

<b>Institution:</b> Northumbria University at Newcastle		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 27 (English Language and Literature)		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Commemorating and teaching the First World War through literature and the arts		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> August 2013 - December 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Ann-Marie Einhaus	Senior Lecturer	03/01/12 – present
Katherine Baxter	Reader/Associate Professor	01/09/11 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> January 2014 – December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Commemoration of the First World War (WW1) has been fraught with differences of opinion about the role that literature and art can play in supporting educational and memorial activity. Research undertaken at Northumbria University by Dr Einhaus and Professor Baxter, explored diverse approaches to how the war is captured in creative media to foster reflective and effective teaching. Influential practitioner organisations such as the English Association confirm how the research made ‘a major contribution’ to WW1 learning activity. The studies directly influenced the AHRC Teacher Fellowship Programme to encourage a more critical approach to commemoration in schools, and provided an ‘invaluable’ educational framework for the UK Government’s Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme (a central component of the national centenary agenda). The research also improved understanding of commemorative practice in the North East of England, empowering Longbenton Air Cadets and the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle to undertake improved community engagement throughout the WW1 centenary.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Historians have long attributed public misconceptions about WW1 to the influence of canonical literature and art, from the poetry of Owen and Sassoon to the paintings of Nash and Nevinson. Research undertaken at Northumbria by Einhaus and Baxter has sought to address these tensions, demonstrating how a deeper understanding of this subject area can lead to more informed teaching and commemorative practices with regards to the conflict.</p> <p>Einhaus’ research explores the importance of literature in WW1 teaching and commemoration. Einhaus’ widely-cited Cambridge University Press monograph – <i>The Short Story and the First World War</i> – traced the link between the experience, memory, and literature of WW1 in short fiction. The research analysed a corpus of several hundred short stories for the first time, covering early wartime stories to late twentieth-century narratives, spanning literary styles and movements. Einhaus’ work reveals a range of responses to the war through fiction, from pacifism to militarism. The stories also reflect multifaceted aspects of the war experience, looking beyond the Western Front to experiences of soldiers, labourers, and citizens of other nationalities which had hitherto been erased by selective canon building [R1].</p> <p>Einhaus expanded this inquiry to examine the use of literary texts and other art forms in teaching and commemorating the conflict [R2-R5]. Einhaus’ collaboration with historian Professor Catriona Pennell (University of Exeter) on the AHRC-funded ‘The First World War in the Classroom’ (TFWWC 2013–14) project was the first empirically-grounded study of the use of literary sources in English and history classrooms in English secondary schools. Einhaus’s research and contribution to this project established that, despite widespread scepticism among history teachers regarding the use of literary texts to teach WW1, literary sources are regularly</p>		

used across both English and History lessons on WW1, even where this is not reflected in exam board specifications [R2, R3]. Einhaus showed that literature plays a vital role in shaping teachers' knowledge of WW1 through their personal reading and research, and thus directly and indirectly inform how WW1 is taught. These findings formed the basis for an influential project report published in 2014 that was praised by both the English Association and the Historical Association, which are prominent membership bodies for teaching practitioners [R2].

Further research explored two contemporary collections of short stories published in 2014 and compared these modern literary accounts of WW1 against popular perceptions of and commemorative discourses surrounding the war [R3]. Similarly, Einhaus' study of the work of contemporary novelist Adam Thorpe situated his work in the context of a renaissance of rewriting and re-remembering of WW1 in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries [R4]. Both studies highlighted the complex exploration of literature's contribution to memory building processes, acknowledging the limitations of fictional representations of war and the enduring power of fiction to reimagine the war for successive new generations of readers [R3, R4].

Research by Baxter expanded the focus of the work, by considering the role of different art forms in commemorating WW1. Baxter's work on the affective experience of contemporary artists working on commemorative WW1 projects [R5, R6] also reflected themes identified in Einhaus' research. It identified the desire to tell diverse stories as a unifying motivating factor among artists. This work grew out of collaboration between the researchers on the twenty-six-chapter *Edinburgh Companion to the First World War and the Arts* [R5]. This authoritative book offers an innovative, multi-faceted reflection on the centrality of arts and media in how we commemorate WW1. Baxter's and Einhaus' co-authored introduction covered subjects from sculpture to requiems, from heavy metal music to computer games.

Einhaus and Baxter have shown, through both their individual and their collective studies, that literary and artistic responses to WW1 are crucial to a commemorative and teaching culture that can accommodate more diverse intellectual, personal, and emotional responses to the war.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

**R1. Ann-Marie Einhaus**, *The Short Story and the First World War* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). ISBN 978-1-107-03843-1 Available on request.

**R2. Ann-Marie Einhaus** and Pennell, C. (2014), 'The First World War in the Classroom: Teaching and the Construction of Cultural Memory', Project report, *The First World War in the Classroom* <http://ww1intheclassroom.exeter.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FWW-in-the-Classroom-final-project-report.pdf>

**R3. Ann-Marie Einhaus (2016)** 'Cultural Memory, Teaching and Contemporary Writing about the First World War' *Literature & History* 25:2 187–204 [doi.org/10.1177/0306197316668055](https://doi.org/10.1177/0306197316668055)

**R4. Ann-Marie Einhaus (2018)** 'Adam Thorpe and the Impossibility of (Not) Writing about the First World War' *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 59:4 419–431 [doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2017.1399855](https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2017.1399855)

**R5. Ann-Marie Einhaus** and **Katherine Baxter** (eds), *The Edinburgh Companion to the First World War and the Arts* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017). Submitted to REF2. Double-weighted due to the research effort that informs its contents, and to the sustained editorial effort required over several years, to mould this research into a coherent collection. ISBN 978-1474401630 Available on request.

**R6. Katherine Baxter (2020)** 'Practices of Remembrance: The Experiences of Artists and Curators in the Centenary Commemoration of World War I' *Arts*, 9:59 [doi.org/10.3390/arts9020059](https://doi.org/10.3390/arts9020059)

**Research Funding**

G1. AHRC Exploratory Grants 2013-2017, GBP24,010 (AH/K005324/1)

G2. HLF First World War Centenary project grants, 2015-2016, GBP55,200.00 (OH-14-08278)

**4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research has provided educational practitioners, youth organisations, and cultural institutions, with new ways to commemorate and teach the First World War through literature and the arts. This has resulted in new and improved commemorative practice among younger audiences and enhanced local community engagement throughout the WW1 centenary.

**4.1 Providing educational practitioners with new methods of teaching WW1**

Einhaus' exploration of links between literature and commemoration of WW1 has changed how education practitioners reflect upon and conduct their approach to teaching WW1 in English and History. The English Association (EA), the UK's leading professional body for English teachers, confirmed how its close involvement with the TFWWC project enabled teachers to '*share ideas*', including publications, conferences, and teacher meetings [E1]. The CEO confirms how the project led to '*widening engagement*' throughout the '*English teaching community at large*'. Evidence of this was seen with the '*rapid growth*' in visitors to their Discover War Poets website and '*an unexpected rise*' in the number of related articles submitted by teachers to the EA's journal, *The Use of English* [E1]. The CEO noted how '*such was the degree of interest*', the EA produced two special issues in 2014, with Einhaus' contribution to the Spring edition making '*a major contribution to the debates ... about the teaching of the First World War*' [E1].

TFWWC and associated activity '*are designed to encourage discussion and reflection about the ways in which teaching of the literature of the First World War may shape the emerging attitudes of pupils and students*' [E1]. This increased reflection on teaching can be seen in the writing of education practitioners who participated in TFWWC workshops. One noted in 2014 how following the symposium she read and reread a variety of texts, and noted how she now felt encouraged '*to pay more attention to the production and publication history of texts and to my assumptions about the selections for comparison, whilst continuing to be on the lookout for interesting relationships between literary traditions*' [E2a, p7]. During the same period, another teacher reflected on her experiences of the project as part of her M.Ed: '*I have gone back to the resources and knowledge gained from this workshop to better teach my students about literary history of World War One*' [E2b, p1].

Similar benefits were highlighted by the Historical Association (HA), that has a membership of over 3,000 secondary school History teachers. The HA stated how the project provided '*an important opportunity to explore how teachers approached this subject over the period of the centenary*' and noted it '*is having an impact on how teachers are changing their approach to teaching this period*' [E3]. The CEO noted that, since 2014, the research has had time to '*trickle down to school-level thinking and start to influence the types of enquiries teachers will explore*', with Einhaus' research being cited in HA-facilitated events, including its Annual Conference and regional forums [E3]. The HA also indicates how the TFWWC project had '*clearly influenced*' the development of its AHRC-funded Teacher Fellowship Programme, run in collaboration with Historic Royal Palaces [E3]. Progress reports acknowledges that insights derived from the project were used and had an almost immediate effect on teachers' approaches in Schools '*we've been particularly impressed by the Teacher Fellows' emerging ideas ... [and their development of] more critical and inclusive approaches to commemoration in schools has also been really impressive*' [E4].

The award-winning, government First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours programme, was also underpinned by the TFWWC project. The Executive Director of the programme stated how '*In developing this rich educational programme, it was very important to have a clearer understanding of the educational landscape and how the subject was being taught in schools. The First World War in the Classroom project provided these invaluable insights*' [E5]. The project also enabled '*informed decisions*' about the tours and associated resources and

*'provided a useful reference point and benchmark against which to assess the development and impact of our programme'* [E5]. As of March 2019, over 2,000 schools had participated in the Battlefield Tours programme and 7,000 teachers and students attended the four-day tour to the sites of the Western Front.

#### **4.2 Improved outcomes from new commemorative practice for younger audiences**

An overarching aim of the government-funded WW1 centenary programme was to facilitate and improve engagement with the commemorative process, particularly among young people and local community groups. Research by Einhaus and Baxter supported this through a successful collaboration with Longbenton Air Cadets (LAC). Part of the Royal Air Force Air Cadets, a national youth organisation for 12-20-year-olds, 2344 (Longbenton) Squadron is one of the largest in the North of England. It has a significant record of achievements, including being the UK's top performing Air Cadet unit [E6a].

Since 2014, Einhaus and Baxter have engaged with more than 150 cadets through a series of creative workshops, introducing the cadets to creative responses to the war by both historical and contemporary writers and artists. The commanding officer explains how the effective partnership with Einhaus and Baxter *'played a vital role in shaping and supporting our WW1 commemorative activities'* [E6a]. They explain how engagement throughout the centenary was *'a rewarding and transformative experience ... providing our organisation with innovative tools and new insights that have enabled us to provide a strong and culturally appropriate pedagogy'* [E6a].

For the cadets themselves *'these innovative approaches to education and training altered the cadets understanding of the war and how it is commemorated'* [E6a]. LAC confirms how the cadets now possess the *'confidence to try out new creative approaches to our [commemorative] activities'*, contributing to the squadron leadership development programme [E6a]. Cadets could *'develop their own autonomy and take ownership of their work, and, very importantly, [the programme of workshops] has developed their critical thinking in relation to armed combat and their values for responsibility'* [E6a]. Workshops played an important role in addressing literacy among cadets: *'our catchment has low literacy rates and often cadets will not express interest or skill in writing, but these projects, and the research underpinning it, inspired them to produce creative writing in ways that improved their skills and their willingness to engage'* [E6a].

The squadron's broader engagement with historical themes relating to WW1 *'enabled ... [and] inspired them to respond to the experience of the War in new and imaginative ways'* [E6a]. This included the publication of *Trench Magazines*, based on historical literary material produced in the trenches, which the cadets produced and sold to the community. The squadron was *'thrilled'* [E6a] when its work received Royal praise from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in May 2019 [E6b]. The commanding officer confirms how this was a *'vindication of the research that enabled this achievement, and the direct benefits that our members received in terms of bolstering confidence and opening them up to entirely new learning experiences'* [E6a]. This new approach to commemorative practice was further demonstrated with live productions, performed by the squadron at cultural centres across Tyneside. These events *'raised the cadets' aspirations and engagement with cultural centres throughout the centenary period'* [E6a]. In 2018, cadets designed their own remembrance memorial programme, performed at the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, a prominent heritage institution.

Working with Baxter and Einhaus on these creative projects resulted in the squadron leading community Remembrance Day services and parades [E6c]. LAC confirms that this has created *'a stronger relationship with the local community who attend the services and parades'* [E6a]. The cadets led the Armistice Day Service at St Bartholomew's Church, Benton, in 2018, where they were joined by dignitaries, 350 people inside the Church and 1,000 outside [E6a]. Lt. Richardson stated it is clear *'the squadron's and the cadets emotional engagement with the commemoration of World War I (indeed, sacrifices made during war-time more generally), has become richer, more thoughtful, and meaningful, thanks to our ongoing engagement with Baxter and Einhaus'* [E6a].

### 4.3 Enhancing cultural institutions local community engagement during WW1 centenary

The Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society (Lit & Phil) is a 200-year-old independent library and cultural space. Collaboration with Einhaus and Baxter was '*influential in shaping*' its *Reflections of Newcastle* project and in securing an HLF grant to support that project, the largest external grant the Society has won in over 10 years, representing 10% of its 2015 income [E7]. The research enabled the Lit & Phil to make a new 18-month appointment to employ a part-time project manager, to provide payment to student interns, and funded the crucial involvement of performing arts organisation, November Club. Moreover, the project enabled them to develop new relationships with other organisations and businesses in the city. '*The project thus allowed us to reach out into Newcastle, increasing our visibility as a culture hub in the city and creating a network of commemorate activities around the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme*' [E7].

Supervised by Einhaus and Baxter, volunteers produced three free interactive iBooks, taking participants on a tour of Newcastle. This was accompanied by performances and exhibitions. The research created impact: (i) by creating new knowledge for volunteers (ii) by reaching new audiences and (iii) by fulfilling its educational remit by engaging with local schools, who used the iBooks to learn about WW1 in Newcastle. It also enabled the Lit and Phil to gain increased media attention, which is an important route to generating subscriptions and donations [E7].

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Ref.	Source of corroboration	Link to claimed impact
E1	Testimonial - Chief Executive Officer, English Association	Improved understanding and approach of education practitioners
E2	a) Article/Feedback - Teacher (1) TFWWC b) Article/Feedback - Teacher (2) TFWWC	How the project increased reflective practice and changed teaching
E3	Project Report - Chief Executive Officer, Historical Association	Improved understanding and approach of education practitioners
E4	Feedback - Course Leader (HA Teacher Fellowship Programme 2019)	Influence on HA fellowship scheme and resulting outcomes in schools
E5	Testimonial – Director, FWW Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme	Informed development of FWWBT programme
E6	a) Testimonial - Officer Commanding Longbenton Air Cadets (LAC) b) LAC Press release – Royal recognition c) LAC Press release - remembrance services	Improved understanding of, and approach to, commemorative practice
E7	Testimonial - Lit & Phil Society	Confirming research contribution to 'Reflections of Newcastle' & benefits