



DISTANT LINES

Queensland voices of the First World War



LEARNING NOTES

Philip Bacon Heritage Gallery

Guide script (upper primary students)

Inquiry Questions:

- How was support for the war drummed up?
- How were Germans and Germany portrayed during the war and what effect did that have on Germans living in Queensland at the time?
- Why did the Prime Minister want to enforce conscription and how did he go about trying to convince the Queensland public it was a good thing?
- How did people at home support those serving on the front line?
- How did Queensland react to the end of the war?
- What problems did Queenslanders face after the war and how did they try to overcome them?

Guide Resources

- Photograph of Queen Victoria

WELCOME STUDENTS AND INTRODUCE TOUR

Welcome to the Philip Bacon Gallery. In this room we will be looking at how the First World War affected everyday Queenslanders at home during and after the war. You will see posters that were around during the war, read newspaper articles from that time and explore things that were happening in Queensland such as the conscription debate and censorship.

By the end of this tour you should be able to answer the following questions:

- How was support for the war drummed up?
- How were Germans and Germany portrayed during the war and what effect did that have on Germans living in Queensland at the time?
- Why did the Prime Minister want to enforce conscription and how did he try to convince the Queensland public it was a good thing?
- How did people at home support those serving on the front line?
- How did Queensland react to the end of the war?
- What problems did Queenslanders face after the war and how did they try to overcome them?

Before we start though I'm just going to quickly explain how the room is set out.

DISCUSS LAYOUT OF THE ROOM

Different topics of the war are presented on the different text panels hanging from the roof and each topic is presented in the order that it occurred. For example find the first panel titled, *The Coming of War*. This panel talks about what life was like in Queensland before the war.

Find the panel titled *Your Country Needs You*.

This panel talks about life in Queensland when war was declared.

Find the panel titled *Will You Be Next?*

This panel talks about life in Queensland during the war.

Finally find the text panel titled *Aftermath*.

This text panel talks about life in Queensland after the war.

If you look around the room, there are a number of items such as posters and photographs hanging on the walls and in the display boxes. These items also help tell the story of Queensland at this time and we're going to look at a few of these today.

When you look at the display boxes, please be careful not to lean on them or to put hand prints all over them.

POINT OUT THE BUNTING

Other than the text panels and the items on display what else can you see in this room? Look up. Bunting

When do we use bunting? Celebrations

If bunting is used for celebrations why do you think there was so much in Queensland at the outbreak of war?

Take a few of the students' answers.

Queenslanders saw a lot of bunting during the war. Bunting decorated meetings, concerts, street parades and public meetings. Look for bunting in the photos and images you see today.

Let's get started.

DISCUSS THE COUSINS' WAR

Find an image of Queen Victoria to refer your students to.

Point to the cartoon by A.J. Hingston 'Monarch's Meeting, 1908'

Let's have a look at one of the images that reflects Queensland before the war.

What is it? Cartoon

Who can tell me who Australia's allies were during the First World War? Remember allies mean who we fought with.

Australia's allies during the war were all the countries of the British Empire including England, India and Canada as well as France and Russia.

This is a cartoon of the King of England, King Edward VII and Tsar Nicholas II of Russia. It was drawn a few years before the war. Tsar Nicholas and King Edward had a special relationship and were more than just political allies.

Who recognises this lady here? (Show photo of Queen Victoria)

Queen Victoria of England was King Edward's mother (**point to Edward**) and Tsar Nicholas' (**point to Nicholas**) grandmother.

This made them what? Uncle (King Edward) and nephew (Tsar Nicholas).

During this time people in royal families across Europe were expected to marry into other European royal families and so many of the Kings and Queens across Europe were related.

What are uncle and nephew doing in the cartoon? Thumping fists together.

When might you do this and why? If you're part of a team before a game you might put your fists together as a sign to show that you are bonding and that you will fight for each other.

This cartoon shows that King Edward and his nephew Tsar Nicholas and the countries they ruled were tied not only by bloodlines but that they were also loyal to each other and would support each other if war broke out.

King Edward died shortly before the war, soon after this cartoon was drawn and his son King George then took over. King George was Tsar Nicholas' first cousin.

Now these two monarchs had another cousin who played an important role in the war. But this cousin wasn't an ally; this cousin was the leader of the enemy.

Which empire do you think King George and Tsar Nicholas' cousin was leader of? German Empire and his name was Kaiser Wilhelm.

That's right King George, King of the British Empire, Tsar Nicholas, leader of the Russian Empire and Kaiser Wilhelm leader of the German Empire were all first cousins. Their grandmother was Queen Victoria of England and it was these three cousins who took their countries to war. The First World War is sometimes called the cousins war.

DISCUSS THE MEANING OF 'FOR GOD, KING AND COUNTRY'

Move to the text panel that says 'For God, King and Country'.

This text panel is titled *For God, King and Country*. When the First World War broke out in 1914, many young Australians were keen to fight or were pressured into fighting for God, King and Country and so rushed to enlist. But who exactly was the God, King and Country this panel is referring to?

In 1914 most of the people living in Australia were of British heritage and followed the Christian faith. They went to church every Sunday and God played a very important role in their lives. So the God this sign refers to is the Christian God.

Which King does this panel refer to? King George

The King this panel refers to is King George, who we just spoke about. The people of England, and in turn the people of Australia, traditionally looked to their King or Queen for guidance.

Which country does this panel refer to? Australia

The country this panel is referring to is of course Australia.

When did Australia become a federated nation? 1901

If the war broke out in 1914 how long had Australia been one nation? 14 years

Before federation each state, including Queensland, was a colony of England. With federation, all the colonies joined together and became the nation of Australia. In 1914, many other countries still saw Australia as another England, only on the other side of the world and as a country full of people who descended from convicts. The war was an opportunity for Australians to prove that they were more than this.

The government, community organisations, churches and even some families initially believed in the war and therefore put a lot of pressure on young men to enlist. And so, in the name of God, King and Country, thousands signed up and marched off to fight a war on the other side of the world.

DISCUSS PATRIOTISM

Move students over to the display box that has the recruitment song 'Cooee! Coee!' in it.

If you were a young person in 1914, you would need to be strongly convinced that you should give up your life for God, King and Country. One way the government and community organisations did this was by promoting patriotism.

Feeling proud to be an Australian or a Queenslander is called being patriotic. Think about Queensland and New South Wales when it is State of Origin time, there is a lot of patriotism going on then. People wearing their states colours, Queenslanders yelling out 'Queenslander', each state's flag flying high. These are all displays of patriotism designed to stir emotions in Queenslanders and gather support for their state team. During the war, Australians did the same thing, trying to stir up support for God, King and Country.

Queenslanders held patriotic parades, concerts and plays during which they flew the flag high, sang patriotic songs and listened to patriotic speeches. All of these things were designed to make people feel proud of Australia and to convince them that going to war to defend the nation was a desirable and honourable thing to do.

Let's have a look at the items in this display cabinet. This display cabinet and the one next to it contains some patriotic photographs and items that were used to stir emotion and to help convince Queenslanders the war was worth supporting.

Look at the objects found in this display box. There are three songs, two concert programmes and one play. Can you locate them?

Have students locate items.

You are listening to a recruitment song. The text label on the box next to this one will tell us what it is called. Who would like to read this text label and tell us the answer? *Title: Hear our soldiers cry.*

This song was performed at a concert in Brisbane during which the then Prime Minister of Australia, Billy Hughes, made a speech trying to convince people to vote 'Yes' to conscription. Let's talk a bit about conscription, what it means and why Australians were asked to vote on it.

DISCUSS THE CONSCRIPTION DEBATE

Move students over to the proclamation poster

Who can tell me what conscription is?

Conscription is compulsory military service – a law which requires people to fight if they are able, even if they don't want to.

During the war the Prime Minister of Australia, Billy Hughes, wanted to enforce conscription.

Why might he want to do this? What possible reason could he have for forcing young men to fight and possibly die for their country?

Take a few of the students' answers.

Prime Minister Billy Hughes had promised Britain that Australia would supply a large number of troops to fight the war. Initially this wasn't a problem and many young men enlisted, motivated to do so by the patriotic posters, music etc that we just saw.

However, as news of the many dead and wounded Australians reached home AND it appeared that the war would drag on for years, Queenslanders' support for the war decreased and enlistment numbers dropped. This meant Billy Hughes was having trouble fulfilling his promise to Britain. Prime Minister Hughes thought he could solve this problem through conscription...forcing young men to go. But there was something stopping him...the law!

Australian law at the time said that all men who went to fight overseas had to do so voluntarily. If Hughes wanted to bring in conscription he had to change the law, and he could only change it if his government supported him. And they would only do so if they were guaranteed this was something the Australian public wanted them to do.

So how could Hughes find out if the Australian public supported the idea of conscription or not?

What is one easy way he could have found this out? Let's pretend someone in your class thought it was a good idea to adopt a class goldfish and everyone would take turns looking after it. How would you decide if the majority wanted to do this or not? Vote

Billy Hughes decided to put it to the vote. When the Australian public is asked to give a 'Yes' or 'No' answer to a question such as *Do you support conscription?* the vote is called a referendum. You will see and hear this word a lot today.

Hughes was very confident the 'Yes' vote would win. So confident in fact that he had posters like this one made up before people even got to vote.

Point to the proclamation poster.

This is a proclamation. A proclamation is a public announcement and this public announcement was about how conscription would work.

If you were a man in 1916 and conscription has just been brought in you would want to know if you were too young or too old to be conscripted. This proclamation provides the answer, let's find it.

First let's guess what the minimum age for enlistment might have been.

Take a few answers.

Now what do you think the maximum age for enlistment might have been?

Take a few answers.

Let's see if you are right.

Ask two students to come forward and look for the answer on the poster. Ans: 21–35

If you were a young woman with children whose husband was between 21 and 35 years old you would want to know if your husband would be called up. This proclamation gives the answer.

First let's take a vote...or referendum of sorts...put your hand up if you think married men would have been conscripted? Put your hand up if you think they would not?

Ask two students to come forward and look for the answer on the poster. Ans: No.

So this poster answers lots of questions the public would have had at the time. But did people vote 'Yes'? Was conscription brought in? Were posters like this ever used or were they simply thrown in the bin because Australia voted 'No'? Let's find out.

DISCUSS CONSCRIPTION DEBATE

Ask students to turn and move towards the anti-German poster with the large ? on its left.

After Billy Hughes had set the date for the referendum, he needed to convince people to vote 'Yes'. One way he did this was to stir up patriotism and we just discussed how that was achieved using propaganda through things such as songs, marches, concerts etc. Another way the conscription supporters tried to convince the Queensland public into voting 'Yes' was by scaring them into it.

Look at this poster. **Point out anti-German poster.**

A lot of symbolism has been used in this poster.

Discuss the following questions with your students

How is Germany represented?

What is on Germany's hands?

Where does the blood initially fall on the map?

Where does the blood extend to and what does this suggest?

What do you think the question mark represents?

How does this poster make you feel?

Would it convince you to vote 'Yes'?

Before we have a look at other ways people were encouraged to vote 'Yes' in the referendum let's have a quick look at how posters like these impacted Germans living in Queensland at the time.

At the beginning of the First World War there were a lot of German immigrants living in Queensland. Before the war they were very welcome. In fact they were considered hard working, respectable citizens.

When the war broke out, posters such as this one and newspaper reports such as these appeared all over Queensland. They reported horrible stories about Germany's behaviour towards other countries and were designed to make Queenslanders afraid of the German Empire and the German people.

Do you think this propaganda changed the way the Germans living in Queensland were treated?

Yes it did. When the war broke out German immigrants living in Queensland were treated with great suspicion and life became very difficult for them. German businesses were attacked, people would not hire Germans or serve them in shops and German clubs were closed down. Over 300 German immigrants were taken to internment camps in New South Wales. Internment camps were a bit like prisoner of war camps but without the extreme treatment that prisoners of war overseas endured.

Now we know how German immigrants were treated during the war, let's go back to the original question:

How did people who supported conscription try and convince the Queensland public to vote 'Yes' in the referendum? So far we have discovered that they stirred up patriotism through marches, concerts etc and that they tried to scare people into it through anti-German posters and newspaper reports. Another way they tried to convince people was through holding public rallies, where people spoke about why it was important to vote 'Yes'. It was at one such rally, held in Queensland that a rather unusual thing happened to Prime Minister Billy Hughes. Turn around and have a look at the poster 'Who thre that egg?' and try and guess what it was.

First here's a little bit of background information for you.

Billy Hughes had come to Queensland to try and gain support for the 'Yes' vote. He was doing this by touring around and speaking at public rallies and meetings across the country, a bit like politicians do today when they are trying to get elected.

One day he was standing on the railway platform at Warwick when something happened.

Have a look at this cartoon and see if you can guess what it was?

He had an egg thrown at him; but not by a young boy, but by two men.

Have a look at the badge Billy Hughes is wearing. What does it say? Vote 'Yes'

What is written on the egg? No majority

What is written on the boy's hat? Australia

So who do you think he represents? The people of Australia

What do you think this cartoon is trying to tell us?

This cartoon suggests that Australia did not want conscription and most would vote 'No' in the referendum. Let's go back to the boy for a minute.

We know it wasn't a boy who threw the egg so why do you think the cartoonist presented the egg throwers this way? Clue: think about how long Australia had been a federated nation for?

In 1917 when this cartoon was drawn, Australia had only been a nation for 16 years. It was young. Perhaps this is why the cartoonist has represented Australia as a young boy.

Let's have a look at some of these other cartoons to see if we can work out how Queensland felt about the conscription referendum.

From the first cartoon you can see who Billy Hughes was. Can you point him out in the other cartoons?

Ask students to point Billy Hughes out in the other cartoons.

The big man in the black suit is the Queensland Premier at the time, T.J. Ryan.

How is Premier Ryan treating the Prime Minister in these cartoons?

Take a few student answers

Taking into account the fact that he was pelted with eggs and the nature of these cartoons you see before you, how do you think Queensland felt about Prime Minister Hughes and his stand on conscription?

As you might have guessed, Hughes was not popular in Queensland, nor was some of the tactics he used to try to encourage people to vote 'Yes'. One of the most disliked tactics was censorship. When governments censor something this means they control what the public read and hear about a topic.

Let's quickly review what we have learnt so far.

So far we have learnt the following:

- How patriotism was used in Queensland to gain support for the war.
- How Billy Hughes tried to convince people to vote 'Yes' in the conscription referendum.
- How Germans and Germany were portrayed in Queensland during the war and what impact this had on German immigrants living in Queensland at the time.

Now we're going to look at how people at home supported those serving on the front line.

DISCUSS HOW ORGANISATIONS AT HOME HELPED THOSE SERVING AT THE FRONT

Move students around to other side to text panel titled, *Comforts From Home*

If you were in Queensland during the war, how would you have felt knowing there were young men and women, far away from home, risking their lives to keep you safe?

Take students answers.

A lot of people at that time felt helpless and just wanted to assist any way they could, and they soon found lots of ways to do this. Organisations such as the Red Cross, supplied nurses who looked after wounded soldiers when they returned home from the war. Others such as the Comforts Funds raised money which they used to buy goods such as clothing, food, medicines and toiletries that were sent to the soldiers serving on the front line. Each battalion had its own Comforts Fund, which raised money and bought goods for that fund; a bit like your school's P and C Association, which raises funds for your school.

These organisations' efforts were very welcomed by soldiers who, with every parcel received, were reminded that they were not forgotten. These organisations also kept Queenslanders, who would otherwise have felt helpless, busy and made them feel like they were contributing to the war. The items and photographs in this section tell the story of some of these organisations. Let's have a look at some of the photographs.

Who can find the photograph of two women fundraising for the war effort?



Are they selling anything or are they just asking for donations?

What have they got tied around their waists? Flags

Why did they do this? Patriotism, to remind people why they should give money.

Point to this photograph



What is happening in this photograph?

This is a photograph of ladies from the 26th Battalion Comforts Fund walking in a parade.

Why are they doing this? Remind people who they were and what they were doing. It was a form of marketing.

Point to this photograph



What is happening in this photograph?

This is a photograph of Red Cross Workers preparing food for the wounded who had returned to Queensland.

Turn to the display box and point out the badges.

Who plays sport for a club?

Just like your sports club and your school have uniforms and badges to show that you belong to them, each of these organisations also had their own uniforms or badges.

This display case contains badges from some of the support organisations that were around at the time.

Can you name some of them?

Red Cross, Rose Day, POW appeal, War Chest 1918, Win the War League.

DISCUSS QUEENSLAND AFTER THE WAR

Move students to the photographs shown below

The final section we're going to look at examines how Queenslanders reacted to the news that the war was over, and the problems Queenslanders faced after the war.

When the war ended on the 11 November 1918, there were celebrations all over the world AND in Queensland including fireworks displays, concerts and street parades, such as the one shown in this photograph.



This sense of excitement was soon replaced the realities of life after war. The first problem they faced was what to do with soldiers once they returned home.

Many returned home physically wounded.

Have a look at this photograph. What is happening in this photograph?



What does the caption at the bottom read?

As well as physical wounds soldiers came home with mental wounds. Many suffered their whole lives from nightmares and depression caused by what they had seen and experienced during the war. These physical and mental wounds affected their ability to work and live the same way they did before. The government and community needed to work out a way to help them.

The Queensland government offered returning soldiers a block of land each, upon which they could build a house and run a small farm. Unfortunately many of the blocks proved too small for farms and soldiers were forced to leave them.

One group of returning soldiers did not receive the same recognition or benefits that most did.

Can you guess which group this might have been? Indigenous soldiers.

Despite having fought for their country, Indigenous soldiers were forced back into a life where they were discriminated against and denied the same rights as non-indigenous soldiers.

Over 8,000 Queenslanders did not return home. Most of those killed were buried overseas. This was difficult for families as they had no grave to visit to help them deal with their grief. To help overcome this problem war memorials and honour boards started springing up all over Queensland. They served as a place where people could gather and remember the fallen and in time they became the central focus point for ANZAC Day services.

Another problem faced after the war was a lack of eligible men which young women could marry. This was a time when women could not work after they married and therefore a young woman thinking about marriage had to find a strong healthy man who could provide for her and any children she might have. With so many young men dead or wounded this proved a difficult task.

All of these problems meant that life in Queensland was hard not only during the war, but after as well.

CONCLUDE BY REVISITING QUESTIONS FROM BEGINNING

So that brings us almost to the end. You've learnt a lot. Let's see who can give me a quick answer to the questions I put to you at the beginning of this tour.

How was support for the war drummed up?

Patriotism, posters, marches, concerts etc.

How were Germans and Germany portrayed during the war and what effect did that have on Germans living in Queensland at the time?

Why did the Prime Minister want to enforce conscription and how did he go about trying to convince the Queensland public it was a good thing?

He needed to enforce conscription as he wanted to keep his promise to Britain that he would provide a lot of men for the war. When voluntary enlistment fell, he needed to find another way to get men to fight.

He tried to convince people to vote 'Yes' by increasing shows of patriotism, through public meetings, by scaring people and by censoring anything that might encourage people to vote 'No'.

How did people at home support those serving on the front line?

They set up help organisations which nursed soldiers, sent parcels of goods to troops, raised money etc.

How did Queensland react to the end of the war?

People celebrated with concerts, parades, fireworks displays etc.

What problems did Queenslanders face after the war and how did they try to overcome them?

How to care for physically and mentally wounded soldiers.

Lack of eligible men of marriageable age.

No graves for families to visit.

Offered soldiers blocks of land to farm but unfortunately most didn't work.

Built war memorials and honour boards.

Indigenous soldiers not granted same rights and privileges as non-indigenous soldiers.

If time permits let students look at exhibition themselves.

This project is proudly supported by the Queensland Government

