



Investigating **THE AUSTRALIAN HOME FRONT** During the First World War



We know a lot about the Australian soldiers of the First World War and the nature of the war they experienced.

But what was life like on the home front?

Were people united or divided? Did they all support the war or oppose it?

Were there pressures on men to enlist? Or on women to become nurses?

On people to raise money for the war? On men who did not volunteer to enlist?

On opponents of the war to keep quiet?

These are issues that can be explored by meeting some of the people who lived on the home front during the war.

2015 is the 100th anniversary of the first major Australian involvement in World War 1 — the landing at Gallipoli.

This event, together with the subsequent Australian campaigns on the Western Front and Palestine in 1916-1918, are being officially commemorated by a large government-sponsored program.

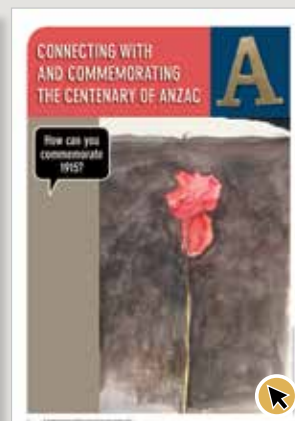
In the previous units in this series we have asked what type of society Australia was in 1914 when World War 1 began, what the reactions were in Australia to its outbreak, what decisions the society had to make once war had started, and what happened at the landing at Anzac on 25 April.

For these units go to

<http://www.servingaustralia.info/education/#estudies>

While the soldiers, sailors and nurses were involved in these military activities most Australians were at home, trying to live normal lives while their loved ones were putting their lives at risk thousands of kilometres away.

This unit looks at how we can look at some individual lives and use these to investigate what life was like on the Home Front during the war.



RSL COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM – SERVING AUSTRALIA

This unit is part of an educational program about the centenary of Australian involvement in World War 1. It is sponsored as a civic and educational contribution to the young people of Australia by the Returned and Services League (RSL) and addresses the requirements of the Australian Curriculum History at Years 9 and 11/12.

Some of the main elements of this program include:

- Three curriculum units per year in *eStudies* for use at Years 6 and 9 to 12
- A new **Serving Australia** website, **www.servingaustralia.info**, that contains video, interactive modules, timelines, Centenary updates and information about youth and community programs.



How would you respond to these Home Front issues during war?

Many issues arise on a Home Front during a war. Here are some of the main ones for the Australian Home Front during the First World War. Record what you think you would have done for each.

Do not worry if you do not know much, or are not sure. Just record what you think you would probably have done. You will be able to come back and revise your answers later if you wish.



Issue	What do you think?	Your response
Volunteering Australia created a volunteer army.	Do you think all eligible men (single, healthy, aged 21-35) should have immediately volunteered to fight?	
Recruiting A way of getting volunteers is through recruiting campaigns.	Do you think women should have been actively engaged in encouraging men to volunteer?	
Opposing the war Not everybody agreed with the war, or did not want Australia to be involved.	Do you think people should have been allowed to oppose the war and try to discourage people from volunteering?	
Propaganda The government supported the war, and had to pursue it to the fullest.	Do you think the government should create pro-war and anti-German propaganda to put pressure on people to join the war?	
Conscription If not enough volunteers could be raised, an alternative is to conscript eligible men to fight.	Do you think men should be conscripted if there are not enough volunteers?	
Enemy aliens When war broke out there were many citizens of enemy countries living in or visiting Australia.	Should the citizens of enemy countries be interned (locked up) while the war is on?	
Fund raising and comforts During war the soldiers appreciate food and clothing packages from home.	Do you think women ought to be the main fund-raisers and providers of comfort packages?	
Strikes Many costs rise at home as a result of the war, and there are many shortages of goods. Wages may not keep up with costs.	Should people at home be able to strike for better personal conditions during war, and perhaps harm the war effort?	
Government powers During war the federal government needs to be in charge of the total war effort, both economic and social.	Should the government exercise greater powers over people (such as censorship) during a war?	
The impact of death or injury Wars cause deaths and injuries. The families of the dead and injured must live with those consequences.	Do people turn against the war as a result of the death or severe injury of their loved ones? Or do they accept the loss as being terrible but justified?	
After the war Many soldiers return from the war terribly damaged physically and mentally, and need special care and help.	What should the nation do for those who have been damaged in its service?	

We know a lot about the Australian soldiers during the First World War, and the nature of the war they experienced.

But what was life like on the Home Front? Were people united or divided? Did they all support the war or oppose it? Were there pressures on men to enlist? On women to become nurses? On people to raise money for the war? On people who did not volunteer to be conscripted? Or opponents of the war to keep quiet?

One way of finding out what actually happened in each of these aspects of the Australian Home Front during the First World War is to 'meet' some people from the time.

The following pages provide information about a number of people.

Your task is to find out what happened to them, or what their involvement was with particular aspects of the war, by using the evidence provided.

You will do this by:

- 1** Focusing on **one of the 13 case studies** in this unit.
- 2** Identifying the **Home Front issue** that your people represents.
- 3** **Interrogating and analysing evidence** about that person.
- 4** **Coming to informed conclusions** about how the person dealt with the issue.
- 5** **Presenting your findings** to the rest of the class.
- 6** **Listening to presentations** about the other people, and creating a summary of all of them.
- 7** **Meeting as a whole community to create a Home Front memorial** that commemorates the experience of the people or people in your case study.

You will then be in a position to test your ideas about the Home Front experience of Australians during the First World War by your own further study.



PEOPLE SUMMARY PAGE

What does meeting this person tell us about the nature and impact of the war on the Australian Home Front?



Person	Main Home Front issue or aspect	REFLECTION: This person's experience of this issue helps me understand that on the Home Front:
1 Robert Menzies	Enlistment	
2 Rufus Rigney	Enlistment Patriotism	
3 Florence Faithfull and Alice Yoxon	Women's roles in war Volunteering	
4 Hans Overbeck	Internment	
5 Billy Hughes (1)	Enlistment	
6 Billy Hughes (2)	Conscription	
7 Les Darcy	Enlistment Conscription	
8 Daniel Mannix	Opposition to the war Conscription Sectarian divisions	
9 Adela Pankhurst and Tom Walsh	Opposition to the war Conscription Government powers	
10 Edith Burns and Muriel McPhee	Death and mourning	
11 Alfred Spain	Economy during war	
12 Daryl Lindsay and Elizabeth Anderson	Looking after wounded soldiers	
13 Gilbert Dyett	Looking after returned servicemen and nurses	

Meeting Robert Menzies

THE WAR SITUATION

It is August 1914. The government has announced that Australia will go to war to support the British, French and Belgians against the invading German forces. There is general public support and enthusiasm for the announcement, although there is some opposition too. The government has called for volunteers to join an army to go and fight.

The initial call is for single men aged 18-35. Thousands immediately volunteer, for a variety of reasons: patriotism to Britain or Australia or the Empire, civic duty, to fight German militarism, adventure, a job that pays well at a time of high unemployment, to be with mates, peer and community pressure and expectations.

MEET ROBERT MENZIES

He is a healthy, single 20-year-old man studying Law at Melbourne University. He is a Lieutenant in the Melbourne University Rifles — part of the compulsory military training scheme introduced in 1911 for young men. He has three brothers — two of them single and of eligible military age — and a sister. His father is a Member of Victorian Parliament.

He has to decide whether to enlist.



Robert Menzies, 1916



Robert Menzies (front row, centre), President of the Melbourne University Students' Representative Council 1916

The Menzies Foundation

http://menziesvirtuallibrary.org.au/the-1910s/1916

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue to be investigated here is **the pressures and tensions that existed on eligible men to enlist to fight, and the factors that determined men's decisions.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 List some key factors that you think might influence whether Robert Menzies will volunteer to fight. Relevant factors might be his family situation, his occupation, his age, his attitudes and values, peer influences, or economic factors.

Factors that might influence Robert Menzies to enlist

Factors that might influence Robert Menzies not to enlist

- 2 What do you expect him to do? Explain your reasons.

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Now use the following evidence to discover what Menzies did, and why.

Robert Menzies was a law student (1913-1916) graduating with first class honours. He was then employed as an articled clerk (a sort of apprenticeship under a senior lawyer) in 1917, at the same time as studying for a Master of Law degree in 1918. He began work as a Barrister in 1918.

Menzies, like all Australian boys and young men, was conscripted under the Commonwealth Defence Act 1911 to complete four years of compulsory military training (1912-1915). He completed this obligation in the Melbourne University Rifles, ending as a lieutenant.

SOURCE 1 University involvement

In 1916 he was president of the Students' Representative Council and of the Students' Christian Union, and he edited the Melbourne University Magazine. His editorials and articles in this journal stressed the virtues of hard work and service to others. He had little time for students who cultivated 'the friendship of the billiard room' and, forgetting the real purpose of university life to 'freely squander their parents' money'.

He wrote many articles for the magazine including the following verse:

In Memoriam

Lieut. J.R. Balfe

Killed in Action, Gallipoli, July 1915
His was the call that came from far away -
An Empire's message flashing o'er the sea -
The call to arms! The blood of chivalry
Pulsed quicker in his veins; he could not stay!
Let others wait; for him the glorious day
Of tyrants humbled and a world set free
Had dawned in clouds and thunder; with a glee
Born not of insensate madness for the fray,
But rather of a spirit noble, brave,
And kindled by a heart that wept at wrong,
He went. The storms of battle round him rave
And screaming fury o'er him chants its song,
Sleep, gallant soul! Though gone thy living breath,
Thou liv'st for aye, for thou has conquered death!

By R G Menzies

3 What attitudes does this poem show towards the war, and towards enlistment?

Menzies chose not to enlist. Look at this evidence and work out why he made this decision.

SOURCE 2

Menzies explains his decision in Commonwealth Parliament, 1939

In 1939, Menzies was the leader of the Nationalist Party. Country Party leader Earle Page attacked him as an unworthy leader. One of the grounds of his attack was the fact that Menzies did not serve in the First World War. Menzies replied to this attack:

It represents a stream of mud through which I have waded at every election campaign in which I have participated. The attack is "You did not go to the war." ... He said, with all its deadly implication, that I resigned a military commission a year after the Great War broke out. If he had investigated a little further, he would have discovered that I, in common with other young men of my age, was a trainee under the then existing system of compulsory training ... When my period of universal training expired, my activity in connexion with the system also expired. I did not resign anything, I served the ordinary term of a compulsory trainee.

I was in exactly the same position as any other person who at that time had to answer the extremely important questions — Is it my duty to go to the war, or is it my duty not to go? The answers to those questions cannot be made on the public platform. Those questions relate to a man's intimate, personal and family affairs, and, in consequence, I, facing those problems, problems of intense difficulty, found myself, for reasons which were and are compelling, unable to join my two brothers in the infantry of the Australian Imperial Force.

SOURCE 3 A historian's explanation

"Menzies himself did not enlist [for war service], a fact of which he was cruelly reminded throughout his life... an internal family conference decided that with two brothers in the AIF, Menzies' duty was to stay at home to look after and partly support his parents. His only sister, having eloped with a soldier of whom her parents disapproved, could not be relied on for ordinary familial duties. At the same time, Menzies' enthusiastic public and private support for conscription had to encompass the virtual certainty that if conscription was brought in, he himself would have been one of the first drafted."

4 Why do you think Menzies chose not to enlist?

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 5 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Robert Menzies. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

Menzies went on to become Prime Minister of Australia from 1939-1941, and then from 1949-1965.

- 6 Do you think Menzies should have enlisted? Explain your reasons.
- 7 What do we learn from Robert Menzies about the issue of enlistment and the Australian Home Front during the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 8 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.



Meeting Rufus Rigney

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1914. There is an Aboriginal Mission at Point McLeay (now known by its traditional name of Raukkan), in South Australia. Aboriginal missions were established during the nineteenth century to provide protection for local Indigenous people, and to try and convert them to Christianity.

Several of the Indigenous men at Point McLeay in 1914 are of eligible military age. They do not have a vote and are not regarded as full citizens — for example, they are not counted in the national census, and all government welfare legislation specifically excludes Aboriginal people from benefits such as old age pensions and maternity allowances. There is a government policy that Indigenous men cannot join the army, unless they are ‘substantially white’. On the other hand, recruiting propaganda stresses the duty of men to join to protect the Empire and Australia, and the pay is very attractive to unskilled workers.

MEET RUFUS RIGNEY

Rufus Rigney is one of a number of young men on the Mission. He is 14 in 1914 and far too young to enlist. But will he try to enlist? He has a brother and uncle of eligible military age.

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Now look at the evidence to help you test and develop further your initial ideas.

SOURCE 1 Lantern slides

These are lantern slides shown by missionary Herbert Read to his congregation at the Mission before and during the war.



Magic lantern slides owned by Herbert Read

- 2 What do these slides show?
- 3 What do they suggest about Read’s attitudes and values?
- 4 Might these have influenced the men of Point McLeay? Support your idea with reasons.

SOURCE 2 Indigenous culture and economy

The people at Raukkan produced boomerangs, clubs and rush mats and sold them to tourists.

- 5 What do these tell us about the culture and the economy of the residents?
- 6 Why might enlistment be an attractive economic option for the eligible males?

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue to be investigated here is **the pressures and tensions that existed on eligible men to enlist to fight, and the factors that determined men’s decisions.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 List some key factors that you think might influence whether Rufus Rigney will volunteer to fight or not. Relevant factors might be his family situation, his occupation, his age, his attitudes and values, peer influences, or economic factors.



Factors that might have influenced Rufus Rigney to enlist.

Factors that might have influenced Rufus Rigney not to enlist

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Rufus Rigney did enlist.

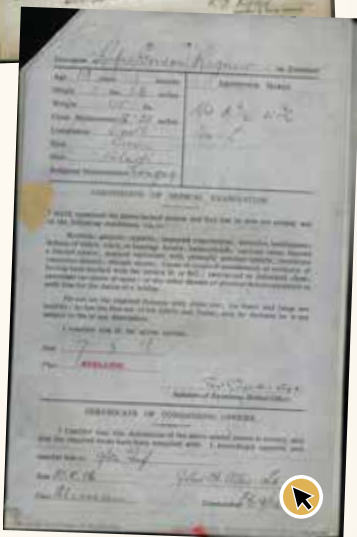
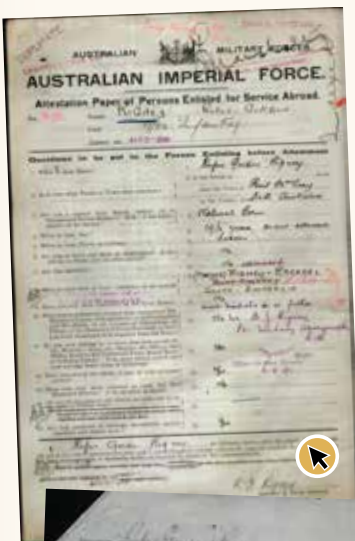
7 Look at the following evidence and use it to decide why he enlisted, and what happened to him.

http://connectingspirits.com.au/pages/resources/ngarrindjeri-soldiers/rufus-rigney.php

SOURCE 4 Rufus Gordon Rigney



SOURCE 5 Rufus Rigney's AIF enlistment form



SOURCE 6 A radio report on a student's research

Mike Sexton: When the First World War broke out, the men and boys of Point McLeay Aboriginal Mission in SA answered the call. Unlike their white comrades around the country, the Ngarrindjeri volunteers had to first seek permission from the Protector of Aborigines before they could leave the home they called Raukkan near the mouth of the Murray River.

Donna Handke, Student: By right they were not allowed to enlist for war, and all of a sudden all of them wanted to enlist. I mean, why would you want to fight for King and country which you are not classed as a citizen in?

Mike Sexton: One of them was Rufus Rigney, a 16-year-old who lied about his age so he could join his older brother Cyril and uncle, Gordon Rigney.

Doreen Kartinyeri, Ngarrindjeri Historian: They said, "Well look, you'll be getting paid good pay and we'll also be sending money to your families, particularly your mother and father", and they thought that was the best thing ever because all they was getting on Raukkan - if you wasn't working, all you was getting was rations.

Mike Sexton: In the bloody years that followed, five Ngarrindjeri men were killed on the Western Front. Among them were Cyril and Rufus Rigney.

Doreen Kartinyeri: I think about all that crying I had to listen to when I was a little girl, my mum, my dad, and my grandmother and the other old ladies used to come and sit with my grandmother and they'd howl for days, a couple of days before Anzac and a couple of days after. They'd stop long enough to go into the church and have the Anzac service.

Mike Sexton: Donna Handke was a student at Adelaide's Mount Barker High School when an excursion to Raukkan sparked her interest in the Ngarrindjeri Anzacs. For her final year history project, she researched the story of Rufus Rigney and in conjunction with her teacher, Julie Reece, planned a trip to the battlefields of Europe to find his grave.

Julie Reece: Donna is an amazing young woman. Her story is very special in itself, in so far as she was a kid who really struggled to stay in Year 12, and had lived independently. She was a young woman who was bringing herself up virtually and yet she wanted to go on this trip.

Mike Sexton: In addition to the research, Donna Handke worked 20 hours a week in a supermarket supporting herself and raising the funds for the trip. Eventually, last year she and a dozen others from her school found themselves in a fog-bound cemetery in Belgium looking for Rufus Rigney's grave.

Donna Handke: We just sort of walked around to find the grave because there were just so many graves in the cemetery, and eventually we found it and at first... ..I never had any connection, I didn't find anything, until I saw his grave, and I stood there and I thought, "Oh hi, Rufus", as if yeah, I knew him.

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2005/s1353096.htm>

National Archives of Australia

SOURCE 7 From Rufus Rigney's official file



SOURCE 8 Harlebeke New British Cemetery, Belgium, where Rigney is buried.



The headstone inscription requested by Rufus' father reads: HE DIED TO KEEP US FREE

- 8** How did Rigney die?
- 9** What happened to him after he died?
- 10** What was his father's attitude towards his service and death? How did the community feel about his death?

Look at Sources 8 and 9.

SOURCE 8 A newspaper report

POINT MACLEAY WAR HEROES.

An interesting ceremony took place at the Point Macleay Mission Station last Friday evening, when a memorial window was unveiled in the church by Brig-Gen. S. Price Weir. Sixteen natives from the station enlisted for the war, and of them four (Cyril and Rufus Rigney, brothers, Alban Varcoe, and Millar Mack) were killed. The residents on the station have been contributing and collecting since then in order to raise an appropriate memorial to the four men. Their desires have at last been realized. A four-panel memorial window, bearing the names of the fallen, and the inscription, "To the glory of God, and in sacred memory of our men who died for justice and freedom" has been erected in the building which has been used for worship for many years.

SA *The Register* 19 August 1925

SOURCE 9 The windows at Raukkan Church



- 11** What do these two sources tell us about how the community felt about these deaths?
- 12** Do you think the memorial window reflects the community's feelings, or those of the people in charge of the community? Explain your reasons.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

13 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Rufus Rigney. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.

Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
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E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

14 What do we learn from Rufus Rigney and the men of Raukkan about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.

15 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Florence Faithfull and Alice Yoxon

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1914. The war has begun. Over 20,000 men have volunteered, been enlisted in the new army, and are training to go overseas. Many women are keen to be involved in the war effort, but they will not be allowed to fight.

MEET FLORENCE FAITHFULL AND ALICE YOXON

In 1914, Florence is the 63-year-old unmarried daughter of wealthy Goulburn pastoralists.

In 1914 Alice is a school girl.



Florence Faithfull, 1918



Alice Yoxon, 1918

National Museum of Australia

National Museum of Australia

What could they do to help the war effort?

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue facing Florence Faithfull and Alice Yoxon is about **what activities women could be involved in to support the war effort.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 Suggest appropriate activities that each might have played in supporting or opposing the war.



Florence Faithfull

Alice Yoxon

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Now look at this evidence and list the war-related activities they would have taken part in.

SOURCE 1 Photograph of Florence Faithfull with a Red Cross group



Red Cross fundraiser outside the Bon Marche department store on George Street, Sydney, 1917

Caroline Simpson Library and Research Collection, Photograph © Greg Weight, Historic Houses Trust of NSW

SOURCE 2 Collection of badges bought as fund-raising and war support activities



Display of South Australia fundraising buttons, assembled 1926

SOURCE 3 Alice Yoxon was a member of the VAD and would have worn a uniform like this



SOURCE 5 A historian's comment

By 1918 there would be 2200 Red Cross branches across the country involving 82,000 women and 20,000 men and boys . . . Ultimately, the Australian Red Cross would send nearly 400,000 Red Cross parcels to Germany, Holland, Austria and Switzerland, including some 320,389 pyjamas, 457,311 shirts, 130,842 pairs of underpants, 1,163,049 pairs of socks, 142,708 mufflers, 83,047 pairs of mittens and 3000 cases of 'prepared old linen' for surgical dressings and bandages. To the Western Front, it would send 10,500,000 cigarettes, 241,232 ounces of tobacco, 94,007 toothbrushes, 57,691 pipes, more than 65,000 tins of cocoa-and-milk and coffee-and-milk, / and even 869 Primus stoves.

The Red Cross was soon joined by a plethora of other patriotic fundraising organisations, most of them staffed by middle-class women volunteers and led by members of local political and social elites. To name only some, they included the Lady Mayoress's Patriotic League (Victoria), the Citizens' War Chest (NSW), the League of Loyal Women (South Australia), the Queensland Patriotic Fund, the 'On Active Service' Fund (Tasmania), the Victorian League of Western Australia, and the Belgian Relief Committees. By 1916, many of these organisations were consolidated into the Australian Comforts Fund . . .

The patriotic fund movement was a remarkable industry in its own right. Yet it is now largely forgotten. There are a number of possible reasons for this. In the first instance, the very success of the patriotic funds in attracting more women than those in paid employment reflected the fact—troubling to later generations of feminists—that World War I did not transform prevailing ideas about femininity in Australia. Rather, traditional gender stereotypes were, if anything, reinforced by the war—that is, Australian men were expected to fight while women remained at home, 'waiting and weeping' and 'keeping the home fires burning'. Whereas in Britain the war offered women new employment opportunities, in Australia women generally did not replace men in factories, transport and public administration—though there was some shift of female workers from domestic work to industrial employment, office work and jobs in sectors such as banking, insurance and the public service. By one estimate, the percentage of women in paid employment in Australia actually declined between 1911 and 1921, from 28.5 to 26.7 percent.

SOURCE 4 Extracts from the official website of the Red Cross

During WWI, Red Cross formed the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) in Australia, based on the British Red Cross model. The vast majority comprised of women and girls, known as VAs, who were trained in first-aid and home nursing to carry out unpaid domestic and quasi-nursing duties in hospitals and convalescent homes. They became the public face of Red Cross.

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Australian women also raised funds - over one-third, or almost £5 million pounds, of all monies donated in Australia over the four years of WWI to the patriotic funds.

SOURCE 6 A second historian's comment

Why did so many regional women join the Red Cross? For many, it simply represented a continuation of voluntary service ... Joining the Red Cross also had a certain social cachet. It was fashionable and it conferred status on those who joined.... For some women, the Red Cross served a social function. It offered women a chance to meet with other women... The majority, however, joined the Red Cross because they had sons, brothers and fathers fighting in the trenches. The organisation offered a tangible way to help end the war and bring the men home.

No-one was too young or too old to join.

- 2 Why might Faithfull and Yoxon have taken on these duties?
- 3 How common were these activities among women in local communities?
- 4 Do you think the Red Cross and VADs played a valuable role in the war?
- 5 Do you think this was recognised by the community?
- 6 Why were these voluntary activities more typical of women's involvement in the war than other possible roles such as nursing and paid war work?
- 7 Which of the possible motives suggested in Source 6 do you think would have applied to Faithfull and Yoxon? Explain your reasons.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 8 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Florence Faithfull and Alice Yoxon. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
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E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 9 What do we learn from these two women about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 10 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Hans Overbeck

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1915 and Australia is at war with Germany. There are about 30 000 German-born residents in Australia, with the majority living in South Australia and Queensland.

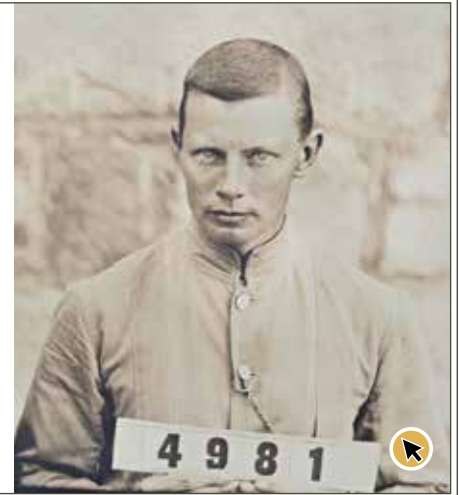
There is strong anti-German feeling among some people. Some Germans have been sacked; many have to report periodically to local police; some are harassed by locals who claim that the Germans were behaving 'suspiciously'. German schools and churches are being closed by state governments, and the names of 42 German places are being changed to British ones. (For example, Blumberg in South Australia becomes Birdwood, and German Creek in New South Wales becomes Empire Bay.) German language classes are banned.

MEET HANS OVERBECK

He is a 32-year-old German businessman, linguist and entomologist (specialising in a study of ants). He is in Singapore (a British colony) when war breaks out. He is what is called an 'enemy alien', that is, a citizen of a country that is at war with Britain.

Should he be allowed to remain free, or should he be interned (kept in a form of prison camp)?

Hans Overbeck, 1915-18



National Archives of Australia

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **what to do with people who are citizens of enemy nations, or 'enemy aliens'.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 Summarise points for each option, including any refinements or modifications.



Lock him up

Let him be free

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- 2 What do you think should have been done? Explain your reasons.

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Now look at the following information to see what actually happened.

Australia interned almost 7000 people during the First World War, of whom about 4500 were enemy aliens and British nationals of German ancestry who were already residents of Australia.

SOURCE 1 Internment camp work party

A work party from Trial Bay internment camp cutting wood, 1917



National Library of Australia whf703393-s58-22

SOURCE 2 The Camps and the System of Internment

Since it was impossible to intern all enemy aliens resident in Australia, the Government pursued a policy of selective internment. They targeted the leaders of the German Australian community ... [and] Women and children of German and Austrian descent, detained by the British in Asia, ... Some internees had been accused of being disloyal by neighbours or had come to the attention of the police by accident. Internment in Australia was regulated by the War Precautions Act 1914 and internees could be held without trial.

Internment Camps were established at Rottneest Island in Western Australia, Torrens Island in South Australia, Enoggera in Queensland, Langwarrin in Victoria and Bruny Island in Tasmania.

Internees at all the camps formed management committees, theatre and arts groups, self-education classes, restaurants and cafes.

The Australian Government was very serious in sending a message back to Germany that the internees were well looked after so that Australian prisoners of war in Germany received the same treatment from their German captors.

SOURCE 3 Holsworthy camp



Holsworthy internment camp's main entrance, soon after a riot had broken out, 19 April 1916

- 3 Describe what conditions seem to be like in the camp.
- 4 Do you think internees such as Hans Overbeck were fairly and well treated by Australia?
- 5 There was no evidence that most of the people interned were in any way actually dangerous or a threat to Australia. Do you think the internment policy was justified? Explain your reasons.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 6 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Hans Overbeck. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 7 What do we learn from Overbeck about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 8 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a **final community meeting** of people from this unit.

What happened to Hans Overbeck?

He returned to Java after the war, and was interned again in 1940. In January 1942 he was sent to Bombay, the ship was attacked by a Japanese plane, and while the 120 crew and military guards were able to escape in five lifeboats, Overbeck drowned.

Meeting Billy Hughes (1)

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1916. The war is going badly for Australia. The Battle of the Somme which was supposed to break the German lines failed, at great cost. The soldiers are bogged down in static trench warfare, with thousands being killed daily for no gains. Recruiting is falling while casualties are increasing. The war is also costly in economic terms, and is driving the government into massive debt. What can be done to win the war?

MEET WILLIAM MORRIS ('BILLY') HUGHES

He is the 54-year-old Labor Party Prime Minister of Australia. He believes in the justice and the necessity of the war, and that Australia needs to do everything it can to help win the war. He is concerned about falling recruitment and the negative impact this is having on Australia's war effort. What will he do?



Prime Minister William 'Billy' Hughes, no date
National Library of Australia, vn4831473

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **how government could appeal to people to encourage enlistments.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 List the ways you might encourage recruiting. Consider how you might appeal to different ideas (such as patriotism, loyalty, duty) and also different groups – such as fathers, women, and sportsmen.



Group	Way of appealing

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

- 2 Now look at these recruiting posters from various states and stages of the war. For each one decide:
- What it shows
 - What the appeal or argument is
 - Who the target audience is
 - Who might be persuaded by it, and if any group might be alienated by it.

A

AMM ARTV05259

B

AMM ARTV00141

C

AMM ARTV00040

D

AMM ARTV00027

E

AMM ARTV00148

F

AMM ARTV05616

G

AMM ARTV00036

H

AMM ARTV00139

I

AMM ARTV00154

J

AMM ARTV00147

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 3 There is only one source of evidence here. Consider the strengths and weaknesses of using official recruiting posters to understand the wartime situation.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- What do we learn from Billy Hughes about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Billy Hughes (2)

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1916. The war is not going well for Australia. Recruitment continues to fall and casualties continue to rise. Many believe the solution is to increase the number of men being sent from Australia to the front: conscription for overseas service.

Australia already has conscription — but for service within Australia only. These conscripts cannot legally be sent overseas to fight. This legal power can only be gained by amending the existing Defence Act in Parliament. Will Australians support conscription?

MEET WILLIAM MORRIS ('BILLY') HUGHES

He is the 54-year-old Labor Party Prime Minister of Australia. He believes in the justice and the necessity of the war, and that Australia needs to do everything it can to help win it. He has been campaigning to encourage recruitment but it is not effective. He believes it will be necessary to introduce conscription but he needs the support of the Senate to amend the existing Defence Act.

He holds a plebiscite or referendum — a mass public opinion poll. If and when the people vote for it this should persuade enough of the Senators holding out against it to change their vote, and accept the will of the people.

But Hughes has to persuade people to vote Yes without dividing the community and weakening the war effort. What will he do?

Pro-conscription billboard, 1916



Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **how supporters and opponents of conscription saw the war, and presented their views in ways that would influence and persuade others.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

1 List the main arguments that could be used for and against conscription.



2 List the groups that you might appeal to.

3 List the images that might be persuasive.

Arguments for conscription

Arguments against conscription

--	--

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Look at the following evidence to see what happened.

SOURCE 1 Pro-and anti-conscription badges

Pro-conscription button, 1916 Anti-conscription button

4 What do the badges above suggest was happening in society on this issue?

SOURCE 2 Paperweight caricature of Prime Minister Hughes

Paperweight caricature of Prime Minister Hughes, 1916

- 5 What does the object above suggest about how Hughes was seen by his opponents?
- 6 Below are some examples of leaflets that were distributed to persuade voters one way or the other. Look at these and for each one decide:
- What it shows
 - What the appeal or argument is
 - Who the target audience is
 - Who might be persuaded by it, and if any group might be alienated by it
 - Whether it is likely to unify or divide the community.

SOURCE 3 Conscription and anti-conscription leaflets and posters

A AMM ARTY10140

E AMM RC00305

I AMM RC00331

M AMM RC00300

B AMM RC00337

F AMM RC00336-1

J AMM RC00302

N AMM RC00320

C AMM ARTY10140

G State Library of Victoria

K AMM RC00339

O State Library of Victoria

D AMM RC00309

H AMM RC00308

L State Library of Victoria

P AMM RC00310

SOURCE 4 Conscription questions and vote figures 1916 and 1917

QUESTIONS

28 October 1916

Are you in favour of the Government having, in this grave emergency, the same compulsory powers over citizens in regard to requiring their military service, for the term of this war, outside the Commonwealth, as it now has in regard to military service within the Commonwealth?

20 December 1917

Are you in favour of the proposal of the Commonwealth Government for reinforcing the Australian Imperial Force overseas?

RESULTS

State	1916		1917	
	% For	% Against	% For	% Against
New South Wales	42.92	57.08	41.16	58.84
Victoria	51.88	48.12	49.79	50.21
Queensland	47.71	52.29	44.02	55.98
South Australia	42.44	57.56	44.90	55.10
Western Australia	69.71	30.29	64.39	35.61
Tasmania	56.17	43.83	50.24	49.76
Federal Territories	62.73	37.27	58.22	41.78
Total for Commonwealth	48.39	51.61	46.21	53.79

- 7 Hughes failed both to introduce conscription, and to unite the community. Why do you think the conscription issue was so divisive?

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 8 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Billy Hughes. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			
4			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 9 What do we learn from Hughes about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 10 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Les Darcy

THE WAR SITUATION

It is October 1916. Australia has been at war for two years and it is not going well. Casualties keep rising while the number of men volunteering is reducing. Prime Minister Hughes has called for a referendum on the issue of conscription — the compulsory enlistment of men for overseas service. The first men to be called up if conscription is passed are the young, single, healthy men.

MEET LES DARCY

He is the second son of Australian born Catholic parents, with an Irish background.

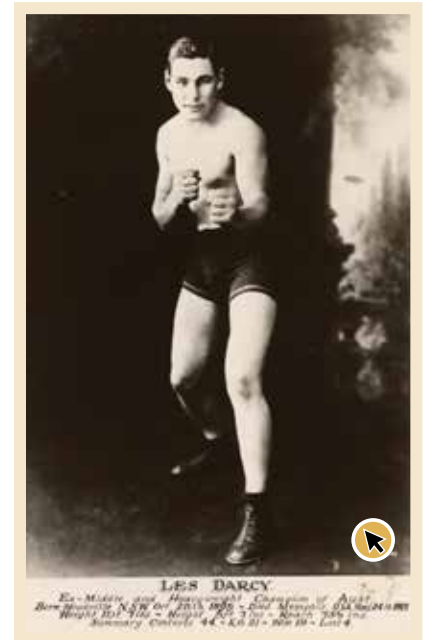
He left school in 1907 aged 12, apprenticed as a blacksmith at 15. He is now a healthy 21-year-old man.

He is not only healthy and single (though engaged to be married), he is a champion boxer. He first started boxing and winning money at age 14. He had enough money to buy himself out of his blacksmith indenture in 1915. Each contest in 1915 and 1916 earned him at least £300, at a time when an average male annual wage in NSW was about £150.

He is now the Australian champion in his weight category, and could become a world champion if he can organise a fight in the United States (which is not at war).

If conscription is passed he will be one of the first called up to fight. He cannot legally travel to the United States as the government has cancelled the passport of all potentially eligible men until the result of the conscription vote is known.

Will Les Darcy enlist, wait until he is called up, or try to get to America illegally?



Les Darcy, 1910-16

D THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue to be investigated here is **the pressures and tensions that existed on eligible men to enlist to fight, and the factors that determined men's decisions.**

E FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

1 List the arguments for and against each possible course of action.



	FOR	AGAINST
Enlist now		
Wait and be conscripted		
Go to the United States		

2 What do you think he should do? Justify your choice.

D INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

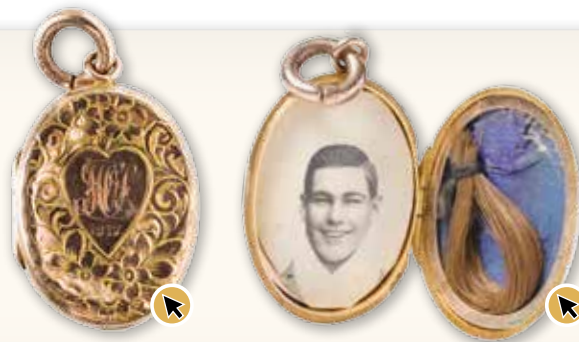
- 3 Here is some more evidence about him. Read it, and use it to work out what he did and why.

SOURCE 1 Darcy's fiancée Winnie



Winnie O'Sullivan in Los Angeles, 1917

SOURCE 2 A mourning locket kept by Winnie



Mourning locket, 1928

SOURCE 3 Les Darcy's grave at Maitland, NSW

Of your charity
Pray for the soul of
James Leslie Darcy
Late Champion Middleweight Boxer of the World
Born at Woodville NSW October 28, 1896*
Died at Memphis USA May 24, 1917
Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and
Let perpetual light shine upon him
May he rest in peace Amen
Being made perfect, in a short space,
he fulfilled a long time.
Wisdom IV.13.

This monument has been erected to the memory of James Leslie Darcy, by his numerous admirers and Friends throughout the Australian Commonwealth As a tribute to his unsurpassed brilliancy as a boxer; and in testimony of his high and loveable character and of the uprightness and integrity of his life.



SOURCE 4 Extracts from an account of his fiancée's experience

Mrs. Winifred Hannan of Bennett street Bondi] is a charming, grey-haired widow. As Winifred O'Sullivan she was Darcy's fiancée. She was with Les when he died in Memphis (Tennessee) on May 24, 1917.

Darcy was the second son in a family of 11, a devoted son and brother. It was his sense of responsibility to his family that set him on the path which ended in his tragic, untimely death.

As a boy of 19 and 20 he defeated the best American boxers who could be brought to Australia. He was proclaimed middleweight champion of the world. He was offered huge sums if he would go to America and fight there.

BECAUSE he was of military age, the Australian Government refused to let him go; it maintained this attitude even after Darcy offered a £5,000 bond that after six months in America he would return and enlist or go to France and join the A.I.F.

On his twenty-first birthday (October 28 1916) Darcy stowed away on a ship leaving Newcastle. He worked his passage as a stoker, but received a welcome fit for a king

when he landed in New York. Leading U.S. promoters vied with each other to place Darcy under contract. His popularity slumped after a few weeks. Public resentment at the manner in which he left Australia spread to America. He was barred from boxing in New York, Chicago, and other U.S. cities.

When America entered the war, in April, 1917, Darcy took out U.S. naturalisation papers and enlisted in the U.S. Air Corps. He was then granted permission to have five fights during the training as a pilot. But it was his fate never to box in America. He contracted a chill during his first air flight. At the time he was suffering from an infection in a tooth which had been knocked out in an earlier flight. Pneumonia developed and caused his death.

Mrs. Hannan says. "When Les enlisted, the U.S. Air Corps doctor who examined him described him as the most perfect man physically he had ever seen. But when I reached the hospital he had been so ill and had lost so much weight that he looked just like a little boy.

"We were just walking out of the ward when the sisters called us back. Les died just after we left his bedside."

CONSCRIPTION ISSUE PROVIDES HARDEST BATTLE

The pleas of the enlisting officers were being placed before Australian youth, and Les Darcy was one who considered them. Early in September, 1916, a professional bookmaker came back with a commission from St Paul, U.S.A., for a £7000 engagement.

Torn by this interest, dragged by that, is it any wonder that the badgered, distracted youth, knew not which way to turn?

In an honorable endeavor to meet the situation, he approached the military and the civil authorities with a proposition that he be allowed to go to America under a bond to return and enlist after six months. But Darcy's appeal was preemptorily rejected.

While in Brisbane for his return contest with Dave Smith, Darcy made a second attempt to enlist,

When Les Darcy's mother heard from Brisbane of her son's intention to enlist, she was so badly affected that she had to consult a doctor. She has been in Indifferent health for some months, and the news that her boy purposed going

to the front, gave her such a shock, that although nearly a week has passed since, she has not properly recovered yet.

'The recruiting sergeant came to me,' he said, 'and after he had explained everything, I gave him my name and told him I would go up on the Friday. You know, I've always had an inclination that way. I tried to enlist about two years in Maitland, but they wouldn't have me because I was too young. Anyhow, I intended going to the barracks on the Friday, but on Thursday morning I got a telegram from my mother, telling me that she objected. I'm under age you know, and she wouldn't give her consent. I can't do anything. That's all there is to tell.'

'Will you enlist when you come of age in October?' Darcy was asked. 'I can't say now,' he replied. 'There are several things that have to be considered. My mother and the other members of the family are dependent on me, and I have to think of them. Another thing, my mother's health is not good.'

Townsville Daily Bulletin 27 July 1936

- 4 What did Les Darcy do? Why?
- 5 Do you think he was justified in what he did? Why?

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 6 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Les Darcy. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 7 What do we learn from the story of Les Darcy about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 8 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Daniel Mannix

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1916 and the conscription campaign has been a bitter and divisive one, creating tensions and hostility among various groups in society. One of the fault lines is the issue of Irish Catholics in Australia and Irish Home Rule.

In 1914 Britain was close to giving Ireland Home Rule (in effect, independence) but the war ended any immediate plans for this. This led to armed opposition to British rule by the Irish Republican Army, and in April 1916 IRA leader Patrick Pearse proclaimed the Republic of Ireland. The British opposed it, and after an artillery bombardment of part of Dublin the rebels surrendered. Sixteen leaders were executed. Many Irish emigrant communities in Canada, America, Britain and Australia turned against the British Government as a result of its actions. Many declared they would no longer wholeheartedly support fighting in the First World War for Britain.

About 1 in 3 people in Australia is Catholic, and most of these are from an Irish background.

MEET DANIEL MANNIX

He is the assistant Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne. He is an Irishman who has been in Australia since 1912. He did not sympathise with the Irish Rebellion, but spoke out against the brutal way the British Government suppressed it.

Catholics will look to him for guidance on their attitude to the war, and to the proposed referenda on conscription of eligible men for overseas service.

Will he help unite or divide Australian society?



Archbishop Daniel Mannix, 1919

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **did sectarian or religious issues divide society, and did they influence the conscription plebiscite outcomes?**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 Mannix was an Irish Catholic leader in a community that was 2/3rds British Protestant in origin and culture. Suggest ways that he could maintain his own beliefs about the war and provide leadership without alienating people who disagreed with him or who were suspicious of him.

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

- 2 Look at the following information. How active and influential was Mannix during the conscription votes?

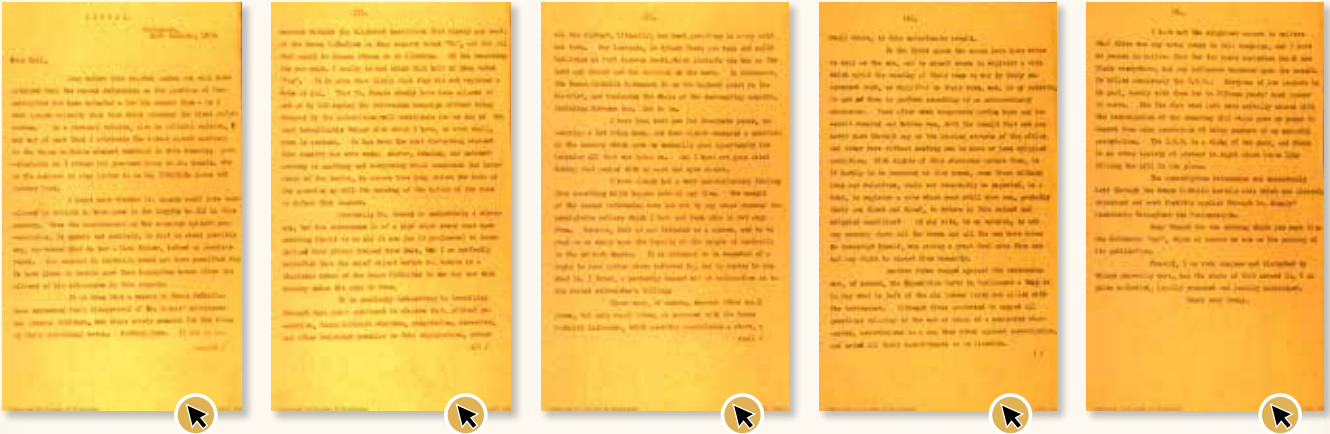
In 1916 Prime Minister Hughes held a plebiscite (in effect a national public opinion poll) on the issue of conscription of eligible men for overseas military service. He believed that recruiting was falling behind casualty rates, and that if Australia did not contribute its fair share of soldiers it would lessen the Allies' chances of victory, and put the troops already fighting at greater risk of injury or death. The issue was fiercely contested in Australia. The vote was defeated in 1916, and again in 1917.

During the 1916 conscription campaign, Mannix argued that Australia was already doing enough to help the British. Despite only speaking publicly twice, he became the government's scapegoat for the ballot's narrow defeat. By the 1917 referendum, Mannix, like many others, argued more passionately against conscription. That ballot, too, was defeated.

Mannix was watched by the intelligence service, had his mail intercepted, his speeches secretly recorded, and newspaper reports of his speeches censored.

SOURCE A response to Mannix

Here is a letter in the National Archives of Australia from an unsigned friend or colleague working in Australian intelligence to 'Hall', probably Admiral Sir William Reginald Hall, who was Director of British Naval Intelligence during the war.



National Archives of Australia

Read the letter and answer these questions:

- 3 What reasons does the writer give for the failure of the conscription referenda?
- 4 How significant is Mannix in that explanation?
- 5 What does it tell you about popular and even well-informed 'loyalist' attitudes to Mannix?
- 6 Why might an informed observer believe that Mannix was so important?
- 7 Do you believe he was? Explain your view.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 8 There is only one source of evidence here. Consider the strengths and weaknesses of using an official but also personal letter as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 9 What do we learn from Mannix about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 10 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Tom Walsh and Adela Pankhurst

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1917. The war has been going for three years.

Casualties keep increasing, and ordinary people's standard of living continues to decline.

A debate on conscription has split society, as well as the Labor Party. Those who strongly support the war have joined with the Liberals to form a new Nationalist Party under Prime Minister Billy Hughes. This new Nationalist Party became the government as a result of the May 1917 election. The now smaller Labor Party Opposition had a solid core of people for whom working standards and conditions are more important than the war. There is growing protest against conscription and against the war, and growing attempts by the government to suppress dissent that it sees as threatening the war effort.

MEET TOM WALSH AND ADELA PANKHURST

Tom Walsh is a 46-year-old Irish seaman and unionist who came to Australia in 1903 seeking a socialist utopia. During the war he has been a passionate organiser and speaker against the war and against the issue of conscription.

Adela Pankhurst is a 32-year-old year-old daughter of English suffragette leader Emmeline Pankhurst. She came to Australia in 1914 and is an organiser and star anti-war and anti-conscription speaker for the Women's Political Association, the Women's Peace Army, and the Victorian Socialist Party.

Adela and Tom marry in September 1917.

Both are opposed to the war and to conscription. Their actions have placed them both under government surveillance and there is a possibility they could be arrested. Should they continue to speak out?



Tom Walsh and Adela Pankhurst, 1925

Fairfax Syndication

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **government controls on opponents of the war and conscription — were they justified in imposing harsh laws?**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

1 Should Adela and Tom continue to speak out against the government?



Arguments in favour of speaking out against the government at a time of war

Arguments against speaking out against the government at a time of war

--	--

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Look at the following evidence to find out what happened with opponents of the war.

SOURCE 1 A banned song

VERSE 1

Once when a mother was asked
Would she send her darling boy to fight
She just answered 'No'
And I think you'll admit she was right

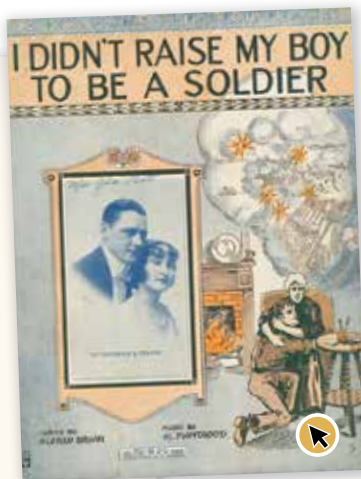
CHORUS

I didn't raise my son to be a soldier,
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.
Who dares to put a musket on his shoulder,
To kill some other mother's darling boy?
The nations ought to arbitrate their quarrels,
It's time to put the sword and gun away.
There'd be no war today,
If mothers all would say,
"I didn't raise my son to be a soldier."

VERSE 2

All men are brothers
Our country — One World
State Library of Victoria
Glories of war are a lie
If they ask us why
We can tell them that mother's reply

Repeat Chorus Twice



State Library of Victoria

SOURCE 2 Sample page from a petition to Hughes for the release of Pankhurst



National Archives of Australia

- 2 Why do you think this song was banned?
- 3 Do you think that was justified? Why?
- 4 Adela Pankhurst was gaoled for singing this song at peace meetings. Do you think that was an appropriate response by the authorities? Explain your reasons.
- 5 Supporters organised a petition to set her free. There were over 7000 signatures on it. Look at the petition and explain what the supporters wanted.

- 6 Do you think she should have been freed? Explain your views.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 7 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Tom Walsh and Adela Pankhurst. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 8 What do we learn from Walsh and Pankhurst about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 9 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Edith Burns, and Muriel McPhee

THE WAR SITUATION

It is June 1917. Sixty thousand Australian soldiers died during the war. The nation is in a state of mourning. Everyone had family, friends or colleagues who were touched by the death of a loved one.

MEET EDITH BURNS AND MURIEL MCPHEE

For Edith Burns, it is her son, Vincent, killed in action in June 1917. She would have been notified by telegram of the death of her son, probably brought by the local clergyman. People came to fear a visit by a clergyman, knowing what it might bring.

For Muriel McPhee, it is her fiancée, also killed, but whose name we do not know.



Muriel McPhee, about 1920

National Museum of Australia

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **the impact of soldiers' deaths on family and community.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

1 What do you think would be the reaction of a woman to the death of a loved one (son or fiancée) during the war? List words that describe what feelings you would expect them to experience.

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

2 Here are some objects associated with Lt Burns and his mother, Edith. Decide what each is, and why it would be significant for the family of the soldier.

SOURCE 1
Soldier's identity tags



Identity tag issued to Vincent Burns, 1915

National Museum of Australia

SOURCE 2**Deceased soldier's kit identity tag***Issued for Vincent Burns, 1917*

- 3** Why would relatives keep the objects shown in Sources 1-4?
4 How do you think Edith might have felt about her son's death?

We have a clue to her attitudes. After the war the next of kin of a dead soldier who had a known grave was invited to submit words to be inscribed on the headstone.

SOURCE 5

Here is the inscription chosen by Edith for her son's headstone in Trois Arbres cemetery, Belgium:

"THIS MY SON WAS DEAD
AND IS ALIVE AGAIN"

ST LUKE XV.24

- 5** Does this help you understand Edith's attitude towards the death of her son? Explain your ideas.

Muriel McPhee was a young woman engaged to a serving soldier, who was killed during the war. We do not have any objects relating to the soldier kept by Muriel other than a photograph of a soldier whom we presume was her fiancée.


We do have dozens of items that she knitted and crocheted as part of her 'glory box' or hope chest – the collection of clothing and other items a woman made in preparation for her marriage. Muriel would have spent thousands of hours making these garments, all with the purpose of being part of her married life. We also have a black mourning dress.

SOURCE 3**Mother's badge given when a son enlisted***Issued to Edith Burns***SOURCE 6 Muriel McPhee's black mourning dress***Mourning overdress*

- 6** Why would a woman make and keep these objects? What does it tell us about her attitudes and expectations?
7 What do these objects (Sources 1-6) help us understand about the impact of the death of a soldier on his family and friends back home?
8 Muriel McPhee never married. Thousands of the men of marriageable age of that generation died in the war, leaving as many thousands of women unmarried for life. What impact do you think that might have had on the lives of those women, and their families?

SOURCE 4**Photograph of Vincent Burns***Vincent Burns, 1916*

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 9 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Edith Burns and Muriel McPhee. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence. 

Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 10 What do we learn from these three people about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 11 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.



AWM REL39127



Meeting Alfred Spain

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1917. Industrial conditions for many workers have declined during the war. During the year there is a very large strike, possibly the biggest industrial upheaval in Australian history, mainly by transport, wharf and mine workers in New South Wales, protesting against a decline in the purchasing value of their wages (about 30% between 1914 and 1919) and new strict checks on their attendance. The strike spreads to the other eastern states as well. In all about 100 000 workers in several states will strike for six weeks. The strike also leads to many mass demonstrations of public support, the disruption of food supplies, and a fear of food shortages.

MEET ALFRED SPAIN

50-year-old Alfred Spain is head of the Taronga Zoo board of management in Sydney. He is an architect by profession, and runs a company that designs office blocks, houses, flats, hotels and factories. His company is also associated with building army camps during the war.

He was a part-time officer in the pre-war New South Wales Military Forces from 1903-1913. During the war, he commanded the reinforcements camps in Sydney. He then enlisted in the AIF in 1916 and served with the Sea Transport Service until May 1917.

The government believes that the strike is harming the war effort. It has organised volunteers who will take the place of striking workers. They need a base or campsite. Spain is in a position to help support the government against the strikers. Will he?



Alfred Spain, 1910

National Library of Australia MFN NX 928

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **strikes during a war, and whether striking is anti-patriotic.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

1 Consider the arguments for and against mass strikes during a war.

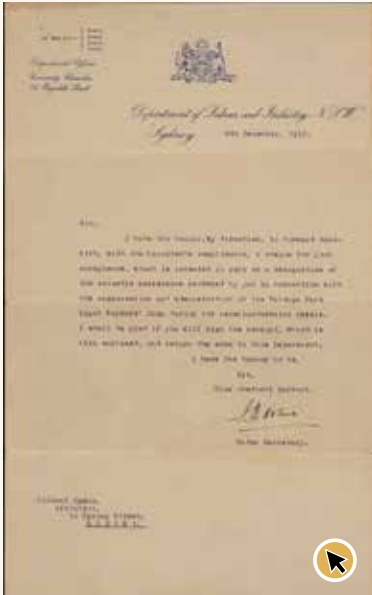


Arguments supporting strikes	Arguments opposing strikes

Now look at this evidence to understand what Alfred Spain did, and why.

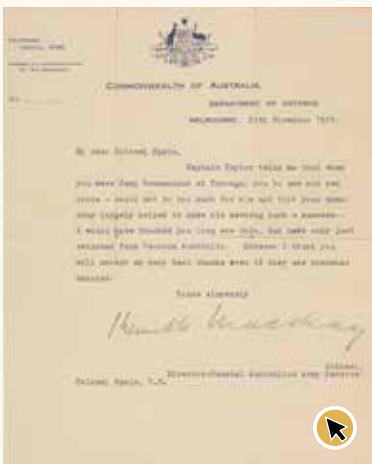
National Museum of Australia

SOURCE 1 Letters of support to Spain from business and government leaders, 1917



Letters of support to Spain from business and government leaders, 1917

National Museum of Australia



Letter to Spain from the Secretary of the Department of Labour and Industry, NSW, 1917

- 2** Who is thanking or supporting Spain?
- 3** Why?
- 4** Are these important supporters? Explain your view.

SOURCE 2 Photo of strike breakers



Strike-breakers on Taronga Wharf, Sydney, during the Great Strike, 1917

National Library of Australia vn3068163

SOURCE 3 A poem critical of 'loyalists' (strike breakers), 1917



Poem by Jack Bradshaw

National Museum of Australia

- 5** Describe the strikers.
- 6** Do you think they are accurately described in the poem?
- 7** Do you think they are typical Australians, or representative of a smaller group?
- 8** What is the attitude of the poet towards the Loyalists?
- 9** What is his attitude towards the strikers?
- 10** What arguments (if any) does he use against the Loyalists?
- 11** What is the challenge he makes to them about their loyalty?

SOURCE 4 An historian's comment

With the strikes disrupting the flow of goods around Australia and creating panic about food supplies, the state and Commonwealth governments went on the offensive. As the Nationalists saw it, industrial action was more than an intolerable threat to the war effort: it was 'an organised attempt to take the reins of government out of the hands of those duly elected by the people to carry on the affairs of government. ... [and] a belated effort by those who were defeated to set aside the will of the people' ...

Determined to keep the economy running while they sat out the strike, the state and Commonwealth governments commandeered coal stocks, shipping and motor- and horse-drawn vehicles in order to keep essential power and transport services operating. Gas and electricity were rationed. ...

Responding to patriotic calls from the conservative press, volunteers from the regional areas, which were solidly behind the government, streamed to the cities, wharves and coal mines. Improvised barracks sprung up in locations like Taronga Park Zoo and the Sydney Cricket Ground—which strikers promptly renamed Scabs Collecting Ground. ... In all, the governments were able to organise some 170,000 man days of strike-breaking labour, far fewer than the three million strike days lost but still enough to keep essential services going...

During September and October, the food riots stopped and strikes at each workplace across the eastern states collapsed in almost unconditional surrender.

12 What were the motives of:

- the government
- the strikers
- the strike-breakers
- Alfred Spain

in this dispute?

13 Do you think the workers were justified in striking during wartime? Do you think Spain and the Loyalists were justified in breaking the strike? Explain your reasons.



D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

14 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Alfred Spain. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.

Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			
4			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

15 What do we learn from Alfred Spain about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.

16 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Daryl Lindsay and Elizabeth Anderson

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1918. Since 1915, Australian soldiers have been returning to Australia with terrible physical and mental damage.

Men have had limbs destroyed, lungs corroded by gas, faces horribly disfigured by bullets and shrapnel, minds shattered by the terror of bombardment, and the horrors they have seen, caused and suffered.

These men, their family and friends, are now part of this legacy of the war.

MEET DARYL LINDSAY AND ELIZABETH ANDERSON



Daryl Lindsay in his studio at Queen's Hospital, Sidcup, England, 1918



Elizabeth 'Betty' Anderson, 1910

Daryl Lindsay spent two years as a driver in the Australian Army Service Corps but his most important work during the war was as an artist. In 1918, Lindsay was posted to Queen's Hospital in Sidcup, Kent, where he documented patients' horrific facial injuries and the ground-breaking reconstructive surgery being performed there. His diagrams, and those of other medical artists, were used to train surgeons worldwide.

Machine-guns, shell fragments and shrapnel tore men apart in ways never before experienced. Surgeons had to find new ways to treat the injured and were driven by a desire to help soldiers regain a sense of purpose and dignity.

Elizabeth 'Betty' Anderson served with the Red Cross in Melbourne during the First World War. She was one of thousands of women who worked as nurses or voluntary aids in hospitals and rest homes across Australia. Only a small number of nurses served overseas.

What can governments do, and what can individuals do, for those damaged by the war?

A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **the responsibility of society for the care of its damaged soldiers after the war.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 List what you think will be needed for the damaged men (and women) who return.

- 2 What role might individuals play in the care and repatriation of these men and women?

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

Look at the following information to see what happened.

SOURCE 1

The Department of Repatriation

The Department undertakes:—

- (1) To secure suitable employment for those who are able to follow their previous occupation or one similar to it, and to pay sustenance until such opportunities are presented;
- (2) To restore to the fullest degree of efficiency possible, by means of vocational training, those who on account of war service are unable to follow their pre-war occupations, and during the period of such training to assure trainees adequate sustenance;
- (3) To supply gratis all necessary treatment, surgical aids, and medicaments; all hospital fees, and transport expenses thereto and therefrom, with allowances for certain classes for the period of treatment (where hospital treatment is not feasible the same may be given in the home or in such place as may be approved);
- (4) To provide educational facilities and maintenance allowances for children of deceased and totally and permanently incapacitated soldiers so that they may ultimately engage in agricultural, industrial, commercial or professional occupations;
- (5) To provide a pension to the soldier and his dependents in accordance with the degree of war disability of the soldier.

SOURCE 2 Sketches of damaged faces



SOURCE 3 Former servicemen in a ward in Australia



A massage ward on the verandah of Rosemount Repatriation Hospital in Brisbane, staffed by Voluntary Aid Detachment members, 1918

- 3 Do these measures seem appropriate? Should anything be added to or removed from this list?

- 4 Do you agree that Australia had obligations to its returning war damaged citizens?
- 5 Do you think the measures above suggest that the veterans were being well cared for?

The evidence above tells us about official care for the war damaged men and women, but there was also family care. Look at this story of George McQuaid (Source 4, opposite) and answer the questions that follow.

- 6 List the words that would describe different feelings George McQuaid family might have felt.
- 7 McQuaid would have received a pension for his war injuries, but his family would not have received any assistance. Do you think the state ought to have helped this family with his care? Justify your view.

D EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 8 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Daryl Lindsay and Elizabeth Anderson. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence.



SOURCE 4 The Story of George McQuaid

In 1928 the *Sydney Morning Herald* ran a story about a returned soldier in a mental hospital. The soldier was named 'Unknown Patient' because he had lost his memory and could not identify himself. He had been buried in a shell explosion in 1916 and dug out. He was sent to England and was found wearing an Australian uniform and wandering in London. He was sent to Australia, placed in a hospital, where he was often aggressive, violent, dull and confused. He had gone to the war as somebody and had returned as nobody. His family had farewelled him and for 12 years did not know if he was alive or dead. Like so many of those families whose soldiers' bodies were never recovered or identified they lived in a void of knowledge. They could not afford to go back to the battlefields to find their men's names on memorial walls, so local memorials were in effect the last resting place of these men in their families' eyes.

A former soldier recognised the man from the newspaper's description of a distinctive tattoo on the patient's arm. He said he was George McQuaid, a New Zealander. McQuaid's family were contacted and they came to Sydney and recognised him and he recognised his mother and sister. The family took him back home.

The story does not have a happy ending. McQuaid showed no improvement in New Zealand and had to be cared for every minute of the day by his mother, and then his sister, for the rest of his life. He died in 1951.

Adapted from Jen Hawksley, "Long time coming home: the 'unknown patient' of Callan Park", in Martin Crotty and Marina Larsson, *Anzac Legacies: Australia and the Aftermath of War*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010

Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

E YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 9 What do we learn from Lindsay and Anderson about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 10 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.

Meeting Gilbert Dyatt

THE WAR SITUATION

It is 1919. The war is over, but there are now over 250 000 returned soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses in Australia. Many of these people have suffered physical and mental damage, and even those who have not been damaged by the war need help to successfully re-integrate into civilian life through education, housing and employment.

The support group, the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA, now the Returned and Services League or RSL), has existed since 1915 to give support to wounded returned servicemen.

Up to 1919 the RSL, under its President, Nationalist Party Senator W Bolton, has been closely associated with the Nationalist Government, and has supported it politically. This has alienated many returned service people who hold different political views.

MEET GILBERT DYATT

He has just replaced Senator W Bolton as President of the RSL. He has to decide: does he continue to openly tie the RSL to the political policies of the governing Nationalist Party, or does he try to use diplomacy behind the scenes and be non-political?



A THE HOME FRONT ISSUE

The Home Front issue here is **the best way of supporting and promoting the interests of the returned service people after the war.**

B FIRST THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ISSUE

- 1 List the advantages and disadvantages of both approaches: being associated with the ruling political party, and diplomatic negotiation behind the scenes.



Associating with a political party	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Negotiation and diplomacy	
Advantages	Disadvantages

C INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE

- 2 Now look at this evidence to see what actually happened.

SOURCE 1 Extracts from the biography of Gilbert Dyatt

Sir Gilbert Joseph Cullen Dyett (1891-1964), ex-servicemen's leader, was born on 23 June 1891 at Bendigo, Victoria, third child of Benjamin Dyett, blacksmith, and his wife Margaret Frances, née Cullen, both Victorian-born. He was educated by the Marist Brothers at Bendigo, leaving school at 14 to work for an estate agent. He was engaged in several business ventures on his own account in Victoria and Western Australia, and at the outbreak of the war in 1914 was in South Africa. He rushed back to Australia to enlist in September, qualified for an officers' school and in March 1915 was commissioned as lieutenant in the 7th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force. He embarked in April and fought on Gallipoli, but in August was so badly wounded at Lone Pine that he was reverently covered and left for dead. Rescued and repatriated, he was told that he



would not walk again, but in later years was able to list ‘walking’ among his recreations.

While convalescing at Bendigo, Dyett took charge of the local recruiting campaign with such success that in May 1917 he was appointed secretary of the Victorian State Recruiting Committee, with promotion to temporary captain. He brought enormous energy to this job, combining opposition to conscription with a strong belief in military service. He initiated schemes such as a recruiting train and returned-soldier bands, but his attempt to introduce recruiting speeches during theatrical performances drew complaints about his over-zealousness.

In 1916 Dyett had been elected a Federal vice-president of the Returned Sailors’ and Soldiers’ Imperial League. By 1919 dissatisfaction was growing within the league about the ‘law and order’ policy of its national president, Senator W. K. Bolton. A Victorian faction campaigned for Dyett who defeated Bolton for the presidency on 15 July. His immediate task was to turn wartime promises into legislation protecting the interests of returned soldiers. Despite the circumstances of his election, Dyett believed in a policy of ‘patience, tact and diplomacy’; after an inauspicious clash with W. M. Hughes soon after assuming office, he maintained an almost daily contact with Federal ministers. This quiet diplomacy under his personal domination was at odds with the more aggressive tactics favoured by many branches.

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dyett-sir-gilbert-joseph-cullen-6071>

- 3 What qualities did Dyett have?
- 4 What evidence is there that he would be committed to the welfare of RSL members?

SOURCE 2 Extracts from a history of the RSL

The height of the RSL’s power and influence appeared to come in late 1919 when Bolton’s successor as federal president, Gilbert Dyett, was able to wring major concessions from Hughes in the lead-up to the 1919 federal election. Hughes met with Dyett, with and without Dyett’s executive being present, on a number of occasions shortly after his return from the Paris Peace Conference in August 1919 ...


The verbatim records of the meetings between Hughes and Dyett reveal Dyett as an astute negotiator who got the better of an ill-prepared Hughes. Playing on Hughes’ anxieties about his re-election hopes, and suggesting that the riotous behaviour of some returned troops would be much worse but for the restraining influence of the League, Dyett extracted an impressive number of concessions. These included the establishment of a Repatriation Commission, the payment of a generous war gratuity, RSL representation on all boards concerned with repatriation matters and an increased scale of pensions. These were major concessions that even Dyett’s own executive, and certainly the bulk of RSL office holders, marvelled at.

By the end of the 1920s the decline in membership had been halted, the ideological divisions within the organisation had been ironed out, and it was on a much more solid footing. Crucially too, Anzac had become more entrenched in the national consciousness and Anzac Day had been declared a public holiday throughout Australia, partly as a result of relentless RSL activism.

Martin Crotty, ‘The Returned Sailors’ and Soldiers’ Imperial League of Australia, 1916-1946’, in Martin Crotty and Marina Larsson (eds), *Anzac Legacies. Australians and the Aftermath of War*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2010

- 5 What was Dyett’s approach to winning improvements for RSL members?
- 6 How successful was he?

EVALUATE THE SOURCES

- 7 Consider the different sources that have been used to explore the story of Gilbert Dyett. List each type (e.g. newspaper, official record, oral history), decide if it is Primary or Secondary, and list the main strengths and weaknesses or limitations of each as evidence. 

Type	P or S	Strengths	Weaknesses
1			
2			

YOUR FINAL UNDERSTANDING

- 8 What do we learn from Gilbert Dyett about the Australian Home Front and the First World War? Complete your **People Summary Page**.
- 9 Think about how you might make sure this Home Front war experience is fairly and accurately represented on a Home Front memorial after the war. Be ready to make sure this experience is presented at a final **community meeting of people** from this unit.