

NOTES ABOUT SIGNING UP

"The war will be over by Christmas..."

But it wasn't and by 1915 - a huge majority of the army had been wiped out.

Lord Kitchener (who was the Minister of War) issued a huge campaign to encourage men to join up.....

BRITONS



JOIN YOUR COUNTRY'S ARMY!
GOD SAVE THE KING

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Men felt it was their duty to help their country.

They were full of pride and patriotism.

Men in the most depressing jobs such as mines or factories couldn't wait to enlist.

They thought that the war meant a new life for them, new opportunities to travel the world, fresh air and good companionship. The army sounded **GLAMOUROUS!**

Many men were afraid the war would be over before they could play their part.



© IWM Q 743 10th Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment (Hull Commercials)

There were restrictions to joining though and many were left disappointed...

- You had to pass a medical.
- You had to have a chest that measured 32 inches (82cm).
- You had to be taller than 5 foot 3 inches (160cm)
- You had to have good physical health.
- You had to be 18 years old or over.

Lying about their age was common and often boys would be turned down for being too young.

Some however would be told to go outside and come back in with a different story and they would be allowed to sign up.

An estimated 250,000 boys under the age of 19 served in the war.

The youngest was only 12.

Some boys/men put newspaper in their boots to increase their height to reach the minimum.

Joining up with all their friends was also important.

In some places in Britain, special 'Pal's Battalions' were created - this was when all the men in a firm, street or village signed on together after being promised that they would all serve together in the same unit.

Although popular the practice was eventually discouraged because if the pal's battalion suffered heavy casualties it could seriously affect the local community.



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