

Brian Hatton

## English – Pupil's notes

### Theme - 'The Lost Generation'

#### Introduction

Brian Hatton died in the First World War aged 28, on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1916, at the Battle of Oghratina in Egypt, where he had been sent to fight the Turkish forces that had joined the central powers (Germany Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria) in 1914. Volunteering in the heat of battle to ride for help from the nearby Gloucester Regiment, Brian disappeared into the desert and was never seen again. His body was found months later. In his wallet was a tiny photograph of his wife.

From an early age, Brian Hatton showed a keen interest in horses in action. The first image, 'The Tournament', demonstrates his remarkable observation of horses and armour. Many of his early drawings and paintings were influenced by the stories of King Arthur and his knights, Walter Scott and Byron, so reflect scenes of conflict.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> September 1914, Brian joined the Worcester Yeomanry as a trooper. During his time in the army, Brian produced several pieces of work including, 'Civilisation', 'Scene in the Café Royale', 'Advance Guard Patrolling a Road' and 'Signalling, Enemy in Sight.' These continued to reflect his fascination with horses. Most of these were completed using charcoal, black ink and white gouache with a grey wash. Why do you think that might be?

The young men who volunteered to fight for their country had little idea of what lay before them, yet within days or weeks of reaching the front line they had experienced the realities of war.



#### **Title of Artwork: 'Civilisation'**

Brian drew this in 1915, before he went into active service. It was based on accounts he must have heard, in spite of censorship. It was very different from the works he had produced before. He may have wanted to offer this to a newspaper, but it is unlikely that a picture showing so clearly the stark horrors of war would have been printed.

During the First World War, 908,371 soldiers from the British Empire were killed in action, or died of their injuries or disease. These countries included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India. Approximately

750,000 of these men were from Great Britain. The men who died in this war became known as 'The Lost Generation'.

### Useful Web link

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWdeaths.htm>

Casualties of war

## Lesson activities - Poetry

**Key question - How can we use poetry to understand 'The Lost Generation'?**

### Podcast

There is a podcast of Brian Hatton's last letter to his wife read by the actress Miranda Richardson – go to ['The Lost Generation', Podcast](#)

### Resources

- Image of 'Civilisation' – found at the end of this document
- Blank A4 paper (1 sheet per person)

### Useful web links

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/poetsandprose/index.htm>

Links to the work of many First World War Poets

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/>

Excellent digital archive of First World War Poetry.

<http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/>

Links to poetry in remembrance of the First World War

<http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/L/lostgeneration/>

Channel 4 site on 'The Lost Generation'

### Activity 1 - Looking at First World War poetry

It would be helpful to look at some First World War poetry before creating your poem

The following three poems give different interpretations of the war.

<http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/housman.html>

**Here dead we lie** by A E Housman

(26 March 1859 – 30 April 1936)

<http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/ww1lit/collections/item/3303?CISOBX=1&REC=5h>

**Dulce et Decorum Est** by Wilfred Owen' 8 October 1917 - March, 1918. Died aged 25 in France on 4th November 1918

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori - it is sweet and right to die for your country.

<http://www.poeticexpressions.co.uk/poems/O%20Valiant%20Hearts.htm>

**O Valiant Hearts** by J.S. Arkwright, MP for Hereford. This is the hymn commonly sung in England on Remembrance Sunday, or in special services (e.g. in schools, if it's a school day) on Remembrance Day, November 11. He wrote it in 1917, when he was 45 years old.

## Activity 2 - Creating a poem

Working in small groups, look at 'Civilisation', and discuss the image. Using a blank piece of A4 paper, fold it horizontally into three equal sections and then tear these into strips. Tear each strip in two, to create six pieces in total and number them 1- 6.

Use the pieces of paper to record your answers;

**Question 1:** Imagine the environment around this image. What is the landscape like, what can be 'seen' beyond the image? Write down a short list of words that describe it.

**Question 2:** What time of day do you think this image records?

**Question 3:** Discuss the colour used in 'Civilisation'. Think of appropriate similes to describe the colours in context.

**Question 4:** Describe the sounds that you imagine when looking at 'Civilisation'.

**Question 5:** Record the smells that you can imagine.

**Question 6:** Record any emotions that you feel when looking at 'Civilisation'.

Once the answers have been written down the six answer blocks can be moved around into any sequence. Use the words and answers to create your group poem titled 'The Lost Generation' or 'Conflict'.

This can rhyme but it is not necessary for it to do so. Once the group piece has been created, share it with the rest of the class.

## Extension Work: War Horse

Read and discuss War Horse, by Michael Morpurgo, Mammoth, 1997, 142 pages. ISBN 0749704454



**Civilisation**