

Remembrance



As you can imagine, the First and Second World Wars had a huge impact on everyone in the UK and across the world and November 11th marks a day of Remembrance. In honour of this, the LRC has created a few displays that explore various aspects of the wars, including the effects of war on soldier's mental health, the roles women played in the war and the unsung heroes: the animals.

In keeping with the children's fairy tale theme that we are focusing on this term, we will also be looking at the impact of the wars had on children, particularly during WW2, which saw mass evacuations of children from towns and cities to the countryside.

Upheaval

The Second World War was a time of great upheaval for many children in Britain. The new threat of air raids and gas attacks led to increased fear over civilian safety. Therefore the government made arrangements to evacuate over a million children from towns and cities into the countryside. Many children had to adjust to being separated from family and friends. To some, this was an adventure - some of the children from cities had never seen farm animals before - but others found themselves in often more isolated and 'primitive' homes, without running water or electricity.

The children who stayed had to endure bombing raids, were injured or often made homeless. All children had to deal with rationing and changes to their education and daily life.

Education

The war required many of the country's young men to leave their homes and families to fight at the Front. This included farmers, factory workers and teachers. This had a dramatic impact on children's education. A lack of teachers meant bigger class sizes and there was a shortage of stationery and books. 1 in 5 of the country's schools were damaged by bombing and around 2000 schools were requisitioned by the government for the war.

Children's involvement in the war effort

Children also left school at an earlier age and were encouraged into work from the age of 14. They worked in agriculture, salvaging, offices and major industries such as aircraft production and shipbuilding to aid the war effort.

Organisations such as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides helped by guarding railway lines, fire watching, tending allotments, packaging clothing and food for the Front, and prepping 1st aid dressing stations.

There were as many as 250,000 teenage boys (under 18) who joined the fighting in WW1, despite the necessity of being 19 to join the army. There were several reasons for this:

Recruitment officers were paid two shillings and sixpence for each new army recruit, and would often ignore any concerns they had about age. Many people at the start of the 20th Century didn't have birth certificates, so it was easy to lie about how old you were. The minimum height requirement was 5ft 3in (1.60m), with a minimum chest size of 34in (0.86m). If you met these criteria you were likely to be recruited. Some young boys were scared of being called a coward and could not resist the pressure from society.

Further reading:

- [The teenage soldiers of World War One - BBC News](#)
- [Children and Youth | International Encyclopedia of the First World War \(WW1\)](#)
- [10 Ways Children Took Part In The First World War | Imperial War Museums](#)
- [Children and War Foundation](#)
- [Children's experiences of World War One | The British Library](#)
- [Children and World War Two - History Learning Site](#)
- [\(PDF\) The effect of war on children: The children of Europe after World War II](#)

Stained Glass Poppy



If you'd like to make your own stained glass effect poppy to display as a sign of remembrance, please find some instructions below:

[poppy instructions](#)