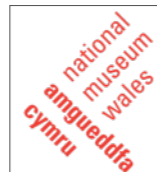


THE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF SOLDIERS



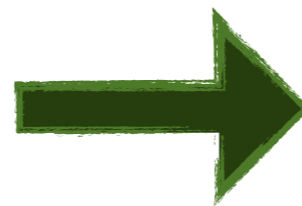
**YOU ARE WANTED
AT · THE · FRONT**



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government



1. On the 4th of August 1914 Britain declared war on Germany.



2. Britain needed soldiers and sailors to fight in the war.



RECRUITMENT

Recruitment campaigns were used to try to persuade people to join the armed forces during the First World War.

In August 1914 an appeal was launched to recruit 100,000 men aged 19-35 to the army. Posters, newspapers and local meetings were used to try to persuade people to join up.



YOUNG MEN

OF
DENBIGHSHIRE
AND
FLINTSHIRE.

—
YOUR
COUNTRY
URGENTLY
NEEDS
YOU.

This advertisement in the *Denbighshire Free Press* on 12th September 1914 seeks to encourage men to join the army

Recruiting for Kitchener's Army at Merthyr.

PUBLIC MEETING AT THE DRILL
HALL.

MAJOR JAMES REBUKED.

A public meeting was held at the Drill Hall, Merthyr, on Saturday night last for the purpose of hearing addresses from the Mayor (Councillor H. M. Lloyd), Mr. Edgar Jones, M.P., Major F. T. James, and others, in support of recruiting for Lord Kitchener's second new army of 100,000 men. Prior to

A meeting to recruit men from the area as reported in the *Merthyr Pioneer* newspaper on 5 September 1914.

RECRUITMENT

Joining the Army

The recruitment campaign was well received at the beginning of the war, and many men from Wales joined the army . Why did so many men join the army?

- Those who joined the army were seen as brave and heroic men . Men who refused to go to fight were often branded cowards or traitors.

- Most recruits had no idea what life was like on the front line. They had little understanding of the scale of the fighting and the terrible conditions in the trenches.

- The majority of people assumed it would be a short war that would be over by Christmas 1914, and few could foresee a war that would last for 4 years.

- Some men saw the war as an opportunity for a great adventure, and did not realise what lay ahead of them.





RECRUITMENT

Joining the Army

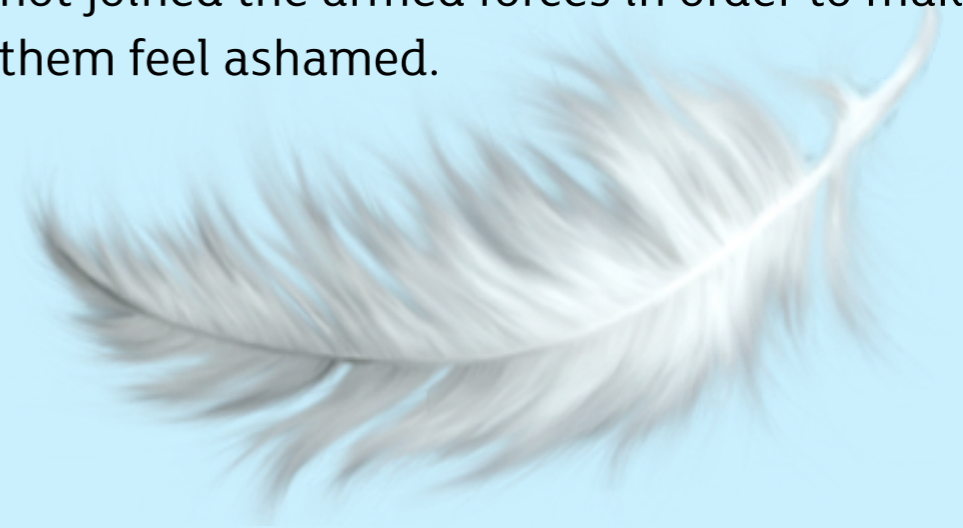
Some men that joined the armed forces believed they would encounter new opportunities, such as:

- a chance to explore and see the world
- adventure
- an escape from their boring jobs
- the chance to fight for 'King and Empire'
- an escape from poverty

Many didn't realise the appalling future they would face.

Men were placed under considerable pressure to join the armed forces. Some women would give white feathers to men of recruitment age that wore civilian clothes.

The white feather is a traditional symbol for a coward, and they were given to those who had not joined the armed forces in order to make them feel ashamed.



RECRUITMENT

Propaganda Posters



One of the most popular and successful tools used to recruit men into the armed forces was propaganda posters.

These posters included pictures that encouraged ordinary men to join the armed forces. Many showed proud and happy men going to fight for their country.

Some of these posters were targeted specifically at women in the belief that they would be able to persuade their men to join up. Study these posters to see if you can identify how they targeted different groups of people.

RECRUITMENT

Propaganda Posters

Propaganda posters were also used to try to persuade British people that they had a duty to protect 'small nations', and to keep promises made by the British government to protect these countries.

This poster stresses the need to protect Belgium. It includes a picture of an agreement signed by the British government in 1839 to protect the independence of Belgium .



Belgium

RECRUITMENT

Recruiting Offices



A recruiting office in Cardiff in 1914

Recruiting offices were opened by the Government across Britain, and recruitment officers appointed to manage these offices.

A sergeant would also be present in these offices to help with the recruitment process, and to make life easier for those joining.

British recruitment numbers in 1914

- **August** - 180,000 had joined the armed forces
- **September** - 640,000 had joined
- **October** - 780,000 had joined

62,000 Welshmen had joined the army by December 1914.

RECRUITMENT

Joining the Army

In order to be considered for the armed forces in 1914 you would need to:

- Be male, women were not allowed to fight.
- Be between 18 and 38 years of age, or 18-45 years for those who had served in the armed forces before.
- Be at least 5 feet 3 inches (160cm) tall .
- Have a chest size of at least 34 inches (86 cm).
- Have good eyesight and be able to pass an eye test administered by a doctor.
- Have more than 10 teeth, as it was believed that individuals who had lost many teeth had poor diets.





RECRUITMENT

'Pals' Battalions

Many men joined up with their friends. Groups of men from the same town or workplace could establish their own battalions. A battalion is an unit of soldiers within an army.

The government believed that Pals battalions would encourage more people to join the armed forces.

The problem with these battalions was that they increased the possibility that a large group of soldiers from one town or area would be killed together during a battle.

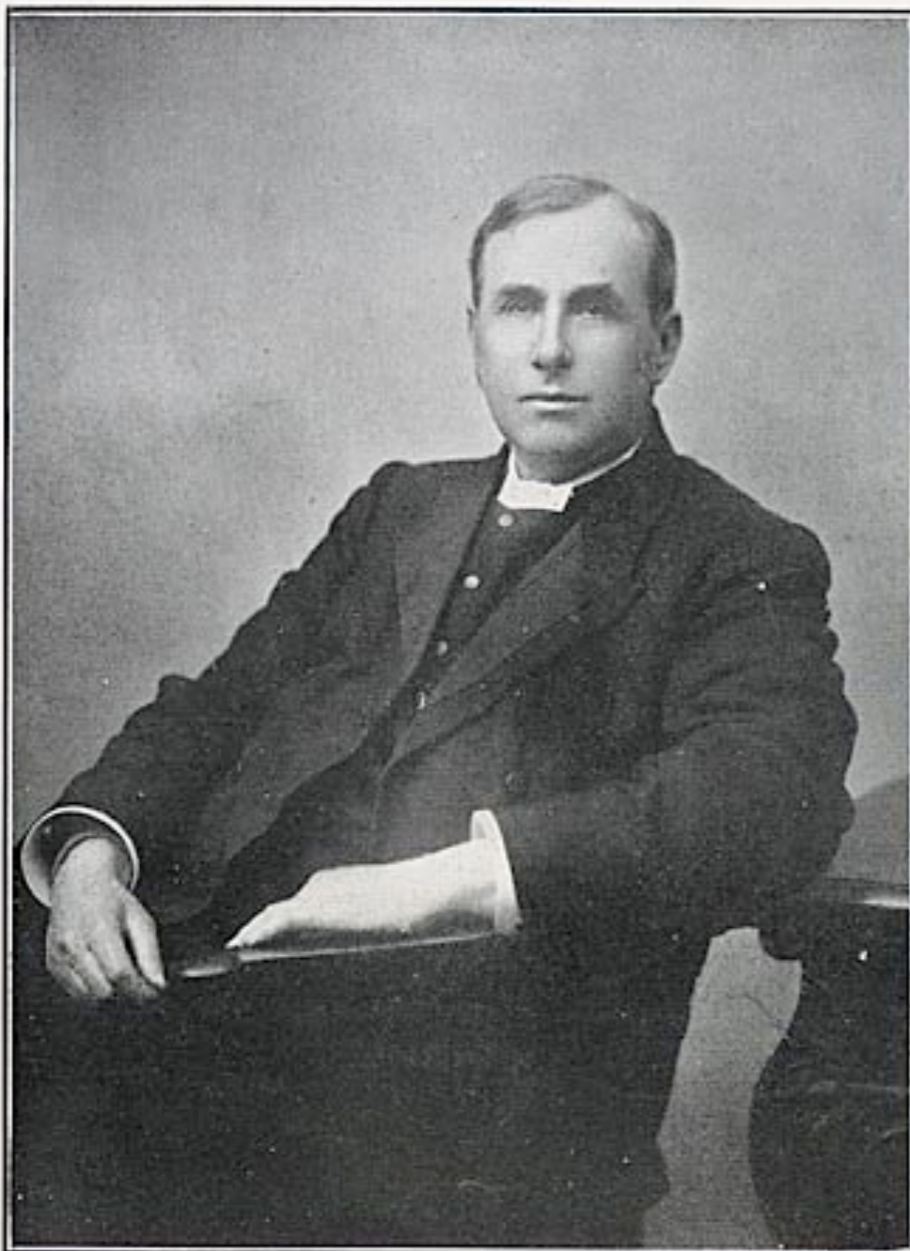
Why are you stopping **HERE**
when your pals are out **THERE?**



Soldiers from Blaenau Ffestiniog

RECRUITMENT

Chapels and Churches



**Y PARCH. JOHN WILLIAMS, D.D.,
BRYNSIENCYN.**

BU FARW TACHWEDD 1af, 1921,
YN 67 MLWYDD OED.

The representatives of many chapels and churches in Wales urged men to go to war.

John Williams, Brynsiencyn was a Methodist minister who played a leading role in the recruitment drive, particularly in the most rural and Welsh speaking parts of Wales.

He would wear his military uniform and round collar to preach, and encourage men to join the army by arguing that Britain was fighting a just war.



RECRUITMENT

Conscription

By 1916 there was a shortage of men to fight as part of the armed forces. Thousands of men had been killed during huge battles on the Western Front, and more soldiers were required to take their place.

By 1916 men it had become more difficult to recruit soldiers because men were more aware of what lay ahead.

The government decided to introduce **Conscription** which meant that every man between 18 and 41 years old had to register to join the armed forces.

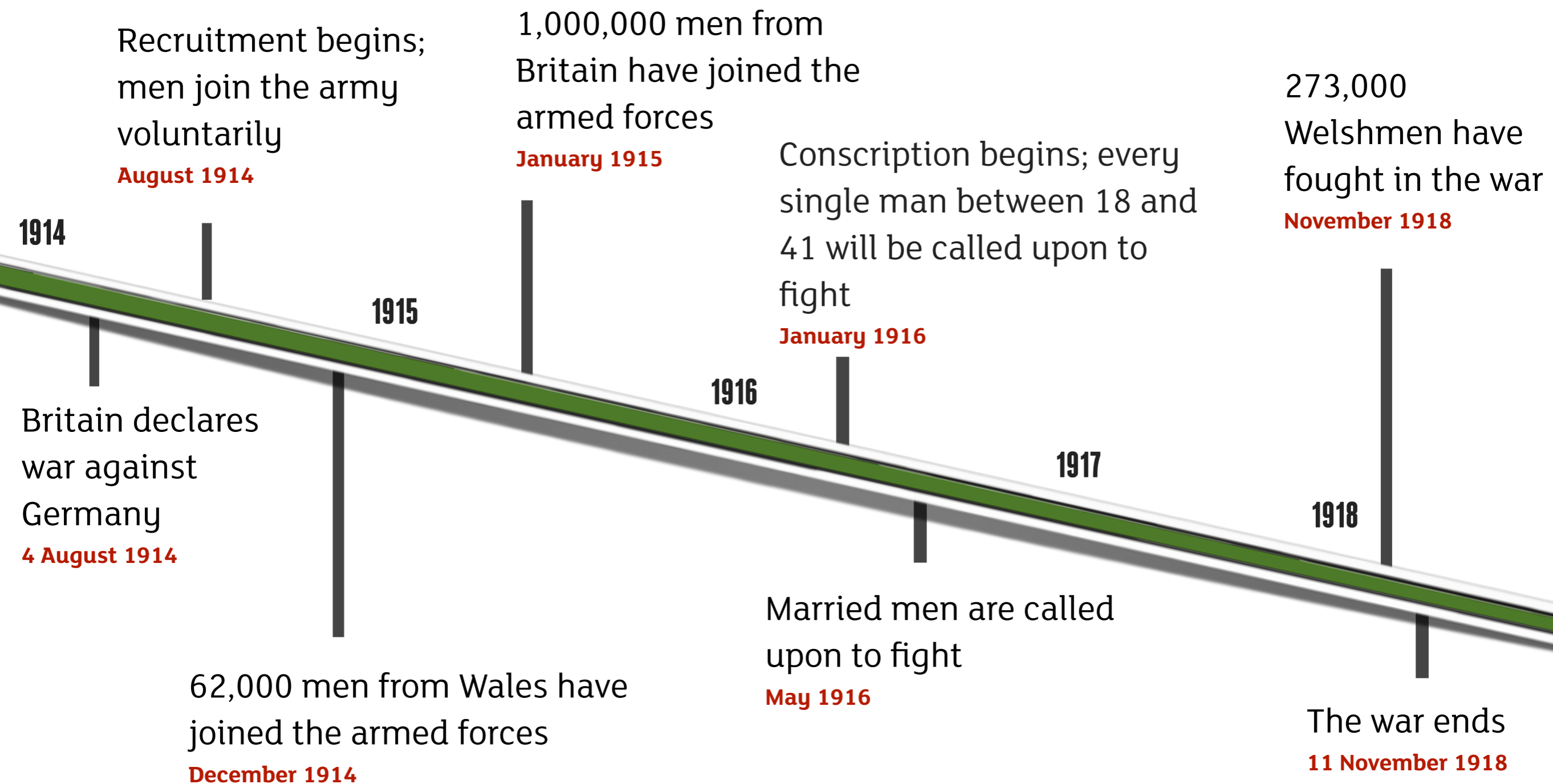
Only men in jobs that were important to the war effort, could avoid joining the armed forces. These 'key positions' included:

- miners
- munitions workers
- doctors
- farmers
- policemen



RECRUITMENT

Recruitment timeline



TRAINING

The Training Camps

Training camps were built across Wales to train the new recruits and make them more ready to fight as part of an army.



Military training camp at Devil's Bridge

TRAINING

New recruits would normally receive three months of training.

Skills

The first phase of training would focus on:

- physical fitness
- self-discipline, obeying orders, perseverance, confidence
- how to march and drill
- how to handle weapons
- the hazards of gas
- skills required on the battlefield
- first aid

The second phase of training would be more specialized e.g. how to become a rifleman, a signaler or bomber .

