Preface

The present study focuses on the English War Poets who enlisted themselves in the First World War (1914-1918) and wrote about their experiences extensively in their poetry. Some of them were not actually involved in fighting. Rupert Brooke, for example, died just before he could take part in the Gallipoli landings. Some were killed, but some of them survived to write of their experiences later.

The Poetry of these Combatant War Poets is considerable, and has left a profound impact on the course of English poetry since their time. The First World War was the first such occasion in which ordinary educated English civilians took part. No previous war left any poetic harvest at all from the actual combatants. I put these War Poets on the bounds of possibility that a rediscovery of their genuine poetic talent may be made.

In the present study I have confined myself to the poetry of five of the most prominent and gifted of these war poets. They are Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Charles Sorley, and Edmund Blunden. Though there are many others who are worthy of considerations but due to the constraints of the space (in a Ph.D thesis) they could not be included.

The whole study has been divided into six chapters. Chapter I is of an introductory nature, about the prevailing literary
situations just before the war broke out in 1914. Chapters II, III deal with Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon as war poets. While in chapter IV Rupert Brooke and Charles Sorley have been studied as war poets. Chapter V has been devoted to the study of Edmund Blunden's war poetry while in chapter VI a summing up of the whole study has been provided followed by a detailed biography with a view to assisting future researchers.

This, perhaps, is the most appropriate time to place on record my sincere sense of gratitude to those who helped me to complete this study. First of all, I express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Rahatullah Khan, Reader, Department of English, AMU, for his attention that he paid and concern that he has shown. I am also grateful to Professor Sohail Ahsan, Chairman, Department of English, AMU, and Prof. A.R. Kidwai for their help and cooperation. Thanks are also due to Maulana Azad Library AMU, Seminar Library D/o English, AMU, National Library, Kolkata, J.N.U, New Delhi and CIEFL, Hyderabad for their help and cooperation. Last but not the least I am indebted to my parents and other family members particularly my wife Ayesha for their unwavering support and help.

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(Md. Imteyaz Ahmad)