Introduction

> There is no memory that sinks more deeply into the mind of a young boy or a young girl than the memory of a poor widowed mother struggling hard, week in and week out, to make ends meet. […] she will have a lonely life and a hard lot, and the least we do for her is to keep her from having to depend on odd jobs or on the cold hand of charity.
> *18th November, 1914. Parliamentary debate. War in Europe: naval and military services, pensions and grants debates*

> On the second instant several hours were of necessity spent in a careful endeavour to ascertain whether or not there was any local story connected with this woman's re-marriage, but in spite of unofficial conversations with certain neighbours there was no suggestion of gossip or that the marriage was one of convenience.
> *Police report on Rosina Allen, 23rd March, 1935. PIN26 17200.*

This thesis will explore the discourses surrounding British widows of men who died as a result of the First World War. In particular, discourses of nationalism, morality and social welfare will be the main focal points. Critical discourses analysis (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Wodak, 1999, 2002) will be used to unpack these discourses in a variety of texts, although the main focus will be on texts relating to two widows who did not receive war widows' pensions, but for very different reasons. The pension claimed by these women was the first State-funded, (financially) non-contributory pension in Britain and as such offers the chance to see emergent discourses of social welfare in the early part of the 20th century as this newly-devised system was developed and implemented. The two case files will be analysed in detail, using discourse-historical analysis (Wodak, 2002) as a framework in an attempt to uncover how interdiscursivity operates within a patriarchal ideology and nationalistic concerns surrounding the eugenics debate, alongside underlying parsimoniousness.

This introductory section will set out my argument for the need for such research, arguing that this is a relatively unexplored facet of this 'war to end all wars'. We will look at the social construction of widowhood and why this particular social category is interesting in terms of the gendered assumptions that came to be written into law for the group of women who form the focus of this study: war

widows. Whilst the First World War continues to generate a lot of popular and academic interest, war widowhood has been largely unexplored yet is a rich area for academic analysis.

The complex nature of the data that forms the corpus for this thesis will be summarised, with reference to the various sources as well as the challenges of collecting it, not least the diverse media in which this data exists. Whilst much of the data used in this thesis comes from National Archives at Kew, comprising private correspondence between bureaucrats and with widows, there are also texts from the public sphere (Habermas, 1987) which will be used to help contextualise those from the private sphere. The selection of the data will be discussed below, explaining why the cases of two widows in particular have been chosen for more detailed case study analysis. Finally, this section will briefly detail the theoretical approaches that will be used to analyse this corpus of data in ways which will prove a useful addition to our understanding of women in a given context.

Both of the extracts at the beginning of this Introduction relate to widows of men who died in the First World War. The first is taken from one of the early parliamentary debates, as recorded in Hansard, when State pensions for widows were first discussed. Here, the widow is being positioned as a figure of pity, her husband's death in service of king and country potentially leaving her in a state of poverty and unhappiness. The 'we' in this extract are the members of parliament and, by extension, the country, who will step in as beneficent guardians to protect the poor, defenceless widow. In reality, as the second extract indicates, these women were subject to a great deal of distrust in terms of their sexuality and morality. Their position as women without a male head to the household had rendered them as a potential threat to the moral stability of the nation. As such, they were open to public scrutiny from neighbours, the police and the State to ensure they remained worthy of their state-funded pension. My argument will explore their representation and experiences to show how these apparently contradictory frames of pity and distrust relate to two specific widows. Underpinning this analysis will be an understanding of the cultural representation of women, in particular working-

class women in Britain in this period, and this thesis seeks to fill a gap in existing knowledge about them.

As Threadgold (1997), drawing on Fraser (1995) has argued, one of the effects of 20th century social welfare reforms on the public sphere is that these reforms render many aspects of the domestic, private sphere public. In this case, what Threadgold refers to as discourses of Care and Protection are used to deploy patriarchal rule, invading the innermost reaches of the private sphere to make public and masculine what was once private and feminine. As we shall see in the course of this study, discourses of morality include sexual behaviour and child-care matters, issues which were transformed from the private sphere to the public by the social welfare reforms which affected war widows in the 20th century.

Since the 1970s, there has been much academic interest in the history of women in the 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly how the 'two spheres' ideology of the 19th century shifted in the course of the 20th to evolve into second wave feminism. The First World War is often described as marking a pivotal moment in the women's movement in the West, starting at the height of the militant women's suffrage campaign and ending in the same month as women were granted the vote in Britain (eg, Marwick, 1963; Lewis, 1984). Historically the view of women has been framed largely by the 18th century Enlightenment's conception of the 'two spheres': the rational and public masculine sphere and the irrational, private female one. Macdonald (1995) has observed that the discursive division of the social universe into the separate spheres of 'public' and 'private'

> has had powerful practical consequences in suppressing women's pay, muting their cries for childcare provision, and constructing domestic violence as a purely 'private' matter. These consequences stem from a conceptual and ideological framework that view the public sphere as inherently 'masculine'; the private as intrinsically 'feminine'. (1995: 47)

The concept of biological essentialism contributed to exclude women from many areas of life such as education, sport and politics until very recently. The 'Women of Britain' recruitment poster, which will be looked at in more detail later (page 53), firmly places the weaker members of society – women and children – within the

safety of the domestic environment. However, this is a view that is strongly class-based. For working class women, as will be discussed further in the chapter on the historical background to this period, it was expected that they would go out to work until they were married, and even after the birth of children it was not unusual for them to be in paid employment (Lewis, 1984). Although professions such as the civil service and teaching continued with female 'marriage bars' for many years, the employment opportunities afforded to working class women generally offered few such restrictions.

The ideology which had confined 'respectable' women to the domestic environs was irrevocably altered by the First World War. Vera Brittain's autobiographical account of this period, *Testament of Youth* (1933), reveals how her 'respectable' middle-class upbringing required a young woman to be chaperoned when in male company or else out of the house. After volunteering to be a VAD in the nursing service in 1915, she observes the changes in her life that the war had brought, not least of which was a relative freedom to travel without a chaperone. This Victorian practice was largely removed by the war, but the public unease with this is probably most noticeably seen in the treatment of the young, unmarried woman of the 1920s – the 'flapper'. The 'public' life of the flapper involved sport, dancing and, with the advent of affordable day trips and holidays, unchaperoned travel, mostly funded by employment in the public arena of the office or shop. No longer tied to domestic service, the expectations and liberty of the young female in the 1920s was shockingly public to an older population who were, as Light (1991) has indicated, in other ways trying to return to the 'good old days' before the war[1].

In her study of literature between the wars, Light coined the phrase 'conservative modernity' to described the Janus-faced nature of British society at this time, as it chose to return to the certainties of the past, no matter how much this was hated, whilst being 'reluctantly and forcibly propelled into new ways of living after the war, and that it is this traumatised relation to modernity which produced new kinds of conservative as well as radical response' (1991: 11).

[1] The 1918 Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act was primarily responsible for the expulsion of women war workers from the posts previously occupied by men, but has far wider social consequences which will be discussed in the Historical Background section.

This can be clearly seen in the case of the flapper. Her overt femininity, despite cropped hair and the quite androgynous fashions of this period, was emphasised in popular culture by a portrayal of her as flirtatious and coquettish, through plays and popular tunes. The hedonistic world of the 1920s was her playground, but her perceived enjoyment of the 'jazz age' was used by the media to devalue her role in society, particularly her political status (Macdonald, 1995). When the franchise was eventually extended to include women on the same grounds as men in 1928 under the terms of the Equal Franchise Act, the press referred to the legislation perjoratively as the 'Flapper Bill', drawing on images of flappers as capricious and self-indulgent. The very femininity that the Pankhursts had been using as a positive strategy to gain acceptance for women's suffrage rights a quarter of a century earlier was being re-appropriated by the media to malign women once they were legislatively accepted into the public sphere. Thus the construction of women at all levels in society was bound up in a moral discourse that sought to confine them to the domestic sphere within a dominant patriarchal ideology.

The construction of widowhood

The distrust of women outside of the domestic sphere mirrors that of women outside of direct patriarchal control, in particular, the widow. This section will briefly explore the social construction of widowhood then focus more specifically on war widowhood.

At a micro-text level, the etymology of the label *widow* reveals something of the society in which it has been constructed. Mills, in *Womanwords*, traces its origins:

> Old English *widewe* or *widuwe* originated in the Indo-European root *widh-* or *wiedh-*, meaning to be empty, to be separated, as in the Sanskrit *vidh*, meaning be destitute or lack. Hence the Latin *viduus*, meaning bereft, void or widowed, and *dividere*, meaning divide. (1991: 259)

As in the original Sanskrit root of the word, 'lack' has been the defining point for widows throughout history. In the modern English usage, the use of *widow*

relates to a woman whose husband has died. A man in the position of his spouse dying is a widow*er*, reflecting the more common factor that women are more likely to outlive their spouses, and thus *widow* is one of the few roots of a noun which is modified for use for a man. However, for the widower, society is far more tolerant of his moral behaviour, as it is of men's behaviour in the world in general.

It is not only through lexical choice that women are differentiated from men. The distinction can be shown through grammatical analysis. Much critical linguistic research has shown that the least powerful in society are most frequently rendered less powerful through grammatical strategies such as passive voice, linking with intransitive verbs and negative naming practices (eg Wodak, 1999, 2000, 2003). The group most commonly found to fall into this category is women (see for example Spender, 1985; Cameron, 1995; Talbot, 1998). Through the use of close linguistic analysis, I hope to uncover the widows' roles in terms of power in the extant textual materials available, both in their own words and the writing of others.

Perhaps the least powerful woman, and therefore an interesting case study into how language might operate to rescue these relations of power, is the working-class widow who is the main focus of this study. As Yalom has found, even from ancient times widows were commonly expected to exhibit fidelity to a dead spouse (2001: 40). Without a male guardian in the form of a husband, the widow is expected to continue to behave as if she was still married, and remain loyal to his memory and indeed to her marriage vows. This set of assumptions about widows is based on the common fact that usually most widows are older. However, in the case of war widows, it is highly likely that they are much younger. As we saw in the quotations at the beginning of this Introduction, these were women who were ready to re-marry, or else were still able to have full and productive lives. The gendered performance of widowhood is written into the pension legislation with little allowance for the age of the widow. As will emerge from the more detailed case studies, the widows themselves often refused to perform the subject position of passive widowhood that society required of them. Their resistance to the discursive construction of widowhood is remarkable but ultimately largely ineffective.

War widowhood

The unprecedented number of men who died as a result of the First World War is just one of the factors that makes this war one of the most studied, although the fate of their widows has received little academic attention. Much academic research has been conducted into the First World War throughout the 20th century, with the official history of the war being written whilst it was still in progress (indeed, the Imperial War Museum was set up in 1916 to collect artefacts and documents). Some excellent research has been carried out more recently, such as De Groot's *Blighty: British society in the era of the Great War* (1996) and Jay Winter's numerous works seeking to explore the various aspects of the war. Perhaps best known is Fussell's *The Great War and Modern Memory* (first published in 1975), which, like most other studies, explores the war from an androcentric perspective.

More recent work has sought to remedy this gender imbalance to some extent. Women's experiences and contributions to the war have been studied in works such as Woolacott's *On Her Their Lives Depend: munitions workers in the Great War* (1994), Thom's *Nice Girls and Rude Girls: women workers in World War 1* (2000), and Grayzel *Women and the First World War* (2002). These studies look at the women, most of whom were working class, whose lives were changed during the course of the war as they took up well-paid jobs in munitions. Beddoe's *Back to Home and Duty* (1989) looks at the longer-term fate of such women in the inter-war years. The experiences of middle-class women are most commonly recorded in novels and memoirs, perhaps most famously by Vera Brittain in her wartime diaries and longer memoir, *Testament of Youth*, which was first published in 1933 and emerged out of the glut of (male) war memoirs that appeared from 1928 onwards. With one or two exceptions, the memoirs published in the late 1920s and early 1930s were all from a middle-class perspective, where the more erudite and literate writers were able to offer a contribution which Fussell (1975) ascribes to making the First World War the most literate in history. However, whilst there are several excellent studies on these issues, and there are novels and memoirs which look more closely at the experience of war widowhood (such as Young's novel from

which the title of this thesis emerged), there has been little academic interest in this area of female experiences of the First World War.

Of previous research into widows of this conflict, one of the first was by Thomas in her PhD thesis 'State Maintenance' (Sussex, 1988). This study is largely concerned with the wider issues of State support for servicemen's families throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Without access to the data in the individual pension case files that will form the basis of the case studies in my research, Thomas's study focuses on the historical development of charitable and State assistance. Lomas, in her PhD thesis 'War widows in British Society: 1914-1990' (Staffordshire, 1997) builds on Thomas's work but includes more detailed reference to the widows themselves. Her data is largely from the individual letters held in the Iris Strange Collection at Staffordshire, letters written by war widows in the late 1960s and early 1970s as the British War Widows' Society finally came to fruition. Whilst these letters provide fascinating information about the widows' lives, they are mainly in the form of retrospective narratives, coloured by the expectation of State support, particularly in the wake of the development of the Welfare State after the Second World War (something we will come across in the second case study in this thesis). Lomas's argument about inadequate support for war widows is backed up by the reports of the Ministry of Pensions which she cites extensively. However, without access to individual case files, her chronologically wide-ranging data tends to offer only the official Ministry of Pensions accounts of contemporary attitudes, with the voices of the widows only appearing in retrospect.

The first use of individual case files from the Ministry of Pensions appears just after this documentation was released for public scrutiny in 1999. James's PhD thesis, '"To keep me all my life": policy, provision and the experience of war widowhood, 1914-1925' (Cambridge, 2000) makes use of 500 individual case files as well as similar data to Lomas's, such as letters and diaries held in the Vera Brittain archives. Whilst James uses examples from the case files which also form the main analysis of my research, she has concentrated on the synchronic experience of war widowhood in the years immediately after the war. Like Thomas and Lomas, she focuses on the development of State maintenance for war widows, the widows'

voices appearing to support her argument that these women were politically engaged at a level not previously suspected. My own selection of data, as will be discussed in detail later, allows for an in-depth exploration of the discourses surrounding widowhood for two different groups of war widows. The use of critical discourse analysis, unlike the historical methodologies employed by Thomas, Lomas and James, allows for a more detailed discussion of war widowhood, revealing the closely intertwining discourses of social welfare, nationalism and morality that is merely implicit in previous research.

To return to Light, whilst she is looking specifically at English literature of this period, the same conservative modernity can be found in legislation and social attitudes which sought to return to the pre-war certainties (however falsely remembered) whilst forging ahead with modernity. She goes on to point out that, with a shrinking global empire, imperialist ideology became increasingly domesticated (1991: 211). Before 1914, the concept of British nationality was pre-eminently masculine, but after the war (particularly after 1918 and full suffrage in 1928), a new State recognition of women came to see them as citizens in their own right, as national citizens at that. Light points out that this recognition can be seen as a double-edged sword. Whilst women were able to form a 'self-conscious social and political constituency' (ibid) and were able to represent their country in a way never before seen (such as in parliament and in military uniform), they were also expected to carry more of the imperialistic burden (see also Skeggs, 1997). Thus the responsibility for continuing the heroic memory of dead servicemen husbands fell on war widows to be morally responsible for upholding this memory as well as providing the serviceman's children with a stable, respectable upbringing.

As most of the widows were working class, the amount paid in terms of their widows' pension and dependants' allowances for their children was minimal. These allowances permitted the State to be seen as beneficent provider for the dependants of dead heroes who had given their lives in the service of 'their' country. However, as we saw in the introductory quotation from Hansard, such allowances also ensured that large numbers of women and children were kept out of the workhouses which were vastly more expensive to maintain. As we shall see, discourses of nationalism

were linked inextricably with those of social welfare, the pension scheme being an extension of the pre-war concerns over the future of the empire in terms of its moral well-being and imperial might whilst being framed by parsimony.

Drawing on Foucault's earlier work in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Walkerdine (1985:206) also points out that the State's relationship with the family became increasingly intrusive as the 'aim to produce citizens who would accept the moral order by choice and freewill rather than coercion or through overt acceptance and covert resistance' gathered momentum in the course of the 19th century. As Billig (1995) comments, this is closely linked to the development of the idea of the 'nation-state' around this time. In this way, the social legislation of the pre-war years which positioned women as guardians of the country's future came to be more visible in the socially prestigious but contingent label of war widowhood. The widows themselves are complicit in this as they fought to be acknowledged by the State as war widows. As we shall see, the actual amount paid to such women as 'approved' war widows is only part of the argument they present in support of their appeals.

Rendered economically vulnerable and politically without a voice, there is little formal recognition of a collective working-class female identity at this time. At a local level, there was some organisation. Beddoe (1989) cites the Welsh women hunger marchers of the early 1930s, and the first female Labour MP, Ellen Wilkinson was instrumental in organising the Jarrow Crusade at the same time. However, these are exceptional cases and there is little evidence of a collective, publicly acknowledged identity for war widows who did not organise themselves until well after the Second World War[2]. Instead, they would approach male-centred organisations such as the British Legion (formed in 1921 to help the veterans of the Great War, but also providing legal advice to war widows), the YMCA (which provided legal advice), the Joint Committee of the British Red Cross and Order of St John (which offered financial and material support to widows who were awaiting the result of pension appeals), and various other veterans' and regimental organisations.

[2] The British War Widows Association was not formally established until 1972.

However, this does not mean that war widows lacked a sense of identity. In the contemporary world, constructions of identity derive from a multiplicity of sources: from nationality, ethnicity, social class, community, gender, sexuality, or marital status. Woodward points out sources may 'conflict in the construction of identity positions and lead to contradictory fragmented identities' (1997:1). Our sense of identity is important to us in positioning ourselves in the world and in providing a link between us and the society in which we live. Sampson notes that the social construction of identity is essential in that 'selves, persons, psychological traits, and so forth, including the very idea of individual psychological traits, are social and historical constructions, not naturally occurring objects' (1989:2). Personhood is not an autonomous construction: it is created in relation to and with others. Culture shapes identity through giving meaning to experience and, as Rutherford argues:

> identity marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we live in now […] identity is the intersection of our everyday lives with the economic and political relations of subordination and domination. (1990: 19-20)

In forming a social identity, we are constrained by culture in our social relations and in the limited variety of possibilities offered through symbolic representations and contemporary discourse, manifest through language.

The subject positions described above are formed in discourse, the positions ascribed within various social and institutional structures. Throughout our lives, we all enter into a wide range of subject positions: daughter, student, employee, partner, all of them invented relations of power of some kind or another. As Talbot comments, 'an individual's subjectivity is not fixed, invariant and "unitary"; it is diversified and potentially contradictory' (1998:154). Widows, and particularly war widows, are forced into a gender identity by the death of their husbands, a position that imposes restrictions on them, not least in their sexuality which can often be at odds with the lifestyle that is more typical of their age and social class. This subject position carries with it assumptions about age, passivity, moral guardianship of the

'sacred' memory of the deceased and, as we shall see, is perceptively more fixed than other subject positions.

Data collection

Data gathered in the corpus for study in this thesis come from a wide variety of sources. This section will contextualise these sources and associated data to give a better understanding of the texts that will be analysed later.

The National Archives, Kew

The greater part of my corpus comes from the files held in the National Archives, Kew. Of these, the files catagorised under the coding PIN26 form the bulk of my data, and were released for public examination in 1999. These are the individual case files held in the National Archives, relating to widows' pension claims[3] from the First World War. Although I have mainly looked at only the first 200 of these, the archive itself holds a total of 22,756 under this code. This total represents 2% of the total pensions dealt with by the London Region of the Ministry of Pension. There were three regional administrative divisions for war pensions: 'London', which also covered the large industrial centres such as the Midlands; 'Provincial', which covered smaller urban communities; and 'Rural', which covered the non-urbanised communities. These districts reflect those of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association on which the infrastructure of the war pensions scheme was initially based. Of these three regions, only files from the 'London' area remain. These files were selected for archiving by War Pensions staff, who retained every 15th file from a total of 1,137,800 for that region. The sample can thus be regarded as being quite random. This is borne out in the files I have examined. Some of these contain just one or two sheets of paper relating to claims; others are several inches thick and contain a variety of documents ranging from the soldier's enlistment papers to correspondence with the widow that stretches into the late 1960s.

[3] The National Archive catalogue actually states that these are pensions awarded, but my data show that this is far from the case and, in fact, covers a much broader range of case files to include those relating to women whose claims for a pension were not accepted as valid.

Although there is now only one file per person, these are often the result of several other files being merged, such as a man's army medical records, his service records, disability documentation, letters to and from the widow or her representative, and internal Ministry of Pensions memoranda. What is missing from this assortment of papers is much of the documentation relating to the Special Grants Committee (SGC) of the Ministry of Pensions, which had the power to suspend, reinstate and withdraw pension allowances. The individual case files for this committee have not been retained. Information relating to the SGC now comes from files coded under PIN15. These contain policy documents, annual reports and internal memoranda, as well as some examples of individual letters relating to specific cases which seem to have been retained as exemplars. Because of the comparatively small number of individual files retained under PIN26, it has not been possible to trace the very few named individuals from the SGC papers held in PIN15, not least because the files held in PIN26 are in alphabetical order by the serviceman's name, whereas the cases revealed under PIN15 tend to only give the widow's name.

Other PIN-coded files show the internal workings of the Ministry of Pensions, but do not deal with specific named cases. PIN26 therefore is the main source of information on which my case studies will focus.

Charity records

In addition to National Archives data which deals exclusively with State funded assistance for widows, I will also be looking at some of the extant charity records held in various archives in an attempt to analyse continuity of discourses across various agencies. Individual case files have not been found, many charities reporting that they had not retained such records since the 1950s. In other agencies, locally-held records had been centralised in the late 1930s, but in the case of several charities (such as the ROAB and British Legion) these had been destroyed in Luftwaffe raids during the Second World War. However, charities such as the Red Cross and Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association have retained annual reports in their head offices in London. The common membership of these

organisations' committees can be seen as an extension of the State's own committees, as we will see. These organisations form a link between the older philanthropic charities of the 19th century and the newfangled welfare state of the 20th and are thus a useful source of data in the course of this analysis when tracing discourses of morality, nationalism and social welfare.

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association (SSFA) was renamed Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA) in 1924, but is one of the oldest charitable associations which helped war widows. It was established in 1894 to care for the dependants of servicemen who had died in colonial service. The largest charitable organisation, it had a nation-wide network of offices which the government was able to use in 1914 to pay out separation allowances and later widows' and dependants' pensions, a system which continued until 1916 when the scale of the payments required a different approach and the State took over direct management of this, using local post offices in a precursor to the way in which State benefits would be paid for much of the rest of the 20th century. The founder of SSFA, James Gildea, wrote a history of the charity in 1916, and there are also annual reports of SSFA/SSAFA up to 1924 when financial help for war widows was moved solely to the Joint Committee of the Red Cross and Order of St John.

The Joint Committee of the Red Cross and Order of St John (hereafter Joint Committee) was formed in 1920, when the two charities merged resources under the umbrella of various Emergency Help Committees to help ex-servicemen. In 1921, this was extended to war widows. Again, there are no individual case files, but the annual reports for most of the 1920s and 1930s give examples of anonymised case studies detailing the sort of help offered in each year. The reports relating to widows and dependants generally focus on amendments to the regulations under which help was given, as well as the financial reports of the committee. By the time of the Second World War, paper shortages had reduced the physical size of the pages from foolscap to something closer to A5. Paper quality was poor and ink was consumed with care, and the reports feature almost exclusively the financial information, the previous inclusion of pages of the 'good works' of the committee detailed through case studies vanishing.

In an attempt to find out if other organisations had specifically helped working class women, I visited the archives of the Women's Cooperative Guild, held at Hull University Library. Whilst there are no individual case files, the various documents held in this archive provide background information about the working-class feminist movement in the post-war years, particularly the 'white poppy' campaign that attracted such negative publicity, and the pressure the organisation was able to put on the government in an appeal for maternity benefit.

'Public sphere' texts

The public sphere, as described by Habermas (1987) is the realm of public life in which discussion of matters of general interest take place and from which 'public opinion' emerges. Here, I will be talking broadly about 'public discourse'; that is, texts which are placed into the public realm with the intention of influencing public opinion. The public sphere is generally set against the private sphere, which is where personal duties of family are performed.

In this thesis, the 'public realm' texts such as personal columns and letters pages of national and local newspapers will be studied in addition to more mainstream media reports. In particular, the debates about war widows which were conducted in the letters columns of *The Times* in 1914 will prove interesting in how they engage with influencing opinion about widows and their entitlement to State funding.

Newspaper reports about war widows and associated moral panics in the inter-war years will also be drawn upon. As we will see, the widows themselves were often prompted to write to the Ministry of Pensions in response to media reports about changes in pension legislation or in reaction to media 'moral panics' about other State benefit recipients.

Additional texts from the public sphere, such as recruitment posters will prove useful in exploring the representation of war widows, in particular where they have been used intertextually.

Finally, the parliamentary debates as recorded in Hansard are invaluable in exploring the discursive construction of war widows by the State. The public

representation of these women, as found in the debates of 1914, presents the case for widows to be granted pension in light of their perceived need, reflecting the State's assumption of a patriarchal role. The actual terms of the Royal Warrant allowed for the State's intervention in the private sphere in a way that sits uncomfortably with the liberal ideals espoused in the public forum of parliament.

The use of public discourses in the private correspondence, particularly the Ministry of Pensions letters to widows, will be studied. In particular, these will be explored in relation to Fairclough's (1989) discussion of increasing conversationalisation in official texts, contributing to what Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996) refer to as 'de-bureaucratisation', which will be discussed in more detail below.

Data selection

The data which form the basis of my analysis are therefore mainly from the National Archives. Early on, it was decided to select just two of the 200 case files studied. This is partly because the arguments found and discourses used in these files were (surprisingly) of a fairly uniform nature, even if each individual case provided often very different sets of circumstances. The very nature of the data contained within the individual case files meant it would have been very difficult to carry out a corpus-based linguistic analysis. In particular, the idiosyncratic orthography of the widows' letters themselves offered an insight into wider issues such as education and income which would have been lost had the data been electronically standardised for corpus analysis. Added to this, the sheer volume of data contained within the small sample I chose would have proved impossible to transcribe fully and present in a standardised form. The files are not removable from the National Archives, and much of the data they contain is not photocopyable (which is also the case for much of the data found in the SSAFA and Red Cross archives, largely where the paper is too fragile). Much of the data I shall refer to is based on my own handwritten transcriptions from the case files, although where possible scanned images of photocopies will be placed in an appendix and referred to accordingly in the course of the analysis.

The two case files which will be the main focus of the case studies were selected for the quality of the data contained therein, but also because of the typical nature of these cases. One case, that of Louisa Bayliss, presents the opportunity to explore synchronically the experiences of one widow whose pension started during the war, so did not entail the problems found by many of the post-war applicants, but was stopped at various points on moral policing grounds which were typical of many other women's cases. The other case file, Florence Bayliss, offers the chance to explore diachronically a typical case of a woman who was refused a war widow's pension in the post-war years for the common reason that her husband's cause of death in 1930 was perceived by the State not to have been directly related to the war. These two case files offer the chance to explore two very different but highly typical sets of circumstances war widows found themselves in.

Because of the relatively small sample of 200 files I have looked at, the surnames of the women to which they refer are often similar or, as in the case of Louisa and Florence, identical. For this reason, rather than for any lack of respect for these women, I have chosen to refer to them by their first names wherever possible. Similarly, there is no intentional employment of the Li'l Abner Syndrome (Preston, 1985) in my presentation of data relating to the widows[4]. The Li'l Abner Syndrome, as described by Preston, is such that non-conventional transcriptions are used to assert a hierarchy of dominance where the analyst assumes power over the analysed. As we will see, the non-standard orthography found in their letters (which can be found as complete copies of the originals in the appendix) has been repeated in my typewritten transcriptions of them within this thesis. In no way is this intended to be patronising, but to attempt to show the 'authentic' voices of working class women of this period as being equally valid as the official, standardised orthography found elsewhere.

The case studies

As described above, this corpus of data gives the opportunity to develop two case studies to look in greater detail at the discourses surrounding two sets of widows. In

[4] Thanks to Michael Higgins for pointing this out to me.

the interwar years, there was a general perception that war widows had been adequately provided for by the State. As Holden (1996, 2004, 2005) has shown, they were held up as an ideal model on which other pensions could be based, and indeed provided the background to the interwar campaign for a spinsters' pension scheme. As late as 1938, at the height of that campaign, the Bradford MP William Leach made a speech in which he cited the example of war widows as having an enviable status:

> The law has helped the mother and the father of the dead soldier. The law had helped his children and his widow. Even his unmarried ladylove has been helped but it never occurred to any of us to help his sweetheart, although her whole life may have been tragically altered by his death. (cited in Holden, 2005: 389)

Thus we can see that the war widow's position is perceived as being fortunate in its State funded allowance, her sacrifice recognised and recompensed by the public. However, as we shall see in the case studies that form the basis of this thesis, the widows themselves were in a position that was far removed from the comfortable subsidising that appears to have been their public representation.

The first study, featuring Louisa Bayliss, will explore the case of widows whose husbands had been killed in action and thus were entitled to State support. However, their more pressing personal circumstances were largely ignored as the State evoked discourses of morality to deny them this financial support. For such widows, their moral behaviour became the focus of intense scrutiny for a variety of agencies, all of which worked to ensure that such women were 'worthy' of allowances from public funds. Their behaviour was judged on the basis of largely middle-class, Victorian ideals which reflected the 'angel in the house' ideology of the previous century that was still very much in the minds of the men who drew up the pension legislation of 1916. This ideology and its distance from the reality of working-class cultural life is found the legislation of the pre-war years when Edwardian Liberalism formed the basis of what would become the British welfare state. The moral judgements which influenced the drafting and implementation of

war widow pension legislation are seen to spread to the working classes themselves as they became involved in the monitoring and surveillance of widows.

To refer back to Care and Protection discourses, the 'angel in the house' ideology can be clearly traced in the positioning of woman as carers, irrespective of financial and social circumstances, but as previously mentioned, this carried sanctions to 'protect' the nation's future. Many widows had young children who were (largely) eligible for a dependant's allowance which would usually be paid until they were 16 years of age. Whilst children were not subject to the same level of surveillance as widows[5], as we shall see in the more detailed individual case study of Louisa, the guardian (usually the mother) was open to surveillance which reflects the development of the early 20th century concerns over the fitness of mothers to care for their children. It was up to the SGC to decide whether a mother was a suitable guardian, and they could remove her children from her care and place them in orphanages without her consent. A less draconian but nevertheless humiliating measure would be the decision to place the children's pension allowance into 'administration', whereby the money would not be paid directly to the widow but dealt with on behalf of the children by a local pensions agency.

As we shall see in the second case study (Florence Bayliss), for many other widows, the status of war widowhood is something that was denied them through no fault of their own, yet was something which they continued to strive for in the decades after their husbands' deaths, even when other allowances were available to them. The Royal Warrant of 1916, under which pensions were issued to war widows, was drawn up after much debate and with typical parsimony, and had decreed that pension would only be payable where a man had died as a direct result of his war service. This required the widow to provide extensive documentation to certify the details of her husband's illness and death. Fairclough's notion of 'orders of discourse' (1989, 2003) is particularly useful here, as many widows found that the only evidence accepted by the Ministry of Pensions would be largely that which was officially sanctioned by the State, particularly armed forces medical documentation.

[5] Although later the female children would be open to moral surveillance, this was never applied to their brothers.

As these men died in the decades following the war, the case files of their widows provide a valuable opportunity to show the changing relationship between State and citizens over the course of the 20th century through shifting orders of discourse (Fairclough, 1992).

To return to the identity of the widows in my data, what appears as a common claim is the reiteration on their part that they are a '*war* widow', not simply a 'widow'. The prefixing of the abstract noun *war* rendered as an adjective onto the marital category of 'widow' is one which links to the woman's status to something many regarded as being hierarchically superior to the traditional widow. The granting of a pension to this group of women sets them apart from others, and the 'right' to a war widow's pension is one that is hard-fought by many women. This is more than a fight for financial support: as we shall see in relation to the detailed analysis in the second case study, after 1928, many of these women would have been eligible for a comparable State pension under the contributory widows' pension scheme. The prestige attached to the prefix *war* is one which seems to have offered women a perceived social status that was highly desirable. The empty tragedy of widowhood seems to have been rendered less so by the relationship to a man who had died 'for king and country', whose name might even be etched in stone in the very public space of the local war memorial. However, unlike other widows, the war widows became public property in receipt of financial assistance from the State and were open to public scrutiny in regards to their behaviour and that of their children in a way that no other widow would be. The very nature of war widowhood, therefore, renders it more visible than other forms of widowhood and thus is a fascinating area of study, drawing on Habermas's work on public and private spheres in relation to lifeworld discourses (1987).

The widow's pension scheme is firmly rooted in the conservative, patriarchal ideologies of the early 20th century, complete with its moral and patriotic discourses. Yet in its very inception, the idea of the State caring for the families of deceased servicemen reflects the modernity that underpins the social welfare reforms of the time. Therefore Light's term 'conservative modernism' is very apt to describe British society that encompasses the period of my data.

Theoretical approach

In order to explore the representation and experience of the women in this study, detailed case studies will be conducted using critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is informed by the works of Foucault and Halliday and is an interdisciplinary branch of linguistics that can be used to explore the ideological workings of language in representing the world. It begins from the determinist premise that language is not a neutral or transparent medium that unproblematically reflects an objective reality (eg Fairclough, 1989, 1995, 2003; Wodak, 2002). As Benwell and Stokoe put it, CDA takes language as a form of ideological practice that 'mediates, influences and even constructs our experiences, identities and ways of viewing the world' (2006: 44). The development of this over-arching methodology will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis before it is employed more systematically in the analysis of the data that comprises this corpus.

The documents which form the corpus of this study are primarily in a written form, whether that be handwritten manuscripts such as the widows' letters to the Ministry of Pensions, the official type-written Ministry of Pensions reports, or more 'public' documents such as newspaper reports and war-time recruitment posters. CDA provides a theoretical approach to analysing these texts. As Van Dijk has observed,

> Beyond description or superficial application, critical science […] asks further questions, such as those of responsibility, interests, and ideology. Instead of focusing on purely academic or theoretical problems, it starts from prevailing social problems, and thereby chooses the perspective of those who suffer most, and critically analyses those in power, those who are responsible, and those who have the means and the opportunity to solve such problems. (1986: 4)

As such, this approach is particularly useful in the investigation of the discourses of morality, nationalism and social welfare which help form the experience and representation of the war widows who are the basis of this thesis. Regarding 'language as social practice' (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997), Wodak (2000) goes on to extend this approach to take into consideration the context of language use

through a model which allows for the analysis of a wider range of texts. The model she has developed, discourse-historical analysis, has been used to analyse texts that deal with racism and xenophobia, reflecting the fact that this model emerged out of the involvement of linguists such as Riesigl and Wodak (2001) at the University of Vienna in research into latent anti-Semitism in the wake of the so-called 'Waldheim Affair' in Austria in 1986. Their triangulatory approach is well suited to the nature of the data in this study, although as we shall see, the diachronic and synchronic analyses require a further extension of this model owing to the diversity of data within this corpus.

As discussed above, the war widows' pension scheme emerged out of a complex mixture of charitable and newly-developed State systems of social welfare. The resultant emerging bureaucratic system also has an unprecedented number of applications to deal with, as well as various amendments to the legislation which meant that women who were not entitled to a pension under one Act could be found eligible under a later amendment or completely different Act. Sarangi and Slembrouk's (1996) work on bureaucratic language therefore provides a framework for a very interesting analysis of how the State's relationship changed over time in respect of war widows, as with citizens in general.

Conclusion

Beginning with a detailed account of the theory and methodology that will be employed in the analysis of this corpus, this thesis will then move on to provide details of the historical context to the data that will be analysed in the two case studies that follow.

The very private experience of widowhood came to be propelled into the public sphere as war widows were granted State-funded pensions in the course of the First World War. In highlighting the cases of two widows, this thesis will explore the wider representation and experience of war widowhood in terms of the intertwining discourses of morality, nationalism and newly-emergent social welfare over a period of 60 years in a way that will provide lessons for our understanding of women in a given context. The methodology employed will show how useful

critical discourse analysis can be in looking at how discourses are played out across bureaucratic and personal correspondence traversing historical contexts in the 20th century.

Theory and methodology

In this thesis, I will be using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the main analytical model. This has developed as an area of linguistic analysis under such theorists as Kress (1989), Fairclough (1989) and Fowler et al (1979) to explore areas of social activity and the complex relationships between language and social practice. The more dialectic view this approach to research affords allows for the investigation of language as reflecting and also shaping and maintaining social realities. In their introduction to the first edition of *Critical Discourse Studies* (vol 1, no. 1, 2004), Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak draw attention to the uses and purposes of critical social research in addressing social problems, particularly 'those aspects of the structure, organization and functioning of human societies that cause suffering, injustice, danger, inequality, insecurity, and self-doubt' (ibid: 1). Their position is evangelical in character, arguing that 'the critical objective is not only to identify and analyze the roots of social problems, but also to discern feasible ways of alleviating or resolving them' (ibid). Whilst most current work in the field of critical social research concentrates on the most important social problems of the day, the theories and approaches developed by these theorists are nevertheless relevant to my own research. Whilst my study will concentrate on the past, exploring discourses employed by people long since dead, the spirit of critical analysis, particularly critical discourse analysis, emphasises the continuities and sequelae in discourses and societies which link the past, the present and the future.

As developed by Fairclough, CDA is heavily influenced by Marxism and, in particular, the impact of Foucault's work on power and discourse is significant. As Hall observes, in the Marxist conception of power, it is 'always radiating in a single direction – from top to bottom – and coming from a specific source – the sovereign, the state, the ruling class and so on' (1997: 50). CDA's explicitly political agenda seeks to raise awareness of the ideological frameworks that inform language choice, and the construction, representation and positioning of its subjects in discourse. This will be discussed in more detail below.

Discourse, ideology, power

The definition of discourse is open to several different views. Although highly influential in the development of CDA, Foucault infamously failed to provide his own clear definition. In the early development of CDA, Fairclough and Wodak argued that 'discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it' (1997: 258). This argument shows that there are important issues of power involved as a social consequence, and this in turn may have major ideological effects in that discourses 'can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people' (ibid). This definition broadly encompasses the analysis of textual form, structure and organisation from the level of phonology to generic structure. Within linguistics, different approaches have tended to focus on specific levels. For example, in French discourse analysis, the focus is on lexical semantics, whilst in critical linguistics the focus is on grammar and lexis. However, as Riesigl and Wodak point out,

> [w]hether analysts with a critical approach prefer to focus on microlinguistic features, macrolinguistic features, textual, discursive or contextual features, whether their angle is primarily philosophical, sociological or historical – in most studies there is reference to Hallidayan systemic functional grammar. (2001: 8)

Texts function within 'discourses'. In so defining discourses within the Foucaultian tradition, they are historically constituted bodies of knowledge and practices that shape people, giving positions of power to some but not to others. Wodak expands on this, claiming that 'power does not derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and long term' (2002: 11).

Ideology

The term 'ideology' has been used in many different ways by social theorists, largely owing to the way in which ideology has been applied to answer very different questions. As Williams has observed, the concept of 'ideology' is an 'important concept in almost all Marxist thinking about culture' (1994: 175), although its origins precede Marxism itself.

According to Frow, in *Power/Knowledge* Foucault argued against 'the normativeness of any conception of ideology' (1994: 295), choosing to focus on a description of the determinations according to which discourses have historically been distributed between the true and false' (1994: 296). Whilst rejecting the notion of ideology in his earlier works, for Foucault, power does not function in the form of a chain of effects, rather it is 'deployed and exercised through a net-like organisation' (Foucault, 1981: 98). Whilst Foucault sought to demonstrate that those in a position of hierarchical power, such as the lawmakers and the sovereign, may have positions of dominance, he transferred our attention 'away from the grand, overall strategies of power, towards the many, localised circuits, tactics, mechanisms and effects through which power circulates' (Hall, 1997: 50), the 'micro-physics' referred to above.

Foucault's model, however, is attempting to 'sideline ideology', as Macdonald asserts, and 'reduces the possibility of distinguishing between different types of power. The charge of relativism, or treating as equal operations of power that are very different in their consequences, seems difficult to refute' (2003: 36). I would agree with Macdonald that, whilst Foucault's work on discourse is useful for the insight it provides to the operation of power through symbolic forms, the term 'ideology' still has currency when evaluating relations of power. It is still necessary to remain attentive to those regimes of influence that centralise power and employ it in relations of dominance.

This requires a broad and inclusive definition of ideology. Broadening the concept of ideology from its Marxist inception, as Eagleton comments, moves us away from conceptualising ideology simply as ruling belief systems that seek to preserve the status quo but to refer to 'any kind of intersection between belief

systems and political power […] whether this intersection challenged or confirmed a particular social order' (1991: 6).

For the purposes of my research, I shall be taking it to mean a 'set of beliefs or values that can be explained through the (non-cognitive) interest or position of some social group' (Elster, 1982: 123). As Mepham explains, in this way ideology is structured discourse, and is 'directly or indirectly, based on or generated by a set of mutually interdependent categories' (1994: 215). As adopted by Eagleton and Macdonald, this reformulation of ideology does not deny how ideology operates through 'such devices as unification, spurious identification, deception, self-deception, universalisation and rationalisation' (Eagleton, 1991: 222). It would appear that Gramsci's notion of hegemony is useful to theorise how ideology works in this way.

Gramsci claimed that dominant groups rule by consent and that 'in order to win consent, the dominant group cannot count on the power and material force which such a position gives in order to exercise political leadership' (1998: 210) but must rely on a 'multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the working classes' (ibid: 215). The dominant ideologies are not imposed on our consciousness, but rather they dovetail into ways of thinking that seem to make sense, or even be viewed as being common sense. Such a model, whilst it 'captures the effectiveness of forms of appeal that speak to our senses of expediency while masking their tendentiousness' (ibid) also recognises that ideology is only ever encountered in what Bennett (1998) refers to as a 'compromised form': one which is not static but forever shifting through the constant negotiation and contestation of differing and shifting social and political circumstances. This model therefore acknowledges the agency of social subjects to make (limited?) choices depending on their cultural positioning instead of being reduced to being merely the effects and vehicles of power.

In relation to my research, patriarchal ideology is most evident in the positioning of war widows as dependent on male guidance and control, in this case through the role of the State acting in the place of the absent husband. Such female

dependence on male provision is clearly seen in the case studies that follow, where the most authoritative 'voices' are those of male protagonists, and those of the State and the law are the most authoritative of all. Largely unchallenged, this reflects a hegemonic acceptance of patriarchal ideology by citizens who regard this as being common sense.

Texts and social structures

Texts can be very useful in assisting in developing an understanding of how discourses, ideology and power operate in society. As Fairclough has commented, they can be seen as 'sensitive barometers of social processes, movement and diversity, and textual analysis can provide particularly good indicators of social change' (in Jaworski and Coupland, 1999: 204). They provide evidence of these ongoing processes, and thus offer a rich source of data for research. A much-criticised aspect of Foucault's hugely influential work on discourse is that he failed to provide specific and detailed evidence of texts to support his historical studies of discourse. In spite of this, the specifically linguistic analysis of texts provides support to Foucault's underlying genealogical methodology for analysis. Habermas claims that 'language is also a medium of domination and social force. It serves to legitimise relations of organised power. In so far as the legitimations of power relations, […] are not articulated, […] language is also ideological' (1977: 259). This is a claim that would probably be endorsed by most critical discourse analysts. Commenting on the usefulness of textual analysis in this area, Fairclough states that

> [it] is increasingly through texts […] that social control and social domination are exercised (and indeed negotiated and resisted). Textual analysis, as a part of critical discourse analysis, can therefore be an important political resource.
> (in Jaworski and Coupland, 1999: 205)

As Wodak (2002) explains, a fully 'critical' account of discourse requires a theorization and description of both the social processes and structures which leads to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects create meanings in their interaction

with texts. Consequently, three concepts feature in CDA: the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology. If we accept that discourse is structured by dominance, then the history of a given discourse is tied up with the history and development of those system of dominance. In other words, it is situated in time and space, and the dominant structures are legitimated by ideologies of powerful groups. CDA makes it possible to analyse pressures from above and possibilities of resistance to unequal power relationships that are made to appear as societal conventions. According to this view, dominant structures stabilize conventions and naturalise them. Explicitly, the effects of power and ideology in the production of meaning are obscured and acquire stable and natural forms: they are taken as 'given'. Resistance is then seen as the breaking of conventions, of stable discursive practices in what Fairclough (1993) refers to as acts of 'creativity'.

To the extent that much of social science shares a concern with the relationship between text, practice and relations of dominance, CDA provides a generally useful resource. Because of the dominance of text in this study, CDA is especially useful in looking at bureaucracy and social control, as employed in research by Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996).

The development of CDA

Critical Discourse Analysis grew out of the work of British and Australian pioneers of Critical Linguistics, particularly Fowler and Kress, in convergence with the approaches of British discourse analyst Norman Fairclough and the Dutch text linguist Teun Van Dijk. CDA has produced the majority of the research into media discourse during the 1980s and 1990s, and 'has arguably become the standard framework for studying media texts within European linguistics and discourse studies' (Bell and Garrett, 1998: 6).

In the tradition of critical theory, CDA aims to make transparent the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities. CDA in the majority of cases takes the part of the underprivileged and tries to show up the linguistic means used by the privileged to stabilise or even to intensify inequalities in society. Most frequently, CDA has an explicit socio-political agenda, a concern to discover and

testify to unequal relations of power which underlie ways of using language in a society, and in particular to reveal the role of discourse in reproducing or challenging socio-political dominance. It also offers the potential for applying theoretically sophisticated frameworks to important issues, so is regarded as being a particularly useful tool for researchers who wish to make their investigation socially active. Work in Australia in the 1990s, initially in the field of educational linguistics, has led to what Martin terms 'Positive Discourse Analysis' (Martin and Wodak, 2003: 4) 'to characterise ideologically orientated research and intervention that examines positive developments with which to make the world a "better" place, and draws on these to intervene in related sites – as a mode of inquiry complementing CDA's focus on language in the service of abusive power' (ibid). This continuity of explicit political intent underpins the approach's on-going concern with a theory/practice dialectic. One of the strengths of CDA is that it bases concerns with power and ideology in the detailed linguistic analysis of texts.

Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996) employed CDA to research bureaucratic networks of social control, in particular where the private sphere is brought into the public through bureaucratic demands. Hacking (in Hoy, 1986) pointed to the 'avalanche of printed numbers' which emerged through the increasing bureaucracy of 19th century Europe and which Foucault comments on indirectly in his early work. As he noted, European societies have developed a bureaucracy which seeks to control citizens in ever-increasing ways. This has led to an intrusiveness into private life and a demand that citizens 'play the game', following bureaucratic rules which are often left implicit. In relation to ideology and lifeworld discourses, this also relates to research by Mumby (1987, 1988) and Helmer (1993), looking at discursive practices of storytelling in bureaucratic organisations. Helmer makes the argument that storytelling can operate ideologically by 'creating and sustaining symbolic oppositions that enable members to position themselves and others in the organisation', and as such narrative 'serves to strategy the organisation along lines of power, authority, gender and ethics' (1993: 34). In particular, Helmer makes the point that women are forced to 'play the patriarchal game' in order to gain some form of economic and political advantage when they are disadvantaged both

politically and economically. In relation to my own data, I will show how widows adopted behavioural and discursive practices that are deferential to the middle-class moral values built into such official regimes as the Royal Warrant in order to gain economic capital. (This argument will be dealt with in more detail in the individual case studies later in this thesis.)

The model that Fairclough developed for CDA is useful for researchers who share his concerns with language, discourse and power in society. Fairclough's model has three components (see Figure 1 for the diagrammatical representation):

1. The first dimension is *text or discourse*, which includes micro texts (eg vocabulary, syntax) and macro levels of text structure, as well as interpersonal elements in a text.
2. The second is analysis of *discourse practices*. This looks at how a text is constructed and interpreted, and also how it is distributed. Analysis of discourse also considers the discourse practices of different social domains (such as political discourse). Fairclough calls these 'orders of discourse'.
3. The third dimension is analysis of *social practices*, focusing in particular on the relation of discourse to power and ideology.

One criticism of CDA has been that the definition of a text is so narrowly defined in that it would not reveal the wider social and discursive practices to be found in other objects for study. However, as Fairclough acknowledges, the wide-ranging cultural studies definition of text 'can obscure important distinctions between different types of cultural artefact, and make the concept of a text rather nebulous by extending it too far' (1995:4). For example, I would argue that it is not appropriate to attach the same level of importance to Vera Brittain's war-time diary as to the style of a woman's hat[6]. Both are essentially cultural artefacts, yet their

[6] Brittain's diary offers a detailed account of her experiences as a VAD in the First World War, including reflections on shifting attitudes towards 'patriotism' and morality. A study of war-time fashions would reflect the changing roles of women, as well as reflecting historical changes such as the Russian Revolution, after which Cossack-inspired headwear fell out of favour.

significance may be of very different importance to the analyst. Nevertheless, as Fairclough goes on to say and to explore in more detail in his subsequent work, the broader definition of text is useful in contemporary society as 'texts whose primary semiotic form is language increasingly [have] combined language with other semiotic forms' (1995: 6). Yet even this has a number of dimensions of meaning. Written texts can be multisemiotic, for example, in the typographical design and inclusion of graphics. The co-presence of other semiotic forms within a primarily linguistic artefact interact to produce multisemiotic texts. We will see later that my own data includes war-time recruitment materials (such as the 1915 'Women of Britain say "Go!"' poster, page 53) which combine words and visual images to produce such multisemiotic texts.

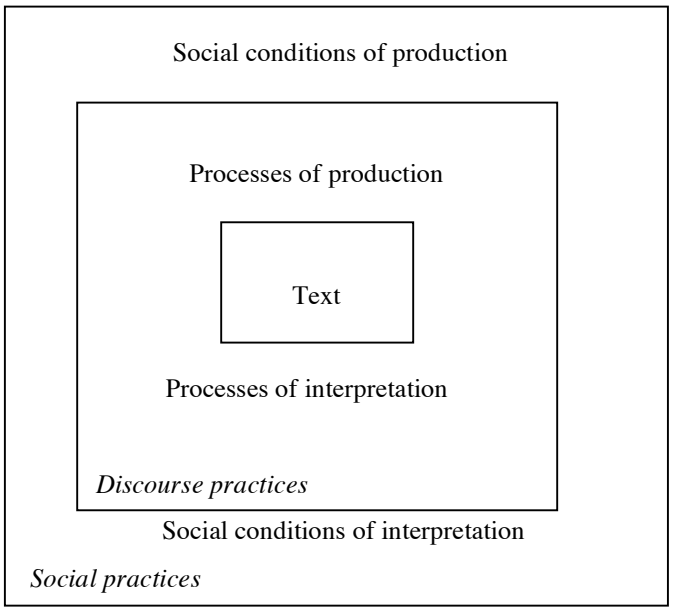


Figure 1: Fairclough's model of CDA (1995)

What emerges is a multifunctional idea that texts can be viewed as social spaces in which two fundamental social processes occur at the same time. This involves the analysis of 'the cognition and representation of the world, and social interaction' (Fairclough, 1995:6). As Fairclough points out,

> [t]exts in their ideational functioning constitute systems of knowledge and belief (including what Foucault refers to as 'objects'), and in their interpersonal functioning they constitute social subjects […] and social relations between (categories of) subjects.
> (1995: 6)

So this view of texts helps to bring about a practical demonstration of Foucault's (1981) claim about the socially constitutive properties of discourse and text.

My own data includes texts which can be categorised under several different genres. As Fairclough had argued, a 'genre' may be characterised as the conventionalised, more or less schematically fixed use of language associated with a particular activity, as a 'socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity' (Fairclough, 1994: 14). However, Threadgold points out that genres can be more flexible, unpredictable and heterogenous (Threadgold, 1989). As we will see in the case studies, the writers' own perceptions of which genre their letter belongs is frequently contested. For example, Florence's response to an official Ministry of Pensions letter is to return it with her own comments written in any available white space. Her appropriation of this text shifts the genre from that of official, impersonal letter of rejection to an impassioned and highly personal refusal to accept the 'official' version of her narrative. The effectiveness of widows' letters of appeal is highly limited as they do not tend to fall into the category of 'approved' missives: they do not comply with the 'order of discourse' constructed by the State.

Foucault's concept of 'orders of discourse' (1985) differs in its use by different CDA practitioners. It is taken by Fairclough to 'refer to the ordered set of discursive practices associated with a particular social domain or institution […] and boundaries and relationships between them' (1995: 12). In general terms, orders of discourse are the ways in which power relationships are enacted, where one participant is positioned in a more powerful position than the other. The more powerful participant evokes this hierarchy of power through language choices, for example through choosing to accept or reject a contribution or through evoking certain discourses. The boundaries of these discourses are not clearly defined in many cases, and are constantly shifting, reflecting orders of discourse as mediation

between the linguistic and the social. For example, in my own data, the State's evocation of discourses of patriotism as part of their recruitment drive in the war years is continued by the widows in the interwar years, but for the State, this is no longer seen as being relevant in the former way. Fairclough (1995) regards these changes in the order of social discourse as being in themselves part of wider processes of sociocultural change. Official, expert knowledge serves as a means of building up structures of 'truth' or 'normalisation', regulating what can be said and what can't be. Populations can be carefully controlled through the associated disciplinary structures, where certain discursive practices are legitimised and others (usually those of the least powerful) are delegitimised. As Threadgold puts it, such 'expert knowledges thus discursively produce the objects of which they speak and simultaneously exclude those categories which cannot be accounted for within the established "truth"' (1997: 137). As we will see in the case studies, the differently positioned writers and readers across a range of texts that have been produced drawing on differing knowledges and discursive practices will allow for an exploration of aspects of identity and culture in relation to British war widows.

Drawing on Foucault's earlier work on discourse, Fairclough argues for the place of CDA, suggesting that it

> ought in contemporary circumstances to focus its attention upon discourse within the history of the present – changing discursive practices as part of wider processes of social and cultural change – because constant and often dramatic change affecting many domains of social life is a fundamental characteristic of contemporary social experience, because these changes are often constituted to a significant degree by and through changes in discursive practices, and because no proper understanding of contemporary discursive practices is possible that does not attend to that matrix of change. (1995: 19)

Orders of discourse are thus viewed as domains of hegemony and hegemonic struggle. This may be within institutions such as education as well as within the wider social formation. In this process, the ideological investments of particular discursive practices may change. This is found in my own data, most of which was produced in the early 20th century at a time when the role of charitable organisations

and the vestiges of Victorian philanthropy were being replaced by greater State intervention in the wake of Edwardian Liberal ideals. Specifically, within the context of this study, I hope to show that the evolution of the Welfare State in the mid-20th century brought about a change in the discourses surrounding war widows, both in the State's attitude towards them (although still anchored by the original 1916 Royal Warrant) and of the women's changing perceptions of the State's obligation towards them as they recognized the 'cradle to grave' philosophy of the Welfare State.

Fairclough's work on conversationalistion and personalisation (1989) in various forms of bureaucracy in public sphere texts in the late 20th century is relevant to this thesis in view of the timeframe of the data, particularly the second case study which extends to the late 1960s. Fairclough refers to these bureaucratic strategies employed in this increased State intervention (particularly in questionnaires, official forms, and examinations) as *discourse technologisation*, which he further defines as 'types of discourses which involve the more or less self-conscious application of social scientific knowledge for purposes of bureaucratic control' (1989/2001: 175). Whilst the 'avalanche of paper' which emanated from and descended upon the newly-formed Ministry of Pensions provides a very interesting source of material for analysis, particularly when Sarangi and Slembrouk's research in late 20th century bureaucracy is taken into account, it is unfortunately too vast an area to be the focus of detailed attention in this thesis. However, increasing trends in conversationalisation and personalisation in bureaucratic texts will prove worthy of note in the diachronic analysis of discourses surrounding war widows. Decreasing levels of formality and deference in bureaucratic texts reflect social changes in the ways in which the State's relationship with its citizens changed, especially from the mid-1960s. These strategies contribute to what Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996) refer to as 'de-bureaucratisation', which they define briefly as being 'the means that bureaucratic strongholds strive to appear non-bureaucratic by resorting to certain modes' of communication (1996: 19). Despite these changes, as we shall see, these texts continue to be sites of contention.

As Wodak (2002: 11) comments, an important perspective in CDA is that it is very rare for a text to be the work of any one person. In texts discursive differences are negotiated; they are governed by differences in power which are themselves in part encoded in and determined by discourse and by genre. Texts are often sites of struggle, showing traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending with the dominant power. It is not only the notion of struggles for power and control, but also the intertextuality and recontextualisation of competing discourses that can be revealed by CDA.

The three dimensional framework for CDA as outlined by Fairclough includes the analysis of discursive practices. This relates to the processes of a text's production, distribution and consumption, and ensures that a text is not isolated from the institutional and discoursal practices within which it is embedded. Within the scope of this piece of research, this would mean that the Royal Warrant of 1916 would be reviewed not only within the context of its production via the processes of the Houses of Parliament and Civil Service, but also the circumstances and practices of its reception in the hands of the civil servants who administered its procedures and the women who were directly affected by these procedures. Thus the text can be reviewed with reference to the diverse ways in which it could be interpreted and responded to. This approach to text analysis owes much to Morley's work on audience reception in media studies (1980), extending this from examining the moment of reception to consideration of how texts are taken up and transformed in various spheres of life (such as the family, work, leisure activities, etc).

In this model of CDA, the Gramscian theory of hegemony (in analysis of sociocultural practice) is combined with the Bakhtinian theory of genre (in analysis of discourse practice – defining genre as discourses, narratives, registers, etc). Bakhtin's work on text and genre (in Jaworski and Coupland, 1999) argues for the inclusion of intertextual analysis as a necessary complement to linguistic analysis in the studying of texts, as such an approach draws attention to the dependence of text on society and history in the form of the resources made available within the order of discourse. According to Bakhtin, genres 'are the drive belts from the history of

society to the history of language' (ibid, 1991: 123). This dynamic conception of intertextual analysis highlights how texts can transform social and historical resources, and how genres can be mixed within a text.

Intertextuality

The term 'intertextuality' was devised by Kristeva in relation to Bakhtin's discussion of the transposition of sign systems of carnival, courtly poetry and scholastic discourse into the novel (Threadgold 1997: 66). Her use of this term closely follows that of Foucault, although Foucault himself did not use this label, instead describing how statements can only exist in connection with other statements (1972: 98). At its most fundamental level, as Bakhtin observes, intertextuality is inherent in language as part of its comprehensibility. The speaker

> is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe. And he [sic] presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances – his own and others' – with which his given utterance enters into one kind of relation or another (builds on them, polemicizes with them, or simply presumes that they are already known to the listener). (1986: 124)

Bakhtin's writings on text and genre (1986) argue for intertextual analysis as a necessary component of linguistic analysis, an argument that has been taken up by Kress and Threadgold (1988), Thibault (1991), Talbot (1995) and Fairclough (1992, 1995, 2003). The use of the concept of intertextuality in linguistics has been particularly important in relation to the development of CDA. In this model, as Threadgold states, '[t]exts are now understood to be constructed chunk by chunk, intertextually, not word by word, and there can thus be no link between text and context except through the intertextual resources of this discursively produced subjectivity' (1997: 3).

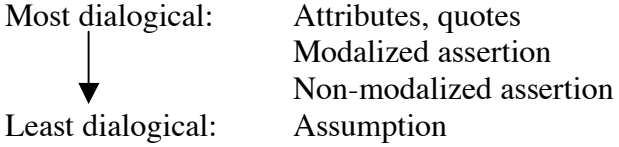
Fairclough expands on this, arguing that intertextuality is used to draw attention to the dependence of texts upon societal and historical discursive formations in the form of the resources made available within the order of discourse (Fairclough, 1995: 188). The concept of cultural capital, as explored by Bourdieu

(1991), is relevant here as access to the range of texts from which interpretation may be drawn is not equally distributed. Culler (1981) and Barthes (1970/1975) expand intertextuality to include the reader as a constituent component. Culler described intertextuality as the general discursive space in which meaning is made possible and intelligible (1981: 103). Thus, for Fairclough,

> Discourses and texts which occur within them have histories, they belong to historical series, and the interpretation of intertextual context is a matter of deciding which series a text belongs to, and therefore what can be taken as common ground for participants, or presupposed. […] Discourse participants may arrive at roughly the same interpretation or different ones, and the interpretation of the more powerful participant may be imposed upon others. (1989: 152)

So the intertextual resources each person has available to them can be limited, leading to a restricted understanding. This link between intertextuality and power makes it an important part of Fairclough's three-part model for CDA. As he argues, 'intertextual analysis crucially mediates the connection between language and social context, and facilitates more satisfactory bridging of the gap between texts and contexts' in his three-part model, whereby intertextual analysis occupies a mediating position (1995: 198).

Holquist relates Bakhtin's notion of the dialogic nature of intertextuality to power, arguing that 'a word, discourse, language or culture undergoes "dialogization" when it becomes relativized, de-privileged, aware of competing definitions for the same things. Undialogized language is authoritative or absolute' (1981: 427). As Holquist suggests, there is a difference in the degree to which texts may be 'dialogic'. Fairclough (2003: 47) offers a general summary of the effects of the dialogicality:



With reference to the case studies to come, if we understand this model as 'less dialogicality' carrying with it consensus, with a 'normalisation and acceptance of differences of power which brackets or suppresses differences in meaning and norms' (Fairclough, 2003: 42), then it is perhaps unsurprising that the vast majority of correspondence from the Ministry of Pensions to widows contains very few quotations or statements attributed to named agencies. The Ministry of Pensions letters do contain intertextual elements which form a direct link back to the text of the Royal Warrant. The widows themselves make use of forms of intertextuality in drawing upon those discourses of national identity and patriotism to be found in wartime recruitment posters to support their appeals for war widows' pensions. As we will see, widows also employed intertextual strategies such as direct and indirect quotations to intensify their claims for pensions, although the attributed quotations tended to come from sources which the Ministry of Pensions failed to accept as recognised authorities.

On other occasions, my data also shows evidence of individuals using state-gathered information for their own means. For example, many women applied for pensions after their husbands' deaths in the 1920s and 1930s. They often reported that their husbands had returned from the war as 'broken' men, their health destroyed by the conditions under which they had to fight. To support their cases further, these women often cited evidence from enlistment forms, stating their husbands had been classed 'A1' fit for active service. This form of resistance to Ministry of Pensions bureaucratic refusals is not unusual in the cases files I have studied and shows how even the least powerful in society can demonstrate resistance to those in authority. As Foucault noted,

> power and resistance to power are not conceivable as opposites, statically ranged against each other, but as fluid force relations that group together, temporarily and uneasily, in oppositional formulations […] Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power. (1981: 34)

Yet this appearance of resistance is something Abu-Lughod has argued that we ought not to romanticise, arguing rather that 'we should learn to read in various

local and everyday resistance the existence of a range of specific strategies and structures of power' (1990: 53). In identifying and exploring the manifestations of 'resistance', we can see in greater detail the complex workings of power relations. For example, if we take the example of widows using information amassed by the State on army enlistment, it is possible to see that the State was exercising power not only through the terms of the Royal Warrant, but from a network which stretches back to official documentation relating to a man's initial application to 'join up': had he not been classed A1 fit, then he would not have been involved in active service.

The use of dialogical elements in a text allows for other 'voices' to be heard, and is at its most dialogicalised in this development of intertextualisation. This can be analysed in terms of power relations: whose 'voice' is allowed by the text's producer, what are they allowed to contribute, how is this being contextualised? This 'editing' process of dialogicalisation can be used to exclude as well as include other voices. My own data reveals very little evidence of contributions from widows in Ministry of Pensions correspondence, and where their voices do appear, attributed as active agents, then the utterance generally carries a negative effect for that widow. This silencing of the widows is a noticeable feature of the documents I shall be analysing later.

Presupposition/assumptions

Just as the intertextuality in terms of both discourse and texts relies upon the producer's knowledge, their interpretation also relies on the reader's awareness (either consciously or subconsciously) of the intertextual context. To refer back to Fairclough's diagrammatic representation of the dialogism in texts (above), where there is no explicit use of intertextuality in the form of quotations and assertions, the least dialogical texts rely on presupposition and assumptions for their interpretation.

Presuppositions and assumptions are both aspects of intertextuality which assume prior knowledge on the part of a text's audience. Assumptions, or otherwise entailments, involve there being a logical consequence to the sense of the actual utterance. They are more nebulous than presuppositions and are more to do with logic and practices of sense-making than pragmatic concepts. The common

elements between intertextuality and assumptions are that they both rely on claims that the assertion exists elsewhere.

As with assumptions, the text producer has the power to determine what presuppositions are used. As Fairclough explains, 'as in the case of a situational context, discourse participants may arrive at roughly the same interpretation or different ones, and the interpretation of the more powerful participant may be imposed on others' (1989: 152). In her discussion of Levinson's *Pragmatics*, Talbot stresses that presuppositions 'always take place as part of an interaction' (1987: 184), and it is the dialogical nature of them that is most important in their interpretation, as the cues within the text direct the audience to an understanding.

Potential presuppositions can be 'triggered' (Levinson, 1983) by cues within the text. Depending on the trigger, they can be identified under a number of different, largely pragmatic, categories. For example, existential presuppositions can be triggered by definite noun phrases such as *the war, his children*. These noun phrases commit the writer or speaker to the existence of the named entities. Factive presuppositions can be triggered by the use of certain verbs and adjectives such as *regret, realise, that*-clauses and *be*-verb constructions such as *be aware* and *be granted* (Seuren, 1998: 740). Here, the presupposed information following the verb can be treated as a fact. Yule (1996) adds the sub-category of non-factive presuppositions which are triggered by verbs such as *dream, imagine* and *pretend*.

Categorical presuppositions are highly reliant for semantic and pragmatic understanding of speaker and audience. For these, the meaning 'is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another (non-asserted) meaning is understood' (Yule, 1996: 28). Categorical presuppositional triggers may involve verbs such as *stop, remain* and the adverb *still*. With categorical presuppositions, the use of a particular lexical item is taken to presuppose another, unstated, concept. This differs from factive presuppositions in that in the former category 'the use of a particular expression is taken to presuppose the truth of the information that is stated in it' (Yule, 1996: 28).

It is not only words and phrases which can trigger presuppositions: there are also structural presuppositions. More common in spoken language than written,

constructions such as found in *wh*-question conventionally presuppose that the information after the *wh*- form is already known. For example, 'where were you married?' presupposes you are married. The use of question structures in written documentation is quite rare in my data. This is likely to be because this tends to be a feature of what Fairclough refers to a conversationalisation of official discourses which is a characteristic of later in the 20th century than most of my data covers.

The intertextuality and interdiscursivity of my own data is highly relevant in the exploration of the construction of war widowhood. The widows' pension files held in the National Archives offer a unique opportunity to examine the views of the widows themselves as they initiated correspondence with the Ministry of Pensions and other agencies of the State in an attempt to justify their perceived rights to a pension under the terms of the Royal Warrant.

The corpus of data which has been gathered for this study incorporates a great variety of materials in terms of genre and source, spanning more than half a century, building up a set of discursive statements not available for analysis elsewhere. It is true that Fairclough's somewhat rigid model for CDA is ideal for the analysis of a small number of texts. However, as Meyer has also observed,

> although there are no explicit statements about this issue, one might assume that many CDA studies (with the exception of Teun van Dijk and Ruth Wodak) mostly deal only with small corpora which are usually regarded as being typical of certain discourses. (2002: 25)

One of the most common criticisms of CDA is that it tends to be fragmentary and/or unrepresentative (see Widdowson, 1995a, 1996, and Stubbs, 1997, for example), and thus fails to produce a rounded argument. The basic Whorfian claim of CDA is that languages or language use implicitly classify experience, and that these categories influence a person's view of reality. It therefore becomes essential to provide additional, non-linguistic evidence of patterns of belief and behaviour. Early in the development of CDA, Fairclough (1995: 1) stated the importance of studying 'how texts are produced, distributed and consumed' if CDA research is not to be dismissed as disconnected or incomplete. However, Stubbs (1997) is strongly critical of the frequent concentration of corpus linguists on analyses restricted to

isolated data fragments. Smith (1993: 3) extends this argument to point out that texts need to be analysed as more than 'inert extra-temporal blobs of meaning', the wider context in which they were produced being lost in the analysis.

The three-part model of CDA goes some way towards producing a theory of the relation between cognition and the textual representation of reality. However, my own data is far more extensive than Fairclough's model would comfortably allow for analysis. The widows are often drawing on enhanced patriotic discourses found in war-time army recruitment posters, the patriotic rallying calls to arms recurring in the post-war letters of widows such as Louisa Bayliss. In the case of Florence Bayliss, her letters span nearly 40 years and reflect changing attitudes towards the Welfare State and the State's attitudes towards such claimants. The contrast between Florence's and Louisa's letters in terms of their relationship with the State is something that is also of great interest to me. There is a great contrast between the highly individual voices that are found in the letters written by widows to the Ministry of Pensions, and the formal, impersonal letters and documents of the Ministry itself. To focus on just one or two texts would, for me, lose traces of these two women's individual voices and as a consequence their narratives. A modified approach is needed.

The discourse-historical approach

Recent developments in the field of CDA at the University of Vienna have proved timely for my own research. The discourse-historical approach to CDA was initially developed by Wodak et al (1990) in order to discuss anti-Semitism in Austria during the 1986 election campaign of Kurt Waldheim. Whilst there has been research on historical topics such as questions of identity and political discourses in various countries (eg, Billig, 1995; Wodak et al, 1999; Wodak and Van Dijk 2000), there was a general neglect of detailed grammatical research on narratives about the past which Martin and Wodak (2003) sought to remedy in a recent edited collection. This collection sought to 'deconstruct the re/packaging and re/evaluation of [historical] events from both functional linguistic and critic perspectives' (2003: 2), drawing on a range of texts such as political speeches, television talk shows,

newspapers, and the bureaucracy that surrounds official and state planning processes. The multimodal and multidisciplinary nature of this approach to CDA has proved useful in the analysis of my own data which is drawn from a large variety of sources, the greatest part of which comes from the case files held in the National Archives, and includes the multimodal nature of the widows' letters as well as more public documents such as wartime recruitment posters.

For example, a recruitment poster from 1915 carries the text 'Women of Britain say "Go!"'[7]. The intertextuality of the text offers a direct attribution of the directive 'go!' to the female population of Britain, thus putting women in the active role of ordering (implicitly) men to volunteer for armed service. In this way, there is a direct gender division between the unanimous voice of the 'women of Britain' and the unnamed object of the directive: the opposite masculine polarity. Interestingly, oral histories reveal posters such as this also positioning women to assume a more active role. In a recent collection of oral histories, (van Emden and Humphries, 2003: 118), one interviewee reports that she was inspired by this particular poster to become a VAD nurse. She read the underlying message that by encouraging the men to go off and fight, by implication women were saying that they were willing and able to look after the country whilst the men were away. The picture on this poster shows what appear to be three generations, comprising two women and a young boy who are firmly placed within the domestic sphere, their intertwined arms and upturned faces indicating a vulnerability which emphasises their need to be protected, implicitly by men. The heroism of the women remaining is highlighted by the youngest figure on the poster, the male child, who is towered over by the two women. In this discourse of morality based on virtuous females,

[7] Imperial War Museum archives; E.V. Kealey

> It is the men who are seen as giving their lives so that the community is protected – and women who are seen both as being protected and obliged to await the return of men, whether as memory or as homecoming hero. Needless to say, the waiting women are assumed to be waiting in a state of virtue, otherwise the sacrifice will be sullied and de-sacralised.
> (J. Davies in Clark, 1993: 121)

But this is not the only discourse in action in this poster. There is a very strong sense of national identity which links the text (it is women of *Britain*) with the image of England's mythical rolling green hills. The text of the patriotic hymn 'Jerusalem' is much-quoted for the phrase 'England's green and pleasant land', and is one of the most commonly evoked images in relation to a particularly English national identity. Interestingly, the setting of part of Blake's exploration of the sublime (see de Luca, 1995) in his poem 'Milton' to Parry's score was originally prepared for use by the suffragette movement in the early 20th century, where its aspirational and uplifting message is read as the female quest to build a 'New Jerusalem' (Hartman, 2003). The use of this hymn by the suffragette movement was quickly extended to encompass the whole nation, both genders, and the dominant patriotic discourses of the time, where it has remained ever since.

Therefore we could say that this recruitment poster is interdiscursive in that it is drawing on two different discourses – morality and national identity – as well as intertextually drawing on other texts such as popular songs to support and endorse its message. The readings of it in different contexts, such as that of van Emden and Humphries' interviewee, show how different social conditions can lead to different processes of interpretation. The representation of the virtuous female who is indebted to the valorous servicemen came to be evoked through discourses of social welfare, in addition to the morality and national identity that are shown here. Indeed, the very public nature of these recruitment posters is linked to the public's ownership of war widows, and the women's assured claim that the country is indebted to them, is a feature of the data that forms the basis of this thesis, as will be explored through the triangulatory approach to discourse analysis Wodak has developed.

Because of its concern with variables such as ideology, power, hierarchy and gender, CDA has been used to inform studies relating to gender, racism, media discourses, political discourses, and identity. The greatly differing analytical techniques employed in various CDA studies, as well as the disputed definitions of such key terms as *discourse, critical, ideology* and *power*, has meant that CDA is not viewed as a holistic or closed paradigm. Wodak and Martin (2003: 5) stress that CDA should be thought of 'as a "school", or a programme, which many researchers find useful and to which they can relate in terms of their research goals'. CDA does not constitute a well-defined empirical method but rather a cluster of approaches with a similar theoretical base and similar research questions: there is no typical CDA way of collecting data. Indeed, many studies don't even mention method of data collection.

Wodak (2002: 64) argues convincingly that CDA 'must be multitheoretical and multimethodological, critical and self-reflective'. Advocating a pragmatic approach to CDA which would go a long way towards countering the arguments of critics of CDA such as Stubbs and Widdowson (above), she states that such an approach 'would not seek to provide a catalogue of context-less propositions and generalisations, but rather to relate questions of theory formation and conceptualisation closely to the specific problems that are to be investigated' (ibid). In other words, seeking to move away from problem-orientated science, this approach tries to find the most useful linguistic research strategies to explore the texts and contexts in question. As discussed above, the Foucaultian notion of 'power' in CDA is based around the view that texts are often the sites of struggles in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance. Wodak stresses the view that it is not only the realisation of power through grammatical forms within a text, but also by an individual's access to and control of a social occasion by means of the genre of a text. In this way, she argues for the importance of genre as it is 'often exactly within the genres associated with given social occasions that power is exercised or challenged' (2002: 11), an argument that builds on Fairclough's stress as to the importance of intertextuality.

Again drawing on the work of Foucault, the notion of 'power' in CDA for both Fairclough and Wodak is based around the view that texts are often the sites of struggles in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance. In common with other CDA theorists, Wodak and Martin (2002: 6) emphasise that discursive differences in texts are negotiated, 'governed by differences in power which is in part encoded in and determined by discourse and genre'. They go on to point out that, in relation to the recording and retelling of histories, '[p]ower comes visibly into play as soon as the various narratives of the past are confronted with each other and elites select one of the competing narratives and naturalise it as the "past" (what "really" happened)' (2003: 8). The histories offered by widows of First World War soldiers are particularly relevant in this respect, as they are the personal accounts which were disallowed by official agents of the State, and later by historians of the period.

Countering the criticisms of CDA by Stubbs, Widdowson and others, Wodak proposes a method of CDA that is based on the principle of triangulation, using a variety of empirical data and it is this that makes the historical-discourse approach more effective (2002: 65). Wodak's triangulatory approach seeks to explore the connections between discursive practices and extra-linguistic social structures. This approach combines various interdisciplinary, methodological and source-specific analytical approaches. The texts I have selected for this study vary in terms of discourse, genre and topic, as well as chronologically. Wodak's own studies are smaller scale, but the basic model holds together in my own research. However, my use of the historical-discourse approach will differ from Wodak's model in that she chose to focus extensively on genre. Whilst this was suitable to the data she was analysing in her corpus, I am very aware that this emphasis would be detrimental to my own aim of giving a 'voice' to the individual widows that form the basis of my study. In addition, the main part of my data comes from the letters exchanged between the widows and the Ministry of Pensions, limiting the range of genres that are relevant, contrasting with the larger variety of genres that formed Wodak's studies. This is not to say that genre is irrelevant to my study, but that the emphasis is more appropriately focused on intertextual references that will reveal more of the

voices that reside with the texts here for study as well as the contrast between public and private spheres that will be apparent.

The triangulatory approach that is used within Wodak's model of discourse historical analysis includes the exploration of different discursive strategies. This section will discuss briefly the discursive strategies that are most relevant to the subsequent analysis of my own data, as detailed above. It is important to point out at this stage that not all of the strategies are employed in all of the texts that form the corpus under analysis, but what follows is a discussion of the most relevant strategies that are utilised.

Argumentation strategies

Wodak's discourse-historical approach to analysing texts within the CDA framework endeavours to investigate historical, organisational and political topics and texts by attempting 'to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive "events" are embedded (Wodak, 2001: 165). This model is multimethodological, including the application of the argumentation approach. According to van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson and Jacobs (1997: 209), there are two characteristic features of argumentation which are central. Firstly, there is a proposition put forward as a claim, to which are added other propositions (or reasons) which aim to justify or refute this claim. The second feature is that argumentation involves two opposing sides of a debate. In the case of dialogic interaction, the protagonist puts forward the claim which an antagonist either contradicts or otherwise withholds assent. In monologic texts, the protagonist provides proof of their claim to an imagined or projected doubtful audience. However, as Fairclough (2003: 42) points out, even in monologic texts the concept of difference is no less central.

For Wodak, the 'common ground' is articulated through a series of topoi. She suggests that

> within argumentation theory, 'topoi' or 'loci' can be described as parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises. They are the content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion, the claim. As such, they justify the transition from the argument or arguments to the conclusion. (2001: 74)

Assumed meanings and topoi are of special ideological relevance in relation to constructions of common sense, as it can be argued that 'relations to power are best served by meanings which are widely taken as given' (Fairclough, 2003: 58). Using Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony as the conceptualisation of power and the struggle for power in society through consent or acquiescence rather than physical force, we can uncover how 'common ground' is articulated in dialogical and monological texts. If we are to accept that all texts are not equally dialogical (as argued by Bakhtin 1981, Fairclough 2003, Holquist 1981), then the different orientations to difference and the power struggles which lie behind these, can be 'unpacked' using argumentation theory within a CDA framework.

Hamblin's (1970) study of fallacies was built around seeing argument as a dialectal process organised around arguers' efforts to convince one another of their own personal standpoints. Van Eermeren et al (1997: 215) suggest that the more important features of Hamblin's approach are

> the emphasis on rules defining speaker commitments and regulating interactions moves rather than an emphasis on logical forms as the generative mechanism for argumentation as well as the recognition of the self-constituting and self-regulating character of argumentation.

This trend towards a more dialogical approach has been accompanied by an equally influential trend towards functionalisation and contextualisation.

Drawing on a concept similar to the classic logic premise, Toulmin (1970) proposes that the question of what a speaker has 'to go on' can be identified as the 'grounds'. These grounds are justified by a 'warrant' or 'inference licence', which is understood as a reasoning strategy or rule that is other than the premise. This 'warrant' is supported by a 'backing' in the form of substantive information which is similar to the 'grounds'. This structure is termed the 'Toulmin model', focusing not

on formal relationships as with classical models of description, but on the functional relationships within the argument. A dialogical approach means that we must take into account elements which are not actually stated but which are nevertheless necessary to represent a speaker's reasoning. Fairclough (2003: 82) draws attention to the CDA approach to argumentation, where the ideological work that the text is doing in its usage of assumed or implicit elements is taken into account. For example, implicit or assumed elements which are somehow contentious or questionable can be presented as being 'common sense'.

Moves towards a functional, interactional view of argument are taken through the pragmatic argumentation theories such as the pragma-dialectical theory of van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984; 1992), and Walton (1989, 1995). This approach incorporates elements of speech act theory (Searle, 1969), and Grice's (1989) theory of conversational implicature. As with Kress (1985) difference is the 'motor that produces texts'. With this approach, the starting point is the assumption that the purpose of argumentation is to resolve a difference of opinion. Here, the important defining feature of argument is that 'it occurs as a means of addressing – and attempting to resolve – a difference of opinion by means of exploring the relative justification for competing standpoints' (van Eemeren et al, 1997: 218). Thus, the writer pictures an audience 'to be persuaded by means of arguments offered to support the writer's views or to refute the audience's own views' (ibid). In spoken interaction, the interlocutors allow one another to put forward their respective positions in response to a succession of interactional moves. Whether spoken or written, the organisation of the argument 'depends on one party's effort to convince another of a standpoint by answering doubts and objections and by grounding conclusions in mutually accepting starting points' (1997: 219).

Argumentation theory will be useful in the analysis of my data, particularly in the correspondence between widows and the Ministry of Pensions, in order to explore continuities and differences in the claims that are made for pensions.

Formulations and reformulations

Heritage and Watson (1979) first applied the term *formulation* to describe the strategy of rewording an utterance in a conversation to check for understanding, or to render it less ambiguous. However, as Thomas (1984, 1985) points out, Heritage and Watson were more concerned with surface meaning in terms of ascertaining the facts of what was uttered rather than any underlying pragmatic meaning. Thomas (1983, 1985) developed this work in the field of pragmatics to explore the strategies speakers use to clarify communicative intent (1985: 773). She distinguishes between what she terms *upshots* and *reformulations* in that the dominant speaker will tend to 'present the hearer with an upshot (a brief summary by the dominant speaker of a long contribution by the subordinate)', and a reformulation as the dominant speaker's tendency to present the hearer's utterance in unambivalent terms, 'in response to which [the hearer] is required to make clear or simply to confirm the intended pragmatic force of his/her utterance' (ibid). In my own data, the fact that the vast majority of it is not based on face-to-face interaction means that the institutional power of an interactant in the form of a bureaucrat from the Ministry of Pensions should generally be regarded as being in the dominant role. Thomas comments that:

> Interactions within institutions are premised upon a high degree of shared knowledge and beliefs, among these believes about what are and what are not allowable contributions and concerning the rights and duties associated with particular institutional roles. (1985: 776)

My data is largely taken from Ministry of Pension files, most of which were compiled before 1948 and the universal provision under the British Welfare State was in place. This means that the widows writing to the Ministry were having to adapt the rules and hierarchies of other institutions with which they were more familiar. Whilst there is primarily a recognition of an institutional hierarchy, the widows often draw on their own authority as mothers and carers to employ upshots and reformulations of Ministry assertions, as they attempt to state their case in support of their pension appeal. For example, the standard response of the Ministry

of Pensions to Louisa's letters would be along the lines of 'it has been decided your pension shall remain suspended'. Louisa herself frequently uses upshots to challenge this response: 'Dear Sir Wood you be so kinge and let me have my Pension paumont of My Money'. In this way, Louisa reframes the pension from a legally-authorised State grant, the payment of which was decided by committee, to a personally authorised allowance paid to her on the basis of need, a decision reached on compassionate grounds ('would you be so kind…').

Thomas points out that the subordinate in an interaction will generally 'back down rather than violate the norms (usually politeness norms) of an institution' (1985: 778). In the case of the correspondence between widows and the Ministry of Pensions, it is unusual to find more than two or three letters in a sequence, and it is more usual that any reformulation of a widow's contribution will be unchallenged by her simply by virtue of the fact she did not get to see it, this document remaining within the files of the Ministry of Pensions. The bureaucratic gaze is overwhelming in this respect. However, where sequences of letters do appear, particularly in the case studies to be examined in more detail later in this thesis, reformulations can be traced, both in the correspondence involving the widows and that which was internal to the Ministry. As we will see, although institutionally powerless, Florence does not necessarily see herself as subordinate to the bureaucrat who reformulates her narrative to such an extent that it becomes factually inaccurate. Florence's response to the letter in which this occurs is to return the letter with her own, irate, comments written in all the available white space as she 'corrects' the reformulation. This would follow the less common occurrences, as Thomas explains, when 'upshots and reformations are used on someone who does not perceive her/himself as a subordinate, they may well "throw back" at the speaker' (1985: 778).

Fairclough (2001: 113-14) follows Thomas in defining (re)formulations as a means of clarifying an utterance:

> A formulation is either a rewording of what has been said, by oneself or others, in one turn or a series of turns or indeed a whole episode; or it is a wording of what may be assumed to follow from that has been said, what is implied by what has been said. Formulations are used for such purposes as

checking understanding or reaching an agreed characterisation of what has transpired in an interaction.

As Wodak has observed in relation to political news reports, for these to make the message clearer, 'linguistic reformulations must be augmented by more extensive background information as well as detailed knowledge about politics' (1996: 177). Thus in my own data, the early letters from the Ministry of Pensions lacked clarity in their reformulating of the widows' appeals as they did not engage with the same frame of war widowhood as the widows themselves were. By frequent intertextual reference to the terms of the Royal Warrant, the Ministry of Pensions failed to answer the more pressing requests for money that often appear in the widows' letters. This meant that, as media coverage of pension reforms appeared in the inter-war years, many widows were led to believe (usually erroneously) that they must be eligible for a pension after all, and thus contacted the Ministry reformulating their earlier appeals in the futile hope that this would be in line with some new regulation or other. The ambiguity of the original refusal to grant a pension lay in its refusal to deal with specific individual cases in any detail, a failure which would lead to an increased amount of unnecessary paperwork for the Ministry in later years and dashed hopes of a pension on the part of widows. As Fairclough terms the most important parts of a text's message in reformulation is the *gist* (2001: 115), the most important part of the message as decided by the Ministry of Pensions is the fact that the widow would not be eligible under the terms of the Royal Warrant for a pension rather than the more immediate and personal longer term effect in terms of income that is the widow's concern. The Ministry of Pensions is, therefore, more concerned with the State's financial expenditure than with the widow's future.

Fairclough goes on to highlight the more power-based uses of (re)formulations, which 'are also used for purposes of control […] as a way of leading participants into accepting one's own version of what has transpired, and so limiting their options for future contributions' (2001: 114). The way that an utterance is reformulated can be read to discover the underlying power structures of an interaction by seeing who is the benefactor of the reformulation. Even allowing

for politeness strategies such as hedging employed stylistically in bureaucratic language found in Ministry of Pensions documents, the level of reformulation found in my data often renders the widow invisible or else silent, and is worthy of analysis in the course of my case studies.

For the purpose of analysing my data, I plan to use the term *reformulation* to cover both of Thomas's terms *upshot* and *reformulation*. This is owing to the nature of my data, the vast majority of which is in written form and therefore renders Thomas's distinction less appropriate. This use will be in line with that adopted by Wodak (1996, and in her discourse-historical approach found elsewhere), and echoes Fairclough's occasional and interchangeable use of it in his later work.

Frames

The concept of framing communication was originally developed by Bateson (1972) and further developed by Goffman (1974). Framing has been defined as a 'kind of metanarrative that influences interpretation but is not part of the content' (Stahl, 1989: 49). Yule (1996: 86) suggests that 'a frame shared by everyone within a social group would be something like a prototypical version'. Clair further explains that 'frames devices are rhetorical/discursive practices that define or assign interpretation to the social event' (1993: 118).

Tannen and Wallat (1999) point out that frames can be separated into two basic categories of usage by different disciplines:

Frames of interpretation, which characterise the work of anthropologists and sociologists such as Frake (1977) and Gumperz (1982), in addition to Goffman's early work in sociological use (1974). Here, frames are used 'as a definition of what is going on in an interaction, without which no utterance (or movement or gesture) could be interpreted (Tannen and Wallat, 1999: 348). Within the frame of interpretation, Wodak (1996: 22) describes how a frame 'focuses on the definition which participants give to their current social activity – to what is going on, what the situation is like, and to the role that interactants adopt within it'. In this way, the

interactants need to know which frame an utterance has been made, such as whether a joke or an insult.

The second main way in which **frames are used are as schema**. Here, the participants' expectations about people, objects, circumstances and events are negotiated by the interactants (Tannen and Wallat, 1999: 349). Linguistic semantic scholars such as Fillmore (1976) point out that utterances can only be understood by reference to an already-known pattern. Frames are critical to disguising the deep-level power structures that sustain a dominant ideology. As Fairclough describes, within the understanding of frames as schema they can be representative of 'whatever can figure as [the…] subject matter, or 'referent' within an activity'. As such, fames can 'represent types of person or other animate beings (a woman, a teacher, a politician, a dog, etc), or inanimate objects (a house, a computer, etc), or processes (running, attacking, dying, etc), or abstract concepts (democracy, love, etc). They can also represent complex processes or series of events with involve combinations of such entities' (2001: 32). Schemata are, therefore, 'a chunk of unconscious knowledge' (Fowler, 1991: 43) which is shared by groups of people who use these to draw on in order to make sense of the world. A frame is essentially a stereotype of a particular object or event. At a more detailed level as cognitive frames, according to Minsky (1975), these characteristics comprise those which are essential, those which are variable, and those which our past experience has shown are likely to be present. In terms of war widows, the 'essential' element includes a dead husband who was an armed serviceman. The other elements are more culturally dependent, and as we shall see shortly, were formulated in the terms of the Royal Warrant around the experiences and expectations of a middle-class, male authorship.

In terms of frames of interpretation, most of the widows' letters within the data for analysis within this thesis can be described as being framed as letters of appeal or else request for a pension. Within these frames can be found others such as apology and complaint which serve to underpin the claims for a pension.

As schema, frames incorporate ideas of stereotypes which are produced by the dominant discourses and ideologies of the time. For example, the frame of

widowhood has been produced by a patriarchal ideology which encompasses discourses of femininity, mourning and religion. The Royal Warrant of 1916 frames widows within a strongly patriarchal ideology that insists on certain expectations of behaviour of widows as a condition for pension payment. The frame of widowhood comprises interdiscursive lines between national identity and femininity, largely based on Victorian middle-class expectations. Widows were being granted pensions on the basis of their husband's war service and consequent death, thus were receiving money for their husband's expected service to the country. This forms an interdiscursive link to the middle-class expectation of women being dependant on a male breadwinner, whilst the actual amount paid to these women was based on the assumption that they would also be in paid employment as befits their position in society as working-class women. The contrast between expected behavioural norms for middle-class women and those of working-class women reflects a narrow understanding of the lives of the working classes, particularly single women. It could also be seen that the strict terms under which the Royal Warrant was dispensed on behavioural grounds to these women was actually an attempt to force these women to accept the behavioural norms of the middle classes.

War widows were therefore framed by the interdiscursivity of the Royal Warrant's terms. They should be passive and sober, living a life which reflected the patriotic pride associated with reverence and respect for their dead war-hero husband's memory. Transgression, or even suspected transgression, from this frame, such as in Louisa's case, could too easily result in the suspension of the widow's pension by the Ministry. Discourses of morality and national identity are thus producing a semantic frame of war widowhood.

Speech acts, mitigation and intensification strategies

Although the data selected for analysis in this study is entirely in a written or printed form, Austin's (1962) work on speech acts will prove useful as part of the analysis. His work comes out of the philosophical study of linguistics in the 1960s, but has proved very useful in branches of critical discourse analysis. Although Austin's early work on speech act theory is helpful in the context of my own data, as we shall

see it can be argued that some utterances can fall into more than one category. In addition, Austin's model cannot cope with some elements of spoken language such as backchannels and incomplete sentences. However, the basic principles of speech act theory, as set out in Austin's early work, can be applied to my written data to some effect.

Performatives, as demonstrated by Austin, are the speech acts that people use to perform actions, actions which affect or change the world in some way. This could be in a very minor way, such as one person offering to make a cup of tea for another person, or they may be more devastating, such as Britain declaring war on Germany in August, 1914. Austin expanded on this with the requirement that felicity conditions must exist for a performative to be successful (1962: 14-15):

Condition A:	i.	There must be conventional procedure having a conventional effect;
	ii.	The circumstances and persons must be appropriate.
Condition B:		The procedure must be executed i. correctly, and ii. completely.
Condition C:	i.	The persons must have the requisite thoughts, feelings and intentions, and
	ii.	if consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant parties must do it.

So, for Condition A, for example, in Britain, there is a requirement that a marriage can only be between a man and a woman[8], who are not disqualified from marrying for any reason, presenting themselves to an authorised person (minister of religion or civic registrar), in an authorised place, at an approved date and time, accompanied by at least two witnesses. The actual performative speech acts contain the formulaic declarations which validate the marriage. The second condition, that the 'circumstances and persons must be appropriate', is particularly relevant to my data as several of the widows in the case files I examined had to have their marriages annulled when it was later found that their husbands were bigamous. In such cases,

[8] Although from 2005, civil partnerships have been permitted between same-sex couples.

these women would be subjected to rigorous investigation to establish whether or not they were aware of their new husbands' existing marriages at the time of their own weddings.

In relation to Austin's Condition B, that a procedure must be executed correctly and completely, it is very clear from my data that this largely relates to officially documented evidence. Margaret Aries'[9] husband Alfred, for example, died of malaria in 1928. She was initially refused a war widow's pension on the grounds that Alfred had not been pensioned for malaria, but for bronchitis, and that there was no documented evidence of him having contracted the disease, despite his war service in Cyprus and Egypt. The remote likelihood of contracting malaria in inner-city Glasgow was finally acknowledged by the Ministry of Pensions in 1930, but initially the lack of complete and correct documentary evidence would indicate that Austin's felicity condition B was being employed by the Ministry to refuse a pension to his widow.

Austin's Felicity Condition C is slightly more problematic to illustrate, but I would suggest that it is part of the State's intention in drafting the Royal Warrant. As discussed previously, it is assumed that the widow will continue in that role of reverential mourning to her heroic husband. The wording of the claim form makes this clear when it requires the widow to sign her name below the statement 'I have continued a widow…'. Her intention at this stage is assumed to be the continuance of this role, and the terms included under the Royal Warrant involve the widow complying with middle-class ideas as to the behaviour of a widow.

Certain kinds of speech acts, such as requests, warnings, promises, orders, etc can only be performed successfully, or to use Austin's term *felicitously*, on the basis of recognised powers. As Chilton and Schaffer (1997: 219) have observed, other speech acts 'such as explicit or implicit claims to truthfulness, knowledge, or accurate assessment, depend partly on being empirically refutable in the light of events'. In the case of my data and drawing on the Foucaultian notion of 'truth', the truthfulness of a widow's assertion as to her own 'good behaviour' is only accepted as being admissible when supported by independent, State-approved agency reports,

[9] PIN26 17255 National Archive file for Margaret Aries.

such as police surveillance reports and Ministry of Pensions local office welfare visitor reports. In such cases, the authority of the speaker vests the assertion with the appropriate felicity conditions.

Performative speech acts, therefore, could be said to require speaker authority and collaboration with the recipient/hearer, within a setting of appropriate felicity conditions. This leads to another aspect of Austin's speech act theory. His three-fold distinction differentiates between the utterance of the words within a statement and the action it performs: the illocutionary force. The three-fold distinction can be simplistically described as follows:

Locutionary act	the actual words uttered/being written;
Illocutionary force	the force or intention behind the words;
Perlocutionary effect	the longer term effect of the illocution on the hearer or reader.

For example, the locutionary act of a widow writing 'I am a war widow', as found in many letters held in the National Archives, carries the illocutionary force of an assertion that the writer's husband has died as a result of his war service. In the context of a letter to the Ministry of Pensions, the desired or perlocutionary effect is that she claims a pension from the State. This interpretation requires the 'correct' interpretation of the speech act as being a request for a pension built on the assertion that she is eligible for this. Building on Austin's work, Searle (1969) classified speech acts by grouping them into macro-classes as follows:

Declarations

These comprise the performatives that Austin had earlier identified, and can be termed as words and expressions which change the world by their very utterance.

- The Tribunal disallows this appeal.
- I pronounce you man and wife.
- It has been decided that she is unworthy of a grant from public funds…

As previously discussed, some performatives carry more authority than others depending on felicity conditions and the authority of the speaker. An interesting example from my own data concerns the youngest child of Mary Anderson[10]. Marys' husband Frank had died in the influenza pandemic in March 1919, before he was discharged from the army. Their youngest child had been born in October 1918 and registered (as required under law) at that time as Kenneth. It later transpired that Mary had decided to call him Frank, in memory of his father, and claimed a dependant's pension for him under that name. Ministry of Pensions enquiries revealed the child had been christened as Frank. The dilemma arose in the Ministry as to which name the child should be referred to by them, seemingly the authority and felicity conditions of both State and church carrying equal weight. It was eventually decided that he should be referred to by the name his mother chose to call him, thus vesting her with an apparently greater authority than either church or State. His file, however, continued to carry both names in the format 'Kenneth, known as Frank'.

Representatives

These are speech acts in which the speaker states what they believe to be the case, such as describing, claiming, insisting, predicting, and hypothesising.

- He died of chronic valve disease of the heart caused through the war.
- You had my husband to fight for king and country.

Commissives

These include speech acts in which the speaker commits themselves to future action, such as promising, vowing, offering, threatening, refusing, and volunteering.

- Any person knowingly making a false declaration will be liable to prosecution.

[10] PIN26 17215 case file of Mary Anderson, widow of Frank Anderson.

- I undertake to furnish any further particulars in support of my claim that may be required by the Ministry of Pensions.

(Widow's pension application form from 1934)

- Your pension payments will cease at the end of three months from this date, unless, in the mean time, the father of your illegitimate child has ceased to reside at your house…

(PIN15 2604 copy of letter from Special Grants Committee to Sarah Finn, 10th November, 1936)

The modality of certainty in *will* in the first and third examples the authoritative nature of the State's use of commissives, compared with the hedging of *may* in the second example which is written in the widow's voice.

Directives

Here, the speaker is aiming to get someone else to do something, such as by commanding, suggesting, requesting, inviting, preventing and forbidding.

- You are authorised not to issue motherless rates in this case.
- Use the enclosed envelope to return this form.
- Right back soon.

Expressives

Speaker feelings are included in this group of speech acts, such as apologising, regretting, praising,

- *I think you* have mistaken me for someone else.
- *It is regretted* that no further action can be taken in the matter.
- *I am appealing to you…*

The use of expressive elements in a directive to form an indirect request, such as 'I would greatly appreciate it if you send me my pension' rather than the bald statement 'Send me my pension' carries the same illocutionary effect but in a less assertive, more mitigated form. It is recognising power relations and degree of imposition, and can be seen as a strategy to minimise a possible face threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1987), and possibly make the anonymous bureaucrat at the Ministry of Pensions look upon the request more favourably. Such a strategy is a form of indirect speech act, as described by Searle (1969). As Thomas (1995: 119) explains, indirectness occurs when 'there is a mismatch between the expressed meaning and the implied meaning'. In this way, the apparent surface meaning communicates a different meaning. Thus, Florence Bayliss[11] uses the interrogative form 'Could you not allow me £50?' which functions as a request, in this case for the Ministry of Pensions to send her money to help alleviate her debts.

The use of interrogative forms can be used as a hedging or, to use Reisigl and Wodak's term (2001), mitigating strategy, where demands are rendered less assertive in seeming to allow the addressee the option of declining to comply. Similarly, as seen above, the representative *you have mistaken me for someone else* is prefixed by the expressive *I think*, which softens the force of act and carries the indirect meaning of insisting that a mistake has been made. The expressive *it is regretted* prefixes the commissive *no further action can be taken* which is an indirect refusal.

Most of the language we as adults use is indirect and:

> the classification of utterances in catagories of indirect and direct speech acts is not an easy task, because much of what we say operates on both levels, and utterances often have more than one of the macro-functions. (Cutting, 2002: 19)

As Yule comments, 'indirect speech acts are generally associated with great politeness in English than direct speech act' (1996:56), where they carry a perception of lesser imposition. Indirect speech acts are so closely associated with

[11] PIN26 17294 Letter from Florence Bayliss to Ministry of Pensions, 8th May 1931, Appendix 3, document iv.

politeness that directives are most often expressed as interrogatives than imperatives. In the context of my own data, where there is generally a social and geographical distance between the widow and her addressee at the Ministry of Pensions as well as a level of formality, the use of interrogatives as a marker of politeness is very common. The level of formality that is found in the bureaucratic language which emanates from the Ministry of Pensions appears to be stylistic, and when used in interaction with the widows, would challenge Cutting's assertion that 'it is generally those of the less dominant role and so on who tend to use indirectness' (2002: 20-21). In addition to the stylistic preferences and the lack of familiarity of the interactants, on the part of the widows there is the fact that they are appealing for financial assistance. Other factors which can make speakers use indirect directives include discursive roles, age, gender, education and social class. The more specific mitigating strategies that can be used in relation to different speech acts have been described by Reisigl and Wodak (2001), and from this I have extrapolated intensification strategies which relate more directly to my own data.

Mitigation and intensification

Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 83) suggest that mitigation and intensification strategies can combine analysis of speech act structure with 'the analysis of the perspective, of the linguistic representation of social actors as well as with the analysis of presuppositions and implications'. Various forms of hedging can be employed as mitigation strategies, as shown in the table below, including those which relate more to spoken than written interaction, given the low levels of literacy exhibited by some widows and the associated use of a style that is closer to spoken than written English.

Macro-mitigation (macro-strategies: mitigation in the matrix clause/sentence or in parenthesis)	
Categories	**Forms/examples of realisation**
Forms indicating degrees of reservation: - addressee-oriented - speaker-orientated related to the importance/relevance of the following/previous part of discourse/text or related to the conversational organisation.	- *If you don't mind…/unless I have misunderstood you…/unless I heard it incorrectly* - *I'm not an expert, but…* - *I have just some additional remarks…*
Modal verbs + verbs of saying Verbs of feeling and verbs of thinking	*I would like to tell you something* *I think, we can do it over again…* *I guess, I suppose, I reckon, I gather* (used parenthetically)
Anonymisation by means of impersonalising constructions	*<u>It</u> seems quite clear that* (mitigation also by *seem* and *quite*) *<u>It</u> appears that…* (mitigation also by *appear*)
Stereotypical conjunctive	*I would like to say…*
Indirect micro-mitigation (micro-strategies: competition between the basis illocution and the realised illocution, ordered according to the strength of indirectness)	
Question instead of assertion - Basic: question/realised: directive (especially together with negations)	*Shouldn't we go further?* *Can you shut the window, Robert?*
Assertion with *we/one/it* instead of directive with *you* Assertion with *we/one/it* instead of assertion with *I* Particles and adverbs in questions and directives	*We have to consider recent developments in…* *It will be necessary to consider…* *We proposed the new strategy…* *One cannot carry on as usual after this…* *Surely you are not serious?* *Would you kindly fasten your seatbelts?*
Direct micro-mitigations (micro strategies)	
Vague expressions	*There may be some points you didn't mention before / a few weeks ago / in the past.*

Tag questions	*It was because of the tension, wasn't it?*
Particles and adverbs	*Fairly, pretty, quite, rather, somewhat, supposedly, perhaps, theoretically, technically, strictly speaking, just, possibly, probably, likely…*
Subjunctive	*Such a move might anger the people / it would be endangering relations with the people*
Negation/litotes	*Not unlikely, not unhappy, not unreasonable… The relationship here is not unproblematic.*
Hesitations, false starts, self-corrections, repetitions.	*Well…/yes uhm they don't want ah to adapt themselves*
Determiners	*A, some, (or absence of)…*

Adapted from Reisigl and Wodak, 2001:84

In contrast, intensification strategies can be used to strengthen or amplify the argument or point being made, as demonstrated by the categories and examples shown in the table below (adapted from Reisigl and Wodak, 2001).

Macro-intensification ***(macro strategies; intensification in the matrix clause/sentence)***	
Categories	**Forms/examples of realisation**
Forms indicating degrees of certainty: - addressee oriented	*I want to say…I know this is so…*
- speaker oriented (related to the importance/relevance of the following/previous part of discourse/text or related to the conversational organisation.	*I have additional information…*
Modal verbs + verbs of saying	*I have to tell you…*
Verbs of feeling and verbs of thinking	*I know, I expect, we see*
Personalised constructions	*We will send…/ we have decided…/ I will visit you…*

Indirect micro-intensification (micro-strategies: competition between the basic illocation and the realised illocation)	
Questions which act as response-demanding utterances, with response agreement assumed	*If you have claimed … then you must …/ How can I live on this? I need more money*
Directive with 'you'	*You need to…/ You must…/ You are required…*
Assertion with 'I'	*I* will send you… *I* have studied this case…
Direct mirco-intensification (micro strategies)	
Definite expressions	*You have claimed…*
Tag questions followed by assumed agreement (acts as formulation)	*He died in the war, didn't he? So I should get a pension*
Particles and adverbs	*Definitely, extremely, very, actually, certainly, undoubtedly, most likely…*
Definite determiners	*The, these, those, my, your…*

In addition to these strategies, Reisigl and Wodak further suggest that the intertextual strategy of employing quotations can be used as either mitigation or intensification strategies.

Membership catagorisation

Within my own data, it is interesting to observe the way the State and society attempted to fit all widows into the subject position traditionally ascribed to them, a role which was formed out of a long tradition of older women, living a life of quiet reflection in honour of their deceased husbands. Membership catagorisation analysis, as Baker (2000: 99) points out, can be useful in looking at the 'micropolitics of everyday and institutional life' (ibid). Drawing on Sacks (1992), this can be used to explore how we recognise and enact descriptions and draws on our cultural knowledge and relevance. The various labels or, to use Sacks' term, membership categorisation devices under which the women in my data are

categorized provide useful insights into how they are represented in texts, particularly how they are positioned in relation to others.

Relationship to men	Widow
	War widow
	Wife
	Mrs *X*
	Woman
Relationship to state	Applicant
	Claimant
	Pensioner
Relationship to family	Mother
	Guardian

Here, the most commonly used, and most proliferous, are those in the category which places women in relationship with men through the use of categories which imply 'a second term to a standard relational pair' (Baker, 2000: 102). Their relationship to the State is implied through categories which Baker points out are strongly suggestive of a client-professional relationship. The last category here also follows Baker's notion of there being a second term that is implied as a standard relational pair. In fact, the label *guardian* is one which can be applied in the context of social welfare to any adult who has been given charge of children, generally on the authority of the courts, here acting on behalf of the Ministry of Pensions. Like *guardian, applicant, claimant* and *pensioner* are all nominalisations. As we shall see in the case studies, it is most frequently the Ministry of Pensions and associated bureaucratic agencies which employ nominalisations with these membership categorisation devices, increasing the impersonal register of their correspondence. The widows themselves, however, draw on membership categorisation devices which evoke more personal, familial categories, but in particular the evocation of the label *war widow* carries with it the connections with further individual categories such as 'war' and 'social welfare'. As Baker points out, 'the hearing of the second term implied or suggested by the first is the joint activity of the speaker and a listener both using the resources of membership categorisation' (2000: 102). However, as we shall see with particular reference to the frame of widowhood, there

is a divergence of resources which leads to misunderstandings and miscommunication. As Benwell and Stokoe have observed, this is largely owing to 'the common-sense, normative practice in which inferences and implications are generated and managed […], with regard to particular states of affairs or narrative accounts' (2006: 66).

Conclusion

Critical discourse analysis provides a valuable framework for studying the language used by the various agencies involved in the construction and enactment of war widowhood. Whilst the interpretative authority of CDA has been critiqued, and perceived shortcomings highlighted by Stubbs (1997) and Widdowson (1996), if the position of the researcher is made clear from the outset, this can go some way towards responding to the argument that 'textual interpretations of critical linguists are politically rather than linguistically motivated' (Stubbs, 1997: 102). It is my position that CDA provides the tools for uncovering the underlying concerns of parsimony and gender which are generally masked by the dominant discourses of patriotism and morality. I shall be attempting to chart changes in the wider social world during the half century that this thesis covers, showing how CDA can be used to chart changing sociocultural circumstances which are not reflected in legislation drawn up in 1916 on which widows of the First World War were obliged to appeal for State help. Although subject to alteration in 1921[12], the main legislation relating to these women was not further amended to take account of wider social change. I hope that the relationship between this wider social world and the unchanging legislation can be charted using the discourse-historical approach to CDA to show how society's attitudes towards widows of men who died due to the First World War gradually ceased to be reflected in the official discourses of the first quarter of the 20th century.

The norms of working-class life were often very different from those of middle classes, but it was this latter group that formulated regulations and

[12] This was when the 'seven year' rule was removed, thus allowing widows to be granted a pension if their husband died more than seven years from receipt of his injury or discharge from the army.

legislation. This is something I shall explore in more detail in later sections of this thesis, particularly with reference to conceptions of motherhood. The forms and other documentation that comprised the bureaucratic network of the Ministry of Pensions in relation to war widows constructed clients in terms of a potential set of common denominators (Sarangi and Slembrouck, 1996: 136), with expectations that were sometimes far removed from the realities of the women's lives.

Historical context

This section will explore the historical context of the case studies that follow. In particular, the formation of the discourses of nationalism, morality and social welfare will be discussed, looking at some of the main social and political impulses that contributed to their formation. As discussed earlier, I am using the term *discourse* in the post-structuralist influenced linguistic sense of the broad constitutive systems of meaning, and the 'knowledge and practices generally associated with a particular institution or group of institutions' (Talbot, 1995: 43), with its broader implications as Fairclough (1992: 3) puts it, the 'different ways of structuring areas of knowledge and social practice'. In Fairclough's interpretation, there is considerable overlap with the concept of ideology. However, in CDA the Foucaultian model of discourse tends to be usefully understood as that which is able to carry ideology. Discourses are produced and reproduced through use and, as Sunderland (2004: 7) has observed, they are not ahistorical. Despite the productive nature of agency, 'discourses almost always pre-exist individual speakers […] and speakers through their language and social actions constantly revise and re-produce these' (ibid). As we shall see in the case studies, the discourses drawn upon by the writers make links with older forms of practices and knowledge. For example, the welfare reforms which typify the period of my data have their roots in the old Poor Law system which has an Elizabethan legislative heritage that also reflects a system of institutional care that dates back to the Roman Empire (Midwinter, 1994: 15). In particular, my data gives an opportunity to examine the discourse of social welfare which developed over the course of the 20th century in connection with the shifting relationship between State and citizens. The discourses that are drawn upon are interwoven through a patriarchal ideology which developed through the 19th century and see the patriarchal authority of the State play an increasingly dominant role in the lives of British citizens.

A large variety of documents will be used to explore the discourses of nationalism, social welfare and morality which form the basis of the case studies' analysis. For example, in addition to the internal ministry files of the Ministry of Pensions held at the National Archives, texts such as newspaper reports, contemporary novels and diaries, advertising and recruitment posters, political

speeches from Hansard and other parliamentary records, as well as reports and other documentation relating to voluntary organisations will be used to illustrate and support the arguments made.

This section will begin by concentrating on the historical context of women as carers, particularly how they came to be framed as such in the late 19th and early 20th century. This has a direct relationship with the case studies that will be follow this section. In the case of Louisa Bayliss, her role as legal guardian to her children will be illuminated by reference to the wider social and legal context, looking at how the terms of the Royal Warrant of 1916 reflect the arguments relating to Social Darwinism and New Imperialism that were so much in evidence at the turn of the century. The changing role of women as carers in the course of the first half of the 20th century reflected the social and political background of this time, particularly the role of women as carers during the war years. The case study dealing with Florence Bayliss will be largely informed by this assumption of women as carers, particularly as an extension of their 'war work'. This leads into a more focused discussion in this section of the evolution of the war widows' pension scheme, showing briefly how it evolved out of established charitable discourses. As charitable discourses were largely based on the notion of the 'deserving poor', this is relevant to both case studies as we look at the continuation of attitudes which link morality with social welfare by exploring the articulation of such discourses in the papers held in archives of various charities as well as Ministry of Pension files. Finally, this section will look at the social construction of widowhood and how this is closely tied into speech and rituals that underpin the case studies which follow.

The social and legal construction of women as carers

As previously mentioned, the Janus-faced nature of British society in the inter-war years was looking backwards to the perceived certainties of an imperial past. Traces of this conservative modernism can be seen in the main legislation that is relevant in my research. Whilst the Royal Warrant of 1916 under which war widows were first granted a pension reflects a modernising trends in social welfare, it also draws

interdiscursively on morality and social welfare from the 19th century, as well as the heightened sense of British national identity which had developed over the latter part of the previous century. This is linked with international rivalries in the late 19th century that had been generated by the appearance of a powerful Germany on the continent and a dynamic America across the Atlantic.

The heightened sense of national identity at the time of the war actually built upon existing discourses of nationalism. Beginning in the 1890s, Britain had entered a new, more self-consciously imperial phase of colonial acquisition (Spiers, 1980). Placed on the defensive by the rise of the new global industrial powers, Britain had responded with an aggressive display of imperial might designed to contradict any notion of economic or military weakness. Politicians, senior military men and businessmen had extolled the virtues of imperial power for national health, seeing in empire and imperial rule the means by which Britain was to preserve its international standing. For example, advertisements from this period proclaim products with a national identity associated with imperial might for goods as humble as soap and boot polish as well as the newfangled electric lights. Discourses of nationalism thus came to be employed in the pursuit of imperialistic and national glory as Britain strove to redefine itself in the early years of the 20th century.

Children as the future strength of the nation

Although Britain's population had grown dramatically in the late 19th century, it was dwarfed by those of the United States and the continental powers, and its birth-rate had slowed considerably. Fears of population decline added to concerns about the quality of the British population, especially in light of a growing awareness of the depth and degree of poverty, as unemployed rural workers were forced into the cities to look for work during the agricultural depression, and of the high levels of infant mortality that existed throughout the country. Despite improvements in real wages enjoyed by those who had regular work, poverty levels increased during the 1880s and 1890s, and urbanisation made this poverty far more visible to the urban middle-class voters than it had been when most people lived on the land. Rowntree's survey of the working classes in York in the late 19th century, as well as the Fabian

Women's Group's survey of working-class households in Lambeth early in the 20th century are typical of the attention paid to urban poverty in this period. Increasingly detailed government surveys, such as the censuses in the late 19th century, showed that perhaps one third of all Britons lived below the poverty line. Moreover, infant mortality rates were rising. In England and Wales in the 1880s, 142 of every 1,000 infants born died within their first year of life; the figure increased to 154 during the 1890s, reaching 163 by 1899.[13]

The existence of so much poverty, disease and death in the midst of so much modernity demanded explanation. The print media helped spread this 'moral panic' through stories of 'race degeneration', their letter pages filled with alarming correspondence from doctors, scientists, politicians, churchmen and moralists who believed that cities depleted the health and vigour of the population, regarding them as 'the graves of our race' as the Dean of Canterbury put it in 1887 (cited in Kingsley-Kent, 1999: 236). With imperialistic pomposity, it was decided that the solution lay in gathering up the remaining 'unoccupied' territories of the world and peopling them with Britons. Behind this lay the potential that through acquisition, possession and rule of colonies overseas, Britain's health could be maintained. This 'New imperialism' gained momentum from the social Darwinist theories that saw, in competition with the other European powers, the United States and Japan as the means by which to create a robust society of virile men and morally superior women (Anderson, 1983). Kingsley-Kent cites a letter published in *The Times* in 1900 in which Lord Rosebury (leader of the Liberal Party) argues that:

> an empire such as ours requires as its first condition an Imperial Race – a race vigorous and industrious and intrepid. Health of mind and body exalt a nation in the competition of the universe. The survival of the fittest is an absolute truth of the conditions of the modern world. (1999:236)

[13] See also Bruley (1999); Kingsley Kent (1999); Lewis (1984); Midwinter (1994).

This shows evidence of intertextuality with Darwinian theories of evolution (*survival of the fittest*[14]) which can be socially engineered through selective breeding and spread of imperial ideology and rule, thus also proving to be interdiscursive in drawing on Darwinian, imperial and nationalistic discourses to enhance the 'common sense' of this argument. Without explicitly stating as much, it is the *British* imperial race that is being flagged, the writer employing existential presupposition (in the noun phrase *an empire such as ours*) in an example of what Billig (1995) terms 'banal nationalism'. This flagging continued in ever-more visible ways in the coming decade as the country prepared for the European conflict which finally turned into the First World War. In the Foucaultian sense of 'truth', the notion of empire is unchallenged and assumed to be a positive force. The well-being of the nation, and the empire, is articulated through the anthropomorphic use of physical and moral well-being. The existential presupposition of there being such a thing as an 'imperial race' carries with it undoubtedly masculine qualities of strength, diligence and bravery. There is also the existential presupposition that there is such a thing as 'the modern world' which requires a level of physical and ideological engagement that only Britons (presumably *male* Britons) can provide. Such a presupposition neatly avoids any mention of the extreme poverty in which many imperial subjects lived throughout the empire.

On the very fringes of this 'modern world' were the working classes who were viewed as being the most degenerate. They comprised the largest proportion of unemployed (or 'work-shy', as they were more commonly described by the middle-class commentators who carried the Protestant work ethic to a zealous extreme) and women with illegitimate children ('fallen women', who were often forced to turn to the workhouse laying-in wards). The genetic inheritance argument seemed to prove that the working classes were degenerate from one generation to the next. As Skeggs comments, 'using the language of eugenics, the working class were coded as atavistic and potentially dangerous and polluting' (1997: 43). This gave the State the excuse to intervene in the welfare of the working-class, and as we shall see, by

[14] This phrase appears in the 1869 edition of *On the Origin of Species*, and is actually an attributed quotation used by Darwin of Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology* (1865), although Darwin's use is now the better known.

1914 this included in particular war widows and their children in a way which would have been unacceptable for middle-class families. Thom points out that

> legislation in practice is powerfully influenced by class, since women of the working class have far more of their lives affected by both permissive legislation allowing local authorities or employers to provide protective officials (as in the factory inspectorate, health visitors and midwives) and in controlling their behaviour on the streets and in public places (as in public order legislation, policing practice and licensing of drink and entertainments). (1998: 8)

As we shall see shortly, the surveillance of war widows demonstrated the lack of trust the State placed in these women without husbands.

The Boer Wars at the turn of the century proved pivotal in the development of social welfare reforms in Britain. Convinced by the ideology (and propaganda) of empire, the British were confident of their success and determined to teach the Boers a lesson about the power and glory of the British empire. It was, therefore, a great shock to British politicians and the public when the army suffered a series of humiliating and embarrassing defeats in the first months of the war. By late 1900, those losses had been reversed, but the defeat of the 45,000 Afrikaner guerrilla soldiers required an additional 18 months and 450,000 British soldiers (Pakenham, 1979; Attridge, 2003).

In the process of recruiting those soldiers, British officials discovered that almost 40% of those who sought to enlist did not meet military standards of physical health. They were too short, suffered from heart trouble or rheumatism, had weak lungs or flat feet. The scrawny, stunted 'New Town Type' could not stand up to the rigours of physical training and war, and even many of those who passed through the initial screening had to leave the army later when their health failed. In all, then, there emerged a near panic about 'race degeneration', 'physical degeneration' and 'deterioration', adding to the existing moral panic over levels of urban poverty, all of which were linked to nationalism.

Women as carers

Such was the concern about 'racial deterioration' on the well-being of the nation, the government set up several committees to examine causes and remedies, the most public of which placed women in caring roles. In 1904, one of these, the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, was typical of many others in its stress on the 'ignorance' and 'fecklessness' of mothers as a factor in the physical decline of the population, blaming mothers for making their children sick. Major General Maurice (in Davin, 1997: 99) suggested that Britons might learn from the Germans how to raise a 'virile race, either of soldiers or of citizens'. It is telling that the military category is given prime position in this statement, and again it is a masculine role that is identified as being in most important need of improvement, especially given that women were not 'full citizens' until they achieve equal suffrage rights in 1928. Using German cultural references which would become abhorrent in ten years' time, he went on to observe that the essential component in this proposed remedy was that 'the attention of the mothers of a land should be mainly devoted to the three Ks – *Kinder, Kuche, Kirche'* (ibid). Despite lacking citizenship rights, women are thus to blame for race deterioration, and the assumption is that they were not devoting sufficient time and energy to raising their children and looking after their husbands. In direct opposition to the increasing paid employment opportunities for women, the reiteration of the 'two spheres' ideology is being employed to place women back within the domestic sphere. For example, to emphasise this, the government committees collectively proposed a series of reforms that would compel mothers to learn 'mothercraft' in order to improve the health and welfare of their children, and thus the health and welfare of the State, and synechdocally the nation (see also Davin, 1997 and Skeggs, 1997).

By the beginning of the 20th century, married women of all social classes were generally expected to stay at home and look after their children. One of the few exceptions was the Lancashire cotton industry, where married women commonly worked for wages which could be comparable with those of male factory workers. This has been hard-won, partly through the unionisation of this group of workers throughout the late 19th century. As Liddington and Norris (2000) point out,

this led to the development of a powerful women's suffrage movement in this part of the country. James (2000) has observed that, in her sample of data taken from the Ministry of Pension widows' claim files held at the National Archives, the majority of pension appeals come from this area of the country.[15] This suggests that the heightened political awareness of women in these areas did give them the confidence to approach the State for financial help in the inter-war years. However, elsewhere in the country it was common practice for married women to remain at home and look after their husband and children. The 1911 census returns for County Durham reveal that, of all the women who stated they were in employment, only 17% were 'married or widowed' (widows were not separated out until the 1921 census). These women were largely employed in laundry and washing services, where they comprised 44% of that workforce, or as charwomen, where they comprised 74%. Such jobs would have presumably allowed women a certain level of autonomy and flexibility of working hours than could be found in other employment, thus ensuring they could continue to look after their own homes and families. In the most common employment for women, domestic service, just 16% are recorded as being married or widowed. The next most common occupations, dressmaking and millinery, had just 14.5% of employees who were not in this category. So the vast majority of women were employed in traditional roles which involved some form of caring, whether that be in domestic services or garment manufacture.

A spate of child welfare provisions followed the government reports into child welfare, most of which were aimed at the surveillance and regulation of the working classes. The 1908 Children Act brought together and expanded legislation which, during the 19th century, had sought to redefine childhood in line with a new discourse which framed children as helpless innocents in need of protection. This in turn brought the family under the wider patriarchal agency of the State. In keeping with the often punitive tone and substance of the infant welfare movement, much of it directed at women, the Children Act identified and penalised for the first time the neglect of children by their parents. Thus child welfare and legislation of care

[15] Although as described in the Introduction here, these files are largely taken from the 'London' area, rather than provincial towns and rural areas which undoubtedly ameliorates James's argument on this point.

cannot be understood as simply meaning nurture, treatment or support, since it is also represents control, punishment and regulation. In the Foucaultian sense of power, it is indeed 'everywhere' – in public and private, the lives of the population are being regulated with increasingly punitive measures, with women implicitly responsible for the moral and now physical well-being of their children. Moral purity came to be considered as essential for social stability. Extending this social stability to the empire, Skeggs has observed 'the moral condition of the nation was seen to derive from the moral standards of woman; woman came to signify the success or failure of the colonial project' (1997: 42). As Williamson comments, in this way

> [w]omen, the guardians of 'personal life', become a kind of dumping ground for all the values society wants off its back but must be perceived to cherish: a function rather like a zoo, or nature reserve, whereby a culture can proudly proclaim its inclusion of precisely what it has *ex*cluded. (1986: 106; emphasis in original)

Contrary to old liberal convictions that the individual should operate free of interference from, or compulsion by, the State, the British infant welfare movement of the early 20th century made it obligatory that individuals – and in this case particular individuals: mothers – address and resolve national problems of public health, domestic politics and imperial and international conflict. The raising of children now became a national obligation on the part of women rather than a moral or social duty, and if they did not perform this function adequately, the State would step in to insist that they do it better. Almost wholly ignoring the environmental factors working-class families faced – poverty, overcrowding, unsanitary streets, water and sewage systems, pollution, epidemic and chronic disease[16] – the State conferred upon women who had no control over them the responsibility, but not the resources, to improve the stock of the nation. In addition, operating according to a largely negative set of images of working-class women, State officials and voluntary agencies like the Charity Organisation Society turned to laws that coerced mothers

[16] The Public Health acts starting in 1875 had set up local boards of to monitor public health, but these generally lacked the powers and resources to put right the environmental problems lurking in every major town and city in the country.

into providing a certain kind and level of care, rather than legislation designed to help them by providing the necessary means. In effect, as Ross (1993:197) explains, a social worker at this time observed of the working-class mother that the child welfare movement expected that she become 'the unpaid nursemaid of the State'. Discourses of morality and nationalism were underpinned by the ideologies of patriarchy and parsimony.

One of the cornerstones of classical liberalism was the institution of marriage. Domestic ideologies, upon which liberalism was based, infused marriage and motherhood with an element of the divine. The integrity of family life and the guardianship of all the comforts and benefits to be accrued therefrom rested with the wife and mother who presided over them. Marriage and motherhood were regarded as being the 'natural' goal and thus the crowning achievements of a woman's life. The wife and mother was worshipped and exalted in Victorian literature; poets conferred upon her praise of the highest order. The so-called 'angel in the house' enjoyed a degree of respect and adoration that was unrivalled amongst the positions open to women at this time. Coventry Patmore wrote a series of poems titled 'The Angel in the House' in the middle of the 19th century, celebrating an idealised married couple. It gave its name to the 'angel in the house' imagery which reinforced the two spheres ideology in which the woman was respectably confined indoors, creating a domestic haven for her husband and a nurturing, Christian atmosphere in which to supervise the bringing up of their children. The more detailed implications of this confinement of women will be looked at in relation to widowhood, below.

This ideological positioning of women as carers caused problems early in the First World War when it was realised that women would need to be drafted into the munitions factories to replace the men who had left to join up.[17] Although many working-class women were already in paid employment before the war, these were largely jobs which were not required for the war effort. Indeed, female *un*employment increased in the first few months of the war as workers in the cotton industry were laid off and middle-class families elected to do the patriotic thing and

[17] See Appendix 1 for a selection of recruitment posters aimed at women war workers.

economise – by laying off thousands of domestic servants. Although there were many women who were ready to work for the war effort, the trades in which they were skilled were not those which were required. As a result, as Thom (1998: 32) points out 'women were to volunteer as women, rather than on the basis of particular qualifications, whether of labour experience, age, marital status or education'.

After initial resistance, both State and voluntary sector proactively sought women to take on traditionally male roles in industry. Whilst middle- and upper-class women were more likely to be found in the voluntary sector where the absence of wages would not be such a problem, it is estimated that by far the largest proportion of female working-class war workers were to be found in munitions work.[18]

The link between munitions workers and the trusted British Tommy was highlighted by the press at the time who also referred to them as 'Tommy's sister'. However, within this patriarchal ideology the subservient role of sister, a weaker female who needs protection by stronger male guardians, underpins the apparent appreciation of many male commentators of this time. For example, Hall Caine's 'tribute' to Tommy's sister places the emphasis on her caring, compassionate, emotional femininity in the final clause:

> Tommy's sister in the munitions factories, like Tommy in the trenches, lives in the last moment, now joking, teasing, laughing and wriggling, and then fuming and flaming and weeping over her troubles as if the world were coming to an end. (1916: 70)

The mass mobilisation of women workers gave rise to concerns about perceived moral laxness. Surveillance of these women came in public in the form of women police officers, mainly middle-class women who carried special responsibility for female misdemeanours.[19] In the factories, other middle-class

[18]Woollacott (1994: 18-19) estimates that there were approximately 40,000 women employed as VADs by January 1918, 17,596 women officially enrolled in the Women's Land Army during its existence, and some 80,000 women in the various war service corps by the Armistice. She further estimates that the number of women employed in munitions by 1918 was 1,000,000, with some contemporary reports estimating as many as 1,302,000. Whichever figure is used, the number employed in munitions greatly outnumbers those engaged in other women's war work.

[19] See Levine (1994) for details of the role of policing women in public.

female welfare workers were employed to follow up absenteeism as well as monitor the health and well-being of the employees. Whilst as Grayzel (2002: 49) has argued the introduction of female welfare workers in factories was partly based on a deeper concern the nation's future need for healthy citizens, it could also be argued that it reveals a lack of trust vested in working-class women, many of whom were single. These duel concerns are mirrored in the terms of the Royal Warrant, and are also found in the longer-standing charitable works of the time, reflecting a paternalistic approach to women without a male head to their household. This will be discussed in more detail below.

Legislation was brought in aimed specifically at women, such as the 1916 addition to the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) which limited public house opening times after Lloyd George had raised concerns over the potential drunkenness of female munitions workers. Even in his later memoir of this time, Lloyd George continues to entwine discourses of morality with those of patriotism, claiming that the 'first effect of the War was rather to increase the habit of excessive drinking, and, indeed, to raise it into a real menace to the nation' (1936: 195). Other elements of DORA carried strong links back to the much-hated Contagious Diseases Act which early feminists such as Josephine Butler had fought so hard to have repealed some half century before.[20] All of this reflects the State's mistrust of women, particularly working-class women, in a country where much of the male population was away from the home, and hence from the role of patriarchal guardian of the household.

In the final months of the war, thousands of female munitions workers were laid off as it became clear that an Allied victory was close at hand. The Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act (1918) ensured that the vaguely temporary nature of much women's war work was rendered legally so. Under this Act, the male trade unionists laid claim to aircraft making, as it was related to engineering, and to the skilled technique of arc-welding, in the process excluding the women who had pioneered the development of these trades during the war. Thom (1998: 190) reports that, by June 1919 the Ministry of Munitions had discharged 90% of its female war workers.

[20] The Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864 and 1869 were eventually repealed in 1886.

The reconstruction of a (mythical?) domestic idyll was put forward by campaigners for reform of the urban slums. As Thom points out, 'the fit occupation for women, in the context of demobilisation, was being presented as housekeeping both in their own homes and in society at large' (1998: 178). Retraining schemes set up by the Ministry of Labour sought to place women back in traditional roles. This is clearly highlighted in one committee report from March 1919:

> Industrial training will for the present by confined to normal women's trades, for example clothing manufacture, in the processes known as women's processes before the war in which recent enquiry has shown there is a need for skilled workers and a good prospect of employment.[21]

Thus the 'restoration of pre-war practices' not only returned men to their traditional employment roles but also women to the pre-war status of carers and subservient employees. It is also important to acknowledge that many of the jobs which had been done by women in the pre-war years had vanished. Industries engaged in producing luxury items such as jewellery and lace traditionally employed large numbers of women. The austerity of the war years led to the decline of these industries and they failed to recover afterwards. In her autobiography of this period, Kathleen Dayus describes how she had worked throughout the war in Birmingham's metal trades, where jewellery workshops were converted to uniform button-making. She writes that, by 1920, her well-paid factory work had dried up. 'Plenty of people were laid off and many girls, particularly married women who had found no difficulty in getting jobs in munitions and such like a year before, were now reduced to whatever odd jobs they could find' (1985: 124). Dayus's recollections of working-class life in the Midlands mirrors that of the country overall where there was a particular impetus to return married women to the home, preferably to look after children who would be the country's future.

The government had seen the risk of demobilising a huge number of troops en masse. Many troops had joined up 'for the duration', so were kept in the armed services for many months or even years after the end of the war. In fact, the

[21] IWM.EMP 80, 15 March, 1919, p24

government did not abolish conscription until April 1920. Demobilisation was, therefore, a very slow process. Many of those troops who had been promised 'a land fit for heroes' by Lloyd George, found that even after the prolonged delay in their release, their country had no work to offer them. The personal columns of newspapers at this time record the sense of disillusionment, such as the following advertisement, found exactly a year after the Armistice:

> Ex-Artillery Major, reliable and trustworthy, age 24, single, just demobilized, offers his services anywhere in any capacity at any price. Will any Patriot communicate:
>
> *The Times*, 11th November, 1919.

The demobilised serviceman here suggests that it is a prospective employer's patriotic duty to employ him as someone who has so recently defended the country. Against such an appeal, the much-feted women war workers had very little chance of being given preferential treatment. The newspapers which had feted the women war workers earlier rapidly reversed their editorial policy to the pre-war ideology which placed women firmly back in the domestic sphere. There were frequent stories of former munitions workers queuing for unemployment benefit wearing the smart clothes their wartime wages had enabled them to buy. The *Daily Chronicle* ran an article under the headline 'Unemployed in Fur Coats' (6th December, 1918), contrasting these well-clad 'girls' with the demobilised heroes also queuing for dole. The government quickly responded to this negative reporting by matching the middle-class 'problem' of servant shortages with female unemployment. Any woman who refused work would have her State benefit stopped. Domestic service, with its long hours, low pay and often deplorable working conditions was probably one of the most hated types of employment for women, and they refused to go back in their thousands.

Wages for women workers remained lower than those paid to men employed in comparable jobs. For female workers, it seems there was a perception that widows were partly responsible for the lower wages, as is the case today with immigrant workers who are prepared to take on low-paid work. This echoes Asquith's reservations about 'subsidising' widows and suppressing wages, as voiced

in the debates in November 1914 that will be discussed below. There is an intertextual reference to this in a Labour Party report from 1923, commissioned in preparation for the Widowed Mothers' Pensions Act. In this report, Davies, a member of parliament in the first Labour administration, felt compelled to defend women against this perception. He observed that from the 1911 census report for England and Wales 'the percentage of widows occupied in industry is three times as great as the percentage of married women who are occupied' (Davies, 1923: 7). The problems women experienced in finding skilled employment were exacerbated for widows, who were traditionally older than their fellow female workers. Rather than simply blaming widows for being most obviously responsible for lowering women's wages by more willingly accepting such rates, Davies sought to explain the plight of the widow:

> Presumably, she has been out of the industrial world for some years, and has thus lost whatever skill she may have previously acquired. She has no knowledge of how to obtain work of the types at which she is suited, nor of the worth of her labour. And, for the sake of children waiting for food, she is prepared to accept whatever pay and conditions are offered. Not only is her own supply price thus lowered, but her competition pulls down the wages of other women workers. (Davies, 1923: 8)

The presupposition that the widow has children is used to draw on discourses of women as carers for the nation's future, her self-sacrifice in willingly taking lower paid work is triggered by the prepositional phrase *for the sake of the children*. The widow is presented as being naïve and unworldly, unable to find better-paid work by her own active agency in being ignorant of her potential. Although commencing with the hedge *presumably*, which in itself acts as a common sense assumption to engage the reader with agreement, the intensification of this point is made through the absence of other hedging: *[she has] lost whatever skill; she has no knowledge*. The hedging that is employed is used to cast uncertainty as to her abilities: *skills she <u>may</u> have previously acquired*. The women in this text are either naïve and unskilled, in need of the State's patriarchal guidance, or else are rendered invisible as economic commodities. However, despite the well-intentioned words of

Davies, there is a strong underlying patriarchal ideology to support the case of the State knowing what is best for the widow.

Elsewhere in society, the inter-war years saw a resurgence of the cult of the 'perfect housewife', based on middle-class ideas. New labour-saving devices for the home, such as electric washing machines and vacuum cleaners joined the earlier vogue for electric lighting. New magazines such as *Homes and Gardens* (1919) and *Good Housekeeping* (1922) appeared on the market to help the middle-class woman achieve the 'perfect home'. In 1924, the Good Housekeeping Institute was established to test domestic appliances and other products new to the market, offering the housewife consumer 'scientific' guidance. There was a movement promoted by the women's magazines and advertisements of the period to encourage the housewife to think of herself as the 'domestic expert'.[22] However, as Spring Rice's survey (1930) of working-class wives shows, these women's health had been worn away by continual pregnancies, poor diet and the sheer hard work of trying to run a household in buildings possibly condemned as slums years before. Whilst life for the middle classes improved during the inter-war years, for working-class people it was demonstrably worse than in it had been during Victorian times. It took another world war for the slum clearances to be effective and by that time the Welfare State had rescued many from extreme poverty.

Charitable assistance and the foundations of State welfare: notions of the deserving and the undeserving poor.

Upper- and middle-class women, often unmarried, had engaged in philanthropic works with 'the poor' for centuries. Christian teaching about charitable giving has long motivated philanthropic work. As Midwinter has commented, 'alms-giving has also been utilised as a kind of afterlife insurance' (1994:15) whereby the givers would have more than half an eye on their souls rather than the bodies of the recipients (ibid). The increased awareness of the conditions of the urban poor in

[22] See also Ryan (2000)

Victorian Britain was largely owing to the efforts of social reform campaigners such as the Rowntree, Booth and the Fabian Society. During the First World War, this philanthropic energy was channelled into organising countless new charities to raise money for just about every cause: the YMCA Hut Fund; the Birmingham Cripples; the Police Aided Association for Destitute Children; and the Blue Cross Fund (which declared its aim 'to help the wounded horses at the war'). These were all what could be termed 'deserving poor'. This category was widely understood to mean those who were in financially straitened circumstances, but who were morally and materially not responsible for their perceived misfortune. The dichotomy of the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' would have a profound influence on the way war widows' pensions legislation would be drawn up and implemented and, as we shall see in the case studies, is also part of the discourses the widows themselves draw upon.

The Charity Organisation Society (COS) was set up in 1869 to coordinate mainly London-based charities to make better use of their resources. The principles governing who should be given charitable help, as promoted by the COS, were based on classic liberalism whereby self-dependence was encouraged only to those who were deemed capable of becoming self-supporting, a principle which still underpinned charitable work after the First World War in even the most tolerant of charities, such as the Emergency Help Committee of the British Red Cross and Order of St John. As Thane has explained, the COS pioneered the practice of case-work whereby enquiries were made as to the background of claimants. The 'worthy' were given help in the form of money and equipment, and were assisted in finding work, but were under surveillance in the form of the apparently beneficent social work visitor who made frequent calls on the claimant. Those whose condition was deemed to be 'due to improvidence or thriftlessness and [for whom there was] no hope of being able to make him [sic] independent in the future' (Thane, 1996: 22) were generally not considered eligible for charitable assistance. Thus the COS ran on principles which were based around discourses of 'worthy' and 'undeserving' poor, which are linked closely with those of morality and eugenics (in that the poor were predestined to be irredeemably poor, and thus beyond moral salvation). The

COS seems to embody the description 'the cold hand of charity', which implies an unfeeling, begrudging administration of aid, an image which is called upon during parliamentary debates relating to war widows' pensions, as discussed in the Introduction.

Although the COS's draconian principles were not widely adopted outside of London, they do reveal a more visible articulation of the discourses which underpin the majority of charitable and State policies for dealing with poverty. Where the COS did have a longer lasting influence was in the systematic use of welfare visitors.

In the late 19th century, as Holden (2004) has shown, middle-class women began to formalise their roles as welfare visitors, and were presented as guardians of maternal, Christian identities. As with the 'lady visitors' employed by the Ministry of Pensions, they are part of the wider network of surveillance which Foucault (1977) describes developing throughout the preceding century.

Other researchers looking at widow's pensions have looked in detail at the workings of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association (Lomas, 1997, James, 2000). To review briefly this organisation's relevance here, it is necessary to understand that the State pension scheme for war widows was based on the system which the SSFA had set up in 1885 to:

> help by a small allowance, where help is needed, and, as far as Funds will admit, first of all, married women [including widows], irrespective of their being on the strength or not; second, aged parents who have been dependent on their sons when at home; and, third, in finding suitable employment for those who are able and willing to help themselves. (Gildea, letter of14th March, 1895)[23]

Gildea, as founder and Chairman of the SSFA, is setting out the 'deserving' categories who could receive help from the charity, but mitigates this help by including the condition that it would be dependant on the charity's own financial position. Any excessive generosity is similarly mitigated by the premodification of *allowance* with *small*. The Protestant work ethic is also clear here, where those

[23] SSAFA archives

'who are able and willing to help themselves' are included as a separate category for assistance. Hidden within this offer of help is the condition that it will be 'where help is needed', and it is the criteria on which this is based that links it so closely with the more general discourses of morality that prevailed in the middle classes at this time.

The SSFA, with its network of local offices and 'lady visitors' who would personally look after individual families' (Gildea, letter of 14th March 1895), provided a ready-made arrangement for the State to link into on the outbreak of war. They readily continued their officious work 'to bring sympathetic relief to the homes suddenly bereft of their breadwinners' (Gildea, 1916: 179). Gildea is positioning the SSFA as beneficent, patriarchal guardian of the deserving poor, although the actual people affected are absent in their synechdocal nominalisation as *the homes*. It continued to administer pensions and separation allowances on the State's behalf until 1916, when the Royal Warrant was finally implemented. Its lady visitors were retained by the Ministry of Pensions, thus forming a continuity of intervention and surveillance. The committee membership of the SSFA (which changed its name to the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airman's Families Association in 1919) contained many members who also served on other charitable committees, such as Lady Ampthill who served on the Emergency Help Committee of the British Red Cross and Order of St John, which will be discussed below. This common membership, involving upper- and upper-middle-class men and women, provides a link between the State committees and the charitable organisations, where common attitudes relating to morality and social welfare meant there was little diversity in the terms under which help would be granted to those in need.

Conceptions of what is right is negotiated through, and in opposition to, wider social and political norms and values, and in conjunction with, for example, counter discourses offered by family and alternative value system or habits of everyday life. Social policy and the practices of welfare professionals are crucial to the legitimisation, surveillance and control of social welfare provision in both the formal, 'public' and informal, 'private' spheres.

As will be discussed in more detail below, there was an assumption that women would act as unpaid carers for their disabled ex-servicemen husbands though the difficult inter-war years which included the Depression.[24] Increasing State intervention into the private family life in the inter-war years, superficially at least, served to improve the health of the population, such as found in the child welfare legislation. However, the underlying surveillance this entailed served to monitor the health and living conditions of the population, leading to a heightened awareness of poverty. Organisations such as the Co-operative Women's Guild had campaigned since the early part of the century for maternity allowances to be paid directly to women, successfully getting maternity benefit included in the National Insurance Act of 1911, and within two years had the Act amended to allow this benefit to be paid directly to women.[25] They campaigned on issues which related to government and national concerns about racial deterioration. After the war, they also took up the campaign for wider distribution of birth control information. This concern with maternalist issues was coupled with an anti-militarist campaign which was characterised by the 'white poppy' crusade in the post-war years.

After the Second World War, the Co-operative Women's Guild again engaged in political lobbying in their objections to the apparent enforced dependency that was inherent in Beveridge's proposals for the welfare reforms that resulted in the 1948 Welfare State.

The Emergency Help Committee of the British Red Cross and Order of Saint John worked in cooperation with other charities to support ex-servicemen and their families after the war. Reports of the Joint Committee show how they also worked in conjunction with other charities to help widows out of debts which were seen to have been incurred through no fault of their own. For example, the 1930 report gives the following case study:

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[24] Charities report increased appeals for help at this time. For example, the Annual Report of the Emergency Help Committee (1924-1925) recording the effect of the wider social context on their work, stating that there is 'the need for relief in connection with the War disabilities [which] cannot be altogether disassociated from the general industrial distress' (p7). More explicitly, a year later the report comments on 'a large amount of relief [that] is afforded, is due in many cases to malnutrition, shortage of clothing, etc, occasioned by unemployment' (Seventh Report, 1996-1927: 24).

[25] Women's Co-operative Guild archives, typewritten manuscript (1926).

> Late husband served in the Devon Regiment from August 1914 to July 1916 and was pensioned 40% Synovitis Right Knee; died November 1929 in a Mental Hospital, leaving a non-pensionable widow. The British Legion having made a loan to set the widow up in a drapery business, the Emergency Help Committee settled in full the considerable debts incurred on account of the husband's illness and death. She is now keeping herself and is free from debt.[26]

Like the State-funded war widows' pension, the Joint Committee use the anonymous ex-serviceman's implicitly good service (here, he is assumed to be one of the earliest volunteers, serving right through to the worst fighting of July 1916 at which point he sustained a pensionable injury), and the fact that his widow has already been deemed worthy of financial assistance from another charity (the British Legion) as supporting evidence for their own intervention. This notion of 'worthiness' is further enhanced by the assumption that the widow is self employed, putting the loan from the British Legion to effective use in setting up her own business. Her independence of need from further charitable funding is carried in the final sentence where it is stated she is managing her business profitably. The readership of this annual report would have been limited to the members of the executive committee of the British Red Cross and the Order of St John. As with all the other case studies citied in each annual report, the Emergency Help Committee's role as beneficent patriarchal guardian of the wives and dependants of ex-servicemen is being highlighted, in this example through the intensifying adjective *considerable* to premodify *debts*, placing the Committee in the active agency role of settling these debts, rather than allocating this to the widow herself.

The Emergency Help Committee continued its work through the Second World War, although in that conflict it was forced to change its terms of engagement in recognition of the wider contribution of women to that war effort. For example, in 1942 Section 2 of Governing Principles was amended from 'That the man did active War service' to 'That the applicant did War service'. The gender neutral *applicant* recognises that not only were women involved in active service in this war

[26] Joint Committee Annual Report for 1930, case W5012.

(as seen above, this was also the case for more than a million women in the First World War), but that women could have dependants. This shows a shift in the patriarchal ideology whereby women could be acknowledged as the main breadwinner in a household by the middle of the century.

Separation allowances and widows' pensions

In the first two decades of the 20th century, the newfangled discourses of social welfare are linked into the charitable provision with which most Britons would have been very familiar. As discussed above, for centuries a shifting system of charitable provision for the poor had been distributed largely to those who were classed as the 'deserving poor'. By and large, this would include widows who were reduced to poverty after the death of their husbands and thus were (usually) regarded as being in this position through no fault of their own. For younger widows with young families, this was often a very hard life as childcare commitments meant they were unable to go out to work. Reliance on family for support was usually the first resource these women called upon, but most such woman quickly remarried. Young widows were frequently the wives of soldiers, so would be associated with a garrison town or else 'on the strength' of the regiment. The 'on the strength' system limited the number of men who were given official permission to marry by their commanding officer, and hence the number of wives who were allowed to follow their husbands around their postings.[27] This much-used military phrase indicates that these soldiers' wives were the 'strength' and therefore a complement to the regiment, not a weakness to it, and as such were expected to carry out domestic tasks such as cooking, cleaning and laundry. As Trustram (1984) has shown, most such women remarried with quite astonishing rapidity following the deaths of their husbands, some woman remarrying several times. Of course, the haste with which such women remarried was most often explained as being out of necessity rather than any true attachment, but it is difficult to find any documented evidence of such hasty remarriages as being regarded as 'indecent' haste. In a

[27] Trustram (1984) reports that this was approximately 4-6% of the number of soldiers in any one regiment.

strongly patriarchal society, it was expected that a woman should be looked after, materially as well as financially, by a male breadwinner. However, this informal arrangement whereby a soldier's widow would be taken on as the wife of another soldier worked effectively in the regular army where the proportion of servicemen to women was strictly regulated by the 'on the strength' system. The army would generally tolerate these 'on the strength' wives, although as Trustram has observed, they occupied an ambivalent position which reflected contradictory attitudes:

> The wives' morality was continually questioned – they were considered dirty and shiftless, a corrupting influence on the brave defenders of the Empire. Yet at the same time the women were useful to do the men's washing and sewing and in their role as wife and mother they were idealised as a steadying, humanising influence on the licentious, drunken soldiery. (1984: 30)

Thus by 1914 the regular soldier's wife was already enshrined in army (and national) culture as someone who was untrustworthy, yet who should embody the 'angel of the house' ideology that had risen to unprecedented heights in the latter half of the 19th century. The war widows' pension system was devised along the lines of previous charitable provision which enshrined such ideologies. That this notion of the army widow was based around the institution of the army rather than the civilian world would have a huge effect on the lives of men who had simply signed up 'for the duration'.

The existence of a volunteer rather than a conscript army in Britain in 1914 had a significant impact upon the perception and kind of separation allowances granted. As Grayzel (2002: 23) points out the British government viewed separation allowances as an aid to recruitment: with generous allowances, men could join up and feel confident that their families would not endure any financial or material harm whilst they were away fighting for 'king and country'. The living standard of soldiers' and sailors' families was maintained, at first, by a combination of private and public sources that granted payments to all wives, and through them, children. What makes this allowance so different from previous provision is that it was not

means tested. As the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, commented during one of the debates in November, 1914:

> We have no motive of any sort of kind for failure in liberality of generosity. On the contrary, our motive is the other way. We want to get as many recruits as we can to the Colours, and therefore we, of all people in the world, can understand greatest possible stimulus to act with liberality, even lavish liberality […][28]

This link between separation allowances and pension, and recruitment can be clearly seen also in the fact that the government issued propaganda posters designed to publicise the allowances available to families. There was thus a strong emphasis on the State's role as financial provider in the place of the absent husband, implicitly acting as moral as well as material guardian. In the above extract of Asquith's speech, we can also see him highlighting the British government's (and hence metonymically the country's) presumed moral superiority to that of other countries, implicitly the 'enemy' but also countries which were perceived to be threatening Britain's place in the world.

Because the allowance was paid to a serviceman's wife (or *de facto* wife) and was granted as a right based on his service to the nation, women could and would be disqualified if they failed to fulfil their duty to their husbands. In this way, the State saw part of its role as being obliged to subject women to surveillance, making infidelity and misbehaviour grounds for the denial of this allowance (see also Pedersen, 1993).

However, in a startling piece of insight into the reality of working-class culture, separation allowances and pensions were ultimately granted to women who could prove their marriage or *de facto* marriage[29], most commonly through the serviceman stating on his enlistment papers that such a woman was financially supported by him. Both sets of women were treated equally, the amount they were paid rising occasionally throughout the war and in the decades that followed, but

[28] Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series Vol LXXII (1914-1915) p30.

[29] My own research has shown that approximately half of the women who were married had actually given birth to their first child within the first nine months of their marriage. However, out of the 200 case files I have examined, I found very few cases of women claiming a pension without being legally married.

never reaching a level when they could live on this amount in comfort. In keeping with Victorian self-help ideals, the allowance was set at a rate just above subsistence level in order to keep the widows of servicemen out of the workhouse, but assuming that they would have another source of income – primarily, a job of their own. In 1919, after much discussion, the amount was set at £1 a week for a childless widow under the age of 40, and remained at this level until 1967.[30] The arrival of universal welfare provision in Britain in 1948 saved many of these widows from abject poverty as their wage-earning capacities declined with age, but as we shall see in the case studies which follow this section, not all war widows were so lucky.

Again in the early debates on the pension legislation, Asquith had highlighted the expectation, indeed the presumption, that working-class women would be able to support themselves by going out to work. He presents his argument for a minimum pension amount in terms of 'fairness' to other unpensioned female workers, doubtless bearing in mind the feminist calls for equality in the workplace.

> There is then the problem, the most serious problem of all, the problem of the childless widow, who is in most cases a young woman, a woman accustomed to work, a woman who, under normal conditions, would work and go to work after she was unfortunately deprived of the companionship and support of her husband […] You must consider, and you ought to consider, when you are dealing with a matter of this kind, the effect on the labour market, on the conditions of female labour in particular, and the standard of wages which women generally earn in this country. You must consider the effect upon them of letting loose, in competition with their sister women, a number of these young widows highly subsidised by the State.[31]

In recognition of the realities of working-class life, Asquith assumes that all 'childless widows' will be in paid employment. In direct contradiction of the middle-class containment of the widow in the weeks and months immediately following her husband's death (see Flanders, 2003), he assumes the working-class

[30] It is useful to compare this with Spring Rice's survey of working-class married women in 1939. This showed that almost half of these women had less that 4/- per person a week in housekeeping money and were in very poor health compared with that of the 17% who had 10/- or more per person. (Spring Rice, 1939)
[31] Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series Vol LXVII (1941-15), p31.

widow would not have such a period of closeted mourning when he employs the repetition of work: 'would work and go to work after [her husband's death]'.

He presents the case for a widow's pension as part of wider concerns about the economy in wartime, thus linking to discourses of patriotism in terms of what is good for the country. He then draws on intertextual reference to pre-war concerns raised by feminist and other social campaigners for better wages for women, maintaining the earlier link to wider economic concerns but more specifically to female employment on a national level. This carries the assumption that women's wages are lower, the negative connotations triggered by the series of destructive images which follow in the final sentence here. The responsibility for these negative actions is placed on the other members of parliament, who have 'let loose' pensioned widows on the employment market. This triggers assumptions of negativity through lack of control, women who are also uninhibited by a patriarchal head to their household.

Drawing on feminist discourses, he refers to *sister women*, but here employs this discourse to support his argument for a lower pension rate to reduce the risk of disruption to some assumed female sisterhood. Asquith's argument links this speech with that later made by Rhys Davies (above), although he used it to support the case for a widow's pension, whereas Asquith had used the suppression of wages as an argument to reduce the amount paid to widows.

This extract is immediately followed by Asquith's warning that a 'lavish' pension would impose an 'enormous burden' on the 'resources of this country' for years to come' (ibid). Thus the long-term financial condition of the nation was coupled with recruitment concerns to underpin the legislation which was drafted, rather than an immediate concern with the social welfare of widows and dependants.

Whilst the ever-cautious Asquith employed first-wave feminist discourses as a weapon against women to cover up the underlying parsimonious ideology, Bonar Law employed discourses of nationalism to apparently support a more generous allowance. In the presentation of the interim report of the Select Committee to parliament on 24th February, 1915, he states:

> I think we must realise, all of us, that on the whole allowances of all kinds which are made by the State are made in this spirit, which was the spirit of every member of the Committee, and which represents the spirit of the House of Commons and of the country, that however great may be the demands caused by the War on the financial resources of the country, the men who are giving up their lives in her service and their dependants come first, and that in what we give to them there must be no suggestion that we are not treating them really in a way that the heart and conscience of the country will regard as just and generous.[32]

Bonar Law interpolates the common opinion climatically, from the members of the Select Committee, to the House of Commons then to the country. He frames the 'spirit' of public funding of allowances as being in the national interest and by the nation. The politicians' part in ordering men to the front line to act as 'cannon fodder' is downplayed as the servicemen themselves are the active agents in the verb phrase *giving up their lives*. Discourses of national identity are drawn upon to frame them as being willing to act on their country's part, here personified as female so emphasising the need to be defended from enemy attack. As Billig (1995: 58) points out, the love of the Ingroup provided the most important motivation for going to war in the 20th century for Western nations, where 'the willingness to die in the cause of the homeland precedes a motive to kill' (ibid). This homeland included the 'defence of women and children, of family and honour' (Grayzel, 2002: 9), as represented in recruitment posters and the wartime media.[33]

Bonar Law uses the inclusive pronoun *we* to continue the earlier interpellation of this view being that of 'the country'. Like Asquith, he employs multiple negation to intensify his point of rejecting the agentless 'suggestion' of a lack of generosity. However, as van Dijk et al (1997: 173) point out, the use of 'apparent empathy' can be employed to make decisions appear beneficial to Outgroup members. Here, Bonar Law, although presenting a superficial case for unparalleled generosity of State-funded allowances, is setting this within an argumentative move where the State/country could be the victims in that there would

[32] Parliamentary Debates, 5th Series Vol. LXVII (1914-1915), p70.
[33] The 'Women of Britain' poster discussed in the previous section of this thesis (p53) is an example of how this was employed in early recruitment posters in Britain. Grayzel (2002) further shows that this was widespread amongst the belligerent nations at this time.

be unlimited expenditure involved. The 'heart and conscience of the country' could also be rendered less favourable towards unlimited expenditure by this implicit threat, and thus allow the State to impose strict terms under which the widow could be granted a pension. Such terms could then be formulated as 'just and generous' to the country, rather than to the individual widow. This is exactly what happened with the widows in question here, where their idea of 'justice' is less to do with the national debt than with personal debt.

In keeping with the increasing State intervention into the family that had been such an important part of 19th century imperial ideology, the war widows' pension (under the Royal Warrant of 1916) was devised to confine the woman to the domestic role of idealised mother whilst refusing to pay her sufficient money to keep her within the home. At around half the 'minimum wage' of £1 a week, the pension was actually devised to prevent anyone from relying entirely on the State for their livelihood, and took for granted the assumption that working-class women would be earning a living from some form of paid employment. The payment was thus more of a token gesture, yet this token is one which the women themselves adopted as a badge of pride. The large number of women who appealed for a pension reflects the attraction of the public status of 'war widowhood' that they aspired to in many cases, rather than the actual amount to afford financial security, as will be discussed in more detail shortly.

As discussed briefly above, widows of servicemen in the regular army tended to re-marry, more out of practical need than strong attachment. However, this convention became an assumption that younger widows would remarry, and as such was built into the war widows' pension scheme, whereby a widow would forfeit her pension on remarriage (and thus re-enter the patriarchal institution of marriage) in exchange for a one-off 'gratuity' amounting to a year's pension payments. The Depression of the 1920s and early 1930s meant that for many widows the war widows' pension was the main source of income, in terms of financial contribution as well as being a regular, reliable contribution to the household income. This resulted in many women having little choice but to cohabit because they would lose their war widows' pension on remarriage.

The discourses of morality which were built into the Royal Warrant included the image of a sober, discreet, grieving widow who would care for the children of the fallen hero. These children were, unquestionably, of greater value to the country's future, being of noble stock, their fathers having given their lives for king and country. Many widows had their pensions suspended or withdrawn when they were adjudged to have failed to maintain the honoured memory of the 'glorious dead' who were immortalised in stone in just about every community in the country. It was the role of the Special Grants Committee of the Ministry of Pensions to handle such cases.

The Special Grants Committee was set up in 1916. As Lomas (1997) explains, it had wide-ranging powers which could not be appealed against.[34] She states:

> It was able to pay alternative pensions, supplement pensions in cases of hardship, allow lump sum payments to cover emergencies, decide whether individual war widows were entitled to a pension or a gratuity, award extra allowances, pay education grants, remove children from the care of their mothers, arrange fostering and adoption for children in need of new homes, and to impose sanctions against war widows. (ibid, 1997: 89)

These powers were imposed in three different ways.

> [Firstly, the SGC] had the power to administer pensions on behalf of any war widow whose payment should not be forfeited for a single lapse into misconduct provided that the misconduct had ceased. Secondly, the Committee had the ultimate sanction of forfeiture of pension. Thirdly, they [could] remove children from their mothers' care and place them in the care of the Ministry of Pensions in cases where they are found to be suffering from neglect or want of proper care. (ibid)

The 'misconduct' of which widows could be found guilty was largely based on middle-class ideals of passive and virtuous widowhood and motherhood[35]. As such,

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[34] The *Ministry of Pensions Gazette*, October 1917 makes this explicit:

> From the point of view of the Ministry, the Special Grants Committee are a body independent of the ordinary machinery of the office, though contained within it, whom they can call upon to act as referee, arbitrator or judge in certain cases; whose decision are final; and from whom no appeal can be made to the Ministry.

drunkenness, cohabitation and the birth of illegitimate children could be used to punish the widow.

The SGC comprised 15 members, mainly ex-military representatives, some of whom were also members of SSFA or the Royal Patriotic Fund, and others who were called upon for their experience of committee work, such as Poor Law Guardians. As Lomas (1997: 87) has observed, 'overall, the personnel and workings of the committee reflected male middle-class ideals and prejudices'. Three female members were also appointed. These were Mrs Shakespear, the Honorary Secretary of the Birmingham Local Committee (whom we shall come across again in the case studies which follow), Miss Kelly, who held the same position in Portsmouth Local Committee, and Mrs McKenna, who had already served on the Statutory Committee which looked into the formation of the war pensions' scheme. From evidence elsewhere in Ministry of Pensions files held in the National Archives, it appears Mrs McKenna[36] held strongly eugenisist views. For example, in a letter dated 25th February, 1918, she writes:

> There is one type of unmarried mother to whom, in no circumstances, should pension be payable. I mean the mentally deficient woman, not sufficiently feeble-minded to be placed under control, who drifts from one workhouse to another, burdening the community with a succession of feebler minded children. It would better for her to be exterminated than endowed.[37]

McKenna is framing her argument within the parsimonious ideology of charitable social welfare which divided the poor into those who were deserving of

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[35] Grayzel (2002:10) points out that this was one of the concepts employed by moral guardians at this time, citing the November 1914 edition of the newsletter of the British National Vigilance Association which reminded its readers that the serviceman 'needed to take away as his last remembrance of the women and girls of England all that was pure and gentle and straight and true'. The terms of the Royal Warrant made this moral perception a legal obligation for war widows.

[36] There is a Mrs R. McKenna who served on the Joint Committee until her death in 1941. Lomas suggests that the Mrs McKenna who served on the SGC could have been the wife of Reginald McKenna, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1915, also serving on the Select Committee on Naval and Military Services (Pensions and Grants). Although there is no evidence to prove a link between the two, the overlap between different committee memberships would support the argument Lomas sets out, and the inclusion of the initial 'R.' in the Annual Reports for the Joint Committee would strengthen this claim.

[37] PIN 15/405, Mrs McKenna to Sir Matthew Nathan (later Chair of the SCG), 25th February, 1918. She was writing in response to a request for comments on the proposed bill for the Endowment of Motherhood.

help and those who were undeserving. The unquestioned assumption is that 'feeble-mindedness' is inherited and, indeed, worsens with each generation, the view which had underpinned much of the social welfare legislation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and which went on to influence later legislation. The strong eugenisist argument she presents culminates in the ultimate, violent sanction against the undeserving: extermination. The lax sexual morality of unmarried mothers is assumed to result in large numbers of children who will require the beneficent support of the community (or, as in the case of the Endowment of Motherhood, more specifically the State).

Negative attitudes towards one of the most defenceless groups in society, the unmarried mother who lacks education and self-resourcefulness, are evident in McKenna's assumption that some form of control would be beneficial to them. The precise nature of this 'control' is left unsaid, but would probably include some form of institutional care at a time when it was not uncommon for such women to be incarcerated in mental homes for years, often the rest of their lives. As is clear from this letter, such treatment was presented as being beneficial to society as a whole. The woman is positioned as the active agent of this supposedly negative action, the negativity triggered by *burdening* which carries connotations of unwelcome encumbrances. Furthermore, the choice of *drifting* is semantically linked with waywardness, aimlessness and a lack of control, linking back to the perception of a positive force of control in the preceding clause. The final sentence cited here employs what Van Dijk et al (1997: 173) term 'apparent empathy', where the highly negative action of 'extermination' is used in an argumentative move that presents it as being beneficial to the woman. Ultimately, the polarities of extermination or endowment are presented as the only two options. The patriarchal and parsimoneous ideologies which are so strongly linked to discourses of social welfare are employed here in connection with national identity (following the older eugenicist arguments discussed earlier) and morality (it is *unmarried* women who are assumed here to the least deserving of State care).

Although McKenna is writing to Nathan before his appointment as chairman of the SGC in July 1919, she was to continue to serve on that committee under him

for many years to come. It would appear that her views were not so objectionable to him that he had her replaced.

As discussed above, the war widow's pension could form a vital part of the household income. If the Ministry of Pensions found that a widow was cohabiting, she would be confronted with stark choices. She could give up her common-law husband absolutely and perhaps regain her pension after a period of proven 'good behaviour'; marry and lose her pension[38]; or carry on cohabiting and lose her pension irrevocably. The terms under which a widow could have her pension reinstated appear draconian, designed to break up any cohabiting couple, irrespective of their commitment to one another. The following is a letter[39] typical of those sent to widows who had been found cohabiting, although as we shall see in the case studies which follow, such letters do not appear to have been retained in the individual case files that form the main corpus of my data. However, a brief exploration of one such letter from the SGC files, will show some of the communication from the Ministry of Pensions to individual widows:

> Madam,
>
> I am directed by the Ministry of Pensions to refer to the interviews which an officer of his department had with you recently in connection with the weekly payment of allowances made by the Ministry to you as the wife of William Thomas Finn. In view of the facts elicited at the interview the Minister has decided that under the circumstances you are now living he will not be able to regard you as eligible to receive payment of allowances at present at issue. I am accordingly, to inform you that payment will, therefore, cease at the end of three months from this date unless in the meantime, the father of your illegitimate child, Mr Reeves, has ceased to reside in your house, to have access thereto; and/or to associate with you in any way; or alternatively, that you have secured other accommodation in another district and to which Mr Reeves is not allowed access. An envelope is enclosed and you are asked to give an immediate reply.

[38] The Pension Issues Office was under instruction to refuse to pay a gratuity where a war widow was found to have been cohabiting prior to her remarriage. PIN15 2604.
[39] PIN15 2604, letter from Doyle on behalf of the Special Grants Committee dated 10th November, 1936. There is no extant case file for this widow, the letter presumably surviving in the SGC file as an example of a 'typical' letter.

Here, the widow is placed in the role of one who has been condemned by her own honesty in providing 'facts'. These 'facts' are responsible for the cessation of her pension rather than any human agency, and are presented as being the active force behind the decision to stop her pension, later euphemistically formulated as *the circumstances*. There is an assumption of change in her circumstances, triggered by *now living*, suggesting that previously she had been conforming to some sort of moral code and was thus eligible for a war widow's pension. The pension itself is formulated in the noun phrase *the weekly payment of allowances made by the Ministry*, where *weekly allowance* semantically carries associations with housekeeping or pocket money that is discretionary rather than a pension which was connotations of a long-term commitment, placing the State in the role of beneficent but stern patriarch. Here, it is the *Ministry* rather than the State or, as found in other letters, *public funds* which provide this, although by highlighting the Ministry's role, there is still a hyponymic avoidance of the SGC's role in stopping the pension. The widow is named as the *wife*, not *widow* of the deceased serviceman, thus again invoking the State's position as surrogate husband who acts as moral guardian. I would also suggest that *interview* is a euphemism for the questioning and interrogation which the widow would have had to undergo to defend her position.

The bureaucrat who signs the letter employs the first person pronoun *I* to assume an active role passing on the information relating to the terms of her continuance of a pension, although the decision has in fact been made by the nameless Minister of Pensions on whose instructions Doyle is acting. The use of *therefore* carries the assumption that there is an inevitability to the decision that has been reached.

The register of the public sphere in the form of the highly formal language of the Ministry of Penions' letters includes the stylistic convention of a complimentary closure which places the writer in an apparently subservient position to the addressee: he is her 'obedient servant'. However, the underlying ideational message of the letter is directive rather than instructive.

The terms under which the widow's pension can be continued are essentially ones which involve the break-up of her family. She is placed in the passive role of

being left by her common-law husband, who is identified only as 'Mr Reeves'. It is clear that this is a long-term relationship, as the condition that Reeves *has ceased to reside in your house* carries the assumption that he already lives there, so is more than an occasional visitor. The widow is essentially being forced to isolate herself from the father of her child, although she is placed in the passive role where Reeves is the active agent in the requirement that he ceases *associating* and having *access* to her. His rights as the father of the child are not considered relevant to the terms of the widow's pension. Evicting Reeves from the house (here labelled as *her* house) is one alternative, another being that the widow herself assumes an active role and moves away. Her new home district, the conditions state, should be one to which 'Mr Reeves is not allowed access'. There is no indication as to the active agent who will prevent Reeves obtaining access to the widow and their child, but is can be assumed that the widow will be self-governing to a certain extent and exclude him from her new home on the penalty of losing her pension. Indeed, it is difficult to see how anyone could prevent Reeves from at least visiting the widow in a new area, unless some extensive surveillance system were in operation. There are disturbing connotations of house arrest in these terms, when the 'crime' is simply one of cohabitation that the Royal Warrant accepted elsewhere in its acknowledgement of 'unmarried wives' as being eligible for pension.

The final sentence of the letter operates as a directive, softened only slightly by the *you are asked*, where the indirect speech act request only partly disguises the demand. Ultimately, widows found to be cohabiting were left with the almost impossible choice of losing their pension or else continuing cohabiting with a man who was not their husband. Widows who chose the latter, in the hope of the man providing them with a stable family life, could also run the risk of that man abandoning them without legal redress. In such cases, the widow's war pension would not be resumed and they often ended up in the workhouse. For example, Mabel Beadsworth's[40] husband had been killed in action in 1915, leaving her a widow at the age of 25 with two children under the age of five. An illegitimate child was born the following year, at which point her war widow's pension was stopped.

[40] PIN26 17296

She continued cohabiting with at least two different men throughout the 1920s, but the last of these left her in 1930. Destitute, she ended up in the workhouse from where she petitioned (unsuccessfully) for her war widow's pension to be reinstated. The discourses of morality which are at play here will be explored in more detail in the first case study, where closer attention will be paid to the specific case of Louisa Bayliss.

Despite the financial disadvantages of remarriage, the need for younger widows to remarry relatively quickly and thus restore the male head of household to their families remained as true for the wives of men who had joined up as part of Kitchener's Army or later as conscripts as it had been for war widows in previous centuries (as discussed above). In other cases, problems arose when pensioned war widows married ex-servicemen who were in receipt of a war disablement pension: in the event of such a serviceman's death, his widow would not be eligible for a war widow's pension as she had married him after he had been discharged from the army. Countless numbers of widows suffered such a fate, much to their dismay, and it would doubtless have been particularly galling given that they had been encouraged by agencies such as the church and the media in particular to marry single disabled ex-servicemen. These women were thus employed as unpaid carers for disabled ex-servicemen, but received no State help on their husband's death. This will be explored in part in the second case study.

The patriarchal nature of the legislation and of society in general underpins the data in this study. In particular, the discourses of morality which have formed much of the social welfare changes and legislation discussed above are highly relevant to the discursive formation of widowhood, based in social convention, became enshrined in law under the Royal Warrant of 1916.

The social construction of widowhood

As mentioned in the Introduction, there is an age-old tradition of widows being passive and closeted which stretches back to the Ancient world. However, the degree of passivity has shifted over time. As Yalom has argued, although fidelity to

a dead husband was commended, there were actually laws in Roman times that 'penalized women under fifty who refused to remarry' (2001: 40). However, over time the period of 'respectable mourning' for widows (but not widowers, who were expected to remarry almost immediately) extended from ten months, to twelve months and then to two years (ibid). This reflects the shift in society that we saw with reference to the semantic derogation of lexis used to refer to women (in the Introduction). In fact, in extant Mediaeval records, there is frequent mention of widows in documentation relating to business, as they took over their dead husbands' trades (Chandler, 1991). This gives rise to the stereotype of the 'merry widow' who has the freedom to enjoy her dead husband's money after his death, largely uninhibited by patriarchal authority. The figure of the merry widow recurs throughout English literature. Freed from the constraints of her marriage vows, Webster's Duchess of Malfi is termed the 'lusty widow' by her brother as she seeks sexual fulfilment in other men. In reality, perhaps most famously, in the 16th century Bess of Hardwick inherited a large estate in Derbyshire on her husband's death but enjoyed her widowhood by exhibiting a very public form of conspicuous consumption in building a massive new house to her own avant-garde design.

However, as society changed in the course of the Industrial Revolution and power shifted further away from the domestic (female) world to the public (male) domain, the expected role of the widow came to be framed as more passive embodiment, where she should avoid the attention of men and of any intimation of 'fun'. Their sombre clothing would indicate to anyone that they should not be approached with a view to encouraging breaking these rules. The widow was expected to be a repository of moral values, although such 'worldly' women without a male head to their household carried a perceived threat to patriarchal authority which led to innumerable details of etiquette. Any woman who transgressed from her grieving status by being seen to enjoy herself in social circumstances laid herself open to criticism of being called 'fast' or 'loose', and when it came to framing the widow in the Royal Warrant of 1916, this could carry with it the more severe penalty of the pension being stopped.

The symbolic opposite of the glamorised 'war bride', the war widow occupies a position of pride above her fellow women. In Derrida's privileging of one term over its opposite in order to sustain hierarchical structures, the war widow appears to rank higher than other widows, courtesy of her husband. The image of the solider was – and still is – glamorised, and this reflects on his wife or widow. Even in the very unglamorous world of trench warfare, the image of the solider remained noble and proud. For some war widows, the reality of their predicament must have begun when their husbands' possessions were returned to them. In her diary, Vera Brittain recounts how the package of her dead fiancé's clothing brought home to her the horror of trench warfare and made her realise he had really gone:

> Everything was damp and worn and simply caked in mud. All the sepulchres and catacombs of Rome could not make me realise mortality and decay and corruption as vividly as did the smell of those clothes. [41]

For working-class war widows, however, the immediacy of their loss may have been only one part of the problem, in that they had lost their main breadwinner as well as a husband. As we shall see in the main case studies, widows claiming a war pension faced many obstacles as their status as war widow was questioned by Ministry. For most women, the schematic frame of war widowhood they used entailed their husband dying as a result of the war, or more loosely, their ex-soldier husband dying. For example, Lilian Armfield's husband[42] had died of prostate cancer in 1954, but had been in receipt of a war disability pension for neurasthenia which later developed into schizophrenia. On being informed she was not eligible for a war widow's pension, Lilian wrote 'Why all this trouble about a widow's pension – a war pensioners widow at that' (emphasis in the original). Here, like so many widows, Lilian is assuming that a war pension would transfer to her as a widow, the noun phrase *a war widow's pension* being syntactically similar to *war pensioner's widow*, but semantically and legally irreconcilable in the eyes of the State. This frame of war widowhood extends in the post-war years to include the wife of just

[41] *Chronicle of Youth*, (2000:336)

[42] PIN26 17264. Letter to the Ministry of Pensions, 20th April, 1955. This will be dealt with in more detail later (pp178)

about any man who had served in the First World War and is employed by the widows themselves in a relatively clear-cut way. However, the frame employed by the Ministry of Pensions and as found in the terms of the Royal Warrant was much more complex.

The Ministry of Pensions file for Ellen Stock[43] shows how her husband Frederick had deserted her in 1900. He was killed in action in 1917. Ellen discovered he had married again under a different name in 1910. Although by law Ellen was still married to her bigamist husband, the pension was not paid to her as she had not been named by Frederick as one of his dependants on enlistment. A letter dated July 1918, almost a year after his death, informs Ellen of the Ministry of Pensions' decision:

> I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that as you were not maintained by your husband the late M/205934 Private F. Adams, Army Service Corps, prior to his enlistment you are not eligible for the award of pension from the public funds.

Ellen's status as an 'official' widow is denied her. In the summary of the correspondence within the file, the note 'Nature of enquiry: widow states she is soldier's legal wife' has been altered by some Ministry of Pension bureaucrat to read '*woman* states she is soldier's legal wife'. Even though Ellen could provide official documentation in the form of her marriage certificate, the discourse that prevailed was that of her husband's declaration on enlisting, naming another woman as his wife. Her status was decided by powerful patriarchal discourses: in the first instance, by her husband deserting her; in the second, by his neglect in naming her as his legal wife; and thirdly by the insistence of the Ministry of Pensions that her marriage certificate could not support her appeal. This is qualified by prepositional phrase *from public funds*, which links Ellen's appeal to discourses of social welfare and nationalism, concealing the underlying parsimonious ideology.[44]

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[43] PIN 26 17168

[44] This same parsimonious ideology is clearly supported by the charities, such as the Emergency Help Committee which, in its 1924-1925 annual report states that 'everything possible [be] done to ensure that justice is done, not only to the claimant, but also the taxpayer' (p15). This assumption of justice

To summarise, the complex schematic frame under which the Ministry of Pensions determined who could claim a war widow's pension included such factors as marriage having to have taken place before the soldier was discharged from military service. Other widows found the terms of the Royal Warrant precluded them from being granted a war widow's pension because their husband had died more than seven years from the date of his injury of date of discharge, although this rule was revoked in 1921. The 'seven year rule' has been incorporated in the 1916 Royal Warrant, reflecting the assumption that any claims would have been made by that time, based on experiences in the Boer Wars. The First World War saw the emergence of new illnesses which had long-term effects, such as those experienced as a result of gassing or shell-shock. The unexpected and unpredicted longevity of such illnesses meant that the finite nature of the provision proved unworkable by 1921, however it still took many months to process claims made under the revised conditions of the Royal Warrant. During this time, many widows found that their pension applications were held up, leaving them with a greatly reduced income. The Emergency Help Committee files record the extent of the aid which they provided to such widows at this time, but always on the understanding that, as far as possible, such financial aid would be treated as a loan to be repaid out of pension arrears. In the post-war years, there are many cases of widows whose husbands had died of a condition which was not certifiably directly related to his war service. As we shall see in the case study of Florence Bayliss, a combination of these factors caused great anxiety and financial hardship for many women. So whilst the widows themselves used the general schematic frame of war widowhood as being that which required them to have been married to a serviceman or an ex-serviceman who had died, the more detailed schematic frame found in the Royal Warrant was far more complicated and, consequently, excluded many thousands of women from claiming a war widow's pension.

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and fairness which links into the older charitable discourses of help on the basis of need, is one which the widows themselves draw upon in their letters of appeal. As we shall see in the following case studies, although not explicitly linking this to justice for 'the taxpayer', Florence in particular draws on this.

Conclusion

Early 20th century provision of social welfare in the form of a pension for war widows in Britain had evolved in a society in which the dominant patriarchal ideology assumed that men had a responsibility to maintain their wives and that women were generally reliant on the income of others. As Bland has pointed out, this was a largely middle-class view where 'men were allocated to the public and political, [and] women to the private and domestic' (1995: 88). Lewis (1984: 113) comments that this two spheres ideology sanctifies the home as a refuge from the rapid economic, social and political changes, and as explained above, women were seen as the moral guardians of family life against the immorality of the market-place. The expectation that there would be a male head to the household to provide the family's primary source of income was not confined to the middle classes. Wages of working-class men, set by middle-class employers, were assumed to be higher than for women. Only in exceptional cases, such as the Lancashire cotton industry, were men and women's wages comparable.[45] Lewis (1984: 49) points out that by the end of the 19th century, the ability to maintain a wife had increasingly come to represent a measure of both masculine pride and working-class respectability, and, through a series of social legislation which prohibited women from traditional employment such as in the mines and factories as well as the infant welfare reform mentioned above, it became the norm that the wives of skilled workers should remain at home and look after the family rather than engage with paid employment. The male trade unions movement in the late 19th century supported this view, campaigning for higher wages for male employees on the basis that they had families to support, where patriarchal rule is common sense.

The etiquette surrounding widows can be seen from a Foucaultian perspective as an aspect of institutional apparatus that includes dress regulations, morality and discourses that enclose widows. The Royal Warrant of 1916 frames

[45] See Liddington and Norris (2000) for a fascinating discussion on the place of the Lancashire women's suffrage movement in relation to male trade unionism.

widows according to Victorian, middle-class perceptions of morality. As social welfare reforms came to be enshrined in State legislation in the early years of the 20th century, the discourses of morality and nationalism which were so apparent at this time sought to define women in line with largely middle-class ideals. The heavily interdiscursive nature of the Royal Warrant draws on older discourses morality, heightened discourses of national identity and newfangled discourses of social welfare. Charitable conventions, built on strongly Christian philanthropic works of the 19th century, mark the terms of the Royal Warrant and its implication, not least by the use of charities such as the SSFA and Emergency Help Committee to assist in the administration of assistance to widows, but also because of the shared membership of committees that is found in both State and charitable organisations. Where the Royal Warrant differs from charitable assistance is in its explicit ties to the nation, its funds drawn from taxable public sources. Although able to access a far greater 'pot' of money than that available to any charity at this time, the State sought to limit the nature of its assistance to widows by drawing on highly parsimonious ideology to underpin its decisions. As we shall see in the case studies, the terms of the Royal Warrant carried a very narrow schematic frame of widowhood which was frequently at odds with that drawn upon by the widows themselves. The underlying mistrust of the working classes in general and women without a male head to their household in particular is evident in the level of surveillance these women were subjected to, all under the vigilant bureaucratic gaze of the Special Grants Committee.

The case studies will also look in more detail at how widows were positioned as carers by the State, continuing the intervention in family life to ensure the regeneration of the race in the post-war yeas. Conversely, the widows themselves came to draw on their role as carers of children (the nation's future) and also the disabled servicemen, who are positioned as having given their health and ultimately their lives in defence of the nation. As suggested here, remuneration for carers could be seen as an extension of women's war work, particularly as the abiding image of women at war came to be reinforced as that of the nurse through the memoirs and

novels published in the post-war years.[46] That so many widows took the unprecedented action of seeking remuneration (in the form of compensation or reimbursement) from the State for this latter caring role is something that will be explored in more detail in the case studies.

[46] See Appendix 1 for examples of some of the recruitment posters for women war workers.

Case Study 1: Louisa Bayliss and ‘unruly’ widows

This section will employ discourse-historical analysis (Wodak, 2002) to explore discourses of morality, nationalism and social welfare in relation to British widows of the First World War who were granted war widow pensions on the basis of their husbands' deaths whilst on active service.

Building on previous sections, this analysis will focus on the case file of Louisa Bayliss[47] but will also draw on the case files of other widows, where relevant. These additional files will provide evidence of the extensive surveillance to which women such as Louisa were subjected by the State in relation to their pensions. As discussed previously, this surveillance could extend into all corners of a woman's life. Discourses of morality are particularly relevant in Louisa's case, and it is her role as a widow and as a mother (both of which carried a pensionable allowance) that is open to surveillance.

Data

The case file of Louisa Bayliss has been selected on several grounds. Firstly, she is a woman who was granted a pension during the war, her husband having been reported 'missing in action' in 1915. This meant that there was no question as to her eligibility for a widow's pension on the grounds of her husband's death being caused by something unrelated to his war service. Louisa is thus typical of the thousands of women who were widowed during the course of the war. As we will later see in the case of Florence Bayliss, for the widows of men who died after the war the situation was considerably more complicated. Secondly, Louisa is typical of many war widows in that she is relatively young at the time of her husband's death (he was reported missing three months after her 34th birthday), and has four children eligible for dependants' pension allowances under the terms of the initial pension legislation: David (born 1907); William (born 1909); Edward Ted (born 1912) and the only girl in this group, Winifred (born January 1915). Another child was born in December 1917. He crops up in several letters but is nameless and no other information is

[47] PIN26 17293. See Appendix 2 for scanned copies of the relevant letters from this file.

available on file about him, although as we shall see, he plays a significant role in Louisa's fate.

Louisa's file therefore presents a fairly typical example of a young widow who has been left with a large family of young children and who has been allotted a pension on the basis of her husband's death whilst on active service. What makes Louisa's file more remarkable and therefore worthy of selection for more detailed analysis is the number of letters she herself writes. Whilst it is apparent that not all of her correspondence is extant in this file, the large number of letters she wrote to the Ministry of Pensions over the period August 1919 to April 1921 is indeed unusual. As we shall see, her persistence in writing one or two letters a month requesting pension payments is rewarded with a standardised letter which did not vary very much in all of this time, and did not engage with her main arguments. What Louisa's letters do allow us to grasp is some indication of the life of a barely literate, working-class woman in the immediate aftermath of the First World War as she struggled to keep her family together. She draws extensively on discourses of social welfare and nationalism to support her claims, countering the accusations of the Ministry of Pensions that she has behaved immorally (although as we shall see, close textual analysis reveals none of the letters ever expand on this, there are traces as to just what this immoral behaviour might have been in Louisa's letters as well as those written by other more institutional voices).

The case file contains a large amount of correspondence relating to Louisa and her children. Whilst some of these letters and forms would have been seen by Louisa, such as copies of letters sent to her as well as application and declaration forms she has completed and returned to the Ministry of Pensions, many other documents exist that were not intended for her or for other non-Ministry readers. These include internal memos and correspondence summary sheets and letters between various pensions offices. There is also a letter from the Comrades of the Great War organisation written to the Ministry of Pensions in support of Louisa's claim for reinstatement of her pension. It is not clear whether or not Louisa would have been sent a copy of this letter, but its sympathetic tone does indicate that she was involved in its composition.

What is missing from the file is the undoubtedly extensive and detailed correspondence relating to the suspension of her pension. In cases such as Louisa's where the recipient was suspected of behaving in a way that could render their pension inadmissible, the case would be referred to the Special Grants Committee (the SGC). As previously discussed, there are no extant files relating to this committee as far as individual cases go, although policy document files are in existence and give some idea as to the power of this agency. For example, in 1921 it was determined that decisions by the SGC would not be subject to external scrutiny, even from other members of the Ministry of Pensions, in order to save paper. This led to the virtual autonomy of the SGC. (This move also, perhaps, indicates something of the huge workload of the SGC as it oversaw the surveillance of pensioned war widows in the inter-war years.[48]) As we saw earlier, the papers which do exist relating to the working of SGC suggest an unsympathetic agency which would call women suspected of misdemeanours in for interview, at the end of which they would asked to sign a declaration which summarised their alleged misbehaviour and so compelled them to accept the decision of the SGC. Louisa would undoubtedly have had to go through this process. The 'economy drive' of the SGC might also explain why there are virtually no copies of any correspondence in her file from this agency, whilst her letters to the Ministry of Pensions appear to be virtually complete for the period under discussion here. Indeed, there is nothing in her file which relates to Louisa herself from the time when her pension was resumed in June, 1921, until a rare memo from the SGC, dated October, 1927 announces the final forfeiture of her pension (although correspondence relating to her children does exist during and after this period). The six-year gap could be explained by the absence of the vast majority of documentation from the SGC.

One of the challenges of Louisa's file has been the chaotic nature of its organisation. Apparently merged from local and central files (but missing the SGC section), no attempt has been made to merge these documents chronologically. Some bureaucrat has at one point numbered some of the documents, particularly Louisa's letters, for easier reference, but these do not necessarily follow

[48] In 1919-1920, there were 11,386 investigations organised by the SGC (Lomas, 1997).

chronologically. I have re-ordered the documents to follow in a chronological order as best I can, although in the case of Louisa's letters, it has not been possible to date these other than from the 'date received' stamps on them. In some cases, her letters have been passed from one department to another, each adding its own date stamp, in which case I have taken the earliest legible date as that which I shall refer to.

Louisa's letters themselves present another challenge in that most of them are written on pieces of paper (half the size of a sheet of foolscap) folded into a four-sided notelette and it is not always clear which side of the 'page' leads on from another. Scanned copies of the originals can be found in the appendix. Her idiosyncratic punctuation and grammar has not helped this ordering task, but I hope that the sense I have made out of her letters is reasonable and here present typed transcripts of them indicating where I believe clause boundaries fall. Also highly idiosyncratic and sometimes difficult to read, I have retained Louisa's original orthography (although this is not always clear from the photocopies, as she often wrote in pencil which has smudged or else not copied clearly). Despite State-funded education being made compulsory in Britain under the 1870 Elementary Education Act, this was often negligently enforced by local education authorities. This was usually the case in working-class families where children were expected, and indeed relied upon, to contribute towards the family income. For girls, formal schooling was seen as less important than for their brothers. Often, they would be required to stay at home and help with household chores, particularly in large families where they were depended upon to look after younger siblings. It is therefore not surprising that someone of Louisa's generation exhibits only basic literacy skills, largely relying on phonetic strategies which give her writing a marked regional accent, as well as a strong reliance on conventions of colloquial spoken dialect rather than formal written English that might be expected in correspondence with official agencies. This lack of standardisation in her writing is one of the more appealing things about her file in that she really does appear to 'speak' out of the pages. Her individuality shines through in what appears to be the authentic voice of a working-class woman from the Midlands, and I hope to avoid being accused of the Li'l Abner syndrome (Preston, 1985) of appearing to treat her patronisingly.

So it is the typicality of Louisa's case, coupled with the quantity and quality of the documents in her file that led me to select her for closer analysis. Louisa's scant awareness of many of the conventions of institutional letter-writing could perhaps be explained by the nature of her claim: the war widow's pension scheme was probably the first time such a large number of working-class women had come into contact with a centralised bureaucratic organisation, the conventions of which had not then been widely and clearly established. As we shall see, Louisa draws on much older discourses of social welfare than the ones under which her pension was issued. The historical nature of discourses is very apparent in her claims for social welfare as she draws on charitable discourses with which she would have been familiar. The official documents relating to Louisa, as with other war widows, reveal similar traces of older, charitable discourses, but also are forging new discourses of social welfare that are nevertheless tied by law into middle-class Victorian discourses of morality. This brief period of time, when the British State sought to provide social welfare to its citizens on a mass scale never before encountered, contrasts with the diachronic nature of Florence's correspondence explored in the next case study.

Mother of the nation's children: 'An unsuitable guardian'

The exact reason why Louisa's pension was stopped remains a mystery as the documents which would provide the key to this disclosure no longer exist. However, there are traces of the probable cause in the documents which will be discussed below. Amongst these are correspondence dealing with Louisa's role as a mother, a role which came under close surveillance by the State. Unlike a widow's pension, the dependants' allowance paid in respect of the serviceman's children was much less likely to be stopped. As the future of the nation, children were supported financially by the State until they were deemed old enough to be self-supporting, usually at the age of 16.

Throughout the course of the decade following her husband's death, Louisa's role as primary carer to her children was under close surveillance by the Ministry of

Pensions and other agencies. This section will look at the State's intervention in the family life of widows, particularly the way in which the State acted as moral guardian in determining whether or not a woman was fit to look after her own children in much the same way as her own 'worthiness' to receive a widow's pension. As we have already seen, women's social position and motherhood are commonly equated. The legislation which was drafted by middle-class, Victorian men under the auspices of the Royal Warrant of 1916 is very closely tied into perceptions of morality, as discussed in the historical context section. As Urwin (1985) has argued, over the course of the late 19th and throughout most of the 20th centuries, there was a steady expansion in women's responsibilities which brought about the production of social and legal expectations about the maternal role. Indeed,

> this production has been supported both by the development and by the emergence of social regulatory apparatuses concerned with the well-being of children. These apparatuses […] have contributed to the production of the modern family as a site for intervention and the reproduction of dominant ideologies. (Unwin, 1985: 164)

In Foucaultian terms, Donzelot (1979) has observed that this led to the development of practices of surveillance which were ostensibly concerned with identifying deviance and in the process constructed norms which became the basis for regulating the rest of the population. As Urwin has expands, this strategy 'involves not only the isolation of deviants but the introduction of forms of prevention which support particular orthodoxies and effectively "police" entire populations' (1985: 165). The power/knowledge relations in operation here can be investigated in the creation and regulation of practices. Power can be understood in Foucaultian terms as not being possessed in a single individual, nor as something static. Rather, power is shifting and fragmentary, its position and employment given in the apparatuses of regulation themselves. In this way, widows and mothers possess limited power by virtue of having lost a husband or given birth to a child.

As we shall see below in the case of Louisa Bayliss, she is both widow and mother, yet the power she holds (in terms of obtaining money from the State and in

the care of her children) is actually granted and withheld by the apparatus put in place by the State under the terms of the Royal Warrant. As Walkerdine (1985: 220) has observed in relation to motherhood in general, 'women have power only in so far as they are positioned as mothers in relation to certain practices concerning the regulation of children'. The very practices of motherhood are regulated and constituted by the dominant ideas of child rearing prevalent at the beginning of the 20th century. Women's sexuality and their fitness to be mothers had become the object of what Walkerdine refers to as 'interlocking apparatuses and technologies' (1985: 209) from the 19th century onwards, where ideologies of separate spheres for men and women defined women as passive, receptive and maternal against the active, reasoning male. The Royal Warrant enshrined in law the expected behaviour of the woman, in terms of her social behaviour and her fitness to be a mother. The education system, through various legislative measures, and a mother's role were contrived to 'produce citizens who would accept the moral order by choice and freewill' (Walkerdine, 1995: 206), and in the case of a war widow, it was also a patriotic pride in the country for which one's husband had died. Gramscian hegemony was in operation in producing an acceptance of these moral and patriotic codes.

As stated earlier, at the time of her husband's death, Louisa had four children under the age of 16, all of whom were eligible for dependants' pensions under the terms of the Pay Warrant (1915). The eldest of these children, David, was seven at the time, and the youngest, Winifred, was eight months. Louisa was awarded a pension of 22/6 a week, increasing to 25/- in July 1916 under the revised terms covering widows' pensions and dependants' allowances contained within the Royal Warrant (1916).

The earliest correspondence in Louisa's file (21st February, 1919) is a memorandum[49] from the Ministry of Pensions central office at Millbank to the 'W. Branch' which dealt exclusively with war widows' pensions. This memorandum is also the earliest extant document which refers to Louisa's pension being suspended.

[49] See Appendix 2, document i.

However, it is not just her pension that is open to question. As the memorandum continues:

> [The Special Grants Committee] recommend however that payment of the pension for the children be made to Mrs. E.M.R. Shakespear[50], Hon. Secretary, Birmingham Local War Pensions Committee 159-161 Corporation Street, Birmingham, in trust for administration.
>
> Pension is not issuable for a child born in December 1917 as it is illegitimate.

As far as the State is concerned in Louisa's case, it is the widow's obligation to uphold the noble memory of her late husband by behaving in a way that complies with the image of the quiet, dutiful widow, corresponding to Victorian middle-class values. Similarly, her role as mother is seen through the lens of such values. As we shall see below, whilst the State regards ill-treatment and neglect as sufficient grounds to remove her children from her care, Louisa herself sees things in terms of the more immediate, day-to-day practicality of assessing her own financial ability to feed and clothe her children.

This granting of the widow's pension contrasts with the 'payment' of the pension for the children. At this stage, it was not considered reasonable to impose moral restrictions on the behaviour of minors[51], as they were under the care of a 'guardian' who was nominally their mother but, as in Louisa's children's case, could be a more 'responsible' agency, such as the State (through the locally organised Citizens' Committees of the Ministry of Pensions) or charitably organised orphanages.

What is interesting to note in this particular memorandum is that Louisa is reported to have had another child, born in December 1917. Throughout official correspondence relating to Louisa's case, she is consistently credited as having four children under the age of 16, the youngest being Winifred who was born in 1915. This memorandum dismisses the child born in 1917 as being illegitimate, not even assigning a sex. In Louisa's own lengthy correspondence, she only mentions this

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[50] As discussed in the historical context section, Mrs Shakespear is also one of only three female members of the Special Grants Committee.

[51] The Royal Warrant was later amended to include a clause to ensure the 'good behaviour' of female children. No similar instruction was made for boys.

child once: in a letter dated 23rd September 1920[52], she tries to defend this child (a boy) as belonging to her late husband (a biological impossibility, given his death in October 1915). This child is invisible in the Ministry of Pension's eyes, his place in the pensionable family ignored. In most of Louisa's letters, he is also not counted amongst her children. She is apparently accepting the 'rules' which allowed pensions to be payable only in respect of children certified as being those of deceased soldiers[53], rather than part of the extant family unit. The Royal Warrant only seems to have stepped into the role of patriarchal provider in a financial sense where there was documented evidence of a soldier's support for a child (or intended support, in the case of the unborn child of whom he was the father), thus the family unit is very tightly defined in terms of the State's willingness to support and indeed even acknowledge the presence of such children. Like other widows, Louisa does not challenge this assumption of legitimacy, instead claiming at one point that her youngest child's father is her dead husband. Louisa is drawing on the power she has in her motherhood to claim an allowance for this child, but does not persist in this claim once it has been rejected. This shows how she has recognised the power she has in her role as war widow *and* mother, although the effectiveness of this strategy is severely curtailed by the institutional power of the State.

A letter[54] to the Pension Issue Office from Mrs Shakespear, on 8th April 1919 reports:-

> Mrs Bayliss has now placed all her 4 children under the care of my Committee as she does not feel capable of looking after them properly herself. They will be removed from her guardianship on Monday next, April 14th and I shall be glad if you will now issue to me at the Motherless Rate (with arrears) for the 4 children, as up to the present we have only been receiving at the Ordinary Rate. We have been administering for all 4 children since the 28th Feby.

[52] See Appendix 2, document ii.

[53] However, if it could be proved that a soldier had supported a child that was not his, but had documented such support on enlistment, then such a child would be in receipt of dependant's allowance. For example, this is found in several cases where a man had financially supported children from his wife's previous relationship.

[54] See Appendix 2, document iii.

Here, *all her 4 children* triggers the assumption that she has just four children, rather than the alternative choice of *four of her children*. More accurately, rather than these being 'Mrs Bayliss's children', it could have been clarified stating these were all Frank's (known?) children. Ideologically, Louisa is ascribed the role of mother to only 'legitimate' children in the eyes of the State. She is placed in the active role of handing over these children to Mrs Shakespear's care, her actions prompted apparently by her own reported admission of being incapable of 'looking after them properly'. The use of the mental process verb *feel* deprives Louisa of a verbal input to this action. She appears compliant with the middle-class notion of what 'proper' care of a child should be, although no-where is this described in the extant documents held in her file, nor is there any information as to how her own guardianship of her children deviated from this standard. The assumption is that the Citizens' Committee, with its combination of the authority of State-sponsored and charitable resources is capable of providing a standard of care which the mother is not. Here, the double-voicing in the text is working ideologically, taking as an unquestioned and unavoidable reality that the State is in a position to provide better childcare than the mother (see Fairclough, 2003: 58). Louisa is seen to be acting in hegemonic accordance with this assumption.

A letter[55] dated 12th August, 1919, Mrs Shakespear offers a different perspective on the care of Louisa's children.

> This widow still has the guardianship of her youngest child, Winnie, aged 4; the three boys have been committed to the guardianship of this Committee by an order of Court. I shall be glad to have your permission to cease administering pension for the child Winnie, as our visitor, does not feel that any good is being done by her visits to the House. Mrs Bayliss is still very unsatisfactory, and does not appear to be a suitable guardian for the child, but the Court could not prove any deliberate neglect or ill-treatment, and therefore could not see their way to transfer the Guardianship. I shall be glad if you would allow separate ring paper[56] to be issued to Mrs Bayliss for this one child, leaving the other three under our care.

[55] See Appendix 2, document iv.
[56] This would be comparable with the modern pension book.

The use of passive voice gives the bureaucratic agent *order of Court* responsibility for the removal of the children from Louisa's care to that of the Birmingham Citizens' Committee. Apart from the initial allotment of the care of the children to the noun phrase *this widow* on the first line, the nominalisation of *guardianship* goes on to be used in a way that removes traces of human agency, preserving an anonymity which is common throughout official documentation of this period (something we will see further evidence of in the following case study). Furthermore, this nominalisation shows the care of the children to be something material which can be exchanged between agencies, linking with economic discourses that will become more apparent later. Louisa's position is reduced to that of intransitive agent who has possession of this guardianship, although the use of the adverb *still* triggers the assumption that this is not something that is permanent and can therefore be changed.

Mrs Shakespear is more tentative in her statement that Louisa 'does not appear to be a suitable guardian', where *does not appear to be* carries less force than other possible lexical choices such as *is not*. The reason for this tentativeness becomes clear in the following clause: 'but the Court could not prove any deliberate neglect or ill-treatment'. Here, there is a presupposition that the Court has indeed been looking for deliberate neglect or ill-treatment. It is assumed that such behaviour would have been sufficient to result in the removal of Winnie from her mother's care. The use of the legalistic *prove* implies that the weight of evidence was insufficient, although possible. Again, the use of legalistic register occurs with the adjective *deliberate*, which leaves room for the possibility that there may be accidental neglect. The coordinating conjunction *but* to begin this clause triggers the assumption that this is somehow disappointing in the mind of the writer, emphasising the underlying distrust of Louisa.

The final clause of this sentence again reveals an apparent desire to find fault with Louisa's care. The magistrates 'could not see their way to transfer the Guardianship' uses the macro intensification strategy of negation to trigger the presupposition that there was a way being sought, but could not be found. The presupposition that there was a way to be sought highlights the link between the

Courts and Citizens' Committee on one side, and Louisa on the other. The clausal conjunction *therefore* offers the final clause as the inevitable result of the preceding clause. The weight of official and bureaucratic intervention into a widow's life is clear in the litany of State-authorised agencies mentioned in this letter.

As will be discussed below, Louisa frequently wrote requesting her own pension, supplementing her argument on occasion with a brief narrative detailing the hardship experienced in looking after her daughter Winnie on the dependent's pension of 6/- a week. Her role as mother is drawn upon to frame her argument for a pension, linking interdiscursively with the increased State intervention aimed at women in the care of children, the nation's future, in preceding quarter century. For example, in a letter[57] received by the Ministry of Pension on 11th December, 1919, Louisa writes:

> I gate know money at all honely 6 shillings a week fore Winine that Donte keep haire in Boots I donte know howe she live on that money the mix is Cale bread.

Here, Louisa is using the presupposition that she is herself attempting to purchase food, but can only afford stale bread (*cale bread*), and that she is similarly unable to afford boots for Winnie. Given the letter was written in December, there is an assumption that suitable winter footwear is a necessity. Louisa is highlighting Winnie's welfare and lack of money as the cause of material difficulty. For Louisa, her power rests in her position as a mother. In her appeal for help in providing for the material well-being of her children, Louisa is linking into the State's assumed role as patriarchal provider of the means for such.

With her frequent letters of appeal gaining only a standard, negative response from the Ministry of Pensions, Louisa took matters into her own hands utilising her 'power' as a mother, and wrote in January 1920[58]:

[57] See Appendix 2, document v.
[58] See Appendix 2, document vi.

> I ham gainge to hand my Little Girl over to my Father … Dear sir I cante lived on the hair whay donte you be so kinge and send me my Pension money

Louisa's choice of the metaphor *can't live on air* is one which she employs frequently throughout her letters, but here is coherently linked to Winnie's welfare. Again, Louisa's frequently-used markers of deference *dear sir* and *be so kind* suggest she is aware of the distinction between a pension paid by rights and the more subjective nature of the war widow's pension. These markers of social deference as a premodification to a request both imply that Louisa is also aware of the power differences between herself and the anonymously addressed recipient at the Ministry of Pensions. Despite the fact the Civil Service was started to employ women in far greater numbers during the war, Louisa's letters never vary in her assumption that it is a male addressee, showing her (subconscious?) awareness of the gender imbalance.

On the back of this letter, someone at the Ministry of Pensions has written the note:- 'Widow wishes pension for child to be transferred. LC sent to guardian for completion with VF13c. 24.1.20'. Again, a mental process verb (*wishes)* is used by an official to reduce the power of Louisa's voice, glossing over the underlying plea for help in the form of financial assistance which she believes she is entitled to, and help her out of the dire poverty where it is a real struggle to provide basics such as bread for herself and her family. Louisa's narrative emphasises the link into a patriarchal ideology where the State has assumed the role of husband as provider of financial support. She is also drawing on discourses of poverty through specific mention of basic needs such as food and clothing.

The staff of Birmingham Citizens' Committee would appear to have followed up the action instigated by Louisa with their own enquiries. A memorandum[59] from this office to W Branch, dated 11th March, 1920 reads:-

> The child Winifred is in the care of the mother, Mrs L. Bayliss, at the address given 25 Crt, 4 H. Clifton Rd. It is not her house but she lives with her father John Watton, and 4 Gothic Terrace is the same address. Motherless rate is

[59] See Appendix 2, document vii.

> certainly not issuable for the child and the Guardianship is unsuitable. The case has, however, been before the courts and though the Magistrates removed the boys from the care of their mother, they left her the girl.

The use of definite descriptions of Winnie and Louisa (*the child*, *the mother*) further serve to depersonalise the memorandum, this premofication apparently deemed necessary for an understanding of the information. The second sentence seems to offer the assumption that Louisa has given information to the contrary, that she is not living with her father and is thus suspected of being deceptive, reflecting a mistrust of the working classes in general and widows in particular. However, reference to her previous extant correspondence reveals that this point about living with her father is one Louisa frequently makes, so has not in fact attempted to conceal. It is only when financial consequences for the State are involved (here, the payment of the child's allowance) that the bureaucrats choose to observe this information, Louisa's plea for help being reformulated as an argument against her.

The question of appropriate rates of pensionable pay is handled with a firmness that is startling in light of any extant documentation to the contrary. In employing the intensifying adverb *certainly* to premodify the negative, the meaning is unambiguous. Rather more puzzlingly, Mr Watton's guardianship (implied as such through exophoric reference to previous texts, here rendered less clear by the use of nominalisation) is described as being 'unsuitable'. No grounds are offered as to this declaration in this memorandum nor in subsequent ones. Only much later in the file is this expanded upon, where Mr Watton is described as being 'an unsuitable person'[60] to act as Winnie's guardian. Up to that reference, the impersonal nominalisation *guardianship* had remained ambiguous as to whether it was Mr Watton who was unsuitable or the fact of the address being unsuitable.

The final sentence echoes that written by Mrs Shakespear in August, 1919 (Document iv). Again, the court/magistrates are the active agents. Louisa's sons are not named as such, but there is the assumption that 'the boys' referred to are David, Teddy and Willie. The anaphoric reference *they* refers to the only active agents in this sentence: the magistrates. Continuing the use of impersonal definite

[60] PIN26 17293 Ministry of Pensions summary sheet, 1st May, 1930. Appendix 2, document viii.

descriptions which run throughout this letter, *the girl* is assumed to be Winnie. The impersonal nature of the letter is enhanced by the final clause, in which Winnie is reduced to the status of a package, *left* carrying a less considerate connotation than *remain*, which would presume a continuation of care that is not apparent in *left* with its connotations of abandonment. The State is here implicitly assuming its own guardianship as being more suitable than the children's own grandfather. 'Two spheres' ideology is also evident here as somehow the State is rendered more appropriate to care for the male children, presumably by admitting them to an orphanage where they would receive the beginnings of an apprenticeship, whilst the daughter, not much younger than her next eldest sibling, is allowed to remain with a woman whom the State has evidently tried to prove to be an unsuitable mother. Winnie's well-being is thus implicitly regarded as being less important than that of her brothers.

In June 1919, a letter was sent to the Ministry of Pensions, purporting to be from Louisa. However, this was not in her handwriting and contained none of her usual non-standard orthography. Written on a good quality, bond writing paper, very different to Louisa's usual inexpensive, thin paper, this letter appears to have been the work of someone who is perhaps more aware of the semiotics of writing formal letters, where heavy gauge paper is generally regarded as a sign of respectability, formality and sobriety. The letter[61], date-stamped 16th June, 1919 actually contains the writing of three different people, all employing different formulations of the same argument, but it is only Louisa's clearly identifiable voice (both in terms of handwriting and style) that adds more information to her claim.

> [*not in Louisa's handwriting*]
> Sir,
> Would you kindly forward to me my 2 childrens money as I have got them both at home again. This is Edward Bayliss and Winifred Bayliss and oblige yours, Mrs L. Bayliss.

[61] See Appendix 2 document ix.

[*Louisa's handwriting*]
What you stoppinge my Husbands Money off me I habey gote Daivid and Wilie and Tedy and Winine to children by my Husband that all I Wante to Look after / they are say Whate they liked bute Me it Wonte do them any good to say a late 2 lies / I wish I was boye em to stope my money

[*Ministry of Pensions note*]
Widow taking charge of her two youngest children again. £6.3/ sent 23.6.19

Here, the unknown writer who appears to be taking on Louisa's identity at the start of the letter includes some of the same politeness strategies that Louisa herself commonly uses, such as the *Sir* salutation and the deferential plea *would you kindly forward*…. This writer is framing the letter as an instruction but in using a question format is employing a positive politeness strategy. Where this writer differs from Louisa is in the formulation of the pension, which here is referred to as my *2 childrens money*, whereas Louisa's formulation of this overleaf again reinforces her belief that this money actually belongs to her husband: *my husbands money*. The third reference to this, noted by the anonymous bureaucrat at the Ministry of Pensions, omits any reference of ownership or attribution, simply noting *£6.3 sent*. The reporting frame of this official's brief note indicates the power of the institution over the voice of the claimant. The use of *again* triggers the presupposition that both children have previously been in her care.

Louisa's contribution to this letter asks a direct question *what you stoppinge my husbands money off me*?, which seems to imply she is not aware of the reason why the Ministry has suspended her widow's pension and thus implying her 'innocence'. She goes on to present a case of need (which will be discussed in more detail below) that is based on the assumption that the children of a dead soldier receive a pension, and as she has four children. She adds the further clarification that these are *by my husband*. This could be to emphasise that they are the children of a soldier whom she still regards as her husband – and thus counteracts the accusation implicit in other letters that she has remarried. To this opening response-demanding utterance, Louisa supplies an answer to the unspoken accusation: 'they are say Whate they liked bute Me it Wonte do them any good'. She is countering

the unspoken but expected response that her pension has been stopped because of her inappropriate behaviour. She attributes this to unknown but malicious informants who would appear to have a personal vendetta against her which she seems to think is for their own gain: *it won't do them any good*. Again, Louisa is drawing upon the assumption that it is the State's responsibility, as patriarchal guardian, to help her in her role as mother, but also accepts that it is the State's role to act as moral guardian.

It could also be that she is implicitly restricting her claim to these four children, not the son born in December 1917, so is appearing to be more reasonable in her claim for financial assistance. She states the desire that all she wants to do is look after these children. This links with the implicit assumption that she would use the pension money for other means than her children's welfare. A fear expressed in the early debates on the subject of widows' pensions in 1914 centred around the politicians' fears that a widows' pension would simply subsidise young women to live a life of luxury at the expense of the State. Although no-one could ever have been said to have become rich on the pension paid out to war widows (the rate of the pension had been decided to fall in line with the bare minimum on which someone could live just outside of poverty – and the workhouse)[62], the underlying fear of unworthiness to receive 'public funds' underpins the legislation and seems to have been adopted by Louisa in her correspondence. She appears to be framing herself as one of the 'deserving poor' for whom the social welfare system was being developed.

The argument relating to accusations against Louisa appears only in Louisa's part of the letter. The anonymous writer of the first section is simply concerned with the topic of Louisa's resumption of care for the two youngest pensionable children. It is this topic alone that the Ministry of Pensions picks up on in the internal note: 'Widow taking charge of her two youngest children again'. The use of progressive future tense indicates that Louisa has only very recently taken over the guardianship

[62] Diverting widows from the workhouse system was one of the factors discussed in the early debates, where it was stressed that it would be shameful of the government to allow widows of war heroes to end up as reliant on the Poor Law. This was acknowledged to have happened to women married 'off the strength' in the past.

of Teddy and Winnie. The child born in 1917 is rendered invisible, the lack of additional premodification to *youngest children* triggering the assumption that she has no others who are younger.

The naming of the children is also of interest here. Although inconsistent in her spelling, Louisa always refers to these two children as Teddy/Tedy/Ted and Winnie/Winine. Her naming practices for her children are not used by anyone else who writes about them, including here the anonymous first writer who uses their full first names, and the Ministry of Pensions official who (erroneously) refers to them as 'her two youngest children'. Thus Louisa is drawing on her role as mother to employ the declarative speech act of renaming her children, although again her power as mother is strictly limited by the State in this respect, as all references made from that source employ the children's 'full' names. Unlike the example of Mary Anderson's[63] child cited in the Theory and Methodology section (page 69), the widow's preference here is not taken up by the bureaucrats, perhaps reflecting a lack of sympathy towards this more unruly widow than to the apparently compliant Mary Anderson.

Louisa's war widow's pension was restored by order of the SGC in April, 1921. There are no further letters in the file from Louisa herself, but her role as guardian to her children continued to be the subject of debate in official correspondence. The Ministry of Pensions Central Issue Office wrote to the Birmingham office in November, 1922, giving details of the whereabouts of Louisa's children:-

> You are informed that payment of pension in respect of the children William John and Edward Ted, is being made at Motherless rate in accordance with your instructions dated 22nd June, 1921. The child, Winifred Doris now has left her Mother's care and has been admitted to Crowley's Orphanage. […]

From later correspondence, it is clear that Willie and Teddy had been apprenticed from around this time. Unfortunately, the letter of 22nd June referred to in the above document is no longer extant, but the mention of their pension being

[63] PIN26 17215

administered under Motherless rate leads to the assumption that they were not living with Louisa. It is likely that the boys had been apprenticed under some system which included accommodation, hence the Pension Office would pay the apprenticing agent the 'motherless rate' by way of board and lodgings. Again, the fact that it is the *boys* who are apprenticed is evidence of a patriarchal ideology which expected men to go out and work in a 'trade' whilst working-class women were largely expected to undertake unskilled work (such as domestic service or unskilled factory work) prior to marriage.

The change-of-state *now has left* triggers the presupposition that Winnie was living with Louisa until very recently. Winnie is the active agent in leaving Louisa's care of her own volition, which would be unlikely in that she would be seven years old at that time. However, the intransitive verb *leave* minimises the impact of this action. She is then subject to an agentless passive for the admission to the orphanage.

The Birmingham office's reply to this[64], dated 10th January, 1923, continues:-

> Re:- Winifred BAYLISS, child of the late
> No. 15900, Private, Frank Balyiss, Glos.
>
> Referring to previous correspondence on this case, by arrangement made with the mother the Institution were prepared to keep Winifred for 6/- per week […]

The funding of Winnie's care has been arranged 'with' contributions by both Louisa and the orphanage, placing them both in equal status of power. However, Louisa is reduced to the definite description of *the mother*, whereas the orphanage has been given an initial capital to emphasise its official importance. Where *mother* is written with an initial capital, as in the letter above (November, 1922), Louisa is there in a more important role grammatically as the recipient of an action. The authority of the orphanage over Louisa is, however, emphasised by the choice of *prepared*, which implies an element of negotiated choice on this authority's part.

[64] See Appendix 2, document x.

Winnie is again given her more formal name which emphasises the distance between her mother's informal relationship with her and that which is afforded to her by the official agencies administering her care. The reference line to this letter explicitly states Winnie is the 'child of the late…'. This highlights the link between Winnie and her father which is the basis for which her allowance is paid, giving evidence of the patriarchal ideology which underpins the whole pensions system.

The last letter in Louisa's file relates to Winnie's removal from one orphanage to another in 1930.

> Re: Winifred BAYLISS, child of the late 15900,
> Private, Frank BAYLISS, Gloucester Regiment.
>
> With reference to our minute of 13th February, 1923, and your reply thereto (copy attached) you are informed that family rate (at present 7s.6d.) is still in payment for the above-named child who is an inmate of Crowley's Orphanage, Edgbaston, up to 13th February, 1929. She was then transferred to the Orphan House, Leominster, but it is now considered that the child should be in a Home for bigger girls and the Secretary has applied for her admission to the Home of Hope, Gloucester.

The impression of Winnie as a material object being passed between guardians is continued here. The second sentence begins with Winnie as the subject of the actions of unnamed others who organise her transfer to a different orphanage. Again, an agentless passive considers her placement and leads to the assumption that Winnie is now an older and 'bigger' person who is inappropriately placed in the Leominster orphanage. An anonymous Secretary appears as active agent in the material action of applying for Winnie's transfer to a more appropriate institution (alliteratively named 'Home of Hope', seemingly in an attempt to euphamise the institution's role as orphanage).

This correspondence reveals the different attitudes towards the role of a mother. The State, with its middle-class, Victorian ideals, is concerned with material processes. These can be in the form of Louisa's behaviour and its failure to meet their expected norms of moral behaviour, or can be in the form of presenting her children as various packages with price tags attached, bargaining counters in the State's parsimonious battle to save money in the 1920s' post-war austerity. Louisa,

on the other hand, regards her role as mother as the provider of material care in the form of food, clothing and shelter. Without financial support from the State, she claims she is incapable of such care. It is this inability to provide adequately for her children at this basic level that is her greatest concern. This dilemma is perhaps what the magistrates saw when they were unable to find evidence of '*deliberate* ill-treatment and neglect'.

Patriarchal ideology underpins discourses of morality and social welfare which are in evidence in these letters which construct Louisa as an unfit mother. However, the State's distrust of Louisa extended far beyond her role as mother. After most of her children had been removed from her care, she continued her struggle to support herself and Winnie, as we have seen. As time went by, she adopted different strategies in launching her appeals, as we shall see shortly.

An unruly widow: 'To keep me all my life'

As discussed above, the first letter[65] on file relating directly to Louisa is dated 21st February, 1919 from the Ministry of Pensions, alerting the Widows' Branch of the SGC's decision to 'suspend' her pension, framed as instructions for action.

> The Special Grants Committee have had under consideration the case of Mrs. Bayliss 4/159 Clifton Road, Aston, widow of the late No. 15900 Private F.H. Bayliss, Gloucestershire Regiment, and have decided that the pension granted to this widow in respect of her late husband should be suspended.

The impersonal agency of the Special Grants Committee here appears as the theme of the opening sentence. Louisa herself is missing as a person, replaced by the nominal phrase *the case of Mrs Bayliss*…. She is then referred to by her relationship to the dead serviceman, linking her to the State's interest in her as a war widow rather than any other capacity. This is further highlighted by the (unnecessary?) clarifying clause in which her pension is postmodified by the verb phrase *granted to this widow in respect of her late husband*. *Granted* implies this is not a right, but more akin to an arbitrary favour, the State in the guise of the SGC

[65] See Appendix 2, document i.

having the power to withdraw this favour at any time. The prepositional phrase *in respect of* links semantically back to the notion that the pension is 'respectful' of a dead solider, and is so provided as a mark of value and gratitude. The use of *suspend* follows a legalistic register (such as is found in 'suspended sentence'), but carries the assumption that the pension is simply on hold, and may be reinstated at some point (presumably of the SGC's volition). These features serve to intensify the State's view of the pension being provided as something that is earned, more of a favour than a right.

As discussed above, whilst this letter also mentions that the children's pension allowances are still to be paid, the new information given is that this money should not go to Louisa, but to the secretary of the local War Pensions Committee. The final sentence of the letter provides a clue as to why Louisa's pension has been stopped: she has had another child which cannot be that of her dead husband, so she must have been involved in some sort of sexual (and therefore immoral) relationship with a man who was not her husband. This deviation from the expected behaviour of a State-funded war widow was unacceptable under the rules of the Royal Warrant. Based heavily on middle-class, Victorian ideals of women, irrespective of the norms of working-class life where extra-marital sexual relations were not unusual, such behaviour was regarded as being unacceptable to the point of the imposition of financial penalty. With such a strong moral code underpinning early State-funded social welfare, the Ministry of Pensions could not be seen to be publicly condoning extra marital sexual relations, particularly those which resulted in the birth of a child to unmarried women. Thus at a time when it would appear that Louisa needed financial help most, following the death of her husband, the birth of new baby and with five children under the age of 12 to support, she has her main source of income removed.

What seems likely is that, by 1919, the formal network of surveillance of widows had been established by the Ministry of Pensions. As previously discussed, up until 1916, the SSFA had still been involved in the local provision of pensions, but their system had not been able to cope with the large increase in the number of 'cases' for them to monitor via their network of 'lady visitors'. The formal

arrangement of the Ministry of Pensions' local offices would have given the State a higher profile in the provision of pensions on a national scale, where State-funded social welfare could be seen in action. This might go some way to explaining why there is gap of 14 months between the birth of Louisa's fifth child and the first official notification of this in her file (although investigations by the SGC are not extant, it is highly likely they would have acted quickly to 'suspend' Louisa's pension on the grounds of inappropriate behaviour as part of their role in not condoning State subsidised immorality). This letter, therefore, shows traces of the State's position on social welfare which is closely related to morality, both discourses being employed here.

Louisa's own letters of appeal contain very similar argument structures:-

1. **The grounds** to which she nearly always refers is that her husband has died;
2. **The warrant** of this being the undisputed fact that this was as a result of his war service;
3. **The claim** is that she is a war widow, and is therefore able to draw a pension. It is in the backing to her claims that she produces some variety. The two main **backings** are,
    a. Her own state of poverty;
    b. It is the State's patriotic duty to pay her the pension.

These two backings in her consistent argument provide the main categories under which her letters will be discussed below. Starting by looking at her plea for a pension which employs the backing that the pension is owed to her on a basis of need, her letters utilise discourses of social welfare and nationalism. Secondly, she bases her appeal on the basis that the pension is owed to her as a right, evoking discourses of morality and social welfare. These topi will be discussed in relation to the discourses of morality, social welfare and nationalism that run through these letters.

Pension on the basis of need: 'I can't live on air'

As previously discussed, the Royal Warrant had been drafted partly out of a desire to save money in the long term, institutional care of destitute widows by preventing the potential future expense of workhouse accommodation whilst appearing to be beneficent and acting for the good of the nation. In this rush to appear fair and equal in the distribution of pension payments, there was no means testing for a war widow's pension. It was set at a flat rate on a scale depending on a number of factors including the widow's age, and for children the dependent's pension was available at a flat rate.

In common with most working-class widows whose letters form the basis of this corpus, Louisa often features the argument based around material needs. This links into older more established and familiar discourses of means tested allowances. In a letter[66] dated by Louisa 27th December, 1919, she pleads:

> Sir / I have gote a Bade Father to live with / he gainge to throwe me out is house bocose I cante Pay my longs money that ben fru to my Husband / Sir Could you Finde me something To do / I ham a War Widows / I gete know home to cauled my hone / No15900 Private Frank Bayliss 10 Gloucestershire Regiment WCB237.
>
> Dear sir / I till Bade I cante work fore my self […]

Here, her argument to regain her pension payment is supported by her need for accommodation. It appears she is living with her father but she claims he is going to throw her out as she is unable to pay him any lodging money, triggered by the assumption she has to be in his house for him to 'throw her out'. She draws on the notion of the State as surrogate husband in pointing out that her husband had previously paid for her lodgings. Echoing the debates in parliament from six years previously, she highlights her fate as a destitute war widow without a home to call her own. She is also implying a willingness to go out and work, thus linking into the ideology of the Protestant work ethic which underpinned much 19th century

[66] See Appendix 2, document xi.

charitable provision and continued into 20th century social welfare legislation. In Louisa's case, she pleads she is unable to work owing to ill health ('I till Bade'), a factor which is highlighted in other letters in her file.

In one of the first letters[67] from Louisa herself (date-stamped 28th August, 1919), she requests her ring paper be reissued as she is only receiving a pension for Winnie.

> Dear Sir / I ham Sendinge this letter to you if you wood forde this Ringe Papper down soon you can / I havent hade heny money week fore aught houlding fore my Little Girl / I cante mabed you out / Wood you be so kinge forde my Ringe Papper down as Well soon you cane / the Number the Ringe Papper is 237 / My Husband No 15900 Private Frank Bayliss 10 Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment / Dear Sir / I havente gote marrage not all / I ham a Widow / Wood you Please Sende me my Pensions money down soon you can

This letter shows Louisa engaging in a conversational yet deferential style of writing that implicitly acknowledges the difference in power between herself and the bureaucrats. The modality in her first clause appears to carry a certainty that her request will be acted upon, as she finishes it by employing a positive politeness strategy with the request that this be done 'as soon as you can'. She presents the argument that she has no money with the presupposition that this will be sufficient grounds for her pension to be reinstated. Indeed, she uses a macro mitigation strategy to reduce the force of her expression of bewilderment that she can be in such a position when there is a certain income to be had from 'her' pension: *I cante mabed you out* implies that she is unaware of any circumstances under which her pension should have been stopped. Perhaps in the hope that this is merely an administrative error, she helpfully includes reference to the ring paper number. In what would become a feature of all of her letters, she also gives the full number, rank, name and regiment of her husband. This is not as futile as it would first appear, as in her letters this tends to be one of the only elements which is deemed

[67] See Appendix 2, document xii.

important enough to be highlighted by the blue pencil of the bureaucrats at the Ministry of Pensions.

In my analysis of such documents throughout the corpus, this bureaucratic trace is consistently found. The serviceman's details would be underlined along with any reference to a change of circumstance or other 'fact' deemed valid for attention. In Louisa's letters, as seen in the appendix, little is underscored apart from Frank's details, thus suggesting the main arguments she is making are not seen as valid by the Ministry of Pensions bureaucrats. In fact, the few occasions when further underlining is evident, it is to Louisa's detriment, whereby the document is effectively transformed from one that seeks to make a case for Louisa to regain her pension, to one that is designed to dismiss her account.

To return to Louisa's letter of 28th August (Document xii), it could be assumed that she is writing to refute a claim that she has remarried (in which case her pension would have ceased anyway), triggered by the statement *I havente gote marrage not all I ham a Widow*, in which she presents herself as a widow and therefore presumably worthy of a State-funded pension. As discussed above, the frame of motherhood is also used to appeal for a pension, whereby the assumption that it is the breadwinner's role to provide for the family is passed to the patriarchal authority of the State. It should also be noted that, although the children's dependants' allowances were not suspended during this period, they were often subject to administration orders where they would be held in trust by the local Pensions Officer (in this case, Mrs Shakespear), thus denying the mother the role of head of household and revealing the State's lack of trust vested in women without a male head of household.

In this first letter, we see Louisa already regarding the widows' pension as one that is hers by right as the widow of a dead soldier, but also she is linking this to older assumptions about such payments being given on the basis of need. For Louisa, 'need' is the most important factor as she struggles to look after herself and her family, and it is this most pressing issue which continues as a theme throughout her letters. She is not 'failing' in this traditional role of mother through any intentional fault of her own. Quite the reverse; it is lack of (financial) resources that

are causing her main difficulties. Thus she employs the frame of motherhood to support her claim on the basis of need, and as we shall see below, the frame of widowhood which was written into the Royal Warrant is one with which she also comes to comply.

Another widow, Mabel Beadsworth, whose case will be discussed in more detail below, was in a similar position to Louisa in that her pension had been stopped on the basis of 'immoral' behaviour. Unlike Louisa, there is another letter in file much later from this widow which gives some idea of the possible fate of such women. Some 15 years after her pensions had been stopped, in a letter[68] written from Fishpool Institution (the euphemistic re-naming of a workhouse near Bolton), Mabel pleads for a reinstatement of her pension. Her letter carries the assumption that a reinstated pension would remove her from the workhouse, and draws intertextually on much older arguments relating to the State's maintenance of war widows whereby the pension was partly intended to act as a means of keeping such women out of the workhouse system. Hence her needs is here based not so much on the daily means of living, as Louisa's is, but on the next level of need, that of freedom to maintain a level of independent living outside of the much-feared institution of the workhouse.

> Since my second child of my husband's was 3 years of age, I have lived with a man named Dakin by whom I have had eight children who has now left me since March of last year, thus my reason for being in the institution, and am told by my solicitor where I have applied for a summons against this man, to apply to you for pension. Kindly note I had not met the man Dakin until nearly three years after my husband's second child was born […] I hope I have made my case quite clear to you, and hoping you will reconsider my Army pension, when I will promise I will not lose it again.
>
> Believe me,
>
> Yours respectfully,
>
> Mabel Beadsworth

The more complex details of the parentage of Mabel's children will be discussed below, but here she presents herself as a women who has been mistreated by the

[68] PIN26 17296 Mabel Beadsworth to Ministry of Pensions, 23rd September, 1931

father of eight of her children in his abandonment of her. She employs macro intensification strategies to present this abandonment as the reason for her presence in the workhouse (which she herself refers to euphemistically as 'the institution'), that no alternative course of action is available is triggered by the use of *thus*. The gap in the coherence of her argument here may hide a series of desperate misfortunes that lead her to take the drastic step of entering the workhouse, but is left implied by this coordinating conjunction. She distances herself from the man with whom she has had a long-term relationship by referring to him only by his surname, also prefixing this by *the man* in order to mark the difference between him and *my husband*, her relationship to the latter being the grounds on which she is basing her plea for reinstatement of her pension. Her repeated restatement of her children's relationship with Beadsworth serves to further highlight her claim, drawing on the frame of motherhood which she stretches to include her children by Dakin by giving the exact number of children born to this father.

Mabel, like Louisa and many other widows, regards the war widows' pension as being hers, triggered by the use of the personal possessive pronoun *my*. In Mabel's case, she is also takes responsibility for having her pension stopped through the commissive speech act *I promise I will not lose it again*, where *again* acts as a trigger to enforce her role as the active agent responsible for the loss of the pension. Mabel's claim to truth is intensified by the complimentary close *believe me*, which precedes the conventional deference of *yours respectfully*. Without the expected prefix of *please*, the phrase moves from a request to an instruction which, semantically, acts indirectly as an intensified plea, thus revealing Mabel's recognition of linguistic strategies appropriate to such appeals.

One of the groundbreaking principles on which the Royal Warrant had been drawn up was that it was not means tested but, as seen above, many widows had very great need of this pension in order to maintain their material existence. Frequently, when widows' appeals on the basis of material need were not answered by the Ministry, a different approach was used by widows, resulting in many of them resorting to the argument of it being the State's moral obligation to support them.

Pension on the basis of moral obligation/right: 'For king and country'

As previously mentioned, almost every letter Louisa sent to the Ministry of Pensions contained the name, rank, number and regiment details of her husband. In so doing, she is reinforcing her claim to a pension by this invocation of her husband's military details. Although he had only been in the army for just over a year, these are the only identifying details she gives. As described earlier, Louisa's widow's pension was distributed to her as soon as the Army Council had been satisfied as to Frank's military service and presumed cause of death ('missing in action' was a frequently invoked euphemism to describe those unfortunate men who had been blown to pieces in the course of their active service), and Louisa had provided evidence of her association with Frank by producing her marriage certificate as well as her and the children's birth certificates.[69] The blue ticks of the Ministry bureaucrats on records in her file indicate that all of these documents had been received and authenticated in the six months following Frank's declared 'missing in action', this period being the time built into the pension system for administrative purposes. Once her pension had been stopped, Louisa often invoked discourses of nationalism to support her plea for its reinstatement as part of her 'right' to a pension which she seems to regard as being in exchange for her husband. In a letter[70] date-stamped 11th December, 1919, Louisa writes:-

> Dear Sir / you hade my Husband to fighte fore Kinge and Country / I speted you to keep me all my life War Widow / Private Frank Bayliss 1590010 Batt Gloucrstershire Reg / From is wife L J Bayliss.

Here, Louisa explicitly draws on the argument that the State should act as her guardian and provider of financial support in her husband's absence, citing the State's patriotic duty as the backing to her claim for a pension. She is accepting the patriarchal role of the State to take over her husband's role in a phrase that echoes

[69] See Appendix 2, document xiii.
[70] See Appendix 2, document v.

the marriage lines: 'to keep me all my life'. As Elshtain (1993) has observed, in times of war the motivation to join up is not primarily by hatred of the enemy, but by a willingness to die in the cause of the homeland. This particular articulation of national identity is one which the British State drew upon during the First World War and is one which Louisa, and other widows, repeated in the years that followed.

The early recruitment posters to Kitchener's Army had made the explicit link between monarchy and nation, often employing the highly alliterative phrase 'fight for king and country' (for example, see left[71]) in expressing the idea of fighting for the defence of the homeland as the main motivation for joining up. It is a phrase found in countless letters written by war widows to the Ministry of Pensions. For example, Mary Rooney finished a letter appealing for an extension to her children's pension with: 'you will at least earn the gratitude of the widow of one who has made the supreme sacrifice for his King and Country'.[72] This phrase came to be one of the most common to be carved onto the community war memorials which sprang up around the country in the years immediately following the war, where they remain to this day with the addition of names from later conflicts for whom this overt patriotism was perhaps less relevant. The phrase appears in various texts throughout the war, such as found on post cards and even official Christmas cards.[73] In a letter[74] dated by Louisa herself as 27th December, she repeats this argument: 'My Husband Done fore his Best fore his

[71] 1914 recruitment post from the Imperial War Museum archives. According to Rickards (1968: 10), Kitchener later insisted that army advertising should always sign off with 'God Save the King', which further emphasises the link between monarchy, nation and Christianity.
[72] PIN26 19002 Mary Rooney to Ministry of Pensions, 3rd June, 1920.
[73] This phrase has become so closely associated with the First World War that it comes as a surprise to many people that the 'King and Country' regimental magazine which features in Curtis and Elton's 'Blackadder Goes Forth' (BBC, 1985) did not actually exist. Given the proliferation of this phrase's uses at the time, perhaps this is one of the few opportunities to use it that was missed.
[74] See Appendix 2, document xi.

kinge and Countery I think you aught to do something fore me'. She has employed the rather more sophisticated rhetorical strategy of parallel structures to emphasise her argument and implicitly links her husband's service to the State with the State's obligation to her. Her use of *ought* carries a modal obligation of greater certainty than alternatives such as *could* and *might.*

For Louisa and so many other widows in the post-war years, their evocation of patriotic phrases was no longer accepted as valid by the State, the order of discourse having shifted to be primarily one of morality rather than patriotism.

Louisa also frequently repeatedly refers to herself as 'war widow' or more simply as Frank's 'wife'. In the case of the former, she is drawing on her schemata for the frame of war widow which includes the status and power that would be vested in such a position, the power to draw a pension, for example. A war widow would also have been the one category of widow who was allocated a (financially) non-contributory State pension at this time, and thus is a position which carries with it a certain material benefit which would come to be held up as an example of a perfect model for a pension system when the widows' pension scheme was developed by the first Labour administration in the mid 1920s. In society in general, the frame of a war widow carried with it the hushed reverence and pride that would be ascribed to a woman whose husband had died in the service of 'his' country. Such power and status vested in the title of 'war widow' thus encompasses ideas of nationalism and social welfare, discourses that Louisa draws upon in her claims for the reinstatement of her pension. This put war widows in the unexpected position of being envied by the unmarried women in the interwar years, whom Holden (2005) refers to as 'imaginary widows'.

This passage from 11th December (document v) also shows another common strategy used by Louisa in her letters: the use of a conversational style which makes her appeal personal to the nameless and unknown bureaucrat whom she is addressing. In a society where face-to-face appeals for charitable assistance would have been common, this is not surprising. Her letters frequently employ the discourse marker *dear sir*, although it is not always clear if the second person pronoun is addressing an individual or an institution. For example, in this passage it

would appear that although she is appealing directly to the anonymous bureaucrat in her imploring *dear sir*, the ***you*** *hade my Husband* and *I speted* ***you*** *to keep me* are more likely an institutional *you.* Earlier in the same letter, in the most frequent opening to all of her correspondence, Louisa writes: 'Dear Sir Wood you Be so kinge and sende me mye Pension'. Here, the second person pronoun appears to be directed towards the recipient as an individual. In other letters, the appeal is more desperate as she demands 'Sir howe wood you likede to go with out heny Diners on Sunday all the week Nothinge to live on'.[75] This apparent response-demanding utterance carries the assumption that it is Louisa herself who is living under such hardship, but also links into the British tradition of a 'special' meal on a Sunday which she herself is deprived of as she has not the money to spend even on bread for seven days a week. Here as elsewhere, Louisa is drawing on more familiar encounters with authorities where meetings would be on a face-to-face basis, and so more personal, thus her attempt to find a common ground, a shared lifeworld, with her interlocutor is, perhaps, not surprising.

Like other widows, Louisa is persistent in her assumption that the pension is hers as a right. Drawing on the frame of motherhood to support her argument, she is consistent in referring to it in the first person possessive article. For example, as is found in the more or less standard opening to her letters as here in a letter[76] date-stamped 4th May, 1920:

> Dear Sir / Wood you Be so kinge and lete me have my Widows Pensions Pay / I think Some Boday eles havinge My Pension Loance For speite my Husband left me is Pay to Pickup Every Week I Dont / I am left with 4 children / I dont know What you gote to stope it for / from the forst temes 28 last yeare in Mach last pay I hade / I haught to have it backe gen / Dear Sir / I done Nothinge fore you to stop my Widows Pensions launce / Private Frank Bayliss 10 Gloster 15900 WCB237 / from Mrs L Bayliss.

She appears to be working on the assumption that an unidentified agency is paying the pension every week into some sort of holding fund, presumably basing this

[75] See Appendix 2, document xiv.
[76] See Appendix 2, document xv.

assumption on the fact that her separation allowance was paid directly from her husband's army wages to the local post office for her to collect, hence her comment 'my Husband left me is Pay to Pickup Every Week I Dont'. The pension payments, although delivered in the same way as the separation allowance, were not held in trust in the event of a pension being suspended as Louisa's had been. However, this does not appear to have been explained to Louisa, or at least understood by her. Using argument structure, we can see that this results in the backing of unwarranted cessation of pension which she employs in addition to the more usual backing of poverty. She again invokes the modality of greater obligation in claiming that she *ought* to have her pension reinstated, this reinstatement triggered by the use of *again* to carry the presupposition that she has had a pension at some time in the past. The apparent assumption that the pension is actually a continuation of her husband's army pay and is not, in fact, a State-funded pension, is clearly articulated in an undated letter (probably August, 1919[77]) when Louisa formulates her usual request for reinstatement of her pension as 'Please forde my Husband Money on be longe to him'.

Other factors are introduced here to reinforce Louisa's arguments. Part of the grounds for her argument are that she seems to believe someone else is unfairly collecting her pension. Nowhere does she offer evidence of this, but seems to link it to the known fact that her separation allowance then her pension had been paid regularly, but had stopped. The material nature of such a payment, to someone who is unfamiliar with the nature of social welfare funded by central government, quite logically must still exist, even when it doesn't get paid every week.

There is apparent bafflement on the part of Louisa as to why this pension payment has ceased. She pleads 'I dont know What you gote to stope Widow pension money', personalising her argument by expressing ignorance as to the cause of the State's unfair actions. Invoking the frame of motherhood, she states she has four children to look after, linking her argument for a pension on the basis of personal need with the need to provide materially for the children of a dead soldier. Again, the direct appeal to the anonymous bureaucrat at the Ministry of Pensions is

[77] See Appendix 2, document xvi.

marked by the macro mitigation politeness strategy of deference in addressing this person by the formal letter writing salutation in a conversational style when she appears to answer the implied question: 'Dear Sir I done Nothinge fore you to stop my Widows Pensions launce'. Other letters repeat this sense of bewilderment: 'I cante maked you out' (28th August, 1919[78]); 'I think you tuck me fore the raunge one' (undated, but approximately early September, 1919). This mental process verb *think* in this last example acts as a micro mitigation strategy, lessening the force of Louisa's accusation of mistaken identity.

As mentioned above, the conversational style of Louisa's letters makes personal appeals the basis of her argument. Whilst she usually addresses the anonymous Ministry of Pensions bureaucrat as an individual, she also lays personal blame for her circumstances on this unknown individual. In a letter[79] date-stamped 9th February, 1920, Louisa writes:

> all you fault I cante gete my proper food know money to lived on / Dear Sir / wood you be so kinge and let me have my Pensions money soon you cande / are you tryinge to trick me out of my Pensions Launce Course my Husband Gate killed at the Ware / Private Frank Bayliss 10 Glasters Sheres 15900

Here, she makes a direct accusation of blame for her current state of poverty as being the 'fault' of the anonymous bureaucrat. Immediately after this outburst, she resumes her usual deference with the well-worn request 'Dear Sir would you be so kinge and let me my Pensions money soon you cande', placing the power of the request back in the hands of the authorities. However, this request is then followed by a question which makes another accusation, although here the use of the question form makes the accusation less forceful than the opening statement *all you fault*. The response-demanding 'are you tryinge to trick me out of my Pension Launce' is backed by the known facts of her husband's war service, thus the tentative accusation is being reinforced by acknowledged fact to give it more weight. As with most of Louisa's arguments, the fact of her husband's death whilst on active service

[78] See Appendix 2, document xii.
[79] See Appendix 2, document xvii.

is regarded by her as her strongest bargaining tool. Her argument about her current state of impoverishment being the responsibility of the State (synecdochally standing in for the nation) is emphasised by the stress placed on the usual warrant that her husband died during active service ('my Husband Gate killed at the Ware'). In this way, nationalism and social welfare are inextricably linked, along with Louisa's view that it is the State's moral obligation to give her money. This letter ends with: 'from Mrs Balyiss War Widow I ham'. The subverted syntax of the noun phrase she has chosen for herself emphasises her status as a war widow by placing it before the pronoun, making what would otherwise be an equal state subject more powerful.

Throughout Louisa's letters, there is an underlying assumption that her pension payments can and will be reinstated as a result of her petitioning. In a letter[80] date-stamped 1st September, 1919, she gives quite specific instructions as to where her pension money should be paid, which carries the assumption that it *will* be paid in its frame of instruction: 'my Ringe Papper is 237 / Will you Please to Sende it Aston Maner Post Office / Please Sende Soon you cane Fore me hand my Little Girl.' Aston Manor Post Office would, indeed, have been the agency which would have paid out her weekly pension, but here Louisa shows an apparent confidence that, by including such details, her pension will appear where she has directed. She continues this strategy almost a year later (in July, 1920[81]) when, in the voice of her father[82], she writes that she 'will draw the money on Monday'.

The precise reason Louisa's widow's pension was suspended in 1916 is one of the unspoken features of her case. As discussed above, she sometimes refers to an exophoric, malicious entity who is passing on information about her to the Ministry of Pensions. For example, the letter date-stamped 16 June, 1919 (Document ix, discussed earlier), Louisa appears to be countering the unspoken but expected response that her pension has been stopped because of her inappropriate behaviour. She attributes this accusation to unknown but malicious informants who would appear to have a personal vendetta against her which she seems to think is for

[80] See Appendix 2, document xviii.
[81] See Appendix 2, document xix.
[82] This letter will be discussed in more detail below.

their own gain: 'it won't do them any good'. The surveillance this implies will be discussed further shortly.

There are no letters in the file from Louisa following the reinstatement of her pension in 1921, but it is clear that she did remain under official surveillance. A letter[83] from the local pensions office to the Ministry of Pensions in January 1923 repeats Louisa's own claims of ill health, but here presented by the Ministry officials themselves as being an essential factor in redirecting some of the family pension money to her:

> In view of the widow's mental condition and inability to earn, it is felt that payment of the extra 5/- to her becomes in fact, a vital necessity.
>
> It is, therefore, strongly recommended that payment of 6/- be continued to the Orphanage, and that payment of 22/2d. be paid to Mrs. Bayliss.

The urgency expressed in the phrase *a vital necessity*, the intensifier emphasising the perceived need, is carried through in the following sentence with the premodification of *recommend* with *strongly*. Unusually in correspondence from Ministry of Pensions bureaucrats, this letter expresses a sense of need rather than right in the administration of the pension. The Ministry of Pension's use of 'need' over-rides Louisa's own use of this in her drawn out pleas on this claim grounding, once again showing the institutional power of the State over its citizens in the orders of discourse that are permitted. Lengthy correspondence within the Ministry of Pensions proceeded to clarify the position and it was eventually decided that Louisa had no right to this extra 6/- under the terms of the Royal Warrant.

Compliance with moral code: 'Her moral character has been good.'

Whilst the precise nature of Louisa's perceived misdemeanours which led to the initial suspension of her pension in March 1919 are unstated in the extant documents

[83] See Appendix 2, document x.

in her file, it is clear that it was her *moral* behaviour which led to this initial suspension. As discussed earlier, the letter from the Birmingham office of the Ministry of Pensions, dated 12th August, 1919[84], declares: 'Mrs Bayliss is still very unsatisfactory'. The use of *still* triggers the assumption that this unsatisfactory behaviour has previously been known about and continues to the date of this letter. Evangelical beneficence is suggested in this letter where the writer uses indirect speech in giving the visitor's report that she 'does not feel that any good is being done by her visits to the House'. This carries the assumption that the visitor would be 'doing good', probably by offering advice relating to childcare and general moral values, although to whose benefit is left unstated. However, the visitor would have been part of the surveillance system set up initially by the SSFA, implicitly to report on any inappropriate or immoral behaviour on the part of the pensioned widow. The public and parliamentary debates relating to the initial drafting of the Royal Warrant in 1914 hint at the mistrust of women. Letters in *The Times* in early October 1914 relating to the fear that soldiers' wives would squander their separation allowances also formed part of the parliamentary debates the following month when widows' pensions were first discussed. The debates, as we saw earlier, carried the fear that these working-class women would (unacceptably) become State-subsidised 'merry widows' if no checks were built into the Warrant. In light of this fear that women without a patriarchal head to the household who could manage their moral and financial existence, the pension rates were deliberately set at such a rate that anticipated such women would have another source of income so would not be languishing in State-subsidised luxury, or at least alcoholic inaebriation, as was frequently expressed by *The Times* letter-writers.

The moral standards which framed widows, including working-class war widows, included the expectation that they would adhere to behaviour which modelled passivity and sobriety. Whilst such attributes were undoubtedly part of middle-class widowhood, the lifestyle of working-class women was often very different. What is interesting to note is that there is a dawning acceptance of these middle-class standards of moral behaviour by the working-class widows, whose

[84] Appendix 2, document iv.

private lives are being discussed in the public sphere. Perhaps the realisation that they were the subject of surveillance and that their pensions depended on such morality led to compliance, at least on paper. As Foucault pointed out in *Discipline and Punish*,

> In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his [sic] subjection. (1977: 187)

The case files of other widows give an indication of the levels of surveillance these women were subject to. To return to Mabel Beadsworth[85], her husband had been 'lost in action' in May, 1915. Mabel's claim for a dependant's pension for a daughter born in January 1916 aroused suspicions by unnamed bureaucrats at the Army Council (which administered war pensions until later in 1916, when the Ministry of Pensions was created) as her husband had not been home for leave since February, 1915. The local office of the War Relief Committee (which preceded the Ministry of Pension) organised a police investigation into this matter. In one letter, the local Army Council official writes:

> I am directed […] to request that you will be good enough to cause confidential enquiries to be made and a report to be furnished as to the truth of the allegation made concerning the parentage of the child (born the 2nd January 1916) and as to the woman's general character and conduct. […] This information is required to enable the Army Council to decide whether Mrs. Beadsworth is worthy of the Pension which has been awarded to her in respect of the above soldier [Pte Alexander Beadsworth].[86]

Here, the euphemism *confidential enquiries* masks the intrusive, indeed draconian nature of the surveillance under which widows were subjected. Police involvement suggests this is a criminal activity and links with the legal register that is employed elsewhere in official documentation relating to pensions, such as *commit, sanction, suspend*, etc. Indeed, in other letters it emerges that a high-ranking police officer (a

[85] PIN26 17296
[86] PIN26 17296, letter from Army Council to Leicester Chief Constable, 30th May, 1916.

detective chief inspector) had visited Mabel at home to question her. The high level of formality in this letter features a lack of human agency, where nominalisations such as *the allegation* and *the parentage* mask responsibility, and Mabel herself is reduced to *the woman's character*. Mabel's 'character' is open to surveillance, discourses of morality being invoked in line with those of social welfare for which she has to prove herself 'worthy', rather than any argument of need. Once more drawing on moral discourses which frame widowhood, the resultant police report records:

> She is a Barmaid and at the present time is employed at an Hotel here, but her general conduct is open to suspicion, although no recent complaints have been received here respecting her.

Serving in a bar was regarded as a very unsuitable occupation for a 'respectable' woman, and as we shall see later, this attitude relates to Louisa's own negative comments about women who drink in bars. There is no active agent assigned to the nominalised mental process verb *suspicion*, and the contrastive conjunction *although* leads to the presupposition that her behaviour has been the cause of moral concern in the past (triggered by *recent* and enforced by *here*, which suggests that complaints could have been received elsewhere).

It is not just the State that is engaging in the surveillance of widows: it could come from neighbours and family as well. Another letter in Mabel Beadsworth's file is from her mother-in-law[87], who writes that Mabel 'gave birth to a bastard child'. At this time, *bastard* was still most commonly used in its legal sense (as in the Bastardy Orders which were issued to fathers of children who were born out of marriage in this period), but this letter is also carries highly negative connotations which are enforced by the following clause, which the writer presents as a response-demanding utterance 'do you not call that misconduct'. Assuming agreement, she goes on to draw upon strongly moralistic discourses, and continues 'it is a disgrace to the name of woman'. Mrs Beadsworth senior is thus presenting herself as a moral guardian in line with the State's expectations of the same.

[87] PIN26 17296 letter from Mrs E. Beadsworth to Army Council, 10th June, 1916.

Another widow, Rosina Allen[88] aroused suspicion at the Ministry of Pensions when she re-married nine months after the death of her husband in 1934. In Rosina's case, her neighbours were questioned by local Ministry of Pensions officials in an attempt to find out if her second husband had lived with her before they married. An internal memorandum of 23rd March, 1935 further reports that 'the Superintendent of this Council Estate, whose office is situated quite close to [Rosina's street], unofficially informed me that the woman was generally regarded as very respectable.' It appears that the 'unofficial' surveillance emerges from the panopticon of the superintendant's office and stretches into the unofficial network of neighbours, further supporting the Foucaultian notion of surveillance that underpins the discipline of morality to which the widows were subjected.

This euphemism of 'confidential enquiries' echoes the 'unofficial information' in letters relating to Mabel. Fortunately for Rosina, these enquiries from unnamed neighbours are reassuring of her 'respectable' behaviour, ie her compliance with the middle-class code of morality for widows.

A more subtle level of surveillance was also employed, ostensibly to the widow's benefit. In particular, the moral surveillance extended to the husbands of widows who remarried. Catherine Baillie's[89] husband, John, had been killed in action in 1917, leaving her with five children under the age of 16. She married again in 1920, receiving the 'gratuity' of a year's pension to mark the end of her war widowhood status. The dependants' allowance for her children continued, as with the Royal Warrant policy of standing as provider in the place of their father. It emerged that her second husband was, in fact, already married. A letter from the Glasgow Local Committee to the Special Grants Committee relates the brief details of her situation:

> I have to inform you Mrs Baillie is in receipt of a pension for £1-9-6 on behalf of the children of the above named deceased soldier. On the 7th April 1920, she married James Kearney. She stayed with him just about six weeks and only discovered after that period, through the School Board Officer, that

[88] PIN26 17200
[89] PIN 26 17241

> he was a married man. She took in his children, three in number. Kearney's legal wife has been away from him since November.[90]

Catherine is noticeably the active agent in most of this letter. In particular, she is placed in the role of carer. This is initially in the role of carer for her children from her first marriage where she is curiously absent from the explicit role of mother to the children, instead being merely the recipient of the State's money which is clearly paid in their position as the children of a dead serviceman. She is also somewhat vaguely placed as carer to her new husband's children, the use of simple non-present tense leaving it unclear if this is something she is continuing to do. Kearney's first wife is also given an active role, euphemistically described as having 'been away from him'. There is a background assumption that Catherine's second marriage took place to enlist her help as carer of Kearney's children from his existing marriage. However, the news of this bigamous marriage is passed to Catherine, not through friends and relatives, but through the subtle surveillance of the school board officer. This illustrates the point made in the Historical Context section that the working classes, and mothers in particular, were subjected to surveillance through the social welfare reforms of the early 20th century, particularly those directed explicitly towards children. In Catherine's case, this surveillance seems to have worked to her advantage as her pension was restored. A letter from the SGC announced:

> The Special Grants Committee have decided that she may be regarded as worthy of resumption of her pension.[91]

The collective agency of the SGC, although reinstating her pension, employ the hedge *may* to allow doubt to be possible in the future which a greater degree of certainty such as *is* would not have allowed. There is also a level of arbitrariness in the choice of the mental process verb *decide* which is found in other letters from the SGC. Catherine's reinstatement of pension is articulated as being linked to her

[90] PIN26 17241 letter from Glasgow Local Committee Secretary to Special Grants Committee, 20th September, 1920.
[91] PIN26 17241 SGC to W Branch, 30th November, 1920.

moral behaviour, triggered by *worthy*, all underlining the power of the autonomous SCG.

In Mabel, Rosina and Catherine's cases, we can see that the surveillance of widows extended to family, employers and neighbours, all of whom were expected to contribute to the official State surveillance. In relation to Mabel and Rosina, there is little doubt that this is the sort of surveillance to which Louisa was subjected.

Louisa in particular presents a picture of herself which appears to be an attempt to comply with this morality within the frame of widowhood. In a letter[92] date-stamped 22nd January, 1920, she frames her appeal as a request:

> […] Dear sir / I cante lived on the hair / whay donte you be so kinge and send me my Pension Money Dawn / Dear Sir / I nate marriage / I ham still a widow / I all kieep my selfe to selfe / I donte go out at night time / if havey halfe my Pension aboute £10,- week to bye me some food with / I donte draink bare liked some shouldrs wife in a bare shope / I donte have aute work pay / I note loakey / the others to gete heny think aut tell you a lie / I donte gete heny thnk to heat / I wish I gate a Good Friend to healp me / I go now bodary at all.

Here, she presents her usual argument claim that she has material need for a pension, but uses the backing that she is complying with a standard of moral behaviour which she has presumably been accused of breaching, leading to her pension being stopped. She asserts 'I all kieep my selfe to selfe I donte go out at night time'. The use of the intensification strategy of negation to enhance a positive feature continues as she uses the strategy of comparing her own behaviour with that of other soldiers' wives. This links into the moral panic about soldiers' wives which Trustram (1984) commented on, and which again surfaced in relation to soldiers' wives in Britain during the First World War. Such distrust was a factor that contributed towards the more draconian measures in DORA against a backdrop of general mistrust of women without a male head of their household, whether these be simply women whose husbands were on active service, or women who had been widowed.

Louisa is also drawing on discourses of social welfare whereby at this time demobbed soldiers were returning home to resume their pre-war jobs, putting many

[92] See Appendix 2, document vi.

women war workers out of a job. As previously discussed, those women who had paid into the National Insurance scheme were not always eligible for unemployment benefit, as the legislation that had been formulated generally precluded women from this scheme unless they could prove they were unable to find work elsewhere. It is against this background that Louisa is making her assertion that she 'doente have aute work pay', whilst at the same time it could also be read that she is emphasising her poverty in not having dole as a form of income, rather than presenting her own moral worthiness.

Louisa also appears to imply that unnamed 'others' only get State money by telling lies. She is linking her argument into wider public concerns about the abuse of unemployment benefit to enhance her own argument, the shifting order of discourse is thus being recognised by her. This links with a previous argument Louisa has used to claim a pension in a letter[93] earlier in the same month (date-stamped 10th January, 1920), where she appears to be offering the case of a widow who claims a pension for a baby that is not hers:

> nowe that widow gete hair money fore hair self and fore that babey donte be longe to her / she Pound of 28 Shilings fore haire self and Ten Shiling fore the Babey / that ise faire / me have Nothinge at all

Here, Louisa is putting herself in the role of 'informant', a role she appears to so despise in other people. The dishonesty which Louisa is accusing other, unnamed claimants of a widow's pension contrasts with her own honesty which is emphasised by her inability to buy food for herself.

Louisa's letter ends on a plaintive note, where she declares she has nobody to help her. It is possible that she is actually referring back to the Poor Law policy of forcing claimants to exhaust help from their family before resorting (and a very last resort!) to the Poor Law Guardians.

This claim to a moral behaviour by Louisa is not considered relevant in the reformulation of her letter by the anonymous official at the Ministry of Pensions. As we saw earlier, the opening of the letter had implied that Louisa could not afford to

[93] See Appendix 2, document xiv.

look after Winnie so would be handing over her care to her grandfather. The reformulation of this by an anonymous Ministry of Pensions bureaucrat does not reflect the desperation and lack of choice in her actions which Louisa's letter indicates. By declining to engage with Louisa's more detailed discussion of her impoverished state where day-by-day existence is a struggle, the bureaucrat has chosen to reformulate Louisa's narrative of poverty as something which can be made in line with the narrow terms of the Royal Warrant. This emphasises the Ministry of Pension's general refusal to engage with the needs of widows, concentrating instead on the financial implications for the State.

When Louisa's letters to the Ministry of Pensions declaring her own improved behaviour did not receive anything other than the standard dismissive response, it seems she called on other resources. In two letters[94], both in Louisa's handwriting and both written in her own idiosyncratic style, it appears that it is her father's voice that she is attempting to present (the letters are not signed under any name, this omission perhaps showing an awareness of the risk Louisa was running in writing these letters pretending to be someone else). Other letters in the file show that Louisa was living with her father for most of the period of this case study, and indeed she had handed over the guardianship of her children to him, as discussed above. Although her letters indicate that this was a difficult arrangement and the Ministry of Pensions had elsewhere decided that he was an 'unsuitable guardian' for the children, by June 1920 Louisa had resorted to invoking his voice as one of authority and trust.[95] His voice is being used not only to repeat Louisa's habitual request for her pension to be resumed, but is also being used to vouch for her moral character. In line with Louisa's earlier letter (Appendix 2, document vi), there is a negation of 'bad' behaviour being used to back her claim for a pension as she draws on the frame of middle-class widowhood.

> Dear Sir / she ben good fore 5 month / she donte go out at night time / she donte drank bare know / she gived it up a longe wile / so will yu do some thinkg fore my daughter Louisa Jane Bayliss

[94] See Appendix 2, documents xxi and xix.
[95] Appendix 2, document xxi.

The denial of drinking beer is apparently in response to an undocumented accusation that this is one of the reasons for her pension being withdrawn, and forms the backing of good behaviour that is part of her argument structure here. That drinking beer had been the case is the past is clear from the temporal trigger *now*, emphasised by the following clause which assures the reader 'she gived it up a longe wile'. This apparent compliance with a moral standard of behaviour for pensioned widows shows acceptance of rules which were imposed under the terms of the Royal Warrant. A month later (date-stamped 12th June, 1920[96]), Louisa again writes in her father's voice, again invoking assurances that her behaviour has improved: 'She kieep hair selfe to selfe she donte go out with heny body'. This invokes the middle-class frame of widowhood which carries the expectation that a widow should be cloistered, reflective and soberly respectful of her dead husband's memory. Added to this is the assurance 'she still a widow wife and all shall be' which carries an intertextual reference to the initial pension claim form where the widow's signature is prefixed by the declaration 'I have continued a widow'. Here, as with other letters Louisa writes, there is an assumption that it is her duty as a pensioned widow to remain a living memorial to her dead husband.

In this second letter, the standard of her moral behaviour is reinforced as discourses of social welfare are drawn upon where her need of help is emphasised in a reporting frame which leaks into a negotiating frame.

> Sir I / ham very Sorry to tel you she cante work corse hair Harte is very Bade / Could you lete have pay from the Pensions Ministry Grante / if honley a little it wood help My Daughter Bite to go one with / I cante kieep hair all the wile

As with several of Louisa's other letters, there is the implicit acceptance of the expectation that she should seek employment and be self sufficient, but she is prevented from doing so by her ill health, which provides a variation in her usual argument backing. This is stated as part of an apology, where the macro mitigation

[96] Appendix 2, document xix.

strategy which employs humility in making the request for a pension payment is emphasised by the regretful tone of 'I ham very sorry to tel you'. The imposition of the request is lessened further by the apparent negotiation that 'honley a little' money would help. This links with a long-standing understanding of how charitable institutions would work on a system of need and negotiation, and shows a lack of understanding as to how the State would operate in such circumstances with its rigid scales of allowances.

This letter also implies that Louisa's father has been looking after her financially and materially: 'I cante kieep hair all the wile'. Whilst the family would have been the first resort for those in need of assistance under the Poor Law, the State-funded pension scheme offered a different course of action. This statement in the letter of July, 1920 (document xix) shows that Louisa had turned to her father as a provider of support once her widows' pension had been withdrawn, but also indicates something of the problematic nature of this with the temporal constraint implied here being made to the Ministry of Pensions in an attempt to persuade them to reinstate her pension. Louisa has passed from one paternal guardian (her husband) to another (her father), but is aware that the State can also stand in for her husband and provide her with some level of independence through the pension. She is presenting this argument within the patriarchal ideology which also underpins the Royal Warrant.

A further indication of Louisa's attempts at having her pension reinstated by drawing on the testimony of others is found in a letter of 21st February, 1921[97] from the Birmingham office of the Comrades of the Great War. This organisation had been set up shortly before this to assist the men who had been demobbed, but also is occasionally found to intervene on behalf of servicemen's widows in communicating with the Ministry of Pensions. Presenting Louisa's argument for a pension to the Ministry, the writer can be seen to draw on the same discourses of morality and need, using argument backing of good behaviour and ill health as Louisa does elsewhere, but the letter also has similarities with the point of view presented by the Ministry.

[97] Appendix 2, document xxii.

> Mrs Louisa Jane Bayliss aged 37, is the widow of the late no 15900 Private Frank Bayliss, Gloucestershire Regiment. She at present has no pension having forfeited the same in March 1916. [sic]
>
> She is in poor health physically and mentally.
>
> I believe that for some time past her moral character has been good and I submit that in this case a recommendation should be forwarded to the Superintendant Pension Issue Office, Ministry of Pensions, Widows & Dependents Division, 161 Great Portland Street, London, W.1., with a view to her pension being restored to her.

Louisa is presented as being the active agent in the suspension of her pension, suggested by the use of *forfeited*. This contrasts with Louisa's own arguments in which the anonymous official at the Ministry of Pensions is blamed for the suspension of her pension. Her argument for a pension on the basis of need is here presented as the factual certainty of her poor physical and mental health. When it comes to a testimony as to her moral character, the writer is less certain. The use of the mental process verb *believe* acts as a mitigating strategy and leaves the argument open to doubt and thus the writer free from blame should this be disproved. Again, the use of *recommend* and the prepositional phrase *with a view to* both lessen the force of the argument for her pension being reinstated.

This series of letters shows that Louisa was actively seeking her pension reinstatement through the patriarchal voices that would appear to carry more authority than her own. In employing the voices of her father and the Comrades of the Great War, her own voice is ultimately obscured by her own volition.

Undoubtedly the standard letters sent by the Ministry of Pensions in response to Louisa's regular correspondence in which she is informed that her case is under constant review do actually conceal more detailed surveillance. The missing SGC documents may have indicated whether or not the Comrades of the Great War had any effect on their decision. However, a letter to W Branch of the Ministry of Pensions from the SGC, dated 1st June, 1921 declares: 'the Special Grants Committee have decided that the widow's pension should be re-issued with effect from 22nd April, 1921'. Here, the collective agency of the SGC are presented as the active agents in re-issuing Louisa's pension. The use of the mental process verb

decided indicates a considered, informed decision being taken. No grounds for this decision are mentioned in this letter.

The last letter in Louisa's file relating to her rather than to any of her children is dated 3rd October, 1927[98] from the SGC to the Ministry of Pensions and marks the final forfeiture of her pension. Any human responsibility for this action is removed in the wording of the letter: 'the Special Grants Committee have had under consideration the case of the above mentioned woman and have decided that the facts of the case are such as to call for the forfeiture of the widow's pension'. The collective agency of the SGC is presented as acting in response to the abstract noun *the facts*. Louisa herself is no longer referred to as *the widow*, this status carrying with it an indication of possible future State benefit, instead using the more general noun phrase *the above mentioned woman*. The memo continues:

> She should be informed that in view of her conduct it has been decided that she is unworthy of a grant from public funds, and that the pension cannot therefore be continued.

Louisa is presented as the agent of her own downfall, although this is in the noun phrase 'her conduct' which is the cause of this forfeiture. The underlying implication, supported by previous correspondence, is that it is her moral conduct that is being judged. This is reinforced by the agentless decision that she is *unworthy* of a pension, and that this decision has been made for the public good. Thus discourses of nationalism, social welfare and morality are being employed to underpin the SGC's decision to stop her pension payments. There is certainty and inevitability attached to this decision, triggered by the modality of *cannot* and the causal connective *therefore*. Louisa's regular claims on the basis of 'need' make no mention of the newfangled social welfare under which her pension was devised, instead drawing on older discourses which were in the process of being overtaken.

[98] Appendix 2, document xxiii.

Ministry of Pensions correspondence: the obedient servant?

Before leaving this case, the Ministry of Pensions letters to Louisa herself, although concise and standardised in the main, bear some brief discussion as to their place in the discourses of widowhood at this time and provide a background to the next section of this thesis.

The Ministry of Pensions occasionally responded to Louisa's frequent letters of appeal. Her argument structures based around need were never engaged with, the formal response rarely varying from a standard letter along the lines of:

> Madam,
>
> Re:15900, Private F. Bayliss,
> Gloucestershire Regiment.
>
> In reply to your letter of the 20th ultimo, I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that it has been decided that your pension shall remain suspended.
>
> I am, Madam,
> Your obedient Servant,
>
> [signed] L. M. Bostock
> for Director-General of Awards.

The named bureaucrat here is deferring any responsibility for the decision to an unnamed higher authority. Bostock is merely acting on the directions of the Minister of Pensions. The authority of the Minister is greater than that of Bostock, who is acting on this person's directions. The decision for Louisa's pension to remain suspended is not attributed to any active agent. This would most likely have been a decision made by the SGC, but this agency does not appear in this letter, remaining a powerful, shadowy committee that had the power to inform and advise the Minister of Pensions on decisions on pension provision for individuals. The irony of the formulaic salutation and complimentary close place the writer (here, Bostock) in a deferential role to Louisa, particularly in the formulaic assurance that he is her 'obedient Servant'. This contrasts markedly with the message of the letter

where the writer is explicitly acting in obedience with the Minister of Pensions rather than Louisa, whose previous letters have consistently appealed for the reinstatement of her pension. In relation to the barely literate Louisa, not familiar with these bureaucratic conventions, the Latinate *ultimo* would also probably have been beyond her understanding. This formal language contrasts markedly with Louisa's own conversational style.

One of the few variations to this standard letter comes on 23rd September, 1920.

Madam,

> In reply to your letter of the 28th ultimo, I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that your case has been carefully considered but it has been decided that your pension must remain suspended.
>
> I am, Madam,
> Your obedient Servant,
>
> [signed] M. L. Crossley
> for the Director of Awards.

The opening formulation is identical to other letters, in that the bureaucrat is acting on the direction of the Minister of Pensions. On the other hand, the letter goes on to imply that Louisa's case has been reviewed with care and consideration, *carefully* premodifying *considered* which combine to produce an impression that her case might have been viewed favourably. This is related to what Van Dijk et al term 'apparent empathy' (1997: 173), whereby negative actions are made to appear to be softened in response to perceived face threatening acts, here with the widow's case appearing to have been considered with a view to a positive outcome for her. However, any softening of the ministry's position is immediately cancelled by the contrastive clause beginning *but*. Again, nameless agencies are at work in making this decision and the use of the categorical certainty of *must* leaves no room for confusion.

Conclusion

As custodians of the dead serviceman's memory, the war widow had to live up to his sacrifice by her own exemplary behaviour in the eyes of the nation. If she fell short of the high standards of moral behaviour the State had decided was appropriate, then her pension could be stopped. This attitude continued to be uncritically displayed throughout the inter-war years, as we have seen. Indeed, in the 1937 *Annual Report of the Ministry of Pensions*[99], this is made explicit:

> Continuance of the pension is […] reasonably made conditional on the circumstances and conduct of the pensioner continuing to justify such support by the State, acting as it does, in the place of the deceased husband. (1937: 21)

The 'reasons' on which the terms of the Royal Warrant were based were, as we have seen, heavily influenced by discourses of morality grounded in middle-class, 19th century patriarchal values. The State's position as stern, patriarchal guardian of the widow, entitled to oversee her behaviour as a husband might, is used to justify the intrusive surveillance to which these women were subjected. If the State was to act as surrogate husband, then if the widow's 'circumstances and conduct' were not what a husband would expect, the withdrawal of financial support could be part of the punitive measures the State saw fit to enforce.

Without Louisa's own letters, her voice is virtually absent from the official documentation. Where she does appear, she has minimal impact and virtually no power over the circumstances in which she and her children find themselves. This is despite her own attempts to invoke the somewhat limited powers she has in her role as war widow and mother. Like other widows, Louisa is subject to practices of surveillance which, as Donzelot observed, are linked with identifying deviance and constructing norms. She herself apparently accepts the norms expected of her as a widow and mother within a patriarchal ideology, attempting to employ discourses of

[99] *Nineteenth Annual Report of the Ministry of Pensions*, part ii, 1937 – Survey of War Pensions from 1916.

social welfare and motherhood herself to support her arguments for reinstatement of a pension.

The consistent argument presented by Louisa varies only in its backing of poverty or State obligation. Her use of pleas on the basis of need and right are not engaged with by the Ministry of Pensions in their letters to her. Instead, the State's bureaucrats focus on their perception of Louisa's moral behaviour, in line with the terms of the Royal Warrant under which Louisa claims a pension, based on a schematic frame of widows as passive, sober, respectful and morally irreprehensible. It is interesting to note that Louisa seems to realise that this is the best backing for her arguments as time goes on, with the more frequent evocation of her own exemplary behaviour, often compared with that of other women, being cited in her later letters. This engagement extends to the apparent impersonation of her father as a figure of male authority to vouch for her 'improved' behaviour. In all the voices that appear in these letters, whether the institutional voices of the anonymous bureaucrats or the remarkable voice of Louisa herself, discourses of nationalism, morality and social welfare are evoked and appear inextricably linked. Ultimately, and despite the number of letters of appeal written by Louisa, it is the impersonal voice of the Special Grants Committee that decides her fate with regard to her pension.

Case study 2: Florence Bayliss and ‘disallowed’ widows

Background to post-war claims for widows' pensions

This section will look at the case files of women who were not granted war widows' pensions on the death of their ex-servicemen husbands in the decades following the First World War. These files take up more than two thirds of the selection I have looked at in the National Archives and, as they cover more than half a century, offer the opportunity to explore the changing relationship between the State and British citizens as the welfare state developed over the course of the 20th century. In particular, Florence Bayliss's file offers the chance to explore diachronically many common issues in more detail, so she will be the main focus of this case study.

The hastily-drawn up Royal Warrant of 1916 was repeatedly revised in the years following the end of the war. By 1919, the Ministry of Pensions was already dealing with women whose husbands had died after demobilisation in cases where the legislation made a decision unclear[100], particularly in the frame of war widowhood used by the State. For example, the parliamentary debates of 1914 had established a time limit of seven years from date of injury or army discharge for a widow's pension to be claimed. Perhaps the most important revision to the Royal Warrant was the removal of this seven-year rule in 1921. However, in the extant documentation held in PIN15, Mr Hore, a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Pensions, sought to retain this time limit with a view to reducing the State's future financial burden:

> The degree of aggravation by war service in a given case may be quite small, and there may be no record of sickness for any substantial time between the date of discharge and of death, yet it is proposed to saddle the State with the liability of a full Article 11 pension to the widow. Surely this is indefensible?[101]

In light of Foucault's notion of 'truth', we can see here that Hore is highlighting the State's position on documented evidence from authoritative, acknowledged sources, something which many widows would come up against in the course of the next few

[100] In an internal memo dated 8th June,1920, it was reported that more than 1,000 widows' claims were being held up because no decision had been reached.
[101] PIN15/228 Widows' Pensions, Art. 11 Royal Warrant. Conditions of Entitlement and Eligibility. Department conferences 13.12.19, 7.5.20 and 14.6.20.

decades. The financial support of war widows is here perceived as an unwelcome burden, triggered by the verb *saddle*. This leads to the desired positive response in the use of the response-demanding utterance at the end of this memorandum, emphasised by *surely* which carries commonsense agreement. The seven-year rule was eventually abandoned in 1921, although the debate briefly discussed above does make it clear that the underlying parsimonious ideology was still very significant. However, my own data shows that widows were still successfully claiming a war widow's pension as late as the 1950s[102], more than 30 years after the end of the First World War, on the grounds that a man had died of war wounds. Such women had often acted as unpaid carers for men who had been injured in the war, these injuries often resulting in quite dreadful pain and suffering, not just for the man to experience but for his family to witness. In addition to the physical pain and suffering, there was also the more pressing problem of reduced income, particularly in the late 1920s when the Western world was in the grip of an economic depression and employment was hard to come by for even the most fit of men.

During the war, it had usually been clear which women could claim a widow's pension and who couldn't. As we have seen, Louisa Bayliss had simply to complete a form and produce certain documentation to gain her pension following her husband's reported death in 1915. In the few cases where a pension was not quickly granted, it was usually owing to a dispute over the woman's relationship to the deceased solider, particularly where they had not legally married. However, after the war there was a huge increase in the number of women who claimed a war widow's pension, which was largely unexpected and entirely unprecedented. The Ministry of Pension files held at the National Archives, Kew reveal the stories of men who had been passed 'A1' fit and healthy on enlistment becoming the 'broken men' of the 1920s and 30s, men whose ill health was often attributable to their war service, but exacerbated by the poverty they found themselves in during the Depression. This was a fact often recognised by family doctors, whose letters of support for a widow's pension claim are found in some of the case files. However,

[102] For example, Lilian Andrew (PIN26 17220) was granted a pension in 1950 when her husband eventually died of a shrapnel wound to his head which had left him in great pain for the last five years of his life, Lilian acting as his unpaid carer throughout.

even this authority was not recognised by the Ministry of Pensions bureaucrats who stuck rigidly to the terms of the Royal Warrant in declaring that death must be *directly* attributable to war service as detailed in their official records.

Aside from physical disabilities caused by injuries sustained whilst on active service, chronic illnesses such as bronchitis, asthma and tuberculosis were some of the commonest complaints amongst veterans.

Of the many newly-recognised medical conditions which resulted from the First World War, neurasthenia, or shell-shock, is probably one of the most infamous. It frequently appears in accounts of the conflict (such as Robert Graves' *Goodbye to All That* (1929) and more recently in Pat Barker's *Regeneration* trilogy (1991)), and is picked up in the innumerable novels for which the war forms a backdrop (such as Dorothy L. Sayers' neurasthenic character Lord Peter Wimsey (1920s and 1930s), and is a theme returned to again in Barker's contemporary novel, *Another World* (2001)). Neurasthenia is commonly associated with nightmares and mental torment that lasted well beyond the serviceman's return home. This story is almost always told from the point of view of the man, leaving unwritten the story of their wives who faced years of caring for ex-servicemen, many tied to these men out of a sense of duty, when 'escape' from the marriage would have been unforgivable in the eyes of the world in general which would have seen such an action as running away from the responsibility of caring for a war hero.[103] To return to Lilian Armfield[104], who had been denied a pension following her husband's death from prostate cancer, (is disability pension had been for schizophrenia following war-induced neurasthenia). Her letter of appeal to the Ministry of Pensions gives some indication of the long-term effects of Stephen's war service on the family:

> About the Widow's Pension I am fighting for and am intitled to as other Widows draw it, remember I am a War Widows Pensioner. I was left to fend for myself when my Husband entered the Mental Home for War Disablement 20 years ago. He was A1 and passed his test at Wolwich London for 2nd Air Mechanics. After a short time sent to Scapa Flow. Came out of the hospital for home in 1918. He was Pensioned. His complaint (Acute Neurasthenia)

[103] Although women gained equality in British divorce law in 1928, the social stigma of divorce was such that it was rarely an option, even when it could be paid for.
[104] Previously mentioned on page 116.

> witch developed in mental illness. His family Doctor now Dead sent him to the General Hospital Sheffield. From there to the mental home. He was in there till he died. He had strange habits and loss of memory many times. This was all through his War Services. Remember I lost my Breadwinner. I have worked all through the War in a factory myself. I have never drawn Sick pay or have I had Glasses. Teeth I have paid for them out of my earnings. The bit of money I saved I lived on when I gave up work […][105]

Lilian is drawing on discourses of nationalism and social welfare to intensify her case for a war widow's pension. She also emphasises her own war service in the Second World War to enhance her presentation of self as a good, patriotic citizen, linking this to her husband's First World War 'service to his country'. She highlights her husband's good health on enlistment, demonstrating that he was mentally unwell to such a degree following his war service that he had to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital from 1935 onwards. Lilian hints at the problems of caring for someone with neurasthenia, using the euphemism *strange habits* to avoid giving details that might be too personal or private, whilst at the same time attributing this to his war service, and thus synedochally to the State. The details and register of Stephen's fitness on enlistment are employed to increase the link between his health and Lilian's claim for a pension. She presents herself as someone who has not called on the State for support, despite the hardship incurred through her husband's ill-health. Drawing on the services available under social welfare reforms, such as sickness benefit, optical and dental treatment, she is attempting to demonstrate that she has not been a burden on the State, enhancing this 'model citizenship' and thus worthiness by articulating it with the ill-health her husband suffered as a direct result of his war service.

Lilian draws upon discourses of social welfare, presenting the State pension as something which is far preferable to charitable support. In particular, she refers to 'National Assistance', which was the replacement for the old Poor Law system.[106]

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[105] PIN26 17264 Letter from Lilian Armfield to Ministry of Pensions, 20th April 1955.
[106] The Local Government Act of 1929 disbanded Poor Law Unions and Boards of Guardians. Provision for the able-bodied was then provided by the newly-established Public Assistance Committees. These retained many of the same personnel as before and often operated more stringently than under the Poor Law. (Thane, 1982: 188-89)

> I was forced to get National Assistance witch I am glad of now. I am not proud of this. I would rather have my Widows Pension I am entitled to and get. […] All this is degrading to me as War Widow fighting for rights. […] That is a lot of difference when my husband gave his services to his country[107]

The presupposition of stigma that lingered with this system is triggered by use of *forced*, and emphasised by the following phrase where *now* triggers the assumption that she was reluctant to accept it earlier. Indeed, she goes on to declare 'I am not proud of this', preferring the social capital which a war widow's pension would bring. She clearly thinks that this pension is hers by right, using the personal possessive *my* to prefix it, and then underlines *I am entitled to*, adding emphasis to her point. Women applying for a war widow's pension appear to have regarded it as very much a badge of pride in the absence of any other form of public recognition for their loss. Whilst the names of those servicemen who died after the war as a result of their injuries were added to public war memorials, those of whom death could not attributed directly to their war service were omitted. Thus the refusal to grant a pension to Lilian and others would also be seen as a rejection of the validity of her husband's war service, either carved in stone or in financial assistance to his widow as his living memorial.

As we will see, for many women widowed after the war, the pension also seems to have been regarded as a form of financial recognition for their role as unpaid carers, or as some sort of compensation. As discussed in more detail in the historical context section of this thesis (see page 88), in the post-war years, the high-profile war-time recruitment of the volunteers to act as more conventional carers such as nurses at the same time as women for waged employment such as the reasonably well-paid factory work may have led to the conflation of the two, with the common perception that all 'war work' was remunerated.[108] This is coupled with increasing expectations of State support for those in need through a developing

[107] PIN26 17264 Letter from Liliam Armfield to Ministry of Pensions, 19th February, 1955 (page 178).
[108] See Appendix 1 for examples of such posters.

welfare support system that was not means tested, such as those services cited above by Lilian Armfield.

This belief in their own particular patriotic contribution seems to have led many war widows to see the nature of their relationship with the State in a very different light. They were no longer simply the wives and mothers whose connection with the State was accomplished primarily via their relationship to a deceased serviceman, with all of his rights and citizenship status. Instead, war widowhood seems to have prompted these women to go beyond their traditional dependant roles and discover a new status as independent claimants on the State. The National Council of Social Service undertook extensive research into the question of State provision for civilian widowhood in the run-up to the introduction of widows' pensions in 1926. In one of their earliest reports they observe that, for many women:

> [A widow's] War pension […] is felt to have been earned as a right, and for service rendered to the State. Indeed it is recognised that even when the pension has been granted the State is still the debtor, the State rather than the pensioner is under obligation. (1920: 17)

The nominalisation of *service* leaves it unspecified just who has been of service to the State, blurring the distinction between the serviceman and his wife. Thus in the public sphere, the State is placed in the position of seeming to continue to be in debt to the widows, continuing the perception of the 'debt of gratitude' that was expressed towards these citizens in the parliamentary debates of 1914. However, as we have already seen in the case of Louisa Bayliss, the reality of this national obligation is couched in discourses of morality and the parsimony that is embedded in the discourses of social welfare excluded many more widows in the years following the end of the First World War.

In the atmosphere of self-sacrifice that underlies their roles in the patriarchal ideology of this time, women seem to have accepted their continuing role as carers of disabled ex-servicemen husbands whilst they were alive. In a mood doubtless typical of that voiced by Lloyd-George in his altruistic boast that the post-war State (and metonymically, the nation) would provide 'homes fit for heroes' to live in, the

State's recognition of responsibility came in the form of pensions paid on the basis of the serviceman's documented disability. This appears to have been the root of the argument that widows later employed: the State had accepted financial responsibility for the wounded war hero, so it naturally followed that the State would look after the hero's widow as surrogate husband. Chronic ill-health was often the legacy of many men's war service. In particular, heart disease resulted in the early deaths of many men but left their widows ineligible for a war widows' pension as such a condition was commonly undocumented during the period of active service, this documentation being the primary source of data accepted by appeals tribunals after the war. In one unusually detailed file, there is a summary of an appeals hearing involving a widow named Amelia Adams. Her husband, George, had died of coronary heart disease at the age of 47. In the transcript of the appeal hearing, Amelia was asked if there was anything in her husband's army service which could have caused his heart problem. Her response is succinctly true: 'the liability to get shot would upset anybody'.[109] Amelia's lifeworld, common-sense assumption proved inadmissible as in the eyes of the State such 'common sense' was not documented in George's medical file and so the order of discourse which prevails is that which is recorded in his official papers.

The failure to acknowledge such lifeworld discourses is found in many other files. In terms of intertextuality, direct quotations relating to lifeworld experiences can be used to 'fulfil the function of expressing […] assertions without the speaker or writers having to take responsibility for the statement' (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001: 111) and can thus act as a mitigating strategy. We will look at this in relation to intertextual quotations from Royal Warrant shortly. The authority and respectability of the speaker, on the other hand, can be employed to intensify or validate a statement, as is often found in widows' letters. For example, Ada Broadbent employed this strategy in relation to her pension claim. Her husband, John, had been pensioned for bronchitis resulting from exposure to gas during the war. He died in 1920 of heart failure, which meant Ada was not entitled to a war widow's pension under the terms of the Royal Warrant. In 1938, following a publicised

[109] PIN26 17170 Amelia Adams' appeal tribunal, 21st January, 1938.

revision of the pension scheme, she wrote to the Ministry of Pensions to see if she would be eligible. In her letter, she writes:

> After the War, he was never the same, could not follow his work for long together and on one occasion when we were out shopping, he was taken ill in the market, a stallholder gave him a box to sit down and I got him water, and she asked me if he had been in the War, I said, yes, and she said poor fellow […] Every-one who knew him said he died through War Service…[110]

Here, Ada is drawing on both direct ([the market stall holder] said poor fellow) and indirect (*she asked me if he had been in the War*) quotations from various eyewitnesses to support her claim for a pension based on her husband's condition. Unfortunately for Ada, as with so many other widows, the undocumented or unrecognised testimonies they employ as intensifying strategies were not accepted as evidence in support of their pension claims. The order of discourse that prevails is again the State's documented medical record rather than the lifeworld experiences that Ada is able to provide.

In the National Archives files, there are many cases of women claiming a widow's pension in respect of a disabled ex-servicemen they had married after his discharge from military service, and as such would not be eligible for a war widow's pension should he die of his disability.[111] The spirit of patriotism which encouraged such marriages started during the war itself and can be seen in accounts written at this time. For example, Vera Brittain's diaries and memoirs recall the death of her fiancé during the war, followed by that of another close male friend, and then relate how she returned to England from her VAD nursing post in Malta with the intention of marrying the blinded Victor Richardson, only for him too to die shortly after her return. This feeling of patriotic duty towards those men who had been disabled by service to their country has also been explored by Kovan (1994), who describes the church-supported 'marriage bureaus' set up during the war itself to promote

[110] PIN26 17393 Letter from Ada Broadbent to Ministry of Pensions, 25th January, 1938.
[111] This condition of the Royal Warrant changed after much lobbying in the wake of the Second World War. Associated publicity led to large numbers of widows making claims for war widows' pensions under the new rules, but these were mostly unsuccessful as their husbands could not be proved to have died of causes directly attributable to war service.

marriages for those men who had been disabled. This served the dual purpose of restoring to widows that role ascribed to them by society, and secondly, as Kovan states, these 'wounded heroes' would have their manliness restored (1994: 1189). Whilst these organisations were disbanded before the end of war following accusations of impropriety, the feeling of duty towards ex-servicemen persists throughout the inter-war years as newspapers and magazines urged single women (whether never-married or widowed) to marry the nation's heroes.

This promotion of marriage to disabled ex-servicemen concealed the fact that the position of war widow was narrowly defined to include only those women who had married before the man was discharged from the armed forces. The painful truth of this was made clear to many a woman who had nursed her husband for years, only to find that on his death she was ineligible for a war widow's pension as their marriage had taken place after his discharge from the armed forces and so she was not, in the State's eyes, a 'war widow'.[112]

Financial support from charities and the State was largely directed towards Lloyd-George's heroes, the ex-servicemen, although the rules governing how much money could be paid out to those classed as 'worthy' ensured that no-one ever became rich from a State pension. For ex-servicemen, the basic disability pension allowed existence just above the poverty line, preventing families from falling back on the Poor Law Guardians. This ensured that, in the public sphere at least, the State gave the impression of being grateful for war services rendered, whilst the underlying parsimony meant that they were also keeping a potentially large number of citizens out of the more expensive Poor Law system.

The State pension for widows and ex-servicemen could be supplemented by additional help from a myriad of charities, often mediated through central organisations such as the newly-formed British Legion or Comrades of the Great War. The andocentric nature of State support is mirrored in that of the innumerable

[112] A different definition of 'war widow' is commonly applied in the United States, where in 2002 it was widely reported that the last war widow of a Civil War veteran had died. Her marriage to an already-aged veteran has taken place in the 1920s when there was already a considerable age difference.

charities[113], the needs of women and other dependants not being considered when looking at claims for aid for disabled ex-servicemen or their widows. As late as 1933, the Emergency Help Committee of the Joint Committee of the Order of St John and the British Red Cross notes in its annual report that only the families of those men who 'did good, effective service in the Great War' would be considered for charitable help. Thus it was not the families' needs that were paramount even in the eyes of charitable organisations, such was the perception of patriotic debt owed to the *men* who had fought in the First World War. A previously discussed, elsewhere the Joint Committee policy clearly indicates that financial help would only be given to those widows who were most likely to receive a State war widow's pension, and so would be in a position to repay all or part of the money 'loaned' to them by the charity. Thus the discourses of morality and nationalism which were so strongly evident in the terms of the Royal Warrant were being repeated by even this most liberal of charities. Underlying all of this is the parsimonious ideology that went largely unquestioned.

From my own study of more than two hundred widows' pensions files in the National Archives, I estimate that about two-thirds of these related to widows who were not eligible for a pension under the terms of the Royal Warrant. As discussed above, this could be for any number of reasons, most commonly because there was insufficient evidence to support their claim that their husband had died as a direct result of his war service, as in Ada Broadbent's claim. Attention will now focus on one widow who was not eligible for a war pension under the terms of the Royal Warrant.

Florence Bayliss: Pension disallowed

Florence Bayliss's husband, Walter, died at the age of 36 from a condition for which he had not received a disability pension. The lack of acknowledged documentary evidence to support claims such as hers was very commonly the cause of lengthy

[113] Whilst not usually giving substantial financial support, charities often gave help in kind such as donations of clothing and household goods, or gave one-off grants to assist relocation.

correspondence between widow and Ministry. Florence, like many other widows, argues for a pension on the basis of being an unpaid carer for her disabled ex-soldier husband. What is unusual about Florence is that she resumes her argument more than 30 years after her husband's death by which time the welfare state had been well established. We can also see evidence of what Fairclough (1989) refers to a conversationalisation appearing in the Ministry's correspondence with Florence and so her file presents the opportunity to see how the State's relationship with its citizens had changed from the post-war correspondence found in most other case files. However, despite these fundamental changes in social welfare, we shall see that there is continuity in the arguments proffered by the State.

Up to the end of the 1920s, the Ministry of Pensions was still using standard letters on pre-printed forms to communicate with widows wherever possible. These forms, which left blank spaces appropriate for a highly limited set of noun phrases, do not allow the bureaucrats to engage in a more detailed discussion of the decision. Although revised in terms of format at intervals over the course of the decade, the pink copies of these forms appear in dozens of the files I looked at, each one heralding a negative decision for the widow.

As we saw earlier in the case of Louisa Bayliss, the extant widows' files are often a composite of a number of different files and are usually incomplete. In Florence's case, there is mention of her husband's disability file, although nowhere in her own case file is there any documentation from this. Where possible, I have tried to fill these gaps with reference to documents found in other widows' files and where I can be fairly sure that such documents would have existed at some point in relation to the widows discussed in more detail here. For example, following her husband's death in December 1930, Florence claimed for a war widows' pension. This appears to have been seen to merit further investigation as a letter to her in April, 1931 requests further details.[114] Whilst obviously not a standard letter relating to widows' claims (as indicated by the pre-printed address of *Sir/Madam*) and the letter has been individualised in the hand-written questions, nevertheless the answers are constrained by the design of the form. The questions all relate to Walter,

[114] PIN26 17294 Questionnaire returned by Florence, April 1931 (Appendix 3, document i.)

Florence's husband, rather than herself, reflecting the close ties of the Royal Warrant to the serviceman rather than his widow's needs.

What is more interesting about this letter is that Florence has made use of the available white space left at the bottom of the form to present her argument for a pension. Rather than responding to the request for 'reference number quoted on previous correspondence', she appears to have reformulated this as a very different question along the lines of 'reference to any previous correspondence'. Her response to this reformulation is to cite her husband's letter in appeal for a disability pension, to which she adds a response to the anticipated 'why was your husband's pension not progressed' with the explanation that he was too ill to take it further. It is left to the Ministry bureaucrats to add requested reference number, using the left hand side of the page that appears implicitly reserved for their use.

The medical boards Florence refers to were organised by the Ministry of Pensions to assess the degree of disablement for which an ex-serviceman could claim a pension. There were several centres around the country, Florence here referring to the Preston centre closest to her Burnley home. Reports found in National Archives files refer to other medical boards and show that these were not organised with the claimant's needs in mind. Irrespective of state of health, he would be required to attend such a board where civil servants and medical officials would examine him. In one case found in the National Archives files[115], the Ministry representative on the board was in favour of adjourning when discussion on legal technicalities brought proceedings to a standstill. It was only on the intervention of the medical representative that this adjournment was prevented and the claimant saved the expense and inconvenience of another hearing on a different day. Thus it appears that the boards were routinely organised around the convenience of the bureaucrats, as indeed medical boards that are convened for disability benefits continue to be to this day. Florence's point about her bedridden husband being unable to attend his disability board hearing is, therefore, hardly

[115] PIN15 2977 Pensions Appeal Tribunal, Leeds 21st July, 1925. Letter from C Edge to Minister of Pensions.

surprising as is the assumption that this inability meant his disability claim did not proceed.

Although her claim was rejected, there is no record in her file of the actual decision, but it is certain that such a letter would have been sent to her. Instead, below is a copy of the main part of the standard letter as found in countless other widows' files.

DECISION OF APPEAL (Disallowed).

(WIDOW OR DEPENDANT)

The Appeal of

……..…….

…….…….. of the above-named man (deceased) has been duly heard by the Tribunal.

> The Tribunal finds that the appellant is ineligible for a pension under Article 11 of the Royal Warrant as *the deceased*[116] did not die within 7 years of the receipt of his wound or injury, or removal from duty, or termination of active service.
>
> The Tribunal further finds, having regard to the terms of Article 17B, of the Royal Warrant, that the death of the late *pensioner* cannot be certified as wholly due to the nature or condition, as resulting from War Service, of the disability in respect of which pension or allowance was current at date of death.
>
> The Tribunal disallows the appeal.[117]

The impersonal style of the form is enhanced by the use of noun phrases rather than actual names to refer to the widow and her husband. In this particular appeal, the husband's name appears only in the first line, after that he is referred to as *the deceased* and later as *pensioner*. (In cases such as Florence's, as the husband had not received a disability pension prior to his death, the second noun phrase would have indicated this by replacing *pensioner* with *the deceased*, no other noun

[116] Words in italics are typewritten rather than printed in the letter, indicating they are the only variables relating to each individual claim.
[117] PIN26/17229 Letter sent to Rose Aston, 25th November 1929.

phrase available to maintain the coherence of the text.) Elsewhere, the rigidity of this pre-printed form leaves no space for advice on further action to be offered and, of course, does not allow for the pension to be granted on the basis of a woman's death. Explicitly, the pension is being considered on the basis of *the above-named man*'s medical and service history. It would take another World War before the physical contribution of women would be acknowledged to the point that dependants' pensions could be granted under their name. This form thus explicitly draws on the common-sense assumption that it would be a male combatant whose dependants needed a pension, firmly locating it within the patriarchal ideology that was so much a part of the drawing up of the war widows' pension scheme.[118]

This standard letter does reveal one of the most troublesome elements of the Royal Warrant. Article 17B required that death be *wholly due* to a man's war service. This adverb caused many widows to be denied pensions on the basis of their husbands' deaths being caused only partly by their pensioned disability. For example, Emily Boyce's husband Harry died in 1937, however she was not granted a war widow's pension as it was judged that his death had been only partly due to his pensioned disability. Unusually, in Emily's case file are the internal Ministry of Pensions notes of her appeal tribunal, including a transcription of part of these proceedings. The Chair was a Mr Ashby from the Ministry of Pensions. In the course of the discussion about Harry's health, Ashby is cited as declaring: 'We are again bothered by that blessed word "wholly"'.[119] This carries the assumption that this particular adverb has been the cause of dispute in the past, triggered by *again*, and the use of *bothered* carries connotations of troublesomeness, concern and worry. More interestingly, the mild expletive *blessed* has been left in the transcript and emphasises a sense of frustration at the too-rigid wording of the terms of the Royal Warrant. The notes were probably only ever intended for an audience of Ministry civil servants, but to today's wider readership provide a fascinating insight into the internal workings of the Ministry in the form of not-so-faceless bureaucrats for once.

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[118] Roles of Honour, found in every community, list women as fatalities. In particular, the Scottish National War Memorial has several tomes dedicated to female casualties alone. This provides official evidence of women having died whilst serving in the war, although it must also be stated that the number of female casualties is miniscule when compared with those of their male counterparts.
[119] PIN26 17365 Notes of Ministry of Pensions (Entitlement) Appeal Tribunal, 5th November, 1937.

The Royal Warrant was revised in 1938 to extend the terms to the cause of death being *wholly or materially* due, then again in 1945 to be *mainly due* to war service. Each time, press coverage resulted in widows who had been denied a war widow's pension writing to the Ministry in the hope that they would now qualify, but very rarely was the decision reversed. For example, Annie Ballard's husband had died in 1943 from bronchopneumonia, but on appealing again for a pension, the Ministry judged at the time that his death was unrelated to his pensioned condition of superative otitis media. The Ministry's response contains phrases which appear in many letters, including intertextual quotation from the revised Royal Warrant :

> …the fact that your husband was in receipt of pension does not of itself confer on you a right to pension. The matter of a widow's pension is an entirely new issue; and a grant could not be made to you unless your husband's death was at least mainly due to the nature or condition of his pensioned disability as resulting directly from her service in the 1914-1918 War.[120]

The absence of any determiner before *pension* suggests that the Ministry of Pensions bureaucrat is employing a hedging strategy in not making reference to a specific pension that could be claimed. This contrasts with the labelling of widow's pension which carries the indefinite article *a*, this removing it from any explicit link with Annie that possessive pronouns would have indicated. The assertion that a widow's pension is *an entirely new issue* is somewhat misleading as the widow's pension (as we shall see in the case of Florence) is actually closely tied to the husband's eligibility for a pension. Indeed, this Ministry letter goes on to make this link between widow's pension and ex-serviceman's pension explicit. This second clause carries intertextual quotations of the wording of the Royal Warrant without actually disclosing this as the main source, showing that the cessation of the use of pre-printed forms in favour of apparently more individual letters is not as personal as it might appear. Indeed, as we shall see in the more detailed study of Florence's file, intertextual quotations from much earlier sources can be found in the 1968 correspondence.

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[120] PIN26 17250 Letter from Ministry of Pensions to Annie Ballard, 15th June, 1945.

Pension as compensation: 'This is not a begging letter'

The first letter from Florence in her case file is date-stamped 1st May, 1931[121]; nearly five months after her husband's death in December 1930[122] but written within days of her responding to the Ministry's questions, as we saw above. In this letter, she employs the same general argument structure as most other widows whereby the grounds are that her husband died; the claim that she is therefore eligible for a widow's pension; and the warrant is her husband's war service. The backing Florence uses is one that she has in common with many other widows, particularly Louisa: that she is faced with imminent poverty. In Florence's case, she adds a further claim to her argument as a bargaining tool: that a loan could be an alternative to a war widow's pension.

Florence actually addresses her letter to 'Miss Bondfield'. This is Margaret Bondfield, the Minister of Labour, who in 1929 had become the first woman to take up a seat in the Cabinet. It is probably the publicity surrounding her appointment that drew Florence's attention to her, as well as Bondfield's high-profile involvement in women's issues in the inter-war years, as she would not have had any ministerial responsibility for pensions and, as MP for Wallsend, was not Member of Parliament for Florence's constituency in Burnley. It seems Florence is attempting to draw on a feeling of sisterhood with one of the few female politicians at the time, a strategy which other researchers have commented on.[123] Florence's use of emotive language and mental process verbs can also be seen as part of her strategy of attempting to appeal woman-to-woman, contrasting with what we saw earlier when Louisa eventually acknowledged the overwhelmingly patriarchal nature of the pension scheme and adopted 'male' voices to plead her case. In Florence's letter, her strategy of using an individual name continues in the conversational

[121] See Appendix 3, document ii
[122] As with all the letters from the individual widows, I have retained the writers' original orthographical features.
[123] For example, Ingrid James (2000) has commented on the huge number of letters other women MPs received from women in the inter-war years, particularly prominent politicians such as Ellen Wilkinson.

elements of the letter, mixed with what appear to be carefully composed, more formal elements.

It is clear from this letter that Florence's most pressing need is financial, but she seems to be very aware that her appeal needs to be tactfully articulated. To begin with her argument is made less direct by the opening sentence's directive speech act (*I wish you to read this letter through*) being followed by an expressive speech act (*as it is not a begging letter, for I feel sure you get plenty of them*) which mitigates the request. Florence employs the mental process verbs *wish* and *feel* to add to this effect. Interestingly, she draws upon older charitable discourses which place the intended recipient, Bondfield, in the position of a charitable donor who receives numerous requests from the undeserving poor. Florence attempts to retain a sense of dignity and pride by immediately negating the supposition that her letter would be dismissed as 'begging' and therefore unworthy of further perusal. This fear of charity is one that appears in many widows' letters. For example, Annie Banks wrote to the Ministry of Pensions in 1929 following the death of her husband: 'I am in very straightened circumstances at the present time, and not wishing to appeal to charity, I am finding it very hard to continue.'[124] The rigorous system of means testing established by many charities as well as by the Poor Law Guardians, had long-since lodged fear of the stigma of charity in the minds of the working-class population. More to the point, a State pension paid to a war widow carried with it a clear sign of payment made in respect of a man who had given his life for the country. For Florence as for the thousands of women who appealed for a pension after the war, as discussed above, it was also the matter of their personal suffering that they judged as being relevant.

Florence emphasises her argument that her husband's ill health was caused through his active service by stating that he had 'Cronic valve disease of the heart caused through the war', the absence of hedging expressing her conviction that Walter's illness was directly attributable to his war service. Her feeling of injustice is further highlighted by contrasting this with the conjunctive *but* to emphasise the that this was not pensioned, despite the clear worthiness of this.

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[124] PIN26 17256 Letter from Annie Banks to Ministry of Pensions, 27th April, 1929.

> […] he died of Cronic valve Disease of the heart caused through the war, but he got no pension, he was able to work when he first came home with it but for the last 3 years he has suffered agony, and of course it meant losing a lot of wages, for he has never worked regular for 3 years prior to his death […]

Florence employs a number of intensification strategies to argue her case here. For example, she goes on to use a macro-intensification strategy to highlight his decreasing health by claiming he could work 'when he first came home'. The use of 'first came home' leads to the assumption that this was a very short space of time, but it is clear from careful consideration of the chronology that he was actually working for eight years after his army discharge. Florence's narrative builds up to the cause of her poverty being decreased earnings in the last three years, something she attributes to her husband's worsening health, as a further intensification strategy. Whilst she does not state that he was unemployed at the time, she leaves this as a presupposition when she writes 'their was only my wages', where *only* triggers the presupposition that there was just one wage coming into the house. This gap in the narrative has to be filled by the reader. The 1930s reader would doubtless have been very aware of the huge discrepancy between wages for men and for women and would thus have been assumed to understand the force of Florence's argument about her impoverishment without need for further elaboration. She employs the interpellatory intensifier marker *of course* to compel the reader to agree with her statement that 'it meant losing a lot of wages', which also reinforces the previously implied common sense background assumption that her husband's job had been better paid than hers.

The late 1920s and early 1930s was a period of economic depression in Western Europe. Florence's letter is written against this backdrop of widespread financial difficulties. The records of the Joint Committee of the Order of St John and the British Red Cross show clearly that there was a huge increase in the number of appeals made by ex-servicemen, their widows and families for help at this time. Annual Reports of the Ministry of Pensions report similar increases in the number of pension applications, both for war disability pensions and for widows' pensions.

In her letter of 1st May, 1931, Florence explicitly makes the link between war service and the State's repayment for a loss of wages: 'I was thinking for what he suffered through the war could you ask the government to help me with sum of money in part of wages what I lost through him having got no pension'. Using the macro intensification strategy of employing a mental process verb, she is collocating her husband's illness with her own on-going financial struggle, both being something for which the State is responsible, or at least capable of alleviating. Bondfield is here treated as someone who is separate from the State but could act as an advocate for Florence, emphasising her view of Bondfield as a sympathetic fellow woman, indicated by the personal request that she 'ask the government' for financial help on Florence's behalf. Her claim for financial help is also intensified by the way Florence presents herself as a nurse of a man whose health had deteriorated to the point where he could no longer go out to work. She writes: 'I did all I could to prolong his life', here implying that her husband's life was in danger and she carried out her duty as his carer to the best of her abilities. This is turned into a bargaining tool to support her claim for financial help when she goes on to suggest that financial aid 'would compensate us for what we all have suffered', implying her husband's suffering was shared by the family who were with him.

Her argument of selflessness is enhanced by the strategy of using her family's welfare as the greater benefactors of financial assistance, appealing to Bondfield's maternal instinct, perhaps. She ties discourses of social welfare into those of nationalism and patriotism in suggesting that the relief of her debts would enable her to raise her children 'a cridit to there country'. This reflects the argument put forward by Kovan (1994) who suggests that the children of war heroes were regarded as inheriting their fathers' selflessness and sacrifice in aid of the greater good of the country. This belief was also articulated in popular culture in this period, for example in Marie Stopes' 1918 play, *The Race: A New Play for Life*. In this play, Stopes' main character sees conceiving the child of a serviceman as being a patriotic act, with motherhood as her national duty. As Billig has pointed out, in modern warfare men have been called up to defend a way of life, their country and the country's future (the children), and it is this discourse of patriotism that Florence

is picking up on. Florence is presumably including her children in her argument when she claims financial help to 'compensate *us* for what *we* all have suffered'. The use of *all* triggers that assumption she is referring to more than just Florence and her husband, the others probably being her two children, although she does not give us any more information about them and so they remain virtually invisible.[125] In abandoning her frame of motherhood in her claim, we can perhaps surmise that her children were older and therefore less dependant than Louisa's.

Most strongly in Florence's letter is the underlying fear of debt. She repeats several times the fact she is in debt, each time linking this to her husband's ill-health and so implicitly intensifying her claim for a State pension. In her carefully constructed narrative, she builds up to the story in chronological order from her husband's war service, his subsequent ill health and his recent death to a more pressing matter: the debts incurred in the course of his illness to which has been added the funeral expenses. She writes 'now there is the funeral expences on the top of them [earlier debts] they all together amount to nearly £50'. She does not employ overt intensifiers, but the idiom 'on the top of' carries a metaphor of daunting mountains of debt. Whilst this is a lot of money to Florence, she carefully implies that this is actually very little in the great scale of government finances, using contrastive clauses joined by the contrastive conjunction *but*: 'it is not much that I ask for, but it would be like a fortune to me'. She is mitigating her request by assuming it would be a small amount to the reader, whom she has shifted to be in the institutional role of the State. This is repeated later in the letter, where she frames her request as an 'appeal' which she distinguishes from the earlier-discounted 'begging' by mitigating it as 'no more than what will clear me', thus presenting herself as being rational and lacking in self-indulgence.

Seemingly aware of possible arguments against her appeal for a pension or other financial help, Florence offers an alternative claim that she presents as a reasoned argument. Employing a macro mitigation strategy showing a degree of reservation in terms of addressee orientation, she writes 'if they couldn't give it [a

[125] As they were born after Walter's demobilisation, they would not be eligible for a dependent's pension under the terms of the Royal Warrant.

war widow's pension] me', the modality carried by *could* being less categorical than alternatives such as *would*, implying that the State has a choice but other factors may prevent them from granting the pension. In an apparent attempt to negotiate some sort of loan, she uses a question form as a politeness strategy move to allow for possible rejection: 'would they grant it me as a loan, with 5/- shillings a week knocked off my pension'. This question is immediately followed by an expansion in the form of the second clause which provides details of the solution. (Her use of the definite determiner here is confusing, but it is possible that Florence is here referring to an ordinary widow's pension which was introduced in 1926.) Again, she is addressing her remarks to Bondfield and appears hopeful that she will act on her behalf in passing these on to the relevant powerful agency which she identifies usually as 'they' but sometimes more explicitly as 'the government', thus is drawing on new discourses of social welfare whereby the State will step in to support the needy.

Florence's appeal on the basis of pressing financial need is similar to many others in my corpus. For example, Ellen Bambrough[126], writing nearly ten years earlier, in her statement writes only: 'I am a widow with 2 children since the death of my husband I have been left with nothing.' Like Florence, her husband's death had been classed as 'not attributable' to his war service (he had died after demobilisation, in the influenza pandemic at the end of the war, at the age of 33). The Ministry of Pensions' reformulation of Ellen's claim is simply 'no evidence', this referring to her husband's medical history rather than her own circumstances of need for which she could doubtless provide ample evidence.

Florence's appeal for financial help is a mixture of claims grounded in her husband's war service, her care for him and the consequent loss of earnings (so a form of remuneration), and ultimately her own very pressing present financial difficulties. At various points in her letter, she resorts to highly personal appeals based on her current personal suffering and helplessness, for example 'I don't know which way to turn', and later 'I am nearly out of my mind'. Again, macro intensification strategies are used employing mental process verbs. The emphasis on

[126] PIN26 17252 Claim form completed by Ellen Bambrough, 10th December, 1921.

her current circumstances are so strongly expressed towards the end of this letter, it is clear that she was under great pressure to keep herself and her family together in the immediate aftermath of her husband's death. There is urgency in the postscript directives: 'Please don't delay. Please put it through as early as possible as they are all troubling me for thier money'. The repetition of *please* emphasises the underlying desperation. The first sentence carries the assumption that help will be forthcoming, triggered by *delay*, the negation being used to expedite this help. This plea is supported by the following sentence where *it* refers anaphorically to the hoped-for financial help, and *they* is an exophoric reference to the unnamed creditors, this perceived threat triggered by the choice of the verb *troubling* which carries a semantic link to worry, difficulty and unrest. Thus Florence is framing herself as a carer on the part of the State, and as such she should receive compensation for the associated hardships. The discourses of social welfare she employs also reflect the underlying parsimony of the legislation as she adopts financial discourses in an attempt to merge social welfare with older charitable discourses that would provide 'loans', as we saw in the case of the Joint Committee earlier.

The Ministry of Pensions responded quickly to Florence's letter, although it had initially been sent to the Ministry of Labour. The memoranda which exist in Florence's file[127] show her case was debated between bureaucrats, although there is nothing to suggest that Bondfield herself had any input. As we have already seen in Louisa's file, there is a lack of engagement with arguments based around poverty and need on the part of a widow, rather the discussion simply relates strictly to the grounds for a pension being granted. In Florence's case, this is exclusively based upon Walter's record.

> In this O.S.Y. claim the widow wrote to the Minister of Labour and the letter was forwarded to this Department for consideration. It is stated by the widow that death was due to Chr. Valvular Disease of the Heart. As an O.S.Y. claim by the man in respect of heart trouble was rejected in April 1930, should the claim be refused on 'non pensioner grounds', without submission to MS(1)?

[127] See Appendix 3, document iii.

In this first entry on the memorandum sheet, the writer states that the claim is there for *consideration*, the nominalised mental process verb carrying with it connotations of careful thought and deliberation rather than other more proactive choices such as *action*. Florence is placed in the active role of provider of the claim on the grounds of her husband's cause of death. Interestingly, the bureaucrat here has repeated Florence's own formulation of Walter's cause of death which in itself is probably a formulation of the medical register of diagnosis found on his death certificate. Florence's claim is apparently supported by reference to some other document which no longer exists in her file: a documented appeal for a pension by Walter himself (traces of which are also found in the reference number written by the bureaucrats on document i. in Appendix 3). In this case, the claim was made for 'heart trouble', which does not carry the same authority as the medical register employed by Florence. The agency to which Walter made his pension claim is left unnamed, as are the grounds on which this claim was not accepted. The entry concludes with an interrogative form which apparently includes the preferred answer in the formulaic structure 'non pensioner grounds'.

The response comes from a bureaucrat called Mitchell[128], who echoes the 'non-pensioner grounds' formulation. This entry appears to be the work of someone who has greater authority than the unnamed awards officer of the first entry, indicated by the use of first person pronoun.

> I propose to reject forthwith on non-pensioner grounds adding that the husband's case was specially considered last year by the Ministry who, after reviewing all the evidence, was unable to take any exceptional action in his favour. No grounds are seen for departing from this decision, and the Ministry are unable to deal exceptionally with the widow's claim.

Mitchell puts himself in a position of power who has the authority to decline a pension claimant's appeal. The strength of this authority is also reinforced by the use of *forthwith*, which carries a mood of urgency. The thoroughness of the basis of

[128] See Appendix 3, document iii.

the decision is emphasised by the prefixing of *evidence* with *all*, although as we later find out, there was evidence in his medical file which could have supported Walter's claim at that point. Mitchell continues to defer responsibility for this action (or lack of action) to the institutional agency of the Ministry, with *unable* carrying the assumption that the agency is prevented from acting by a lack of evidence rather than any institutional lack of will to act.

The response[129] sent by the Ministry to Florence closely follows the wording found in the memoranda whilst adding more detail about Walter. Florence's appeal for a pension on the basis of need is not engaged with. Instead, her appeal is formulated as being entirely on the basis of her husband's death.

> With reference to your recent letter, addressed to the Minister of Labour and relative to an application for pension in respect of the death of your husband, the late Walter Bayliss, No.264951, Private, Labour Corps, I have to inform you that as your husband was not in receipt of a disablement pension or allowance under the Royal Warrant at the time of his death, you are not eligible for the grant of a pension by reason of the provisions of Articles 17A and 17B of the Royal Warrant which apply in your case.

The initial first person pronoun in the following representative speech act would seem to imply personal responsibility and could be seen as evidence of emergent personalised bureaucratic strategies employed by the State, but in fact the writer is apparently acting on a higher authority, instructed by an unnamed agent to pass on the news of the rejection of the claim, and is acting in the same way as the complimentary closes previously discussed in bureaucratic correspondence sent to Louisa. This is expanded upon at the end of this opening paragraph where the responsibility is allocated to the impersonal bureaucratic agency of the Royal Warrant. This contrasts with the memoranda where it is clear that individual bureaucrats have made this decision based on their personal opinions. Like the memorandum, bureaucratic traces are evident in the use of the official codes (*Articles 17A and 17B*) which are only partly clarified for Florence by the final

[129] PIN26 17294 letter from Ministry of Pensions to Florence Bayliss, ? 6th May, 1931.

clause which carries the assumption that the Ministry of Pensions have carefully identified relevant legislation on Florence's behalf.

There is further use of first person pronouns later in this letter.

> I have to add that your husband's case was specially considered last year by the Ministry, who, after reviewing all the evidence, were unable to take any exceptional action in his favour. No grounds are seen for departing from this decision and the Ministry are unable to deal exceptionally with your claim.[130]

Although again employing first person pronouns, the impersonal institutional agency of *the Ministry* is given credit for the action of reviewing Walter's case, the use of the adverb *specially* implying that this was an extraordinary move. This impression of individual care and attention is further elaborated on by the prepositional phrase *after reviewing all the evidence*, which follows the wording of the internal memoranda discussed above. The use of *exceptional* to prefix *action* serves to intensify the supposed special treatment Walter's case was given. There is no active agent in the final sentence, although there is an expectation that it is still the bureaucrats at the Ministry that are responsible for such decision-making. Florence's claim is thus linked inextricably with Walter's failed claim, reflecting the 'non-pension grounds' found in the memoranda. The discourse of social welfare here is firmly anchored in the State's obligation to the soldier rather than the widow as there is no engagement with Florence's argument for a pension on the basis of need, nor mention of her suggestion of some sort of loan to help her out of her financial difficulties.

In response to this, Florence writes back[131] to repeat her suggestion of a loan, this time avoiding mention of a State pension based on her attempt to gain the publicly acknowledged status of war widow. She is engaging with the bureaucratic language of the Ministry's letters in quoting back at them the reference number they have allocated to her claim. She also echoes the opening clause of the Ministry's letter which makes reference back to the preceding correspondence, drawing upon the formality of the standard letters sent out by the Ministry.

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[130] Ibid.
[131] See Appendix 3, document iv.

Whilst she maintains her argument grounds on the basis of her husband's death, there is an additional argument that is more clearly presented which uses her debts as the grounds of her argument. Here, the claim is for a loan, not a pension, and she employs the warrant that she is a good citizen who is not trying to take advantage of the government as benefactor.

She is again using emotive language to present her appeal for financial help, and is drawing on the widening network of expectations of State social welfare which had appeared by the early 1930s. The phrase *to relieve my anxious mind* draws on poetic language and possibly reflects the more educated, literate nature of Florence's writing when compared with Louisa's. This is further shown in Florence's attempt to negotiate a loan that would not be disadvantageous to the State.

> I have received your letter in answer to mine, and to relieve my anxious mind could you not allow me £50 pounds, and you take 5 Shillings per week off my pension until you have received it all back, the Goverment would lose nothing that way, and would take a load off my mind, as those who I owe it to are pressing me very hard, and I would managed with 5 Shillings a week less if all my Debts were cleared, I only ask for help, not for anything giving to me. So please let me know as early as possible and oblige

Florence uses an interrogative form to again appeal for a loan, this politeness strategy showing attention to the negative face of the anonymous bureaucrat in not imposing a demand on him. There is an ambiguity in the use of the second person pronoun *you*, which seems to veer towards an institutional, generalised *you* to stand for the government although the highly personal nature of her plea indicates an expectation of a more personal relationship with the State. She shows an awareness of the State's responsibility to its citizens whilst also assuming a patriotic stance as one who will not be a burden on the country through draining State resources. She draws upon the same discourses of self-help and the State's ideological position of parsimony as we saw in the parliamentary debates of 1914 which helped form the Royal Warrant, and could thus be seen as attempting to align herself with the State's ideological stance, as found in Helmer's work on institutional storytelling (1993).

Again, her argument repeats her assurance that a loan would not disadvantage the State, whilst there would be an advantage to herself in that her own mental troubles would be alleviated, using macro mitigation strategies that are addressee orientated. She repeats her backing that the unnamed menace causing her such problems are (presumably) loan sharks: *those who I owe it*. The intensification of her problem comes in the verb phrase *pressing me very hard*, where the action of retrieving the money she has borrowed is articulated as a physical force, further strengthened by the intensification *very hard*. She frames herself as a responsible mother in offering certainty in her ability to manage her family and finances through the use of the modal *would* rather than the less certain alternatives *might* or *could*. In repeating her earlier request for a loan which is mitigated with the use of *only*, she follows this up with the assertion that it is not for herself that she requests the money. In using the micro mitigation strategy of the negative structure, there is the assumption that other people might use the money for themselves in some inappropriately selfish way. This echoes her earlier distancing of her own case being distinguished from the hypothetical 'begging letters' from those who are implicitly unworthy of help, and frames herself as being a responsible, deserving citizen.

She finishes her letter with a conversational informality, starting with *so*, used here as a marker of consequential connection and implies that Florence is hopeful that her argument has been convincing enough to merit a positive response. To make sure of this, she concludes with the verb *oblige*, which is used to hasten a response whilst also indicating that this should be favourable. Florence's persisting sense of hope that the State will come to her aid reflects the underlying assumption that the State was morally responsible for the welfare of war widows, rather than drawing on the legal obligations that the State itself drew upon.

The final letter in this sequence is in response to Florence's of 8th May. It again includes elements that personalise it and engage with some of Florence's concerns in a way that previous rigidly standard letters would not allow.

The letter opens with a reformulation of Florence's request for a loan, turning it back into the original appeal for a war widow's pension. Again, Walter is

identified by his service details rather than any other indicators, emphasising his connection with the State and with the nation and less with Florence herself.

> With reference to your letter dated 8th May, 1931, respecting pension in connection with the death of your husband, the late Walter Bayliss, Private, No.264951, Labour Corps, I have to inform you that as previously notified the Royal Warrants administered by this Department do not permit of the grant of a pension in your case, and in these circumstances it is regretted that no further action can be taken in the matter.[132]

There is a reiteration of the Ministry's position as being unchanged, triggered by the prepositional phrase *as previously notified*. Again, the impersonal noun *Royal Warrants* is used as the active agent, removing any human agency from the denial of a pension. Florence's claim is rendered more personal by the labelling of it as being *your case* rather than alternatives along the lines of *such cases*.

The use of the mental process verb *regretted* suggests that a more favourable decision could have been possible, and carries associations with apology and disappointment. This is repeated in the use of *regret* in the final paragraph, where the writer actually gets around to engaging with Florence's request for a loan.

> I have also to inform you with regret, that there are no Funds at the disposal of this Ministry from which assistance could be granted you.[133]

The use of this prepositional phrase *with regret* goes some way towards softening the news that a loan is not forthcoming. However, there is also an indication that financial help might be available elsewhere: it is simply that there is nothing at the disposal of the Ministry of Pensions. The use of the modal verb *could* indicates that there is no obligation for any such funds to be made available to people such as Florence, and so the State is distanced from any responsibility for this.

There are no further letters in Florence's file until December, 1934.[134] Seemingly abandoning her attempt to construct a sympathetic sisterhood with female

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[132] PIN26 17294 letter from Ministry of Pensions, 10th May, 1931.
[133] Ibid.
[134] See Appendix 3, document v.

members of parliament, she has turned instead to her own MP, Vice-Admiral Gordon Campbell. There is not a copy of his letter to the Minister for Pensions, Major Tryon, nor any paper trail to indicate how (or if) the case was reviewed, however there is a copy of Tryon's private secretary's response to Campbell. In this letter between civil servant and member of parliament, Florence is rendered invisible, replaced by the noun phrase *the case of Mrs Bayliss*, the impersonal nature of this noun phrase emphasised by the use of *which* rather than the personal reference *whom* in the associated prepositional phrase.

> Major Tryon asks me to say that enquiries have been made in the case of Mrs. Bayliss, of 52, Albion Street, Burnley, about which you wrote on 8th December.

There is a temporal vagueness as to when Florence's claim had been looked into, perhaps disguising the fact that no fresh enquiries had been made at this time, something supported by the absence of any accompanying documentation. That this is the case is demonstrated in the second paragraph where there is a clear indication that the only enquiries had been made at the time of Florence's original appeal in 1931.

> Mr. Bayliss was never in receipt of a disablement pension, and his widow's application failed primarily on that ground in view of the provision of the Ministry Royal Warrant. The case was, however, considered on its merits, but it could not be certified that Mr. Bayliss' death from valvular disease of the heart was either wholly or materially due to his war service. No exceptional action could therefore be taken on the widow's behalf, and Major Tryon regrets that further action in the matter is not possible.

Again, responsibility for the failure of Florence's appeal is not given human agency, instead there is the institutional agency contained within the noun phrase *the Ministry Royal Warrant*. In the second sentence, *however* triggers the presupposition that special attention was given to her appeal, juxtaposed against the second clause beginning with the contrastive conjunction *but* which heralds the negative element confirming the pension was not granted. Here there is an element of doubt where the negation of *certified* leaves the possibility that there could be

other evidence to support Florence's claim, but that this is not documented and so is inadmissible in the eyes of the officials. This second sentence also contains intertextual reference to the wording of the Royal Warrant, as we saw above.

The Ministry is placed in the patriarchal role of helping Florence but being prevented from so doing by the terms of the Royal Warrant. This willingness to help is triggered by the reference to action being taken *on the widow's behalf*. This is further emphasised by the use of *regret* in relation to Tryon's apparent attempts at further action, triggering associated meanings of sorrow and apology. The 'facts' of the case are thus being presented as preventing affirmative action in Florence's favour, irrespective of any need she may have. There is finality in the final sentence where further action *is not possible*, this lacking mitigation through temporal restriction such as 'at this time'. It seems any hope Florence might have had at this stage as been extinguished as there is no further correspondence in her file until the late 1960s.

Before continuing to look at Florence's case, it is also worth mentioning the personalisation and conversationalisation that will become more relevant in the following section. As has been mentioned above, most widows in this period drew on older discourses of social welfare which relied on face-to-face interaction. This may have led to the fact that many of them appeared to address the anonymous bureaucrats as individuals. As we saw with Louisa earlier, her conversational style reflects her personalised appeals to the nameless addressees. In return, however, the widows received impersonal, formal letters, typical of the public sphere and official world with which they were engaging for the first time in such numbers. The correspondence from the Ministry were depersonalised to the extent that many of the letters, particularly in the early years of the Royal Warrant, were actually pre-printed forms which allowed for very little variation in message, reflecting Fairclough's concept of discourse technologies (1989/2001). Despite very personal appeals for help, such letters were apparently the most bureaucratically effective mode of communication, continuing well into the 1930s. These pre-printed letters largely removed human agency from responsibility, especially negative actions such as the disallowed appeals and withdrawal of pensions. As we have seen in correspondence

addressed to Florence and others, even in the 1930s 'the Royal Warrant' is most commonly the active agent, where any is given. However, from examination of the correspondence in Florence's file, we can also see active human agency within the Ministry of Pensions in the memoranda for May, 1931. Here, Mr Mitchell writes 'I propose to reject forthwith…'. So, deep within the bureaucratic structure, away from public gaze, we can see what was withheld from Florence, as from other widows: the actual name of the person who refused to grant the pension. As we shall see, by the late 1960s there is a far greater level of visible human agency in the State's dealings with its citizens. However, traces of the older reticence to accept responsibility for negative actions continue.

Post-war social welfare: 'This country owes me a lot'

There is no other documentation extant in Florence's file until January 1968. The intervening 34 years had seen radical changes to social welfare provision in Britain. As previously mentioned, universal welfare provision had come into force in 1948, the National Health Service and Social Security implementing State-funded support for all citizens. This legislation was in addition to the early attempts at social welfare provision from the beginning of the century, however the Royal Warrant of 1916 (with subsequent amendments) remained the only means of State-funded war pension provision for widows of the First World War. Other funds were available for distribution by the State, such as the remaining money held in the Royal Patriotic Fund[135], but it seems these tended to be allocated on moral grounds as can be seen from the case of Elizabeth Groake. Elizabeth wrote to the Ministry of Social Security in 1962 stating that her war widow's pension of 35/- a week was insufficient to maintain her in her old age. A Ministry- appointed welfare officer visited her at home and sent a recommendation back, writing 'I found Mrs Groake to be an extremely worthy type of widow and in this case welfare action is being taken

[135] The Royal Patriotic Fund had been set up in 1854 to provide the families of soldiers who had died in the Crimean war with assistance. Its funds were gathered from the unclaimed effects of servicemen who had been killed in action.

for additional assistance'.[136] It seems the older notion of moral propriety and deservingness, here formulated as *an extremely worthy type*, was still prevalent in welfare allocation many years after universal welfare provision had come into force in Britain.

By 1968, universal State welfare provision was 20 years old but still being revised as different pre-1948 systems occasionally conflicted with post-1948 provision. Such a conflict of provision often occurred when they had been administered by different departments, such as unemployment benefit being under the umbrella of the Ministry of Labour and the long-standing old age pension under the Ministry of Pensions, both of these ministries merging post-1948 to become the Ministry of Social Services but each retaining its existing benefit structure. Where discrepancies in benefit provision occurred, and they became public knowledge through wide media coverage, a 'moral panic' often resulted, fuelled by the media reports of an unnecessary and unfair drain on tax-payers' money that clearly reflects the earlier debates in both public and private spheres that we saw above.

The threat of the State (and thus the honest tax-payers) being taken advantage of by people who did not seem worthy of financial support has a long history and has been the subject of several moral panics. As we saw earlier in the debates about widows' pensions and separation allowances in 1914, many newspapers carried scare stories of women who, without a male head of the household, could not be trusted with an independent income.[137] One such letter from Canon EA Burroughs summed up some of the feeling against soldiers' wives when he wrote in the *Daily Express* that 'eighteen shillings a week and no husband were heaven to women who, once industrious and poor were now wealthy and idle'.[138] Similar fears of women, in particular, being encouraged into idleness at the State's, and hence the country's, expense was also behind the media reporting of women claiming unemployment benefit in the years immediately following the First World War, as mentioned in Louisa's case study. In the early 21st century, similar moral

[136] PIN26 19000 Report of Ministry of Social Security welfare officer, 25th June, 1965.
[137] In particular, a series of letters in *The Times* in the first fortnight of October, 1915, showed a fear that women would squander any money given directly to them by the State.
[138] Cited in Barker (1979).

panics erupt frequently, commonly in relation to asylum seekers claiming benefits, where the underlying concern remains that the unworthy are receiving financial benefits which 'we' as honest (white) British tax-payers have helped to fund.

It seems such a moral panic about unworthy recipients of State funding appeared in the media in early 1968 where it was reported that some people were claiming both unemployment benefit and old age pension. This prompted Florence to write to the Ministry[139] again. Florence's opening phrase[140] carries intertextual reference to an unspecified newspaper report, her use of the definite article ('*the* two men …') indicating that this is a specific case she is referring to. Using macro intensification strategies, her sense of outrage is clear in her repetition of *reck* to describe her husband's health on return from active service, the second use premodified by *perfect* to enhance the sense of totality of his condition. She draws on her role as a mother to intensify her role as carer, linking this to the concept of a husband who gave his health for his country that is so often found in widows' letters of appeal. Florence here echoes the emphasis on her personal suffering that is found in her letters from 1931.

She introduces details of her husband's war service that did not appear in her earlier letters. The nature of Walter's war injuries is emphasised to highlight the claim that it was not only enemy fire which caused his wounds and eventual death, but also the rescue party's misfortunes:

> […] my Husband was wounded laying on a hill side waiting for an Ambulance, it came and toppled on the top of him, it affected his heart on the top of his wound's, his Heart used to stop and start again, when he had an attack, he always fell on the floor, I never knew when I came home from work, I never new what I would find when I came home from work, would he be dead or alive […]

Thus there is a two-fold demand for recognition: her husband was injured *for* his country and *by* his country, metonymically represented here by the ambulance. The shift to the narrative of her own role as carer again focuses on her personal distress

[139] Although she addresses her letter to the Ministry of Pensions, by this time it had been reformed as the Ministry of Social Security. PIN26 17294, see Appendix 3
[140] See Appendix 3, document vi.

in detailing the uncertainty and danger of her husband's condition in relation to her own position. As with the letters of 1931, Florence is using the assumption that the State should act as financial provider in recognition for the life of her husband, and to this she adds her own expectation of compensation for her own role as carer. In using this macro intensification strategy, she emphasises her own self-sacrifice as giving her the authority to comment on the (unfair) benefit claims of others.

In considerable detail, she accounts for her income at the time of Walter's death, indicating that through such precision she had to make every penny count. This attention to finances is repeated at the end of the letter when she states that she had to pay for the funeral at a small amount per week, which links back to her letters of 1931 when she appealed for a loan to be paid back at five shillings a week, twice the amount she states here as being what she had to pay eventually.

Florence's attention to finance is a large part of what is behind her argument. To intensify her complaint of injustice, her minute finances and work record are juxtaposed with the thousands of pounds the State is alleged to have given people on the dole, with its connotations of idleness. Employing argument structure, we can see that the grounds are provided in the opening phrase where she refers to the men who receive £3,000 a year on the dole, her claim being that this is unfair, supported by the warrant that her husband died because of his war service and she herself was left in a state of impoverishment. It is clear she is not launching another appeal for a widows' pension when she writes 'I never got a war Widow's Pension […] and it still rankle's with me'. Whilst she offers a great amount of detail about her own hardships, this is not framed as a request for a pension for herself. It is interesting to note that Florence's representation of her poverty is articulated through reference to not having a holiday, reflecting the post-war expectation of certain standards of living which are markedly different from the inter-war standards cited by Louisa when she appeals for help in acquiring more basic provisions such as food and clothing for her children.

There appears to be a factual discrepancy in Florence's statement that she wrote to Churchill as prime minister at the time of Walter's death: Churchill did not become prime minister until 1940, and indeed was not even in government in 1931.

However, this claim does suggest that Florence was pro-active enough to approach politicians as indeed she did in her letter to Margaret Bondfield. In citing the support of her family doctor, she is also attempting to draw on the order of discourse that might be acceptable to the State. That her appeal was 'turned down flat' is also clear from her file as she was not even allowed to engage with the formal tribunal process. She offered evidence for this refusal for a pension on the basis that her husband was unable to go to the medical board for examination in the months before his death. To return to the initial claim Florence made for pension in 1931, we can see that this is a point she had made before, although this is not acknowledged or mentioned elsewhere in the correspondence from the 1930s. The assertion that it was Walter's illness that prevented him from fully processing his disability pension claim is used by Florence to support her argument that she deserves a pension, both in 1931 and again in 1968. Once more we can see that the order of discourse puts the widows in the least powerful position as the evidence they supply in support of their claims is ignored by the State.

In contrast to her husband's ill health and the lack of State-funded compensation for her carer role, Florence presents 'these men' as being able to 'draw both'. By *both*, she is making exophoric reference to retirement pension and unemployment benefit. She goes on to use the micro intensification strategy of employing a response-demanding utterance when she uses an interrogative structure 'when oh when will justice be done' to carry the assumption that justice has not been done. For Florence, 'justice' would appear to be the men's pensions being stopped rather than her own claim for a war widow's pension being accepted. She is appealing for fairness and equality in benefit payments that draws on older discourses of social welfare where only the worthy were granted assistance, but here the basis is that they can be 'worthy' if they had paid taxes and continued to work, thus reflecting the development of social welfare discourses. As with saw with Lilian Armfield earlier[141], Florence places herself in the role as one who is worthy, having earned a pension through her own employment, as well as being one who has suffered (and continues to suffer) through poverty caused by her husband's early

[141] PIN26 17264, page 178.

death. This death is framed firmly as the responsibility of the State, metonymically as part of the country, leading to Florence's representative speech act that 'this country owe's me a lot'. For Florence, the State and the country are one and the same.

Her letter ends with a repeat of her opening expressive, employing mental process verbs here as a speaker-orientated in what would usually be seen as a mitigation strategy: 'I think it is scandalous'. This mirrors her opening expressive speech act carrying the mental process verb *think* to indicate that this is her personal opinion, then draws on the emotive adjective *scandalous* which carries connotations of immorality, shock and outrage. However in the context of her letter, it is clearly the intensification strategy of one who is qualified to make such an opinion, particularly when she adds the vivid metaphor *it makes my blood boil,* which operates to intensify her expression of indignation. There is a response-demanding utterance in *so you could tell the state I was in*, the addressee-orientated intensification strategy assuming that her representation of herself as someone who has suffered because of the State has been compelling. She links with all this into a discourse of nationalism which assumes that the country is not going as well as it might, owing largely to unfair benefit claims, and it is the role of every righteous citizen (implicitly including herself) to police this.

Interestingly, like Louisa nearly half a century earlier, Florence is using the strategy of off-setting her own exemplary behaviour, and therefore worthiness for State support, against the behaviour of others who do receive State support but are morally less worthy. In Florence's case, she is using the men who claim dole and retirement pension as the grounds of her argument rather than the backing Louisa utilises. For Florence, the perceived unfairness of her own treatment when compared to that of others has been the incentive to write, but she does not use this to launch another appeal for pension for herself, rather to act in defence of other tax-payers. In Louisa's case, the deployment of a morally less worthy other was used to support her own case for a pension. I would argue that Florence is demonstrating a greater awareness of her role as a citizen than is found in earlier widows' letters, reflecting developments in society in the course of the 20th century.

Before the Ministry of Pensions responded to Florence, there was an internal investigation into her case. This appears to have been prompted by the misinterpretation of her argument as being one in which she claimed a pension for herself rather than for the cessation of a pension for others. The Ministry bureaucrats had placed her letter in the genre of widows' pension claims rather than Florence's own intention of complaining about other people receiving State funds 'unfairly'. This misinterpretation is clear from the reformulation of her argument in a memorandum dated 7th February, which reads

> As her main complaint is that she did not get a war widow's pension, you may wish to deal, please.[142]

Whilst there is no hedging to indicate uncertainty about the nature of Florence's argument, there is hedging in the following directive *you <u>may</u> wish to deal*, reflecting institutional politeness practices rather than uncertainty. The response to this from within the Ministry of Pensions again employs reformulation, reaching a summary that is in line with Florence's argument, but again repeats the earlier reformulation that she is also claiming a war widow's pension.

> Mrs Bayliss seems to be complaining about men who retire on pension before the age of 65 and then claim unemployment benefit. I believe that this question is at present being considered by N.I.A.C. Have you a stock paragraph on this subject which could be included in the letter I propose to ask Blackpool Central Office to send to the widow about her claim to war widow's pension, please[143]

This reformulation contains a number of hedges, perhaps to mitigate the fact that it is contradicting the earlier reformulation. For example, *seems* triggers the assumption that this might not be the case, although this is the most likely interpretation of her argument. To this, Cross adds other details which reformulate Florence's letter further, where the more precise details of the benefits claimed by

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[142] PIN26 17294 G Owens to HK Cross, memo dated 7th February, 1968. From other correspondence in Florence's file, Cross would appear to be one of the higher-ranking bureaucrats in the Ministry of Social Security, a person to whom most of the decisions about Florence are referred. See Appendix 3, document vii.

[143] See Appendix 3, document viii.

the two men she mentions are given. Here, there is an intertextual reference to the specific case Florence is citing and indicates that the Ministry are already aware of the argument grounds and claims of her complaint. Hedging is again employed in the second sentence in the use of *I believe*, where the personal assertion of the writer is being softened as the indication that this case is already known by the Ministry is highlighted by the use of *this question*, referring anaphorically to the reformulation in the opening sentence.

The bureaucrat ends the memo with a directive framed as a question, where there is an assumption that a 'stock paragraph' exists on this matter, indicating that this is a well-known complaint. It also reveals something of the inner workings of the Ministry of Pensions in that, although letters would appear to be individually composed, there are traces of the system of standard letters and forms which were so common in the early years of the Ministry of Pensions as we saw previously.

As mentioned above, the writer of this memo appears to be someone in a position of power as they are able to request letters to be sent out on their behalf. Cross again uses hedging in *I propose to ask*, although here it is less a marker of uncertainty as one of stylistic formality. *Ask* is, presumably, interchangeable here with *instruct*. The only area of the memorandum where Cross does not employ hedging in relation to Florence or their actions in response to her letter is in the final clause where it is assumed with certainty that Florence has actually claimed a war widow's pension.

The reformulation of Florence's argument to be one in which she renewed her claim for a war widow's pension led to considerable bureaucratic activity at the Ministry. A longer memorandum from Cross, dated 5th March[144], clearly shows that internal enquiries had been conducted into Florence's supposed claim for a widow's pension. As with all widows' pension claims, the actual circumstances of need Florence presented are not engaged with, something that is noteworthy given the background of the established universal welfare provision in Britain and the existing practice of additional help for other pensioned widows, as with Elizabeth Groake (page 206).

[144] See Appendix 3, document ix.

Cross again uses quite a marked amount of hedging, but here to indicate tentativeness which is hardly surprising given the half century between the evidence being collected and the summary Cross is writing. Gaps in the records relating to Walter are clear in the certainty with which Cross writes in the opening paragraph that the 'incapacity for which a claim was made is not known', where the active agent who is deprived of this information is presumably Cross and, by the Ministry's reach, all other bureaucrats. However, it is not suggested here that Florence herself is contacted to provide additional information, thus the order of discourse which includes Florence is being rejected, as has been the case in most other widows' records.

Walter's cause of death is again open to a different formulation. In the second paragraph, this is noted as 'chronic heart trouble', which removes it from a medical register and thus becomes hearsay rather than medical fact. The next formulation *valvular disease of the heart* is contained within a direct quotation from the letter discussed earlier sent to Campbell in 1934. Here, Cross is accepting the statements of fact made in this letter as being authoritative, although as we saw earlier, there was nothing to indicate that further investigation has been carried out at that time. Instead, this letter is acting as a substitute for medical opinion which might have served to support a claim for a war widow's pension in 1968. Again using hedging, Cross writes that 'there is no evidence *in the file'*, the prepositional phrase triggering the assumption that there could be additional evidence elsewhere. This is prefixed by the contrastive conjunction *but* followed by *although* leading to the following clause where there is greater certainty in *it is stated* which introduces the authority of the 1934 letter to Campbell. One reason for the hedging and reformulation of Walter's medical condition in this letter could be that the writer is aware of the evidence which shows that Walter claimed for a *chronic* heart condition in December, 1929 and died of the same condition a year later, his claim for this having been rejected in March, 1930. The underlying semantics of *chronic* indicate something long-standing, so is hardly likely to have developed to a level of fatality in the nine months between the claim being rejected in March, 1930 and his death in December of the same year. Reference to Florence's testimony on this point shows

that the grounds on which Walter's claim was rejected were not medical, but simply that he was too ill to make it to the medical board. Again, the order of discourse including a widow's testimony is not admissible, even in 1968.

The intertextual quotation from the words of the Royal Warrant, that Walter's death was neither 'wholly or materially due to his war service' is not attributed to this source (indeed, it comes form the 1938 revision rather than the 1945 version, which amended this troublesome definition to *materially due*). Given much of the controversy over this definition of eligibility that we have already seen from the Ministry bureaucrats in the 1920s and 30s, it might be regarded as surprising that these terms are not questioned. As we shall see below, when Cross is attempting to distance herself from potentially controversial matters, there is no hesitation in employing quotation marks to deflect blame. This would suggest that the impassioned debates about war widows' pensions that we have seen elsewhere in this corpus had largely died down by the late 1960s, the problematic terms of eligibility no longer so widely articulated, particularly within the Ministry, and might also explain the use of the wording from the longer-standing 1938 amendment to the Royal Warrant.

The final paragraph repeats the reformulation of Florence's argument to be one of a pension claim:

> The widow has again raised the matter and we can now consider, but it seems unlikely that we shall be able to obtain fresh evidence. There is, however, a mentioning of a Medical Board report dated 25.9.1917 (doc.14A in disability file) of a systolic murmur, i.e. "heart systolic murmur at apex. Not enlarged, has no dyspnoae on exertion". We would be glad of your opinion as to whether there was any significance in this in order to help us to decide whether to take the case further.

Cross uses hedging in *seems* as a stylistic feature to the representative speech act that an inclusive *we* (standing for the Ministry's investigation bureaucrats) would be able to find additional supporting evidence for Florence's claim. This carries the background assumption that there is a willingness to obtain such evidence. To emphasise this point, Cross does add some additional information in the form of a quotation from a medical report. The use of a direct quotation here

suggests that Cross is deferring judgement to another agency, in this case an army medical board from 1917, and is so avoiding any blame that may be levelled should this prove not to be the case. Indeed, Cross defers judgement for this to another agency (identified here only by the code M4, presumably one of the medical advisors attached to the Department of Social Security), where *your opinion* carries less authority than *instruction* or *direction*, thus retaining ultimate power in the hands of the bureaucrats attached to Cross's section.

Further reformulation of Walter's condition is found in the medical advisor's memorandum of 8th March, 1968.

> The systolic murmur at the apex in 1917 may, or may not have been due to organic heart disease. As he died from ? chronic valvular disease of the heart, under present standards, the case is worth investigation.
> Advise obtaining all the pre and post service evidence available.[145]

The wording of the 1917 medical report, as cited by Cross in the preceding memorandum, is formulated here with the addition of the definite article to *apex*. Using a direct micro mitigation strategy, any opinion as to its significance is ameliorated by the hedge *may or may not*. Walter's condition is further reformulated here using a medical register as *organic heart disease*, indicating more detailed awareness of medical issues than is found in Cross's correspondence. There is again hedging in the use of a question mark to prefix the cause of death which Florence had quoted as being that on Walter's death certificate, this indicating here that there is uncertainty or lack of commitment held in this diagnosis for the purpose of this correspondence.

The attention paid to Florence's perceived claim for a war widow's pension does indicate that such a claim continued to be taken seriously, even half a century after the end of the War, with several detailed internal enquiries being made into her case. However, the problem of her initial letter being misinterpreted eventually led to a letter from the Department of Social Security to Florence, which is striking in its new reformulation of her position, as well as in the level of personalisation and

[145] See Appendix 3, document x.

conversationalisation (Fairclough, 1989) which contribute to 'de-bureaucratisation' (Sarangi and Slembrouck, 1996) when compared with the letters she was sent in the 1930s. At the same time, it contains intertextual links with these letters, particularly in the title of 'controller' assigned to the unnamed senior bureaucrat on whose behalf the letter has been sent.

The reformulation of Florence's argument to render it one of an appeal for a pension is taken one step further in that the opening sentence of this letter carries the presupposition that Walter had been in receipt of a disability pension:

> As your late husband was in receipt of a war disablement pension when he died, you may be eligible for a war widows pension.[146]

We can see there is an assurance of the fact in the representative that Walter '*was* in receipt of a war disablement pension when he died', this being used as the condition under which Florence can claim a war widow's pension. Even with this level of misunderstanding, there is still hedging in the Ministry's position to pay out a pension for her, triggered by 'you *may* be eligible', presumably as this would involve 'new' expenditure on the part of the State, and thus reveals traces of the underlying parsimony.

The bureaucrat who has signed this letter, Billington, employs first person pronouns to add a level of conversationalisation to the letter, even going so far as to place themselves as the active agent who is offering friendly advice to Florence:

> I cannot say at the moment whether you are entitled to a war pension, but I suggest that you complete and return the enclosed form so that we can consider your entitlement. An addressed label is also enclosed.
>
> If you need any assistance in completing the application form, please ask the local Ministry of Social Security office to help you. You can get the address at any Post Office.

This 'friendly' advice masks institutional hedging in the first extract, where the final decision will be made by anonymous bureaucrats (visible here only as an

[146] PIN26 1794 Letter from Billington to Florence Bayliss, 14th March, 1968. See Appendix 3, document xi for Florence's returned copy of this letter.

institutional *we*) rather than the letter-writer in person. Billington employs an FTA softening strategy in *suggesting* Florence complete the form rather than instructing her in a more demanding, face threatening way. The final sentence of this extract indicates an implied question ('where do I send my form?') has been answered, again exhibiting a greater dialogic element of conversationalisation than is found in earlier letters. This strategy is repeated in the second extract, where the need for assistance is anticipated and suggestions for where help can be found are made. The second clause of this sentence is framed as a request, triggered by *please*, rather than a more assertive directive, adding to the level of conversationalisation.

The final paragraph continues to list options for Florence, based upon social welfare schemes that were in operation prior to the full welfare state in 1948, whereby a widow could claim a widow's pension but only if her husband had made contributions under the National Insurance Act (1911 and subsequent revisions). Up to the 1940s, these were not compulsory payments and generally excluded the very low-paid, these exceptions acknowledged here by the hedge *if*:

> If your husband was insured under the National Insurance Acts and you are not already receiving a pension or allowance under these Acts, you should apply for National Insurance widows benefit on a form which you can get at your local Ministry of Social Security office. It is advisable for you to do this even though you also claim a war widows pension.

An absence of human agency in the final sentence, where *advisable* carries connotations of this being a sensible and prudent move, enhances the paternalistic presupposition that Florence has been imprudent in failing to apply for a widows' pension under other legislation such as the National Insurance Acts.

As we can see, the level of personalisation and conversationalisation is quite marked in this letter and is perhaps one of the earlier uses of this than the ones Fairclough cites in his own research on this subject. However, despite the level of personalisation evident in the use of personal pronouns in this letter, there are many traces of bureaucratic language here. The letter is headed with an instruction to respond quoting an otherwise meaningless reference. The discourse technoligisation that is apparent in this particular text, explicitly in the reference to an enclosed claim

form which contains notes to 'explain the conditions for an award'. This is also implicit in showing there are underlying bureaucratic links between the Ministry of Social Security and other State agencies such as the post office and local Social Security offices. These are flagged as places where Florence can go for assistance, thus placing the State in the role of patriarchal guardian of the citizenry through a network of agencies. Unlike the network of State agencies Louisa had been subjected to in the 1920s, agencies largely used for surveillance and control, the relationship between State and citizen in the latter part of the 20th century is one which is presented as embodying the ideal of the post-war welfare state. The underlying patriarchal ideology that underpins discourses of social welfare is clear here, as Florence is being told what is best for her, the assumption being that she does not know this for herself.

Florence's response to this combination of reformulation and patriarchal social welfare came in the form of the letter being returned to the Ministry with Florence's writing taking up much of the available white space.[147] In appropriating the Ministry's letter as her own, she is exerting power in some limited but dramatic way with her direct dialogic engagement. This is not the first time Florence exerted some power over the limitations of the State's correspondence to her: we saw her do something similar, in a less dramatic form, in her responses to the letter sent to her in April, 1931. What is interesting here is that she is not engaging with the well-intentioned Billington, whose letter carries a high level of personalisation. She attempts to form no bond with Billington, as she had done in the letter to Margaret Bondfield. Undoubtedly, this is because here Billington's letter has caused Florence such anxiety and disquiet in its complete misunderstanding of her original intention in writing. She has chosen to vent her fury on the whole State apparatus rather than the hapless Billington, despite the latter's attempts at creating a personal linguistic relationship.

In response to the opening paragraph of this letter of 1968, which carries the presupposition that Walter had been in receipt of a war disability pension, Florence

[147] PIN26 17294 Letter returned by Florence, date-stamped 19th April, 1968. See Appendix 3, document xi.

writes: 'My Husband was not in Receipt of a war disablement Pension' (the underling is Florence's). Here, she is drawing on intertextual references to the actual opening paragraph, underling *was* as she picks up on the factual certainty which is the trigger for this presupposition. She quotes the rest of the clause in full, underlining the pension provision to emphasise her point that this is inaccurate, as indicated by her insertion of *not* to negate the erroneous truth of this letter's assertion. A line links this to her next comment, written vertically in the left hand margin: 'They would not give me a war widow pension now it is too late'. The exophoric *they* is probably the Ministry of Pensions, this being the agency empowered to provide her with a war widow's pension at the time of her initial appeal in 1931, rather than at the named bureaucrat, Billington.

In terms of her lexical choices, Florence uses *give* in preference to other options which might have been more in line with her earlier arguments relating to a pension earned on the basis of need or care, verbs such as *award* or *grant*, but this nevertheless implies an arbitrariness to the allocation of pensions that has been part of Florence's, and so many other widows', arguments elsewhere. There is an ambiguity in her claim that 'it is too late', perhaps relating to her earlier point about the struggle she endured to bring up her family and looking after herself in the pre-welfare state years. Given that Florence is now an elderly lady, this is probably the underlying assumption to this point.

Making use of the white space at the foot of the letter, in response to Billington's final sentence, Florence writes: 'And I had no war widows Pension only the ordinary pension'. She has possibly read Billington's letter where the use of the simple non-past verb *claim* in the final sentence leads to two different interpretations: that she *is going to claim* a war widow's pension; or that she *does* claim a war widow's pension. *Claim* is also ambiguous in that it can carry the meaning of *ask for*, in line with the first interpretation, or *receive*, which would fit with the second. Florence may have taken the second interpretation, which would explain her repudiation. To continue the micro intensification strategies here, this is repeated below when she writes: 'And I am not claiming at war widows Pension, but I am saw red when those 2 men drawing all that money every week and also

Drawing Assistant'. Florence again draws on violent metaphors to describe her emotions, here *saw red*, which is underlined to emphasise her anger and frustration previously articulated in her January, 1968 letter as *makes my blood boil*. She repeats her own argument from January, citing 'those 2 men' as the grounds for her argument. She emphasises the large amount of money they received in benefits by the use of macro-intensifying premodification *all that* and creates a sense of accumulation by the additive *also*.

As discussed above, the status of war widow was one widows often sought as a mark of recognition for their husbands' and their own heroic service to the nation. The amount of pension payable for a war widow and for an 'ordinary' widow were just about the same, so there is little benefit to claiming a war widow's pension on financial grounds. Here, Florence is also carrying this notion of the higher prestige awarded to a widow who was granted the status of a war widow through her pension, triggered by the use of *only* to prefix the ordinary pension. Even half a century after the end of the First World War, Florence is drawing on it as a marker of her patriotism and moral worthiness for a war widow's pension. This is added to on the back of this letter[148] when Florence has written: 'And will you please send the Card back with his Name and Number and Regiment on it, it is all I have of his papers, thank you'. Here, Florence is requesting the return of Walter's army warrant card which she had presumably forwarded to the Ministry for identification purposes in the recent past. Her use of a request frame, carrying the polite complimentary close of *thank you* indicates that this is important to her, her pride in her husband's army service linking to the underlying sense of patriotism and national identity that recurs throughout Florence's letters, but are discourses that are no longer explicitly engaged with by the State.

The final documents in Florence's file comprise the draft response and the actual letter sent to her following her returned correspondence. The final letter

[148] See Appendix 3, document xii.

contains more or less the same wording as the draft, so I shall quote the whole letter but draw attention to the changes from the draft where appropriate.[149]

Despite involvement in this section of the correspondence from an early stage, this is the only extant letter from Cross to Florence. Unlike the letter from Billington, discussed above, Cross addresses Florence by her title and surname, indicating a polite formality which is nevertheless more personal than Billington's, and indeed previous bureaucrats' *Madam*. As indicated earlier, this is perhaps owing to Cross's higher position within the Ministry's bureaucracy.

The opening paragraph contains a formulation of Florence's response that is likely to have been read by her with some frustration: 'Thank you for your letter letting us know you do not wish to claim a war widows pension'. Here, Florence's furious argument is mitigated by its formulation as the mental process verb *wish*, carrying with it none of the anger and frustration apparent in her own presentation of her argument. Like Louisa, she has been silenced by this mental process verb by institutional bureaucratic power. The rest of the letter follows in a similar vein, down-playing Florence's arguments through various mitigating strategies:

> Your remarks regarding people who retire from their normal occupation with a pension from their employer and then claim unemployment benefit have been noted. At present, people in this position who are available for fresh work can qualify for unemployment benefit provided they satisfy all the usual conditions. However, because of the concern felt about this problem, the Minister asked the National Insurance Advisory Committee to consider the whole question of unemployment benefit for occupational pensioners. The Minister has recently announced that she has received the Committee's report and is studying its recommendations.

The main body of the letter formulates Florence's main argument about unworthy men claiming pension as *remarks*, which in itself is a rewording of the draft's even less engaged *you also mention.* Florence's argument, she is assured, has *been noted*, which carries connotations of bureaucratic attention which is largely ineffective. Cross goes on to set out details of the social welfare available to the people about whom Florence has complained, offering this as an assurance that it is

[149] Copies of both the draft (document xiii) and final version (document xiv) of this letter can be found in Appendix 3.

not illegal, although the prefixing of this sentence with the temporal prepositional phrase *at present* triggers the presupposition that this could change in time. This is emphasised by the contrastive conjunction *however* in the following sentence, which sets up the expectation this could take place, given, the Minister's active intervention. Passive voice is used to remove human agency from the 'concern' expressed, with the terms under which people can claim a pension as well as unemployment benefit being formulated as *this problem*. Active human agency is presented in the powerful authority of 'the Minister', and the abbreviation found elsewhere in internal memoranda *NIAC* is given in full as *National Insurance Advisory Committee*. This attention to an external audience's knowledge of the inner bureaucratic workings of the Ministry of Social Security is a further example of the increasing personalisation found in institutional letters to members of the public of this time, as we have seen. The Minister is again the active agent in being seen as taking physical action in the final sentence, although the vague temporality of *recently* gives a less precise indication of time than the draft's *last few days* triggers. However, this change would indicate that the it has indeed been a very recent series of events, the change to *recently* perhaps being made as *few days* implies less than a week, which would be out of the timeframe of the letter being drafted and sent.

Once again, the absence of any further correspondence in Florence's case file indicates that she gave up her fight for 'justice' at this point. As the correspondence from 1968 shows, social welfare in Britain had continued to develop not unproblematically. Florence, as we have seen, continues to use explicitly discourses of morality and national identity to support her arguments. However, although the legislation on which the Ministry draws is founded on these discourses, as we saw in Louisa's case, it is clear now that in the order of discourses imposed by those in a position of power, social welfare takes precedence. The 'cradle-to-grave' social welfare discourses post-1948 are found in both the internal memoranda and the letters sent to Florence. Florence's engagement with the State, half a century after the end of the First World War, serves to show how for such women discourses of social welfare continued to be bound up in discourses of morality and nationalism,

and proved capable of producing impassioned arguments from citizens who had cause to feel disadvantaged by this progress.

The changes in society are also reflected in the increased level of conversationalisation and personalisation found in the State's letters to Florence at this time. Where previously personal responsibility for actions had been limited by bureaucrats to internal memoranda, or at most to letters between people of relatively equal status (such as high-level civil servants and members of parliament, as we saw earlier), the level of conversationalisation and personalisation in letters to Florence is remarkable. It is not simply a case of there being fewer claimants and therefore more time in which to respond to individuals. As we have seen, 'stock paragraphs', or intertextual references, continue to be part of the correspondence. However, the way in which it is presented to Florence is that her case has received exhaustive, special attention. The bureaucrats of the late 1960s continue to employ hedging in their own responsibility, a mitigation strategy that sits oddly against their confident yet erroneous view that Florence is actually claiming a widow's pension. The reliance on existing files and correspondence as the authority on which decisions would be made shows that there is actually very little independent investigation going on in order to produce a favourable decision for Florence. Her own testimony in her letters of 1968 receives the same level of attention as that written in 1931, but here with a lesser degree of understanding as to her underlying message. Like thousands of widows whose unsuccessful appeals are held in the files of the National Archives, Florence is ultimately rendered silent by the institution of State bureaucracy. Despite the well-meaning efforts of the Ministry of Social Security bureaucrats in 1968, like their predecessors in the 1930s they have been constrained by the terms of the Royal Warrant, built around discourses of morality and nationalism that are underpinned by parqsimony and a strongly patriarchal ideology of a different century.

These problems serve to show how discourses of social welfare continued to be bound up in discourses of morality and nationalism for widows, proving to be capable of producing impassioned arguments from citizens who had cause to feel disadvantaged by this progress.

Conclusion

The Royal Warrant of 1916 continued to be enforced as the main pension provision for war widows, carrying with it the explicitly patriarchal ideology which fed into wider legislation relating to social welfare later in the century. Discourses of social welfare can been seen to develop over the course of the 20th century to involve greater expectations on the part of women, particularly in their role as carers which came to be seen as something which was remunerable by the State. This links closely with discourses of patriotism as widows claimed pensions for looking after war heroes, arguing that they themselves were owed a war widow's pension as a mixture of compensation and repayment for services rendered. This links back to the war-time recruitment posters where women were presented in their role as carers, whether this be in the voluntary capacity of nurses or as factory workers who were 'looking after' men's jobs whilst they went away to fight, as well as ensuring a regular supply of reliable equipment and munitions.[150] Older discourses of social welfare drew on charitable provision where means testing and moral worthiness were important criteria. Like Louisa, Florence draws on examples of less worthy recipients of State benefit, although in Florence's case she is not in the process of appealing for a pension for herself, instead appearing to require the State to act 'fairly' to stop other people getting benefits. This is a similar argument to ones we can find in the media today on an almost daily basis in connection to the 'unworthy' who claim State benefits.

What is perhaps remarkable about the findings in this case study, is that half a century after the end of the First World War, widows were prepared to engage in correspondence on the matter of war pensions. Equally, the State can be seen to take such correspondence seriously. Even when misinterpreting the writer's intention, as we have seen in Florence's case, reasonable attempts are made to investigate the circumstances of the widows' claims. However, the 'letter of law' as set down in the 1916 Royal Warrant is partly at odds with the discourses of social welfare and

[150] See Appendix 1 for examples of such posters.

State's responsibility to its citizens in the post-1948 welfare state in some ways (seen most clearly in the whole concept of 'cradle to grave' social welfare), but are heavily reliant on the Edwardian ideals behind this early social welfare legislation.

The discourses of social welfare which are most apparent in the letters of 1968, underpinned by ideologies of parsimony and patriarchy: it is the State's duty to cut unnecessary expenditure; and the State knows best what is good for the population. So, even after more than half a century since the Royal Warrant for Widows' Pensions was drawn up, the same ideology continues to underpin changing discourses of social welfare and nationalism.

Conclusion

This study has conducted an analysis of war widowhood in relation to those British women whose husbands died as a result of the First World War. As we have seen, war widowhood is bound up in discourses of morality and nationalism, in particular how these discourses are entwined with those of social welfare in Britain.

In terms of the methodological lessons to emerge, Wodak's model of historical-discourse analysis has been adapted here to focus more on intertextuality than genre in a way that retains her emphasis on a triangulatory approach to CDA. This has allowed a large corpus of data to be explored and, more importantly for the integrity of this data, the voices of the widows themselves have been heard. In particular, this close linguistic analysis has proved invaluable in piecing together the narratives of the two widows whose claims formed the case studies. The fragmentary nature of the texts contained 'gaps' which the discursive strategies within the historical-discourse analysis approach adopted here allowed us to fill to some extent, and offer a greater insight into the widows' experiences. In offering a significant development of previous research, this study has shown that the experience of war widowhood is entwined in the discourses of morality, social welfare and nationalism as these women sought to claim State-funded support for themselves and their families. This analysis has revealed that, although there was no national, public voice for these widows, there were surprisingly close similarities in the arguments they presented to the State. As was discussed with reference to Louisa and Florence, these were women who were prepared to challenge the State: in Louisa's case, by sending dozens of letters to the Ministry of Pensions; in Florence's, by continuing her argument over a period of 40 years.

Light's (1991) 'conservative modernism', as mentioned in the Introduction to this study, is seen in the developing relationship between State and citizens in the inter-war years. The modernising pressure to intervene more in the welfare of its citizens can be seen in the gesture of providing non-means-tested pensions for war widows. However, as we have seen, this was heavily curtailed by the underpinning discourses of morality that were used to mask the parsimonious economic basis of this legislation. Whilst the war widows were public, living symbols of the glorious dead of the 'war to end all wars', they were subjected to closer scrutiny than almost

any other citizen as the State and the nation sought to preserve the hegemony of Victorian moral values.

Widowhood, gender, morality and social welfare

As we have seen, widowhood is bound up in discourses of morality and patriarichal ideology. When this social position is recognised in terms of widows of men who died as a result of armed conflict, then war widowhood in the early 20th century is also inextricably linked with discourses of nationhood and social welfare, used by the State to relate implicitly to parsimonious ideology. The analysis of two different case studies has shown that the orders of discourses (Fairclough, 1989) shift over the course of the 20th century, with social and legislative changes being reflected in the importance of certain discourses over others.

Financial necessity clearly represented one of the main driving forces behind the correspondence, as we saw in the cases of Louisa and Florence, who drew on discourses of charitable welfare in an often-futile engagement with State-funded social welfare reforms, regarding their lifeworld experiences as being more valuable than the institutional frame of reference (Sarangi and Slembrouck, 1996: 90).

The main findings of this thesis therefore relate to the shifting order of discourse in relation to nationalism, the underlying patriarchy that influenced the experience and representation of war widows, how widowhood and motherhood are articulated in relation to war widows, how the widows themselves came to regard the pension as some form of remuneration, and finally how this pension can be seen to demonstrate a shift in State bureaucracy and social control over time.

Nationalism

The order of discourse which saw the State employ patriotism as a call to arms during the war, demanding personal sacrifice in the public sphere for 'king and country' was quickly downplayed once the war ended. What has been seen in the case studies is that widows continued to draw extensively on discourses of nationalism and patriotism in their claims for pension. They make interdiscursive reference to discourses contrived at a time of heightened national identity during the

war itself. For example, as we have seen, there is a frequent evocation of the State's war-time call to fight 'for king and country', even in widows' letters that were written decades later. In contrast, the State chose to ignore this evocation of physical patriotic indebtedness, calling instead on an evocation of nationalism that links with underlying parsimony, where there is a financial burden on the country that needs to be managed carefully rather than engaging with the physical sacrifice that the war required. Florence attempted to engage with this, claiming a 'loan' from the State to assist with her debts, but she again was employing the argument backing that it was physical sacrifice in the service of the country that had led to this state of affairs to begin with. Although the widows continued to draw on discourses of nationalism, this no longer connected with an approved discourse employed by the State.

We saw a final demonstration of this patriotic pride in Florence's last letter to the Ministry of Social Security in 1968 when, overleaf from her irate response to Billington's letter, she adds a post-script requesting her husband's service papers be returned to her. These seem to be the last tangible link she has with his war-time service, her own status as war widow being denied by the State. If we are to accept Billig's (1995) point that national identity is heightened during war-time, then I would argue that this is only officially recognised in the public sphere. It seems that, in the private sphere, for so many widows, residues of the First World War remain prominent in their own worldview.

Patriarchy

In terms of discourses of social welfare, it is clear that patriarchal ideology is at work. On the part of the State, this patriarchy was usually employed to the detriment of the widows as they were open to unprecedented levels of surveillance when a very great distrust of them was enacted in the public and the private spheres. On the other hand, the widows themselves have been seen to evoke patriarchal ideology in their claims for social welfare payments, regarding the State as their means of protection from poverty. However, as we have seen, the widows'

evocation of patriarchy was largely ignored, the power of this discourse lying firmly in the hands of the State.

Discourses of morality and social welfare are inextricably linked within the provision of pensions for war widows by the State which, in the early 20th century, was concerned not so much with the rights of the woman, but with the rights of her deceased husband. The Royal Warrant ensured that widows had to be seen to deserve their pension on more than the grounds of their husband's death in the service of 'his' country, thus the mistrust of women without husbands is articulated in the implementation of this legislation.

This underlying patriarchy is clear through analysis of the presuppositions in Louisa's letters. We get a glimpse of a young woman whose behaviour did not comply with the State's, and indeed society's, perception of a 'grieving widow', but instead seems more like her unmarried 'flapper' counterpart at this time. Louisa's social role as a young woman is severely sanctioned by the State, who suspended her pension. As we saw, she eventually conformed to being a 'good' widow, writing to the Ministry of Pensions that she no longer drank beer or went out in the company of men, and for a time was rewarded with the reinstatement of her pension. Louisa eventually claimed the behaviour which is implicit within the discourses of morality the terms of the Royal Warrant required, showing hegemonic compliance and self governance. However, the way in which her claim was made is particularly interesting as she clearly employs patriarchal voices in assuming that of her father and, later, calling on the official, authoritative patriarchal voice of the British Legion to present her argument. Thus Louisa's own voice is eventually lost under the patriarchal power that is called for by the State.

Interestingly, in their correspondence with the Ministry of Pensions, war widows frequently demonstrate an assertiveness that indicated more than an awareness of their entitlement to pension provision under this legislation. As we have seen, they also clearly demonstrated a strong sense of moral entitlement to support, looking to the State to provide this in a patriarchal ideology where the State took on the role of surrogate husbands. This view of the State as beneficent

patriarchal guardian contrasts with the State's own view of this role which was far less beneficent.

These letters should be seen in their broader social context. Overall, the degree of mistrust with which these widows, largely working class, were viewed is remarkable. We have seen their vulnerability to accusations of cohabitation, prostitution, child-neglect and drunkenness. As we saw in the first case study, this surveillance came most commonly from the Local Pensions Office and its network of 'visitors', but also from neighbours, relatives and local government agencies which were otherwise not connected with the Ministry of Pensions. All of these agents saw themselves as, in some way, responsible for the moral surveillance of widows and even the most gossipy reports appear to have been treated with some degree of seriousness. This study has shown that the middle-class, Victorian morality which saw soldiers' wives as immoral slatterns and Poor Law recipients (Trustram, 1984) led to attitudes which stigmatised the wives and widows of volunteers and conscripts in the First World War. Drawing on the same moral framework, distrust of these women was undoubtedly increased by the fact that they were women without a male head of household to keep a close patriarchal watch on them. The ideological positioning of women is clearly seen in the extant correspondence relating to war widows, where passive and dutiful behaviour is publicly rewarded by State pension.

Eugenics and motherhood

The moral surveillance of widows extended deep into the family unit, continuing the eugenics debate of the late 19th century. We have seen how widows were positioned as being responsible for the future of the nation by the care they gave to the children of the dead war heroes. Their childcare skills carried financial penalties in the form of withdrawal of direct payment of children's allowances should they be perceived as falling short of the State's requirements. Klett-Davies (1996: 7) has challenged the framing of lone motherhood in the 1990s in terms of an underclass, arguing instead that they do actually hold 'quite traditional family values'. We have seen the problematically-constructed Louisa exhibiting such values as she seeks to provide

for her daughter Winnie, and elsewhere the extensive correspondence in her file reveals that her sons were all apprenticed, in contradiction to the amoral, work-shy values that are implicitly ascribed to their family unit. Within the terms of Klett-Davies' argument, the discourses of morality that we have seen to be heavily influencing the legislation relating to war widows' pensions in the early 20th century continue to influence perceptions, if not the practice, of social welfare almost a hundred years later.

The War Widow's Pension, like other State financial benefits, often came to be a vital source of income for widows, particularly those with young families, and was often the most significant – and regular – contribution to the household income. Indeed, as we have seen in Louisa's case, the seasonal privations experienced by the very poor in society acted as a spur to increased appeals, in her case when it came to requiring winter boots for her daughter. That Louisa should appeal to the State for such material necessities is a clear link with the charitable assistance that was more familiar to British citizens at this time. The social welfare reforms produced this new form of financial dependence that stimulated many such widows to forge a new and direct relationship with the State, even if the terms of State-funded social welfare were unclear to them.

Social welfare as remuneration

Another finding is that the frame of war widowhood is fairly static to the point of official legislative definition, disturbingly so given its basis in Victorian middle-class ideology and the huge shifts in British society over the first half of the 20th century, and this contrasts with the frame of social welfare which changes quite remarkably over this period. From expectations of payments on a basis of means-testing and moral worthiness, in keeping with older frames of charitable social welfare, the frame of social welfare after 1948 moves to be less dominantly one of moral worthiness, the universality of social welfare provision after this time drawing upon the assumption that help on the basis of need was a fundamental right rather than a means-tested favour. This shift sees the framing of social welfare as being provision on the basis of having been earned through paying taxes (in the case of

health care and pensions), but also retains traces of a claim to moral worthiness (such as benefits through an inability to work) in societal attitudes, if not legislative practice. This can be clearly seen in the Florence's letters of 1968, where her complaint about undeserving recipients is not supported by her own moral worthiness, but by the fact she has been a good, tax-paying citizen. Louisa's framing of the same argument backing of unworthy others, however, highlights her own moral worthiness. Thus we can see hegemonic acceptance of State parsimony on the part of its citizens increasing through the course of the 20th century.

Commonly-expressed fears and moral panics of 'work-shy lay-abouts' claiming unemployment benefit in the early 21st century are very closely related to the public and parliamentary debates of the early 20th century when contributory unemployment benefits were first introduced under the 1911 National Insurance Act. By the late 1960s, the Ministry's correspondence no longer makes explicit reference to discourses of moral behaviour, as we saw in the correspondence relating to Louisa. Given this emergence of moral frames in certain periods, it is, therefore, interesting to note that the legislation of the Royal Warrant of 1916 was formulated with widows framed as being *worthy* of pensions, whereas the parliamentary debates of 1914 framed widows as being in *need* of pensions.

This distrust of widows can be linked with the moral discourses surrounding the long-standing notion of the 'deserving poor'. Whilst many widows wrote to the Ministry out of financial necessity, this is often coupled with the associated belief that they had earned some form of remuneration for their loss and, it was often argued, for the care they had given to their husbands prior to death. There is a remarkable consistency in the widows' calls for such remuneration, particularly as there was no precedent for such claims. Whilst it is not possible to establish with certainty a reason for such a widespread attitude within the confines of this thesis, I would suggest that there was a public visibility in women as carers that greatly contributed to this perception. For example, during the war itself, recruitment of women to the war effort was promoted with them as carers, whether this was as VADs or munitions workers. This led to the belief that women could earn money in fulfilling patriotic roles associated with the war. In the immediate post-war years,

the care of wounded ex-servicemen continued to carry a high profile with charitable organisations being set up to support these men and their carers. Perhaps the role of the media in promoting the care of the returning heroes fed into the consciousness of the women whose disabled ex-servicemen husbands later died. For women such as Florence Bayliss, who had lost their primary means of financial support as a direct result of the war (synecdochally associated with the government of the day), a war widow's pension did not simply represent financial relief, but rather financial compensation for this loss, both fairly earned and rightfully possessed.

Irrespective of the official social welfare legislation, the majority of these women did not think primarily in terms of the State's relationship with its servicemen but rather in terms of their own personal sacrifice of a husband and a breadwinner. The order of discourse shifted away from dominant nationalism to reveal the underlying parsimoneousness of social welfare provision. As a result, the widows' notion of entitlement was somewhat different to that of the Ministry of Pensions, as we saw in Florence's case, where she presented an argument in which discourses of morality and social welfare are linked with those of nationalism. To reinforce Threadgold's (1997) argument about the impact of social welfare on Habermas's division of the public/private spheres, we can see explicit disclosure of private, lifeworld experiences as being an expected part of public, official discourses.

Bureaucracy and social control

The State's bureaucratic intervention into the lives of war widows in its role as patriarchal guardian is part of the increased involvement of the State in the private lives of its citizens. The war widows' pension scheme was the first non-means tested, (financially) non-contributory allowance aimed directly towards women in Britain. As we have seen, it emerged from long-standing philanthropic and charitable practices but was the first attempt at State funding in this way. As such, all those who came into contact with it were drawing on older discourses of social welfare as they tackled this new-fangled system of State maintenance. This required the official, public sphere to collide with the private sphere and the participants to

develop 'rules' which are related to Wittgenstein's notion of 'language games' (1958) where they are employed in relation to understanding bureaucratic encounters. As Sarangi and Slembrouck (1996: 37) argue, bureaucracy is all about submitting without restriction to a set of precise, arbitrary rules. This can be linked to Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* (1991), whereby access to certain life skills and knowledge (in the case of my data, knowledge of bureaucratic 'rules') is restricted and therefore not everyone is equally skillful at playing this game. Whilst some of the rules, such as what would be counted as legitimate information and what would not, seem to relate more to the lifeworld experiences that the widows employ, the bureaucrats engaged with these selectively and usually only then to the detriment of the widows. We saw this with Louisa when the care of her children only became an issue of engagement with the Ministry of Pensions when she transferred them to her father's care after she herself had been unable to materially provide for them.

The vast majority of the letters written by widows to the Ministry of Pensions demonstrate an awareness of the bureaucratic 'rule' that requires deference in terms of address, and conform to the preferred bureaucratic practice of providing husband's name, number and regiment details on all correspondence. However, the act of writing to the Ministry of Pensions to challenge their decisions is in itself an act of resistance, even though they write within the terms of the Ministry's own language game. For whatever reason, these women are refusing to accept the role of passive widow.

It is also interesting to note that when the widows try to extend the terms of the 'game', one of the most noticeable features of their letters of appeal is that these personal statements are frequently addressed to the bureaucrats as individuals, even when no specific contact name is known. As Sarangi and Slembrouck have observed, 'perhaps clients demand that bureaucrats, even if they fail to grant an entitlement, recognise that the client's lifeworld experience is more valuable than the institutional frame of reference' (1996: 90). In the case of the widows in this study, the lifeworld experiences of looking after children and general day-to-day living are most frequently cited as causing the greatest hardship. Details of life, such as Louisa's appeals for money to help buy food and clothing, and Florence's plea of

help with her husband's funeral expenses, do not help their case as the pension was not awarded on the grounds of financial or material need. As we have seen, the widows were entering into a frame of means-tested 'need' which would reflect the charitable provision of care that they were more familiar with. Given the fact the war widows' pension was the first such pension offered in Britain, then a fuzziness of understanding about the actual grounds on which help could be granted is understandable.

Fairclough's notion of orders of discourse, based on Foucault's work on 'truth', has been seen in that only certain versions of events and 'expert knowledges' are acceptable to those in authority. The lifeworld experiences embodied in the sources of intertextuality so commonly used by the widows to strengthen their claim for pension were, as we have seen, not acceptable grounds for State help. On the other hand, with reference to Fairclough's notion of discourse technologisation, the bureaucratic language at an official level was initially constrained within the limits of pre-printed forms, later developing to more personalised letters which nevertheless drew heavily on intertextual references to these earlier texts which were unchallenged in their veracity.

Louisa's engagement with the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Pensions is typical of other widows' in that she regards the pension paid by the State as being hers by right. Her letters frequently carry the question 'why did you stop my money?'. However, nowhere in her file is there a copy of a letter responding to this direct question. The general reluctance of the Ministry of Pensions to clearly explain their reasoning behind pension decisions, at best citing the Royal Warrant as grounds for dismissal of applications, could be read in Sarangi and Slembrouck's framework as the bureaucrats hiding behind legislation and choosing not to engage with certain arguments. To add further to the distance from the lifeworld experiences the widows drew upon, the correspondence from the Ministry of Pensions draws extensively on the formal, legalistic language associated with the public sphere that often contrasts markedly with the conversational, private style of the widows' letters.

This contrast between official, bureaucratic language and the conversational style used by many widows is undoubtedly partly due to the literacy skills at the disposal of the widows. Although elementary education had been made compulsory in Britain in 1870, this was only occasionally rigorously imposed and had to be reinforced by further Acts towards the end of the 19th century and into the early 20th. Formal training in most State schools in the necessary literacy skills for dealing with bureaucrats was unheard of. In fact, Louisa's writing reveals basic literacy skills and little evidence of written literacy education (to the extent that she produced inconsistent spellings of her own children's names). The question arises as to whether her appeals might have received a more favourable response had they been written in a more erudite manner. Even though I have spent quite a considerable amount of time trying to make sense of her letters, which employ regionally marked conversational style, frequent use of colloquial phrases and a highly idiosyncratic orthography, some passages still remain unclear. It is unlikely that the staff at the Ministry of Pensions would have spent quite so much time and effort trying to read Louisa's letters. Many of her letters to the Ministry appear to have gone unanswered, and those which do elicit a response containing little evidence of engagement with the points she raises in her arguments, none of them engaging with intertextual quotations from Louisa's letters, but with frequent quotation from the Royal Warrant to deny her payment.

Ultimately it is the bureaucrats who have the power to award or withhold pensions. As with Louisa, they also have the right to refuse to respond to letters from widows. The huge asymmetry in power is clear here. If a widow declined to respond to a request for information from the Ministry of Pensions, there could be serious outcome such as withdrawal of pension. Without a nationally organised 'voice' to act on the widows' behalf, no such powerful sanction appears for the Ministry of Pensions bureaucrats when they fail to respond to Louisa's request for a face to face meeting.

The 'rules' of this particular language game are heavily weighted against the widows in favour of the bureaucrats, which might be expected given that the 'game' had been fashioned by the bureaucrats themselves. Both sets of participants were

engaging with bureaucratic practices that were new, the very terms of the Royal Warrant under which the pension was issued being open to redefinition. As we have seen, both the widows and the bureaucrats often resorted to interdiscursive references to older discourses of morality, social welfare and national identity to support their arguments. In particular, the notion of the deserving poor recurs in the evocation of Victorian morality we have seen.

In the diachronic analysis of the case of Florence Bayliss, the State's relationship with citizens and claimants changed over this period. The initial overloading of bureaucracy led to the development of the discourse technology of standard, multiple choice forms in the years around the First World War as the various ministries attempted to cope with the unprecedented volume of paperwork generated by pension claims. This gave way to more individual letters towards the end of the 1920s. There are traces of what Fairclough calls the 'conversationalisation' of State bureaucracy from this period onwards, contributing to debureaucratisiation (Sarangi and Slembrouck, 1996). However, widows' appeals were no more likely to be successful. Close analysis of the Ministry's 1968 correspondence show clear intertextual reference to much earlier sources which the bureaucrats regard as being legitimate, whilst Florence's own intertextual references to highlight her complaint are ignored in much the same way as we saw in pre-1948 correspondence.

Summary

When combined with their sense of personal possession and the stark reality of financial necessity, this growing awareness of their new status as independent claimants on the State often prompted a significant change in attitude for the widows involved. War widowhood encouraged many such women to intervene in the public sphere in their own interest. Of the 200 pension case files examined in the course of this research, approximately two thirds contain some degree of correspondence between the widow and the State. Whilst some of these letters relate to the relatively standard procedural matters such as requests for a child's dependant's allowance to be extended, a significant number contain far more detailed demands, often kept up

long after the widow could realistically have hoped for compensatory financial assistance, as in Florence's case. In overcoming long-standing socialisation in political reticence and a limited education, widowhood had prompted these women to discover their own written voice and taught them to use it in order to negotiate the terms of their allowance, or even defend themselves against charges of immorality in the case of pension forfeiture.

In the public sphere, such was the perceived success of the war widows' pension scheme, it became a benchmark by which other legislation was devised. The Widows' Pensions Act of 1926, although reliant on National Insurance contributions, had many links with the Royal Warrant of 1916. One major difference is that it did not have an explicit moral agenda, perhaps due to the fact that it was funded directly out of National Insurance contributions rather than the mixture of funding sources that had been patched together in 1916 for the war widows' pension. The shift of widowhood from the private to the public sphere in the case of war widows would appear to be closely linked to the financial basis of the funding as well as to the patriotism that was its more public face. Because of this relative absence of a moral agenda in legislation for other widows, there was not the surveillance system in place to monitor them, although the health visiting scheme did intervene on the part of widows with younger families. This reflects the State's increasing intervention into the future wellbeing of children, synechdocally the nation. However, in the public sphere, the war widows' pension scheme was apparently envied by other citizens. As Holden has shown, the scheme was used by other women to campaign for single women's pensions in the inter-war years. Campaigning under slogans demanding 'equality with widows', this crusade was apparently only halted when the Second World War intervened.

Gaps in the provision of social welfare were partly filled by a discourse of morality. The notion of 'deserving poor' continues to be inextricably linked with discourses of social welfare. Both Florence and Louisa claim that they are 'deserving', in complying with the moral codes and patriotic actions of good citizens. However, in Florence's case, we also see her applying this idea of the deserving and the undeserving poor to the media report of men claiming dole whilst

drawing a pension in the late 1960s. Her sense of indignation is palpable in the furious scribbled response to the misrepresented letter the Ministry sent her in February, 1968. She draws on discourses of patriotism to enhance her argument, directly refuting the political optimism of the 1960s, following on from Macmillan's claim in 1957 that 'most people have never had it so good'.

The complex terms of the Royal Warrant emphasise the underlying expectation that war widows must be 'respectable' and conform to middle-class images and stereotypes into which authorities have traditionally cast widows. This is most clearly seen in the public sphere, where war widowhood carries with it the expectation by the State and by society that these women should be passive, observant of patriarchal rule and morally worthy of pity. This representation in the public sphere is markedly different from the experience in the private sphere that we have been able to explore through the case studies where endemic distrust of these widows led to unprecedented levels of surveillance of their private lives. As we saw in the letters of Louisa Bayliss, she eventually sought to 'round up a square peg' (as Sarangi and Slembrouck (1994) have called it), in providing hegemonic compliance with the bureaucrats' and society's demands of moral behaviour. Even today, many of the discourses of morality that have been shown to apply to war widows here continue to be embedded in the discourses of social welfare that surround single mothers, as Atkinson et al (1998) have shown in their research into single motherhood in the 1990s.

Critical discourse analysis has allowed us to see in this study that there is a clash of language use in the letters exchanged between the widows and the State. These letters show how the official language of the bureaucrats removes personal responsibility for negative actions on the part of the State through the use of passive voice and nominalisation, whilst the correspondence relating to the widows largely places them in an active position when the action carries negative consequences. In addition, the conversational, largely informal style of the widows' letters offers lifeworld experiences as evidence in support of their pension claims where they themselves are making personal appeals on the basis their own circumstances.

Although war widows' pensions now are no longer regarded as being important in the public sphere (see Simon Hoggart's comments in *The Guardian*, 29th July 2006, where he cites these along with conservatory planning applications as being harmless occupations for politicians), over the course of the last 90 years they have been the subject of much public debate. Discourses of morality, nationhood and social welfare are clearly entwined, both in the public and private spheres, but as we have seen at different periods some of these discourses were given even more importance by the writer, depending on the effect they hoped to achieve. These reflect wider changes in society, which CDA has helped to uncover through the linguistic analysis of the data within different social contexts, something other studies of war widows have previously not been able to demonstrate clearly.