



Teachers' notes for First World War Recruitment trail

These notes accompany the
'First World War Recruitment' trail.

Introduction

Edinburgh Castle played an important role during the First World War (1914–1918). It acted as a recruitment and training centre, a prison of war, and had its own hospital. Surprisingly, parts of the castle also remained open to the public as a visitor attraction throughout the war. Today, Edinburgh Castle still plays an important role as a tourist attraction, which includes the National War Museum, Regimental Museums and the Scottish National War Memorial.

This trail encourages learners to step into the shoes of First World War recruits arriving

at Edinburgh Castle. It explores parts of the Castle: the National War Museum; the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Museum; the Royal Scots Museum and the Museum of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, and the Scottish National War Memorial.

These notes provide supporting information for teachers and group leaders. They include:

- The questions and answers for each section of the trail.
- Extra information to share with learners.
- Extension activities for on site or back in the classroom/at home.

Practical information

Aimed at Primary 5–7 pupils.

The full trail takes approximately two hours.

We have highlighted a recommended route on the map but the trail is not sequential and you can complete it in any order.

Please note that part of the trail discusses fallen soldiers and how they are remembered. Please bear this in mind for anyone who may need advance warning.

The Scottish National War Memorial is a place of remembrance and no photography is allowed in this building. We ask that groups are respectful and quiet during their visit.

Curriculum links

I can use primary and secondary sources selectively to research events in the past. **SOC 2-01a.**

I can investigate a Scottish historical theme to discover how past events or the actions of individuals or groups have shaped Scottish society. **SOC 2-03a.**

Extension activity

As you travel round Edinburgh Castle ask learners to identify where they are on the map.

Curriculum links

To extend my mental map and sense of place, I can interpret information from different types of maps and am beginning to locate key features within Scotland, UK, Europe or the wider world. **SOC 2-14a.**

1. The Esplanade



© The Royal Scots Regimental Museum.

2nd Battalion The Royal Scots, taken on Edinburgh Castle's Esplanade.

The Esplanade is an evocative spot to imagine the thoughts and emotions of a new recruit as they arrived at Edinburgh Castle. As well as witnessing the first steps of new recruits into the army, the Esplanade also saw practice drills and last parades before battalions moved on to their next destinations. Describing one of these parades, Lieutenant General Sir J S Ewart, the Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, said *'I saw them off; very sad, nothing but weeping wives, lately brides'* (Spencer Ewart Diary, 12 August 1914).

Questions

What do you think you will find inside the gate?

How are you feeling before entering the Castle?

Suggested answers

- Other new recruits, recruiters, somewhere to sleep and eat.
- Excited, nervous, proud, curious, scared, lonely.

Extension activity

Learners' reflections could be used as inspiration for creative writing. You might ask them

- Why not write a postcard back home describing your arrival and first impressions when you signed up?
- You could also write a diary entry. How might your diary entry be different from your postcard?

Curriculum links

I enjoy creating texts of my choice and I regularly select subject, purpose, format and resources to suit the needs of my audience. **LIT 1-20a / LIT 2-20a.**

By considering the type of text I am creating, I can select ideas and relevant information, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience. **LIT 2-26a.**

I am learning to use language and style in a way which engages and/or influences my reader. **ENG 2-27a.**

2. National War Museum



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Medical staff and soldiers at the Military Hospital <https://www.scran.ac.uk>.

The courtyard area outside the National War Museum is called Hospital Square. The building was originally built in the 1700s as a storehouse, then from 1897 it was used as a military hospital for the Castle. During the First World War, it was used as a hospital for both allies and prisoners of war.

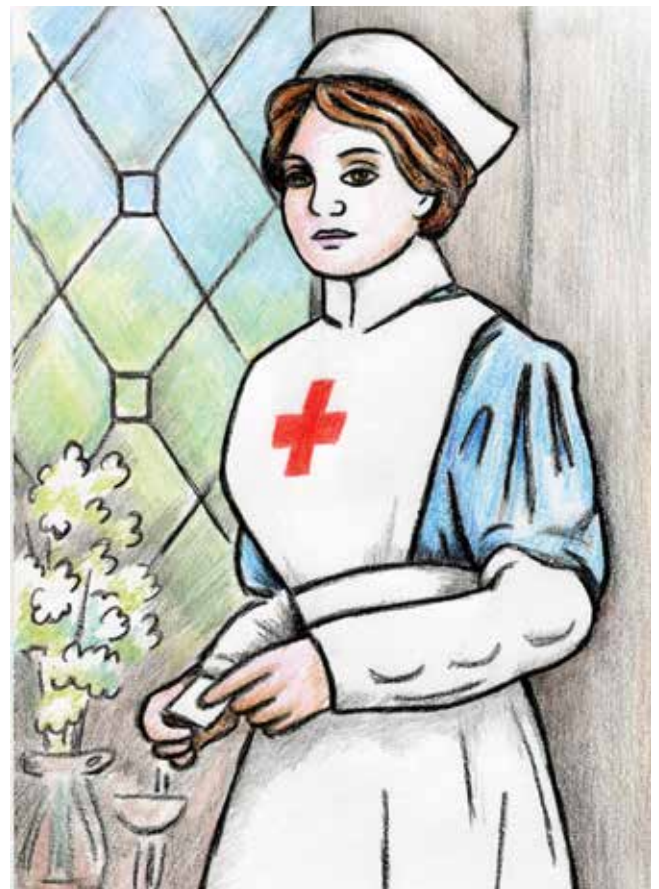
Extension activity

Before you enter the museum, find the door where this photograph was taken. Why not take a group photograph beside the door?

Question

Go into the Museum to Gallery 5 *In Defence*. Find the nurse's uniform. The uniform is towards the end of the museum.

A nurse wearing a uniform like this will look after you. Take a picture of the uniform or draw it in the box opposite.



Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse illustration.

Question

Find the nurse's autograph book in the same display. It contains artwork, notes, autographs and poems from wounded servicemen.

Why do you think the nurse made and kept this book?

Suggested answers

- To make a connection with the people she was looking after.
- As a memento and reminder of the people she had helped.
- Once the servicemen were no longer in her care the chances were that she would not see them again.
- As a way of helping her to deal with the pain and suffering she witnessed.

Question

Looking at other evidence in this display, what would life have been like for those working in wartime hospitals?

Suggested answers

These objects will provide other information about life in wartime hospitals.

Collecting box

In 1914, Dr Elsie Inglis founded the Scottish Women's Hospitals (SWH). This collecting box was used to raise money for the SWH. Inglis had offered her support to the War Office, and had received the reply '*My good lady, go home and sit still*'. The British government rejected the offer of military hospitals run entirely by women. As a result, many like Inglis offered their services to Allied countries instead and ran hospitals in countries such as France and Serbia.

Women were vital to the war effort in many ways, working in the factories, on the land and in hospitals. Previous to the war, they had not had the same opportunities as men, and were campaigning for equal rights and the right to vote.

Lapel badges

These were sold to raise money for war charities. Examples include the Red Cross and homes and hospitals for wounded servicemen. Women's organisations were also prominent in this fundraising.

As the war continued, people realised that more money was needed to care for servicemen who returned home injured. When the war began in July 1914 many thought it would be over by Christmas. During the first few months there was nothing in place to look after discharged servicemen who were sent home in need of care and rehabilitation. The war lasted from 1914–1918.

Uniform

Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) nurses received basic training to support nursing services in the army. Voluntary Aid Detachment nurses helped staff military hospitals, caring for patients and providing meals as well as duties such as driving ambulances. Many went to France to help staff dressing stations. VAD had been established in 1909 and many women were keen to play a role in the war effort.

3. The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Museum

The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are Scotland's only regular cavalry regiment. Troopers have always made sure their horses were well fed, looked after and ready to carry out their duties.

The Museum is housed in the New Barracks, which was around 118 years old when the First World War broke out. Soldiers had to make do with the cramped living spaces here while the new barrack block in the south of the city was being built.

This is where you will stay while you complete your training. You may have to spend your first night with just a blanket, concrete floor and your kitbag as a pillow before being assigned your bed here!

To find Room 3, when you enter the building, go up the stairs and follow the one-way system. You will pass across a corridor between rooms one and two. When you reach the third room, you'll be able to find these objects below.

Question

Find the trench periscope in the display case of objects from the First World War.

What was a periscope used for?

Answer

To check the ground outside of their trenches without taking the risk of raising their heads above the parapet.

Question

It looks like something you might find in your kitchen! What is it?

Answer

A wooden rolling pin.

Extension activity

Discuss how a periscope works and try to make your own.

Curriculum links

By exploring the refraction of light when passed through different materials, lenses and prisms, I can explain how light can be used in a variety of applications. **SCN 3-11a.**

Question:

In the same case there is a musical instrument called a bugle. As a recruit, you might learn to play this.

What was it used for?

Answers

- Giving out commands and instructions.
- Playing ceremonial tunes.

Extension activity

Explore the idea of using sounds rather than words to communicate. Task learners with creating a set of instructions using sound and then use them to guide a partner around a simple outdoor obstacle course.

Curriculum links:

I can use my voice, musical instruments and music technology to experiment with sounds, pitch, melody, rhythm, timbre and dynamics. **EXA 2-17a.**

4. Prisons of war

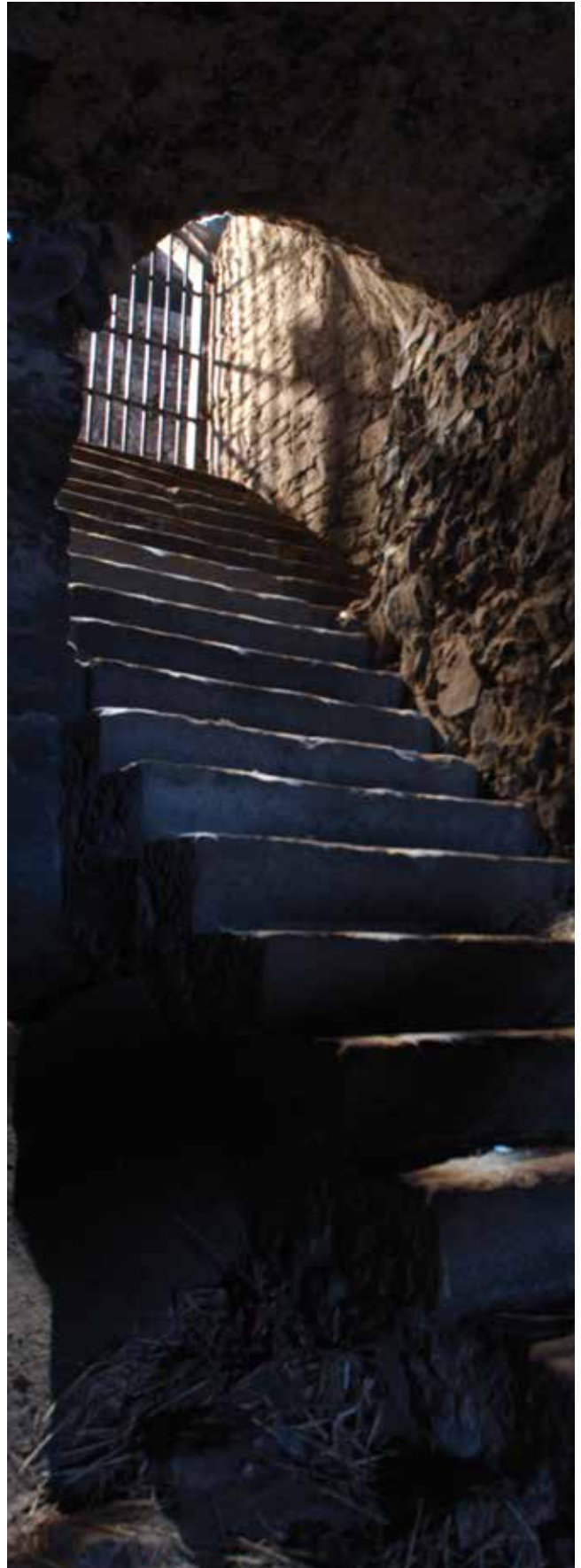
Edinburgh Castle was used as a prison for over 1000 years, including during the First World War. It held prisoners of war, political prisoners and civilians who were kept under the 'Aliens Registration Act 1914'. This Act required German nationals ('Aliens') to register with the police, after which they could be interned or deported. Although some were interned due to suspicious activities, many were targeted simply for being German.

Question

Who are the prisoners you might meet?

Suggested answers

- **German prisoners of war** rescued from ships sunk during naval battles (including SMS Blücher, SMS Greif and submarine U-18).
- **German civilians**, including suspected spy Dr Walter Gellhorn (he was detained by the Royal Navy onboard a Dutch ship on his way to Rotterdam, apparently with military plans in his possession).
- **Political prisoners**, including David Kirkwood (a shop steward at Glasgow's Beardmore engineering works, later a Member of Parliament). Skilled engineering workers were striking. One of the reasons for these strikes was to protect their status from unskilled labourers (often women). These strikes had been declared illegal.



Stairs leading to the prisons.



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The 'Stars and Stripes' graffiti carved in the door in the prisons of war at Edinburgh Castle. Although this graffiti is from earlier than the First World War, it is a lovely example of what prisoners chose to draw/write on the walls and doors of their prisons.

Extension activity

Many prisoners over the years have left their marks in the prisons, carving poetry, images or their names onto the walls. Ask learners what they would write or draw if they were in prison here.

Back at school or home, learners could carve their message into soap or clay. Visit this Historic Environment Scotland link to find out how: [Become a soapmason craft](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/media/6574/become-a-soap-mason.pdf)
<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/media/6574/become-a-soap-mason.pdf>

Curriculum links

I can create and present work that shows developing skill in using the visual elements and concepts. **EXA 2-03a.**

Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through activities within art and design. **EXA 0-05a / EXA 1-05a / EXA 2-05a.**

Question

More prisoners will be arriving tonight. Describe them arriving in a few sentences below.

Suggested answers

To help your learners write their answers, you could ask them the following questions

- What might the prisoners be thinking/feeling? How would this show on their faces, in their body language?
- Where are they? Coming up the steep castle hill? Going over the drawbridge? Entering the prison?
- Who are they? Why have they been brought here? This might affect what they're thinking/feeling.
- What would it have been like entering the prisons? Can how it smells or feels today help you imagine?

5. The Royal Scots Museum and the Museum of the Royal Regiment of Scotland

The Royal Scots was the oldest regiment in the British Army until 2006, when it was merged with the other Scottish infantry regiments to form the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

The building that houses these two museums is the Old Drill Hall. Drill is essentially marching! The recruits would practice it over and over until they could move in unison with each other.

This is the Drill Hall, where new recruits are put through their paces. Once you have finished your training, you will be sent to the front line.

Question

Find the gold tin sent to soldiers.
Fill in the missing words.

Answer

Princess Mary sent this to soldiers for Christmas in 1914.

Question

How would you feel receiving this gift?

Suggested answers

Happy, overwhelmed; homesick;
proud; excited

Question

Explore what happened to some Royal Scots soldiers during the First World War, including the train accident in 1915. Describe one example below.

Suggested answers

Learners could look at the Quintinshill Rail crash, near Gretna in Dumfriesshire, which claimed the lives of 210 Royal Scots travelling from Larbert to Liverpool during the First World War. They could also investigate some of the Victoria Cross recipients and find out why they were awarded the medal.



© The Royal Scots Regimental Museum.

A Royal Scots Soldier around 1915.

In the same building, find the Museum of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. It is located in the last gallery before leaving the building.

Question

How do the experiences of soldiers today compare to those of soldiers during the First World War? Look for the display which remembers a soldier killed in action in 2007.

What was the soldier's name?

Answer

Captain John McDermid

Question

Has the way we remember fallen soldiers changed since the First World War?

Suggested answer

Soldiers killed in action today are honoured and remembered in a similar way; however, there are many more 'unknown soldiers' from the First World War.



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SCOTS piper at the entrance of the Scottish National War Memorial, 2019.

Extension activity

Use the last question to prompt a discussion on Remembrance and the poppy, which has been a symbol of Remembrance since the end of the First World War. Ask learners to find a War Memorial near their school or home and try to find out more about the people named on it.

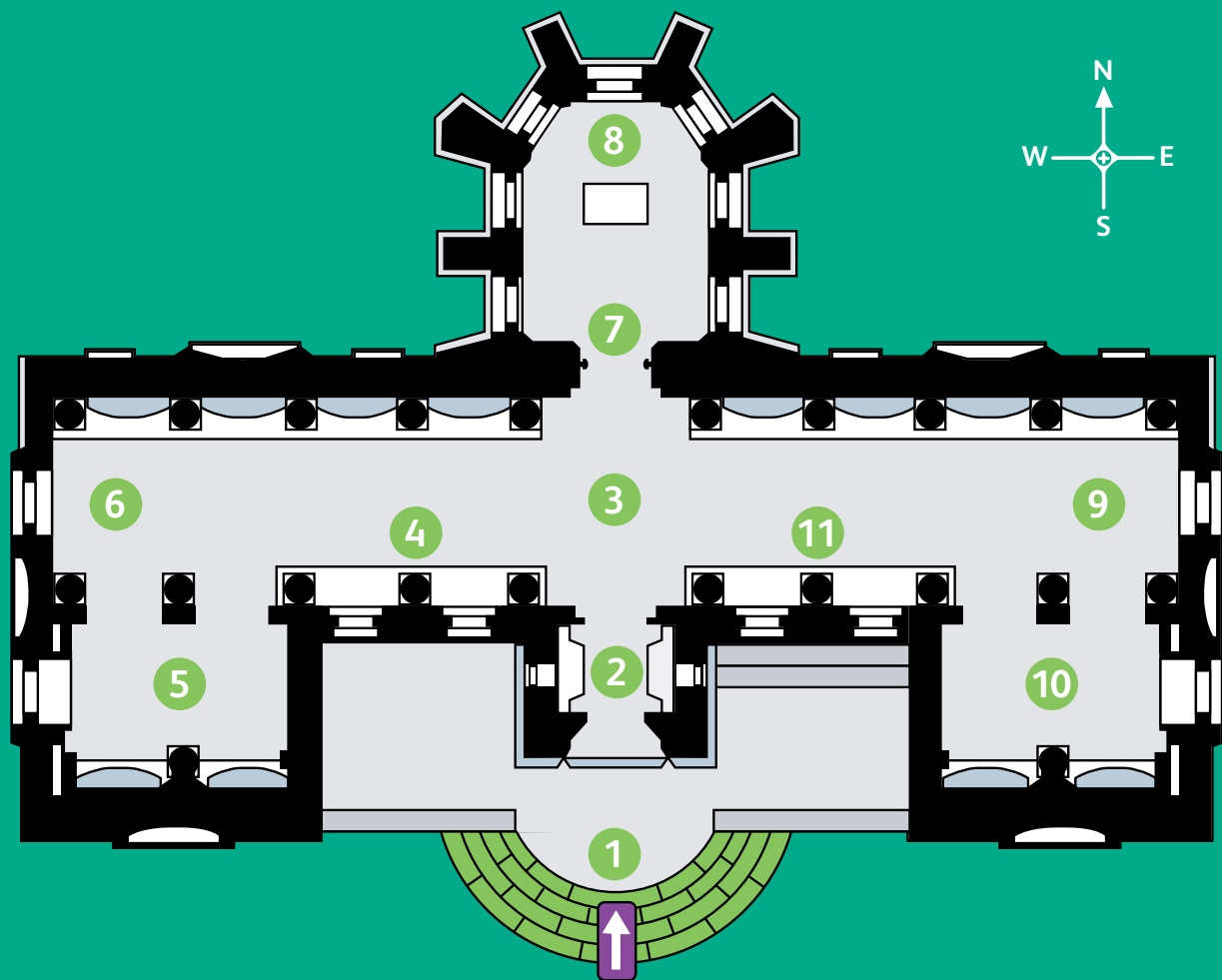
Curriculum links

By exploring places, investigating artefacts and locating them in time, I have developed an awareness of the ways we remember and preserve Scotland's history.

SOC 1-02a.

I can use evidence to recreate the story of a place or individual of local historical interest. **SOC 1-03a.**

6. Scottish National War Memorial



KEY



Entrance

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1 The Entrance | 5 The Western Transept | 9 The East Windows (Water) |
| 2 The Porch | 6 The West Windows (Air) | 10 The Eastern Transept |
| 3 The Hall of Honour | 7 The Shrine | 11 The South Windows (Spring & Summer) |
| 4 The South Windows (Autumn & Winter) | 8 The Frieze | |

The Scottish National War Memorial was built during the 1920s, opening in 1927. Originally intended to honour those who served in the First World War, it now commemorates all later conflicts as well. The exterior of the building has many examples of sculpture, showing figures including Peace, Justice, Mercy, Knowledge, Truth, and Courage. Inside, beautiful stained-glass windows, stone carvings and bronzes depict scenes from the First World War and honour the different roles played by men, women and animals in warfare.

Question

As well as soldiers, there were many others who were vital to the war effort who are remembered in the windows and stone carvings of the Memorial.

Suggested answers

Encourage learners to look at the stone carvings and stained glass windows. The numbers in brackets show locations of possible answers.

- Animals: Elephant (10), a horse (2), a reindeer (6) or a canary (5).
- An image of a nurse (5).
- An image of a soldier (10).

Question

Think of three words to describe what it was like to be a recruit at Edinburgh Castle.

Suggested answer

To help your learners write their answers, you could ask them the following questions:

- Would Edinburgh Castle have been a comfortable place to stay?
- What words would you use to describe it?
- What do you think would have been good about being a recruit here?
- What do you think would have been difficult about being a recruit here?

Extension activity

Learners could design their own stained-glass window, inspired by their visit to Edinburgh Castle. You could try using sticky back plastic and tissue paper, coloured cellophane or tracing paper and felt tips, or use entirely recycled materials. Using these designs, you could create a larger display.

Curriculum links

I can create and present work that shows developing skill in using the visual elements and concepts.

EXA 2-03a.

Through observing and recording from my experiences across the curriculum, I can create images and objects which show my awareness and recognition of detail. **EXA 2-04a.**

Inspired by a range of stimuli, I can express and communicate my ideas, thoughts and feelings through activities within art and design. **EXA 0-05a / EXA 1-05a / EXA 2-05a.**

Useful resources

Web links correct as of November 2021.

Edinburgh Castle has a dedicated website, with information about the different areas of the castle, virtual tours and access information. <https://www.edinburghcastle.scot/>

SCRAN has a wide selection of archives connected to First World War covering a range of topics, from animals to the home front. <https://www.scran.ac.uk/hierarchy/worldwarone/>

Forthview Primary School created animations inspired by their First World War studies. Read about the project in the Scranalogue Blog <https://www.scran.ac.uk/scranalogue/2017/06/20/forthview-of-the-great-war/> and view the animations.

You can also find blog posts about Armistice and the **Scottish National War Memorial**, as well as the stained glass windows on the Scranalogue blog.

<https://www.scran.ac.uk/scranalogue/category/schools>

Historic Environment Scotland's dedicated website for the First World War includes details about the sites in their care which are connected to First World War. <https://www.scotlandsfirstworldwar.org/>

WW100 Scotland includes a library of resources covering various topics, all available to view online. <http://ww100scotland.com/>

Discover more stories from in the First World War by exploring the **National War Museum's** collection online. <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/stories/scottish-history-and-archaeology/first-world-war/>

The **Scottish National War Memorial** has some lovely images as well as a virtual tour of the memorial. <https://www.snmw.org>

Explore more First World War resources and activities on the **Regimental Museums Learning Hub**. <https://www.learning-hub.theroyalregimentofscotland.org>



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