

New interactive online map reveals global reach of the First World War

Friday 1 August 2014, London– To mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, The National Archives is launching a new interactive online map – First World War: A Global View. It will map the global reach of the conflict using the official records of the First World War from The National Archives collection.

The map shows countries, territories and empires as they were during wartime alongside a map of the present day for comparison. This is the beginning of a four year project which starts by focusing on the involvement of countries from across the British Empire during wartime. Each of these countries has an interactive tab which contains images and links to documents drawn directly from primary sources held by The National Archives. They highlight key events, historical figures and some lesser known stories from the war.

[First World War: A Global View](#)

Over the course of the four years, the map will be expanded to include Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, Africa and Asia. When complete it will offer a truly global view of the First World War.

Dr Stephen Twigge, Records Specialist at The National Archives said: “This new map reveals the many nations that joined forces to go to war. You can now explore lesser known stories from countries involved alongside famous events to understand the full impact and global scale of the First World War.”

First World War: A Global View is part of The National Archives’ centenary programme – [First World War 100](#) – which spans a five-year period from June 2014 to June 2019.

Examples of lesser known First World War stories:

Bermuda: During the Boer War (1899-1902), camps were set up in Bermuda to hold Boer prisoners of war and this practice was readopted in the First World War. The majority of the German prisoners held on Bermuda were men taken off ships from America, who were attempting to return to Germany to enlist.

Conditions in the camps appear to have been relatively good and the prisoners were even allowed to manufacture souvenirs which were sold to tourists. The American Consul who monitored conditions in the camp recorded a rather unusual complaint from the prisoners, which was that ‘there was not enough discipline exercised over the camp by the officer-in-charge.’ The prisoners went on to say that they felt that ‘a considerable portion of the discontent was due to a lack of sterner discipline’. ([CO 37/259](#))

Falkland Islands: On the morning of 8th December 1914, the day of the Battle of the Falklands Islands, the movements of three incoming German ships were reported from the town of Fitzroy, 20 miles west of Port Stanley. They were reported by telephone by

Mrs R. S. Felton, the wife of the manager of a sheep station. As her husband and the workers were out working, Felton and her two maids, Christina Goss and Marian Macleod were alone when she received a call from Port Stanley that vessels had been seen approaching. From that moment, the two maids took it in turns to ride to the top of a nearby hill to record the movements of the incoming ships and report them back to Felton who telephoned them through to authorities in Port Stanley.

Felton was praised by the Admiralty for making “valuable and accurate reports in the presence of considerable danger, and entirely unprotected.” (CO 323/850 folio 139). Her reports allowed HMS Bristol and Macedonia to be dispatched accurately to where the ships were positioned.

Mrs Felton and her maids were honoured in a telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies in July 1915 and presented with silverware for their work. (CO 458/5 f.105) Mrs Felton is reported to have later received an OBE for her services.

Jamaica: supported the war effort through gifts of its own produce as well as military support. In a telegram of 1 September 1914, the Governor declared: 'The people of Jamaica unanimously desire to contribute to the Imperial Government in some way towards the expenses of the war other than its own local defence.' (CO 137/704/58) In October 1914, the Legislative Council agreed a gift of £50,000 worth of sugar (CO 137/705 folios 44-6). By November 1914, shipments of donations of oranges and grapefruits for wounded soldiers (CO 137/705 folio 197-203) and cigarettes for the troops were beginning to be shipped to the UK (CO 137/705).

Examples of well-known events relating to the First World War:

Australia: was the second largest of the self-governing Dominions with a population of just under 5 million people in 1914. From the outbreak of the conflict Australia strongly supported the Imperial war effort. Over 400,000 men enlisted in the armed forces, whilst many more men and women did essential war work at home.

The first major deployment of Australian troops came in the campaign to seize the Gallipoli peninsula in 1915. Australian troops landed on 25 April 1915 and were involved in heavy fighting throughout the campaign. The battle saw one of the largest numbers of Victoria Crosses awarded for a single action in the First World War. Six of these Victoria Crosses were awarded for the extraordinary defence of the Australian positions against overwhelming Ottoman assaults on the 9 August.

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Notes to Editors:

Spokespeople available:

Dr Stephen Twigge is Head of the Modern Records Team at The National Archives. Stephen joined The National Archives in 1999. Stephen was formerly a Post Doctoral Research Fellow at the Department of International Politics, University of Wales, Aberystwyth and is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has published a number of books and articles on cold war history including German Unification 1989-90, Berlin in the Cold War 1948-1990, British Intelligence, Avoiding Armageddon and Planning Armageddon.

Images available: [Click here for screenshots of First World War: A Global View on Flickr](#)

First World War 100 - The National Archives First World War Centenary Programme

[First World War 100](#) - a new digital platform - has been created to guide people through the vast collection of historic records, letters, wills, maps, photographs, illustrations and artworks held by The National Archives.

Adding content throughout the five year programme, [First World War 100](#) will be the central hub for the public to search and view official First World War records. There will be links to video, podcasts and multi-media applications, such as the All Pals Together online videoconference for schools, to fit with anniversaries, themes and lesser known stories in First World War history.

About The National Archives:

For the record, for good...The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archive of the UK government and England and Wales, we look after and make available to the public a collection of historical records dating back over 1,000 years, including records as diverse as Domesday Book and MI5 files. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk www.legislation.gov.uk

First World War Centenary Partnership, led by IWM

The National Archives is a member of the First World War Centenary Partnership, established in 2010 and led by IWM. The First World War Centenary Partnership is a network of over 2,000 cultural and educational not-for-profit organisations from 37 countries, who are producing a collective programme of events, activities and resources from 2014 – 2018 to mark the centenary. www.1914.org