

Their Legacy: The Metaphorical Use of Children in Six British Novels of the Second
World War

Isabelle Bourbon

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

May 2003

© Isabelle Bourbon, 2003

National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services

Acquisitons et
services bibliographiques

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*

ISBN: 0-612-83800-5

Our file *Notre référence*

ISBN: 0-612-83800-5

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

Canada

ABSTRACT

Their Legacy: The Metaphorical Use of Children in Six British Novels of the Second World War

Isabelle Bourbon

This thesis studies the effects of the Second World War on the portrayal of youth in six British novels published between 1939 and 1946: Graham Greene's *The Ministry of Fear*, Barbara Noble's *Doreen*, Henry Green's *Caught*, Nevil Shute's *Pied Piper*, James Hanley's *No Direction* and Evelyn Waugh's *Put Out More Flags*. It focuses on how the authors tended to use the younger generations as a canvas on which could be painted a possible future in order to bridge the gap between the social and political changes taking place between the Victorian and the World War II eras. It analyses the distinctive metaphorical qualities the writers ascribed to their young characters against a backdrop of war. It not only rectifies the lack of attention by scholars to Second World War British fiction, it also works at understanding the nature of the population's mindset to this unprecedented exposure to violence in the domestic sphere. This study argues that the children in British war texts of the Second World War era are not simply additional characters to the construction of the narrative, but function in part as a metaphor to English society itself.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The assistance of a number of people has been essential in the writing of this thesis and I could not submit this without acknowledging their invaluable input.

I therefore wish to thank my advisor Professor Andre Furlani who has been wonderfully patient and understanding, and who, despite everything, still made himself readily available. Also, I cannot forget Professors Susan Johnston and Marcel DeCoste who were essential in not only pointing me in the right direction, but in providing me with the necessary material to find my own way. I will also forever be grateful to my parents who have provided me with constant support, and to my dear sister Chantal who has been at my side every single step of the way and without whose constant encouragement and prodding, the following study would probably never have seen the light of day.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1 Social and Political History of England in the Early Twentieth Century.....	10
CHAPTER 2 Nostalgia and Anticipation: Using Children as a Way for Adult Characters to Reconcile Their Past, Present and Possible Future	23
Graham Greene's <i>The Ministry of Fear</i>	32
Barbara Noble's <i>Doreen</i>	42
Henry Green's <i>Caught</i>	53
Nevil Shute's <i>Pied Piper</i>	61
CHAPTER 3 Stuck in Limbo: A Cynical View of Children as a Device for Depicting the Confusion of War	69
James Hanley's <i>No Direction</i>	72
Evelyn Waugh's <i>Put Out More Flags</i>	83
CONCLUSION	93
BIBLIOGRAPHY	99

INTRODUCTION

“War has often left in the vessel of literary energy a destructive, anti-literary residue which turns certain writers into mystical aesthetes or converts to exoticism and nihilism. But to the genuine novelist war and politics are facts of the real world to be faced, interpreted and imaginatively projected in his work” (McCormick 204).

Scholars of English literature have largely ignored the writings of the Second World War, whereas studies pertaining to the First World War or post war period are abundant. The sociological differences between these two wars should warrant a profusion of comparative studies on the subject. Indeed, where the battlefield of the first war was mainly the trenches—thus involving predominantly the fighting soldiers—the second war's was European cities, which involved civilians. This marked an intrusion of the public sphere into the private sphere and vice-versa. By definition, fighting soldiers are part of the public sphere, but living under Martial Law, evacuating to public underground shelters at night and the bombing of the home are all instances where public and private domains collide.

Indeed, the public and private spheres are not merely inverted; they are merged together. While civilians may view their new world as an invasion of their private environment, soldiers find themselves fighting a war in what they considered their private space. Instead of finding themselves thousands of miles away, they find themselves fighting an enemy from the streets and backgrounds where they most likely grew up. Thus, it is the inherent definition of war that changes; it can no more be relegated to an abstract view of battlegrounds and generic violence when citizens have to learn to live with the realities of bombs and possible invasion.

Of course, some scholars have found the subject of violence infiltrating the domestic space worthy of further analysis and, as a result, have dedicated studies to texts

in which war becomes a convenient background for civilian stories. For instance, Kristine Anne Miller finds an interesting relationship between private and public life emerging from “the front line that is the home front.” She acknowledges that this new sphere of violence has an impact on the domestic space and that authors tend to use this situation as an opportune framework within which to explore the changes undergone by the besieged society. She writes: “The war forced violence into domestic space, refiguring the private household as a site for explicit political expression” (Miller 15). However, the main area of interest of her explorations of a wavering British identity lies in the merging of gender roles both in the domestic sphere and on the battlefield. She supposes that since domesticity and politics are merged by war, traditional gender roles are mixed to the point where they are impossible to define as easily. She writes:

The violence of war exposes the way in which international politics directly affects and changes the private lives of men and women; in doing so, that violence both attacks social naiveté concerning the public-private relationship and challenges rigid gender roles that conventionally align men with politics and women with private life. Thus, even as war binds people together in the endurance of widespread destruction, it slashes through stereotypes that oversimplify the relation between private life and politics, female civilians and male soldiers (Miller 20).

I agree with this notion, but in what follows I study the different, yet no less important, consequence of the fall of the borders between public and private on children.

Studies have neglected the existence of the child who is another victim of the introduction of violence into a previously safe sphere of existence. Modern family units are commonly represented by parents and their children and these nuclear units delineate

what is understood to be the domestic sphere. The neglect of critical studies focusing on children is understandable since there is only a very slight youthful presence in literary novels from the war era; the focus of most war fiction concerns mainly adult characters struggling to survive a second war within a generation.

In post-war fiction, children feature prominently as these authors are, for the most part, adults who were children during the war. They tend to remember the past by using a child's perspective which is biased by an adult's perception and a good dose of hindsight about both the outcome of the war and the reorganization of society that resulted. The author can then borrow from his or her own memories to express the feelings of a child living through the tumults of war time era, while at the same time using his or her grown-up baggage of values and knowledge of the outcome to convey greater depths to the story. For instance, the coming of age theme of a war novel written in the post-war era often depends on the author possessing knowledge about the future of the world the child is evolving in. War can thus function as a sort of "trial by fire," standing for the final testing of a child before reaching adulthood. For instance, a novel such as J.G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun* written in the seventies, though a fictional book, still relies heavily on Ballard's own experiences during the Second World War. The presence of the child as the main character results directly from the author's remembered point of view during the time of the war.

When writing a novel at the actual time of the action, however, adult writers do not have the luxury of drawing on their own experiences as children, thus need to write a child's perspective despite their adult perceptions. Either they can try to extrapolate from their own childhood, or write solely based on their own points of view transferred to their

young characters whether or not they truly have the insight necessary to write about them. How would a writer try to express the difficulties and the feelings of a child having to live through World War II? For people who already had to confront their own emotions about a subject as difficult as living through a war fought in one's own backyard, trying to extrapolate them for characters who shared nothing with them seems to have been too difficult to even attempt. It may be a possible explanation for the lack of children in British literature of any kind and genre, save from juvenile fiction, of the Second World War even though the action happening within the domestic sphere should be disturbing the lives of entire family units, including the children.

Burdened with so many new problems and difficult situations, adults tended to overlook their children or, at least, leave them to their own devices as long as they did not put themselves into too much direct danger. Robert Westall's edition of children's journal entries and thoughts centered on their feelings about living in a war zone during the Second World War, *Children of the Blitz: Memories of Wartime Children*, gives children's impressions of this chaotic world. A few children remark about the relative freedom and the fact that their parents would have been devastated to learn about some of their schemes. One such example is:

As the heap of letters grew, it became clear there had been more than one 'secret war.' For the things the kids got up to, all questionable, many illegal, and some downright lethal, would have sent their parents into fits—if the parents hadn't been too busy, too worried, too tired to notice (Westall 11).

This attitude partly explains the lack of children in these novels. Characters were rarely parents because that would have given them too many problems to deal with at once. The war itself was enough. Indeed, though novels published during wartime are always propagandist to some point, there always remains the purpose that is to feed the need for escapism through a fictional narrative, and that implies a break from daily worries.

This brings us to the central concern of this paper: adult World War II fiction in which children play a substantial role. When children are actually central to a story line within the novels studied, it is so because they are designed to serve a greater purpose. Under these conditions, children are not meant to be well-developed characters that have a basis in reality. In order to create children characters without mimetic fidelity, the authors I will be studying tend to use them as metaphors and images to illustrate or make a point to the readers. As we will see in the following pages, children are the perfect vehicle both for making vivid impressions and for delivering a message as they present a versatile set of images that can be adapted to the point an author is attempting to make. It is this adaptability of their image that will be studied most closely in this study.

Another limitation of Miller's study is that, like most critics studying the relevance of the Second World War on British literature, she concentrates her study solely on literary fiction. To restrict a study to literary texts weakens the argument, as popular fiction of the Second World War era tended to confront the upheavals of conventional life. If the introduction of violence into the domestic sphere creates a remodelling of the perception of society within the literary texts as a coping mechanism, a similar phenomenon occurs in popular fiction. The latter being intended for a much broader audience, its underlying meaning would affect a greater number of readers. In

effect, a common goal for both literary and popular writers in a time of war is to make sense of a world they no longer recognise. British writers of the Second World War who bore witness to the domestic disorder recognised an unavoidable social and political transformation of British society as they knew and understood it. As a result, authors in all media converged to depict a world in which they strove to understand the struggles of the civilians to survive both the war and the inevitable transformations it was bound to generate; at the same time, they attempted to offer their own vision of what the future might hold for England and her people.

This thesis will be a study the effects of the Second World War on English literature written between 1939 and 1946, focusing on the effects such violence had on civilians as represented in British texts. I will focus my study more particularly on the portrayal of youth in English fiction of that era to demonstrate how the authors tend to use the younger generations as metaphors rather than as realistic characters to either make a point or convey a message. To do so, the authors I study use children in three distinct manners: first, as the nostalgic personification of an idealized past, second, as a blank canvas on which to paint visions of the English future, and third, as a generation born in chaos and lost to either past or future. In these latter cases, that future tended to be one where England not only survived the war, but also preserved its former way of life. This thesis will also study the distinctive qualities the writers ascribed to their young characters against a backdrop of war.

The small number of published British war narratives during the war years seems to have affected the number of critical studies done on them. In fact, “[during] the war there was a sharp fall in the number of new novels published, from 4, 222 in 1939 to 1,

179 in 1945” (Bergonzi 27). This is because “paper was strictly rationed, and 20 million volumes were destroyed by fire in an air raid on the publishing quarter of London in December 1940, a loss which was never made good” (Bergonzi 21).

[the] shortage of paper would have been a major factor in this decline; but it also reflected the fact that young writers on active service or engaged in other kinds of war work lacked the freedom and time needed to write novels, and so concentrated on short literary forms: poetry (usually the brief lyric), stories, and reportage (Bergonzi 27).

The very fact that these narratives were not only written but also found their way to the publishing houses in such difficult times suggests how important they were to the state of mind of the distraught population of England between 1939 and 1946. Perhaps the lack of attention to these few novels stems from a perceived lack of anything innovative as opposed to the blooming creative renewal that followed the First World War. Many obstacles hindered writers during these difficult years; yet, even though it is commonly thought that

[no] significant new talent emerged between 1939 and 1945, in contrast to, say, the late 1920s, which saw the first novels of Henry Green, Graham Greene, Christopher Isherwood, Rosamund Lehmann, and Evelyn Waugh, or to the 1950s when Kingsley Amis, William Golding and Iris Murdoch all published their first novels in a single year, [...] some novels of high quality did appear during the war (Bergonzi 27).

In this thesis, I shall endeavour to both rectify the lack of attention by scholars to Second World War British fiction, and work at understanding the nature of the population’s mindset to their unprecedented exposure to violence. In order to do so, I

intend to remedy the omission of children in scholarly studies pertaining to the period. The narratives I am going to study are Graham Green's *The Ministry of Fear*, Barbara Noble's *Doreen*, Henry Green's *Caught*, Nevil Shute's *Pied Piper*, James Hanley's *No Direction* and Evelyn Waugh's *Put Out More Flags*. I intend to argue that the children in British war texts of the Second World War era are not simply minor characters but that they function in part as a metaphor of English society itself. Whether authors preferred a return to the old values, a step into a brighter future or simply wished to criticise the reality of war dictated how they created their young characters.

This study will be the first of its kind to determine the role of children in World War II British fiction. As such, there will not be much supporting evidence by literary critics pertaining specifically to the texts studied. I have therefore gathered texts that explain in further details the changes that England underwent in that period, as well as the changes in the literary world itself. I also utilise studies of some accounts of real-life war children in order to contrast real-life reactions with the often lack of reaction to stress witnessed in the children of these novels. Of course, the novels themselves are to be central to the development of my argument as they contain the texts and metaphors I will be analyzing.

CHAPTER 1

Social and Political History of England in the Early Twentieth Century

'On the day in September when the Germans broke through and set the docks on fire, I think few people can have watched those enormous fires without feeling that this was the end of an epoch'
(Orwell, qtd in Bergonzi 15).

As Georges Orwell writes in the opening epigraph of this chapter¹, the first half of the twentieth century was indeed the end of an epoch. It is indeed a time of change and no one could be sure as to whether that change was for the better or for the worse. Two world wars in the span of less than fifty years made it necessary to rethink the world's views on many things. Arthur Marwick quotes Lord Butler in his autobiography: "The crisis of modern war is a crucial test of National values and way of life. Amid the suffering and the sacrifice weaknesses of society are revealed and there begins a period of self-criticism and movement for reform" (Marwick 127). Everything the British had previously held as hard and permanent truths are now crumbling and changing before their very eyes. The proud society that has lived through the eighteenth and nineteenth century as the "Empire on which the sun never sets", little by little realises that it is no longer invulnerable and that it needs to evolve to survive.

Up until the late nineteenth century—and even as late as the early twentieth century—British literature depicts society as a rigid entity governed by strict rules of conduct. The Victorian era literature is peppered with images of debutante balls, arranged marriages and the idleness of the very rich. Even wars are perceived as a good opportunity for sons of well-to-do families to ascend by means of patriotism into prestigious social position. Indeed, war offered opportunities for young gentlemen to become officers and prove their worth by leading a number of campaigns abroad and

¹ From Orwell, George. *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, ii* Harmondsworth, 1970, 273

retiring as decorated veterans. Plain soldiers would do the actual fighting—mostly hand to hand combats or musket fights. The officers were therefore rarely part of the battle itself as they remained well behind enemy lines and strategized much in the same way as in a game of chess. Even though this particular type of battle was undoubtedly brutal and murderous, warfare remained primarily a battle of man against man and needed to be fought in close quarters as no technology had yet been invented to permit long-distance battles.

The First World War changed forever the perception of war. At the beginning of the twentieth century it is discovered that technological advances are not only good for a betterment of living conditions, but it can also procure a definite advantage to the warring faction whose technology becomes more advanced than the other. In this context, the “War to end all Wars” saw the creation of countless inventions designed to kill and maim the greater number of soldiers from the greatest distance possible.

This gave birth to the first real war of trenches where soldiers could wait weeks in appalling conditions either to engage in battle or for death to come in the form of deadly gasses or grenades. Little or nothing can be found redeemable in war, but this kind of butchery disillusioned young men of the gentlemanly act of war. By the end of that First World War, there were no more illusions that warfare was a synonym for gentry, and as the world was on the verge of entering a Second World War less than three decades later, people displayed reluctance in sending people to die in horrific circumstances. Even the Americans who were late in joining the battle and did not know of the conditions in living in a country where the fighting was done in the streets were reported to be unusually weary of this Second World War.

By 1940, before Americans even entered World War II, the innocence which had marked the beginning of the Great War had long since been destroyed, as had the naïve enthusiasm for war itself. They had been replaced by wariness, resignation, and a numbness to statistics which, horrifying as they were, could never again stupefy their witnesses as the smaller numbers had done two and a half decades earlier, when optimism was strong and modern was still new (Everson 77-78).

If Americans have lost “the naïve enthusiasm for war,” Europe who had yet to recover physically from the previous war, comprehensibly had problem adjusting to the coming of yet another one. Though this new wariness in approaching warfare is suggested in literature, there is a lack of a single universal theme to express it. John McCormick explains it:

The First World War was comparatively easy to write about in universal terms; France provided a frame and the very nature of the fighting made possible a helpful economy. The Second World War, which was fought all over the world, has defied universal treatment, and novels have been a little more than vignettes (McCormick 221).

It is impossible to categorize neatly the novels of this later era, as it had been possible at the beginning of this century. It is possible to group WWI novels under a common theme of soldier diaries and war accounts, and post-WWI saw the emergence of narratives where the common theme was denouncing the loss of an entire generation. The pre-WWII novels tended to introduce themes of trial by fire where the world was viewed as diseased for permitting a leader such as Hitler to gain power which needed to be remedied by entering a war, but the reluctance to do so is prominent in most of the novels

of the period. However, later works are not bound by such common rules and as such, they are more difficult to study as a group. On the other hand, though the form may vary greatly from one text to another, there are still common themes recurring in a number of texts even though their treatment may be different.

“Through a challenge of everything linked to the society which created the war and sent an idealistic young generation to its doom, World War I kindled a new perspective on both the world itself and the language and literature used to portray it” (Everson 15). Authors who emerged from the First World War expressed a sense of loss and of a wasted generation. Young people now felt betrayed and lost, in quest of who they were and what they wanted out of life. This confusion is what inspired writers such as Hemingway, Joyce and Woolf whose characters were unhappy and self-destructive, to portray a world where existed a whole generation of an emotionally bankrupt youth.

The years following the war were, for England, a time of readjustments as she was still reeling from the conflict:

Every ‘war’ writer who was a writer realized that the war of 1914-1918 was the absolute end of a social order which had come into being with the French Revolution, which survived 1830 and 1848 and 1870, if only barely, and came crashing down in 1914. Traditional religion became mockery for large masses of men; the various social élites lost status and social customs suffered fundamental changes; anarchy replaced manners; swinishness and barbarity replaced urbanity (McCormick 209).

Though it was a time of industrial prosperity in Europe, British colonies were not as secured as they once were and England was not as strong an Empire. Families which had

been living on old money were left to contend with less, huge dwellings were converted into flats and many were compelled to rent small houses or move to the country. After a decade of elation from the military victory, the world in the thirties had to cope with the Depression—resulting in mass unemployment and industrial problems—as well as with the rise of Hitler’s regime. The Second World War may only have been nine years into the future, but the conflict already seems unavoidable. However, a war coming so soon on the heels of another did not bode well for British society that was not yet coping with the disillusionments of time past. Her people seemed to know instinctively that their known way of life, as precarious as it already was, could surely not withstand another serious war.

Literature of that time reflects those apprehensions and a good example of the fear of losing the world as they know it is in Virginia Woolf’s *Between the Acts*, aptly titled for the limbo Britain seemed to find herself between wars, concerns a woman who produces an annual pageant to a gathering of acquaintances. Bernard Bergonzi also makes this connection to a tribute to a dying way of life: “The Pageant is a mode of art, but at that point in history it is also an elegiac celebration of a form of life that may be on the verge of dissolution” (Bergonzi 28). The aeroplanes overhead before the people scatter reflects the approaching menace and foreshadows the changes to come not only in warfare but also in England’s traditional lifestyle (Woolf 118).

The general sense of the Second World War is of a wariness to enter yet another armed conflict so soon after the last one, especially considering the horrific image of warfare it left upon the last combatants. This time there are no romantic ideals attached to the reality they are to face. The mystique of officer and gentleman has been relegated

to the nineteenth century and one must now face the harsh realities of violence first hand.

John W. Aldridge notes:

In comparison with the innocent boys who set out, more than twenty years earlier, to save the world for democracy, the young man who went into the second war seemed terribly aware. The illusions they might have had about war—the patriotic illusions of courage and noble sacrifice—had all been lost for them that first time and long since replaced by cynicism and a conviction of the international double cross which was sending them out to be killed (Aldridge 117).

WWII's moral dilemma was between stopping Hitler's politics and actually sending troops to endure the devastating warfare they barely survived in the previous conflict. There was no doubt in the allied forces' minds that Hitler had to be stopped at any cost. On the one hand, there is an eagerness to declare war because fire had to be fought with fire and Hitler's regime had to be brought down before it could do anymore damage; while on the other hand, there is the loss of mystique of Victorian warfare. In this case, it meant that war was inevitable. For certain authors, civilization had already taken a turn for the worse and now had to be demolished in order to be rebuilt anew. One such author was Graham Greene, and in the words of Bernard Bergonzi, "[like] other writers who had come to maturity in the 1930s he had for some years been expecting the violent collapse of a rotten civilization, and now it seemed to be actually happening" (Bergonzi 17).

These ambiguous feelings seem to generate in literature a need to turn toward a past which was free of armed conflicts and difficult political struggles. By doing so,

novels recreate a past that is recalled by the characters as ideal and what this thesis defines as nostalgia. This argument will be studied further in the following chapters as the novels will be introduced. Though war was first officially declared by the invasion of Poland by the Germans, England is at first spared the trauma of domestic warfare. However, after a few false starts and after the Second World War officially reached England, further complications started threatening the established facts and disturbing the ground rules. Battles were no longer restricted to the distant and uninhabited battlefields, they were now present in the non-combatants' homes and in the streets they traveled in their day-to-day business. War was brought into the private sphere contributed in deconstructing a lifestyle that had been part of Britain's identity for centuries.

The most evident consequence of the city bombings was the fact that it brought together soldiers and civilians. It blurred the distinction between the two as contingencies had to be thought of to defend and help the city function as normally as it could during such drastic times.

Beginning with the First World War, developments in aircraft technology enabled enemy bombers to transgress previously stable boundaries between the home front and the front line. By the time of the Second World War, such transgression became the norm: as Axis bombers blitzed London, Coventry and other British cities, civilians experienced a violence previously known only by soldiers on the front lines. The war's bullets and bombs, invasions and incendiaries, dive bombers and doodlebugs placed soldiers and civilians alike in the line of fire (Miller 1).

This was also the first step in blurring the clear-cut boundaries between the classes. Everyone had to work together toward a similar goal and social hierarchy could not be

maintained. Soldiers held priority over civilians of all classes, just as civilian guards or firemen held priority over members of high classes. However, this idea of working toward a common and ultimate goal had the advantage of bringing the classes together in a determination to rebuild England more co-operatively than during the thirties. Bernard Bergonzi states that

[darkness], loneliness, and displacement were only one aspect of the wartime condition. The mixing of social classes and the physical mobility brought by military service changed attitudes and enlarged horizons. Isolation and the threat of violent death were to some extent balanced by a new sense of community and shared hopes for the future. During the war years the collective mood moved to the left. There was a determination that the postwar future would be better than the recent past of industrial depression and mass unemployment (Bergonzi 19-20).

Of course, the event that created the most mixing between the classes was the evacuation of the people of London to the country side during the Blitz. These evacuees were mostly children, which means that working class children found themselves being cared for by upper-middle class and upper-class families. Some parents from the London area were reluctant to send their children among the evacuees not only because of their fear of being separated from them, but because they were uneasy in having them experience a life they were not born to. The same could be said of the good Samaritans who welcomed children in their households during the second evacuation, following “the phoney war” of 1940:

Many of the deep social divisions within British society once more were sharply exposed. Householders were again disgusted by the habits of the slum children billeted on them;

many attempted to evade their responsibilities for providing accommodation (Marwick 75).

However, those problems and misunderstandings were mostly put aside:

Yet the hard evidence is that, although inevitably there were many personal frictions and problems of adjustments, on the whole relationships between hosts and billetees were much better, and characterized by greater sympathy and understanding, than had been in September 1939 (Marwick 75).

Mainly, what the evacuation did was make sure that middle- and upper-class English “voluntarily, or involuntarily, were projected into situations in which they were forced to accommodate themselves to some of the most appalling aspects of life as lived by Britain’s poor” (Marwick 75). But then again, the latter would see a problem in sending their own children to a life they felt they had no part of. It did produce some anxiety that the children would “get used” to an easier way of life and be reluctant to go back to the life their parents were able to provide for them. The question, however, is whether it “is to be seen as a social experiment which in the long run had beneficial consequences, or whether it is to be seen as a profoundly disturbing experience for the children involved” (Marwick 75). The authors I am going to study provide their own answers to this question.

None of this meant that the convergence of classes succeeded in offering a united front to the enemy, or that segregation was simply a fact of the past. On the contrary, life did go on in London and posh restaurants were still catering to their well-to-do clientele

and factory workers did not mix with the socialites. The values might have been crumbling by necessity, but people were still trying to hold on to what they knew and understood to be the way of life they were brought up in. James Hall explains this phenomenon:

British class values, under attack but surprisingly resistant, offer comfort, safety, style—the sense of life as bourgeois theater in which a person can be well-regarded by others qualified to judge. Class emphasizes intelligence, group agreement on projects only half-satisfactory to any individuals (Hall 11).

The world was in chaos and there were two ways to deal with it. One either took refuge in the comfort the past could afford as it offered a sense of security from a world that had not yet been turned upside down, or one could use the churning world order for the people's purpose and use chaos as a springboard from which new ideals could be launched. Both reactions were understandable, and sometimes it seemed that it would have been easier to remain with the known instead of stepping from the confusing to the completely unknown. However, a little bit of both could always be witnessed in England during the forties, in fact:

Whatever the validity of the idea that class divisions were breaking down in the upheavals of the Second World War, it cannot mean that they actually disappeared. In several respects they actually intensified, and socialist ideas gained a great hold on mass consciousness during the war (McLennan, Held and Hall 69-70).

If critics and historians seem to be divided on this issue of classes either breaking down or getting stronger it simply means that the people themselves were divided. The two schools of thought are explained by Bernard Bergonzi:

There was inevitably a conflict between this temperamental stance [Orwell's belief that the past had been good and the future looked doubtful] and a commitment to socialism, which believes the past to have been a matter of injustice and oppression and is committed to the establishment of a better world in the future (Bergonzi 99).

It is that very conflict that will be depicted in the following chapters. Even though the political stances are different depending on the writer, they tended to utilise the same strategies when it came to illustrating their point. The authors that I will study were either hailing for a return to former beliefs and an earlier state of society, or a completely new future, a new revolution were the world was bound to be a much better place. It is understandable that both options would be far more appealing than the hardships war was bringing to England. It has to be that way because

[the] twentieth century has wanted to have things both ways. It has driven for change, for control of events in the name of "rational" improvement, and it has, like any other age, wanted to cling to familiar patterns. Only when conditions and responses shift so much that the ideas, habits and assumptions become false over too large an area does the general agreement break. In the meanwhile people stretch familiar schemes—and protagonists—as far as they can go. An age like ours assimilates as much as possible to its inherited hero and has not reached a time of revolutionary dissatisfaction. Endless tension between cultural pattern and sought change, results—and creates a sense that the times are shifting too rapidly for the human spirit (Hall 11).

What all the authors I chose to study have in common—despite their different points of view—is the device they use to illustrate both the longing for the return of time past and longing for revolutionary renewal. To do this they used a versatile image: children. The authors I am studying use children either nostalgically or to project change. Other devices have been used by writers of the time, but these have this peculiarity in common.

There is also a third—though less widespread—view, which consists of depicting children as non-entities, as a simple inevitability of life. In that case, writers express the feeling of hopelessness and confusion for people who really had no time to dream about either the past or the future, but had to survive through the everyday hardships of living in Britain during the war. Again, it is imperative to note how children are again the perfect device to illustrate this. Simply by the use of a more cynical tone, it was possible for writers to paint children in a far different light and share their fears about the present, which were just as real as their hopes and aspirations.

CHAPTER 2

Nostalgia and Anticipation: Using Children as a Way for Adult Characters to Reconcile Their Past, Present and Possible Future

Novelists generally did not retreat into childhood *instead* of dealing with the war. Rather, they examine childhood innocence, jointly with its disillusioning loss, as contexts which reduplicate the coexistence in the imagination of the disparate “halves” Newby mentions—memories of peace anomalously juxtaposed with actual experience of the war (Stevenson 89).

Now that the social and political climate of England between 1939-1945 has been established, it is possible to introduce its treatment in the literature of the time. As Eric Homberger writes in his chapter on World War II in *U.S. Fiction* (p. 173), “there is ... no typical novel of the war” (Everson 115). Indeed, it is impossible to single out one narrative and consider it as the one model for all of the authors of the time. As it was already established in the previous chapter, though there can never be one typical narrative of a whole era, common themes and treatment of a subject matter can always be found in most literary periods. However, there were as many kinds of novels as there were authors in England during the war. However, there are some novels which can be grouped together because of their treatment of war. As we have seen, children are and have always been used as a metaphor or allegory because of the number of different images that can be ascribed to a child. “So many of the clearest images, and those longest remembered, are of children” (Everson 1). This is not simply a new trend, but it is something that has always been part of humanity to look to their young either to remember their own youth or to see them as a way to ensure their own immortality by carrying on their name and genetic makeup to the next generation. In fact, we are bombarded everyday with images of children by advertising companies to either sell a product, an idea, or simply to try to alter our consuming habits. Many television advertisements for life insurance include a character looking at one or more children in an

everyday setting while discussing the necessity of providing for them should anything ever happen to the parent. They are also “given prominent positions in parades to make a show of continuity. Politicians kiss them to suggest their own virtue. [Their] faces fill charity posters, because the heart is acritical” (Rosenblatt 6). Indeed, the heart does not tend to be critical of children in need; it simply finds a natural inclination to help. Such examples show how culturally stable and profound images of children tend to be. We all instinctively know what those images can illustrate responsibility, personify our future generations, suggest continuity, or demonstrate virtue by association or helplessness.

In a violent setting such as war, it is natural for people to turn toward the image of children, for they are, in our minds, the main victims of any armed conflict. In recent news, we were presented with the images of limbless Iraqi children, victims of the most recent Gulf War. Roger Rosenblatt studied children who had lived with the war for most of their lives in order to record the reactions of the innocent victims of the grown-ups’ decisions. He noticed that even the children would mention youngsters first as they talked of the consequences of the violence. Hadara, a young victim he interviewed,

automatically focuses on children whenever she mentions the victims of war. Many of the Belfast children did the same, as would the Palestinian and Lebanese children later in the journey. It is not as if they are simply naming their own kind and complaining of their peril selfishly. Only that they, like adults, associate childhood with innocence and thus cite the example of the most blameless targets in order to make a point dramatically (Rosenblatt 51).

Indeed, how would it be possible to lay blame on the young who take no part in any decision-making? They decide nothing, yet they must endure the consequences of these decisions. As children they become metaphors for blameless victimhood simply because in our collective minds they personify human race yet untouched by corruption and “[that], of course, is the central symbol: goodness, innocence and implicitly, redemption” (Rosenblatt 7). It is true of human nature now and it was true of it then. Children were always considered the first victims of war as their evacuation to the countryside during the Second World War can testify to. Their innocence is timeless and as we react to these images today, we can imagine adults reacting to them similarly as they, themselves, had to live through war.

Because of an implied purity, the idea of childhood becomes even more fitting in the context of violence at a large scale such as war. It is indeed

a powerful image and symbol in the midst of war. In an event that is focused on, initiated, run, fought, justified, and perpetuated by adults, it seems ironic that a central part of our national approach to an understanding of war, and of our emotional investment in it, is the child (Everson 2).

It is certainly ironic, but highly understandable; writers use children as a central image because of the feelings they readily evoke. The values the artists wish to transmit are usually closely related to those feelings:

The reason that we turn to our own children as symbols within and justification for war are perhaps much the same—because the image of a child has the power to evoke

emotion without cynicism, to create belief in an ideal future, and to make ourselves and others move to actions we might not otherwise be willing to undertake (Everson 3).

War can only be endured where the hope persists for a better future. That hope, in the novels that I am studying, is personified in the guise of the children characters. As children they would carry the values that grown-ups are forced to lay aside in times of duress, ensuring that positive beliefs persevere for the endeavour of building a more attractive future. That is what the adults are trying to recapture in the image of the child; that very part of themselves they had thought lost, but was simply entrusted to our children for safekeeping. Interviewing children of war, Roger Rosenblatt realized that his conceptions of adult and childhood values were not as accurate as he had once thought them to be:

I thought children were important to grown-ups because grown-ups saw in them all they had lost in the process of becoming grown-ups. I knew now that children matter so much to adults because they remind us that we never lost the original gentleness at all, that we never lost any of the virtues of childhood. The acquisition of size, power, zeal, authority and territory may have pushed our best feelings aside or below, but we did not really lose them. When I was astonished by Khu, I was astonished by what I recognized as still alive in myself. I was astonished by me (Rosenblatt 193-194).

This passage reflects the thoughts of an adult who, looking at a child victim of war, still is concerned by himself. However, these thoughts are not unusually selfish as Rosenblatt is not trying to trivialise Khu's ordeal. What his thought process suggests is that he is

using the image projected by Khu's typical child strength in the face of adversity and applying it to himself as this trait was part of his own makeup as well. Adults tend to leave that ability aside as they grow older and focus on ways to remedy the problem instead of trying to first deal and live with it. As children are not generally in a position to alter their own faith, they have no other choice but to learn to adapt to their situation. That quality is what Rosenblatt recognises as being part of himself but lying dormant in his adulthood; thus, Rosenblatt needed to see the world through the eyes of the children he interviewed before he was able to understand his own strength and, with them, the strength of all adults, theirs for the taking should they choose to recapture it.

Recapturing the past is another important characteristic of the young protagonists in the novels I am studying. The presence of children forces adults to remember their own childhood, or their ideal of a perfect childhood, and the contentment that is by-product of this state of mind. What they endeavour to do is recapture the feelings associated with protection and safety. Most of the writers examined in this chapter were born between 1899 and 1905. Their childhood was lived mainly before the First World War was declared and thus they can recall their early years as an interval of safety in the care of their parents, not yet aware of the realities of living during a military conflict. By contrast, their teenage years were a great departure from the world they grew up in. First they experienced aspects of the First World War, then the uncertainty of the thirties, and then the Second World War. They tend to turn to the only time in their life when they felt any kind of stability as the ideal reference, and that particular time was, for them,

their childhood. Rosamond Lehmann, herself born in 1901, wrote in “The Future of the Novel?” (p. 7):

For the present most novelists are likely to turn back to the time when, the place where knew where they were—when their imagination can expand and construct among remembered scenes and established symbols, just as they mostly did during the period. They will look to their youth ... or they will invent allegories and fantasies (qtd. in Stevenson 82).

In a sense, war literature does not necessarily preoccupy itself with recapturing an idealized childhood, but mainly expresses the loss of the innocence sacrificed in maturation that took place in the midst of war. That loss coincides with the loss of innocence of the entire society, as it was forced to “grow up” very quickly during the years between 1914-1945: “Even novels which seem to portray an ideal childhood are often concerned not solely with innocence but with its loss” (Stevenson 88). This theme is common with most “coming of age” stories; however, what distinguishes it in the context of the narratives that will be studied in this thesis is that the loss of innocence is not associated with growing up into adulthood, but with the loss of a collective innocence. The children are mostly too young to come of age naturally as they are forced to leave their childhood innocence behind prematurely. That is what is paralleled to the concept of the whole British nation which is also not quite ready to lose its own “innocence” at the hand of war. This war becomes a period of transition for England as it is forced to change without assurance that this change is indeed going to be for the better.

David Bevan writes: "Much of war is unspeakable, though perhaps not unsayable" (Bevan 7). In the present context, this means that even though war is too much of a terrible ordeal to be able to translate adequately in a novel, it is perhaps not impossible to suggest the idea of the terrible ordeal that is war in creative and artistic ways. So far, we have seen that children are ideal figures to translate the need for order after the upheaval of an armed conflict, and that children readily suggest a connection to adults' past and personal history. They also are well-suited to illustrate the effects of the disruption of war, through the parallel between the maturation of children under a time of stress, and the evolution of a nation during an armed conflict.

Equating children with a nation is not relegated to literary narratives, or literary criticism as many non-fiction writers have used this comparison to drive their point to their readers about the bravery and adaptability of children living with the realities of conflict. Roger Rosenblatt found the parallel comforting as he interviewed extraordinary children who were still able to retain their hopes and, consequently, transmitted them to the adults who looked to them as models to recover their own faith in the future. These children allow adults to glimpse a better future simply by hoping and surviving against the odds: "She is Ireland, this girl; not Northern Ireland, but the whole strange place, that western chip of Europe stuck out in the Atlantic with no natural resources but its poetic mind and a devouring loneliness" (Rosenblatt 37). Even very young children had a tendency to use children as metaphors for the conflicting nations, as one boy recorded in his WWII journal:

The Germans are the bullies of the European classroom. Lots of little countries have been getting their arms twisted behind their backs. But in the corner of that classroom,

Britain is sitting, best fighter in the school, captain of football, popular hero. Britain has got her feet up on the windowsill at present, reading a book, because the bully hasn't gone too far. Yet! But when the little kids squeal too loud, Britain will get up and give the bully a bloody nose. The bully will crumple up, snivelling snots into the corner, and then we'll have peace. *Boy, aged nine, Tyneside* (Westall 21).

This somewhat naïve description of the world politics of the late thirties and early forties is nevertheless a good example of the familiar thought pattern reminiscent of the images we associate with our youngsters because they are yet uncorrupted by the nasty misconceptions and complicated world views that afflict their adult counterparts. Though adults do have a grasp of the complex politics inherent to their world at war, it does not mean that they wish to think and discuss them every hour of every day. The respite accorded by a nostalgic trip down memory lane is not only welcomed but required by adults. To see their world again through the eyes of children is a form of escapism, especially for the British whose reality is harsh, difficult and ever-present in the news and their homes. They saw in their chaotic surroundings very little hope for the future of humankind as their reality was mainly violent and savage. Even today, as we see conflicts in many parts of the world, our confidence that the world could be made into a better one fails to push through evidence to man's inhumanity to man. Like Rosenblatt keeps suggesting, we still need those children to remind us of the possibilities that humans have. Through their innocent eyes, adults are still able to recapture their own vision of the promise the world has to offer: "Yet I looked upon the dead-as-ever world;

unchanging, stiff as a board. Not so to Samer, however, not to the child. It was his view I wanted to find, and to retrieve” (Rosenblatt 191).

Graham Greene’s *The Ministry of Fear*

Adults during the real context of the war turned to childhood characteristics to make sense of their world. Oddly enough, as stated in my introduction, children seem to shine by their very absence in most war novels. Although stories take place in domestic settings, couples are usually childless, the streets are void of their presence, and the main characters rarely even mention them. Whereas it is not conspicuous in narratives taken individually, this systematic overlook is. Aside from juvenile novels that feature children as protagonists to appeal to their young readership, adult novels do not even mention them at all. While some novelists found difficult to include children in their narratives, they continued to invoke nostalgia and hope for a better future by reference to children, through their vocabulary or the actions of their adult characters. Though he has not included any child in his novel, Graham Greene’s *The Ministry of Fear* retains a persistent youthful presence both through the actions of Arthur Rowe, the protagonist, or the vocabulary the characters and the narrator use to describe Rowe’s state of mind.

Like many novels published in the years we are concerned with, actual armed conflict represents only a historical context for Greene’s novel. War is very much in the background and only invoked to underline the key events. It concerns an ordinary man who unexpectedly stumbles into the world of espionage simply by winning a cake at a charity event. Arthur Rowe, however, proves not to be as ordinary as expected. He

poisoned his ailing wife to spare her the ordeal of a prolonged painful death, but his conscience will not let him decide whether he was right or wrong in his actions. In effect, both the spy story and the war are convenient storylines to create an environment for the character to evolve in, while Rowe's past act and his reaction to it are truly the centre of the surrounding narrative.

The story opens at a fête: "there was something [that] drew Arthur Rowe irresistibly, bound him a helpless victim to the distant blare of a band and the knock-knock of wooden balls against coconuts" (Greene 11). For this particular character, decisions are endured rather than actively taken. The key event that plunges the protagonist into his own psyche as well as the world of espionage—winning the cake by chance—owes its very being to an outside force that unexplainably drew Rowe to the fated contest. The fête is also the setting for the very first instance where the narrator utilises a vocabulary reminiscent of childhood. For instance:

Arthur Rowe looked wistfully over the railings—there were still railings. The fête called him like innocence: it was entangled in childhood, with vicarage gardens and girls in white summer frocks and the smell of herbaceous borders and security. He had no inclination to mock at these elaborately naïve ways of making money for a cause (Greene 11).

The past here is about summer days, pleasant smells and a feeling of security that can find no rival in the present. Even Rowe's motives for going to the fête are those of a little boy attracted by the music, smells and colourful images designed to advertise

amusement. However, even though the nostalgia for childhood is there, the presence of the war is hinted at by a few references to the Blitz:

Of course this year there were no coconuts because there was a war on: you could tell that too from the untidy gaps between the Bloomsbury houses—a flat fireplace half-way up a wall, like the painted fireplace in a cheap dolls' house, and lots of mirrors and green wall-papers, and from a round corner of the sunny afternoon the sound of glass being swept up, like the lazy noise of the sea on a shingled beach (Greene 11).

As David Bevan notes, “[much] of war is unspeakable, though perhaps not unsayable” (Bevan 7). Graham Greene’s introductory paragraphs imply that it is, in fact, impossible to translate in art the unspeakable qualities of the violence, pain and suffering of war; however, it is possible for him to depict this reality through its after-effects. The “gaps between the Bloomsbury houses” and the “flat fireplace half-way up a wall” are all the missing houses and basic structures destroyed by one of the raids. Furthermore, the “mirrors and green wall-papers” are the result of buildings being blown open by the loss of its walls, leaving their contents for everyone to see. Despite that description, it is not made obvious that those are in fact the result of a violent action. The tone is light and the description is woven with the description of the happy event of the fête. To a reader who never had to live through the Blitz, this scene does not seem foreboding at all, but to the initiated, the same narrative can signify the terror of living through its events without having to appeal to overly dramatic and violent devices. War may indeed be unspeakable, but it is by no means unsayable.

Rowe is seeking to take refuge from events in his recent past through his childhood escapades. Robert Hewison explains this need to reconcile a difficult present with an earlier period:

In the face of apparent decline and disintegration, it is not surprising that the past seems a better place. Yet it is irrevocable, for we are condemned to live perpetually in the present. What matters is not the past, but our relationship with it. As individuals, our security and identity depend largely upon the knowledge we have of our personal and family history; the language and customs which govern our social lives rely for their meaning on a continuity between past and present. Yet at times the pace of change, and its consequences, are so radical that not only is change perceived as decline, but there is the threat of total rupture with our past lives (Hewison 43-45).

Rowe's recourse to euthanasia to ease his wife's suffering is responsible for plaguing him by guilt. His first rationalization was that he did it to spare her the agonies of a long and painful death, but he cannot prevent himself from wondering whether he wished to spare himself the misery of bearing witness to it. In his own mind "he had told himself a hundred times, that it was he who had not been able to bear his wife's pain—and not she" (Greene 89). He is further confused by the ethics of his action as he knows a timely death had also been at one point his wife's own wish but he does not accept that she expressed them from a sound mind:

Once, it was true, in the early days of the disease, she had broken down, said she wanted to die, not to wait: that was hysteria. Later it was her endurance and her patience which

he had found most unbearable. He was trying to escape his own pain, not hers, and at the end she had guessed or half-guessed what it was he was offering her (Greene 89).

His pain stems from the complex morals attached to the act. Was he trying to help her, or help himself? Was she aware of what he had done and did not dare to ask what he was doing, or was she aware and acquiescent of his act? Did he have the right to precipitate her demise?

In the symbolic economy of Greene's novel, Arthur Rowe suffers from the same moral dilemma as the English people did during the Second World War. Euthanasia is at the root of the conflict within Rowe similarly as war is at the root of the conflict within the British. Rowe's wife's premature death did not spare Arthur Rowe's pain for it was the cause of it, but Rowe truly believed that eliminating the disease was the best action to take. Similarly, England's decision to eliminate Hitler and his regime seems to be the only one, but the price of this action is the pain of sending young men to die and enduring war on the domestic front. The English were torn over the necessity of stopping a man such as Hitler versus sending people to the same fate that had destroyed a whole generation twenty-five years earlier. Even that knowledge of past suffering can be compared to Rowe's own dealings with pain as a boy:

His early childhood had been passed before the first world war, and the impressions of childhood are ineffaceable. He was brought up to believe that it was wrong to inflict pain, but he was often ill, his teeth were bad and he suffered agonies from an inefficient dentist he knew as Mr Griggs. He learned before he was seven what pain was like—he wouldn't willingly allow even a rat to suffer it (Greene 88).

Knowing what pain was like, it had taught him that he could not let anyone else live with it, especially not the wife that he cared so greatly about. Along the same lines, sending people to their own deaths when the world has just discovered the true face of pain in the guises of technological warfare seems extreme and appalling, but allowing a disease personified by Hitler to keep on spreading death and suffering could not be allowed either. Neither option is viable but, at the time, one had to be taken. To ease his own remorse, Rowe longs for his childhood, a time that takes him before the First World War, before all innocence deserted him forever, a time where every decision was either unequivocally right or unequivocally wrong:

In childhood we live under the brightness of immortality—heaven is near and actual as the seaside. Behind the complicated details of the world stand the simplicities: God is good, the grown-up man or woman knows the answer to every question, there is such a thing as truth, and justice is as measured and faultless as a clock. Our heroes are simple: they are brave, they tell the truth, they are good swordsmen and they are never in the long run truly defeated. That is why no later books satisfy us like those which were read to us in childhood—for those promised a world of great simplicity of which we knew the rules, but the later books are complicated and contradictory with experience; they are formed out of our own disappointing memories (Greene 88-89).

Therefore, “Rowe initially chooses to avoid the difficulties of his experience by escaping from the ‘complicated details of the world’ into the ‘simplicities’ of childhood” (Miller 149).

The books mentioned in the passage are very important for Rowe. Indeed, he has, for instance, a fascination with Dickens as he reads it “as people used to read the Bible, over and over again till he could have quoted chapter and verse, not so much because he liked them as because he had read them as a child, and they carried no adult memories” (Greene 20-21). It seems that “[for] many writers, Charles Dickens offered a way out” (Knowles 11) because he was firmly planted in the nineteenth century when Britain was at its best and the “war to end all wars” had not yet profoundly shaken England’s sense of identity, and Rowe could reminisce about his readings of it as a child. Knowles succinctly says “[there] were many ways of returning to the past. All were anticipatory in their attempts to stave off the future; all were certain to fail” (Knowles 11).

And to confront that future was inevitable. After frolicking in childhood spy fantasies and country fairs for the first third of the novel, Arthur Rowe reaches the height of his denial of the present, as he is victim of an attack orchestrated by the spies who had drafted him in the first place. A device hidden in a valise—the nature of which we are not privy to—induces amnesia in Rowe as he opens it. Twenty years of his life are wiped out along with his own identity. Rowe is forcefully removed from his past. There is nothing left for him but the present and anticipation of the future; however, even that is not as important, as he finds himself in an institution, with no contact with the outside world. To him, even the war is remote and seems to be removed from him: “The war and all that happened round him had seemed to belong to other people” (Greene 132). His doctor, who works for the same people who attacked Rowe, even gives him *carte blanche* to forget everything about past dealings: ““You’ve had your share of the war for the time

being, Mr Digby, and you can lie back with an easy conscience” (Greene 109). He even unknowingly frees him from his personal demons by providing Rowe with a new identity. Along with his new identity, Rowe is offered a new start as he does not remember what it is exactly that he has lost. In that fabricated life he is free to fall in love with the spy Anna and to pursue that romantic interest without the baggage of his own past. But the pastoral retreat he inhabits is, in effect, a bubble isolating him from everything else, a refuge from the war and the dangers of the spy games. He is effectively living his past in the present and the twenty years erased from his mind are also erased from his life. Everything is simple again and doctors portray themselves as very effective guardians who make all the difficult decisions for Digby/Rowe. Unfortunately, it soon becomes evident to Rowe that such a life is unfeasible to an adult.

As Robert Hewison states, “[a] secure sense of identity depends not only on a confident location in time and place, but also on an ability to cope with the inevitable alterations that time brings about” (Hewison 45). Being cut off from his own past gives Rowe the perfect opportunity to reinvent himself based in the simplicity of childhood. But he soon finds that for all its simplicity, this sort of life is restrictive and unmanageable and he finds himself trying to again find his way back to reality and the present. His own realisation is clear: “It was unbearable to be treated as an invalid. What woman outside a Victorian novel could care for an invalid?” (Greene 133) However, Rowe is not an invalid as he merely fails to remember his past life. He does not have any physical ailments that would prevent him from taking care of himself and his condition would still permit him to be a productive member of society. The need for someone to

care for him is a reference to a return to a pre-adult state where he would be under and adult's care for any decision making on his behalf. By using the reference to a Victorian novel, Rowe establishes a parallel between his own past and that of England's. Being cared for as he now is can only happen in the distant past of a Victorian self-image in his childhood novels he cherishes. As oppressive as that sort of life is, it becomes imperative for Rowe to take possession again of his own identity and willingly let go of his attachment to his childhood. The Victorian remark equates his own loss with England's movement away from the nineteenth century as he realises that it is ludicrous to try to freeze time at a point of imagined safety. That feeling is unfortunately impossible to capture again. He consciously decides to take back his own life, memories and all, and endeavours to find the significance of his own present:

He was Arthur with a difference. He was next door to his own youth; he had started again from there. He said, 'In a moment it's going to come back, but I'm not Conway—and I won't be Stone. I've escaped for long enough: my brain will stand it. It wasn't all fear that he felt; he felt also the untired courage and the chivalry of adolescence. He was no longer too old and too habit-ridden to start again (Greene 148).

That is Rowe's first step in denying himself the security and ease of an infantile past. He is not yet ready to embrace the present as it stands, but he is able, at least, to reach for a youthful energy to face the present and anything that confrontation entails.

The novel is divided into four books: "The Unhappy Man", "The Happy Man", "Bits and Pieces" and "The Hole Man". In the first part, the story is established and Rowe gets involved against his will with the world of espionage. Here Rowe is an adult

looking for a way to recapture his past. He is unhappy because of his inability to cope with the present he has been dealt, and is looking for the simplicity only his youth seems to be able to provide. In the second book he has lost his memory and thus gets the chance to start over from the beginning. The present is irrelevant and his lack of knowledge gets equated with a child's state as he is cuddled and told to leave all of his care and decision-making to the competent doctors. This unnatural state needs to be remedied in order for Rowe to become whole again. In book three Rowe resembles an adolescent as he gradually recollects his mature identity. He is not yet whole, which is why he is incapable yet of interacting with the outside world. Mr Prentice, yet another agent in this espionage game, remarks on this as he asks Rowe: "You don't feel it, do you? Adolescents don't feel pity. It's a mature passion" (Green172). In other words, Rowe's world is not yet as it should be, but it is slowly getting to the point where he can make sense of it. In the final book, Rowe puts most of the pieces together and reconciles himself to his flaws. He accepts his past actions and realises, as he embarks on a romantic involvement with the female spy, that he cannot relive the past.

This progression provides him with a necessary perspective. To put order into a jumbled timeline, it is necessary to find a beginning, a middle and an end. Robert Hewison writes:

Continuity between past and present creates a sense of sequence out of aleatory chaos and, since change is inevitable, a stable system of ordered meanings enable us to cope with both innovation and decay. The nostalgia impulse is an important agency in adjustment to crisis, it is a social emollient and reinforces national identity when confidence is weakened or threatened (Hewison 47).

Stages of life offer the closest parallel to this natural evolution, which is the reason Greene relies strongly on images of maturation. Nostalgia is a longing for the past—here for childhood. It permits characters to remember where they came from in order to figure out where they are and, ultimately, where they are going.

Barbara Noble's *Doreen*

The next series of novels are structured similarly, with the exception that the following portray actual children as opposed to images of maturation. The first is Barbara Noble's *Doreen*, and is structured around the breaking down of the class system. The first edition of the novel was published in 1946 and we can thus estimate Barbara Noble to be a contemporary to the other authors studied.

The novel is of the evacuee story genre. Its protagonist is a little girl, Doreen Rawlings, whose mother is at first dead set on keeping her child with her in London during the Blitz, finally relents to send her to the country, safe from the bombing. Though she hesitates to send her to anonymous people through billeting officers, she accepts a reluctant offer from a woman working in the same building she does, Miss Helen Osborne. Helen's brother and sister-in-law, Geoffrey and Francie, own a country house and even though "Francie should have had half a dozen [children] of her own" (Noble 45), the couple is childless and Mrs. Osborne is more than happy to welcome the little girl in a temporary arrangement.

As opposed to Greene's use of a maturation vocabulary to depict different aspects of a society at war, Noble focuses more on the class system, its meaning, its gradual disappearance and its potential extinction. The Second World War became a powerful catalyst to demolish a strong and proud society that had not known much social and political change in centuries, but now faced an important reorganisation because of the war's invasion of its domestic sphere. Evacuee stories demonstrate well class-consciousness and their reluctant mix as most evacuees were London's working-class children billeted to upper-middle class homes in the country. In reality,

the significance of the evacuation experience was that it brought to middle- and upper-class households a consciousness for the first time of the deplorable conditions endemic in the rookeries and warrens which still existed in Britain's great industrial cities, and so, among the articulate few, aroused a new sense of social concern. In this sense evacuation was a unique experience and one of the most significant phenomena of the war (Marwick 75).

Those are England's concerns and the ones that are addressed readily in WWII literature.

Barbara Noble's preoccupation with class-consciousness is at the forefront of her novel as she keeps opposing different images of working class and professional class. One of her most favoured images is Francie and Geoffrey's country house. According to Robert Hewison, "[the] country house is the most familiar symbol of [England's] national heritage, a symbol which, for the most part has remained in private hands" (Hewison 53). In Noble's text, the house itself presents a merged image of two distinct lifestyles. Helen describes the building as looking "so out of place—like the woman who walked through

the fields in gloves. It's a town house dumped down in the country" (Noble 44). The description foreshadows the blurring of the lines between the classes. It also implies similar changes for characters who originate from different classes, but find themselves interacting for extended periods, because "there is no doubt that the hierarchy of architectural orders is also a symbol of the hierarchy of social orders" (Hewison 76). Noble even associates the images of a child and a house to signify the loss of upper-middle class ancestral values: "A child in the house was its focal point; everything else radiated from it. [...] There was no continuing life in a house without children" (Noble 234).

Robert Hewison refines this argument by stating: "The truth was, however, that society had re-oriented itself in relation to the values that the country house represented: nostalgia for the past ensured the continuation of the country house into the present" (Hewison 63). This country house, though indeed situated in the country, is of an architectural design imported from an urban context. Noble's suggestion is that this hybridizing reflects an inevitable motion toward an altered society for the future. Indeed, continuation cannot be guaranteed since, according to Geoffrey, "Francie should have had half a dozen [children] of her own. That's probably my fault. Our kind is dying out. We're becoming sterile" (Noble 45). Asked to clarify his usage of "our kind," he explains:

Hard to define. The professional class? Upper-middle? One foot in the country and the other in trade. People who no longer have the staff to run a house comfortably, but know how it ought to be run. People who took their holidays abroad before the war as units,

not in gangs. People with the smattering of culture required to fill in the clues in the *Times* crossword puzzle. That about sums it up, I think (Noble 46).

Already, Noble is establishing a parallel between the apparent disappearance of a class system with the absence of a baby. According to Geoffrey, the professional class is bound to extinction and the image illustrating that fact is his inability to father children. Barbara Noble uses a common symbol for children by suggesting that sexual reproduction is humankind's only chance at immortality as their genes are passed from one generation to the next and their names live on. This foreshadows the true repercussions of Doreen's temporary stay with the Osbornes; she is a natural filler to the void left in the house by the childless couple. Francie's candid description of children foreshadows Doreen's role:

'They're all real people to themselves and only half-real to the rest of the world. Except to other children, of course. However much they're loved, they're never taken quite seriously. And yet their own lives and their own feelings are terribly important to them. I'm sorry for children because they're so helpless. They have to go where they're pushed' (Noble 19).

Since children have no other choice but to go where they are pushed, Doreen's own choices are limited to the wishes of the adults responsible for her. Indeed, she is relegated to conform to the environment she finds herself in, in order to be able to interact with others.

Doreen is the perfect vessel for adults to pour into it any of the characteristics they wish. Early in the novel, Doreen is shown to be very apt at the art of imitation. She takes quickly to her new life in a previously unknown environment. She

watched and imitated and laboured to conform the whole time. She never once betrayed ignorance or expressed surprise. Her motives were not snobbish ones; for all her class awareness, Mrs. Rawlings was not a snob and had not taught Doreen to be one; it was an instinct of self-preservation which bade her take on the protective colouring of her background. For as long as she was different, she was marked. Safety lay only in uniformity (Noble 50-51).

Her natural talent permits her to adapt herself to the society where she lives. Thus, when in the care of her temporary guardians, she is the perfect upper-middle class child to the point where she is perceived as different by her schoolmates from the village: "her position in the Osbornes' household singled her out in the village and divided her from her schoolmates by an intangible barrier. [...] She could never be entirely on an equal footing with the rest" (Noble 93). Living with the Osbornes, Doreen adapts her behaviour to match that of her caregivers and Helen remarks to Francie: "You're turning her into a child of your own class" (Noble 106). By doing this, both Francie and Geoffrey can relive their own childhood vicariously through Doreen. Like all humans, the characters are resistant to change and readily use children as surrogates to re-experience their own childhood. Even Geoffrey happily uses Doreen's youth as a way to recapture his own with a gift at Christmas:

It was a small tent, wigwam-shaped. Francie had not altogether approved; she had had a sensitive fear of appearing to outdo Mrs. Rawlings in expenditure on Doreen and had purposely limited her own. But Geoffrey had swept aside these niceties and chosen something to please himself. He believed that he was buying it for Doreen, but in fact it was an offering to his own childhood (Noble 76).

While the narrative suggests that the upper-middle class is starting to disappear, it also establishes deeply ingrained class-consciousness behaviour from people who refuse to ignore their rank in the hierarchy. This is one social explanation for this behaviour:

Whatever the validity of the idea that class divisions were breaking down in the upheavals of the Second World War, it cannot mean that they actually disappeared. In several respects they actually intensified, and socialist ideas gained a great hold on mass consciousness during the war (McLennan et al. 69-70).

When Mrs Rawlings visits Doreen at Christmas, Geoffrey raises a question that seems to be quite ridiculous to Francie, but one that is imperative to Mrs Rawlings herself: “‘You realise, don’t you,’ Geoffrey said, ‘that it will raise a delicate social problem? Is Mrs. Rawlings going to take her meals with us?’” (Noble 58), Francie maintains that she should eat with them but Mrs Rawlings politely refuses. Even though both women are able to work together making breakfast the next morning, there is an undercurrent of the differences between the classes as “[working] together, the two women found themselves more in accord. They exchanged remarks through the service hatch and mapped out the day ahead” (Noble 74). Speaking through the service hatch is an indicator that the only

moment both women can truly interact is when they are separated by a partition traditionally dividing employer and employee. Mrs Rawlings is in fact clinging very hard to the old social conventions and cannot consider interacting with others without them. Mrs Rawlings is not servile, but rather stands behind the propriety of her rank. Her insistence at behaving and being treated like an employee in the Osbornes' house is explained by the fact that

until recent years Englishmen, whatever their pursuit, however humble their task, had no inferiority complex about labor. Indeed, each calling had its own dignity, and obligations, however lowly, towards superiors were carried out merely as professional duties, never in a manner suggestive of servility (Maillaud 133).

Though Doreen may be the only child protagonist, Barbara Noble establishes many parallels between her and Francie Osborne. She portrays the latter as a childlike character who experiences the world similarly to Doreen in some respects. Primarily, Francie's childless marriage prevents us from perceiving her as the motherly type. Quite the opposite, she rarely makes a decision without seeking counsel from Mrs. Renshaw, a motherly matron from the village, or asking for her husband's blessings. It is also established that she cannot darn, she burns clothes when ironing them, and there is even one instance where she burns the sauce at dinner, even though she blames the occurrence on the glass of sherry she had ingested beforehand (Noble 21). Though it is irrelevant today, Francie's inability to perform these tasks would have been equated with a lack of femininity in 1946. A number of parallels are drawn between Doreen and Mrs. Osborne.

One example occurs when Francie imagines having a child to care for while she looks at her surroundings:

Through her eyes, she looked at everything afresh—the hedged fields which, at first, would seem so much alike, then the village itself, straggling and haphazard, with no particular charm of obvious rusticity but with its own pleasant character of life lived slowly and on the whole contentedly within a small compass and for a great many generations (Noble 12).

Francie does not simply imagine what a child would see, she uses the image of the child to look through her eyes at a scene she knows very well. Using this technique, she is able to see the field differently. This passage is also a good example of the static qualities associated with traditional values as many generations had been privy to the same panorama. It also shows Francie's allegiance to those values.

Francie's definition of a child is itself child-like and naïve: "I think all children are alike in a special way, but I don't know the words to explain what I mean" (Noble 19). That childish explanation is the first hint suggesting childlike qualities in Francie. She is like a child in special ways herself. For instance, Doreen seems to bond more quickly with Geoffrey than with Francie even though it was the latter who desired to invite Doreen. For Francie, "[it] did not mar this pleasure that from the first Doreen responded more to Geoffrey than to her. She too loved Geoffrey" (Noble 46). It seems peculiar for a wife to equate her feelings of love for her husband with those of a young child, but this would be normal between two equals. Francie is thus presented as a woman-child. Even Geoffrey perceives Francie in a child-like manner. When Francie

points out “you’re treating *me* like a child”, he answers: “Nonsense. I like you much better than any child. You have all their traditional virtues and none of their actual shortcomings” (Noble 19). Though she is presented as an adult, Francie has none of their traditional traits, as it was already established. Noble keeps describing her using child vocabulary and comparisons and she is childless. She is even afraid to interact with a woman like Mrs. Rawlings because the latter is far too authoritative a woman for Francie to comfortably relate to.

She too, represents the changes undergone by England, but in a different way. It is impossible to categorize Francie in any class *per se*. By creating an orphaned character, Noble deprived her of a true identity. Not only has Francie lost her history, she is given to the care of many different guardians. Her caretakers were her much older brothers and sisters who did not quite know how to interact with such a young child, thus insisted that she call them “auntie” and “uncle”, taking away all of her familial ties altogether. According to Robert Hewison, “[a] secure sense of identity depends not only on a confident location in time and place, but also on an ability to cope with the inevitable alterations that time brings about” (Hewison 45). Francie represents the present in a state of flux with her inherent inability to reconcile herself with change. War is also the main cause for the breakdown in England’s class system and social hierarchy. It is the cause of Britain being in a state of flux.

Geoffrey and Mrs. Rawlings are able to interact because they both still respect the propriety of addressing a person from a different class, even though they are unable to hold complex conversations due to the marked difference between their respective

languages. To Mrs Rawlings, the Osbornes “spoke a language which was foreign to her; but Doreen could interpret it. Their ways were unfamiliar to her; but Doreen was at home with them” (Noble 225-226). As for Francie, she cannot reconcile either the pre- or the post World War II eras and, therefore, needs Doreen to serve as a buffer between her and Doreen’s mother. The child is the only hybrid whose knowledge about the rules to both worlds permits her to evolve easily in either. She can thus bring order into the chaos of Francie’s world. When Mrs. Rawlings refuses to take her meal with the Osbornes, Francie only offers a token argument and she feels guilty “because her relief was great. She had been dreading having dinner with Mrs. Rawlings minus the protection of Doreen” (Noble 72). Doreen becomes a transition from one system to another while she is still able to recognize the differences between her own class and the Osbornes’. She is also able to evolve comfortably in both worlds. When Doreen receives a gift from artist friends of Francie, she resolves to keep the gift from her mother simply because

she knew that she would never find the words in which to tell her of the circumstances of the gift. People like the Crossleys were as remote from her mother’s experience as from her own, and instinctively she knew that what she liked about them would not please her mother (Noble 55).

In fact, she evolves so well in both worlds that the actual place she should belong to becomes an issue.

Doreen becomes the victim of a tug of war between her mother and Francie as Mrs Rawlings harbours jealousy for her daughter’s relationship with the couple. Mrs

Rawlings fears that Doreen will become too comfortable with the Osbornes' lifestyle and that it will make her repudiate her own class and everything it stands for, including her mother. Doreen's mother perceives the Osbornes as a threat and "[in] the past two or three weeks she had come to think in terms of weapons and defence. She felt herself driven into a corner, forced to give fight" (Noble 225). That sentence is structured specifically to serve as a simile for war. The image of war forcing the classes together and making them disappear is the strongest at this point in the novel. English society was resistant to change because it resulted from a political instability created by war. That change was not the result of a natural progression but was forced upon the British violently as a direct result of the war. Mrs Rawlings was most desperate to cling to the world as she knew it for "[she] had a most conservative preoccupation with social distinction" (Noble 224). She is afraid to lose her only child to what she knows is a more alluring world. For instance, Mrs Rawlings feels the need to offer Doreen at Christmas a "large and extremely expensive doll, dressed in a rose-pink silk frock, complete with undergarments, shoes and socks—such a doll as only a child at complete opposite ends of the social scale receive" (Noble 75). But Doreen is different and her experiences have shaped her into a different person, she has just started to grow up:

It was as if the image in the mirror and the events of the past few days—meeting her father, going to London, being ill—combined to tell her something which she did not want to know. Something had changed. Something had gone. Even Mum was different (Noble 221).

Even Mrs Rawlings acknowledges the fact that Doreen is no longer a mere working-class child. This realization reaches its peak at the end of the novel as Mrs Rawlings observes Doreen after deciding to take her from the Osbornes to bring her back in London: "Her child's face, still indeterminate in features, looked curiously shuttered and reserved. And watching her, Mrs. Rawlings felt as though a hand had squeezed her heart. Perhaps it was already too late" (Noble 246). The "indeterminate features" are an indication that we still do not know what the future of England will look like, but there are definite changes already taking place that indicate a different path for British society. Change, as always, is inevitable but no necessarily welcomed.

Henry Green's *Caught*

Caught is the story of Richard Roe, an upper-middle class widower who joins the Fire Service as an Auxiliary just before the war. He is separated from his son as he deemed him safer with his aunt in the country. His superior officer, Pye, is a working-class career fireman whose sister abducted Roe's son Christopher because of her mental instability. Pye cannot get past his feeling of guilt because of an incident in his own past involving his sister.

Like Barbara Noble, Henry Green is concerned with the disappearance of the class system in World War II England. The child in this particular story is Richard Roe's son Christopher. Though he is not as present in the narrative as Doreen, Christopher is no less crucial to the storyline. What is similar to both Barbara Noble and Graham

Greene's novels is the insignificant part the war plays in the text. War is mentioned, and some violence is shown, but most of it happens outside the text:

Roe's difficulty in giving an account of the air raids, and the disparities Green demonstrates between his narrative and his actual visual memory, exemplify the problems encountered by wartime writers in turning into fiction experience already 'un-real', film-like, or 'too violent for the art to transcribe' (Stevenson 79).

Aside from using the image of children to express the changes of their society, these British writers also share their timidity in writing the violence of war into their narratives. "Green is interested not in the overt facts of war cruelties but in what the mind makes of them" (Wall 437). War is not depicted as one of many casualties and of constant bombings, but it is a background against which Richard Roe experience a new lifestyle created by the chaos of the introduction of violence into the private sphere. It is only a prelude to some even more powerful changes once the protagonist is confronted by the Blitz.

Like Doreen brings a connection between classes by going to live in the country with the Osbornes, Christopher links Richard and Pye in a more intimate manner than they would have been as superior and subordinate. However, where it differs from *Doreen*, is that the child's role is limited to that of the catalyst and his role as a character is minimal. Christopher is responsible for that first confrontation of classes, which would have been less of a problem on all people involved if Christopher's kidnapping had not occurred. Richard had first met Pye during his training as an Auxiliary and he is

described as a competent fellow and fireman but for the comment: "This was before Christopher had been abducted, at a time when Pye could speak freely in Roe's presence, without ending almost every period, because he was always talking, by a dark reference to his sister's little trouble" (Green 20). Contrary to Noble's novel, little Christopher himself, not the war, is the disruptive incident that turns the world on its axis.

As for Richard's relationship with his son, at first he idealizes him even though he can hardly communicate with him during his leave. At that point, Richard Roe can hardly communicate with anyone as he tends to idealize his relationships in his memory.

Walter Allen writes:

From one point of view, *Caught* is a tragi-comedy of misunderstanding; everyone talks at length, but there is no communication. There is no communication between the middle-class auxiliary fireman Roe and his five-year-old son, as there is none between Roe and his officer Pye, whose lunatic sister abducted Roe's son (Allen, *Tradition and Dream* 217).

What he really idealizes is the area of his past he associates with his son; how he, his wife and their son used to be a happy family. He even applies it to the present as he relegates to the past his visits to the country when he is not on leave, as well as the fire station, when he is. Carey Wall explains:

At first, his recent loss of his wife and (just by absence) of his son makes him idealize them and his pre-war life, and so, by opposition, to monsterize the working-class men who have become his fellow firemen. The symbols available to him pull his class bonds tighter, and he hugs his misery (Wall 435).

He feels his class sets him apart from his fellow firemen and

[he] began to blame everything on the A.F.S. He would still admit the new Service was necessary but he came, in that first interview with Trant at which they had not been mentioned, to recognise cut-price firemen, the Auxiliaries, as an evil. He cracked hard down on his. He would shew who was running the substation (Green 133).

Roe is not from the same class as the other auxiliary firefighters and he is presented as showing contempt to them. That perception is established as being linked to the incident that involved Pye's sister and Christopher. Christopher is thus the catalyst who reminds both Roe and Pye that they come from different worlds, and that interaction between them should be discouraged.

Christopher is also associated with "the country house in which he [*Roe*] had been born, and in which he was to spend his next leave with Christopher" (Green 29). Indeed, "Roe's occasional retreat into a country garden, and into memories of his youth, is of a sort which apparently appealed strongly to several contemporary authors, and which was clearly encouraged by the war" (Stevenson 82). In fact, every walk he indulges in with his son brings forth a memory of his own youth. As in Noble's *Doreen*, Roe's childhood is associated with the unalterable nature of a testament to England's traditional upper-class values:

Roe had been brought up in this house, among these gardens. The lawns, and most of the undergrowth in the wild garden, the trees, the beds of reed around the moat, all these had become a part of his youth. They had not altered in the twenty years he was growing up.

It was he who had changed, who dreaded now, with a hemlock loss of will, to evoke how once he shared these scenes with no one, for he had played alone, who had then no inkling of the insecurity the war would put him in, and who found, when confronted by each turning of a path he knew by heart but which he could never call to mind when he closed his eyes, that the presence, the disclosure again of so much that had not changed and shewed no immediate signs of changing, bore him down back to the state he wished to forget, when he was his son's age and had no more than a son's responsibility to a father (Green 32).

Even an off-hand comment uttered by his son when referring to a part of the garden hidden from the house for the hired hands to walk from workers quarters to the kitchen reflects the distinct nature of the relations between the working- and the upper-middle class:

He took his father up the garden by a back way. Roe had never used this, and, to break the ice, tried to make something of its being so dark, for there was a high wall one side, thick shrubs on the other. But Christopher was definite. In a loud voice he told his father it was to hide all sight of the gardeners from the lawn, as these men went from kitchen to kitchen garden, and back again (Green 7).

The fact that his son is aware of the presence and significance of the passage in the garden shows that a change has occurred in the generation separating them. Richard had not known of the existence of this place because he did not really think of the working-class people working on the property and the purpose of the place was to spare the owners of the house the sight of people working. That Christopher knows of its existence

and purpose and uses the way himself expresses an introduction into the mingling of classes in the younger generation.

During his last visit to the country and his son, there has been an important change within Roe. Once the Blitz actually started, decisions needed to be made and responsibilities needed to be taken, Roe seemed to come of age:

after the training and the anxious waiting, when there are actually fires to fight, he finds his own manhood, his competence, and his capacity for leadership, in working with the others. Having gained self-confidence, he moves to an ecstatic vision of his brotherhood with them. On the strength of that, he frees himself from those of his bonds to his sister-in-law and son which demean and reduce him and his brother firemen (Wall 435).

Class does not mean anything in this setting, and Roe is obligated to shed his old views of his coworkers in order to be able to work with them. Like in *Doreen*, war has thrown everyone together and they must abandon their petty squabbles because they need to work together in order to survive. True to his childhood imagery, Henry Green describes Richard's sister-in-law's perception of Roe as a boy who has finally come of age. She sees that

his face was thinner, while his neck had thickened. His shoulders were broader. He was much dirtier than he used to be. Of course, his hands were awful, and then probably he could not get them clean. But his forehead was grey with dirt. Suddenly, with a real pang, she saw grey in the red hairs at his temples (Green 179).

He has matured and he even exhibits characteristics of a manual labourer. He even perceives Pye as a fellow firefighter rather than as the man whose sister abducted his son and “Roe can see Pye as a bad image of himself but as a real, separate man whose death must be redeemed because he too was one of the firefighters” (Wall 435). They are of the same cloth, even though their social backgrounds are at opposite ends of the scale, because that does not matter in a war. He has left his lifestyle behind to ensure that there will be a society to go back to when the war is over, though even Roe admits that “[if] the war ended to-morrow I suppose everything would be different to what we have known” (Green 93). He knows he would not have the money he had before the war, but he stops caring about this by the end of the novel.

Roe’s epiphany came from the responsibilities that meant life or death in a dire situation during the first fire attributable to the Blitz. During a leave following this first combat against the flames, Richard notices for the first time that the property has changed:

Because it was overgrown, now that the old tidiness had, so to speak, been allowed to ramble, he would once have lingered all the more with what was left him of days when these surroundings were the moist fat skin which covered the skeleton of his adolescence. To-day it was different. In his pre-occupation with air raids he could even let his son run on ahead without sentimentalising ever the boy.

He had forgotten his wife.

Even when, twelve months later, he had begun to forget raids, and when, in the substation, they went over their experiences from an unconscious wish to recreate, night

after night in the wet canteen, even then he found he could not go back to his old daydreams about this place. It had come to seem out of date (Green 178).

Contrary to Barbara Nobel's novel, Roe's perception of himself is improved and he views the abolition of the class distinctions as an event to celebrate. Christopher is the catalyst that creates the rift between Roe's sister-in-law, Dy, and Roe himself. During a walk on the grounds, Christopher wanders away, forcing Dy to call him back and, worried that he is not obeying her, "[she] took her arm away from Richard, detached herself" (Green 188). By wandering away and forcing his aunt to take her arm from Roe's, he is physically pulling apart the old values personified by Dy and the new and improved ones personified by Roe. However, by calling his aunt "mum", he is suggesting the possibility of creating another bridge between the firmly entrenched former values and the generation to follow. By observing his son during his many visits to the country, Roe reached his own conclusions and realizes the gulf separating Dy and him. Roe is part of the new order but he is removed from the old one and it is left to Christopher to reconcile both ends of the spectrum.

However, Christopher's other role as a jumping board for Roe to take nostalgic trips down memory lane is firmly over as Roe for the first time rejects his playful son's presence. Indeed, as they walked the gardens at different points in the novel, Christopher reminds Roe of his own boyhood and even makes him idealize his former family life before it was broken by his wife's premature death. Therefore, Christopher embodies both Roe's past and his future as Roe embraces the path offered to him by the auxiliary services and the working-class people who are employed there. Like in all the novels so

far, that personal notion of past and present is tightly woven with that of England's as the past represents Victorian, traditional values, and the future represents a possible breakdown of the social classes. Contrary to Noble's book, that future is painted in a positive light, as the only true way to go. The novel acknowledges the need to evolve along with society. It demonstrates the futility of resisting as only through a movement forward can England survive.

Nevil Shute's *Pied Piper*

The three previous novels used child imagery as continuity between the past and the future. Nevil Shute's novel is different, as the children exist independently from the past. Furthermore, their main concern was the disappearance of the social classes in England. *Pied Piper* leans towards more universal themes of maintaining a strong England built on Britain's future generations. Another difference is the physical manifestation of war. Whereas in *The Ministry of Fear*, *Doreen* and *Caught* war is muted and most of its action happens out of the text, *Pied Piper* constantly reminds the readers of the occupation, the bombardments and the enemy patrols. The whole roadway is alive with the presence of soldiers of different nationalities, planes fly overhead and bombard clusters of people trying to flee the worst of it, tanks drive down the streets of the villages they pass through and victims are witnessed all along their path.

Pied Piper is the story of John Sidney Howard, an old man travelling back from Cidoton where he had planned to take a vacation. Upon hearing the news of France's occupation, he decides to head back to England. A couple vacationing with their two

children decide to stay in Geneva where they have spent most of their adult lives but wish to see their children safely back in England. They ask Howard to take the children with him as it is arranged that relatives will take charge of them upon their arrival in England. In order to get back to England, Howard and his charges must navigate through France, a nearly impossible task as the German troops are marching into the country. Transport is scarce and the procession needs to walk and find alternate transportation most of the way. Along their slow progress, they meet five other children of different nationalities and fallen from various circumstances. Howard makes it his mission to bring them all back safe and sound where they could be left safely in the hands of caring people. Howard sacrifices his own health to accomplish his self-appointed mission and he recounts his story during an air raid to the actual narrator, a younger member of his club in London.

As opposed to all the novels studied so far, the children have no ties to the past. They appear in Howard's life suddenly and he is forced to plan for their future while trying to keep them all alive in the present. Their ties to the past are severed—they were cut-off from their parents and birth countries—but oddly enough, not one of them ever questions the lack of former history. In fact, most of the children have no past as they are discovered along the way to be victims of their circumstances. Britain's past is represented by the old Mr. Howard instead of the youth. There is no reminiscing while watching the youngsters because focusing on the task is central to staying alive. At the beginning of the novel, Howard is telling his story to his fellow club member and recounts his past, along with his youth. The younger man narrates: "In his quiet voice he built up for me a picture of the days that now are gone forever, the days that I remember

as a boy” (Shute 4). Howard is the only one who keeps comparing, before he starts his story of travel, how England used to be in the past and how the world was changing. Like Green and Noble, Shute finds a traditional England in the country and Howard tells of the “old country house, not very large, standing in about three acres of garden and padlock” (Shute 9) he owns.

The past is disturbed by a number of incidents occurring around each other but all with a common theme: “The war spoiled all that. The news bulletins penetrated every moment of his consciousness till he could no longer take pleasure in the simple matters of his country life” (Shute 10). “Then, at the beginning of March, something happened that made a great change in his life” (Shute 11). That change was the death of his son while in the service. That loss is also a caesura to the continuity of his own personal timeline, and it is attributable to the war as well. His own son, who would have been the part of Howard’s continuity between his past and the future in England is dead. Even his daughter, living abroad cannot contribute to a continuity, only not only of England. By the end, she will contribute in the building of a better world as she will welcome some of the children Howard brings back with him. The England Howard knew is no more and he sees the war as it is by definition: destructive and hateful.

Julian Smith, Shute’s biographer, recounts the different stories explaining Shute’s reasons in writing this novel. Ultimately, these reasons do not matter. He writes: “... whatever his motives, he turned *Pied Piper* into an allegory of human resources and capabilities: the old man on the verge of death saves the young and sends them to safety while the strong middle generations are busy destroying one another” (Smith 57).

Howard's reasons for accepting to take all these children with him are never expressed frankly in the novel and scholars could argue at length on those, however a passage from his story when he explains his motives to travel to France after the war is declared reveals his profound feelings for the loss of his ordered life and country:

He wanted to see the spring, this year—to see as much of it as ever he could. He wanted to see all that new life coming on, replacing what is past. He wanted to soak himself in that. He wanted to see the Hawthorn coming out along the river banks, and the first crocuses in the fields. He wanted to see the new green on the rushes by the water's edge gleaming through the dead stuff. He wanted to feel the new warmth of the sun, and the new freshness of the air. He wanted to savour all the spring there was this year—the whole of it. He wanted that more than anything else in the world, because of what had happened (Shute 12).

The word “new” is repeated four times in that paragraph alone, and there is also the word “first”, in “first crocuses”, which also refers to something new. What happened is his son's death, his own personal renewal lost “*en son avion, au-dessuse de Heligoland Bight*” (Shute 17). The long passage demonstrates that Howard has already accepted his own failure to strive and perpetuate his pre-WWI values. The arrival of a Second World War disturbs everything to a too great extend to be able to salvage anything of the old ways. At first, the spring is the only thing he can think of to see to remind himself that life and renewal is a cycle of nature. He needs the reminder as war destroys everything and puts an end to life, like it did for his son.

Though Howard does not explain his reasons for accepting to take charge of the first children, the reader must remember this strong desire to bear witness to the renewal of life. Like this study argued for the previous novels, childhood is foremost an image for the renewal and continuity of life. By caring for these children and ensuring their well-being on their way to England, Howard is safeguarding the following generation in order to guarantee that the world will survive the war.

However, aside from providing obstacles along the way, the war is not extensively commented upon. Julian Smith writes:

An idealist would have argued that, if war so warps the minds of children, then the artist should write against war itself; however, the ever-practical Shute would have answered that it is too late to be idealistic about war after it has come, and that one does what one can to get the children out of the way and to get on with the war (Smith 57).

That is what Shute does. Between the years 1939-1945, war was a part of life, and like the other writers, Nevil Shute includes it in his novels without expressing strong feelings against it. Howard has more of a fatalistic view of the war; it is here, and it is easier to act for things that can be controlled than rage about things that cannot be. The closest Howard comes to giving a reason for doing what he does is to a German guard who asks him why he's doing this after they are intercepted on their way home on a liberating boat: "Because this war is bad for children to see. It would be better for them to be out of it" (Shute 209-210).

While the world is busy killing each other, Howard is saving seven children from harm's way. These seven children are from different nationalities, social class and

education, yet they all get through this together. The price Howard pays is quite high: “The old man has given his last strength to save seven children of different nationalities—British, French, Dutch, Polish, and German—and social backgrounds in order to give the world another chance” (Smith 57). Shute did not need to hold a discourse on the futility of war and the advantages of peace. The seven children, as different as they can possibly be, never fight, they take care and comfort each other when they need it. Howard’s age difference from the children is meant to separate past and present in order to claim that even if Britain comes up battered from the war, the youngest generation is ready to take up the challenge of reconstructing her as a metropolis comfortable in being one of many different cultures, rather than a self-serving empire. This is an example of the children’s caring of each other:

Not for the first time he was reminded of the gulf that separated him from the children, the great gulf that stretches between youth and age. It was better to leave the little boy to the care of the other children, rather than to terrify him with awkward, foreign sympathy and questions (Shute 82).

Shute went further than the other authors by ascribing universal qualities to his theme of continuity. Shute’s concern is not only about the perpetuation of England’s life, it is in the peaceful interactions between all social classes and all nations. Shute’s vision of the future is of a multicultural ideal. The possibility of understanding between different cultures is shown by the easy manner in which the children embrace each others’ differences. The novel shows all these children as similar in their interactions and in terms of their potential. England’s future seems to rely on its ability to acknowledge her place

as a part of the whole instead of a mere geographical location. Those children are the future for which Howard is sacrificing his health; by helping them, he ensures that the younger generations are in the position to rebuild the world their parents' generation is busy destroying.

Like Henry Green, Shute's modified future is a good and desirable outcome. The middle generation may be trying to exterminate one another with the Second World War, but as long as children like these survived together, there was a hope for the future of the planet. England may be going through hardships, but the triumph of an old man and seven children as they travel from France to England is a victory against the invasion of the domestic sphere and the loss of personal security. "*Pied Piper*, written after England's initial military losses on the continent, showed, through the "Dunkirk" of one old man, how England could snatch small moral and practical victories in the face of a larger but temporary defeat" (Smith 58). Against all the odds against them, the world's best hope for the future arrive unscathed. What Nevil Shute wrote in *Pied Piper* is the triumph of life over death, so hope springs eternal in the hearts of the ones who bother to see life where it is.

What these four novels have in common is how children, or the idea of a child, can create an image of nostalgic remembrance as well as a sense of continuity. Neither state can exist without the other. Like John Howard counter-balances the ages of the children in his charge in *Pied Piper*, there are not absolutes. Every notion depends on an opposite to explain or understand a need. In order to have a future to worry about, there must be a past to compare it with. Kristine Anne Miller writes:

Nostalgia is not merely a “filler”, however, but a bridge between the past and the present. The structure one discovers in examining a temporarily coherent version of the past can provide useful ways of ordering a persistently incoherent present. Nostalgia is an act of the imagination that resolves the condition of loss not through an escape into the past but through a reorientation of the self in the present (Miller 40).

The Second World War created great incoherence in the present of the British people and nostalgia became necessary to writers to express their dismay at the state of the world. That was the concern of all four authors, and all of them were successful in creating literary universes where they attempted to provide some answers to a confusing world. Their treatment became universal as they used children to personify that “bridge between the past and the present” and even the future.

The next chapter will cover the combination of the use of satire and humour to denounce the lack of cohesion war imposes Britain during WWII’s Blitz. Rules are rewritten and the nice, ordered world disappears to leave in its place pandemonium. Though they serve different purposes, we will see how these children remain a metaphorical presence in the novels.

CHAPTER 3

Stuck in Limbo:

A Cynical View of Children as a Device for Depicting the Confusion of War

For all the voices in this requiem, the war was primarily a time of waiting. Whether anticipated, experienced, or remembered, the war entered a suspended world (Knowles 13).

We have already seen that authors of the Second World War era either looked back to an easier time, or forward to a better and improved world. However, this does not include writers committed to conveying immediate violence in works of arts. Indeed, it has been said that the difficult times could not be captured adequately by the writers because the chaos was too much and the feeling of loss and terror could not be well adapted in a work of fiction. Short-story writer William Sansom, in his journal, *Under Siege* (p.87), even “suggested that the war offered ‘experience ... too violent for the arts to transcribe’” (qtd. in Stevenson 72). This did not prevent writers from trying to convey what they were witnessing and feeling at that time.

As I have established in the previous chapter, by definition war renders a relatively stable civilisation into fractured chaos. Time ceases to matter as everything seems to be happening at the same time and continuity needs to be abandoned in favour of surviving the next threat to safety. In the previous chapter, I have established that in order to survive and create an artificial order to their world, people tend to *re-create* the order they once knew, or try to devise the sort of perfect future in which to evolve. However, as Sebastian Knowles states, “literature of the Second World War can be divided, like Gaul, into three parts”: “Eyes front, eyes side, eyes back” (Knowles 1). Until now I have neglected to include in my argument the third alternative, eyes side.

To Knowles, “eyes side” stands for the experience of the war itself, without prospects or reminiscence. The drawback of this particular mode of thinking is that there does not seem to be a way out of the present. With such a wide array of occurrences as the uncertainties of living in a world at war, it is easily conceivable that an author incorporate horror without turning his or her narrative into a war journal. If the writer is able to succeed in his or her endeavour, the possibilities are endless. Like Dan Davin writes in his introduction to *Short Stories from the Second World War* (1982), “[war] abounds in extreme situations swiftly enacted and if the writer can transpose them into art rather than nearly transcribe them he need never be at a loss for narrative” (qtd in Bergonzi 40).

The two writers are Evelyn Waugh and James Hanley with their respective novels *Put Out More Flags* and *No Directions*. These novels neither look back fondly on the past nor look eagerly toward the future for a glimpse of a new society filled with wonderful social advances. These novels depart from the style we have studied so far in order to delve into surviving the present and depict the absurdity of political power. Waugh’s characters are aware of the impossibility of looking back or forward as they know they are stuck in a world that can only exist in the immediate moment: “Everyone is either looking back or forward. Those with reverence and good taste, like you, my dear Geoffrey, look back to an Augustan age; those with generous hearts and healthy lives and the taste of the devil, like Poppet Green over there, look forward to a Marxian Jerusalem. *We must accept the Present*” (Waugh 175-176). The title alone of Hanley’s novel is a strong indicator of the lack of purpose, the sense of disorientation resulting

from living with the constant assault of an invisible enemy. *No Directions* implies that there is no looking forward, nor backward for the simple reason that one does not know where those places are anymore. The here and now is the only thing that can exist for as long as this confusion exists. Both are concerned with a world that provides no place for past or future; they write of a world in-between, a limbo or purgatory of some sort. The comparison is a fitting one since “[for] many writers, purgatory reappeared with such persistence because of its position between two sets of worlds. Mount Purgatory lies between heaven and hell, and between heaven and earth. War, as hell on earth, also occupied a halfway-world” (Knowles 22).

James Hanley’s *No Directions*

No Directions is certainly the more fractured novel of the two, as the pace and vocabulary used leaves the readers slightly confused and completely out of breath: “He [Mr Frazer] had been quietly dozing, and now everything seemed violent, urgent, people pushing each other about, a baby crying, something shouting, ‘Ow,’ it bewildered. What had happened? What was all this about?” (Hanley 122) The sentence structure itself is, throughout the novel, fragmentary and abortive. In his introduction to the 1990 edition, Henry Miller states that it “is the language of utter disorder and moralisation, maintained as rigidly and consistently throughout as is Kafka’s in the nightmare he inhabits” (Hanley v). “It is a mad-house, an exact replica of the outer mad-house which is the world, only this mad-house is in the mind, and only a cataclysm can put an end to the crazy clock work” (Hanley v). Characters speak predominantly in questions and the answers are

rarely recorded. Most characters keep asking questions or thinking about them. “Where the hell am I?” (Hanley 11) and its various phrasings is a frequently reiterated question. In that particular instance, the answer to that question was: “Nearly there” (Hanley 11), which means that a more specific answer could not be provided at the time. People are getting somewhere; they just are not quite sure where this place is exactly. Where is there and how far is it? That information is not deemed important enough to impart to either the characters or the readers.

No Directions means exactly that. It tells the story of a group of people taking refuge in the basement of an apartment building during a bombardment on London. The characters thrown together are either tenants or passerbys who attempted to protect themselves from blasts. In between air-raids, people climb up and down stairs, walk in and out of the building, trying to find someone, or something but never truly finding it. Some know each other, others do not; but regardless, communication is nil. People speak but no one truly listens.

Art itself is portrayed as fractured and at a loss. One of the tenants is Clement Stevens, an artist who obsesses on an unfinished painting while his wife suffers from breast cancer, which he believes to be “cancer of the heart” (Hanley 31) and cannot understand the doctor’s reticence to accepting the possibility of a new disease. His oversized painting is never quite finished because he cannot get the colours quite right: “The colour should bleed” (Hanley 32). Both his wife’s disease and his “bleeding” painting are a symptom of a sick nation, one of which contributes to the chaos as Clem refuses to leave his canvas behind when he takes refuge in the cellar. Clem’s expression

of “cancer of the heart” is a play on words for “cancer of the art” as the constant shifting of the painting includes art in the sense of hopeless loss affecting the characters in the novel. The constant movement upstairs and downstairs of Clem’s canvas as he takes it everywhere with him is a commentary of the confusion of the arts. It would have been just as easy for the characters to leave the painting in one location or another, but the couple’s insistence in carrying it everywhere with them contributes to the suggestion that absolutely everything in the world finds itself in a state of pandemonium. According to Miller, “Clem symbolises the modern artist moving in a void under the pressure of his own steam” (Hanley vi). War does nothing to cure the artist—and, consequently, his art—of this displacement in the void, but can only add to it.

Even the past and the present constantly merge into the same timeless space, as there are no distinctions made between the characters’ youth and their present state. For instance, Celia is one of the people staying in the cellar during the bombing. She is also—like all the other characters of the novel—in search of herself. She is looking to define herself and she can only do it through the portraits Clem had done of her in her youth. She came back specifically to find Clem and, more importantly, the paintings of her. Since she cannot identify herself to that young and perfect woman anymore, she looks to Clem and his paintings to provide her with a new identity. As she sees the one picture she remembers most she immediately connects her present to her past and merge them together: “And now Celia had found it, after years, herself nineteen, who thought, opening a blouse and touching with her hand, that what she touched was of that time still, nineteen, and all youthfulness there” (Hanley 81). It does not matter that her physical age

is long past nineteen, because the picture reproduces what she can still feel to be there in her mind. Her vision is not confined to her past; it is her new definition of the present because, in her own mind, time is not regulated by the same rules any longer. She finds her own order, like the adults of the novels studied in the previous chapter, by looking nostalgically to her past to attempt to bridge the gap existing between her adolescence and her maturity. When she leaves the cellar, she completely ignores the dangers and the obstacles outside the building. Though she is freed from her worries, she is removed from the present, thus ignores what is to come: "She had Clem's picture under her arm, she had got it from its hiding place under the stairs. She was going off down the street. She knew the way to go, she always did" (Hanley 140). This decisiveness originates from an object from the past and thus cannot provide the answers to the problems of the present. As she realizes the sailor is dead, she burdens someone else with the discovery and gets on with her way. The present no longer has any hold on her.

Thus, in order to depict wartime reality, the author translates the world as one in chaos. The characters of this novel are meant to evolve within the confines of this confusion yet, except for Celia, without the hope or comfort that they awarded themselves within a narrative looking to the past or the future. These characters are prevented from connecting at any level. They are lost and confused. Talking of adult war novels, Susan Everson notes of war novels that their conclusions encourage us to "accept a wartime social formation which is inherently fractured, and in which no one—even by the end of the novel—is really unified with that social structure" (Everson 358). That connection is impossible simply because there is no structure or any order around

them. Even connection to each other is impossible. Even though the characters strive to share their space with others, they are ultimately alone and isolated from one another.

No Directions begins with the rescue of a drunk sailor from a street full of glass by an official. While prodding the sailor to get up, the man urges him to help himself because he believes that

‘[being] alone don’t count any more, nobody can be alone any more, see? Now get up. Don’t know who the hell you are, where you come from, but you can’t lie there. I’m going to get you in some place. See! Now come on. Be a good chap, pull yourself together. We all lose our bearings at times, course we do. But I’m not going to stand over you all night. Now! Up you come! (Hanley 9-10)

Mr Jones, the sailor, is confused and lost. Even though he tries during the entire narrative to get to Plaistow, he “succeeds only in wandering from one room to another and at last winds up in the deathless sea of light where delirium tremens continues forever” (Hanley vii). However, what the rest of the novel will divulge is that being with other people did not help the sailor either. During most of the story the man is dead drunk, sleeping on the floor near the entrance of the cellar and by the end, he simply gets killed by a blast that came too close to the building. The body itself becomes a barrier between characters. As Richard, a tenant who is also a warden, comes back from his rounds to his wife and it gets in the way, a “[still] dividing sea” (Hanley 140). Respectful of the dead, Richard refuses to step over him as he “would not cross the man, not even to get her [his wife’s] warmth” (Hanley 140). Generational clashes contribute to the lack of connection

between the characters. For instance, Mr Frazer feels like the “odd man in” in the cellar with all the other tenants:

A journey downstairs to a cellar, where you sat in the dark with others, where you didn't really fit in, you were old, of a time when things were normal and doors closed in a natural way, as they were meant to do. Sitting in a cellar where people talked, but you didn't understand very much, the tempo of everything was new, even the language they used was new, you didn't seem to have the right key to it (Hanley 101).

Not only is this new purgatory a complete confusion for Mr Frazer, it is also another instance for a failure to connect and communicate with another.

In the center of all this confusion, the child appears not as one of its victims, but as one of its sources. The child itself helps create the situations where people will fail to connect or simply sink deeper into their disorganized and disoriented minds. During the entire novel, there is a baby present in the cellar. However, that child is never referred to by a given name or any other kind of human reference. The closest the child ever gets to being treated like a living thing is when the characters ask whether the mother has fed “it,” because “[like] a horse, a dog, you had to feed these” (Hanley 91). Aside from that, the child is treated as a prop, an object that the adults have to carry around with them:

You had ‘It,’ and there it was. There it was over your shoulder. And you had *him*, as well, home on a leave. This was an extension on wonder. You were thrilled. You had him home on leave. The accident over the shoulder was just one of these things that happened, like getting a letter, or counting your change. This was reason in her. You fed ‘it,’ you would take it down with you to the cellar (Hanley 93).

The child is of no concern to its own mother and serves no purpose in connecting both husband and wife together. On the contrary, the mother refers to both as two self-contained units that have nothing to do with one another. One is an object, the other is a human being and the contrast of “it” and “him” two sentences apart is very telling of the mother’s perception. Another instance is the moment when the bombs stopped falling, and the all-clear is sounded for everyone to get back to their apartments, “the blue man” helps Mrs Robinson up and takes the child from her and it awakes, crying, so he exclaims: ““Oh damn! All O.K., ducks. Get the other things, will you?”” (Hanley 138) Of course, the “*other* things” refer to all the things that are not the child, whom he already carries in his arms.

That scene also establishes a parallel between the child and the “set” (the wireless) that used to get Bolivia as its only station before it went off the air. In many instances in the novel, both the baby and the radio are used to create distorted sounds that create a confusing auditory background. Celia, remembering Clem’s apartment, makes the inventory of some of the characters in the building. When she gets to the Robinsons, she describes them by those two linked images of the baby *sounds* and the man’s wireless: “And on the next floor the laughter, the music, the crying child whom you never thought about, never even knew existed until Bolivia went off the air, the only station his wireless would ever get” (Hanley 58). The baby’s existence can only be validated by its cries, as the wireless only serves its function if it broadcasts a station. Both are responsible for creating a gulf between husband and wife as any attempt to communicate

gets lost in a vacuum created by the cacophony of the set and the baby's cries. Like everything else in the novel, noises attempt to drown out other noises, none of them agreeable. One particular instance when the child is crying, Mr Robinson asks Mrs Robinson: "'Shall I switch on, ducks?' he said, 'it might stop her crying'" (Hanley 123). This exchange is followed by people wishing the bombing were over, they could go up, or that "she hadn't gone out" (Hanley 123). Again the baby performs its function of disorder and discord, as it is paralleled to an object that has the same function.

Even the failure to connect can be related in part to both the wireless and the baby. In a particularly chaotic scene towards the end, the bombs are falling closer and people are even more frightened than they were before. Screams, shouts and wishes are coming from every corner but Mrs Robinson finds no comfort in her husband's voice and reassurances. She pleads, "don't talk anymore, *please*, darling," because at the time "[even] Bolivia was better, the whole thing made her sick" (Hanley 133). The apex of the bombing is building up and the characters are unnerved by the situation and the child, of course, is crying. The exchange that follows shows how not only is the child itself a rift, a vacuum made of discordant sounds lying between its parents, it is also creating the stress necessary for the mother to acknowledge her disdain of a woman from a higher class:

'Heavens,' she shouted, 'can't you keep that child quiet?' The candle flame grew bigger, sometimes it gave spasmodic upward leaps, the draught fanned, it would soon burn out.

'Please!' Can't you keep it quiet?' she said, looking across at the Robinsons.

Mrs Robinson looked at her but said nothing. She never spoke to Gwen, she knew her name was Jones, her blue man had told her about Mr Jones being a bowler-hatted man.

Again Gwen said against child cries, 'Do keep it quiet.'

'Oh, I say half a mo ducks,' the blue man said, stopped suddenly, he thought, 'she's got a mood.' He watched podgy-wodgy jerked upwards, he heard her sing to it.

[...]

'I say, you'll make her ill, ducks.'

'Dum te dum te dum te tah,' she sang, it was suddenly fierce, like battle cries.

The child's face rose and fell against the candle light (Hanley 122-123).

The entire exchange is disconnected and the emphasis on the image of the flickering candle added to the noisy background of a baby crying almost gives the impression of a scene done with stroboscope lights; the child plays a big part in creating the ambiance of escalating stress exhibited by anxious people cramped together in a dark and scary place. Because of it, instead of trying to comfort each other through this scare, the tension climbs until the people in the cellar can only get on each other's nerves.

The baby is not the only image of childhood used in this book. In this particular novel, other images of childhood are equated to a perception of oneself in simpler times or as potential for the future; it is equated with the need for guidance in all things. Without grown-ups to lead the way, children are simply lost. Indeed, even if Mr Frazer seems to be living in the past because of his inability to connect to the present, Gwen listens only because it puts her mind off the problems at hand. To her, the past holds no

interest, she can only understand her own present: “Below Mrs [sic] Frazer took Gwen right back to his boyhood, and she listened to him, but only because it could be distracting” (Hanley 124). Again, the idea of boyhood prevents meaningful interactions between two characters as Gwen needs to care too much for Mr Frazer who is not capable of doing the slightest thing to help himself and needs constant guidance.

The vocabulary used to address characters is often reminiscent of a parent to a child. Indeed, the tone suggests that the people running up and down the stairs, into and outside of the different rooms and the cellar are nothing more than small children requiring guidance from officials such as Richard. Such a conversation is the one between Richard, Lena and Clem as they are still insisting on transporting the painting with them to the cellar:

‘Do let me help you. I’ll tell you what, you and he go down now, right away, I’ll see to this. I’ll see everything’s all right, nothing will happen to it,’ there was a toy, a doll, a box of soldiers, these were children and he was talking to them, with the warmth of a father, with his authority. ‘I’ll see nothing happens to it, really I will,’ children approaching the dark bedroom, he always assuring them, ‘darkness is nothing. It won’t harm you’ (Hanley 113).

The tone is very soft and gentle and is described as one that would be used by a father to his children. Even the painting is compared to toys that children would be reluctant to leave behind in such an emergency. Reassurance, comfort and guidance are the key elements of this passage and Hanley emphasises those fatherly traits. Even though there are no children in this scene, the image evoked of them still does not reflect the potential

people usually ascribe to young children for a foreseeable future. Even Gwen thinks of Mr Frazer using the same vocabulary. She views them as children requiring guidance; as there is a big commotion in the cellar, near the end of the bombing, Mr Frazer wanders off and she gently steers him toward a seat: "... taking his hand, leading him back to his seat, thinking of his oldness, his doddley ways, Emily and he, they were like children" (Hanley 122).

Another powerful image associating children and disorientation is the realisation that Lena, another refugee of the air-raid, comes to as she looks upon the residents of the building. Emily, the most lost character of the novel, is even more confused by the end and insists on being let go by Lena even though the way is completely free for her to pass. As she contemplates Emily leaving, Lena comes to her realisation: 'Yes, that's right. A label round their necks, "Lost,"' Lena thought (Hanley 125). The idea of a label around their necks is reminiscent of the labels worn by evacuee children during the Blitz on London. Again, the use of children imagery serves the specific purpose of creating an image of displacement, chaos and confusion; young evacuees were, as a matter of fact, uprooted from their know environments and transplanted to unfamiliar surroundings in unknown families in order to escape the war.

During the entire book, there is only one moment of connection between the baby and another character and it is with its father, toward the end when people are growing more restless. Changing the subject from Clem and his painting to the fact that his child is still sleeping through the ruckus, the baby's father remarks: "'funny how she sleeps through it,' he said, taking the child's hand, feeling a petal softness against his hard, dry

skin” (Hanley 121). It is the first time that the gender of the child is revealed and that she is treated like a small human being. She is even contrasted to another human by the characteristics of her skin. However, the connection does not last and he soon switches his hand to drum on his wireless. It seems from that point on that “unity and a sense of belonging in wartime are illusory things, that families are not as lasting or easily created as one might expect them to be, and that man in war is ultimately, and often with intense disappointment, alone” (Everson 175). Hanley chose to confront his readers with the harsh reality of life at war. Blood is not enough to forge a bond within a family unit, but those other factors are destroyed by the presence of war. Despite the presence of a group of people, no character was really able to bond with another; proof that even for Hanley war indeed pushes human beings to strive alone.

Evelyn Waugh’s *Put Out More Flags*

Though not as preoccupied with fragmentation and loss of direction in itself, Evelyn Waugh is nevertheless aware of fragmentation’s effects on his characters: “The party left the restaurant and stood in an untidy group on the pavement, unable to make up their minds who was going with whom, in what direction, for what purpose” (Waugh 61). The characters in *Put Out More Flags* may not always act that way, but they are just as lost as the characters in Hanley’s novel. One thing is for sure; England’s political system is viewed as fragmented to the point of not making any sense at all. During a humorous exchange Ambrose, looking for employment in the Ministry of Information, comes into

contact with Mr Bentley. The latter shows Ambrose a series of memos sent back and forth within the department and has, as its object, a pair of marble busts by Nollekens:

He showed Ambrose a long typewritten memorandum which was headed *Furniture, Supplementary to Official Requirements, Undesirability of*. 'I sent back this.' He showed a still longer message headed *Art, Objets d', conducive to spiritual repose, Absence of in quarters of advisory staff*. 'To-day I got this.' *Flowers, Framed Photographs and other minor ornaments, Massive marble and mahogany, Decorative features of, Distinction between* (Waugh 63).

The humour is not only derived from the ludicrous argument, but also from the escalating gibberish in which the titles are written that is supposed to render the inconsequential communiqués more official looking. This official language is just as fractured as the one used by Hanley in *No Directions* to express the confusion of his characters.

As in Hanley's novel, the sense of lack of any continuity extends even to the arts in Waugh's novel. Ambrose, who has been expatriated by Basil to evade the consequences of Basil exposing him to the Ministry of Information as a communist, attempts to re-organise the fragments of his life into a novel but he is prevented from doing so by his circumstances.

Here Ambrose settled, in the only bedroom whose windows were unbroken. Here he intended to write a book, to take up again the broken fragments of his artistic life. He spread foolscap paper on his dining-room table and the soft, moist air settled on it and permeated it so that when, on the third day, he sat down to make a start, the ink spread and the lines ran together, leaving what might have been a brush stroke of indigo paint

where there should have been a sentence of prose. Ambrose laid down the pen and because the floor sloped where the house had settled, it rolled down the table, and down the floor-boards and under the mahogany sideboard, and lay there among napkin rings and small coins and corks and the sweepings of half a century. And Ambrose wandered out into the mist and the twilight, stepping soundlessly on the soft, green turf (Waugh 204).

The circumstances surrounding Ambrose prevent him from making any sense of his own life and to mend his broken existence. The ink spreading in the humidity is a sign that art is merging into another form that makes no sense. Though Ambrose tries to use art to reconcile his past with his future, his circumstances prevent him from doing so and he simply abandons; art cannot make sense of the incomprehensible. The loss of the pen underneath the sideboard is a sign that it will remain in its own limbo with the rest of the inconsequential knick knacks that have accumulated over the years and remain there, completely forgotten along with “the sweepings of half a century.” They serve no more purpose and have only to wait there doing nothing. Ambrose is condemned to suffer the same fate as he abandons all effort to write and simply exists in an intermediary world of “twilight” where he is able to step “soundlessly on the soft, green turf.” This comparison is appropriate since war provides a middle ground for life as many everyday activities had to be suspended due to the rigors of living on a battlefield. In that regard, “[the] sense of passive suffering that the war induced found its most common literary expression in the metaphor of purgatory” (Knowles 16). Even though Waugh’s novel is not religious, limbo is a state equivalent to the secular one Waugh describes. According

to Knowles, “[those] who do not choose to write of purgation, who are in Eliot’s sense indifferent to its theological force, nevertheless provide acutely experienced visions of a secular purgatory.” In that case, “Waugh’s *Put Out More Flags* ... present[s] the guiding metaphor of the time in a third form, in the image of limbo” (Knowles 19).

Waugh views this particular state of limbo as the only valid alternative to less than desirable places such as Heaven or Hell. Ambrose’s thoughts on the subject are clear:

But Limbo is the place. In Limbo one has natural happiness without the beatific vision; not harps; no communal order; but wine and conversation and imperfect, various humanity. Limbo for the unbaptized, for the pious heathen, the sincere sceptic. Am I baptized into this modern world? At least, I haven’t taken a new name. All the rest of the left-wing writers have adopted plebeian monosyllables. Ambrose is irredeemably bourgeois. Parsnip often said so (Waugh 60).

According to Ambrose’s words, limbo contains “imperfect, various humanity,” and according to his own thoughts he believes the central figure of the novel, Basil, to be one such imperfection who could not ascend to such a thing as a Heaven by any definition of the word: “Nanny told me of a Heaven that was full of angels playing harps; the communists tell me of an earth full of leisure and contented factory hands. I don’t see Basil getting past the gate of either” (Waugh 60). One agrees readily with that assessment that Basil is irreversibly flawed. From the very beginning of the novel, Basil’s mother, his sister and his—at the time—love interest are all worried about him because he is incapable of taking care of himself as war approaches. This state of limbo

therefore becomes for him the perfect opportunity to survive and become somebody because the rules have changed. Limbo offers a world perfectly suited to Basil's base humanity, and thus, permits him to make his own rules and actually succeed by them. According to Basil himself, "The only thing in war-time is not to think ahead. It's like walking in the blackout with a shaded torch. You can just see as far as the step you're taking" (Waugh 218). There is here no forward or backward; everything exists only in the here and now.

As in *No Directions*, children are in part responsible for creating chaos. This time, however, the children are older and it is their actions, and not their treatment, that make the lack of order what it is. "[The] savagery of the Connolly children sets the standard for a general reversion to an animalistic childhood" (Knowles 187). Indeed, the children are a caricature of what young children usually are and their actions resembles those of wild animals who know nothing of morality and listen only to their instincts. Nothing connects the children to the past. They are described almost as if they had just appeared out of thin air:

These had appeared as an act of God apparently without human agency; their names did not appear on any list; they carried no credentials; no one was responsible for them. They were found lurking under the seats of a carriage when the train was emptied on the evening of the first influx. They had been dragged out and stood on the platform where everyone denied knowledge of them, and since they could not be left there, they were included in the party that was being sent by bus to Malfrey village. From that moment they were on a list; they had been given official existence and their destiny was inextricably involved with that of Malfrey (Waugh 79-80).

Their existence is validated only once they arrive at Malfrey. They not only lack any connection to a previous time, they are also given connection to a higher power, but no human one. Their appearance in Malfrey suggests the creation of a self-contained world where no outside influences have any effect. War is the force that created Basil's Malfrey and gave him the children to profit by them. Indeed, inquiries as to their former life has been prevented as there seems to have been an aunt taking care of them who disappeared without a trace after having dropped them off in the train to Malfrey with other evacuees:

Nothing was ever discovered about the Connolly's parentage. When they could be threatened or cajoled into speaking of their antecedents they spoke, with distaste, of an 'Auntie'. To this woman, it seemed, the war had come as a God-sent release. She had taken her dependents to the railway station, propelled them into the crowd of milling adolescence, and hastily covered her tracks by decamping from home (Waugh 80).

Even the presence of an aunt does not obliterate the fact that these children do not seem to have any kind of parentage. Another instance where the children can be connected directly to the limbo state the world finds itself in is when Basil sells them to the billeting officer to the next county. Mr Todhunter, speaking of regular billeting officers' reaction to children in general, exclaims: "There's no sense in it, but it's quite a fact—they make household gods of them" (Waugh 139). Again, children are connected to a divine figure in a context other than Heaven. The children are elevated to rulers in a world where there

are no rules to abide, thus they turn it into a primitive one. Where children would be controlled by adults in normal circumstances, war enables them to control adults.

This primitive state suggests a time when social rules were nonexistent, thus even someone like Basil who has no conscience can actually become someone because lack of rules means lack of fear of social consequences for one's actions:

'We must get them settled to-day.'

'It's hopeless. No one will take them.'

'You've got powers of coercion.'

'Yes, but I can't possibly use them.'

'I can,' said Basil. 'I shall enjoy it' (Waugh 87).

Basil was not above profiting from these children whom no one wanted to welcome in their homes. The presence of the children during the time of war seems to be all the incentive needed for Basil to shed the most basic social rules and use people to his own advantage. In that regard, he uses the Connolly children to make money by billeting them to people and extorting hefty sums to rid them of this nuisance:

'Doris, I think it's a very good game of yours making the kids be a nuisance, but we're going to play it my way in the future. When you come to the house where I live you're to behave, always. See? I may take you to other houses from time to time. There you can usually be as bad as you like, but not until I give you the word. See?' (Basil 102)

In that sense, the children are also compared to objects to be used and sold without further thought, much like the baby in Hanley's novel who is referred to as an "it."

Therefore, once he is finished with them he has no scruple to sell them to the next taker who is going to be doing the same thing with the kids: “In spite of himself Mr Todhunter could not disguise the fact that he was profoundly moved. ‘Yes,’ he said. ‘I give you that. They *are* special. If it’s not a rude question, what did you pay for them?’” (Waugh 140) Viewing children as an opportunity for gain is not even restricted to Basil Seal as even a woman “had kidnapped a baby from a waiting perambulator in order to secure her passage to safety, so impressed had she been by the propaganda of the local officials” (Waugh 79).

Lacking any rule of conduct, Basil even betrays Ambrose, one of his closest friends, in order to be granted a promotion. When he learns that his scheme may cause his friend his life, Basil is shocked to realise that it is not what he wished for his friend: “In the pleasure of setting his trap, Basil had not looked forward to its consequences” (Waugh 193). Even though Basil exiles his friend in order to prevent his execution as a communist, that does not prevent him from overtaking Ambrose’s life and possessions in order to gain the attentions of a certain young lady he works with:

For some time now Basil had felt himself unfairly handicapped in his pursuit of Susie by the fact of his living with his mother. He had not thought of this solution. It had come providentially, with rapid and exemplary justice all too rare in his life; goodness was being rewarded quite beyond his expectations, if not beyond his deserts (Waugh 196).

Even the young woman can hold Basil’s attention only for so long as she soon proves to be too much work for the protagonist to contend with:

In London Basil set Susie to work. She wanted to be taken out in the evenings too often and in too expensive a style. He set her to work with needle and silk and embroidery scissors, unpicking the A's from the monograms on Ambrose's crêpe-de-Chine underclothes and substituting on their place a B (Waugh 204).

In a normal world, Basil could not survive and would have to suffer the consequences of his actions, but in a world where past and future are inconsequential, he can flourish. He can even use children for his personal gain and not be construed as a monster for it.

In both novels it is clear that children play a role that is not typical for them to play. Mostly, they are given characteristics that make them anything but human. They contribute to making the atmosphere chaotic, different from any world that was before or may come after. There is an in-between world that defies definition by common social rules. According to Knowles, both "Waugh and Woolf savagely undercut their characters, and in that savagery implicate themselves in the primitive state to which phoney war society has returned" (Knowles 190). Hanley has as well, except his world does not represent animalistic behaviour, but is instead a return to the primordial sea with the image of the sailor and the sea separating the characters from the outside world. The authors create a world disconnected from anything that was known, and children provide them with a lack of restraint and order because such behaviour are acquired without guidance, they do not develop it.

Also, treating children as objects further demonstrates the fact that the world the authors depict is not supposed to be real, but is a representation of a psychological feeling of living with the threat of war. Human connections can only be made more difficult if

family units are impossible to create; a lack of realistic children in literature is an effective way to create a world without such units in order to demonstrate the isolation of human beings in war. They can be the foundation for disorder because they serve no purpose in character interaction. Not only are people unable to connect, the mere presence of children prevents any sort of connection. Hanley's baby is too noisy, and Waugh's Connelly children become a barrier between any possible communication with the Malfrey habitants as they flee Barbara's approach. As the actual billeting officer, the villagers are afraid she might try to drop the Connelly children at their place:

Evacuation in Malfrey had followed much the same course as it had in other parts of the country and had not only kept Barbara, as billeting officer, constantly busy, but had transformed her, in four months, from one of the most popular women in the countryside into a figure of terror. When her car was seen approaching people fled through covered lines of retreat, through side doors and stable yards, into the snow, anywhere to avoid her persuasive, 'But surely you can manage *one* more' (Waugh 79).

With their eyes firmly to the side, both authors create representations of a world nobody could really connect to. However, instead of ignoring it and simply looking to either the past or the future to escape the present, they try to make some sense of it, using the device of the wild, instinctive nature of children raised without the benefit of adult or social guidance.

CONCLUSION

As readers, we wanted to know how the social revolution was changing us, what it meant in terms of human beings; and this was something that only a new generation of novelists could tell us. The rest of us had to admit, if we were honest, that we were already probably living in the past, still fixed emotionally in a world that had died in 1939, for in their most fundamental attitudes to life and society writers and readers alike are governed by the experiences, felt often unconsciously, of their childhood and youth (Allen, *The Novel Today* 8).

For Britain, the Second World War was not concerned with sending soldiers abroad and listening to news from the front on the wireless. World War II introduced violence into the domestic sphere. That invasion was responsible for a number of social revolutions that confused the English people as to their place in their own history. Long standing traditions were falling and values were accommodating the instability created by the war. The most obvious change was the sudden mixing of the classes and the loss of a traditional hierarchy as the battleground was transplanted into the domestic space. Evacuated children also played an important part in the mixing of classes as working-class children found themselves evacuated to the country during the Blitz.

The authors studied in this thesis have chosen to explore the image of these children to illustrate the most viable changes British society sustained between 1939 and 1945. Since it is impossible to study evolution without establishing first a point of reference, the past had to be defined, as well as the present, in order to attempt to predict a plausible future.

Since human beings tend to be resistant to change—especially when it is as radical as the changes brought to a society by a war—the most common theme one can find in literature is nostalgic remembrance of a pre-war civilization. Because of the close proximity to the Great War, the adult characters in the novels studied here would have been children during the peace preceding the Great War. The presence of children

provides a natural memory trigger for the adults to reminisce about their own childhood. This need to be nostalgic about the past is explained by P.H. Newby in his book *The Novel 1945-1950*:

... for most people who were beginning to write at this time experience could be divided into two halves: childhood and adolescence on the one hand and war on the other. Unless one wandered off into fantasy or allegory these were the inescapable themes and of the two childhood probably proved the more attractive (qtd in Stevenson 82).

The authors themselves were cognizant children before the First World War as they were born between 1899 and 1905. Though all six authors were courageous enough to write about the war, they did not completely cope with it without looking back to a time when living in England was simpler and life was more ordered. However, as the characters soon find out, living in the past is not a long-term option and sooner or later they must face the present and confront the future.

Since children are also naturally associated with continuity, the novelists in this study used that character trait to attempt to preserve order within Britain's society. If the children in their narratives are able to survive unscathed, it gives hope to the readers that Britain herself will be able to survive, even if a little singed by the events of the war. Kristine Anne Miller writes:

Nostalgia is not merely a "filler", however, but a bridge between the past and the present. The structure one discovers in examining a temporarily coherent version of the past can provide useful ways of ordering a persistently incoherent present. Nostalgia is an act of

the imagination that resolves the condition of loss not through an escape into the past but through a reorientation of the self in the present (Miller 40).

Nostalgia in the form of reminiscence of childhood is simply a way for the characters to establish the direction they come from in order to know where they are going.

Whether the social, political and economic changes are depicted to be for the best or the worst depends entirely on the individual author's vision on the matter; but regardless, the authors are still trying to express and share their fears and hopes for the life they are condemned to reclaim once the conflict is over. Then, "[novels] are voyages of self-discovery for their authors; if they are good novels, they may also be voyages of self-discovery for their readers" (Allen, *The Novel Today* 8). We, as readers, might agree or not with the visions put forth by the authors, but we still are asked to connect what was, to what is, to what will be. To ensure our interest while reading, the authors used the image of children as continuity.

We all perceive the first victims of war to be the children. We tend to first think of them as victims because of their innocence and lack of involvement in political decisions. They suffer the consequences for the decisions taken by adults who are responsible for their care. Yet, they hold the potential to evoke the most powerful images in our minds, which make them the perfect vehicle to attract readers' attention.

Another way authors dealt with the war was by expressing the complete chaos and lack of rules and the inherent problems those deficiencies created for Britain. James Hanley and Graham Greene did not feel the need to provide answers and viable solutions for the problems they uncovered because their goal was to express as well as they could

the stupidity and pointlessness that is war by definition. As flexible as they are, again children were proven to be the ideal vessel to convey that message as the satirical texts studied here tend to create inhuman children, that is, children who have no human characteristics aside from the obvious anatomical ones. In both texts, children are mere props and their only purpose is to be used either by the adult protagonists or by the authors as an indicator of the absence of the rules during warfare.

Children are rarely included in British World War II fiction and their presence in these six novels makes them stand out from other novels written in the same era. Considering their role of metaphor for the continuity of British society, it may be possible to infer that their absence from most English novels of the era stands for authors' uncertainty as to the future of England. When couples are childless, the streets are empty from children at play and youth revolves around late teenagers on the verge of adulthood, it may be inferred that the instability of the civilization precludes any attempt at even considering continuity. Is war forming a bubble around these characters, a bubble where there is no future because the domestic sphere does not belong to the private any longer?

There can be no future without a past, no new beginnings without previous events, no lower classes without upper classes, nor can there be maturity with youthfulness. Children offer a natural balance to the turmoil of the war years in England and their absence from most British texts is conspicuous, to say the least. The present study has given you an insight into the significance of the image of youth for six British writers of the Second World War. There are still many texts written during the same period where children are noticeably absent. Sometimes their absence seems to speak

louder than the presence of the protagonists. A further study would be to offer possible reasons for children's absence in notable texts of the same period. If the children of these novels are mainly a metaphorical reference to England in upheaval, is their absence a metaphorical reaction to a feeling of loss and confusion created by the war?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aldridge, John W. *After the Lost Generation: A Critical Study of the Writers of Two Wars*. New York: Noonday, 1958.
- Allen, Walter. *Tradition and Dream: The English and American Novel from the Twenties to Our Time*. 1964. London: Phoenix House, 1968.
- . *The Novel To-Day*. London: Longmans, Green, 1955.
- Bergonzi, Bernard. *Wartime and Aftermath: English Literature and its Background 1939-60*. Oxford & NY: Oxford UP, 1993.
- Bevan, David, ed. *Literature and War*. Atlanta: Rodopi, 1990.
- Buitenhuis, Peter. "British Authors and Propaganda in the Second World War: The End of an Era", *English Studies in Canada*. 1994 March, 20:1, 91-103.
- Calder, Angus. *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945*. London: Panther, 1971.
- Emerson, Gloria. "The Children in the Field", *TriQuarterly*. 1986 Winter, 65, 221-228.
- Everson, Susan Elaine. "A Soldier's War, A Child's Peace: The Dialogue of Adult and Children's War Fiction Since 1941." Diss. U of Chicago, 1995. *DAI* (1995): DA9542718.
- French, Warren, ed. *The Forties: Fiction, Poetry, Drama*. DeLand, Flo.: Evertt/Edwards, 1969.
- Greene, Graham. *The Ministry of Fear*. London; NY; Ontario: Penguin Books, 1978.
- Green, Henry. *Caught*. London: The Hogarth P., 1943.
- Hall, James. *The Lunatic Giant in the Drawing Room: The British and American Novel Since 1930*. Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1968.

- Hanley, James. *No Directions*. London: Andre Deutsch, 1990.
- Hewison, Robert. *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*. London: Methuen, 1987.
- Holsinger, M. Paul et al., ed. *Visions of War: World War II in Popular Literature and Culture*. Bowling Green, OH: Popular, 1992.
- Hynes, Samuel. *The Auden Generation*. New York: Viking, 1977.
- Knowles, Sebastian D.G. *A Purgatorial Flame: Seven British Writers in the Second World War*. Philadelphia: UPP, 1990.
- Maillaud, Pierre. *The English Way*. NY & London: Oxford UP, 1946.
- Marwick, Arthur. *The Homefront: The British and the Second World War*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.
- McCormick, John. *Catastrophe and Imagination: An Interpretation of the Recent English and American Novel*. London: Longmans, Green, 1957.
- McLennan, Gregor, David Held & Stuart Hall. *State and Society in Contemporary Britain: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984
- Miller, Kristine Anne. "We're In the Front Line: The Blitz on Identity in British Literature of the Second World War." Diss. U of Michigan, 1995. *DAI* (1995): DA9542915.
- Noble, Barbara. *Doreen*. New York: Doubleday, 1946.
- Paris, Michael. *The Novels of World War II: An Annotated Bibliography of World War II Fiction*. London: Library Association Publishing, 1990.
- Rosenblatt, Roger. *Children of War*. 1983. NY: Doubleday, 1992.

- Shapiro, Stephen A. "Henry Green's Back: The Presence of the Past", *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 1964, 7, 87-96.
- Shute, Nevil. *Pied Piper*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1969.
- Sinfield, Alan. *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*. Berkley: U of California P, 1989.
- Smith, Julian. *Nevil Shute (Nevil Shute Norway)*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976.
- Somer, John and Barbara Eck Cooper. *American & British Literature 1945-1975: An Annotated Bibliography of Contemporary Scholarship*. Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1980.
- Stevenson, Randall. *The British Novel Since the Thirties*. London: Batsford, 1986.
- Wall, Carey. "Henry Green's Enchantments: Passage and the Renewal of Life", *Twentieth Century Literature: A Scholarly and Critical Journal*, 1983 Winter, 29:4, 430-446.
- Waugh, Evelyn. *Put Out More Flags*. Markham, Ontario: Penguin, 1978.
- Westall, Robert. *Children of the Blitz: Memories of Wartime Childhood*. NY: Viking, 1985.
- Woolf, Virginia. *Between the Acts*. London; NY; Ontario: Penguin Books, 1992.