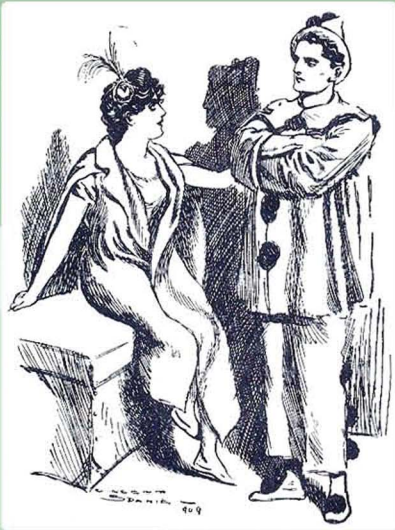


1st World War pierrots and concert parties



'Pierrot Hero', *Woman's World*, 1909

By the outbreak of 1st World War, pierrot troupes were a mass entertainment form, with hundreds of troupes performing at the seaside resorts all around Great Britain: what they sang and played represented a nostalgic glimpse of normality and a sense of patriotic pride - the very things that the recruits had enlisted to defend.

Troupes & concert parties were organised, to raise money for the troops fighting overseas, by philanthropic individuals, such as the actress Lena Ashwell.



THE LENA ASHWELL Y. M. C. A. - CONCERT PARTY - EGYPT

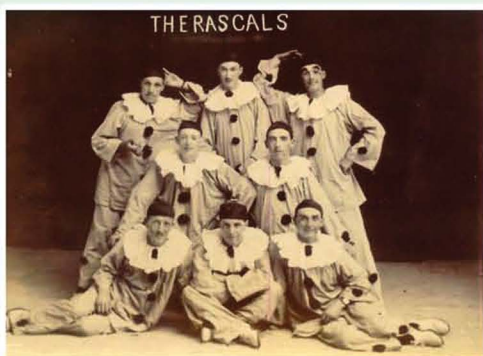
This enabled performances at distribution centres and hospital stations, but the conflict areas were too dangerous for civilians, so the soldiers and sailors often created their own troupes: the contemporary comedian Lee Mack's great grandfather 'Billy Mac', performed with 'The Optimists' whilst fighting at the Battle of the Somme!



The Gloucestershire Regiment



Billy Mac is on the far left



THE RASCALS

Back of postcard reads: "our Battery Concert Party... in aid of the sick and wounded that are here".

Pierrots entertain Scottish troops at Salonika, May 1916

