

Hard Vrocht Grun Project

Loss, Return and Commemoration



TOPIC



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Hard Vrocht Grun Project

The 'Hard Vrocht Grun' is an Aberdeenshire Council project supported by Heritage Lottery Fund to create educational resources based on locally held heritage material about the effect of World War One on the NE of Scotland for Secondary schools.

The Hard Vrocht Grun is a Doric phrase meaning 'hard worked / wrought ground'; this is not only a term used in the region to describe the harshness of farming the land but is also a metaphor used to describe the difficulties of winning ground on the battlefields of Europe and Mesopotamia.

The project is orchestrated by the Heritage Education Partnership (HEP), which comprises officers from: Archives, Libraries, Registrars, Museums, Arts Development and Education (Secondary schools).

David Atherton, Arts Education Officer, February 2014

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The First World War, or the Great War, had a dramatic impact on every person who lived through it. Most people experienced the deaths of family members, friends and neighbours. Every community experienced the deaths of many of its young men.

Those who returned from the fighting were often damaged physically and mentally and carried horrific memories of their experiences, but once they stepped out of uniform they became ordinary citizens again, seeking to live, work and raise families in their communities. Both servicemen and their families, friends and neighbours were reluctant to revisit their memories of the War.

Nevertheless there was a strong desire to commemorate the War. In the North East of Scotland communities built memorials, created ceremonies and parades, wrote books, music and poetry, listed names and devised all manner of ways to acknowledge the dead, express gratitude and symbolise their collective feeling about the War they had just lived through.

Through researching original material from the time, and examining what continues today of the War commemorations, we gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, motivations and attitudes of people who lived through the Great War.

Task Overview

Your task in this topic is to create a presentation about an aspect of Objection and Exemption in World War One. You will do this with a small group working in collaboration.

The purpose of your presentation is to help your audience understand the strong feelings that were generated in local communities and the country by those who applied to be exempted from fighting in the War.

To prepare for this you will study original source materials from the period, using research questions to decide what further investigation you will do, and how you will present your findings.

You can undertake further research with the assistance of Library, Archive, Museum and Registrar services, together with local historians, your teacher and other experts who are available to you.

You may find some of the handwriting unfamiliar but with a little perseverance you will find the writing similar to what we use today and you may also find it useful to copy out any difficult word - this should help you to decipher the text. Discussing difficult words in groups and with your teacher is also helpful.

Your work is in three stages: Stage 1:

- Research the document bundles provided for this topic and discuss the research questions for each bundle
- Choose an area that interests your group for further research
- Decide provisionally on what form of presentation you will use, and what further research you need to undertake to create your presentation successfully. (You can make a definite decision about the presentation once you've done the research)

Stage 2:

- Devise up to three questions that your further research will answer. This will help to focus your work
- Research your chosen area of the topic in more depth using the resources available and record your findings. Use your research questions to keep your work relevant. All your research should be based on original sources
- Make a final decision, in consultation with your teacher, on what form your presentation will take

Stage 3

- Create your presentation, ensuring that everyone in the group makes a contribution
- Make your presentation available to your audience

Presenting Your Work

You will present your research as a group. Your presentation should help your audience understand more about an aspect of Loss, Return and Commemoration.

There are several different ways you can create the presentation of your research. You should discuss with your teacher which of these might be suitable for your group, and what time and resources are available with which to create it.

Options include:

A computer/screen-based presentation using e.g. PowerPoint including text, images, sounds and spoken words. This might be used to illustrate a live talk from members of the group.

A computer/screen-based interactive website including text, images, sounds and spoken words or short video clips spoken to camera or showing discussion or re-enactment.

A short dramatised presentation involving members of the group as characters enacting an aspect of the topic, or debating the issues, or reporting events.

Any storyline should be based clearly on actual events backed up by evidence from original sources.

A list of other options is provided further on in this unit, and you should discuss with your teacher what form of presentation might be appropriate for your group, given the resources and time available.

The Death of Arthur Burn

Arthur Burn was the only son of M.P. Colonel Burn and the grandson of the Laird of Fyvie. He was killed in action on October 30th 1914 at the age of 22. Read the newspaper extracts from the time, (which are from a scrapbook held by the Fyvie Heritage Society) and discuss the following questions with your group.

- Why was Arthur Burn's death so widely reported ?
- Why do you think Colonel Burn chose to address a football crowd in the days after his son's death ?
- Why do you think Colonel Burn said that if he had nine sons he would give them all in the cause of the War ?
- Do you believe him ? Why ?
- Why did Col. Burn describe his son's death as 'glorious' ?
- What do the newspaper reports suggest to you about media attitudes towards the War ?
- Why do you think the Colonel's appeal to the football crowd seemed to fail to encourage recruitment ?

Of interest:

What does the reference to a 'scrap of paper' in Arthur Burn's death notice mean ?

The 'curse' referred to in the newspaper extract is one of several ghost stories about Fyvie Castle. Investigate the others.

COLONEL BURN'S APPEAL TO FOOTBALLERS.

London Shocked.

London was shocked yesterday, and rather disgusted, to learn that the only result of Colonel Burn's noble and stirring appeal delivered at half-time at the Chelsea-Notts match at Stamford Bridge on Saturday afternoon was one recruit (says the "Glasgow Herald"). There was a crowd of 25,000 present, and a respectful attention was accorded to Colonel Burn. "As a soldier," he said, "I ask you, I am not saying go. I say, 'Come, your country needs you. One man to-day is worth ten in a month's time. I have been at the front since the war began. I leave for the front again to-morrow—for the scene where my elder boy has already died a glorious death for his country.' The appeal fell on deaf ears, for the London Central Recruiting Office was able yesterday to attribute only one enlistment to the gallant Colonel's effort.

Within a few years he had become one of the steel kings of America, working on parallel lines to Andrew Carnegie, with whom he was afterwards associated in the Steel Trust. He owed his success largely to his tireless industry, and the foresight that led him to realise the limitless opportunities for the steel trade that were opened up by the development of railways and other enterprises all over the American continent.

By this time he had made millions, so he decided to realise the ambition of his life. He retired from business, returned to Scotland, and bought the ancient home of his forefathers, Fyvie Castle, Aberdeenshire.

Legend of a Curse.

The castle is supposed to have been built from the stones of a ruined abbey in the neighbourhood. One of these stones was thrown into the River Ythan, which runs close to the castle, and, according to the legend of a curse, until it has been removed there shall be no male heir to the estates.

Strangely enough, many of the lairds preceding Lord Leith (he was raised to the peerage in 1910) had no male issue.

The curse was transmitted to the newcomer. His only son at the age of nineteen died from enteric at Pietermaritzburg during the South African War.

Mr A. R. Burn, his grandson, then became heir, but was killed by a shell in the trenches in Belgium in 1914.

Lord Leith has therefore died without an heir. He is survived by his wife and a daughter, who married Colonel Sir Charles Rosden Burn. It is understood that the funeral will take place at Fyvie.

LIEUT. ARTHUR H. R. BURN KILLED IN ACTION.

on 30 Sept 1914
LORD LEITH'S GRANDSON.

Lieutenant Arthur Herbert Rosdew Burn, 1st Royal Dragoons, was killed in action on Sunday, intelligence of his death, fighting for his King and country, having been communicated to his mother, the Hon. Mrs Burn, wife of Colonel C. Rosdew Burn, and daughter of Lord and Lady Leith of Fyvie.

Lieutenant Burn, who left Oxford to join his father's old regiment, the 1st Royal Dragoons, about two months ago, had been at the front for only ten days. He was 22 years of age, having been born on June 30, 1892, in Eng-



[Photo, Milne, Turriff.]

Mr Arthur Burn.

land, while his father was aide-de-camp to the Duke of Connaught. Prior to entering Oxford, after having received his earlier education at Eton, he spent a year at Heidelberg, Germany, studying the language. He left Oxford, as stated, only this autumn.

Much of his time was spent on the Fyvie estate, and his love for that district was intense. Combining with a splendid physique a modest, unassuming simplicity of manner and disposition, he was regarded by all the tenantry and residents with feelings of esteem. An expert rider, and possessed of a fondness for the gun and rod, Lieutenant Burn was a thorough and skilful sportsman.

Testimony to the regard in which he was held was afforded in the spontaneity of the rejoicings on the Fyvie estates when he attained his majority. The blow is all the more heavy in view of that recent event.

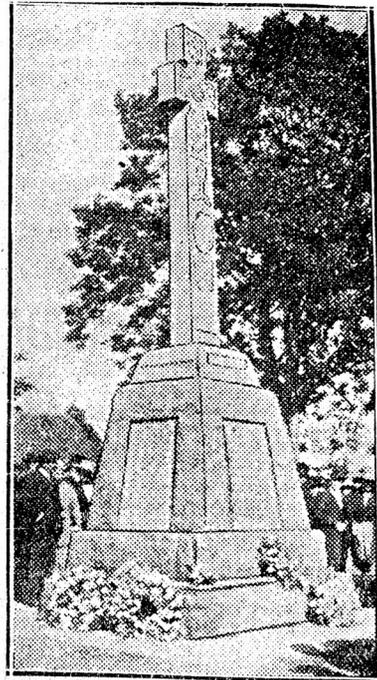
No details are yet available as to the circumstances in which Lieutenant Burn met his death. Colonel Burn, his father, is at present also serving with the Expeditionary Force, and has been in action.

Lord Leith of Fyvie's only son lost his life in South Africa during the war of 1899-1902.

The other members of the family of Colonel and the Hon. Mrs Burn are Miss Lorna Marsalis and Master Robert Ian Algernon.

"Journal"
Sitting:—Lady Leith of Fyvie, Master Charles Lang, Mrs Conyers Lang, and Capt. Conyers Lang.
Standing:—Colonel Burn, M.P.; the Hon. Mrs Burn, and Mr Ian Burn.

FYVIE WAR MEMORIAL.



The scene at the unveiling on Sunday of the Fyvie War Memorial. Lord Leith of Fyvie is seated behind the table, and Colonel Burn is standing addressing the gathering. The Memorial, a Runic Cross of Balmoral granite.

"I'VE GIVEN MY SON": M.P.'s APPEAL.



Colonel Burn, M.P., makes an eloquent appeal for recruits at the Chelsea v. Notts County football match at Stamford Bridge. "I've given my son—he's gone—and if I had nine I'd give every one of them," he said.

LATE LIEUT. A. H. R. BURN.

Torquay Memorial Service.

Sympathetic References by Fyvie Ministers.

A memorial service to the late Lieutenant A. H. R. Burn (elder son of Colonel C. R. Burn, M.P. for Torquay), who was killed in action with the 1st Royal Dragoons—his father's old regiment—was held at St Matthias Church, Torquay. The chief mourners were Colonel Burn, in uniform, he is a bearer of dispatches from the front; the Hon. Mrs Burn, Miss Lorna Burn, Master Ian Burn, and Lord and Lady Leith of Fyvie. In the congregation were wounded officers from Colonel and Mrs Burn's Red Cross Hospital at their Torquay residence, wounded Belgians from the Torbay Hospital, and the Local Red Cross Hospital's staff.

As Colonel and Mrs Burn left the church they received from a crowded congregation quiet demonstrations of sympathy, which the hon. and gallant member acknowledged with a military salute.

Fyvie Churches.

References to the late Lieutenant Arthur Herbert Rosdew Burn, grandson of Lord Leith of Fyvie, who was killed in action recently, were made in both the Fyvie churches yesterday.

The Rev. John Lamb, in the Parish Church, made the following tribute:—

"Somehow I think this aspect of life must be ever present on our minds to-day as we remember the life of one we loved, a life laid down for King and country, for honour and righteousness, a life lost to gain life. The choice we have been speaking of to-day was the one made by the late Lieutenant Arthur Burn; with him it was honour first. Ours was the privilege to know what that meant for him. It gave him that great straightforwardness that marks an enlightened soul. Here lay the root of his grandeur which was never broken; of his gallantry, which stamped him as one of the world's gentlemen; of his ambition, which was pure; of his religion, which was earnest and sincere. His was the manliness that makes men.

FOR KING AND COUNTRY.

Preaching in St Mary's Church, the Rev. George Minty said:—"The lament of David over the death in battle of Saul and Jonathan well expresses our feelings to-day as we lament the many in high places who have fallen in this unprecedented war. There has scarcely been a family in high life which has not had to mourn for one dead or wounded, and it has been brought home to ourselves in this parish and neighbourhood by the very sad news of Lieutenant Arthur Burn's death. He loved the Fyvie people; they loved him. He deserved their love. They were proud of him, and they looked forward to the time when, in due course, he would be their laird.

9/2/14

THE LATE LIEUT. ARTHUR BURN.

Token of Sympathy from the Fyvie Tenantry.

A largely attended meeting of the Fyvie tenantry was held under the chairmanship of Mr James Durno, Jackstown, for the purpose of giving an expression of sympathy with Colonel Burn, M.P., and the Hon. Mrs Burn and family on the death of their son, Lieutenant Arthur H. R. Burn, 1st Royal Dragoons, who was killed in action.

A number of the tenants spoke sympathetically of the great loss the parish had sustained by the death of so gallant and so young an officer, whose future career gave so much promise. The chairman was authorised to sign and forward the following letter:—

To Colonel and the Hon. Mrs Burn and family.

We, the tenantry of Fyvie Estate, desire to tender to you our very deep sympathy on the death, in action, of Lieutenant Arthur H. R. Burn. What must be to you a burden of sorrow almost too hard to bear has brought to us all a personal sadness. We feel that we have lost one who was our true friend, one we loved and honoured, one we had hoped through many long years to associate with the name of Fyvie.

Bound to you by the strongest ties of honour and friendship, we would share with you our common sorrow. Yet remembering how he gave his life for God and the right, for King and country, we are proud to count him amongst the noble and the good, who put duty before life, and live the undying life of honour. We believe that in your sorrow his devotion must make it easier to bear his loss, as it is for each one of us.

May God, who keeps in store the life of fuller service, bless you and comfort you, and help you in your sorrow.

Signed in name of the Fyvie tenantry—

JAMES DUNO (Jackstown), Chairman.

A letter has just been received from Colonel Burn, from the General Headquarters of the British Field Force in France, expressing deep gratitude to the tenants for their token of sympathy with him and his wife and family in their sore bereavement.

Deaths.

ARTHUR HERBERT ROSDEW BURN, Second Lieutenant, the Royal Dragoons, the dearly-loved eldest son of Colonel Charles R. Burn, A.D.C. the King, M.P., and the Hon. Mrs Burn, killed in action while serving with his regiment on 3 October, 1914, aged 22 years.

He died for the honour of his country and
 a "scrap of paper."

The Bravest of the Sixth

A scanned copy of this poem by Robert Watt was found in Aberdeen Archives' Town House in a box marked 'Great War Enquiry Day'. It is not known where the original is stored, or even if it is still in existence. It was published in a local newspaper on the 13th October 1915.

Read the poem and discuss the following questions:

- What did Robert Watt admire about Peter Thomson ?
- Why do you think Robert wrote this poem ?
- Why is so much of the poem about bravery, honour, nobility and respect ?
- Why might this poem have encouraged young men, even those under-age, to enlist in the army ?
- How does Robert want Peter Thomson to be remembered ?
- What does this poem tell you about how people regarded those who died in War ?
- Do you think everyone in the local community would have shared Robert Watt's attitude towards Peter Thomson's death ? Why ?

THE BRAVEST OF THE 6th.

**In Memory of Pioneer-Sergeant
Peter Thomson, 6th Gordons.**

The autumn win's wi' eerie moan
Are dingin' doon the yellow leaves,
An' Cushnie folk wi' eident han's
Are githerin' in the gowden sheaves.
Yet maist unusual is the scene
On ilka hairst-field i' the Clachan,
The throbbin' herts an' brimmin' eon
Suppress the usual jests an' lauchin'.

What means it?—a' the craps are gweed,
That's nae the cause o' dool an' wae;
Yet ilka heid's bood doon wi' loss
That worldly gear can ne'er repay.
Ower Alford's vale an' Cushnie's braes
The hamely herts wi' sorrow bleed,
The bravest o' the gallant Sixth
Is numbered wi' the honoured deid.

For twa decades an' three odd years,
In peace an' war he did his duty;
An' aye his noble manly pairts
Shone forth like gems o' peerless beauty.
He wis admired by aye an' a',
Lo'ed an' respected by his betters;
An' tho' he's gane, his life lives on,
Bun' roon' oor herts wi' gowden fetters.

Upon the gory plains o' France,
Unawed by guns' death-dealin' rattle,
He calmly stood, like hero true,
Richt i' the forefront o' the battle.
His comrades, wha should surely ken,
On him a noble title fix't,
A guide, a counsellor an' freen,
The bravest man in a' the Sixth.

A bard obscure in humble lay,
Wi' hertfelt sympathy sincere,
Desires tae lay wi' reverent han'
This tribute on a hero's bier.
Sae lang as dear auld Scotia can
Raise sons like him as true as steel,
Nae tyrant foe can ever crush
The thistle 'neath his ruthless heel.

ROBERT WATTS

Aberdeen, 13th October, 1915.

VETERAN'S DEATH.



Pioneer-Sergeant Peter Thomson; Newseat, Cushnie, who was killed in the first charge of the 6th Gordons on September 25. He went out in November, and came through Neuve Chapelle without a scratch. He was 46 years of age, and was respected and admired by his officers and comrades for his skill, courage, and endurance. He was a crack shot, and widely known as a first-class ploughman.



Peter Thomson Sgt 10346 6th Gordon Highlanders born Leochel Cushnie 12/10/1869 enlisted Alford, Age 47, Killed in Action F & F 25-Sep-15, Son of Harry Thomson & Jane Williams. Husband of Mary (nee Watt) Thomson, 265 Westburn Rd; Aberdeen. Loos Memorial M. R. 19 Panel 115 to 119

Extracted from Scottish War Memorials project

The Poem was written by Robert Watt of Aberdeen in memory of Pioneer Sergeant Peter Thomson of the 6th Gordon Highlanders. June says: "I think the verse was written about him by his brother-in-law. Peter's wife was a Mary Watt. He was born 12th October 1869 and died 25th September 1915. There is a stone for him at Leochel Cushnie churchyard. He was the son of Harry (Henry) Thomson (1836-1906) and Jane Williams, who in his time farmed at Newseat and Calfward, Cushnie."

The Pioneers were the Territorials. The losses had such a major impact on Donside and almost every family was affected by the tragic events. Undaunted it spurred on many more to enlist, some as young as 15 pretending to be much older!

June goes on to recall: "My Grandfather Andrew McDonald was in the Gordon Highlanders in WW1. Apparently he lied about his age, and was for a period batman to a landowner from Cushnie. He very rarely spoke of what happened, only of how cold it was in the trenches."

Extract from Alford Images collection, quotation from local woman June Riddell

Extract from A stranger on the Bars - The Bloody Kilt

Read the extract by Christian Watt Marshall and discuss the following questions:

- How did receiving the parcel change the women's experience of James' death?
- Why do you think they never told their mother about the kilt and tunic?
- Why might they have chosen the brae head under the clothes poles to bury the kilt and tunic?
- Why was it important to Christian Marshall that James' blood 'returned to his birthplace'?
- Why do you think they chose his watch to keep?

Activity

In pairs read the extract aloud, each partner reading a sentence, then the other partner reading the next sentence, back and forth. Notice that the story has more impact when read aloud. Practise reading it aloud this way, adding expression and tone of voice for dramatic effect.

Further research

What mementos of the war dead did people tend to keep? Why?

A blood soaked kilt, extracted from *A Stranger On The Bars* by Christian Watt Marshall– p103

My mother came home again from Fife, once more in a broken state. We were all stunned. Even after 60 years it's still painful. In the first week we tried to tell ourselves it wasn't true but, when a large parcel arrived from the military hospital in France where James had died, we were forced to accept the grim reality. My sister opened it and screamed at the pitch of her voice. It was the possessions of the late Private James Sim – a Gordon kilt and a tunic drenched in blood with two of my mother's letters in the pocket. My mother wanted to know why Margaret had screamed, but we never told her. I said it was the green coat she had sent to Perth to be dyed black. I showed my mother the coat which had arrived with the same post.

We dug a hole on the brae head under the clothes poles, and when our neighbour Gamrie Donald realised what we were doing, he dug it deeper for us. He was a kind man. We buried the kilt and tunic and most of the small trifles in the parcel. We kept James' watch, but hid it away from my mother. At least some of his blood had returned to his birth place.

A Stranger On The Bars; the recollections of Christian Watt Marshall about her life in the Fraserburgh area in the early 1900s

Armistice Day parade; extracted from *A Stranger On The Bars - Armistice Day parade*, and Longside Parish Council extracts

Read the extracts and discuss the following questions

- The Armistice Day extract describes a two-minute silence and exploding shells as two of the elements of the Armistice Day celebration. What other elements are described in the extract ? Make a list.
- What do you think is the purpose of the different elements of the commemoration described by Christian Marshall ?
- Which of these elements do you think are particularly meaningful or appropriate ways to commemorate the end of the War ? Why ?
- Which of these elements are still part of war commemorations today ? Why do you think this is ?
- What do the two extracts from Longside Parish Council suggest about the experience of ex-servicemen after the War ?

Further research:

What did returning servicemen expect their lives to be like after the war ?

What was the experience of men who returned from the War ? Why ?

Armistice Day parade; extract from *A Stranger On The Bars* by Christian Watt Marshall - p114

On our way to work on the morning of November 11th1918 we met two naval ratings from HMS Electra. They told us that an armistice was to start at eleven o'clock that day! We were busy packing kippers when a policeman called at the yard to tell us there would be two minute silence at eleven o'clock and to watch out for the maroons.

The herring came in and we started to split them. Everyone was tense. We could hardly believe the war was nearly over. The maroons went off and we laid down our knives for the two minute silence. We threw off our aprons and made for the town. The ships in the river were all blowing their hooters and we could hear church bells ringing in every direction. 'Very' lights shot into the sky as shells from the ships burst high out over the sea.

A great parade made its way through the town – at least thirty thousand troops and naval units, all with their bayonets fixed. Drums rolled as officers on horseback led the procession up the Regent Road and on to King Street. Hundreds of maimed servicemen, most of them from the Melton Lodge hospital, were being pushed along in bath chairs by Boy Scouts. It was one of the saddest sights I have ever witnessed. Some of them were blind, others had lost limbs or were in some way horribly disfigured. Mustard gas had given many of them a queer jaundiced look. I wondered how these poor souls would fare in our 'land fit for heroes!'

A Stranger On The Bars; the recollections of Christian Watt Marshall about her life in the Fraserburgh area in the early 1900s. This extract describes her experience of Armistice Day in Yarmouth, where she was working in the fishing industry at the time.

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William Leslie. The Inspector also 'reported' that William Leslie, a ship's fireman and ex-serviceman belonging to Aberdeen had applied for relief on the evening of Saturday 20th March. He had been tramping the country in search of work and arrived exhausted in Longside. He wished to get to Aberdeen and the Inspector advanced 6/- to pay his fare & claimed on Aberdeen. This was approved.

Extract from Longside Parish Council minutes 1920 about an ex-serviceman looking for work, 'tramping the countryside' and applying for financial help

Disabled Officers & Men A letter was submitted from Mr. Munison County Clerk calling the attention of Public Bodies to the desirability of employing Disabled Officers and Men in the Local Public Service whenever possible and the Clerk was instructed to intimate to Mr. Munison that the Council had already given effect to the recommendation and had employed a disabled soldier as Inspector of Poor etc.

Extract from Longside Parish Council minutes 1920 stating they have employed a disabled ex-serviceman as Inspector of the Poor

"What is our task? To make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in."

David Lloyd George in a speech given in Wolverhampton during the general election campaign in 1918

War Memorials

Look through the images of war memorials from around the North-East of Scotland.

Discuss the following questions:

- What do you think was the purpose of building these memorials ?
- What do you think the designers were intending to express in these different memorial designs ?
- Which ones do you find particularly meaningful or appropriate? Why? What purpose do they serve now ?
- Look closely at the photograph of the Stonehaven memorial inauguration. What do the hats tell you about who is attending this ceremony ?
- Why might the Longside council have decided to have nothing to do with receiving a war trophy ?

Research directions:

Investigate the commissioning and design of your local war memorial.

Research different memorial inscriptions from the area. How were they chosen ?



Stonehaven War Memorial inauguration



Turriff War Memorial Arch

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Peterhead War Memorial



Memorial Arch at Foveran Churchyard. nr. Newburgh



Drumoak War Memorial



St James Church Stonehaven Soldier Memorial



Fraserburgh War Memorial inauguration 12th September 1923



Fraserburgh War Memorial: statue titled 'Justice Guiding Youthful Valour'

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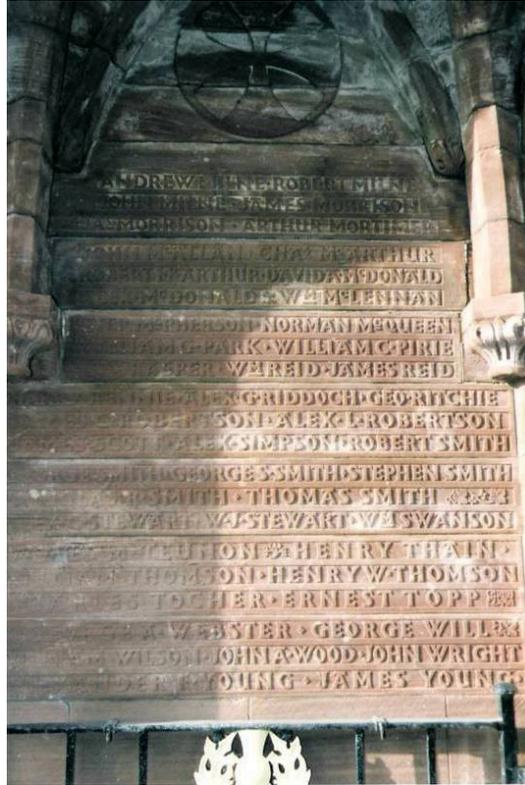
Dunottar Parish Church War Memorial



Inverurie War Memorial



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Turriff War memorial names

War Trophies. "A letter was submitted from the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Aberdeen intimating that a number of War Trophies had been placed at his disposal for distribution to parishes within the County Area who wished a supply. It was unanimously agreed to have nothing to do with them.

Extract from the minutes of Longside Parish Council meeting 1920

There was read to the meeting a letter dated 18th February 1919 from the Secretary, War Trophies Committee, War Office, London, intimating that the Committee had agreed to offer to the Council for safe custody and care one German machine gun, damaged, one German machine gun ammunition box and one German machine gun ammunition belt. It was agreed to accept these.

Extract from the minutes of Stonehaven Town Council meeting 1919

War and Peace Document Bundle

War Trophies

After the War communities built memorials to the local men and women who had died on active service.

In addition, many communities were offered 'war trophies,' which were usually German armaments such as field guns, to display in their localities.

Reactions to these offers varied from community to community. This document bundle explores some specific stories from Aberdeenshire related to war trophies, and an unusual memorial created in Muchalls.

Read through the documents and discuss the following questions. There are sometimes no 'right answers' to these questions; they are opportunities for you to learn more about the topic by hearing each others observations and points of view. Make notes about your discussion on the sheet provided.

Research Questions

- What do you think is the difference between a war memorial and a war trophy? Why might communities have felt differently about each of these?
- Why do you think the Muchalls community called their memorial a 'Peace Memorial'. Why do you think most memorials are called 'War Memorials'? Does it make a difference?
- Compare the articles titled 'Sacrilege' and 'Guns Thrown in the Sea'. Why do you think these two events around memorials are so different?
- Read the article titled 'The Same Cause'. What do you think is the 'controversy' mentioned at the start? How would you go about deciding whose name deserved to be included on the War Memorial?

Discussion notes about War and Peace Document bundle

What do you think is the difference between a war memorial and a war trophy? Why might communities have felt differently about each of these?

Why do you think the Muchalls community called their memorial a 'Peace Memorial'? Why do you think most memorials are called 'War Memorials'? Does it make a difference?

Discussion notes about War and Peace Document bundle

Compare the articles titled 'Sacilege' and 'Guns Thrown in the Sea'. Why do you think these two events around memorials are so different ?

Read the article titled 'The Same Cause'. What do you think is the 'controversy' mentioned at the start ? How would you go about deciding whose name deserved to be included on the local War Memorial ?

Further research in collaboration with local researchers and Aberdeenshire agencies

There are three potential directions for deepening your research into Loss, Return and Commemoration. You should undertake this research with the assistance of a local history organisation, and using the resources of Aberdeenshire libraries, registrars, museums and archives.

You should collect together original sources such as photographs, personal accounts, official records, statistics, quotations, drawings and plans, objects, letters, diaries, etc.

When you have collected together some original sources you can use them to draw conclusions about what they tell us about people's experiences.

1. What was people's experience of loss in the Great War, and how did it affect them ?

This includes the deaths of loved ones and neighbours; the loss of limbs, mobility or mental stability; the collective loss of a generation; the loss of opportunity

2. How did people choose to commemorate the Great War at the time ? What remains now of these commemorations, and what has been added ?

This includes both public and private commemoration and honouring of the dead, and of people's experience of the war. For example: war and peace memorials, war trophies, honour rolls, public and private ceremonies, tree and garden planting, wreaths, personal mementoes such as medals, flags, ribbons, clothing, letters, photographs, awards, weapons and other personal objects, personal accounts of ways people marked the ending of the war

3. What was the experience of service men and women who returned from fighting in the Great War, and how did it affect them ?

There are some useful case studies such as that of James Mair who became Inspector of the Poor in Longside, as well as accounts of people's struggles to find work or to fit back in to their local communities

Further research in collaboration with local researchers and Aberdeenshire agencies

Your research is in two parts:

1. Collect original sources which help you understand more about the topic and provide evidence of people's experiences and attitudes at the time. Use Aberdeenshire agencies and a local history organisation to assist you in this research
2. Use the original sources you have collected to draw conclusions about the topic question

Once you have done this, discuss an appropriate way to report your research findings for others to see. You will need to make the original sources available in some form, and communicate your conclusions clearly.

However you choose to report your research it is essential that your finished report is understandable by someone who has not been involved in your research.

You can use a variety of media to achieve this. For example:

- Physical reporting such as a wall exhibition or collage of images and words, a written report, a replica wartime box filled with papers displaying your sources and conclusions
- Screen-based reporting such as a website, slideshow of images and words, filmed performance
- Performance reporting such as a sound recording of personal accounts; a guided walk through an exhibition of images; a short scripted performance using words, music, objects, actions and characters; a talk presented by all members of the group together

Photography, Design or Commemorative Ceremony project

There are three potential directions for this part of the topic. Each is a group project involving work based on a local war memorial. Your choice of design project is not dependant on which of the research topics your group has undertaken. You can undertake the research element in collaboration with local historians, and Aberdeenshire agencies.

1. Photography project

Investigate the local war memorial; its physical surroundings, design, the details of wording, imagery and symbolism, its colouring, its history and the ceremonies associated with it

Find a way of photographing the memorial in a way that you think reflects the community feeling it was intended to express; for example does it express pride, or sorrow, or heroism, or anger, or patriotism, or other feelings? Perhaps it reflects a mixture of these? Try photographing the memorial in different light and at different times of the day, or with different types of lenses, close-up and from far away or unexpected angles. Apply photographic effects

Create an exhibition of at least six photographs involving the memorial, which you think expresses the intentions and feelings that the people of the time had when they created it

2. Memorial Design project

Investigate the local war memorial; its physical surroundings, design, the details of wording, imagery and symbolism, its colouring, its history and the ceremonies associated with it

Decide what it is that the memorial is intended to express. For example does it express pride, or sorrow, or heroism, or anger, or patriotism, or other feelings? Perhaps it reflects a mixture of these? Investigate how the memorial expresses these things, through shapes and symbols, location, colour, words, texture and materials

Create a design for your own war memorial to replace this one, expressing the same intentions and feelings. Specify the materials to be used, the size and location, the words and symbols, colour and texture. You can create your design as a model, a set of technical drawings, computer generated images or another medium that you think accurately represents your ideas

Photography, Design or Commemorative Ceremony project

3. Commemorative ceremony

Investigate the local war memorial; its physical surroundings, design, the details of wording, imagery and symbolism, its colouring, its history.

Research details of ceremonies, rituals and traditions associated with the local memorial.

Research an annual commemorative ceremony that takes place at the war memorial either locally or in a nearby town or city

Investigate the different activities that form the ceremony and what they mean, who is involved and what the ceremony means to those who attend

Using this information create your own ceremony to commemorate the Great War. You can decide whether this is a modern ceremony, or one intended to take place at the inauguration of the memorial just after the War. Specify the people who are to take part, music and words, actions, timing, clothing and objects, how to start and finish the ceremony. Your work should explain the meaning of the different elements of the ceremony

You can display your work as an enactment of the ceremony with explanatory notes or commentary, a film or set of photographs of the ceremony taking place, with explanatory notes, or in another form that you think communicates your ceremony design clearly

Teacher's Notes

The project is ideally undertaken by students working together in collaborative groups of up to six.

Document Extracts activity

Extracts of documents are provided, alongside questions for student groups to discuss. This introductory activity is intended to prepare the groups for the more in-depth Document Bundle activities. It might usefully be undertaken by the whole class with the teacher as facilitator, as described in the Facilitating Discussion section below.

Document Bundle activity

There is one document bundle and a research document containing a mixture of original sources related to a common theme. Students are required to read the materials, discuss their contents using the research questions and make notes of their answers. Note sheets are provided and are best enlarged to A3 size to provide sufficient space for notes.

The research questions are intended to provoke open-ended discussion, and initial class dialogue about discussion techniques may be valuable. Teachers should determine an appropriate time period for groups to undertake a document activity depending on the ability and disposition of the class. The bundles can be duplicated so that several groups can be undertaking the task at the same time.

A single document bundle activity might be undertaken by a whole class at the same time if sufficient copies can be made available. This is valuable where teacher facilitation is desirable for the best outcome. Teachers may wish to do this for part of the document bundle in order to model good practice before setting the groups to work on the other two. The Document Extract activity can also be used for this purpose.

Some guidance may be required for students to access the arcane language of some newspaper reports, official letters and reports.

A class plenary session may be useful once each group has worked on all the document activities. On completion of the document activities each group should be in a position to identify an area of further research.

Teacher's Notes

Facilitating discussion

Many students will require some structured facilitation and modelling of the discussion process for it to have value in originating good-quality research questions.

It can be valuable to agree 'ground rules' for group discussions, even where students are already experienced in discussion and debate.

For example:

- The goal of the group's discussion is not to reach agreement but to gain a deeper understanding
- Listen with respect and curiosity to others when they are speaking
- All views and ideas are worth consideration
- All members of the group have a chance to speak and be heard
- The discussion is a place to test out ideas, even if they are not fully formed
- There are not necessarily 'right' answers to the questions being asked
- Disagreement should be honest, respectful and seen as an opportunity to explore different ideas
- Listen and check you understand before responding
- Question and challenge ideas, not individuals
- Make notes

Teachers should consider facilitating a group discussion or a class discussion to model good practice for the whole class of students before embarking on separate group discussions.

Facilitation involves asking relevant questions, ensuring the group stays on the subject and follows the ground rules, and redirecting the group back to the subject if the discussion wanders away. The teacher as facilitator should avoid contributing to the discussion itself, but act as a guide to a constructive discussion process.

Successful group discussion is a curricular goal in itself and worth taking the time to ensure students have learned how to do it.

Teacher's Notes

Further research questions

Groups are asked to devise a minimum of three open questions about the topic to focus their research. These questions should direct research towards local sources with the intention of deepening understanding of the local experience of objection and exemption. Students should be encouraged to draft multiple questions and variations on questions, then edit them down through discussion and re-wording.

Teacher guidance is important to ensure relevance. Cross-referencing with other groups may also be useful. Students should see this exercise of devising the questions as a valuable learning activity in its own right.

At this stage it is useful for students to have considered how they might present their research findings. A list of possibilities is included in the topic notes, and teachers may present further or a different set of options depending on resources available in the school, anticipated timetables and the students' own experiences and abilities.

Students should be encouraged to see this as a provisional choice that can be changed later in the light of the research they undertake. Some students may prefer to have the certainty of a form of presentation already decided if this will assist in focussing the research.

Further research using original sources

The emphasis of the Hard Vrocht Grun project is on the Aberdeenshire experience of the War, understood as much as possible through the evidence of original sources.

Students are encouraged to obtain original source materials from a variety of agencies, groups and individuals. The Aberdeenshire Council's Archives, Registrars, Libraries and Museums services are part of the project and are prepared for student requests for material. Named contacts with e-mail addresses and phone numbers are listed at the back of this topic pack, together with descriptors of the types of relevant material available from each.

Local community history societies are part of the project and are available to supply students with locally researched material, copies of original records and expertise in understanding how to interpret original sources. Some have collections of photographs, others documents and objects, researched pamphlets and papers about specific individuals, families, buildings, organisations, community groups etc.

Teacher's Notes

Students should spend time deciding what specific materials they wish to request from different agencies before contacting them. There may be short delays between requesting information from agencies and receiving it, either electronically or by post, so students should ensure they have library and web-based resources available to be researching while they wait for records to be sent from agencies.

As much as possible, Aberdeenshire agencies have material already prepared for Hard Vrocht Grun project requests and the turnaround should be rapid.

Group working

In the topic notes students are instructed to plan how they will work as a group. Teacher input and support is discretionary in this process depending on students' past experience of cooperative group working and the teacher's knowledge of personalities in the class.

Students should be clear that group working is itself a learning process and an important aspect of the topic work. Discussion, speculation, and the exercise of ideas is integral to the success of their research and presentation. Making mistakes and trying something else is also essential for developing an effective group.

The unit notes encourage students to experiment with ideas and try different ways of working together in order to develop an effective *modus operandi* for their group.

Presenting research

Teacher guidance on timescales and available resources is important for students to make realistic choices about their research presentation. Sufficient time plus a little extra should be available for students to collate and prepare their research material in a form suitable for presentation, and 'rehearsal time' used effectively.

While ideas are listed in the topic unit the range of options will depend on school resources, and could well be wider than the range presented in the unit.

Experiences and Outcomes for Hard Vrocht Grun topic packs

Outcome statement	Curriculum area	Group(s) used in
I have used the skills I have developed in the expressive arts to contribute to a public presentation/performance. EXA 3-01a	Expressive Arts > Participation in performances and presentations	
I can use and combine the visual elements and concepts to convey ideas, thoughts and feelings in expressive and design work. EXA 3-03a	Expressive Arts > Art and design	
I can use the visual elements and concepts with sensitivity to express qualities and relationships and convey information, thoughts and feelings. I can use my skills and creativity to generate original ideas in my expressive and design work. EXA 4-03a	Expressive Arts > Art and design	
When I engage with others, I can make a relevant contribution, encourage others to contribute and acknowledge that they have the right to hold a different opinion. I can respond in ways appropriate to my role and use contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking. LIT 3-02a * Responsibility of all	Literacy > Listening and talking > Tools for listening and talking	
When listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate detailed information, ideas or opinions • explain processes, concepts or ideas with some relevant supporting detail • sum up ideas, issues, findings or conclusions. LIT 4-09a Responsibility of all *	Literacy > Listening and talking > Creating texts	

<p>I can use my knowledge of a historical period to interpret the evidence and present an informed view. SOC 3-01a</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>I can make links between my current and previous studies, and show my understanding of how people and events have contributed to the development of the Scottish nation. SOC 3-02a</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>I can describe the factors contributing to a major social, political or economic change in the past and can assess the impact on people's lives. SOC 3-05a</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>I can discuss the motives of those involved in a significant turning point in the past and assess the consequences it had then and since. SOC 3-06a</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>I can evaluate conflicting sources of evidence to sustain a line of argument. SOC 4-01a</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>I can express an informed view about the changing nature of conflict over time, appreciate its impact and empathise with the experiences of those involved. SOC 4-06b</p>	<p>Social studies > People, past events and societies</p>	
<p>Through discussion, I have identified aspects of a social issue to investigate and by gathering information I can assess its impact and the attitudes of the people affected. SOC 4-16b</p>	<p>Social studies > People in society, economy and business</p>	

External sources of information and assistance

Getting professional assistance with your research

When your group is ready to undertake research using your research questions there are several sources of valuable information, original source material and expert assistance you can use.

Your Teachers and School Area Librarians can provide school-based resources and guidance as to organising your research. They can also advise you about how to use external agencies.

For example the Registrars Office can search for birth, death and marriage records for individuals you wish to investigate further. The Libraries service can find extracts from local newspapers from the time, most of which are digitised and available locally.

Local History societies are a valuable source of local knowledge, original documents and objects, and expertise in research methods.

Look through the descriptions of the different agencies and discuss with your teacher how each can help you further your research.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives provides a joint Archive service for Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council and access to collections relating mostly to local administration in North East Scotland along with some collections from external depositors, such as businesses.

The main Aberdeenshire resources relating to the First World War period include County Council records, Town Council records, school records and poor relief records.

Once you have developed your research questions after completing the first part of your research project you can contact us at our Old Aberdeen House address below to discuss what sources we may have to help you. You can also find more information about our collections on our website and our online catalogue, and links to these are provided below along with our contact details.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives

Old Aberdeen House

Dunbar Street

Aberdeen AB24 3UJ

T. 01224 481775

E. archives@aberdeencity.gov.uk

W. www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/archives

Catalogue. www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/archivecatalogue

External sources of information and assistance

Aberdeenshire Libraries

The Aberdeenshire Library Service also holds a number of published books which include WW1 poetry and deal with WW1 combatants and casualties in various localities and for different organisations (e.g. University of Aberdeen, Gordon Highlanders). We also hold digitised newspapers from the period, which are a rich resource for your project.

Our contact details are :

Aberdeenshire Libraries, Local Studies Department,

Meldrum Meg Way, Oldmeldrum AB51 0GN.

T: 01651 871219/871220.

E: local.studies@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

The Department is open Monday - Friday, 9.00 - 5.00 and visitors are welcome by appointment.

The principal resource relevant to your project is digitised newspapers; the Aberdeen Journal, the Aberdeen Free Press, the People's Journal and the Evening Express, which all cover the conduct of the war in some detail and the home front in Aberdeenshire.

A number of local newspapers also contain general war news and cover their local area in more detail:

- the Banffshire Journal for Banffshire
- the Buchan Observer for Peterhead
- the Fraserburgh Advertiser
- the Fraserburgh Herald for Fraserburgh,
- the Huntly Express for the Huntly area,
- the Kincardineshire Observer, the Mearns Leader and the Stonehaven Journal (to 1917 only) for the Stonehaven area.

Contact us for assistance in searching the newspapers and finding published books relevant to your project research.

For information and updates please go to our website:

www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries/index.asp

External sources of information and assistance

Aberdeenshire Registrars

Aberdeenshire Registration Service comprises of staff located at offices throughout Aberdeenshire. These offices are geographically spread across all 6 administrative area of Aberdeenshire.

Staff have a wealth of experience and are fully trained in providing guidance and assistance in respect of all Registration matters, including births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and family history and genealogy services.

If you or your school wishes to access records via the Registration Service, please contact registrars@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Aberdeenshire Museums Service

Aberdeenshire Museums Service is the museums section of Aberdeenshire Council's Education, Learning & Leisure Service. We operate 4 museums across Aberdeenshire including the Mintlaw Discovery Centre, and work in partnership with others, from Fordyce in the north to Stonehaven in the south.

The collections are wide-ranging, including weaponry, archival material and other items from the Western Front in the First World War, and letters from the Egyptian and Mesopotamian campaigns.

Enquiries about the collections and advice on using them for further research as part of a HVG research project can be directed to:

Aberdeenshire Museums Service Headquarters and Discovery Centre

Mintlaw Industrial Estate

Station Road

Mintlaw AB42 5EE

T. 01771 622807

E. museums@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

External sources of information and assistance

North East Folklore Archive

An internet resource for the study of the cultural heritage and traditions of North East Scotland. The site contains specific materials related to the Hard Vrocht Grun project as well as a wide range of materials about life in the North East.

www.nefa.net

David Atherton, Arts Education Officer

David is one of the coordinators of the Hard Vrocht Grun project. He is a point of contact for you in finding the best local sources of information and local partner organisations.

david.atherton@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Community History and Heritage Groups

Aberdeenshire has many local history and heritage groups which research the local area, publish leaflets and booklets, collect original source materials and stories from local history. These groups are an invaluable source of information for your project. There are several ways to access local heritage groups in your area:

- Your teacher or school librarian will know which local groups would be the best for you to contact about your project.
- The Aberdeenshire Council website has a list of Community groups which you can search by subject and by area. www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/clubs/index

University of Aberdeen Special Collections Centre

The Special Collections Centre is home to the University of Aberdeen's historic collections of books, manuscripts, archives and photographs.

The University holds several collections related to WWI. Foremost is the Roll of Honour, a list of all staff, students and alumni of the University who served in WWI, with biographies and photographs of those who were killed in the war. This commemorative book is now digitised and available online at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/roll-of-honour/>

The archive collections contain a number of WWI-related collections, highlights of which include the letters of Amelia Nyasa Laws, a nurse, physiotherapist and masseuse who rehabilitated soldiers wounded on the front and the journals of Sir Alexander Ogston spanning 1915-1917, which record his experiences as a surgeon in hospitals in Serbia and Italy. There is also an oral history collection with interviews recollecting the impact of the war on life at the University.

To use any of the collections for your research, contact the Learning and Outreach team at email: scc.learning@abdn.ac.uk
scc.learning@abdn.ac.uk.

There is also a WWI factsheet available to help you get started which you can download at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/about/special/>

Special Collections Centre

The Sir Duncan Rice Library University of Aberdeen Bedford Road Aberdeen AB25 2WN

Tel: (01224) 272598E:

email: scc.learning@abdn.ac.uk

scc.learning@abdn.ac.uk (school enquiries)

email: speclib@abdn.ac.uk

speclib@abdn.ac.uk (general public enquiries)

Web: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/about/special/>

Hard Vrocht Grun Project

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



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