

*The following text is a transcript of a student reading at the University of Manchester's WWI Centenary Event, 25 November 2014. Each reading consists of a brief introduction, followed by correspondence between Professor Tout and students who were serving in WWI.*

**Student 2: James Stanley Carr joined the Friends' Ambulance Unit in 23 April 1915. The following is drawn from three letters written by Carr to Tout between 1915 and 1917.**

Dear Professor Tout,

Manchester and University life seem to far behind me, in fact are almost forgotten; I seem to have lived ages since then...Time passes so quickly that I shall soon have been out here a year and one wonders if ever University days will return...I often wonder if I shall have forgotten all of the history I ever knew. I have a book – only one – but have never time nor inclination to 'swat'. It was foolish ever thinking of studying past history when one is in the middle of history present but one does foolish thing sometimes and this must rank as one of the many of mine.

I am again back in the old district, being billeted only a few miles from the scene of my first experience of war. How the district had changed!! Sometime in the next few days we are to evacuate about 100 kiddies and the wooden huts to house them are being prepared now. We shall be very busy until they are well installed and I'm looking forward to the time when we shall have them out of danger.

How long must this go on! At night, without lights, is a punishment and I wonder what are my sins to deserve such. Still I'm a lucky beggar – some fellows have to walk those same roads and have a comfortless destination at the end. The more I see the more do I remark – the soldier's sacrifice is supreme. How paltry I feel my own experience to be! To the man in the trenches I must sound like a babe babbling. And yet with my very limited experience I feel almost heart-broken at times. There seems no hope. And yet I suppose this period of hate is the only way of ensuring the prospects of happiness in the future.

**James Stanley Carr survived the war.**

**END**