

# **The National Tramway Museum**

## **Conversations and Memories**

### **A First World War Teachers' Resource**

#### **Primary**



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## Introduction

This pack provides background information and resources to enable teachers to develop and deliver a cross curricular First World War Project. The initial focus is the sculptures 'Conversations and Memories', which are to be found on our Woodland Walk.

These sculptures were commissioned as part of the Museum's First World War commemorations and provide a lasting legacy to the tramway men, women and their families whose lives were lost or changed by the war.

International, award winning artists Musson + Retallick designed and constructed the five pieces using rail from our stockyard made during the years of the First World War. The artists worked with the Museum, schools, volunteers, visitors and the local community to develop the design for the sculpture. Artefacts from the collection were used to inspire and inform, including photographs, stories, engineering drawings, uniforms and ticket machines.

Each sculpture tells a different story and aims to encourage discussion. Who does this represent? What are these people feeling? How does it make you feel?

The Pack can be used as part of a local study with links to the stories of people in your area, or as a stand-alone cross curricular topic.



## Aims

- To encourage critical thinking and enable reflection.
- To gain an understanding of life and conditions for those living through the war.
- To understand historical concepts such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance and use them to make connections.



## Curriculum Links

### KS1

**History** –significant historical events, people and places in their own locality.

**Art and Design** – Use experiences and ideas as the inspiration for artwork. Share ideas using drawing, painting and sculpture.

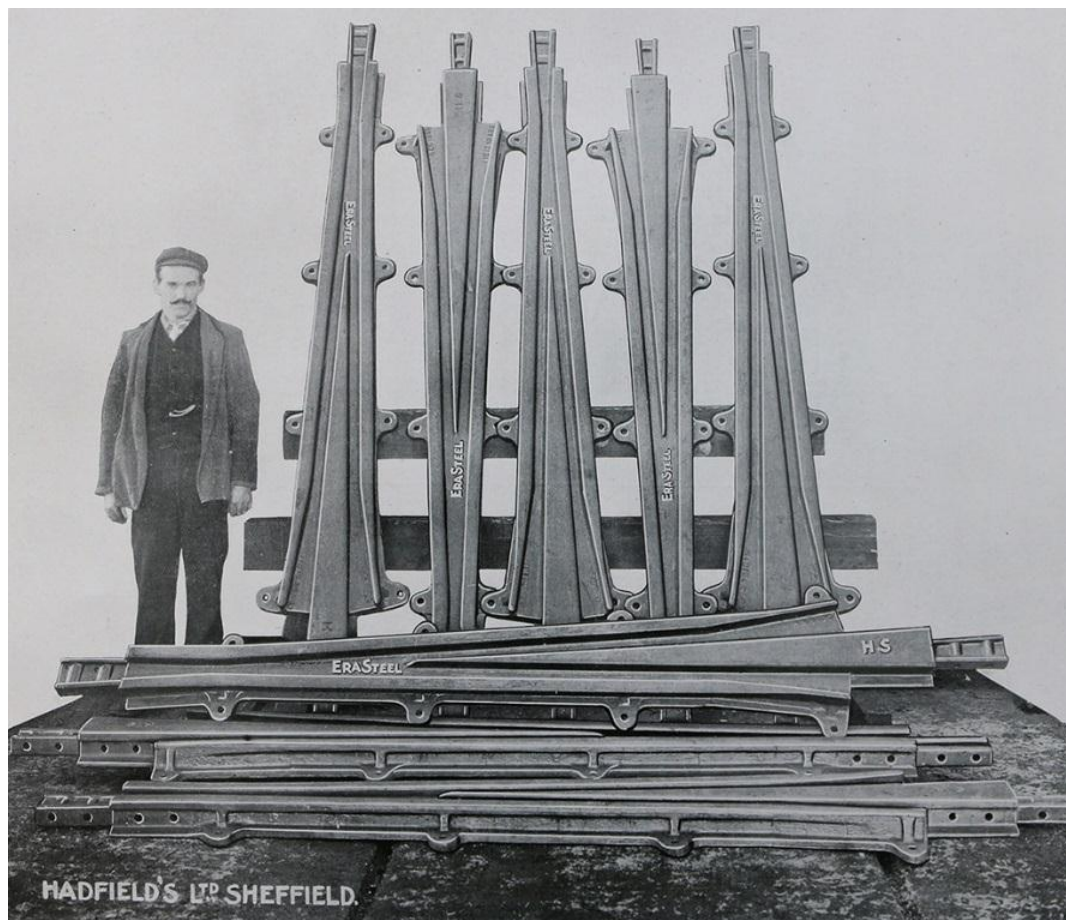
**English** – Write narrative diaries, write lists, present information. Engage in meaningful discussions in all areas of the curriculum. Listen and learn a wide range of subject specific vocabulary. Debate issues and formulate well-constructed points.

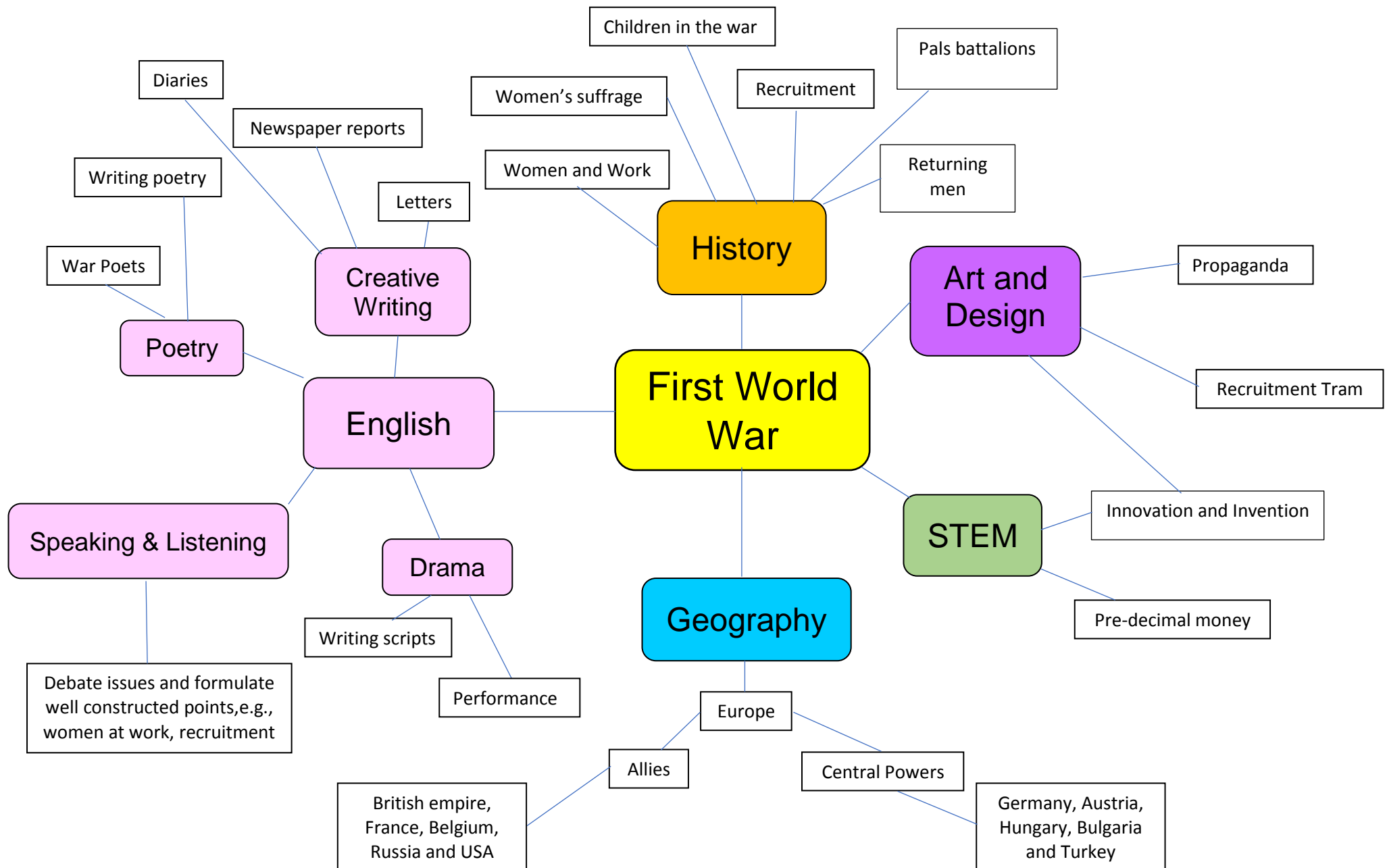
### KS2

**History** – a local history study. A study of a theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066

**Art and Design** – Use experiences, other subjects across the curriculum and ideas as inspiration for artwork.

**English** – Write stories that contain mythical, legendary or historical characters or events. Write letters. Write stories, letters, scripts and fictional biographies inspired by reading across the curriculum. Write in a journalistic style. Learn by heart and perform a significant poem. Engage in meaningful discussions in all areas of the curriculum. Listen and learn a wide range of subject specific vocabulary. Debate issues and formulate well-constructed points.





## Background to the First World War

The start of the war was triggered by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir to the throne of Austria and Hungary, and his wife Sophie, on 28 June, 1914. A Serbian terrorist group, the Black Hand, planned the assassination, which was carried out by a Bosnian man, Gavrilo Princip.

Although the assassination was the immediate cause of the war, there were many underlying reasons. Differences over foreign policy and a series of events throughout Europe resulted in numerous disputes, threats and insults. Despite making alliances to maintain a balance of power, countries were assembling their armed forces, keen to build empires and regain lost territories from previous conflicts. As each country spent more on their armed forces the relationships between them deteriorated.

A network of alliances developed across Europe between 1870 and 1914 creating two major power affiliations, each group of countries agreed to defend one another if any of them went to war on a country from the other group.

The two alliances were 'The Central Powers' (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) and 'The Allies' (British Empire, France, Belgium, Russia and USA). For Britain, the First World War began on 4 August 1914 when Germany invaded Belgium and ended on 11 November 1918. The formal peace treaty was signed in 1919.



**First World War Facts**

- The British Government asked for 100,000 volunteers to join the Army at the start of the war. 750,000 applied in the first month.
- 70 million military personnel were deployed worldwide, 60 million of them Europeans.
- 58,000 men lost their lives on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.
- More than 100 countries were involved, those not directly involved in the fighting provided hospitals, prisoner of war camps or were producing supplies such as munitions.
- The Victoria Cross, the highest military award, was awarded 628 times in the First World War. Recipients included Jack Cornwell, who was just 16 when he remained at his battle post despite suffering fatal injuries.
- It is estimated that around 250,000 British boys lied about their age in order to join up. The youngest, Sidney Lewis, was just 12 and was duly sent home.
- Average life expectancy in the trenches was six weeks and was considerably lower if you were a junior officer or a stretcher-bearer.
- 65 million men from 30 countries fought in the First World War. More than nine million fighting men were killed during the conflict, one third of them through disease. At least 750,000 of these were British, and over 188,000 were from British colonies.
- 1 million horses were taken into battle. British families gave their dogs to the army to act as messengers.
- Over 500,000 children lost their fathers.
- 9 out of 10 British soldiers survived.
- Following the war an influenza pandemic spread around the world, by May 1919 the virus had killed over 220,000 in the UK and over 50 million (although no one can be sure of exact numbers) around the world, more in one year than had been killed over the four years of war. No one knew where it came from or why it suddenly went away.



## The Sculpture Stories

### Lilian the Salvationist



Lilian Parker was a tram conductress on the Burton and Ashby Tramway. She had joined the company during the First World War, as many women did, taking over the jobs of the men who had left to fight.

Lilian was a member of the Salvation Army and a well-loved Sunday school teacher.

On Wednesday, 8 October 1919 Lilian was conductress on the tram travelling from Burton-on-Trent to Ashby. As the tram was ascending a steep hill it started slipping back. The driver applied the brake and Lilian rushed down from the top deck to apply the brake on the rear platform. The tramcar overturned and she was trapped underneath. She had a leg amputated in hospital but died six days later.

Lilian's grave was erected by public subscription as a tribute to her personality and courage. The poem below was read out at her memorial service.

### The Heroine of Newhall

'Twas early one morning – a tram  
ascending Bearwood Hill,  
When the slippery state of the metals  
brought the tram to standing still.  
Then down the steep descent at once the  
tram began to move,  
And quickened pace so rapidly, as these  
few lines will prove.

If Lillian had so desired, herself she might  
have saved,  
By springing from the step – but no, 'twas  
duty that she craved.  
Inside the car she hurried, and threw out  
sand with haste,  
To save the tram if possible – no time she had to waste.



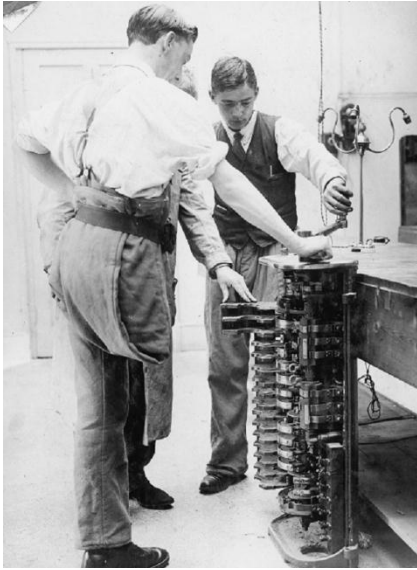
The tram down to the bottom crashed, as though by lightening speed,  
And at the wall it came to grief, in spite of Lillian's deed.  
The children standing saw it, with its weight of violence thrown,  
A sight they never will forget, when youth and prime have flown.

To all the maids of Newhall, who at times may slothful grow,  
While gazing at the monument, respect you sure can show,  
By catching up the duty thread, and weaving it with care.  
Procrastination stealeth time – Yield not to it one share.

When round the fire at eve you sit, and lights are dim and low,  
And children ask you for a tale which will a moral show,  
Forget not then Miss Parker, who did in duty fall,  
While acting as conductress on the tramline from Newhall.



## The Engineers and Apprentice



The inspiration for this group came from the engineering drawings of William Edgar Allen and Michael Holroyd-Smith, and the plight of injured returning soldiers. The tall figures to the rear represent the engineers and the smaller figure to the front a disabled soldier retraining as an apprentice engineer.

William Edgar Allen (1837-1915) was educated in Paris as a young boy. He later spent time in Germany, Holland, Spain, Portugal and Italy. He founded a steel works, Edgar-Allen and Company, in 1868 in Sheffield using his knowledge of European business to build the company. His philanthropy provided the Edgar Allen Library for the University of Sheffield in 1909 and the Edgar Allen Institute for medico-mechanical treatment in 1911.

The Institute was originally intended to treat local steelworkers and miners, but during the war was used to help rehabilitate injured soldiers returning from the battlefields.

Michael Holroyd Smith (1847- 1937) was a notable engineer and inventor and contemporary of Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell. His interests and inventions included automobile engines, electric traction for tramways and aeronautics. During the First World War he patented designs for military defence

## Soldiers waiting

What are they waiting for? Where have they been? What have they seen? How do they feel?



This sculpture was inspired by the Tramway 'Pals' regiments recruited in many towns and cities across the country.

The idea that men would be more likely to enlist if they could do so with their friends or work colleagues led to the introduction of 'Pals' regiments. This proved incredibly successful as the country was gripped by a wave of patriotic enthusiasm. There were tramway battalions, football battalions, cyclists and many more.

The great drawback of this recruitment campaign was that those that went to war together often died together, sometimes wiping out large numbers of the men in a community and concentrating the effect on those at home.

## The Family



Who is missing? Will their father, husband, brother come home?

These figures were inspired by the story of Private Thomas Whitham, a Burnley tramway worker awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery in singlehandedly disarming a German machine gun post.

There was an official celebration was for Thomas in Burnley Town Hall. The Mayor presented Thomas with an inscribed pocket watch in a packed hall. His local church gave him an inscribed Bible, a silver loving-cup, a clock and brasses. His wife, Fedora, received a silver tea and coffee service, and the children were given money to be invested for their future. Thomas, who believed he had done no more than his duty, was overwhelmed.

On 19 October, 1917 Thomas received his medal from King George V Buckingham Palace.

Life after the War was hard for Thomas, lack of work and poverty forced him to sell his Victoria Cross to provide for his family. While cycling in Cumbria searching for work, he crashed, cutting his head badly. Ignoring advice to rest he carried on. Thomas disappeared in August 1923, and a distraught Fedora believed his accident had caused memory loss. In May 1924 she appealed for any news of him in the local paper. With no income she had returned to live with her father. Thomas was found in Liverpool, unable to account for his disappearance or where he had been.



Extreme poverty contributed to his death in October 1924, aged just 36.

Burnley Town Council managed to retrieve his medal and it was on top of his coffin when he was buried with full military honours. It is now on display in Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum.

## Ernest Taylor



Ernest Taylor was born in Crich in 1886. When he was 15 he was working as a gardener in Worksop.

By 1905 he had moved to Leeds where he enlisted in the army with the Royal Horse Artillery. Ernest served for three years then remained as an army reservist. On leaving the army he became a tram conductor with Leeds City Tramways. As a reservist he would have been one of the first to be called up when war was declared, leaving his wife and job behind.

Ernest served under enemy fire in 1914 and eventually rose to the rank of Bombardier.

After the war Ernest returned home to his family and the Leeds City Tramways where he was still working in 1939. Ernest died in 1962, aged 76.

# **Activities and Discussion Points**



## Introduction

This pack aims to support and supplement existing curriculum teaching materials and resources through snapshots of real people and their experience of war. It is intended to support pupil's critical thinking and personal reflection by developing an understanding of the issues and dilemmas facing people caught up in conflict.

Activities are divided into topics as they intentionally overlap subject areas to be truly cross curricular. The activities are not prescriptive allowing teachers to adapt them to the needs of their own pupils, or to use as a starting point for more in-depth work or research. By their nature, some topics are more suited to KS2 and all need to be treated sensitively with regard to the children's understanding.

Pupils should be encouraged to consider their feelings about the different aspects of involvement and how they would have reacted and be involved. It may help for them to connect to one person's story; this could be one of the sculpture stories, a known historical figure or someone local to the school that they can research. They should be given plenty of opportunities to discuss and reflect, using evidence from the resources and their discussions to support their opinions and conclusions. Using a question grid such as the one below for each topic can help the children's thinking and research.

	Is?	Did?	Was?	Could?	If?
What					
Where					
Who					
Why					
How					

## Women, Work and Suffrage

Women weren't allowed to join the armed forces, but the war still changed their lives dramatically. Before the war women were seen as home makers, with work outside the home mostly limited to domestic service, teaching or nursing.

With so many men fighting abroad, women began taking on their working roles. Millions worked in munition factories, engineering, transport, farming and more. Many men thought women wouldn't be able to do the work as well as men or would enjoy the freedom of work outside the home too much!

Before the war women were campaigning for the right to vote, but when war was declared the war effort took priority and the campaign was put on hold. Women had to wait until 1918 before they gained the right to vote and even then, only women over 30.

Once the war was over women were expected to return to their unpaid jobs in the home and the returning men would go back to the jobs they had before the war and the munition factories were no longer needed.

- *What roles did women usually do? What roles did women take on during the war? Was their pay the same as the men who had been doing the same job?*
- *Some women didn't do paid work, but took on volunteer roles – what did they do?*
- *What happened when the war was over?*

- *How did employers feel about women replacing men? Discuss the War Cabinet Committee Statement. The Statement claims that women were not as competent as men. Does this statement fit the data?*
- *What jobs do the women you know do? Were these jobs available to women at the beginning of the 20th century?*
- *Do you think attitudes to women working changed during WW1? How? Do you think women's war work helped women over 30 get the vote after the war?*

## Recruitment and Propaganda

Men were encouraged to feel excited about fighting for their country. It was an adventure, they could fight beside their friends and colleagues and it would soon be over. Women were urged to persuade men to join up and to join the war effort themselves.

As the war went on recruitment campaigns changed from encouraging men to do their patriotic duty, to making those that didn't feel ashamed or guilty. To begin with volunteers came forward willingly, but it was soon clear more men were needed to fill the ranks.

Many boys lied about their age. Some were found out and sent home, others died fighting at the front. Recruitment Officers often turned a blind eye if a boy was keen and fit. Once conscription was brought in the number of underage recruits dropped dramatically.

The Military Service Act was passed in January 1916 calling up all medically fit, single men between 18 and 41 years, unless they were widowers with children or members of the clergy. Within a few months conscription was extended to include married men.

Exemption could be granted by the Military Service Tribunal under four grounds:

- someone engaged in work, or being trained for work deemed to be in the national interests
- if serious hardship would ensue due to financial or business obligations or domestic position
- ill health or infirmity
- conscientious objection

Those exempted carried papers and badges to prove their exemption. This was vital – men remaining at home needed to demonstrate they were supporting the war effort.

- *What did the men believe they were fighting for? To preserve a way of life? Freedom? Justice? Duty? Honour? Love of their country? Fear of being left behind? To make their families proud?*
- *Why do you think they volunteered? Why do you think so many underage boys volunteered? What were the consequences of not fighting?*
- *Why do you think it was important for those exempt from fighting to carry proof? Can you relate this to any situations today?*
- *Research the use of white feathers.*

## Propaganda

What is Propaganda? *'Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.'* (Oxford English Dictionary)

The War Propaganda Bureau was established in 1914 to coordinate propaganda at home and abroad. Well-known authors, including Arthur Conan-Doyle, John Buchan and HG Wells, were recruited to write articles and pamphlets that endorsed government policy.

- *Research some posters from the first world War. What images/wording was used? And how do they make people feel? Lies about the enemy were common, why do you think this was allowed?*

- *Design a poster or write a newspaper article to encourage recruitment to the armed forces.*
- *Find out more about the authors that were recruited to write propaganda.*

### Recruitment Trams

Recruitment trams were used in many towns and cities. The trams were decorated with posters, flags, lights and banners and gave free rides to Town Halls and council buildings where men could sign up.

Many of the recruitment trams promoted Pals Regiments and encouraged groups of men to join up together.

- *Design a recruitment tram to encourage men to enlist. How are vehicles used for advertising now?*
- *Do you think seeing a recruitment tram would encourage men to enlist?*

### PALS Regiments

Two weeks into the war Lieutenant General Sir Henry Rawlinson put it to Kitchener that men would be more likely enlist if they were fighting alongside their friends and colleagues. This campaign was successful beyond anything the government imagined.

- *Why do you think this campaign was so successful?*
- *What do you think the impact was on the soldiers' home towns?*
- *What do you think the impact was on the soldiers when their friends and colleagues were killed or injured?*

### Conscientious Objectors

Conscientious objectors were men who believed that war was wrong and refused to work in the armed forces on moral and religious grounds.

Many joined the Non-Combatant Corps working at the front as stretcher bearers, earning a great deal of respect from their arms bearing colleagues. Others worked in roles considered of national importance such as farming or in hospitals and some volunteered for the Friends Ambulance Units in France, aiding all victims no matter what side they were fighting on.

Richmond Castle in North Yorkshire has researched the graffiti left by imprisoned conscientious objectors during the First World War:

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/richmond-castle/richmond-graffiti/cell-block-graffiti/>

Read the stories of some of the men:

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/richmond-castle/history/c-o-stories/>

- *Do you think these men were traitors to their country? Do you think they were cowards? Can you relate what they did to any present-day activists?*
- *How do you feel about the way these men were treated by the authorities?*
- *What do you feel passionate about? What in the world is worth preserving? Big things that concern the whole planet? Small things that matter to your town, family, friends, you? Can you rank these in order of importance?*
- *What can you do about the things you feel strongly about?*

### Children

Everyone was expected to 'do their bit' for the war effort. Children wanted to support their fathers and brothers away at the front. Many joined their mothers working in factories or on farms. School leaving age was 12, but many younger children were encouraged to divide their time between



school and work. Others looked after younger siblings, did housework and joined the long queues for food.

They were also involved in fundraising and collecting. Blankets and books were either sent to the front or sold, scrap metal was collected to be recycled and conkers were gathered to help in the production of explosives.

Scouts assisted with air raid duties and trained as fire fighters. They guarded railway lines, reservoirs and coastline and learned to shoot so that they could defend the country if required.

Girl Guides knitted socks and scarves for soldiers and learned first aid, to assist the injured following air raids. They also carried messages for the Ministry of Defence, initially a role given to the Scouts who were discovered to be unable to keep secrets!

Over 500,000 children lost their fathers and many lost brothers, uncles and cousins. The emotional impact of the war was hard on young people who struggled to understand the reasons behind it. It was also difficult for them to deal with returning fathers and brothers who were often physically and mentally very different men to those they knew before the war.

- *How would you feel about working twelve-hour shifts, six days a week at 12 years old?*
- *What do you think children felt about the war?*
- *Do you think it was right for Scouts to be trained to use guns?*

## News

Information about what was happening on the battlefields was spasmodic and often far from accurate or up to date. There was no television or social media to bring news and newspaper reports avoided describing the awful conditions and loss of life, focussing instead on patriotism and success.

The Defence of the Realm Act forbade the press to report anything 'liable to cause alarm and despondency', so journalists ensured stories emphasised Allied success and understated failures.

To begin with the press were not allowed to report from the front, relying on the Government Press Bureau which passed on little information, so journalists struggled to fill their columns. Later official war correspondents were recruited under military control. Official photographers and cameramen followed, providing visual resources for newspapers and newsreels for cinemas. Censorship ensured that much was not reported.

Families and soldiers relied on letters to exchange news and soldiers could receive parcels from home containing food, tobacco and warm clothing. Letters were censored to prevent tactical information being accidentally disclosed.

- *Why was censorship important?*
- *Why do you think the government wanted to make sure the press only reported success?*

## War Artists

Official war artists were recruited by the War Propaganda Bureau to produce propaganda through posters, leaflets and cartoons. Later they portrayed and recorded the experience of war in a way that photographs, newsreels and the written word could not. By 1918 the war artists scheme was run by the British War Memorials Committee to produce art that would be part of the remembrance and commemoration of the war.

Some artists objected to the censorship regarding what they portrayed but they produced some of the most descriptive and emotional images of what was actually happening on the Western Front and beyond, which is now part of the Imperial War Museum's collection.

- *What do you think of the paintings? How do they make you feel about war?*

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/british-art-of-the-first-world-war>

### **Dazzle ships**

One of Germany's most feared and effective weapons was its submarine fleet, U-boats, which were destroying British cargo ships.

Norman Wilkinson, a marine artist, came up with an ingenious solution: Instead of trying to hide ships, make them stand out.

The ships' hulls were painted with irregular abstract shapes and patterns which made them visually confusing, making it difficult to tell the ship's size, speed, distance and direction when looking through a periscope.

- *Research dazzle patterns. Try painting a dazzle image.*

## **Innovation and Invention**

Many ground-breaking and life enhancing inventions are born of war. The First World War saw the invention of the tank, portable x-ray machines, aerial photography and tissues, the beginnings of plastic surgery, blood banks, occupational therapy and much more.

Less than fifteen years after the Wright brothers flew, aeroplanes were being used in war for the first time. Mono and bi-plane fighters were designed that could carry heavy bombs and machine guns while maintaining manoeuvrability.

The idea of developing an armed and armoured vehicle wasn't new, but the needs of war kickstarted the project. The design had to be armoured to protect crew, have caterpillar tracks to cross mud, shell holes and trenches and be mounted with a machine gun. The first 'landships' were built amid great secrecy. The story was that large amounts of metal were being transported by rail to build water tanks for Russia. The name 'tank' stuck. They were first used in battle in 1916.

- *Research inventions of the First World War that we are still using today. Try and find inventions that you would not consider to be related to war, for example; tea bags.*

## **Money, weights and measures**

At the beginning of the war gold coins were still normal currency, a sovereign was worth £1 or 20 shillings and half a sovereign was worth 10 shillings. The Government wanted to ensure there were enough gold reserves to pay for the war, so sovereigns and half sovereigns were removed from circulation and replaced with £1 and 10 shilling notes.

Decimal currency was unheard of at the time of World War One, and coins had different names.

Pounds (£); Shillings (/); Pence (d)

So, three shillings and sixpence would be written 3/6d.

4 farthings = 1 penny

12 pennies = 1 shilling

20 shillings = £1

21 shillings = 1 guinea

There were also halfpennies, threepence pieces (thruppence), sixpences, florins (2 shillings) and half crowns (two shillings and sixpence).

### How much did things cost?

People bought liquids, such as milk, in pints and gallons; and foods, like flour or sugar, were measured in pounds and ounces.

A pint of milk cost 1d and a loaf of bread was also 1d. Half a dozen (6) eggs were 3d and a quarter pound of loose tea was 2d.

With long queues of customers and no calculators, shopkeepers had to be good at arithmetic.

Adding things in pounds, shillings and pennies was tricky!

16 ounces (oz) = 1 pound (lb)

14 pounds = 1 stone

### Different ways of measuring

Measuring things was done differently too. Measurements were taken in yards, feet and inches.

12 inches = 1 foot

3 feet = 1 yard

1760 yards = 1 mile

- *How has currency and measurement changed since the First World War? What is the difference between pre-decimal and decimal currency and imperial and metric measures?*
- *Which is easier to use? Why?*

## Returning Men

Fighting continued right until the last minute then suddenly stopped. The relief that the war was over was soon replaced by a feeling of 'now what'. Many men believed they wouldn't survive the war and suddenly they had a future. For younger men the war was the only work they had known so returning home and trying to find employment proved difficult.

*'I applied for a job at Whitehall, at the Ministry of Labour as a temporary clerk. I went before a man, he was chairman and a lot of bearded old men round a board. The old men were in the saddle again and you just didn't stand a chance. He said, 'I'm sorry Mr Dixon, but you've had no experience!' Why, didn't I see red! I got up on my hind legs and said, 'Pardon me, sir! But I've had more experience than anybody in this room, but the thing is it's been the wrong sort! When I joined the army in 1914, I told the recruiting sergeant I couldn't ride a horse and he said, 'We'll bloody soon teach you!' They did and they spared no pains over it! Apparently I could be fitted for war but I can't be fitted for peace! I shall know what to do another time gentlemen!' Fred Dixon*

Post-Traumatic Stress was neither recognised or understood and although the symptoms of what was referred to as shell shock were common, suffering was hidden by men afraid to admit they were struggling. Little psychological help was available and the pressure of trying to cope and failing often resulted in outbursts of violence. The wives and children of these men also felt the mental and physical scars that had begun on the battlefields.

Two million British soldiers, sailors and airmen returned home permanently disabled. Life changing injuries were common and men who were dealing with pain and adjustments to their lives also had to suffer unpleasantness from a public who wrongly believed they were a drain on society, living off the generosity of others. Those with facial injuries struggled most, and even with the developments of plastic surgery that helped to rebuild their faces, severe depression and suicide were common.



Retraining was a key factor in the rehabilitation of disabled men. They became carpenters, engineers and bookkeepers; they learnt to play sport, ride bicycles and drive with crutches or their prosthetic limbs.

Demobilisation was a long process and considered unfair by many. Men were demobbed according to the importance of their previous civilian occupation rather than their length of service. In February 1920 there were still 125,000 soldiers waiting to be demobbed. For the thousands who had only known military service it was difficult to find work and many unemployed.

- *Discuss the impact of so many men returning to the workforce. How do you think the women felt about being dismissed?*
- *Consider Fred Dixon's statement – do you think he was treated fairly? Do you think the men interviewing him had a valid reason to reject him?*
- *Research facial injuries and the development of plastic surgery, in particular Harold Gillies.*
- *How does the treatment of post-traumatic stress now compare with how shell shock was treated?*

# Resources

## Poetry

The poetry included in this pack has been chosen to reflect different viewpoints and feelings. Teachers are advised to read the poems before utilising them in lessons and to prepare the students emotionally and mentally.

### War Girls - Jessie Pope

'There's the girl who clips your ticket for the train,  
And the girl who speeds the lift from floor to floor,  
There's the girl who does a milk-round in the rain,  
And the girl who calls for orders at your door.  
Strong, sensible, and fit,  
They're out to show their grit,  
And tackle jobs with energy and knack.  
No longer caged and penned up,  
They're going to keep their end up  
'Til the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

There's the motor girl who drives a heavy van,  
There's the butcher girl who brings your joint of meat,  
There's the girl who calls 'All fares please!' like a man,  
And the girl who whistles taxi's up the street.  
Beneath each uniform  
Beats a heart that's soft and warm,  
Though of canny mother-wit they show no lack;  
But a solemn statement this is,  
They've no time for love and kisses  
Till the khaki soldier boys come marching back.

### The Veteran - Margaret Postgate Clay

We came upon him sitting in the sun  
Blinded by war, and left. And past the fence  
There came young soldiers from the Hand and Flower,  
Asking advice of his experience.  
And he said this, and that, and told them tales,  
And all the nightmares of each empty head  
Blew into air; then, hearing us beside,  
"Poor chaps, how'd they know what it's like?" he said.  
And we stood there, and watched him as he sat,  
Turning his sockets where they went away,  
Until it came to one of us to ask "And you're-how old?"  
"Nineteen, the third of May."

### Since They Have Died – May Wedderburn Cannan

Since they have died to give us gentleness,  
And hearts kind with contentment and quiet mirth,  
Let us who live also give happiness  
And love, that is born of pity, to the earth.

For, I have thought, some day they may lie sleeping  
Forgetting all the weariness and pain,  
And smile to think their world is in our keeping,  
And laughter comes back to the earth again.

**In Flanders Fields – Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae**

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row  
That mark our place: and in the sky  
The larks still bravely singing fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the dead: Short days ago,  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved: and now we lie  
In Flanders fields!  
Take up our quarrel with the foe  
To you, from failing hands, we throw  
The torch: be yours to hold it high  
If ye break faith with us who die,  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields

**The Dugout – Siegfried Sassoon**

Why do you lie with your legs ungainly huddled,  
And one arm bent across your sullen, cold  
Exhausted face? It hurts in my heart to watch you,  
Deep-shadowed from the candle's guttering gold;  
And you wonder why I shake you by the shoulder;  
Drowsy you mumble and sigh and turn your head...  
You are too young to fall asleep for ever;  
And when you sleep you remind me of the dead.



**Notes from a Tape Recording made 18 September, 1978 of MRS. ROSE JONES (then aged 84) who was a conductress on the Metropolitan Electric Tramways 1917 to 1919.**

Mrs. Rose Jones moved from Northamptonshire to London in 1914 and was in domestic service. She joined Metropolitan Electric Tramways (MET) as a trainee conductress in 1917. Her uniform was a dark grey jacket and skirt, edged with black leather round cuffs and hem. She wore a white shirt and red tie with a dark grey, leather trimmed winter coat and black leather lace-up boots.

Training was with an experienced conductress, starting with short journeys, then longer routes for 2 or 3 months. She worked a 10 hour day, 6 days a week with one weeks holiday per year. Starting pay was £1.10s per week, rising to £2. By the time she left in 1919 pay was nearly £4 per week. In the last week of her service an 8 hour day was introduced.

Shifts varied, from a 4.00 am start, finishing at 2.30 pm to a late turn, finishing at 1am. Late or early turns meant a 4 mile walk from her lodgings. On Sundays, cars started later and finished earlier. After training she became a "spare girl" meaning she could be allocated to any route.

Her future husband was a wounded soldier travelling by tram between hospital and a Soldiers Club. A romance developed and he would deliberately wait for her car. He returned to the Front but was wounded again, returning to the same Hospital. They were married in September 1918.

By 1917 there were very few male conductors, these being over military age, unfit for the forces or training as drivers. Most other male staff were above military age.

Towards the end of 1917 Rose was allocated a regular route with a regular driver. The cars were usually covered top but occasionally open top. She disliked open top cars in cold, wet weather. She only used gloves to get a good grip on the trolley rope. The pressure of the spring on the trolley was quite hard as was holding the points lever.

There was a partial blackout during times of air raid risk. A bicycle lamp was carried for emergencies and there were shaded lights where trollies were reversed to help place the trolley wheel on the wire. She recalled one air raid when the driver stopped the car and put the lights out and the passengers ran to a nearby public house, but she and the driver sat in the car until the "all clear". She also recalled a daylight raid when bombers flew over very low. She was taking fares on a crowded car and the passengers panicked to get off, knocking her over in the process.

Many different tickets were carried, fares ranging from 1d to about 1/6. Workmen's fares were 2d. return. Shift workers could travel at workman rate outside usual hours. At end of duty money, tickets and waybill were taken to the cashier's office to be checked. Shortages had to be made up. She was once 2/6 short but couldn't recall ever being over.

She could not recall any derailment, dewirement or being stuck on "dead" on conduit, nor any serious mishaps or rude passengers. A timekeeper was employed to regulate the cars.

Rose recalled Armistice Night well. Her car was delayed for half an hour by people dancing up and down the street and inside the car. She said everybody had gone crackers.

She continued in the service until forced to leave in Autumn 1919 because of pregnancy. By then men were returning and most of the conductresses left the service.

The tramcars had folding canvas seats for the conductresses' use. There was a government regulation covering provision of seats for female staff.

When Rose and her husband celebrated their Diamond Wedding the local paper described her as an ex—bus "clippie", much to her annoyance. The term 'clippie' for conductresses, mentioned in some accounts of the Great War, is a newspaper fabrication referring to those engaged during the Second World War. In the Great War all references were to conductresses or lady conductors.

## Women and Work – World War 1

Extracts form a Transport and Railway journal considering the role of women as drivers and conductresses on trams in Scotland.

### Extracts from Women Drivers by Archibald Robertson 1916

'I believe the Greenock tramway was one of the first, if not actually the first, Tramway Company to experiment with lady drivers and conductors. It will be understood that this is not from any desire to make a change, but from absolute necessity...on the outbreak of war a considerable number of our men at once enlisted...As time went on...we were faced with putting on lady drivers or drastically curtailing services, and considering that 70 to 75% of our traffic is munitions workers' traffic it will be agreed that stoppage or serious curtailment would have been disastrous.

After anxiety and careful consideration...it was decided to train a few selected females as drivers...the number was steadily added to until we had some 80% of females on the running staff...62% were women drivers. After a month's training they were as efficient as a good class man with a similar period of training.

We were somewhat concerned as to how the drivers would stand the winter...I was agreeably surprised. While the 'missed turns' were more frequent than during the summer the girls stood the cold remarkably well. Rain and snow did not daunt them the only conditions which seemed to frighten them was a greasy rail. They preferred to work similar shifts to men.

While the experience has been favourable there are one or two points where they are not as reliable as men. While some of them have not lost a single minutes time in twelve months, a proportion do not realise the necessity for punctual reporting. They appear to think that if they report within 10 or fifteen minutes of the reporting time there should be nothing to complain about, and even when they do not turn out for work they sometimes neglect to send word.'

## Women and Work: Post World War One

The information below is taken from a War Cabinet committee report just after the war ended.

### War Cabinet Committee report on Women in Industry 18 December 1918

The number of women employed in the Traffic Departments of the Municipal Tramways of the United Kingdom and who are taking the place of men is shown by the following table which also shows the number of men still employed.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Drivers . . . . .	12,637	745
Conductors . . . . .	2,906	11,671
Inspectors . . . . .	962	110
Timekeepers . . . . .	474	15
Shedmen . . . . .	6,688	
Women Car Cleaners . . . . .		1664
Employees under 18		
Years of age . . . . .	1,685	400
	<u>25,352</u>	<u>14,584</u>

Of the 90 municipal Tramways only 12 pay less basic rate of wages (apart from war bonuses) to women than to men. All the rest pay the same basic rate

Extract from a War Cabinet report considering the work of women on trams post 1918.

War Cabinet Committee report on Women in Industry  
18 December 1918

Generally speaking, do women conductors employed by you carry out their duties as efficiently as men?

The answer is decidedly negative

Do they collect fares efficiently?

No. There is no doubt more fares are missed by women conductors...

Can you furnish figures in support of your answer as regards fare collection?

I am afraid I cannot...our inspecting staff have been very much reduced during the war, and on account of the way the cars have been crowded, and the slowness of the women in collecting fares, the inspectors have been engaged more in assisting the conductors than in inspecting duties

Do they make up their way bills efficiently?

They do not. They are not so careful in making the figures legible, and thus extra work is entailed in the Cash Offices and Head Office

Are the courteous to passengers?

There is no question we have more complaints of rudeness by female than male conductors. They are naturally more argumentative.

Are they punctual in attendance?

There are far more late reports by women than we had when men were employed, and I am of the opinion that we had more regular attendance when wages were lower.

## Recruitment Trams





## PALS Regiments

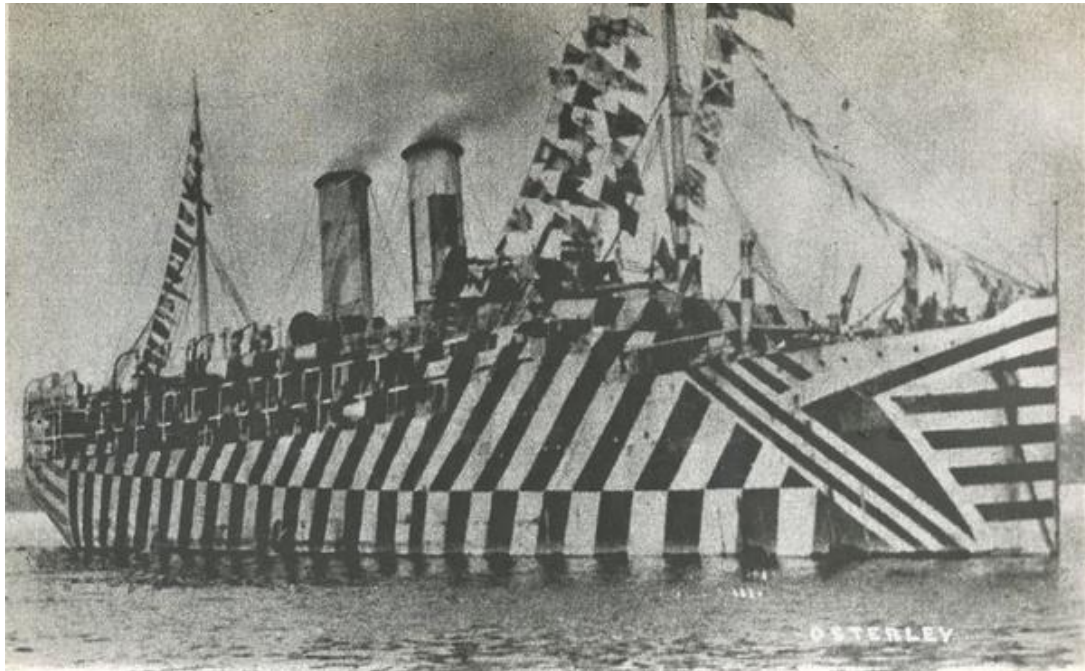
Glasgow Corporation Tramway workers



## Dazzle Ships







## Useful Resources

### Novels and stories about the First World War

Where the Poppies Now Grow, Hilary Robinson & Martin Impey

Private Peaceful, Michael Morpurgo

Stories of the First World War, Jim Eldridge

Archie's War, Marcia Williams

Line of Fire, Barroux

Remembrance, Theresa Breslin

The Story of WW1, Richard Brassey

War Horse, Michael Morpurgo

Dear Jelly, Sarah Ridley

Charlotte Sometimes, Penelope Farmer

War Girls, Various

Stubby: A True Story of Friendship, Michael Foreman

### Websites

BBC iWonder – [www.bbc.co.uk/iwonder](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iwonder)  
<https://academic.oup.com/shm/article/24/3/666/1630765>

British Legion <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/what-we-remember/first-world-war/>

BBC Guides <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zxw42hv>

BBC Teach <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks1--ks2-ww1-a-to-z/zmcpg8>

**References**

The National Tramway Museum Library and Archive, Crich, Matlock, Derbyshire.

All Quiet on the Home Front, Richard van Emden & Steve Humphries (2003, Headline Book Publishing, London).

Home Front 1914-1918; Ian Beckett (2006, The National Archives, Kew)

A History of the First World War in 100 Objects, John Hughes-Wilson (2014, Cassell, London),

Stories of the First World War; Jim Eldridge (2014, Scholastic, London).

Horrible Histories Frightful First World War; Terry Deary (2013, Scholastic, London).

<https://academic.oup.com/shm/article/24/3/666/1630765>

British Legion <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/remembrance/what-we-remember/first-world-war/>

BBC Guides <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zxw42hv>

[https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/children\\_and\\_youth](https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/children_and_youth)

<https://www.bl.uk/world-war-one/articles/childrens-experiences-of-world-war-one>

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/wars\\_conflict/home\\_front/the\\_home\\_front\\_11.shtml](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/wars_conflict/home_front/the_home_front_11.shtml)

<https://www.historyextra.com>