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WALES: ITS PART IN THE WAR





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EDITED BY  
IVOR NICHOLSON, O.B.E.  
AND  
TREVOR LLOYD-WILLIAMS, M.A.  
Formerly of the Ministry of Information.

WITH A PREFACE BY  
SIR E. VINCENT EVANS  
High Sheriff of Merionethshire.

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## PREFACE



# PREFACE

BY

SIR E. VINCENT EVANS,

HIGH SHERIFF OF MERIONETHSHIRE.

THERE must be many Welshmen and others who would like to know what Wales did to help in the colossal struggle now so triumphantly concluded. How our sister-nations in the United Kingdom wrought and suffered, their sons have not been slow to tell; but Wales, never eager to advertise herself, has up to now been silent as to the part she played. This book was written to supply the lack; and for the sake of other nations as well as Wales; for the sake of the future no less than the present; it was well our story should be told. The volume breathes the spirit of proud but unobtrusive patriotism, and is all the better for its purpose that it states the truth without rhetoric or comment. The bones of an epic are here; it will be for the poets of Wales throughout their generations to clothe them with fair imagination.

## PREFACE

Like most peoples, the Welsh have for many centuries been often forced to draw the sword ; but whenever they have done so it cannot be said of them that they disgraced their ancient name. Even Rome spoke with respect and bated breath of Caradog, Caswallon and Buddug. Driven to the mountains by the Saxons in later times, our forefathers forced the invader back, with disillusioned hosts, from many a field, and taught him that “ Y Ddraig Goch ” was a flag not to be despised. When at last the feud was over, and Wales with England owned allegiance to the one throne, the king found that the descendants of Llewelyn and Owen Glyndwr were among the doughtiest men in his army. One may be forgiven a little national pride when he remembers that the Welsh archers were the real victors of Cressy and Agincourt.

“ We are a small nation, but we are a great people.”

E. VINCENT EVANS.

## FOREWORD





## FOREWORD

THIS little book, it is hoped, will be welcome to all who are interested in Wales and its splendid war record. It does not profess to be exhaustive—it never could be—but it contains references to the main contributions which Wales made to the great victory which has been consummated in Paris. Much publicity was given during the war to the activities of the three sister kingdoms, of the Colonies, and of our Allies. This helped to sustain and encourage the allied peoples in the hours of difficulty and trial, and it certainly contributed to a better understanding on the part of the non-belligerent nations of the great issues that were at stake. The Editors of this handbook felt that some time must elapse before a full account of Wales and the war could be published, and that there was a possibility, indeed, of it never appear-

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ing in a form which would make it accessible to every home in Wales, and wherever her children dwelt. Hence, it was decided to put these pages together while the information was available, and before the intense personal interest in the subject matter had been altogether dispelled by the problems and perplexities of the new era.

IVOR NICHOLSON.

TREVOR LLOYD-WILLIAMS.

**THE PRINCE OF WALES IN THE WAR**



## CHAPTER I

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### THE PRINCE OF WALES IN THE WAR

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THE present Prince of Wales, prior to the outbreak of war, was attached as an ordinary Company Officer to the First Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, which was then stationed at Warley Barracks in Essex. The Battalion was amongst the first to proceed on active service when the great little British Army went to France in August, 1914. The Prince's passionate desire was to go across to France in command of his platoon, but to his great disappointment he was prevented by Lord Kitchener.

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The story is told that His Royal Highness, in high dudgeon, sought out the famous Field Marshal and remonstrated and pleaded with him. Lord Kitchener listened attentively, and then said very emphatically, "I don't mind you running the risk of being killed, but I refuse to allow you to run the risk of being captured," and with that the interview closed. Whether the story is true in detail does not matter very much, but it is obvious that the authorities could not run the risk of having our Prince of Wales held as a hostage by the enemy. This was a grievous disappointment to His Royal Highness, who, throughout the war, must have been more than ever conscious of his dual personality. On the one hand, as the heir to the throne of the British Empire, his personal safety was an imperative concern to the authorities. On the other hand, as an ordinary healthy young British citizen, he was desperately anxious to do his bit in company with his friends.

The solution of this difficulty—for it was a very real one—was found in the hard common-sense of the Prince himself, and in the wisdom of his advisers. He proceeded in England with his military train-

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ing, and in November, 1914, he was out in France attached to the Headquarters Staff of Sir John French, at St. Omer. He went to learn in the best possible way, namely, by careful personal investigation, the needs of a modern army at war overseas. The Prince was also, of course, representing His Majesty the King, and on all hands there is generous testimony to the value of his being in France at the time when the outlook was dark, and when the presence and the knowledge of the presence of the Prince amongst his fellows was a source of encouragement and gratification to all ranks in France, and to the new armies growing apace in the home country.

The actual recital of day to day events in the life of the Prince at this time will perhaps be monotonous reading, but all of us know by now, if not by personal experience, at least from the lips of our friends and relatives, that the outstanding feature of modern war is monotony. From a Diary which has been available in the compilation of this book, the picture one has of the Prince of Wales is of a tremendously live young man, quite at home in the danger zone, and not

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a little annoyed with the attentions of nervous Generals who were, quite rightly, solicitous of his welfare, observing and making careful notes of everything of military interest, very much in earnest, and disarming one and all by his unaffected simplicity, sincerity and geniality.

The Prince arrived at Boulogne on Monday, November 16, 1914. On the previous Saturday Lord Roberts had died at St. Omer, and the hearts of his old friends now out in France were very heavy. The Prince attended the late Field Marshal's funeral service before the body was conveyed to England. It was deeply impressive—the dark blue of the French Dragoons, the lances and helmets, the Indian soldiers so painfully stricken with grief, all combined to make a picture which stamped itself indelibly on the minds of the onlookers.

In this time between November, 1914, and April, 1915, the Prince led a very full life. While he is a keen and capable motorist, he is also a great walker, and every morning at G.H.Q. he rose at 7, and, in spite of execrable weather, walked before



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breakfast, examining some experimental trenches, or inspecting the latest developments in flying at the Headquarters of the Flying Corps. Few men can know the geography of Flanders and France better than the Prince. For in these winter months he was up and down the British and French and Belgian lines repeatedly. He usually studied in the mornings. To begin with he used to go over to Generals Macready and Robertson, the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General, and have the military maps explained to him in detail. Then he would visit the Headquarters of each of the Armies; and, from the diaries it appears that he was a constant visitor at the Divisional Headquarters of Generals Rawlinson, Smith-Dorrien, Plumer, and Wilson. The Prince took his share of ordinary military duty at G.H.Q., and on occasions special work like the making of detailed and technical reports on the second line of trenches—would be allocated to him.

There is an undoubted fascination in getting as close to the enemy as possible, provided he does not observe you! The Prince was always anxious

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to observe the enemy, and see everything at first hand. On one occasion, in the first winter of the war, the Prince was on his way to Laventie with a companion, when they met a General, who suggested that it would be unsafe to go there. The Prince was bitterly disappointed. As it was, they were, without knowing it, within 1500 yards of the Germans.

On several occasions the Prince went to Neuve Eglise, from which it was possible to see the German lines south of Wytschaete and Messines, where heavy shelling was in progress. Here he saw a section of field guns in action. His Royal Highness was constantly recognised by the troops, who were always genuinely pleased to see him. He would often spend some time with the Guards Brigade. One day in December he motored to Vieux Berquin to meet the 4th Guards Brigade, and marched with them to Bethune, and subsequently to a farm near the line where they rested prior to taking over the trenches. Luckily, it was a very foggy day. A General came out later and reminded them that they were in a most dangerous spot. Once again the Prince was very

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upset at being recommended to move out of danger, although he always realised that it was the duty of the high Military Authorities to warn him.

The Prince was always very solicitous for the welfare of the wounded and was a constant visitor at all the hospitals. He was well known in the Canadian Hospital at La Touquet, where he always had a boisterous welcome, and also at the Duchess of Westminster's splendid hospital, where all the wounded from the terrible La Bassée fight were housed. If ever he was in a locality where a disaster happened, he was the first to visit the wounded. On one December day he had motored to Hazebrouck, and, having left his car by the church in the north of the town, he walked to a farm just outside. While there he heard two tremendous explosions. Some bombs had been dropped by the enemy in the town. One bomb was found within 150 yards of the Prince's car, and another had exploded in the field on the other side of the car. It was on this occasion that the Prince's chauffeur was killed. Yet another had gone clean through the roof of a house, and had killed nine men and wounded some

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eight or nine civilians, including a woman and a tiny baby. The Prince did not rest until he had visited these poor creatures in the local hospital.

King George paid his first visit to France in November, 1914. The Prince of Wales motored over to Dieppe to meet him. In touring the front with His Majesty, the Prince usually led the procession of cars. On this occasion something went amiss with His Royal Highness's car, and he had to drop out and crawl home at a snail's pace as best he could. While on the road he picked up a poor fellow in the Army Service Corps, who had been left behind by the train at Ebbinghem Railway Station. He had lost his hat and coat, and was very miserable. The Prince stopped his car, and giving the Tommy his Burberry to wear, gave him a lift home.

The Prince went with the King to visit the King of the Belgians at La Panne, and subsequently was a frequent visitor there. By the end of 1914 the Prince had visited the principal places on the British front, and had studied the enormous activities of the Army behind the

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lines. The manifold needs of the fighting men of the modern army baffle description, and have to be seen to be appreciated. The remount depots, the veterinary hospitals, the mechanical transport workshops where all spare parts of every automobile used in war are kept, the bakeries, the Indian supply depots, the aircraft workshops, the ordnance depots, the hospitals and the post offices, etc.—all these huge places situated at such towns as Havre, Rouen, Abbeville, Boulogne, and Calais, were carefully examined by the Prince, who made notes of their activities. There was nothing formal or ceremonious about these constant visits of His Royal Highness.

It is obvious that His Royal Highness led a very busy life, but occasionally he would take an afternoon's recreation. He would join in with his Regiment in a football match with great zest, or else would motor his companion to a spot near St. Quentin to shoot pheasants and rabbits—and he is a very good shot. Sometimes, instead of walking or motoring, the Prince rode an Arab horse given him by the Maharajah of Jodhpur while in France. The Prince was a great favourite

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amongst the Indians. He used to drive over to Sir Pertab Singh's house at the Indian Cavalry Headquarters, and Sir Pertab was a frequent visitor at St. Omer. The gallant Sir Pertab gravely announced at dinner one evening to the amusement of the Prince and the staff that no one ought to die in their beds. "It is a bad business," he repeated with conviction, "to die in your bed!"

Early in January, 1915, the Prince started on a most interesting tour to the Eastern side of France. This was the first occasion for him to visit the French troops, and he was everywhere most warmly welcomed. The party set out from St. Omer, and the Prince drove himself in his own car. The first evening saw them at Compiègne, having covered some 100 miles. The next day they set out early, and by the evening reached Chalons, a distance of 168 kilometres. They had passed over the scenes of some terrible fighting in the previous September. They could hear the guns firing on the Aisne line, and they saw some of the graves of their old friends and many unnamed graves with only the khaki cap on the top of the rough cross. From Chalons they motored

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on to Belfort, 309 kilometres, via Vitry la Française, and saw the trenches of the German Crown Prince's army prior to the battle of the Marne. At Montreux Vieux, a little further on, he was shown a school conducted by a French territorial in the Octroi house, which was riddled with bullets. The children sang to the Prince of Wales, who was very delighted. The next town which the Prince reached was Nancy, where Monsieur Millerand, the French War Minister at that time, received him. Returning to Chalons the next day the Prince was shown near Villers aux Vents a dug-out used by the German Crown Prince. It was carpeted and furnished, and from this spot he had witnessed the burning of the village. The whole village was destroyed by fire, with the exception of one house.

Continuing their return to British G.H.Q. the party visited the Headquarters of the French Army, where the Prince was received by Marshal Joffre and General Foch. The Prince learnt that on the arrival of the Germans at Compiègne they put the château practically in a state of defence for the use of the Kaiser, who was eventually

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coming there had the German plans succeeded. Later on the Prince visited Bethisy, St. Pierre, south-east of Compiègne, and made his first public speech in French at the presentation of medals of St. John of Jerusalem to four inhabitants, two of whom were women, for succouring some English troops who were wounded by the Germans during their retreat. The Mayor of the little town received the Prince, and the inhabitants gave him a splendid welcome.

Until February, 1916, the Prince of Wales was with the Guards' Division. He then went to Egypt, joining the expeditionary force operating along the Suez Canal. He also visited the troops at Khartoum. After his return to France, the Prince was attached to the 14th Corps, which was at that time holding the northern sector of the British line. During August, 1916, His Royal Highness moved with the 14th Corps to the battle of the Somme, where he was often to be seen in the neighbourhood of the Delville Wood, the Flers line, Morval, etc., places which men who took part in the Somme battle will remember so vividly and painfully.



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His Royal Highness had been attached before the war to the cavalry, but at the beginning of the war to the infantry, so it was deemed advisable that he should have knowledge of, and experience of the other arm—the artillery. Hence, when the Somme offensive was over, the Prince attended an artillery course at the Third Army Artillery School.

During the summer and autumn of 1917, the Prince, as a general Staff Officer, took part in the offensive of Flanders, where again many recognised the familiar figure of their future King along the Canal bank, on the Pilken ridge, in Langemarck, and other equally unhealthy places. In November the 14th Corps was suddenly ordered to Italy, where the Prince also accompanied it, to the great pleasure of the Italian nation. In May, 1918, His Royal Highness went to Rome to attend the meeting at the Augusteum, which was held to celebrate the entry of Italy into the war. He had a most enthusiastic reception in Rome, and won the hearts of all he met by his frank and straightforward manner.

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His Royal Highness arrived on the 23rd May, and all Rome turned out to meet him at the station and cried with enthusiasm, "Long live England and long live the Prince of Wales." There was a deep significance to the Italians in his visit, and one paper recalled Mr. Lloyd George's words: "For Italy we are ready to give everything that may be necessary. You have a pledge already in the heir to the throne."

The *Giornale d'Italia* paid a warm tribute to the "charming spontaneity and chivalrous impulse" of the young British Prince, who came in the darkest hour of Italy's peril, after the disaster of Caporetto, before the French and British banners had time to cross the Alps, taking his place by the side of the Italian troops, and introducing himself by saying simply, "I am the Prince of Wales, and I have come to place myself at the disposal of Italy." "How well we all remember this," exclaimed the journal. "Now Prince Edward comes as a guest to celebrate the third anniversary of Italy's entry into the war. The welcome of Rome will not only be marked by devoted homage, but also by grateful affection for the Prince, who

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showed that he never for one moment doubted the stability of the Italian nation, and who, in those moments of sadness and trepidation, proved his sincere friendship.”

The Prince of Wales undoubtedly took Rome by storm. The ceremony at the Augusteum on the 25th May was a most striking popular manifestation. The Prince read his speech in English and one of the Italian papers commented on “something that is rare in the case of Royal personages owing to etiquette.” The speaker was continually interrupted by shouts of applause like an eloquent orator who speaks at a public meeting!

While His Royal Highness was necessarily absent from this country on military duty, every opportunity was taken by him to visit the scenes in Great Britain where the war was being waged with equal skill and endurance by the great host of civilian workers. In February, 1918, the Prince paid a visit to Wales, and though he lived most laborious days, there is no doubt that he entered into his experiences there with great enthusiasm. He saw

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the Port Talbot steel works and workers, witnessed some of the processes of steel manipulation in full operation, and noted how the main activities of the works were devoted to supplying the needs of the Army and Navy. From Cardiff he went to Ebbw Vale, and was acclaimed on all sides by the workers and their wives and children, who turned out from the countryside. The Prince believes in seeing everything first hand, and if he found himself in a colliery district he would not rest until he had descended a coal mine. It was on this occasion at Ebbw Vale that he plunged down some 600 feet into the earth. Down in the bowels of the earth the head miner of one of the sections was presented to the Prince, and informed him that he had been thirty-three years working underground. Gripping the Prince's hand, and speaking with deep fervour, the fine old miner said "We welcome your Royal Highness, we are honoured to have you among us, and we, one and all of us, wish you happiness, prosperity and success. May God bless and keep you." The Prince was much impressed with the spontaneous blessing delivered, as someone said, in almost patriarchal fashion by the earnest old miner.

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When the Prince left Wales, His Royal Highness said to the authorities that the visit to South Wales had been one of the greatest interest to him, that he had enjoyed it thoroughly, and deeply appreciated the splendid reception that had been accorded to him.

It was a bold idea of the authorities to suggest that the Prince should visit the Clyde, but he was accorded a stirring welcome wherever he went. When he was at Greenock he tried his hand at riveting. Mounting a platform erected near a standard ship on the stocks, the Prince was handed a pneumatic riveting hammer with which he drove a white hot rivet into a plate in the ship's bows. Subsequently he tried his hand at a hydraulic riveting machine, and drove several rivets into a ship's steel plate so well that someone said he deserved the highest rate of 1s. a rivet! The Royal Party stayed at a hotel in Glasgow, and the Prince had, of course, private apartments allotted to him. It is typical of him that he far preferred to dine in the public restaurant than in his private room, and after dinner he told his friends that he would far rather take a walk round the city than go to his

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own quarters. However, the experiment did not prove a success, for he was instantly recognised, and the good-natured citizens of Glasgow compelled him to beat a hasty retreat.

On February 19th, 1918, His Royal Highness took his seat in the House of Lords. The ceremony, the first of its kind since the introduction of his grandfather as Prince of Wales on February 5th, 1863, was solemn and picturesque. The House was full and looking down on her son from the side galleries was Her Majesty the Queen. Slowly the procession moved to the Woolsack, where the Letters Patent creating His Royal Highness Prince of Wales and the Writ of Summons calling him to attend in Parliament were handed to the Lord Chancellor, and by him to the Clerk of the Parliament. The Letters Patent bade the Peers know that His Majesty had made and created "our most dear son" to be Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, to have the name, style, title, dignity, and honour of the Principality and Earldom. They recited that he had been ennobled and invested "by girding him with the sword, by putting the coronet on his head, and a gold ring on his finger, and also by

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delivering a gold rod into his hand." The Writ of Summons, which opened with the words, "To our most dearly beloved son, Greeting," commanded the Prince, by the allegiance by which you are bound to us, waiving all excuses, "to be present at Parliament with us and with the prelates, nobles, and peers of our Kingdom, to treat and give your counsels" on the urgent affairs for which Parliament had met. The reading ended, the Prince took the oath of allegiance and signed the declaration. The procession was re-formed, and again moved towards the Woolsack, the Lord Chancellor lifting his three-cornered beaver hat to the Prince as he passed. His Royal Highness was conducted to the chair on the right hand of the Throne, and, putting on his peaked hat, took his seat.\*

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\* *The Times*, February 20, 1918.





**THE SOLDIERS OF WALES**



## CHAPTER II

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### THE SOLDIERS OF WALES

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**NOTE.**—It has been impossible to give an account of all the campaigns in which the Regiments of Wales have taken part during the War. Owing to lack of material, the only practicable course has been to give some account of their doings in the earlier stages of the War.

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**RECRUITING IN WALES.**—Sir Auckland Geddes in his speech on the 15th January, 1918, in the House of Commons, said, “The effort which the British nations have made under the one item of provision of men for the Armed Forces of the Crown amounts to not less than seven and a half million men. Of these 4,530,000, or 60.4 per cent. have been con-

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tributed by England, 620,000, or 8.3 per cent. by Scotland, 280,000, or 3.7 per cent. by Wales, 170,000, or 2.3 per cent. by Ireland, and 900,000, or 12 per cent. have been contributed by the Dominions and Colonies." If comparisons are to be instituted between the man power contribution of the four nations it would perhaps have been fairer to estimate the percentage on a population basis.

By adopting this method, the following figures are obtained:—

	Population 1911 Census	Man Power contribution	Percentage of population
England ...	34,045,294	4,530,000	13.30
Scotland ...	4,760,904	620,000	13.02
Ireland ...	4,390,219	170,000	3.87
Wales ...	2,025,198	280,000	13.82

These figures speak for themselves and show how eagerly the men of Wales came forward to do battle for the cause of freedom and liberty.

It would be invidious to make a comparison between the recruiting efforts of the various Welsh

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counties, but some account of the methods adopted in a few of the counties is of interest as illustrating the enthusiasm, so characteristic of the Celt, which attended the development of the machinery for recruiting before the introduction of the Military Service Acts.

FLINTSHIRE.—At the outbreak of the War the industrial portions of the County of Flint were represented to a certain extent in the County Territorial Battalion, the 5th Royal Welsh Fusiliers. This battalion had strong companies in the towns of Mold, Flint, Connah's Quay, Holywell, and Rhyl, but did not comprise many men from the rural districts. Immediately after the commencement of hostilities there was a feeling in some parts of the county that an early effect of the War would be to bring some of the main industries of the county to a standstill, and in view of this fact employers of labour offered every facility to their men to enlist. This was particularly the case in the industrial districts along the Dee. Accordingly a very large number of men enlisted in the earlier units of Kitchener's Army. Shortly afterwards, as a result of meetings held in connec-

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tion with the movement for the formation of a Welsh Army Corps, many men joined up in "Pals" Battalions and the newly formed battalions connected with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, so that by the end of 1914 Flintshire was strongly represented in Kitchener's Army and the Territorials. Early in 1915, the County Territorial Association, in conjunction with the Flintshire County Council, embarked upon a recruiting campaign with a view to forming a Reserve Battalion to the 5th Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Meetings were held in all parts of the county and in the course of a few weeks the Reserve Battalion was formed.

In the autumn of that year the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Mr. H. N. Gladstone, in response to an appeal from the King and the Government, convened a representative gathering at Mold consisting of members of the County Bench, the County Council, the Urban and Rural Councils, and all classes of the community. This largely attended meeting enthusiastically decided to do everything that lay in its power to make the new recruiting campaign a success. A strong Parliamentary Recruiting Committee was formed with

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the Lord Lieutenant as Chairman, and this Committee at once set to work to organise the county. The assistance of all local authorities was invoked and within a very few days every town, village and hamlet in the county had its local recruiting committee which proceeded to canvass all men of military age. The result of the canvass was most encouraging and indicated a readiness on the part of the male population of the county to respond to the call of their country, so that when the attestation scheme, inaugurated by Lord Derby, came into operation, no difficulty was experienced in getting the available men to attest. In some of the more populous parts the local committees, with their recruiting officers and medical men, were kept busy far on into the evening attesting men and medically examining them. In one or two towns and villages practically every man of military age attested, and when the Military Service Act became law there were very few conscripts in certain parts of the county.

The Parliamentary Recruiting Committee continued to control the machinery of recruiting until the establishment of the tribunals and the passing

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of the Military Service Act. The Lord Lieutenant and other members of this Committee subsequently became members of the County Advisory Committee which was established in connection with the work of the tribunals, and this Committee continued to assist the military authorities, and afterwards the National Service authorities, till the cessation of hostilities.

**DENBIGHSHIRE.**—In every Welsh county the recruiting of men for the Army was carried out on much the same lines as in Flintshire, but in Denbighshire a scheme was ultimately adopted which to a great extent foreshadowed the methods of the Derby Campaign.

The Recruiting Committee which was formed in Denbighshire at the outbreak of war became later the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, of which Mr. Alfred Seymour Jones, J.P., was appointed Chairman. Early in the spring of 1915 he inaugurated a campaign on lines which were almost identical with the Derby Campaign. A complete register of every man of military age, between 18 and 41, was prepared; and



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for the work on the land, in munition works and in hospitals, a similar register of women was compiled. Throughout the county the Chairman addressed meetings of the parish, rural and urban councils. On the register the men of military age were graded as to age, employment, and visible physical defects. Trades were classified and those which were regarded as essential to the winning of the War were starred. This scheme met with remarkable success and was ultimately submitted and reported on to the Downing Street Committee.

In the late winter of 1914, in spite of the opposition of the military authorities, under the inspiration of Mr. Seymour Jones a recruiting campaign for the 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the County Territorial Battalion, which had suffered many casualties, was inaugurated. To meet the expenses of the campaign a fund of £600 was raised, to which the County Council contributed £150 out of the rates. Two companies of convalescent men belonging to the battalion marched through East and West Denbighshire respectively, visiting the most inaccessible places, with a view

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to bringing the War home to the more remote rural population. Through the instrumentality of the Local Government Board the Army Council eventually decided to agree to the scheme. The result was a signal success and the battalion was enabled to maintain its strength by drafts from its home county.

The Women's Register which has been referred to was very successful. Several nurses were recruited who went in for special training under an experienced lady doctor; many women found employment in the county munition works; some took up work on farms; and others replaced enlisted men in various occupations.

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In North Wales splendid recruiting work was done by Brigadier General Owen Thomas, who inaugurated a campaign in the vernacular for the Welsh speaking population. In Carnarvonshire and Anglesey especially good results were obtained. A second and third line battalion for the 6th Royal Welsh Fusiliers was formed within a few months, and for the Welsh Army Corps three battalions were obtained from Carnarvonshire men alone.

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From Glamorganshire, which contains nearly half the population of Wales, it is computed that over 100,000 recruits were voluntarily enlisted between August, 1914, and November, 1915.

Welshmen resident outside the Principality were not slow in responding to the demands of the War. While many joined the regiments associated with Wales large numbers enlisted in local English regiments. It is only necessary to glance through the list of military decorations and awards which were given to non-commissioned officers and men during the War to discover that men hailing from Wales could be found in almost every regiment. In London, through the instrumentality of a "London Welsh Committee," of which Mr. Lloyd George was President and Sir Vincent Evans Chairman, two battalions of Welshmen were raised which were subsequently attached to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, as the 15th Battalion of that regiment. The Recruiting Offices were situated at Gray's Inn and the success which attended the efforts of the Committee was largely due to the energy and zeal of Sir Vincent Evans.

## WALES: ITS PART IN THE WAR

### II

**THE REGIMENTS OF WALES.**—The three regiments most intimately connected with Wales are the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the Welsh Regiment and the South Wales Borderers. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers are especially associated with North Wales and their recruiting area comprises the counties of Denbigh, Flint, Carnarvon and Anglesey, Merioneth and Montgomery. The Montgomery Yeomanry and the Denbighshire Yeomanry are also attached to this ancient regiment. South Wales is the recruiting ground of the Welsh Regiment, and during the War battalions were raised by Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, and Glamorganshire. Four battalions were also recruited from the Rhondda Valley, Swansea, and Cardiff. To this regiment the Pembrokeshire and Glamorganshire Yeomanry are also attached. Monmouthshire raised four battalions for her county regiment, the Monmouths, while the county of Brecon supplied a battalion to the South Wales Borderers, which also recruited in South Wales.

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During the War Welshmen were to be found in a large number of English regiments, particularly in the Cheshire Regiment, the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, and the Herefords. Under the Territorial scheme Wales also provided units for the Royal Horse Artillery, the Royal Field Artillery, and the Royal Garrison Artillery, and in addition had her contingents in the Royal Engineers, the Royal Army Medical Corps, and the Army Service Corps.

**THE WELSH GUARDS.**—One result of the War was the revival of the idea of a special Guards Regiment for Wales. This proposal was eventually agreed to, and the Welsh Guards came into being. Before the War Wales had been in the recruiting area of the Grenadier Guards, and when H.M. the King granted permission for the formation of a regiment of foot guards, to be designated "The Welsh Guards," on February 23rd, 1915, a nucleus of veterans was formed by the transference of a certain number of Welshmen in the Grenadiers to the new regiment. Whatever may have been the official reason for the formation of this new unit, it was generally felt in Wales

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that this was a compliment to the Principality in recognition of her excellent record in the matter of recruiting.

The first battalion of the Welsh Guards was formed on February 27th, 1915, and placed under the command of Colonel Murray-Threipland, D.S.O. On March 1st, St. David's Day, they mounted guard for the first time, and in the evening there was an important dinner to celebrate this historic event in the military history of Wales. Among those present were Viscount Kitchener (Secretary of State for War), Lieut. General Sir Francis Lloyd, K.C.B., Colonel Murray-Threipland, D.S.O., Colonel Lord Falmouth (Colonel of the Coldstream Guards), Colonel H. Fludyer (Commanding the Scots Guards), Colonel J. A. G. R. Drummond-Hay (Commanding the Coldstream Guards), Colonel Dalrymple White, Colonel Lewis, Major J. B. Arbuthnot (Brigade Major), Brigadier General R. Scott Kerr, Sir Richard Bulkeley, Colonel Noel Corry, Captain Sir George Arthur (Private Secretary to Lord Kitchener), Captain Douglas Gordon, Lieut. Williams Bulkeley, Lieut. Lord Clive, Lieut. P. L. M. Battye.

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On the 3rd August, the Battalion paraded at Buckingham Palace and was presented with its Colours by H.M. the King, and on the 17th of the month it embarked for France.

### III

MONS, THE MARNE AND THE AISNE.—In the ranks of the Old Contemptibles were three battalions, the 1st South Wales Borderers, the 2nd Welsh Regiment, and the 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, worthy representatives of the three regiments of Wales.

Of these three battalions the first two were attached to the third Infantry Brigade (General Landon) of the 1st Division of Haig's Army Corps, and the third to the 19th Brigade, which during the early weeks of the War was a semi-independent unit. At Mons the 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh were in reserve and consequently were hardly engaged, but in the subsequent retreat they had a very stiff time. Some

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very excellent work was performed by the 2nd Welsh when on flank guard on August 27th—a day when the position of the 1st Corps was critical, but neither they nor the S.W.B. were heavily engaged during the retreat. The 2nd R.W.F. held the line Condé—Mons Canal from Lock No. 5 west of Pommerouel to Condé. During the retreat they covered the retirement of the hard pressed 5th Division from Le Cateau. Likewise at the Battle of the Marne none of these three Welsh battalions were very heavily engaged, though the 2nd R.W.F. had some sharp fighting in clearing part of the town of La Ferté sous Tovarre, south of the Marne.

It was the battle of the Aisne which gave the Welshmen the first chance of proving their mettle. On September 14th the Germans made a heavy counter attack which threatened to cut in two Haig's Army Corps. The 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh were rapidly brought up and put in on the left of the 1st Division in Chivy Valley. The Germans were driven back and most effective help was given to the brigade on the extreme right of the 2nd Division. It was on this occasion that



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Lance-Corporal William Fuller rescued Captain Haggard under heavy fire, a deed which won him the V.C. Afterwards, when the British advance was brought to a standstill, these two battalions maintained themselves in an advanced position at the head of the Chivy Valley for several days, until withdrawn to a position a little further in the rear, south west of Troyon. Here on the 26th September the 1st S.W.B. had to face the strongest of all the counter attacks which were made by the Germans during the whole month. At one point the line was penetrated and in the company on the left all the officers were casualties. The reserve company with the help of the 2nd Welsh counter attacked with the bayonet and retook the lost trenches. Enormous losses were inflicted on the Germans. The S.W.B. suffered heavy casualties—7 officers and 182 men. Both of these battalions were warmly praised by Sir Douglas Haig for their gallantry and endurance. During the Battle of the Aisne the 19th Brigade was mainly in reserve and so the 2nd R.W.F. were only lightly engaged.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF YPRES.—Throughout the

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months of October and November Welsh troops were almost continuously engaged in the heavy fighting which took place in the Ypres district. When the 2nd Army Corps began its north easterly advance past Bethune towards the Aubers Ridge and Lille it included the 2nd R.W.F., attached to the 19th Brigade. This regiment had been moved north from the Aisne with the 6th Division. Advancing past Bailleul and across the Lys it was heavily engaged in the gap between the left of the 2nd Corps and the right of the 3rd, near Le Maisnil and Fromelles. In this sector the immediate task was not to attack but to hold back the German counter attacks. Although the men of this regiment were not stationed in that part of the line where the most critical fighting occurred yet their work was of the greatest importance. The strain on them was exceedingly severe and at one time the battalion was twenty-three days consecutively in the trenches without receiving any relief.

While the 2nd R.W.F. were being severely tested in the Lys valley, the 1st battalion of this regiment landed in Belgium with the 7th Division.

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With the rest of the division it first of all marched into Belgium with the object of assisting the Belgian Army, but was forced to withdraw and retired to Ypres. It is common knowledge that the 7th Division was regarded during the first battle of Ypres as the most reliable unit of the British Army, and in the struggle of this division before Ypres the part played by the 2nd R.W.F. was most important. It was on the point of storming the German trenches at Kleytbock, near Menin, when, on October 19th, news was received that the Germans were advancing in great force and that retreat was necessary. Falling back on the line Zonnebeke-Broodseinde, it held on to its position in the face of furious shelling and constant attacks. With the arrival of the 1st Corps from the Aisne relief came, but it was almost at once sent into action again further south near Zandvoorde, where it was subjected again to constant bombardment and repeated attacks. It was holding its position just east of Zandvoorde on October 30th, when the troops on its right were overwhelmed and the Germans pushing on were able to swing round and roll up the Welsh Fusiliers from the right. This engage-

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ment left the 2nd R.W.F. a mere remnant of 50 men. The survivors were, however, attached to another battalion of the same brigade (the 22nd) and actually continued to hold part of the line. More than this, they took part in a most successful counter attack on November 6th, which restored the position at a very critical point.

The two Welsh battalions in the 1st Army Corps also revealed their splendid quality in the First Battle of Ypres. After their arrival from the Aisne they were sent into the line on the 21st October, near Poelcapelle, where the 1st Division, to which they belonged, encountered a German Army Corps advancing against Ypres. The British advance was brought to a standstill, but in spite of enormous losses the Germans could not shake the line held by the 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh in front of Langemarck. When the French took over this sector the 1st Corps moved towards Hooge and Gheluvelt with the object of capturing Menin. The overwhelming numerical superiority of the Germans frustrated this project and but little progress was made. The enemy brought up corps after corps and delivered one

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fresh attack after another. The 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh had to fight hard defensive battles, sometimes counter attacking when the line had been broken, sometimes holding a long thin line in spite of the terrible bombardment of the German artillery and the constant attacks of fresh troops. On October 29th, when the Germans broke the line at the cross roads east of Gheluvelt, these two battalions were prominent in the counter attack that stopped the enemy's further advance and restored the position. The trenches at this particular point were subsequently allotted to them and so the brunt of the great German attack of October 31st fell largely on these two Welsh battalions. It was one of the most critical moments in the whole battle. The 2nd Welsh were in a salient and enfiladed. After struggling in vain to retain their position and inflicting and suffering heavy losses, the remnants of the battalion were forced back, but they rallied behind Gheluvelt and helped to check the German advance. Meanwhile the 1st S.W.B., though heavily pressed in an exposed position, repelled an attack on their right and held on. Their losses were enormous, but they stuck to their trenches

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till a counter attack by the Worcesters on their right restored the day. The Worcesters have deservedly earned great credit for the exploit, but strict fairness demands that the name of the 1st S.W.B. should be coupled with theirs, as it was the tenacious resistance of the Borderers which made the opening for the Worcesters' onslaught.

Not even after these terrible experiences were these two Welsh battalions allowed to rest and refit. The line was too thin and not a man could be spared. First between Veldhoek and Gheluvelt, and afterwards near Zillebeke, they had to go into the line again and endure heavy shell fire, constant sniping, and repeated counter attacks. Finally, when later in November the French took over this sector, these two battalions had been reduced to mere skeletons.

During the remainder of November and the month of December the 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh were in reserve, reorganising and refitting, but the 1st and 2nd battalions of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers were in the line south of Armentières, undergoing great hardships in flooded trenches in constant need of repair.

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Towards the end of December the 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh were called upon to retrieve the situation in the Givenchy area, where the Germans, by a sudden attack on the trenches held by the Indian Corps, had carried the front line and seemed on the point of capturing the ridge on which the village of Givenchy stands. This knoll or ridge is almost the only high ground in a marshy district and has been called the key to Bethune. These two Welsh battalions, supported by the 4th R.W.F. (Denbighshire Territorials), which had just joined the 3rd Brigade, were conspicuous in the counter attack by which the 1st Division restored the situation. The difficulties under which this counter attack was made baffle description. The country was a swamp intersected by broad and deep ditches; the mud clogged the rifles of the men and they could not be fired. It was barely possible even for men who were not weighed down by arms and equipment to move. The artillery and machine gun fire of the enemy was heavy and continuous. In spite of these obstacles, many of the lost trenches were retaken, the German advance was checked, and a satisfactory line established and consolidated. In

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this connection it is worthy of notice that the 4th R.W.F. were the first Welsh Territorial battalion to go into action.

For the remainder of the winter and throughout the spring of 1915 these three battalions remained in the Givenchy area. In January they helped to repulse a powerful German assault on Givenchy Village. During these months of trench warfare of the most exacting and strenuous kind the men of Denbighshire, to which county the 4th R.W.F. belonged, acquitted themselves nobly and well. Periods of real rest were few and short, and the conditions in the water-logged trenches extremely exhausting and trying. The British artillery were too short of ammunition to be able to do much to support the infantry and in all the special weapons of trench warfare, the bomb, the minenwerfer, and the aerial torpedo, the British were at a disadvantage compared with their adversaries. The hardships and difficulties which the Old Army and their Territorial comrades endured in the first winter of the War cannot be exaggerated. Fortunately, the Germans also were none too well supplied with ammunition



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for their artillery, and bombardments, though frequent, were not as heavy as they had been.

**THE YPRES SECTOR.**—One of the worst sectors of the whole of the British front was in the area immediately south-east of Ypres, that part astride the Ypres-Comines Canal in which “ Hill 60 ” and “ The Bluff ” were the outstanding landmarks. It was in this area that the 1st Welsh had their introduction to trench warfare when they arrived in Flanders at the end of January. This battalion formed part of the 28th Division, composed of battalions which had just returned home from India and the Colonies. It was a particularly hard experience for these troops to go almost straight from the tropics into such a difficult part of the line. The ground was a wooded swamp and half the trees had been brought down by bombardment. Lying at all angles on the ground they formed a serious obstacle to any forward movement and afforded but scanty protection against shrapnel and bullets. The trenches were in a bad condition. At some points they had fallen in and at others they were overlooked by the German positions. The communications were in-

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different and the fallen trees made artillery support a difficult business. The enemy positions were held by a Bavarian Corps who had the advantage of knowing the ground well and were exceedingly alert and aggressive. No Division had a more trying experience than the 28th. In less than a month frostbite, trench-feet and the losses from enemy action had reduced the strength of the divisional brigades by 50 per cent. The 1st Welsh shared to the full in the hardships and heavy fighting of this strenuous period, but eventually the 84th Brigade (Winter) to which they belonged was so reduced that it had to be relieved and removed to a quieter part of the line.

Reinforcements brought the battalions up to strength again and at the beginning of April the Brigade moved back to the Ypres area. It was almost immediately sent to take over the trenches at the eastern end of the Ypres salient in the neighbourhood of Broodseinde and was soon engaged in heavy fighting. The trenches which the 1st Welsh were holding were in close proximity to those of the enemy, too near for the British artillery to be able to lend effective support and not

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far enough away to be out of range of the enemy's trench mortars. The battalion had a very hard time, but more than once were able to retaliate most effectively on the Germans and, though hard pressed, it succeeded in maintaining its position.

Towards the end of April the Germans began to employ gas. The French troops who were holding the line to the west of the Ypres sector were overcome and all available reserves had to be diverted to fill the gap thus created. Consequently, the 1st Welsh had to remain in the front line trenches which they were occupying for a fortnight without relief, enduring constant bombardments and attacks. During all this time, when British troops were making effort after effort to regain the ground which the Germans had won through the agency of their poison gas, the 1st Welsh maintained their position in the front line.

Early in May, however, it was found necessary to withdraw from the Broodseinde trenches to a position nearer Ypres, as the inability to regain the ground lost by the French necessitated a

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readjustment of the whole line. The Germans were not slow in attacking the new position. They were still superior in artillery, in ammunition, in trench mortars and machine guns, and no adequate protection had yet been devised against gas attacks. The defence of the Ypres salient at this time in the face of these overwhelming advantages can take its place among the historic episodes in the annals of the regiments which were engaged. The Germans with everything in their favour failed to break through. In this fighting the 1st Welsh were the only Regular representatives of the Principality, but they were well supported by the three battalions of the Monmouthshire Regiment (T.F.). The 2nd Monmouths had previously been allotted to the 4th Division and from December to the end of April had been engaged in trench warfare near Armentières. The 1st and 3rd Monmouths were attached to the 28th Division and had already been engaged in the terrible struggle which was being waged in the Ypres salient. These three battalions acquitted themselves splendidly, though finally they were so much reduced that they had to be temporarily amalgamated as one battalion. The

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1st Welsh also suffered hardly less heavily, but notwithstanding, after a month of strenuous and fierce fighting, on the night of May 24th they made a counter-attack near the Bellewaarde Lake and actually succeeded in reaching the German trenches and in recapturing some of them.

NEUVE CHAPELLE, RICHEBOURG, AND FESTUBERT.  
—Meanwhile, the other Welsh units which were in France had been distinguishing themselves in other parts of the line. The 1st R.W.F. took part in the battle of Neuve Chapelle in March, where they were on the left of the main attack. In the great attack of May 9th on Rue des Bois the 2nd Welsh, the 1st S.W.B., and the 4th R.W.F. made gallant and desperate attempts to carry the almost impregnable German positions between Festubert and Neuve Chapelle. The great strength of the German breastworks, the inadequacy of the supply of ammunition on the British side, and the deadly fire of the German machine-guns resulted in the failure of an attack which was urged with the utmost gallantry and determination. The three battalions suffered heavy losses. Yet if the attack itself failed it helped the progress of Mar-

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shal Foch's 10th Army at Arras by diverting and holding up German reserves which might otherwise have been employed in stemming the French advance towards Vimy Ridge. A week later the British renewed their attack on a smaller front north of Festubert and met with more success. In this effort the 1st R.W.F. were prominent. Moving into the trenches on the night of the 15th May they attacked on the following day. Their commanding officer, Lieut. Col. R. E. Gabbett, was killed directly he scaled the parapet, whereupon Captain C. I. Stockwell assumed command. The first-line trenches of the Germans were captured and the battalion pushed on to its final objective, an orchard at La Quinque Rue. Unfortunately the brigade on their right was held up and consequently the Fusiliers were enfiladed on that flank by machine-gun fire from the enemy. In spite of this they held on to the orchard till they were ordered to retire, the supports which were sent up to them having failed to reach them owing to the German artillery barrage. Their losses were enormous and amounted to no less than 19 officers and 544 men. During the summer the fighting on the Western Front quieted down considerably.

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THE BATTLE OF LOOS.—In July three Welsh battalions belonging to the “Second New Army” arrived in France; they were the 9th R.W.F., the 9th Welsh and the 8th S.W.B. After a probationary period of trench warfare in the Bethune area the 9th R.W.F. and the 9th Welsh took part in the general offensive of the First Army known as the Battle of Loos.

The objective of these two battalions was the German trenches east of Festubert, the attack forming part of the holding movement associated with this battle. In this operation the 9th R.W.F., a battalion composed largely of miners from North and South Wales, lost their commanding officer, 14 officers, and 250 men. Although the attacks of these two battalions were not actually successful they directly contributed, like the other holding attacks of that day, to the success of the main offensive further south, which resulted in the capture of the German front line system from the south of Loos to the Hohenzollern Redoubt, with many guns, and over 3,000 prisoners. Moreover, large German forces were held up which would otherwise have been

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available against the French armies in Champagne, where Marshal Joffre's successful attack undoubtedly assisted to relieve the pressure on Russia at a critical moment. If the attack at Loos did not achieve all that it originally gave promise of, it was a distinct though limited success, and the Welsh battalions which took part in it acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of all praise.

South-west of Hulluch the 1st S.W.B. and the 2nd Welsh were well to the fore in the attack by which the 1st Division broke through the German trenches. The 1st S.W.B. were fiercely engaged on the night of September 25th and beat back a strong counter-attack, while the 2nd Welsh made a gallant attack against the 2nd German system of defences south-east of Hulluch on the 26th and pushed forward further than any other unit. In the 7th Division the 1st R.W.F. carried the German position on the left of the 1st Division and in front of the quarries, arriving on the scene of action at a time when the leading line had been checked. After storming the strongly held trenches they quickly consolidated the position and helped to hold the ground gained against



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the German counter-attacks. The 2nd R.W.F., who were now part of the 2nd Division, were engaged east of Cuinchy, a part of the line where the attack did not succeed. The artillery had failed to cut the enemy's barbed wire entanglements, but in spite of this the Fusiliers made a gallant attempt to renew an attack in which two other battalions had already been repulsed, only to fail and suffer heavy losses. Later in the battle the 1st Welsh were moved down from the sector which they were holding further north, to help in maintaining the ground which had been gained near the Hohenzollern Redoubt. With them came a territorial battalion of Glamorganshire men, the 6th Welsh, and these two battalions were soon engaged in heavy fighting around the much damaged Hohenzollern Redoubt. It was not long before the Germans made desperate efforts to recover the ground which they had lost on September 25th, and largely owing to their great superiority in the supply of bombs they were able to make considerable headway, though not without heavy losses. In resisting this counter-attack these two battalions of the Welsh Regiment played a conspicuous part.

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On October 1st the 1st Welsh made a most successful attack on the Little Willie Trench, capturing several prisoners and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. It was in the fighting of this period that the 6th Welsh lost their commanding officer, Lord Ninian Stuart, the Member of Parliament for Cardiff. On the 13th of this month the 1st Monmouths, who were attached to the North Midland T.F. Division as a Pioneer Battalion, distinguished themselves in the attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt, with spade and rifle doing excellent service in the consolidation of the position.

**THE WELSH GUARDS AT LOOS.**—But perhaps the great interest of the Battle of Loos, as far as the Welsh regiments are concerned, lies in the fact that it saw the Welsh Guards in action for the first time. The Guards Division was under the command of Lord Cavan, and the 1st Welsh Guards, together with the 1st and 4th Grenadier Guards and the 2nd Scots Guards, formed the 3rd Brigade. In command of the Welsh Guards was Lieut. Colonel Murray Threipland. The immediate objective of this division was the recovery of

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the ground east and north-east of the town of Loos, which had been captured by the 15th (Scottish) Division on the first day of the battle, but a great part of which the Germans had regained on September 26th as the result of heavy counter-attacks.

In order to reach the town of Loos, from which the attack on Hill 70 was to be launched, the Brigade had to cross an open plain for over a mile under artillery fire and in full view of German observers. The order of march and attack was 4th Bn. Grenadiers, Welsh Guards, 2nd Bn. Scots and 1st Bn. Grenadiers. It was originally intended that the attack, which was dependent upon the success of the 2nd Guards Brigade on the left in attaining its objectives, should be undertaken by the 4th Bn. Grenadiers. On reaching the trenches in Loos it was found necessary to forego the original plan, and the attack was entrusted to the Welsh Guards and some two hundred men of the Grenadiers. For the attack the Grenadiers were placed on the left and the Prince of Wales Company of the Welsh Guards, with a frontage of two platoons, on the right. Of the three remaining companies of the Welsh Guards two were placed

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in support and one in reserve. The attack was launched at half-past five in the evening and the crest of the hill was carried. The German fire, however, was murderous, and the summit became untenable, so orders were given to the men to fall back and dig themselves in on the nearer side of the hill, and here they remained till they were relieved on September 30th.

The behaviour of the Welsh Guards was magnificent and strictly in accord with the great tradition of the Guards. In the advance over the plain there was no disorder; every platoon kept its place and the men advanced steadily and in excellent order. The Principality has every reason to be proud of the way in which the Welsh Guards acquitted themselves in their first engagement.

**WELSH BATTALIONS IN THE EAST.**—In the autumn of 1915 some more Welsh Service Battalions arrived in France. They formed part of the 3rd New Army and belonged to the “K.3” divisions. They included the 10th and 11th R.W.F., the 6th, 7th, and 8th S.W.B., and the 11th Welsh. The majority of these, however, were destined to

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make only a short stay in France, and in October the 11th R.W.F., the 7th and 8th S.W.B., and the 11th Welsh were all transferred to a new theatre of operations, where British troops had never served before in any previous war—namely, Macedonia.

Welsh battalions had already taken part in an important campaign in the Mediterranean. These were the one remaining Regular Welsh battalion, which has not yet been mentioned, the 2nd S.W.B., and the three Welsh battalions of the First Hundred Thousand, the 8th R.W.F., the 4th S.W.B., and the 8th Welsh, together with some five territorial battalions of the '53rd (Welsh) Division, many of whose normal units had (like the 4th R.W.F. and the 6th Welsh) gone to France independently, so that the Division had to be completed with units from Cheshire, Herefordshire, and the Home Counties.

The outbreak of War found the 2nd S.W.B. on garrison duty in China, and so it was that it fell to its lot to represent the British Army at the capture of the German Colony of Kiao Chau. Returning to England in the autumn of 1914, the

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battalion was allotted to the 29th Division, which went out with Sir Ian Hamilton to Gallipoli in the spring of 1915 and achieved the impossible by landing at Cape Helles on April 25th. In this great exploit the share of the 2nd S.W.B. was most distinguished. The bulk of the battalion landed from trawlers inside the mouth of the Straits at Beach "S." and captured an important work known as De Tott's Battery. This was admirably executed, but the check received by the troops who landed from the "River Clyde" at Sedd el Bahr prevented the battalion from carrying out its further task of taking in flank the retreat of the Turks from the end of the Peninsular. However, though isolated, it maintained its position until on April 27th it was enabled to establish contact with the troops which had landed nearer Cape Helles. One company of the battalion had been attached to the force which landed at "Y." beach on the West Coast and distinguished itself greatly in the heavy fighting which took place there.

In the subsequent advances against Krithia and Achi Baba the 2nd S.W.B. were constantly

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engaged and won great credit. In the heavy fighting of the first week of May, in the attack of June 4th, and above all in the highly successful Battle of Gully Ravine of June 28th, the battalion was to the fore. If it did not always maintain all the ground it gained it was because on more than one occasion it had advanced ahead of the units on the flanks. No battalion, even in the 29th Division, achieved more or acquired a higher reputation. In August, after the failure of the first attack at Suvla Bay, the 87th Brigade, to which the Borderers were attached, was sent round to Suvla to take part in the new attempt of August 21st. In this attack the battalion advanced against the strong position known as Scimitar Hill and again distinguished itself, though the repulse of troops at other points compelled it to withdraw eventually to its original position. The battalion remained at Suvla till October, when it was again transferred to Cape Helles, only to leave in January.

Few battalions earned a higher reputation in the Gallipoli Expedition than the 2nd S.W.B. It was famous not only for its gallantry in attacking the

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most formidable and stoutly defended positions, but for its high standard of discipline and of work in the trenches. On one occasion a battalion which needed instruction in trench warfare was temporarily amalgamated with the 2nd S.W.B. because that unit was amongst the very best in the Division.

The three Welsh Service Battalions of the First Hundred Thousand formed part of the force to which was entrusted the task of breaking out from the narrow confines of the position to which the Australian and New Zealand Corps had been so tenaciously clinging ever since April, with the object of capturing the formidable heights of Sari Bair. This was a tremendous task for units which were not yet twelve months old. The 4th S.W.B., who formed part of the column detailed to cover the left flank of General Godley's move, acquitted themselves splendidly. Advancing in the dark over rough, intricate and unknown ground, they had to pass in silence Turkish sniping positions and rush a ridge which was held in great strength. For any unit, even a regular battalion, this would have been a big task. For the 4th



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S.W.B. it was their first baptism of fire. Damak-jelik Bair was surprised and captured and successfully defended against a strong counter-attack, an achievement of no mean merit. Unfortunately, the battalion lost its commanding officer, Lieut. Colonel F. M. Gillespie, to whose brilliant leading the battalion owed so much. If the 8th R.W.F. and the 8th Welsh were not called upon to carry out any task of quite the same difficulty as the 4th S.W.B. they came in for very heavy fighting and had plenty of opportunity of showing their mettle.

Three other battalions of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers—namely, the 5th, 6th, and 7th, representing the counties of Flint, Carnarvon, Anglesey and Merioneth, were also engaged in the fighting on the Peninsula which took place between August and December. In the attack on “Burnt Hill” the 6th R.W.F. played a conspicuous part and lost heavily, and in the fighting near Salt Lake the 7th R.W.F. also won renown.

MESOPOTAMIA AND EGYPT.—After the evacuation of Gallipoli the 8th R.W.F., with the 8th

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Welsh and the 4th S.W.B., returned to Egypt to refit and reorganise. In January, 1916, the 13th Division, to which they were attached, was sent to Mesopotamia to take part in the attempt to relieve the hard pressed garrison of Kut el Amara. The three battalions saw desperate fighting and gained more than one success, but the adverse weather conditions and the flooded Tigris were all against the relieving force, and its efforts failed. The 8th R.W.F. particularly distinguished itself in the attack on Sannaiyat on the night of April 8th. In December, when Sir Stanley Maude started on his campaign for the recapture of Kut, these three Welsh battalions were able to revenge themselves for their disappointment of the Spring, and in the brilliant operations which culminated in the capture of Baghdad and the driving of the defeated Turks up the Tigris and into the hills, they played a distinguished part.

In the operations in Egypt and subsequently in Palestine Welsh territorial troops also figured prominently. They had a long period of service in the defences on the Suez Canal and were conspicuous in the fighting at Romani in August, 1916,

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and subsequently in the checkered fighting of the Spring of 1917 round Gaza. It was in the great advance in November and December of that year, which saw the Gaza-Beersheba line broken and culminated in the capture of Jerusalem, that the 53rd Welsh Division got its chance, and in the great achievements of General Allenby's campaign it played a notable part. From that time forward the Welsh battalions shared in the astounding victory which swept the Turks out of Palestine and brought Damascus, Aleppo and all the famous ports of the Levant into British hands. Yet this does not quite exhaust the story of the Welsh units who served in the East. The Welsh Horse, a new yeomanry regiment which was raised after the outbreak of War served, dismounted, at Gallipoli for four months, and the four other Welsh yeomanry regiments (Denbighshire, Glamorganshire, Montgomeryshire and Pembrokeshire) went out to Egypt as dismounted troops, did duty there for over a year as part of the force which defended Western Egypt against the Senussi, and then, amalgamated into battalions of a "Yeomanry" Infantry Division, did splendid service in the conquest of Palestine, till the Spring of 1918, when

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they were recalled to France to earn further laurels in the Great Offensive which changed the face of Europe.

The Welsh battalions which had been transferred to Macedonia—namely, the 11th R.W.F., the 7th and 8th S.W.B. and the 11th Welsh, displayed great vigour in the raids and trench warfare which characterised the fighting in that theatre of operations, and on the Doiran-Vardar front the Bulgarians learned to respect the valour and dash of the Welsh battalions.

To do justice to the exploits of the soldiers of Wales in the Great War it would be necessary to write many volumes, a task which would require a knowledge of detail and a fund of information which is not yet and cannot be for many years available to the general public. The records of many battalions of the regiments of Wales have not yet been written and many of the officers who alone were in a position to know particulars of the various engagements and campaigns have fallen on the field. It must be left to the military historian of the future to record the doings of the

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Welsh battalions in the Battle of the Somme, where the newly-formed 38th (Welsh) Division, which was recruited with men from every part of Wales, covered itself with glory in the famous attack on Mametz Wood, and after serving for many months in Flanders, added still further to the lustre of its name by its notable defeat of the Prussian Guard at Pilken. It is only necessary to add that a study of the British Official communiqués for the last year of the War reveals the courage and tenacity of the Welsh troops and the recognition of their national characteristics.

For the information in this chapter the Editors are indebted to Captain C. T. Atkinson, Lord Kerry, Captain The Earl of Lisburne, Lieut. Colonel J. O. Fisher, Major C. Crawshay, H. N. Gladstone, Esq., Lieut.-Colonel T. M. Keene, Captain Caradoc Davies, A. Seymour Jones, Esq.



**INDUSTRIAL EFFORTS OF SOUTH WALES**





## CHAPTER III

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### INDUSTRIAL EFFORTS OF SOUTH WALES

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#### I

STEAM COAL.—When War broke out South Wales had only one important contribution to make to the material necessities of the Allies, and that was Welsh steam coal. This product was the food of the engines hidden beneath the decks of the cruisers and battleships of the British Grand Fleet, and generated the driving power which sped them on their way to the battles of Jutland and Dogger Bank. But it was not only the British Navy that drew upon the resources of the South Wales coalfield. The fleets of France, Italy,

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America and Brazil were largely dependent for their supplies upon the same source. Welsh steam coal was required and was forthcoming in quantities four times as great as pre-war demands. If it had not been for the introduction of oil-driven engines it would have been impossible to meet the requirements of the Allied navies and at the same time maintain sufficient reserves for home industries. The significant fact is that the sea and land borne supplies of coal to the Allied fleets were sufficient to meet demands. This alone speaks volumes for the organisation of the coal-carrying trade of Cardiff, Newport, Barry and Swansea, to say nothing of the work of the miners themselves.

**THE MINERS.**—There has been much criticism of the South Wales miners' attitude to the War, both in responsible and irresponsible quarters, from the uninformed and the informed. His patriotism has been called in question. To comprehend his point of view his daily life and environment must be visualised. The South Wales mining towns and villages are the hotbeds of every extreme socialistic growth in the political world, and

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the reason is not far to seek. The chief features of South Wales mining townships are their inconvenience, their ugliness and their unhealthiness. The long dreary rows of drab houses, the filthy and haphazard streets, the lack of gardens and recreation spaces, and the 'general atmosphere of smoke and coal-dust, tell upon the mental outlook of the inhabitants. The undying conflict between Capital and Labour takes on its most violent aspect in these sordid and monotonous surroundings. The young socialistic and syndicalistic spirits among the miners play upon the vague feelings of unrest and discontent engendered in the minds of their fellow workers by their uncongenial environment and their toil in the bowels of the earth. In such communities there is not much room for the ideals of a large patriotism, and it must be confessed that the greatest struggle between the forces of tyranny and freedom the world has ever seen has not sufficed to quench the fires of social warfare in the hearts of many of the miners of south-east Wales. To realise this is to appreciate to the full the splendid response made by the South Wales colliers to the call for men in the early days of the War. In

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1914 the total number of men employed in the Silurian coal-field was over 230,000, including old men and boys. By the end of 1915 approximately over 30,000 young men had voluntarily enlisted and joined the forces.

**BY-PRODUCTS AND COKE OVENS.**—Important as is the actual coal, its by-products are even more valuable. From a single lump of coal as many as 80 by-products can be obtained. This fact explains the importance of by-product and beehive coke ovens. At the outbreak of war the number of these ovens in South Wales was less than three hundred, but the recognition by the iron and steel industries that the metallurgical coke obtained from the low volatile coals of South Wales was, if not better in quality than, at least equal to, the Durham product, soon led to a great increase in this number. At the time this development was helped by the demand for raw material for explosives. It is a matter of great credit to the South Wales coalowners that, without financial aid from the Government, they willingly incurred the expense of increasing the number of their coke ovens, and of the erection of new bat-

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teries and by-product plants. By-product coke ovens working on South Wales coals are not promising commercial propositions, yet whereas in 1914 there were only two batteries of ovens able to produce benzol and toluol, to-day there is only one battery unable to do so, and in this case it is proposed to build a completely new set of ovens. This will bring the number of Welsh ovens to over one thousand. With regard to coke and benzol production, the output in the first year of the War was about 8,000 tons and 7,000 gallons a month respectively. In 1918 these figures had risen approximately to 40,000 tons and 30,000 gallons. The most perfect of these by-product plants are to be seen at Coedely, Risca, Bargoed and Ebbw Vale. This great increase in the output of these two products was accompanied by the construction of numbers of blast furnaces, and in this way a supply of coke for France was ensured. During 1917 France alone obtained in one month almost as much coke as she obtained in a twelve-month before the War. In this achievement South Wales had a large share.

NOBELS, PEMBREY.—The chief centre in South

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Wales for the utilisation of the by-products was the explosive works of Messrs. Nobels at Pembrey, which was taken over as a Government Explosive Factory. The output reached such a magnitude that it exceeded the demands of the shell-filling factories and for a time work had to cease. This cessation enabled experiments to be made in the production of explosive material never before thought of and only demanded by the introduction of more deadly war machines. Smoke shells and poison gas shells were filled with chemical products manufactured in South Wales.

### II.

The important part played by Welsh steam coal in the War cannot be exaggerated, but there were many other industries besides mining in which the enterprise and the imaginative genius of the Welsh national character were of great value.

THE INDUSTRIES OF SOUTH WALES.—Before the War the industries of South Wales were based solely upon the geographical advantages of assembling raw material at the edge of the coal field.

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The cheaply manufactured products were exported to all parts of the world and competition with America and Germany was keen. The South Wales industries accordingly depended entirely upon the low cost of production of their essentially commercial products. The financial and transport restrictions which accompanied the outbreak of war threatened at first to cause much unemployment and distress in the South Wales industrial world. Besides coal the industries of South Wales centre round iron and steel, tinsplates, galvanised sheets, copper, spelter, nickel and lead, the silica brick manufacture and ship repairing. Situated in this district also is one of the largest weldless steel tube works in the United Kingdom.

During the first year of the War, the Swansea area played an important part in the supply of steel tubes, gas bottles, copper and spelter for war services, and the sheet works were largely engaged upon material for the temporary buildings erected for the training of the New Army. It cannot, however, be said that the district had occasion to divert its ordinary manufactures into new channels to any considerable extent. With the

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organisation of the Ministry of Munitions by Mr. Lloyd George, however, the position changed, and the whole district rapidly adjusted itself to the manufacture of war requirements.

Mr. Lloyd George visited Wales and the immediate result was the establishment of a Munitions Committee, under the chairmanship of Colonel J. R. Wright. This committee at once organised local committees at Cardiff, Ebbw Vale, Newport, Swansea, and subsequently Llanelli. At the same time, under the guidance of Mr. F. W. Gilbertson and Mr. J. C. Davies, the steel works began to organise for the supply of shell steel and other special grades of steel which had not hitherto been manufactured in Wales.

From July, 1915, the industrial effort of South Wales constantly and rapidly increased in volume and in variety. Mr. Lloyd George's enthusiasm was contagious.

**IRON AND STEEL WORKS.**—In normal times the iron and steel industry in South Wales was divided into two main groups. The blast furnaces, Besse-



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mer shops, and rail mills, of the hill districts, together with the Cardiff Dowlais plate mill, and certain bar, rod and wire mills in Monmouthshire, formed one group, and the Siemens steel works, producing tinplate and sheet bars, together with the Port Talbot steel works and plate mills, comprised the other.

**EASTERN GROUP.**—The chief plants of the first group were in the hands of the following firms:—

Guest, Keen & Nettlefolds, Ltd. (at Dowlais, Cyfarthfa, Cardiff, Rogerstone and Cwmbran).

Blaenavon Iron and Steel Co.

J. C. Hill and Co., Ltd. (rolling mills).

Lysaght's, Newport (sheet works).

Ebbw Vale Coal, Iron and Steel Co., Ltd.

Whitehead and Co. (rolling mills).

Cordes (Dos Works), Ltd. (rolling mills).

From the first all these firms found valuable uses for their products—rails, ship-plates, sections, wire and rods. At the Ebbw Vale Works there

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were important extensions, and arrangements were made for the production of steel from native ores on a very large scale. The open hearth steel plant of the Blaenavon Works was also enlarged, and certain extensions in connection with the blast furnaces and coke oven by-products were undertaken.

The output of this eastern group of works was well maintained and formed an important contribution to the war material of the Allies, but apart from shell steel their products were substantially the same as in normal times.

CYFARTHFA REDIVIVUS.—Early in 1916 the Cyfarthfa rail mill was restarted by the Ministry of Munitions for the purpose of rolling the steel ingots (produced in the western group of works) into shell steel billets for the French Government. This mill had been idle for many years and, when the Ministry's representative inspected it, rabbits were to be seen in the engine house. By February, 1916, new boilers and reheating furnaces had been installed, and the mill started work with an output of 1,500 tons of shell steel billets weekly. Con-

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ditions, however, changed and the mill was utilised for rolling the surplus 12 in. and 9.2 in. H.E. castings from America into 18-pounder H.E. shell bars. The change of work affected the capacity of the mill, and the output was reduced. This conversion of surplus stores into material urgently needed involved work that could not have been undertaken in any other plant without upsetting the balance of operations. In 1917 two of the old blast furnaces at Cyfarthfa were restarted on native ores, the mining of which in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Lincolnshire had been energetically developed by the Ministry of Munitions. These furnaces immediately produced weekly some 1,400 tons of metal of the best possible quality for the manufacture of steel by the basic open hearth process.

LYSAGHTS, NEWPORT.—At Newport Messrs. Lysaghts ingeniously adapted their steel sheet plant in many ways and undertook the casting and rolling of brass and zinc on a large scale. This change was due to the excess in the number of sheet mills necessary for the steel sheet requirements of the War.

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WESTERN GROUP.—The western group of works in the iron and steel industry of South Wales comprised the following firms:—

Baldwins, Ltd. (large steel plants at Panteg, Landore, Gowerton, and huge new works and plate mills at Port Talbot).

Bryngwyn Steel Works.

Cwmfelin Steel Works.

F. W. Gilbertson & Co., Ltd.

Llanelly Steel Works.

Richard Thomas & Co., Ltd.

Briton Ferry Steel Works (Albion).

Bynea Steel Works.

W. H. Edwards.

Grovesend Steel Works.

Monmouthshire Steel Co.

Upper Forest Steel Works.

Results of the highest importance were achieved by this group. Before the war their maximum capacity of output was 1,400,000 tons. During the two years 1916-17 this was increased by 400,000 tons. Particularly noteworthy was the effort of the Port Talbot Steel Works (Messrs. Baldwins, Ltd.). Under the immediate direction of Col. Charles

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Wright and Mr. J. C. Davies, these works, which possessed the finest plate mill in the United Kingdom, were rapidly adapted to the manufacture of all kinds of special war material, in particular shell steel in the largest sections up to 12 in. blooms, boiler plates, high tensile plates, rails, sections, and ship plates. The new open-hearth plant was further extended in 1917 by the addition of two large basic furnaces, and a commencement was made and rapidly pushed forward in the construction, on the largest scale, of a self-contained steel plant on an adjoining site. This consisted of by-product coke ovens, blast furnaces, and open hearth plant with mixers and rolling mills.\*

**BILLETS—SHELL STEEL.**—Several of the plants in this group during the years 1914 and 1915 undertook the manufacture of billets in place of steel bars, and supplied the small section and wire mills of the United Kingdom. Formerly, these mills

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\* Modernisations, enlargements and extensions were made at the following works also: Briton Ferry Co. (Albion Steel Works), Bynea Co., W. H. Edwards, W. Gilbertson & Co., Monmouthshire Steel Works, Richd. Thomas & Co., Ltd., and Baldwins, Ltd. (Panteg and Gowerton).

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had to rely on imported German billets. Towards the end of the first year of the War the Port Talbot Co., Baldwins (Gowerton), and W. Gilbertson & Co. commenced the manufacture of shell steel, and their efforts proved eminently successful. From the beginning the products of these three firms were free from all the defects which were associated with the manufacture of shell steel in other districts and had led to the view that its manufacture was beset with difficulties. Early in 1916 the western group of firms formed a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. F. W. Gilbertson in order to organise the weekly supply of 4,000 tons of shell and gaine steel for the French Government. Both in the matter of quality and quantity the excellent results obtained by the Briton Ferry, the Llanelly and the Cwmfelin Works were especially noteworthy.

**THE CELTIC TOUCH: ADAPTABILITY.**—The results obtained by this group were a striking exemplification of the genius of the Welsh people. Before the War South Wales was a comparatively minor centre of the steel industry, but the great crisis of 1914 called forth all the latent energy and en-

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terprise of the Silurian. It was not long before steel of all grades was being produced in South Wales at a cost substantially lower than in any other district. From time to time fresh difficulties were encountered, due largely to the ever-changing conditions in the supply of raw materials. Rapid changes in the methods of production became essential, and the successful overcoming of the various obstacles was a marked feature of the South Wales area. At no time was there any decrease in the volume or deterioration in the quality of the steel produced.

In the first years of the War the supply of hematite ore was greatly restricted owing to the ravages of German submarines. Scrap, however, was abundant, and the firms of the western group made a standard practice of producing steel with not more than 25 per cent. of pig iron. Some firms, notably the Briton Ferry Co., reduced this percentage to 15. At Messrs. Gilbertson & Co.'s works, during the period of shortage, excellent shell steel was experimentally manufactured out of steel turnings alone. The success of these Welsh steel makers in producing steel containing

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such a low percentage of pig iron led the Ministry of Munitions to utilise the services of some of them in educating other districts in the economical use of hematite iron, a task which they accomplished very successfully. At a later date, when the efforts of the Ministry of Munitions had resulted in a large increase in the supply of basic iron from native ore, the works of this group readjusted their methods to basic open hearth practice with complete success.

**THE BASIC PROCESS.**—The South Wales Steel makers of this particular group still further distinguished themselves in the use of the basic process for the manufacture of high grade steel, and the experience which was gained in the value of basic open hearth steel will have a permanent bearing on the conditions of the industry in the future. The restricted supplies of hematite ore and Swedish pig iron made it necessary to use the resources of the United Kingdom in the manufacture of a large proportion of the low phosphorous steel needed for special engineering work. Messrs. Gilbertson had for many years supplied the Sheffield market with a substantial quantity of high



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carbon low phosphorous steel made from British basic pig iron, and this firm, with the willing co-operation of their employees, abandoned the manufacture of sheet bars and concentrated all their efforts upon the production of special carbon and alloy steel. Messrs. Baldwins pursued a similar course at their Gowerton Works, and the Bynea Co., the Cwmfelin Co., and the Monmouthshire Co. were very successful in the manufacture of high grade steel in basic open hearth furnaces.

The very particular requirements of the British Mannesman Tube Works, which before the War were almost solely obtained from Germany, were rapidly met in 1914 by Messrs. Baldwins and Messrs. Gilbertson & Co., with their basic open hearth steel.

The importance of this effort and its influence upon the future of basic steel (for the manufacture of which British native ore resources are abundant) may be seen from the appended list of articles which, together with many more, were manufactured with the greatest success from South Wales basic steel:

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Gas bottles and cylinders.  
Boiler plates.  
Files.  
Levins projectors.  
High tensile wire.  
Connecting rods.  
Gears.  
Rifle and machine-gun barrels.  
Ball and roller bearings.  
Fire-box plates and stays.  
Bright drawn bars.  
Electrical and aircraft sheets.  
Bullet proof and helmet sheets.  
Boiler tubes.  
Naval gun wire.  
Stokes guns.  
Recoil cylinders.  
Aeroplane engine stampings and forgings.  
Crank shafts.  
Rock drills.  
Tools.  
Axles.  
Tank parts.  
Case hardening plain and alloy steel.  
Railway, automobile and gun carriage  
springs.

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**THE EMPLOYEES.**—In striking contrast with the miners, the workers in the iron and steel industry of South Wales are more tolerant of their employers, a fact which was emphasised in the report of the Commission on Industrial Unrest for South Wales and Monmouthshire. The workmen are mainly organised in the Iron and Steel Confederation, which union cordially co-operated with the Employers' Organisation in avoiding strikes. The workmen were splendid in their willingness to adapt themselves to the changing conditions of manufacture, and for long periods, when the raw material sufficed, worked extra hours in the week. From every point of view the effort of this group was successful and forms a bright chapter in the industrial history of South Wales.

### III

**STEEL AND GALVANISED SHEETS.**—The steel and galvanised sheet industry, mainly an exporting one, was severely hit by the restriction of shipping facilities and the ensuing shortage of raw materials. Its operations were reduced to some 30 or 40 per

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cent. of normal, and were practically confined to the rolling of steel sheets for trench covers, bombs, mines, of painted corrugated sheets for hutments, works, extensions, aerodromes, and of special sheets for aircraft and electrical industries. The employers and workpeople cheerfully submitted to the restriction of their trade and co-operated in making the best use of the plant that remained in operation.

### IV

**TINPLATE.**—Among the various British industries which were dependent upon their export trade, none was more adversely affected by the outbreak of war than the thriving Welsh tinplate industry. During the first eighteen months of the War the dislocation in this trade was considerable, as the Government were suspicious of the ultimate destination of any tinplate which might be exported to neutral countries. Thus the South Wales tinplate trade suffered not only from the shortage of tonnage, but also from the caution which the authorities had to exercise in the granting of ex-

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port licences. With the establishment of the Ministry of Munitions and its Priority Department, the situation was considerably eased. In 1917 a system of allocation in bulk to the various services and to the Allies came into successful operation. At the same time the definite allocation of steel to the industry and the placing of its distribution in the hands of the Area Steel Committee ensured the acquiescence of Labour in the necessary restriction of output and promoted smooth working.

**THE WORKMEN.**—In spite of the complexity of its organisation the Welsh tinplate industry gave the Government but little trouble and cause for anxiety, and this was chiefly due to the admirable working of the Conciliation Board under the wise guidance of Mr. F. W. Gibbins, its Chairman, and Mr. Clement, its able and experienced Secretary. Many of the workmen were able to obtain employment in other essential war industries, and out of 22,000 male employees it is estimated that 8,000 joined the colours.

The restrictions which had to be imposed on this industry cut down its activity by 55 per cent., but tinplate is a product that is essential in modern

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warfare, and the following list shows the extent to which it was utilised.

Mess tins.	Trench helmets.
Petrol tanks.	Chemical goods.
Oil cases.	Electrical work.
Aeroplanes.	Shell cases.
Cartridge cylinders.	Food packing cases.
Petrol cans.	Anti-gas masks.
Cotton goods (packing).	

In addition, almost all the sub-departments of the War Office, the Ministry of Munitions, and the Admiralty needed a supply in one form or another of this important product.

### V

ORGANISATION.—The success of the iron and steel, tinsplate and sheet industries of South Wales in meeting war requirements lay chiefly in excellent organisation. For nearly three years Mr. F. W. Gilbertson and Mr. J. C. Davies, volun-

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tarily and unofficially, gave to the director of Steel Production at the Ministry of Munitions all the assistance they could in co-ordinating the industrial activities of South Wales. Their knowledge of the district was indeed invaluable. In January, 1917, they were recognised as the local agents of the Steel Department. Their success in the work of distributing the available steel among the various industries contributed largely to the decision of the London authorities to form steel committees in the different areas. These two gentlemen, with Mr. T. E. Rogers as steel superintendent and Mr. Clement as secretary, became the Steel Committee for South Wales and Monmouthshire. The harmonious relations which existed between the various interests that came under the control of the Steel Department were largely due to the efforts of this committee.

## VI

SHELLS.—The committees formed for the erection of National Shell Factories in South Wales were another example of remarkable efficiency.

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At first their difficulties were greater than those of any other area, as apart from ship-repairing and the industries to which reference has been made there was practically no engineering industry in South Wales. The attempt to utilise old engine lathes and the existing machinery resources of the district was soon found to be impracticable and wasteful, so new plants were put down for the manufacture of shells. Messrs. Baldwins, in the Swansea area, and Messrs. Richard Thomas & Co., in the Llanelly area, placed commodious premises at the disposal of the Boards of Management. The record of all the National Shell Factories in South Wales was good. Swansea in 18 pounder and 4.5 inch shells, and Llanelly in 6 inch shells, set an example of efficient production before the whole country, holding as they did a continuous record for low cost of production. Another firm which showed great enterprise was the Briton Ferry Engineering Works (Messrs. Taylor & Sons). They were the first in South Wales to manufacture shells, under the direction of Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. In co-operation with the Swansea National Factory they were successful in producing a very large output.



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## VII

**COPPER, SPELTER, NICKEL, LEAD.**—In the smelting and manufacture of the principal non-ferrous metals for war materials South Wales played an important part. The efforts of the following firms were particularly noteworthy :—

Vivians (Swansea and Port Talbot).

William Foster & Co.

English Crown Spelter Co.

Swansea Vale Spelter Co.

Cape Copper Co.

Rio Tinto Co.

Dillwyn & Co.

Mond Nickel Co.

Messrs. Vivians were remarkably successful in supplying the Admiralty with brass tubes and condenser plates, and during the War their output was more than doubled. In the manufacture of shell driving bands they also made an important contribution. Many of the spelter works, particularly the Swansea Vale Co., increased their out-

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put, and by equipping themselves with roasting furnaces for the recovery of sulphur as sulphuretted hydrogen put themselves in a position to use Australian concentrates in the future.

The local engineering works, more especially the Glanmore Foundry, the Risca Steel Foundry, John Player & Sons, the Millbrook Engineering Co., Richard Nevill & Co., Thomas & Clement, and the Lower Forest Foundry, were successful in supplying the requirements of the manufacturing plants of the neighbouring steel tinplate and subsidiary works, and at the same time added to their production special products such as bombs, bomb sticks and shell parts. The various stamping works, such as the Welsh Tinplate & Metal Stamping Co., did yeoman service in undertaking valuable work of a very intricate nature.

The supply of sulphuric acid for explosives, sheet pickling, and artificial manures was well maintained through the agency of the sulphuric works of the district. In many cases special concentrating plant was laid down.

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## VIII

SHIP REPAIRING.—The activities of the large shipbuilding yards on the Clyde and the Tyne during the War are common knowledge, but very little publicity has been given to the highly important and vital work which was carried out in the South Wales ship repairing yards. Owing to the heavy losses inflicted by the German U-boats on British and neutral shipping it became imperative to keep existing vessels in constant active commission, and soon after the outbreak of war it was increasingly apparent to dry dock owners and ship repairing firms throughout the South Wales ports that as the war proceeded they would be called upon to cope with a vast influx of vessels requiring repairs, and that the large amount of repair work done in normal times at the ports of Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp would be diverted to this country. The ports of the north east coast and the yards and docks of the western ports were given over almost wholly to constructional work or to the repair of fighting craft, and consequently the South Wales ports were inundated with merchant vessels requiring repairs.

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Ship repairing became as vital an industry as ship building and this fact was fully recognised by the Government.

**GROWTH OF SOUTH WALES FIRMS.**—To appreciate adequately the important war service rendered by the ship repairing industry of South Wales, a brief description of the conditions existing prior to the war is necessary to show how the South Wales ports were able to undertake this task. The steadily increasing demand for Welsh coal for engine propulsion on sea and land had necessitated the employment of a vast amount of tonnage. It was its coal exporting trade which had given South Wales its value in the world of commerce. The clearance tonnage of vessels bound foreignwise from Cardiff was greater than that of any port in the world. The various docks at Cardiff, Barry, Penarth, Newport, and Port Talbot, vied with one another in giving rapid loading facilities. The steady increase in the number of vessels visiting these ports naturally led to the growth of the dry dock and ship repairing industries, and the gradual adoption by the various dry dock and ship repairing establish-

## INDUSTRIAL EFFORTS OF SOUTH WALES

ments of the most modern plant and machinery with a view to the efficient repairing of vessels in the shortest possible time. In this way South Wales became one of the largest ship repairing districts in the world, with a reputation for rapid despatch, skilful workmanship, and capable administration.

**EFFECT OF THE WAR.**—The plans which had been made for increasing the dry dock accommodation at the various ports had to be shelved owing to the outbreak of war. Early in 1915 it became apparent that the dry dock accommodation would be severely tested. There was a huge number of vessels requiring repairs, and the administrative skill of managers was put to the test in coping with the situation. Their pre-war experience, however, stood them in good stead. Competition between rival firms ceased, and the efforts of the engineering and ship repairing firms were co-ordinated. To add to their difficulties, there was not only the dearth of labour, but the scarcity of raw materials. Clever organisation and the goodwill of managers and men accomplished the impossible.

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In normal times the number of vessels repaired every year in the South Wales dry docks alone exceeded 2,000, with a gross tonnage of over 6,000,000. These were ordinary cargo carriers. During the War the number of vessels dealt with was much greater, and in addition the work was of a totally different character. Large Admiralty transports were repaired, and destroyers and other small fighting craft. A considerable proportion of the work in connection with the mounting of guns on oversea cargo carriers, the fitting of mining gear, and wireless telegraph installations, the conversion of trading ships, the camouflaging of ships, and the fitting and repair of passenger liners, was done in South Wales ports.

All this new type of work involved many changes. Clever engineering feats were carried out, machinery and plant were scrapped, and the most recent labour saving devices installed. The time spent by vessels in dry dock was reduced to a minimum. As soon as under water repairs were completed vessels were discharged from dry dock, and internal or above water repairs were finished in

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the wet dock. The old fashioned firms were purchased by the more enterprising ones. On one occasion a disused lock entrance was used as a dry dock. Workshop practice was reorganised and in many cases output was trebled.

**GOVERNMENT CONTROL.**—In October, 1915, all dry docks and ship repairing yards came under the aegis of the Government. Owing to the increased activity of the enemy submarines the Admiralty in 1917 appointed a Director of Ship Repairs, who was represented in the various districts by deputy directors with particular knowledge and experience in ship repairing. Co-ordination of effort was carried still further and in conjunction with private enterprise and initiative an immense amount of work was successfully accomplished.

**LABOUR AND ITS REWARD.**—Not only did the managers of the various firms exhibit skill and enterprise, but the artisans and labourers connected with the South Wales ship repairing trade lent themselves with a will to their important tasks. Reorganisation and startling changes in

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workshop practice necessitated interference with time honoured customs and habits. In spite of this the introduction of new systems was carried through without friction or disturbance. The thousands of workmen employed in the yards fully recognised the importance of the work which they were rendering. The majority of firms at Newport, Cardiff, Penarth, Barry, Port Talbot, Swansea and Milford Haven paid their employees liberally, and the increase of wages over pre-war rates in some cases was as much as 175 per cent.

The part played by the ship repairing firms of South Wales in the frustration of the submarine menace was surely a great one. Underlying the efforts of both managerial and working staffs was the dominant belief that work of the highest importance was being rendered. This factor was to a large extent responsible for the great efforts made.

The principal ship repairing firms of South Wales to which reference has been made in this section are :—

The Cardiff Channel Dry Dock and Pontoon Co.,  
Ltd., Cardiff, Barry and Newport.

The Bute Shipbuilding Co., Ltd., Cardiff.



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The Mercantile Pontoon Co., Ltd., Cardiff.

The Mount Stuart Dry Dock and Engineering Co.,  
Ltd., Cardiff.

Hills Dry Dock and Engineering Co., Ltd., Cardiff.

Elliott & Jeffery, Cardiff and Barry.

Thos. Diamond & Co., Cardiff.

John Rogers & Co., Cardiff.

The Junction Dry Dock and Engineering Co., Ltd.,  
Cardiff.

Harris Brothers & Co., Ltd., Swansea.

The Penarth Pontoon and Slipway Co., Ltd.,  
Penarth.

The Barry Graving Dock and Engineering Co.,  
Ltd., Barry.

C. H. Bailey, Tyne Engineering and Ship Repairing  
Works, Newport, Mon. and Barry Docks.

John Shearman & Co., Cardiff and Barry.

The Tredegar Dry Dock and Engineering Co., Ltd.,  
Newport.

Mordey, Carney & Co., Ltd., Newport.

The Port Talbot Dry Dock and Engineering Co.,  
Ltd., Swansea.

The Ocean Dry Dock Co., Ltd., Swansea.

The Prince of Wales Dry Dock and Engineering  
Co., Ltd., Swansea.

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CONTRIBUTION.—Such was the industrial effort of South Wales. There was not a single industrial centre in the whole district which did not make some contribution to the material requirements of the Allies. Coal was provided for the British and the Allied navies and for essential industries in Britain, France and Italy. Steel, iron, tinplate and brass were manufactured in large quantities. The corrugated sheets used as trench covers in France came chiefly from South Wales. Shells, shell parts and other ammunition were produced. The ships of the Allies were repaired in the ports of South Wales. It is impossible to enumerate the minor industries which all contributed their share. Suffice it to say that it is practically impossible to mention any article vital to the prosecution of modern warfare in the production of which South Wales did not play a part. The strain which all this industrial activity placed upon the railways and transport of the district has only to be mentioned to be realised, and it is to the last-

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ing credit of the railway officials and workers of the great railway centres and in particular of Newport—that funnel through which the greater proportion of the volume of traffic between England and Wales flows—that this great mass of traffic was dealt with so skilfully. Tribute must also be paid to the men and women workers who were responsible for the splendid output of material in the various industries, and finally to the services of those men supplied by South Wales industries to the Ministry of Munitions, of whom it is safe to say that not one of them failed to reflect credit on the Principality.

For the information in this chapter the Editors are indebted to the following gentlemen: Sir Edgar Jones, Colonel W. C. Wright, C. Lambourne, Esq., F. W. Gilbertson, Esq., W. R. Lysaght, Esq., Finlay Gibson, Esq., William Graham, Esq., W. Clement, Esq., and W. H. Simmonds, Esq.



**INDUSTRIAL EFFORTS OF NORTH WALES**



## CHAPTER IV

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### INDUSTRIAL EFFORTS OF NORTH WALES

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NATIONAL SHELL FACTORIES.—In August, 1915, at the request of the Ministry of Munitions, a thorough investigation was made into the industrial resources of the counties of North Wales, with a view to ascertaining to what extent existing machinery and plant was suitable for the manufacture of munitions, and formulating a scheme for the establishment of national shell factories in the North Wales area. A representative committee was formed and it was decided to make a

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tour of inspection in each county. In this way practically every workshop in the district was visited and such machinery as was found suitable for munition purposes was marked down for removal to the new factories. The manufacturers of North Wales displayed a true patriotic spirit and no obstacles were raised in connection with the proposed removals, which, of course, involved the crippling of the industries concerned. In almost every case consent was readily given. The next step was to secure suitable sites and premises for the new factories. A scheme was submitted to the Ministry of Munitions, with the result that within a very short period national shell factories were established at three centres, namely, Carnarvon (Vulcan Foundry), Portmadoc (Boston Lodge Works), and Wrexham (Electric Works). These factories were to concentrate on the manufacture of 18 pounder high explosive shells. On behalf of the Ministry of Munitions a Board of Management was set up and the following gentlemen were selected as members:—W. Buckley, Esq., R. M. Greaves, Esq., E. S. Taylor, Esq., Evan R. Davies, Esq., T. Sauvage, Esq., and W. G. Pickvance, Esq.



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LABOUR AND OUTPUT.—With the erection of the factories a fresh difficulty was encountered in the shortage of labour. Skilled men were very scarce and there were but few engineers in the district. It was decided to enrol a large number of men and women as workers and to train them in the required processes. Rapid progress was made and a remarkable intelligence was evinced in acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various operations involved and in the use of gauges and other necessary implements. Especially noteworthy is the fact that 80 per cent. of the operatives employed were women. The output of shells steadily increased and the Ministry of Munitions repeatedly expressed their satisfaction with the efforts of the North Wales area. In addition to high explosive shrapnel shells, 9.2 inch proof-shot, cast-iron bomb stems, adaptors, plugs, burster containers and aeroplane parts were manufactured in these factories.

DENBIGHSHIRE AND MONTGOMERYSHIRE.—In the course of time other munition factories were established in Denbighshire, Flintshire and Montgomeryshire. One of the most successful

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of these was the factory belonging to Powell Bros., Wrexham. This firm before the War was practically exclusively engaged on the manufacture of agricultural machinery. The factory was entirely turned over to munitions, the buildings were enlarged and the number of employees rose from 100 to 900. In this case also a large majority of the workers were women. Every week this factory manufactured 10,000 shells and was responsible for about one-fiftieth of the total supply of trench bombs. A very successful social and welfare scheme was also introduced by the head of the firm for the benefit of the workers.

The Wrexham Town Electricity Works, which were converted by the Town Council into a national shell factory, have already been mentioned. Several other firms in Denbighshire undertook the manufacture of shells, among them Messrs. Cudworth & Johnson and Messrs. Jenkin Davies & Co. In co-operation with Messrs. J. C. Edwards and Messrs. Richards of Trevor, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn started a shell factory at Wynstay, where many thousands of shells were made, chiefly by women's labour. At Acrefair

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(Messrs. Graesser, Ltd.) and other places in Flintshire, considerable quantities of carbolic acid, picric acid and high explosives were manufactured.

One of the most successful factories in North Wales was the Powysland Ordnance Works, Welshpool. Originally a four-storeyed flannel mill and afterwards purchased by a syndicate for the manufacture of leather goods, these works had been lying idle for some years. On the outbreak of war, Mr. J. H. Petersen, the present owner, who is a native of Denmark, purchased the buildings and equipped and organised them as a munition factory without any assistance, financial or otherwise, from the Government. The latest and most modern machinery was introduced for the manufacture of 6-inch high explosive shells and an up-to-date plant of automatic machines for the manufacture of fuse parts was installed. This factory gave employment to 500 operatives who, with the exception of the charge hands, were recruited from the unskilled and semi-skilled workers of the surrounding agricultural district. In pre-war days most of the male

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employees were agricultural labourers, coachmen, gardeners and game-keepers.

**MINERALS.**—The colliery districts of North Wales responded patriotically to every demand which was made on them, although, owing to the large number of miners who joined the Army, there was a natural decrease in the output from the Denbighshire and Flintshire pits. In the case of the iron and steel works of these two counties progress was made on much the same lines as in South Wales, and as the result of strenuous efforts the output of iron and steel products was considerably increased. Side by side with the development of the industrial resources of North-east Wales there was investigation into the mineral wealth of the counties of Central and North Wales.

The lead mining industry had never entirely died out in these counties, although the output from such mines as were still working had been steadily declining for the last fifty years. The War, however, emphasised the necessity of opening up still further the home resources of zinc ore, and as

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in the past these lead mines had only been worked for the sake of obtaining lead ore they abounded in plentiful supplies of the neglected zinc ore, and there is no doubt that if there had not been a scarcity of labour, and if the authorities had realised the enormous possibilities of the Welsh deposits of non-ferrous ores, large areas in Central and North Wales would have developed into important industrial centres. It was, however, possible to maintain a small output, and 5,157 tons of dressed lead and zinc ores were obtained in 1916 from the twenty-five productive mines of Wales. These were the Cwmystwyth and Lisburne group in Cardigan, the Halkyn and Rhosesmor group in Flint, and the famous Van Mine in Montgomery. Operations in the Halkyn district had been seriously hindered in recent years by the flooding of the mines, but the installation of adequate pumping machinery and modern methods of drainage gave them a new lease of life, and it is estimated that these mines should in the future be capable of producing about 9,000 tons of dressed lead and zinc ores per annum. In Montgomeryshire the owners of the Van Mine increased the capacity of their dressing

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plant, and this will enable them to treat the large reserves already developed.

The War also brought about the renewal of work in the Caecoch Pyrites Mine, Carnarvonshire, and there was an output of many thousand tons of pyrites suitable for the production of sulphur. In the case of copper ore it is hoped that one of the results of the War will be the development of the Mona and Parys Mine in Anglesey. In Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire the War also saw the opening up of the fields of manganese ore.

The fact that only forty years ago there were over 260 mines in the county of Cardiganshire alone producing lead and zinc, and that to-day there are to be found scattered over the whole of Wales many hundreds of disused mines, gives rise to the hope that the value which has been placed on these mineral deposits by the activities of the War will not be neglected and lost sight of in the future.

STONE, BRICK AND SLATE.—Before the War North Wales, in particular Merionethshire, was an

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important centre for stone quarrying on a large scale, and during the War large quantities of road stone, quarried in some cases by German prisoners of war, were exported to France. In Flintshire several new quarries were started and large quantities of rock, containing a very high percentage of silica, were secured. This silicate was also obtained on a large scale from the Bwlch Gwyn and Gwersyllt Quarries in Denbighshire.

The importance of this particular kind of rock was due to the formation of a new industry, the manufacture of silica bricks. These bricks were used for lining steel furnaces. For engineering purposes, for building, for chemical works and ship-building yards, the brick industry of Flintshire and Denbighshire proved invaluable to the Ministry of Munitions, to the Admiralty, to the War Office, and to manufacturers of high explosives.

The more famous slate industry of North Wales unfortunately suffered severely owing to the War. For some years previous the slate quarries of this area had been the victim of a wave of depression

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in the slate trade, due in no small measure to the substitution of tiles for slates for roofing purposes. In a subsequent chapter reference is made to the excellent work which was done by the committee of the American Relief Fund to relieve the still further dislocation which the war produced in this industry. At one time the output of slates practically ceased owing to the entire cessation of demand. Eventually the position did improve, though only slightly. This was due to the efforts of the secretary of the Relief Fund, Mr. Owain Evans. At the time of the erection of the military huts at Kinmel Park, Denbighshire, he was able to present a case to the War Office emphasising the value of slate as a roofing for the huts in preference to wood. He pointed out that a slate roof was weatherproof and would add to the comfort of the huts; that slates were at hand in the North Wales quarries, and finally that, as all wood had to be imported, the substitution of slate for wood roofing would save tonnage. The result of this plea was that the choice of slate or wood was in all future War Office contracts left to the option of the contractor. Inasmuch as Welsh slate has been proved by analysts to be the best in the world, it



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is legitimate to expect that, with the inevitable boom in the building trade, this important North Wales industry will once again recapture its former premier position.

**WELSH TEXTILES AND LEATHER.**—At the outbreak of War the woollen mills of Wales were chiefly engaged on the production of all wool shirtings and flannel for the industrial population of South Wales. These products had won a well deserved reputation for durability, and consequently the Welsh textile mills were called upon to produce large quantities of these flannels for the Army and Navy. Socks, blankets, waistcoats, cardigans, helmets, scarves, haversacks, gloves, body belts, vests and flannel goods of all descriptions were produced in Wales for the British and Allied Governments.

During the first two years of the War the percentage of machinery employed on Government work rose steadily until the maximum of 60 per cent. was reached. In October, 1917, the authorities decided to requisition the whole flannel output

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of the principal mills in Wales and, from that date until the end of 1918, they were entirely engaged in the production of Government flannel. During the requisitioning period it was found that some of the small factories were unable to produce this standard flannel, so arrangements were made for these firms to manufacture a special Welsh standard Government flannel, which was accepted by the Royal Army Clothing Department. Early in 1917 the Roumanian Government approved a sample of grey Welsh flannel and through the British Government ordered large quantities for their Army. This order was distributed over all the Welsh factories and kept them busily engaged for over six months. Owing to the increased prices of wool, the rise in the cost of production, and the limited supplies, the prices of Welsh flannel for the ordinary trade steadily rose, and with a view to protecting the interests of the mining population in South Wales, it was decided to introduce a standard civilian flannel at a controlled price, the production of such flannel to rank as Government work. Prices were not only fixed for the manufacturer but also for the wholesale and retail trade, both in the case of piece-cloth and made-up

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goods. This secured a supply of reliable all-wool garments at a very reasonable price.

When the Government decided to purchase the British wool clip and afterwards the Australian clip, Wales was allowed to have her own district rationing committee, which distributed all supplies of wool, both for Government work and for civil trade. One important result of the War in the Welsh flannel trade was the formation of the Welsh Textile Manufacturers' Association in November, 1917. The North Wales textile manufacturers had previously formed themselves into an association but it was decided to form one body to cover the whole of North and South Wales. This Association has done excellent work and is likely to prove itself still more useful in the development of the textile industry in North Wales. The following firms in Central Wales are among the more important ones which did Government work:—

Jones, Evans & Co., Ltd., Newtown.

Pryce, Jones, Ltd., Newtown.

George, Francis & Kerr, Ltd., Llanidloes.

R. George & Co., Ltd., Llanidloes.

Morris & Son, Llanidloes.

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Not only did Wales supply clothing for the Army and Navy, but her light leather industry, especially in Central Wales, met the needs of British aviators. In Montgomeryshire this industry was carried on by two firms, Lewis & Sons, Ltd., of Newtown, and T. Pryce Hammer, of Llanidloes. In normal times these firms produced roller leather for the cotton mills of Lancashire, but during the War they undertook the supply of jerkin leather for waistcoats and motor clothing. During 1917 and 1918 they manufactured about half a million square feet of leather for jerkins, or in other words, they treated 100,000 sheep skins. Jerkin leather for aviators' clothing was also manufactured in Denbighshire, at Wrexham and Llanrwst, and the same county supplied chrome tanned sole leather for the Army. In this way the industries in North Wales enabled the British soldier, sailor, and airman to maintain himself in warmth and bodily comfort amid the hardships of winter campaigns.

Without exaggeration it may be affirmed that when the essentially rural and agricultural character of Central and North Wales is taken into account the people of these areas have no reason to

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be anything but proud of their industrial contribution in the Great War.

For the information contained in this chapter the Editors are indebted to the following gentlemen: Sir Edward Pryce Jones, Hugh Lewis, Esq., William Buckley, Esq., A. Seymour Jones, Esq., Professor O. T. Jones, Captain Maurice Cockerell, Arthur L. Onslow, Esq., David Breese, Esq., J. H. Petersen, Esq.



**RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN WALES**





## CHAPTER V

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### RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN WALES

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THE AWAKENING.—Before the War there were men and women scattered over the various counties of Wales who were fully alive to the needs of a thorough investigation into the conditions of urban and rural life in Wales and to the necessity of grappling with the great problems of national health and social discontent, but it may be safely said that the great mass of opinion throughout the Principality was indifferent to that development of the resources of Wales which is now being

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urged by men of all creeds and parties. With the progress of the War, however, a change became evident, and men and women in every Welsh county began to take a deep interest in the future well being, economic and social, of their country. The two organisations which played the most prominent part in the propaganda which led to this awakened interest were the Welsh Housing and Development Association and the Welsh National Association for Reconstruction.

**THE WELSH HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION.**—The Welsh Housing and Development Association is a purely philanthropic, educational, and advisory body. It was formed by the amalgamation of the Welsh Housing Association and the South Wales Garden City and Town Planning Association. It relies solely upon subscriptions and donations from sympathisers. The Association exists primarily for the propagation of sound principles of town planning and housing, the promotion of garden villages and small holding colonies, afforestation, and land reclamation, the development of Welsh agriculture and rural in-

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dustries, and the improvement of the conditions of rural life and labour. At the present time, in addition to a large number of individual members, the Association has over fifty organisations, representing about 150,000 trade unionists, building trade employers and similar organisations. The South Wales Miners' Federation, the South Wales Building Trades' Federation and other important bodies are directly represented on its Council.

During recent years the South Wales Branch, formerly known as the South Wales Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, has taken a leading part in arousing public opinion on behalf of town planning and housing reform. A North Wales Branch has also been doing good work and branches in Central and West Wales are in process of formation. The Association has been much consulted by architects, builders, local authorities, officials of Government Departments and other persons and bodies interested in the questions of Welsh housing and development, and lectures on these questions have been delivered without any kind of fee or payment all over Wales. In addition, the Association runs a newspaper publicity bureau and a publishing department.

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**ITS ACTIVITIES.**—For some time, and especially during 1918, the Association has devoted itself to post-war reconstruction work and has given consideration to the question of providing work for discharged soldiers and sailors, and to the housing and employment of those disabled in the War. It has published a number of books and pamphlets containing information and guidance for architects, builders, local authorities and others, in the preparation of town planning and housing schemes, and dealing with the importance of developing agriculture, afforestation and rural industries in Wales.

**TOWN PLANNING.**—Local authorities have been urged to prepare without delay town planning and road reconstruction schemes. Lectures and conferences have been held and numerous articles published from time to time in local newspapers. Members and officials of local authorities have been interviewed and in many cases deputations have waited on the authorities concerned. The Association has also advised public officials on town planning and housing matters, and has organised a movement for a standing conference of representa-

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tives of South Wales local authorities to consider the town planning and housing needs of South Wales. Special researches have been made in connection with questions on town planning, the reform of bye-laws, and methods of estate development in the South Wales valleys, with a view to recommending economies in the development of building sites and in the erection of dwellings. Exhaustive reports on these subjects have been prepared and in particular a very illuminating one on bye-law reform in hillside areas.

**HOUSING.**—Similar work has been done in regard to estate development and housing. Local authorities, companies and individuals have been urged to prepare schemes particularly during the period of the War in readiness for the period of building following demobilisation. Before the War there was a shortage of 50,000 houses in the Principality and during the War this shortage increased at the rate of 5,000 per annum. As a result of the Association's activities numerous local authorities and other agencies prepared schemes for house building. In connection with this problem the women's point of view was not forgotten and an exhaustive

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inquiry into the improvement of cottage planning was made, in which the views of some thousands of women were ascertained and incorporated in a report. It was under the auspices of this Association that a series of cottage planning competitions were arranged in connection with the Neath National Eisteddfod of 1918. The Association has kept in touch with the various Government Departments interested in housing and town planning matters and is represented on the National Housing and Town Planning Council.

**RURAL REGENERATION.**—Through the medium of meetings and publications the Association has actively advocated the need for rural reconstruction, and at the present time purposes conducting a thorough investigation into rural conditions throughout Wales, with the intention of formulating proposals and schemes for the improvement of rural economic conditions and for the brightening of rural life. In promoting the establishment in Wales of a Small Holdings Colony for Discharged Sailors and Soldiers under the auspices of the Board of Agriculture the Association took an active part. Its memorandum on agricultural reconstruc-

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tion greatly influenced public opinion throughout Wales, and may be fairly said to have been one of the chief influences which moved the Government to provide a farm colony at Pembrey, in Carmarthenshire. In addition to its many activities on behalf of agricultural reform, carried on through the medium of lectures and press communications, the Association has arranged with the Welsh County Councils for a series of rural housing exhibitions and conferences.

**AFFORESTATION.**—The Association has interested itself in the reclamation of waste lands in Wales by means of schemes of afforestation. Some thousands of acres of colliery and works refuse tips in the coalfield, now hideous blots on the landscape, are believed to be capable of reclamation by tree planting. A non-profit making forestry society has been formed for the purpose of planting old works and colliery tips and other waste places. As has been demonstrated at Aberdare and Mountain Ash pitwood can be grown on such tips. Incidentally it is hoped that in this way some work may be provided for demobilised soldiers. Steps have also been taken urging on the

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Government and local authorities the importance of making provision for the replanting on a large scale of the areas denuded of timber by war time requirements.

**INSHORE FISHERIES.**—Another scheme in which the Association is interested is the development of the inshore fisheries of Wales. Expert advice on the subject has been taken and there is reason to believe that the shell fish resources of Cardigan Bay and other home waters can be immensely increased, while the river and lake fisheries are also capable of considerable improvement. Several valuable suggestions for the proper organisation of the fisheries have been received. The Association has under consideration proposals for the establishment of sea beds for mussels and other shell-fish, and the proper marketing of the fish.

**WATER RESOURCES, ROAD TRANSPORT AND SURVEYS.**—Attention has also been paid to the need for conserving the water resources of the Principality and for utilising the vast amount of power now running waste for the generation of electricity. It is believed that the provision and dis-



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tribution of a cheap supply of electricity throughout rural areas will have an important influence on the development of agriculture and rural industries generally. Agricultural progress depends very largely on transport and road and transport facilities in rural Wales are of a very inadequate and unsatisfactory nature. New roads are required and existing roads need to be improved, while the provision of road motors or light railways is a matter of urgent importance. Another urgent necessity is a geological survey of Wales, in view of the considerable source of wealth in its mineral deposits, ferrous and non-ferrous.

WAR ACTIVITIES.—The following is a summary of the activities of this remarkable Association during the War:—

1914.—*Meetings.*

Seventy-five meetings were addressed, together with a large number of lectures, under the auspices of Working Men's Clubs of various political denominations.

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During the year, in co-operation with the National Housing and Townplanning Council and the Welsh Housing Association, conferences of local authorities were held at Newport, Llanelly and Cardiff.

### *Press Publicity.*

During 1914 about 150 contributions in the form of letters and articles dealing with the various aspects of the work of the Association were published in the leading South Wales papers.

### *Advisory Work.*

The Association received numerous requests for various forms of assistance from various quarters, some as far distant as Lancashire and Durham. The whole of these requests were dealt with satisfactorily and much assistance was given in the preparation of Local Government Board enquiries.

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During the year several interviews were held between the Secretary and local authorities in areas where housing or townplanning action was deemed necessary.

### *Investigations and Reports.*

An extensive survey of the housing conditions in Wales was carried out and the reports of the housing needs of South Wales were submitted to the Local Government Board. Reports were also published on Welsh housing schemes, bye-law reforms, etc.

### *Pithead Baths.*

A Conference was held at Trealaw under the joint auspices of the Association and the Rhondda District of the South Wales Miners' Association.

A number of lantern lectures on the subject were given throughout South Wales and numerous articles and lectures were published in different papers.

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1915.

This was a repetition of 1914, with the exception of the following additions: publication of report upon Welsh housing schemes and what townplanning means; inquiry into the cost of building materials and deputations to fifteen local authorities.

1918.

This year the Association promoted a competition of designs for Agricultural Labourers' Cottages and living-in-quarters at the National Eisteddfod, Neath. Prizes to the amount of £170 were given.

The Association has held a series of Exhibitions of these plans throughout the counties of North and South Wales, at Llangefni (Anglesey), Bangor, Welshpool, Aberystwyth, Llanelly, Pembroke, Swansea and Abergavenny. It is intended to publish these plans in book form.

The remarkable success which has attended the efforts of the Welsh Housing and Development Association would have been impossible if it had

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not been for the enthusiasm and energy of its secretary, Mr. Edgar L. Chappell.

**BUILDING OPERATIONS DURING THE WAR.**—Very little building was carried out in Wales during the War. Such building as was undertaken was carried out by Public Utility Societies.

The Welsh Townplanning and Housing Trust, Ltd., 32, Park Place, Cardiff, have erected houses in Barry, Wrexham, Llanidloes, and Burry Port, the number built being about 400. The Society has several large schemes in contemplation.

The Welsh Garden Cities, Ltd., have built about 200 houses during the last four years, and have various schemes in preparation.

The Government has erected a number of houses at Chepstow and several local authorities have plans prepared.

**THE WELSH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RECONSTRUCTION.**—This body is comparatively young. The South Wales branch was formed in the

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autumn of 1917 and the North Wales branch in January, 1918. Accordingly its work as yet is little known. The aim of this Association is to investigate problems of reconstruction and frame proposals for dealing with them. It also aims at rousing a greater realisation among all sections of the community of the duties of citizenship. The South Wales branch has held conferences which have considered the report of the Commission on Industrial Unrest in South Wales, the report of the Whitley Committee on the relations between employers and employees, the project of a Ministry of Health, the Education Bill, and the provision of teaching in citizenship. Two sub-committees have been appointed, one to enquire into the reorganisation of the public services in Wales, in view especially of the greater measure of autonomy which it is hoped will be conferred on the Principality, and the other to examine the use, opportunities and conditions of leisure in the urban centres of the coalfield. A considerable mass of interesting social information has been collected. In addition to these two enquiries, the Branch has been able to render assistance in the collection of

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materials for a Government Inquiry into the cost of living in urban areas. One of the last appearances of the late Lord Rhondda in Cardiff was on the occasion of a meeting convened by this Branch to discuss the new Ministry of Health. Addresses have also been delivered by officers of the Association in various centres of South Wales.

The North Wales branch has been considering the question of land and small holdings for discharged soldiers, and the conversion of water power into electricity for the rural industries of North Wales. A sub-committee has also been collecting information as to the conditions of social intercourse and recreation in villages and small towns.

**WELSH MINING TOWNSHIPS.**—Although much good work has been done by these two Associations much still remains to be done. There are many of the rural and smaller urban local authorities who are not awake to the urgency and gravity of the problem of reconstruction. Every patriot who has the true interest of his country at heart must realise that the conditions

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of life in the rural and industrial districts are a menace to the health and social well being of the Principality. One has only to visit the valleys of the South Wales coalfield to realise the appalling environment in which the future generation of Wales is being brought up. Living all day in an atmosphere of industrial dirt and coal-dust with but little opportunity for recreation other than the streets afford, spending their day in the heart of valleys where the sunlight seldom penetrates, these children of industrial Wales are handicapped from the day of their birth. Townplanning in hillside districts is a special problem, but in the past no attempt has been made to develop towns in conformity with the physical configuration of the valleys. It has been forgotten that the sun cannot shine through hills, and even the light from the opposite side of the valley has often been excluded by the erection of houses on the opposite side of the street. For example, houses of narrow frontages with black projections have been repeatedly built on the upper sides of hillside roads, so that light and a free circulation of air around and through the dwellings have been rendered impossible, while access to the garden has to be obtained



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by climbing up long and steep flights of steps. Roads have often been run straight up hill at difficult gradients and during the rainy season are frequently converted into mountain streams. No provision has been made for direct and easy access from one part of the village to another. Public health has been completely disregarded and dwellings have been crowded on the land—sometimes as many as forty or fifty per acre. The constant repetition of cottages of the same type in rows, including sometimes scores of dwellings, has a most depressing effect on the mind of the passer-by. In the case of many of the cottages the sanitary arrangements are very primitive, and hot and cold water services, baths, washing coppers and labour saving facilities are deplorably absent.

Not only are the streets in these mining villages ugly and repulsive, they are also grossly insanitary. In some of the older villages especially, the roads have never been properly made, and access to the houses is obtained along approaches consisting in wet weather of pools of slush and water, strewn with domestic garbage. Owing to the lack of proper drainage facilities, and a proper

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system of refuse collection, the tenants have no option but to deposit refuse and to drain household slops into the front road or back lane on which their cottages abut. Further, the dirt engendered by colliery operations adds much to the undesirable appearance of Welsh mining townships. The collieries are not infrequently situated in the middle of the townships and surrounded by buildings, and the untidiness of the surface arrangements and the smoke and dust emitted from chimney stacks, screens, and tips do not favour cleanliness. That all this can be prevented has been demonstrated by the installation of suitable appliances at some of the more progressive collieries. Another painful eyesore is the murky and forbidding appearance of the rivers, with their banks defiled with black mud, which run through the valleys of the coalfield. This pollution could be prevented by the introduction of filter beds or settling ponds. Perhaps the most disfiguring features of the mining districts are the huge refuse tips, unnecessary monuments to industrialism, which have been piled up near the collieries.

HOUSING CONDITIONS IN RURAL DISTRICTS.—It

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is a well known fact that tuberculosis is very rife in the rural districts in Wales. There are scores of village cemeteries where the wiping out of whole families is recorded on a series of tombstones. Life in the country ought to be healthy, judged by recognised standards, but here again housing conditions are largely responsible for the prevalence of what is known as "decline."

The type of cottage known as "Celtic" can be seen in every county in Wales. These are in reality one-roomed cottages. A light partition generally divides the house into two rooms—kitchen and chamber—while in many cases a loft, reached by a ladder, is provided by means of boarding stretched across at the level of the eaves. The height of these lofts at the apex of the roof is sometimes less than six feet, while the roof slopes down on each side to meet the floor. The majority are provided with small windows or skylights which very often do not open. The walls of these cottages are sometimes very solid but are usually without foundations of proper cement, so that wallpaper will not always adhere to them. In some localities earth floors are fairly common. In very many of

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the houses there is no provision for the entrance of light and air except in the front. The windows are almost always too small and frequently will not open. There is a lack of proper sanitary accommodation, larders, pantries and storage rooms. The average cubicle contents of these houses is about 2,500 cubic feet, but some have only 1,500 cubic feet of air space. The condition of the two-storied cottages is very often as bad. Naturally the size of these cottages leads to overcrowding. Cases are known in which a man, his wife and seven children all sleep in the bedroom, where the ventilation is entirely inadequate. The bad housing conditions of rural Wales are one potent cause of the depopulation of the countryside.

Another defect in the rural life of the Principality is the inadequate accommodation provided for farm labourers. The men are almost invariably lodged over outhouses, sometimes over the stable, cowhouse, coachhouse or granary. While the establishment of the Agricultural Wages Boards has done much to improve the status of the farm labourer, much yet remains to be done.

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The monotonous life of the hamlets must be done away with and every incentive given to prevent the further exodus of the rural population to the large towns and cities. Rural and industrial reconstruction must go hand in hand.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELSH RESOURCES.**—If Wales is to shoulder her fair proportion of the great burden of debt which has been incurred by the United Kingdom during the War every effort will have to be made to develop her as yet untouched resources and to increase productivity. Not only must the health and housing of her citizens be placed on a sound basis but her agricultural and mineral resources must be developed to the full. Wales possesses a considerable source of wealth in its mineral resources, other than coal. Worked on modern lines there is no reason why her deposits of copper pyrites and galena (lead) and blende or black-jack (zinc), manganese and phosphatic rock should not become profitable commercial investments, especially in view of the fact that a geological survey of Wales on the lines suggested by Professor O. T. Jones would reveal that Welsh

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mineral deposits are far larger than have been imagined. Moreover, such a geological survey would enable the various deposits to be worked in a scientific and economical manner.

Before the War it is an undeniable fact that the rural industries of Wales were steadily declining. In many cases war requirements, however, caused a revival. If this period of prosperity is to continue it is essential that steps should be taken to utilise the great stores of water power available in Wales for the production of electrical energy. There is sufficient power at hand to supply all existing rural industries, while all houses in towns and villages, and even isolated dwellings, could be lighted and heated by electricity. This electrical power could also be used for purposes of transport and for agricultural operations, and there is no reason why the manufacture of fertilisers by the same agency should not prove a highly profitable industry, with the increase of intensive methods of cultivation. The immediate need is a survey of the water resources of Wales and the establishment of area water boards.

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The Editors are indebted for the information contained in this chapter to Edgar L. Chappell, Esq., Professor H. J. W. Hetherington, Captain Greville N. Irby, and Miss M. F. Rathbone.

The address of the Welsh Housing and Development Association is 38, Charles Street, Cardiff, and of the Welsh National Association for Reconstruction, Peter Freeman, Esq., Rectory Road, Penarth.





**WALES AND THE DISABLED SOLDIER**



## CHAPTER VI

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### WALES AND THE DISABLED SOLDIER

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WAR PENSIONS COMMITTEES.—In Wales as in England the Ministry of Pensions has entrusted the care of the disabled soldier to the local war pensions committees which have been formed in every county. It is to the honour of Wales that a model of what such a committee should be is to be found in the Denbighshire War Pensions Committee, which has received the congratulations of the Central Authorities on the excellent way in which it has set to work. A large measure of the

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success of this committee has been due to the enthusiasm and hard work of its chairman, Mr. Alfred Seymour Jones, and its capable and energetic secretary, Mr. G. G. Lerry. The Denbighshire War Pensions Committee possesses in addition an excellent office staff of paid workers, who consist of experienced men and women. The staff interview every morning discharged men, whether disabled or not, and the wives, mothers and female dependents. The discharged men and their dependents are invited either personally or by a friendly letter to pay a call. Every discharged man at these interviews is made to feel that he is dealing with sympathetic friends who are really interested in his case. The test of a pensions committee comes not in the case of the 90 per cent. of the cases which are comparatively easy to deal with, but in the remaining 10 per cent. which present difficulties, and it is in the handling of this minority that the Denbighshire Committee has shown such ability. Orthopædic cases are interviewed in a private room, while a stenographer takes down the man's story and all his replies to questions. He is given a comfortable seat and made to feel that he is talking to his best friend.

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If this method of interviewing fails the interviewer falls back on the man's wife, his friends and his minister, in order to make the second interview a success. The splendid orthopædic hospital, the Croesnewydd, at Wrexham, enables all these cases to receive any further operative treatment that may be necessary. In this connection it is well to note that it was a Denbighshire man, Sir Robert Jones, who was one of the leading medical men in the development of orthopædic surgery. In dealing with neurasthenic cases this committee has again been remarkably successful. Every effort is made at the interview to induce the patient to face another medical board and it is carefully pointed out to him that it is not a military medical board but one composed of specialists. The board meets at Berrington Auxiliary Military Hospital, to which place the men are motored voluntarily. Particulars of every case are sent beforehand to the Board in order to help the members in arriving at a correct diagnosis.

These two examples give a good insight into the methods which this committee uses. No trouble or expense is spared. Emphasis is laid on per-

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sonal interviews in the case of each man and the lazy way of sending him forms filled with bewildering questions is avoided. Tact and patience are never failing. It is the constant endeavour of the members of this committee to appreciate the psychology of the disabled man, which undoubtedly accounts for the success of their work.

**EMPLOYMENT FOR THE DISABLED.**—The task of finding employment for the disabled soldier has been tackled with great success by the North and South Wales Joint Disablement Committees. The North Wales Committee, the secretary of which is Mr. G. G. Lerry, has been particularly successful in training men in market gardening, in furniture and basket making, and in diamond cutting. Through the Welsh Townplanning and Housing Trust, Ltd., a training centre in market gardening has been established in Acton Park, near Wrexham Garden Village. Through the kindness of Mr. Bernard Oppenheimer the whole of the vegetable gardens and pleasure grounds in the park have been secured. There are also two large kitchen gardens at Little Acton and Plas Acton.

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Since November, 1917, a large number of ex-service men have been at work in the gardens under the tuition of expert instructors. The men not only receive training in the growing of every kind of fruit and vegetable but also in horticulture, pig, poultry and bee keeping. The course of training lasts as a rule for twelve months and in certain cases arrangements are made for the continuance of the course at Madryn Castle Farm School, Carnarvonshire. The men live either in the hostel at Plas Acton or in houses in the adjacent village, or in Wrexham. Board, lodgings and washing are all found for 17/6 per week, which leaves a balance of 10/- out of the minimum weekly allowance of 27/6. Such men as need hospital treatment are attended free of charge at Croesnewydd Orthopædic Hospital and their travelling expenses are also paid. During the period of tuition the necessary gardening tools, together with a pair of gardening boots, a pair of overalls, and an oilskin coat and a straw hat are provided. As the result of the excellent work which is being done at this centre disabled men are able at the end of their training to set up on their own as expert market gardeners or to obtain em-

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ployment in a market garden or a private garden, and when the necessary capital is obtainable can become small holders by taking up twenty-five to fifty acres of land.

At Trefnant, a small village in the Vale of Clwyd between Denbigh and St. Asaph, there has been inaugurated an enterprise which will probably play a large part in the rural economy of North Wales in the future. The scheme of finding employment for the villagers in the winter evenings by providing them with training in the making of Welsh toys and furniture, which was started by Miss Mary Heaton in 1909, has been developed with a view to training disabled soldiers. In August, 1918, a hostel for disabled soldiers and sailors was opened by Mrs. Lloyd George. Experienced instructors have been engaged and the men are trained in the making of furniture, modelled on old Welsh designs, and of baskets. There are toy making workshops, equipped with fretworking and other machinery, which is largely used to supplement the hand workers. On the occasion of the opening of the hostel, Mrs. Lloyd George paid a tribute to the work of Miss Heaton



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and to the excellence of the toys, which have a world wide sale. "I never go to an exhibition in London," said Mrs. Lloyd George, "without seeing Miss Heaton there in her tall Welsh hat, busily selling her goods."

The appended list of occupations in which employment has been found for disabled soldiers shows the great efforts which the North Wales Committee have made.

### DENBIGHSHIRE :--

Market gardening : Wrexham Garden Village.

Electrical wiring and fitting : Wrexham Corporation Electricity Department.

Repairs to gas and electrical plant : Colwyn Bay Urban District Council.

Repair and maintenance of public lamps : Colwyn Bay Urban District Council.

Electrical wiring : Broughton Plas Power Colliery Co.

Blacksmithing : Messrs. Francis & Sons, Colwyn Bay.

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Cabinet-making: Messrs. W. Aston & Sons, Johnstown.

Clogging: Messrs. Fletcher, Wrexham.

Coachpainting and wheelwrighting: Messrs. Fletcher & Sons, Colwyn Bay.

Painting and paper-hanging: Mr. E. Jones, Wrexham.

Toy-making: North Wales Toy Factory, Colwyn Bay.

Toy making: Vale of Clwyd Toy Workshop.

Electrical work: Messrs. H. D. Carter, Colwyn Bay.

Clerical work: Education Offices, Ruthin.

Watch repairing: Messrs. Butt & Co., Wrexham.

Boot repairing: Messrs. Fletcher, Wrexham; Mr. W. Dodman, Wrexham.

Inspectors of weights and measures: County Inspector, Wrexham.

## FLINTSHIRE:—

Automatic machine work: Phoenix Works, Rhuddlan.

Switchboard work: Rhyl Electricity Works.

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Cable jointer and meter fixer : Rhyl Urban District Council.

### CARNARVONSHIRE :—

Agriculture : Madryn Castle Farm School.

Forestry : Gwydyr Ucht, Rhydyeran, Penrhyn.

**THE SOUTH WALES COMMITTEE.**—Both the South Wales and the North Wales Committees have been very fortunate in securing the services of very able secretaries, who have not spared themselves in their work. The secretary of the South Wales Committee is Mr. S. Auckland. In this area training centres have been established in practically all the large towns such as Cardiff, Swansea and Newport. Schemes of training of all kinds have been started, the period of tuition ranging from six to twelve months in the majority of cases. The possession of technical colleges and institutes by these three towns has considerably facilitated the work of the committee. Other important centres are the Treforest School of Mines and the Green Farm, Ely. Large numbers of disabled soldiers have found employment in clerical work,

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cinema operating, and tailoring. Many have also found situations as motor mechanics and switch-board and motor attendants. Among the most successful schemes has been the establishment of the market garden farm at Ely. A great measure of the success of this scheme is due to the efforts of Mr. P. R. Marrison, of the Welsh Townplanning and Housing Trust, Ltd. Through the Agency of the South Wales Committee several hundreds of disabled soldiers have been found employment in over thirty different trades. Furthermore, medical treatment has been provided for several hundreds of disabled soldiers at various hospitals in the Principality and the West of England. In connection with the training of diamond cutters at Acton Park, Wrexham, a number of places were reserved for applicants to the South Wales Committee.

THE KING EDWARD VII. WELSH NATIONAL MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION AND THE WELSH NATIONAL FUND.—Splendid work has been done in dealing with the disabled soldier by the King Edward VII. Welsh National Memorial Association. This Association is the only authority in Wales which

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has tackled the problem of the discharged tuberculous soldier. Over two thousand soldiers and sailors have passed through the hands of the Association, of whom over sixteen hundred have received treatment in hospitals or sanatoria. The Association has also endeavoured to deal with the training of the tuberculous ex-soldier, with reference to those cases in which a return to pre-war occupation would be detrimental to the complete restoration of health.

Excellent work has also been done and is being done by the Welsh National Fund for the welfare of sailors and soldiers of Wales and their dependents. The existing organisation was brought into being as the result of negotiations between the committee of the National Fund for Welsh Troops, of which Mrs. Lloyd George is the Chairman, and the committee of the Welsh National Fund. It was felt that although allowances were made by the State to disabled men and their dependents, there were gaps in the State organisation which could be filled by a voluntary fund. At the same time the question of assisting the demobilised men in any future difficulty was considered to need

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some special provision. The Fund was organised on a wide basis and provided for grants not only to discharged men and their dependents but also to all men and women who had served in the War, overseas or upon the seas, whether suffering from any physical disability or not, the only limitation being Welsh nationality or residence in Wales, or in the case of soldiers without either of these qualifications, service in a Welsh regiment. No grant is made where an adequate amount can be obtained from the State. In apportioning its grants the Fund works through the local war pensions committee, the National Federation of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors, and the Comrades of the Great War. Many cases of real poverty have been dealt with. Both discharged men and men in training have been helped in meeting unforeseen extra expenses, such as the funeral expenses of a child or illness in the family. Grants have also been made to disabled soldiers who have undergone schemes of training and require money to make a fresh start in life. In the summer of 1918 an agreement was made with the King's Fund for Disabled Men, whereby complete co-operation was secured between the two organisations.

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**THE FARM COLONY FOR WALES.**—The Government decision that Wales was entitled to one of the proposed farm colonies for ex-soldiers roused the Carmarthenshire County Council to take steps to secure the establishment of the Welsh Colony within its borders. The success of the Council's efforts led to the establishment of the Pembrey Farm Colony. The area of the site is about 1,400 acres and the soil is suitable for crops of all kinds. There is an additional area of 700 acres of salt marsh which could be reclaimed by a sea wall and which would then be worth from £40 to £50 an acre. There is also a tract of about 1,000 acres of light sandy soil which could be utilised by fixing the sand with Marras grass and sitka spruce. Fine asparagus has been grown here and the soil would be admirably adapted for market gardens.

The property is served by the Great Western Railway main line from London to Fishguard, which runs through the estate and is adjacent to a virgin anthracite coalfield. A rapidly increasing industrial population is within easy reach. The network of agricultural co-operative societies which exists in the County of Carmarthen will

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considerably help its development. In addition to its possibilities as a market garden centre for the needs of the populous adjacent villages, the basket making industry can be established, as the land is suitable for osier plantations.

The district of Pembrey is typically Welsh in language and sentiment. The education of children is well provided for, elementary and secondary schools being close at hand. There is also a county organiser of agricultural education, a county instructress in dairy work, poultry keeping and rural domestic economy, whose services will be at the disposal of the colony. The colony is traversed by the main Llanelly and Kidwelly road and a good parish road runs eastwards, so that the majority of the fields are within easy reach of fine transport facilities. It is the hope of the Welsh authorities who have interested themselves in this scheme that this holding will eventually become a model farm colony.

For the information in this chapter the Editors are indebted to G. G. Lerry, Esq., Alfred Seymour Jones, Esq., Alderman David Evans, H. E. K. Adams, Esq., Miss G. Jones, S. Auckland, Esq., Miss Mary Heaton, P. R. Marrison, Esq., F. J. Alban, Esq.



**WALES AND WAR SAVINGS**



## CHAPTER VII

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### WALES AND WAR SAVINGS

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**BOTH** generosity and thrift, to be effective, must be organised. This is the lesson of the campaigns which have been carried out in Wales by the National War Savings Committee.

Some of the Welsh counties are among those that have contributed most per head of the population; some of the Welsh counties are among those that have contributed least per head of the population. It would be unfair to infer that because two or

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three counties in Wales have not contributed to the Government War funds as liberally as might have been expected there is any section of the Welsh people who have not responded to the Government's call for money. Wales is essentially a rural and agricultural country, and with the exception of Glamorganshire, Monmouthshire and parts of Flintshire, Denbighshire, and Carmarthenshire, the wealth of most of the counties is not great. For this reason it is all the more creditable that the county which has responded most generously is one which is practically devoid of any industries and is almost entirely agricultural in character, namely, Cardiganshire. In this county war savings campaigns were organised perhaps more thoroughly, and at any rate more effectively, than in any other county of a similar nature in the British Isles.

During the period from its formation in the autumn of 1916 to September, 1918, the Cardiganshire War Savings Committee through its Associations were responsible for the investment of £616,534 in Government securities, and of this amount £455,458 was subscribed through the Elementary Schools of the County, which averages

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£4,338 per school. The total number of members of all the War Savings Associations in Cardiganshire is 12,085, so that the contribution per member averages £51. This undoubtedly constitutes a record, not only for Wales but for the United Kingdom. When it is borne in mind that Cardiganshire is a county of villages—the great majority of the population is made up of small farmers and labourers—the significance of these figures is all the more wonderful.

The success of the war savings movement in this county is undoubtedly due to the fact that the joint secretaries of the county committee, Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Jenkin James, decided from the commencement to educate the county in the necessity and duty of investing in Government securities. The personal factor must largely explain why Cardiganshire has done so much better than the average county in England and Wales. Both the county secretaries are Cardiganshire men and speak the Cardiganshire dialect of the Welsh language—their mother tongue—and their names are household words throughout the county. In

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the carrying out of their policy they realised that the natural centres for their educational programme were the elementary schools. Every school in the county was visited and at each one a war savings association was formed, the head teachers and their staffs forming the committee, and in every school special lessons were given on war savings. In the course of time the school committees were enlarged and the most influential men in every district were co-opted. The secretaries were able to imbue these committees with some of their own enthusiasm and by insisting on the necessity of a house-to-house canvass in every parish were able to claim that there was practically no home in the whole county to which a personal appeal had not been made. Another important factor was the personal influence of Mr. Thomas. As an inspector of the Board of Education for 25 years he had obtained a unique influence upon both present and past pupils, as well as over the teachers of the county.

The majority of the schools in Cardiganshire are very small, with an average attendance of about 60 children. In the following table are

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contained particulars of the efforts of eighteen of the schools—out of the 105 Elementary Schools of the County—which are specially worthy of mention :—

NAME	No. of Members	Total amt. Invested
New Quay Cl. ....	325	£36,097
Llangoedmore C.E. ....	32	27,165
Aberaeron Cl. ....	208	12,786
Llanwenog C.E. ....	200	15,927
New Court and Blaenau Cl.	200	11,819
Llangeitho Cl. ....	208	10,976
Adpar Cl. ....	112	10,533
Llandyssul Cl. ....	165	10,416
Penlon Cl. ....	148	9,232
Blaenporth C.E. ....	144	8,619
Pontrhydfendigaid and Strata Florida Cl. ....	248	8,491
Pontgarreg Cl. ....	185	8,425
Llanilar Cl. ....	185	8,372
Llanwnen Cl. ....	85	8,322
Llechryd Cl. ....	123	7,742
Rhydypennau Cl. ....	176	7,627
Glynarthen Cl. ....	176	7,159
Aberbank C.E. ....	182	7,033

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The large majority of the members of the above mentioned Associations are farmers, farm-labourers and cottagers. The farmers of Cardiganshire are mostly tenant farmers and cannot by any stretch of the imagination be termed wealthy or rich. Working on the land in much the same way as their servants or labourers they extract a bare existence from the none too fertile uplands of west Wales.

The persistence and enthusiasm of the members of the committees have been most praiseworthy, and all the obstacles inseparable from any organisation of this nature existing among a scattered rural population with meagre post office facilities were overcome.

The three Cardiganshire Boroughs also did remarkably well. Aberystwyth, with a population of 9,000, invested through the banks and the post office no less a sum than £1,818,951, an average of £200 per head. A sum of £682,448 was subscribed during Tank Week in July, 1918, an average sum of £75 16s. 2d. per head of the population. Cardigan, with a population of 3,578, has invested through War Savings Associations a sum of £128,410, while the work



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done at Lampeter in the matter of investment in Government War securities deserves very special commendation. As much as £103,608 was invested at Lampeter during War Weapons' Week, held in July, 1918, the largest sum invested by any single person during that week being only £1,000. (The population of the Borough of Lampeter is 1,808 and of the Union of Lampeter 5,368.) The appended table shows how the noteworthy effort of Cardiganshire has been distributed among the various districts of the county:—

Name of Local Committee.	No. of Members to Sept. 28, 1918.	Total amt. invested in War Savings Certificates and War Bonds to Sept. 28th, 1918.
Aberayron & District	1,377	... £68,434
New Quay & District	986	... 61,324
Aberystwyth Borough	2,287	... 66,469
Aberystwyth Rural...	1,950	... 30,726
Cardigan Borough ...	641	... 128,410
Cardigan Rural .....	892	... 71,232
Lampeter & District	946	... 66,556
Llandyssul Parish ...	630	... 24,591
Newcastle Emlyn R. District .....	975	... 48,316
Tregaron Union .....	1,401	... 50,476

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It would be committing an injustice not to state that this example of patriotism was largely due to the unflagging efforts of the elementary school teachers throughout the county, who devoted all their spare time in the evenings, on Saturday afternoons, and during the vacation to the task of securing the successful working of the respective war savings associations to which they belonged.

Owing to the fact that large sums of money were invested in War Loan and War Bonds through banks and post offices, it is not possible to ascertain the various amounts which were contributed by the Welsh counties, but with one or two possible exceptions it can be stated on the authority of the National War Savings Committee that Wales did her fair share in supplying the Government with that money which was one of the keys to victory.

In Glamorganshire local centre committees were established in 41 towns, and through their agency 1,192 war savings associations were formed in the county. Of these 450 were connected with schools, over 220 with works and 160 with churches

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and chapels. Specially noteworthy were the efforts put forth by Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr, Pontardulais, Maesteg, Penarth and Cowbridge. Cardiff, with a population of 170,000, invested £1,020,000 during Tank Week and £3,660,000 during Business Man's Week, Swansea, with a population of 136,000, contributed £1,226,225 in one week alone, and Merthyr, with a population of 85,000, £1,029,877 in three days. In one week of March, 1918, £47,000 was invested by the 7,000 inhabitants of Pontardulais, and later in June the same town contributed in one week an additional sum of over £80,000. Maesteg (population 28,000) invested £235,000 in three days; Penarth (15,000) invested £142,000 in one week, and Cowbridge, a small town of 2,500 people, contributed £18,200 in one week.

Another Welsh county which has done remarkably well in the matter of war savings is Denbighshire. Both the eastern part of the county, which is industrial, and the western, which is agricultural, have responded equally well, and it is estimated that altogether the county has invested over £3,000,000 in Government securities. There are

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14 local committees and 160 war savings associations. Between January, 1917, and April, 1918, the elementary schools of the county purchased 25,000 War Savings Certificates, and at the same time these schools increased their contributions to the ordinary school savings banks. Nine thousand school children are members of War Savings Associations or School Savings Banks.

The Pentre Broughton Boys' School, near Wrexham, has a remarkable record for war activities of all kinds. The boys of this school have invested £2,042 in Government securities, namely £1,511 in War Savings Certificates and £531 in War Loan and War Bonds. The deposits in the School Savings Bank increased from £35 in 1914 to £141 in 1917. These boys also contributed £80 to various war charities, such as St. Dunstan's Hospital, the "Jack Cornwell" Fund, and the Soldiers' Plum Pudding Fund. Collections of waste material were also organised, and in this way 123 cwt. of old newspapers, 9,500 jam jars, and 18,000 bottles were collected. These materials realised over £80. This enthusiasm was due largely to the organising ability of the Head Master, Mr. D. E. Rees,

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who arranged for special lessons to be given to the boys on patriotism, thrift, and war savings. The boys were also instructed in poultry and goat keeping.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the Denbighshire war savings campaigns was the investment by the Miners' Association of the funds of their Society in War Loan.

The examples which have been given of the efforts of these three counties can be taken as typical of the whole of Wales. Though the magnitude of their contributions has naturally given them more publicity than has fallen to the lot of other counties, yet it is true to say that throughout Wales there has been a thorough realisation of the need for financially supporting the Government. It is an undoubted fact that the rural if not the urban Welshman is conservative by nature and suspicious of innovation, and it is not so long ago when the Welsh farmer preferred to receive the notes of a local bank with a local impress, such as a red ox or a black cow, rather than the notes of the Bank of England. There can be

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no doubt that the withdrawal of gold from circulation in the early days of the War was viewed with much misgiving by many Welshmen, and it was only such an organisation as the National War Savings Committee created which could appeal sufficiently to the patriotism of many a Welsh farmer and peasant to induce him to lend his secret savings, whether in stocking or in jug, under the pillow or up the chimney, to the Government.

For the information in this chapter the Editors are indebted to David E. Thomas, Esq., Jenkin James, Esq., W. Roberts, Esq., D. E. Rees, Esq., Evan Hughes, Esq., Sir Thos. Hughes, and D. S. Roberts, Esq.

**WAR CHARITIES**





## CHAPTER VIII

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### WAR CHARITIES

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IT is impossible to estimate the amount which the people of Wales contributed to the innumerable funds which were raised in connection with the War. Owing to the shortage of paper the majority of charitable societies did not issue their usual detailed list of subscriptions, but inquiries from the various secretaries established the fact that Wales contributed her fair share in practically every case. In this connection the following quotation from the reply of a secretary of a well known relief fund is illuminating as revealing an Englishman's point of view. "I remember Pro-

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fessor Huxley once saying that if a nation could produce a Faraday, a Davey or a Watt at a cost of £100,000, either one of them would be dirt cheap at the price. If Wales did nothing more in this War it has produced a man who will be the saviour of the world from German domination. All honour to Wales for producing Lloyd George.”

In estimating whatever financial contribution Wales may have made it has to be borne in mind that half its population lives in the south-east corner and that the greater part of the country is agricultural and rural in character. While it is not possible even to summarise the efforts which the various Welsh counties put forth on behalf of the most important funds, yet by examination of the activities of a small number of them in Wales some light can be thrown on the subject.

## THE BELGIAN REFUGEES

The Welsh nation was moved to the depths of its being at the outbreak of war by the plight of Belgium, and the need of one small nation called forth the generosity of the other. Almost every

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village in Wales made preparation for the hospitable entertainment and reception of Belgian refugees, and it is on record in the Government report of the committee appointed to inquire into the best means of assimilating these refugee workers, that the accommodation provided in Wales was many times in excess of what proved to be the actual requirements. It is estimated that there were altogether in the United Kingdom about 200,000 refugees, and of this number Wales took her fair proportion. In seven of the Welsh counties central committees were established, and in 224 towns and villages local committees were set up.

The most important centre was Cardiff, which became a kind of distributing bureau. The first refugees arrived on September 7th, 1914. The Lord Mayor at once formed a committee of public men, including representatives of religious bodies. The aid of the Press was invoked to give publicity to appeals for funds and hospitality. Over 1,400 refugees passed through the hands of the Cardiff Central Committee. Of these about 500 stayed in Cardiff and the remainder were sent to various

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places in South Wales. A complete register was kept containing particulars about every refugee. In the matter of hospitality the various religious denominations vied with one another in taking empty houses and furnishing them. Collections were made among the members and guarantees, amounting sometimes to as much as £14 per week, were obtained for the upkeep of these homes.

In Newport the same plan was followed. A number of large and small houses were taken and through the medium of a Mayor's Fund contributions were received which produced a weekly income of £50. Among the other towns which gave hospitality on a large scale were Swansea, Porthcawl, Neath, Pontypridd, Aberystwyth, and Carmarthen. The county of Anglesey alone received three hundred refugees. As a general rule the method of organisation was the same everywhere. Representative committees were established, houses were taken, and a guarantee fund inaugurated. Wherever it was possible and expedient every effort was made to find work for these destitute subjects of King Albert. In the course of time arrangements were made by which it became possi-

## WAR CHARITIES

ble for those Belgians who so desired to return to their native land. A large number found employment in munition factories and in other industrial works, and gradually the work of the local committees became less and less. Wales has every reason to be proud of her generous treatment of the Belgian refugees, and it should be placed on record that her religious institutions were not found wanting in this emergency.

### THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Before the War the Young Men's Christian Association possessed organisations in most of the large towns in Wales. On the declaration of War, these were immediately placed at the disposal of the troops which were being mobilised. In connection with the annual summer training camps of the Territorials arrangements had been made for the provision of marquees at the various Welsh camps. When these troops were transferred to their War stations the Y.M.C.A. accompanied them, so that the Association was able to render immediate service in a number of centres. The

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resources of the existing Y.M.C.A. centres were soon taxed to the utmost and development on a large scale became imperative. Wherever there was any considerable number of troops encamped Y.M.C.A. workers and marquees were despatched.

In the winter of 1914, when the men were billeted in towns, the Y.M.C.A. secured central buildings and rendered all possible service. At Newport, Cardiff, Barry, Swansea, Porthcawl, Port Talbot, Llanelly, Pembrey, Pembroke Dock, Tenby, Aberystwyth, Llandrindod Wells, Brecon, Abergavenny, Wrexham, Denbigh, Rhyl, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Bangor, Carnarvon, Criccieth, Pwllheli, the local organisations did excellent work. As soon as it had been decided where the permanent camps and training centres were to be located, arrangements were made for the provision of huts for the use of the men. Some idea of the valuable services which the Welsh branch of the Y.M.C.A. rendered to the troops, English and Welsh, which from time to time were stationed in the Principality, may be gathered from the following imposing list of huts which were established in Wales:—

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Cardiff Barracks, Cardiff Castle, Cardiff Skating Rink, Cardiff (Sophia Gardens), Cardiff Docks, Penarth, Laverock, Barry Dock, Buttrills (Barry), Barry Island, The Mumbles, Swansea, Pembroke Dock, Llanion Barracks, Bush Camp, Chapel Bay, East Blockhouse, Dale, West Blockhouse, Scoveston Beaumaris, Neyland, Tenby, Goodwick, Milton, Brecon, Crickhowell, Carmarthen, Aberystwyth, Llandrindod Wells, Wrexham, Kinmel Park (3), Prestatyn, Deganwy, Conway, Rhyl, Bangor, Carnarvon, Waenfawr (Carnarvon), Towyn, Penrhyn.

From these forty-one centres the Y.M.C.A. workers kept in touch with the men on outpost duty or on lines of communication. In addition the Y.M.C.A. provided for the men on guard at the prisoners of war camps at Bwlch (Brecon), Port Talbot, Frongoch (Bala), and Dyffryn Aled. Good work also was done at the Canadian lumbermen's camp at Cwmyoy, Abergavenny.

Interesting developments of the work on the social and welfare side arose in the provision of canteens for munition workers employed at Cardiff

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(National Shell Factory), Newport (Uskside Works), Ebbw Vale (Steel Works), Port Talbot (Baldwins' Steel Works) and Pembrey (Nobel's Explosive Works). Provision was also made for soldiers travelling by train and station huts were provided at all the important railway junctions, such as Newport, Cardiff, Bridgend, Carmarthen, Pembroke Dock, and Barry Dock. All troops arriving at these stations were met and if necessary provided with sleeping accommodation for the night. At Bangor, owing to the cancellation of all Sunday trains, all men arriving on leave on that day were conveyed by car to their homes in Carnarvonshire and Anglesey.

Considerable attention was paid to the wounded men located in Wales and in the large towns everything was done to give the men a hearty welcome. In all the town centres employment bureaux were established and work was found for large numbers of discharged soldiers.

Every hut provided the usual facilities for recreation, refreshment and correspondence. Definite efforts were made to encourage the men to



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make good use of their leisure time by providing them with an educational programme. Lecturers toured the huts, and local educational experts co-operated to this end. Concert parties made regular tours to the various areas. The various religious bodies placed their services at the disposal of the Y.M.C.A. and chaplains, clergymen and ministers of all denominations gave willing help in meeting the religious needs of the men.

All the expenses of the work of the Y.M.C.A. in Wales during the four years of war were met by the contributions of the men and women of the Principality, and at no time was it necessary to make any claim for financial assistance on the Y.M.C.A. headquarters in London. The total receipts from all sources from August, 1914, to June, 1918, amounted to over £170,000, exclusive of any sums remitted direct to the London headquarters.

Without exaggeration it is true to say that the work of the Y.M.C.A. in Wales was completely successful and that the general policy of meeting the needs of the men stationed in the various areas was faithfully carried out. The majority of the

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troops stationed in Wales were men from England, Scotland and Ireland, the men from Wales being sent across the border. These Welsh troops were cared for by the Y.M.C.A. in the camps to which they were sent, and whilst Wales only had two camps of any considerable size, namely, Pembroke Dock and Kinmel Park, everything possible was done for the men located in the Principality of whatever nationality, whether English, Scotch, Irish or American.

### THE LLOYD GEORGE AMERICAN RELIEF FUND

The Lloyd George American Relief Fund was a remarkable example of that intense nationalism which the Welshman carries with him wherever he goes. News came to the bands of Welsh settlers in the United States that the outbreak of War had caused much distress and unemployment in both North and South Wales. Immediate steps were taken by the two American-Welsh newspapers, "Y Drych" of Utica and "The Welsh-American" of Pittsburg, to organise a campaign for raising money to meet this crisis in Wales. In this way

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over £5,000 was raised by Welsh societies, churches, universities and mining camps in all parts of the United States and Canada. The American subscribers entrusted their gift to the Right Hon. David Lloyd George, who called together a number of representative Welshmen to consider the best method of securing in accordance with the wishes of the donors the most effective utilisation of the funds for the benefit of the people of Wales. This conference, which was held in Carnarvon in February, 1915, decided to entrust the work to a committee and invited Mrs. Lloyd George, Sir Joseph Davies, of Cardiff, Mr. R. Silyn Roberts and Mr. J. Owain Evans to form the committee. Working through the local distress committees which had been set up in every county, the committee decided that it would concentrate upon the relief of such persons as were in distress and had no claim upon the various other relief organisations which were in existence.

Before the Government decided to increase the old age pension the committee, between February and October, 1915, subsidised a certain number of old age pensioners in Wales. Naturally this was

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only done in a very small number of specially deserving cases, as a general scheme of subsidising the 42,000 Welsh old age pensioners would have absorbed all the funds available. Sums amounting to over £1,700 were distributed in sixty towns and villages of North and South Wales. Special care was taken that only deserving cases should obtain any benefit from the fund. In each class of claim, sickness, old age, unemployment and poverty, the majority of appeals came from North Wales. For some years prior to the outbreak of war the quarry industry had been suffering from a severe wave of depression, partly owing to the craze for roofing houses with tiles instead of slates. By the end of the year 1914 the demand for slates practically disappeared and the quarries were either closed or put on short time. This came as a final blow to a people who had already used up all their reserves.

In the great industrial districts of South Wales, once the first war dislocation had passed, all industries were carried on at top speed; while in central and west Wales the demand for and the rise in value of all agricultural products reduced distress to a minimum. It was true that the army ab-

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sorbed a large percentage of the young men of north west Wales and that many girls were able to find work in munition factories, but the committee's enquiries showed there were considerable numbers left who in duty to parents and relatives felt compelled to stay and share the poverty of their people. On these facts the committee decided to start a sock knitting industry for women in the slate quarrying districts of north Wales.

The first workroom to be opened was at Blaenau Ffestiniog, where part of the market buildings, after necessary alterations, was converted into a workroom. Knitting was started on the 7th July, 1915, with seven knitting machines, a number which was gradually increased up to the present equipment of twenty knitting machines, with finishing and winding machines. Coincident with the establishment of the workrooms, arrangements were made to provide employment for the older women in hand knitting in their homes. From the opening of the workrooms to the autumn of 1918, 68 girls were trained in the use of the machines, and over 100,000 pairs of socks were

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made. The final output for that year was at the rate of 1,700 pairs per week.

The next development was the organisation of workrooms on similar lines at Penygroes. The band room at Talysarn was converted into a workroom and was opened on the 15th September, 1915, with six machines and five learners. It soon became necessary to secure larger premises. Up to the present over 46 girls have been trained. Over 100,000 pairs of socks have been made and the output now averages 1,600 pairs a week. In January, 1916, a workroom was established at Bethesda, where 50 girls have been trained. The total output from this workroom exceeds 70,000 pairs of socks.

These factories were not run on the usual business lines. The policy persistently kept in view was the relief of distress, and accordingly the girl workers were not chosen with a view to their capacity for turning out so many dozen pairs of socks per week. Many of the girls were invalids and were unable to work more than two or three days a week. In 1918 a first class girl was able to earn over 30/- a week. The success of the enter-

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prise was largely due to the energy and enthusiasm of the secretary, Mr. Owain Evans. By bringing these factories to the notice of the War Office he was able to secure contracts for the English Government and afterwards for the French and Belgian Governments. Nearly 300,000 pairs of socks were supplied to the Allies. It is worthy of mention that the War Office never had occasion to reject a single sock. In regard to organisation, Mr. Evans succeeded in obtaining the services of a highly experienced woman from the Midlands, who acted at first as instructor and afterwards as supervisor. He also secured the co-operation of Mr. Ralph Green, of Cardiff, whose technical knowledge proved of the greatest value in the negotiations for the purchase of yarn. The workrooms became practically self-supporting and it is hoped that this new local industry will be permanent. The practical assistance that these workrooms afforded cannot be better exemplified than in the following instances of the circumstances of girls who were employed.

Girl, aged 18. She kept house for her grandfather, an old age pensioner.

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Girl, aged 16. She was one of a family of eight. The father, the sole support of his children, was a quarryman and earned about £4 10s. a month.

Girl, aged 24. Her mother was an invalid and her father a cripple.

Publicity is not always deserved, but in the case of the American Relief Fund it can be said with sincerity that the example of the Welsh-American and the splendid work of the Committee which was appointed to control the disbursements are but typical of the spirit of service which was shown by public men and women throughout Wales during the four years of War.

### GENERAL

Foremost among the funds to which Wales contributed on a large scale was the British Red Cross Society. During the first three years of War nearly £35,000 was raised for the funds of this society by the thirteen Welsh counties. In



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addition, gifts in kind to the ninety odd hospitals which were established in Wales amounted to over £12,000. The reports issued by the society show that the majority of these hospitals were run on thoroughly economical and satisfactory lines and in particular the Ystrad Isaf Hospital was highly commended by the authorities at headquarters. During the first three years of the War the Welsh hospitals received over 35,000 wounded soldiers.

Besides the British Red Cross Society, Wales gave liberal support to the similar institutions connected with the French and Belgian troops. Large sums were also contributed to the relief funds for the Belgians, Serbians, Montenegrins, Poles, and the inhabitants of Palestine. The Polish Victims Relief Fund appealed particularly to the Roman Catholics of Wales. In connection with the Serbian Relief Fund a remarkable development took place under the inspiration of Captain W. H. Williams, of Newport.

During the latter part of 1917 a small committee was formed at Cardiff for the purpose of establishing a hostel for the accommodation of nine Serbian

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boys. Further provision was afterwards made for the education of exiled Serbian youths at the Welsh University Colleges of Aberystwyth, Bangor and Cardiff, and also at the technical schools of Newport.

Of all the war charities on behalf of which Welshmen made generous contributions it is natural that none appealed so much as the prisoners of war funds which were established in the various counties. It has been impossible to ascertain the exact amount which was raised for these funds but the amount can be gauged by the fact that Monmouthshire collected £9,000 for her prisoners of war and that in one year the people of Anglesey raised £650 for their county fund. When it is realised that further large sums of money were expended on comforts for the Welsh troops and that contributions were made to practically all the multifarious war charities, such as the Lord Roberts Memorial Fund (over £6,000) and the "John Cornwell, V.C." National Memorial (over £200), it becomes obvious that Wales was not behindhand in responding not only verbally but in a very practical manner to the

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demands which the suffering and sacrifice of the War called into being.

The Editors are indebted for the information contained in this chapter to Frank S. Higman, Esq., Basil Mayhew, Esq., F. C. Davies, Esq., Major Tudor Craig, H. A. Leggatt, Esq., Captain W. H. Williams, Miss Alma Tadema, C. Eustace Wilson, Esq., J. Owain Evans, Esq., W. O. Jones, Esq., F. Lyndon Cooper, Esq., A. Seymour Jones, Esq.



**AGRICULTURAL WALES**



## CHAPTER IX

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### AGRICULTURAL WALES

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It is hard to realise that in the early middle ages Wales was a great corn growing country and yet this fact has been indubitably established, not only by the actual statement of medieval chronicles and historical records, but by investigations which have been conducted by experts in recent years.

Evidences of ploughed land have even been discovered in uplands of an altitude at which it is scarcely conceivable that any cereals would yield even a scanty return. During the last hundred years Wales has come to be more and more regarded as a land where the growing of wheat is not a profit-

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able undertaking. Moreover, the humid climate of the greater part of the Principality favours grass farming and stock rearing. It is remarkable how easily, owing to the climatic conditions, pasture land is formed. One result of this is that greater effort is needed to convert this kind of land into arable than in districts where the climate is drier. The unsuitability of the greater part of the soil of Wales for the production of cereal crops was amply proved by the unfortunate result which attended the huge harvest of 1918, when all over the country there could be seen field after field of corn rotting on the ground owing to the impossibility of garnering it in the wet weather. When the Government demanded that every county in Wales should increase its acreage of arable land many Welsh farmers undoubtedly considered the scheme as impracticable for quite a considerable part of Wales.

For some years previous to the outbreak of War Wales had become agriculturally a stock rearing country, and in the rural districts her wealth lay not so much in her crops of barley and oats and her root crops as in her flocks of mountain sheep, her herds of oxen and the tens of thousands of



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ponies which roamed her upland heights, to say nothing of the enormous number of pigs which were to be found in every Welsh county. Consequently it was felt by many that it would have been better for Welsh farmers to concentrate upon the lines which were most familiar to them and considered more suitable to the conditions of the country. This feeling of misgiving did not, however, interfere to any great extent with the loyal carrying out of the Government programme as soon as it became law.

**THE WELSH CONTRIBUTION.**—The method which was adopted in assigning quotas to the Welsh counties was to ascertain the mean between a maximum and a minimum estimate of the acreage in each county suitable for cultivation. The total quota for the Principality amounted to 682,000 acres. The actual amount which was put under corn was 645,000 acres. This left a deficit of 37,000 acres and at least half of this deficit can be accounted for by the failure of one county to toe the line. Three counties exceeded their quota by several hundreds of acres and three others were only a relatively small number of acres below.

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To appreciate the increase one must compare these figures with those for 1916. Compared with that year the 1918 figures show a total increase of 335,000 acres of arable land. One result of this emphasis on the necessity for cereals was a very large decrease in the number of store cattle in the Principality, due largely to the curtailing of pasture land but also to the shortage of foodstuffs and the great demand in the home market.

The general method and organisation of this agricultural campaign was practically the same in every county. The membership of the county executive committees, which were constituted by the Cultivation of Lands Order, 1917, was increased by the co-option of several gentlemen by the Board of Agriculture. These county War Agricultural Committees were necessarily large, owing to the great amount of work which was entrusted to them. Their duties were to undertake a survey of all the land and farms in the respective counties, to determine what land was suitable for the cultivation of cereal crops, and to see that the orders which were served on the farmers were strictly carried out. But their duties did not end

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with this task. Under their control came the supply of tractor ploughs, of horses, and of the necessary labour, the business of procuring exemptions from military service for the men employed on the farms, the supply of threshing drums where necessary and of such fertilisers as sulphate of ammonia, superphosphates, basic slag and lime and of seed wheat and seed potatoes. The following brief résumé of the activities of the War Agricultural Committees of Glamorganshire, Denbighshire and Anglesey can be taken as typical for the whole of Wales.

GLAMORGANSHIRE, DENBIGHSHIRE, AND ANGLESEY.—The Glamorganshire Agricultural Committee carried out its duties through eight sub-committees entitled respectively Labour, Tractor, Threshing, Supplies, Survey, German Prisoner Labour, Potato, Horticultural. The work of the Survey was carried out by thirteen district committees. Forty-four tractors were employed in the county and were in charge of sixty-three tractor drivers, ploughmen and mechanics. These tractors ploughed, cultivated or harrowed 9,452 acres. Ninety-seven horses were supplied by the Government and accommo-

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dated at a central stable at Bridgend. In order to assist small holders lacking equipment, fourteen ploughing gangs, comprising ploughmen, teams of horses and the necessary implements were formed. The Food Production Department supplied twenty-seven ploughs, ten disc harrows, twenty sets of three-harrows, twenty corn drills, forty-five binders and twenty rollers. Ploughing schools were established, at which 55 men were trained and about 600 soldiers were employed as agricultural labourers. The Supplies Committee distributed 620 tons of sulphate of ammonia, 1,200 tons of superphosphates, 1,287 tons of basic slag and over 160,000 bushels of seed corn. On the financial side of their work the Executive Committee received splendid help from the County Accountant, Mr. A. W. Fox. The quota for Glamorganshire was 27,000 acres, and in spite of the industrial nature of this county this acreage was attained, in a large measure owing to the untiring efforts of the secretary, Mr. H. A. Pritchard.

In the case of Denbighshire, the War Agricultural Committee consisted of twenty members, and in the various parts of the county twenty-four district

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committees were formed. These district committees arranged meetings of farmers in their respective localities, at which addresses were given by members of the central committee. The quota assigned to Denbighshire for the 1918 season was an additional 31,000 acres of arable land. Inspectors were appointed to make a complete survey of every holding of not less than five acres in the county. In order to carry out their various duties the central committee established five sub-committees. Through the efforts of the Labour Sub-Committee large numbers of agricultural labourers were exempted from military service and about 500 soldiers were obtained for work on the farms. The Machinery Sub-Committee organised and arranged tractor ploughing. Ten tractors and ploughs were obtained and ploughed up an area of 2,660 acres. This committee also dealt with the supply of corn drills, ploughs, rollers, cultivators, harrows, carts and threshing machines. Under the control of the Supply Sub-Committee came the supply of fertilizers and seeds and the arrangements for the hiring of horse teams by the farmers. The 56 horses which this Committee controlled were lent to farmers at 12s. per week per horse and its keep,

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or alternatively were hired for ploughing land at the rate of 25s. per acre. In this connection over 1,000 horse licences were issued by this Committee under the Sale of Horses Order, 1917. The Supply Committee also arranged for the distribution of seed potatoes and facilities for potato spraying. The agricultural record of Denbighshire was in keeping with its activities in the other spheres of war time work and effort.

In the days of Welsh independence the Isle of Anglesey, known in the vernacular as Sir Fôn, had earned the title of "Mam Cymru" owing to the fact that its large supplies of corn fed the people of North Wales, so it is only fitting that it should be mentioned in connection with the Welsh agricultural campaign. The quota for this county was an additional 18,000 acres of arable land. The amount of additional grassland actually ploughed was 18,460 acres. This result was largely due to the energy and enthusiasm of the chairman of the Anglesey War Agricultural Committee, Mr. William Edwards. The three tables appended show that the farmers of Anglesey were patriotic not only in word but in deed.

## AGRICULTURAL WALES

### NET CULTIVABLE AREA ON HOLDINGS OF 10 ACRES AND UPWARDS.

District.	Total acres.	Waste acres.	Area. Cultivable acres.
Aethwy .....	32,808	6,123	26,684
Dwyran .....	15,016	6,137	8,879
Twrcelyn .....	54,307	8,766	45,541
Valley .....	52,207	8,840	43,367
<b>Totals.</b>	154,338	29,866	124,471

### FINAL RETURN OF 1918 CULTIVATION.

District	Orders on holdings 10 acres & upwards.	Acres voluntarily ploughed in excess of orders.	Orders on holdings between 5 & 10 acres.
Aethwy .....	10,178	201	405
Dwyran .....	3,149	42	185
Twrcelyn ...	16,913	248	634
Valley .....	16,235	317	502
<b>Totals.</b>	46,475	808	1,724

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### TOTAL ACREAGE FOR 1918 CROPS.

Aethwy	...	...	...	10,784
Dwyran	...	...	...	3,376
Twrcelyn	...	...	...	17,795
Valley	...	...	...	17,054
				<hr/>
				49,009
				<hr/>

**TIMBER FELLING.**—One great economic result of the War was the realisation of the dependence of the United Kingdom upon foreign countries for its supply of timber, and during the War the demand far exceeded the supply. All over Wales the countryside was denuded of its trees. The collieries had to be supplied with pit wood, the aircraft works with ashwood for aeroplanes, and military huts, munition works and the trenches in France still further increased the demand. In South Wales large areas were felled and in Central Wales the timber trade experienced a boom. In North Wales de-afforestation took place on an enormous scale. Felling operations were conducted on no less than 114 estates, and in this work over 2,000 men were employed. In Wales as in Eng-



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land many of the felling operations were carried out by men of foreign nationality, such as Norwegians, but it is interesting to note that for the first time women's labour was employed in forestry.

**TIMBER FELLING IN BRECONSHIRE.**—The following letter from Miss Gertrude M. Painter, who was in charge of the contingent of girls employed in Breconshire, gives a vivid account of the nature of the work in that county: “The country is of the wildest, hilly and mountainous, with deep valleys and narrow gorges, and while this renders it very beautiful and picturesque it makes it very difficult for the work in hand, the task of removing timber from the wooded slopes and precipices. Some of the valleys where we are felling timber are very remote and far removed from railway stations, with roads never intended for heavy traffic, and with inclines so steep that it is not possible to use horses to drag the trees out of the wood. But by means of traction engines placed on the roadside the felled timber is removed by the use of wire ropes. Sometimes it is possible to run a tramline through the wood; sometimes a brook rushing madly through the bottom of the

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ravine is dammed and the trees are floated downstream.

“In the case of pitwood the trees are cross-cutted and in lengths of six, nine and thirteen feet, placed ready for loading on the roadside, whence a motor lorry takes them direct to the nearest station for consignment to the collieries. Should the valley hold a great quantity of big timber, saw mills are set up directly the felling has progressed sufficiently, and camps spring up like mushrooms in the most isolated parts of the county—camps of busy men and women, occupied in getting converted timber ready for France for use in the construction of huts and dug-outs and gateposts, and as sleepers for the railway companies. Some of the timber is sent to the dockyards and some to the arsenals, camp depots, and railway and post office departments. The big larch and scotch trees are used for keeling boats; the willow trees are used largely for artificial limbs, while the wood of the ash is utilised in the construction of aeroplanes, in munition works, and in the manufacture of tool handles. The industry of bark stripping has been greatly revived, and while the bark continued to

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run well a large quantity was harvested in this county.

“It is difficult to give an impression of the enormous rate at which timber is being felled, owing to the urgency of the orders which we have to execute. An incredible quantity has already been cut. Every wood is either felled or has been bought for that purpose in the county. The work is hard and the strain is great. The difficulties of transport, the remoteness of the woods, and the lack of skilled labour all add to the arduousness of our task. I must not forget the Welshwoman, for we have a gang of timber girls doing excellent work. Not all, I must confess, are Welsh, but a fair proportion belong to the Principality.

“There is a sadness in the destruction of the beauties of the countryside which this work entails, but it is counter-balanced by the pleasure of finding what a dignity the bare hills acquire.”

**AFFORESTATION.**—Wales possesses enormous forestry possibilities. The mere replanting of the

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woodland areas which have been depleted since 1914 is not an adequate method of dealing with afforestation in Wales. The Principality contains no less than 1,300,000 acres of waste or semi-waste land. If from this figure there is deducted all land of over 1,500 feet high and the rest is reduced by 50 per cent., half a million acres suitable for planting are still left. This area would be capable in the course of time under systematic management of producing every year 30,000,000 cubic feet of timber. Of course it does not follow that all waste land is necessarily afforestable. The wind-swept western seaboard of Wales is unsuitable, and it would be unwise to afforest any land which yields an annual rent of more than 4s. per acre. Again, in forestry the topographical factor has to be taken into account. Rainfall, climate, physical configuration, road and rail transport, and water power have to be considered. Several kinds of trees are suitable to the Welsh climate, among them the spruce, the Douglas fir, the Japanese larch and the Corsican pine. Afforestation in Wales has a great asset in the small holdings which are such a feature of Welsh agriculture. Forestry provides the small holder with a means of increasing his income by

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remunerative labour during the winter season when work on the farm is not at full pressure. And on the other hand the forester, during the summer, would gladly release many of his men for work in the fields. Forestry and agriculture have identical interests.

It is impossible to write about afforestation in Wales without referring to the notable experimental area which exists in Denbighshire. Early in 1906 Mr. John Mahler, of Penisa'r Glyn, presented to the Denbighshire County Council the freehold of fifty acres of land situated near Chirk, on condition that the area should be devoted to forestry investigation carried out by the Department of Forestry of the University College of North Wales, Bangor. The area is typical of much hill land suitable for afforestation in Wales and stands at an elevation varying from 950 to 1,250 feet above sea level. Altogether 117,000 trees have been planted, these being contained in thirty-one plots, each  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acres in extent. There is also a shelter belt to the west and south of the plots, designed as a protection against the prevailing winds. The area

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is visited periodically by forestry students from Bangor, under the guidance of Professor Fraser Story. Careful records are kept not only of height growths but of every detail in the treatment and development of the trees. Valuable information has been obtained and the experiment is being watched with great interest, not only by the Board of Agriculture, but by estate owners and public spirited men all over Wales.

**WAR TIME CONDITIONS.**—In the years immediately preceding the outbreak of War a steadily increasing interest was being taken in every Welsh county in afforestation, and this was due in no small measure to the ability and zeal of the Board of Agriculture Forestry Advisory Officer for Wales, Professor Fraser Story. By a systematic inspection of estates in all parts of the Principality he roused much enthusiasm among all classes of landowners and several projects of afforestation were being enthusiastically taken up when War broke out. Nevertheless a certain amount of afforestation was undertaken during the War. The scarcity of labour and the shortage of materials handicapped

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any planting on a large scale, but at Lake Vyrnwy, the watershed owned by the Liverpool Corporation at Llanwddyn, a fairly large area was afforested by women's labour. Some planting was also done on Major David Davies' estates at Llandinam, Montgomeryshire, and at Leighton, in the same county. Small areas were tackled on Lord Lisburne's estate at Crosswood, Cardiganshire, and on the Coed Coch estate, Abergele, also on Colonel Sandbach's estate at Hafodunas, Denbighshire, and at Nantclwyd, near Ruthin. With the assistance of women workers an area of 25 acres at Corsygedon, near Duffryn, in Merionethshire, was planted on experimental lines in connection with the work of the Forestry Department of the University College of North Wales. Forest plants could have been obtained during the War and it is a fact that many thousands which became overgrown in the nurseries had to be burnt. The great obstacle to war-time development was the scarcity of labour and the shortage of the wire netting which is absolutely necessary for the protection of young plantations from damage by rabbits. There is no lack of interest in forestry in Wales, and the depleted areas in all parts of the

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Principality afford ample scope for development.

In the near future there is every prospect of considerable activity in this direction as soon as conditions become normal. In their struggle for independence the men of Wales found safety and refuge in the impenetrable forests of medieval Wales, and coming generations may find in the restoration of these forest lands a very fruitful source of income for the relief of that burden of debt which the War has placed upon their shoulders.

**WOMEN'S WORK.**—Everyone who has any knowledge of life in Wales in pre-war days is acquainted with the fact that Welsh farmers have always relied on their womenfolk for much of the routine work connected with farming. The dairy work has as a rule been entirely in women's hands, as also the management of the poultry yard. There is one great distinction between farming in England and in Wales. In the Welsh counties there are very few "gentlemen farmers." Wales is a land of small yeoman farmers and the farms are worked by the family of the tenant and the men and women



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labourers whom he is able to employ. Before the War the supply of women labour for Welsh farms was unequal to the demand. For some years the countrywomen have been in the habit of migrating to the towns or the industrial districts where higher wages and better housing conditions prevail and where life is more strenuous and less monotonous. During the War the recruiting of women in Wales for the Land Army was carried on by the Women's War Agricultural Committees working in conjunction with the officials of the Employment Exchanges. The appeals were not confined merely to the needs of the Land Army but were made on behalf of war services generally, although the attractions of the Land Army were specially emphasised by means of processions and exhibitions. As the result of the campaigns which were held there was a large increase in the number of women in the villages who were prepared to undertake part time work, a feature which has always been prominent in Welsh rural life. The girls who joined the Land Army took part in almost every type of agricultural work. As a rule the farmers preferred to employ them for stock work but very many also assisted with horse work. When

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engaged on field work, such as harvesting or potato lifting, the girls usually worked in gangs.

At first the farmers of Wales were very averse to this wholesale substitution of women for men. It was difficult for them to believe that women who had undergone a few months' training could possibly take the place of their skilled labourers and ploughmen who had the inestimable knowledge accruing from years of experience. In some districts the farmers even held meetings to express their views on the absurdity of offering them women as labourers. In the course of time the eminent satisfaction which the more progressive farmers who had engaged girls expressed broke down the prejudices of the more conservative, and soon the demand for girls of the Land Army increased to such an extent that the authorities were unable to cope with it. In 1917 the farmers who had taken on women for harvest work, intending to release them immediately after the crops had been garnered, retained them in a large number of cases for winter stock work on their farms. Many of the girls who undertook this agricultural work for the period of the War out of patriotic reasons

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expressed their intention of remaining permanently on the land, if their services were required, and in many cases Land Army girls married farmers.

As a rule the field working girls were boarded out, but the majority of the stock workers who have obtained permanent employment lived in. In a few cases hostels were established for the girls. On the whole the eastern counties of Wales employed a greater number of Land Army girls than the western. On the other hand, it is in the western counties that the farmers' wives and daughters take a more active share in farm work. Cardiganshire may be taken as a typical example of what the Women's Land Army performed in Wales. In this county about 150 girls of the Land Army were employed on various farms. The majority of them were recruited from Glamorganshire, Denbighshire and Durhamshire. Thirty of these received training in their home county. The wages varied from 7s. to 15s. per week with board and lodging, according to the girl's capabilities and experience. These girls did on the whole excellent work, and though working in lonely and

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out of the way districts stuck to their work in a way deserving of all praise. Many of them had no desire to return to town life, and made their homes in Cardiganshire.

For the information in this chapter the Editors are indebted to the following ladies and gentlemen : Professor Fraser Story, Sir Alfred Davies, Professor Bryner Jones, Alfred Seymour Jones, Esq., Miss Gertrude M. Painter, Walter O. Jones, Esq., Mrs. Silyn Roberts, Mrs. B. L. Jones, Maunsel Franklin, Esq.

## CONCLUSION



## CHAPTER X

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### CONCLUSION

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IN the foregoing pages we have endeavoured to indicate briefly the lines along which Wales served the Empire and the Allied cause in the Great War, and the manifold nature of her assistance to the larger whole. At the same time it is felt that this is but a part of a larger subject, viz., The Contribution of Wales to British History and Strength, her fractional value within the British and Imperial unit. At a later date we may attempt an undertaking of this nature, provided the task shall not have been undertaken by more leisured and competent hands. Meanwhile, some of the suggestions thrown out in this chapter may be of value.

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It is a regrettable fact that there does not exist a complete and authoritative history of Wales.\* The period which closed with the death of the last Llywelyn has been amply explored and has afforded material for excellent monographs. Remarkably little has been written of the life of Wales from the 14th to the 19th Century. This lacuna of historical reference to her movements, and interest in her ways, from whatsoever cause, may account for much of the ignorance which prevails concerning her beyond the Welsh borders. It may be an interesting question to consider how much of this scantiness of reference is due to her tenacious hold upon her language, and how much is due to the pacifying influence of the Tudor period, and her contentment with the Welsh blood that circulated in the veins of subsequent British monarchs. No thinker or patriot can deny that her debt to England is beyond computation, but is it not equally true that Wales has been a valuable asset in the developing life of Great Britain, exemplified at the present time in the conspicuous

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\* There are some excellent surveys.



## CONCLUSION

personality and influence of the present Prime Minister of the Realm?

From the early days of the civilisation of this island the Cymric element has been associated with its progressive endeavours. Far back in the Saxon period we find it recorded that Alfred the Great, in his desire to reconstitute the educational system of his day, engaged the services of John Asser, or Asserius Menevensis, born in Pembrokeshire, and educated in the Monastery of St. David's. King Alfred made him his "preceptor and companion," and it was he who wrote "The Life of Alfred" for the benefit of his Welsh countrymen. More than one responsible historian holds the view that Alfred himself was an Anglo-Celt. As bearing upon the earlier writings, mention may be made of the debt of English literature to the Mabinogion, from which sprang the story of King Arthur and his knights, and of the great medieval "journalist," Giraldus Cambrensis, the Norman Welshman, who was the tutor to the sons of Henry II.

The military service rendered by Wales has been more or less continuous. At the close of the Saxon

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supremacy we find the Welsh border princes rendering assistance to the rebel Saxon earls against the Norman sway. In the period of Norman ascendancy Wales became the recruiting ground *par excellence* for the wars of the Kings of England. The Angevin and Plantagenet Kings of England raised foot soldiers in the Principality, and freely used them in their wars at home and abroad; and from the 12th century onwards Welsh contingents are to be found in the armies of England, whether it be in the Scottish wars, the Irish expeditions, or the French campaigns. Welsh tradition has it that "three Welsh soldiers" saved the life of Henry V. at Agincourt, one of them at the sacrifice of his own life. Was there ever a braver or more efficient captain in the whole of "The Hundred Years' War" than Matthew Goch, *anglice* Gough, the veteran soldier of Henry VI.? In Tudor times Wales supplied soldiers for the suppression of the Irish rebellion. They came also to the aid of the Stuarts, who found them loyal and true. One of the oldest regiments in the British Army is the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (1689). All of which goes to prove that, through and in spite of all dynastic changes, Welshmen rallied to the

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defence of the frontiers and fortunes of this historic isle, of which Wales forms a part.

The part played by Welsh sailors in Elizabethan times is also worthy of notice, who, in conjunction with their racial cousins, the men of Devon and Cornwall, repelled the foreign foe, and fought, in earlier times, for the freedom of the seas.

In constitutional events and improvements of national importance Wales has had a share. Articles 56-58 in Magna Charta show how large a part Llywelyn, the great lord of Snowdon, played in the transactions which led to the signing of that document which is regarded as the corner-stone of the British Constitution. Further, Professor Tout, of Manchester, has established beyond doubt the position that Simon de Montfort received invaluable aid from Llywelyn, the last native Prince of Wales, in the establishment of the "De Montfort" Parliament, which otherwise might never have materialised. At a later stage the Tudor dynasty, rich with Welsh blood, gave ordered Government to England after the turbulent period

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of the "Wars of the Roses"; and it may be pertinently added that without the aid of Rhys ap Nicholas, and the men of Wales, Henry would never have won the Battle of Bosworth Field.

Moreover, in the realm of statesmanship and political administration Wales has unquestionably made its contribution. During the Tudor period Welshmen in considerable numbers came forward and served, if not in the highest, in very important offices of State. The Welsh name Seisyll, anglicized Cecil, reminds us that the famous family of the Cecils are of Welsh origin, and large numbers of the men employed in the English secret service during the 16th and 17th centuries hailed from Wales. And what of the indebtedness of Britain to the Great Protector, Oliver Cromwell? Wales can claim her share in the stock and strength of that virile personality, for he was of Welsh descent, one of his ancestors, named Williams, having adopted the surname of his patron, Thomas Cromwell, whose agent he was in the suppression of the monasteries. Time and space would fail to tell of other eminent men of Wales, who crossed the seas, and served in other lands, but the name of

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Roger Williams—the great prophet of religious toleration under British rule, and the founder of Rhode Island Colony—must ever be remembered as a forerunner of that spirit of justice and freedom which has helped to form the moral sinew of the United States Republic.

These facts, somewhat hastily and casually extracted from the multiform course of history, tempt us to a fair and rich field of interest and research, and go to show that the part played by Wales in this, the greatest of all wars, is but in keeping with her past, consistent with her ancient valour, her faith in ideals, and her long range of service in the dethronement of tyranny and wrong. She has served, and still serves, her “big sister” well. And it will be further seen, when the Record Offices of Great Britain, and France, and other countries, have been more diligently and carefully sifted, and the chapter of her devotion to religious life and liberty as well as the story of her keen appreciation of education and the higher themes of life have been fully written, that she has been a more valuable factor in the life of this Empire than we have hitherto dreamed of.

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And remembering her past, and scanning her future in so far as presaging the coming years is possible to mortals, well may every Welshman take courage and cherish the hope and sentiment once expressed in the following words by John Bright, the great tribune of the British people—

“ I think I see, as it were among the hill-tops of time, the glimmerings of the dawn of a better and nobler day for my country, and the people that I love so well.”

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