**Scotland and the Great War Revision Notes**

**Scotland in 1910**

In 1910 Scotland was an important part of the world’s greatest empire. Glasgow was the industrial powerhouse based on heavy industry such as shipbuilding and steel. It was not all rosy as some of the industries were being overtaken by more modern other countries. The workers were beginning to complain about pay and conditions and politically were beginning to vote for the Labour party. In short Scotland was at the edge of a new period of change.

**The British Empire**

In 1910 Britain controlled an Empire that covered ¼ of the earth. Scots could leave and find work in places over the world that belonged to Britain and make good careers for themselves.

**Cities**

Glasgow was called “the second city of Empire” as it was one of the largest and richest cities in the whole of Britain. Although they were not as large as Glasgow, Scotland’s other cities were confident, rich cities in their own right. Edinburgh was a publishing and financial centre, Dundee had publishing and textile industries and Aberdeen was famous for its fishing. Scotland had 5 Universities which was more the England and her people were well educated for the time.

**Industry**

Scotland was a hive of heavy industry with 560coal mines in central Scotland, shipyards on the Clyde that produced 20% of all the world’s ships. High quality steel was produced in Motherwell and the Clyde gave a clear highway to export these products to the rest of the world. Scotland seemed to have a secure and optimistic industrial future. However this gave a false picture because raw materials were running out and other countries were beginning to produce similar goods cheaper than Britain could.

Industrial relations were strained just before the war as workers were agitating to be allowed to join Trade Unions to improve their working conditions. Their main weapon was the strike which was used to try and help their members improve wages to keep up with increasing prices.

**Politics**

During the 19th century there were 2 main political parties and Scotland tended to vote for Liberals rather than Conservatives. In 1900, the Labour Party started to represent the interests of the working class and new Socialist ideas were floated, which showed a possible new political future for Scotland.

**Problems for the Population**

During the 19th century Scotland’s population both increased in numbers and moved from the countryside to cities. By 1910, 30% of the population lived in such cities, often in slums. Such filthy, overcrowded tenement flats encouraged the spread of disease and decreased life expectancy. The workhouse still existed and the one in Campbeltown had to be increased in size suggesting that there was still a lot of poverty among the wealth.

In the Highlands, the Crofters Act started to give people renting land some security after the Clearances but this was only a start and much remained to be done.

**Social and economic conditions**

***Population***

* Big population growth in Scotland prior to 1850.
* 1.26 million in 1755 to 2.62 million in 1841. Continued population growth, but not revolutionary growth up to First World War.
* By 1911, 45.6% of the population lived in the central industrial areas.
* Industrial areas of the western lowlands were the dynamic areas of development.
* Population of Edinburgh (although growing) stagnant in comparison to the west.
* Migration to the west and natural population growth.
* Overall death and birth rates fell at this time.
* Last cholera outbreak: 1860s.
* Diseases such as measles and whooping cough less dangerous by the early 20th century.
* Improved medical knowledge and sanitation by the burgh and city councils.
* High death rates from bronchitis, pneumonia and tuberculosis.
* Peaks in emigration: 1880s, 1900s and 1920s.
* 1853–1939: the number of emigrants was half the natural increase of the population.
* Most emigrants before the First World War seeking better opportunities came from central Scotland.
* Scotland at the heart of transatlantic transport links; facilitating movement.

***Urbanisation***

* By 1911, nearly 50% of Scots lived in towns of more than 20,000 people.
* Large industrial cities.
* 1901: 75 burghs with populations over 5000.
* Tradition of dynamic council government.
* Scottish housing small, with poor levels of sanitation, ventilation and light.
* Overcrowding an enduring problem.
* Mortality rate for Glaswegians living in one to two rooms was three to four times higher than for those in bigger houses.
* 1911: 7.1% of English population lived in one to two room houses; in Scotland it was 47.7%.

***Education***

* Idealised notions of a broad education system: progressive and meritocratic.
* 1872: education for children 5–13.
* Secondary schools largely existed in the towns and were dominated by the middle classes.
* Small tradition of ‘public schools’ like Glenalmond and Fettes.
* Day schools such as Heriots and the Merchant Company schools in Edinburgh.
* History began to be taught as a systematic subject; establishment of professorships of Scottish history at Edinburgh (1903) and Glasgow (1911).
* Admission of women to universities from the 1890s onwards.
* Employment opportunities for women graduates outside of teaching and social work were limited.
* Scottish universities short of money; relied on the Carnegie Trust (1901). State funding not significant until after the First World War.

***Politics***

* Traditional concerns: tariff reform, empire, land reform and temperance.
* New issues: old-age pensions, housing, health and unemployment insurance.
* Irish home rule: only given serious attention between 1910 and 1912.
* Politically volatile period: swings of support for the Conservatives and the Liberals, 1900 and 1906.
* 40% of male voters unable to vote.
* Slow growth of the Labour Movement.
* John Wheatley a key figure in the growth of socialist Labour politics.
* Liberals continued to reflect contemporary concerns.
* Scottish Home Rule Association set up in 1886.

**‘Key Social and Political Issues’**

* Crowded cities.
* Industrial pollution
* Impact of agricultural revolution.
* Extension of the franchise.
* Land reform.
* Growth of the Labour Movement.
* Irish home rule.

***The economy***

* By 1914, the most significant industries were shipbuilding, engineering and coalmining.
* Core industrial areas: Strathclyde, Lothian, Central and Fife.
* Clydeside yards were major employers and world leaders in terms of output.
* Beginning of relative decline for heavy industries; 1890–1914, half the tonnage ordered in the shipyards was for the Navy.

***Land reform***

* Liberal support for redistribution of land key to their support before the First World War.
* Land agitation in the Hebrides in the 1900s.
* Land reform bills unsuccessful.
* Small Landholders (Scotland) Act, 1911: impact minimal.
* Issue of land reform still to be settled.

**Why did Scots join up?**

The traditional story suggests that many Scots could not wait to get into the war and volunteered in their thousands, desperate not to miss the adventure. This is undoubtedly true in some cases but it does not cover the whole story. Some were bored with their jobs while others gave in to peer pressure and yet others were forced to volunteer. The old life was boring.

* Peer pressure for friends and sporting heroes.
* Economic reasons. It was better pay with uniform and 3 meals a day plus pay.
* Estate owners could threaten workers with families living in tied cottages.
* Pressure to go jail or join up.
* Scotland’s martial tradition and the allure of smart kilted uniforms.
* War hysteria and public demonstrations of support for the war.
* Pledges of land after the war if they joined up (mostly in the Highlands).
* A lack of understanding about how bad the war could be.
* Fear of missing the adventure.
* Adventure Papers glorifying the war and making it an adventure.
* Pals battalions such as HLI Commercial Clerks Battalion.
* The fact that recruiting sergeants were paid could influence who they took.
* The White Feather campaign where girls would embarrass their boyfriends into joining up.

**‘Scottish Martial Tradition’**

* Popular histories of Scotland’s heroic past: the Wars of Independence, Covenanters and the Jacobites.
* 18th century Scots dominance of the British Army; enduring symbol.
* 20th century decline in number of Scots in the army.
* Scottish regiments: kilts and tartan, highly visible regiments.
* Highland regiments resistant to amalgamation.
* Continued importance of military symbols, eg. the Highlands, the kilt and the bagpipe to Scottish identity.
* Existence of local regiments important to the success of recruiting at the outbreak of the First World War.
* Relatively large number of Scots enlisted in the First World War – around 688,000.

***Military legacy***

* Scots were good soldiers: legacy from fighting abroad and the Jacobite rebellion. The British Government recognised Highlanders’ abilities as fighters with endurance and fierce loyalty to their commanders.
* Highland Clan structure lent itself to military structure: distinct kilted uniforms meant Highlanders were both feared and instantly recognisable. Mixture of reactions to them during the First World War, ranging from admiration to complaints of arrogance.
* Soldiering was a respectable way of bettering yourself in the 19th century.
* Higher percentage of young Scots volunteered compared to England.
* Military matters widely reported in Scotland.
* Scotland comparatively poor so soldiering was a way of escaping poverty.
* Enthusiasm for war seen in formation of ‘pals battalions’. In Glasgow the corporation units represented different parts of the city: the 15th HLI represented the tram workers, the 16th the Boys Brigade, the 17th the Chamber of Commerce. In Edinburgh similar units were formed and became the 11th, 12th and 13th Royal Scots. The 15th and 16th Royal Scots were also known as Cranston’s Battalion and McCrae’s Battalion owing to the commanding officers who brought them into being.

***Military reality in 1914***

* Ten infantry regiments, each with two regular line battalions and a reserve battalion.
* Two battalions of Scots Guards in the Household Regiment.
* Battalion system meant that British units were associated with geographical areas. The Cameronians recruited largely from Glasgow and industrial Lanarkshire, for example. The Gordon Highlanders recruited from the north-east.
* One cavalry regiment: the Scots Greys.
* Three battalions were based in Scotland; eight regular battalions were based in England or Ireland, helping form the six infantry divisions that made up the BEF. Another ten battalions were abroad; seven were in India.
* Of the 247,000 officers and men of the BEF it is likely that at least 20,000 were Scottish.
* By the end of the war 584,098 Scots had served in the army.
* By end of 1915 2,466,719 men had volunteered: 320,589 or 13% were Scottish, forming what became known as the New Army.
* Formation of distinctly Scottish divisions such as the 15th (Scottish] Division in light of this.
* Important Scottish contribution to leadership: Douglas Haig, corps commander under John French in the BEF, became commander-in-chief.
* Many Scots joined the Territorials: volunteering was a part of Scottish life in certain social classes. Four of the 14 Territorial Divisions formed were Scottish: 51st Highland, 52nd Lowland, 64th Highland and 65th Lowland. Joining was as much a social thing as about warfare. Many Territorial units represented workplaces and even the old boys of schools.

**Western Front**

**Conditions**

Life in the trenches was completely new to the soldiers. For the first time whole armies were living close to each other suffering the same wet, miserable conditions. New soldiers found that just surviving was a problem. This alien world brought a host of new problems for the soldiers. Men found themselves infested with lice. They found the area covered with rats. They found themselves constantly wet and cold, eating tinned cold rations and drinking polluted water. Cold wet feet feet could lead to trench foot. Men who had never seen a dead body lived close to decomposing corpses.

On top of these natural problems there was the continual problem of the enemy. A shell could land at any moment; a sniper could be waiting for the unwary at any low point of the trench. A slip could result in drowning in the many mud filled shell holes. Gas could burn a man’s lungs out. For some men the conditions were so bad that death became preferable and self-inflicted wounds and suicide were frequent.

**Building Trenches**

When the Germans attacked they forced their way into France quickly. Once they had been stopped and the war of movement was over, machine guns, rapid firing rifles and artillery meant that it was too dangerous for soldiers to stand above ground level. They began to dig pits in the ground to protect themselves. In time they were joined up and became permanent lines where the troops could live and fight. As the Germans had invaded and held ground in France, they were less worried about giving up land and built their trenches on higher ground. The British and French, however, would not give up any land and built their trenches as close to the enemy as possible.

As the Germans were prepared to defend the ground they had already captured they built more permanent trenches while the British and French only intended to attack from them so their trenches were less comfortable. Eventually, networks of trenches were constructed. These trenches had to ensure the safety of the soldiers who would live, eat, sleep and fight there. Often these trench systems were as close as 20 metres away from the enemy. They became a permanent feature of the war and the trench lines changed little in three and a half years.

The soldiers dug a hole about a metre wide at the bottom and two metres deep. Boards were placed on the ground to act as drainage. On the side of the trench facing the enemy a ‘fire step’ was cut into the wall for soldiers to shoot from. Sandbags were placed at the top of the trench which protected the soldiers from bullets and shrapnel. In front of the trench barbed wire was rolled out to delay soldiers trying to attack the trench and stop grenades being thrown in.

The trenches were never dug in straight lines so that if a shell exploded in the trench the blast would not extend too far. Also if enemy troops got into the trench they could not fire all the way along the trench. There were at least three with communication trenches between each line. The ground between the two side’s trenches called ‘No Man’s land’ which both sides fought over. By 1916 you could walk from the North Sea to Switzerland without putting your head above ground level. This was a distance of 600 miles but with all the indentations in the lines it covered some 12,500 miles of trenches.

The advantages of trenches were that they were easy to dig, easy to defend, cheap to build and they didn’t need too many men to defend them. However, they were wet, cold, difficult to get in and out of unobserved, dirty and unhygienic.

**Daily Life**

Once soldiers had reached the trenches their life was controlled by a set routine. As it was not safe to move about during the day, most work done outside trenches was done at night. Although death was always present due to sniping and shelling, trench living was boring.

During the day soldiers would eat, clean weapons, fill sandbags, repair trenches (on the inside), write and read letters and be daily checked for trench foot and other medical conditions. To keep an eye on the enemy, periscopes were used. The only highlight of was the issue of rum to the troops.

When night came the dangerous work started. Supplies had to be brought to the front line, Work parties were sent out in front of the trenches to reset wire and repair trenches. Observation patrols would check on who was opposite them and bring in an enemy prisoner. Sappers (engineers) would dig trenches and tunnels closer to the enemy line. At night also bodies would have to be found and buried if possible.

First thing in the morning at just before dusk there was stand to. This was the time that the enemy were most likely to attack so all the soldiers lined up on the firestep fully armed to repel any attack. As both sides did the same thing attacks were rare.

**Battles**

When the war started it was thought that it would be a war of movement and that the armies would march about until they met and fight an open battle. This was no different from the Battle of Waterloo 99 years before. In practice, after a short period of open warfare, when each side tried to outflank the other, the front lines became a series of trenches which went from the coast of the North Sea to Switzerland.

This meant that there was no chance of outflanking the Germans and any attack would have to be frontal. Generals tried to amass as many men at one place as they could, without the enemy knowing, and launch a massive attack to overwhelm them. Once through the trench lines, the cavalry could spread out and roll up the lines achieving a breakthrough.

The process of the breakthrough was to reconnoitre the enemy positions to find a likely place to attack and quietly move troops to the front. Shortly before the attack the artillery would shell the German trenches and barbed wire to clear a way for the infantry. At the last minute some infantry men would try and cut more gaps through the barbed wire and when the attack was due the troops would rise up out of their trenches and advance across no man’s land.

Frequently the artillery barrage did not work, leaving the wire uncut, and as soon the barrage stopped the Germans would rush to their guns and be ready for the attack. This meant that the casualty rate for the attackers was extremely high, and usually no impact was made on the German front line.

By 1916 it was clear that a breakthrough was almost impossible and the tactic changed to attrition. Instead of trying to win ground the object of the attack was to draw enemy soldiers into the battle and kill as many of them as they could. The reasoning was that if we had more soldiers than the enemy, if each of our soldiers killed 1 German before he was killed, there would be some British soldiers left and no Germans so we would have won.

**Loos**

The battle of Loos was one of the first of the great battles of World War which included regiments from all over Scotland. About half of the 72 Battalions were from Scotland. After the battle was over some 7,000 Scottish soldiers had been killed.

The battle was mainly to help the French. Haig, the British commander did not want to attack as he felt his troops were not trained sufficiently. He was also worried about the flat land which offered little cover to attacking troops.

To overcome these problems the British used a massive artillery bombardment, which took away any chance of a surprise attack. They also used chlorine poison gas for the first time,. This required a wind to blow it over the German trenches at it was to be released from the British lines.

The battle began on the 25th September 1915 after a 4 day artillery bombardment with an attack including 2 Scottish divisions. Many of the troops were affected by their own side’s gas as there was no wind to blow it over the German lines.

Despite frightening casualties the Scottish attacks were successful but needed immediate reinforcement. Haig demanded reserves to back up his attack. They had been held some 16 miles behind the front and by the time they reached the front the Germans were waiting and their machine gunners slaughtered the new untried troops.

Although the battle dragged on till 19th October any real chance of a breakthrough was over by the end of the second day.

Loos could have been a victory with reinforcements but became known as the first of many inconclusive “nearly” battles with enormous casualties.

Scotland’s casualties were especially severe. Her regiments were connected to particular parts of the country and every part of the country was affected. The 15th (Scottish) Division lost6,896 men of which 228 were officers while the 9th (Scottish) Division lost6058 men of which 190 were officers

Probably the main effect of the battle was the promotion the Scot, Douglas Haig to replace Sir John French as Army commander. This was important as he believed the war could only be won on the Western Front.

There were some long term lessons which could have been learned but which plagued Generals throughout the war.

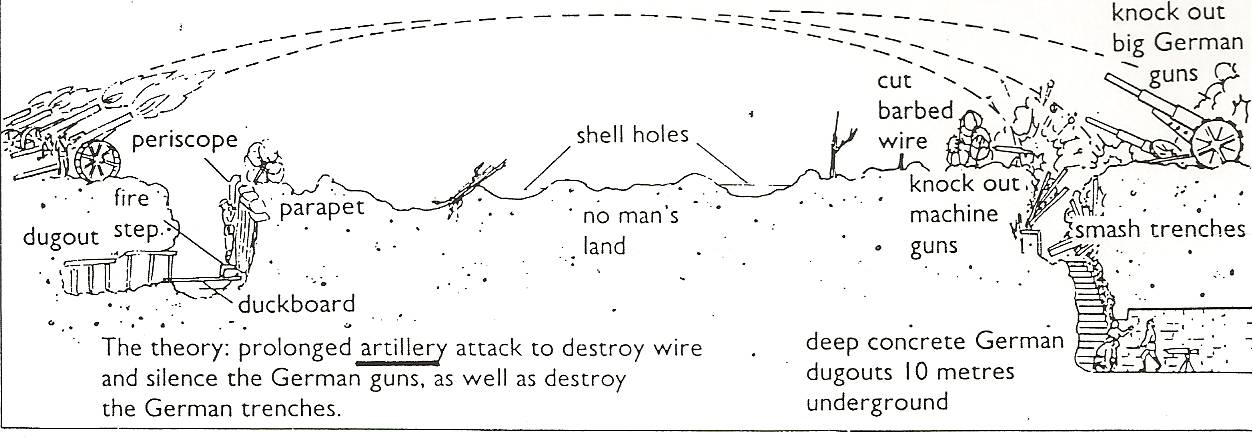
Long bombardments did not work but lost the element of surprise, gas was unpredictable, it was difficult to move up reinforcements quickly, communication was difficult in a battle and the New Army units were brave but as yet untrained.

***The Battle of Loos***

* Part of a series of battles by the allies to attack the large German salient which ran from Flanders to Verdun. The French would attack in the south, the British in the north.
* British battles of Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge, Festubert and Loos.
* Loos involved the first of Kitchener’s New Army divisions.
* Scottish losses were so dreadful no part of Scotland was unaffected. The Black Watch (raised in Tayside) had massive casualties; the 9th lost 680 officers and men in the first hours of the fighting. Of 950 men of the 6th Cameronians who went into battle, 700 were casualties.
* A relatively meaningless battle in terms of what it achieved. Joint French-British offensive. Haig was sceptical owing to the lack of artillery and introduction of new army units. He was overruled by Kitchener. Haig felt he did not have enough men and his reserves were far behind the front line. Gas was to be used to make up for the lack of artillery.
* Loos deserves to be called a Scottish battle owing to the large number of Scottish troops in action: 30,000 took part in the attack.
* Of 72 infantry battalions taking part in the first phase of the battle, half were Scottish.
* Came up against stiff German opposition organised in strong points such as the Hohenzollern Redoubt, Fosse 8 and Hill 70.
* Attack broke down owing to German reinforcement of their position and time it took to get the reserve units up to support the limited successes of the first day.
* Five Victoria Crosses given to Scots after the battle in recognition of their extraordinary bravery.
* Of the 20,598 names of the dead on the memorial at Loos one-third are Scottish.
* Bloody minded attitude of the survivors: losses were replaced and the Scottish units got back to the job in hand.

**Somme**

The Battle of the Somme could be considered as a Scottish battle as 3 of the 4 full Scottish Divisions took part. In all 51 Scottish battalions served at the Battle of the Somme. Haig was forced to attack to force the Germans to move troops from their major attack against the French at Verdun as they were putting a lot of strain on the French Army and it was feared that they might break.

The preparation began with an 11 day long artillery bombardment, with pauses to trick the Germans into manning their front line trenches. The British artillery men had 1500 guns along a 30km front line and 1,738,000 shells ready to be fired at the German trenches. The idea was that the artillery guns would destroy the German trenches, kill the soldiers, destroy their weapons and barbed wire placed in front of the trenches. The artillery bombardment began on 24th June and the infantry attacked on 1st July. Haig believed that the British soldiers could go over the top and stroll towards the enemy trenches as their weapons would be destroyed, and they would all be dead or ready to surrender. Haig felt this was necessary as his troops were not well enough trained.

British troops were ordered to be ready to go over the top at 7.30am July 1st and tens of thousands of men clambered up the assault ladders and into no man’s land. They advanced at a steady pace so as to not become disorganised

The British artillery bombardment was a complete failure as the barbed wire had not been destroyed, the German machine guns had not been destroyed and not many German soldiers had been killed. The Germans had deep dugouts and when the attack started they moved from the dugouts and manned their machine guns to face the British and French. This meant that the Germans were able to exploit their good defensive positions on higher ground.

The first day of the battle of the Somme was the worst day in the history of the British Army. Over 20,000 British soldiers were killed and almost 40,000 wounded. The Battle continued until November 1916. Since the 1st July, the British suffered 420,000 casualties. The French lost nearly 200,000 and the Germans about 500,000. Over 1 million men were killed or wounded at the Battle of the Somme.

During this battle Haig changed his tactics from an attempt at a breakthrough to a battle of attrition, where it became more important to kill Germans than to take land.

***The Somme***

* Three Scottish divisions – 9th, 15th (Scottish) and 51st (Highland) – took part as well as numerous Scottish battalions in other units, eg the Scots Guards in the Household Division. 51 Scottish infantry battalions took part in the Somme offensive at some time.
* Douglas Haig, an Edinburgh-born Scot, was made commander-in-chief by this time.
* Haig planned to attack the Germans with overwhelming force. He would break through their lines and take over the reserve areas.
* A one-week bombardment from 1000 guns and a creeping barrage would mean that British soldiers would be able to walk through German lines, it was hoped. German lines were well prepared and the British armies suffered horrendous casualties: 57,480 on the first day alone.
* Examples of Scottish losses on the first day:
* 15th (Cranstons) Royal Scots lost 18 officers and 610 soldiers wounded, killed or missing
* 16th (McCraes) Royal Scots lost 12 officers and 573 soldiers
* 16th HLI lost 20 officers and 534 men.
* 51st Highland division suffered 3500 casualties following two attacks on an objective called High Wood.
* Despite losses there was still a belief in victory, but some criticism of war and its slaughter began.
* Successes existed as well: the 51st (Highland) division launched a successful attack at Beaumont Hamel with relatively few casualties in November 1918.
* Tribute to the attitude of the Scottish soldier. Three platoons of the 16th HLI were isolated after an attack on a trench called Frankfurt Trench. They held out for eight days against ferocious German attacks. There was no military worth in their doing so. It said everything about their attitude.
* At least 400,000 British casualties.
* Somme considered to be a win on points despite the slaughter for so little gained. German commanders after the war felt the Somme had seen the death of the German field army. Scottish units learned the lessons of the battle despite their sacrifice.
* 9th (Scottish] Division performed well during the five months of fighting. Casualties were high – 314 officers and 7203 other ranks – yet morale remained high.

**Arras**

By 1917, the British Army had become a strong fighting force. In April 1917, they moved into the area round the French town of Arras. The battle which followed probably contained more Scots fighting in one place than at any point in the War. Ten Scottish Divisions fought at Arras with nearly one-third of the 159,000 casualties being Scots.

Led by Field Marshall Douglas Haig, the BEF began making elaborate preparations for the assault. This was a new type of attack using many of the lessons learnt in earlier battles. The parts of the army were much better coordinated with better communications between artillery, aircraft, tanks and infantry.

Haig intended to attack with 3 armies. The artillery was told to concentrate on specific areas rather than bombard the whole front. Shells cut the wire and gas shells killed German transport horses, which made moving guns impossible. A new idea was the construction of tunnels under no man’s land to move the 24,000 assault troops closer to the German lines secretly as well as placing mines under the German trenches. When the troops attacked creeping barrages were ordered just in front of them to keep the Germans heads down. They also improved their counter battery fire to destroy the German artillery.

On March 20, the preliminary bombardment of Vimy Ridge commenced. During the bombardment, British guns fired over 2,689,000 shells.

Troops used a new method of attack called “bite and hold”. Instead of all the soldiers attacking in waves across the whole front, one part would advance. It would then consolidate the ground it had captured. Another part of the army would then continue the attack and this was repeated over and over.

The Germans also changed their defensive tactics. They held the front lines with minimum strength with counterattack divisions kept close behind to seal off any breaches.

On April 9 the assault started. The British troops slowly moved behind the creeping barrage towards the German lines. At Vimy Ridge the Canadians achieved stunning success and quickly took their objectives. A breakthrough may have been achieved but the attack plan called for a two-hour pause once objectives had been taken and darkness prevented the advance from continuing.

In the center, British troops attacked east from Arras on 9th April and it took several days to completely clear the Germans from the trench system. The German new defensive system did not work as their reserve divisions were stationed 15 miles behind the lines, preventing them from rapidly advancing to block British attacks.

By the second day, German reserves were beginning to appear and slowed British progress. After this, a pause in the fighting occurred as both sides rushed in reinforcements to support the troops at the front. Over the first few days, the British had made dramatic gains including the capture of Vimy Ridge and advanced over three miles in some areas but by April 23rd the battle was turning into a grinding war of attrition.

Though losses were increasing rapidly, Haig kept the attack going and the offensive officially ended on May 23.

In the fighting around Arras, the British suffered 158,660 casualties while the Germans incurred between 130,000 to 160,000. The Battle of Arras is generally considered a British victory but it did not alter the strategic situation on the Western Front. After this the Germans built new defensive positions and the stalemate resumed.

***Arras 1917***

* Saw concentration of 44 Scottish battalions and seven Scottish-named Canadian battalions, attacking on the first day, making it the largest concentration of Scots to have fought together.
* 9th (Scottish), 15th (Scottish), 51st (Highland) Divisions as well as the battalions in other divisions.
* Very successful initial assault, but with localised losses impetus was lost: German resistance stiffened and their reserves were brought up. Bad weather and the failure of the accompanying French ‘Nivelle’ offensive did not help either.
* One third of the 159,000 British casualties were Scottish.
* Scottish units also involved in Third Battle of Ypres and Cambrai.

***Scottish experience of war***

* Also felt effects of German attacks, especially operation Michael in 1918. 51st (Highland) Division in Cambrai sector and the 15th (Scottish) in Arras were particularly affected.
* Scottish leadership – role of Douglas Haig: strong Presbyterian background; believed in his mission to win; stubborn and stoical; famous for order in 1918 not to give ground and to fight to the end.
* Debate over Haig’s role. Considered to be one of the most intelligent soldiers of his generation, he had a reputation as an innovative commander. However, his relationship with Lloyd George was not good and he suffered from criticism as a result. On one side are those who see him as a butcher, whose blundering and orders condemned a generation to the slaughter of the Western Front. The other side gives him credit for the tactics that ground down the Germans and led to their ultimate surrender. In a balanced judgment the historian John Terrain calls him ‘the educated soldier’. He had to deal with a military situation that was unique and no other general had dealt with. He did so with a vision of what was needed: that he embraced the use of tanks, for example, is to his great credit. He could be distant and was touchy, but he did visit the front and was aware of the sacrifices made. He was also the architect of victory.

***The reckoning***

* Official estimates put the number of Scottish dead at 73,000.
* This was revised upwards to 100,000 by the 1920s (13% of British total).
* The names of over 148,000 Scots who lost their lives in all armed services shows the sacrifice made. Glasgow alone lost 18,000 men, or 1 in 57 of the population.
* Loss of young men felt particularly in small, rural populations where casualties could have a disproportionate effect.

**Domestic Impact of War: Industry and Economy and Society and Culture**

***Opposition to the war***

* Not all agreed with the war.
* Helen Crawfurd, one of the leaders of the Rent Strikes, on 10 June 1916, launched the Women’s Peace Crusade, the first concerted effort to involve people in all social classes to oppose the war. It had some success: by summer 1917 there were branches all over Scotland and it attracted 14,000 protesters to a mass meeting held on Glasgow Green.
* Other organisations included the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom founded by Chrystal Macmillan, a graduate of Edinburgh University.
* Role of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and other left-wing groups.

***Impact on domestic economy***

* Government organised the economy with the creation of the Ministry of Munitions.
* State control of many industries to oversee wartime production: steel, railways and coal, for example.
* They diversified many industries: Beardmore’s produced aircraft and artillery pieces as well as ships. John Brown’s produced tanks.
* War was particularly good for the west of Scotland.

***Shipbuilding***

* Immediate impact on Clydeside shipyards, where most of Britain’s ships were built.
* Beardmore’s at Dalmuir, Browns of Clydebank and Fairfields at Govan were placed under Admiralty control. Others followed suit after passing of Munitions of War Act in 1915. Many of the battleships produced for the British navy were produced on the Clyde.
* By 1913 shipbuilding on the Clyde produced 757,000 tons and the total number of workers dependent on the industry was estimated at 100,000 or 14% of the working population.
* Clyde yards were innovatory and bred a skilled workforce that was reasonable to well-paid and led to job security. Men were proud to work in the shipyards.
* As a result of the wartime boom Clydeside experienced a bonanza, with the three leading yards winning orders worth over £16 million.
* Skilled workers could not volunteer for the armed forces and were exempt from conscription after its introduction in 1916.
* Between 1914 and 1918 a total of 481 warships were built on the Clyde, and profits were good.
* Other heavy industries also benefited:
* North British Locomotive Company at Springburn and Polmadie
* Beardmore’s in Parkhead employed 20,000 workers by 1915, producing aircraft and airships as well as ships.
* Difficulty of retaining skilled labour led to construction of housing for workers in Brown’s and Beardmore’s, for example.

***Industry***

* Steel output doubled during the war.
* 90% of armour plate produced came from Glasgow.
* 24,000 men in full-time employment in the Clyde valley.
* Edinburgh industries such as the North British Rubber Company did well, as did the railways.
* Dundee’s jute industry boomed as demand for sack cloth rose to meet the demands of warfare.
* Both Dundee and Aberdeen benefited from shipbuilding work.
* Fishing declined owing to the threat of naval attack.
* Agriculture benefited as well: sheep farming in particular did well as the government bought the wool crop. Shepherd’s wages doubled! More land was placed under agricultural production.
* Despite actions to maintain food supply, rationing introduced in 1918.

***Fishing***

* Major industry before the First World War, employing over 32,500 men. By 1917, employing fewer than 22,000 men.
* White fish industry decimated, only herring industry remained stable.
* North Sea almost totally closed to fishing.
* Fishing only allowed in inshore areas on the West coast, banned in the Firth of Clyde.
* East coast ports taken over by the Admiralty, neutral fishing boats banned.
* Loss of herring trade to Russia and Northern Germany caused a slump.
* Royal Navy Reserve (Trawler Section), 8,000 strong, kept the industry going when restrictions elsewhere prevented its operation. 2,000 of these fishermen came from Lewis.
* Restrictions on how much could be fished pushed up prices and by 1917 white fish was rationed.
* From 1917 onwards: slight improvement to industry when the Germans started unrestricted submarine warfare.
* Many of the Scottish fishermen and merchant navy sailors who lost their lives came from the Western Isles; a local perception that these areas suffered disproportionately.

***Agriculture***

* Food became increasingly scarce and more expensive as the war progressed. Government promoted self-sufficiency by introducing measures to make more farmland arable.
* Attempt to grow more in Scotland not very successful as amount of suitable land was limited; many were hill farms. Only 5 out of 19 million acres were under crops.
* Labour shortage as many had volunteered to fight in the war; more men in this industry than elsewhere. Number of farm workers dropped by 18,000 over the course of the war.
* Main contribution from farming in Scotland was from sheep farming: wool and meat.
* Sheep industry enjoyed full employment and high wages from 1916, when the Government bought all of Scotland’s wool production.
* Average wage of a ploughman more than doubled by 1919.
* Oats and vegetables all increased in amount being farmed and yield because of the need to grow more home products.
* Food shortages led to ‘meatless’ days by 1918: Wednesdays and Fridays in Scotland.
* Food rationing in operation in Scotland by 7 April 1918.
* 1920 Agricultural Act introduced to maintain prices and production. However, by 1921 this Act was abandoned because of the poor state of the economy causing hardship for many farm workers who lost jobs or had wages cut.

***The Defence of the Realm Act (DORA)***

* Alcohol consumption was curbed with restricted opening hours.
* Public houses were open 13 hours a day, except on Sunday. DORA reduced this to 5½ hours by 1916. ‘Treating’ was banned and in certain areas pubs and breweries were nationalised.

***Role of women***

* In 1911 it is calculated that fewer than 6000 women were employed in the heavy industries of Clydeside.
* By the end of the war 31,500 women were working in the munitions industry alone.
* Driving force for change was the need to increase armaments production and the consequent ‘dilution’ of labour, which allowed women into previously skilled engineering jobs.
* Women were already important in some industries before the war. They were used in the textile trade, as domestic servants and on the land. In particular the jute industry in Dundee relied on women. The success of such industries was linked to the low pay they gave women workers. On average it was 45% of what was paid to a man.
* Various things restricted women and work; marriage was one as was the perceived ‘role’ of women, particularly true of the middle classes.
* The war allowed women to, temporarily, step into jobs vacated by male workers serving in the armed forces or employed in heavy industries under the dilution scheme.
* Women worked on the trams, the railways and in the rubber industry.
* By 1917 it was calculated that one in three working women were substituting male workers’ jobs.
* Women did not get equal pay, although it did improve.
* Munitions was a major employer of women: the huge purpose-built facility in Gretna was a case in point. At its height 9000 women and 5000 men worked there. They lived in a purpose-built village that connected with the works via a light railway. 12-hour shifts were the norm and the work was dangerous. Order in the facility was maintained by the Women’s Police Service.
* Scottish Women’s Hospitals were one remarkable example of people wanting to contribute to the war in a positive way. They were idea of the remarkable Dr Elsie Inglis. She had been a campaigner for the vote. She proposed field hospitals near the front. Rejected by the British she found a more positive response from the French and Serbian governments.
* She raised money and organised the setting up of field hospitals. The Scottish Women’s Hospital served throughout the war in both Serbia and France. The French one treated over 10,000 service men. She died on returning from the Russian front where the Scottish Women’s Hospitals had been helping Serbian and Romanian troops.
* Although many of the gains of the war went into reverse, eg soldiers returning from France expected their jobs back and got them, one thing did change: the Representation of the People Act gave women the vote in national elections for the first time.

***Problems in Scotland relating to the war: Rent Strikes***

* Real pressure on housing in Glasgow as a result of industrial expansion.
* Generally tenement housing was poorly maintained. One or two roomed flats.
* Landlords responded by increasing rents and evicting those who could not meet the new demands.
* Rising price of foodstuffs placed another demand on hard-earned wages.
* 1915 response from trade unions, the ILP and the South Govan (Glasgow) Women’s Housing Association, which was created to protect tenants from rent rises.
* Secretary was Helen Crawfurd, a suffragette and anti-war campaigner, who along with others, such as Mary Barbour, Agnes Dollan and Jessie Stephens, took on the landlords.
* First direct action was the non-payment of rents increases in Govan, Glasgow. Resistance took the form of making it impossible for the sheriff’s officers to carry out their evictions. When they were faced with court action the first rent strike took place in May 1915. 25,000 tenants joined the movement by the end of the year.
* Organised by women very effectively; accused landlords of being anti-patriotic. They were supported by employers, who did not want to see production affected by external factors.
* By November the women were supported by men taking wildcat strike action at Fairfields and Beardmore’s. Crowds gathered in support of 18 tenants who were due in court for refusing to pay rent increases.
* Government rushed through a Rent Restriction Act, which froze rents at pre-war levels and increases were only allowed if improvements had been made to the property.
* Agitation against rent increases also took place in Aberdeen and Dundee.

***Overall industrial effects***

* During the war production techniques had improved and the privileges of the skilled working class had been diluted to ensure maximum efficiency.
* In reality this merely delayed the decline of the heavy industries.
* With the end of the war production was cut and mass unemployment loomed.
* The skilled workers, through the powerful engineering unions, were organised and sought to defend themselves.
* Demands to reduce the working-week in terms of hours: the Amalgamated Society of Engineers sought a 47-hour week. In Scotland there was support for a 40-hour week (this would ease unemployment and was supported by the Labour Party, ILP, STUC and Glasgow Trades Council).
* January 1919: strike action beckoned; ship-workers came out, as did other skilled workers.
* Friday 31 January: ‘Bloody Friday’ saw 100,000 demonstrate in George Square in Glasgow in support of a 40-hour working week and at the end of rent restrictions.
* Fighting between police and demonstrators led to massive overreaction by authorities, who moved 12,000 English soldiers to the city, supported by six tanks.
* Strike ended swiftly as strike leaders were shocked at the violence. Trade unions were the losers as they distanced themselves from strike action.
* Expectations of returning soldiers to find jobs and a high standard of living. Expectations increased with the promise of Lloyd George to provide ‘homes fit for heroes’.
* Initial economic boom soon replaced by reality in the 1920s.
* Shipbuilding went into decline: between 1921 and 1923 the tonnage built on the Clyde went down from 510,000 to 170,000. By the 1930 yards were closing as orders dried up.
* Decline in locomotive production by two-thirds at the North British Locomotive company. Engineering work also went into decline as railway companies were amalgamated and their direction moved from Scotland to London.
* Coal production went into decline as a result of falling orders.
* Fish production went into decline as a result of falling demand.
* Jute production affected by declining orders and industrial action.
* Textiles affected by declining markets.
* Decline in those working on the land.
* Decline in Highland population: 341,535 in 1911, 325,853 in 1921. Emigration, loss of life and decline in agriculture were all to blame.
* Land settlement improved, although there was still a shortage of decent land in the Highlands and Islands.
* Highland crofters had enjoyed security of tenure from 1886. The 1919 Land Settlement (Scotland) Act released funds and allowed the Board of Agriculture to compulsory purchase private land. However, the process was laborious. Land raids occurred, especially by ex-servicemen who expected land on their return from the trenches, in areas like Lewis, Uist, Skye and Sutherland.

**Domestic Impact of War: Politics**

***Problems in Scotland relating to the war: Red Clydeside***

* Glasgow workforce saw a huge influx of Highland and Irish immigrants owing to the industrial nature of its industry.
* By the 20th century there was a sense of injustice at how the working class in Glasgow did not benefit from their hard work.
* Powerful trade unions, particularly in the skilled engineering industries.
* Tradition of helping people in need in Glasgow.
* Local council provided many services and leisure facilities, for example.
* Glasgow area saw growth of socialist- and labour-based organisations, such as the ILP and the Glasgow Central Labour Party.
* Increasing industrial unrest pre-war.
* Unrest seen in Glasgow through the Rent Strikes.
* Feb 1915: ‘Tuppence an Hour’ Engineers’ strike.
* Strike cased by rise in cost of living and arrival of more skilled workers from America who were paid more than Scottish workers.
* Engineers also felt employers were taking advantage of the war, making inflated profits.
* Dispute centred on Weir’s of Cathcart, who brought over American workers.
* Three-week long strike by 10,000 workers/members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in the Clydeside area.
* Hostility of William Weir, the managing director.
* Eventual compromise.
* Did lead to the setting up of the Labour Withholding Committee: made up of the more radical trade union members who were prepared to ignore official trade unions if they thought workers’ interests were not being properly represented
* Impact of The Munitions of War Act, which gave employers much power to ensure that weapons and munitions made it to the army uninterrupted.
* Led to the reduction in the power of unions and led to limitation of rights of skilled workers.
* Workers could not leave their job without a leaving certificate from the employer to move to another job.
* Also made it compulsory for a worker to accept a job, whatever it paid, and to work overtime, paid or unpaid.
* Munitions tribunals (made up of officials] set up to deal with workers who did not comply with the Munitions Act.
* Led to the Fairfields dispute, August 1915.
* Three shipwrights from the Fairfields shipyard in Glasgow were given a prison sentence by a tribunal for the non-payment of a fine.
* Fairfields workers went out on strike, which led to further escalation. The Labour Withholding Committee called for strike action if the men were not released within three days. This was only avoided when someone paid the fine anonymously.
* Dilution of labour.
* Reaction of skilled labour to the introduction of unskilled workers to do their job largely negative. In December, 1915 eading government member David Lloyd George visited Glasgow to speak to a meeting of workers and shop stewards. He was heckled and could hardly be heard above the jeers.
* The Clyde Workers’ Committee (CWC) was determined to oppose the introduction of unskilled labour. Disputes broke out in Beardmore’s in Parkhead when the management refused to allow the CWC representative, David Kirkwood, to speak to new female workers. Kirkwood was arrested and with three other shop stewards was deported to Edinburgh until the end of the war.
  + Industrial unrest in Glasgow continued after the war with the 40 hours strike and the battle of George Square in 1919.
  + Continued industrial unrest in Glasgow partly caused by the split between the CWC and the official trade unions. CWC refused to accept a 47-hour week negotiated by the official trade unions. They demanded a 40-hour week instead.
  + CWC called a strike to support their demands, and support spread rapidly.

***Remembrance***

* Monuments to the fallen exist all over Scotland:
* to the rugby players who fell at Murrayfield, Edinburgh
* to the Heart of Midlothian players at Haymarket in Edinburgh
* granite memorial beside Aberdeen Art Gallery
* bronze statue of a Border Reiver in Galashiels.
* Scots wanted their own memorial in tribute to their special sacrifice: Edinburgh castle houses the memorial and museum. It was officially opened in 1928.
* Commemoration of the war can also be seen in outpouring of poetry: of importance is the work of Charles Hamilton Sorley and Ewart Alan Mackintosh, and also the writing of people such as John Buchan, *Mr Standfast*.

***Effects***

* War changed some, a minority, into fervent nationalists, eg men like the poet Hugh MacDarmid. In 1928 he joined the National Party of Scotland, which campaigned for Scottish Independence.
* Creation of the British Legion and British Legion Scotland in 1921 under the auspices of Douglas Haig. Poppy Day started at the same time. The act of silence at 11am on 11 November started in 1919.
* Many returned home injured in body and mind. At a time when a stiff upper lip was expected this undoubtedly led to hidden horrors.

***Political effects***

* Growth of radicalism during the First World War as seen by Red Clydeside and role of the ILP.
* The ILP formed in Bradford 1893 by Kier Hardie and various Labour and socialist organisations.
* The ILP stood for the political independence of Labour rather than its previous political partnership with liberalism.
* The ILP was committed to achieving equality in society by the application of socialist doctrines. From the beginning the main objective of the party was ‘to secure the collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange’.
* The ILP directed its appeal towards working people, firm in the belief that the working class credentials of its leaders, and the experience gained by many of them in trade union struggles, would gain the party the support of many ordinary workers.
* The ILP was one of the bodies involved in creating the Labour Representation Committee in 1900, which subsequently became the Labour Party, and it remained an important force within the Labour Party until the late 1920s.
* At its peak in the mid 1920s, ILP membership in Scotland accounted for a third of all membership of the party in Britain, and out of a total of just over 1000 branches throughout Britain, over 300 were in Scotland.
* [[](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc069.htm)](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc069.htm)In Scotland the party was to the fore, agitating and campaigning on the major issues affecting the working classes.
* James Maxton campaigned tirelessly against poverty and the means test, whilst John Wheatley organised the rent strikes of 1915–16 and fought for improved housing conditions for Clydeside’s urban working classes.
* [[](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc008.htm)](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc008.htm)The ILP was active in the anti-conscription movement, and its leadership in Scotland opposed Britain's involvement in the First World War.
* ILP members were actively involved in resisting the Munitions Act of 1915 and in opposing the introduction of dilution. Indeed two future ILP MPs, Davie Kirkwood and Emanuel Shinwell, were [](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc034.htm)leaders of the CWC during the 40-hours strike of 1919.
* Another notable feature of the ILP in Scotland was the prominence of many women within the party. Female involvement in political agitations and campaigns was a characteristic of ILP front-line politics in Glasgow, doubly significant in an era when women did not feature so prominently in public and political life. Women like Mary Barbour, Agnes Dollan and Helen Crawfurd proved themselves more than capable of operating in the male-dominated and hostile arena of municipal politics.
* Up until the late 1920s in Scotland, and particularly on Clydeside, the ILP was seen by its supporters as the Labour Party. It was the electoral advances of the ILP in Scotland which helped to break the Liberal hegemony of British politics and which contributed to the growth of the Labour Party as the second party in British politics.
* A graphic illustration of the ILP’s influence in Labour's electoral rise can be [](http://sites2.scran.ac.uk/redclyde/redclyde/rc006.htm)highlighted by the fact that in the 1922 general election in Scotland, 40 out of the total of 43 prospective Labour candidates were members of the ILP. It was in the general election of 1922 that the ILP was to record perhaps its most famous electoral victory, when the party won 10 out of the 15 parliamentary constituency seats in Glasgow. This was a great reversal of electoral fortunes for the party who had managed to win only one Glasgow seat in the previous election in 1918, and it allowed the ILP stalwarts of the Red Clydeside period, such as John Wheatley, James Maxton, Davie Kirkwood and Emanuel Shinwell, to enter parliament.
* The ILP’s co-operation with communists at the local level, its pacifism and its theoretical approach to politics were regarded as electoral liabilities by the leadership of the Labour Party.
* Throughout the 1920s, as the Labour Party sought to present itself as a potential party of government, it increasingly employed a strategy of respectability and compromise in order not to alienate it from middle-class voters. The policy of the Clydeside ILP MPs on the other hand was to harass and confront Conservative and Liberals MPs in parliament, especially on the issues of poverty and unemployment. This was to lead to confrontation with the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), who viewed the ILP tactics as little more than cheap political stunts that discredited the PLP as a whole.
* ILP condemnation of the Labour leadership for deviating from its socialist principles led to outright disillusionment with the PLP and eventual ILP disaffiliation from the Labour Party in 1932.
* 1918 election.
* Splits and decline of the Liberal Party: coalition Liberals supported Lloyd George and the coalition with the Conservatives at the end of the war. The supporters of Herbert Asquith, the old party leader, stood as Liberals.
* Old Liberal causes died in the aftermath of the war. With the partition of Ireland in 1922 Home Rule died. So too did demands for it in Scotland.
* Strengthening of Conservative Party: they won 30% of the vote in 1918, increasingly associated with the growing middle class. Conservatives also benefited from being seen as the party of law and order, especially in the aftermath of the George Square riots. In the second election of 1924 they won 38 seats in Scotland compared to Labour’s 26.
* Emergence of Labour as an important political force with seven seats in Scotland and winning as large a number of votes as the Conservatives. That they did not do better was due to problems of voter registration and the fact that many working-class servicemen were not home yet. In the aftermath of the George Square riots many disaffected workers increasingly voted Labour: as seen in the success of Labour in the 1919 municipal elections in Glasgow and Fife.
* Labour in fact sought gradual reform as the leadership of people like Tom Johnstone, James Maxton and David Kirkwood found precedence over the more radical leaders like John McLean.
* In the 1922 election Labour made the breakthrough as the second political party: 29 of their 142 seats were in Scotland, and 10 of these were in Glasgow.
* 34 seats were won in Scotland in the 1924 election. Labour formed a minority, led by a Scot, Ramsay MacDonald; administration with Liberal support. One of their more radical measures was the Wheatley Housing Act. John Wheatley was a Glasgow Labour MP and Minister for Health, which gave government funding for local council housing. In Glasgow 21,586 badly needed houses were built as a result. The Government fell later in the year.
* Radicalism in Glasgow 1919 George Square riots: context of successful Communist revolution in Russia and the Spartacist revolt in Germany. Over-reaction of the authorities to an industrial protest.
* Role of Manny Shinwell, Willie Gallacher, John McLean.

**Perspectives**

* Impact on Scotland’s identity contentious and often subject to retrospective concerns.
* Impact on Scotland’s population: a wave of emigration post First World War.
* Impact on Scotland’s industry as the boom war years faded to the decline of the traditional heavy industries.
* Effects of the war on industry focused attention on people’s welfare and jobs.
* First World War damaged the Liberal Party, which split as a result of the war. Both the Conservatives and Labour benefited, the Conservatives more so in the short term and Labour in the longer term.
* Socialist idealism emerged as a growing and lasting force in Scottish political life.
* Conservatives attracted those middle classes who did well after the war with their message of patriotism, steadfastness and appeal to traditional family values.
* As industry suffered, professions such as academia, the Church and medicine came to dominate Edinburgh society and politics. Respectability and the importance of appearance became the dominant social mores.
* Land settlement remained a hot issue. The Land Settlement (Scotland) Act, 1919 gave government money and funds for the compulsory purchase of land for crofters. These purchases did not happen fast enough for men returning from war. Many felt that they had been promised land in return for their sacrifices. Owning one’s own land remained an important part of identity in the Highlands and islands. Significant land raids in Harris, Lewis and elsewhere.
* Living and working conditions remained poor in town and country alike, feeding a sense of grievance that many people’s suffering in the war was not fully appreciated.
* Home Rule became an increasingly remote possibility in the 1920s.
* Political and economic control seemed to become increasingly more southern based. Trade unions and the Labour Party lost their distinctly Scottish outlook and became more British and internationalist in their approach to improving workers’ rights.
* Both the Labour and Conservative parties emphasised the maintenance of the Union and modest state intervention.
* The distinctively Scottish way in which the First World War was remembered did not translate to a growing sense of Scottish nationalism in the short term, apart from in a few individuals. Most Scots fought for king, country and the United Kingdom.
* However, the First World War did change the way Scots viewed themselves: the impact of the war on industry and the impact of military losses on society had a huge impact in the long term.