

Scotland and The First World War – A Chronology

1914

Jun 28 - Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife are assassinated in Sarajevo by Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip

Jul 28 - Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia. Russia mobilizes

Aug 1 - Germany declares war on Russia

Aug 3 - Germany declares war on France

Aug 4 - Germany invades Belgium. Britain declares war against Germany at 11.00pm

Aug 7 - First troops of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) land in France

Aug 7 to Sep 6 – The French and British are pushed back by the Germans towards Paris in a series of battles - Mons and Le Cateau (UK) and Battle of the Frontiers (French). Germans are stopped at the River Marne

Aug 11 Lord Kitchener calls for 100,000 men to enlist in a New Army. 'Your King and Country Needs You'

Sep 12 - An appeal led by Dr Elsie Inglis is set up to raise money for a Scottish Women's Hospital

Oct 16 to Nov 22- The First Battle of Ypres

Nov 22 - The end of the 'race to the sea'. Trenches are now established along the entire Western Front

1915

Mar 10-12 - Battle of Neuve Chappelle

Apr 22-May 25 - Second Battle of Ypres. First use of poison gas by Germany

Apr 25 - The first Allied landings at Gallipoli - 70,000 British, Commonwealth and French troops involved

May 7 - A German U-boat torpedoes the British liner *Lusitania* with the loss of many American lives

May 22 - A troop train carrying Royal Scots to Liverpool crashes at Gretna. 226 killed and 246 injured

Jun 28-29 - Scottish troops from the 52nd (Lowland) Division suffer heavy casualties at Gallipoli

Jul, 1915 - Munitions of War Act. Many women now replace men in the factories and start working in munitions factories in Glasgow, Irvine and Gretna

Sep 25-27 - Battle of Loos. First battle of the Scottish New Army divisions – the 9th and 15th Divisions. Over 4,000 Scottish soldiers are killed in three days fighting

Oct 12 -Nurse Edith Cavell is executed by the Germans for helping Allied prisoners of war to escape from Belgium

Dec 15 – Scotsman General Sir Douglas Haig replaces Sir John French as Commander-in-Chief of the BEF

Dec 30 - HMS *Natal* blows up in the Cromarty Firth. Over 420 sailors and civilian visitors are killed

1916

Jan 24 - British Government passes the Military Service Act introducing conscription. Becomes law on May 25

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Jan 8 1916 - Allied evacuation of Helles marks the end of the Gallipoli campaign

Feb 21 to Dec 18 - The Battle of Verdun. Over a million French and German soldiers are killed over ten months

May 31 - Battle of Jutland. Royal Navy sails from Orkney, Invergordon and Rosyth to defeat German Fleet

Jun 5 - HMS *Hampshire* is mined off Orkney. Lord Kitchener and 643 others are lost in the sinking

Jul 1 to Nov 18 - The Battles of the Somme

1917

Jan 31 - Germany starts unrestricted submarine warfare to starve Britain into defeat

Apr 6 - USA declares war on Germany

Apr 9 - May 4 - Battles of Arras. 51 Scottish battalions in action on first day. Canadians capture Vimy Ridge

Apr 16 - The French 'Nivelle Offensive'. Heavy losses lead to many mutinies in the French Army

Jun 7 - Battle of Messines. 19 mines are exploded under German front lines.

Jul 9 - HMS *Vanguard* blows up in Scapa Flow, Orkney. 835 sailors are killed

Jul 31 to Nov 6 - Third Battle of Ypres (also known as Passchendaele)

Nov 20 - Dec 30 - Battle of Cambrai - successful use of tanks and aircraft by British

Winter of 1917-18 - Rationing introduced in Britain

1918

Mar 3 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Soviet Russia capitulates and frees up German troops for the Western Front

Mar 21 to Jul 15 - German Spring Offensives. Five offensives are successively launched across the Western Front to attempt to split the British and French armies and reach the Channel coast

Aug 8 – Nov 11 - The Allies launch offensives against the Germans, pushing them back all along the front

Nov 11 - The Armistice is signed between The Allies and Germany

1919

Jan 1 - Loss of HMS *Iolaire* off Stornoway harbour. 205 sailors are drowned, most of them from Lewis

Winter of 1918-19 - Spanish flu spreads across the world infecting 500 million people, killing over 50 million

Jun 21 - German High Seas Fleet scuttled at Scapa Flow

Jun 28 - Treaty of Versailles signed between the Allies and Germany

1921

Aug 31 - Last qualifying date of death for Commonwealth War Graves Commission commemoration