them to death.”

Processed in this way Deuteronomy 20 looks much less alarming and grim than it might, on first reading, appear to be. And there are some positive aspects to the text. Not destroying the fruit trees is a good idea. One could extrapolate from fruit trees a broader principle that forbade wanton and unnecessary destruction of assets. In other words it could rule out any kind of scorched earth policy. The principle of offering peace before waging war is also potentially of great significance. And the idea that no-one should be sent into battle who is not mentally fit to fight shows shrewd psychology. The great Chester Bible commentator Matthew Henry argues from the role of the priests on the eve of battle that army chaplaincy has Biblical sanction. But all these positives pale into insignificance compared to the fundamental idea that lies behind the legislation, namely that war should be waged *according to rules*. A no-holds-barred approach to conflict is unacceptable: there are laws and limits to be respected. Some of the laws promulgated here might be questionable, but they can be improved. Here possibly for the first time in history, someone has put forward the revolutionary idea that there are laws that limit the actions permissible to belligerents in war.

This idea was developed by Christian thinkers. Particularly important has been the section on war (*Secunda Secundae: Quaestio* 40) in the great *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), which laid the basis of the modern concept of a just war (**Exhibit 2.3**). Aquinas rejects pacifism and argues that there are times when it is permissible for a state to go to war, but such a war will be justified only if three basic conditions are met: (1) the war is declared by competent authority, the legitimate sovereign of the city, kingdom or province which goes to war, into whose hand the care of the common good has been committed. It is not the business of a private individual to declare war, because he can seek redress of his rights from the

tribunal of his superior, nor is it the business of the private individual to muster people to form an army. Though Aquinas does not develop this principle it is of enormous importance in providing a defence for soldiers who kill in the line of duty. If they are acting within the framework of a legally declared war, then this does not constitute murder (though there are contexts in which the *way* they exercise their license to kill may constitute a war crime). If the war has not been legally declared, by competent authority, then they may well lay themselves open to a charge of murder (though an argument from self-defence may, in certain circumstances, be possible).

(2) A good cause must exist for going to war. War must be to redress wrongs that have been suffered. A war of naked aggression or simple territorial expansion is not a just war. And (3) the belligerents should have a right intention in going to war: it should be with the intention ultimately of advancing the good, or avoiding evil. It should be aimed at securing a just and lasting peace. As later thinkers were to put it: war has to be the last resort, the least-worst option – undertaken to avoid even greater evils. Intention extends to the conduct of war. War may be declared by legitimate authority, and for a just cause, and yet conducted in a way that is unlawful. Aquinas quotes Augustine: "The passion for inflicting harm, the cruel thirst for vengeance, an unpacific and relentless spirit, the fever of revolt, the lust for power, and such like things, all these are rightly condemned in war."

Aquinas also discusses whether it is lawful for clerics to fight. He argues that it is not: "Prelates and clerics may, by the authority of their superiors, take part in wars, not indeed by taking up arms themselves, but by affording spiritual help to those who fight justly, by exhorting and absolving them, and by other spiritual helps. Thus in the Old Testament (Joshua 6:4) the priests were commanded to sound the sacred trumpets in the battle. It was for this purpose that bishops or clerics were first allowed to go to the front: and it is an abuse of this permission, if any of them take up arms themselves." There have been bishops who have gone to war and led armies, but Aquinas's principle has been recognized as the basis of military chaplaincy in the modern period. Though in some modern armies it is left to the consciences of the individual chaplains whether or not they bear arms, they are regarded in the British armed forces as strictly non-combatant.

Aquinas's laws of war have been greatly refined by later generations of philosophers and lawyers, and are now embodied in a range of international legal instruments. The most famous of these are the Geneva Conventions and their associated Protocols. The First Geneva Convention was signed in 1864 (**Exhibit 2.4**). It aimed to ameliorate the condition of the wounded and sick of armed forces in the field. This was extended in the Second Geneva

Convention of 1949 to cover armed forces at sea, and in the Third Geneva Convention (also 1949), to cover the treatment of prisoners of war. The Fourth Geneva Convention (also 1949) covered the protection of civilians in time of war. To these were added the three Protocols, which amend various aspects of the conventions. The most interesting of these for our purposes is Protocol III (2005), which legislates that a Red Crystal symbol may be used by those involved in humanitarian work (including religious persons) in situations of conflict to indicate that they are non-combatants, and anyone displaying this symbol must be protected by all parties in the conflict. The two symbols hitherto recognized for this purpose were the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, but of course those have significance only for Christians and Muslims and will not be acceptable to those of other faiths. Various international agencies, such as the International Court of Justice in the Hague, exist to enforce these and other international laws which govern the conduct of war. These courts grew out of the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, which tried the leadership of Nazi Germany for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

It is remarkable how much of the contemporary international law relating to war grows out of the basic principles enunciated by Aquinas nearly 800 years ago and has its roots in Christian thought. When Tony Blair wanted to launch the Iraq War in 2003, there was much debate whether or not Britain could find a just cause for the invasion. Iraq wasn't attacking Britain, though attempts were made to argue that she posed a threat. The fact that Saddam Hussein was a tyrant who was oppressing his own people was not enough. "Regime change" was not regarded by most international jurists as an adequate cause. Britain's right to wage such a war was in serious legal doubt, and this is why the government was so keen to get a UN resolution which would allow her legally to take action. If the international community, through the UN, would sanction the war then that would provide a much stronger basis than an individual country taking matters into its own hands. And arguably the "Shock and Awe" tactics that were used at the beginning of the war, which terrorized the population, not to mention the inevitable collateral damage and civilian casualties of aerial bombardment, breached the rules for proper conduct of war. Aquinas's principles matter deeply and are never more relevant than today. The range of modern legal instruments which they spawned, controlling the conduct of nations before, during and after war, is heartening and impressive. The fact that they are ignored or treated with cynicism by many countries that have signed up to them, including our own, is deeply dismaying, but we would be a lot worse off if we didn't have them, and they can be used to shame governments into a more humanitarian approach.

(b) Holy War

So far we have traced attempts to ameliorate the harsh aspects of Deuteronomy 20, and to formulate over against it a doctrine of just war. This development was positive and Christian thinkers played a leading role in it. But Deuteronomy 20 has also engendered a deeply negative interpretation. It has been taken literally and used as the basis for a doctrine of Holy War. One way of stating this position would be as follows. Deuteronomy 20 does not, indeed, lay down laws for wars in general but for a particular kind of war – a religious war waged by divine sanction for religious ends. It contains instructions specifically for the conquest by God's covenant people Israel of the divinely promised Land of Canaan. It is addressed by God to his holy people and relates to their divine mission in the world. In Holy War things may be lawful which are not lawful in other conflicts, such as the annihilation of the enemy, seen not simply as military foes but as unbelievers, who deny the true God and may infect the holy people with their unbelief. Note the reason given in Deuteronomy 20:17-18 for the genocide of the Canaanite nations: "You shall utterly destroy them, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded; that they may not teach you to do according to all the abominable practices which they have done in the service of their gods, and so to sin against the Lord your God." There is no reason to suppose, the argument goes, that these laws were intended to be limited to the Israelite conquest of Canaan. There may be other times when God's people are called to fight against God's enemies, to engage, like the ancient Israelites, in Holy War, and in these cases Deuteronomy 20 remains relevant to how such wars may be conducted. Just how far this doctrine pervaded the conduct of war in ancient Israel is chillingly demonstrated by the eminent German Old Testament scholar, Gerhard von Rad in his book *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (English translation, 1991) (**Exhibit 2.6**).

This concept of a Holy War has had the most baleful consequences through history, right down to our own days. It provided theological backing for the activities of the Zealots in the time of Jesus. The Zealots were men consumed, as they saw it, by zeal for God's law, who felt justified individually as well as collectively in summarily executing anyone whom they held to have slighted it. We know about the Zealots mainly from the writings of the first century Jewish Historian, Flavius Josephus, a copy of whose works, in the well-known translation of William Whiston, is on display (**Exhibit 2.5**). One branch of this political philosophy, known as the Knifemen (the Sicarii), waged a campaign of assassination against Roman soldiers and officials, who had taken the place of the Canaanite nations in denying to God's people sovereignty over the land which he himself had given them. This pinpoints

one of the most terrifying aspects of the doctrine of Holy War. In Just War theory one can only kill when sanctioned by legal authority – a legally constituted state – after a formal declaration of war. Otherwise the killing is murder. But in Holy War the command is seen as having been issued once and for all by God himself, and it can be invoked at any time by any individual or group to sanction killing their religious enemies. It is interesting that one of Jesus' early followers had belonged to the Zealot wing of Judaism – Simon the Zealot (Matthew 10:4; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). But there was nothing Zealot about Jesus' doctrine: he declared that his kingdom was not of this world, and therefore he did not expect his servants to fight (John 18:36). When one of his followers did fight, he told him sharply to put his sword back into its sheath and healed the wound he had caused (Matthew 26:51-53). He told his followers to love their enemies and do good to those who hated them (Matthew 5:43-48). All this must have come as a shock to Simon. He can hardly have kept his old political allegiance when he joined Jesus' circle of disciples.

The annals of the Church are, alas, stained by instances of Holy War. One of the most horrifying of these was the Albigensian Crusade (1209-1229), waged to annihilate the heretical Cathars of southern France. There were aspects of Holy War associated also with the Crusades to recapture the Holy Land – thought here a code of chivalry, according to which the foe is seen as noble and gallant, had a mitigating effect on the savagery – a code famously exemplified in the courteous relations between Saladin and Richard the Lionheart. In our times there are clear and direct echoes of Deuteronomy 20 in the ideology of the Settler Movement in Israel, which holds that God's gift of the land to the Jewish people has never been revoked and this sanctions them occupying Palestinian land and pushing the Palestinians off it. But the most obvious manifestation of the doctrine of Holy War is in contemporary Jihadist Islam, as represented, for example, by Islamic State.

The theoretical underpinnings of the doctrine of Jihad espoused by Islamic State and other such Islamic groups can be traced back to the middle ages, to Islamic thinkers such as Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), interestingly a near contemporary of Aquinas. The key elements of this view are as follows: (1) A stress on fulfilling the duty of *jihad* through war – specifically war against the infidel. This represents a dramatic narrowing of the concept of *jihad*. Jihad simply means "striving" in Arabic, and is used in the classic Islamic sources in the general sense of striving to fulfil the will of God. This might be done by fighting but not necessarily. Equally important is struggling with oneself to subdue those impulses which prevent one from being a good Muslim. (2) A stark division of the world into the Domain of Islam and the Domain of Infidelity: the former comprises the old heartlands of Islam, Arabia, the

Middle East and so on (the exact borders are disputed); the latter comprises Europe and the West in general, seen as fundamentally Christian and infidel. Islam is regarded as being in a state of perpetual war with the Domain of Infidelity: it must fight against it, till finally it is eliminated and the world becomes universally Muslim. (3) Hostility is directed not only outwards towards the Domain of Infidelity, but also inwards towards those groups within the Domain of Islam who are seen as infidels. These will include not only non-Muslims, such as Christians or Yazidis, but also other Muslims who are regarded as heretical, that is to say who do not conform to a very strict definition of Islam. All are infidels, and the ferocity with which they can be treated is related to the fact that they are seen as compromising the integrity and purity of the Domain of Islam. The analogy with the Canaanite Nations is clear. Those who threaten to corrupt the holy people must be eliminated. (4) Ruthlessness and even brutality is lawful in eliminating the infidel.

It must be conceded that this final claim, which is important in the philosophy of jihadist groups such as Islamic State, cannot, as mainstream Muslim scholars endlessly point out, be easily sanctioned by classical Islamic sources, many of which, including the Qur'an, contain elements of Just War theory. Jihadists point to Q. 8:12, "Remember thy Lord inspired the angels [with the message]: 'I am with you: give firmness to the Believers: I will instil terror into the hearts of the Unbelievers: smite ye above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them.'" (translated by Yusuf Ali). But like any other text this is open to interpretation. It does not necessarily countenance mutilation of a defeated enemy. Again Q. 47:4 is quoted by Jihadists, but it does not support them in the way they often claim: "Therefore, when ye meet the Unbelievers [in fight], smite at their necks; At length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly [on them]: thereafter [is the time for] either generosity or ransom: Until the war lays down its burdens. Thus [are ye commanded]: but if it had been Allah's Will, He could certainly have exacted retribution from them [Himself]; but [He lets you fight] in order to test you, some with others. But those who are slain in the Way of Allah, – He will never let their deeds be lost." (**Exhibit 2.7**)

Islam was initially spread by the sword, but often the settlements made with the conquered peoples were on mild terms, which allowed them to continue to follow their own religions traditions. Some minority groups, such as the Jews, initially welcomed the Muslim invaders, because they offered them greater religious freedom than they enjoyed under Christian rulers. In their use of terror and atrocity as an instrument of psychological warfare, to demoralize their enemies, Islamic State owes more to European theorists of terror and to European terror groups, such as the Red Army Faction, than to classical Islam.

The Church should not feel smug or superior about Islamic State. Its doctrine of Jihad as Holy War finds analogies in Christian and Jewish sources, which, historically speaking, are the ultimate root of the idea. The mainline Churches all utterly reject the doctrine of Holy War, but they are constantly assailed by the temptation to blur the boundaries between Just War and Holy War, to see any war in which we as a nation happen to be engaged as being in some sense holy, to claim that God is on our side, and that we are the special instruments of his will, to demonize the enemy, and thus justify treating them harshly and without pity. The Churches have powerful moral authority in a time of war, and the State will inevitably seek to exploit that authority for its own ends. Claiming that the war is in some sense a Holy War can be hugely motivating, it can inspire people to fight harder, to be more ready to make the supreme sacrifice. By and large the Church in this country, certainly in the recent wars it has fought, has resisted this temptation. Even when it has supported a war as just, it has avoided declaring it as in any sense holy. It was this important distinction which lay behind Archbishop Runcie's words, quoted earlier, "those who dare interpret God's will must never claim him as an asset for one nation or group rather than another". However, as we shall see presently, the Church in the past has not always scrupulously observed the distinction, but flirted dangerously with the language of Holy War.

(c) Spiritual Warfare

Another aspect of the Christian doctrine of war is revealed by the fact that Christian thinkers often use war as a metaphor for the spiritual life. This idea is found already in the New Testament, most memorably in Ephesians 6:10-20. Paul, coming to the end of his letter, exhorts his readers to "find your strength in the Lord, in his mighty power. Put on all the armour which God provides … Stand firm, I say. Fasten on the belt of truth; for coat of mail put on integrity; let the shoes on your feet be the gospel of peace, to give you firm footing; and, with all these, take up the great shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take salvation for helmet; for sword, take that which the Spirit gives you – the words that come from God." (**Exhibit 2.8** NEB). The Christian life is a spiritual struggle. Paul identifies the enemies against whom we struggle as the Devil, and his agents. "Our fight", he writes, "is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens." Paul was using here categories of thought which belonged very much to his own times. We don't have to take them at face value today. Yet it would be wrong to suppose that Paul is not speaking about realities which we would readily recognize – the culture, the ethos of a society that is materialistic and consumerist, individualistic and self-centred, unequal and unfair, in which people are constantly exploited and

their baser instincts appealed to by forces beyond their control. Christians more often than not have to fight against the culture of their times. And that can be hard: it is a tough fight, a fight to bring in the Kingdom of God.

This image of the Christian as engaged in spiritual warfare has been much exploited by later Christian preachers and hymn-writers. Think, for example, of "Soldiers of Christ arise and put your armour on" – a splendid paraphrase of Ephesians 6, or "Fight the good fight, with all thy might". Bunyan in *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) tells of how Christian, as he walks through the Valley of Humiliation, has to fight the ruler of the City of Destruction from which he has escaped, and to which he refuses to return, the "foul fiend" Apollyon, the personification of the world, the flesh and the devil (**Exhibit 2.9**). Bunyan exploited the image of spiritual warfare again at length in his extended allegory *The Holy War* (1682), which tells the story of Mansoul, a beautiful, perfect city built by King Shaddai for his glory. But Mansoul, deceived by the wicked Diabolus, rebels and rejects the rule of King Shaddai, and falls into sin and despair. Battle rages between the forces of good and the forces of evil. Good finally prevails thanks only to the intervention of Prince Emmanuel, the son of King Shaddai (**Exhibit 2.10**).

This figurative use of warfare by Christian writers shows that they cannot have found warfare totally evil and bad. The metaphor wouldn't work if they did. It is clear they admire, not the killing and the suffering, but the virtues of the good soldier – courage and heroism, steadfastness, loyalty, self-sacrifice, comradeship. These are qualities from which Christians can draw inspiration in their *spiritual* lives. But there is a danger here if the distinction between spiritual warfare and physical warfare becomes blurred, if we see behind our physical enemies the satanic forces against which we have to fight in our spiritual life. The former can become overlaid by the latter; the one can blend into the other. This can lead to a demonization of the enemy, and take us back in the perilous direction of Holy War. The metaphor of spiritual warfare should remain just that – a metaphor.

(d) Armageddon: "The War to End all Wars"

There is one final aspect of the Christian attitude towards war which we will explore. It is the unshakeable Christian hope that one day – when the Kingdom of God is finally realized – wars will forever cease, and universal peace will reign. This firm eschatological hope is theologically important, because it makes clear that war is an aberration in the divine order of things. It was not what God intended. It came about through human sin and rebellion. It is a clear mark of the broken, fallen nature of the world in this age. But it will cease in the age to come. Some of the most famous and lyrical verses in the

Bible describe the peace that one day will reign over the whole world: “They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isaiah 2:4). “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, the sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:6-9). These visions of the future universal peace when God’s kingdom comes in power have sustained people over the years in the darkest days of war, and given them hope that the whole ghastly business would one day end. We have symbolized this longing for peace in the exhibition by displaying a 1549 Book of Common Prayer open at the Collect for Peace for Evening Prayer, which is still part of the daily office and said every day: “O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give, that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen*” (**Exhibit 2.11**).

Strangely, however, in a widely held interpretation of Biblical prophecy the reign of peace will be ushered in by one last great battle between the forces of good and evil, when evil will finally be defeated. This war to end all wars is commonly referred to as “Armageddon”, a Greek form of the Hebrew name *Har Megiddo*, “The Mountain of Megiddo”, Megiddo being a city that controlled the entrance to the Plain of Jezreel in northern Israel, one of the great strategic crossing-points of history. A classic reference to this last battle is found in the Book of Revelation: “And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them” (Revelation 20:7-9 RV). (**Exhibit 2.12**)

The traditions about Armageddon in both Judaism and Christianity are obscure and conflicting, but they have fired the imaginations of many. Some see the final conflict as global in character, others see it as taking place in the land of Israel: the name Megiddo should be interpreted literally. There have been those throughout history who have wondered when great wars have

broken out, whether they were witnessing the beginning of Armageddon, whether this heralded the last great battle, and was a sign that God's kingdom was at hand.

In the exhibition we have represented Christian speculation on Armageddon by an essay on Gog and Magog in Revelation 20 in the *Clavis Apocalyptica* of Joseph Mede (1586-1639), published in Latin in 1627 and in English translation in 1643 (**Exhibit 2.13**). Mede, the most learned and influential millenarian of the 17th century, thought the end of the world was imminent, possibly as early as 1654, but certainly no later than 1716. The discovery of America in 1492 had roused enormous excitement among theologians. They were puzzled as to how it related to the world envisaged by the Bible. Some suggested that the native Americans might not actually be descendants of Adam. Others suggested, on the basis of the apocryphal work known now as 4 Ezra, that they were, on the contrary, the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel (4 Ezra 13:39-46). Mede's contribution to the attempt to put the Americas on to the Biblical map was to conjecture that the armies of Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8-9 would rise up from "the Hemisphere against us", i.e. from the New World. Later Christian millenarians in the 19th and 20th centuries postulated other identifications for Gog and Magog, such as Russia, both Imperial and Soviet. Some are still trying to find Gog and Magog in our present world (Islamic State is suggested by some). To most of us all this seems absurd, but it is dangerous, because by writing current events into grand apocalyptic scenarios we can be pushed again in the direction of Holy War.

The idea of the last great battle passed over from Jewish and Christian eschatology into Islam, only there it is seen as a final mass attack of the infidels on the Muslims. Islamic State believes that battle has started, and they seize on the fact that in some obscure Muslim traditions this war will begin in northern Syria, around the town of Dabiq. Gog and Magog become the infidel nations, Christian and non-Christian, who have ganged up to attack and destroy them. This illustrates how potent and how dangerous these ideas can be. We are back again with the idea of Holy War. The followers of Islamic State believe they are major players in an unfolding eschatological drama. This encourages them to fight on fanatically against all the odds in the unshakeable belief that they will ultimately be victorious.

This is not the first time that these eschatological ideas have been used in this way. We know that the Sect behind the Dead Sea Scrolls thought in similar terms. They have left behind them their war manuals as to how they planned to fight the last great battle. That battle, they held, would be three-dimensional: it would be not only a war on earth between men, but a war in heaven between angels. They were the Sons of Light and their opponents the

Sons of Darkness. The Sons of Darkness embraced not only the Romans who had robbed the Jewish people of their freedom and occupied their land, but also all those Jews who did not accept their teachings. When the final show-down with the Romans came, the Qumran sect, the Zealots, the Sicarii and other groups like them, by all accounts, fought fanatically against the might of Rome, and were wiped out. This is a solemn warning from history. We must be very, very careful not to write our wars into the obscure eschatological wars mentioned in prophecy, nor conflate our earthly wars with the spiritual warfare which we are called on daily to wage, but keep our eyes fixed on the ultimate vision of universal peace.

Case Three
Liturgies and Rituals of War

(a) War Prayers

Case Two explored aspects of what we called the Church's doctrine of war – the traditions and ideas which form the framework within which the Church reacts to war, and which define, in a broad way, the role it plays in it. Case Three turns to that role itself, and to the outworking of the theory in practice. It is concerned with the prayers and rites which the Church has devised for various occasions associated with war. Some of these are found in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer itself, such as the "Form of Prayer to be used at Sea", which includes "The Prayer to be used before a Fight at Sea against an Enemy", "A Psalm or Hymn of praise and thanksgiving after Victory" at sea, and a form of words for burial at sea (**Exhibit 3.1**). The navy had expanded during the Commonwealth, and in 1645 Parliament had issued *A Supply of Prayer for Ships of this Kingdom, that want Ministers to pray for them*, as a supplement to the *Directory of Public Worship*. When the Prayer Book was revised after the Restoration, it was decided something similar needed to be added. There are also occasional forms of prayer authorized for particular occasions, and possibly printed for a time in the Prayer Book, but, because not deemed an integral part of it, later removed. An example of this is the "Prayer for the Preservation of the Queen's Majesty", composed in 1588, the year of the Armada – one of a number of occasional forms of prayer produced during this time of national danger, but not found now in the Prayer Book (**Exhibit 3.2**). Case Three is concerned also with those clergy who above all are called upon to conduct those liturgies, and to live out the Church's teaching on war – the chaplains to the armed forces. All clergy will at some time in their ministry have to address war, if only on Remembrance Sunday, but for chaplains war is at the heart of their ministry. They represent the Church and its values in the armed services and even on the field of battle.

There are a number of occasions relating to war when the Church's ministries are called upon. The Church is an expert in public ceremony and ritual, and it is expected to produce services which focus and express in appropriate liturgical forms and words the national mood. If danger threatens or defeat and disaster looms, the Church may be asked to focus people's minds to ask God's help. This is less likely today when the role of Christianity in society has been reduced, but it has been very important in the past. Faced with a grave national threat the monarch called for a day of national prayer and fasting, and people crowded into the churches to repent of their sins and petition God's forgiveness and help. National fasts were held during the time of the Armada, the Civil War, the Continental Wars of the early 18th century, the Napoleonic Wars, and the First and Second World Wars.

They have been used in other countries as well. In 1863, in the middle of the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a Day of National Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer: "I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoting themselves to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace."

National Fasts, which have Biblical precedent (1 Samuel 7:5-6; 2 Chronicles 20:3; Jonah 3:6-10), can be very effective in bringing the people together, steadying their resolve, and focusing their minds on the struggles that lie ahead. This fact has not been lost on governments who have been tempted from time to time to turn them into instruments of propaganda. They could be used to call down divine fire and brimstone on the enemies of the nation (Biblical precedent might be found for this in some of the Psalms), but, interestingly, that is not how they have tended to be used. The emphasis has been, rather, on the sins of the people rather than the sins of the enemy, and for this reason the Litany, a standard confession of sin from the Book of Common Prayer, usually features prominently. The theology of such events is clear. God is the Lord of history. Whatever happens happens by his command, so if the people face disaster then this must be God's way of punishing them for their sins. The enemy is God's instrument to chastise the people (again Biblical precedent for this is not hard to find). They have, therefore, repenting to do. The spotlight is turned away from the enemy and focused on the

spiritual state of the nation. Lincoln's proclamation is theologically pitch-perfect on this point:

> "Insomuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It behoves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

A second occasion when the Church is called to act in relation to war is in thanksgiving for the end of war and, where appropriate, for victory. Such events may be held in the immediate aftermath of war, or on the anniversary of its end. The services can differ subtly, and reflect changing attitudes to the conflict, or even to war itself. Thus immediately after the armistice they tend to have a raw and immediate quality, while those from later are often more mellow and contemplative. Again such events are a theological minefield. They can become very triumphalist and chauvinistic in tone (that is, assuming we won), but by and large they have not. They have tended to focus on the sufferings and sacrifices of war, and on the sense of thankfulness that these have ended. Numerous occasional forms of service survive that have been used for such events in the past, and analysing them theologically and liturgically is an instructive exercise. In the exhibition we present a copy of the service for national thanksgiving for the Victory at Blenheim, 2nd August 1704 (**Exhibit 3.3**), and three special services produced for use in Chester cathedral during World War I (**Exhibits 3.4 – 3.6**).

(b) War Hymns

Christianity is a religion of hymns in a way that probably no other religion is. It has a huge stock of them amassed over centuries for all eventualities of life, including war. For many the most moving part of a Remembrance Service will be the hymns – old favourites played, maybe, by a military band. Some

hymns are battle hymns, sung by troops as they marched to war, serving to stiffen their courage and resolve. The most famous of these is the Battle Hymn of the Republic ("Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord"). Now a patriotic anthem of the United States, it was originally composed in November 1861 during the American Civil War by the poet Julia Ward Howe. Echoing Isaiah 63:1-6 and Revelation 19:11-21, she depicts that war in terms of God's apocalyptic judgement of the wicked.

A number of the Psalms have served as battle hymns (e.g. Psalm 68, "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered"). Some lend themselves readily to occasions of war, and have been sung on the eve of battle, or even on the field itself. Oliver Cromwell was steeped in the Psalms and invoked them constantly in war. Prothero thus describes the Battle of Dunbar against the Scots (3rd September 1650): "Cromwell knew that he was in a desperate case. 'Our condition,' he says, 'was very sad.' On the 2nd of September he wrote a letter, hastily folded before the ink was dry, to Sir Arthur Haslerigg, the Governor of Newcastle, asking for aid, and bidding him prepare for the worst. On the same day Leslie [the Scottish commander] began to move his army down from Doon Hill to lower ground, from which he proposed the next morning to attack the English army. The moment that Cromwell saw this movement he recognized the advantage which it gave him. 'The Lord hath delivered them into our hands' is the traditional exclamation that burst from his lips when he saw his antagonist 'shogging' down the hill. He determined that he would himself be the assailant at sunrise the next morning. Throughout the wet and cold night of Monday the 2nd, in the storms of rain and sleet, he made his dispositions. When at four o'clock the moon shone through the hail clouds, all was not yet ready. An hour later the trumpets pealed, the canon roared, and Cromwell's horse and foot, shouting their watchword, 'The Lord of Hosts', burst upon the Scottish troops, who, stiffened by the cold and with unlighted matches, were beginning to stir themselves as twilight crept among the shocks of corn where they had bivouacked. Here and there the fight was stubborn. Leslie's horse boldly answered back the English challenge with their shout of 'The Covenant'. But the position was such that the Scottish general could make no use of his superior numbers, and when, over St Abb's Head and the German Ocean, burst the rising sun, the gleam drew from Cromwell's lips the triumphant cry, 'Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered' [Psalm 68:1]. The horse broke, trampling down the undisciplined masses behind them; the rout was complete. The 'chase and execution' of the fugitives lasted for eight miles, till the Lord General made a halt in his pursuit, and sang the 117th Psalm. It was a brief respite. Practical in his religion as in all else, Cromwell chose the shortest Psalm in the book' (Prothero, *The Psalms in Human Life*, 1905, pp. 256-57). Cromwell may in reality have been fighting in Scotland on the fields of Dunbar, but in his mind he was in a

mythic, Old Testament landscape, in which he and his soldiers were God's people, engaged in a Holy War, and God was on their side. We have acknowledged this use of the Psalms in war in our exhibition by including Psalm 68 in the metrical version of Tate and Brady (*New Version of the Psalms of David*, 1696). (**Exhibit 3.8**)

Five famous hymns are displayed to represent the rich hymnography of war. (1) The first, "O valiant hearts", honours the fallen (**Exhibit 3.9**). Composed by Sir John Stanhope Arkwright (1872-1954), and published in his collection *The Supreme Sacrifice, and other Poems in Time of War* (1919), it first appeared as a hymn in the 1925 edition of *Songs of Praise*, compiled by Percy Dearmer, Martin Shaw and Ralph Vaughan Williams. It is now normally sung to a tune composed by the Revd Dr. Charles Harris (1865-1936), but there are also settings by Vaughan Williams (an adaptation of a traditional melody) and Gustav Holst. The hymn is much beloved by the Royal British Legion and they like it sung at Remembrance Day Services in which they are involved, but some clergy have strong reservations about its theology, with its equation of the sacrifice of the soldiers with the sacrifice of Christ, albeit theirs are "lesser Calvaries" than his. One common compromise is to omit verse 5, but the problematic idea is found in verses 4 and 6 as well.

One might wonder why this hymn is so popular with the Legion and the general public. The answer possibly lies in the fact that it gives transcendent meaning to the death of soldiers in war. This is something that those left behind crave. They want to believe that those deaths, often in appalling circumstances, served some ultimate purpose: heroism, duty, and defence of one's country are not strong enough. What if they can be linked in some way to Christ's suffering and death in the salvation of humankind? There is surely no more transcendent purpose than that. After all don't soldiers give their lives for others, just as Jesus did? The idea is common. It is suggested in a rather vague way by the many war memorials in the form of a cross, with the names of the fallen inscribed upon it. The allusion is even clearer in the case of war memorials in the form of a *crucifix*, like the one that dramatically overhangs the road in the grounds of Chelford Parish Church. The parallelism is seductive and comforting, but theologically it is questionable.

(2) The second hymn is "Abide with me" (**Exhibit 3.10**). Composed and set to music by Henry Francis Lyte in 1847, it is now most commonly sung to the tune "Eventide" by William Henry Monk (1861). It was hugely popular in the trenches during the First World War, having been included in the short selection of hymns in the little copies of the Gospel of John distributed to servicemen (on which more in a moment). It was probably because it was so well known to soldiers who had returned from the front that it became a

custom to sing it at the FA Cup Final (since 1927), and the Rugby League Challenge Cup Final (since 1929). It is not obviously suitable for either sporting occasion, but originally it must have invoked for the men some of the camaraderie they had experienced in the trenches. It is a plea to God for a sense of his presence in the face of helplessness, adversity and death, and, although not composed with war in mind, it resonates powerfully in this setting:

> "I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
> Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
> Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
> I triumph still, if Thou abide with me."

(3) The third hymn, "I vow to thee my country", was composed in 1908 by a British diplomat, Cecil Spring Rice, but he revised it in 1918 to refer to the appalling casualties in the first year of the war (**Exhibit 3.11**). It was included in *Songs of Praise* (1925), to a tune by Gustav Holst, adapted from the Jupiter-theme of his suite *The Planets*, and since then it has joined "O valiant hearts", as a staple of Remembrance Day Services. It has become a hymn to the fallen, celebrating their ultimate sacrifice as an expression of their love of country. It was a favourite of Margaret Thatcher's and she quoted from it in an address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on 21st May 1988 – the famous "Sermon on the Mound", which did not go down well with the assembled divines, one calling it "a disgraceful travesty of the Gospel". It was sung at her funeral. It was also a favourite of Princess Diana, who heard it first at school (it fits well with the public school ethos). It was sung at her wedding, at her funeral, and at the service marking the tenth anniversary of her death. But once again its theology has come in for strong criticism. Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Hulme, in August 2004, denounced it as "totally heretical". In November 2013, in an article in the *Church Times*, the Revd Gordon Giles, an authority on Church music, called it "almost obscene". The problem is that it appears to put love of country "all other things above", and calls for that love to be "unquestioning".

> "I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
> Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;
> The love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,
> That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
> The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
> The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice."

But who or what represents one's country? Is it some abstract ideal, or is it the government of the day? If it is read as the latter, then the critics have a strong point. No government, surely, can be given unquestioning obedience, no

matter what it does. No government or political institution (such as the monarchy) has the right to call on its citizens to pay the ultimate price "unquestioningly", and to brand them unpatriotic if they don't. That would be contrary to Christian teaching. The hymn also plays dangerously with the idea that in some unspecified sense unquestioning love of one's country goes hand in hand with love of that other country, the Kingdom of God. It is impossible now not to read this poem through the lens of the Second World War, and to remember how the principle of unquestioning love of the Fatherland led the German Christians (the Deutsche Christen) to support Hitler and the Nazi Party. In Hitler's case the problem was compounded by the fact that he was presented not just as a state official, Chancellor of Germany, but as Führer – the embodiment of the German national spirit. All this reminds us that hymns are not just rollicking good tunes. Their words matter. We should think about what we sing. This is hardly the first time that dubious theology has been set to fine music.

(4) The fourth hymn, "O God our Help in Ages Past", was composed by one of the most prolific and greatest of English hymn writers, the Nonconformist divine Isaac Watts (1674-1748) (**Exhibit 3.12**). It first appeared in his collection *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* (1719), though the tune to which it is now sung had already been composed by William Croft in 1708. Watts has been called "The Father of English Hymnody", because many of his hymns are free compositions, not tied to the Biblical psalms. Up to Watts's day the Psalms had dominated English liturgy – in Coverdale's version in the Book of Common Prayer, or in the poetic versions by Sternhold and Hopkins or by Tate and Brady, or in the metrical version in the Scottish Metrical Psalter. Watts introduced a range of new hymns that expressed personal experience or theological ideas, many of them on the theme of Christ's atoning death ("When I survey the wondrous cross", "Alas! And did my saviour bleed"). He paved the way for the outpouring of hymns from the Wesleys. Indeed, John Wesley introduced a small but significant change to Watts's opening line, when he reprinted the hymn in his *Psalms and Hymns* in 1738. Watts had originally written, "Our God, our Help in ages past". Wesley changed this to, "O God, our Help in ages past", and this is what now is almost universally sung. The change turns the hymn more obviously into a direct address to God, a plea for the renewal of the divine mercies which the people experienced in earlier times. The change strengthens the line poetically, avoiding the rather awkward repetition of "our".

All that said, the Psalms continued profoundly to inspire Watts's hymns, and this is the case here. "O God, our Help in ages past" is a wonderful paraphrase

of Psalm 90:1-7. It celebrates the majesty and eternity of God, and contrasts it with the transience of human life:

> "Time, like an ever rolling stream,
> Bears all its sons away;
> They fly, forgotten, as a dream
> Dies at the opening day."

Watts originally extended this transience to nations in a verse no longer sung:

> "Like flowery fields the nations stand
> Pleased with the morning light;
> The flowers beneath the mower's hand
> Lie withering ere 'tis night."

The hymn was not composed for war, nor are there allusions to war in it. It is an interesting question, therefore, why it should be deemed so appropriate at a service of remembrance for the fallen. How is its meaning defined by being put in this context? The answer would appear to lie, as we noted earlier, in the sense of transcendence which people instinctively seek on these occasions. Mayhem and carnage surely can't be the whole story. To be reminded that there is a God who reigns in majesty over all things, who is implicitly the ultimate guarantor of meaning, and the Lord of history, is profoundly reassuring. The opening line is absolutely crucial to the message. The eternal God does not just reign in remote majesty. He has been "our help in ages past". This goes right to the heart of the Psalm's opening line: "Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations". Watts's message could be summed up in another much quoted verse of Scripture: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27). Here is a hymn truly worthy of the most solemn national occasion!

(5) The same may also be said of our final hymn, "Eternal Father strong to save" (**Exhibit 3.13**). It was composed in 1860 by William Whiting (1825-1878), when he was headmaster of Winchester College Choristers School, to provide an "anchor of faith" for one of his students who confided in him his overwhelming fear of an impending sea-voyage to America. It was published a year later in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, in a version revised by the editors, set to a tune by the Revd John B. Sykes, which he called "Melita", the ancient name for Malta, where St Paul was shipwrecked. It was rapidly adopted by the Royal Navy and the US Navy for their religious services, and it is sometimes simply known as "The Navy Hymn", though its reference generally "to those in peril on the sea", and to deliverance from "rock" and "tempest" and "fire", as well as from "foe", have made it popular on all sea-faring occasions. I remember as a boy it being played at the service to launch the ocean liner the SS Canberra at Harland and Wolff's shipyard in Belfast. The ship was sitting

in her cradle on the slipway, prow rearing up majestically over the assembled company. First Psalm 107, to which the hymn alludes, was read by a local minister. The great shipyard was silent. You could have heard a pin drop. The workmen (my father and uncles among them), draped on the gantries, and cranes, and any other vantage point, to watch their handiwork committed to the sea, doffed their caps. Then a local brass band played "Eternal Father". This magnificent piece of theatre made a deep impression on me as a thirteen year old, and the memories of that day came flooding back when I saw on television twenty-two years later the Canberra heading as a troop-carrier to war in the Falklands. The other armed services, not happy to let the Navy hog one of the best hymns, have produced versions which write them into it, but these are seldom sung. It remains very much the anthem of the Navy and the merchant marine.

Are war hymns a kind of war poetry? Yes and no. There is a large and distinguished body of war poetry in English, apart from hymns, and some of it can serve on occasions of remembrance. A famous example is Rupert Brooke's poem "The Soldier" ("If I should die, think only this of me:/ That there's some corner of a foreign field/ That is forever England") (**Exhibit 3.7**). Brooke died of sepsis from an infected mosquito bite on the 23rd April 1915, in a hospital ship moored off the Greek island of Skyros in the Aegean, while on his way with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to the landing at Gallipoli. War poetry can use powerfully religious language and imagery. Take, for example, "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young" by probably the finest of our war poets, Wilfred Owen (1893-1918), which uses the story of the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 to excoriate the old men for sacrificing out of pride the youth of Europe .

> "Then Abram bound the youth with belts and straps,
> And builded parapets and trenches there,
> And stretched forth the knife to slay his son.
> When lo! an angel called him out of heaven,
> Saying, Lay not thy hand upon the lad,
> Neither do anything to him. Behold,
> A ram, caught in the thicket by its horns;
> Offer the Ram of Pride instead of him.
>
> But the old man would not so, but slew his son,
> And half the seed of Europe, one by one."

Owen, who was born near Oswestry in Shropshire, spent the years 1898-1907 with his family in Birkenhead, and it was, apparently, on a holiday in Cheshire in 1904 that he first felt the call of poetry. He joined the Manchesters and fought with them at the Somme. He was killed one week before the armistice

in 1918, while leading a platoon of his men across the Sambre and Oise canal near Ors. Brought up as an evangelical Anglican, he was for a time as a boy notably devout, and read a chapter of the Bible every day. He never seems totally to have lost his faith, though he turned away from institutional religion.

Benjamin Britten uses this and other war poems by Owen in his *War Requiem*, folding them into the Latin Requiem Mass. They become deeply religious by association, but in themselves they are not religious. They tend to focus on the tragedy, the futility, the anguish of war – the pity of it all. As Owen himself put it: "I am not concerned with Poetry. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity." War hymns are much more obviously religious in content. They try to set events in some sort of Christian perspective. They often address God directly. And they are usually uncomplicated metrically and suitable for congregational singing.

(c) War Sermons

The Ministry of the Word in the form of a sermon is an integral part of Christian worship, and it provides an occasion on which ministers of religion can not only instruct their congregations in their faith, but can comment on events and shape public opinion. In a time of war sermons can comfort people, give them hope, stiffen their resolve. Their impact on morale can be considerable, and governments are all too aware of this, and in all sorts of ways – some subtle, some not so subtle – can bring pressure to bear on the Church to support the war effort. The Church – especially if it is a national church – treads a delicate line here. It cannot stand indifferently by in a time of national crisis, yet at the same time it cannot give the government the impression that, come what may, it will always loyally back it during war. In the lead up to the 2003 Iraq war leading Anglicans publicly expressed strong reservations about the legality of the war, but once the fighting started the criticism was noticeably toned down. The Church's efforts tended to shift towards the spiritual support of those involved in or affected by the war. This shift in emphasis was not necessarily a sign of inconsistency or hypocrisy. A number of factors were probably in play. On the one hand there was a reluctance to lay the Church open to the charge of undermining morale, of stabbing the nation in the back in its hour of danger (government ministers might not have put it that way, but some tabloids would have had no qualms). On the other hand the Church would have been mindful that its primary duty was now pastoral care of those fighting the war, their families and friends. That being so, it would have been understandably reluctant to add further pain to those whose loved ones had been killed or wounded.

Hundreds of war sermons have survived from many different wars, and they make instructive reading. It is an interesting exercise to observe when they use the language of Just War and when the language of Holy War. Some sermons have started wars, as when on 31st March 1146 Bernard of Clairvaux, at the instigation of Pope Urban II, preached the Second Crusade in a field at Vézelay. Others have expressed opposition to war: one thinks here of sermons preached by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and other pastors of the Confessing Church (Bekennende Kirche) in Germany during the Nazi era. Most war sermons, however, lie between these extremes, and tend to concentrate on pastoral concerns.

The sermons were delivered in different settings. Some were national events, preached before parliament or the monarch in some great national venue. Others were preached by parish clergy as part of their routine ministry of the word, sometimes in remote country churches. The impact of the latter should not be underestimated. Cumulatively they would have had greater impact on public opinion than the grand sermons, which would have been preached to smaller audiences, whose minds would already have been largely made up.

We have displayed in the exhibition a number of sermons from different periods, and for different occasions and audiences. The first was preached in Chester cathedral on Sunday 13th October 1745 by Samuel Peploe (1668-1752) the then Bishop of Chester, "the Mayor and Corporation being present", urging them in no uncertain terms to "zealously oppose the present Rebellion", that is to say the Jacobite uprising under Bonnie Prince Charlie (**Exhibit 3.14**). The Jacobites had defeated the English at Prestonpans in September and advanced into England. They were to capture Carlisle in November. The threat was real, and Peploe was determined to stiffen the resistance. He had "form" in the case of the Jacobites. He had been Vicar of Preston in 1715 when the Jacobites captured the town. A well known local story goes that he was saying the office in the parish church when a group of rebel soldiers burst in, one of whom held a gun to his head and threatened him with instant death if he didn't stop praying for the "Hanoverian usurper". Peploe coolly replied, "Soldier, I am doing my duty, you must do yours", and went on reading. He survived, and when the story was told to King George I, he is reported to have said, "Peep-low, Peep-low is he called? By God he shall peep-high: I will make him a bishop." Peploe did become a bishop, Bishop of Chester in fact, but not till 1726. The story is a little dubious, but it is too good not to repeat it. It captures the uncompromising character of the man. He was buried in Chester Cathedral.

The fundamental ground on which Peploe urges resistance is religious. His text is 1 Corinthians 10:14, "Flee from idolatry". The Jacobites are "papists"

who worship images and so are idolators, and will make everyone else do the same. Idolatry is contrary to the law of God, and so opposing it has divine sanction. Much of the sermon is taken up with proving from Scripture that idolatry is sinful – not difficult to do. But the argument is not very subtle. Peploe takes it as self-evident, as most Protestants did then (and some still do), that when Catholics venerate images they are worshipping them. He is aware that Catholics deny this, but brushes their protests aside. To the religious arguments he adds the one of liberty. English liberty is bound up with the Protestant religion: the Papists will curtail our hard-won freedoms, and he reels off a list of Catholic persecutions to prove it. Peploe used his considerable standing and authority in society to back the government directly and politically in a time of war. Doubtless the king and his ministers were duly grateful.

Also displayed are two sermons delivered at services of thanksgiving for victory. The first was preached by John Evans in 1706, "on occasion of the surprising Victory obtain'd at *Ramelly* [Ramillies] in *Brabant*, May 12 [Old Style = 23rd May]. By forces under the Command of his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough*" (**Exhibit 3.15**). John Evans (1680-1730) was a well-known Welsh Dissenting minister of the time (a Presbyterian), and this sermon is an interesting case of a Dissenting response to war. Its patriotism cannot be faulted. The sermon was probably preached in the meeting-house at Hand Alley, where Evans was serving as the assistant to Dr. Daniel Williams. He takes for his text Psalm 21:3, "Thou preventest him [David] with the blessings of goodness". The victory at Ramillies, he argues, is a striking example of God's "preventing goodness", "preventing" here in the obsolete sense of "coming before", "anticipating": "When God communicates his Benefits, antecedent to our Meetness and Preparation for 'em, 'tis a sensible instance of preventing Mercy." Evans is here engaged in the popular exercise of discerning in events the providences and mind of God, of trying to understand, as it might be put today, what God is telling us. It was God who brought about the victory. What does this tell us about him, and our relationship to him? How should we properly respond? Evans whole argument is predicated on the fact that the victory and its completeness were unexpected: "We thought we could reckon on no more than to stand our Ground and God creates us Songs of Victory."

Such signal mercy, though not merited, of course, by us, nevertheless shows we are a "people highly favoured of the Lord". In particular it evidences divine approval of our Queen (Queen Anne) and her ministers, and we should stop grumbling and finding fault with them: "Let these preventing Mercies qualify our Resentments of any Remaining Uneasiness. No State in the World is perfect, or in all Respects what we would wish it. Adversity and Prosperity

are set over against the other: And sometimes they are so near Balance, that we are at a loss to determine which prevails. But when the case is so, this Thought, that God prevents our Deserts in all the Benefits we enjoy, and all the Allays of our sorrows, ought to check every Murmur. But how ill must any Thing of that Nature become us, when our small Difficulties bear no Proportion to the Greatness and Number of our Publick Mercies." So once again the pulpit is used to defend the status quo. We should, of course, respond to God's benefits by cultivating "a spirit of serious piety". There should be a "penitent Abasement of our provocations", but this amounts to little more than a "Reformation of Manners" – a popular theme at the time, which meant in effect the suppression of drunkenness and swearing, and the cultivation of deference and church-attendance.

As the preacher warms to his theme, his language takes on, as so often, the tone of Holy War. The fight is a religious fight, for the truth and freedom of Protestantism against the falsity and slavery of Rome. Evans can't resist casting the British in the image of the ancient Israelites: We may hope, he suggests, that it was "a particular Circumstance of Advantage in the Battle, that while our *Joshua* and his Troops fought against *Amalek*, so many fervent supplications in the Numerous Congregations assembled on that Day [the recent day of national fasting], were *holding up their Hands* for them to God in the Heavens."

The second victory sermon was preached at St Paul's London, before the Prince Regent and both Houses of Parliament, on 7th July 1814, "the day appointed for general thanksgiving" for the defeat of France (**Exhibit 3.16**). On 30th March the Allies had entered Paris, on 6th April Napoleon had abdicated, and on 10th April the last remnants of the Napoleonic forces were defeated at the Battle of Toulouse. The preacher, George Henry Law (1761-1845), Lord Bishop of Chester (1812-1824), a protégé of the Prince Regent, took as his text Mark 12:11, "This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes". Law was one of the cleverest churchmen of his day, and at times showed admirable concern for the plight of the poor. He founded St Bees College in Cumbria, the first ordination training-college outside Oxford and Cambridge. He was, in short, a man of talent and substance, but this sermon is decidedly lack-lustre. It addresses the rather cerebral question of whether or not "the world be governed by a general or a particular Providence, that is, whether the Laws of Nature proceed in one fixed unalterable course, or are subject to occasional interpositions and control." The answer, the bishop argues, "can only be resolved, by considering the Word and Works of God". He first runs through some Bible verses that support the notion of "particular Providence", and then a series of historical events, "as exhibited in the rise and subversion of the various Empires of the world", including the recent war,

which point towards the same conclusion. Divine Providence, then, was manifest in the defeat of Napoleon. Britain was the conspicuous beneficiary of the providence. "Blind indeed must we be, or ungrateful, if we do not acknowledge, that we are, and long have been, favoured among nations." And this divine favour was *earned*, because we are better than other nations – morally, religiously, and politically. We are not, indeed, perfect: there is room for improvement, and we should seize the opportunity to improve, and right the wrongs that remain; but it was our virtue that drew God to intervene on our behalf. The message is depressingly conservative and self-congratulatory. It was the existing social, political and religious order that ensured victory, and we should, therefore, be careful not to tamper with it. The whole sermon in argument and style is decidedly anaemic. It must have signally failed to articulate and to focus the huge relief and joy that people must have felt now that a long and bloody war had come to an end.

The final three sermons were delivered on more humble stages, to less exalted audiences. They were all preached locally in the North West. They are from 1803, and reflect the fact that Britain had declared war on France in May of that year. The period of the Napoleonic Wars is rich in war sermons. They document the profound shock of the English establishment at the French Revolution, and the spread of its principles across Europe by the armies of Napoleon. The opposition to France was not just political and economic, it was profoundly religious. The French Revolution was godless. It had attacked the Christian religion. Bonaparte was cast by many as the Antichrist. The danger was exacerbated by the fact that there were some in this country who embraced the revolution, and fervently hoped to witness here a similar overthrow of the old order. Wordsworth caught their mood in his famous lines, "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,/ But to be young was very heaven!" The enemy were within the gates.

The earliest of the three sermons was preached on 8th July 1803 in the parish church of Runcorn by the vicar, the Revd W.E. Keyt (**Exhibit 3.18**). Taking as his text Deuteronomy 23:9, "When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing," he argues that "religion and valour [are] both necessary for the preservation of the United Kingdom". "Let not rulers and people trust wholly to human aid and valour; rather let them rely fully on divine protection, and confide in the Lord of hosts the God of battle, for it is God who giveth victory unto kings, and delivereth his chosen servants from the peril of the sword. It was thus that the Israelites of old were directed to humble themselves before God, and be both pious, religious and brave. … Let us consider ourselves as a nation like the Israelites, as surrounded by enemies, yet warlike and victorious, let us recollect with

gratitude, that our nation has hitherto been under the guidance and protection of Heaven, and that we are a happy and favoured people."

The second was preached by the Revd Thomas Williamson in the parish church of Little Budworth on 19th Oct. 1803, "the day appointed for a General Fast in the United Kingdom of England and Ireland" (**Exhibit 3.17**). Williamson took for his text Joel 2:1, "Sound an alarm". His approach was to "monster" the revolutionary armies and their leader. "What good can be expected from that man [Bonaparte], who has no God? What mercy or even justice can be expected from the man, who has no religion? Certainly, the tender mercies of such an one must be cruel! This, our bitter enemy has proved against himself, by his mad career in life. At Rome a Papist, in Egypt a Mussulman, in France a Papist again, and receiving adulations, as if he were a God on earth. His butchering in cool blood upwards of three thousand unfortunate prisoners, after having granted them their lives, and his poisoning hundreds of his own men, who in fighting his battles, were wounded and disabled from further service, shew us clear enough what *we* may expect should he lord it over *us*. …. Shall our good and gracious King, whose anxious wish is, that we may enjoy prosperity and felicity, be basely murdered, because he is our King! Shall our Nobility, the ornaments of our nation, be butchered, because they are great as well as good! … Shall our widowed matrons, fallen at the feet of the merciless murderers of their husbands, sue in vain with tears for pity and protection! … Shall our tender orphans, with helpless hands and feeble cries, expire on the bayonets, or perish by the sword! … Shall this our house of prayer, and of God, be made the receptacle of popish idolatry, and superstition!" And much more in the same vein.

The third sermon was preached by the Revd Melville Horne in Christ Church Macclesfield on Sunday, 27th November, 1803 (**Exhibit 3.19**). The congregation included the Loyal Macclesfield Foresters, one of a number of local militias which sprang up in England during the Napoleonic Wars. Horne, though he touches on many of the same themes, is a cut above the other two in eloquence and subtlety. He took as his text Nehemiah 4:14, "I rose up and said to the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the rest of the People, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible; and fight for your Brethren, your Sons, and your Daughters, your Wives, and your Houses." As in other war sermons, Horne draws parallels between ancient Israel, God's chosen people in Old Testament times, surrounded by enemies, and Britain in his own day, to suggest that, in some sense, she now constitutes the people of God. "We have, indeed", he writes, "no national covenant, yet we have been greatly favoured", and he cites from history examples of such divine favour. He contrasts the freedoms which the British enjoy with the military despotism

of the French Emperor, who is depicted in the most lurid terms as bloodthirsty, godless, and megalomaniac.

Unusually Horne raises the possibility of defeat. It cannot be ruled out that God in his infinite providence will use Napoleon as a rod with which to chastise the sins of Britain. On this front there is much to be feared: "Have we not greatly sinned against the Lord, against our own country, and against our own souls? Have not luxury and dissipation spread themselves, from the rich and the noble, through all ranks in the community? Are not swearing, cursing, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, and contempt of the ordinances and day of the Lord, so common and flagrant, as to excite no surprise, and little detestation?" But the answer to this is obvious, and lies in our own hands: we need to repent and throw ourselves on the mercy of God. Above all soldiers should cultivate "pacific and Christian virtues" and not imagine "that the temperance, sobriety, and devotion of the Christian are incompatible with the gallantry of the soldier".

Again, unusually Horne confronts the claim of "the Quietists" that Christians should not bear arms, because Christ said, "They who take the sword will perish by the sword." He argues that what Christ has in view here is civil war, taking up arms against fellow citizens, against the Sovereign, and against the laws. That is forbidden. But if they take up the sword in self-defence, at the command of their country's laws, and under the conduct of their Sovereign, that is permitted. And he plays the fear card, but more cleverly than most. He appeals to his audience's manliness. Would you be prepared, he challenges them, to live to "see the yoke of slavery riveted to the necks of your children, and your wives and daughters exposed to promiscuous lust? While the frantic shrieks of violated chastity implore from heaven the mercy denied by the ruffian soldiery, O let not your wives curse the memories of their husbands, whose cowardice betrayed them to those indignities." Better to fight to the death.

One reads much of this stuff today with dismay and embarrassment. The Church threw its weight unthinkingly behind the status quo, in defence of a corrupt political and social order which some at the time were rightly questioning. It peddled lies and half-truths. It offered itself up unquestioningly as an arm of state propaganda. Its role in quashing dissent and protest in England should not be underestimated. This kind of sentiment was probably repeated in every parish church across the land. It is interesting how some of these parish sermons contain quite a lot of information about current affairs. They must have been an important source of news, especially to parishioners who could not afford to read the press, or whose ability to read was not all that great, but it was news filtered through a bias so blatant that it would probably

have made writers of even the most chauvinistic newssheets of the day blush. The sermons were printed by local printers on cheap paper, to maximize their impact (though the two that are priced – one at a shilling, and the other at six pence – were not cheap). These battered little pamphlets are a witness to a rather shameful chapter in the history of the English Church, when it had well nigh lost its prophetic voice, and saw its role largely in terms of shoring up a corrupt social order. Where were those to argue that while we must fight to defend our country, all is not well at home? There is oppression, poverty, injustice and inequality (not just swearing, drunkenness, and Sabbath-breaking) that weaken our society and call in question the justice of our cause? There are lessons in all this for the Church today.

(d) Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy is the high-water mark of the Church's involvement in war. Chaplains are ministers of religion who are embedded in the armed forces, and in certain circumstances may go with them into battle. The presence of chaplains in the theatre of war is very old. Aquinas, as we saw, already acknowledges the possibility and cites the presence of the priests on the battlefield in the Bible as precedent. But he does not allow them to fight. They are there to minister to the spiritual needs of the combatants. And this is the fundamental role of chaplains in modern times. Chaplains in the British armed forces are not armed, though in some countries it is left up to their conscience whether or not they carry a weapon. According to international convention they are regarded as non-combatants, and if captured should be returned to their own side, unless their services are retained to serve the spiritual needs of their compatriots who are prisoners of war.

Though they are not combatants they are required to pass a fitness test, and to undergo basic training, so that they know how to handle themselves in battle, and not get in the way of the fighting. In the army and the air force they are given military ranks, but in the navy they are not. They are deemed to have the rank of those to whom they happen to be ministering at any point in time. There is practical wisdom in this. If a chaplain is on board a warship during war he may well see frontline action if the ship is involved in a battle. It helps if he can mingle without ceremony with all ranks. In the army, however, chaplains tend not to go right to the front (the nearest they would usually get would be the forwardmost aid-station). And they remain firmly on the ground in the air force, and do not accompany the planes into battle.

There were chaplains on board British ships involved in action at Jutland, and several of them were killed. Twenty-four navy chaplains in all were killed in action in World War I. After a battle one of the first acts was to bury the dead

at sea. If a chaplain was not available this melancholy duty fell to the captain or the most senior officer. Donald Maclachlan, a stoker on board the battlecruiser HMS *Lion,* Beatty's flagship, which had 99 crew killed and 51 wounded in some of the hardest fighting of the action, gives the following account of the burial of the dead as the great ship made its way back to port:

> "All the ships moved slowly. Our chaplain had been killed in action, so Admiral Beatty took over the service. But when he started his feelings overcame him and he handed the book to Flag Captain Chatfield. Here was a scene from the brush of a great artist – the great flagship with her flag at half mast in honour of the ceremony and the marks of heavy action all over her, the smoke stained officers and men swaying to the roll of the ship, and all the time the funeral party committing the remains of their late comrades to the deep. During the later part of the ceremony we sang the hymn 'Abide with me'. Surely never did the noble words of that beautiful hymn have a deeper significance or were ever sung in such a setting."

Beatty was famous as a tough, fighting admiral. The fact that he "choked" is powerful testimony to the toll the battle had taken on him. The chaplain who died was Revd Cyril Wykeham Lydall. To mark the peculiar nature of Navy chaplaincy we have displayed Gordon Taylors' detailed and important study, *The Sea Chaplains* (1978) (**Exhibit 3.20**). The dramatic picture on its dust cover shows HMS Barham exploding off Egypt on 25th November 1941. Barham saw heavy action at Jutland, during which her chaplain, the Revd Henry Dixon Wright, was killed. In the Second World War she served in the Mediterranean, mainly on convoy protection. Hit by a salvo of torpedoes from a German U-Boat, her main magazine exploded. She sank within minutes, 862 of her crew being killed, including her chaplain, the Revd Frank Burnett.

There is a longstanding convention that Bibles, in whole or in part, are distributed to members of the armed services in times of war, and chaplains play a role in this. It is a venerable tradition. Cromwell's New Model Army was issued with a little volume of extracts from the Bible, mostly in the Geneva Version, in 1643. It carried the following on the its title page: *The Souldiers Pocket Bible: Containing the most (if not all) those places contained in holy scripture, which doe shew the qualifications of his inner man, that is a fit Souldier to fight the Lords Battels, both before the fight, in the fight, and after the fight; Which Scriptures are reduced to severall heads, and fitly applied to the Souldiers severall occasions, and so may supply the want of the whole Bible, which a Souldier cannot conveniently carry about him And may be also useful for any Christian to meditate upon, now in this miserable time of Warre*. This little book was reprinted in five editions (amounting to 50,000

copies) for use by the Federal troops in the American Civil War, and again, using the King James' Version, by the American Tract Society for use during the Spanish-American War.

The tradition continues down to the present day. The Scripture Gift Mission and the Naval and Military Bible Society distributed little copies of the Gospel of John to the army in World War I, and many men carried them with them when they went over the top. A centenary reprint is on display (**Exhibit 3.21**). A note in it states: "Many millions of New Testaments and Gospels such as this one were issued to soldiers at training camps, distributed through charity tea huts at the Front, given to wounded soldiers by nurses, or handed out by chaplains. They were designed to be carried in the front pocket of a uniform, the edges rounded to prevent creasing. Hymns were included at the back so that chaplains could hold services in the field. Each one had a message from the war hero Lord Roberts printed inside". Frederick Roberts, Earl Roberts of Kandahar (1832-1914), victor of the Second Boer War and many other colonial wars, was the most distinguished soldier of the day. His message, dated 25th July 1914 and reproduced in his own handwriting, read: "I ask you to put your trust in God. He will watch over you and strengthen you. You will find in this little Book guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness, and strength when you are in adversity." The hymns at the back, with music, are: "Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear", "Eternal Father strong to save", "Abide with me", and "O God our help in ages past." Also at the back was a Decision Form which invited the owner to put his faith in Christ as his personal Saviour and to confess him before men. There was a space for him to sign his name and give his address. Many of these little Gospels were recovered from the dead and returned to their families, who have preserved them as family mementoes. In some cases it was only thanks to the signed Decision Form that a body could be identified.

The custom of distributing Bibles to the forces continued in World War II. On display is a copy of a New Testament issued by the American Government to soldiers of the Christian faith (**Exhibit 3.22**). It belonged to an American Army Chaplain, the Revd Rufus L. Hill, who probably served at some point with the American forces stationed in Cheshire, and this is how it got into the library. Also on display is a New Testament in desert camouflage colours issued by Sandes to people serving in the armed forces. The copies are tailored for various regiments. The one on display carries the crest of the Mercian Regiment, the successor regiment of the Cheshires (**Exhibit 3.24**). Thousands of copies of this little New Testament were sent out to troops serving in Afghanistan. Sandes is an example of chaplaincy in a wider sense. It is an evangelical Christian charity operating on a number of army bases with the permission of the military, to provide a "home from home" for

members of HM Forces. Founded in 1869 in Southern Ireland, it grew out of Elise Sandes' concern for the welfare of the drummer boys (some of whom were as young as 15) in the army camp at Tralee near her home (**Exhibit 3.25**). Sandes also currently distribute what they call "dog tags". These little plaques which soldiers can hang round their necks, like their identity tags, or use as key-rings, contain suitable prayers and verses of Scripture (**Exhibit 3.23**).

Chaplains conduct the usual round of services in army barracks, at airfields, at naval bases, and on warships. On the field of battle these may have to be improvised. At a drumhead service, traditionally on the battlefield, an altar is improvised by piling up the regimental drums. On display is a grainy photo of a drumhead service at Delville Wood, on the Somme in 1916 (**Exhibit 3.27**). The troops in the background are a South African Regiment. The dishevelled soldiers, indeed the rather dishevelled Chaplain, the roughness of the ground, the crude improvised cross convey a poignant sense of a moment of reflection in the chaos of battle. The institution of the drumhead service is also invoked at times away from the field of battle. It features at the annual British Legion Remembrance Day Service at the Albert Hall. The piled up drums are draped with regimental standards. On display is a photo of a drumhead service at Dale Barracks near Chester to mark the passing out of the Cheshire Regiment.

Anglican Chaplains use the Prayer Book and other standard Anglican liturgical texts for the services they conduct. These are supplemented by other resources. One of these is on display, Matthew Tobias's *Collects for the British Army* (1930) (**Exhibit 3.26**). This offers a series of newly composed prayers, one for each regiment of the time, tailored for it in some way. That for the Cheshires, for example, plays on the image of the oak, in reference to the Cheshires' badge, the acorn and oak leaves, which King George II gave them to wear at the Battle of Dettingen in 1743:

> "Almighty God, Lord, and Giver of Life, nourish we pray thee, the Cheshire Regiment with thine abundant grace. As we wear the oak leaf in token of our loyalty and forget not the valour of our fathers, so, being rooted in the love of Christ and of our brethren, we may not fall away in time of temptation but stand fast in the faith, and be strong like the oak for His sake, the same Lord Jesus Christ."

Pasted into the cathedral library copy of this book is a regimental hymn composed by "Harry F. Kellie, 1866-1929, Lieutenant-Colonel, The 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment". According to the *London Gazette* Kellie retired from commanding the 8th Battalion of the Cheshires on retired pay on 29th June 1914, and relinquished command on account of ill-health on 19th January

1915. The hymn does not seem to have been published. It was clearly intended for use at the Cheshires' chapel in the Cathedral:

> "Bless us, O Lord! and hear us from on high,
> On these Thy walls our tattered banners fly;
> Forgive us, Lord! bow down a loving ear
> To us, Thy servants met together here."

Concluding Reflections

The purpose of this exhibition, as with the earlier exhibitions in the Cathedral Library, is to stimulate Christians to reflect from a Christian perspective on an important topic, in this case the Church's attitude to war. As in the other exhibitions we conclude the Guide with some thoughts that may be helpful towards this end.

(1) War is an ever-present reality in our lives. People sometimes refer to World War II as "the last war", when in fact the world has scarcely known a moment's peace since then, and we as a nation have been directly involved in many of those later wars. We are at this very moment engaged in war (in air-raids on targets in Syria). All right-thinking people detest war, and the suffering it brings, and refuse to glorify the violence, destruction and loss of life, but few get much beyond that. Some are too readily inclined to assume that because war is an evil, everything and everyone associated with it must be tainted as well. That is much too simple. We need to think more deeply about the issues involved.

(2) War in itself is not the business of the Church. It is the State that bears the sword, and has the right to declare and wage war. Yet the Church is in its own way deeply involved in war, particularly the Church of England, which as a national Church cannot be indifferent to the tragedies and triumphs of our country. It has, at the very least, a pastoral duty to minister to those involved in and touched by war, who will often be the members of its own congregations. In carving out a role for itself that is in keeping with its own mission to bring in Christ's kingdom of peace, it has a long tradition of Christian thought on which to draw. That tradition is immensely rich. It has to tread a fine line between being, on the one hand, simply an instrument of propaganda of the State, unthinkingly serving the State's war agenda, and, on the other, offering comfort, support and spiritual guidance to those who have to fight, or who suffer war's dreadful consequences. It has to maintain its own integrity, and its own vision, against external pressures which might lead it to

compromise. It has too often failed to do so, but it must learn lessons from its past mistakes.

(3) The doctrinal traditions of the Church on war are complex, and contain sometimes contradictory tendencies, but by and large they are not pacifist. This may surprise some people, given that the Church follows the Prince of Peace, some of whose sayings recorded in the Gospels are strikingly pacifist in tone. In keeping with the vision of the ancient Hebrew prophets, the Church looks forward to a time when wars will cease and peace will reign throughout the world. That is in the age to come. But in this age it acknowledges that war may have to be waged as the least worst option, to prevent even greater evils.

(4) There is a long and honourable tradition of Christian pacifism, represented in this country notably by the Society of Friends (the Quakers), who refuse to fight against their fellows. We have not represented that tradition in our exhibition, partly because it is complex and diverse, and it is difficult to do it justice in so short a compass, but also partly because it represents the minority Christian view. The mainline Churches accept the dominant Christian doctrine that there are circumstances in which the State is justified in going to war.

(5) That said the task for the Church then becomes to define those circumstances as precisely as possible, to limit war and mitigate its worst effects. Attempts have been made to do this in the doctrine of Just War. War must be the least worst option, the lesser evil. It must be the action of last resort, after all other avenues of conflict-resolution have been explored. Wars must be fought to restore peace. There must be a just cause. Wars of aggression or territorial aggrandizement cannot be just wars. Wars must be fought in ways that minimize as much as possible the suffering and damage. Arbitrary cruelty and terror can never be condoned. Every effort should be exerted to achieve reconciliation and a just peace after hostilities have ended. Defeated enemies should be treated with compassion. And so on, and so forth. Many of these principles are now embodied in instruments of international law. It is deeply sobering to reflect on how few wars that this country has fought in the past one hundred years would comply with *all* the principles of Just War. But this simply points to a role for the Church as the conscience of society: it has a prophetic duty to hold these principles up to governments, the state, the military, and the general public, however much this may be resented.

(6) The Church does not see all aspects of war as evil. It honours, indeed celebrates, the heroism, courage, steadfastness, loyalty, and self-sacrifice of the men and women who put themselves in harm's way for the sake of their country. It sees those virtues as virtues that can be transferred to the spiritual

life, to the *spiritual* warfare which all Christians are called upon to wage against the world, the flesh and the devil. And it has no problem with burying those who fall in battle, with trying to comfort those bereaved, wounded, or traumatized by war, and with seeing all this as absolutely integral to its pastoral mission. Honouring heroism, and comforting those affected by war lie at the heart of most of the forms of religious service related to war devised by the Church. There should be no attempt to glorify war, or the weapons of war (would it be right to bless a trident nuclear submarine?), to promote militarism, or to hide the fact that the violence and suffering of war are anything other than evil.

(7) Against all this there is another, darker strand of the Church's doctrine of war which is deeply problematic. It is the tradition of Holy War. This tradition is all the more troubling because it has roots in the Bible, in Scriptures acknowledged by the Church as Word of God. A Holy War is a war regarded as fought under *divine* mandate aimed at defeating *God's* enemies. It is a war in which the enemy are seen as heretics and infidels who may be treated with a harshness and cruelty that would never be allowed under the rules of Just War. The Church in the past has persuaded the State to fight Holy Wars to suppress heretics and infidels whom it has declared enemies of Christ. It would be hard to find anyone in the Church today who would directly advocate Holy War, but language and attitudes associated with it can creep into and colour Just War positions. In today's world the idea of Holy War is alive and well in Jihadist Islam, but the Christian world should not allow itself to be lulled into thinking that it has left this idea behind. Faced with militant Islam it is not difficult for talk of a clash of civilizations to slide over into talk of a clash of religions, and in that setting ideas of Holy War could all too easily spring back to life.

List of Exhibits

Case One: The Church and the Commemoration of War

1.1 Plan of the Cathedral with principal War Memorials marked
1.2 [Sir John Ernest Hodder-Williams], *Jack Cornwell: The Story of John Travers Cornwell V.C. Boy – 1st Class* (1917, repr. 2016)
1.3 Painting of HMS Chester
1.4 Cartoon for the Egerton Memorial Window
1.5 Egerton Family Tree with those killed in World War I highlighted
1.6 Cheshire Regiment Boer War Monument
1.7 Soldiers of the Cheshire Regiment in a trench at the Somme

Case 2: The Church's Doctrine of War

2.1 Deuteronomy 20 (King James Version)
2.2 Adam Clarke's commentary on Deuteronomy 20
2.3 Aquinas *Summa Theologica* on the Just War (Secunda Secundae, Quaestio 40)
2.4 First page of the Geneva Convention of 1864
2.5 The Works of Flavius Josephus in the translation of William Whiston
2.6 Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel* (English trans. 1991)
2.7 The Qur'an in Arabic and English
2.8 Ephesians 6 (New English Bible)
2.9 John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), Christian's fight with Apollyon
2.10 John Bunyan, *The Holy War* (1682)
2.11 The Collect for Peace, Evening Prayer (Facsimile of Book of Common Prayer 1549)
2.12 Revelation 20 (Revised Version)
2.13 Joseph Mede, *Clavis Apocalyptica* (1627), "On Gog and Magog"

Case Three: Liturgies and Rites of War

3.1 Book of Common Prayer (1662): Prayer after Victory, and Burial at Sea
3.2 Prayer for the preservation of the Queen's Majesty 1588
3.3 Service of Thanksgiving for the Victory at Blenheim (2nd August 1704)
3.4 Chester Cathedral: Special Service, 4th August 1916
3.5 Chester Cathedral: Special Service, St Luke's Day 1917 (for the Red Cross)

3.6 Chester Cathedral: Special Service of Intercession, 4th April 1918
3.7 Rupert Brooke, "The Soldier" (1914)
3.8 Psalm 68 in the metrical version of Tate and Brady (1696)
3.9 Hymn: "O valiant hearts" (1919)
3.10 Hymn: "Abide with me" (1847)
3.11 Hymn: "I vow to thee my country" (1908/1918)
3.12 Hymn: "O God our Help in ages past" (1719)
3.13 Hymn: "Eternal Father strong to save" (1860)
3.14 Sermon: Samuel Peploe, Chester Cathedral 1745: Against Bonnie Prince Charlie
3.15 Sermon: John Evans, London, 19th May 1706: The Victory at Ramelly
3.16 Sermon: George Henry Law, St Paul's, London, 7th July 1814: Victory over France
3.17 Sermon: Thomas Williamson, Little Budworth, Cheshire, 19th October 1803: Address on the Day appointed for a National Fast
3.18 Sermon: W.E. Keyt, Parish Church, Runcorn, Cheshire, 8th July 1803: Religion and Valour
3.19 Sermon: Melville Horne, Macclesfield, 27th November 1803: Address to the Loyal Macclesfield Foresters
3.20 Gordon Taylor, *The Sea Chaplains* (1978)
3.21 Gospel of John: Active Service Edition (World War I)
3.22 A GI New Testament (World War II)
3.23 Sandes: "Dog Tags" with Prayers and Bible Verses
3.24 A Sandes New Testament in camouflage, with the crest of the Mercian Regiment
3.25 Leaflet for Sandes Mission to HM Forces
3.26 Matthew Tobias, *Collects for the British Army* (1930)
3.27 Drumhead Services: Dale Barracks, near Chester, and Delville Wood, the Somme

SUPPLEMENTARY EXHIBITS
(All, except S8, kindly loaned by the Cheshire Military Museum, Chester)

The following supplementary exhibits were acquired after the Guide was completed. They are scattered around the cases, and also displayed on top of the bookcase to the right of Case One

S1 Map of the Somme (Top of Bookcase)

In the Battle of Albert (1st-13th July), the Cheshire Regiment was particularly active on the front between Hamel and Mametz. Cheshires were in the first

wave of those who went over the top at 5.30 am on the first day to attack the German lines.

S2 Cheshire Sentries at the Somme (Top of Bookcase)

A tinted picture of Cheshire sentries with fixed bayonets on duty in a trench at Mametz, "20 yards from the Bosch", according to the caption. If they were that close to the enemy one wonders why they are not wearing helmets. In the early days of the fighting there were not always enough helmets to go round, so this may be the explanation. But the picture looks a little posed and artificial, and may be a propaganda shot.

S3 Cheshires in the town of Albert (Case One)

The town of Albert in Picardy, located about 3 miles from the front, was important strategically during the early phases of the Somme offensive. The Albert to Bapaume road bisected the front and was savagely fought over. The picture was probably taken a few days after the battle began. The damaged church was a well-known landmark. On 15th January 1915 a German shell hit the statue of the Virgin on the top of its tower. Oddly, however, the statue did not fall, but leaned over at a precarious angle. The Leaning Virgin of Albert became the stuff of legend among soldiers on both sides. It remained leaning till it and the rest of the tower, which posed a threat as an observation post, were reduced to rubble by shelling in 1918.

S4 Some Cheshires and a cup of tea (Top of Bookcase)

The picture was taken in 1916, but the exact location is unknown. It is probably an aid station behind the front. The soldier on the right appears to be wounded, possibly blinded. Note the label round his neck. He is reaching out uncertainly and his comrade in the greatcoat is putting a cup of tea carefully into his hand. A moment of gentleness in the midst of the carnage!

S5 Service Sheet for 50th Anniversary of the Somme (Case Three bottom shelf)

The service was held at the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, located just outside the town of Thiepval, which, at the beginning of the Somme offensive, was at the heart of the German lines. The service opened with the singing of Bunyan's "Who would true valour see, let him come hither". Psalm 129 ("Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth") was read – a rather puzzling choice. The Chaplain read the first three verses of "O valiant hearts", and the service ended with "O God our Help in ages past".

S6 Service Sheet for 70th Anniversary of the Somme (Case Three, bottom shelf)

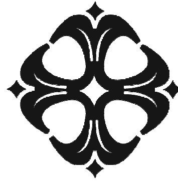
This service was also held at Thiepval, and presupposes French troops were present. It opened with "O God our Help in ages past", and included a reading from the Greek historian Thucydides' account of the Funeral Oration of the Athenian statesman Pericles for the Athenians who fell in the first year of the Peloponnesian War against Sparta (431 BC). The first three verses of "O valiant hearts" were followed by the last post, then two further verses of "O valiant hearts" were sung. The wreath-laying was followed by prayers and blessings, and the service ended with "God save the Queen" and the Marseillaise. The service sheet is surprisingly poorly produced for such an important occasion.

S7 Drumhead Service at Dale Barracks (Case Three, bottom shelf)

Dale Barracks at Upton, near Chester, has been since July 2014 the home of the 2nd Battalion of the Mercian Regiment, the regiment into which the Cheshire Regiment was merged on 1st September 2007. The previous occupants of the barracks were the Royal Welsh, an infantry regiment with as long and distinguished a history as the Cheshires.

S8 The Proclamation of the Irish Republic, Dublin, Easter 1916 (Case Two, bottom shelf)

We have included this item, the centenary of which will be the subject of national celebrations in Ireland this year, for three reasons: (1) The Proclamation is a further illustration of the tendency to invoke Holy War language in a time of war: "We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms … In this supreme hour the Irish nation must … by the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called." Ireland was a deeply religious country at the time, and such religious language would have resonated loudly. (2) This religious aspect is reinforced by the suspicion that Patrick Pearse and a number of other leading rebels had no illusion as to the outcome. They had no expectation that they could win. They mounted a sort of suicide mission with the aim of dying as martyrs, and so rousing the consciences of their compatriots. (3) When put in the context of Jutland and the Somme, which lay only a few months ahead, it is easy to understand the ferocity of the British response. They saw the uprising as an unforgiveable "stab in the back".



O GOD, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

The Second Collect, Morning Prayer (for Peace)

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen*.

Second Collect, Evening Prayer (for Peace)

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