

THE TEES VALLEY AND WORLD WAR I

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Exploring the history of their locality helps students develop a sense of identity and place in the world. Delving into the past can reveal fascinating stories of the people and events that shaped their area and their own lives, fostering pride in their roots and a sense of what they can achieve.

Like many areas across Britain, the Tees Valley was directly affected by the First World War. And, like other places, it made its own unique contributions to the war effort.

From the start of the War in 1914, to its end in 1918, men from the Tees Valley joined the armed forces to fight. And, like their fellow countrymen, thousands of Tees Valley fathers, brothers and sons were among the 888,246 British men who lost their lives. The Middlesbrough War Memorial alone includes the names of 3,500 fallen men. Tom Dresser, Stan Hollis, Edward (Ned) Cooper and William Short were all awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest medal for bravery.

The area was key to the production of metal to build ships and make munitions. The Steelworks at Skinningrove produced both the steel to make shells and high explosives to fill them. This made the village a key target and German Zeppelins dropped more than 100 bombs on the area.

Local women came forward to work in jobs previously reserved for men. Over 1000 women – ‘munitionettes’ – made more than a million shells for the Front at the Darlington National Projectile Factory (known locally as the ‘Shell Shop’), and 700 women worked to build the Furness shipyard in Stockton.





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On 16 December 1914, Hartlepool was bombarded by German navy warships. Although the town's Heugh Battery returned fire – becoming the only battery in Britain to fire its guns in anger during the First World War – the bombardment demolished buildings and killed over 100 men, women and children. Refusing to be beaten, the people of the town went on to raise more money per person for the war effort than any other in the country.



Use the **Image gallery** and **Classroom activities** in the resource to explore the unique part the Tees Valley played in this world history and to make links with students' lives today.

Explore these themes further at:

[Kirkleatham Museum](#)

[Hartlepool Museum & Art Gallery](#)

[Preston Park Museum](#)

[Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum](#)

