

# Advertisements: Empire and War

Camille Marrinan  
UROP Project

**Hypothesis:** Empire and war were topics that were a part of the public consciousness during Britain's height of imperial power, this could be seen in advertisements in newspapers.

**Sources:** *The Graphic* and *Illustrated London News*

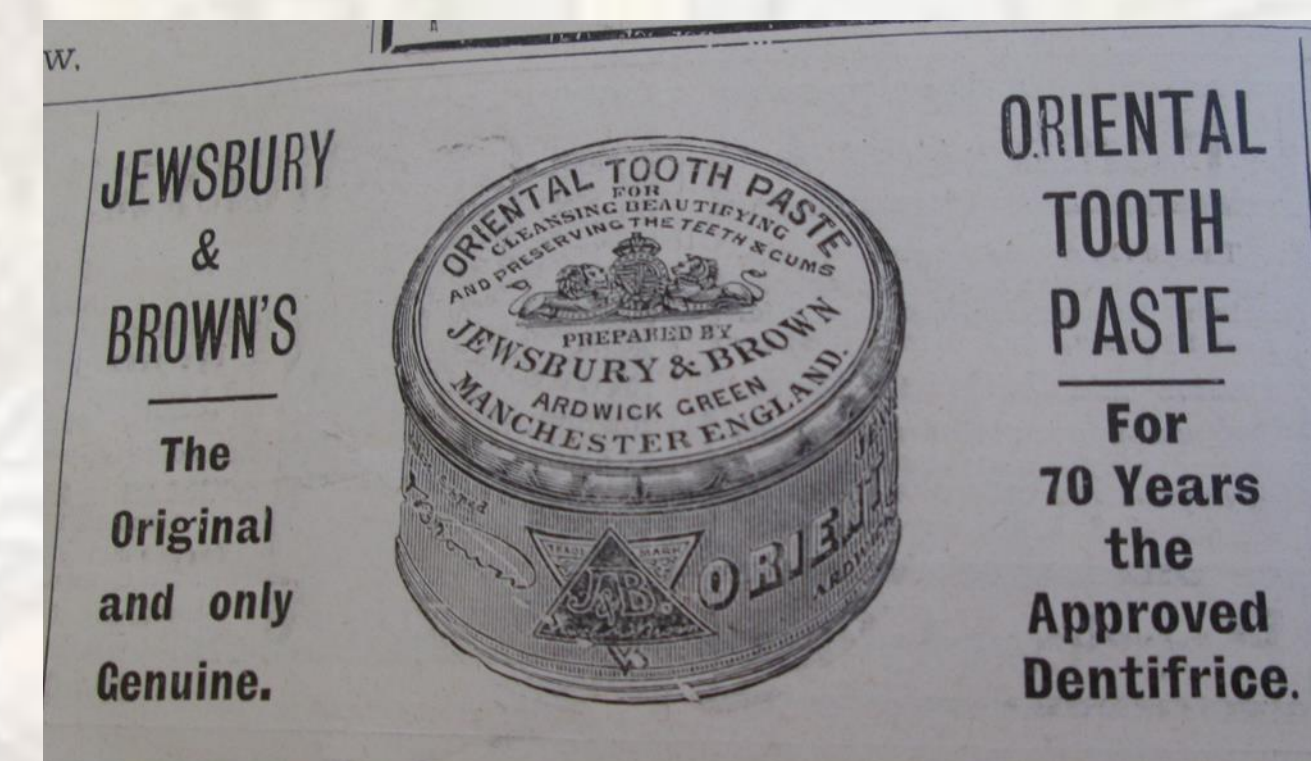
**Time Period:** Third Ashanti War (1873-4), First Boer War (1880-1881) and Second Boer War (1889-1902)

**Method:** Look at the first issue of each month and count each ad, categorizing for empire and war (as well as health as a control)

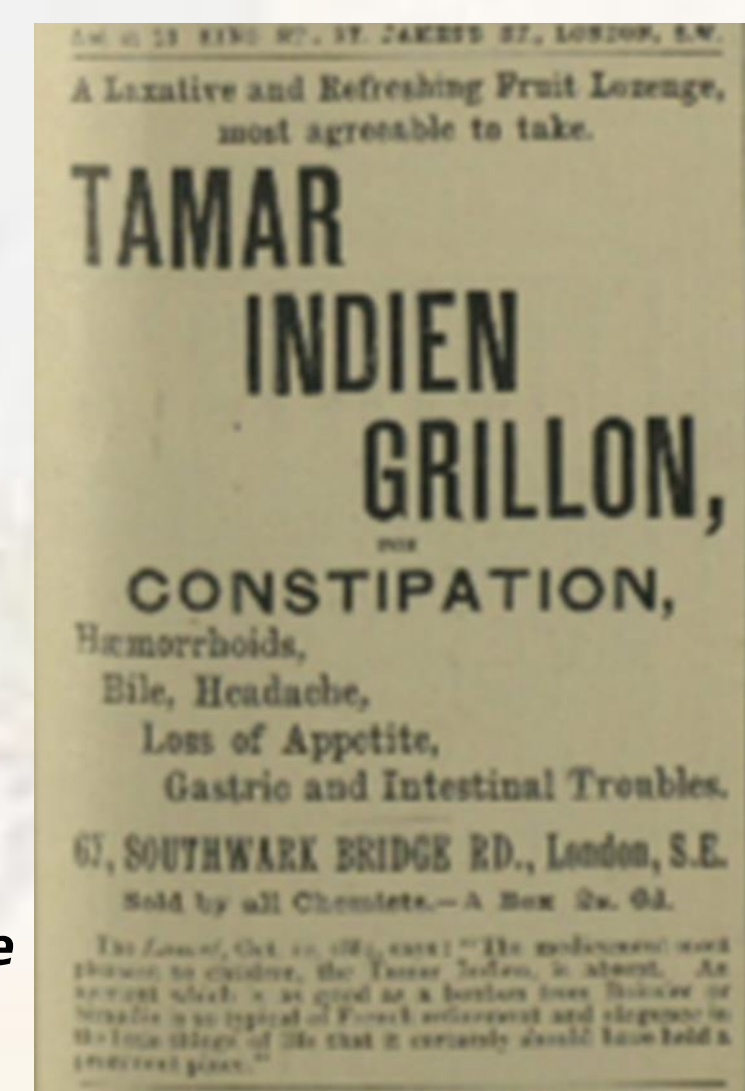
**Findings:** The amount of advertisements using empire and war changed over time, starting with virtually none during the Third Ashanti War to highly politically driven ads during the Second Boer War (often for a male audience.)

## Empire advertisements

Most empire related ads were for goods from (or claiming to be from) parts of the empire. Often these items were health related (toothpaste, medicine) or luxury goods (silks, cashmere, décor). There were instances of the pride of empire being used to promote products as can be seen with the Bovril ad below. Many of the advertisements under the theme of empire were geared to a feminine audience.



**Oriental Tooth Paste** - February 2, 1901 - *The Graphic* (L) and **Tamar Indien Grillon** - June 7, 1902 - *Illustrated London News* (R)  
These two advertisements represent a commonality among many of the empire goods examples, a special formula from a part of the empire to promote better health. Note that the Oriental Tooth Paste is in fact made in Manchester.



**Liberty & Co.** - May 8, 1880 - *The Graphic*  
Liberty & Co. was once called Liberty's East India House. It was an oriental bazaar where people could purchase many exotic items from the east. (Krista Lysack) Many of the Liberty and Co. advertisements promote their collection of wares from the east, specifically India as can be seen here. Other clothing advertisements relating to empire advertised clothing to be worn in warmer climates like India.



**Bovril** - February 1, 1902 - *The Graphic*  
In celebration of the coronation of Edward VII and the British Empire, Bovril ran a campaign featuring the lands of the empire laid out to spell the company's name. This gimmick of using imagery of empire or war to promote your product was often used. A common use would be to brand images of war scenes with a company's name.

## Propaganda style advertisements

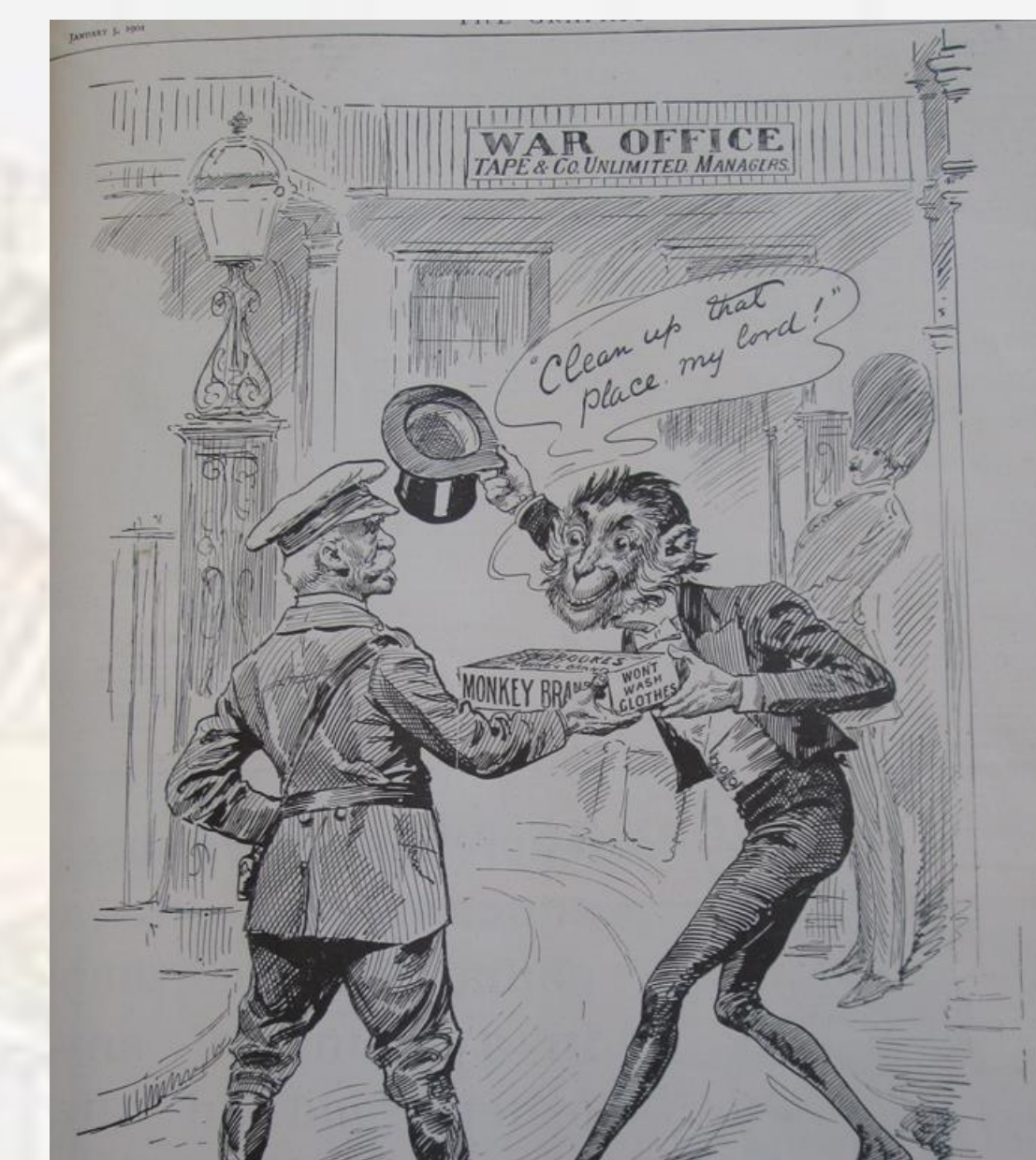
I found advertisements towards the end of the Boer War that embodied the image of political and war driven propaganda. These politically driven ads suggest that empire and imperial wars were part of the everyday public consciousness as they would not have been understood without a basic knowledge.



**Pioneer Tobacco** - June 1, 1901 - *The Graphic*  
This ad features the British lion relaxing with a pipe of Pioneer Tobacco and is surrounded by imagery related to the Second Boer War. His hind legs resting on bags labeled South Africa, he is sitting on De Wet (a Boer General), and the text "At Last I Can Enjoy My Favourite Pipe" alluding to the thought that the English can now relax and enjoy themselves due to a moment of success in South Africa.



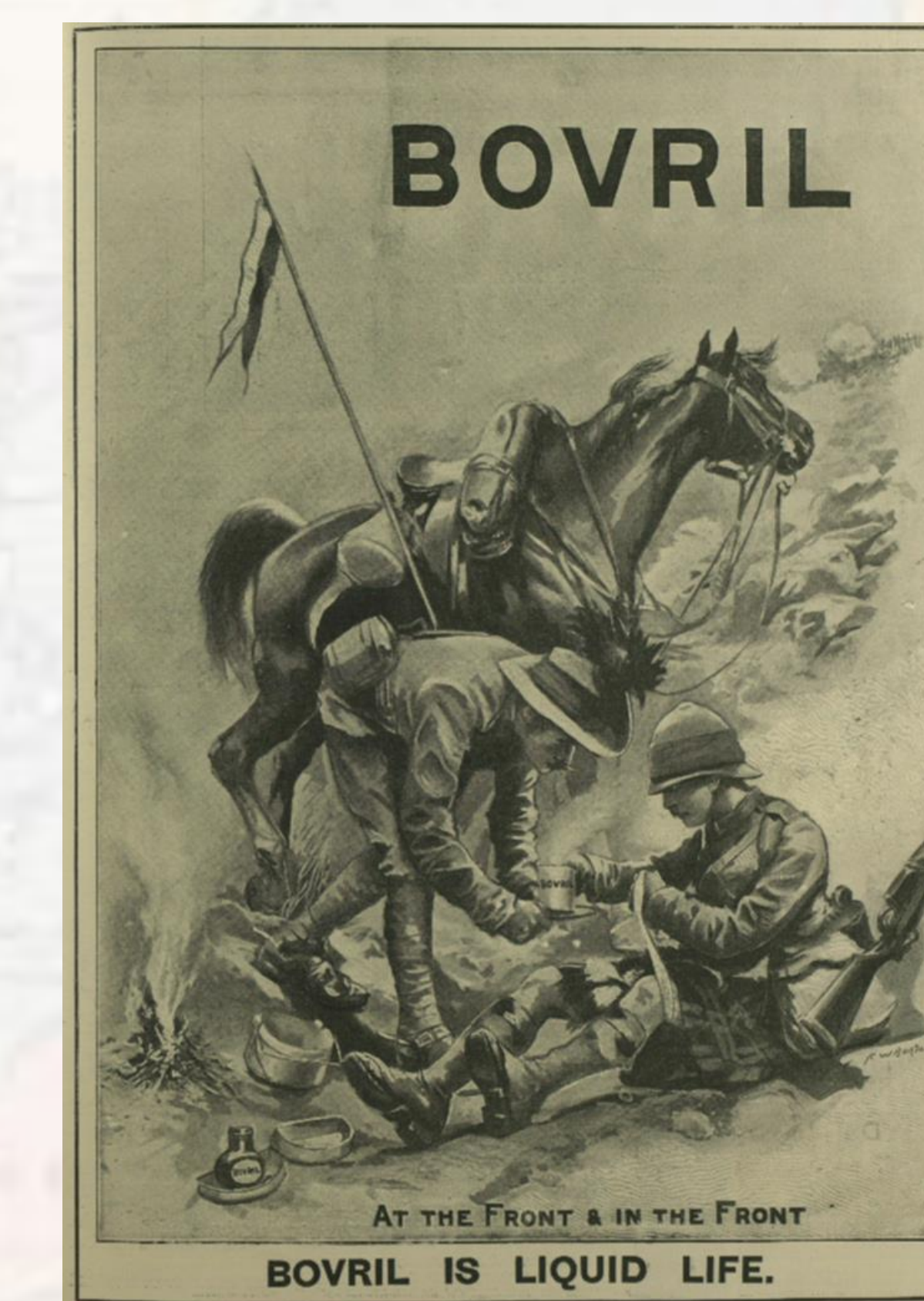
**Monkey Brand Soap** - April 4, 1900 - *The Graphic*  
This advertisement features the British General Roberts sitting heroically with a map of Africa and is being handed soap to clean the country of South Africa with, as well Kruger (Boer President) is seen in the background looking ghoulishly through the window.



**Monkey Brand Soap** - January 5, 1901 - *The Graphic*  
Here is another advertisement featuring the Monkey Brand Soap monkey presenting an official with soap to clean, this time domestically with the War Office in the background.

## War advertisements

There were many different kinds of products that were being advertised with war; from food to health products to guns to war souvenirs to children's clothing (suggesting the importance of instilling the ideas of empire and war at a young age). The Third Ashanti War had no advertisements involving war and it grew through the two Boer Wars, being very prominent in the second.



**Bovril** - February 2, 1902 - *Illustrated London News*  
Often with the ads exhibiting empire and war themes, if the text relating to the product were omitted it would look like an illustration from the war or a political cartoon. This Bovril advertisement falls into this category. Take away the text and it looks much like the illustrations seen on other pages of these newspapers.



**Yorkshire Relish** - February 1, 1902 - *The Graphic*  
Food was a surprising item that frequently was linked to war in advertisements. Often they suggested that these products were enjoyed by the hard working soldiers so they should be enjoyed by the public as well.



**Carter** - February 2, 1901 - *The Graphic*  
These advertisements for "invalid comforts" ran for a long time without "The War." being included above the images of the products. The top part was added on as the Boer War progressed, and there were more soldiers that would be in need of these types of products.