



Richard Henry Tawney
 British Historian
 Serving in World War I
 England, France 1914-1919

\$2200

An archive of eight letters, 24 documents, 30 pages of notes, and other ephemera connected with British historian Richard Henry Tawney's World War I service. All items are very good or better with short tears and age-toning.

An archive of ephemera kept by British historian and educator, Richard Henry Tawney, while serving with the Army during the Great War. After getting married in 1909 to Jeanette Beveridge he moved to Manchester where he completed his first volume of social history, *The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century* published in 1912. When the war broke out Tawney enlisted and served as a Sergeant in the Manchester Regiment, turning down a commission "due to his political beliefs." The papers here include military memos, notes, letters, and other ephemera from about this time. Included in these papers are a collection of 24 pages of notes by Tawney headed, "The Attack, Orders for B Company." These notes were probably used when writing *The Attack* which was published in the *Westminster Gazette* in August 1916. One page reads: "each man will carry two bombs, one in each lower pocket of his tunic. They are not to be used unless absolutely necessary." These pages discuss everything from attacks, written and drawn in diagrams, what to do with wounded, and how "corrupt" men will be treated. A drawing of the battlefield is also included here, hand drawn in pencil detailing the information in the attack notes.

Also included are long letters from several comrade-in-arms. A letter from 1918 from a Sapper, W. Woolley, writes to the "Sgt" and discusses mutual soldier friends and a recent time they spent together: "I'm pleased to say my leg is much stronger now than it was 12 months ago...I'm not the same man I used to be, but still none of us are that came back." During the Battle of the Somme Tawney was badly injured on the first day and according to historian Gareth Dale, Tawney "had to lie in no man's land for 30 hours until a medical officer evacuated him." Additionally present are official letters from the hospital in France dated July 10, 1916 contacting his wife stating that he is "seriously ill from gunshot wounds, chest and abdomen." A letter from July 19th states that Tawney has been "removed from 'seriously ill' list." He was then transferred to the reserves and his papers for the reserves and his disability pension are also present. Woolley writes to Tawney that "the pension they have given you is scandalous. I hope it has been raised by now, it is nothing in proportion to your injuries, I'm sure." He continues, "I'm sorry you were left so long on the reserves before being discharged." Additional material from the War Pensions Committee, the Home guard, and the Training Reserve Branch are included.

Tawney spent 1918 writing what would become the report, *Christianity and Industrial Problems*. The war, he claimed, "heightened his sense of urgency for meaningful social, economic and political change." He spent the war and the immediate years after his discharge "grappling with the nature of original sin," writing: "The goodness we have reached is a house built on piles driven into black slime and always slipping down into it unless we are building night and day." After the war he was a lecturer at the London School of Economics and eventually he helped found the Economic History Society with Sir William Ashley. He was also a "Christian social activist" whose religious beliefs influenced his desire for reforms to health and education, among other social issues.

A collection of papers from an important figure in British social reform during his time in the Great War which shaped many of his beliefs going forward into his academic career. [BTC#414127]