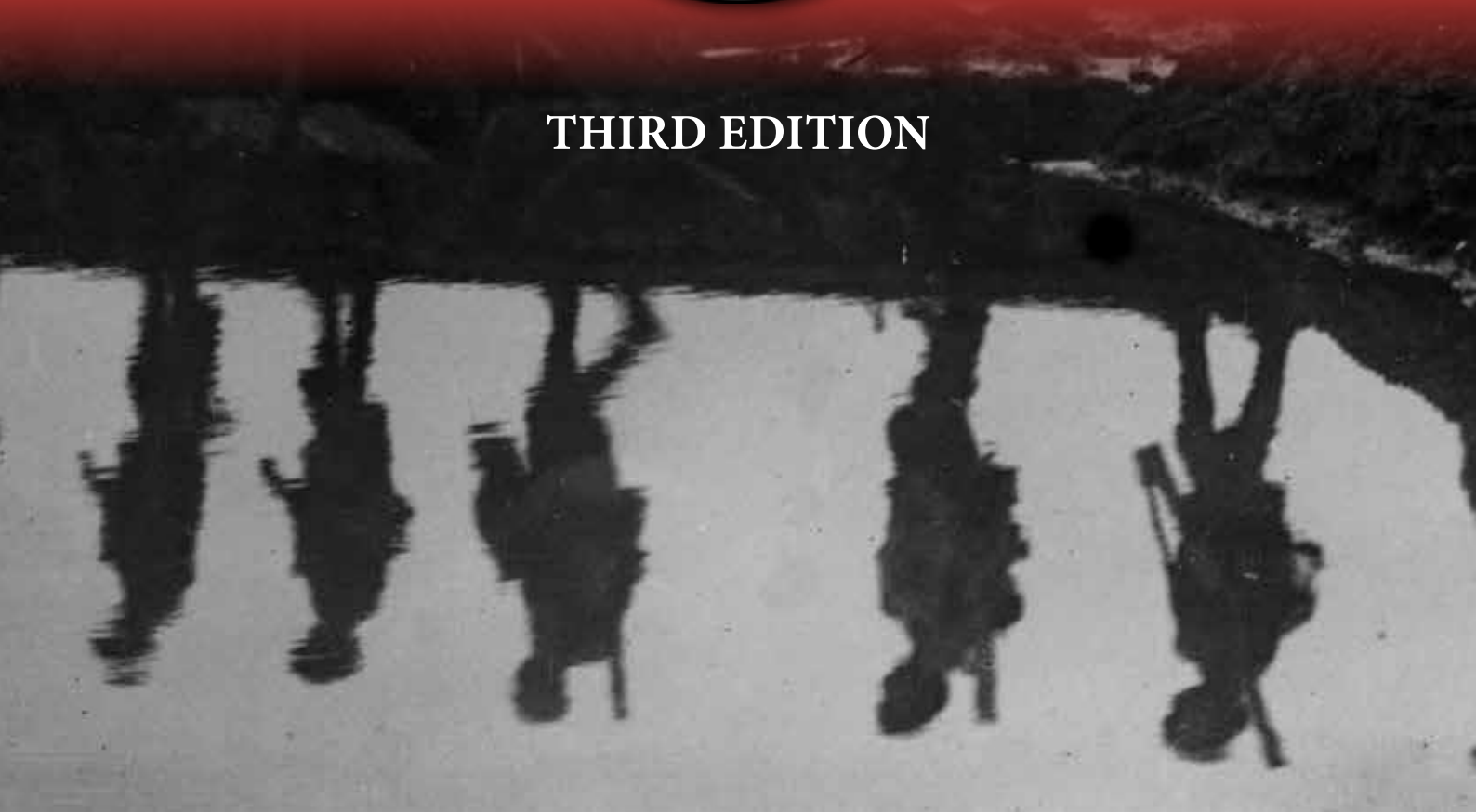

THIRD EDITION

Thanks...

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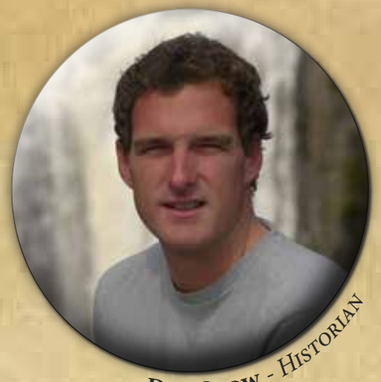
Foreword

The First World War was a military, political, economic and human catastrophe which destroyed millions of lives and fundamentally altered the course of human history. It tore up the map of Europe and toppled ancient empires. It left chaos in its wake, revolutions, civil wars, ethnic cleansing and bitterness which meant that the legacy of the war extended far beyond the end of formal hostilities in 1918. In fact we are still living with the consequences of the war. Turmoil in the Middle East, tensions with Russia, ethnic squabbling in Eastern Europe are all symptoms of a world that has still not dealt with the fallout of the war.



Dan Snow - *Historian*

As this excellent resource points out, the effects on Britain were just as profound. Hundreds of thousands of men had been killed; many more bore the physical and psychological scars. Britain was victorious but almost bankrupt. There had been great changes to society. Women had challenged how they were seen by successfully taking on jobs that had supposedly been the exclusive preserve of men. After the war many women were given the vote for the first time to reflect their contribution and millions of working class men were also given the vote as returning soldiers and workers in key war industries demanded a greater say in how the country was run. Britain entered the democratic era as a result of the war. This new electorate was more interested in rebuilding their country and spending Government money on welfare than on more battleships.

The war changed Britain and the world. Only by understanding it and its consequences, can we make sense of the world around us today. This resource produced by Never Such Innocence gives us an excellent account of the war, its effect on society, art and culture. It is a great place for young people to start learning and engaging with our shared history.

Introduction

Never Such Innocence is dedicated to educating young people about the First World War, its impact and legacy. The charity takes its name from a line in Philip Larkin's poem MCMXIV, which reflects on the changes caused by the First World War.

To mark the centenary of the First World War, Never Such Innocence is running an annual poetry and art competition for young people. This pack explores the different stages of the First World War and aims to provide young people with an objective and insightful account of the events that unfolded between 1914 and 1919. It has been designed so that you can select topics that interest you most and uses poems and artwork from the war period throughout to help stimulate responses to the competition.

This pack is aimed at getting you started; submissions can be on any subject related to the First World War and must be original work. To see last year's winning entries, full competition details and rules, or for more information about Never Such Innocence, please visit www.neversuchinnocence.com or follow @NeverSuch on Twitter to stay updated with all our news and events.

We are excited to be working in partnership with Dave Stewart Entertainment to bring a new and exciting category to the competition, Songs of the Centenary. See our website for details on how to get involved.

PRIZES

1st £400 per competition
(£200-pupil / £200-school)

2nd £200 per competition
(£100-pupil / £100-school)

3rd £100 per competition
(£50-pupil / £50-school)

Additional prizes for runners up in each competition

We will be accepting poems written in Welsh and Gaelic

Winner of Years 5-6 £200 per language category
£100-pupil / £100-school

Winner of Years 7-9 £200 per language category
£100-pupil / £100-school

Winner of Years 10-11 £200 per language category
£100-pupil / £100-school

Our play, compiled by Dr Martin Stephen and published in partnership with TreePress, is a selection of First World War poetry telling the story of the war from initial recruitment to the end of the war. You can find it at www.treepress.org/scripts/never-such-innocence

The Never Such Innocence resource pack will be updated every year of the centenary to include more events and experiences of the First World War. Forthcoming topics include Ireland, New Zealand, Russia, and Conscientious Objectors. The final edition will be published with the winning entries in a special legacy book in 2018!

"I much look forward to seeing the wonderful work you brilliant poets, artists and songwriters will produce. Year on year you continue to move me beyond words!"

- Lady Lucy French, Chair of Never Such Innocence
Great Granddaughter of Field Marshal Sir John French

Timeline: First World War

1914

June

28th June (Page 8): Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, is assassinated. Austria-Hungary blames Serbia for supporting the terrorist attack

July

By 6th July: Germany confirms unconditional support to Austria-Hungary

23rd July: Austria-Hungary issues ultimatum to Serbia

28th July: Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia

August

1st August: Germany declares war on Russia

2nd August: Germany invades Luxembourg and demands permission to advance through Belgium, which asserts its neutrality

3rd August: Germany declares war on France and prepares to invade

4th August (Page 8): Germany declares war on Belgium and invades. Britain declares war on Germany

6th August: Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia

7-16th August: British Expeditionary Force lands in France

12th August: Britain and France declare war on Austria-Hungary

13th August: Austria-Hungary invades Serbia

14-19th August: Russia invades East Prussia

23rd August (Page 10): Battle of Mons, Western Front, first British battle of the First World War

September

6th September (Page 11): Battle of the Marne, Western Front, and beginning of trench warfare

26th September: First Indian troops arrive in Marseilles, France

October

3rd October (Page 38): Canadian Expeditionary Force departs for Britain

19th October: First Battle of Ypres

31st October - 7th November (Page 38): Anglo-Japanese siege of Tsingtao, China

November

1st November: Departure of first Australian/New Zealand troops for Britain

2nd November: Russia declares war on Turkey. Britain launches naval blockade of Germany

5th November: Britain and France declare war on Turkey

6th November (Page 31): Anglo-Indian Force lands in Mesopotamia to protect UK oil interests in Persia

December

3rd December: Australian/NZ Army Corps (ANZAC) diverted to Egypt

25th December (Page 16): Christmas Truce, Western Front

1915

Jan - Apr

19th January: First Zeppelin air raid on Britain, killing 5

18th February: German submarine blockade of Britain begins

22nd April: Second Battle of Ypres, first use of poison gas

25th April (Page 30): Allied troops land in Gallipoli, Ottoman Empire

May - Aug

7th May: RMS Lusitania sunk by German U-boat, Irish coast

9th May: Kitchener's New Army begins overseas deployment

23rd May: Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary

Sep - Dec

25th September: Battle of Loos

7th October: Joint German-Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia

31st October: Steel helmets introduced on the British Front Line

22nd November: Serbian forces defeated by Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria

20th December: Gallipoli evacuation begins

1916

Jan - Apr

27th January (Page 64): British Government passes the Military Service Act introducing conscription for single men aged 18 to 41

21st February – 18th December: Battle of Verdun, Western Front

24th April – 1st May: Easter Rising, Dublin

May - Aug

31st May (Page 12): Battle of Jutland, North Sea

4th June – 17th August: Brusilov Offensive (Russia's major battle of the war), Eastern Front

1st July (Page 10): Battle of the Somme, Western Front

28th August: Italy declares war on Germany

Sep - Dec

3rd September: First German airship shot down over Britain

4th September: British forces take Dar-es-Salaam, German East Africa

15th September: First use of tanks on the Somme

12th December: Germany delivers Identic Notes to the Allies informing them they are ready to negotiate peace

Timeline: First World War

1917

Jan - Apr

31st January: Germany announces the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare

3rd February (Page 58): British civilians urged to observe voluntary rationing to conserve food supplies

11th March: British forces capture Baghdad from Ottoman forces, Mesopotamia

12th March – 15th March: Russian revolution resulting in Tsar Nicholas II abdicating

26th March: First Battle of Gaza, Middle East

28th March (Page 70): Formation of Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) allows women to serve with the armed forces for the first time

6th April (Page 80): USA declares war on Germany

May - Aug

10th May: Royal Navy introduces convoy system in response to German submarine warfare

21st May (Page 40): Imperial War Graves Commission established

25th May: First daylight bombing raid on Britain by German Gotha aircraft

31st July: Third Battle of Ypres

Sep - Dec

29th September: First night raid on London by German Gothas

7th November: Bolsheviks seize power in second Russian Revolution

20th November (Page 11): Battle of Cambrai, Western Front

15th December: Bolshevik Government signs armistice with Germany

1918

Jan - Apr

6th February (Page 69): Representation of the People Act, Britain. Right to vote gained by women over 30 and many previously ineligible men

25th February: Rationing introduced in London and southern England

3rd March (Page 80): Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed – Russia leaves the war

21st March: Beginning of final German offensives

April: Spanish flu spreads to Europe

May - Aug

19th May: The German Air Force launches its largest and last raid on London

June: Spanish flu spreads to India

15th July: Last German offensive launched on Western Front

18th July (Page 81): French counter-attack begins on the Marne

8th August: Second Battle of Amiens sees Allied forces break the German lines

Sep - Dec

27th September (Page 81): British begin to breach Hindenburg Line, Western Front

28th September: German commander Ludendorff advises the Kaiser to seek peace

1st October: Allied forces capture Damascus, followed by Beirut, Homs and Aleppo, Middle East

6th October: German Government starts to negotiate an armistice

30th October: Ottoman Turkey agrees an armistice

1st November: Serbian forces recapture Belgrade

11th November (Page 82): Armistice is signed by Germany and the Allies

The Outbreak of War

In the years leading up to the First World War, Germany sought to gain international presence by extending her empire and increasing her naval capacity.

Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance in 1882, agreeing to support each other if attacked by either France or Russia. The objective of the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale of 1904 was to settle Britain and France's disagreements outside Europe, in Africa and Asia. France and Russia had an alliance from 1894, and in 1907 Russia and Britain reached agreements about Central Asia. These agreements gradually developed to form the Triple Entente, from 1905-07 onwards the three countries were co-operating more closely against Germany and Austria-Hungary.

When **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, was assassinated in Bosnia-Herzegovina in June 1914 (see box), the **Austro-Hungarians issued an ultimatum to Serbia** which would make Serbia an effective client-state of the Austrians. It was expected that Serbia would reject the ultimatum, providing a pretext for a war against them, but running the risk of drawing Russia in on the side of Serbia. With this in mind, Austria-Hungary sought assurances from Germany that she would come to her aid if Russia declared war in support of Serbia.

Dissatisfied with Serbia's response, Austria-Hungary declared war on 28th July which sparked a series of events culminating into the Great War. Russia announced the mobilisation of her army, which Germany viewed as a threat to the Austrians and to themselves, and thus declared war on Russia and its ally France on 1st and 3rd August, respectively.

Britain had initially hoped for a diplomatic solution to the situation; she feared that if Germany were to defeat France, Europe would be dominated by a single, militarist autocracy. Germany launched her attack on France on 4th August, invading neutral Belgium in an attempt to bypass French defences. The Germans aimed to defeat France before turning eastward to Russia.

This act of war broke the **1839 Treaty of London** which bound Britain to guard the neutrality of Belgium. Britain was nervous that a German success against Belgium or France would guarantee German domination of Europe, and thus declared war on Germany.

Assassinated

On the 28th June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was assassinated. The Archduke and his wife were shot by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the Black Hand Gang, an organisation that wanted to rid Bosnia of Austrian rule, while they were visiting Sarajevo, Bosnia. Shortly afterwards Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the chain of events that led to the First World War were set in motion.

Schlieffen plan

Germany had been preparing for war since the 1870's. Their Schlieffen-Moltke Plan took nine years to finalise and was based on the theory that if Germany went to war with Russia, France would inevitably attack Germany, producing the military nightmare of Germany fighting a war on two fronts.

The plan assumed France was weak and could be beaten quickly, and that Russia would take 6 weeks to mobilise its army, in which time if Germany knocked out France, Germany would be left fighting one enemy, Russia.

Russia issued the general mobilisation order on 31st July, but France did not attack. Germany was forced to invent a pretext to declare war on France.

Map of European Alliances, 1914

Major Battles

Battle of Mons

The Battle of Mons was the **first British battle of the First World War** and the last of four 'Battles of the Frontiers' on the Western Front between Allied and German forces.

On 22nd August 1914 the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), led by **Sir John French**, dug defensive positions near the Mons Canal as a result of British intelligence warning that the size and vicinity of the German army was not known.

Von Kluck, commander of the German First army, engaged the British in battle on 23rd August and although the BEF were heavily outnumbered, they withstood six hours of constant shelling and infantry assault.

By evening, French ordered his army to retreat after realising the size of the German army.

© IWM Q17139

First Battle of the Marne

Sir John French and the BEF retreated from Mons alongside the French Army as far as the River Marne, just outside Paris. On the 6th September 1914, **French Commander-in-Chief Joseph Joffre** ordered an attack on the advancing German forces.

The offensive managed to increase the gap between the German First and Second Armies which was exploited by the BEF and French Army, who advanced in a counter-attack against the Germans.

The attack succeeded and German forces were in full retreat by 11th September. When they reached an area near the River Aisne they dug defensive trenches to repel the attack from the Allied forces, **marking the beginning of the trench warfare that dominated much of the First World War**.

© IWM Art 2676 - Richard C. Carline, Village of Pozières, France. A battle-scarred landscape with a road running horizontally across the composition in the foreground. There are two trucks, one marked with a red cross, and four soldiers on horseback moving along the road.

© IWM Art REPRO 0006684 34 – Muirhead Bone, A drawing of Welsh soldiers

Battle of the Somme

The Battle of the Somme started on 1st July 1916 and lasted until November of the same year. The British planned to attack German trenches along a 15 mile front north of the Somme with French divisions attacking along an 8 mile front south of the Somme. **The battle started with a week-long artillery bombardment** of German lines – a total of 1.6 million shells were fired – in an attempt to destroy the German trenches. However, all did not go to plan. Many of the British shells failed to explode and German troops moved to the deep dugouts in their trenches when the bombardment began which offered them relative safety from attack. Germans waited for the shelling to end and set up machine guns ready for their counterattack. The **British suffered 60,000 casualties, of whom 20,000 died, on the first day** marking it as one of the biggest defeats the British army had ever suffered. Over the course of the next few months, the British suffered around 420,000 casualties.

© IWM Q1580 – Lieutenant Ernest Brooks. British soldiers eating hot rations in the Ancre Valley during the Battle of the Somme, October 1916.

Did You Know...?

Trenches were dug in zig-zag lines, so the blast of an artillery shell landing in them could only affect a short length of the trench.

Battle of Cambrai

The Battle of Cambrai is noted as the **first battle to use tanks en masse** combined with heavy artillery, infantry, cavalry and air power. The Allies started their coordinated attack on 20th November 1917 and proved successful at surprising the Germans. Bombs were dropped on German anti-tank guns to clear the path for the Allied tanks and ground troops, and artillery was used to cover the troops from a German counter-attack.

The initial attack gained considerable distance, however the success of the attack did not last long, for example a strategic bridge collapsed under the weight of a tank which halted the advance of cavalry into Cambrai. There was a breakdown in command which opened the Allies up to the German counter-attack resulting in the Germans recovering much of the land that was lost. There was **44,000 British casualties** by the time the battle ended on 6th December

Major Battles

Battle of Jutland

The German commander, **Admiral Reinhardt von Scheer**, hoped to lure out **Admiral Beatty's** Battlecruiser and **Admiral Jellicoe's** Grand Fleet from major British naval bases to waiting submarines and surface boats. Scheer hoped to destroy Beatty before Jellicoe arrived, however the British were warned by their codebreakers and Jellicoe ordered the Grand Fleet to put to sea early.

The Battle of Jutland started on 31st May 1916 when Beatty encountered Admiral Hipper's German battlecruisers starting an artillery duel at fifteen thousand yards. The Germans were successful in damaging HMS Lion and sank HMS Indefatigable and HMS Queen Mary. After this initial encounter, Beatty turned north and lured the Germans onto Jellicoe's Grand Fleet.

The Germans thought Jellicoe's fleet were too far north to intervene and so received a nasty surprise when they found themselves under bombardment from the Grand Fleet. Scheer ordered a retreat and after a night of intense fighting the German battleships successfully made it to harbour largely unscathed.

The Battle of Jutland was the only major encounter between the British and German fleets in the First World War. **Both sides claimed victory** however the German fleet was never again in a position to challenge the British in the North Sea.

© IWM Art Q20438 – Horace Nicholls, The Battle of Jutland 31 May 1916. A painting showing the British Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow before setting off for the Battle of Jutland.

Battle of Passchendaele

The Battle of Passchendaele, often better known as the **Third Battle of Ypres**, was launched by the Allies in the Flanders region of Belgium on 31st July 1917. The aim of the campaign was the destruction of German submarine bases on the Belgian coast, thus requiring clearance of the bases on the Belgian coast. British forces and Australian and New Zealand **(ANZAC)** forces launched a heavy artillery attack on the Germans; however the main targets of the Allied offensive remained out of reach due to the poor conditions of thick mud caused by heavy rainfall in early August.

© IWM Art 3819 – Gilbert Rogers MBE, Gassed. 'In Arduis Fidelis'. The body of a dead soldier lying on his back on a battlefield. The body rests rigidly on a thick mound of mud, the feet hanging into small rain-filled crater.

By October the Allied attackers were nearing exhaustion as German forces were reinforced by reserves released from the Eastern Front. The Germans used mustard gas to aid their defence which resulted in chemical burns.

The **Canadians were sent to relieve the ANZAC forces** early in October and take part in the push to capture Passchendaele. The eventual capture of Passchendaele village by British and Canadian forces came on 6th November and finally allowed Haig to cut off the offensive. Although the Battle of Passchendaele was claimed as a victory, it came at the cost of **245,000 British** casualties as opposed to **215,000 on the German side**.

At the Battle of Jutland Germany lost 11 ships and 2551 men, Britain lost 14 ships and 6094 men.

Did You Know...?

Battle of Passchendaele:

The area in Flanders was saturated with the heaviest rainfall for 30 years and constant artillery bombardment by the Allies had churned the clay soil and smashed the drainage systems. Shell craters filled with water producing thick mud that clogged up rifles and immobilised tanks. The swamp like conditions became so deep in many places that men and horses drowned in it.

Poetry

The poetry of the First World War has become so popular that the phrase 'war poetry' is now taken to mean not war poetry in general (there have been poems written about every war), but only the poetry of the First World War.

War poetry is as complex as the war itself and the people who fought in it. **Many of the best-known poets were killed in the war**, and never saw their poems published. Some lived on, but a number never seemed to scale the poetic heights they had reached in the war. Many people think Siegfried Sassoon's later work did not match his war poetry, and another famous survivor, Robert Graves, wrote little war poetry and became at least as well-known as a novelist as he was as poet, following the war.

Some poets such as Rupert Brooke took pride in the war, whilst others such as Wilfred Owen and Siegfried wrote bitterly against what they saw as its pointless sacrifice. In between these two extremes the war poets expressed every possible opinion. The best-known poems and poets are those who were clearly outraged by the scenes on the front lines of the battlefields.

The Soldier - *Rupert Brooke, 1887-1915*

If I should die think only this of me
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by the suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Fighting Hard - *Henry Lawson, 1867-1922*

Rolling out to fight for England,
singing songs across the sea;

Rolling north to fight for England,
and to fight for you and me.

Fighting hard for France and England,
where the storms of death are hurled;

Fighting hard for Australasia
and the honour of the World!

Fighting hard.

Fighting hard for little Tassy,
where the apple orchards grow;

(And the northern territory,
just to give the place a show),

Fighting hard for Home and Empire,
while the Commonwealth prevails—

And, in spite of all her blunders,
dying hard for New South Wales.

Dying hard.

Home Thoughts - *Unknown, 1916*

The hot, red rocks of Aden
Stand from their burnished sea;
The bitter sands of Aden
Lie shimmering in their lee.

We have no joy of battle,
No honour here is won;
Our little fights are nameless,
With Turk and sand and sun

East and west the greater wars
Swirl wildly up and down;
Forgotten here and sadly
We hold the Port and Town.

The great round trees of England
Swell nobly from the grass,
The dark green fields of England,
Through which the red cows pass.

The wild-flowered lanes of England
Hurt us with vain desire;
The little wayside cottage,
The clanging blacksmith's fire.

The salt, dry sands of Aden,
The bitter, sun-cursed shore;
Forget us not in England,
We cannot serve you more.

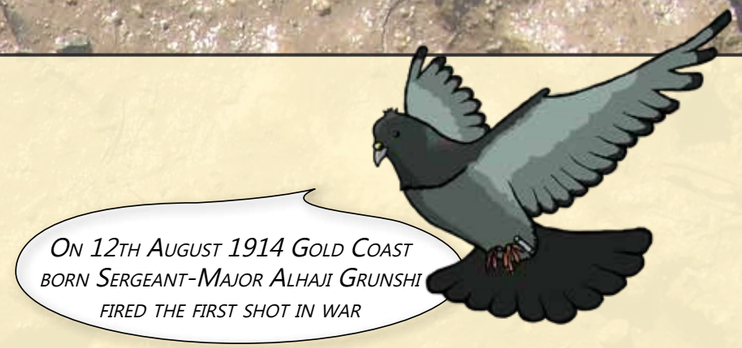
Dead Man's Dump - *Isaac Rosenberg, 1890-1918*

They lie there huddled, friend and foeman,
Man born of man, and born of woman;
And shells go crying over them,
From night till night and now …

Burnt black by strange decay
Their sinister faces lie,
The lid over each eye;
The grass and coloured clay
More motion have than they…

Fighting on Multiple Fronts

The Western Front is the best-known battlefield of the First World War, but fighting took place across the globe.



Life in the Trenches

The Western Front was plagued by trench warfare and conditions were much worse at the beginning of the war. The Allied trenches of 1914 were just deep furrows which provided minimal cover from enemy fire. This was because the generals believed that trench warfare was only temporary as the 'normal' war of movement would resume in the spring.

© IWM Art Q7842 – Lieutenant John Warwick Brooke. The British front line west of Trescault before the Battle of Cambrai, 10th December 1917.

A condition known as **Trench Foot** caused by the cold, wet and unsanitary conditions could cause fungal infections and feet were amputated in severe cases. Trenches were often smelly and unsanitary, this was because dead bodies were buried nearby, and there was a huge infestation of rats and lice spreading disease and infection.

The Christmas Truce

© IWM Art Q11745 - British and German soldiers fraternising at Ploegsteert, Belgium, on Christmas Day 1914, front of 11th Brigade, 4th Division.

In the autumn of 1914, soldiers fighting in the trenches on the Western Front held a truce at which time they may have played football with the enemy.

The Christmas Truce was an unplanned and unexpected event in which soldiers set aside their weapons and **met in 'No Man's Land' to sing Christmas carols and exchange souvenirs**. There is plenty of evidence that the truce did take place; however there is debate about whether or not anyone really played football in No Man's Land.

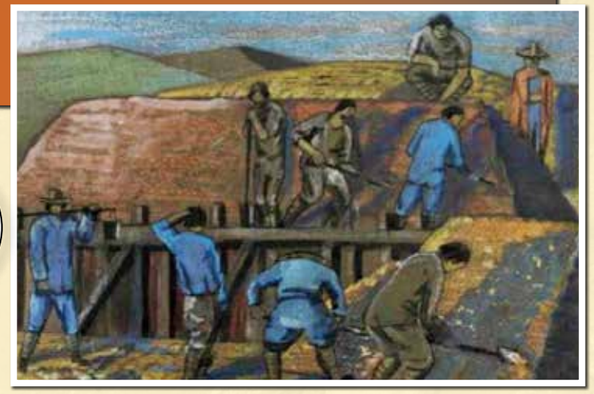
The Siege of Tsingtao

Germany built a port and naval base at Tsingtao, a city in eastern Shandong Province on the east coast of China, and garrisoned by approximately 4,000 troops. Japan was allied with Britain from 1902 and declared war on Germany on 23rd August 1914 and assisted the British with the capture of Tsingtao. This campaign violated Chinese neutrality and was the only battle to be fought in the Far East during the First World War. The Allies successfully captured the base on 7th November.

Chinese Labour Corps

China proclaimed neutrality from the outset of war, however the ruling powers decreed China had to get involved in the war in 1916. **China sent 140,000 labourers to assist the British and French** on the front lines in Europe, 100,000 of which served in Flanders, Belgium. Chinese volunteers were paid up to four times more than a labourer back in China, and their work included digging trenches, working in factories and carrying ammunition.

China later declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary in 1917 and the Chinese Labour Corps served under British officers. The war claimed many Chinese lives and many of the victims are buried in cemeteries dotted across the Flemish landscape.



© IWM Art 1151 – Paul Nash, Chinese Working in a Quarry.

Did You Know...?

Trenches were never truly developed along the Eastern Front (Russia) as fighting was stretched along a longer front line. This enabled more mobility than was experienced on the Western Front

Animals

Despite the advancement in weaponry during the First World War, **animals were heavily relied upon by all sides both physically and psychologically**. They took on a multitude of roles such as transport and communications. Horses and dogs were considered so essential on the battlefield that g**as masks were made for them**.

© IWM Q 29559 - A British war dog wears a gas mask as it is held by its handler at the British Army kennels near Etaples, the rows of kennels can be clearly seen in the background

Dogs

Dogs were some of the most trusted workers during the war and took on a variety of roles depending on their size, intelligence and training. Sadly, thousands of dogs were lost to disease, starvation, exhaustion and enemy attack.

Sentry dogs: These were **typically Dobermans** and would stay with one owner to act as a guard dog. They were trained to give a warning signal such as a growl or snarl to indicate when there was an unknown presence in the area.

Scout dogs: These were highly trained in avoiding detection. They would accompany soldiers on foot patrol and **could detect enemy scent up to 1000 yards away**. To avoid drawing attention to the squad, a scout dog would stiffen, raise its hackles and point its tail.

Messenger dogs: These dogs helped to get messages to the front line from one base to another. Dogs were **able to travel over any terrain a lot faster than humans** and presented less of a target to a sniper.

A Man's Best Friend

Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Hautenville Richardson began training dogs for military purposes in 1900 after learning of a German purchasing large quantities of collie dogs for the German Army on behalf of his government. Richardson bought land for farming at Carnoustie on the east coast of Scotland with his wife Blanche Bannon where they pursued their mutual interest in canine training. Officers at the nearby Barry Buddon army camp took an interest in their work and allowed Richardson to bring his dogs in to experiment during the training of soldiers. Richardson and Blanche were eventually asked by The War Office to set up the first British War Dog School at Shoeburyness, Essex.

© IWM Art 1439 – James McBey, The Long Patrol: The Wadi. An Imperial Camel Corps patrol have halted in a wadi, a dried out riverbed, in the desert.

Did You Know...?

The Imperial Camel Corps Brigade was a camel-mounted infantry brigade that served in the Middle East for the Allies. The unit included one battalion each from Great Britain and New Zealand, and two from Australia.

Pigeons

Approximately **100,000 pigeons were used as messengers during the war**, they always flew home when released so the troops had to ensure that there were nests placed where they needed messages sent to. Pigeons were strapped into corsets and dropped by parachute at arranged 'drop zones' for secret agents working behind enemy lines.

Animals

Horses

At the start of the war horses were mostly used by the cavalry – soldiers who fought on horseback using swords and guns. However, due to the nature of trench warfare on the Western Front and the development of machine guns, cavalry charges could no longer be used, so horses were used for transportation instead. As the war was initially presumed to be 'over by Christmas', the Army Medical Services did not initially invest in motorised ambulances, but used horse power to take the wounded to first aid stations. The **horses suffered almost as much as the casualties** during the long and difficult journeys over shell-cratered terrain.

In 1914 the British Army owned 25,000 horses but this was not considered enough, so thousands more were recruited from rural Britain and purchased from countries around the world, such as the United States, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Spain, Portugal and Argentina. While the Allies were able to import horses, the **Central Powers could only replace their losses** by conquest, and requisitioned many from Belgium, France and Ukraine.

It is estimated that around **eight million horses from all sides died during the war**.

© IWM Art 2922 – Edwin Noble, A Horse Ambulance Pulling a Sick Horse out of a Field. Two strong horses pulling a deep cart over the brow of a hill. The bony frame of an ill horse can be seen standing in the cart. Their hooves send up clouds of dust that cover the soldier who walks alongside.

Blue Cross Fund for Horses

Although mechanised ambulances eventually replaced horses, horses continued to be used for all other work. Lady Smith-Dorrien, wife of General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, became President of the Blue Cross Fund for Horses which provided veterinary surgeons and hospitals for wounded horses. One fund-raising initiative was the publication of a *Book of Poems for the Blue Cross Fund*. Several poems are by children, the youngest contributor was Inez Quilter, aged 11. She lived in Suffolk and would have seen the Army requisitioning the cart horses which were previously used for farm work.

An Answer to Cavalry Charger - *Helena Robinson*

We've read your appeal, faithful charger
There is truth in the story you tell,
So we're sending you on a subscription.
And hope others will do so as well.
You deserve all our help and pity.
For you have helped our soldiers so true,
To fight for their dear Country's honour,
And you have shared in their sorrows, too.

You've borne the brunt of battle bravely.
Now you are badly wounded and torn.
You want our kind care and attention.
And need rest for your body so worn.
You shall have it, true-hearted charger.
We will tell of your right noble fall.
Then others will help to restore you,
And respond to your sad-hearted call.

You are but a cavalry charger,
Yet the God that made us, made you,
So we'll pray for you and your comrades. And we know God will answer us, too.
We'll uphold the work of the ''Blue Cross."
We will do just as much as we can.
To help you, dear cavalry charger.
For we know you're the true friend of man.

Sall - *Inez Quilter*

I'm none of yer London gentry,
Non o' yer Hyde Park swells,
But I'm only a farmers plough horse
And I'se born among hills and fells.
Yer mus'n't expect no graces
Fer yer won't get 'em from me,
I'se made as nature intended
An' I'm jus' plain Sall, d'ye see.

You've not seen me in the Row yet
An; yer won't, if yer try so 'ard,
I'm not a show 'orse yer forget
But I'm Sall, plain Sall, and Sall goes 'ard!

Did You Know...?

Elephants filled in for absent horses in rural and industrial Britain, and pulled heavy guns on the front lines.

Germany

Kaiser Wilhelm II, King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany, was determined to expand Germany's power and when the First World War broke out most Germans were in support. However, as the war continued discontent increased on the German Home Front.

Conscription in Germany

The First World War was fought mainly by large conscript armies. The concept of the 'citizen soldier' was established during the French Revolution and was based on the idea that all male citizens had a duty to bear arms in defence of their nation. Britain did not enforce conscription until January 1916 (see page 64), but **in Germany all able bodied men aged 17-45 were liable for military service**. By 1914 the Germans had a well-established and organised system of peacetime conscription.

At the age of 20 men would undertake two or three years of peacetime training in the active army. At the end of their training they were allowed to go back into civilian life but could be called back to the army at any time up to the age of 45.

Conscription meant that by August 1914, **the German army needed just 12 days to expand from 800,000 to 3,500,000 soldiers**. In Germany, under 60% of military-aged men served. In 1916 Germany passed the auxiliary service law, which made all men aged between 17 and 60 liable for service in some form, including war production.

Did You Know...?

Many children were unable to get enough vitamin D in their diet which led to widespread bone deformations amongst the young

British Naval Blockade

One tactic that Britain used to help win the war was to starve Germany. They used their naval forces to cut off all supplies coming from outside Germany in an attempt to starve the nation and force it to surrender. The Royal Navy blocked the entrance to the English Channel and the North Sea, and with the help of the French and Italians mounted another blockade in the Adriatic Sea, which affected Germany's ally, Austria-Hungary. The blockade, beginning at the start of the war and ending when Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919, worked well. The Naval forces successfully limited the supplies that reached Germany and its allies.

The consequences of the blockade were compounded by Germany's failure to manage its own food production effectively or to distribute food in ways that were equitable. Bad harvests in 1916 resulted in what the Germans called 'the turnip winter'. The country began to suffer from malnourishment, resulting in riots and starvation in some areas. The pattern was repeated in the winter of 1917-18. **After the war Germany claimed that about a million people had died because of the blockade**, whether actually starving to death or contracting diseases such as tuberculosis and pneumonia.

German War Artists

The work of German artists Kathe Kollwitz and Otto Dix reflected candidly on the world they saw falling apart around them. They both viewed their art as therapeutic for themselves and their society. They depicted images of war, grief, and devastation, including starving children and soldiers with facial injuries.

Kathe Kollwitz, The Survivors, 1923

Kathe Kollwitz (1867-1945)

Kathe Kollwitz was a German artist and sculptor, as well as being an advocate for victims of social injustice, war, and inhumanity. In 1914 her youngest son died in battle, hugely affecting her. **The way she felt best able to grieve was through her art**, and she produced many pieces on the theme of a mother protecting her children. In 1924 Kathe wanted to produce a memorial dedicated to her late son. She made two sculptures, The Mother and The Father, which were placed in a cemetery near Ypres where her son was buried.

Otto Dix (1891-1969)

Otto Dix volunteered to join the military service at the beginning of the war. **He survived but the horrors of the war stayed with him**. His paintings, influenced by expressionism and futurism, often reflected this. As a machine gunner at the front Otto experienced many of the gruesome parts of the First World War, which inspired his paintings. Due to Otto's graphic and disturbing depiction of the war and his 'mocking' of the German idea of heroism, he was dismissed from his teaching post at the Dresden Academy in 1933.

© DACS 2016 – Otto Dix, Storm Troopers Advancing Under Gas, 1924

Scotland

Communities from every corner of Scotland were affected by the First World War as **more Scots per head enlisted and died in combat than in any other nation of the United Kingdom**. The 100,000 war dead were known as 'the Lost Generation'. For many young Scots the opportunity to sign up with their friends as part of a Pals Battalion encouraged them to go to war. Scottish troops often led from the front and are noted for their action at the Battle of Arras, Cambrai and the Somme and particularly for their action at the Battle of Loos in autumn 1915.

Battle of Loos

The Battle of Loos began on 25th September 1915, following a four day artillery bombardment in which 250,000 shells were fired, and was referred to at the time as 'The Big Push'. Sir Douglas Haig led the offensive despite serious misgivings regarding the shortage of shells, lack of cover, and fatigued state of his troops.

Battalions from every Scottish regiment took part in the battle, around 30,000 Scots in total.

Haig planned to use poisonous gas on the enemy to provide the British troops with cover from the German machine gunners, however the plan backfired as the direction of the wind had changed blowing the gas back on their own men. **This was the first time the British Army used poison gas as a weapon**. Although in many parts of the battlefield the Germans had been pushed back, the British attack had lost the element of surprise so the German machine gunners mowed down the men in their thousands. The battle proved indecisive and of the 21,000 killed, over 7,000 were Scottish soldiers.

© IWM Art REPRO 000684 42 - Muirhead Bone, Waiting for the Wounded

The Rent Strikes

Thousands of workers migrated to munitions districts in areas of Glasgow in the early months of the First World War which meant the demand for housing rocketed. Many landlords in the area saw this as an opportune moment to increase rents in these districts. This was unpopular throughout the munitions districts and so in February 1915 local women formed the Glasgow Women's Housing Association to resist rent rises. The first rent strike took place in spring of 1915 with around 25,000 tenants joining in. With support from Lloyd-George, the government introduced the Rent Restriction Act which froze rent at 1914 levels.

Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service

The Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Service (SWH) were founded in 1914 in response to female medical professionals having their services to the British Government rejected on the basis that the battlefield was 'no place for women'. With an acceptance from the French Government and financial support from the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and the American Red Cross the SWH opened its first Auxiliary hospital in Royaumont, France, under the French Red Cross.

Throughout the First World War the SWH arranged 14 medical units to serve in Corsica, France, Malta, Romania, Russia, Salonika (Thessaloniki) and Serbia.

© IWM ART 3090 – Norah Neilson Gray, The Scottish Women's Hospital: In The Cloister of the Abbaye at Royaumont. Dr Frances Ivens inspecting a French patient

Did You Know...?

By the end of 1915, the British were establishing special sniper schools. Some of the first instructors were ghillies, gamekeepers from the Scottish estates. They taught marksmanship, stealth and camouflage

Craiglockhart

Craiglockhart in Edinburgh was used as a specialist hospital to treat traumatised soldiers suffering from 'shell shock'. Several treatment methods were used to treat the patients, such as 'ergotherapy' and 'talking therapy'. Ergotherapy was an approach taken by Dr Arthur Brock which involved taking part in meaningful activities such as working in schools, and 'talking therapy' was advocated by Dr William Rivers who believed the best cure for psychological trauma was self-expression and social activity.

A whole cohort of well-known war poets passed through Craiglockhart including Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, and Charles Hamilton Sorley. Dr Brock encouraged his patients to write poems for The Hydra magazine, the hospital's in-house publication. Around 80,000 soldiers were treated at Craiglockhart by the time the war ended in November 1918.

Crown Dependencies

The Crown Dependencies are the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Jersey and Guernsey form part of the Channel Islands, an archipelago in the English Channel, and the Isle of Man rests in the Irish Sea to the West of mainland Britain. The isolated nature of these islands did not mean that they avoided the costs of war.

Although they were self-governing, both Jersey and Guernsey sent troops to the front and maintained Royal Militias which provided basic military training for young men. On the Channel Islands, 6,292 men from the Bailiwick of Jersey and 6,168 from the Bailiwick of Guernsey served during the First World War. Of those 12,460 men, 2,298 gave their lives.

Jersey

General Kitchener's famous recruitment drive for Pals Battalions grabbed the attention of Jersey and so the Island set about forming its own unit. The Jersey Overseas Contingent of the Royal Jersey Militia, consisting of 230 men, went into active service with the 7th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles in March 1915. The Jerseymen spent much of 1915 training alongside the Irish volunteers and left for France in December of that same year.

Jerseymen fought at the Battle of Loos and the Somme in 1916, and at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917. Having suffered severe casualties at Passchendaele, the remnants of the force fought at Cambrai which was the final action undertaken as part of the Royal Irish Rifles. The Jersey Company were part of the offensive that drove the enemy from the gates of Ypres at the end of September 1918.

The last members of the Jersey Company returned home in 1919. **One in four Jersey men who served during the war had died, while a similar number suffered serious wounds** Jersey also housed prisoners of war - the site at Blanches Banques was home to 1,500 inmates and remained open until the autumn of 1919.

Guernsey

The first contingent of more than 240 men left the island in March 1915 and joined the 6th Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment in 47 Brigade at Fermoy, Ireland.

By April 1916, men from Guernsey were manning parts of the trenches at Loos in France and were subject to a German attack which included the use of chlorine and tear-gas. The Service Battalion of the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry was formed at the end of 1916 as a fighting force in its own right and trained in Guernsey and Kent. The Battalion saw action at the Battle of Passchendaele and Cambrai, and later was tasked with defending the small town of Les Rues Vertes against a German counter-attack for two days where the unit suffered heavy casualties with around 40 percent of the regiment either killed or severely injured.

Guernsey also suffered a serious economic downturn due to a loss of tourism during the war years. A lack of manpower to support farming and the wider agricultural sector also severely impacted the island.

The Isle of Man

The Isle of Man's booming tourist industry was severely affected by the First World War as many were nervous about the prospect of crossing the Irish Sea and coming into contact with German U-boats. This was exacerbated when the Royal Navy pressed into service 11 of the Isle of Man's Steam Packet Company's 15-strong fleet which left the Isle increasingly isolated from the outside world.

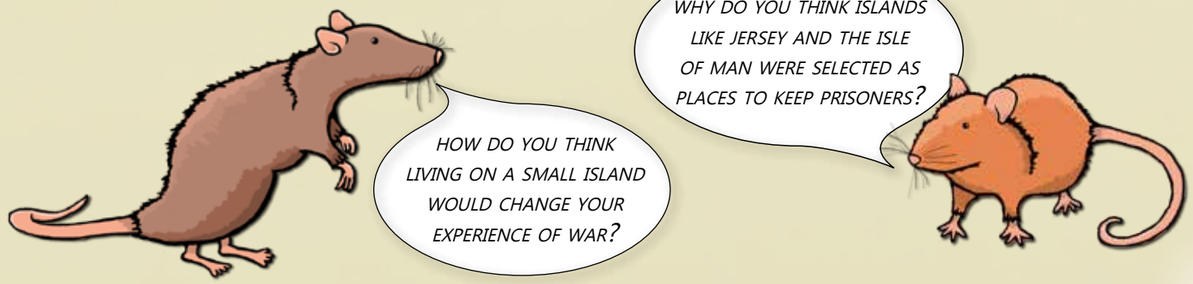
Under the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA – see page 58) the British Government was able to move those it viewed as a threat to British interests to internment camps where large groups of people were confined without trial. These 'enemy aliens', as they were called, were usually citizens of hostile powers, namely those from Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The Isle of Man was selected to house the 'enemy aliens' in two internment camps, one at Douglas – a requisitioned holiday camp - and the other a purpose-built camp at Knockaloe. The camp at Douglas held around 5,000 but it was Knockaloe that was the largest such camp in the British Isles; its population peaked in July 1916 at 22,769.

Records show that 8,261 men from the Isle of Man (Manx) enlisted in the armed forces, which translated into 82.3% of Manx men of military age joining the war effort. Of the more than 8,000 men who served, 269 of them received honours, 1,165 died and 987 were wounded.

© IWM Art 17053 – George Kenner, Overnight Snowfall Melting Into Slush. A scene in a camp. Prisoners stand around in the melting snow in a small yard between some wooden huts. In the background, on the other side of a wire fence, is a row of huts stretching towards some low hills.

© IWM Q 7336 - Inspection of the Regiment after the consecration the King's Colours of the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry at Montreuil, 1919



Wales

David Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, hoped that Wales would raise its own corps, as Canada and the ANZACs did. Recruiting in Wales did not go well enough to warrant such expectations, although it has been calculated that about 100,000 Welsh people had joined the army before May 1915. By the end of the War 272,000 Welshmen had fought and nearly 35,000 of them were killed. In South Wales, many men were employed as coal miners, undertaking work of vital national importance. Coal was used for the manufacture of steel for armaments and for the propulsion of both warships and merchantmen.

The Battle of Mametz Wood

The 38th or Welsh Division (also known as Lloyd George's Division) aimed to capture Mametz Wood as part of the Battle of the Somme. Mametz Wood was the largest wood on the whole of the Somme battlefront. The 38th Division was made up of soldiers from many different Welsh regiments, such as the Royal Welch Fusiliers and the Welsh Regiment.

The Battle of Mametz Wood began 7th July 1916. The battle was expected to last for a matter of hours but in fact went on for five days and the division suffered around 4,000 casualties. **The Welsh Division achieved their aim of driving back the Germans to their second line of defence by the end of the five days.**

Home Front – Working Women

The British Women's Institute (WI) was an organisation set up in response to the First World War, teaching women new skills in order to play an important part in their community. **The very first British branch was established in Wales, in Llanfairpwll, in 1915**. Although Welsh women played a vital part in cities and rural areas during the war, by the end they were expected to return to their traditional role as housewives. As a result, the numbers of working women in Wales fell. It was not until the Second World War when these women could re-assert themselves again.

© IWM (Art.IWM ART 3070) – Augustus John, Fraternity. A scene with three soldiers standing amongst the rubble of a bombed building. Two of the soldiers, the one on the left looking much younger than the others, tilt their heads close together; they are sharing a light for their cigarettes.

Hedd Wyn

Ellis Evans enrolled at Trawsfynydd School in 1892 and is thought to have left around 1899 to work as a shepherd on the family farm. Ellis received a rich cultural education through the local Ebenezer Chapel and Sunday school. His father was a 'bardd gwlad' (literally 'a country poet', this Welsh term refers to a poet who celebrates his community) and taught him to compose poetry. Ellis won his first prize for poetry at the age of 11.

In 1910, Ellis received the bardic name Hedd Wyn ('Blessed Peace') at a ceremony in Blanenau Ffestiniog. He competed in many local Eisteddfodau (which are competitive festivals of music and poetry held throughout Wales). The tone of Ellis's work, which had originally been influenced by nature and religion, changed after 1914 as he began to write about the horror of the war and his friends who had died on the battlefields.

When the government introduced conscription in 1916 Ellis enlisted with the 15th Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers and trained at Litherland. **He set sail for France in June 1917 and was killed on the first day of the 3rd battle of Ypres, 31 July 1917**. In September of the same year Ellis was posthumously awarded the bard's chair at the National Eisteddfod of Wales. The chair was draped in black cloth and has been known ever since as 'Y Gadair Ddu' (The Black Chair').

Rhyfel – *Hedd Wyn*

Gwae fi fy myw mewn oes mor ddreng,
A Duw ar drai ar orwel pell ;
O'i ôl mae dyn, yn deyrn a gwreng,
Yn codi ei awdurdod hell.

Pan deimlodd fyned ymaith Dduw
Cyfododd gledd i ladd ei frawd;
Mae sŵn yr ymladd ar ein clyw,
A'i gysgod ar fythynod tlawd.

Mae 'r hen delynau genid gynt
Yng nghrog ar gangau 'r helyg draw,
A gwaedd y bechgyn lond y gwynt,
A'u gwaed yn gymysg efo'r glaw.

War – *Hedd Wyn*

Why must I live in this grim age,
When, to a far horizon, God
Has ebbed away, and man, with rage,
Now wields the sceptre and the rod?

Man raised his sword, once God had gone,
To slay his brother, and the roar
Of battlefields now casts upon
Our homes the shadow of the war.

The harps to which we sang are hung
On willow boughs, and their refrain
Drowned by the anguish of the young
Whose blood is mingled with the rain.

Translated by Alan Llywd

The British Empire

When Britain declared war on Germany it did so on behalf of the British Empire. There were four self-governing Dominions (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa) and close to 80 British colonies that fought in the First World War. Many soldiers were from undivided India (comprising India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), and the Indian Army also recruited from the independent kingdom of Nepal. Forces were raised in Sri Lanka and various parts of Africa. There was also a sizeable army from the Caribbean recruited into the British West Indies Regiment, which fought on the Western Front and in the Middle East.

Gallipoli

With troops mired in a seemingly endless stalemate on the Western Front, the British Cabinet decided to attack Germany's ally, the Ottoman Empire (today's Turkey) through the Dardanelles. The Gallipoli peninsula was chosen for a three-pronged attack in April 1915, combining British, French, Indian and ANZAC forces.

The attack was initially successful, but Allied forces were **stopped by an Ottoman defence that was masterminded by a German officer called Otto Liman von Sanders**, and thus struggled to push beyond the beachhead. The ANZAC forces forged a reputation for themselves in fierce fighting north of the main beach-heads. The allies fought on for nearly a year, and were eventually evacuated with more skill than had been demonstrated during their landing.

© IWM (Q 70561) – Map of Eastern part of the Mediterranean region.

The West Indies

In spite of severe hardships following the proclamation of war, **the West Indies donated sugar, rum, oil, lime, cotton, rice, clothing, logwood, and nine aeroplanes to the British**. A total of 11 ambulances and adequate funds for their maintenance were also donated, and approximately two million pounds sterling was given to the British Government and charities.

Approximately 16,000 soldiers from the British West Indies Regiment saw action in France, Palestine, Egypt and Italy and over 1,000 other West Indians joined different regiments in the British Army. The British West Indies Regiment were all volunteers. **The Regiment received many battle honours**. The men won 81 medals for bravery, and 49 were mentioned in dispatches. Around 1,500 soldiers from the British West Indies Regiment died during the war.

Lawrence of Arabia

Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, joined the British Army in late 1914 and was stationed in Cairo as an intelligence officer.

In 1916 Lawrence was sent to support the Arab Revolt. Under the command of General Sir Edmund Allenby, he and the Arab fighters rode across hundreds of miles to attack the Ottoman Army where it least expected it, Aqaba, a port in the Red Sea. Rather than attacking from the coast, the direction from which the Turks could anticipate danger because of the British Navy, Lawrence decided to emerge from the Nefudh Desert. As General Allenby's forces advanced into Palestine in 1917-18, **Lawrence and the Arabs severed the enemy's lines of communication from Turkey and destroyed the railway lines**.

© IWM (Art.IWM ART 2473) James McBey, Lieutenant-Colonel T E Lawrence, CB, DSO, 1918.

After this success, the British government was keen to receive more help from the Arab Army under Lawrence's leadership. By the beginning of October 1918 both the British and the Arab armies were in Damascus, and within a month Ottoman Turkey had surrendered.

Mesopotamia

After the Ottoman Empire entered into the war the British felt their interests in the Middle East were threatened. They wanted to protect their oil reserves and put pressure on the Ottomans, and so they deployed a force made up overwhelmingly of Indian troops to Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq). **The British and Indian troops arrived there in November and were able to achieve a few early successes against the Turkish army**, capturing the main port of Basra. These successes gave the Allies the confidence to push on to Baghdad. However, the Ottomans checked General Townshend's Anglo-Indian force at Ctesiphon, an ancient city to the south of Baghdad, and Townshend was forced to retreat to Kut. The Turks besieged the town, and efforts to relieve the garrison failed. In April 1916 Townshend surrendered. Britain made better preparations and took Baghdad in 1917. By the war's end they had reached as far north as Mosul.

Mesopotamia © IWM (Art.IWM ART 2680)

The British Empire

When war broke out between the Entente and the Central Powers, their colonies were immediately drawn in. 55,000 men from Africa fought for the British during the First World War and hundreds of thousands of others carried out the vital roles of carriers or auxiliaries. It is estimated that 10,000 Africans were killed and many more died of disease and malnutrition. African troops were awarded 166 decorations for bravery.

Did You Know...?

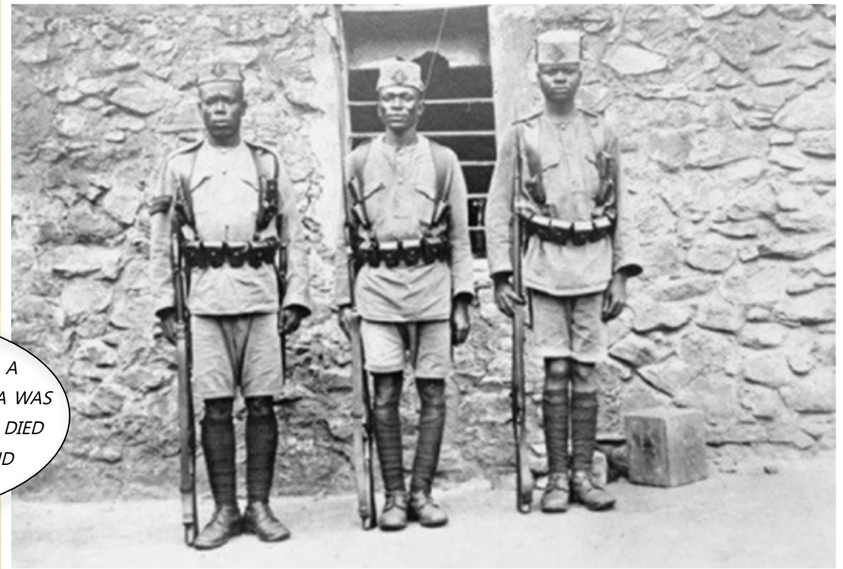
Around 3,000 South Africans joined the Royal Flying Corps

East Africa Campaign

The East Africa Campaign was one theatre of conflict where the Germans had not already surrendered by the time of the Armistice. The campaign began on 8th August 1914 and ended on 25th November 1918.

The participants of the war in East Africa included Indians, South Africans, Germans and Belgians as well as Africans from across the continent. There were at least 177 "micro-nations" also involved. **The fighting took place over 750,000 square miles and seven territories were directly involved in the fighting**. They were Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo), British East Africa (Kenya), German East Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Nyasaland (Malawi), Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) and Uganda.

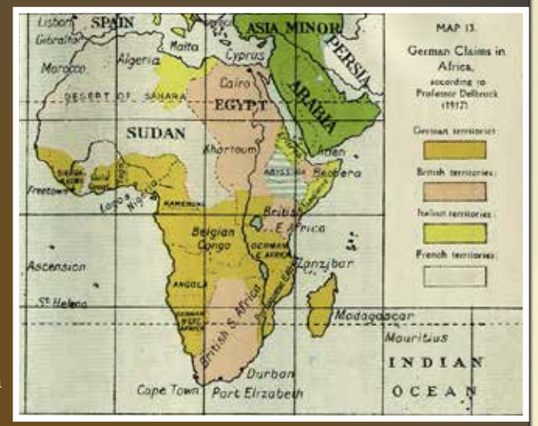
One important naval battle in East Africa was the sinking of the Königsberg ship in the Rufiji Delta. The British were determined to destroy the ship because it was such a threat to their sea lanes in the Indian Ocean, but it was a struggle even to locate it. When it was finally found, it was a slow battle but **the British succeeded and the Königsberg ship was abandoned**.



© IWM Art Q34470 - Men of the 1/4th King's African Rifles at Njombe, German East Africa. Formed at the beginning of the century from tribesmen in British East Africa (now Kenya) and Uganda, the KAR bore the brunt of most of the fighting during the campaign.

West Africa

British West Africa included Nigeria, Ghana (then called the Gold Coast), Sierra Leone and the Gambia. The soldiers of the British colonies were divided into two military formations, the West African Regiment in Sierra Leone and the West African Frontier Force (WAFF). Both of these were led by British officers. **At the beginning of the war the WAFF had over 8,000 soldiers of which less than 400 were British and over 5,000 of them were Nigerian**.



German Claims in Africa according to Professor Delbruck, 1917

The first battle between Germany and Britain took place in Togo, a German colony. Early on in the war the British decided to destroy all wireless stations in German colonies, starting with Kamina, Togo, which had enough power to relay communications between all Germany's African colonies and its cruisers in adjacent waters to Berlin. The German force lacked local support and included just 300 German and 1,200 native troops. After capturing Lomé on 7th August 1914, the British and French advanced towards Kamina. **By 25th August the Germans had surrendered and set fire to Kamina rather than letting it fall into the hands of the Allies**.

Southern Africa

Troops were stationed in the Union of South Africa prior to the start of the First World War. At the beginning of the war the British Government decided to withdraw their troops from South Africa because they were needed in European combat zones.

Over 146,000 men served in South African units during the war. The most significant military campaign in Southern Africa was the South African invasion of German South-West Africa (today's Namibia). South African units also fought on the Western Front and in the East Africa Campaign.

In 1915, the lack of water in the South West caused major problems for the South African forces. For instance, after the South Africans took control of the port of Swakopmund they began to advance on Windhoek, and arrived to find that the Germans had poisoned the wells. **German forces were keen to avoid large scale battles in order to prolong the campaign**.

The South African fighting contingent consisted of mainly white soldiers, with black auxiliaries acting in a supporting role. The South African occupation of South West Africa produced the first Allied armistice of the war.

Australia

In 1901, the six separate colonies of Australia united to form the Commonwealth of Australia. Australia was a Dominion of the British Empire whose population was made up of indigenous Aboriginals and others from European, mainly British, lineage. It has been reported that the outbreak of war was met with great enthusiasm from the Australians, with their Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, declaring that Australia would support Britain to 'the last man and the last shilling'. Despite several unsuccessful attempts to introduce conscription through referendums held in 1916 and 1917, enlistment remained strictly voluntary throughout the war - **over 400,000 Australian men enlisted**.

ANZAC

The Australians saw action early on in the war with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force taking possession of German New Guinea on 17th September 1914 and the neighbouring islands of the Bismarck Archipelago (Islands Region of Papua New Guinea) in October 1914. The Australians' most famous engagement was during the failed invasion of Gallipoli in 1915 (see page 30) – this campaign was considered the 'birth of a nation' for both Australia and New Zealand. **The Gallipoli campaign included 50,000 Australians and 9,000 New Zealanders**, who suffered around 8,700 and 2,700 casualties, respectively.

The day of the invasion, 25th April, was officially named ANZAC day in 1916 and was marked by a variety of ceremonies and services including a commemorative march through London involving Australian and New Zealand troops. ANZAC day is commemorated annually around the world with a dawn service and has become the focal point for how we remember Australia and New Zealand during the First World War.

© IWM Art 4279 – Herbert Hiller, The Battle of the Landings – ANZAC – Night, 25th April 1915. Crew members of HMS Manica stand on the deck of the ship trying to view developments on the shore at Anzac Cove on the western side of the Gallipoli peninsula.

This is an Australian adaptation of the soldier-song **'Take Me Back to Dear Old Blighty'**

Take me back to dear old Aussie,
Put me on the boat for Woolloomooloo.
Take me over there, drop me anywhere,
Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, for I don't care.
I just want to see my best girl,
Cuddling up again we soon will be;
O Blighty is a failure, take me back to Australia,
Aussie is the place for me.

Multiple Fronts

Australian forces fought all over the world including at sea with the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and in the air with the Australian Flying Corps; following the Gallipoli campaign they fought campaigns on the Western Front and in the Middle East. The Australians fought in many of the campaigns along the Western Front including Fromelles, the Somme and Passchendaele. They suffered many casualties on the Western Front, particularly at the Battle of Fromelles on 19-20th July 1916 where the Australians suffered 5,500 casualties overnight on what was described as the worst day ever in Australian history. In the Middle East the Australians fought a mobile war unlike their counterparts on the Western Front, and had to endure extreme heat, harsh terrain and water shortages. The Australian forces participated in the Allied reconquest of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula in 1916, the advancement into Palestine to capture Gaza and Jerusalem in 1917, and the occupation of Lebanon and Syria in 1918 resulting in Turkey suing for peace on 30th October 1918.

Australian Army Nursing Service

The Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) was formed in 1903 as part of the Australian Army Medical Corps. It was a reserve unit and during the First World War more than 2,000 of its members served overseas alongside Australian nurses working with other organisations. Australian tolerance for high temperatures made them particularly well suited for climates in Greece (where the wounded from Gallipoli were treated), Egypt and India. The nurses were posted to the 1st Australian General Hospital (1AGH), established in the grand Heliopolis Palace Hotel in Cairo, or to 2AGH in Mena House, a former royal hunting lodge. There was a rapid influx of patients from Gallipoli in April 1915 which meant these two hospitals in Egypt quickly became overcrowded. 1AGH took over an amusement park, turning the ticket office into an operating theatre and the skating rink, scenic railway, and skeleton house into wards. Within three months it was operating as a 1,500-bed hospital.

The Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was formed on 15th August 1914 as a new overseas force. It initially included one infantry division and one light horse brigade.

© IWM Q 659 - Troops of the 1st Australian Division at dinner; Fleurbaix, May 1916.

India

India was the 'jewel in the crown' of the British Empire and by November 1918 had contributed over a million personnel*, 170,000 animals (including horses, camels and mules) and 3,700,000 tons of supplies and stores (including military hardware, cotton and grains). India also made a substantial financial contribution and by 1918-1919 its total net military expenditure amounted to 121.5 million pounds.

Active Service

Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus all fought during the war and saw active service as infantrymen, cavalrymen and in support roles in a variety of theatres, including the Western Front, Mesopotamia (see page 31), Gallipoli and East Africa. Indian troops made up half the attacking force at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in March 1915 and took heavy losses at the Battle of Loos in September of the same year.

© IWM Art 2928 – James McBey, The Wadi Ali: one of the three passes by which access to the Judaean Plateau is possible. A large mass of British and Indian Army troops move across a flat plain leading to a narrow mountain pass. On the left an artillery gun is pulled by a tractor, with a train of camels on the right.

© Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove.
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Douglas Fox Pitt. Shows the Dome during its use as a Military Hospital, 1915.

Writing Home

The British Army had a team of censors that monitored letters being sent home but the soldiers quickly worked this out and resorted to coded language. Most codes were deciphered fairly easily however some more subtle ones would have eluded the censors. The chief censor produced a weekly report commenting on the contents of the letters. The Indian Army recruited overwhelmingly in rural parts of the country so many of the soldiers were illiterate. Indian soldiers would have asked scribes to write their letters and read the ones they received.

*Records of the number of Indian personnel involved range between 1-1.5 million

Sarojini Naidu - *1879—1949*

Sarojini Naidu was a distinguished poet and spent much of her life campaigning for Indian independence. She was known as 'the Nightingale of India' and became the first Indian woman president of the National Congress. The Gift of India reflects Sarojini's love for her country and reminds us of the considerable sacrifice made by Indians during the First World War.

The Gift of India – *Sarojini Naidu*

Is there ought you need that my hands withhold,
Rich gifts of raiment or grain or gold?
Lo! I have flung to the East and the West
Priceless treasures torn from my breast,
And yielded the sons of my stricken womb
To the drum-beats of the duty, the sabers of doom.
Gathered like pearls in their alien graves
Silent they sleep by the Persian waves,
Scattered like shells on Egyptian sands,
They lie with pale brows and brave, broken hands,
they are strewn like blossoms mown down by chance
On the blood-brown meadows of Flanders and France
Can ye measure the grief of the tears I weep
Or compass the woe of the watch I keep
Or the pride that thrills thro' my heart's despai
And the hope that comforts the anguish of prayer?
And the far sad glorious vision I see
Of the torn red banners of victory?
when the terror and the tumult of hate shall cease
And life be refashioned on anvils of peace,
And your love shall offer memorial thanks
To the comrades who fought on the dauntless ranks,
And you honour the deeds of the dauntless ones,
Remember the blood of my martyred sons!

Indian Hospitals

Brighton was chosen as the site for the first set of hospitals dedicated to the care of wounded and sick Indian soldiers. The town authorities gave three buildings for this purpose: the workhouse (renamed the Kitchener Hospital), the York Place School, and the Royal Pavilion.

The Royal Pavilion was the first hospital to open with its first patients arriving in early December 1914. Efforts were made to accommodate the religious and cultural needs of the men, with a tented Gurdwara in the grounds of the Pavilion for Sikhs, and space on the eastern lawns for Muslims to pray facing Mecca. Separate kitchens were also established to meet the religious dietary requirements of the men. Brighton's Indian hospitals gradually closed toward the end of 1915 as the British started to withdraw Indian troops from Europe and redeploy to the Middle East.

Did You Know...?

Within Europe the CWGC took into account religious beliefs when it came to burying Indian soldiers, for instance, Muslims were buried facing Mecca.

Canada

When Britain declared war in 1914 Canada was automatically drawn in as a Dominion of the British Empire. Canada had a small army of about 3,000 soldiers and so the federal government, under Prime Minister Robert Borden, formed the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) of about 35,000 men. Around 630,000 Canadians served in the CEF throughout the First World War.

Battle of Vimy Ridge

The Battle of Vimy Ridge started on 9th April 1917 and was **the first time all four Canadian divisions fought together**. German forces captured Vimy Ridge in October 1914 and transformed it into a strong defensive position. They had built a complex system of tunnels and trenches manned by highly-trained soldiers with machine guns and artillery pieces. The Canadian Corps was commanded by General Julian Byng who, after learning from mistakes made at the Battle of the Somme, prepared his soldiers with intense training that helped them to make quick decisions. The soldiers were also assisted by maps drawn up from aerial photographs and deep tunnels dug from the rear to the front by engineers. On the first day of battle, around 15,000 Canadians rose from the trenches whilst nearly 1,000 guns opened fire on German positions.

It was a difficult battle but **the Canadians captured most of the ridge on the first day and the remaining positions were all taken by 12th April.** The success for the Allies came at a cost; more than 10,000 soldiers were killed or wounded.

The Taking of Vimy Ridge, Easter Monday, 1917. R. Jack. Canadian War Museum.

The Canadian Patriotic Fund

Sir Herbert Ames established the Canadian Patriotic Fund (CPF) in August 1914. The organisation took donations during and after the war from many individuals and businesses wanting to support the Canadian soldiers and their families. The idea was to reassure the married soldiers going overseas to fight, which was 20% of all Canadian soldiers during the war. These soldiers were promised that in their absence their wives and families would be cared for and supported. Most Canadians believed it was their duty to support their soldiers' families but the CPF still urged many to donate, encouraging Canadians to fight or to pay.

© IWM (Art.IWM PST 12494) Propaganda poster

After The Speeches About The Empire
– *Ted Plantos*

I remember the Union-Jack-waving crowds
Before our train pulled out, and the quiet later
That choked their gaiety – how they went black
And motionless white when the last photograph was taken
I volunteered with twenty-one others
August of '14 it was, and we were handsome then
In our red tunics, trousers as blue
As the ocean we ached to cross
And white helmets marching to the railway station
Sam Hughes couldn't have hoped for more
They were joining up right across Canada
In Vancouver we burned the Kaiser in effigy,
Soaked him in kerosene and applauded the flames
The crowds cheered us in our new uniforms
When we marched ahead of automobiles,
Horses and buggies and the local fire brigade
Loaded down with flags
One of the officers told me
The war would last only three months,
And I'd likely not see any action
After the speeches about the Empire
Soaked up our hearts and were over,
The band played "God Be With You Till We Meet Again"
And the crowded platform
Went motionless quiet
When the train with us out the windows pulled away.

Source: Colombo, John Robert, and Michael Richardson, We Stand on Guard: Poems and Songs of Canadians in Battle, Toronto: Colombo & Company, 1998.

The famous war poem 'In Flanders Fields' was written by Canadian military doctor and artillery commander, Major John McCrae

Farming

The government were aware of the agricultural labour shortage and in an effort to boost employment of women and children they formed the Farm Service Corps "Farmerettes". The Farmerettes were involved in all types of farm work, often replacing men who had joined the military. The programme only existed in the Ontario province and **in 1918 there were 2,400 women picking fruit in the Niagara region.**

Prior to the start of the war many rural women were part of the agricultural labour force. The war years were particularly challenging for them without the support from their husbands and sons. Canadian women contributed significantly to allied food production, especially of wheat.

Did You Know...?

The Canadian Forestry Corps cut and prepared timber in Europe for the Allied war effort

Did You Know...?

The national programme Soldiers of the Soil had a similar purpose to the 'Farmerettes' but was aimed at adolescent boys. It recruited 22,385 young men from across the country!

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) owes its existence to the vision and determination of one man – Sir Fabian Ware. At 45, Ware was too old to fight but he became commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross. He noted there was no organisation in place to record the final resting place of casualties and became concerned that graves would be lost forever, so his unit took it upon themselves to register and care for all the graves they could find. By 1915, their work was given official recognition by the War Office and incorporated into the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission.

On 21st May 1917 his diligence was recognised when the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter with Ware as its Vice-Chairman.

After the war, Fabian Ware explained his motivation saying, 'common remembrance of the dead [of the Great War] is the one thing, sometimes the only thing that never fails to bring our people together.'

The CWGC cares for war memorials **to remember 1.7 million people** who died in the two world wars.

CWGC cemeteries, burial plots and memorials are a lasting tribute to those who died and can be found at almost **23,000 locations in 153 different countries around the world**.

The cost of the work is shared by the member governments – Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom – in proportions based on the number of their graves.

As part of their efforts the CWGC maintains a database of all the Commonwealth forces who lost their lives during the two wars. The entire database is available at www.cwgc.org, and can be easily searched, allowing you to locate any of your ancestors who may have died in the conflicts.

There are over 300,000 Commonwealth war dead commemorated in the United Kingdom – in almost 13,000 locations. This is the highest total of world war commemorations in any country, other than France. This map highlights the distribution of commemorations across the UK.

Mrs Katharine Mary Harley was sister of Field Marshal Sir John French, Chief in Command of the BEF in France and Flanders in 1914-1915. Mrs Harley led a group of British nurses serving with the Serbian Army and she was killed in the bombing. She was typical of the many women who served with the nursing and similar forces of the Commonwealth and whose graves lie wherever those forces served. Her grave bears a private memorial erected in 1917 by the Serbian Army and inscribed in two languages:

The generous English lady and great benefactress of the Serbian people, Madame Harley, a great lady. On your tomb instead of flower the gratitude of the Serbs shall blossom there for your wonderful acts. Your name shall be known from generation to generation.

Memorial - Katharine Mary Harley

Do you think it's important to memorialise fallen soldiers? Why?

Number of War Dead by Forces

	Identified Burials	Commemorated on Memorials
United Kingdom & Colonies	478,648	409,584
Undivided India	8,097	66,099
Canada	45,495	19,499
Australia	38,796	22,284
New Zealand	11,761	6,292
South Africa	6,684	2,854

CWGC
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

To find out more please visit:
www.cwgc.org or www.centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk

Commonwealth Stories

Manta Singh

Died: 30.03.1915

Commemorated: Patcham Down Indian Forces Cremation Memorial, Sussex

Manta Singh was born in 1870 near Jalandhar, Punjab, Northern India. As soon as he left school he joined the 15th Ludhiana Sikhs, an infantry regiment of the Indian Army. At the start of the First World War, the regiment became part of the 3rd (Lahore) Division, sent to reinforce the BEF fighting in France.

After long months of trench warfare, in March 1915, Manta Singh's regiment prepared to engage in the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, of which half of the Commonwealth fighting force, 20,000 men, were Indian Army soldiers.

On 10th March four divisions, comprising 40,000 men, gathered on a sector of the front which was only three kilometres wide. The infantry attack was preceded by heavy but concentrated shelling from 342 guns, guided by reconnaissance planes of the Royal Flying Corps.

During an attempt by British soldiers to take Aubers River, Manta Singh witnessed an English comrade, **Captain Henderson**, suffering serious injury. **Manta pushed him to safety in a wheelbarrow** he found in No Man's Land but he himself was severely injured while carrying out this selfless rescue.

Manta and his wounded comrades were shipped to England where hospitals had been set up to meet their needs. Here, sadly, his wounds became infected with gangrene. He was told his legs would have to be amputated to save his life, a thought which filled him with despair. He died from blood poisoning a few weeks later.

Colour Sergeant George Williams

Died: July 1918

Colour Sergeant George Williams, 1/3rd Regiment Kings African Rifles, was a Sudanese soldier with an English name. He was awarded the KAR Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) for reconnaissance work at Tsavo, East Africa in September 1914.

The next year, in January 1915 at Jassin in the Umba Valley, Colour Sergeant Williams under a heavy enemy fire, extricated the remainder of his platoon after one officer (Lieutenant GM Dean 1/3rd KAR) had been killed and the other seriously wounded. Colour Sergeant Williams also managed to personally carry away the platoon machine gun after the crew and supporting carriers had all been killed or wounded too.

For this deed, the Divisional Commander Major MJ General Tighe, **recommended him for the Victoria Cross (VC)**. If this award had been approved, George Williams would have been the first soldier in the KAR to be so honoured. He did not receive the VC, but he was eventually awarded a bar to his DCM before he was killed later in July 1918. The main reason that the VC was not confirmed would seem to be inter-departmental politics. The War Office was not going to have the Colonial Office handing out their highest military decoration.

Walter Tull

Died: 25.03.1918

Commemorated: Arras Memorial

Walter Tull was born in Folkestone in 1888. His father had arrived from Barbados in 1876 and his mother was from Kent, England. Both of Walter's parents died when he was still a child and so he was sent to a Methodist run orphanage in Bethnal Green, London.

Walter was a keen footballer and in 1908 his talents were discovered by a scout from **Tottenham Hotspur** whom he played for until 1910 before being transferred to Northampton Town. However, when war was declared in 1914, Walter gave up his football career to join the 17th (1st Football) Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment.

Walter was a good soldier and was **promoted three times during his training**. Whilst fighting on the Western Front in 1915, Walter was sent home with post traumatic stress disorder, but returned to fight in the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Walter's superior officers were impressed by his courage and abilities and therefore recommended him as an officer, though officially black soldiers were barred from becoming officers in the British Army at this time.

On 25th March 1918, Lieutenant Walter Tull was killed by machine gun fire whilst taking part in an attempt to break through German lines on the Western Front. Several of his men attempted to retrieve his body under heavy fire but were unsuccessful due to the enemy soldiers' advance. **Walter's body was never found** and he is one of the thousands of soldiers from the war who has no known grave.

Francis Pegahmagabow

Died: 05.08.1952

Francis Pegahmagabow was born on the Parry Island Reserve in Ontario and enlisted with the 23rd Regiment (Northern Pioneers) in August 1914. He became one of the original members of the 1st Canadian Infantry Battalion which landed in France in February 1915.

Francis gained the nickname 'Peggy' and developed a reputation as an outstanding sniper and superior scout during the Second Battle of Ypres. He captured a large number of German prisoners at the Battle of Mount Sorrel in June 1916 for which he was awarded the **Military medal**.

At the Battle of Passchendaele, **Francis was a runner** whose job was to deliver messages from the front of the battle informing the command at the rear about the location of the Canadian soldiers so artillery bombardments were successfully aimed at the German forces and not at the friendly ones. He was awarded a bar to his Military Medal in November 1917 for his bravery and excellent work during the Battle of Passchendaele. Francis was awarded a second bar for actions during the Battle of Amiens in August 1918.

Francis was one of the few Canadian soldiers who enlisted in 1914 and fought to the end of the war, he was also one of Canada's most decorated Aboriginal soldiers in the First World War.

Irish War Poets

There is no echo in the works of Tom Kettle and Francis Ledwidge of Owen's 'doomed youth' or of Sassoon's dismissal of the officer class as 'incompetent swine'. Their writings contain more echoes of Rupert Brooke's 'foreign field that is forever' - Ireland. As Irish nationalists, they persisted to the end in their belief in the essential nobility of the task in which they were engaged. They adhered to the view of Irish parliamentary leader, John Redmond, for whom the war was a struggle 'in defence of rights and freedom and religion.'

The stories of Kettle and Ledwidge provide an intriguing insight into Irish involvement in the First World War. Their poetic responses to the war differed from those of their English literary counterparts.

Francis Ledwidge - *1887–1917*

© Francis Ledwidge Museum

Francis Ledwidge decided to enlist in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers and his first introduction to the war was at Gallipoli. He wrote no poetry during the eight weeks he spent on the campaign but was lucky enough to be included among the 118,000 men who were evacuated from the peninsula.

While recovering from an inflamed back in Manchester in 1916, Francis received news of the Easter Rising in Dublin and the executions of nationalist leaders that followed it, including his good friend and fellow poet Thomas MacDonagh. He became completely disillusioned and declared 'If someone was to tell me now that the Germans were coming over our back wall, I wouldn't lift a finger to stop them. They should come'.

In July 1917 having survived the **Battle of Arras**, Francis' unit was ordered north to Belgium in preparation for the Battle of Passchendaele. On 31st July the 1st Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, of which Francis was a member, were repairing the road to Pilkem near the village of Boezinghe northwest of Ypres. In the afternoon of that day a shell exploded beside them, killing one officer and five enlisted men, among them Francis.

A Soldier's Grave by Francis Ledwidge

Then in the lull of midnight, gentle arms
Lifted him slowly down the slopes of death,
Lest he should hear again the mad alarms
Of battle, dying moans, and painful breath.
And where the earth was soft for flowers we made
A grave for him that he might better rest.
So, Spring shall come and leave it sweet arrayed,
And there the lark shall turn her dewy nest.

Did You Know...?

206,000 Irishmen fought in British uniform and some 49,000 lost their lives.

Tom Kettle - *1880–1916*

In 1913, **Tom Kettle joined the Irish Volunteers**, a paramilitary group set up **in opposition to the Ulster Volunteers** as a part of the struggle for Irish Home Rule. Visiting Belgium in the summer of 1914, on a mission to purchase arms for the Irish Volunteers, Tom witnessed at first hand the German invasion of that country. He like many Irish nationalists sympathised deeply with the plight of Belgium. From the start, he saw the war as a struggle for civilised European values against the threat posed by Imperial Germany and became convinced that Britain's support of Belgium would be a precursor to subsequent support for Irish Home Rule – already committed to by the British Government in London, albeit delayed in its implementation by the arrival of war.

Tom returned to Ireland and became a recruiting officer. Often criticised by other nationalists for his recruiting activities, he once stated that, if forced to choose, he cared for liberty more than he cared for Ireland.

Tom requested that he be sent to fight in France in the **Battle of the Somme** and was killed during an attack upon Givenchy on 9th September 1916.

To My Daughter Betty, The Gift of God by Tom Kettle

In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown
To beauty proud as was your mother's prime,
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,
You'll ask why I abandoned you, my own,
And the dear heart that was your baby throne,
To dice with death. And oh! they'll give you rhyme
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,
And some decry it in a knowing tone.
So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,
And tired men sigh with mud for couch and floor,
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret Scripture of the poor.

Did You Know...?

Tom Kettle wrote 'To My Daughter Betty, The Gift of God' just days before his death – in it he tries to explain to his daughter why he had sacrificed his life.

A New Kind of Warfare

As the First World War progressed it witnessed a great transformation toward modern warfare. The arms race between the two warring sides hastened the development of more efficient and destructive weapons.

The most common rifle issued to British troops was the **Short Magazine Lee Enfield (SMLE)** rifle (see diagram), which was manually operated and contained 10 rounds in two five-round clips. The SMLE was **capable of rapid fire in the hands of a highly trained professional**, but most conscripts were able to achieve ten rounds per minute. Machine guns were also introduced as infantry weapons and their reliability made them effective at inflicting high numbers of casualties.

The tank was invented by the British and was seen as a major technical innovation. Early models were unreliable but later models played a vital role in the Allied advances of 1918. They were able to cross enemy trenches and act as shields for the advancing troops.

© IWM Art 3035 – William Orpen, Tanks. A view looking up to the underside of two tanks. The tanks are cresting a low rise, their treads rearing up towards the grey sky..

The German 'Maxim' machine gun was able to fire as many as **600 rounds a minute**, and was used to deadly effect during the Battle of the Somme. German troops tactically placed their machine guns on the front line, and within minutes of the battle starting thousands of British troops were killed.

© IWM Art REPRO 000684 6 – Muirhead Bone, A gun hospital.

© IWM Art 3037 – William Orpen, The Gas Mask. A study of a stretcher-bearer sitting beside a stretcher, his face obscured by the gas mask he is wearing.

Heavy artillery also proved extremely successful on the battlefield and was able to cause damage to enemy trenches, communication lines and landscape.

A Soldier's Equipment

Brodie Helmet -
This was the first metal helmet worn by British troops. It was only issued in later years of the war - at first soldiers fought in cloth caps.

1908 Pattern Webbing -
The soldier is wearing battle dress, containing all of the essential supplies for fighting, minus the large rucksack worn while on the march. The small front pouches are for ammunition.

Belt items -
On his belt the soldier has a water bottle, entrenching tool, sheath for his bayonet, more ammunition pouches, and a small haversack for food and other supplies.

Rank badge -
This man is a sergeant, meaning he was in charge of a troop or platoon of around 30 soldiers.

Puttees -
These were strips of cloth wrapped tightly around the lower leg for support and protection. The word comes from the Hindi word patti, meaning bandage.

Short Magazine Lee-Enfield MkIII -
Chambering a .303 round, the SMLE was designed as a reliable, accurate rifle, and was used throughout the War by troops fighting for the British Empire.

Did You Know...?

The FWW was the first war to witness poison gas being used effectively – some soldiers died a lingering death as their lungs collapsed and filled with liquid and others were blinded for life.

To protect themselves from potential attacks, soldiers would wear protective helmets, which consisted of face masks, goggles, and respirators.

Spies

In a book written in the 5th Century BCE, a famous Chinese military leader, Sun Tzu, devoted a whole chapter to "The Use of Spies". He reached the conclusion that "what enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is foreknowledge".

Between 1914 and 1918, both sides did their uttermost to recruit, train and use spies to gather that 'foreknowledge'. Although men were sent close to the battle fronts, women worked behind the lines on both sides. Spies' watchful eyes and listening ears provided both sides with intelligence about what was going on behind the scenes.

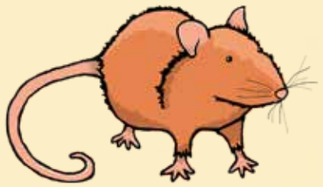
Elisabeth Schragmüller aka Fraulein Doktor 1887 - 1940

© www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Elisabeth Schragmüller was the first German woman to become a doctor, not of medicine but of Political Economy. However she is remembered best for being a spymaster during the war.

Code-named Fraulein Doktor, in August 1914, Elisabeth was desperate to 'do her bit' for Germany's war effort. At first, Germany wasn't convinced Elisabeth could be useful but eventually the military authorities sent her to Antwerp in German-Occupied Belgium. **Elisabeth was tasked with the important job of recruiting and training spies to be sent throughout France**. Elisabeth organised a spy school to teach recruits many skills as well as how to develop secret codes, create invisible ink and miniature handwriting. Messages were hidden in accessories such as umbrellas, in shoe heels, hollowed-out vegetables, rolled into tiny packages or enclosed in small pieces of inflammable materials stuffed inside a cigar or cigarette. If someone dangerous approached they just lit up and puffed away!

Elisabeth didn't care if her spies were men or women; all that mattered was their ability. She found excellent spies in unlikely places. **One of her best was a florist who couldn't read or write but was brilliant at remembering what he had seen; he had a 'photographic memory'**. It has been estimated that Elisabeth sent over 100 female agents into France (20 were caught) and at least four times as many men.



Did You Know...?

Some 'students' could write up to 1,600 words on a postage stamp

Marthe Cnockaert, c 1920 © www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Martha Cnockaert

1892 - 1966

During the summer of 1914 Martha was training to be a doctor, and on the outbreak of war she was conscripted to work as a nurse at a German Military Hospital near her home in Roulers, Belgium.

A British spy master approached Martha to be a spy to which she agreed out of a sense of loyalty to Belgium. She was told to gather information about troop movements around Roulers station, an important railhead for the Germans. **In spring 1915, thanks to her information, the Allies bombed the station.**

Martha describes how she had "wandered along an endless street of smoking ruins where the way was strewn with mangled corpses whose glassy eyeballs watched me accusingly."

`On 22nd April 1915, both German and Allied casualties of the first gas attack flooded in to her hospital. Martha's dedication to her patients earned her the German Iron Cross which was presented to her by the King of Würtemburg.

The Germans then asked Martha to spy for them but she refused. She fell into a trap they set. **In November 1916, she was arrested.** The court found her guilty and she was sentenced to death. Roulers Military Hospital's Chief Doctor spoke out in her defence. Her sentence was changed to life imprisonment.

After the war, Martha was mentioned in British General Sir Douglas Haig's Dispatches. The French and the Belgian Légions d'Honneur followed, making her **the only person to have been decorated by four of the main combatants of the Great War.**

Roulers after the bombardment

Louise de Bettignies

1880 - 1918

The 'Joan of Arc of the North'

Born in Lille, France, Louise was exceptionally clever and spoke five languages fluently, including English. When the Germans captured Lille in October 1914 the British recruited her to spy for them in Occupied France. At an English spy school, she learnt how to create miniature maps, write in invisible ink on tissue paper, engrave minute letters on spectacle frames, conceal messages in shoe heels, umbrella handles, hems of skirts and hollowed out vegetables.

She used her map-drawing skills to create a miniature map of the German lines showing two thousand gun positions. The Germans called the forty kilometres where her networks operated the "cursed" front; this was where they seemed to suffer the greatest number of unexpected attacks and aerial bombardments.

Sadly, her information was sometimes ignored. **When Louise reported that the Germans were preparing a massive attack on Verdun in early 1916, the French commander discounted it because the information came from a woman**. The Battle of Verdun resulted in 262,308 French and German dead or missing.

Louise was arrested in autumn 1915 and went to trial the following March. The Germans sentenced Louise to life imprisonment with hard labour. During the winter of 1917 Louise developed pleurisy and died on 27th September 1918, 45 days before the Armistice.

She had been mentioned in Marsh Joffre's dispatches in April 1916 and was awarded the French Légion d'Honneur, the Croix de guerre 1914-1918 with palm, the British Military Medal and the OBE.

In November 1927, a monument to Louise de Bettignies and the 'heroic women' of the Occupied Territories was unveiled.

Monument to Louise in Lille from "La France Reconnaissante" (a Grateful France)
© www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Memorial to Louise at Notre Dame de Lorette
© www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Gabrielle Petit

1893 - 1916

Shop assistant Gabrielle Petit © www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Gabrielle Petit, a local 21-year-old shop assistant in Brussels was furious when Germany had occupied on 20th August 1914. She wanted to share her knowledge of the surrounding area and activities of the Germans with the British. **In July 1915 she was invited by the British authorities to London's Spy School.**

Back in Brussels, she soon created her own spy network. She crossed backwards and forwards between Occupied France and Belgium carrying TOP SECRET information and she was always on the look-out for anything the Allies might find useful.

Gabrielle was arrested on 20th January 1916 and thrown into St Gilles Prison, Brussels. At every interrogation she stressed her loathing of the Germans. After a trial conducted in German, she only spoke French, and without knowing anyone influential to plead on her behalf, Gabrielle was sentenced to 'Death by Firing Squad'

After the war, combatant nations sought to memorialise their glorious dead. In Belgium someone thought of the little Brussels shop assistant, Gabrielle would become Belgium's martyr. **In May 1919, her body was exhumed; at an elaborate funeral the Belgian queen awarded Gabrielle the Croix de l'Ordre de Léopold.** Gabrielle's statue still stands in Brussels' Place St Jean. She looks down proudly on passers-by and reminds them that poor and young though she was, Gabrielle Petit had known both how to spy and how to die for her beloved Belgium.

The engraving reads 'You will see that a Belgian woman knows how to die'
© www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Memorial to Gabrielle in the National Arboretum, unveiled 1ST April 2016
© www.firstworldwarwomen.co.uk

Poetry & Poets

Wilfred Owen - *1893–1918*

Wilfred Owen described himself as a **'pacifist with a seared conscience'**. He enlisted in the British Army in 1915 and first arrived in France in January 1917. He spent the next few months serving at Serre and St. Quentin but was sent back to Britain for treatment of shell shock in April 1917. Under the guidance and encouragement of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred wrote with a burning honesty about the horrific reality of the war. He hated it and in his poetry he explored and described the true horrors and trauma of war and the experiences of the common soldier. 'Dulce et Decorum Est' is a war poem in which he describes a gas attack.

He returned to France in August 1918 and **took part in the breaking of the Hindenburg Line** in October of the same year, for which he was awarded the Military Cross. He was killed on 4th August 1918 whilst leading his men across the Sambre-Oise Canal. The telegram to his mother saying Wilfred was dead arrived as the church bells were ringing out to celebrate the Armistice.

Dulce et Decorum Est - *Wilfred Owen*

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!---An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,---
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.

Dulce et Decorum Est is Latin for 'it is sweet and right to die for your country'.

Isaac Rosenberg - *1890–1918*

Isaac Rosenberg was the son of Jewish Russian immigrants and was a **keen and talented painter**. In 1914 he was sent to South Africa to stay with his sister for health reasons. Isaac was thought a better painter than a poet in his day, but was hopelessly chaotic. Returning from South Africa, **he ruined a large number of paintings by stacking them whilst still wet touching each other**, and then dropped some over the side when his ship docked at Southampton.

Isaac returned to England in March 1915 and enlisted in the British Army. He found army life very hard; he was passed from one unit to another and was **victimised because of his faith and artistic temperament**. He wrote many of his poems whilst fighting in the trenches on the Western Front and is known for his great use of imagination. In March 1918 he was killed whilst on patrol during the German Army's spring offensive. His body was never found.

Siegfried Sassoon - *1886–1967*

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Siegfried Sassoon arrived in France with the British Army in May 1915 where **he gained the name 'Mad Jack' for his bravery** on the battlefield. Influenced and encouraged by pacifist friends such as Bertrand Russell, Siegfried decided to make a stand against the war by writing a letter to a British newspaper in 1917. This act by a serving officer could have been met with severe punishment, and even the death sentence. However his friend and fellow war poet, Robert Graves, convinced the authorities that Siegfried was suffering from shell shock, and the Army itself did not wish to create a martyr to the pacifist cause.

Siegfried was subsequently sent to Craiglockhart war hospital in Edinburgh where he **helped fellow patients with their writing**, including Wilfred Owen. He returned to fight in the war where he was posted to Palestine and then to France, before returning to Britain for the remainder of the war after being wounded in the trenches. He wrote poetry throughout the First World War and published a number of volumes after the Armistice.

The War in the Skies

The development of aircraft was motivated by the demands of modern warfare. Initially aircraft were used for reconnaissance missions, whereby a crew of two pilots would take a series of photographs and feed information back about the movements of German troops and to help direct artillery strikes.

The Navy's air force from the outset of the war was active at sea and on land. At sea the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) made **great strides in operating seaplanes**, with floats to land on the water, and then naval versions of land planes, which couldn't land on the water, but could fly back to an airfield or 'ditch' in the sea next to a rescue ship, from its warships. **On land the Navy's air force was used against the Zeppelins, German airships**.

Dogfights were made more deadly when Dutch aircraft designer **Anton Fokker developed a timing mechanism** that synchronised the machine gun with the propeller, allowing bullets to fly between the turning blades.

Fighter planes, such as the **Sopwith Camel** and the **German Fokkers**, capable of carrying bombs to drop on enemy targets were soon produced by both sides.

© IWM Art 3077 – F. Gordon Crosby, Lieutenant Warneford's Great Exploit: The first Zeppelin to be brought down by Allied aircraft, 7th June 1915.

Did You Know...?

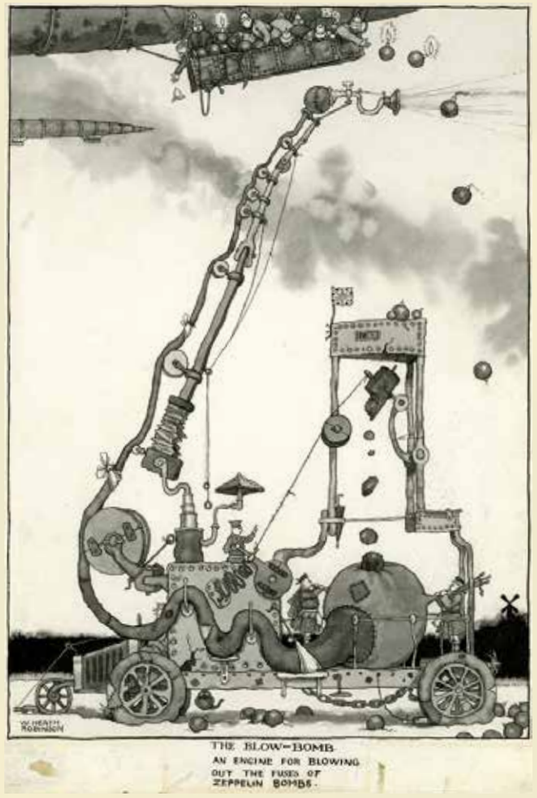
Britain had two forces in the air – the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) run by the Army and the Royal Navy Air Service (RNAS) owned by the Navy. In April 1918 the two air forces were combined into one Royal Air Force (RAF).

Airships are often called Zeppelins, but technically only those designed by German Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin should bear that name.

By the time the RAF was created the RNAS was embarking on the world's first 'strategic bombing campaign' – an attack on German factories making guns and ammunition and the German transport network using the world's first strategic bomber – the Handley.

By 1918 the Royal Navy had an aircraft carrier, armed with aircraft that could drop torpedoes for a planned attack on the German fleet in its base.

© IWM Art 4570 – Sydney W. Carline. Three British planes prepare to engage in a dogfight in the lower left with the Dead Sea to the right and the River Jordan mid-ground.



William Heath Robinson © The Estate of Mrs J.C. Robinson. Cartoon Museum collection.

© IWM Art 3071 – George Horace Davis, Closing Up. Horace Davis, was a landscape painter who served in the RAF. He instituted aerial manoeuvre diagrams to train pilots, and was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum to paint two of these manoeuvres.

The War at Sea

Germany and Britain began to build warships over a decade before the outbreak of the First World War. Britain was first to launch the submarine in 1902, and saw them as ideal weapons for coastal protection. **Although Germany was able to exploit a more perfected technology, it always lacked in terms of numbers**.

A massive naval battle in the North Sea was expected, but the German Navy was not strong enough to risk a meeting, and so opted for raids on the British coast. It hoped gradually to whittle down the British superiority to the point where it could meet the Royal Navy on equal terms. The British moved their Grand Fleet to the relative security of Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands, and so the North Sea became a maritime no man's land.

© The Royal Society of Marine Artists – Charles Pears, HMS Dunraven, VC, In Action against the Submarine that Sank Her, 8th August 1917

© IWM Art REPRO 000323 - W.L. Wyllie (RA), The Second Division at Jutland

Did You Know...?

Naval power during the First World War was often used to control trade routes rather than capturing new territory. For example, the siege of Tsingtao secured trade routes in the Pacific for the Allies.

The Battle of Jutland was the only time when massed fleets of huge battleships fought head-to-head. It was indecisive. The British lost more ships, but after it the German fleet rarely ventured out of its harbours.

© IWM Art 15814 – W.L. Wyllie (RA), Destruction of the German Raider 'Leopard' by His Majesty's Ships 'Achilles' and 'Dundee'

Years Ahead - *Guy N.Pocock, 1880-1955*

Time goes by, time goes by,
And who shall tell where our soldiers lie?
The guiding trench-cut winds afar,
Miles upon miles where the dead men are:
A cross of wood or a carven block,
A name-disc hung on a rifle-stock –
These shall tell where our soldiers lie
As the time goes by.

But years ahead, years ahead,
Who shall honour our sailor-dead?
For the wild North Sea, the bleak North Sea,
Threshes and seethes so endlessly.
Gathering foam and changing crest
Heave and hurry, and knows no rest:
How can they mark our sailor-dead
In the years ahead?

In February 1915 the Royal Navy tried to force Turkey out of the War by taking ships through the narrow Dardanelles and attacking Constantinople (see Gallipoli page 30). When it was clear the Allies could not win, it was the navy's job to evacuate the army, but its role in the Mediterranean did not end there. It contributed to the blockade of both the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, and supported Allied land operations in Egypt, Palestine and Macedonia, as well as keeping open the routes from Europe to Asia via the Suez Canal.

The long awaited clash between the navies did eventually happen, in an action **known as the Battle of Jutland** to the British and Skaggerak to the Germans (see page 12), fought on 31 May 1916. After that the Germans relied on submarines – their U-boats.

Germany used their submarine fleet aggressively. **In February 1917 German U-boats, armed with torpedoes, started sinking all merchant ships, regardless of nationality, which brought in vital supplies to Britain**. Due to this the Royal Navy started using convoys to enable it to provide escorts for merchant ships bringing supplies to Britain, and so cut losses.

The Home Front

Although the majority of the fighting during the First World War took place beyond Britain's shores, British people at home were far from unaffected.

The **Defence of the Realm Act (DORA)** was introduced in August 1914 in the interest of maintaining security during the war. The Act allowed the Government to impose widespread restrictions on the British population, including censorship of newspapers and rationing of food.

The introduction of **food rationing** was aimed at preventing panic buying and hoarding of food, thus ensuring there were no food shortages.

However, the supply of food became a national problem from 1916 when German submarines (known as U-boats) began attacking and sinking merchant ships heading for Britain.

The home front in Britain wasn't only affected by Germany's U-boats, there was also a terrifying bombing campaign that saw many towns attacked by German Zeppelins and shelled by warships.

The Zeppelins were capable of carrying up to two tonnes of bombs, and their first campaign in January 1915 targeted Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn. The German air raids resulted in the British authorities **imposing 'blackouts'** in areas thought to be at risk of attack. Despite such precautions, the **raids killed more than 500 British civilians** and injured over 1,000.

The bombardment sowed fear among the population, but it may also have contributed to the strong sense of patriotism that sent men flocking in their thousands to the recruiting offices.

© IWM 1999-11-70-17 - British soldiers examine debris from the crashed Zeppelin L32, shot down by Frederick Sowrey RFC, which crashed near Snails Farm, South Green, Great Burstead, near Billericay, on the night of 23rd - 24th September 1916.

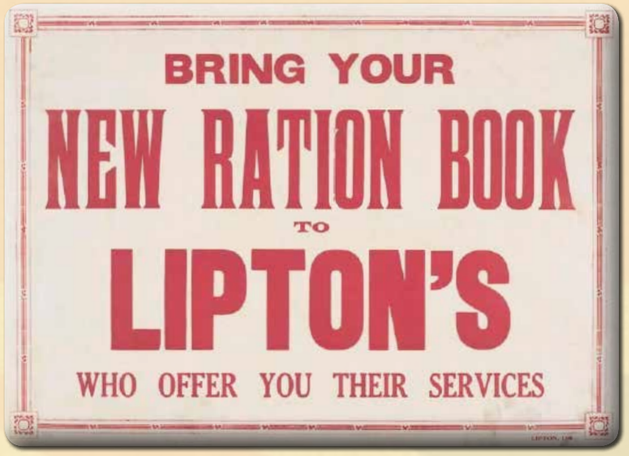
Prohibition

Throughout the First World War many countries, such as Britain, Germany, Austria Hungary, France, Russia and Italy, were concerned that the amount of alcohol being consumed by the public was affecting the war effort.

In Britain, the Chancellor of the Exchequer David Lloyd George saw alcohol consumption as a huge problem. To address the issue, he started a campaign to encourage national figures to publicly pledge that they would give up alcohol during the war years. One such supporter was King George V who promised that no alcohol would be drunk in the Royal household until the war was over.

The campaign showed little success and so the 'No Treating Order' was issued, establishing closing times for Public Houses and preventing people from buying alcoholic drinks for others. The level of tax on alcohol was increased, by 1918 a bottle of whisky cost five times more than it had before the outbreak of the war. The government's methods proved successful, **alcohol consumption was reduced and British consumption fell from 89 million gallons in 1914 to 37 million in 1918**.

© IWM Art 840 – C.R.W. Nevinson, The Food Queue. A crowd of grey-faced civilian women, children and men queue in front of a row of shop windows.



© IWM Art SPT 13352 – The Government introduced rationing in 1918.

Did You Know...?

In London in 1914, 67,000 people were found guilty of being drunk. In 1917 this had fallen to 16,500

Young People at War

It was important for children to understand why the war effort was important. In Britain's case this involved teaching the importance of the Empire, both at home and at school. Young people were encouraged to do their bit for the war, whether at home, school or even on the front line.

War in the classroom

Schools and teachers played an important role throughout the First World War. They tried to minimise the physical and psychological threats to their pupils' safety **whilst teaching them that the Empire was something worth saving**, and stressing that Britain was fighting for the rule of law and for democracy. Teachers were expected to change their curriculum to one that encouraged patriotism and inspired young to help with the war effort at home.

Schools kept animals and planted gardens in order to encourage children to learn how to farm, for example teaching girls to make jam and to preserve fruit and vegetables for the tougher months. Seeing the benefits, the British Government was keen for schools to expand their gardening programmes. **By October 1915 there were 56,037 children receiving instruction in practical gardening in 3,129 school gardens**.

© IWM (Q 30965) - Girl guides practising semaphore signalling in Britain during the First World War

Kaiser Bill - *Children's Song*

Kaiser Bill went up the hill
To see the British Army.
General French jumped out of a trench
And made the cows go barmy.

Did You Know...?

Both the girls and the boys learnt first aid during the war years. They were often employed by hospitals, local authorities and central government.

Preparing for war

Boy Scouts were taught how to shoot at rifle ranges, a precautionary measure so they were ready to be called upon to defend Britain if the German army invaded. The War Office used Boy Scouts to guard important places, such as stretches of coastline and railway lines, and taught them to send semaphore messages using small flags. After a long night of guard duty the Scouts were sometimes allowed the following day off school.

Girl Guides were expected to be able to help the injured after an invasion and learn useful occupations and handiwork whilst still keeping their womanliness. Although their training was expected to be done in a feminine way the **Girl Guides adopted uniforms and even had military ranks, which the Boy Scouts did not have**. Some of the girls' activities, such as stealing rival troops equipment, had to be hidden from the Guiding Headquarters for being too 'unladylike'.

Boy Soldiers

For years children had been taught that the Empire was worth protecting and now boys who wanted to fight had their chance to protect it. **Lots of young boys found the prospect of fighting for their country exciting and lied to recruitment officers about their age**.

Cecil Withers joined at 17 and gave a false name and address so that his true age could not be discovered. He then came to realise that if he were to die in battle his family would never be informed. His family thought the same and sent a message through The Times in 1916. The message read 'Cecil. C. W. – All's well, will not apply for discharge if you send full address; past forgiven – Father'

The army employed boys as drummers and buglers, and very often they were sons of soldiers. In 1914 the War Office ordered all regiments to leave their boys at home, unlike the South African War (1899-1902), as they were unable to contribute to the campaign. The same did not apply in the Royal Navy, and **one boy seaman, Jack Cornwell, won the Victoria Cross at Jutland in 1916 at the age of 16**.

Officer (to boy of thirteen who, in his effort to get taken on as a bugler, has given his age as sixteen). "Do you know where boys go who tell lies?" Applicant. "To the Front, Sir."

F. H. Townsend. Officer (to boy of thirteen who, in his effort to get taken on as a bugler, has given his age as sixteen). "Do you know where boys go who tell lies?" Applicant. "To the front, sir."

Poetry from the Home Front

The term 'War Poetry' is now associated with the Soldier Poets of the Great War. People often do not realise that many **women and children also wrote poetry**. 'Total War' impacts upon everyone's life and whether knitting socks, making munitions, seeing the Army requisitioning horses, or mourning loved ones, women and children were fully aware every hour of every day that their nation was at war.

Knitting Poems

Yorkshire-born nine-year-old Amy Tyreman, helped by family members including her three-year-old sister who knitted face-cloths, produced 194 articles (mainly socks) for the troops. In Australia, Nora Pennington won the district record for the number of socks, mufflers, mittens, and balaclavas knitted by anybody under the age of thirteen.

At school, children used every possible moment to knit as this poem shows:

Mary had a Little Lamb
- Anonymous Child

Mary had a little lamb
Its fleece was quite expensive,
It followed her to school one day,
And came home feeling pensive.

The little maids at school that day
Forgot their sums and letters.
They pulled the wool all off its back
And knit it into sweaters.

Poetry was sold to raise money for ambulances and for privately run hospitals, and people bought tickets for poetry reading evenings in aid of war causes.

Knitting enabled women to connect with their own fighting man. There is something deeply personal about making a garment that a loved one is going to wear next to their skin:

To my Mother - *Anne Page*

On flash her fingers busily, and swift the pattern grows,
And fall the stitches evenly in neatly rounded rows.
And softer eyes are smiling, but they never see at all
The clumsy thread unwinding from the dull, grey worsted ball.
Her shining needles glitter with a thousand mystic gleams -
It isn't wool she's weaving there, it's a gossamer of dreams.

A rosy dream of fights forgot and clouded skies serene,
A white, white dream of honour and a spirit brave and clean.
A thrill of pride, half-fearful, for the strength to do and dare,
A tender little blessing and a quiet little prayer.
And in and out she weaves them from a heart with hope a brim
-It's not a sock she's making, it's a web of love for him.

Munitions Poems

By the middle of 1915, with more and more men in the Army, women were needed in the factories. Short though they were of money, many women enthusiastically donated some of their pay to the charities and benevolent funds which sent 'comforts' to men at the Front. They also invested in War Savings Certificates despite many of them being unable to afford to eat in the subsidised factory canteens.

This poem was found in a munitions worker's scrapbook.

War Loan - *Unknown*

We're working on munitions to help to win the war,
Now England needs more money, so has called on us once more;
Right gladly would we aid her by giving of our own
That's why we are so busy putting money in War Loan:
So that our gallant fighting men can with conviction say,
'Our women tried to aid us in every possible way.'

© IWM (Q 15064B)

from Munitions
- Helen Dricks

We have forgotten
the guelder roses,
You and I,
The lilies
And the lilac too;
The sweet scents of Spring
Pass by unnoticed.

My life
Lies in the turning of a lathe
And yours
In the skill to fight -
Two poor cogs in the
machinery of war.

Like the men at the Front, munitions workers were soon caught up in the war machine. Regulations made it hard to leave a factory or move to an alternate one; life before the war seemed a distant dream.

Many women suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder following horrific explosions in munitions factories.

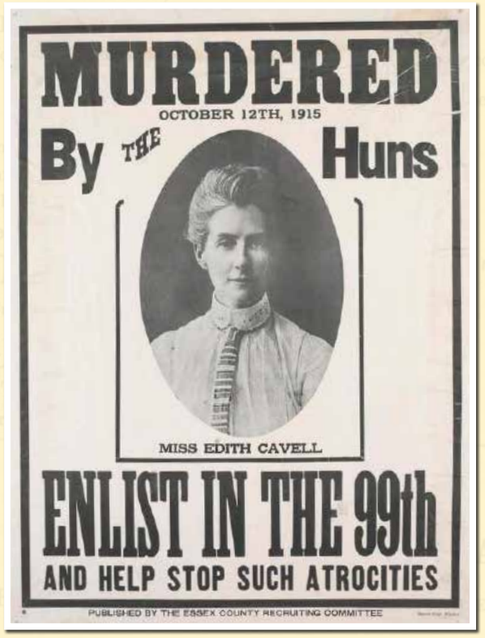
Media & Propaganda

The use of media and propaganda during the First World War served a multitude of purposes. It was not only used to encourage young men to sign up to the army, but also to maintain the nation's will to fight.

The most well-known campaign was **Lord Kitchener's** appeal for volunteers to sign up to the army. Lord Kitchener was Secretary of State for War and had been a career soldier; he believed the war would last up to four years and millions of men would need to be mobilised to win the war. Therefore he created a new volunteer army – soldiers had to be at least 18 years old to join, and 19 before they could be sent abroad to fight.

Posters and newspapers were used to encourage men to volunteer for the war effort. Posters targeted women in the hopes they would persuade more men to join the army. They also appealed to women to join the Women's Land Army, and non-combatant organisations such as the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) (see page 70).

A considerable number of men were killed or injured on the front lines and not enough men were volunteering to replace them. To fill this gap, the British Government introduced conscription through the Military Service Act 1916. Single men aged 18 to 41 were liable to be called up for military service under the act. **Conscription** was unpopular with the British public and over 200,000 people demonstrated against it in Trafalgar Square in April 1916.



© IWM Art 12217 – Edith Cavell's execution provoked an outcry in Britain and was often cited in Allied propaganda as an example of German brutality.

During the following year there was a feeling within the British Government that public unrest was coming to a head. Defeat in conflict is not confined to the battlefield, maintaining a nation's will to fight is just as important as having a strong army. The British Government dealt with domestic dissent by setting up the National War Aims Committee (NWAC) as a semi-official group to craft and distribute pro-war messages. To help politicians deny that they were stifling free speech, the NWAC paid freelance journalists and worked with unions, labour organisations and church groups to tailor what was said to the public.

How would you feel if you found out that the Government was stifling freedom of speech in Britain today?

© IWM Art 13544 – Propaganda poster

© IWM Art 12211 – Adelaide A. Vaughan. Issued by the South Australian Government

Did You Know...?

Lord Kitchener's Pal Battalion recruitment campaign encouraged friends to join together. A direct consequence of such battalions was that there were disproportionate losses among some villages and towns as these Pals died together. Some villages lost nearly all the men who joined up. Others lost none.

Cartoons

Since the 19th century cartoons have been used as humorous illustrations in magazines and newspapers. During the First World War cartoons were used to ridicule the German threat and boost morale. Newspapers and magazines were subject to government censorship so cartoons were limited in their capacity to criticise the war. However the 'comic' nature of cartoons meant that they were able to get much closer to the reality of conflict than any other form of art or journalism.

Bruce Bairnsfather *1887–1959*

Captain Bruce Bairnsfather went to France in November 1914 as Machine Gun Officer with the 1st Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He participated in the famous 1914 Christmas Truce, and was wounded in the Second Battle of Ypres on 25 April 1915.

Bruce sent his first sketch to *The Bystander* in March 1915 and his cartoons soon caught the imagination of both the men on the front line, and their families back home. He soon became a household name and published volumes of his ***Fragments from France*** cartoons sold over a million copies. His cartoons appeared on merchandise including postcards, prints, jigsaws, playing cards and even a range of Bairnsfather Ware china. His most famous character was a walrus-moustached old soldier called Old Bill.

In 1916 Bruce was transferred to the Intelligence Department of the War Office, and appointed 'Officer Cartoonist', touring the French, Italian and American fronts at the request of the Allied armies. By 1918 he had become the most famous cartoonist of his time, credited by General Sir Ian Hamilton as **'the man who made the world laugh in its darkest hour.'**

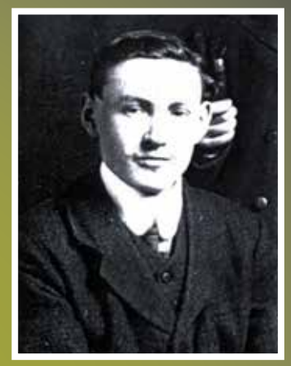
"Well, if you knows of a better 'ole, go to it."

© 2015 Estate of Barbara Bruce Littlejohn. Old Bill is the character on the left.

"They've evidently seen me."

© 2015 Estate of Barbara Bruce Littlejohn

Archie Gilkison *1885–1916*



Born in Glasgow in 1885, **Archie Gilkison wrote and cartooned under the nickname 'Baldy'** for newspapers including the Glasgow Herald, Evening Times, Dundee Courier, London Opinion and Bristol Echo. He also illustrated books.

Though best known for his humour and wit, **the war brought out a more serious and patriotic side to Gilkison's art**. From 1914-1916 he produced hundreds of cartoons, many focusing on the darkest elements of war – death, destruction and retribution. The work is erudite, referencing Shakespeare, the classical world and current affairs, and much of it is sharply ironic.

Following the rediscovery of his work in 2014, Archie, who was self-taught, has been **described as 'the Wilfred Owen of cartooning'** – he is the only popular cartoonist known to have depicted the horrors of the war while it was ongoing.

Archie was perhaps at the height of his cartooning career just as he was conscripted into the Scots Guards in October 1916, despite having been rejected on medical grounds in 1914 due to life-long respiratory problems. During training in Berwick, a chill Archie caught developed into pneumonia and he died aged 31 on 2nd November of that year, never having made it to the front line.

Wipers Times

The Wipers Times was a trench magazine named after the army slang for the Belgian city of Ypres. It was a satirical publication offering a release from the misery of the conflict through songs, puns and literary parodies, all of which proved popular with the troops.

The name Wipers was first used by Field Marshal Sir John French because he couldn't pronounce Ypres.

Archie Gilkison, The Reason Why. Archie's style and quality of line drawing was exceptional. It was often ahead of its time, as evidenced here, in his sketch which depicts the corpse of a German soldier lying rotting in a trench. The work could easily be mistaken for something drawn decades later.

Women at War

Until 1914, life for women in Britain was mainly restricted to a life of domesticity. With so many men going off to war, women were called upon to take their place in factories and other industries.

© IWM Art 5234 – William Hatherell, The Last Message. A Red Cross nurse seated at the bedside of a dying soldier.

Many women left their low-paid jobs for higher-paid work in **munitions factories**, however to keep pace with demand from the frontline, women often worked 12 hour shifts. **Accidents were common** in the munitions factories and dangerous chemicals caused health problems that affected workers long after the war ended.

However, for propaganda reasons the Government and the press exaggerated the change in women's roles. For example, most male-dominated professions, such as dentistry, remained mostly closed to women and in industries where they were employed in large numbers, they were often treated as inferior, their **wages significantly lower than those of their male counterparts**.

Despite their immense contribution from 1914-1918, the 1919 Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act forced thousands of women from their jobs as men came home and factories switched to peacetime production.

© IWM Art 2004 – Randolph Schwabe, Milking. A woman of the Women's Land Army sits on a small wooden stool milking a cow.

© IWM Art 4235 – Sir John Lavery (RA) (RSA), Shell-Making, Edinburgh. A view down the length of the interior of a munitions factory. Female workers wearing long overalls and blue hair caps are shown at work manufacturing artillery shells.

Women in Politics

The **Suffragette movement**, which started before the war, campaigned for women to have the right to vote. The movement gained partial victory in 1918 when Parliament passed The Representation of the People Act, which granted the vote to women over the age of 30.

There was only one woman elected to parliament in the 1918 General Election; Countess Constance Markievicz (pictured). However, in line with the Irish republican Sinn Féin policy, she **abstained** from taking her seat in the House of Commons.

Countess Constance Markievicz

© IWM Art 2618 – Cecil Aldin, A Land Girl Ploughing.

Women at War

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC)

After the heavy losses on the Somme in the summer of 1916, the War Office commissioned Lieutenant General Sir Henry Lawson to investigate the number of non-combatant tasks being performed by soldiers on the Lines of Communications in France. It was estimated that 12,000 men could be freed for service in the front line, and although women would not be suitable to undertake all these jobs it was decided that women should be used in the army.

© IWM Art PST 13171 – Women Urgently Wanted for the WAAC

The Corps did not have the same status as men; instead of ranks it had grades – officers were called 'Officials' and Non-Commissioned Officers were called 'Forewomen' and other ranks as 'Workers'. The Corps was essentially a civilian formation, and like the women working in munitions factories and other civilian jobs, workers were paid less than their male counterparts. The women were employed in a variety of jobs including cooking and waiting on officers, and serving as clerks, telephone operators, store-women, drivers, printers, bakers and cemetery gardeners. The War Office had stated that any job given to a member of WAAC had to result in a man being released for frontline duties.

Queen Mary became the patron of the Corps and thus it was renamed Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC) on 9th April 1918. By 1918, nearly **40,000 women had enrolled** in the QMAAC. Of these, some 7000 served on the Western Front, the rest back in the United Kingdom. With the end of the war, the QMAAC was no longer of use in an army being cut down in size to peacetime levels and so the QMAAC was formally disbanded on 27th September 1921.

First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY)

When war was declared on 4th August 1914 one group of women was ready for the call. The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) came into being in 1907 as an all-women uniformed organisation, formed by a Boer War veteran to provide the 'missing link somewhere in the Ambulance Department.... each member of the Corps would receive… training… so that [they] could ride onto the battlefield to attend the wounded who might otherwise have been left to a slow death'.

In spite of official resistance from the British War Office, the first group of FANYs arrived in Calais on 27th October 1914. The Belgian Army, forced into retreat to the coast, welcomed them with open arms. In spite of often meeting hostility and male opposition to women being so near to the Front, for the next four years FANY ran hospitals and convalescent homes; drove and maintained ambulances, supply lorries and staff cars for the Belgian and French Armies. On **1st January 1916, they became the first women to drive officially for the British Army**, initially living in bathing huts on Calais beach.

The Adjutant-General asks the FANY if they can 'extend their activities'... (FANY archives)

The FANYS served all over the Western Front and were awarded many decorations for gallantry and service, including the Military Medal, Legion d'Honneur, Croix de Guerre and Ordre de Leopold II.

The FANY is still an all-women voluntary organisation which supports the civil and military authorities within the United Kingdom during major incidents and public events.

To find out more about the history of the FANY please visit http://www.fany.org.uk/

Carol - *Saki (Hector Hugh Monro), 1870-1916*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground,
A high-explosive shell came down
And mutton rained around.

© IWM Art Q 106251 - A half-length portrait of a young female Russian soldier serving with the Russian Women's 'Battalion of Death' in 1917

Did You Know...?

In 1917, Russia witnessed thousands of men deserting the ranks. In response, Maria Bochkareva persuaded the Russian Government to set up a women's unit...

...The Women's Battalion, the so-called 'Battalion of Death', was 2,000 strong in the beginning but decreased to just 250.

Women at War

Betty Stevenson

Died: 30.05.1918

Commemorated: Etaples Military Cemetery

Bertha 'Betty' Stevenson was born in York on 3rd September 1896. Betty's parents were activists of the **YMCA** and she became heavily involved, at a very young age.

In January 1916, one of Betty's aunts went to France to manage a YMCA Canteen in St Denis Hut, on the outskirts of Paris. Betty was keen to join her. At 19, she was considered too young but a month later she went anyway, paying her own expenses. She enjoyed the work, writing:

'We know how grateful the men are, and they know us now so well, I somehow feel it would be mean to leave them for a new place.'

Once her term at St Denis was completed, Betty returned to the UK but she was soon anxious to get back to France. In April 1917, she was **posted to Etaples** as a YMCA driver, responsible for transporting lecturers, concert parties and relatives from England visiting the wounded in hospital.

Betty was killed by an air raid the following year having stayed in the area to assist French refugees despite the danger.

She was given a military funeral and was **posthumously awarded the Croix de Guerre avec Palme by General Petain**, for courage and devotion to duty.

The personal inscription on her headstone reads simply, 'The Happy Warrior'.

Betty described Etaples in a letter to her father:

"I'm awfully fond of the river here. There is a bridge over it from which you can get the most wonderful view of everything. On one side the river mouth and the sea and the little fishing boats; the quay and the big sailor's crucifix, where the women pray when there is a storm at sea. The boats anchor quite near; and they look like something hazy and unreal, sitting on a shiny wet river; with every sail and mast and man reflected in the water. Behind them are houses - filthy and ramshackle, but with the sun warming their pink, white and grey roofs. Behind the houses again is the camp - the tents crawling up the hill like white snails, and more hills and pines behind them. The whole thing is so illogical, boats and fisherman on the one hand, and on the other, war."

Kathleen Adele Brennan

Died: 24.11.1918

Commemorated: Welford Road Cemetery, Leicester

Kathleen Adele Brennan was **born in Sydney** on 15th November 1882, the eldest of five children. On the outbreak of the First World War, it was agreed that while all five children wanted to serve, one girl and one boy would remain in Australia to look after their elderly parents, Solicitor William Francis Brennan and Elizabeth Mary Brennan.

Kathleen was able to go, and became a member of the Voluntary Aid Detachment with the Australian Red Cross.

She left Australia in September 1916 on the SS Osterley and on arrival in England was posted to the 5th Northern General Hospital in Leicester. She served there until November 1918, when she died from Septic Pericarditis following Influenza.

The coffin, which was covered with a Union Jack, was borne to the cemetery on a gun carriage, followed by a large procession of the Royal Army Medical Corps staff and V.A.D. nurses from North Evington and the base hospitals. The body was interred in the soldiers corner of the cemetery.

A party from **Glen Parva Barracks fired three volley's and the 'Last Post', was sounded by R.A.M.C. buglers.**

Agnes Florien Forneri

Died: 24.04.1918

Commemorated: Bramshott Military Cemetery

Agnes Florien Forneri was born 18th April 1881 in Belleville, Ontario, the third of six children of Richard Sykes Forneri, an Anglican Priest, and Kate McDermott.

NURSE FOLLOWS BROTHER

Daughter of Canon Forneri Dies Overseas—Son Killed in Action.

From Our Own Correspondent.

Kingston, April 27.—The death occured at Bramshott Canadian Hospital, England, on the 24th April of Nursing Sister Forneri, eldest daughter of Canon Forneri, of Kingston. She had been overseas a year and served for some time in France. Her brother, Lieut. D. A. Forneri, of Montreal, was killed in action a year ago.

Toronto Evening Telegram - April 27th, 1918

Agnes trained at the nursing school at the Lady Stanley Institute in Ottawa, and graduated in 1906.

Forneri volunteered for the Canadian Army Medical Corps in early 1917. Her brother David Alwyn was serving in France but unfortunately was killed in action one month before she reached England. She served **first at the Kitchener Military Hospital as a volunteer** in February 1917, and then at No.8 Canadian General Hospital at Saint-Cloud, a suburb of Paris.

In January 1918 Agnes fell ill with bronchitis, and returned to England for convalescence. She recovered, and returned to service at the No.12 Canadian General Hospital in Bramshott.

On 17th April 1918 she collapsed while on duty in the hospital due to a stomach haemorrhage. She received an operation, but died on 24th April from multiple peptic ulcers.

Women at War

Edith Cavell

Died: 12.10.1915

Commemorated: Norwich Cathedral & St Martins Place, London

© IWM (Q 15064B)

The daughter of a vicar with strong Anglican values, Norfolk born Edith trained to be a nurse relatively late in life but soon made a considerable contribution to the nursing profession and was praised for her commitment to patient care. After her training in London, she worked in various UK hospitals before being asked to nurse a sick child in Belgium. Her skills were noticed and she was invited to be the first Matron at Belgium's first nursing school and hospital.

At the outbreak of the First World War, Edith was visiting her mother in Norfolk and against her mother's wishes, returned to Belgium to help those injured during the conflict. Edith remained in Belgium working for the Red Cross and cared for both Allied and German injured soldiers. It was during this time that she started giving Allied soldiers shelter and helping them escape as part of the resistance movement. **After helping over 200 Allied troops escape to neutral Holland, Edith was betrayed and arrested**. She was tried along with 30 others for assisting the enemy. She was found guilty of treason and despite international pressure, was executed by firing squad on the 12th October 1915. The death sentence was only carried out on Edith and one other and **caused international outrage**, further shaping public opinion in Canada and the United States about entering the war.

Edith is perhaps most remembered for her last words to her chaplain the night before her execution; **"patriotism is not enough, I must have no hatred or bitterness to anyone"** the words inscribed on her memorial in St Martins Place, London.

After the war, her body was transferred from Belgium to the UK and she was given a state funeral in Westminster Abbey before her body was transferred to her final resting place at Norwich Cathedral.

Cavell Nurses Trust was established from public donations in response to Edith's execution in 1917 and exists as her legacy of caring and learning. For full details please visit www.cavellnursestrust.org

Drawing by Edith Cavell. With thanks to the Cavell Memorabilia of St Mary's Church, Swardeston

Did You Know...?

Flora Sandes was the only British woman to officially serve as a soldier in the First World War. At the outbreak of war she joined an ambulance unit in Serbia. The Serbian Army suffered heavy losses in 1915 and retreated into Albania, at which time Flora officially enrolled as a soldier with a Serbian regiment.

Reflections

Life for women changed drastically during the First World War. They were called upon to do jobs that were previously held by men and began to achieve a new status in the eyes of society. Here are two reflections on the experiences of women during the war:

Oh you criticise the clothes,
or lack of them, as worn
by members of the female sex
who rise at early dawn.
And carry on throughout the day
to help this stinking war.
Just try to think, a thing I feel
you've never done before.
We're sorry if our garb offends.
We do not like your smile
when you observe a skirt that reaches
to the knee only of our breeches.
We do not wear for choice, you see
these clothes utilitarian.
We hate our nails to be unkept,
our hair like a barbarian.

So do not blame us overmuch.
We're useful, we believe.
And for a precedent we show
the costume worn by Eve.
For when engaged in useful work
After 'the fall', they say
The clothing worn by Eve was not
What people wear today.

Diane Paynter

Diane M Paynter was an early and long serving FANY, Corps number 136.

She was a driver in Calais, France, and was made Lance-Corporal. She was Mentioned in Dispatches (MID) for bravery in 1918.

© Kate Charlesworth, Feeding a Suffragette by Force. 'Suffragettes campaigning for women's voting rights were at this time subject to arrest, violence and torture by forced feeding. As a cartoonist, I particularly dislike the misogyny of the anti-suffrage comic postcards published at the time – and I see them as direct ancestors of today's casual sexism and anonymous internet abuse.' Commissioned by 14-18NOW www.1418now.org.uk

Art & Artists

One of the unexpected benefits of the First World War was the large amount of funding suddenly made available to artists by the British Government. Public demand for information was high, and the Government responded by commissioning hundreds of artists - many of them fighting on the front lines - to depict the war as they saw it. The results were diverse and numerous.

Even though the British propaganda department was behind the commissionings, and many artists saw it as their duty to respond, the paintings and sculptures did not shrink from depicting the reality of war.

John Singer Sargent

Gassed, 1919

© IWM Art 1460

John Singer Sargent was born in Florence to American parents and began training in Paris in 1874 with the portraitist Carolus-Duran. John was a portrait painter and was known for his stunning, jarring landscapes.

In 1918 the British Government commissioned him to go to the front line of the First World War to paint a commemorative work of their troops in action. The result, Gassed, depicts **the aftermath of a mustard gas attack on the Western Front** in August 1918 as witnessed by the artist. Mustard gas was an indiscriminate weapon causing widespread injury and burns, as well as affecting the eyes.

John was commissioned by the British Government to contribute the central painting for a Hall of Remembrance for World War One. He was given the theme of 'Anglo-American co-operation' but was unable to find suitable subject matter and chose this scene instead.

Muirhead Bone

Château near Brie on the Somme, 1918

© IWM Art REPRO 000684 59

Muirhead Bone was apprenticed to an architect, but took evening classes at the Glasgow School of Art where he studied architecture and painting. He settled in London in 1901 and was the **first person to be appointed an Official War Artist** after lobbying hard for the scheme.

Muirhead served as a war artist with the Allied forces on the Western Front and also with the Royal Navy for a time. He arrived in France during the Battle of the Somme in 1916 and returned in 1917 where he took particular interest in depicting architectural ruins.

The nascent Vorticist movement turned its already surreal and brutal style to showing the horrors of the Western Front, with dark and disturbing results. It may not have been the British propaganda machine's top priority, but the honest, avant-garde nature of the works helped cast Britain as a leader in post-war liberal culture.

Like the poets, the variety of the work **reflects conflicted feelings towards the war**. Anna Airy depicts the step forward that the war was for women, while Percy Wyndham Lewis reminds us of the sacrifices.

Percy Wyndham Lewis

A Battery Shelled, 1919

© IWM Art 2747

Percy Wyndham Lewis came to England, from Canada, as a child and studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London from 1898-1901. In the years leading up to the First World War, Percy emerged as one of the chief figures in British avant-garde. He was a **founding member of the Vorticist movement**, an artistic movement that emphasised the upheaval brought by the machine age using aggressive, angular lines. The style draws on elements of Cubism and Futurism.

Lewis served as a battery officer in the Royal Garrison Artillery on the Western Front from 1915-17 and was an Official War Artist from 1917-18. His depiction here of counter-battery fire experienced by the artillerymen was therefore drawn from personal experience on the Western Front.

Anna Airy

Women Working in a Gas Retort House: South Metropolitan Gas Company, London, 1918

© IWM Art 2852

Anna Airy trained at the Slade with William Orpen and Augustus John and was one of the first women war artists employed by the Imperial War Museum in 1918. Although a well-respected female artist of her generation, the **committee imposed strict terms on her contract of employment**, which included their right to refuse a work without payment. She was commissioned to produce a series of works depicting typical scenes in munitions production and other aspects of heavy industry where women had taken over from men. **Anna painted her canvases on site, in awkward and at times dangerous conditions**.

Here women work on the gas retort process, where gas was produced from coal by burning it in the absence of air. It must have been a difficult place to work, not only for the women in the painting, but also the painter herself.

Facially Injured

Soldiers had to lift their heads above the trenches to see across the battlefield. This made them vulnerable to attack from an array of weapons and they often suffered serious injuries and wounds to the face and head as a result.

Facially Injured

The dressing stations and hospitals behind the lines on both sides at the Battle of the Somme (see page 10) had never before seen so many men with severe facial injuries. On both sides, governments were forced to bring together the most ingenious surgeons of the day and the early pioneers of plastic surgery to tackle the challenge.

On the Allied side in the early days of the war, the British New Zealander Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) surgeon, Harold Gillies, worked with Charles Auguste Valadier, a French-American dentist in Boulogne who had set up a small facial injury service, and the French surgeon, Hippolyte Morrestin, to invent new techniques for closing facial wounds and treating the loss of skin and tissue. On the German side, Fedor Krause, Jacques Joseph, August Lindemann and other surgical colleagues were facing similar challenges.

Gillies was shocked by the injuries he saw in the field and requested that the army set up their own plastic surgery unit. In June 1917, the new Queen's Hospital (later Queen Mary's Hospital) opened in Sidcup, Kent, in response to the huge number of facially-wounded soldiers. The hospital specialised in facial reconstruction. Here Gillies and his colleagues developed many techniques of plastic surgery. **More than 11,000 operations were performed on over 5,000 men mostly with facial injuries.**

Henry Tonks

In early 1916, Harold Gillies enlisted Henry Tonks, who had trained as a doctor and was Assistant Professor of Art at the Slade School of Art in London, to draw his patients at Aldershot Hospital and then later at Sidcup. Tonks was asked to produce diagrams of the operations so Gillies would be able to see his patients' injuries before and after surgery, and reflect on what the surgeons had done.

Tonks' pastels are the finest examples of medical imaging before the advent of medical photography but he viewed them as unacceptable for public view.

Henry Tonks, Portrait of a Wounded Soldier before Treatment [Deeks], pastel. © The Royal College of Surgeons of England, Tonks Collection no. 01.

Henry Tonks, Portrait of a Wounded Soldier after Treatment, 1916–17 [Deeks], pastel. © The Royal College of Surgeons of England, Tonks Collection no. 02.

Post-surgery

In Britain, even after Gillies and his team had done their best to treat these soldiers' damaged faces with the new plastic surgery methods, their faces were almost completely hidden from view:

- Mirrors were removed from the wards where they were treated
- They were physically, psychologically and socially isolated from other patients, the world beyond the hospital's extensive grounds, and also from their families who sometimes, it is reported, did not want to see them
- Prosthetic masks were developed to cover their damaged facial features
- In spite of journalistic claims for near-miraculous restoration through modern surgical methods, unofficial censorship in the British press ensured images of facially wounded veterans were not shown - whereas amputees were celebrated as war heroes.

British veterans who had sustained facial injuries often returned home and resumed their pre-war occupation or worked in a new trade or acquired new skills through the extensive rehabilitation facilities at Sidcup.

Many thousands of French soldiers were also facially wounded in the trenches. **They went on to form an organisation called les Gueules Cassées (Shattered Faces)**. Their charity appeals, which included images of soldiers with facial injuries, attracted huge funds with which they bought and established a grand house offering members treatment and convalescence.

Among the thousands of facially wounded French soldiers was Gaston Julia, originally from Algeria, and conscripted at 21 yrs. Gaston's facial injury destroyed his nose. His numerous surgeries were unsuccessful and he wore a leather cover over the part of his face where his nose had been. Gaston had a long and successful career as a top mathematician.

©IWM (Art.IWM ART 1918¬) - H. Tonks, Saline Infusion: An incident in the British Red Cross Hospital, Arc-en-Barrois, 1915. A patient undergoing a saline infusion on a hospital ward in northern France.

Gaston Julia (right), with German mathematician and colleague, Gustav Herglotz

Final Battles of the War

The last 18 months of the First World War witnessed a number of events that, combined, led to the end of the war.

By the end of 1916, Russian soldiers were greatly demoralised. The troops were badly treated, ill-equipped, poorly led, starving and the Germans were in full control of the Eastern Front. **In early 1917, a revolution overthrew Tsar Nicholas II**, however the new Government continued the war. There was a second revolution in October of the same year which brought the Bolshevik Party to Power. The Bolsheviks agreed a ceasefire with Germany and signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918.

The German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare did not go according to plan. It failed to knock Britain out of the war and although the United States of America (USA) remained neutral, public opinion began to turn against Germany when German U-boats started to sink American ships. **USA subsequently declared war in April 1917**; however US troops did not see large scale fighting until May 1918.

© IWM Art PST 6032 – US propaganda poster

Germany sought to capitalise on Russia's departure from the war by launching a major offensive against Britain and France on the Western Front before US reinforcements arrived. The Germans made some advances but it was not enough.

On 18th July 1918 the Allies, now supported by the US and led by General Foch, coordinated a series of counterattacks against the German advance on the River Marne and successfully began to push them back eastwards.

The Allied troops continued to push the German army eastwards at the Battle of Amiens from 8th August. **By 5th October the Allies had breached the Hindenburg Line** which had been built by the Germans as a fall-back defensive position. Meanwhile the Royal Air Force launched a strategic bombing campaign on Germany and the Royal Navy supported land operations with a series of raids on the German-occupied ports of Zeebrugge and Ostend.

Elsewhere, threatened by starvation and internal disorder, Bulgaria, Turkey and Austria-Hungary all sued for peace. This left Germany isolated and thus the Kaiser and the German High Command recognised that the war was lost.

The Allies recaptured towns and cities lost in 1914 and by early November 1918 they recaptured Mons, where they had fired the first shots of the war in August 1914.

© IWM Art 871 – Charles John de Lacy, The 'Vindictive' at Zeebrugge: The storming of Zeebrugge Mole. A high stone sea-defence wall ('mole') on the left borders a choppy sea. In the centre of the painting lies a cruiser, flying the British naval ensign

Did You Know...?

St George's Day Raid: The plan to block German access to the North Sea at Zeebrugge and Ostend called for an attack on the German mole, which provided shelter for U-boats in the harbour and protected access to their inland base.

At the same time three British ships were deliberately sunk in the harbour to block access. The raid did not succeed in blocking the submarine canal but was hailed as a daring and courageous attack, raising public morale in Britain.

After the Dust Settled

The First World War officially came to an end when the Armistice, an agreement to cease the fighting, was signed on 11th November 1918. Delegates from 32 countries met in Paris in January 1919 to negotiate a peace treaty that was hoped to 'end all wars'.

An agreement, **the Treaty of Versailles, was finally reached and signed by Germany and the Allies on 28th June 1919** at the Palace of Versailles, in France. The treaty included a number of controversial clauses; Germany was forced to admit to full responsibility for the war, pay reparations for damage caused and dissolve her empire.

The League of Nations, an international organisation, was established at the Paris Peace Conference and its primary goal was to maintain world peace. But 21 years later the world would go to war once again.

The Great War left the world devastated; more than **65 million men fought of whom 8 million were killed, 2 million died of illness and 21.2 million were wounded, and 7.8 million were taken prisoner or missing**. This scale of loss had never been experienced before.

The poppy has become the symbol of those killed in the war; the scarlet corn poppy grows naturally in conditions of disturbed earth throughout Western Europe. After the war, the poppy was one of the only plants to grow on what were once the battlefields of the Western Front.

The 11th November is now globally recognised as Remembrance Day, in which a two minute silence is held at 11am to commemorate the anniversary of Armistice Day and all those that were killed or injured during the First World War.

© IWM Art 4208 – Herbert A. Olivier, The Terms of the Armistice. A view inside a large ornately decorated room in the palace at Versailles, with senior military personnel and politicians sitting around a large rectangular table.

A New Society

Before the **Representation of the People Act** was passed in 1918, only 60% of men over 21 were able to vote. The Act gave the vote to women over the age of 30 and all men over the age of 21. This inclusion almost trebled the number of voters in Britain from 7.7 million to 21.4 million.

Life in Britain changed dramatically during and after the First World War with previously under-represented groups, namely women and the working class, becoming more vocal and organised. The breakdown in class and gender divisions was spurred on by the role women played during the war and the cross-class experiences of trench warfare.

The territories of Europe changed radically after the war ended in 1919

Although there was not a swift return to normality in Britain after the war, with unemployment reaching its highest point in 1921 since records began and many women forced to cede their jobs to returning soldiers, the British population led much healthier lives after the war.

Did You Know...?

On the morning of 21st November 1918, HMS Cardiff met the German High Seas Fleet. Its ships were led towards the grand fleet and surrendered. The German ships anchored at Scapa Flow and waited while the negotiations took place at Versailles.

Rather than allow the Allies to seize their ships once the treaty was signed the German crews decided to start sinking them on 21st June 1919.

Modern War Art & Poetry

The First World War was commonly referred to as the war to end all wars; unfortunately this was not the case. There have been numerous wars since, many of which are still being fought today. For centuries artwork and poetry have been used to depict and record the events and feelings evoked during periods of war. Below are modern reflections and responses to the First World War and modern warfare.

Philip Larkin

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Philip Larkin was **born 4 years after the First World War** and his poem 'MCMXIV' ('1914') was inspired by old photographs of men queuing up to join the Army. Phillip became one of England's most famous poets in the late twentieth century. He was not a 'war poet', but the fact he wrote this one poem so long after the war had ended shows how the First World War continued to obsess and fascinate people. It has been described as 'a watershed in British history', or a moment that set history and what people believed in on to a different track. Perhaps the fact that a famous 'modern' poet felt a drive to write about this war illustrates how deeply and lastingly it is set in our culture.

MCMXIV - *Philip Larkin, 1922-85*

Those long uneven lines
Standing as patiently
As if they were stretched outside
The Oval or Villa Park,
The crowns of hats, the sun
On moustached archaic faces
Grinning as if it were all
An August Bank Holiday lark;

And the shut shops, the bleache
Established names on the sunblinds,
The farthings and sovereigns,
And dark-clothed children at play
Called after kings and queens,
The tin advertisements
For cocoa and twist, and the pubs
Wide-open all day—

Never such innocence,
Never before or since,
As changed itself to past
Without a word – the men
Leaving the gardens tidy,
The thousands of marriages,
Lasting a little while longer:
Never such innocence again.

© Caroline de Peyrecave, Major James Lyon.

© Ralph Steadman - A contemporary cartoonist's response to the First World War Commissioned by 14-18NOW www.1418now.org.uk

Combat Stress

A number of veterans leave the Armed Forces suffering from mental health conditions. War can cause depression, anxiety and, in some cases, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The charity Combat Stress was founded after the First World War to help traumatised veterans cope with their condition through a rehabilitation programme. Almost a century later, Combat Stress has helped more than 100,000 veterans rebuild their lives through specialist treatment and practical support. Creative expression through art and poetry can be used as an outlet to express feelings of trauma, fear, confusion or loss. Here is a collection of poetry and artwork exploring the effects of modern warfare produced by British veterans that Combat Stress has helped.

To find out more about Combat Stress please visit www.combatstress.org.uk

COMBAT STRESS
THE VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY

Peace and Quiet - *Clive Sutton*

Sitting here amongst the trees,
Listening out to hear something – But what!
Have I found some quiet place of England
Or is it somewhere far away from this noise and all the people and life
But no, I have not
Why can't I be alone?
Why can't I see the peace that surrounds me?
You have found your peace, amongst u
We do not speak, but we hear
All around you
Oh you fool, can't you see where we are
Not in mind but in spirit
Now I sit among you
Yes I can see
Yes I have my little part of peace and quiet
In my England.

It's a common feature of war poetry for the soldier to think of home – a place of safety and hope – in terms of the actual countryside or physical landscape.

Comradeship, or the friendship between men and women who shared the risks of war, is one of the most common themes in war poetry. Men often said that they were fighting not for their country or for hatred of the enemy, but for their comrades.

I Sit - *Combat Stress Veteran*

I sit and wonder why
Why I sit and cry
Emotions crawling from the deep
Unto the heart
Heart ache for the few left behind
Guilt unable to help brothers in arms
Despair and grief an unhonourable death
Taken for no reason or benefit to anyone
'Meaningless'
I miss you all and long to see you again in the time after.

Combat Stress

Many soldiers were more affected by the death of their friends than by fear of their own death. In the First World War, a number of soldiers even went as far as to think it was 'unfair' that their friends had died and they had survived.

It's one of the great questions of war:
why them and not me?

This is by a soldier in a modern war. The idea of 'shell shock' – men whose minds were as wounded by combat as their bodies – was invented in the First World War. Before that, and earlier in the war, those suffering from combat stress were often simply accused of cowardice.

On That Day - *Ian Warner*

I can remember that day, like it was yesterday
Although the rest of my life seem to be a bit of a haze
The radio crackles and voices come from within
To tell of an accident, not knowing where to begin
Quick lad, a stern voice says to me
Grab all your kit and be as quick as can be
Where are we going, we all seem to ask
Brace yourself lads, this is a horrible task
A Lynx has gone down 16 clicks from here
All of a sudden I came over quite queer
We boarded a chopper as quick as could be
To fly us off to this devastating scene
All I can hear are the cries out loud
Does this explain why I can't cope with crowds?
The distinct smell in the air of aviation fuel
Why is it, that nature has to be so cruel?
Twenty one years on I can still hear the screams
The whole situation comes alive in my dreams
So here I am in the arms of Combat Stress
To try and make sense of this horrible mess
I know deep down I will always remember
But I pray that it won't be my soul I surrender!!!

Nearly There - *Jim Gunn*

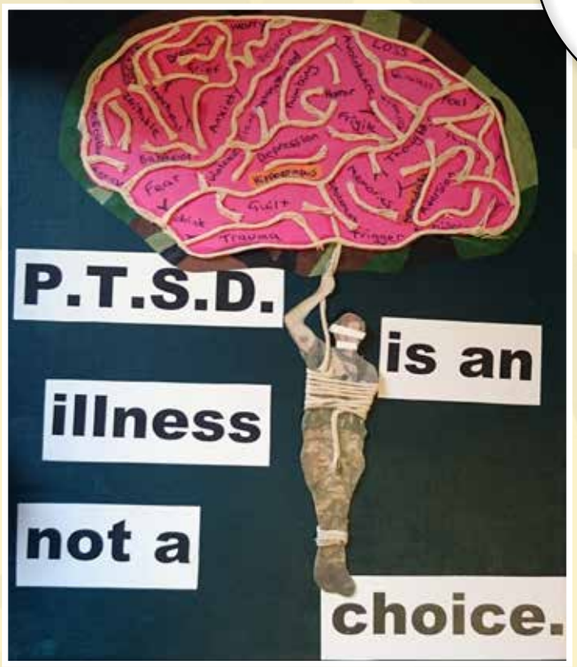
Nearly home at last
It's been a long six months
From the train window I can see the castle
Nearly home
Now, I can see my home
I open the front door
And mum is there
Hello son, your room is ready
I open the curtains and see the old lavender bush
Its gentle smell makes me feel safe again,
It's nice to be home.

Remembrance - *Peter Biggs*

Remembrance time to recall
Those who gave all
Soldiers Sailor Airmen
And all that answered the call
Mothers Fathers Lovers
Sons Daughters and Brothers
Sisters Wife's Girlfriends
Boyfriends and all
Whose life we cannot recall
Let's not forget those who
Came back without all
Those brave Boys and Girls
That now face it all in the
Hope to bring peace to us all
Our duty is to remember them all
Those that give freedom to us all.

This writer is typical of many in that he takes comfort from the fact that he was fighting for freedom. Do you think German soldiers thought they were fighting for freedom? How do you think they justified their fighting?

Combat Stress Veteran -
PTSD: Like being a T-Rex… trying to change the bed sheets…



Combat Stress Veteran -
PTSD is an illness not a choice

Cases of PTSD were first documented during the First World War when soldiers developed shell shock as a result of the harrowing conditions in the trenches. However, the condition was not officially recognised as a mental health condition until 1980.

How do you think your daily life would change after returning home from serving in a war?

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Resources

Fiction

Bullets & Billets	Bruce Bairnsfather
War Game	Michael Foreman
Private Peaceful	Michael Morpurgo
The Best Christmas Present in the World	Michael Morpurgo
War Horse	Michael Morpurgo
The Language of Doves	Rosemary Wells
Road To War: A First World War Girl's Diary	Valerie Wilding

Non-Fiction

Eyewitness World War I	Simon Adams
The Usbourne Introduction to the First World War	Ruth Brocklehurst and Henry Brook
Horrible Histories: Frightful First World War	Terry Deary
The British Soldier of the First World War	Peter Doyle
Animals at War	Isabel George and Rob Lloyd Jones
The Unknown Soldier	Linda Granfield
The First World War: A Very Short Introduction	Michael Howard
Art from the First World War	Imperial War Museum
My First World War	Daniel James
The World War I	Chris McNab
Nursing Through Shot and Shell: A Great War Nurse's Story	Dr Vivien Newman
We Also Served: the Forgotten Women of the First World War	Dr Vivien Newman
World War One: A Very Peculiar History	Jim Pipe
Tommy Rot: WWI Poetry They Didn't Let You Read	John Sadler and Rosie Serdiville
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Ours: The Jersey Pals in the First World War	http://www.thejerseypals.com/
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