**Rivers, W. H. R. (1864-1922)**

A preeminent British neurologist, psychologist, ethnologist and anthropologist, William Halse Rivers Rivers worked as a psychiatrist in British military hospitals, most famously Craiglockhart War Hospital in Edinburgh where he adapted Freudian methods to treat First World War officers suffering from traumatic war neuroses. Rivers advocated ‘autognosis’, a method of acquiring self-knowledge by accounting for conscious and unconscious motivations and the environmental conditions that have shaped one’s state of mind, and ‘re-education’, a process by which patients learn to utilize in a pragmatic way their newly acquired self-knowledge (‘Psycho-therapeutics’ 440). Rivers had received his Bachelor of Medicine from St. Bart’s in London in 1886 (Slobodin 9). After studying experimental psychology in Jena, Germany, in the 1890s, he had founded the *British Journal of Psychology* in 1904 and became its first editor. The author of a groundbreaking anthropological book, *Kinship and Social Organization* (1914), Rivers was recalled from fieldwork in Melanesia in 1915 for military service. One of his most famous Craiglockhart patients was the war poet Siegfried Sassoon, who lionized Rivers in his semi-fictional memoir, *Sherston’s Progress* (1936), representing the physician as a quasi-spiritual guide, an approach that echoes to Rivers’s own emphasis on the importance of a physician’s spiritual dimension, as exemplified in *Medicine, Magic and Religion* (1916). The Rivers-Sassoon relationship is central to Pat Barker’s 1990s fictional *Regeneration* trilogy.

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**List of works**

Rivers, W. H. R. ([1914] 2011) *Kinship and Social Organization*, London: Routledge.

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**References and further reading**

Barker, P. (1996) *The Regeneration Trilogy,* London: Penguin.