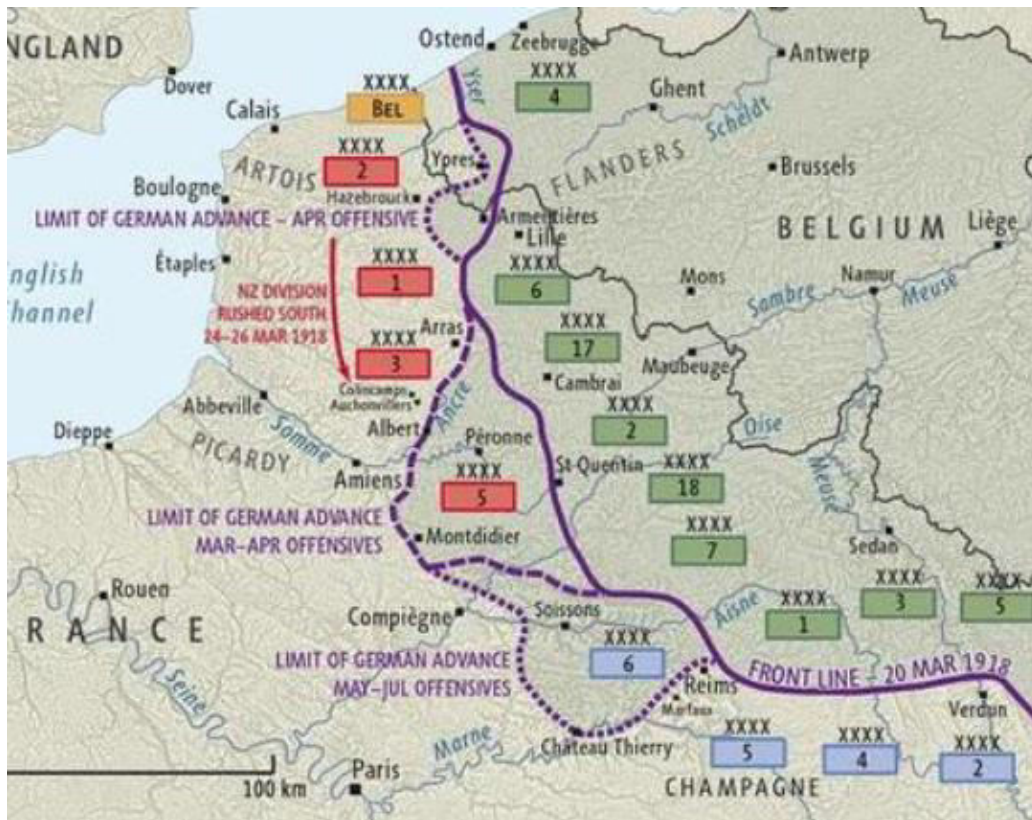


# Bradford and the Somme

July 1916

In 1914 Germany invaded Belgium, which made the English join the war, and was moving through France.



This meant that Britain had to make a larger army so they asked for volunteers.

Today we are going to look at how Leeds and Bradford answered this call for volunteers and why they are linked to the battle of the Somme.

In Bradford alone 2000 men joined the army by 1915 and would begin army training.



A recruiting bus in Leeds

A meeting of recruits in Saltaire Park



Outside the theatre in Bradford.



Click on the picture to meet Horace (it is the first video)



## Joining the army

- ▶ You had to be 18 to join the army but few people had a ID card like we have driving licenses now so if you only looked like you were 18 you could still join. Many young men joined the army, the youngest we have on record is only 12 years old.
- ▶ Why do you think so many teenagers wanted to join the army?



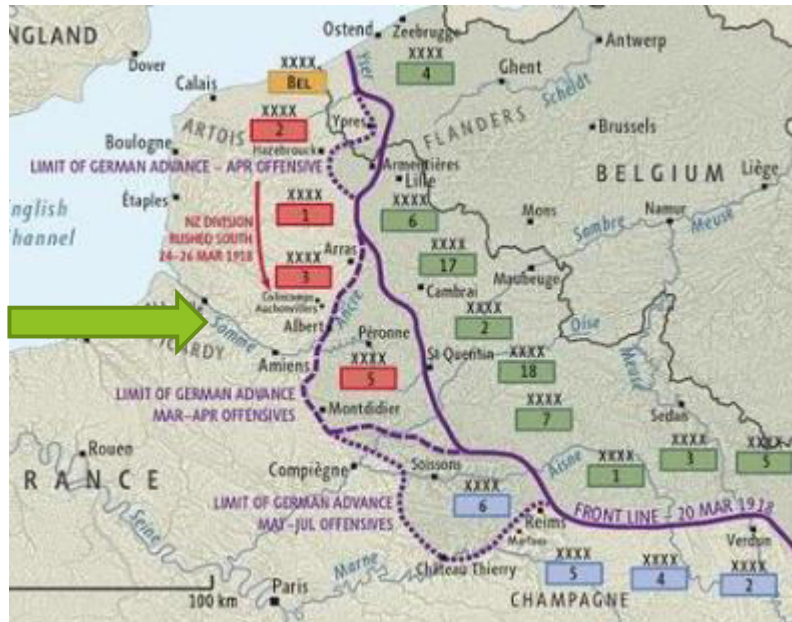
# The Bradford Pals



- ▶ Maybe because of the hard working conditions in the factories of Bradford over 2000 men joined the Bradford pals Battalion by 1915.
- ▶ These men would train for between 1 and 2 years then be sent to war in France.
- ▶ Can you work out where this picture of the Bradford Pals was taken in 1914?

Where the battles are fought we call the front. On the Western front the Germans were fighting the French and British.

- ▶ By 1916 the war was at a stalemate. Neither side was moving and both still thought they could win the war. Thousands of men were dying every week for no gains. Preparations began to attack at the Somme.



The British wanted to make a big effort and attack the Germans and help the French who had their own troubles in Verdun.

Click on the picture to watch a video about fighting in WW1 ( the video is near the bottom and look like the picture)



- ▶ By 1916 every country had seen what dangerous new technology did to the soldiers on the battlefield.
- ▶ Generals in charge struggled to adapt and change their ideas to protect their soldiers and win the war. Everyone was learning some hard lessons and every lesson cost thousands of lives.
- ▶ After seeing you friends wounded or even killed going before, how would you of felt knowing you had to go 'over the top' and run towards a German machine gun waiting for you?

Click the video to some of the reasons that fighting on the front was so dangerous.



Ricky looks into the tactics used during WW1

- ▶ From the 2000 men in the Bradford pals. Over 1000 of them would be killed or wounded on the first day of the Somme, which was their first day of fighting in the war.
- ▶ Soon after 600 more would face the same fate and the remaining Bradford Pals would be moved into other regiments.

On the first day of the Somme alone 20,000 men would be killed and by the end of the Battle in November, where only 5 miles had be won, over 1,000,000 men from both sides would have been killed and wounded in this terrible battle. The bloodiest day in British Military history.



Shock and disbelief is how many people in Bradford felt about the tragic news from July 1<sup>st</sup> 1916. Even if you weren't affected yourself you would of seen weeping families in the street, women dressed in black and closed curtains in the front rooms of many homes.



# Your activity at home.

- ▶ Create a time line to show the history of the Bradford Pals and their families. Use these headings and descriptions to help you.
- ▶ Can you add thoughts and interesting facts to your time line to show what the soldiers must have been thinking at the time and what the facts we know now are.

I will include a sheet with these dates on that you can find on our website along with this presentation if you would like to print it out.

**August 1914** – Germany invades Belgium and England join the war.

**October 1915** – Planning and the moving of weapons, digging of tunnels begins for the battle of the Somme.

**October 1914** – Britain asks for volunteers from all over the country to join the army.

**July 1916** – The Battle of the Somme begins and over 1000 of the Bradford Pals are killed or wounded.

**November 1914** – 2000 men join the Bradford pals battalions and begin their training.

**July 10th 1916** – Bradford mourns for its lost men.

**November 1916** – The battle of the Somme ends with only 5 miles won and 1 million men dead.