

# World War I in Shetland



Primary 3-4

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## The First World War 1914-1918

In the summer of 1914 Europe went to war. More and more countries got involved and the fighting spread around the world.

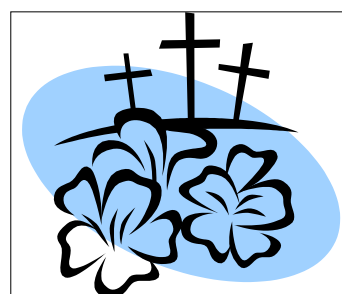
The war was fought between two groups:

- Central Powers-made up of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy
- Allies-made up of Great Britain, France and Russia



30 countries were involved in the conflict

The war was fought in several ways. Battles took place on land, at sea and even in the air.



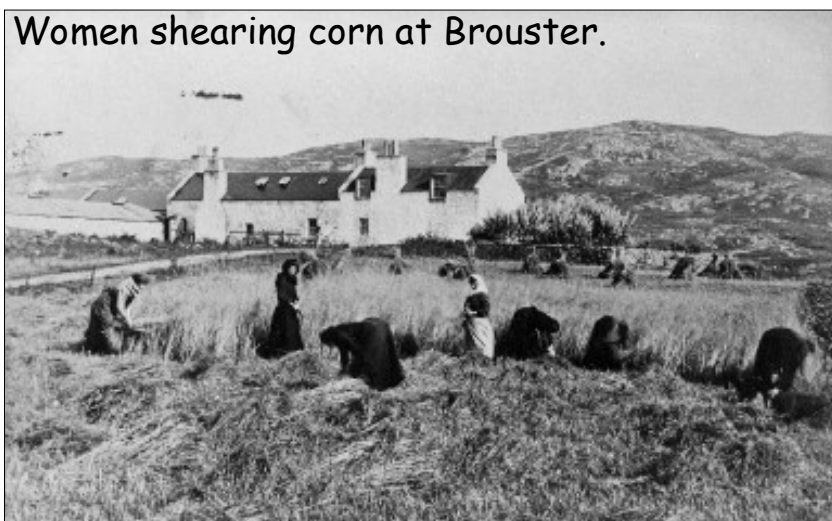
The war lasted 4 years. It ended in 1918.

## The First World War

### Shetland before War

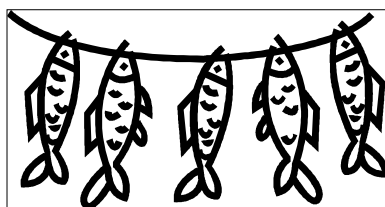
Majority of people lived in the country and worked on crofts.

Women shearing corn at Brouster.



Women and children did most of the farm work. They also sold knitted jumpers to buy things like sugar.

Men were away at sea or fishing most of the time.

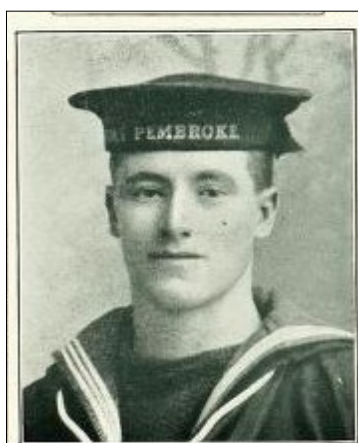


People started to move to Lerwick and Scalloway for paid work. They wanted to earn more money to buy modern things like lamps, lino for the floor or fine dishes.

## The First World War

### Beginning of War

4th August 1914  
Britain declared war on Germany



Some Shetland men went away to fight as soldiers. Others went into the navy or were sailors on ships taking supplies to and from Britain.

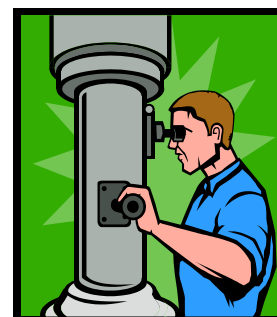
Local men too young or old to fight stayed at home and helped keep everyone safe.

They guarded telegraph cables or were on lookout for enemies.



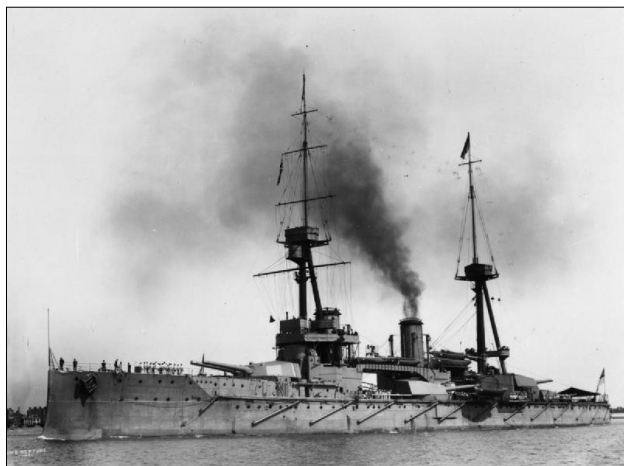
Sandwich Cable Guard

5500 Shetland men went out to fight for Britain in the war



# The First World War

## At Sea



### Warships

The British and Germans had the largest navies in the world. As the War continued, they battled for control of the seas.

### Submarines

German submarines stalked the Atlantic Ocean, attacking Allied ships with torpedoes.



The battles on the sea were known as naval battles.

Working on ships was dangerous. Ships were often sunk by enemies.

Shetlanders took their full share in the fight in all the biggest battles at the sea.

# The First World War

## Out to fight

Lots of Shetland men trained to become soldiers and went out to fight in the war.

Most of the fighting took place in Europe.



Tanks were used for the first time in the First World War. Tanks were so called because they looked similar to water tanks.

Shetlanders served in many countries across the world such as France, Russia, Egypt and Palestine.

Shetland women helped soldiers by knitting jumpers and sewing clothes. They made thousands of knitted items throughout the war.

# The First World War

## At Home

Prices of food were expensive. Most islanders grew vegetables and raised animals on crofts.

Post Offices in Shetland were open night and day to send and receive important messages.

Many men and horses that used to work on the crofts were now at war.

Boy Scouts were messengers for the naval base in Lerwick.

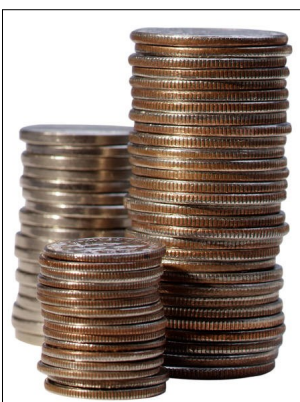


Lerwick Post Office

Eggs were collected and sent to Aberdeen for the soldiers in hospitals.



Collecting eggs at Cunningsburgh



People raised money and collected used clothes.



## The First World War

### End of War

#### Armistice

The deal to stop fighting was made on the 11th November 1918. At eleven o'clock the guns fell silent. The War was finally over.



After the end of war German warships sailed to Orkney. The German commander ordered them to be sunk there. 52 ships were sent to the bottom of sea.

Many Shetland men died during the war. Some were lost at sea or died from being injured by the enemy.

November is the time of the year when people wear a red poppy in memory of those who has lost their lives during wars.

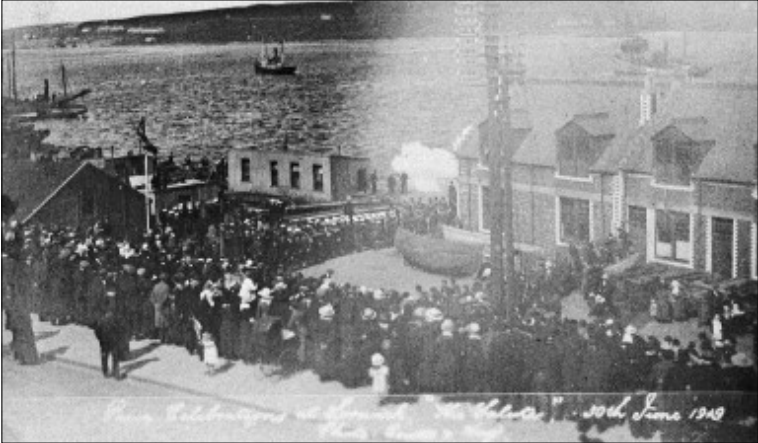


There weren't many jobs for Shetland people after the war and many chose to move away to find better jobs.

# The First World War

## End of War in Shetland

The end of war was marked in Lerwick by: bell ringing, ships sirens, rocket firing, displays of flags and bunting. The Brass Band played and people sang songs.



Peace Celebrations parade at the Esplanade, Lerwick



Unveiling the War Memorial at Hillhead, Lerwick on 6th January 1924

The War Memorial on Hillhead was built in 1918. Local memorials were also built in most areas in Shetland, sometimes in Churches, sometimes outside.

In 1919, Shetland's Roll of Honour and Roll of Service was published. It was a book listing people to be remembered for their brave action during the war.



Page from Roll of Honour