HL	A typescript of *Arms and the Man* in the Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS Eng 1046.1)
Holroyd	Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw*, 4 vols., New York, 1988–92
HRC	Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, the University of Texas at Austin
LC	Typescript copy of *Arms and the Man*, submitted in 1894 to the Lord Chamberlain's Office for licensing (BL Add Ms 53546 'O')
LSE	London School of Economics Archives
MS	Original manuscript of *Arms and the Man* written in three notebooks: in the British Library, Add Ms 50601A, 50601B, and 50601C (also published as *Arms and the Man: A Facsimile of the Holograph Manuscript*, Introduction by Norma Jenckes, New York and London, 1981
Theatrics	Dan. H. Laurence, ed., *Theatrics*, Toronto, 1995
US	First North American edition of *Arms and the Man* published Chicago and New York, Herbert S. Stone, 1898

Other Abbreviations

om.	omits, omitted
s.d.	stage direction(s)

Arms + Man edited by J P Wearing

INTRODUCTION

The Author

George Bernard Shaw was born on 26 July 1856 in Dublin into a family proud of its connections with the Protestant landed gentry, but enjoying only modest financial circumstances that nevertheless did not preclude employing servants. Shaw's parents, George and Lucinda, were already drifting apart; his father was feckless and his mother interested more in music than her family. Shaw's schooling, which he loathed, was erratic; more significant for his subsequent career was his exposure to music (at home), art (in Dublin's National Gallery), and particularly the theatre. In addition to operas, the local theatres provided a wide array of typical nineteenth-century dramatic fare – Shakespeare, melodramas, French adaptations, dramas and comedies.[1] Shaw read voraciously, discovering the works of John Bunyan, Charles Dickens, Shelley, and Byron. All these sources provided a formative cornerstone that Shaw drew on in his own early works. One other influence was the experience Shaw gained while he worked in an estate office; there he was exposed to some of the grimmer economic and social realities of life.

In 1873 Shaw's mother moved to London, following her musical guru, Vandeleur Lee, and taking her two daughters with her. Shaw followed them in 1876, although he had no visible prospects. His mother provided some support, while Shaw supplemented small contributions from his father by ghost-writing musical criticism for Lee. Shaw soon launched out into other fields, in particular writing novels, and politics – the latter more successfully than the former. His first semi-autobiographical novel, with the inadvertently appropriate title *Immaturity* (1879), was rejected by publishers, as were the four that followed. Some, such as *The Irrational Knot* (1880) and *Cashel Byron's Profession* (1882), were serialised in sympathetic socialist magazines. 1882 was the year in which a lecture by the American economist Henry George awoke Shaw to the importance of economics, which in turn led him to read Karl Marx and to embrace socialism. Shaw rejected his brief flirtation with the Social Democratic Federation in favour of membership in the newly formed Fabian Society (1884) in which he became a prominent and hard-working leading figure. The society wanted to transform England by

1. See *Theatrics*, pp. xii–xv. The most recent biographies are A.M. Gibbs, *Bernard Shaw: A Life*, 2005, and Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw*, 4 vols., 1988–92.

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gradually permeating social and political institutions, persuading through rational debate and research rather than by revolutionary overthrow. The society introduced Shaw to such life-long friends as Beatrice and Sidney Webb and a whole host of influential people.

Around the same time, while studying opera scores and Marx side-by-side in the Reading Room of the British Museum, Shaw met William Archer, eventually a close friend. The association also turned Shaw into a journalist and critic: he reviewed books for the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1885–8), art and later music for the *World* (1886–94), music for the *Star* (1888–90), and drama for the *Saturday Review* (1895–8). Archer was also responsible for suggesting that they collaborate on adapting a play by the French dramatist Emile Augier, but the project (entitled *Rhinegold*) fell apart because Shaw used up all the plot that Archer provided before completing the play.

However, a few years later and in the midst of a growing interest in new drama encouraged by Ibsen's plays, Shaw found the opportunity to combine his political and social interests by reviving and revising his incomplete play for the recently formed Independent Theatre Society. Now entitled *Widowers' Houses*, Shaw's exposure of slum landlordism attracted mixed responses at the two performances the play received on 9 and 13 December 1892. Although Shaw declared the play produced a sensation and that he was now infamous, there is little contemporary evidence to substantiate his claims.[2] Undeterred, he found his stride, and quickly wrote three more plays, *The Philanderer, Mrs Warren's Profession*, and *Arms and the Man*, although only the last was staged immediately. In the following decade theatrical success largely eluded Shaw; nevertheless, he produced several plays on a variety of topics that challenged entrenched contemporary attitudes and that would eventually find a place in the repertoire. These were *Candida* (first performed 1897), *The Devil's Disciple* (1897), *You Never Can Tell* (1899), and *Captain Brassbound's Conversion* (1900). He also sought audiences by publishing his plays in versions with considerably expanded stage directions designed to appeal to readers, and with prefaces in which he expounded his views. *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant*, the first in a frequent succession of volumes, was published in 1898, the same year that he married Charlotte Payne-Townshend, a companionable marriage that lasted until her death in 1943.

What really brought Shaw the dramatist to the forefront were the seasons of plays presented at the Royal Court Theatre by J.E. Vedrenne and Harley Granville-Barker, seasons that Shaw underwrote. In addition

2 Holroyd, I, p. 281.

to revivals of earlier plays, Vedrenne and Barker presented *John Bull's Other Island* (1904), *Man and Superman* (1905), *Major Barbara* (1905), and *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), adding *Caesar and Cleopatra* in 1907 when they moved briefly to the Savoy Theatre. Then, in the pre-World War I years, Shaw consolidated his position as London's leading dramatist with plays such as *Misalliance* (1910), the very long-running *Fanny's First Play* (1911), *Androcles and the Lion* (1913), and *Pygmalion* (1914), destined to achieve further fame as the musical, *My Fair Lady*.

Shaw's popularity (and his playwriting) waned with the advent of war and his pronouncements in *Common Sense About the War* (1914), whose rationality clashed with the prevailing jingoist mood of the country. He gave his artistic judgement on those responsible for the war in *Heartbreak House* (performed in New York in 1920 and London in 1921), which he described as *A Fantasia in the Russian Manner on English Themes*. A post-war public received it unenthusiastically: the strong cast was rewarded by only 63 performances.[3] The sprawling five-part structure of Shaw's next play, *Back to Methuselah*, even with its more optimistic theme, militated against a popular success; the cycle was played just four times in the 1924 London production. Yet within a month, Shaw's fortunes were reversed when *Saint Joan* achieved 244 performances at the New Theatre (Sybil Thorndike's Joan establishing the benchmark for every subsequent actress); the play is generally regarded as one of Shaw's highest accomplishments.[4] Appropriately, a Nobel Prize followed in 1925, an honour Shaw dismissed, although he accepted the prize so that the prize money might be used for an Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation.[5]

Although Shaw continued to write plays of some merit (such as *The Apple Cart* [1929] and *The Millionairess* [1936]), the latter third of his career found him much less of a theatrical force. However, his other interests were unabated and the public was usually ready to listen to his encyclopaedic views. Some of these found their way into books such as *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (1928) and *Everybody's Political What's What?* (1944). He travelled extensively, including a controversial trip to Russia in 1931 that revealed his admiration for Stalin (he held similar controversial positions, at least for a time, about Mussolini and Hitler). Nevertheless, he was regarded as something of an oracle right up to his death in 1950.

3 *The Times* (19 October 1921) thought it should be called *Scatterbrain House* and averred: 'As usual with Mr. Shaw, the play is about an hour too long'.

4 *Saint Joan* had also been successful at its première at the Garrick, New York (28 December 1923) with 219 performances.

5 Holroyd, III, pp. 92–4.

Composition

Since honesty in romantic relationships is a major theme in *Arms and the Man*, it is ironic that Shaw's own philandering entanglements were possibly an impetus for the play. In 1893 Shaw was involved with Jenny Patterson, Bertha Newcombe, and Florence Farr. Patterson had provided a twenty-nine year old Shaw with his sexual initiation; eight years later the demanding Patterson no longer fascinated him. Shaw had no ardent interest in Newcombe, yet did not discourage her pursuit of him.[6] More desirable was Farr, in whom Shaw 'appeared to have met a New Woman after his own prescription';[7] the two had been lovers for three years. Scarcely any speculation is entailed in inferring some of the situations and conversations in *Arms and the Man* derive from Shaw's own experience. Moreover, some of Shaw's friends 'served me as models. ... Bluntschli v. Saranoff–Sidney Webb v. Cunningham Graham in the Socialist movement. Saranoff's "I never withdraw" is historical. It occurred in the House of Commons when Cunningham Graham said "Damn". ... Raina–Mrs [Annie] Besant'.[8]

Shaw's diary records that on 26 November 1893, after avoiding a meeting with the persistent Jenny Patterson, he began 'a new play – a romantic one – for FE'.[9] Apart from his amorous interest in Florence Farr, Shaw had an additional reason to compose something for her: she had received financial backing from Annie Horniman in order to advance her theatrical career, and Florence had decided to present a season of plays at the Avenue Theatre.[10]

Shaw's disordered manuscript reveals his initial ideas for *Alps and Balkans* (the original title of *Arms and the Man*) were confined to unformed generalities about setting and characters, as Shaw's self-interview in *To-day* (28 April 1894) recounted: 'In the original MS. the names of the places were blank, and the characters were called simply The Father, The Daughter, The

6 See Holroyd, I, pp. 427–9.

7 Holroyd, I, p. 246.

8 *CL*, II, p. 34. Shaw's letter (5 January 1920) to H.C. Duffin provides similar information (BL Add Ms 50518, f. 195v). William Archer saw autobiographical parallels and identified Shaw with Bluntschli (*Study and Stage: A Year-book of Criticism*, 1899, p. 4). See also Louis Crompton's discussion of Cunninghame Graham and Sidney Webb in *Shaw the Dramatist: A Study of the Intellectual Background of the Major Plays*, 1971, pp. 21–3.

9 *Dairies*, p. 989. 'FE' indicates Farr's married name, Florence Emery. See also Shaw's account of the composition and reception of *Arms and the Man* in Samuel A. Weiss, ed., *Bernard Shaw's Letters to Siegfried Trebitsch*, 1986, pp. 76–7.

10 Annie Horniman also financed the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, in 1904, and in 1907 established the first repertory theatre in England at Manchester. Shaw did not learn of her involvement in the Avenue venture until 1904 (*CL*, II, p. 452).

Stranger, The Heroic Lover, and so on'.[11] Moreover, Shaw's methods were haphazard: on 28 November, when at a loose end, he 'went into the park and sat there working at the new play' for an hour or so. The next evening he 'worked at the new play between the acts' of a performance of Sheridan's *The School of Scandal*.[12] He completed Act I in December, only to be distracted by a Christmas holiday with Sidney and Beatrice Webb, during which he drafted a Fabian Society manifesto. Twice Farr wrote anxiously to Shaw 'reproaching me vigorously for not having worked at the play for her. So I set to and wrote 12 pages of it'.[13] More fitful attempts followed, as did reading extracts to various friends.[14] February and March found Shaw either tinkering with the play 'on my out to Ravenscourt Park' to see Farr, or working 'vigorously' for a morning.[15] The process was not effortless, and Shaw suffered occasional indecision: 'Although many of the cancelled words and phrases merely testify to Shaw's sensitivity to redundancy, some manifest more profound dissatisfactions. ... [Notebook] B, folios 20 and 21, which contain the discarded opening to Act III, reveal an almost unthinkable literary phenomenon – Bernard Shaw at a loss for words'.[16]

Shaw was also at a loss for a suitable war to provide a backdrop for the play, although the Balkans of his title had long been an area of contention, particularly between the Russian and Ottoman empires, into which Britain had been drawn, particularly in the Crimean War (1854–6). 'The incident of the machine-gun bound me to a recent war; that was all. My own historical information being rather confused, I asked Mr. Sidney Webb to find out a good war for my purpose. He spent about two minutes in a rapid survey of every war that has ever been waged, and then told me that the Servo-Bulgarian [*sic*] was what I wanted'.[17] Shaw acquired more specific information (including the fact

11 Shaw's account is not strictly accurate: he had named some of the characters – Juana (later Raina), Michaeloff (Nicola), and Stanca or Luga (Louka).

12 *Diaries*, p. 990.

13 *Diaries*, p. 1005. Earlier (2 January 1894) he 'wrote a scrap of the play, as to which my conscience has been aroused by a letter from FE' (*Diaries*, p. 1003).

14 Shaw read to various friends on 2, 9, 16, 18 December 1893, and 23–4 January 1894 (*Diaries*, pp. 992, 994, 996–7). He worked on the play on 11 and 15 January (*Diaries*, pp. 1005–06, 1008).

15 *Diaries*, pp. 1011, 1018.

16 Norma Jenckes, 'Introduction', *Arms and the Man: A Facsimile of the Holograph Manuscript*, 1981, pp. xvii, xix.

17 *To-day*, 28 April 1894. Ronald Bryden argues convincingly that Shaw had already fixed on the Balkan setting and was partly inspired by newspaper reports of the death of Prince Alexander 'on November 18 [1893], the eighth anniversary of the battle of Slivnitza in which he had led his nation to victory over the Serbs' (*Shaw and His Contemporaries*, 2002, p. 9).

that Serbia had not won the war, as he had thought) on 17 March 1894 when he read the play to fellow Socialist Sergius Stepniak and a 'Russian who commanded the Bulgarian fleet during the war'.[18] As a result, 'I have had to shift the scene from Servia [*sic*] to Bulgaria, and to make the most absurd alterations in detail for the sake of local color, which, however, is amusing & will intensify the extravagance of the play & give it realism at the same time'.[19] Shaw went 'to the [British] Museum where I sat until near 19 [7 p.m.] reading up the account of the Servo-Bulgarian War in the *Annual Register*, and studying maps of the Balkan Peninsula'.[20] On 27 March Shaw tried out a virtually complete version of *Arms and the Man* on Bertha Newcombe: 'After dinner [lunch] we went out and sat on a bank all the afternoon, I reading the play, which she did not like at all'.[21] Conceivably, Bertha perceived and disliked aspects of herself, Shaw, and their relationship in what she heard.

Two days later theatrical fate intervened. Farr's opening production at the Avenue on 29 March 1894 (John Todhunter's *A Comedy of Sighs*) failed; the next day Shaw found Farr and her acting manager, C.T.H. Helmsley, considering his *Widowers' Houses* as a replacement. Shaw 'dissuaded them from that and after some discussion took my new play out on to the Embankment Gardens and there and then put the last touches to it before leaving it to be typewritten'.[22] *Arms and the Man* went into production and, inexperienced in such matters, Shaw consulted a theatre friend (Charles Charrington) on the terms he should agree to: 'I do not want to use my influence with F.F. to get more than my due; and on the other [hand] I do not want to blackleg dramatic authordom by taking too little & running down prices'.[23] Recruiting a cast required coaxing some actors into

18 *Diaries*, p. 1019. Stepniak was a Soviet socialist friend; the Russian was Admiral Esper Aleksandrovich Serebryekov. Shaw gave an expansive account of these events in the *Pall Mall Budget*, 19 April 1894.

19 *Theatrics*, p. 12.

20 *Diaries*, p. 1020 (19 March). Shaw recorded some one hundred words from *The Annual Register: A Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad for the Year 1885*, 1886, pp. 267–78 in his Notebook A. Maurice Valency notes 'it is difficult to see . . . why further research was necessary. *Arms and the Man* did not need careful documentation. Its detail and its coloring were purely theatrical' (*The Cart and the Trumpet: The Plays of George Bernard Shaw*, 1973, p. 106).

21 *Diaries*, p. 1022.

22 *Diaries*, p. 1023. *A Comedy of Sighs* was withdrawn on 14 April after 16 performances. W.B. Yeats' accompanying one-act, *The Land of Heart's Desire*, was suspended until *Arms and the Man* was produced, and was withdrawn on 12 May after 35 performances altogether.

23 *Theatrics*, p. 11. Shaw drew up an agreement proposing royalties on a sliding scale of 5, $7\frac{1}{2}$, and 10% of gross receipts (HRC, Shaw/Box 3.6), but it was not effected, and he received a 5% royalty.

accepting specific roles before rehearsals began on 11 April, just ten days before opening night.[24] Even so, Shaw continued to amend the play; when the typescript (dated 31 March 1894) was submitted to the Lord Chamberlain for licensing, it still bore the title *Alps and Balkans*, as did revised typescripts prepared in early April for rehearsals. By 13 April Shaw had changed the title to *Arms and the Man* since he used that title in the 'interview' he drafted for *The Star* (14 April 1894).[25] This first-production text differs considerably from later versions, as one of countless examples demonstrates. The manuscript stage direction for Sergius' first entrance reads: '*Enter Nicola L, followed by Sergius*'. When Shaw finalized the definitive text in 1930, Sergius' entrance had burgeoned into thirty lines of novelistic description (II, 242–71) that allow Shaw to introduce multifarious ideas and suggestions about Sergius' character. It is a moot point whether these were Shaw's original thoughts or whether they were generated by rehearsals or other influences.

Influences and Sources

Allusions and parallels in *Arms and the Man* abound; indeed, in his Preface to *Three Plays for Puritans* (1901), Shaw acknowledged that *Arms and the Man* employed 'the forgotten [stage tricks] of the sixties' (he claimed, inaccurately, that the play's 'real novelty, which nobody off the stage noticed, was that Major Petkoff's library had only one door').[26] In fact, Shaw's early plays, 'so far from being new, are a tissue of reminiscences of earlier work' by dramatists such as H.A. Jones, Arthur Pinero, Bulwer Lytton, T.W. Robertson, H.J. Byron, and Dion Boucicault; and Martin Meisel has demonstrated meticulously how Shaw and his drama were steeped in the nineteenth-century theatrical tradition.[27] Ironically,

24 See letter to Alma Murray 30 March 1894, *CL*, I, p. 422. The *Diaries* (pp. 1024–5) record seven rehearsals between 11 and 20 April, but there may have been ten (*Shaw on Theatre*, ed. E.J. West, 1958, p. 157). On pre-performance preparations, see also Irving McKee, 'Bernard Shaw's Beginnings on the London Stage', *PMLA*, 74 (1959), 470–71.

25 The Lord Chamberlain issued a licence on 16 April with the new title. Shaw had also considered the following titles: 'Emperor of Switzerland', 'Drums in the Rose Valleys', 'A Choice of Heroes', 'Indomitable!', 'There is But one Step –', 'But One Step', 'A Son of Mars', 'Two Sons of Mars'. Henry Salt, a friend, had suggested 'Battlefields and Boudoirs' (Jenckes, p. xiii, and Henry S. Salt, *Company I Have Kept*, 1930, p. 205). On the variant texts of the play, see 'A Note on the Text', below p. xlviii.

26 *Three Plays for Puritans*, 1949, p. xxv; *CL*, II, p. 686. The same Preface outlines Shaw's concept of the play, 'with its comedic conflict between the knightly Bulgarian and the Mommsenite Swiss captain', p. xxxvii), as a reflection of the differing philosophical perspectives of historians Thomas Carlyle and Theodor Mommsen.

27 Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama 1660–1900: Volume V: Late Nineteenth-Century Drama 1850–1900*, 1967, p. 194, and Meisel, *Shaw and the Nineteenth-Century Theater*, 1963.

while Shaw ridiculed the French well-made play tradition in his article, 'Sardooledom',[28] he took many cues from its leading exponents, Victorien Sardou and Eugène Scribe. As Stephen S. Stanton has noted: 'The evidence suggests that Shaw availed himself of as many of the tricks and devices of the popular stagecraft of Scribe as would help him to successfully establish on the stage his early plays from *Widowers' Houses* (1892) to *Man and Superman*. Specifically, '*Arms and the Man* is an ingenious reworking of Scribe's *Bataille de Dames*, the plot of which is first sketched in *A Peculiar Position*'.[29] So, although Shaw's ideas have an iconoclastic twist, they are conveyed in conventional dramatic vehicles.

While Shaw's title evokes Virgil's epic poem the *Aeneid* – it is a translation of Virgil's opening words, 'arma virumque' – Shaw professed that he was espousing the work of the leader of French Romanticism, Victor Hugo, who rejected established rules and restrictions on dramatic composition:

> I have made a desperate attempt to begin a real romantic play for F.F. in the style of Victor Hugo. The first act is nearly finished; and it is quite the funniest attempt at that style of composition ever made. I am told that I have unconsciously reproduced the bedroom scene from [Hugo's] *Marion de L'Orme* [*sic*], which I never read.[30]

Shaw's informant here remains tantalizingly unknown; however, Shaw was possibly offering a retort to his erstwhile dramatic collaborator, William Archer, who had written: 'but what modern dramatist of note, in France or elsewhere, traces his theatrical ancestry to Hugo?' Archer had also observed that 'the foundations of the new drama' derive from Scribe: 'From him, by way of imitation, development, and reaction, the modern drama springs'.[31]

28 *Saturday Review*, 1 June 1895.

29 'Shaw's Debt to Scribe', *PMLA*, 76 (1961), 575; and, 'Introduction', *'Camille' and Other Plays*, 1957, p. xxxviii. *A Peculiar Position* (or *A Scrap of Paper*) is a translation of *La Frontière de Savoie* by Scribe and J.F.A. Bayard. See similar points by Eric Bentley, 'The Making of a Dramatist (1892–1903)', in R.J. Kaufmann, ed., *G.B. Shaw: A Collection of Critical Essays*, 1965, pp. 58–9, and Michel Pharand, *Bernard Shaw and the French*, 2000, pp. 57–60.

30 *CL*, I, p. 409. Irving McKee, op. cit., p. 470, compares Shaw's original title, *Alps and Balkans*, with Hugo's *Alpes et Pyrenées*. Shaw had read Hugo's *Les Misérables* in March and April 1893 (Pharand, op. cit., p. 2). On Virgilian parallels, see Calvin T. Higgs, jr., 'Shaw's Use of Vergil's *Aeneid* in *Arms and the Man*', *Shaw Review*, 19 (1976), 2–16. A.M. Gibbs suggests Shaw's friend, Pakenham Thomas Beatty, may have provided a hint for the title (*Shaw: A Life*, p. 89).

31 *About the Theatre: Essays and Studies*, 1886, p. 297. Archer's book includes two chapters, 'The Plays of Victor Hugo', and 'Hugo and Wagner'.

Although *Marion de Lorme* is essentially a courtesan play, some of its incidents are echoed in *Arms and the Man*. Act I is set in Marion's bedroom into which her artless lover, Didier, climbs via a balcony. Like Raina, Marion reads a book while there is an off-stage sword-fight (I.ii), an event replaced by gunfire in *Arms and the Man*. Marion's declaration 'Vous êtes mon Didier, mon maître et mon seigneur' (III.vi) shares the same quality as Sergius' and Raina's avowals: 'My lady and my saint! . . . My lord and my –' (II, 476–8). Hugo's *Hernani*, recast as the libretto for Verdi's 1844 opera *Ernani* (mentioned by Raina, I, 694), provides a source for the harboured fugitive theme, triangular love relationships, and 'the point of honour by which the claims of hospitality outweigh enmity' that are found in *Arms and the Man*.[32] Vincent Wallace's *Maritana* (1845) is another opera that fuses similar thematic ingredients; its English libretto was based on Adolphe Dennery and P.F.P. Dumanoir's *Don César de Bazan*, a melodrama inspired by Hugo's play *Ruy Blas* (1838). Significant is the moment when Don César arrives to rescue his wife: 'A shot rings out, and the figure of a man enters precipitately by a window at a balcony upstage – an entrance Bernard Shaw borrowed for his travesty of romantic heroics'.[33] Meisel, in stressing 'the connection between romantic love and romantic heroism' in *Arms and the Man*, identifies *The Daughter of the Regiment* – an opera (1840) by Donizetti and also an operatic drama (1843) by Edward Fitzball – as the 'quintessential military romance in its fusion of love and heroism', and a source for Shaw's play.[34]

Comparable sources are found in Shakespeare's work, most obviously the balcony (and offstage bedroom) scene in *Romeo and Juliet* (II.ii). There Romeo, an enemy Montague, is a 'fugitive' from his friends; however, in a role inversion, as a romantic young lover he resembles Raina in her excesses and Juliet the more practical Bluntschli. A bedroom variation occurs in *Cymbeline* (II.ii) when, after reading a book, Imogen falls asleep and the villain Iachimo, instead of entering from a balcony, emerges from a trunk.[35] *Coriolanus*, suggested by the rare use of 'acclamations' by both

32 A.M. Gibbs, *The Art and Mind of Shaw: Essays in Criticism*, 1983, pp. 70. Shaw acknowledged the ubiquity of the fugitive theme: 'the incident of a fugitive soldier taking refuge in a lady's bedroom was too common to be patented by me or anyone else' (*Advice to a Young Critic and Other Letters*, ed. E.J. West, 1955, p. 202). In the play, Raina signals the theme blatantly: 'This is the happiest night of my life – if only there are no fugitives' (I, 152–3).

33 Frank Rahill, *The World of Melodrama*, 1967, p. 78. *Don César* is discussed on pp. 75–82.

34 Meisel, op. cit., pp. 186–7. Meisel also discusses the fugitive in a woman's bedroom in Thomas Morton's *The Angel in the Attic* (1843), and Tom Taylor's *Lady Clancarty* (1874), pp. 192–4.

35 Shaw was thoroughly familiar with *Cymbeline* as evidenced by his advice in 1896 to Ellen Terry when she played Imogen at the Lyceum Theatre with Henry Irving (*CL*, I, pp. 646–56, 661–2, 665–6).

Shakespeare and Shaw, presents a divergent heroic fugitive, albeit but briefly: Coriolanus enters the city of Corioli alone 'and is shut in'. While there, 'I sometime lay . . . at a poor man's house; he used me kindly' (I.ix.81–2). Both Coriolanus and Sergius fight against considerable odds and observe codes of honour. Another Shakespearean military example is perhaps parodied as Raina describes her pride: 'When I buckled on Sergius's sword he looked so noble: it was treason to think of disillusion or humiliation or failure' (I, 89–90). In *Antony and Cleopatra* (IV.iv) Cleopatra attempts to buckle on Antony's armour, her incompetence inviting comic interpretations.[36]

The military melodramatic romance tradition is encapsulated in *Held by the Enemy*, William Gillette's American civil war drama that Shaw reviewed twice in 1887.[37] In addition to the fugitive soldier motif, *Held by the Enemy* includes windows left unfastened, candles blown out, a cavalry brigade and charge, and a colonel who resigns his commission (though not for the same reasons as Sergius).[38] Another war play well-known to Shaw was T.W. Robertson's *Ours* (1866).[39] Robertson's extensive stage directions, like Shaw's, embody minute realism, and Angus the soldier prefigures Bluntschli:

> '. . . *a hut, built of boulders and mud, the roof built out, showing the snow and sky outside. The walls bare and rude, pistols, swords, guns, maps, newspapers, etc., suspended on them. . . .* ANGUS *discovered, very shabby, high, muddy boots, beard, etc., seated at table, reading by light of candle letters which are lying on an open travelling-desk*'.[40]

Ultimately a comedy, *Ours* does not achieve the grim effects of later plays such as R.C. Sheriff's *Journey's End* (1928) or Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1941); but neither does *Arms and the Man*.

36 For parallels between Bluntschli as Falstaff and Sergius as Hotspur, see Robert C. Elliott, 'Shaw's Captain Bluntschli: A Latter-Day Falstaff', *Modern Language Notes*, 67 : 7 (1952), 461–4.

37 *The Drama Observed: Volume I: 1880–1895*, ed. Bernard F. Dukore, 1993, pp. 72–4. Dixie King, 'Bernard Shaw and William Gillette', *English Literature in Transition (1880–1920)*, 27 : 3 (1984), 239–241, discusses some parallels, but is unaware Shaw had reviewed the play. As some first-night reviewers noted, the presence of Alma Murray and Yorke Stephens in both productions reinforced the connection.

38 *Held by the Enemy*, 1898, pp. 29, 53, 102.

39 As a boy Shaw saw *Ours* in Dublin, and also saw a London revival in May 1876 (*Theatrics*, p. xv; Gibbs, *Shaw: A Life*, pp. 77–8).

40 William Tydeman, ed., *Plays by Tom Robertson*, 1982, pp. 114–15. Notably, this scene in Act III has only one entrance (cf. Shaw's remark on p. xix). In Robertson's *War* (1871) a character declares: 'And I tell you that glory is a delusion, a snare, a cruel lie! It means burnt homesteads, ruined villages, abandoned homes, desolation and despair' (Act I).

Although Shaw dismissed comparisons with W.S. Gilbert's work, parallels are readily apparent.[41] *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879) combines military and romantic matters, and age is a determining plot element as it is in *Arms and the Man*.[42] Class discrepancies between Ralph and Josephine propel *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878); social considerations figure significantly with the Petkoffs, Nicola and Louka, and are a vital ingredient in the play's outcome. *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1888) emphasizes military bravery as epitomized in Elsie's declaration: 'I love all brave men. . . . I love the bravest best' (Act II). Facets of Gilbert's play, *Tom Cobb* (1875), are virtually replicated in *Arms and the Man*. Its heroine (Caroline), of 'poetical demeanour', sends her poet-soldier a photograph, hoping for 'A vast, vast, vast war! Oh for the clash of steel-clad foemen! Oh for the deadly cannonade! And loud above the din of battle, I hear my Arthur's voice, as, like a doughty Paladin of old, he cleaves his path where'er the fight is thickest!' (Act III). Tom Cobb, wearing 'a very low lie-down collar in order to look Byronic', wins Caroline's affection by declaring 'you loved me as a penniless, but poetical major-general; can you still love me as a wealthy, but unromantic apothecary?' (Act III). Archibald Henderson notes that Nicola advising Louka 'to gain a hold over Sergius, marry him ultimately, and so "come to be one of my grandest customers, instead of only being my wife and costing me money" [III, 479–80], is but a paraphrase and inversion of that ludicrous scene in *Engaged*, in which "puir little Maggie Macfarlane" advises her lover, Angus Macalister, to resign Cheviot-Hill for the princely consideration of two pounds'.[43] Finally, confessional truth-telling permeates both *Arms and the Man* and Gilbert's *The Palace of Truth* (1870).

Shaw did acknowledge other influences, although not all those noted above. He called Sergius 'my Bulgarian Don Quixote', took facts from the *Memoirs* (trans. 1892) of General Baron de Marbot, and discovered realistic details of battles in Emile Zola's novel, *Le Débâcle* (trans. 1892).[44] Shaw's resultant play is a magpie's theatrical assemblage.

The Play

In essence, *Arms and the Man* is but a 'well-made play'. Act I provides the romantic premise when the heroine (Raina) encounters a fugitive enemy

41 Arthur Sullivan's music for the comic operettas obviously lightens the import and perception of Gilbert's lyrics and libretto.

42 See note to III, 1105. The on-stage portrayal of Major-General Stanley in *Pirates* provoked contemporary associations with Sir Garnet Wolseley (see p. xxxix below).

43 *George Bernard Shaw: His Life and Works*, 1911, p. 313. This scene was also cited by the *Daily News*, 23 April 1894. Gilbert's *Engaged* was first performed in 1877.

44 See 'A Dramatic Realist to His Critics', *New Review*, 9 (July 1894); rpt. in DE, pp. 485–511.

soldier (Bluntschli) and helps him escape using her father's coat as a disguise. Complications ensue in Act II when the heroine's fiancé and her father (Sergius and Petkoff) return from the war: the fiancé has a roving eye for a servant girl (Louka), and he and the father reveal that they encountered Bluntschli during the war. Coincidentally and conveniently, the soldier arrives to return the borrowed coat, heightening expectations of plot complications. In Act III questions about the coat, a photograph, and Raina's age are resolved, a letter bestows an appropriately large fortune on Bluntschli, and impediments to connubial bliss for the two couples are removed.

Arms and the Man is also about the characteristics of relationships and self-knowledge into which notions of warfare, chivalry, romance, idealism, class structure, social prejudices, and economics are woven. From this perspective the two married Petkoffs are stable, but not unreservedly admirable, figures: they are steadfastly grounded in every facet of their lives and their entrenched snobbery: Catherine can declare proudly, 'Our position is almost historical' (III, 1147–8). Nicola, whom Bluntschli declares is 'the ablest man I've met in Bulgaria' (III, 1016–17), is content and secure in his subservient position; he acknowledges his social status, and pragmatically relinquishes his attachment to Louka but not his economic objectives.[45] Louka, though lacking Nicola's worldliness, spurns social distinctions, and practices her seductive wiles to achieve her romantic and economic objectives. Superficially, Bluntschli is the most practical character; a mercenary, he joined the first army that came his way, and he relishes assisting his former enemies in resolving military logistical problems. He possesses a keen insight into warfare, economics, and people. However, his confession of his inveterate 'incurably romantic disposition' connects him with the idealistic romantics, Raina and Sergius. They engage in a radical, apparently enlightened, shift from their fictionalized 'higher love' to imminent marriage with mates of differing social status.

While many of these ideas are commonplace in literature, Shaw renders them more intriguing by employing interlocking literary devices such as paradox, fictive and meta-theatrical allusions, and rhetorical figures. Rather than intensifying a sense of realism, these devices tend to render the play more illusory, more obviously fictional and theatrical.[46]

45 See also Bernard F. Dukore, 'The Ablest Man in Bulgaria', *SHAW: The Annual of Shaw Studies*, 22 (2002), 68–82. Archer maintained 'The servants . . . are the subtlest psychologists of the whole band, and are equipped with a perfectly definite and articulate philosophy of life' (*Study and Stage*, p. 13).

46 Margery M. Morgan has observed 'The mechanical toy-shop quality of the entertainment . . . It is a nursery play by virtue of its theme as well as its style' (*The Shavian Playground: An Exploration of the Art of George Bernard Shaw*, 1972, p. 51).

Even though the title *Arms and the Man* was somewhat fortuitous, it reflects Shaw's methodology in the play. As a translation of Virgil's 'arma virumque', the title assumes an allusive, transformational quality; moreover, both works are indebted to earlier sources. Paradoxically, the play is no classical heroic epic poem about mythic characters who have waged war; rather, *Arms and the Man* is predominantly a mixture of romantic and domestic comedy, and although a specific war provides a backdrop, war itself is discussed, not enacted (a technique Shaw employed again in *Saint Joan*). The most realistic details are Bluntschli's costume ('*bespattered with mud and blood and snow, his belt and the strap of his revolver-case keeping together the torn ruins of the blue tunic of a Serbian artillery officer*' I, 205–8), a few gun shots, and the description of Bluntschli's comrade burnt alive: 'Shot in the hip in a woodyard. Couldnt drag himself out. Your fellows' shells set the timber on fire and burnt him, with half a dozen other poor devils in the same predicament' (III, 730–2).

Shaw's paradoxical strategy is further embodied in the stage directions.[47] Act I is historically and geographically specific (November 1885, Bulgaria), yet a fairy-tale quality obtains: the romantic bedroom balcony looks out on the mountain peak that, '*wonderfully white and beautiful in the starlit snow, seems quite close at hand, though it is really miles away*' (I, 3–5). That picture-postcard effect simultaneously exposes the illusory quality of theatrical scenery. The bedroom is filled with contradictions: rich Bulgarian/cheap Viennese, a shrine and Christ image/a Turkish ottoman, oriental and gorgeous fabrics/occidental and paltry wallpaper, common pine table/expensive toilet mirror. Prominent is '*a miniature easel with a large photograph of an extremely handsome officer, whose lofty bearing and magnetic glance can be felt even from the portrait*' (I, 24–6). Like the background scenery, this photograph is not the thing itself, only a representation that ostensibly captures Sergius' character; however, one purpose of the play (itself a fiction) is to peel away what the photograph embodies, exposing it as a sham. 'News' (only ever a report of something) reveals that Sergius has become the 'idol of the regiment' (I, 61), a concept that connects him with the Christ icon and worship, inherently a theatrical activity. Convolutedly, Raina declares this news 'proves that our ideas were real after all' (I, 81–2); in fact, Raina and Sergius have founded their ideas, their very existence, on reading Byron and Pushkin, and on operas staged in Bucharest. Even as late as Act III, 29–30 '*Raina, reclining on the divan, is gazing in a daydream out at the Balkan landscape, with a*

47 This discussion refers to the definitive text. However, Shaw's first thoughts as represented in his manuscript or early prompt scripts were not necessarily fully formed.

neglected novel in her lap'. Clearly, both have formulated their lives on the fictional, not reality, a characteristic reflected in Raina's linguistic choices: 'Yes: I was only a prosaic little coward. Oh, to think that it was all true! that Sergius is just as splendid and noble as he looks! that the world is really a glorious world for women who can see its glory and men who can act its romance! What happiness! what unspeakable fulfilment!' (I, 111–15). Raina moves from the prosaic to the romantic, and then into a metatheatrical world in which Sergius can 'act', but his (unseen) glorious world, ironically, comprises death and destruction.

The preface to Raina's entanglement with the war is similarly cloaked in idolatry and fiction:

RAINA [*looking up at the picture*]
Oh, I shall never be unworthy of you any more, my soul's hero: never, never, never. [*She replaces it reverently. Then she selects a novel from the little pile of books. She turns over the leaves dreamily; finds her page; turns the book inside out at it; and, with a happy sigh, gets into bed and prepares to read herself to sleep. But before abandoning herself to fiction, she raises her eyes once more, thinking of the blessed reality, and murmurs*] My hero! my hero!

(I, 170–7)

The subsequent scene is a re-enactment of a well-worn theatrical and operatic theme (harbouring a fugitive soldier) that converts the remainder of Act I into unequivocal meta-theatricality. While the fugitive Bluntschli is described in realistic terms, the description is but a theatrical borrowing (see above, p. xxii). Bluntschli's language is realistic: 'A lot of your cavalry will burst into this pretty room of yours and slaughter me here like a pig; for I'll fight like a demon: they shant get *me* into the street to amuse themselves with'(I, 239–42). However, the scene in which he hides behind a curtain to avoid detection and inadvertently leaves his gun on the bed is a rudimentary theatrical routine. Sound though some of Bluntschli's observations on warfare might be, his famous defence of carrying chocolate instead of bullets is fatuous and exposes 'the traditional comedic framework Shaw adopts. The chocolate creams in Bluntschli's cartridge case are what give the show away – the real Shavian soldier would have carried an *extra* supply of bullets'.[48] However, neither Bluntschli nor his creator is against war itself, as G.K. Chesterton observed shrewdly:

48 Alfred Turco, jr., *Shaw's Moral Vision: The Self and Salvation*, 1976, p. 88. The possibility that this idea may have been borrowed from a Pinero farce reinforces the point (see note to I, 421–3).

Shaw has many of the actual opinions of Tolstoy. Like Tolstoy he tells men, with coarse innocence, that romantic war is only butchery and that romantic love is only lust. But Tolstoy objects to these things because they are real; he really wishes to abolish them. Shaw only objects to them in so far as they are ideal; that is in so far as they are idealised. Shaw objects not so much to war as to the attractiveness of war. He does not so much dislike love, as the love of love. Before the temple of Mars Tolstoy stands and thunders 'There shall be no wars'; Bernard Shaw merely murmurs, 'Wars if you must; but for God's sake, not war songs'.[49]

When the focus in Act I reverts to Sergius and his heroic charge, Bluntschli fictionalizes him: 'He did it like an operatic tenor. A regular handsome fellow, with flashing eyes and lovely moustache, shouting his war-cry and charging like Don Quixote at the windmills' (I, 515–17). (The Quixote allusion, employed three times, is reinforced by Raina using Sergius's photograph as a means of identifying him to Bluntschli.) However, Bluntschli himself is swiftly recast when Raina moulds him into the 'chocolate cream soldier',[50] recalls his (theatrical) balcony-climbing, and correlates Bluntschli's escapade with the opera *Ernani*: 'I thought you might have remembered the great scene where Ernani, flying from his foes just as you are tonight, takes refuge in the castle of his bitterest enemy, an old Castilian noble. The noble refuses to give him up. His guest is sacred to him' (I, 703–6). This speech deftly introduces the theme of honour and hospitality, itself a much repeated literary theme. Furthermore, the whole of Bluntschli's Act I encounter is presented fictively when Petkoff and Sergius narrate it in Act II, describing it as 'that queer story' and 'quite a romance' (II, 394, 398).

The Act II stage directions resemble those for Act I. The precise date, 6 March 1886, invests the scene with historical realism, although the information depends on audiences reading their programmes. The Petkoffs'

49 G.K. Chesterton, *George Bernard Shaw*, 1910; rpt. 1956, pp. 88–9. G. Wilson Knight, *The Golden Labyrinth*, 1962, p. 347, points out 'Shaw likes soldiers', in such plays as *Arms and the Man, Too True to be Good, The Devil's Disciple, Androcles and the Lion*, and *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Gordon N. Bergquist analyzes Shaw's views on war in *The Pen and the Sword: War and Peace in the Prose and Plays of Bernard Shaw*, 1977. Shaw's articles on World War I are collected in *What I Really Wrote About the War*, 1932, described as 'by far the most confused writing he ever did' (J. Percy Smith, *The Unrepentant Pilgrim: A Study of the Development of Bernard Shaw*, 1965, p. 155).

50 'Chocolate! Do you stuff your pockets with *sweets* – like a schoolboy – even in the field?' (I, 425–6). When Bluntschli is reintroduced in Act II, he is associated with chocolate (706, 732, 878), as well as the borrowed coat (698–9, 766), and the balcony scene itself (714).

social ambiguity is captured in the '*washing spread out to dry*' on the fruit bushes (II, 10), while the opening duologue between Louka and Nicola incorporates lower social class considerations.

Meta-theatrical are the discernible parallels with the beginning of Ibsen's *Ghosts* (1881). The set for *Ghosts* is a 'garden room' with a backdrop of 'a gloomy fjord landscape'; *Arms and the Man* is set in a garden, and in the distance '*the Balkan mountains rise and shut in the landscape*' (II, 5). Louka's headstrong personality, reinforced by her socially audacious act of smoking a cigarette, is comparable to Regine's, and both women entertain notions of upward social mobility. Nicola, who sees his 'soul of a servant' as 'the secret of success in service', plans on opening 'a shop in Sofia' (II, 81–3, 40). The more wayward Engstrand has a similar objective 'of starting a sort of tavern – for seamen –'. Each pair enjoys an ambiguous relationship that changes as a result of plot manipulations: Engstrand and Regine begin as ostensibly father and daughter, Nicola and Louka as engaged to be married. Both shifts are effected by family secrets, and Osvald's seduction of Regine (*Ghosts*, Act I) parallels Sergius' of Louka. As happened with characters in Act I, Nicola and Louka are defined in fictional terms.

Some sense of reality is provided with the interposing of the Petkoffs before the reunion of Raina and Sergius, although Catherine's appearance is paradoxical: she wears a 'half worn-out dressing gown', yet possesses an 'astonishingly handsome and stately' manner (II, 130, 132–3). Catherine and her husband are comfortably bourgeois, solid in social and economic terms, and suffused with snobbery. Even though her husband has just returned from war, 'she stoops over the back of his chair to kiss him', a homely act rather than an effusive display (II, 135–6), and a repetition of Raina doing likewise with Bluntschli (I, 592–3). She dominates her husband, takes inordinate pride in the newly installed electric bell, and shares Raina's ideas on romance and chivalry. Petkoff, though occasionally bumbling, exhibits a practical side with some insight, as when he deflates Catherine by criticizing the washing on the bushes.

These two vignettes increase anticipation by delaying the arrival of the hero, Sergius, a taxing role, Shaw thought:

> Sergius is not a ridiculous personage, sent on the stage to be laughed at, but a superb man, brave, haughty, high-spirited, magnetic and handsome. The difficulty lies, not in finding an actor with these qualifications, but in inducing him to play a part in which all his attractions are reduced to tragic absurdity.[51]

51 Shaw's 'Instructions to Producer', HRC, Shaw/Box 4.1.

Like Bluntschli, Sergius is defined fictively and in extensive novelistic stage directions alluding to Byron and his poem, *Childe Harold*. Sergius is '*the original of the portrait . . . romantically handsome . . .* [*with*] *. . . the susceptible imagination of an untamed mountaineer chieftain . . .* [*a*] *clever imaginative barbarian . . . he has acquired the half tragic, half ironic air, the mysterious moodiness, the suggestion of a strange and terrible history that has left nothing but undying remorse*' (II, 242–65). Significantly, Childe Harold, a pilgrim wanderer, is Byron's self-fictionalization, while the poem employs the Spenserian stanza form, thereby evoking connotations with Spencer's *The Faerie Queen*. Such is the fiction that has attracted both mother and daughter. An audience, lacking a text, would be ignorant of this description, although many of Sergius' subsequent physical actions (as when he '*posts himself with conscious dignity against the rail of the steps*' II, 284–5) are designed to reinforce the impression visually.[52]

This 'superb' Sergius, 'improved' by the 'campaign', the embodiment of military glory, proves a walking paradox: he 'won the battle the wrong way when our worthy Russian generals were losing it the right way' (II, 287–96). The Shavian attack on warfare is palpable since commonsense dictates Sergius' cavalry charge against gun emplacements was stupid. However, although Shaw refers to the Battle of Slivnitza, his Victorian audience would associate the charge instinctively with that of the Light Brigade at the Battle of Balaclava (25 October 1854) which was forever imprinted on English memory through Tennyson's 1854 eponymous poem. Again reality is transmuted through fiction.

Sergius displays an absoluteness that is captured in his 'I never withdraw' (II, 313). By mechanical repetition of the phrase (originally spoken by a contemporary, R.B. Cunninghame-Graham), Shaw inverts reality and reduces Sergius to a farcical stage device. Raina's entrance reinforces this mechanistic aspect:

> *She makes a charming picture as they turn to look at her. She wears an underdress of pale green silk, draped with an overdress of thin ecru canvas embroidered with gold. She is crowned with a dainty eastern cap of gold tinsel.* SERGIUS *goes impulsively to meet her. Posing regally, she presents her hand: he drops chivalrously on one knee and kisses it.*
>
> PETKOFF [*aside to* CATHERINE, *beaming with parental pride*]
> Pretty, isnt it? She always appears at the right moment.
>
> CATHERINE [*impatiently*]

52 These extensive descriptions are also absent from the early scripts, although presumably Shaw would have attempted to convey his concept of the characters to the actors involved.

Yes: she listens for it. It is an abominable habit.

SERGIUS *leads* RAINA *forward with splendid gallantry. When they arrive at the table, she turns to him with a bend of the head: he bows; and thus they separate, he coming to his place, and she going behind her father's chair.*

(II, 323–36)

Here is the stately entrance, a stage tableau, a formalized procession with every rehearsed movement and gesture far removed from the reality of the (off-stage) battlefield background.

Further examples of the fictionalised Sergius abound. The 'higher love' duologue becomes an unsung operatic duet, evoking echoes of chivalric literature and Victor Hugo (II, 453–86). Sergius' seduction scene with Louka transforms him into a stereotypical nineteenth-century theatrical villain as '*He takes a stealthy look at her, and begins to twirl his moustache mischievously, with his left hand akimbo on his hip. Finally, striking the ground with his heels in something of a cavalry swagger*' (II, 497–500). Before long, Sergius shifts to intrusive third-person self-description and employs anaphora, a frequent Shakespearean rhetorical device: 'What would Sergius, the hero of Slivnitza, say if he saw me now? What would Sergius, the apostle of the higher love, say if he saw me now? What would the half dozen Sergiuses who keep popping in and out of this handsome figure of mine say if they caught us here? . . . [*speaking to himself*] Which of the six is the real man? thats the question that torments me. One of them is a hero, another a buffoon, another a humbug, another perhaps a bit of a blackguard. . . . And one, at least, is a coward: jealous, like all cowards' (II, 516–20, 575–80).[53] Shaw applies additional linguistic tricks, the style of the braggart soldier, to reinforce the point, as John A. Mills has observed: 'Other features of Sergius' mode of utterance add to its novelistic flavor. Such pseudo-poetic locutions as "You lie", "I dare marry you", "You shall wait my pleasure", and "I brook no rivals", add their trumpet note to swollen phrases like "A paltry taunt", "A hollow sham", and "huge imposture of a world" '.[54] Significantly, Louka is unimpressed by either Sergius' or Raina's theatrical posing: 'I know the difference between the sort of manner you and she put on before one another and the real manner' (II, 607–9).

53 Typical examples of Shakespearean anaphora are found in 'Othello's occupation's gone' speech (*Othello*, III.iii.342–54), or Richard II's abdication scene (*Richard II*, IV.i.204–15). Archibald Henderson noted: 'Shaw told me that *Arms and the Man* was an attempt at Hamlet in the comic spirit: Shakespeare, modified by Ibsen, and comically transfigured by Shaw' (*George Bernard Shaw: Man of the Century*, 1956, p. 539).

54 John A. Mills, *Language and Laughter: Comic Diction in the Plays of Bernard Shaw*, 1969, p. 66.

Louka's perception allies her with Bluntschli who, in Act III, exposes Raina and effects her epiphany: 'How did you find me out'. She confesses 'I've always gone on like that . . . the noble attitude and the thrilling voice. . . . I did it when I was a tiny child to my nurse. *She* believed in it. I do it before my parents. *They* believe in it. I do it before Sergius. *He* believes in it' (III, 284, 296–303). In this realization of her self-imposed theatrically, Raina exemplifies the notion that spurious ideals, false ideas, and romanticism need to be stripped away in order to perceive reality, to know oneself. Yet, ironically, the consequence of Raina's realization is Bluntschli's declaration: 'I'm your infatuated admirer' (III, 317) and his confession that he possesses 'an incurably romantic disposition. I ran away from home twice when I was a boy. I went into the army instead of into my father's business. I climbed the balcony of this house when a man of sense would have dived into the nearest cellar. I came sneaking back here to have another look at the young lady when any other man of my age would have sent the coat back' (III, 1092–7). In short, Bluntschli has not advanced: he ends the play as he began it, a theatrical archetype who climbed over a balcony into Raina's room.

Sections of Act III reprise several main ideas; for example, war, romance, and social class are central to the duologue between Louka and Sergius (III, 514–637). However, Bluntschli's pronouncement, derived from many a fairy tale – 'You and he will then make it up and live happily ever after' (III, 683–4) – aptly epitomises Shaw's technique in unabashedly resolving the plot in shamelessly theatrical terms. The classic challenge to a duel is inverted humorously by Bluntschli's choice of a machine gun against Sergius' sabre, a preamble to Sergius realising that war is 'a hollow sham, like love', and 'Life's a farce' (III, 737, 763). The coat and photograph business (III, 919–40) bears the hallmark of farce or pantomime. Moreover the play is rounded out with an 'auction scene' (another Shakespearean ploy found in, for example, *The Taming of the Shrew* [Act II.i]); it is signalled by Raina's very pointed: 'I am not here to be sold to the highest bidder', even though she is (III, 1209). Through his conveniently acquired wealth, Bluntschli outbids Sergius, satisfies the Petkoffs' bourgeois instincts, secures the heroine, and solves the remaining military logistical problems. Well might Sergius finally declare rather ambiguously: 'What a man! Is he a man!' Along with the other characters, Bluntschli has been only a theatrical artifice.[55]

55 The last two sentences originally read 'What a man! What a man!'. In a first-production prompt copy, Sergius' entire final speech was deleted (presumably by the stage manager), and the production may well have concluded with Bluntschli's 'Gracious ladies – good evening' and exit (see note to III, 1232).

Arms and the Man's first audience perceived some theatrical parallels, particularly those to W.S. Gilbert, although it is a open question whether the Chinese box-within-a box effect of Shaw's fictive devices intensifies or dilutes his thematic intentions, reducing them to a mere cerebral theatrical game. Nonetheless, the fictive filters may help emphasise the unreality, the falsity of the ideals held by the play's characters and the audiences Shaw was addressing. The ultimate irony is Shaw's use of the theatre itself as a vehicle for his point of view.

The Première

In 1894 Shaw was not a big draw on the London stage: prior to *Arms and the Man* his sole theatrical credit had been *Widowers' Houses* in 1892. Moreover, on opening night, 21 April 1894, *Arms and the Man* faced stiff competition from at least twenty current productions in the West End, including *Charley's Aunt* only half-way through its four-year run, the popular musical *The Gaiety Girl*, Henry Irving in an adaptation of Goethe's *Faust*, and the sensational hit of 1893, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, finishing its run on the same evening.[56] Consequently, Shaw arranged complimentary tickets for numerous friends, sympathisers, and critics (including Oscar Wilde, Henry Arthur Jones, and William Archer), although he nearly overlooked his Aunt Georgina.[57] He generated publicity by publishing a self-interview, an ebullient puff that included every aspect of the production: costumes, cast, source of the play's title, historical background, and Shaw's approach generically and thematically.[58]

The publicity yielded results, though how successfully is problematic. The Avenue Theatre held 1,200 and, full of paying customers, generated approximately £245 per night in gross receipts. On opening night, the box office collected only £44 (18% of capacity); however, that figure might translate into 400 or 500 customers occupying the cheaper pit and gallery (at two shillings and one shilling each respectively), but fewer patrons if spread across the theatre as a whole.[59] Nevertheless, the *Daily*

56 See J.P. Wearing, *The London Stage 1890–1899*, 1976, items 92.359, 93.271, 94.63, and 93.123.

57 *CL*, I, pp. 424–5. Other advertising appears to have been limited; *Arms and the Man* was not advertised in *The Times* until after opening night. Indeed, on 20 April the Avenue Theatre was advertised as 'to let, with possession on the 10th of May' (*Times*).

58 *Star*, 14 April 1894; rpt. in DE, pp. 473–80.

59 My conjecture for the gross receipts is based on the seating plan of the Avenue in *The Handy Handbook of London* [1903], n.p.; financial data for Shaw's plays is derived from LSE Archives Shaw/29/1. Shaw noted: 'As far as I can ascertain, the Avenue holds, when full £200 . . . and the expenses will be about £100 a night' (*CL*, I, p. 421). The seating capacity was reduced to 679 when the Avenue was reconstructed and opened as the Playhouse in 1907 (Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson, *The Theatres of London*, 1975, pp. 324–6). No first-night reviews intimate that the theatre was sparsely populated; presumably many complimentary tickets were given out.

Telegraph (23 April 1894) recorded that Shaw's efforts were rewarded with a 'favourably disposed' audience.

Reviewers were slightly more ambivalent about *Arms and the Man*; while the *Pall Mall Gazette* (23 April) thought 'it is worth a wilderness of average plays', most critics did not endorse the play ecstatically or unreservedly. They agreed on the play's satiric, cynical, epigrammatic, and 'clever' attributes, its whimsicality, its Gilbertian topsy-turveydom, and its propensity to burlesque other works. Several critics noted affinities with W.S. Gilbert's *Engaged* and *The Palace of Truth*, William Gillette's *Held by the Enemy*, or detected the influence of Byron or George Meredith. A representative response came from the *Daily Chronicle*:

> The purpose . . . is to burlesque the ideal of the stage, to ridicule the sentiment which refines human nature. . . . Mr. Shaw, if he had less cynicism and more sympathy, would be able to take an enviable place amongst writers for the stage, for he is a smart dealer in epigram . . . but he does not stop at the harmless humour of travesty, he is too earnest and eager to satirise and to wound.[60]

Objections were raised to what were perceived to be gibes at the British Army. The *Sketch* (25 April) remarked mildly that 'when he got on the war topic G.B.S. was perilously serious, and risked the play by uncomplimentary remarks about our soldiers'. The *Star* (27 April) was more censorious, declaring the play 'is not improved by ad captandum [meretricious] references to the British Army, and the general folly of obedience in soldiers'. Nor was Shaw's view of war approved: 'War is painted as the sordid trade of the professional butcher rather than the lofty profession of the hero and the patriot. This may be true in its way, but that way does not go very far'.[61] Equally distasteful was Shaw's 'unflattering picture of Bulgarian life and manners', which the *Daily News* (23 April) considered inappropriate:

60 23 April 1894. The reviewer was amongst those who connected *Arms and the Man* with *The Palace of Truth*, and Yorke Stephens (Bluntschli) reminded him of his performance in *Held by the Enemy*.

61 *Sunday Times*, 22 April 1894. The Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) and the Duke of Edinburgh attended during the run (the Prince was abroad until 30 April), and the Duke was so provoked by Shaw's views that, reportedly, he declared 'the man is mad' (A.M. Gibbs, ed., *Shaw: Interviews and Recollections*, 1990, p. 128; however, the Prince's visit was not recorded in *The Times*' Court Circulars for the period, though nine other theatre visits were). St. John Ervine's account of this event, placing it during the 1907 revival at the Savoy, is inaccurate (*Bernard Shaw: His Life, Work and Friends*, 1956, pp. 266–7), as is clear from Shaw's reference to the incident in *CL*, I, p. 631. The story, with variations, has become part of theatrical folklore.

> To represent Bulgarian maidens as, without exception, liars, flirts, and hypocrites, Bulgarian heroes as adding to these qualities cowardice and braggadocio, Bulgarian officers as illiterate and incompetent, and Bulgarian folk in general as mean in mind and thought, and disgustingly filthy in their personal habits, may of course be only Mr. Shaw's fun . . . it is out of place in this farcical setting.

This reviewer remarked perceptively that 'neither the battle of Slivnitza nor the treaty, though they are brought into the playbill with an emphatic display of precise dates . . . [have] any necessary connection with the action'. William Archer criticized 'all this topographical pedantry' that merely emphasised the 'unreality' of the setting. It was as though Shaw had consulted two sources – one on Bulgaria, another on psychology – 'and combined the two in an essay on "Bulgarian Psychology" '.[62]

Critics were further bewildered by Shaw's dramaturgy – exactly what kind of play had he written and how? Archer was disconcerted by Shaw 'always jumping from key to key, without an attempt at modulation, and nine times out of ten he does not himself know what key he is writing in' (*World*). While the play possessed 'high qualities of frank fun, of mordant humour . . . the setting of them is of the most contorted kind – half in earnest, half in levity, and with consistency only in basic pessimism'.[63] The *Star* also questioned the play's consistency, raising still relevant questions about the play's genre: 'Enormously amusing, if slightly perplexing. Not fitting exactly into any ready-made catalogue, but a nondescript, an amalgam of burlesque, farce, and comedy'. The *Daily Telegraph* was irritated by Shaw's technique of developing sympathy for his 'puppets' only to later 'cheat them of their interest'. That approach might be unconventional, but 'audiences will soon know that when the ostensible hero is introduced to them as the soul of honour and gallantry, he is in reality a despicable fool, if not a downright knave . . . [and] the "unconventionality" here involved will of a surety become more conventional than conventionality itself'.

Shaw's curtain speech added to the confusion. In response to a boo-er in the audience, Shaw responded: 'My dear fellow, I am of your opinion,

62 The *World*, 25 April 1894; rpt. in *The Theatrical 'World' of 1894*, 1895, pp. 111–12 and T.F. Evans, *Shaw: The Critical Heritage*, 1976, p. 62. Archer also noted that 'Saranoff and Bluntschli and Raina and Louka have their prototypes, or rather their antitypes, not in the Balkan Principalities, but in that romantic valley which nestles between the cloud-capped summits of Hampstead and Sydenham'. Louis Crompton argues that the Serbo-Bulgarian war setting is vitally important (*Shaw the Dramatist: A Study of the Intellectual Background of the Major Plays*, 1971, p. 71).

63 *Stage*, 26 April 1894.

but what are we among so many?' He 'sustained his own vein of sarcasm by professing to have written a tragedy which to his surprise had been mistaken for a farcical comedy'.[64]

Although the play itself was the focus of critical attention, reviewers indicated that the 'boisterous success' that irritated Shaw 'was due in no small degree to the sympathetic spirit' of the actors, who 'played in a becoming spirit of mock solemnity'.[65] Stephens played Bluntschli 'with admirable discretion . . . his assumption of intense fatigue was painful in its realism' and he 'deserved a medal for his curious delineation of mixed cowardly and firm temperament'.[66] Bernard Gould performed Sergius 'with a mingled air of satisfaction with his own heroics and bewilderment at the unexpected consequences they entail', although one critic thought he failed to 'convey . . . the answer to the enigma of Sergius'. Yet another critic, perhaps projecting his own notions of Victorian heroism, deemed Gould was 'impressive and thoroughly manly'.[67] Despite an uneven start, Alma Murray soon found the 'right spirit', exhibiting a 'delicate perception and rare grace', that resulted in a Raina that was 'a perfectly charming little minx'.[68] While the censorious *Daily Telegraph* declared Florence Farr 'appeared to no advantage', Archer thought she 'made a memorable figure of the enigmatic Louka', and generally she was 'clever', 'just emphatic enough', and 'bright and gipsy-like'.[69] The remaining actors received less attention; Archer observed that they 'were all as good as need be' (*World*). Overall, the *Star* declared, cast and play had 'kept the whole house in a roar of perpetual laughter', but that first-night reception was not repeated subsequently.

To-day had said that *Arms and the Man* 'is a play that every intelligent playgoer should see', but predicted 'whether [Shaw] will make money with this play is doubtful'. In fact, Shaw did make money: his five-per-cent royalty on the gross receipts amounted to £88 9s 0½d; however, the

64 See Gibbs, *Shaw: Interviews*, pp. 127–30; *Daily Chronicle*. The boo-er was R. Golding Bright who took exception to what he thought were references to the British Army; some accounts suggest more general dissent from the gallerites (*Daily Chronicle; Sun*, 23 April 1894). According to W.B. Yeats, a disturbance had been anticipated and 'chuckers out' had been hired 'to put out all people who make a row' (Allan Wade, ed., *The Letters of W.B. Yeats*, 1954, p. 231). Originally Shaw called the play a 'romantic comedy'; in 1907 it was an 'anti-romantic comedy'. Shaw also referred to it as 'a sermon on war', and 'a serious play' (*CL*, I, pp. 445, 660). When published, *Arms and the Man* was designated as one of the 'pleasant' plays.

65 *Daily News; The Times*, 23 April 1894.

66 *Sunday Times; To-day*, 28 April 1894.

67 *Star; Daily Telegraph; Sunday Times.*

68 *Era*, 28 April 1894; *Academy*, 30 June 1894; *Star.*

69 *Daily Telegraph; World; Star; To-day; Era.*

production was a financial disaster, and lost £4,000.[70] *Arms and the Man* ended its run on 7 July 1894 for a total of 76 performances, ostensibly a respectable figure, although 100 performances was considered the benchmark for a long run.[71] However, a closer examination of the gross box-office receipts provides a different perspective. Total receipts at the Avenue were £1768 19s 6d, an average of some £23 per performance (less than ten-per-cent of capacity). The highest average per performance was £30 in the seventh week, the lowest, £13, in the tenth (penultimate) week. Paying audiences had been scant indeed: '. . . Shaw asked me if I would go and see his first essay as a dramatist, and accordingly my wife and I attended one of the early performances of *Arms and the Man* and found the Avenue Theatre only very sparsely filled. I need not say how surprised we were to realise that here was a landmark in the history of British drama'.[72]

Shaw's Response

Shaw's curtain speech was restrained compared to his candid opinion of the première:

> I had the curious experience of witnessing an apparently insane success, with the actors and actresses almost losing their heads with the intoxication of laugh after laugh, and of going before the curtain to tremendous applause, the only person in the theatre who knew that the whole affair was a ghastly failure.[73]

It was, he noted twenty-five years later when he 'was horrified to find that the experience of 1894 was repeating itself' in a 1919 revival, 'the beginning of that detestable effect as of all the characters being so many Shaws spouting Shavianisms'.[74] The responsibility for the debacle, Shaw determined, lay not with any inherent flaws in the play, but with the cast, the public, and the critics, and he set about castigating all three.

The 1894 cast scarcely merited censure because, as Mrs Charles Calvert (Catherine Petkoff) pointed out: 'The play . . . was produced hurriedly, we were none of us too conversant with our parts, and, at

70 *CL*, I, p. 447. See also Shaw's comments on the run, *CL*, I, pp. 443–5.

71 All earlier sources give inaccurate figures for the run. An additional 'flying matinee' was given at Crystal Palace on 5 June; it grossed £31 15s, Shaw's royalty was £1 11s 9d. On long runs, see John Parker, ed., *Who's Who in the Theatre*, 11th edn., 1952, pp. 1805–36.

72 J.A. Fuller-Maitland, *A Door-keeper of Music*, 1929, p. 206.

73 *CL*, I, p. 462.

74 *CL*, III, p. 646. See also *Theatrics*, pp. 152–3.

times, the public failed to grasp the intensely clever things that were thrown at them'.[75] Nevertheless, Shaw scolded the cast. Alma Murray's failing was that she had lost the 'poetry . . . the tenderness – the sincerity of the noble attitude and the thrilling voice' of Raina; consequently, 'I have no reproaches deep enough for you'. Murray's fault was that she did not believe in her part, and so 'I swear I will never go to that theatre again'.[76] He also upbraided Bernard Gould, declaring that his Sergius was one of the worst performances he had ever seen. Although he expressed concern that Gould might be straining his voice, Shaw believed Gould's fault was the same as Alma Murray's: he did not believe in his role. Not surprisingly, Gould offered to withdraw from the part, which elicited a Shavian paradox: Shaw's criticism should be ignored because he knew nothing about acting.[77]

Shaw was especially ruffled by Archer's *World* review, and launched a vigorous attack in two letters, criticizing him for 'the intense unreality of your own preconceptions' that caused Archer to compare *Arms and the Man* with W.S. Gilbert's work.[78] Shaw thought, 'Gilbert is simply a paradoxically humourous cynic. He accepts the conventional ideals implicitly, but observes that people do not really live up to them'. By comparison, 'Sergius is ridiculous through the breakdown of his ideals, not odious from his falling short of them'. Shaw was stung by Archer's criticism of his character-drawing that exhibited 'a crude and contorted psychology . . . further dehumanised by Mr Shaw's peculiar habit of straining all the red corpuscles out of the blood of his personages'.[79] Shaw retorted that Archer 'ought to be ashamed of yourself for applying such a word as

75 *Sixty-Eight Years on the Stage*, 1911, p. 253. See also rehearsal details in Josephine Johnson, *Florence Farr: Bernard Shaw's 'New Woman'*, 1975, p. 62. On Shaw's rehearsal methods, see Lewis Casson, 'G.B.S. at Rehearsal', *Drama*, No. 20 (Spring 1951), 9–13, and *Shaw on Theatre*, pp. 153–9.

76 *CL*, I, p. 435. Murray replied contritely: 'I have altered one or two points I confess & generally find them go better with the audience. I suppose it is these comedy touches you object to. I will do my best to take them all out' (p. 436). Shaw was pleased with her corrections (pp. 437–8). In an untitled 1946 typescript, Shaw eulogized: 'But Alma Murray's combination of the provincial *ingenue* with the *poseuse* as a Viennese opera heroine was a feat of skilled acting and natural charm that has never been surpassed' (BL Add Ms 50699 ff. 144–5).

77 Shaw's correspondence with Bernard Gould is in the Burns Library Archives, Boston College (courtesy L.W. Conolly).

78 *CL*, I, pp. 425–9. Archer repeated his opinion that *Arms and the Man* was primarily a farce in the Gilbertian mould in *Study and Stage*, pp. 10–13.

79 *World*, 25 April 1894. Nevertheless, Shaw accepted Archer's invitation to write a Preface to Archer's *Theatrical 'World'*, and there Shaw deplored the current state of the theatre business and commented on Sergius' complicated and introspective psychology (pp. xvii–xxviii).

"bloodless" to a man who is bleeding from fifty wounds to his spirit', and claimed that his 'chief object . . . is to call your attention to the fact that last night, whether it leads to a commercial success or not, totally shatters your theory that I cannot write for the stage'. Archer refrained from commenting that a play without an audience is hardly a play at all. More accurately, Shaw told R. Golding Bright that his aim had been to do 'my best to put before you a true picture of what a brave soldier who knows his business really is. I heartily wish you could bring me an audience of veterans – of men who know what it is to ride a bolting horse in a charge'.[80]

Shaw decided to elaborate publicly on his assertion that *Arms and the Man* embodied 'the realities of soldiering', and the result was 'a brilliant article in next month's New Review on Arms and the Man, giving my authorities for the military realism (there is not an original notion in the whole affair from beginning to end) and stating my position as regards cynicism and all that sort of rubbish'.[81] Shaw's opinion has been embraced by critics: '. . . the most probing look at a Shaw play is Shaw's own, in this case his partly tongue-in-cheek "A Dramatic Realist to His Critics." '[82] However, what appears 'tongue-in-cheek' is an a priori refutation of Shaw's critics: scrutiny of his authorities reveals that Shaw's evidence is skewed and barely sufficient to support his propositions.

Shaw asserts initially that his perception of reality is superior to that of drama critics because they derive their conceptions solely from the theatre: 'No class is more idiotically confident of the reality of its own unreal knowledge than the literary class in general and dramatic critics in particular'.[83] By comparison, his own experiences are taken 'from real life at first hand, or from authentic documents' (p. 485); but the fallacy is self-evident because Shaw's life (of committee meetings, concert-reviewing, playwriting) was no more 'real' than that of the critics, and reading about warfare is not experience on the battlefield.

Shaw's choice of corroborating sources is selective and deceptive, notably when he cites Lord Wolseley on courage. While his two quotations from Wolseley illustrate that soldiers can exhibit bravery and cowardice, Shaw cannot resist describing Wolseley as writing 'about war with an almost schoolboyish enthusiasm' (p. 492), a description that fails

80 *CL*, I, p. 434.

81 *CL*, I, pp. 427, 444. The article was 'A Dramatic Realist to His Critics'.

82 Stanley Weintraub, *Bernard Shaw: A Guide to Research*, 1992, p. 65.

83 DE, p. 486. Patrick Braybrooke believed Shaw was deceived about his creation: 'Mr. Shaw has imagined what a fighting soldier is like, his imagination has produced a brilliant play founded on a brilliant misapprehension' (*The Genius of Bernard Shaw*, 1925, p. 24).

to convey a full sense of the man's complexity. Wolseley possessed the Byronic bravery with which Shaw invests Sergius: he was wounded several times, and lost the sight of his left eye in battle. True, he could write that 'man shooting is the finest sport of all',[84] but he was so popular that, when George Grossmith performed Major-General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Grossmith based his makeup on Wolseley.[85] He also inspired the contemporary catch-phrase 'All Sir Garnet', meaning everything is very satisfactory. Wolseley's abilities embraced the utilitarian aspects of soldiering; he concentrated on military logistics and reforms, was concerned with the welfare of soldiers (as evidenced by his *Soldier's Pocket Book*, 1869), and was mindful that battles were won by adequate equipment and supply lines. Indeed, the Wolseley reality was a fusion of the characteristics of Sergius *and* Bluntschli – idealistic hero and pragmatist – whereas Shaw portrays two distinct entities. Shaw endeavours to tip the scales against Wolseley by favouring General Horace Porter, who is 'a cooler writer than our General [Wolseley], having evidently been trained in the world, and not in the army' (p. 493). Thus, Wolseley is dismissed in the same terms as drama critics. Ironically, Porter reinforces his arguments with several literary references and anecdotes, and his experiences related in his article were not significantly different from Wolseley's.

Other sources Shaw disparages include pictures by Elizabeth Thompson (Lady Butler) and Tennyson's poem, 'Charge of the Light Brigade' (p. 498). Both are scorned by associating them with critics who have been 'trained in warfare by repeated contemplation of the reproduction of Miss Elizabeth Thompson's pictures in the Regent Street shop windows, not to mention the recitations of Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade." '[86] However, Thompson's 'Calling the Roll after an Engagement, Crimea' (1874), 'Rorke's Drift' (1880), or 'Floreat Etona' (1882) portray grimly realistic aspects of warfare. For example, 'Calling the Roll' depicts a wounded or dying soldier lying in the snow, having fallen out of a line of many other wounded soldiers. Contemporaries were impressed by Thompson's 'unprecedented sympathy for the suffering and heroism of the ordinary British soldier which they [the pictures] seemed to display, a quality which was deemed especially remarkable because she

84 Joseph H. Lehmann, *The Model Major-General: A Biography of Field Marshall Lord Wolseley*, 1964, p. 30.

85 Whether Wolseley inspired Gilbert in writing the character has been debated: see Michael Ainger, *Gilbert and Sullivan: A Dual Biography*, 2002, p. 182.

86 p. 498. Shaw further criticized Thompson in a letter to Archer (*CL*, I, p. 429). See also Tennyson's lesser known 'The Charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava', and 'Prologue to General Hamley' (which mentions Wolseley).

had never witnessed war at first hand'.[87] Although Tennyson's poem is remembered for its heroic viewpoint, its underlying premise is that 'Some one had blunder'd'; a misinterpretation of orders resulted in the charge of the Light Brigade and numerous deaths.

More convincing is Shaw's citation of Alexander William Kinglake's massive study, *The Invasion of the Crimea*,[88] which results in some irrefutable points: 'A cavalry charge attains its maximum effect only when it strikes the enemy solid' (p. 499). However, Shaw muddles Lord Cardigan's conduct whilst leading the charge. Rather than charging 'the centre gun of the battery just like a dramatic critic', Cardigan was swept along by the charge, and was forced to make a swift retreat when he found himself alone facing 'a mass of Russian cavalry', a retreat Shaw approves because Cardigan 'flinched from the first-night's ideal' of 'the stage hero' (p. 500). In fact, Cardigan was hardly a model officer: he had 'no experience of active service' prior to the Crimean war, and was more interested in regimental sartorial elegance than the practical matters of soldiering.[89] In moving the brigade forward, Cardigan adhered rigidly to standard military practice that prescribed an orderly increase in speed leading up to a full galloping charge. However, on this occasion, the heroic 'dramatic-critical formula' to charge (which Shaw ridicules) was both instinctive and rational:

> Thus when Captain White, of the 17th Lancers (who commanded the squadron of direction), became 'anxious', as he frankly expressed, 'to get out of such murderous fire [i.e. crossfire], and into the guns [the object of the charge], as being the best of two evils', and endeavouring, with that view, to 'force the pace', pressed forward so much as to be almost alongside the chief's bridle-arm, Lord Cardigan checked this impatience by laying his sword across the Captain's breast, telling him at the same time not to try to force the pace, and not to be riding before the leader of the brigade'.[90]

During the eight minute charge, the brigade sped up. Consequently, there were fewer British casualties because the enemy cannons took a considerable time to reload, and so the breakneck charge actually reduced the

87 *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 9, 2004, pp. 131–2.

88 *The Invasion of the Crimea: Its Origin, and an Account of Its Progress Down to the Death of Lord Raglan*, vol. 4, 1868.

89 'James Thomas Brudenell, 7th Earl of Cardigan', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 8, 2004, p. 345.

90 Kinglake, p. 266.

length of lethal exposure.[91] Thus White, the practical, experienced soldier, helped to reduce casualties, whereas Cardigan's insistence on 'proper form' and 'holding back' was illogical in the circumstances: 'Even at the cost of sacrificing military order, for the moment, it was seemingly wise, after all, in the straits to which our squadrons had been brought, to let every man close upon the battery with all the speed he could gather'.[92] Accordingly, Kinglake does not validate Bluntschli's description of the calvary man as 'the poor devil pulling at his horse' in a charge (I, 495), an action that, at Balaclava, would have increased the havoc.

So, while it is true that in *Arms and the Man* Shaw corroborates that 'a battlefield [is] a very busy and very dangerous place', his assertion that 'I perverted nothing' is not inaccurate. Nor is his discovery of 'drama in real life'.

Stage History

Arms and the Man remains one of Shaw's most popular plays, although it has undergone financial vicissitudes.[93] Immediately after the London première, A.E. Drinkwater undertook an (unprofitable) British provincial tour from 3 September 1894 to 13 July 1895. His company gave 176 performances at 37 venues as far apart as Plymouth, Harrogate, and Belfast. Drinkwater recorded that 'audiences in the country were then hardly ready to do justice to Mr. Shaw' and that they could be 'absolutely unresponsive'.[94] More rewarding was Richard Mansfield's New York production (Herald Square Theatre, 17 September 1894). Shaw endeavoured to persuade Mansfield to play Sergius rather than Bluntschli: 'All Sergius's scenes are horribly unsafe in second rate hands, whereas Bluntschli and

91 See Mark Adkin, *The Charge: The Real Reason Why the Light Brigade Was Lost*, 2004, *passim*. Although considerable, the number of casualties was less than is popularly supposed: 'Of the 673 men and horses that started out, 113 men and 475 horses were killed, 247 men and 42 horses badly injured' (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 8, p. 345).

92 Kinglake, p. 269

93 This survey focusses on major professional productions in London and New York. Information on some world-wide productions can be found in Archibald Henderson, *Man of the Century*, pp. 903–44, and Donald C. Haberman, ed., *G.B. Shaw: An Annotated Bibliography of Writings About Him: Volume III: 1957–78*, 1986. See also Samuel A. Weiss, 'Shaw, *Arms and the Man*, and the Bulgarians', *SHAW: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies*, 10 (1990), 27–44, Paulina Kupisz, 'The Reception of Bernard Shaw in Poland', *Shavian*, 10:3 (2006), 16–22, Michel Pharand, op. cit., *passim*, and Wendy Chen, *The Reception of George Bernard Shaw in China, 1918–1996*, 2002.

94 Henderson, *Man of the Century*, pp. 949–50. Receipts for the tour averaged £8 10s per performance, although the final nine performances at the Aquarium, Brighton, netted only £17 3s 6d (LSE Archives Shaw/29/1). See also John Drinkwater, *Inheritance*, 1931, pp. 164–6, and *CL*, I, pp. 542, 547–8, and 554, on Drinkwater's financial woes.

Raina *cannot* fail'.[95] Mansfield opted for safety and gained accolades for his Bluntschli; he possessed the 'wonderful knack of always remaining in the role even when he steps before the curtain and delivers a few words', and depicted 'the character without a superfluous tone or gesture. It is exquisite dramatic art'.[96] Nevertheless, the same reviews echoed the criticisms raised in London – the play's Gilbertisms, Shaw being too clever, gibes at Bulgarian hygiene, and a lack of sympathetic characters. The final verdict was that Shaw's 'sole object is to amuse the clever, cynical portion of his audience'.[97]

By the time *Arms and the Man* was revived in London at the Savoy Theatre on 30 December 1907, Shaw was no longer the neophyte dramatist of 1894. He thought the production had 'a very strong cast' with Robert Loraine (Bluntschli), Harley Granville-Barker (Sergius) and Lillah McCarthy (Raina),[98] while audiences had become familiar with Shaw's 'ideas and his general attitude. All is as plain to us now as ABC'.[99] Max Beerbohm was more blunt: 'Fourteen years ago he was not so far ahead in form, as he was in matter, of the average playwright. In form, indeed, he was merely abreast of the time. . . . How strange and rickety that form seems now!'[100] *The Times* took issue with Shaw's conception of his characters: although Bluntschli was 'really a delightful person . . . most completely executed', Shaw failed to give 'full expression' to Sergius. Hence, Loraine 'made an excellent impression', but Granville-Barker 'seemed vague and uncertain in touch'. Moreover, the women 'are rather too authentically Shavian to be quite agreeable'.[101]

95 *CL*, I, p. 442, and see also Paul Wilstach, *Richard Mansfield: The Man and the Actor*, 1908, pp. 259–61.

96 *New York Herald*, 18 September 1894, *New York Times*, 23 September 1894.

97 *New York Herald*. LSE Archives Shaw/29/1 records Mansfield gave 19 performances between 17 September and 10 October 1894. *Arms and the Man* was in his repertoire during a subsequent American tour that lasted until 9 April 1895. Shaw's royalties totalled £474, and he commented 'Of course it doesn't draw; whoever supposed it would?' (*CL*, I, p. 458). When Mansfield played *Arms and the Man* in New York in April 1895, a reviewer declared 'the ironical philosopher is not, after all, of much importance in the world' (*New York Times*, 24 April 1895).

98 *CL*, II, p. 740. However, during the run, Shaw criticized McCarthy's performance for lacking 'STYLE', and Granville-Barker's for 'his farcical ecstasies & imitations of the exploded king of Portugal' (*CL*, II, pp. 755–7).

99 *Illustrated London News*, 4 January 1908.

100 *Around Theatres*, 1953, p. 493 (originally printed in the *Saturday Review*, 4 January 1908).

101 *Times*, 31 December 1907. The revival ran one performance more than the première (77 performances), but the box office receipts were much higher. Shaw, enjoying variable royalties of $7^1/_2$ and 10%, netted £500, or more than fives times his 1894 royalties (LSE Archives Shaw/29/1).

Loraine took up Bluntschli again in 1919, although the First World War placed both play and man in a different context. Now a war veteran, Loraine had achieved the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Royal Flying Corps, and had received two distinguished medals for his gallantry.[102] Those honours might account for Loraine's performance which 'hardly seemed to have caught the right tone' in a production that was 'terribly rough and ragged . . . [and] the performers of the two characters intended by Mr. Shaw to be romantic insisted upon confusing non-romanticism with theatricality'; however, another critic thought it 'a work of art duly and completely made'.[103] Shaw was unhappy with the production because he thought it repeated the errors of 1894.[104] Loraine was equally 'unShavian' during a brief revival at the Everyman Theatre on 16 September 1926: '[Loraine as Bluntschli] lets us into all his secrets at the outset, and has an air of saying: "Come, join with me in the excellent sport of pulling the Petkoff legs!" '[105]

The Second World War saw a revival at the New Theatre (5 September 1944) with a star-studded cast that included Margaret Leighton (Raina), Sybil Thorndike (Catherine Petkoff), Joyce Redman (Louka), Nicholas Hannen (Major Petkoff), Ralph Richardson (reprising his 1931 performance of Bluntschli), and Laurence Olivier as Sergius (played by John Gielgud in 1931). Fifty years after the première, Shaw's 'youthful jibe at the warlike virtues [coincided] with the rescue of civilization by those very virtues' derided in the play, and there was a 'two-edged topicality of jokes about Balkan honour and loyalty'.[106] In 1931 Shaw had advised Richardson not to 'spend a long time with your gasps and your pauses and your lack of breath and your dizziness and your tiredness', but 'to go from line to line, quickly and swiftly, never stop the flow of the lines, never stop'; now, Richardson, with his 'idiosyncratic personality', gave a 'solid and endearing portrait' that lacked just 'the last spark of perkiness'.[107]

102 Loraine was cited 'for conspicuous gallantry and skill, on 26 Oct., 1915, when he attacked a German Albatross biplane, getting within fifteen yards of it. When the hostile machine dived, he dived after it and followed it from a height of 9,000 ft. to 600 ft. The enemy pilot was hit, and his camera and wireless transmitter were subsequently found to have bullet holes through them. The Albatross fell in our lines' (*Who Was Who in the Theatre: 1912–1976*, 1978, p. 1530).

103 *Athenaeum*, 26 December 1919; *The Times*, 12 December 1919.

104 See fn 74.

105 *The Times*, 17 September 1926. Apparently Loraine regarded *Arms and the Man* as something of a filler in his repertoire, and Shaw turned down his request for a 'stopgap' revival in 1929 (see *Bernard Shaw and Barry Jackson*, ed. L.W. Conolly, 2002, p. 45).

106 *The Times*, 6 September 1944. The production ran 67 performances.

107 John Miller, *Ralph Richardson: The Authorized Biography*, 1996, p. 41; Jonathan Croall, *Gielgud: A Theatrical Life*, 2001, p. 141; *The Times*.

While in 1931 Gielgud, perhaps not an obvious choice for Sergius, succeeded in conveying the 'number of souls – the heroic, the craven, the unscrupulous, the honourable, and the purely comic' that comprise Sergius,[108] Olivier 'was not at all keen to do' the part, floundering in his understanding of the character. Tyrone Guthrie told him, 'if you can't love him you'll never be any good in him', and it took Olivier a week to discover he could: 'I loved him for his faults, for his showing off, his absurdity, his bland doltishness'. Success followed: Olivier's 'tinsel *magnifico* Sergius, combines every touch of spur and moustache-twitching into a performance of the richest comedy'.[109]

Later in the twentieth century London saw regular productions of varying merit. The play enjoyed 'a pleasing revival' with a theory 'still worth considering' in 1953.[110] A novel departure was a satisfactory in-the-round presentation at Croydon in 1960 that, of necessity, placed emphasis on the text rather than the decor. Two years later the 'open stage of the Mermaid Theatre' was deemed 'resistant to comedy set in a domestic interior', and as a result, 'the minutiae of intimate comic acting' was replaced by broad, robust acting and cardboard characterisations.[111] Staging was also decisive in 1981's Lyric Theatre revival that focussed on the Victorianism of *Arms and the Man*, the stage becoming a 'toy theatre space'. Richard Briers and Peter Egan as Bluntschli and Sergius were successful in 'the central Shavian duel', although Irving Wardle maintained the play 'is a slippery piece to get hold of'.[112] Audience imagination was tested by aircraft noise, birdsong, and broad daylight in a 1986 production at the Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, and the critics returned a mixed verdict. *Arms and the Man* 'still retains a surprisingly sparkling vitality and relevance', said one, while another found it 'hard to appreciate, now, that in its day this play was almost revolutionary in its impact', because the production generally lacked 'the kind of elegant, comic playing' that only Brian Deacon (Bluntschli) contributed.[113]

While Mansfield introduced Shaw to America, the true early champion of his work was Arnold Daly, who staged *Candida, You Never Can Tell, John Bull's Other Island,* and the controversial 1905 production of

108 *The Times*, 17 February 1931.

109 Laurence Olivier, *Confessions of an Actor*, 1982, pp. 108, 110; *The Times*, 6 September 1944.

110 *The Times*, 26 June 1953.

111 *The Times*, 21 March 1962.

112 *The Times*, 16 October 1981.

113 *London Standard*, 6 August 1986; *Daily Telegraph*, 7 August 1986; *Guardian*, 7 August 1986.

Mrs Warren's Profession that resulted in his arrest. *Arms and the Man* joined his repertoire in 1906, and he 'made a favorable impression' as Bluntschli, a role 'well within Mr. Daly's range'; he shared the warm applause with Chrystal Herne's Raina.[114] Daly repeated the role in London (Criterion, 18 May 1911) and was considered the best Bluntschli to date: 'He can listen as well as talk expressively and, what is more, can sit still expressively'.[115] Daly was still playing the role in 1915 (Garrick, New York, 3 May) when he gave an 'easy and capable performance'; although one critic thought *Arms and the Man* had 'not stood the test of time', another averred Daly 'threw a high light on Shaw's permanencies'.[116]

In 1925 at New York's Guild Theatre, the famous Alfred Lunn-Lynn Fontanne partnership produced a performance in which, surprisingly, 'beyond the bare words of the lines there seemed to be more significance than the actors expressed'.[117] By mid-century *Arms and the Man* drew some negative responses. It was seen as 'a museum piece' that had 'undoubtedly lost some of its sharpness with the increasing modern familiarity with large-scale warfare'; the production's highlight was Sam Wanamaker's 'bravura performance in the part of the attitudinizing Major Sergius'.[118]

Among recent American productions Kevin Klein's performance as Bluntschli in 1985 at the Circle in the Square, New York, stands out. Frank Rich opined that the perfect production of *Arms and the Man* would consist of Klein playing both Bluntschli and Sergius, so suited was he to both roles.[119] Rich also thought Glenne Headley (Raina) was good as an 'alternately smart and petulant schoolgirl one small step away from maturing'. Raul Julia's broad approach to Sergius succeeded: 'And trying to figure out which of his many selves he really is – hero, buffoon,

114 *New York Times*, 17 April, 22 April 1906. The production, which opened in Philadelphia on 9 April 1906, and the Lyric, New York, on 16 April, ran 53 performances. Receipts were $28,827.10; although Shaw's royalty is not known, he probably collected 10% (LSE Archives Shaw/29/1).

115 *The Times*, 19 May 1911. Shaw had advised Daly not to perform in London, but nevertheless sent Daly instructions on how to perform the piece, as well as chastising Margaret Halstan (Raina) because 'All the dignity and beauty and style were gone; and you were like a comic opera soubrette without any music.' Shaw concluded 'Mr Daly is neither the right actor nor the right producer for my plays' (*Theatrics*, pp. 109–13).

116 *Nation*, New York, 100 (13 May 1915), 545; *New Republic*, 3 (8 May 1915), 18.

117 *New York Times*, 15 September 1925. The production ran 180 performances. The Federal Theatre Project staged four productions in numerous American locations in the 1930s; see Michael O'Hara, '*Arms and the Man* and the Federal Theatre: Love and War in Troubled Times', *SHAW: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies*, 14 (1995), 145–52.

118 *New York Journal American*, 20 October 1950; *New York Post*, 20 October 1950; *New York Times*, 20 October 1950. The production at the Arena Theatre (19 October) ran 108 performances.

119 *New York Times*, 31 May 1985.

blackguard, humbug, coward – Julia makes Sergius just what Shaw said he was, a comic Hamlet'.[120] Less successful was the 'high-strung' 2000 revival directed by Roger Rees. The production at the Gramercy Theatre, New York, attempted to be 'screamingly funny' and emphasized 'the play's farcical aspects without being very funny'.[121]

Arms and the Man has also been adapted as a comic operetta and a film. As early as 1897 Shaw adamantly opposed theatre manager Henry Lowenfeld's proposal to make a musical version of the play: 'I have been all this time recovering from the shock of your proposal to make a Comic Opera of "Arms & the Man." How c^{d} you possibly make it more of a Comic Opera than it is at present?'[122] A decade later Shaw had not changed his opinion and dissociated himself from the musical adaptation proposed by Rudolf Bernauer and Leopold Jacobson, with music by Oscar Straus. This piece appeared first as *Der tapfere Soldat* in Vienna on 15 November 1908, and as *The Chocolate Soldier* in New York and London. While the Viennese production achieved only 62 performances, the English version was an outstanding success, running for 299 performances at the Lyric Theatre, New York, and 500 performances at the Lyric in London – a popularity never achieved by any production of *Arms and the Man*.[123]

Shaw had reservations about allowing *Arms and the Man* to be filmed: 'I have no objection on principle to be filmed; but I have to consider the effect on my ordinary theatrical business; and my general policy is to wait until I have had a revival which shelves the play for five years or so before putting it on the filmable list'.[124] When he did permit changes to the play he insisted that they be made by himself, which he proceeded to do and took some delight in certain cinematic features that expand

120 *Newsweek*, 10 June 1985. Glenne Headly was complimented for resembling a youthful Maggie Smith.

121 *New York Times*, 11 February 2000.

122 *CL*, I, p. 825.

123 Shaw's entanglements in 'the thrice accursed Chocolate Soldier' are recounted in *CL*, II, pp. 741–2, 768–70, 794–6, 934–45; III, p. 730; IV, pp. 236–7; *Advice to a Young Critic*, pp. 204–07; and *Theatrics*, pp. 103–04. Shaw refused to endorse the piece, removed any material taken directly from *Arms and the Man*, and rejected any financial recompense; however, he was willing to permit an acknowledgment that the first act of *Arms and the Man* had provided a suggestion for the operetta.

124 *Advice to a Young Critic*, pp. 208, when the possibility of filming *Arms and the Man* was raised in 1928. Shaw also had to be forced 'to abandon his theory that a good film is only a filmed play' (Donald P. Costello, *The Serpent's Eye: Shaw and the Cinema*, 1965, p. 24). On an undated remnant of a film scenario, Shaw wrote: 'All this is utterly wrong. It would wreck the film. It drags in everything I have left out . . . The book must be followed precisely' (HRC, Shaw/Box 4.4).

upon mere theatrical possibilities.[125] However, the result was a disaster: 'no more dismal film has ever been shown to the public'.[126] The experience did not prevent Shaw from agreeing to a second attempt by film director Gabriel Pascal. Shaw wrote the scenario which included additional scenes, dialogue, and exterior scenes, but which still followed the play text closely because, Shaw wrote: 'It is a mistake to interrupt the play by changes of scene after the audience has become interested in the characters and story'.[127] He and Pascal got as far as discussing the casting and production aspects of the film, but the project eventually fell through.[128]

Notwithstanding its numerous productions, *Arms and the Man* does not occupy a central place in the Shavian canon largely because much in the play now lacks immediacy: 'Given an audience free of drastic illusions about war, "the higher love," defending one's honor, and marrying below one's station, the play becomes a straightforward (and somewhat thin) romantic comedy in the traditional vein'.[129] Without those illusions to provide a focus, one temptation in staging the play nowadays is to stress the farcical elements and to reduce the characters to caricatures. Such was the propensity of the 2006 Shaw Festival Theatre production which was described by one critic as receiving a 'goony farcical treatment'.[130] Shaw himself recognised that the play might not stand the test of time. When a 1904 revival was planned, he wrote that he 'was startled to find what flimsy, fantastic, unsafe stuff it is. . . . I think we had better rest on our 1894 laurels; for unless we could get a very brilliant cast together, the result of a revival would be general disappointment. It was the first "pleasant" play I ever wrote; and it was finished in a hurry to stop a gap for Miss Farr and the lady who was backing her at the Avenue. And it really would not stand comparison with my later plays unless the company was very fascinating'.[131]

125 See *Bernard Shaw and Gabriel Pascal*, ed. Bernard F. Dukore, 1996, p. xii, and Shaw's comments in the *Malvern Festival Book*, 1932, rpt. in *Shaw on Theatre*, pp. 212–13.

126 Allardyce Nicoll, quoted in Costello, p. 40. See also Costello, p. 154, for full details of the cast and production staff.

127 The scenario is reprinted in Costello, pp. 189–96, with Shaw's comment on p. 196.

128 See Dukore, *Bernard Shaw and Gabriel Pascal*, pp. 130–2, 134–9, 142–3, and Dukore, *The Collected Screenplays of Bernard Shaw*, 1980, pp. 119–25, 355–400. The play has been televised by the BBC in 1958, and 1989; a DVD of the latter is available currently.

129 Charles A. Carpenter, *Bernard Shaw & the Art of Destroying Ideals: The Early Plays*, 1969, p. 91.

130 *Buffalo News*, 12 May 2006. See also the *Toronto Sun*, 6 May 2006, *Ottawa Citizen*, 6 May 2006, and the *Hamilton Spectator*, 5 June 2006 for varied verdicts.

131 Letter to Alma Murray, 27 December 1904, BL Add Ms 50562, f. 34 (published in part in *CL*, II, p. 473).

Note on the Text

The copy text for this edition is that of the definitive edition (DE) published as *The Bodley Head Bernard Shaw: Collected Plays with Their Prefaces: Volume I: Plays Unpleasant and Plays Pleasant*, 1970, under the editorial supervision of Dan H. Laurence. DE represents Shaw's final text for *Arms and the Man* as he revised and published it in 1930 for the Collected Edition; 'This text was subsequently reset and issued in 1931–32 as the Standard Edition: it contained corrections but no further textual revision' (DE, p. 5).

Arms and the Man underwent considerable revision between its conception in 1893 and the final version some forty years later; its various forms show Shaw revising the play either in wholesale fashion, or just tweaking minor verbal nuances. However, an examination of crucial groupings of the play's variants reveals how the play took shape at three significant formative stages: the 1893 production, the first publication in 1898, and the final, definitive edition.

Shaw first composed *Arms and the Man* in three notebooks (MS), preserved in the British Library as Add Ms 50601A, 50601B, and 50601C (also published as *Arms and the Man: A Facsimile of the Holograph Manuscript*, Introduction by Norma Jenckes, New York and London, 1981). Even a cursory glance at MS reveals Shaw's holograph manuscript is frequently chaotic, with numerous revisions and deletions, many of a substantial nature. The play that materialized is spartan when compared with the elaborate DE; the manuscript then underwent substantial revision.

The manuscript finished, evidence suggests that Shaw had a fair copy made of it, probably a typescript; however, if made, it does not appear to have survived. This possibility is suggested by some passages that Shaw left unaltered in MS but which do not appear in the typescript copy made for and submitted to the Lord Chamberlain's office for licensing (LC).

LC is a typescript with Shaw's autograph revisions (BL, Add Ms 53546 'O'). Each act was typed individually, and stamped 'Mrs. Marshall's typewriting office, 126, Strand, 31 MAR [18]94'. It was submitted with the title 'Alps and Balkans', although at some point during the licensing process, the title was changed (not in Shaw's hand) to *Arms and the Man.* The play was issued a licence dated 'April 16 1894'.

Shaw also had additional typescripts made as rehearsal scripts, or prompt copies, for the performers and production personnel of the first production. One such typescript (CB) is held at Cornell University in the Bernard F. Burgunder Shaw Collection: MS 4617 (bound ms2). Purchased from Christie's auction house on 7 June 1990, it was, like LC,

prepared by Mrs. Marshall's Office, and was used by Florence Farr (Louka) in the original production. However, Acts I and II are date-stamped 'APR 94' and vary slightly from LC. Act III bears the same date stamp ('31 Mar 94') as LC. Besides some further autograph revisions by Shaw, CB contains holographic additions in a hand other than Shaw's. Since these additions are concerned with stage business (such as the number of gun shots, lighting, or when members of the cast should be called), they may have been made by the stage manager, George R. Foss. This hand also records lines deleted or rearranged in rehearsal, and is designated CB/R.

Shaw was evidently dissatisfied with the text of the first production, and began to revise it even during the run of the play. Possibly the earliest such revision is the typescript held at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin (TX1). The base copy (HRC, Shaw/Box 3.6) is the same as LC; however, while some of Shaw's revisions are the same as in LC, he made additional revisions that were incorporated into later typescripts.

The typescript (HL) held by the Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS Eng 1046.1), incorporates the TX1 revisions, and is one of a considerable number of typescripts duplicated at the same time (probably in June 1894) by 'Miss Wilkinson, 5, Stafford Street, Marylebone Rd N.W.'.[132] (HL was numbered 'No. 14' by Shaw; 'No. 3' is in the Beinecke Library, Yale University [Gen Mss 279], and inscribed to Louis Weighton, the manager for the unsuccessful provincial tour that began on 21 August 1894.) HL is particularly significant because it was apparently the copy text for the first publication of the play in the United States: *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant: The Second Volume, Containing the Four Pleasant Plays*, Chicago and New York, 1898 (US). The play in US is revised and amplified, and substantially resembles DE; however, the text retains conventional punctuation (e.g., 'don't' for the Shavian 'dont'). It has also had a considerable longevity because it ceased being protected by previously prevailing American copyright laws and could therefore be reprinted without royalty payments. It is probably the text most familiar to American readers.

Simultaneously with the publication of US was the edition (with the same title) published in London by Grant Richards (GR). However, in the interim between despatching the copy text for US to America, Shaw made some further minor revisions to the copy text for GR. Thereafter,

132 Shaw referred to having new prompt copies duplicated in a 31 May 1894 letter to Bernard Gould (Burns Library Archives, Boston College).

the text of the play remained stable, although Shaw made further minor amendments for the productions he was involved in. Thus final corrections were not established until DE, some of which can be seen in a set of second page proofs with Shaw's corrections (HRC, Shaw/Box 4.1), date stamped by printers R. & R. Clark '1 Oct 1931', although Shaw himself initialled and dated his corrections 7 October 1930 (TX2).

It should be noted that the present edition makes no pretence to be a variorum edition; however, the notes to the text endeavour to demonstrate the nature of the 1894 production and the ways in which, subsequently, Shaw made substantial revisions and additions that result in the text we have today.

The texts of the play and appendices in this edition retain most of Shaw's idiosyncratic punctuation and spelling practices. Shaw preferred to use the apostrophe only when absolutely necessary (believing it to be redundant in most cases, and always typographically ugly), so he eliminated it whenever he could–e.g., *Ive, youve, thats, werent, wont.* He retained the apostrophe, however, in instances where its omission might cause confusion–e.g., *I'll, it's, he'll.* Shaw also retained a few archaic spellings (e.g., *shew* for *show*) and dropped the 'u' in 'our' spellings (e.g., *honor*).

Shaw also used spacing between letters to indicate emphasis of a word (e.g., h i s rather than *his*), reserving the use of italics for stage directions. However, this practice has caused considerable confusion over the years, since the variant spacing between letters of a word has not always been apparent to editors, typesetters, and proofreaders. Thus, different editions of any particular Shaw play provide different readings, sometimes indicating emphasis of a word, sometimes not. In order to avoid prolonging the confusion and to restore and confirm Shaw's intentions for emphasizing words (as reflected in manuscript versions and in editions prepared under Shaw's supervision), this edition of *Arms and the Man*, in common with other Shaw plays published by Methuen/New Mermaids, uses italics in the conventional way for dramatic texts–i.e. both for stage directions and to indicate emphasis of particular words or phrases in the dialogue.

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