1970

John Masefield's Lecture Tours and Public Readings in the United States in 1916 and 1918.

John Wylie Gray
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/1853

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
GRAY, John Wylie, 1935-  
JOHN MASEFIELD'S LECTURE TOURS AND PUBLIC READINGS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1916 AND 1918.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1970
Speech

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

© 1971

John Wylie Gray

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
JOHN MASEFIELD'S LECTURE TOURS AND PUBLIC READINGS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1916 AND 1918

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The Department of Speech

by

John W. Gray
B.A., Ouachita College, 1957
M.A., University of Arkansas, 1958
August, 1970
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. Francine Merritt for her kind council and assistance as director of the study. The writer also wishes to thank Dr. Waldo Braden, Dr. Claude Shaver, Dr. John Pennybacker, and Dr. Fabian Gudas for their suggestions and encouragement.

Thanks are also due Dr. Ruth Fourier, Mrs. Gail Jones and Mrs. Millie Denholm of the Ralph Brown Draughon Library at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, for their assistance and advice. The writer is also grateful to the Auburn University Speech Department and Dr. Frank B. Davis for assistance and encouragement during the preparation of the study.

The writer is indebted to Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb of Auburn, Alabama, and the Reverend Guy Hulbert of Atlanta, Georgia, for personal interviews that contributed greatly to the study.

Acknowledgment is also made to Mrs. Lola L. Szladits and the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, for their cooperation and assistance.

Further thanks are offered to the following persons:
Mr. D. W. King, Chief Librarian
Ministry of Defense Library
London, England

Mrs. Virginia Downes, Head
YMCA Historical Library
New York, New York

Mrs. Elaine Etkin
Reference Department
Yale University Library
New Haven, Connecticut

Miss Judith Masefield
Midhurst, Sussex
England

Mr. Herman G. Goldbeck
National Archives and Record Service
Washington, D. C.

Mr. J. R. Walfour
Controller of H. M. Stationery Office
Search Department, Crown Copyright
British Public Records Office
London, England

Mr. Albert M. Tannler
Special Collections
University of Chicago Library
Chicago, Illinois

Mrs. Hazel C. Godfrey
Wellesley College Library
Wellesley, Massachusetts

Mr. Fred Lerner
Reference Department
Hamilton College Library
Clinton, New York

Mrs. Suzanne Flandreau
The Houghton Library
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Miss Pamela G. Reilly
Bryn Mawr College Library
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

Mr. M. Ratcliffe
British Information Services
New York, New York
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. EVENTS LEADING TO MASEFIELD'S RECRUITMENT BY THE BRITISH PROPAGANDA ORGANIZATION</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE FIRST LECTURE TOUR: 1916</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE SECOND LECTURE TOUR: 1918</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIXES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. MASEFIELD'S REPORT OF HIS 1916 TOUR</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. MASEFIELD'S REPORT OF HIS 1918 TOUR</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. A Chronology of Masefield's Major Lecture Appearances During the 1916 Tour</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. A Chronology of Masefield's Major Lecture Appearances During the Public Tour in 1918</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. A Chronology of Masefield's Major Lecture Appearances During the War Camp Tour in 1918</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

John Masefield (1878-1967) toured the United States in 1916 and 1918 as a lecturer and war propagandist sponsored by the British War Department. He gave both literary and war lectures and read from his poems and plays. This study presents an analysis of the political and social events resulting in Masefield's involvement in the British propaganda organization, the details of the lecture tours, brief analyses of the lectures, a description of Masefield's speaking and reading techniques during the tours, reports of audience reactions, and a discussion of the possible influence of the tours on British war propaganda and Masefield's literary reputation in the United States.

The 1916 tour took Masefield through the eastern, southern, and midwestern United States from January through March. His lectures prophesied a great renaissance in poetry and the other arts after the war and presented Masefield's views of noteworthy English poets. At the close of each lecture, and as a part of the total performance, he read a few of his poems and often a scene from one of his verse plays.

Masefield did not reveal his role as a propagandist to his American audiences in 1916. He listened carefully.
to their views of the war and reported his findings to the British government upon returning to England. British leaders had confidence in Masefield's report and used his suggestions in planning further war propaganda for the American public.

The 1918 tour took Masefield through the northeastern, midwestern and western states from January through April, and on a tour of the American war training camps from May through July. On this tour his lectures were war lectures. His purpose was to help the American people develop a strong national spirit. As in 1916, Masefield read a few of his poems at the close of each lecture.

On both tours Masefield was successful as a lecturer and reader. His delivery techniques were uniquely his own. His manner was calm and there was no sign of pretension or affectation about him. He did little that could be considered dramatic or theatrical but in his lectures he communicated the quiet concern and encouragement the audiences needed in wartime, and in the readings he demonstrated with his voice the poetic qualities of the language of the poems to the delight of his audiences.

This study revealed that the pro-British propaganda in the United States was strengthened and made more effective as a result of Masefield's lecture tours. It also indicated that Masefield's lectures and readings notably enhanced his literary reputation in the United States.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the fourteen years prior to World War I, John Masefield built a firm reputation in England as a playwright, poet, and novelist. During these years he was known as a "mighty force in the renewal of poetry."\(^1\) When the war came, Masefield desired service in the war effort and was sent to the battle front in France. He served with the Red Cross in the Dardanelles from August through September, 1915, and from January through June, 1917, he served as an official British historian for the events surrounding the battle of the Somme. On two occasions, first in 1916 and later in 1918, the British propaganda organization sent Masefield to the United States as a lecturer and propagandist.

The purpose of this study is to describe Masefield's lecture tours in 1916 and 1918. The study will provide a background and analysis of events leading to Masefield's involvement in the war effort, a description of the two lecture tours in the United States, a brief analysis of the

lectures delivered on the tours, a description of Masefield's speaking and reading techniques during the tours, reports of audience reactions, and a discussion of the possible influence of the tours on British war propaganda and Masefield's literary reputation in the United States.

As background for the study the present chapter furnishes a brief account of Masefield's early life and his first trip to the United States, a summary of Masefield's literary achievements, a description of the American public's attitude toward British and American lecturers during this period from 1910 to 1920, a consideration of the literary climate in the United States for the same period, and a description of Masefield's literary image in the United States at the time of his tours. Chapter II discusses Masefield's concern for mankind, his hatred of war and the emergence of the British propaganda machine that led to Masefield's American lecture tours. Chapter III provides a description of the 1916 tour. It discusses Masefield's views on literature and life as expressed in his lectures, his speaking and oral reading techniques as evidenced during the tour, the possible effects of the tour on Masefield's literary reputation in America, and the possible value as war propaganda that the tour might have had for the British government. Chapter IV provides a description of the 1918 tour. It includes a discussion of America's involvement
in the European War and the influence of this involvement on Masefield's tour, Masefield's visits to the American war training camps as a part of the tour, Masefield's speaking and oral reading techniques during the tour, and Masefield's ideas of the war as expressed in his lectures. The final chapter is a summary of the more important findings in the study.

SOURCES FOR THE STUDY

The details of Masefield's lecture tours have been pieced together from scattered bits of evidence found in the papers of literary, governmental, religious and educational organizations, and from widely dispersed manuscripts and letters in special collections. 

Primary Sources

The Moody Collection at the University of Chicago, the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library, the special collections at the Yale University Library, and the Houghton Library at Harvard University contained letters, publicity notices, programs and other miscellaneous documents valuable to the study.

In London, the British Public Records Office furnished the writer numerous letters related to the 1918 tour and a copy of Masefield's official report of the 1918 tour, while the Ministry of Defense Library provided a copy of Masefield's official report of his 1916 tour.
The Y.M.C.A. Historical Library in New York contained letters and budget reports related to the war camp tour and a complete collection of the war camp newspaper, *Trench and Camp*.

Many letters, telegrams and public notices related to the war camp tour were secured from the National Archives and Record Service in Washington, D. C.

The Lincoln Center Theatre Collection in New York furnished letters, programs, publicity notices and miscellaneous scrapbook material related to the 1916 tour.

Copies of the lectures delivered on the public tour in 1918 were secured through Macmillan Company in New York, and a copy of the war camp lecture delivered in 1918 was secured from the Houghton Library at Harvard University. Complete copies of the lectures delivered during the 1916 tour are not available. The original copies burned in a fire that destroyed a wing of the Masefield home.²

Interviews of Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb of Auburn, Alabama and the Reverend Guy Hulbert of Atlanta, Georgia, members of Masefield's audience during the war camp tour, furnished information that had not been recorded elsewhere.

Other Sources

The microfilmed newspaper's from the various American cities in which Masefield lectured contained announcements and reviews of the lectures.

²Letter from Judith Masefield to author, 15 April 1969.
Material on Masefield's life was found in his autobiography, *So Long to Learn*, and in several biographies, the most useful of which was W. H. Hamilton's *John Masefield* (1922).

**MASEFIELD'S EARLY LIFE AND FIRST VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES**

Researchers have met great difficulty in determining the simplest of facts about Masefield's life. Masefield was shy and despised publicity. In his poem "Biography," he went so far as to predict how his future biographies would reduce all his life "to lists of dates and facts" only to be shortly forgotten,

And none will know the gleam there used to be About the feast days freshly kept by me, But men will call the golden hour of bliss "About this time," or "shortly after this."

The town records reveal that Masefield was born at the house known as "The Knapp" in Ledbury, Herefordshire, on June 1, 1878. His mother died January 20, 1885, and his father died shortly after. Following the death of the parents, the Masefield children lived with their aunt in Ledbury until they were grown.

Masefield recounted the first six years of his life in graphic detail in *Wanderings* (1943), a verse autobiography.

---

3 Stanley P. Chase, "Mr. John Masefield: A Biographical Note," *Modern Language Notes*, XL (February 1925), 84.

4 Ibid.
He described his early days on the seashore with the imaginings, experiences, terrors, and frustrations of childhood.

At the age of fourteen he left Ledbury and joined a training ship called the Conway. After his sea training and one year of experience at sea he became ill after suffering a sunstroke and returned home to England. When he was sixteen he came to New York to join another ship, but upon arriving changed his mind and gave up his sea activities altogether because there was "too little chance for study. I wanted to write." In 1895, when Masefield gave up the sea and made his way into New York, he was sixteen years old, and had five dollars in his pocket and a chest of clothes under his arm. For four months he tried his hand at working on a farm, in a bakery and in a bar. This last position, although often referred to by Masefield's biographers, was nothing more than a brief job as a bartender at the Columbian Hotel in Yonkers. The proprietor, Luke O'Connor, liked Masefield when they first met and gave him work because he knew Masefield needed the money. While he was employed at the

---

5Ibid.

6Ibid., p. 85.


8Ibid.

hotel, a friend offered him a better paying position with Alexander Smith and Sons, a carpet factory in Yonkers. Masefield held the position for almost two years. He spent his spare time in the William Palmar East Bookstore in Yonkers where he bought and read book after book. He read Chaucer, Keats, Shelley, Shakespeare, Swinburne and Rosetti with interest and fascination. The daughter of the proprietor of the bookstore, Miss Elizabeth East, noticing Masefield's interest in reading, suggested he try writing material of his own. Masefield was encouraged by her confidence in him and he immediately began writing a few poems. Later he said that "this fever of reading" came upon him and in 1896 he wrote "any amount of verse, especially on Saturdays and Sundays--a lot of sonnets and sonnet sequences." He sailed back home to England aboard his old ship Conway on July 4, 1875, to begin his serious writing.

MASEFIELD'S LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS

Back in England Masefield set out on a difficult writing apprenticeship. He wrote poems, short stories, articles, and book reviews for Outlook, Academy, Speaker, and other magazines. The editor of the Speaker gave him a job as

10Nicholl, p. 545.
11Ibid., p. 547.
12Ibid.
literary editor and later recommended him for work with the *Manchester Guardian*. Masefield worked for the *Guardian* for six months before returning to London.¹³


One of Masefield's most successful poems was "The Everlasting Mercy," published in the *English Review*, October, 1911. It became popular and gained for Masefield wide recognition in England.¹⁵ "The Widow in the Bye Street" followed in 1912. Both poems were narratives with rough, colloquial language and frequent lapses into sentimentality. The subjects of the poems were sordid and the language somewhat strong for the polite society of the day. When the *English Review* published "The Everlasting Mercy," the offending words were omitted, leaving blank spaces throughout the poem, a practice that only served to call public


¹⁴Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 92-93.
attention to the sensational passages.\textsuperscript{16} The poem's rough language and seeming lack of restraint in the use of colloquial and common expressions was a shock to the literary world.\textsuperscript{17} Many critics believed these poems were so swiftly written as to suggest "carelessness" and "slovenliness."\textsuperscript{18} But regardless of the questionable literary practices, the poems reflected Masefield as a vivid storyteller and a gifted writer of narrative verse.

During the years immediately preceding World War I Masefield tried his hand at editorial and critical work. An example of his criticism is his \textit{Shakespeare} (1911). He also wrote introductions to works by other authors and contributed criticism and book reviews to newspapers.

When war finally came in 1914, Masefield undertook work as an official British war historian and reported his observations in his books \textit{Gallipoli} (1916), \textit{The Old Front Line} (1917), and \textit{The Battle of the Somme} (1919). His most famous war poem was "August, 1914." In his factual works, his poems, and in some of his historical novels Masefield made clear his deep feelings about the futility and waste of war.


\textsuperscript{17}Cecil Biggane, \textit{John Masefield} (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1924), p. 9.

\textsuperscript{18}Hamilton, p. 97. See also Biggane, pp. 9-11.
Masefield's first post-war poem was *Reynard the Fox* (1919), and his first novel was *Sard Harker* (1924). He followed these with a steady output of poetry and turned toward poetic drama as a medium of expression. He had a strong conviction that stories were meant to be heard, and even before World War I he had experimented with verse drama. He believed that through the medium of the drama the story-teller could best make his story real and vivid to his audiences.

He was invited to the Edinburgh Musical Festival in 1922 as a judge in the verse speaking contest, an experience that stimulated a strong interest in the proper speaking of verse. In the summer of 1923 he and his wife organized, at Oxford, a verse speaking contest called the Oxford Recitations. Masefield continued to write but for the next seven years his strongest interest was in the Oxford verse speaking contest.¹⁹ A theatre built in the music room of Masefield's house on Boar's Hill became a popular center for the performing of verse. Masefield encouraged the production of plays and worked with the amateur actors and reciters who sought to "work with him to create a moment of perfection," and who performed with "a spirit of devotion to the spoken word."²⁰

---


²⁰Fisher, p. 35.
In 1930, after the death of Robert Bridges, Masefield was appointed Poet Laureate in England, a position he held until his death in 1967. Over the years, Masefield established a firm literary reputation in both England and the United States. A great portion of his reputation with the American public grew out of his lecture tours in the United States in 1916 and 1918.

THE AMERICAN LECTURE PLATFORM

When Masefield arrived in the United States for his first lecture tour, the American lecture platform was flooded with speakers. In the years just prior to 1917 there had been between fifteen and twenty thousand communities in America served by the lyceum and chautauqua lecture circuits. Large numbers of persons every year listened to these lectures, the influence of which was great on public opinion in this country. These circuits brought noteworthy lecturers to the American people. The American public had grown to accept the lecture tour and "celebrity speakers" as an American institution. A writer of the period observed that these lecture circuits provided "a unique opportunity for national influence."

When World War I was precipitated in 1914, it did

---

22Ibid., p. 405.
little to change the lecture circuit activities of American lyceums and chautauquas, but it brought about changes in personnel and topics of the lectures. The war introduced the element of European propaganda. Many British lecturers came to the United States as a part of the movement to cement British-United States relations. The British War Mission and its Information Bureau in the United States began encouraging distinguished speakers from England to seek lecture engagements in the United States.

The British propaganda organization, lyceums, and chautauquas were not the only sponsors of the English lecture tours. The Rotary Club and the Y.M.C.A. sponsored tours, and the American colleges and universities, city clubs, women's clubs and similar organizations were ready and willing to host the lecturers as they toured. In England the celebrity lecturers had found few opportunities to speak, little money and small audiences. In the United States they were offered attractive itineraries, publicity, and in many cases a substantial amount of money.

Although American audiences were aware of the propagandistic element in these lectures, there was such a flood

---


25 Ratcliffe, p. 922.
of lecturers speaking on such a variety of subjects, that the audiences did not seem to mind hearing the same propaganda presented by several different lecturers. The American people wanted the latest word on art, drama and literature, as well as the latest news of the war, and the fact that these were often blended with obvious propaganda seemed of little concern to them.26

Many of the English lecturers in the United States were well known personalities or "head-liners." They were entertained and dined royally by their audiences and usually drew large crowds to their lectures solely on the basis of their reputation. H. G. Wells, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Harold Nicolson, true celebrities, as a rule were ineffective in the delivery of their lectures. Although they used interesting and appropriate material, these celebrities were unskilled speakers who felt no responsibility to speak with enough volume to be heard or enough directness to demonstrate an interest in their audiences. They thought the audiences should be satisfied merely to see the lecturer.27

When the equally famous G. K. Chesterton appeared before American audiences who had read the wild and boisterous humor found in his stories and poems, they found it hard to believe that the man before them reading from a "little black


27Ibid., p. 353.
note-book" in a formal and lifeless manner could be the same man. Sir Phillip Gibbs was another whose speaking manner left much to be desired. Gibbs depended on his bits and pieces of "inside information" about the war and his daily account of the war's progress to hold his audiences.29

There were, however, other English lecturers with exceptional speaking abilities. Granville Barker, John Ervine, Gilbert Murray, and Alfred Noyes were capable speakers who lectured with "convincing force."30 A few lecturers among the group could be described as not only acceptable speakers but also showmen and entertainers. The poet John Drinkwater was an entertaining performer and earned his fee by "looking every inch a handsome poet in a fervor."31 During his performance he "draped his graceful body over the lecture stand and read from his own poems--it was easy money."32

As the war continued, the welcome of the English lecturers began to wear thin, and by the end of the war they were considered a "standing joke."33 Although they

28 Ratcliffe, p. 924.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., pp. 924-925.
31 Canby, pp. 352-353.
32 Ibid.
33 "English Lecturers As a Standing Joke," Literary Digest, CIX (11 April 1931), 17.
continued for many years after the war to capitalize on the distinction of being foreigners, they were no longer popular figures.

The present study examines John Masefield as one of the English lecturers of this period. Compared with other English lecturers visiting in the United States, he looked and spoke "less like a victim of the one-night system than any one you could name."34

THE LITERARY CLIMATE IN THE UNITED STATES

Masefield's visits to America in 1916 and 1918 came at a time when her unsettled literary conditions were favorable for his visits and advantageous to the growth of his literary reputation in this country.

During the first ten years of the twentieth century, American literature was in a period of transition from the British Victorian tradition to a strong native tradition. According to Cleanth Brooks, during this period "the American poet, after discarding the rags of Victorianism, was to be found walking in a barrel."35 Originality was valued by the American writers but few were sufficiently original to break completely with earlier traditions. Marguerite Wilkinson described this period as one in which the American poets were "academic and imitative versifiers,

34 Ratcliffe, p. 924.

content, for the most part, with the graven images of art and forgetful of the living divinity." Even some of the "new poets" such as Vachel Lindsay and Edgar Lee Masters reflected the earlier traditions of Victorian rhythms, sentimentality, and traditional literary phrases.

Poetry seemed to show a distinctive development in the United States from 1910 to 1920. The year 1912 appeared to be the turning point for American poetry. For many years American writers, searching for a truly American poetry, had been able neither to win over the public nor to satisfy themselves with their efforts. In October, 1912, Harriet Monroe founded in Chicago her little magazine called Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, with Ezra Pound as the foreign editor. Although the magazine published a conventional type of poetry, yet it contributed to the start of a poetic renaissance in America.

By 1913 the influence of the French symbolist poets was felt in the United States. The "vers libre" movement began its sweep of popularity. Public interest in modern poetry grew and in 1914 a new poetry magazine, the Little Review, appeared in Chicago under the editorship of

---

36 Marguerite Wilkinson, "Poets of the People," Touchstone, II (December 1917), 310.
Margaret Anderson. This new magazine published experimental poetry of the "vers libre" order. In 1915 an experimental poetry magazine called Others, edited by Alfred Kreymborg, was published in New York. Although these magazines were popular in some circles and provided outlets for publications by new poets, they were still unable to capture the American public at large. This lack of public interest was demonstrated at a meeting of the Chicago Book and Play Club in February, 1915, at which time the editors of Dial, Drama, Poetry and Little Review "confessed bitter struggles to keep above water."

The new movement in poetry concentrated its activities in Chicago and New York, with the two rival camps of the old and new poetry the literary topic of the day. The reading public in America began to feel that these new freedoms in poetic technique would allow an opportunity for the development of a truly American poetry. The poets began to express a love for their country and to interpret life in the United States with the use of native speech and everyday rhythms understood by the public. George P. Brett, a publisher with Macmillan Company, rejoiced in the fact that now the American poets could feel

40Monroe, p. 281.
free to use small town problems, household chores, and other everyday American topics as subject matter for poetry, and predicted a "glorious future" for American poetry. This period witnessed the emergence of Ezra Pound, Vachel Lindsay, Robert Frost, Amy Lowell and Carl Sandburg.

The American people saw the poetry of their country becoming more democratic and addressing itself to a larger public audience. The rivalry between the new and old poetry had created a great deal of interest by the time Masefield made his first lecture tour in 1916. Most American critics thought that the new interest in poetry was beneficial to the American public. It mattered little to the critics whether the poems were of the experimental type or the more traditional form. Even those who disliked "vers libre" seemed to think that it did reflect hope for American poetry. The need was for a poetry that expressed the drama of modern life, and many Americans thought the war had influenced the English writers to write in a style more appropriate to the spirit and condition of the modern world. One writer, in reviewing Masefield's:

---

43 *New York Times*, 16 April 1916, p. 142.
Story of a Round House, asserted that Masefield had truly captured the realities of modern life, saying his "strict rhyme and meter is anything but 'vers libre' but has such a strong modern theme that the blend is appealing and is poetry in the true sense of the word."^47

MASEFIELD'S LITERARY IMAGE IN THE UNITED STATES

As early as 1913 American reviewers spoke of Masefield's poetry as being strong in realism, and "meat for strong stomachs."^48 Both England and the United States had known Masefield as a democratic poet for some time, but it was not until after the war began in 1914 and the new enthusiasm for poetry in the United States reached a peak around 1916 that Masefield's reputation as a poet of the people was confirmed in the United States. A writer for the New York Times of February 6, 1916, observed that the United States was "finding a new John Masefield" because of his lecture tour and his publication of Good Friday and Other Poems. ^49 He commented that Masefield's reputation had undergone revision in America and this new Masefield offered something more "satisfying and more real" than his


earlier image as a "sailor-poet" could offer.\textsuperscript{50}

Another indication that America had accepted Masefield as a part of a new tradition in poets was Marguerite Wilkinson's decision to include him in her six months' series of articles on "Poets of the People" in \textit{Touchstone} magazine. The series began in December, 1917, and ended in May, 1918, with one poet in each of the six monthly issues. The poets in the order in which they were included were Sara Teasdale, Amy Lowell, Vachel Lindsay, John Masefield, Robert Frost and Edgar Lee Masters. The mere fact that Masefield was the only non-American in the group gave some indication of the esteem in which he was held.

Since Masefield was not only a poet but a dramatist as well, he was welcomed in the United States by individuals and organizations associated with the theatre and dramatic literature. The period from 1910 to 1920 was also a period of transition for American drama. Although perhaps not as vigorously as poetry, the native American drama was making its break with the Continent and developing its own independent art. This emergence of a new American drama had been preceded by a period of experimentation in new theatre forms for the purpose of encouraging the native playwrights.\textsuperscript{51} Masefield had always had a respect for the

\textsuperscript{50}\textit{Ibid.}

craft of the playwright, and had devoted many years to a serious study of the theatre. His first important play, *The Tragedy of Nan* (1909), was produced at the Hudson Theatre in New York in April, 1913. Considered one of the best tragedies produced during this period, it was recommended to the American public by the Drama League of America in its annual list of selected plays in English. Masefield also had a reputation among American dramatists as a Shakespearian scholar. In the introduction to his *Shakespeare* (1911), Masefield gave vigorous expression to his thoughts on the theatre. In England this volume was considered by some a unique work in Shakespearian studies.

In the United States the book was widely distributed by the Drama League. Since the Drama League recognized Masefield as a dramatist it took good advantage of his presence in the United States and not only scheduled a number of his lectures in both 1916 and 1918, but also

---


53 Beers, p. 562.


56 Hamilton, p. 57.

honored him with dinners and receptions during its "Shakespeare Tercentenary Celebration: 1616-1916."\(^\text{58}\)

As a result of America's growing interest in poetry and drama, and her thirst for new ways to blend the old styles with the new native styles, Masefield was given a warm welcome when he arrived for his first lecture tour in the United States.

\(^{58}\text{Drama League of America Monthly Bulletin Number Two}\)
\((\text{New York: Drama League of America National Publications Committee, April 1916}), \text{ p. 2.}\)
CHAPTER II

EVENTS LEADING TO MASEFIELD'S RECRUITMENT BY THE BRITISH PROPAGANDA ORGANIZATION

A full understanding of John Masefield's lecture tours in America cannot be attained without a knowledge of Masefield's concern for the common man, his pacifism, his patriotism, his interest in the war effort and the events leading to his involvement in the British propaganda machine that prompted the American tours.

MASEFIELD'S CONCERN FOR MANKIND AND HATRED FOR WAR

Although Masefield wrote a number of books of verse and prose in his early years, he achieved his first recognition in the years between 1911 and 1914 by composing several long poems that shocked the public.\(^1\) Two of these poems, "The Everlasting Mercy" (1911), and "The Widow in the Bye Street" (1912), were published in America in 1912 and served for most Americans as their first exposure to

\(^1\)"Raps at the Latest Realism," *Literary Digest*, XLIV (22 June 1912), 1299-1300.
Masefield's work. These poems were shocking because of their descriptions of turbulent passions and horrible crimes, and because the characters he drew were common people (farmers, thieves and vagrants) rather than ladies and gentlemen of society who composed a large percentage of Masefield's early reading public. They swore crude oaths and their language was the everyday language of the people with its slang expressions, often approaching the obscene.

Masefield enjoyed the common people and the beauty to be found in lives of toil and poverty. It seemed that he longed to be the poet of the common life and to write convincingly not only about the masses but also for the masses. The common man in both England and America had been eager for a poetry more suited to his manner of life. He wanted a robust and energetic literary approach without the artificial and flowery language. Gilbert Thomas considered the public "impatient for a poet who should

---

2Ashley H. Thorndike, "The Great Tradition," The Dial, LXVI (8 February 1919), 118.
5Thorndike, p. 119.
6Shafer, p. 493.
7"John Masefield," Outlook, CXII (26 January 1916), 172.
prove his art to be not merely artifice, but something robust and something vital in its relation to life."\textsuperscript{8}

Many poets were answering the challenge with attempts at a simpler and more hardy brand of verse. Louis Untermeyer was optimistic about their efforts and declared that poetry was being "set free." He considered the improved use of natural speech a major ingredient in a poet's success with the public in 1914. "It is the use of this vigorous and actual speech," he said, "that makes the work of such utterly dissimilar poets as John Masefield, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Lascelles Abercrombie, James Oppenheim, Rupert Brooke and Rabindranath Tagore so personal and alive."\textsuperscript{9}

Masefield was particularly successful in satisfying the public's desire for a poetry that spoke directly to the common people about events and experiences with which they were familiar. One writer went so far as to say that "No poet today sings more clearly of the real England. No poet is singing more directly to his people than Masefield."\textsuperscript{10}

It was in a romantic spirit that Masefield glorified England and her people, and it was through his "plain earth-wisdom"\textsuperscript{11} and as a realist that he made every attempt to

\textsuperscript{8}"Mr. Masefield's Poetry," \textit{Living Age}, CCLXXVIII (19 July 1913), 148.


\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Outlook}, p. 173.

\textsuperscript{11}Marguerite Wilkinson, "Poets of the People: A Discussion of War and Poetry: By John Masefield," \textit{Touchstone}, II (March 1918), 587.
become involved in the events that shaped England's future and her people. Out of this love for his country grew a strong patriotic spirit that made "a deliberate attempt to emphasize that which is most English" and not only accentuated the appearance of the English landscape and the strong character of the English people but sought to explore democracy at work in the life of his country. Masefield approved of democracy wherever it was found. In an interview in 1912 he said, "I have a great admiration for those American writers whom one may describe as exponents of your democracy. Your democracy is a big achievement." He was speaking of Walt Whitman in particular, later in the same interview calling Whitman America's "poet of democracy" and "your big voice so far."

Masefield believed that all art was intensely national and reflected the nation's personality. Consequently, he admired America's democracy and manifested a great concern for the welfare both of his fellow Englishmen and of mankind in general.

---


13 Wilkinson, Touchstone, p. 589.


15 Ibid.

16 Outlook, p. 172.
Masefield was acquainted with the rough and violent events in life, especially those related to war, and had a great faith in man's ability to handle these situations and conditions. In 1902, Masefield wrote for his book *Salt Water Ballads* a short poem entitled "A Consecration," in which he prophesied accurately his coming literary task during World War I by dedicating himself to writing of

> The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies  
> Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries,  
> The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Masefield's dislike for war was expressed as early as 1909 in his book *Multitude and Solitude*, and 1911 in *Street of Today*. These books contained his views on war as a violation of human personality.  

In 1912 and 1913 many English and American people believed their world to be generally pacific. Although they recognized the inevitability of crime and natural disaster they found it difficult to imagine violent acts in their civilized surroundings. To the upper classes the newspaper accounts of violence and the life of physical violence described in Masefield's poems seemed "romantically remote" from their daily experience. Masefield knew and wrote of the savage and violent life of man. The readers


\[18\] Thorndike, p. 119.
accepted these stories as merely melodramatic tales. But when the war finally came it "brought an undesired and sudden justification of the imaginative genius of the poet who had found in his own experience with men both the brute and the idealist, and who had seen spiritual desire linked with animal frenzy." 19

Masefield's theme of pacifism was repeated in his novel The Faithful (1915) and finally reached its peak with his factual narrative Gallipoli (1916). During the war Masefield's pacifistic views underwent a slight change. He remained steadfast in his philosophy that peace is better than war but he began to realize that peace may not be permitted by hostile and belligerent nations. If peace became impossible, Masefield thought a nation should summon all its resources to make the war effective. He was convinced that he should assist his country in making a quick and effective end to the present war. 20 He had always believed himself at his best as a storyteller, 21 and now, with the war forcing Britain's back to the wall, Masefield sought to write stories that reflected the inevitable futility of war. In The Faithful he wrote a fictional story that spoke of war as a selfish and cowardly act between men.

19 Ibid.
In Gallipoli he wrote a factual story with descriptions of "the terrors and struggles of war, and the humanity of the soldier in face of tremendous odds." Gallipoli, with its striking accounts of death and waste in war was Masefield's earnest plea for peace.22

The one significant war poem written by Masefield during the war years was "August, 1914." It was not a sensational description of the ghastly battles or a bloody picture of dying men, as was often the case with Masefield's novels, but a quiet sad elegy. The poem described the fields of England as inhabited by the ghosts of farmers who sacrificed themselves for England, and spoke of the loyal young men who were breaking their ties with home and taking their place in the war where they might die for England and for an idea they only vaguely understood. Lascelles Abercrombie called this poem "patriotism in elegiac mood," "a noble poem, of assured vitality," and declared that "patriotic poetry, in fact, could not go higher."23 The poem presents patriotism as an attitude of devoted national service rather than a flag-waving militarism.

As the war progressed, Masefield continued his writing and produced both The Old Front Line (1917) and The Battle of the Somme (1919), which followed in the tradition of Gallipoli with factual descriptions of the war.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE BRITISH PROPAGANDA ORGANIZATION

In July, 1914, Americans observed the breakdown of diplomatic negotiations in Europe with amazed disbelief. They watched as the great powers of Europe called a halt to their peace bargaining and took up the arms of war. There had been talk of such a war but few Americans seemed seriously concerned over the possibility. For this reason, the war caught the American people and especially the American press unaware. On Friday, July 24, 1914, the newspapers showed little awareness of any serious threat of war, but on Saturday morning the New York Times headlines were: "Europe at Point of War." Finally, on Sunday, August 2, 1914, the New York Times spread its headline across the entire front page:

GERMANY DECLARES WAR ON RUSSIA, FIRST SHOTS ARE FIRED; FRANCE IS MOBILIZING AND MAY BE DRAWN IN: TOMORROW: PLANS TO RESCUE THE 100,000 AMERICANS NOW IN EUROPE

On Monday, Great Britain joined the fight. This particular event was a shock to the American people, who were made to realize that their isolation and detachment might soon dissolve. Although America was still considered


a neutral country, her sympathies were now to be put to the test. Secretary Hudson, a member of the Wilson Cabinet, later confessed that he watched the events almost with indifference until the British joined the fight. "Then," he said, "I had a feeling that the end of things had come . . . . I stopped in my tracks, dazed and horror-stricken." 27

On August 4, 1914, President Wilson responded to the crisis by issuing a proclamation of neutrality. 28 He directed the American citizens to maintain an impartial position and deny assistance to either side. This official proclamation was to be expected and was generally accepted by all elements of American opinion. The issues producing the war were clearly European issues but unofficially the American people began to take sides. 29 There was no doubt from the beginning, for whatever reason, that the greatest American sympathy was with the British. 30 A majority of the people in America felt strong ties with England and a distaste for the German military ideals and activities. 31 The big problem in America was that of forming a standard

27 Millis, p. 41.
28 Bassett, p. 7.
29 Ibid., p. 8.
30 Millis, p. 41.
emotional position of any kind with a heterogeneous population that traditionally had become detached from its European ancestry and whose feelings were now aroused over this war. This lack of uniform emotional behavior also became a problem for propagandists working in America. Since the American attitude was generally pro-British, the German propaganda organization concentrated its efforts on creating a distrust of England in the minds of the American people. The Germans used the newspapers as a major method of propaganda but also "published pamphlets, gave support to authors desiring to publish books which were favorable to Germany, and later arranged for the release of some newsreels." American opinion was valued highly by the British since it would represent generally the opinion of the entire neutral world, and could result in tangible support in the war effort.

The British believed that educated America was making an attempt at understanding their position and that

---


pro-British sentiment was growing.\textsuperscript{36} The American aristocracy had done most of its foreign business through England and had developed a friendship with the English. Taking the pro-British position was the "thing to do" among these American leaders, and the British wanted to cultivate this friendship.\textsuperscript{37}

The British also understood that they could not neglect the average citizen in the United States. Many of their major propaganda efforts would need to be directed at the average American, the emotional man who had responded strongly to pre-war sentiment and was "excessively turbulent in comparison with European, and . . . subject to waves of emotion, apathy, interest, and boredom."\textsuperscript{38} It was believed, however, that, as emotional as they were, Americans would not appreciate or respond to propaganda unless it was "of the highest order."\textsuperscript{39} Realizing this, the British organized their subtle and skillful campaign to persuade America that the Allied cause was right and just.\textsuperscript{40}

In August, 1914, Charles F. Masterman\textsuperscript{41} was directed

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., pp. 176-178.
\textsuperscript{37}Peterson, pp. 4-8.
\textsuperscript{38}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39}James D. Whelpley, "The Courting of America," \textit{Fortnightly Review}, XCVI (October 1914), 684.
\textsuperscript{40}Peterson, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{41}C. F. G. Masterman (1874-1927), journalist, author and politician, was active in passing a national insurance scheme in 1911 and became the first chairman of the Insurance Commission in Britain.
by the British Foreign Affairs Office to look into the possibility of organizing British propaganda in the United States. Masterman investigated the subject and carried it to the British Cabinet for their consideration. The Cabinet called a conference to discuss the matter and to decide on appropriate action. This conference brought together many prominent British leaders, a majority of whom were authors, since the task at first seemed to be one of written propaganda. Among those present were William Archer, G. K. Chesterton, Arthur Conan Doyle, John Galsworthy, Thomas Hardy and John Masefield. The conference recommended to the Cabinet that the British organize their propaganda efforts at once. The Cabinet directed Masterman, in September, 1914, to take charge of a propaganda bureau for the British government. This bureau was the earliest formal British propaganda organization of World War I.

Masterman kept most of his work secret and the bureau was known as "Wellington House," because of the name of the building in which it was housed and the desire for a code name to maintain secrecy. Wellington House grew fast and all but the lower level of the staff worked voluntarily.

---


43 Ibid.

44 Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 5th ser., 76 (1915): 2231.

45 Masterman, p. 273.
Masterman departmentalized the bureau into units and Sir Gilbert Parker was appointed to head the unit named American Ministry of Information. In the beginning there were nine volunteers under Parker, but by the time America entered the war in 1917, his staff had grown to a group of fifty-four propagandists. Working secretly out of Wellington House, Parker set up an office near Victoria Station for his propaganda unit, from which he provided American press correspondents with articles, pamphlets and essays by such noted literary men as Kipling, Galsworthy, Wells and Shaw. This American operation was a well-kept secret and Parker used every propaganda method at his disposal. He distributed books and pamphlets, published articles for magazines and newspapers, distributed films, sent personal correspondence, and sponsored lecture tours. He kept his fingers on the American pulse and presented the English attitudes about the war forcefully and with confidence. On the basis of his investigations, Parker made a careful study of Who's Who in America and prepared a mailing

---

46 Sir (Horatio) Gilbert Parker (1862-1932) wrote fiction in his early life. From 1900 to 1918 he sat in Commons, as a conservative M.P. from Gravesent. Besides his fiction, the fact that he spent his childhood in Canada and married a New Yorker seemed to endear him to many Americans.

47 Peterson, p. 16.

48 Millis, p. 63.

49 Peterson, pp. 17-18.

list including the names of prominent and influential leaders in America.\textsuperscript{51} This list became the basis for the distribution of American propaganda from Wellington House.

In 1915, Parker spoke of his activities at Wellington House:

\begin{quote}
Since the beginning of the war I have had a very large correspondence with American citizens, and have watched closely the trend of opinion in the United States through a great number of newspapers which come to me regularly. The United States being the most important of all the neutral nations, and with a scheme of government and with ambitions for civilization differing only in color and detail from our own, its opinion and judgment are of deep importance to all other nations engaged in the war.\textsuperscript{52}
\end{quote}

Almost a year after America entered the war, Parker could reveal a few of his methods and summarized them as follows:

\begin{quote}
Practically since the day the war broke out between England and the Central Powers I became responsible for American publicity. I need hardly say that the scope of my department was very extensive, and its activities widely ranged. Among the activities was a weekly report to the British Cabinet on the state of American opinion, and constant touch with the permanent correspondents of American newspapers in England. I also arranged for important public men in England to act for us by interviews in American newspapers . . . . We asked our friends and correspondents to arrange for speeches, debates, and lectures by American citizens, but we did not encourage Britishers to go to America and preach the doctrine of entrance into the war. Besides an immense private correspondence with individuals, we had our documents
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{51}\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{Peterson, p. 16.}}}

\textsuperscript{52}\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{Gilbert Parker, "What is the Matter with England?" Independent, LXXXIV (1 November 1915), 178.}}}
and literature sent to great numbers of public libraries, Y.M.C.A. societies, universities, colleges, historical societies, clubs, and newspapers.  

Parker placed a great deal of emphasis on the use of persons as a means of influence in his American propaganda. He very often used influential friends both in England and America in the service of his department. Parker believed the educated Englishman with his social grace and charm to be ideal for this personal approach. With this in mind, he secured British authors and sent them on lecture tours in America. This may have been the reason for his choice of the mild mannered John Masefield for the American tours.

The lectures by the British authors were used as a propagandistic method to further complement the already successful use of propaganda literature. Sir Edward Grey mentioned to Theodore Roosevelt in a letter dated September 10, 1914, that a number of famous authors, "some


54Lasswell, pp. 156-157.


56Peterson, Propaganda For War, p. 25.

of whose books you have no doubt read, are going to the United States. Their object is, as I understand, not to make speeches or lectures, but to meet people, particularly those connected with Universities, and explain the British case as regards this war and our view of the issues involved."  

Grey was correct in saying that the authors' major object was not to lecture but to make personal contacts with the American public, yet the lectures eventually became a method for making the personal contacts.

In August, 1918, the same month in which Masefield ended his second lecture tour in America, Sir Montague Barlow explained to the Parliament the effective methods of propaganda being used in America.  

He stated that the personal approach had proved to be more effective than the literary approach and that "So far as America is concerned I do not think the printed pamphlet or book is worth what has been put into it. The proper methods there are the interview and the lecture."  

Of all the propaganda flowing from Wellington House, the American propaganda sponsored by Parker's group was possibly the best.  

The methods he used were varied and

---


60 Parliamentary Debates, 109 (1918): 970-977.

61 Ibid., col. 976.

62 Ibid., col. 953.
the information he gathered and on which he acted came from several sources. One of his major sources of information on American opinion was the American press. Parker issued a weekly or bi-weekly summary of the American press from April 12, 1915, to August 8, 1917. This summary was called The American Press Resume and was prepared for distribution to the Cabinet. The importance of this Resume, which was considered "strictly confidential," cannot be overemphasized for it was "on this report that all efforts to educate American opinion were based." The report contained extracts from American newspapers plus various reports from important American and British propagandists working in the United States. The issue of April 7, 1916, carried a report by John Masefield on his observations of American opinion while making his 1916 lecture tour.

After America entered the war there was little need for the British propagandists to be extremely secretive about their operations in America. Wellington House continued to operate but Gilbert Parker, believing his work finished, resigned his post. The American resistance had been overcome but the final task yet remained to

---

63 Peterson, Propaganda For War, p. 23.
64 Ibid.
generate some spirit among the entire American population that would lead to a more vigorous participation in the war effort. Although the United States had entered the war, Americans were unsure or less than enthusiastic about the war effort. In June, 1917, therefore, Lord Northcliffe of the British Department of Information was appointed to head a war mission to the United States for the purpose of coordinating the British war information services. He was chosen for his "superabundant energy" and his deep understanding of the American people. He opened offices in New York that same month and remained until the following November. These were perhaps the darkest days of the war for Britain and his activities between these dates were of extreme importance to this last phase of British propaganda in America. His organization was called the British Bureau of Information

66 Peterson, Propaganda For War, pp. 312-317.

67 Alfred Charles William Harmsworth Northcliffe (1865-1922), a British journalist, was widely known as the owner of a major newspaper that had gained in 1948 a circulation of a million copies.


70 Seymour, p. 85.

71 The Times History of the War (London: The Times Publishing Company, 1919), XXI, 103-104.
in America and of particular significance was the extensive lecture campaign it carried out with much success between 1917 and 1919. Working for closer ties and better cooperation between England and America, Northcliffe found the public lecture an extremely effective means of reaching this goal. He and his successor, Lord Reading, brought distinguished lecturers from England to speak and hold personal interviews with the American press. The lecturing was most effective and "the chart of British speakers in operation upon any given day, which was daily most accurately kept by the Bureau officials, came to resemble a target fired at by a shot-gun." The Bureau also invited American lecturers to visit England and the list of these is as long as the list of visitors from England. After the Peace Conference, Colonel House stated his belief that "Northcliffe has never received the credit due him in the winning of the war." But Northcliffe saw the results of his efforts as the American people became more and more involved in the war. His work had been the

72 Ibid., p. 104.
73 Seymour, p. 86.
74 Rufus Daniel Isaacs Reading (1860-1935) was a British statesman and judge. He became the first attorney general to be at the same time a member of the cabinet.
75 The Times History of the War, p. 104.
76 Ibid., p. 106.
77 Seymour, p. 87.
MASEFIELD'S INVOLVEMENT

The war had drawn many British authors into war service. Poets, scholars and other writers were recruited by the British government to serve as correspondents, historians and lecturers, working for the several departments of the Foreign Office, Press Bureau and other organizations. No persuasion seemed necessary in securing the services of these men. They came willingly and S. K. Ratcliffe believed that this sudden rise of patriotism in the British literary men was to be expected in time of war. He stated that the British "need not be surprised that the process of creation should be suspended, as it is with John Masefield and almost every man who is thinking not of art, but of service."  

When the war came, Masefield's literary career had just begun to flourish. In the preface to a collection of poems published during the war Masefield speaks of this period of his life:

In 1914, before the war began, I wrote two plays in verse. When the war began, I wrote some verses, called August, 1914, which at the time I thought of calling Lollingdon Hill, from the little chalk hill on which they were written.

---

78 Seymour, pp. 94-95.  
80 Ibid., p. 828.
Some other verses were written in the first months of the war, including some of the sonnets; but that was the end of my verse-writing. Perhaps, when the war is over and the mess of the war is cleaned up and the world is at some sort of peace, there may be leisure and feeling for verse-making.  

Unlike many of the British intellectuals who contributed only their literary talents writing for newspapers and magazines, Masefield's involvement in the war "was not merely the contact of a poetic imagination." After volunteering for a few months' experience in French war hospitals as a male nurse, Masefield, in August, 1915, felt a desire to see the war first hand. He was given a position of leadership in the Dardanelles Red Cross work, and was put in charge of bearing the wounded soldiers from Gallipoli. He was profoundly moved by the tragic and terrible things he saw, and the vivid accounts of these experiences appear again and again in his 1918 lectures in America, and, above all, in his book Gallipoli. Upon his return from the Dardanelles in October, 1915, Masefield was called upon by Sir Gilbert Parker to assume the responsibility of his first lecture tour in America.  

---

83Ibid.  
84Hamilton, p. 137.  
CHAPTER III

MASEFIELD'S FIRST LECTURE TOUR: 1916

John Masefield's first lecture tour in the United States was short (January-March, 1916), but the serious propagandistic purpose back of the tour, the evidence that this tour aided in advancing Masefield's literary reputation in the United States, and the fact that the success of this tour led to the writing of Masefield's famous Gallipoli and resulted in his return to the United States in 1918 for a second propagandistic tour, made it a significant event.

EVENTS LEADING TO THE TOUR

Masefield had begun his Red Cross work in the Dardanelles in August, 1915, but by September 25 he was in bad health and overworked. His wife, Constance, asked Granville Barker, a long time friend of Masefield, to see whether another job could be found for Masefield, whose plans were to return to England for a short rest and then to enlist in the military. He had already passed the military medical examination before leaving for the Dardanelles and intended to find a place of war service.
Since Barker thought Masefield would not accept "just anything," he asked Sir Edward Marsh for assistance in finding the appropriate job for Masefield. On October 15, Marsh put Masefield in contact with Sir Arthur Lutham, who in turn made arrangements for Masefield to see Sir Gilbert Parker. Parker commissioned him for the United States tour the same month. The official sponsor for the tour was not Parker's propaganda machine but the Ministry of Information of the British Foreign Office. The plan was to send Masefield as a "British literary representative" whose official responsibility was to "lecture on literature and life."

The 1916 lecture tour had a threefold purpose: to allow Masefield a place of war service to his liking and a rest from his former front line duties, to promote British literature and Masefield's own literary reputation in the United States, and to provide the British propaganda organization with first-hand observations of the American reactions to the war.

---


2 Letter from Granville Barker to Sir Edward Marsh, 15 October 1915, Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

A SUMMARY OF THE TOUR

During his three-month tour (January-March), Masefield's activities were largely those of addressing college and university students, members of literary clubs and societies, and meeting with prominent American literary figures. He did not talk about the war but limited the subject of his lectures to literature. Following the lectures he often received questions from his audiences about the Dardanelles Campaign. Speaking of these questions he said,

People asked me why that attempt had been made, why it had been made in that particular manner, why other courses had not been taken, why this had been done and that either neglected or forgotten, and whether a little more persistence, here or there, would not have given us the victory. These questions were often followed by criticism of various kinds, some of it plainly suggested by our enemies, some of it shrewd, and some the honest opinion of men and women happily ignorant of modern war. I answered questions and criticism as best I could, but in the next town they were repeated to me, and in the town beyond reiterated . . . .

Masefield's lecture tour took him through approximately thirty cities in the eastern, southern, and mid-western United States. In these cities he was able to meet and talk with people of "every sort and condition, from millionaires

---

to day laborers." He did not visit the far-western area of the United States on this tour because he believed it was "some thousands of miles from the war, absorbed in its own affairs, and, on the whole, indifferent to the outcome."  

Masefield was to book passage from Liverpool to New York on the American liner Philadelphia on December 31, 1915, and arrive in New York on January 8, 1916. His ship's delayed departure, causing him to sail from Liverpool on January 4, 1916, and arrive in New York on January 12, 1916, made it impossible for Masefield to meet his first scheduled engagement in the United States. His plans had called for a lecture in John M. Greene Hall at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, on January 11, 1916. A reporter for the college newspaper later expressed both regret that Masefield did not visit the college and assurance that he could be scheduled at another date before his return to England. However, Masefield's itinerary did not permit

---

6 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 13 January 1916, p. 19.
9 The ship's delay also accounts for the confusion in published accounts of his date of arrival. See New York Herald Tribune, 17 January 1916, and Independent, LXXXV (10 January 1916), 52.
10 Smith College Weekly (Northampton, Massachusetts), 22 December 1915.
11 Ibid., 12 January 1916.
a later visit to the college. A chronology of Masefield's major lecture appearances is presented in Table I.

The lecture Masefield delivered most often on the tour was called "The English Poets," and although only approximately thirty minutes long, it included a brief discussion of English poetry, accompanied by the reading of poems from noteworthy English poets, an examination of the possible future of poetry after the war, and an inquiry into the poet's relationship to his reading public.

It is evident from the reviews of the English poets lecture that although the content remained much the same, Masefield was flexible and often added remarks directed to specific audiences. At Bryn Mawr College and Wellesley College he concluded the lecture by offering prizes for original poems, plays and stories. His reason for setting up this competition was to "stimulate that art of writing which has been such a pleasure . . . through so many years of my life." In offering the prizes he stipulated that the poems must not be more than 40 lines, the short stories not more than 1200 words, and the plays not more than 3,000 words. The prizes were to be three volumes of his poetry with an inscription in verse for the best poem, and three volumes of his prose with an inscription in prose for the

---

12 Letter to the writer from Emma N. Kaplan, Director of Archives, Smith College, Massachusetts, 17 June 1969.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 14</td>
<td>5 P.M. Lecture at Yale College, New Haven, Connecticut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the McDowell Club, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Contemporary Club, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Wellesley College, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>8 P.M. Lecture at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>Morning Lecture to the Twentieth Century Club, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Drama League, Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Twentieth Century Club, Chicago, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 27</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Contemporary Club, Indianapolis, Indiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Delaware College, Newark, Delaware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Centennial Club, Nashville, Tennessee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Chicago Woman's Aid, Chicago, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Woman's University Club, Grand Rapids, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Book and Play Club, Chicago, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 4</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Milwaukee-Downer College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the State Normal School, La Crosse, Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture at the Woman's Club, Minneapolis, Minnesota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 10</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Women's Literary Club, Detroit, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Drama Society, Beloit, Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Drama League, Washington, D. C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>7:30 P.M. Lecture at Richmond College, Richmond, Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Author's League, Springfield, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Columbus School for Girls, Columbus, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Woman's Club, Sewickley, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the University Club, Erie, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Twentieth Century Club, Buffalo, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 25</td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Library Lecture Association, Bronxville, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>7:45 P.M. Lecture to the Woman's Club, Boston, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture to the Drama League, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the Hill School, Pottstown, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
best play or short story. In the reviews of the other college lectures there is no indication that he offered these prizes elsewhere.

In the Philadelphia lecture of January 18, Masefield concluded by volunteering to contribute one of his next poems to Philadelphia's new literary magazine, Contemporary Verse.

At the close of each of the lectures Masefield read a few of his poems and often a scene from one of his plays. One reviewer mentioned an intermission between the lecture and the reading but there is no indication that this was a standard procedure. There is no evidence that he had any special method of choosing the poems, or arranging them for delivery. According to the reviews he often read "Sea Fever," "August, 1914," "Consecration," "The Wanderer," "Cargoes," "The Everlasting Mercy," "In the Harbor," "West Wind," "The Winds," "Captain Stratton," "Cape Horn Gospel," "Spanish Waters," "Tewksbury Road," "A Creed," "A Valediction," lyrics from Pompey the Great, and a scene from his play The Tragedy of Nan. At the conclusion of his Yale College lecture on January 14, he was reported to have asked his audience to suggest poems for him to read, but reviews of his other lectures do not report such a practice.

---

14 College News (Bryn Mawr College), 10 February 1916.
15 Public Ledger (Philadelphia), 19 January 1916.
The brevity of the lecture, plus the fact that Masefield spent as much of his performance time reading from his own poetry and the poetry of selected English writers as he did lecturing, caused some to refer to his performances as "Readings"17 or "Author's Readings."18 His entire performance including both the lecture and readings lasted approximately one hour.

Masefield delivered two other lectures on the 1916 tour, "The Tragic Drama" (February 28) and "The Coming of Christopher Marlowe" (March 18), both before the Drama League in New York. They were longer than the English poets lecture and were confined to a discussion of the history of English drama. At the close of the lecture on February 28 he read a scene from his play The Tragedy of Nan, which had been performed a few years previously in the same location (Aeolian Hall).19

Although complete copies of the three lectures delivered on the 1916 tour are not available, newspapers published large portions of them in their reviews of Masefield's appearances.

His audiences on the tour were composed primarily of faculty and students in the colleges and members of social and literary organizations. Masefield was given a warm

welcome by most of his audiences but there were occasions when the American public seemed uncertain as to the literary significance of his visit. The academic and literary groups were enthusiastic and receptive, while the general public reaction was slower in coming and far less assured that Masefield was a figure worthy of attention. The Yale College lecture on January 14 was announced and reviewed by the college newspaper but was not deemed worthy of a line in any of the four New Haven newspapers. In Philadelphia, on January 18, he arrived at the train station but there was no one there to meet him. He hailed a taxi and went to the lecture alone. Once there, he was given a warm welcome by a handful of admirers. According to one observer, the audience for the lecture was small and Masefield's appearance attracted "little public interest." The circumstances were different when Masefield returned to Philadelphia for his lecture on March 5. He spoke before 5,000 people, with hundreds turned away for lack of seats. The explanation of the contrast between this reception and the earlier one is to be found in the fact that between these two visits Masefield had attracted much attention with his lectures and readings. He had also been the subject of extended sketches and full-page discussions in many of the major

20Register and Leader (Des Moines), 8 March 1916.
21Public Ledger (Philadelphia), 6 March 1916.
newspapers. The newspapers also printed copies of several of his poems, including "Widow in the Bye Street" and "My Epitaph," with which the public were possibly unacquainted. If the large crowd at the second Philadelphia lecture did not read Masefield's published works after the first lecture, their interest was at least stimulated by the newspaper publicity.

The lecture appearances and publicity brought about a significant revision of American opinion about Masefield. The public no longer thought of him as a "hearty sea-dog" or "picturesque sailor-poet," separated from his public by eccentric behavior and a life of high adventure. His appearances erased the superstitution and "substituted something less sensational but more satisfactory and more real." The reviewers were sure that the United States would profit greatly from Masefield's presence in this country. A writer for the New York Evening Post stated that Masefield brought "something which few other men could bring to the literary life of this country, something very simple, very utterly sincere, very uncompromising, in the way of art and criticism .... And while he is learning about poets and points of view here, America is likely to learn from him."24


Although newspaper reports reveal that most of Masefield's lectures were well attended, the largest and most receptive audiences were probably those at the colleges. His appearances at the colleges were described as "the greatest event of the academic year," and "a contribution to the intellectual life of the college." On one campus he was given credit for starting a "Masefield craze" that encouraged the students to read "anything written by Mr. Masefield." At the Yale College lecture on January 14, where the seats were all filled and "the standees occupied every inch of available space," Masefield held the crowd "enthralled" and "completely oblivious to everything but the spell of the poet's imagery." At the Bryn Mawr College lecture on January 22, the audience was described as "crowded to the last corner of the balcony," as they listened with interest and appreciation.

Masefield usually took an opportunity to meet the college students and faculty personally. He visited the dining commons and library at Yale College in order to "sense something of the atmosphere of the place" and to meet a few of the students prior to the lecture.

26 Union Alumni Monthly (Union College), April 1916.
29 College News (Bryn Mawr College), 10 February 1916.
College he attended an informal luncheon of faculty and students where he took a "kindly interest" in the students. His "words of encouragement to the undergraduate scribblers" would be long remembered.31

While visiting in the various American cities, Masefield was often honored with dinners and receptions. Sometimes these were occasions on which Masefield delivered his lectures, at other times they were special events given by organizations and individuals who merely wished to honor him and make him feel welcome in the United States. The McDowell Club in New York gave a reception for him on January 16 with approximately 400 people in attendance. Many of those attending were well known literary figures such as Percy MacKaye, Walter Lippmann and Edward Arlington Robinson. This was one of the receptions at which Masefield delivered his English poets lecture.32

Masefield was not scheduled to lecture at a reception given for him by the Author's League in New York on January 20. Among the many famous poets, playwrights and authors in attendance were Amy Lowell, Hamlin Garland and Max Eastman. Winston Churchill, the American novelist and chairman of the Author's League of New York, asked Masefield to deliver an impromptu after-dinner address. Masefield declined to make the address but instead related this

31 *Union Alumni Monthly*, April 1916.
anecdote:

A lady captured Tennyson, after many efforts, as her guest at a dinner party. She expected much poetic discourse. The most poetic thing Tennyson said was, "This mutton ought to be cut in hunks," and he didn't say anything else during the meal. All I can say is that, as I found it, American hospitality is certainly cut in very large hunks, as demonstrated here and everywhere else I have been.  

On March 15 a farewell dinner was given for Masefield by the Drama League in New York. One newspaper reported that "500 dined from 8 to 12 P.M.," and described the guests as "immortals" in the literary world. Among the dignitaries seated at the head table with Masefield were Amy Lowell, Talcott Williams, Alfred Noyes, Edwin Markham and Louis Untermeyer. Each of these writers quoted verse during the four hour occasion. They quoted their own verse or that of some other poet present, and argued with Amy Lowell over the significance of "vers libre." Amy Lowell asked for hisses before her recitation since she was "unable to speak without the inspiration of a hostile audience." Louis Untermeyer had written several "side-splitting burlesques" of the style of Amy Lowell and Masefield. This informal fun-making soon ended and Masefield gave his lecture on the English poets. For the first time on the tour, he concluded the lecture by

34New York Herald Tribune, 16 March 1916.
35Ibid.
offering a few remarks on the war and the friendship between England and the United States. A New York correspondent for the London Times stated that the dinner "resolved itself into a great pro-Ally demonstration. Mr. Masefield's speech was brilliant, and he carried the audience by storm with his references to the War of Independence." The evening ended with a toast to Masefield as a poet and gentlemen.

The only other times when Masefield spoke openly of the war were during the newspaper interviews on March 18 and 19. After the Drama League lecture in New York on March 18, he was asked by reporters how he thought the war would end. He stated that he did not believe the war would end in a crushing defeat for Germany, but he thought the British blockade and the economic isolation of the Central Powers would probably result in Germany's submission.

Just before his departure for England on March 19, Masefield spoke briefly in one final interview on the possible effect of the war on the people of England and the United States. He pronounced Whitman America's democratic poet, who "looks out upon the street and says, 'I shall go out and enjoy these comrades of mine--they are my brothers and sisters'." He described the Englishman as a shy person "who looks out upon the street and sees each human being

with all his thoughts, pleasures and pains," and "understands with a deep sympathy, but he does not say, 'I am one with them'." Masefield believed the war had changed English writers to a degree and had caused authors like Rupert Brooke and himself to attempt a more complete identification with mankind's problems. The British reconstruction after the war, he thought, was "bound to be more democratic." Masefield's Appearance and Manner of Delivery

Masefield was described during the 1916 tour as a "quiet," "gentle," and "thoughtful" man who appeared before his audiences as a proper and refined Englishman with delicately cultivated manners. He was "short of stature, with whitened temples" and usually wore a "sack coat and turndown collar." His appearance reflected signs of his recent illness while in the Red Cross service in France. He was "hollow-cheeked" and "pale from the earlier fever and seemed generally delicate of health."

In the first lecture of his tour, while speaking at Yale College, he was reported as "shy" and "diffident"

---


40 Ibid.


43 Public Ledger (Philadelphia), 19 January 1916.
upon approaching the audience but relaxed as the audience began to show its appreciation and friendliness with applause. After the lecture he asked if the audience had poems to suggest for him to read. A few were requested and finally someone asked him to read his war poem "August, 1914." He began the reading with a voice "tense with feeling" and proceeded with a "quiet enthusiasm," but soon his voice became so "weak" that it could be clearly seen that he was experiencing a deep emotion. One reviewer reported that Masefield was able to continue the reading until he came to the lines:

And died (uncouthly most) in foreign land  
For some idea but dimly understood  
Of an English city never built by hand  
Which love of England prompted and made good.

Then his voice faltered and he asked to be excused for not finishing the poem. A witness later stated that "no finer evidence of the patriotism of John Masefield could have been asked." He read the poem again on January 16 for the McDowell Club in New York. On this occasion he achieved more control and confidence in his delivery of the poem and read "with restraint, emphasizing it as a war poem." 

44 Ibid.  
45 Ibid.  
Masefield's confidence seemed to grow from lecture to lecture and he became more and more relaxed with his American audiences. At the McDowell Club lecture he was described as in a "half whimsical mood," delivering his humor with a "shadow of a twinkle" in his eye. He was also reported as having a "merry sense of humor" in his Philadelphia lecture on January 18. He read his poem "Captain Stratton's Fancy" (a drinking song), and when the audience showed its approval and appreciation, he said with a sly smile, "Don't applaud that scandalous ditty."

Masefield was nothing like those actors and elocutionists of the day who used flamboyant delivery. There was no sign of affectation or artificiality in his manner. His delivery was "better than elocution," for it had an "imaginative fire" that made it vivid and intense. It was a low-toned delivery, so simple and unaffected that any pretense was "far below him."

His eyes were "quiet and full of thought" as he spoke and his body seemed in a "meditative response." His bodily action was limited and his gestures were at a

---


51 Ibid.

52 *Beloit Daily News* (Wisconsin), 12 February 1916.

minimum. He often placed one hand in a pocket of his trousers and moved the other hand only to turn the pages of the manuscript.

Masefield's voice was a "rich baritone" but "lacked volume and variety." Although his pitch range was limited during the lectures, it demonstrated more range and animation during the readings. During the lectures his voice was reported as "monotonous," but with an intense monotony like a "priest's intoning" with its "sincerity and restrained fire."

The readings were reported as having a little more vivacity and spirit than the lectures. The reviewers seemed impressed with the fact that Masefield's "low-toned" reading technique could involve his audiences so intensely in his poems. He carried his audiences "off across the seas, through hurricane and calm," and his expression at times became so vivid that "the auditors could almost smell the smoking oil-lamp swaying above the heads of the crew." He read of the sea storms as "one whose reading takes him back to the wild nights, the piercing cold, the

54 Hartford Daily Courant, 23 January 1916.
icyards and the constant danger . . . "59 As he read he seemed to be "seeing again the brooding blackness of the south west gale off the horn."60 He read the shorter poems with relish, looking and sounding as if he were "feeling the thrill of them for the first time."61

Masefield read his poems in a semi-chant with a true feeling for rhythm. His voice was delicate and had almost a musical tone. The poetic qualities of the English language became evident as he read softly and "with rich feeling for rhythm and smooth sounds."62 The short word sequences in poems like "Sea Fever" and "West Wind" were delivered with a perfect sense of rhythm. The vivid imagery in his poems was delivered effectively as he added tone color to phrases like "wind like a whetted knife," "tatters of shouts," and "my soul shall follow steamers/ Like a gull."63

While reading, Masefield often looked out over the heads of his audience, seldom making direct eye-contact with them. On especially moving portions of a poem he closed his eyes as if remembering the experience that

59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
inspired the poem. One reviewer was struck by the fact that Masefield, although having the manuscript available, often chose to chant the poems from memory. He asked Masefield how he had been able to remember the poems for so long and Masefield said: "Well, I've been chanting them a great deal since I've been in this country. I don't know if I could recite any one of them off hand after they were published."

What an audience saw at a typical Masefield lecture during the 1916 tour was a speaker who possessed a "calm strength" and a direct and serious manner. He spoke with little vocal variety during the lecture but his voice became more flexible and animated during the reading of his poems. He often became intensely absorbed in his poetry as he read and at these times seemed to ignore the audience completely. His simple and unaffected manner was totally unlike melodramatic elocutionists of the day. When he spoke, the image he projected was that of a thoroughly human man who loved people and felt deeply about their welfare.

---

64 _Beloit Daily News_, 12 February 1916.
65 _Ibid._
"THE ENGLISH POETS" LECTURE

The lecture entitled "The English Poets" was approximately thirty minutes long and was delivered more often than any other during the 1916 tour. Copies of the lecture are unavailable, having been lost in a fire that destroyed a wing of the Masefield home. Short summaries of the lecture can be found in the New York Herald Tribune, January 23, 1916, and Wellesley College News, March 23, 1916. Extracts and quotations from other newspapers are helpful in piecing together the major portions of the lecture.

Reviews of the lecture indicate that Masefield's introduction was generally less formal than the remainder of the lecture and was usually brief. He used the introduction to develop rapport with his audiences and to secure their good will. He did this by offering prizes to student writers in his audiences, thanking audiences for kindnesses shown him during his visit, volunteering to give some of his poems to local literary magazines, and by using various humorous anecdotes and metaphors. For instance,

67 Letter to the writer from Judith Masefield, April 15, 1969.
69 Boston Evening Transcript, 27 February 1916.
70 Public Ledger (Philadelphia), 19 January 1916.
in the McDowell Club lecture on January 16 he began his lecture by using this metaphor:

A lyric poet quite strikingly resembles a small mechanical dog, one of those absurd little creatures which will squeak when properly punched. If you press the dog's fuzzy diaphragm in the right place there will be sound forthcoming, however much or little it may resemble the voice prototypic so it is with the lyric poet. When emotion presses against his heart he sings. Thus the difference between fuzzy dogs and lyric poets becomes largely a vocal difference--one squeaks and the other sings.  

After delivering one of these brief introductions, Masefield began the body of his lecture by prophesying a great renaissance in poetry, and in all the arts when the war was over. He believed there would be a strong feeling among the people against every manifestation of brute force, and this revulsion would result in a wide-spread interest in art. He stated that the United States had already witnessed this new interest in art as Americans observed the experimental techniques of their new poets. "In this new interest," he said, "may be observed the germs of what will develop into a great world movement," which might begin with a tendency to return to "community art," and could usher in an era of the amateur. This "community art" would grow naturally out of a democracy and would have its best opportunity for development in the United States.  

---

2 Ibid.
The discussion of the future of poetry led Masefield into an examination of the "free movement" in American poetry. This movement seemed to him a period of experimentation that would stimulate volumes of good poetry and announce the coming of some great new poet. He then compared the present movement in the United States with the movement in the time of Chaucer. Before Chaucer's time experimentation with poetry was popular and "everyone was experimenting with foreign measures--French measures and Spanish. Chaucer himself served a long apprenticeship, under the thumb of each of these foreign influences for a while. Then he fused them into something new . . . . The man who can do the fusing in this case may be living now--but we do not know him yet."74

Although Masefield reflected a great admiration for Chaucer and was an exponent of the old ballad form himself, he nevertheless expressed not only an interest but an admiration for "vers libre," which he felt was the beginning of the new free movement in poetry.75 He cited America's Edgar Lee Masters as his example of a poet involved in this movement and called his poetry "distinctly American" striking "a deep and powerful note."76

74 *Ibid*.
76 *Ibid*.
had not read Master's poetry before he arrived in the United States, but took time to read the *Spoon River Anthology* during his visit. American poets had influenced Masefield and he courted the approval of the American audiences by offering praise to Masters.

Masefield confessed that although he was not familiar with the works of many American poets, he had read and enjoyed Robert Frost and Vachel Lindsay. Speaking of these two poets he said, "I think these poets, and, of course others with whom I am not actually acquainted, are striking out after much more individual expression than that aspired toward by the American poets of a few generations ago." He accused some of these nineteenth century poets (mentioning especially Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell) of borrowing from the English poets and not striking out on their own for the individual expression needed for good poetry. He believed that they could not hope to interpret American life with these imitations.

Masefield then turned his attention to the English poets. "At present," he said, "England is thinking of other things than poetry. And for some years now it will be, when the fire of sacrifice has died down and the ashes

---

79 Ibid.
alone are left. But in five, seven or ten years English poets will be singing a new song."  

Masefield thought that English poetry like all good poetry, reflected the nation's personality, and that although the old English poets were not remote and did "mingle with the crowd," the new English poets had been "a few talking to a few." He believed English poetry had only occasionally reached the masses, and thought of his own guiding motive as a poet to be the bringing of the poet closer to the common man. Believing Masefield achieved this goal, Charles Sorley spoke of him as having "brought poetry down to the level of low life and in so doing has exalted it to the heaven . . . ." Masefield expressed a desire to "interpret life both by reflecting it as it appears and by portraying its outcome . . . . I have frequently chosen tragedy as a medium, because I feel that tragedy reveals the deepest springs of human nature." He liked to believe that English soldiers repeated snatches of the better English poems "on their way to death, as I've often heard them do in the past year." He believed that

---

81 Ibid.
poetry should be meaningful and available to the masses.

In the next portion of his lecture Masefield discussed individually a number of noteworthy English poets and read some of their poems. He spoke of Chaucer as "all that English art is and has been" and read from the *Canterbury Tales.* He discussed Gray's "Elegy" as the only great poem written between the Reformation and the time of Blake, and then read the poem as an example of the beforementioned poems the soldiers repeated just before they died. He spoke of Wordsworth and Blake as "great minds in the revolt from the domination of the intellect." He described Shakespeare as a writer of the "stuff of common life," called Tennyson "the great poet of the middle class," and spoke of Browning and Swinburne as poets who "revolted from the middle class." Reviewers gave no indication that Masefield read from the works of these latter poets.

Masefield concluded the lecture by saying that he would not speak of the modern English poets whose minds were on war and not poetry. He believed that in a few years England would be "quickened to a new inspiration" and the poets would be singing a "grander song." Masefield expressed a hope to be alive "after the destruction of the lives of men

---

85 *College News* (Bryn Mawr College), 10 February 1916.
87 *College News* (Bryn Mawr College), 10 February 1916.
88 Ibid.
and women has ceased, and to help in the reconstruction."89

THE TWO DRAMA LECTURES

Prior to his visit to the United States in 1916, Masefield had written a number of plays, notably The Faithful (1915) and The Tragedy of Nan (1909). He had also produced his critical work on Shakespeare in 1911, and had devoted much of his life to the study of drama. Because of his recognized scholarship the Drama League arranged for him to deliver two lectures on the subject of drama: "The Tragic Drama," February 28, and "The Coming of Christopher Marlowe," March 18.90

The February lecture was a long and detailed one, tracing the development of English drama from its beginnings to the Elizabethan drama.91 It began with a comparison of theatre audiences of the past with those of the present. According to Masefield, audiences of the past came to the theatre to be "thoroughly thrilled and harrowed," and "really enjoyed seeing . . . the greatest violence and the keenest suffering which man can do and endure," while the modern audience preferred "an evening's amusement" or

89 Hamilton Life (Hamilton College, Clinton, New York), 7 March 1916.


91 For a summary of the contents of this lecture see New York Times, 5 March 1916, p. 7.
the presentation of some problem that they could solve. Masefield believed that modern audiences disliked the sight of suffering, greed, violence, or anything else "unsettling or moving." Yet "all drama springs from the fact that any vigorous act comes from intense life, and is interesting to watch. Drama, clash of will or contest of any kind, always compels attention."

At this point Masefield described two forms of the drama that he had had the good fortune to witness. The first form, perhaps dating back four or five hundred years, and as Masefield put it, "less impressive" of the two, was the Christmas mummer's play of St. George of Cappadocia, such as was still presented at this date in English villages. Masefield described the details of this performance in a short narrative as "a party of men . . . all young . . . the roughest and wildest country laborers from a wild and lonely countryside then many miles from any railway . . . halted in the street and then their leader in rough, rhymed traditional verse containing some words so old and so distorted that neither he nor any one there could have understood them, began the clumsy old play." The play was described as approximately ten minutes long, followed by a "strange step dance." Masefield was impressed by the

---

92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
performance and stated that he often thought of it as "the effort of untaught men to celebrate something and to take to themselves, humble as they were, a little part of the general rejoicing for Christ's birth." It seemed to Masefield an exclamation from the hearts of the people and "contained in itself all that is native in English poetry, homeliness, uncouth honesty, depth of feeling, a sense of mystery, a love of the countryside, kindness and horse play. It was the foundation or outline: others could build on it or fill it in."94

The second form of English drama described by Masefield was that of a primitive ritual and dance observed in a remote and wild part of England. He described the performance in colorful detail. The ritual was that of symbolically killing an ox and the dance was described by Masefield as "the one real dance I have ever seen. I have seen modern ballets—Russian, French, and English—and a variety of folk dancing, but nothing approaching the vigor and variety of the swirling figures." Masefield called the ritual as old a drama as man, "not far removed from the wild animal stage," and "the most impressive spectacle I have ever seen in the type of drama. After that all other forms of drama have seemed a little commonplace, unreal and vulgar, or a little vain, unable to exalt, terrify or gladden in the same way."95

94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
The remainder of this lecture explained how English drama had its origins in the festivals of the people and always grew from native sources and the common people. He told of the strolling players and the plays of the guilds and religious societies and of the changes introduced by Marlowe.

The second drama lecture was given on March 18 and was a continuation of the first one. In the first part of the lecture Masefield duplicated a part of the earlier drama lecture by reviewing in great detail the place of the religious plays in the history of English drama. He then traced English drama through the time of Christopher Marlowe. The lecture was long and included detailed and extended descriptions of the morality plays and the early Elizabethan theatre.

Masefield left no doubt of his admiration for Marlowe's contribution to English drama, for Marlowe "appeared on the scene when the theatre was still at the crossroads and when its future development was still uncertain." Masefield insisted that Marlowe had developed more quickly as a writer than Shakespeare and his "passage through this world

96 Ibid.
98 For a summary of the contents of this lecture see New York Times, 19 March 1916, p. 6.
99 Ibid.
where genius is always outnumbered, to say the least, was neither quiet nor long." Marlowe was described by Masefield as a young man coming from the university and saying to himself something as follows:

These old moralities with their abstract virtues and the rest of it are dead; the plays these old college dons write are both dead and silly. The only things the public really like are the roaring parts, like Herod and Pilate. Well, then, why not write a play which will consist of a roaring part sustained enough to be a study of character. The public likes these long lyrical outbursts. They have never had one which can reasonably be called poetry nor reasonably a study of man's central self. I will write a play about one of the splendid egotists of history. He shall rave or declaim whole pages of fluent and rousing poetry. He shall pace through a pageant of splendid acts in a procession of glory, exulting in himself like Lucifer and taking to himself all that is furious and untamed and beautiful . . . . I will write my play about the soul of every man as it would be if there were no laws, no conventions, and no fetters of any kind, and every man will praise, for every man will see himself in my hero.100

The play referred to is Tamburlaine, which Masefield described as a "wild" and "passionate" dramatic poem. Its effect, according to Masefield, "decided the course of the Elizabethan theatre," for "after Marlowe no one doubted that the proper study for the stage was the passionate nature of man and the intoxication of his will, and the results tragical to himself and others which flow from them; and that the language . . . . is a vigorous and varied verse capable of softness and of fury."101

100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
In concluding his lecture Masefield again and again expressed his high admiration for Marlowe's achievement. He believed that "until Marlowe no one had realized the possibilities of the stage," and "a man like Marlowe appears and sets the world on fire." He closed the lecture by saying that Marlowe's proclamation to the world was in terms of "the wonders of the human self," and that if Marlowe were alive in 1916 he would tell the people of the world to look upon themselves as "the only poetry in the world, . . . you strange, miraculous, ecstatic creatures."  

MASEFIELD'S OFFICIAL REPORT OF HIS 1916 TOUR

Upon his return to England, Masefield made a formal written report to the British Cabinet and to Sir Gilbert Parker concerning conditions in America and the effect of enemy war propaganda upon the American people. A full copy of this report appears in Appendix A as taken from the American Press Resume, April 7, 1916.

The report was divided into three parts: the first part was merely a general survey of what he had observed while on his tour; the second part offered Masefield's suggestions as to urgent needs for British propaganda in America; and the final part provided Masefield's suggestions as to how the friendship between England and America might be improved and secured.

102Ibid.
In the first portion of the report Masefield expressed his belief that the eastern part of the United States was "generally pro-Ally" and the strongest concentration of this attitude was in Boston, Philadelphia and New York. But he also expressed the belief that a great number of Americans in the East "hate the English and lose no opportunity to malign them." According to Masefield these Americans had been kept on the British side only by the "traditional national friendship with France," their sympathies being with the French and not the British.

Masefield described the Southern part of the United States as more friendly and pro-Ally than the East. He thought the people were more warm and cordial toward the British because of "England's sympathy with the Southern cause in the Secession War." But Masefield also noted that the Southern sympathy was not practical. He said he "had not the fortune to hear of any Southerner who had actually gone to the war in any way with personal service." The Mid-West was described by Masefield as generally pro-Ally also, but "overshadowed and subdued by fear of the great German organizations centered in Milwaukee, Chicago, and St. Louis. German influence dominates and cowes [sic] the Middle West." Masefield reported this region as the

103 American Press Resumé, 7 April 1916, p. 2.
104 Ibid.
105 Ibid.
most vulnerable to German propaganda.\textsuperscript{106}

In the second portion of the report Masefield suggested that (1) a "loyal Irish member, preferably a Catholic," be sent to America without delay to "silence the Irish-American Party, who exude poison from every pore,"\textsuperscript{107} (2) an effort be made to supply more and better news from the front for the cultivated Eastern cities, (3) a better use be made of film propaganda since Americans are greatly influenced by the motion pictures, (4) an effort be made to reply to the American question, "What has the English army done?" (Masefield suggested that the best British writers be given this assignment) and finally, that (5) he be given the task of preparing an article to be published in America concerning the Dardanelles campaign to counteract the lies regarding Gallipoli spread by the Germans.

The third and final portion of the report was devoted to the subject of "a real linking together of the English-speaking peoples."\textsuperscript{108} Masefield suggested that a liberal exchange of college professors with America, and a "few scraps of autograph by famous English writers"\textsuperscript{109} offered as a gift to selected American universities might serve the

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., p. 4.
The report as a whole reveals that although Masefield's 1916 lecture tour in America concerned itself with things literary, he was at the same time, fully aware of the charge given him by Sir Gilbert Parker and had observed carefully the effects of the war propaganda on the American public.

Masefield's 1916 lecture tour in the United States was a success both as British war propaganda and as a method of advancing Masefield's literary reputation in this country. The British propaganda organization made effective use of these observations of American public opinion by implementing his suggestions in planning future propaganda in the United States. His lectures and the reading of his poems won for him a new admiration among the American public.
CHAPTER IV

MASEFIELD'S SECOND LECTURE TOUR: 1918

Since the war proved to have a profound effect on Masefield, and since much of what he delivered in his lectures during the 1918 tour he gathered from his experiences on the war front in 1916 and 1917, some attention should be given to his activities between the lecture tours.

MASEFIELD'S ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE LECTURE TOURS

Masefield's report to the British Cabinet after his 1916 tour had expressed a need to counteract German lies in regard to the Gallipoli campaign. Masefield had asked specifically that he be given the responsibility for writing a document for this purpose. His suggestion was well received by the British officials and since Masefield had been a part of the Dardanelles Campaign and felt so strongly about it, they placed before him the official records and accounts of the campaign.¹

At first Masefield believed the document should take

¹*New York Times*, 27 January 1918, p. 11.
the form of a leaflet printed for distribution in the United States. The leaflet would give his views of the campaign and his accounts of the events. After considering the matter more carefully, he remembered the great human effort in the Dardanelles and thought that the British failure was the "second grand event of the war, after Belgium's answer to the German ultimatum." He knew of the many military operations of the Dardanelles that had failed from "something which had nothing to do with arms nor with the men who bore them." His personal involvement in these events made him wish to tell the full story. He knew the complete account would require something more than the leaflet. He also knew that, whatever form the writing took, it must be done quickly to be effective against the German propaganda. His decision to write the document as a book resulted in Gallipoli, published in October, 1916, and reprinted in November, 1916. The book was not only a factual account of the events transpiring during the campaign, but a thrilling narrative of the "horrors and splendors of the struggle." In it Masefield

---

3 Ibid., p. 4.
4 Ibid.
6 "Mr. Masefield's Saga of Gallipoli," Spectator, CXVII (7 October 1916), 415.
attempted to answer the questions and demands addressed to him during his 1916 American tour. One reviewer stated that with the repeated questions of the American audiences the "fire gradually kindled in him, and with a full heart, not unmoved by righteous indignation and fortified by first-hand knowledge, he composed what may be called the authentic saga of the Dardanelles Campaign. If the sales of the book indicated success then Gallipoli succeeded. It sold well in both England and America.

Regarding the book as successful propaganda and desiring to make further use of Masefield in the war effort, the British War Office asked Masefield to return to the battle front in France and examine the relief work being conducted by American organizations. Masefield's wife, Constance, was worried over the possibility of his returning to the battle front because of his frail health. She wrote to Sir Edward Marsh to thank him for his concern over Masefield's health in 1915 when he was instrumental in setting up Masefield's 1916 lecture tour in the United States. Telling Marsh that Masefield was happier in doing what he did well and would be unhappy wasting his energy in doing what others might do better, she suggested that someone else might better handle the front line work. She

---

7 Ibid.

admitted, however, that she could not prevent his returning to the war if that was his wish.9

Masefield did decide to return to the battle front. While observing the American relief organizations at work in Paris, he was approached by a member of the British Military Mission and was taken to General Headquarters where he was introduced to General Haig. Haig was well aware of Masefield's war activities and decided to send Masefield to the Somme theatre of war as an official war historian. Masefield arrived at the Somme in time to witness the battle of October, 1916.10 He had been at the Somme only a short time when he was called back to England to give his report on American relief work, in which he praised the relief work he had witnessed in France. A few months later Masefield sent a special cable to the editor of the New York Times to defend dramatically America's neutrality and applaud the work of the Americans.11 Masefield explained that the many who had criticized America for not entering the war on the side of the Allies must remember America's distance from the war and that the "mind of a nation as a whole cannot grasp war" easily from afar.12

---

12Ibid.
The tradition of America, like all young nations, was "against all entanglement in European affairs," and although America had not literally entered the war "the most thoughtful and feeling of her people" had done their part for the cause with "persistent largeness of generous effort."\(^{13}\)

On the subject of American relief work, Masefield pointed out that thousands of Americans were serving in Canadian regiments, many had joined the British army and others had joined the French Foreign Legion. He gave as an example the poet Alan Seeger, who had been killed in France. He also praised the American hospital and ambulance work where many famous American surgeons had served. He mentioned the distribution centers for gifts and hospital equipment, a big depot that issued clothing to refugees, an American association for the rebuilding of devastated districts, and a society for the distribution of delicacies to the wounded. He concluded the cable by stating that all this "makes a fair record for a neutral country."\(^{14}\)

After fulfilling his responsibilities as a reporter of American war relief, Masefield desired to return once again to the Somme battle front. He requested the assistance of Lord Esher in persuading the Chief of Military Operations to send him back to the Somme with his former duty as a war

\(^{13}\text{Ibid.}\)
\(^{14}\text{Ibid.}\)
historian. The request was granted and Masefield remained on the battle front from January until June, 1917. He was directed to witness the battle and write, not for the purpose of propaganda, but "for work of a permanent value in the domain of high literature." Colonel John Charteris, in his book of recollections of the war, stated that Masefield's task at the Somme was a curious one. He believed that if Masefield had begun his writing during the battle it would have been censored, even if it had been planned for delayed publication, because of the possibility of the material falling into the wrong hands. Charteris also believed that if Masefield had known he would be censored, he would have refused to write. Masefield did write, however, and he published his observations of the British line of battle in an historical essay entitled The Old Front Line in December, 1917. His detailed account of the Somme was delayed and later published under the title The Battle of the Somme in June, 1919.

In June, 1917, while in the town of Albert, near the front line at the Somme, Masefield was wounded. Although there are few details as to the extent of the injury, it

15Letter from Lord Esher to Lord Balfour, 26 December 1917, British Public Records Office.


18Ibid.
was serious enough to return Masefield to England. He had some difficulty in regaining his health and did not leave his home in Oxford from July 10 through September 11, 1917.20

In October the British Foreign Office requested that Masefield make another American lecture tour, the dates of the tour to depend on how soon Masefield could recover from his wound and how the war had progressed by that time.21 There were those who thought Masefield should not return to the American lecture circuit while in poor health. Lord Esher was of this mind, believing that Masefield should perform his war service either in England or through some limited activity in France. When he discovered that Masefield had accepted the second American tour he said, "Why, God only knows. I should have thought that nature had deprived him of those physical attributes that go to make a propagandist on the stump."22

The details of the American tour were completed and the tour was scheduled to begin in January, 1918. Masefield used the intervening time to prepare for his lecture and to regain his health.


21Ibid.

22Letter from Esher to Balfour, 26 December 1917.
On October 24, 1917, Masefield wrote Colonel John Buchan of the British Foreign Office to request information for use in his lectures. He wanted materials not only to include in his formal presentation but for use in answering the questions asked by the American audiences. He knew from his previous tour that he was unprepared for many of them. Knowing there were points about which he was certain to be asked, he requested that the Foreign Office provide him with any official publications that would help him "frame" his answers beforehand.\(^\text{23}\) In his letter Masefield requested specifically a summary of the "Dublin Rising." Buchan forwarded the letter to R. F. Roxburgh of the Foreign Office, who worked with Oscar Ashcroft of Wellington House in securing the material for Masefield.\(^\text{24}\) A "bundle of materials" on the subjects requested by Masefield was sent to him on November 5, 1917.\(^\text{25}\) He found this material useful in the preparation of the lectures and on November 11 wrote Roxburgh thanking him for the materials, saying, "I am sorry to trouble you again for more information, but I am very anxious to bring into my American speeches an account of


\(^{25}\) Ibid.
what we have done for the Allies." He then requested detailed information and figures on tonnage of goods and equipment sent by Britain into Russia, France, Italy, Serbia and Belgium. Masefield suggested that these figures would provide good propaganda. Although Wellington House could not send all of the material Masefield requested because of "objections to the publication of all the evidence," he was provided with enough data to be helpful in preparing the lectures.

On November 17, 1917, Masefield again wrote Roxburgh, saying, "I am sorry to become a public nuisance, but I have just heard that it is very necessary to clear up the lies spread about the U. S. in the matter of Mr. Sheehy Skeffington. The Irish have distorted that matter against us, and I would like to put the true version of it before the Americans." Once again Wellington House aided Masefield in securing the materials he needed. He was allowed to examine the Report of the Commission on Inquiry in the Sheehy Skeffington case.

27 Ibid.
Masefield seemed satisfied with the amount and types of information provided by Wellington House. Although little of the material was used in his lectures, it prepared Masefield for answering questions from the American audiences.  

Masefield wanted to be certain that the American public would receive him on this tour as not only a representative of the literary world but also as a war-time spokesman for the British government. To encourage this view, Masefield requested that he be sent to America "cut in uniform." The War Office did not like the idea since it would necessitate providing him with a commission. Because of the disagreement between Masefield and the War Office the matter was dropped. Masefield was assured, however, that he had the fullest confidence and support of the Foreign Office while on the tour.  

MASEFIELD'S ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES  

Masefield came to America in 1918 under quite different circumstances from those of 1916. In 1916 America had not entered the war and was unsure of her loyalties. Masefield arrived as an unseasoned circuit lecturer from England and was instructed by the British War Office to limit the subject

---


of his lectures to literature. In 1918 America had entered the war and the American people were committed to the side of the Allies. Masefield arrived with experience on the lecture circuit and with a public announcement that he was in America to speak of the war. Now that America had entered the war Masefield could speak his propaganda openly and support the British propaganda organization.

The big task for British propaganda in 1918 was to strengthen the American enthusiasm in support of the war. America had joined the fighting but had not done it enthusiastically. The national spirit in America had been aroused and the British propaganda had to seize every opportunity to strengthen it. The British did not enlarge their propaganda organization in 1918, but instead depended heavily on the Americans to carry on much of the work.  

The American citizen became accustomed to hearing the propaganda, and the civic, social and educational groups were flooded with speakers and pamphlets. Both British and American information agencies were providing a constant stream of speakers for these groups. The American Committee on Public Information sent out 75,000 men who delivered four-minute speeches on the war to 7,555,190 audiences.

---

34 H. C. Peterson, Propaganda For War (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1939), pp. 312-322.

The American people desired more and more information about the war and the propagandists were seeing that they obtained it.

Because of the abundance of war lecturers, Masefield found no difficulty being accepted by the American public as a propagandist-lecturer. When he arrived, the American audiences were eager to hear his views on the war. His book *Gallipoli* had been circulated widely in America and his audiences were aware of his war service in France since his last lecture tour. One public notice expressed satisfaction in the fact that "at last Mr. Masefield has consented to talk on the war."^36

The 1918 tour eventually became two tours; the first was a public tour from January 15 through May 9, and the second was a tour of the American war camps from May 10 through July 31. There is no indication that Masefield anticipated the war camp tour when he arrived in America.

During Masefield's visit in America in 1918, he delivered three separate lectures. For the public tour his major lecture was entitled "The War and the Future," and was delivered on all occasions except one. The single exception was the lecture "St. George and the Dragon" delivered on April 23 for the St. George Society in New York. During the war camp tour he delivered a lecture

---

^36Publicity Notice of J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau, 1918, Masefield Papers, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut.
that he called "A Talk With the Soldiers At Camp." All three lectures were similar in that they spoke of the war problems and included many stories and illustrations taken from Masefield's war experiences. The "St. George and the Dragon" lecture included very little new material and few stories not found in one of the other lectures.

THE PUBLIC TOUR: 1918

The public tour in 1918, like the 1916 tour, was under the management of the J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau in New York. Masefield had agreed to a number of engagements before leaving for the United States but followed an itinerary prepared and managed by the Pond Bureau. The British Bureau of Public Information was the official British sponsor.

Masefield arrived in New York for the second tour on Tuesday night, January 15, 1918. He spent the next day at the Harvard Club resting from his trip and visiting with friends. On January 17 and 18 Masefield held interviews with the press and discussed his views of the war, propaganda, the hope for peace, and the possible effects the war might have on the future of mankind. In one interview he stated his belief that the war would inspire more and better literature and more serious readers of good literature,

37Letter from John Buchan to Geoffrey Butler, 10 December 1917.

a topic similar to the one he used in his lectures in 1916. He believed there would be "new Darwins, Spencers, and Carlyles with new messages that would reach the whole world." He told the reporters that the people of the world would "demand future safety, otherwise, civilization is lost. Inventions have progressed faster than social organizations. If we continue to have wars, man's inventions will destroy the world." 

Montrose J. Moses wrote a special account of one of these interviews with Masefield. He reported Masefield as confessing that the 1916 lecture tour was a propaganda tour and that he was sent as an "official detective" to check on conditions in America and report the effects of German propaganda. Masefield also revealed in this interview that his book Gallipoli was a direct result of his earlier tour in America. He told the reporters that the British government had commissioned him to write it.

To a reporter's query about conditions in England Masefield replied that England was "becoming more and more democratized," and that he foresaw, after the war, more possibilities of "kindness and charity existing between class and class." There seemed to Masefield "a greater

---

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
feeling of equality" among men as the war appeared to put
them all in the same boat. He went so far as to predict
that England's next Parliament would be a "Labor Parliament,"
taking into it "the intellectual workers as well as the
hand workers of England." Masefield asserted that the
"salvation" of England would be the "Liberal with his
intellect and the Labor man with his power." He then
added parenthetically: "I regard myself as a Liberal." 

Masefield took the opportunity in these interviews to
continue his attack on the German propaganda. He had
heard a number of Americans speak of the efficiency of the
German army. He did not think the Americans should take
this propaganda very seriously. He said: "They have been
inventive in deviltry. But our building up of an army is
quite as wonderful as anything the Germans have done." He made another attack on the Germans by stating humorously
that the "German's power of hand is greater than the German's
power of mind." 

Another point about which Masefield spoke freely during
the interviews was his belief that the matter of the world's
safety was a serious one. Masefield anticipated the day
when man would tap the scientific secrets that could destroy

---

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid.
nations in a push-button war. No one could know when man might come of age and "tap atomic energy." He predicted in these interviews that the "last struggle of the war" would come very soon. He believed that Germany had become tired of the war and would soon make one last military effort, after which the war would end.

In his report of Masefield's remarks, Moses stated that as Masefield spoke he fingered the identification tag on his wrist. He "fondled it as if there were running through his mind the idea that, though the bosche may deprive him of his life, he cannot take from him the record which shows that he is entitled to the burial service of the church of England." As he continued to finger the tag "a sad flicker of a smile crossed his face," and he said, "You know, I ought to have four of these identification tags—one on the other wrist and one on each ankle. We cannot take one chance with the bosche." With this he ended his interview.

Masefield had many friends in America during his 1916 visit and upon returning home, had corresponded frequently with a number of them, of whom Thomas W. Lamont became a close friend. When Lamont was made an adviser to President Wilson's United States Government Mission in England in 1916

---

47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
and 1917, he visited often in Masefield's home. Masefield in turn made the Lamont home at 107 East 70th Street, his base of operations while in New York.\footnote{Corliss Lamont, ed., The Thomas Lamont Family (New York: Horizon Press, 1962), 167-169.}

On January 18, Masefield made a short courtesy trip to Washington, D. C., to pay his respects to the military and governmental officials. After this official visit he began his public lecture tour of the United States. The public tour began in the northeastern area of the United States on January 21, and took Masefield west to California and then back to New York in mid-April. Upon returning to New York from the western portion of the tour, Masefield made a few more appearances in the northeast. After the war camp tour began on May 27, he gave the "War and the Future" lecture in a few cities near the camps. This seemed to be a "by invitation" arrangement, for there is no indication that these appearances were planned as part of the public tour itinerary or that they happened very often. A chronology of Masefield's major lecture appearances during the 1918 public tour is presented in Table II.

Masefield's audiences were usually composed of the members of social, civic, educational and cultural organizations in the cities he visited. These organizations often opened their doors to the public and charged admission at prices that varied from city to city, ranging from fifty
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at the Tremont Temple, Boston, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Press Club, Boston, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the Plankinton Hotel, Milwaukee, Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture at Camp Dodge, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at the Cordon Hotel, Chicago, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the University of Chicago, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Iowa Press and Author's Club, Des Moines, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at Grinnell College, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture to the Omaha Society of Fine Arts, Omaha, Nebraska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Arts League, Cheyenne, Wyoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at the Liberty Theatre, Tacoma, Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Drama League, Seattle, Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at the Munford Hotel, San Francisco, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the New Drama Society, San Francisco, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the Hotel St. Francis, San Francisco, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture to the Bohemian Club, San Francisco, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event and Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture at the Plymouth Congregational Church, Seattle, Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture at the Multnomah Hotel, Portland, Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Denver Civic League, Denver, Colorado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Toledo Club, Toledo, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>8 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the St. George Society, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Afternoon Lecture at the All Souls Unitarian Church, Washington, D. C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evening Lecture to the Washington Press Club, Washington, D. C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>The date Masefield committed himself to the war camp tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td></td>
<td>The war camp tour began</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>4 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture to the Writer's Club, Atlanta, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>5 P.M.</td>
<td>Lecture to the Women's Press and Author's Club, Montgomery, Alabama</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cents in Omaha, Nebraska\textsuperscript{51} to two dollars in San Francisco, California.\textsuperscript{52} The colleges brought Masefield to their campuses as part of their regular lecture and concert series and there is no indication that admission was charged.

During his stay in California, Masefield spoke on one unusual occasion. He was honored with a "Royal Luncheon" sponsored by the San Francisco Bohemian Club. The hall was decorated extravagantly with large anchors, oars, life boats, fishing lines, and steering wheels, all covered with fishing nets. The food was served by men in "oilskins" and seamen's clothes. These decorations were combined with music to provide an elaborate setting for Masefield's performance. A male vocalist sang a song using the words of Masefield's poem "Sea Fever" and Masefield "rushed" back after his lecture to pat the composer and singer on the back to congratulate him. The Bohemian Club wanted to make the occasion an important one since they considered Masefield the "biggest literary man to visit San Francisco in forty years."\textsuperscript{53}

In all sections of the country Masefield's lectures were well received. Early in the tour one newspaper described

\textsuperscript{51}\textit{World Herald} (Omaha, Nebraska), 17 February 1918.
\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Publicity Notice of the J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau, Yale University Library}.
\textsuperscript{53}\textit{San Francisco Chronicle}, 31 March 1918.
the lectures as "attracting national attention," and further stated that the people in America were "learning something new about the war."  

It would appear, from newspaper accounts, that Masefield usually drew capacity audiences. Reports described the audiences as "crowded," "filling the hall," and "one of the largest audiences we have witnessed." A Des Moines, Iowa, newspaper confessed amazement at "repeated demands for seats from outside the city," an indication that the interest was "far from being purely local." There were no negative reviews and no show of hostility in any of his audiences. The only possible exception might be the lecture at the Cordon Hotel in Chicago on February 12. In the lecture Masefield had made references to the human tragedy of the German dead on the battlefield. The reporter noticed that this "did not meet with enthusiastic response from some of his hearers and the applause was not entirely spontaneous."  

The audiences seemed to have complete confidence in

---

54 Des Moines Register (Iowa), 15 February 1918.
55 Toledo Blade (Ohio), 10 April 1918.
56 Seattle Star (Washington), 28 March 1918.
57 Daily Maroon (University of Chicago), 15 February 1918.
58 Des Moines Register (Iowa), 13 February 1918.
59 Chicago Daily Tribune, 13 February 1918.
Masefield. They accepted his sentiment as well as his logic. In Toledo, Ohio, he was reported as "touching the soul of his audience, apparently by the sheer pathos of the poet's viewpoint." While at Grinnell College, the audience was reported as accepting his refutation of the German lies as "absolute proof of their falsity."

The affection and esteem these people had for Masefield was to be expected. He was not a controversial figure and took advantage of every opportunity to compliment his audiences and mend fences for better English and American relations. In San Francisco he gave what the newspapers called a "glowing indorsement" of the work of the San Francisco Committee for Rebuilding Homes in France. He referred to the rebuilding movement as "one of the great after-the-war undertakings" and called the plan for having America join in the rebuilding project "an inspiration."

This type of compliment was common during his tour. It was widely known that Masefield had sold many copies of his war book, Gallipoli, in the United States and had given the money to American war charities. With a knowledge of these activities, plus the reputation Masefield had for Red Cross

---

60 Toledo Blade (Ohio), 10 April 1918.
61 Scarlet and Black (Grinnell College, Iowa), 20 February 1918.
62 San Francisco Examiner, 27 March 1918.
63 Boston Evening Transcript, 16 January 1918.
work in France, his audiences were receptive. They accepted him as not only a man of words but a man of action. Years later an instructor at Grinnell College stated that Masefield was welcomed at Grinnell because of his concern for England's involvement in the war, the audience accepting him "for his nationality as well as for his genius." His war work had paved the way for his lectures.

Masefield not only complimented the war service of his American audiences but often made other efforts at securing good will. At Grinnell College he paid a high tribute to a graduate of the college, Norman Hall, stating that Hall's story "Kitchener's Mob" was "one of the truest and most exact pictures of trench life" that he had ever read. At the University of Chicago he spoke of the school as a possible "birthplace for a new Chaucer" and encouraged the students to write poetry.

At the close of each of his lectures, Masefield read a few of his poems. There was no indication that Masefield had any special method of choosing these poems. They were, for the most part, the same poems he had read at the close of his 1916 lectures in America. He always read "August, 1914" and "Sea Fever." The first was an obvious choice

64 Mabel Yeoman Spears, a letter to the editor appearing in Saturday Review of Literature, XXXV (12 April 1950), 27.
65 Scarlet and Black (Grinnell College, Iowa), 20 February 1918.
66 University Record (University of Chicago), April 1918.
because of its war sentiment and the second was well known to his audiences and had been a favorite with them for a number of years. Other poems he read often were "The Consecration," "Cargoes," "Prayer," "Trade Winds," "The Seekers," "Cape Horn Gospel," "West Wind," "A Wanderer's Song," "Vagabond," and portions of "The Everlasting Mercy." The lack of attention given to Masefield's reading of these poems in newspaper reports during this tour suggests that the poetry reading period after each lecture was much shorter than in 1916. The reviews in 1918 gave only a line or two to the poetry reading, while in 1916 more attention was given to this feature of Masefield's performances.

The poetry readings were probably expected by the audiences because of Masefield's literary reputation. He seemed to read the few poems for the sake of his audience rather than to promote his poetry. In 1916 he had made a special effort to read a great number of poems and to use poems to illustrate his lectures. In 1918 he seemed to concentrate on his propagandistic purpose and used the poetry readings merely as a method for creating good-will with these audiences.

Masefield's Appearance and Manner of Delivery

Masefield's appearance during this tour may have given evidence of his prior illness. One newspaper stated that he looked "a great deal older than two years ago" and
attributed this to his experiences "under shell fire." Amy Lowell also believed that Masefield's war service had "aged" him. A year later she wrote, "The war has hurt Mr. Masefield . . . his mind, his spirit. He is cast back, pitifully, achingly, upon the world he once knew and that he deeply loved."69

This appearance of ill health and mental fatigue was not mentioned often in the reports of his lectures. There were very brief comments that he looked "weary" and that his eyes were "heavy lidded" like someone who often witnessed tragedy in life. But this description would have suited Masefield as well in the 1916 tour as in the 1918.

Masefield was described often as a quiet and serious speaker with little flair for the dramatic. He was fluent and direct "with a keen understanding of what will appeal to an audience." He knew of the special appeals of the narrative and told his war stories with a great enthusiasm. He related the stories in great detail and with a skillful

---

68Letter from Amy Lowell to George Basher, 21 January 1918, Amy Lowell Collection, Harvard University Library.
70Chicago Daily Tribune, 16 February 1918.
71Des Moines Register (Iowa), 16 February 1918.
sense of effective pacing and pause.  

He was simple and straightforward as he stood before his audience, giving an air of calm authority. He was reported as having a talent for a "plain recital of the facts." His "transparent honesty" and "sincerity" seemed to be the most effective characteristics of his delivery. They were regarded by some as making "an impression even greater than his words." One reporter was so impressed with this image of authority and sincerity that he said: "To talk with him is to believe that his 'yea' is yea and his 'nay' nay." 

Masefield was often regarded by his hearers as humble and modest. He seemed to have made an excellent blend of modesty and authority and used them effectively. A reporter attending the Toledo, Ohio, lecture provided a summary of this unique combination when he said that Masefield's lecture was as "devoid of British boasting as it was of apology, and yet both boast and apology were there, straightforward in words and big in meaning." 

Masefield made every effort at clarity and simplicity in his delivery. Most reports of the lectures used one or

---

72Daily Maroon (University of Chicago), 15 February 1918.
73Toledo Blade, 10 April 1918.
74Grinnell Herald (Iowa), 19 February 1918.
75Marguerite Wilkinson, "Poets of the People," Touchstone, II (March 1918), 590.
76Toledo Blade, 10 April 1918.
both of these terms in describing his speaking ability. His gentle and unpretentious manner seemed to charm and win over his audiences. He spoke in a calm and deliberate manner but the reviewers gave no indication that this technique was uninteresting or disappointing to his hearers. Instead, his slight variations in voice and the subtle drama of his storytelling technique were described as "vivid" and "impressive."  

Masefield had the look of the proper British gentleman and reflected a "cool gravity" which seemed appropriate for someone speaking of war. Along with this serious tone, he often used a note of humor of the peculiarly British type that depended heavily on understatement. The subtlety of his humor blended well with the low-keyed delivery. His audiences often failed to see the humor in his remarks because of its sober and unassuming quality. One reporter believed the audience's slow response to the humor was due to their conditioning to more "vivid exaggeration" in typical American humor. An example of Masefield's understatement was his remark that the German U-Boats were "rather a nuisance."  

Masefield did not seem completely at ease before his audiences, and at times appeared fearful. He showed more

---

77 Grinnell Herald, 19 February 1918.
78 Ibid.
poise and confidence during a lecture than during an interview or private conversation. A review of one of his interviews described him as wearing clothes much too large for him and giving the appearance of a "shy little boy whose mother had left him to entertain the company." In most of his lectures he appeared a little shy upon first appearing before the audience but this quality soon disappeared as he became involved in telling his stories.

It would be safe to say that Masefield was successful with his delivery. He wanted to share the benefits of his war experiences and to draw his hearers closer to the truths about the war. This he did effectively as he told of the pathetic scenes and humorous situations with a "simplicity of narration and words so plain that everybody felt the war more real for what they had heard."

Masefield retained a degree of this calm and quiet delivery when he read his poems at the close of each lecture. The detached quality proved effective for him as he read with an attitude of contemplation. He gazed out over the heads of his audience as one who is remembering past events. His low voice was mellow and carried a hint of a chant as he read. One reviewer called him a "baritone bard ... singing

79 Chicago Daily Tribune, 16 February 1918.
80 Des Moines Register (Iowa), 16 February 1918.
81 Toledo Blade, 10 April 1918.
of the deep as one who has sailed upon it." 82 A witness to
one of his readings, a college instructor, regarded the
poem "Sea Fever" as a most appropriate choice for reading
and believed Masefield effective in delivering it. She
knew that the freedom of the seas was more than a "catch-
word" to her and her students as they listened to the
reading. The war on the seas had made it a "living principle
to be cherished and fought for." 83 Masefield's reading of
the poem had carried his hearers far beyond the traditional
interpretation of the poem. He had added the dimension of
the war that threatened the freedoms of the people. Another
writer, after hearing his lecture and a reading of the poems,
remarked that she "felt the grave beauty of the world's new
hope." 84 Masefield had created an atmosphere of patriotism
and had inspired his hearers with both his lecture and his
poems.

THE "WAR AND THE FUTURE" LECTURE

Masefield began preparing his "War and the Future"
lecture while in England late in 1917. He had access to
British Foreign Office materials as he worked on the lecture.
These materials were useful in securing evidence to refute
the German propaganda. The lecture was popular with the

82 San Francisco Chronicle, 24 March 1918.
83 Spears, Saturday Review of Literature, p. 27.
84 Wilkinson, p. 593.
American people and was published in America in July, 1918, by Macmillan Company and dedicated to Masefield's American friend Thomas W. Lamont.

The lecture was approximately one hour long although newspaper reports indicate that Masefield often added or subtracted small portions in adapting his material to his audiences. At Grinnell College, Iowa, he added statistics concerning the English universities "depopulation" because of the student's participation in war service. In San Francisco he used a few minutes of his introduction to endorse and praise the city's war service projects. At the University of Chicago he replaced a few of the war stories with comments on the future of world literature after the war.

The lecture in its usual form began with an introduction designed to gain the good will of the audience. Masefield flattered his audience by declaring that no one in the world doubted that America "holds the future." The future of the war and the future of the world depended on America's attitude and actions. The only victory he could foresee was that victory which America could bring to pass. He had been a witness to the war and stated that it was the only subject

85 *Scarlet and Black* (Grinnell College, Iowa), 20 February 1918.

86 *San Francisco Examiner*, 27 March 1918.

87 *Daily Maroon* (University of Chicago), 15 February 1918.
on which he felt authoritative.

To insure rapport with the audience, he explained that all Englishmen who really understood America and her ways knew that many years ago England did America "a great wrong." Apologizing for England's early treatment of America, he expressed the hope that England and America would realize that the past is past and that the time had come for "putting by the past, in an effort to make the future."

Masefield explained how England and America had eliminated many of their differences and were now in this war together. He expressed the hope that the people of both countries could remake their lives, forget their differences and hatreds, and ask themselves what kind of new world they were going to help make.

In the final portion of the introduction, Masefield explained how both countries had become involved in the war gradually. Neither country expected war and both countries held to the belief that an action as terrible as war could not occur. He related how England did all within her power to prevent the war. In support of this statement he related an anecdote. He told of the German ambassador, who, at the beginning of the war, was leaving England when one of his English friends said, "I hope you think that we did our best to prevent this war?" The ambassador answered, "You have done everything that mortals could do to prevent the war."

As a transition into the body of his lecture, Masefield
asserted that both the enemy and the Allies were using all the strength and talent at their disposal. One of the major weapons being used by the enemy was that of "lying." At this point Masefield began the body of his lecture by stating that he wished to "state and answer some of these lies."

The first lie to which Masefield addressed himself was the often heard criticism that the English were "a decadent people, intent on sports and money-making, and without ideals or any sense of serving the state." Masefield answered this statement by informing the audience that 5,400,000 Englishmen enlisted without hesitation, to fight for their ideals. He also emphasized the fact that 3,000,000 more Englishmen tried to enlist but were rejected as either too old or unfit.

The second lie to which Masefield spoke was one declaring the English to be "cowardly people" who let others do their fighting. He answered that if England had been cowardly she would not have gone to war and would not have lost approximately 2,500,000 men. This figure, he explained, was exclusive of the losses of men by England's colonies.

The third lie was the rumor that the English were "mean people," who did not take their fair share in the war. Masefield seemed to consider this one of the most damaging lies spread by the enemy and answered it in some detail. He explained that England was holding "one-third of the line in France, much of the line in Italy, nearly all the line in
Serbia, all the line in Palestine and Mesopotamia, and all the line on the vast colonial fronts in Africa." He also emphasized the fact that millions of tons of equipment and supplies, costing approximately 3,000 million dollars, had been provided by England in the war effort. He told how England had fed and clothed the larger part of the population of Belgium from the beginning of the war, and how England had provided hospitals in Russia, Italy and France. He also cited statistics on the cost to England for the job of "policing the seas," which included most of the submarine hunting. In money alone, England had spent 5,500,000,000 dollars on the war, and more than one-fifth of this money was either loaned or given to the Allies.

The fourth lie was a statement that Englishmen were a "grasping people who will profit by this war." In answer, Masefield stated emphatically that no one would profit from the war. He explained how drastically the war would and had hurt the economy in England, but how England hoped the world would learn from it in years to come. He expressed confidence that the people of the world would have "a change of heart, by an understanding among the nations," and would learn that "human life is the precious thing on this earth" and that "we are here truly linked man to man."

The fifth and final lie which Masefield answered was the statement that called the English people "greedy" and accused England of asking the Americans to starve, while the English ate white bread and other good foods. He assured
the audience that no white bread had been baked in England for the past eighteen months.

The second portion of the body of the lecture was devoted to a philosophical discussion of the origins of the war and the possibility of a state of human existence in which there is no war. As a transition into this discussion Masefield explained that he could find no reason for nations to lie to each other. He quickly acknowledged that England had her faults and said,

I know my nation's faults as well as I know my own. They are the faults of a set and of a system. They are the faults of head, they are not faults of heart.

Masefield's statement turned into a strong emotional appeal with these lines:

When I think of those faults I think of a long graveyard in France, a hundred miles long, where simple, good, kind, ignorant Englishmen; by the thousand and the hundred thousand lie in every attitude of rest and agony, for ever and for ever and for ever. They did not know where Belgium is, nor what Germany is, nor even what England is. They were told that a great country had taken a little country by the throat, and that it was up to them to help, and they went out by the hundred and the hundred thousand, and by the million, on that word alone, and they stayed there, in the mud, to help that little country, till they were killed.

Masefield then discussed the origin of the war. He pointed out how each country, many years before the war began, had its beliefs, customs and prejudices. He explained that these traits, although present in every
country, were the same ones that went to make the war. The struggle of the war was "a struggle between two conceptions of life, the soldiers and the civilians." These conceptions had always existed and Masefield emphasized the fact that both had their virtues.

The soldier's view was explained as one in which common men were of little account. One extraordinarily individual man was the key figure. This key man had power over other men and punished and rewarded them at will. The soldier believed that men needed this strong hand and that a state could be strong only if it were "obedient within and feared without." Masefield stated that in this theory all men owed obedience to the state, and no one was encouraged to think for himself, or to break the rules. He gave Napoleon in France and T'chaka in Zululand as examples of leaders in soldier states.

On the other hand, the civilian's view was explained as one in which men were not thought of as slaves of other men. The men in this state existed in as loosely an organized condition as possible without a total collapse of the government. The army was small in a civilian state and war was not looked upon as impossible, but, instead, as a "terrible accident," which could occur at any time, requiring men to fight for the state. Masefield believed that in a civilian state war was not looked upon as a "normal condition" and whenever possible should be avoided.
Masefield confessed that both of these ways of life had been tried and both had been found workable. He then added that since no nation was without fault both ways of life could prove unsuccessful. He believed that if these two ways of life were "persisted in" by a nation for a few generations, they would "intensify themselves," until there would be too much control in the military state and too little in the civilian. The civilian state would have a tendency to evolve into a military state over a period of years and unless it could control its lust for power the world would see to its destruction. Masefield used the fall of Rome, Napoleon's France, and the Zulu state as examples of the way military states failed to last, and said the civilian states of England and America were "banded together" to cause the fall of such a power in the present war.

The third portion of the body of the lecture was devoted to Masefield's descriptions of the nature of the war and the narration of a few anecdotes to illustrate his points. He related how he had walked through a French town on the war front and observed the ruined buildings and military hospitals. He had noticed an old French woman selling newspapers and English soldiers gathered around buying them. One soldier had suddenly shouted, "Hooray, America has declared war," and another soldier had said thoughtfully, "Thank God, now we may have a decent world again."
Masefield followed this narrative with a story he had heard that illustrated the nature of the war. The story told of the poet Swinburne and how he had a passion for conversation and whiskey. One evening, he and a friend had tried to slip up the stairs past his landlady's door with a bottle of whiskey in his hip pocket. As they had passed the door it had opened and the landlady has asked about the bottle. Swinburne had explained that it was his cough medicine but the landlady had seen through his lie and had taken the bottle from him. When she had disappeared with the bottle, Swinburne had wrung his hands and said, "She is a very troublesome woman." Masefield explained that this poet's understatement reminded him of the war. The war was much like the landlady who appeared and robbed men, not only of their material goods, but of "love and leisure and of life itself."

The third story Masefield used to illustrate the nature of the war was one about a young king who became a leper. An old man had told him that in order to be cured he would have to find a meal in a house where there was no sorrow. The young king searched but found no home without sorrow of one kind or another. Masefield explained that there was no home in the countries fighting in Europe that did not have sorrow as a result of the war. This sorrow was usually due to the war death of some young man.

Masefield used an analogy to close the third portion of
the body of his lecture. He compared the coming of war to
the coming of an illness caused by a poison being inserted
into the system from the outside. For this poison to exist
in the body the natural defenses must be unable to reject
or dissolve the poison. When the poison that creates war
enters a country it must have enough natural defenses to
resist it. Masefield explained that if a country was rest­
less, dissatisfied and uneasy, then the poison would feed
on these conditions. If the country had no strong defenses
against the poison the result would often be war. He
believed this analogy illustrated how the greatest wars of
the world began. He said Spain suffered the fever three
hundred years ago, France had the same sickness a century
later, and England had this fever when she forced America
into war for independence. As terrible as these wars were,
Masefield called them "nothing" in comparison with the
"fever of arrogance, blindness, wild and bloody thinking,
and impious dealing with which another irresponsible
autocrat prepared the present war." Masefield was of the
opinion that no former leader had planned and organized so
carefully his armed forces for the purpose of "massacre and
destruction" as the one responsible for World War I.

Masefield did not blame the individual people of the
enemy countries for the war. He recognized that they had
been friends of England in the past and would probably be
so in the future. He assured his audience that he was not
there to abuse the enemy but to help both the Allies and the people of the enemy countries to place the blame for the war on the "collection of men" who followed a way of life dictated by an "irresponsible autocrat." Masefield's major concern was not with who was right or wrong in the war but with the kind of future that would grow out of a war of this nature. He even expressed concern at times as to whether there would be a future if men did not awaken to the horrors of war. He stated that the enemy leaders had no conception of what they had "let loose upon the world." He called war "nearly (but not quite) the last, greatest and completest evil." He said there was "one complete evil" in allowing "proud, bloody and devilish men to rule this world." He then spoke of England and American as banded together to prevent this development.

When Masefield entered upon the fourth and final major portion of the body of his lecture, the tone of the lecture became less philosophical as he began talking of the soldiers and their activities in the war zones in France. He related short narratives and vivid descriptions of the conditions of war as he had witnessed them. This portion of the lecture was the longest of any portion, comprising approximately one half of the entire lecture. Most of the material in this portion had a rambling quality but was held together with loose narratives. Masefield described the lives of the soldiers and the environment of
the war as if he were taking his audience on a tour of
the battle front. He used such phrases as "you come upon
a village . . ." and "a month later you find . . ." to tie
together his descriptions. He described the landscape from
all angles with lines like "If one could look down upon
that strip from above . . .," and "Then a little further on,
you come to a village . . . ." These phrases made the
lecture more personal and emphasized the fact that Masefield
was speaking from direct experience.

The descriptions Masefield gave of the war scenes were
vivid and dramatic. Speaking of the sounds of the war, he
said,

You come to a deafening noise, which bursts
in a succession of shattering crashes,
followed by long wailing shrieks, partly
like gigantic cats making love, and partly
as though the sky were linen being ripped
across. The noise makes you sick and
dizzy.

In describing the wounded soldiers Masefield spoke of the
work of the American facial surgeons, telling how they had
set a standard for the rest of the world in this special
type of surgery. He was astonished at their accomplishments.

What they have done is amazing. You can see
the men brought in, looking like nothing
human, looking like bloody mops on the
ends of sticks. Gradually you see them
becoming human and at last becoming handsome
and at last almost indistinguishable from
their fellows.

Still another example of this vivid use of language was
found in Masefield's description of the landscape following
a battle:
Then if you go on, you come to a landscape where there is no visible living thing; nothing but a blasted bedevilled sea of mud, gouged into great holes and gashed into great trenches, and blown into immense pits, and all littered and heaped with broken iron, and broken leather, and rags and boots and jars and tins, and old barbed wire by the ton and unexploded shells and bombs by the hundred ton, and where there is no building and no road, and no tree and no grass, nothing but desolation and mud and death.

There were other descriptions of bombed-out towns, starving men and women, soldiers at their best and worse, the hardships the soldiers faced from day to day, and a few of the lighter and more humorous moments in the soldier's lives. Masefield's objective in telling all this was to bring his audience closer to the realities of the war.

Masefield also related stories that informed his audience concerning army procedures and activities, while ending each one on a humorous and entertaining note. The following story is an example.

During the Battle of the Somme a friend of mine was up in a tree correcting the fire of his battery. He had a telephone and a telescope. He watched the bursting of the shells and then telephoned back to the guns to correct their fire. While he was doing this, he glanced back at the English lines, and saw a great enemy barrage bursting between himself and his friends, in a kind of wall of explosion. And hopping along through this barrage came one solitary English soldier, who paid no more attention to the shells than if they had been hail. He looked to see this man blown to pieces, but he wasn't blown to pieces; and then he saw that it was his own servant bringing a letter. He wondered what kind of a letter could
be brought under such conditions, and what stirring thing made it necessary, so he climbed down the tree and took the letter and read it. The letter ran: "The Veterinary Surgeon Major begs to report that your old mare is suffering from a fit of the strangles."
The servant saluted and said: "Any answer, sir?" And my friend said: "No, no answer. Acknowledge." The servant saluted and went back with the acknowledgement, hopping through the barrage as though perhaps it were a little wet, but not worth putting on a mackintosh for.

Another example of the type of story Masefield used in this portion of the lecture is one about a general who could not determine how far his division had gone and became very upset when he sent out messengers who never returned. Even the pigeons he sent out did not come back. He stood beside the pigeon-loft waiting and hoping. At last one arrived out of the battle smoke and landed. The general was excited and said, "Now we shall know." He ordered one of the soldiers into the loft to get the message. The soldier was gone for quite some time and the general called, "Read it out, man, read it out." The soldier answered, "I'd rather not read it aloud, sir." The general ordered the message brought to him and he read it. The message said: "I'm not going to carry this bloody poultry any longer."

These stories and descriptions added interest and humor to Masefield's lecture. They gave him a chance to demonstrate a poet's mastery of words and his talent as a storyteller.
At the close of this large portion of the lecture Masefield assured his audience that the war had made England more democratic. He reported how men from every rank of England's society had joined the army and had been treated as equals and friends by their comrades. He told his audience that after the war, these men would flow back into every rank of English society and carry with them the democratic social ideals and attitudes. He expressed a hope that, after the war, England would be as democratic as America or France.

Masefield began the conclusion of his lecture with a return to the remarks he had made in his introduction about the causes and nature of war. Stating that the only method of successfully resisting evil men was with force, he hastened to add that man could prevent war if he put his mind to it. Masefield found war a necessity at times but not necessarily an inevitable fact of life. He believed that the people of the future would learn from the present war and would know war to be "an overwhelming monster which eats them wholesale." He expressed great faith in the "three great nations" (England, France and America) and every confidence that they would "substitute some co-operating system of internationalism for the competing nationalism which led to the present bonfire."

In his final remarks, Masefield again sought to encourage the friendship between England and America and to heal old wounds.
I hope that my people, the English, may, as your comrades in this war, do something or be something or become something which will atone in some measure for the wrongs we did to you in the past, and for the misunderstandings which have arisen between us since then.

He ended the lecture by calling on his audience to set aside their memories of the "old wrongs" done them by England and work together after the war like friends "to make wars to cease upon this earth."

THE WAR CAMP TOUR: 1918

From the time Masefield arrived in New York in January of 1918, he expressed interest in arranging a lecture tour through the major military training camps in the United States. He spoke often with his American friends about such a tour and asked his good friend Percy MacKaye to investigate the possibilities of organizing the tour. MacKaye tried, without success, to contact someone of authority in the War Commission Office about the tour. After becoming discouraged at his lack of success with the War Commission Office, MacKaye reached A. B. Bielaski of the Department of Justice in Washington, D. C., and asked for assistance in organizing the tour. Liking the idea, Bielaski helped

---

88 Letter from A. B. Bielaski to Raymond Fosdick, 4 April 1918, National Archives and Records Service.

89 Letter from Raymond Fosdick to Percy MacKaye, 5 April 1918, National Archives and Records Service.
MacKaye to secure a hearing from the War Commission Office. Raymond Fosdick, Chairman of the War Commission on Training Camp Activities, was receptive to the plans as outlined. He thought Masefield would have a good effect on the troops, and expressed the wish that there were more like him who desired to undertake such a tour.

Fosdick put plans for the tour into action immediately, suggesting that T. W. Lamont and others concerned with seeing such a tour a reality organize the tour immediately, without "delaying his program with other paper work and problems." Fosdick suggested that the easiest scheduling and sponsorship might be accomplished through the Y.M.C.A. organization, which the War Department had officially recognized and supported as a "valuable adjunct and asset to the service," because it sent entertainers and lecturers to the camps to inform and lift the moral of the troops. After his appointment as chairman of the training camp activities in April, 1917, Fosdick was instrumental in securing the services of the Y.M.C.A. as an agency through which to send performers to the camps. He thought that

---

90 Letter from Bielaski to Fosdick, 4 April 1918.

91 Letter from Raymond Fosdick to A. B. Bielaski, 5 April 1918, National Archives and Records Service.

92 Letter from Raymond Fosdick to T. W. Lamont, 1 May 1918, National Archives and Records Service.

93 Ibid.

94 United States General Order Number 57, 9 May 1917, War Department.
Masefield's war camp tour would prove much less complicated if sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. than if sponsored by the American military establishment.\footnote{Letter from Fosdick to Lamont, 1 May 1918.}

Being enthusiastic about Masefield's war camp tour, Lamont assured Fosdick that Masefield was a "fine and noble spirit," and that, although not a "swashbuckler," he had spent many months with the troops on the front lines. It was his opinion that the war camp tour would "be to the advantage of America, Great Britain and our Army generally."\footnote{Letter from T. W. Lamont to Raymond Fosdick, 12 April 1918, National Archives and Records Service.}

When Masefield returned from his public lectures on the west coast, he visited with Lamont and made plans for the war camp tour. Masefield was eager to make the tour and was not difficult to please with the arrangements made by Fosdick. He did, however, want to be assured that both the American and British officials supported the plans. Lamont secured the British government's approval through Lord Beaverbrook of the British Mission in America while Fosdick secured American approval from the Adjutant General's office in Washington, D. C.\footnote{Telegram from T. W. Lamont to Raymond Fosdick, 16 April 1918, National Archives and Records Service.}

Having worked closely with the Y.M.C.A. as it served the soldiers at the front, Masefield was pleased to be able
to work with the organization again. He called the Y.M.C.A. "one of the grandest products of the war." 98

The plans for the tour called for as many visits to camps as time and travel arrangements would permit. Masefield was to meet the military officials in charge at each post and lecture at both large auditorium gatherings and smaller unit building meetings. 99 The itinerary, worked out with Masefield's approval, called for one or two evenings in each camp. The route of the tour was designed to carry Masefield through the Southeastern and Southern Military Departments first, and from there through the Western, Central, Eastern and finally the Northeastern Departments. 100

A chronology of Masefield's major lecture appearances during war camp tour in 1918 is presented in Table III.

Although the war camp itinerary was planned with strict attention to a day-by-day schedule, Masefield often had time to go sight-seeing and to take his first ride in an airplane. 101 In Georgia and Alabama he spent some of his spare time delivering his "War and the Future" lecture in cities near the camps. On June 17, Masefield took a short break from

98 News Bulletin Number 247, 2 June 1918, National War Works Council of the Y.M.C.A.

99 Letter from W. O. Easton to Raymond Fosdick, 1 May 1918, National Archives and Records Service.

100 Ibid.

### TABLE III

**A CHRONOLOGY OF MASEFIELD'S MAJOR LECTURE APPEARANCES DURING THE WAR CAMP TOUR IN 1918**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Camp Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Camp Greene</td>
<td>Charlotte, North Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Camp Jackson</td>
<td>Columbia, South Carolina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Camp Hancock</td>
<td>Augusta, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>Camp Gordon</td>
<td>Atlanta, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Camp Oglethorpe</td>
<td>Oglethorpe, Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Camp Johnson</td>
<td>Jacksonville, Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>Camp Sheridan</td>
<td>Montgomery, Alabama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>Camp Shelby</td>
<td>Hattiesburg, Mississippi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>Camp Bowie</td>
<td>Ft. Worth, Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>Masefield returned</td>
<td>East to receive honorary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>degrees at Yale and Harvard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>Camp Cody</td>
<td>Deming, New Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>Camp Logan</td>
<td>Houston, Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>26-28</td>
<td>Camp Beauregard</td>
<td>Alexandria, Louisiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>29-30</td>
<td>Camp Pike</td>
<td>Little Rock, Arkansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Camp Doniphan</td>
<td>Ft. Sill, Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Camp Funston</td>
<td>Ft. Riley, Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>Camp Kearney</td>
<td>Linda Vista, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>Camp Fremont</td>
<td>Palo Alto, California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>Camp Travis</td>
<td>San Antonio, Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>Camp McArthur</td>
<td>Waco, Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>Camp Dodge</td>
<td>Des Moines, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>Camp Grant</td>
<td>Rockford, Illinois</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE III, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>24-25</th>
<th>Camp Zachary Taylor (Louisville, Kentucky)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>26-27</td>
<td>Camp Lee (Petersburg, Virginia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Camp Merritt (Tenafly, New Jersey)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
his war camp tour and returned to Yale and Harvard to receive honorary degrees. There is no indication that Masefield gave an address while at Harvard. At the Yale Alumni Luncheon on June 19 he delivered a brief address, the first of four ten-minute addresses given at the luncheon. The other speakers were Lord Reading, Justice William R. Riddell, and William H. Taft. The theme for the luncheon was "The Great War for Humanity" and each speaker delivered his views on the topic. Masefield spoke of "The Common Task," emphasizing the unity that should exist between England and America because of their common aims. He also discussed the effects of the war on world literature and the future of man. His address had much the same tone as his "War and the Future" lecture and included stories and ideas from that lecture. Copies of all four luncheon addresses were printed in the Yale Alumni Weekly of July 5, 1918.

While on the war camp tour, Masefield stayed in hotels in cities near the camps. The Y.M.C.A. had requested that he stay in one of the guest rooms provided in the Y.M.C.A. huts at each camp, but Masefield preferred the privacy of a hotel room. The Y.M.C.A. paid for his hotel room and meals and the War Department furnished the railway transportation from camp to camp, a slow but convenient.

---


103 Ibid.
method of travel. The fact that the War Department had control of the American railroads for war purposes made the scheduling of Masefield's railway travel simple. Masefield often complained of the slow trains and regarded them as too "shaky" for reading and writing.  

The heavy itinerary made it impossible for Masefield to address each military unit at each post. At most camps the soldiers were gathered into two groups. One group would hear the lecture in the late afternoon and the other group would hear it in the evening. A few of the camps organized a third group of Negro soldiers and Masefield delivered the lecture a third time in the late evening for this group.

The lectures were usually held in the Y.M.C.A. huts. The traditional hut was a wooden structure with two small guest rooms, a bath, and an assembly room seating from 400 to 600 soldiers. The one major exception was the hut at Camp Lee, which seated 3,000 and was the largest Y.M.C.A. hut in existence. When Masefield lectured at Camp Lee, up to 9,000 soldiers could have heard him during his stay if all seats had been filled for all three performances. A full house was unlikely, however, since attendance was not mandatory.  

On a few occasions the lectures were not delivered in

---

104 Interview with the Reverend Guy Hulbert, Atlanta, Georgia, 15 August 1968.

105 Trench and Camp (Camp Lee, Virginia), 28 July 1918.
the Y.M.C.A. huts. At Camp Jackson Masefield delivered his first lecture in a large tent provided by the Navy and Marine units. At Camp Beauregard Masefield lectured before two large groups of soldiers in the open air. Military sound trucks provided the needed amplification. At Camp Gordon, the late evening lecture to a group of Negro soldiers was also held in the open air.

Although the soldiers were not usually required to attend Masefield's lectures, the huts were often crowded and extra chairs were brought in for overflow crowds. The soldiers were usually attentive and appreciative during the lectures. Not all of them were acquainted with Masefield as a poet, but the war sentiment of the lecture and Masefield's delivery held their attention. One audience was reported to have "applauded vehemently," and another as being "loath to let him leave."

In only one reported instance was the attendance at

---

106 Trench and Camp (Camp Jackson, South Carolina), 2 June 1918.
107 Trench and Camp (Camp Beauregard, Louisiana), 30 June 1918.
108 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb, Auburn, Alabama, 10 October 1967.
109 Trench and Camp (Camp Johnson, Florida), 7 June 1918.
110 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
111 Trench and Camp (Camp Johnson, Florida), 7 June 1918.
112 Trench and Camp (Camp Jackson, South Carolina), 2 June 1918.
the lecture mandatory. At the Camp Sheridan lecture on June 10 the audience was inattentive and approximately one hundred soldiers walked out in the middle of the lecture. They walked "shamelessly right in front of the speaker and down the noisy stairs." The reviewer felt that the soldiers lacked military courtesy, did not appreciate Masefield's ability, and "disgraced the camp." 113

Masefield gave the same lecture at all the camps. It was entitled "A Talk to the Soldiers at Camp" and was filled with an abundance of stories taken from Masefield's war experiences. The most attention-getting parts of the lecture seemed to be the war stories. The newspaper reviews reflected an interest in these stories and often reported them word for word. Masefield told the stories with touches of humor and pity. One reviewer stated that the "word-pictures of the front line trenches" would never be forgotten by those who heard the stories. 114

After each lecture he read for a brief time from a few of his poems. He often read "August, 1914," "West Wind," "Sea Fever," "Roadways," and "Cape Horn Gospel." The poems were, for the most part, the same ones he had read during his public tour.

113 Trench and Camp (Camp Sheridan, Alabama), 12 June 1918.

114 Trench and Camp (Camp Beauregard, Louisiana), 30 June 1918.
Although there was no standard procedure at the lectures, the soldiers at most camps were reported to have arrived early and spent the first half hour in group singing. Soon thereafter the camp officials would arrive with Masefield and any other performers scheduled for the occasion. The performers sharing the stage with Masefield were usually musicians. Just before each of Masefield's lectures at Fort Gordon and Camp Oglethorpe a trio of girls performed on the harp, piano and violin. Their music was taken from the popular songs of the day, e.g. "Mighty Like a Rose" and "I Love You, Dear." Masefield seemed to enjoy the music and on these occasions took a special interest in the harp. He had written a short poem about a harp in his *The Story of a Round-House and Other Poems* (1912). After one of the evening lectures at Camp Gordon, while talking at length with the young harpist, Masefield commented that music and poetry should compliment each other. The next evening he persuaded the harpist to play an interlude between his lecture and the reading of his poems. As the harpist played, Masefield, attentive and appreciative, sat on the stage. Following his reading of the poems he told the harpist that he had changed his mind about music and poetry being sister arts. While he did not think of them as enemies, he also did not consider them close

---

115 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
At Camp Oglethorpe and Camp Hancock, Masefield was merely one of a number of performers on the program. At Camp Oglethorpe a baritone soloist appeared before his lecture and a small military band played popular songs following his lecture. At Camp Hancock, Masefield's lecture was preceded by a male quartet and a Bible reading by one of the local soldiers.117

At some of the camps Masefield performed alone. When he addressed four audiences at Camp Johnson one reviewer described him as standing on the stage alone and "getting right down to the heart of things rather quickly" because of the tight schedule.118 At Camp Lee Masefield was described as a "lonesome looking fellow up on that big stage."119 Whether required to perform alone or to share the stage with other performers, Masefield appeared to enjoy delivering the war camp lectures. He often expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to "help my bit" with the soldiers in the camps.120 He realized that his lecture was

116 Ibid.
117 Interview with the Reverend Guy Hulbert.
118 Trench and Camp (Camp Johnson, Florida), 7 June 1918.
119 Trench and Camp (Camp Lee, Virginia), 27 July 1918.
120 Afloat and Ashore (Camp Linda Vista, California), 10 July 1918.
not the most entertaining and heart-lifting of lectures for the soldiers. He knew the soldiers preferred to forget the war rather than be reminded of it. But he also felt a responsibility to share with them his experiences and offer suggestions that might prepare the soldiers mentally for the task the camps were preparing them for physically. At the close of his lectures, when the soldiers gathered around to sing old familiar songs like "Sewanee" and "Dixie," Masefield usually said his goodby and left the building. When asked why he did this, he replied that the songs were effective in making the soldiers forget the war and lightened their spirits, whereas his lecture only reminded them of their future encounter with war. He wanted the soldiers to end the evening without his presence as a reminder of his words.121

Masefield's Appearance and Manner of Delivery

Masefield was described during his camp appearances as "stoop-shouldered and frail looking," his "thin hair sprinkled with gray around the temples," a "close clipped British moustache," and "eyes that seem weary save when they twinkle with a very human smile."122 There was nothing "upstage" about him but he seemed to know his subject well and to command attention. He was impressive and striking

---

121 Interview with the Reverend Guy Hulbert.
122 Atlanta Journal, 3 June 1918.
as a speaker without extravagant delivery techniques.\footnote{Ibid.}
He most often appeared before the soldiers in a modest suit
with a stiff white collar and tie. His clothes seemed to
hang on him loosely and gave him a tired look. He admitted
on one occasion that he felt a little "overdressed" after
seeing the soldiers in their open collars and boots.\footnote{Interview with the Reverend Guy Hulbert.}
Masefield's proper and cultivated manners were always
evident in his dress and speech whether speaking on a formal
occasion to a group of military officers or speaking in the
open air to a large group of enlisted men.\footnote{Trench and Camp (Camp Johnson, Florida), 7 June 1918.}

Masefield seemed to hold his audience's attention
rather easily. One reviewer expressed his regret that
Masefield could not stay longer since his lectures had been
delivered in a "more understandable manner than any other
speaker that has been brought to the camp."\footnote{Tbid.} The same
reviewer stated that Masefield "proved himself as good an
orator as an author," and described him as "democratic in
manner" and "always ready to meet a stranger with a hearty
handshake and talk with him."\footnote{Tbid.} The three young female
musicians who performed with Masefield at Camp Gordon and

\footnote{\textit{ibid.}}
Camp Oglethorpe did not find him as outgoing as this. They offered to take him to lunch when they first met him and Masefield declined politely. After working with the girls a few days he became more friendly and spoke more openly with them. He explained to the girls that he was reluctant to speak with them earlier because of his amazement that the military would allow such young girls to visit the camps.128

Masefield was direct in his delivery, with effective eye contact and a sparkle of humor in his facial expression. He used a manuscript as he spoke, but no speaker's stand. He held the manuscript at about chest level in one hand, often twisting and creasing it.129 When the lecture was finished he placed the manuscript inside his coat and read the poems from another paper he drew from his pants pocket. He did not explain the poems or deliver a prepared introduction to them. He simply stated that he would now "try a clear reading of them."130

Masefield's bodily action was limited and his manner was stiff and formal. He kept one hand in his pocket most of the time and seldom moved from the position and posture he assumed upon reaching the center of the stage. As he sat on the stage during the introduction or musical prelude

128 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
129 Interviews with both the Reverend Guy Hulbert and Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
130 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
he sat formally on the edge of his chair and seemed nervous. 131

Masefield's delivery was vivid but not dramatic. Although he was described by some observers as "timid," "quiet," 132 and "reserved" 133 as he spoke, he was described by others as delivering his arguments and facts "in a most impressive manner." 134 One reviewer said he described the war in a "most complete and satisfying manner." 135 Masefield captured the soldier's attention without a great deal of physical and vocal animation. From all reports he seemed to have communicated a quiet and thoughtful patriotism that was enthusiastically received by the soldiers.

Masefield's voice was clear and resonant. One of the young female musicians at Camp Gordon, Miss Freddie Scott, a student of voice, described Masefield's voice as low in pitch, of good quality, without much variety, but with clear articulation. 136 The lectures were delivered in a slow steady pace with special vocal attention given to his poetic descriptions of the sights, sounds and events of

131 Interviews with both the Reverend Guy Hulbert and Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.

132 Atlanta Journal, 3 June 1918.

133 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.

134 Trench and Camp (Camp Johnson, Florida), 23 June 1918.

135 Trench and Camp (Camp Greene, North Carolina), 28 May 1918.

136 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
battle. The poems were delivered in a semi-chant with attention given to rhythm and rhyme. Masefield's English accent was described as pronounced and difficult for the soldiers to understand. One soldier remarked after a performance that Masefield sounded like "one of them actors."

What the soldiers saw and heard at a typical Masefield lecture was a speaker who delivered his lecture in a straightforward and sincere manner, without pretense and artificiality. When he delivered his poetry he became absorbed in the sounds and emotions in the poems and gave them the heightened effect of a subtle vocal chant.

THE WAR CAMP LECTURE

Masefield's war camp lecture entitled "A Talk to the Soldiers at Camp" was prepared in May, 1918, while he was a house guest of T. W. Lamont in New York. The manuscript from which he spoke during the tour was in his own hand and included his corrections and changes, most of which were obviously made to clarify and dramatize the lecture. At one point Masefield changed the line "you are fighting for the liberty of the world from a barbarism which has gone

---

137 Interview with the Reverend Guy Hulbert.
138 Interview with Mrs. Freddie Scott Lipscomb.
139 Note by T. W. Lamont attached to the original manuscript of the lecture. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
far to destroy civilization," to read "you are fighting for the freeing of the world from a religion of the sword which has spread a bloody and atrocious gospel across Europe."

At another point he changed the line "rises up to help a national effort in a national crisis," to read "rises up to help a national effort in a time of stress." As a writer Masefield was aware of effective techniques of composition. In preparing this lecture he was alert to opportunities for polishing and improving words and ideas to make them as effective as possible with his audiences.

Reviews of the lecture indicated that Masefield did not confine himself to the organization and content of his prepared manuscript. He would often add short stories and personal experiences as he did when he delivered his "War and the Future" lecture. These slight alterations in the manuscript were designed to adapt his lecture to individual audiences. At Camp McArthur he added a few humorous remarks about his likes and dislikes of war camp foods. At Camp Kearney in California he related a childhood dream in which he came to the United States and found it covered with ice. He then complimented California on its climate.

Although there is no indication that Masefield offered

---

140 Trench and Camp (Camp McArthur, Texas), 18 July 1918.
141 Trench and Camp (Camp Kearney, California), 8 July 1918.
to answer questions from his war camp audiences, the reviews of the lectures do state that he effectively answered the German war propaganda. This may have been a general type of "answering" the reviewers gleaned from the content of the lecture or it may have been an indication that Masefield on occasion incorporated into the war camp lecture some of the counter-propaganda material from his "War and the Future" lecture.

Knowing that narratives work well in holding attention and realizing his talent as a story-teller, Masefield prepared the lecture using simple narration as his basic tool of composition. Having been at the battle front, he knew some of the fear and anxieties experienced by men going into battle for the first time. He used this knowledge well by organizing a large portion of the lecture around a hypothetical story of how the typical soldier is introduced to battle. He developed the story by relating shorter stories and illustrations from his war experiences. The longer narrative was easy for the soldiers to identify with and the shorter stories added small touches of humor and pity.

Masefield began the lecture by seeking good will toward himself and his subject. He was skilled at relaxing his audiences and developing rapport early in his lecture. He began by saying:

I am here to speak to you about the war; so far as I can. I'm not going to wave any flags or talk about patriotism.
You know, as well as I do, that war is not a waving of flags nor any talk, but a putting by of all one's life, and the things one wanted to do, and a taking up of a bitter load, towards an end not yet in sight.

I'm not going to preach to you. It's for you fellows to preach to me. I just want to say a few things.

This personal touch was an attempt to secure the confidence of his audience. It was also an obvious attempt at informality. Moving from this introductory statement, Masefield assured the soldiers that he understood they had left their friends and families, their good jobs, their schooling, and their fun-making back home. He explained that he too was enjoying these things when the war came, and that he was also forced to forsake them for service to the country. He further identified with the soldiers by speaking collectively and in a very personal style. He made repeated use of "I," "you," and "we." In speaking of their feelings of responsibility he said, "All of us" know that "we should have to do something. We did not know quite what, to take a big leap in the dark, and stand up against something pretty bad, which might quite well be our death." Continuing to speak collectively he stated that, "Suddenly we had to face ourselves, to see what was in us . . . " and to ask "what we meant by the words, 'our country.' " He explained that these words might mean many things to many people but essentially they stood for "that kind of soul which the men of a nation make in their land.
by the kind of things they do." This statement acted as a transition into the body of the lecture.

The first major portion of the body of the lecture was composed of two stories used to illustrate the central theme of the lecture, that a soldier, in time of war is not alone, but has the support and encouragement of every living and dead soul who ever lived in his country.

The first story was one often related in the early part of the war. It told of a soldier in a trench with a small army. He and his few comrades were under attack by great numbers of the enemy. Suddenly the soldier saw in the trench beside him a number of "strange Englishmen of all the ages, men in forgotten uniforms, in rags, in armor." These strange soldiers helped him hold the trench and rushed out to aid him in battle "with spear and sword."

The second story told of an English unit outnumbered five to one. The unit was in serious trouble, with no support in sight and with every man fighting on the line. They wondered why the enemy had not broken through their weak defenses. After the battle one of the English officers asked a prisoner why the enemy had not broken through and taken them. The prisoner told him it was because of "all the armies behind your lines." It seems that the enemy had seen large army units standing behind the small English unit since the battle began. The story goes that these armies were the English dead who gathered to help their comrades.
Masefield explained that although these were only stories, he did not doubt that in the English battles "the dead of our race were there to help us." He went on to say that when America went to war the "dead of America mustered and beat the drums for you." He then made a restatement of his central theme and an appeal for national spirit by saying,

I am very sure that all that was ever wonderful in a nation, in its thought or in its life, rises up to help a national effort in a time of stress. And you, who are the nation's strength and mind ranked against your nation's enemy, have all that old national life behind you and entering into you to give you heart.

Masefield complimented the soldiers by stating that he was sure they all felt this national spirit when they decided to serve their country. He told them that this was their finest hour and they should be proud.

The second major portion of the body of the lecture was the longest and was developed through the hypothetical narrative. Masefield used his own experiences to judge how the individual soldiers in his audience felt when they came into the service. He suggested that the soldier's life was more "harsh" than most of them expected. The "glow" of national spirit had somehow misled them into romantic and unrealistic expectations about the military. The "idea" for which they were willing to fight and die might have seemed the finest thing they could imagine. When
they arrived at camp, they found nothing fine about it. In fact, they may have found it "ugly." At this point Masefield made his transition into the hypothetical narrative by saying: "Perhaps at a moment's notice, you will be ordered abroad, and you will think that all the harshness and unpleasantness of the life will be over, and that the freedom and the excitement will come."

He developed the narrative by explaining how, with the hope, freedom and excitement of war on their minds, the soldiers could expect to endure many hardships more severe than those experienced in the camp. They would endure the troop trains, the delay in moving to the battle front, the sore feet, and the aching in their shoulders from carrying the packs. They would endure all this in their "longing for that experience" they believed would come in battle. Masefield told the soldiers how they would move up to the front lines of battle, "filled with exhilaration that you are going into danger, and that you will have a chance to show your courage and your strength, against the enemy."

As Masefield described the sights of war soon to be witnessed by his audience, there was no doubt that the speaker was a poet. He used poetic figures of speech and vivid imagery to give a sense of drama to the narrative. He told of the fast troop movements and the sounds of far off explosions. He described the night scenes as "flashes
and glimmers coming in the sky, from the never-ceasing guns which roar in the dark like beasts."

Masefield made the narrative personal by telling the soldiers that a time would come in all the confusion and noise when they would be told that it was their turn to go up. He explained that they would go past the guns and flashes into the danger that lay behind them. They would know the danger was there, but they would not be able to see it. He emphasized that these events would "make your heart to beat a little quicker, and your mind to run brighter, and your love for your fellows beside you to be a little dearer and less selfish." He assured them that although all would not be gladness and joy, they would all be very glad that they had come.

Masefield then described the scenes and experiences the soldiers might anticipate as they made their move to the front lines. In this section of the narrative he again made good use of dramatic imagery. He described the falling shells as making a "crackling crash" and "glimmers of flame." He described the battle at night as producing "a vivid snake of white fire wriggling its way up the sky, coming, apparently, straight towards you, and then bursting into a star of fire, and wavering slowly down like a star, shedding a brilliance."

Following the descriptions of the battle scenes, Masefield turned to an analysis of the emotional states the
soldiers might anticipate finding themselves in during battle. He believed that their first emotion would probably be that of anxiety, not an anxiety created by a fear of what may happen to them but an anxiety for what they might do when and if something happened. He described it as "a fear lest you should shew your fear." After the anxiety was conquered and the soldiers knew that they could master their fear, Masefield confessed that they would face "much sternest tests." He told the soldiers that they must master their fear to the point that men who might desire to look into their faces for comfort would find it and would "be the steadier" because of it.

Masefield then explained that the experience of being in danger would soon cease to be a new thing and that it would become a part of their daily existence as long as the war continued. Added to this constant feeling of danger would be the discomforts of war. He described the rain and mud as a part of this discomfort and told the soldiers that their lives would seem to "taste of mud," and the danger and discomfort would become so bad that they would be "fed up" with the war.

The climax of Masefield's hypothetical narrative was reached at this point in the lecture as he described the "great day of the war." This day would be the soldier's first encounter with the enemy and was described as the sternest test of all. Before driving home his point with illustrations of the horrors of death in battle, Masefield
lightened the tone of the lecture for a moment and explained that in most war books this event of encounter with death occurs in daylight, on a very sunny day, "with the birds singing." He then quoted a Japanese proverb, "It is always a pleasure to die for one's country." Masefield confessed his doubts about this statement and declared that although many men had been cheered by that thought, he felt the pleasure "sometimes very well disguised."

The tone of the lecture then became more serious as Masefield illustrated the hypothetical narrative with descriptions of four battles of the war in which the soldiers suffered discomfort and death but remained loyal and courageous to the end.

The first battle he described was the first at Ypres, where one battalion was "obliterated," another one remade with new troops twice, and a third one reduced from 987 men to 70 men in one morning.

The second battle description was of the second at Ypres, during which the men were attacked by gas at night while shells bombarded the unit. Masefield described the gas as coming over in "a green cloud, over a wide front. It hung like a fog over the section. Men wandered and ran in that fog, choking, dying and blinded, not knowing what they were doing nor where they were going, nor what was happening." Yet these men, some of them American, were pictured by Masefield as gaining control of themselves,
finding their way through the gas and going "up to be choked in it, rather than give up the line."

The third description was of the battle at Gallipoli, where all the men suffered from dysentery and thirst. After four days and nights of "most bloody fierce fighting," much of it done on a hill in a brush fire, the battle was lost. But just at dawn a few survivors of one English battalion reformed and went back into the battle with bayonets. They did hold the enemy for a short time but were driven back. The group retreated and reformed again. This time only some twenty-five men were left. They went back at the enemy again and died for their country "in pain, in thirst, against hopeless odds, with no chance whatsoever and knowing the battle was lost."

The battle at the Somme was the fourth and final battle described. The ground at the battle was filthy and wet. Horses died of fatigue after pulling their feet from the mud and the rain continued to fall. Masefield described the earth as "burnt bald" with "no trace of any green thing in all those miles of war." The ground was shot with holes which "filled with greenish filthy stinking water, which leaked into the trenches, with scum from the dead." Masefield emphasized the extreme misery suffered by the soldiers as they drank muddy water and slept in the mud. In spite of it all, Masefield thought the men had dreams of victory although they "could have seen nothing but the
abomination of desolation, more awful than words can describe."

Upon finishing this last illustration, Masefield returned to his hypothetical narrative and his earlier statement that they would soon face their "great day of the war." He explained that this day might come in much the same way it did in the battles just described, with the same discomforts, mud, water, and roaring of guns. At this point, Masefield delivered the strongest emotional appeals of the lecture and moved to the final part of his hypothetical narrative. He remarked that when soldiers looked out at the enemy they often saw "nothing but a haze of dust and smoke, stinking of poison, through which all tumult roars and screams and wails." He acknowledged the fact that some men enjoyed these experiences and seemed to work more quickly and with greater eagerness when faced with such a challenge. He did think, however, that most men found no happiness in it but, instead, a "searching of the body and the soul." He told the soldiers that under the horrible conditions he had described, "nothing is much help to a man . . . , except the comrade beside him and his own courage." He painted a vivid picture of such a moment:

"You may look to the comrade beside you on the one hand, and you may see him going mad under the strain, you may look to the comrade beside you on the other hand, and find him lying dead in the mud. You may look into your own heart for your courage; but you may not recognize your own heart. You may see only a little
sick and shaking thing, quite unlike anything known to you, repeating only the words, "My God, I must stick it. I must stick it." But you don't want to stick it.

This emotional passage ended the hypothetical narrative and Masefield returned to his central theme and expressed no doubt that in a time of national crisis "there comes a muster of the dead!" who "stand there" to help. He stated that in those "strange times of the soul," he believed the dead of a nation could "know," "enter in" and "beat up a drum to the soul."

Masefield began his concluding remarks by launching into a passage strong with propaganda and personal appeal. Moving from a discussion of the soldier in general to the American soldier in particular, he reminded his audience that their nation was the only one in the world that had never gone to war except for securing man's liberty. He told the soldiers that all those Americans who died in the war for independence, the war to free the slaves, and the war to free Cuba, would exist forever to help in "all lonely causes wherever there are men." He then enlarged the perspective and told the soldiers that they were fighting "for the freeing of the world from a religion of the sword which has spread a bloody and atrocious gospel across Europe." He regarded this gospel as one without mind and body, one under which "no nation shall be free, nor any treaty sacred, nor any tenderness permitted."
He further described the gospel as "an intellect without mercy, without honor, without scruple, a thing unspeakably terrible, because it has the skill of a man with none of a man's compassion," and "has raised half the world in arms to glut its greed."

Becoming even more personal in his appeal to the soldiers, Masefield gave his final remarks a patriotic and inspirational tone. He told his audience that they personally were at war against "that thing," and could be confident that "the dead of this great land" would be at their sides. He further stated that their help would come not only from the great men such as Washington and Lincoln but also from "the noble army of humble martyrs who have stood up to that thing here in all its forms wherever it has been found." Masefield assured the soldiers that they would have not only the soul of their own nation behind them but the souls of early heroes such as St. George, and Roland, and the best men of the vast armies of the French and English who have already died in the war. And, finally, the soldiers were told that they would have the help of the "armies of the living, to whom you will forever be brothers and comrades and dear friends."

Masefield closed the lecture with a short poetic paragraph. He drew together the entire lecture with an economy of words and an inspirational challenge. The following is the final paragraph in its entirety:
And when the mud is all dry and the wounds all healed and grass grows again on the graves and the war is over, you will know that the great time of your lives will have been just this, when you gave up all the sweet things of life to go out to stand in the mud, with nothing but your courage and your comrade, to set men free, even if it cost your life.

Masefield's understanding of and admiration for the soldiers in his audience was evident in this lecture. From personal experience he understood the hardships the soldiers would endure and in all honesty attempted to prepare the men for their encounter with war. His remarks were at times reassuring and inspiring as he spoke of their common task and appealed to their patriotic spirit. At other times he painted a vivid picture of the horrors of war in order to keep the truths of war in focus. While telling the soldiers of the possibilities of death, Masefield also attempted to boost their morale and comradeship and to instill in them a confidence and a courage which would help them as they faced death.

MASEFIELD'S OFFICIAL REPORT OF HIS 1918 TOUR

Upon returning to England in August, Masefield prepared an official report of his observations during his lecture tour in America. The report dated August 30, 1918, was addressed to Ian Hay Butts of the British Foreign Office. Butts agreed with Masefield's analysis of American public opinion and expressed assurance that he would impress
Masefield's suggestions on future speakers sent on American lecture tours. ¹⁴² A complete copy of this report appears in Appendix B.

Masefield began the report by relating his observations on changes taking place in America as a result of the war. He stated that the war had given America a unity that it needed badly. The Americans had gained the knowledge that their country was "a part of the world and not apart from it." Although not always applied wisely in action, this unity had created an enthusiasm for the war among the American people.

Masefield reported that a most obvious and profound influence in America was the abundance of anti-British propaganda. The "malicious lies" were spread by both the Germans and the Irish, and when the lies were exposed "the propagandists fall back upon malicious suggestions, which are repeated and believed." He reported examples of such lies from Swedish and German sources. He also reported having addressed a meeting interrupted by German demonstrators, and having been "misreported, misrepresented and copiously abused by Irish and German journalists." ¹⁴³


¹⁴³ The writer examined German newspapers from Chicago and Philadelphia but found no evidence of this abuse.
Masefield did not give the details of these events but did single out the cities of Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and the state of California as examples of areas where the enemies of England banded together and enjoyed a great deal of influence. The enemy tactics were reported as less open and more underhanded than in earlier years. Although the enemy activities were not approved by the general public in America, they were in evidence daily. Masefield stated that no day passed during his stay in America in which he was not "hurt by something spoken or written against this country, in malice, ignorance, idleness or poisonous hatred."

Turning his attention to an additional problem apart from the traditional war problems, Masefield reported that he had observed a resentment among the American people toward the English. This resentment had been caused by a growing national spirit and many years of German and Irish propaganda, as well as the old bitterness and rivalry that had always existed between America and England. Englishmen who visited America were "met with this bitterness and have resented it, and their resentment has been resented."

The common language of the two countries seemed to Masefield another reason for the people of the two countries constantly to compare and criticize. Speaking the same language made travel and communication easier and the rivalry flourished. These old resentments and rivalries
had made both the American and British public sensitive to each other's criticism.

The next large portion of the report dealt with mistakes England had made in her relations with America during the first years of the war, and the fact that the English had been unwilling to organize a counter-propaganda campaign to publicize the positive side of their war activities. Masefield reported that much had been accomplished of late, and in the last six weeks the results were beginning to show. Public opinion in America was now "beginning to recognize" that England had "borne the main burden of this war for the last three years." The Americans had been free with their praise of the French for some time but only now were they coming to realize England's share in the war. Masefield predicted the "beginning of a wave of recognition and affection" for the British by the Americans, a wave that would increase and gain strength during the next few months. He stressed the fact that England must make the most of this opportunity and exert every effort to secure the friendship of America once and for all.

Masefield reported that England's worst enemies, apart from the Germans, were the eminent Englishmen who criticized England's activities. Although he did not wish to see a restriction put on public criticism by the leaders in England, he felt it important to make the English leaders more aware of the effect of criticism on the American
public. He pointed out that America was a new country and that American minds "are neither critical nor subtle, and opinion is often taken ready made, like the clothes and boots in general use." Masefield did not believe that the American public understood the Englishman's "habit of self criticism." This misunderstanding was compounded by the fact that the American press preferred to print extravagant and agressive remarks made by the Englishmen. Anyone in America could read an article by an eminent English novelist who bitterly criticized his country, or a statement by an English soldier with "A theory, opposing all other theories," or perhaps a few remarks by an English businessman with "an axe to grind." These criticisms might have been accepted in England as a matter of course but in America they were sure to be misunderstood. Masefield stated that in America "where ninety nine people out of every hundred are ignorant of the fact, and will not believe the fact," that England had done anything in the war, this criticism merely confirmed their opinion.

Masefield expressed concern over the abundance of negative criticism of England's part in the war and the lack of information glorifying England's achievements. No writer of any real importance, with the exception of Professor Gilbert Murray, had written anything in praise of England's actions. It was discouraging to the English lecturer in
America to find half of his efforts "undone, by some British writer or soldier, five thousand miles away, scoring some point" against England. Masefield praised the English writers for their talents but assured them that their clever criticism was so good that it "sticks" so that the American people remembered it better than traditional reports of the facts of the war.

Masefield suggested that England needed to advertise more,—they needed to advertise the fact that England had done much more in the affairs of the war than America. There could be no doubt that the time had arrived to overcome the dislike and jealousy existing between the two countries, and more advertising might help.

In the final paragraphs of the report, Masefield discussed two "virtuous errors" he believed the English had made since the war began. He thought they had been too silent and too modest. They had been silent "when the whole continent waited for full details," and they had been modest when reporting the war's actions, and had "passed over" their own share in the burden of the war, in favor of reporting the accomplishments of the Allies.

As recommendations for future propaganda, Masefield suggested that England send "picked lecturers" to the American schools where they could influence the coming generations. He approved the use of the lecture tour and suggested that the spoken word and the motion picture were the best means
Another suggestion was that the Americans be shown the effects of the war on England's social system. Masefield did not believe that America realized the great revolution that had taken place in England as a result of the war, or how much had been done in England "to prevent any recurrence of the pre-war state, of indifference to the life of the people." If these changes in England's social system could be communicated to the Americans, Masefield believed that the "old mistrust" between the two countries would vanish.

In the final statement of his report, Masefield suggested that it might be better if the people in England refrained from criticizing America and Americans. The English had resented the French and American criticism in the early part of the war, and Masefield wanted to avoid arousing more resentment in America and similar resentment in any future ally.

When Masefield visited the United States in 1918 he was an experienced speaker on the American lecture circuit. He spoke openly of the war, attempting to strengthen the American enthusiasm in support of the British war efforts. During the last three months of the seven-month tour he lectured to the soldiers in the American war training camps. In these war camp lectures he tried to prepare the soldiers for their encounter with war and to lift their morale. His lectures were built around short narratives and anecdotes.
taken from his experiences at the battle front. The stories were filled with poetic descriptions of the pleasant as well as the tragic moods and scenes of war. At the close of the lectures in both the public and the war camp tours he read a number of his poems. He appeared before his audiences as a quiet and serious speaker, delivering his lectures with the "cool gravity" of a proper English gentleman and reading his poetry in a detached and contemplative attitude. His tour was a successful contribution to the British propagandistic effort in the United States.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

John Masefield came to the United States in 1916 and again in 1918 as a propagandistic lecturer sponsored by the British War Department. The lecture tours provided a method of war service for Masefield and offered him opportunities to advance his literary reputation in this country.

In August, 1915, Masefield wanted to see the European War at first hand and volunteered for Red Cross work in the Dardanelles. While at the battle front he was deeply moved by what he saw of the tragic waste of human lives and wanted to do whatever he could to serve the purpose of peace. In September, because of bad health and fatigue, he was sent back to England. In October, while convalescing at his home, he was contacted by Sir Gilbert Parker of the British propaganda organization concerning a possible lecture tour in the United States. Believing this an opportunity for service better suited to his talents and fragile health than front line duty, Masefield accepted the responsibility for the tour.

The 1916 tour had both a literary and a propagandistic
purpose. Masefield toured the eastern, southern and midwestern United States from January through March, lecturing on English literature and observing the effects of the war on American public opinion. His activities were largely those of addressing college students and members of literary clubs and societies, and meeting with prominent American literary figures. He limited the subject of his lectures to literature and seldom spoke of the war except to prophesy a great renaissance in poetry and the other arts when the war was over. He believed that after the war there would be strong feelings among the people of the world against brute force, the result of which would be a new interest in art, evoking volumes of new poetry by great new poets. Masefield also used these lectures to present his views of noteworthy English poets and to read aloud from a few of their poems. He thought all poets reflected their nation's concern for the common man, but he regarded the English poets as only occasionally reaching the masses, a condition that would change after the war. He foresaw the English poets "singing a new song" of democracy and writing poetry more appealing to the masses because of the war's effect in binding together the minds and efforts of the English people.

At the close of each lecture and as a part of the total performance Masefield read a few of his poems and often a scene from one of his verse plays. He most often read "Sea
"Fever," a favorite with his audiences, and the war poem "August, 1914."

Masefield's literary reputation in the United States was enhanced by the three-month tour in 1916. His American readers, who had known him previously as a poet of the sea and a spinner of yarns found a new Masefield, a quiet and shy Englishman rather than a loud, rough "sailor poet." His ideas on literature and life were timely and appealing to them. Although he did not write the "free verse" popular in the United States between 1910 and 1920, he was in sympathy with the experimental poets and was accepted by American writers as a part of the new tradition in poetry.

Masefield did not reveal his propagandistic purpose to the American audiences in 1916. He listened carefully as the American people expressed their views of the war and reported his findings to the British government upon his return to England. In his report Masefield urged the British government to improve the quality and quantity of pro-British propaganda in America. He felt a pressing need to counteract the German propaganda he had heard during his lecture tour. The British government had great confidence in his report and, as one method of carrying out its recommendations, commissioned Masefield to write a factual narrative of the Gallipoli campaign. This campaign had been a subject of controversy and German propaganda had
used it as an opportunity to discredit England's army. Masefield had witnessed the campaign during his service with the Red Cross and wrote the narrative from his own observations. The finished book, entitled *Gallipoli*, was published in England in September, 1916, and in America in October, 1916. It was immediately successful both as British propaganda and as a literary work.

After *Gallipoli* was published, Masefield sought other forms of war service. The British War Department sent him to the battle front in France to observe and report on the American relief work. While there he was appointed official war historian for the Somme. In June, 1917, he was wounded and returned to England. By October he had regained his health and the British War Department requested that he return to the United States for another propaganda-lecture tour. Because the United States had entered the war since Masefield's first tour, he could work openly for the British propaganda organization in the United States. The success of the 1916 tour led him to accept the responsibility for the second tour.

The 1918 visit to the United States took Masefield on a public tour through the northeastern, midwestern, and western states from January through April, and on a tour of the American war training camps from May through July. The circumstances surrounding the second tour were quite different from those of the first. In 1916 Masefield
arrived in a neutral United States as an inexperienced circuit lecturer instructed by the British War Office to limit the subject of his lectures to literature. In 1918 the United States had entered the war on the side of the Allies and Masefield arrived as a seasoned circuit lecturer making a public announcement that he would deliver lectures on the war. Now that America was involved in the war Masefield could speak his propaganda openly.

The lecture delivered on the public tour in 1918 was called "The War and the Future." The central idea was that in a time of national crisis the history and traditions of a country will rise to her aid. American had been reluctant to enter the war and Masefield was attempting to strengthen her national spirit. The lecture was well conceived and organized. The central idea was illustrated by numerous war stories taken from Masefield's experience at the front. Masefield was a superb writer of stories and the poetic imagery he used in describing the battle scenes was vivid and memorable. The lecture was designed to acquaint the civilian American audiences with the realities of the war and its effect on the people of the world. To Masefield, war was a "terrible accident" and not an inevitable fact of life. He expressed regret that man had such difficulty in finding methods other than war for solving his disputes. He believed that if man did not find other methods, he would eventually destroy himself with war.
Although Masefield was firm in his convictions against war, he was equally firm in his confidence that the present war would end in a victory for the Allies. His lecture was patriotic and his commitment to the welfare of mankind unmistakable.

The war camp lecture was called "A Talk to the Soldiers at Camp." It was similar to the public lecture in that it was composed of many war stories, but, unlike the public lecture, its emphasis was on the effect of the war on the individual soldier. While the public lecture had described the war in terms more comprehensible to civilians, the war camp lecture used details more appropriate and meaningful to soldiers. Masefield tried to prepare the soldiers in these camps for their personal encounter with war and possibly with death.

As in the 1916 tour, Masefield read a few of his poems at the close of each of the 1918 lectures. His choice of poems for reading in 1918 was essentially the same as in 1916. The only difference between the reading performances during the two tours seemed to be in purpose. In 1916 Masefield had used the readings to promote his poetry in the United States. In 1918 the readings appeared to be a courtesy to the audience. The audience came to hear a poet and the readings seemed a necessary part of his performance. His major concern on this second tour was not poetry but the propagandistic effect of his lecture.
In his official report of the 1918 tour Masefield revealed that the war had given the United States a unity of national purpose. The American people were becoming more and more enthusiastic about their role in the war. Masefield believed the growing interest in the war was providing more opportunities for war propaganda. Although not as openly as in 1916, the Germans were increasing their propaganda efforts. Anti-British propaganda was abundant and might grow stronger if not counteracted immediately. Masefield suggested that the best method for fighting the German propaganda was by mending the fences of friendship between the British and Americans. He believed the Americans would accept British friendship more readily if the British would themselves refrain from leveling such severe criticism of the British war activities. Although the self-criticism was accepted and understood in England, the Americans saw it as evidence of disunity in the British war effort. Masefield recommended that every effort be made to alert the British leaders to the effects of their criticism on American public opinion.

In the report Masefield also expressed concern over the rivalry and jealousy existing between England and the United States and suggested that British leaders could overcome many of these differences by forgetting the past and refraining from criticizing America and Americans.

From his experiences on the lecture circuit Masefield
believed the lecture to be one of the best methods for reaching the American public. He recommended that the British make extensive use of lectures in future propaganda efforts in the United States.

Compared to the other British lecturers visiting the United States during the same period, Masefield resembled the "one nighter" less than anyone else on the circuit. Although most of the British circuit lecturers were characterized as arrogant and flamboyant, Masefield was described as a gentle and humble man of proper manners. He was shy before his audiences and there was no sign of pretension or affectation about him. He did little that could be considered dramatic or theatrical. His delivery communicated a sense of sincerity and a subtle intensity of feeling. With a controlled and restrained voice, lacking in variation, he spoke simply and naturally in his pronounced English accent. His bodily action was at a minimum, and although he extemporized small portions of his lecture, he read most of it from the manuscript. This is not to suggest that Masefield was not an interesting and effective speaker. He was not a showman and appeared before American audiences at a time when they needed his quiet concern and encouragement more than they needed showmanship.

Masefield stated in his autobiography, So Long to Learn (1952), that his major concern had always been to tell stories and learn to tell them well before live audiences.
He had mastered the technique of writing stories before his lecture tours in 1916 and 1918, but these tours provided opportunities for him to try his skill at oral storytelling. The stories he told were vivid and imaginative pieces of literature that moved his audiences deeply.

Masefield's techniques of delivery were uniquely his own and were successful in securing and holding the attention of his American audiences. Although he delivered his lectures without a great deal of physical and vocal animation, the urgency of his plea for peace and the sincerity of his call for nationalism were effectively communicated. His desire was to share his war experiences and to draw the audience closer to the everyday events of the battle front. To do this he related stories of the war, giving special attention to the sights and sounds of the battles. His subtle use of humor in many of these stories blended well with his calm and deliberate manner and served as an occasional relief from the sober thoughts of war and death.

Masefield's reading of his poems and plays was clear and impressive. Subtle variations in his voice, plus his simple and direct story-telling technique, made the readings of his narrative poems vivid for his audiences. His baritone voice carried a hint of chant as he read the lyric lines of his shorter poems. His involvement in the moods and images as he read was intense, giving him a detached and thoughtful attitude. He often gazed over the heads of his audience as if remembering the event that inspired the poem.
There was no hint of artificiality in his reading manner. He demonstrated with his voice the poetic qualities of the language of the poems and gave special attention to their imagery and rhythms. To his audience he was a simple, honest man who felt deeply about the effects of poetry on mankind.

Masefield's concern for mankind, as revealed during his lecture tours in the United States, was more than a detached poetic sympathy. He not only wrote about and for the common man, but also involved himself in war service for and with the common man. His activities in war service were in harmony with the democratic philosophy expressed in his writings. He had often expressed a desire to close the gap between the poets and the masses, and these tours brought him closer to the American people as both poet and man.

The pro-British propaganda in the United States was strengthened and made more effective as a result of Masefield's lecture tours. His analysis of British propaganda in the United States was used by the British Foreign Office in planning further propaganda for the American public. His war lectures strengthened British-American friendship and acted as a source of inspiration in developing a strong national spirit in the United States. His book, Gallipoli, was one of the finest pieces of literary propaganda of the war.
In all probability, it was the utter sincerity of Masefield's personality and manner that contributed most to the success of his lecture tours in the United States. His personal magnetism moved his audiences profoundly and his dedication to the welfare of mankind served to inspire his hearers.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. BOOKS


2. ARTICLES AND PERIODICALS


Chase, Stanley P. "Mr. John Masefield: A Biographical Note," *Modern Language Notes*, XL (February, 1925), 84-86.


"English Lecturers as a Standing Joke," *Literary Digest*, CIX (April 11, 1931), 17.


"Mr. Masefield's Saga of Gallipoli," *Spectator*, CXVII (October 7, 1916), 415-416.


"Raps at the Latest Realism," *Literary Digest*, XLIV (June 22, 1912), 1299-1300.


Thorndike, Ashley H. "The Great Tradition," Dial, LXVI (February 8, 1919), 118-121.


3. NEWSPAPERS

Afloat and Ashore (Camp Linda Vista, California), 10 July 1918.

Atlanta Journal, 3 June 1918.

Boston Daily Advertiser, 8 February 1916.


Chicago Daily Tribune, 20 February 1916; 13, 16 February 1918.

College News (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania), 10 February 1916.

Daily Maroon (University of Chicago), 15 February 1918.

Des Moines Register, 13, 15, 16 February 1918.

Grinnell Herald (Grinnell College, Iowa), 19 February 1918.


Public Ledger (Philadelphia), 19 January, 6 March 1916.
Register and Leader (Des Moines, Iowa), 8 March 1916.

Richmond Collegian (Richmond College, Virginia), 15 February 1916.

San Francisco Chronicle, 24, 31 March 1918.

San Francisco Examiner, 27 March 1918.

Scarlet and Black (Grinnell College, Iowa), 20 February 1918.

Seattle Star (Washington), 28 March 1918.

Smith College Weekly (Massachusetts), 22 December 1915.

The Times (London), 17 March 1916.

Toledo Blade, 10 April 1918.

Trench and Camp (published at all major America training camps), June-August 1918.

Wellesley College News (Massachusetts), 27 January; 2, 23 March 1916.

World Herald (Omaha, Nebraska), 17 February 1918.

Yale Alumni Weekly, 14, 21 January 1916; 5 July 1918.

4. LETTERS

Authors League of America. Letter to the writer from Mills T. Eyck, Executive Director, June 25, 1969.


Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

Bielaski, A. B. Letter to Raymond Fosdick, April 4, 1918.
National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.


Easton, W. O. Letter to Raymond Fosdick, May 1, 1918.
National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.


——. Telegram to Raymond Fosdick, April 16, 1918. National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.


——. Note attached to a copy of The Times (London), October 22, 1909. Berg Collection, New York Public Library.


Masefield, Judith. Letter to the writer, April 15, 1969.


5. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Great Britain. Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 5th ser., 76 (1915) and 109 (1918).

United States General Order Number 57. May 9, 1917. United States War Department.

6. INTERVIEWS

Hulbert, Guy A. A private interview in Atlanta, Georgia, August 15, 1968.

Lipscomb, Mrs. Freddie Scott. Private interviews in Auburn, Alabama, October 10, 1967; August 6, 1968.

7. MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS

Calendar Card Announcement. "Drama League Calendar." Drama League of America Collection, New York Lincoln Center Theatre Collection.


Publicity Notices. Two notices of John Masefield's lectures distributed by the J. B. Pond Lyceum Bureau. Masefield Papers, Yale University Library.

University Record. A monthly publication of the University of Chicago, April, 1918.
I have the honor to present to you my report of things noticed during my stay in the United States between the 13th of January and the 18th of March. During that time I visited some thirty towns in the East, the South, and the Middle West, and had the fortune to meet and talk with many people of every sort and condition, from millionaires to day labourers.

I will divide my report into three portions—the first, a general survey; the second, some account of things which should be done soon, or might with advantage be done presently; and the third, a suggestion of steps which might now be taken to make the friendship between the two countries a lasting and deep bond or national reconciliation.

(I).—The United States may be divided roughly into four distinct provinces—Eastern, Southern, Middle Western, and Western. I did not visit the Western province; it is some thousands of miles from the war, absorbed in its own affairs, and, on the whole, indifferent to the outcome.

(a.) In the East the feeling is very generally pro-Ally.
The feeling is strongest where the cultivation is greatest, as in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, from which towns a number of men and women have gone to take an active part in the war, but it is fairly general, and in some Eastern societies Germans have been ostracized, or forced by public opinion to adopt cringing and apologetic airs as though ashamed of their country.

It must, however, be remembered that, for many years, throughout America, the schools, the press, and public oratory have proclaimed the iniquities of England. England has been held up as the traditional enemy much more vigorously than she had been extolled (if ever she has been) as the mother country, and there is, therefore, in this pro-Ally Eastern province, a multitude of Americans who hate the English and lose no opportunity to malign them. These people are kept upon our side by the traditional national friendship with France; their sympathies are with the French, not with us, and however much they may hate the Germans, they are loth to admit any merit in our share in the undertaking. Side by side with this very large body is the very large, well-organized, and malignant body of the Irish-Americans, who are bitterly anti-English, and work the Catholic communities against us.

(b.) In the South, the feeling is more warmly and perhaps more generally pro-Ally, the people being more impulsive, more kindly towards English ideals, and still
remembering England's sympathy with the Southern cause in the Secession War. The old antagonism between North and South crops out occasionally, and one meets the feeling that the South would have gone to war with Germany long ago had not the North directed otherwise. At the same time, the sympathy is less practical here. I had not the fortune to hear of any Southerner who had actually gone to the war to help in any way with personal service.

(c.) In the Middle West, the American feeling, even if it be, as it may be, in the main, pro-Ally, is overshadowed and subdued by fear of the great German organizations centered in Milwaukee, Chicago, and St. Louis. German influence dominates and cowards the Middle West. In this province, the anti-Ally lies, insinuations, and rumours are first set going, to spread abroad wherever emptiness will repeat and ignorance credit what malice has invented. These unresting organizations poison the minds of multitudes against us. No means is left unused by them, from buying or intimidating the press to the telling of lies to school girls. Their methods are seldom subtle, but with an audience so uncritical this does not matter. These organizations have their emissaries in the East, including some dozen clever and versatile journalists whose daily tasks provide letters (signed "True American," "Mayflower," "1776," "Boston Tea Party," etc.) for the Eastern press, pointing out the iniquity of England, and
the danger of departing from the great American doctrines laid down by George Washington, etc. Sometimes these dozen, or half dozen, souls will write 100 different letters in a day and scatter them through the national press, which guilelessly prints them.

II.—(a.) It is most important that, some authoritative loyal Irish member, preferably a Catholic, should go over as soon as may be, before the summer fighting begins, to silence the Irish-American party, who exude poison from every pore. If Mr. Redmond would do this, it would be the work of his life. But let some good man do it, without delay, for these snakes are at work daily, with a great priesthood and a skilled journalism to back them, in those Eastern towns which would otherwise be ours. This is most important.

(b.) Many people in the cultivated Eastern centres feel that their marked pro-Ally feelings might be rewarded by a more generous supply of news from the front, not so much news of the actual military events, which, as they realise, cannot be divulged, as of the life in the trenches, vivid personal letters, with drawings and photographs. If such letters could be sent continuously, from the Belgian, English, and French fronts, in much greater variety than heretofore, they would have a very good effect. As there is a prejudice against the English in many American minds, the letters from the English front ought to be edited by men who know America. Much good might be done by writing
up Belgium and the devastated parts of France rather more particularly than has been done.

(c.) Cinemas, or moving picture shows, are much more thronged, and have far greater influence, in America than in this country. The Germans use them to exalt their points of view, and more might be done by our own side. Good films of life in the Belgian, English, and French camps, and in the trenches or dugouts, would have a very good effect. Films of Stratford and of other places dear to Americans, such as the old Washington home, with troops passing, etc., might be shown. Of course, now that they have their own little war in Mexico these things may prove less attractive.

(d.) Taking the hint from German agents, but perhaps prompted in part by their ignorance of war and hatred of the English, various men ask "What have the English done?" or "What has the English army done?" My own reply to such has been that we and the army have not been too proud to fight, but the answer has not been perfect as a begetter of good relations. It might be well to turn various writers to answering these questions in the big American monthlies, pointing out the obvious parallel of the raising of the Northern armies in 1861, and showing how very much more creditable our own achievements have been. Our help to France and Belgium might be insisted on. Our best brains might be turned on to this task.
There can be no doubt that the failure in the Dardanelles has damaged us in America in many ways. Americans neither understand nor pity failure, worshipping success, as they do, they dread it. The Germans, realising this, have emphasized our failure there, and the results are unpleasant. Much has been, and is being, said about "failure of generalship," "useless slaughter of men," "divided counsels," etc. I gather that Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has been lecturing in America on this campaign (I know not from what point of view nor with what success), but more than one voice ought to be raised in the matter. I was myself in the Dardanelles, after the Suvla Bay landing, for a brief while, and would most respectfully suggest that I be allowed to prepare an article upon the venture, for publication in America. I could at least convince them of the difficulties which we overcame.

Apart from the fact that German agents are everywhere spreading the belief that the English hate and despise the Americans, the present would be a good time to attempt a real linking together of the English-speaking peoples. Americans are perturbed by the increase of the Slav elements in their populations and by the persistence with which their German settlers cling to their Fatherland. They would welcome anything which would strengthen the bond between their race and the traditional English culture. If there could be a constant and liberal exchange
of college professors, and (especially) a big application of the idea of the Rhodes Scholarships to our advanced schools of technology, the effect, in a short time, would be very marked. The immediate evil might be remedied effectually and easily. It would probably suffice if the universities, for instance, could give to the Universities of Yale and Harvard (say) some public mark of thanks to the many Americans who have left those colleges to serve in France. Some few scraps of autograph by famous English writers would be ample for the purpose. Such a gift, gracefully made, would be publicly exhibited, universally acclaimed in the press, and lastingly remembered. In any case, many Americans would welcome any sign, however slight, that they are not, as they fear, hated and wholly despised by the country of their traditional culture.

John Masefield
APPENDIX B

MASEFIELD'S REPORT OF HIS 1918 TOUR

(Copy in Masefield's hand, British Public Records Office, 30 August 1918)

I have the honor to present to you the following notes and observations of opinion in America.

Since my last visit to America, early in 1916, the war has profoundly changed every part of the country. It has given to the land the unity which it was fast losing; it has given to the people, the knowledge which they never before had, that America is a part of the world and not apart from it. Almost everywhere, there is an enthusiasm for the war, not always yet applied in action, or wisely applied, but finding its outlets in many ways.

A great result of the war has been, that it has made all anti-British propaganda, whether German or Irish, surreptitious. Much, of both kinds, still goes on. Malicious lies are spread abroad by both peoples continuously, and when the lies are exposed the propagandists fall back upon malicious suggestions, which are repeated and believed. I have myself come upon the tracks of Swedish emissaries, one, a woman, spreading lies about the French, the other, a man, spreading lies about the late
Lord Kitchener; elsewhere, I have heard a German insinuating praise of Germany; have read a history of the war so written, by a German, as to be a long paean of praise of German soldiers and sailors, yet unpublished in an American newspaper; have addressed a meeting interrupted by Germans, and have been misreported, misrepresented and copiously abused by Irish and German journalists. In Boston, Chicago, St. Louis and California, it is impossible not to feel acutely the presence of this organized and malignant enemy, banded against us. The enemy is there, less open than before, and using methods even more underhand, though sometimes even now, he will come out in a manner difficult for the European to understand. In the March offensive the German press of Chicago came out unreproved and exultingly with the heading,

"THE KAISER RIPS BRITISH LINE:

Although it is now considered "bad form" in America to speak ill of the Allies, no day passed, in all my eight month's stay in the country, in which I was not hurt by something spoken or written against this country, in malice, ignorance, idleness or poisonous hatred.

Unfortunately, we are the traditional enemy, and apart from the traditional affinity, there is a certain jealousy of us. The school books, the national pride, and at least twenty years of unresting German and Irish propaganda against us, as well as the thirty millions of
hostile ancestry, have kept this bitter feeling bitter. English visitors to America have met with this bitterness and have resented it, and their resentment has been resented. So it goes on. Then, as we speak the same language, it is more easy for the American to travel in our land, to read our books and papers, and to make comparisons with us, than to go elsewhere to do the same. Then, the American lives more tribally than the Englishman; he likes to be in a crowd and to mix with it; he cannot understand the Englishman's shrinking from a crowd. Both Americans and Englishmen are tenderly sensitive to any criticism of themselves or of their country, by others. Owing to the facts stated above, it happens that both countries come in for a good deal of each other's criticism.

There is no doubt, that our national unwillingness to advertise kept us from a counter-propaganda against the Germans and Irish during the first years of the war. Much has been done since then, but it is only within the last six weeks or two months that the results have begun to appear. I have no doubt whatever that public opinion in the United States is now gradually beginning to recognize that we have borne the main burden of this war for the last three years. At present, the French receive (and take to themselves without protest) nine tenths of the praise given to the Allies in America. But a change is coming, and a close observer can see and hear, in the press and in public,
a beginning recognition of Britain's share. We are now at the beginning of a wave of recognition and affection such as has never been seen in America, a thing strange indeed to one who lived in America in the bitterly hostile days of twenty five years ago. This wave will increase and gather weight during the next few months. It is of the utmost importance that this opportunity should be made the most of.

It has been said, that "our worst enemies in America, at the present time, are the French." It might be more just to say, that they are our only rivals. Our worst enemies, apart from the Germans and the hostile Irish, are often our own eminent men, indulging in criticism of our achievements.

It has been finely said, that "in an old country, like this, a man can identify himself with his country, and criticise her as keenly and as harshly as he may criticise himself." Our readiness to criticise ourselves, and our practice of doing so publicly, in war as in peace, are contributing causes to the fine standards exacted and achieved by us in so many matters. I should be the last to call for any restrictions upon public criticism of important measures by our best minds. But in a new country, like America, where minds are neither critical nor subtle, and opinion is often taken readymade, like the clothes and boots in general use, this habit of self-criticism
is not understood, and is not taken at its proper value. The American likes an article with a flavour of aggression in it. American editors prefer such articles. It often happens, that the best papers and magazines in America print such articles by British writers. You may then read one of our most eminent novelists bitterly criticising this or that fault in our armies, or one of our soldiers with a theory, opposing all other theories, or one of our politicians with an enemy, or one of our business men with an axe to grind, attacking this or that, as though Germany were his spiritual home. This is all very well in this country, where all know what magnificent achievement outsoars the shadow of our errors and our failures. But in America, where ninety nine people out of every hundred are ignorant of the fact, and will not believe the fact, that we have done anything in this war, this criticism confirms them in their opinion. Every educated American can obtain in his daily press or from his bookshop, a bitter arraignment of one or other of Britain's errors in this war, the said arraignment being by some British writer whose judgment he respects and whose verdict he can quote. So far as I know, he cannot and does not obtain any glorification of our achievements in this war to set against the arraignment. So far as I know, no writer of real eminence, except perhaps Professor Gilbert Murray, has written any praise of our effort, from this side, to offset such criticism. Perhaps
all of those who have spoken in America, on behalf of Britain, since the war began, have been discouraged, by finding half their work undone, by some British writer or soldier, five thousand miles away, scoring some point against us, and this, perhaps at a critical time, such as last March and early April, when criticism enough was coming upon us, in the ordinary way, from Americans. Our own eminent men blame us for our sins, so much more cleverly than either Germans or Irish, that what they say sticks.

The nation as a whole does not begin to realize what England has done and is doing in this war. We are not good advertisers, and to a nation which lives by advertising this is an error, not of taste (for which they care little) but of horse-sense (for which they care a lot). Perhaps, even if we were to advertise more than we do, there would still be, deep down, a general dislike, jealousy and distrust of us, and it may well be, that they will love us none the better when they come to realise how much better we have done than they have in the affairs of this war. It is for us to overcome this dislike and jealousy, and there can be no doubt that now is the time.

Ever since this war began we have made two virtuous errors in America. We have been silent and modest, silent when the whole continent waited for full details from us about some particular action or event, modest when, in recounting some action, we passed over our own share in it,
in favour of our guests, the Indians, the Australians, the Canadians, or of our allies the French.

Our silence has had this deplorable result, that the enemy's story has been believed, or credit due to us has gone to our ally. Our modesty has led to the almost universal belief, fostered day and night by German and Irish, that all the hard fighting has been done by Australians, Canadians, Indians and French, and that we have done nothing, but endure defeats from which these people have delivered us. Our share in this war will not be understood nor appreciated in America unless this silence and modesty are changed for a full confidence and a less lavish praise of our Allies and our guests.

As to means of propaganda in the future: much might be done by the sending of picked lecturers to the schools, where the coming generations are growing up. The only good history of the War of American Independence is by an Englishman. It is a pity that a short history, of similar merit, cannot be prepared for the use of American scholars as well as for our own. It is likely that the spoken word and the motion picture will be the most effective means of reaching the American public for some time to come.

It would be a good thing, if the Americans could be shown how greatly the war has changed our social system. They have always mistrusted us, as a feudal, rather than
a democratic country, and they cannot yet even begin to realise how great a revolution has taken place here during the war, nor how much has been done to prevent any recurrence of the pre-war state, of indifference to the life of the people. If they could be brought to realise the advance made since the war in our social system much of their old mistrust of us would disappear.

Finally, it might be well, if people here could be warned, not to criticise America or Americans. Many of us may remember how bitterly we resented French criticism (and American criticism) of ourselves, in the early years of the war, and refrain from rousing similar resentment in our new Allies.

John Masefield
VITA

John W. Gray was born December 8, 1935, in Fordyce, Arkansas. He received his elementary and secondary education in Smackover, Arkansas, graduating from Smackover High School in 1953. In 1957 he received the B. A. degree from Ouachita College in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, and the M. A. degree from the University of Arkansas in 1958. He taught in the Speech Department at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama, for three years before beginning his graduate work at Louisiana State University in 1961. He is a candidate for the degree Doctor of Philosophy at Louisiana State University in August, 1970.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: John W. Gray

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: John Masefield's Lecture Tours and Public Readings in the United States in 1916 and 1918

Approved:

Francisco Marroquin
Major Professor and Chairman

Max Goodrich
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

F. H. Barker
C. L. Shanes
John H. Bean

Date of Examination:

July 17, 1970