

THE BARNBOW Lasses

Education visits

Part One



Life in the 1900's : Welcome to Leeds!

A guide for Teachers



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See Part Two for:-

Extract from Agnes's fictional Diary for June 10th 1914, Flags of State of the main powers, Map of Europe in 1911, European alliances, Getting ready for war, World War One glossary, the last summer, Franz Ferdinand and the Black Hand assassins, Sarajevo – How one thing led to another, Four different assassination stories, Quiz, Front page news, Great Britain Declares War on Germany, What happened next? The domino effect.

Introduction

2014 marks the centenary of the start of the First World War – the War to end all Wars. In Leeds, an inspiring story of dedication and sacrifice unfolded between 1914 and 1918. Some men and women paid the ultimate sacrifice. For others, its effect lasted for the rest of their lives and has echoed down the years, even to their grandchildren.

Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside Service were approached by local ward member, Councillor Pauleen Grahame, who asked us to provide a fitting tribute to the men and women who worked at the Number 1 Filling Factory at Barnbow. This was one of a chain of munitions factories that operated during the First World War around the country.

On December 4th 2012 we unveiled a new memorial plaque and two interpretive boards at the corner of Manston Park, to these brave men and women. We also wanted to create a "learning" legacy, and have written and compiled a pack of information on the local history of the First World War, illustrating both sides of the conflict, from the women who fought by manufacturing shells in the factories of Leeds, to the men of the Leeds Pals who used the millions of tons of explosives in the fight overseas.



The pack is in four parts and can be downloaded individually from the Parks and Countryside website as a series of PDF's. They are, in order

- 1 Life In The 1900's – Welcome To Leeds
- 2 Oh What A Lovely War!
- 3 Shells, Shells, and Still More Shells!
- 4 The Trouble With Cordite

The subject matter covers many elements of the new 2014 National Curriculum for Key Stage 2 History, Geography, English and Science, primarily underpinning "a study of an aspect of history or a site dating from a period beyond 1066 that is significant in the locality" and also "a significant turning point in British history". It covers major elements of Key Stage 3 History and Geography, including "Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day": women's suffrage; the First World War and the Peace Settlement, a local history study and Human and Physical Geography. We very much hope that the packs are of use to teachers and children alike for many years to come.

THE SITE OF THE NO. 1 FILLING FACTORY AT BARNBOW, NEAR CROSS GATES, LEEDS, WEST YORKSHIRE



Barnbow Lasses Memorial



Life in the 1900's : Welcome to Leeds!

If you could talk to someone who was born more than 100 years ago, these are some of the amazing things they could tell you about life in Leeds in 1914.

King changes family name: A royal British make-over!



In 1914, the King of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was George the Fifth. He was the grandson of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Many of Victoria and Albert's children had married into the royal families of Europe. His cousins were Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany.

At a time when many other European countries lost their empires because of the First World War, the British Empire expanded to the greatest it had ever been.

The German Kaiser Wilhelm II was the King's first cousin. For the British public, he symbolised the horrors of the First World War. The King and his family bore the titles Prince and Princess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and Duke and Duchess of Saxony. His wife, Queen Mary, was the daughter of the Duke of Teck and descended from the German Dukes of Württemberg.



When war broke out with Germany, in August 1914, the royal family feared that their German ancestry would make them very unpopular with their British subjects. It took them three years to agree to do it, because it meant giving up all their family history links with Germany, but on 17 July 1917, George V issued a royal proclamation that changed the name of the British Royal Family from the German-sounding "House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha", to the very English "House of Windsor".

Population of Leeds doubles!

In 1914 the population of Leeds was 445,550. Today it is over 730,000. Hundreds of thousands of people in Leeds worked in textile mills and factories that made clothes. Many of these workers were women.

One woman in twelve worked in domestic service as a servant, a housekeeper, housemaid, nursery maid, scullery maid or "Maid of all work". A Maid of All Work was the lowest paid and most unskilled position in a household of servants. You would spend your time cleaning, polishing, scrubbing floors and fetching coal and water, beating carpets and polishing the copper pans until they shone. Your



working day would start at 5.00 am and hopefully finished at 10.00 pm and you would work seven days a week for between £150.00 and £300.00 a year.

In 1911 there were 1.27 million domestic servants in this country. This figure had shrunk by 230,000 in just twenty years from the census of 1891! A very large proportion of these “domestics” were women, but all this was about to change! Today in 2012, there are less than 65,000 domestic servants in Britain. Can you work out why?

Poor children get free school meals

In 1906 the Liberal government decided to give children from poor families free school meals. This meant two things. Firstly these vulnerable children were more likely to actually go to school, because they would get fed, and secondly, they would be able to concentrate on their lessons much better because they were not so hungry.



Pensions for the over-seventies

In January 1909, for the first time in history, older people who reached the age of 70 were given 5 shillings a week to live on by the government. This stopped thousands of very poor old people from becoming destitute and although at the time, it was considered a tiny amount, it was better than nothing!

After a century of improvements on the pension scheme in Britain, we are now facing the very real prospect of working between five and ten years longer than our parents and grandparents did, in order to earn enough credits to provide us with a reasonable pension. This is because we are all living a lot longer now and the same amount of pension money has to cover more years between when we retire and when we die.

The minimum wage is set

Another important milestone in the creation of the Welfare State happened in 1909, when the Government created Wages Councils that set a minimum rate of pay for “sweated industries”, for workers that did particularly hard, heavy industrial jobs, like clothing manufacture, where workers were very low-paid and worked very long hours.

If you don't like what you do now, exchange it!

In 1910 the first Labour Exchanges were opened, where many different jobs were advertised. Before this time, you could get a different job, but you had to rely on notices in newspapers and cards in Newsagents, or word of mouth. From this point, you could go to one place and find out information about dozens of vacancies in your area and elsewhere.



Unemployment Benefit and Sickness Benefit

In 1911 the government passed an act to give sickness benefits to workers that couldn't work because they were ill. The act also provided unemployment benefit for workers in some trades like shipbuilding, where periods of unemployment were common and men would be "laid off" after finishing the ship they had been working on. In 1920 unemployment benefit covered most workers although it was not extended to agricultural workers until 1936.

A living wage!

In 1914, a Farm labourer earned £1.00 a week, a cowman could get £1.1 shilling and a Farm Foreman in Barwick - in - Elmete earned £1. 4 shillings. Have a look further on to find out how money worked in 1914 and what the equivalent would be today.

For some people, life improved in Britain after the First World War. A survey in 1924 showed that only 4% of the population were living in extreme poverty which was an improvement from the period before 1914 when it was roughly 10%. But this fact hides the true cost of the War to end all Wars. Many people were no better off at all. They had lost husbands and fathers and many women had to raise children on their own, or their husbands were injured or disabled and not able to work when they returned from the Front.

A woman's place is in the home!

As men began to do more and more specific jobs, rather than being general labourers, housework became seen as something only women could and should do. The gap grew between the two worlds of work and it was considered "normal" for men to toil in the public domain, as factory or office workers and for women to work in the home, either their own or someone else's. Along the way, it also became the norm for women's unpaid household duties to be less valued than men's paid labour, an attitude we still sometimes suffer from a century later, despite many women working full time and raising a family at the same time.

Go to work on Shanks's Pony

Most people travelled round Leeds, from home to work and to school or the shops by walking! It was not uncommon for children to walk two or three miles each way to school and back and for women to carry their shopping in heavy baskets from town back home. Shanks's Pony was a slang term for walking on your own two feet – shanks is an old-fashioned word for "legs".

Or take the Tram

The earliest trams in Leeds were single deckers pulled along by a horse. From October 1891, double-decker trams were operated by Leeds Tramways Company, until 1901, when the whole system became fully electrified. Throughout most of the twentieth century the tramway used two kinds of tram,



a “bus style” and a “balloon tram”. Both were double-deckers. There were several lines running between the city centre and Cross Gates, but also routes to Armley, Beeston, Chapel Allerton, Hunslet, Kirkstall, Middleton, Moortown and Roundhay. Where you see extra wide streets with really old buildings on either side in Leeds today, you may be looking at a route of the old Leeds tramway. The long hill up Selby Road from York Road towards Temple Newsam and Cross Gates is one of these. See if you can find any others.

School Days

There are still some really old school buildings in Leeds that were built in Victorian times. An elementary school provided free education and was attended by working class children, whereas middle-class boys went to Grammar Schools and middle-class girls went to High Schools. It was not thought a good idea to allow mixed-sex education because the boys would distract the girls and vice versa. The problem with that principle, is that boys and girls grow up not knowing how to get on with each other. Some people think it would still be a good idea today! What do you think?



Elementary schools taught children up to the age of twelve, when most working class children would leave school to go to work. A few of the most intelligent children might gain a scholarship to a grammar school or high school, but would not necessarily get permission to attend by their parents, as by leaving school and getting a job, they could support their families instead. The school leaving age was only raised to fourteen in 1918 and before then, many children left school at 11.

If you see any of these old school buildings, they will usually have a date carved on them, so you will be able to tell they are original. Have a look above the doors. It is likely that there were two entrances – one for boys and one for girls.

In your classroom, you would have your own desk, or you might share a pair of desks – like a semi-detached house, with inkwells and desk tops that lifted up so you could store your books inside. The desks would be in rows from the front, closest to the blackboard, to the back of the room. Many of these old buildings are not schools any more, but have been re-used for other purposes.

The teachers desk would be at the front of the class and there would be maps of Great Britain and the world on the wall with the British Empire coloured pink, and perhaps a picture of the King. There would be a large clock, often with Roman numerals, which would be used to teach children how to tell the time.

Classrooms looked rather dull and boring by your standards today. There would be no bright colours or class work on the walls. The teacher would write on the blackboard and children had to learn a lot of information “by rote”, which means they learned something by repeating it every day until they knew it off by heart or by copying it down on a slate or paper, using an ink pen with a metal nib. You would go home each afternoon with blue ink staining your fingers and if you got it on your sleeve or jumper, you would get a clout from your mother!

Things you would be expected to learn off by heart included your times table, the letters of the alphabet, quotes from the Bible and pieces of poetry. The teacher would write on the board in chalk.

If you did something bad or naughty, or said something disrespectful whilst you were in school, you would be punished. You would get the cane (or a few whacks with a wooden ruler) or a dozen hard slaps with a slipper. Sometimes this was done in private in the Headmaster's office, but often it would be done straight away, in front of the rest of your class. It's not nice to be made an example of in front of all your classmates and cheeky or rude children soon learned to behave themselves. Parents were much more supportive of the actions of school teachers back in 1914 than they are now and if you had been caned or slippered in class and your mother or father found out, you could usually expect another smack from them when you got home!

Playing out

In 1914, there was still a lot of Victorian housing that was very closely packed together in Leeds. By 1918, seventy percent of people in Leeds were still living in this kind of housing. Leeds Corporation only stopped building back-to-back's in 1937! But the new housing estates that replaced them, on the outskirts of the city in the 1920s and 1930s just weren't the same and moving people to these estates broke up the traditional working class communities of the city centre.



"Back to back" houses often had back streets and "ginnels" between them, where children played after school. So even though the city was a lot smaller, the average working class child had less opportunity to play in open spaces than you do today. Children played outside their own houses or in the street. There were very few cars and heavy goods vehicles on the road.

Mothers and older sisters or aunts and uncles or grandparents spent more time at home, so they were around to make sure that children did not get into too much trouble...most of the time! Grown ups often joined in with ball games or skipping with their children in the evening after work, as they were chatting to neighbours, digging the garden, cleaning the windows or scrubbing the front steps. If a woman with children needed to go down to the shops, she would usually arrange to get a neighbour or friend to keep an eye on her children and the following day, she would return the favour. People were always in and out of each other's houses. Everybody knew everyone's business, but you also knew all your neighbours and could call on dozens of people in a crisis. On your street or road today, how many neighbours do you know well enough to know their names? Which kind of lifestyle would you prefer?

The only time children played indoors, was if the weather was really wet. If you wanted to stay indoors on a sunny day, your mother would think you were ill and if she found that you weren't ill, woe betide you! You'd be told to get yourself outside and stop getting under her feet ...sharpish!

Radios were not common until the 1920's and television had not yet been invented. You could read books, chat to your friends, play with your toys, play games and if your parents could afford one, you could ride your bicycle.

Here are two rhyming songs that children would sing when they were playing. See if you can learn them "off by heart".

*Half a pound of twopenny rice,
Half a pound of treacle.
That's the way the money goes,
Pop! goes the weasel.*

*Every night when I get home
The monkey's on the table,
Take a stick and knock it off,
Pop! goes the weasel*

*Half a pound of twopenny rice,
Half a pound of treacle.
Mix it up and make it nice,
Pop! goes the weasel.*



This tinplate toy hot air balloon was made in Nuremburg, Germany. It was bought by Ernest King for 1d (a penny) from a London street vendor on 18th December 1909.



*Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?
Up above the world so high , like a diamond in the sky.*

*When the blazing sun is gone, when he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light, twinkle, twinkle all the night.*

*Then the traveller in the dark, thanks you for your tiny spark,
He could not see which way to go, if you did not twinkle so.*

*In the dark blue sky you keep, and often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye, 'till the sun is in the sky.*

*As your bright and tiny spark lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are - twinkle, twinkle little star.*

Spending money

The money people used in 1914 was different to the money we have now. Before “decimalisation” in 1971, where our pennies started to add up to a hundred, and a hundred pennies made a pound, we had pounds, shillings and pence instead. This was a very old system, though like everything else in our history, it had been modified and had evolved over many centuries.

King Henry II introduced the “old” coinage, which developed from the Troy system of weighing out precious metals like silver and gold. This measuring system was based on the *grain*, the *pennyweight* (24 grains), the *ounce* (20 pennyweights), and the *pound* (12 ounces). The name is thought to come from the city of Troyes in France, site of one of the biggest medieval fairs in Europe, where lots of coinage, silver and gold would change hands.

The penny was literally one pennyweight of silver. A pound sterling weighed 240 pennyweights, or a pound of sterling silver.

Have a look below and see if you can learn this rhyming ditty to find the answer to the question.

That's The Way The Money Goes (to the tune of Pop Goes The Weasel)

“Four farthings make four quarter pence,
Two farthings make a ha’penny.
Two half-pennies make a penny fence,
Which is better than not having any!

Three pennies make a thruppenny piece,
Six pennies are a “tanner”.
Twelve pence is a shilling, a “Bob” for my niece,
And she’ll buy you a Union banner.

Two shillings is a Florin - a two Bob bit,
And two shillings and sixpence is half a crown,
Five shillings makes a crown for the King – if it fits
Invite him to tea and we’ll all come round!

Ten shillings is a ten Bob note,
And two of those make a full Pound,
With twenty shillings you could get a new coat,
Or a dozen great cheeses, all big and round.

A guinea used to be a pound and a shilling,
A gold guinea is a real treasure,
A sovereign replaced it - worth a pound if you’re billing...
So don’t over-charge me, I know my measures!”

The Barnbow Lasses Worksheet 01

Use this worksheet to learn more about what money was called and how much each coin was worth in 1914.

Use the rhyme “That’s The Way The Money Goes” to lay out what our old style money was called and what it was worth in the table below. You can refer to it again if you do some “old style” mathematics with your teacher.

Pounds Shillings and Pence	
What it is called and what it is worth	
Four Farthings	
Two Farthings	
Two Ha’pennies	
Three Pennies	
Six Pennies (sixpence)	
Twelve Pence	
Two Shillings	
Two Shillings and Sixpence	
Five Shillings	
Ten Shillings	
Two Ten Bob notes	
A Guinea	
A Sovereign	



The Barnbow Lasses

Worksheet 01 Answers

Teachers – Get your class to use the worksheet above to extract the information from the rhyme. This sheet shows how the finished worksheet should look, so you can see that this **is** the way the money goes in 1914!

Pounds Shillings and Pence Table	
What it is called and what it is worth	
Four Farthings	Four Quarter Pennies
Two Farthings	A Ha'penny (half-penny)
Two Ha'pennies	Penny piece (penny)
Three Pennies	Thruppenny piece (thruppence)
Six Pennies (sixpence)	Tanner
Twelve Pence	A Shilling or a "bob"
Two Shillings	A Florrin
Two Shillings and Sixpence	A Half Crown (or half a crown)
Five Shillings	A Crown
Ten Shillings	Ten Bob Note
Two Ten Bob notes	A Pound Note or Twenty Shillings
A Guinea	A Pound and a Shilling (or twenty one shillings)
A Sovereign	A Pound (or twenty shillings)

Have you got that? Now see if you can work this out. How many pennies are in £3 - 10 - 6d (That's three pounds, ten shillings and 6 pence?)

Here's how to work it out....

There are 20 shillings in a pound. So that makes 60 shillings in £3.00.

Add 10 more shillings...that makes 70 shillings.

There are 12 pennies in each shilling....so multiply 70 by 12 and that gives you 840 pennies ... plus the sixpence....

Answer 846!

If you have the time in class you can cut out the images of old coins that were in circulation in 1914 and practice asking your class different mental maths questions.

How much is that worth today?

Using the online calculator at <http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/> in 2007 (the latest year available), £10 0s 0d in 1915 was worth £574.27 in today's money, using the retail price index.

If you worked in agriculture, as a cow-man in 1914, you might earn £1-1s. a week. That is the equivalent of £72.60 a week in today's money for working a ten hour day six days a week, outdoors in all weathers. But at least you had a job and didn't have to go "cap-in-hand" to the state, (which was considered a shameful thing to have to do) and this factor was very important to many hard-working people.

If you wanted to start a new life in America in 1912, the price of a 3rd class one-way steerage ticket on the Titanic was £8.00, so your £10.00 could have bought you a one-way ticket to America, with enough change to rent a cheap room and enough food to last you a week or two, so you could find a job.

The pound sterling of 1910 was worth around £70.00 in today's currency, but this fact understates the difference in real value. Money went much further in 1914, when you shopped for the necessities of life, like food, clothing and housing. Even some of the little luxuries of life were cheaper.

A standard working man's family budget for 1914 was £1-1s-6d, or less than £275.00 (old pounds) a year. A shilling went much further before the massive inflation caused by the First World War. That inflation averaged about 14.6% a year for five years between 1914 and 1919!



In 1910, rent for a small house was between 3s-6d to 5s a week. In 1907 a pensioner living alone could make do (just) on 5 shillings a week, which is the rough equivalent of £17.00 a week today.

In 1914, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith was paid an annual salary of £5,000.00 which is equivalent to £325,000 in today's money. Today (in 2013) our Prime Minister earns an estimated £208,000. Do you think David Cameron is losing out?

A pound (1/2 kilo) of butter cost 1 shilling and 2d, 20 pounds (9 kilos) of potatoes could be had for 10d, a loaf of bread cost just 2½d (twopence ha'penny); a dozen eggs sold for a shilling and a pound of meat for 10d.

Welcome to Leeds 1914 – Here's your travel money

