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| **Sigfried Sassoon (1886-1967)** |
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| Born into a wealthy Jewish-Catholic family, Siegfried Loraine Sassoon became a poet, memoirist, novelist, and a soldier during the First World War. His pre-war poetry was heavily influenced by Edward Marsh and the Georgian poets (especially *fin de siècle* rhetoric, nature imagery, and sport and hunting themes). *The Daffodil Murderer* (1913), a parody of John Masefield’s *Everlasting Mercy*, was Sassoon’s first literary success. His pre-war poetry was often criticized for derivative thought and emotional ambiguity — an ambiguity explained, in part, by Sassoon’s sexual inexperience and his reticence to make his own homosexuality a subject of his writing (Moeyes 24-6).  In 1914, Sassoon enlisted as a trooper in the Sussex Yeomanry, desiring to be one of the enlisted men rather than assume an officer position. Less than a year later, however, he earned his commission as a second lieutenant in the Royal Welch Fusiliers. Before arriving at the Western Front, Sassoon received news that his younger brother Hamo had died at the front in Gallipoli. As an idealistic company commander, Sassoon was awarded the Military Cross in 1916 for ‘conspicuous gallantry during a raid on the enemy trenches.’ He fought in the Battle of the Somme (1916) and was later wounded in the Battle of Arras (1917). During his convalescence, Sassoon began developing objections to the war. |
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| Further reading:  (Egremont)  (Moeyes)  (Thorpe)  (Wilson) |