

This Learning Resource has been produced by the South Gloucestershire in the First World War Project 2014 – 2018, a public engagement project commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

The people of South Gloucestershire served in the armed forces, became nurses and worked in factories. They made aircraft, motorbikes and boots for the servicemen: even the horses were sent to the front line of The Great War. This project tells the stories of the contribution that South Gloucestershire made to the First World War.

Amy Hill Autograph Book - Wounded at the Somme

KS 3/4

Students will learn what life was like for nurses and soldiers, in a local convalescent hospital during the First World War.

A broad curriculum based learning resource, reflecting our rich cultural heritage and encourage participation and the discussion of challenging issues.

National Curriculum: History/English/Art and Design/RE/Citizenship

Amy Hill was a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse at Cleve Hill Hospital during the First World War. The wounded soldiers needed to recover from their injuries and they wanted something to do to pass the time, so Amy gave them her autograph book to write in. Some wrote poems, others drew pictures and cartoons. This resource gives today's students the challenge to discuss and respond.

Teacher's information

This Learning Resource Contains:

- The Amy Hill Autograph Book Introduction
- One worksheet with a reproduction of the soldier's signatures
- Extracts from the Frenchay Parish Magazine 1916
- Activity: Investigate using internet links to information about the Battle of the Somme
- Writing a letter home
- Other Free First World War Project Learning Resources Information
- Feedback Form

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Amy Hill Autograph Book Introduction



Photo by Hamilton, Staple Hill,

V.A. HOSPITAL, CLEVE HILL, DOWNEND.

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Cleve Hill House, a large local residence, then owned by Mr and Mrs Cave, it was converted into a hospital and used throughout the war for convalescing soldiers.

Amy Hill was a local girl, her parents were both teachers. Amy would have been sixteen years old in 1914. Amy became a VAD or Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse. This meant that she was not paid for her work, it was her choice to 'do her bit' for the war effort in this way. Amy would have received training for this sometimes difficult and challenging work.

Cleve Hill Hospital was staffed by two doctors and Red Cross VAD nurses like Amy. At the beginning of the war, women had fewer choices as to how they could play their part, by the end of the war there was more appreciation of the valuable roles women could play.



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Here is Amy at home with her family in a rare, informal image of the day. Amy is on the right in the darker dress; her sister Winifred is on the left and their mother Caroline Hill is in the front; one of her brothers' stands behind, possibly Arthur.

Amy lost two of her four brothers in 'The Great War' within weeks of each other, her eldest brother Arthur and her nearest brother Harold.



Image reproduced by kind permission of Frenchay Village Museum.

Wounded soldiers would come off the hospital trains with the mud of the battlefields still on them. Nurses like Amy had to clean them up and look after them. Some of the soldiers were only sixteen or seventeen years old, most were nineteen years or older. Women were not allowed to fight, so this work was something girls like Amy could do for the war effort.



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Image

Convalescing Soldiers: This is one of the wards where Amy worked. The soldiers were of many different nationalities. These soldiers were recovering from horrendous wounds, some of them life changing. Look closely at the one in the nearest bed, there are very few smiles here.

Amy's Autograph Book: The soldiers needed things to do to pass the time, so Amy gave them her autograph book to write in. Some wrote poems, others drew pictures and cartoons. Some were too ill and shocked to write more than their name, regiment and where they were wounded.



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As the soldiers got better they were able to get up and go into the garden. There were organised concerts and local outings to aid their recovery. They even had weekly visits to the Hippodrome in Bristol if they were well enough.

One of the drawings in the autograph book could be of this room, see the wall lamp and the notice behind the bed? Is it in one of the drawings?

The Cleve Hill Hospital was open throughout the war, there were 100 beds and they had 1343 admissions from the opening in October 1914 to closing in February 1919, with only 2 deaths.

Amy Hill got married: For Amy working as a VAD nurse at Cleve Hill Hospital was an experience that coloured her life, she went on to marry one of the Australian soldiers she had nursed and lived most of her life in Australia.

The images and information has been reproduced here by kind permission of Frenchay Village Museum from the Amy Hill Autograph Book which was given to the Museum by Amy Hill's daughter Pam Conder of Australia and the Frenchay Parish Magazines 1916 in the Frenchay Village Museum Archives.

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“Wounded at the Somme.” Have a good look at these pages from Amy’s book. They are autographs from soldiers who must have been in the hospital together, maybe in the same ward. They had all been wounded at the Somme but they are all from different regiments and wounded in different areas of the battlefield.

Pte S. Kulbert.
19th. Manchester.
Wounded at Somme
Battle.
Maricourt.
July. 1. 1916
Elevs Hill
Hospital Doumend.

Pte. J. Vincent.
8th Batt. W. of Wales.
Wounded Drenche Wood.
July 20th 1916.
Elevs Hill Hospital
Doumend.

Pte W. Jayes.
2nd Batt. Essex Reg.
Wounded at Serre.
Battle of Somme.
July. 1. 1916

Pte J. Helling.
4th Batt. Royal Fusiliers.
Wounded in the Push
Big. July. 10th 1916.
Eamoy.
Elevs Hill
Hospital
Doumend.

21st Aug. 1916
Pte J. Slade. 8th Bn. Somerset Light Infantry.
Wounded 1st July 1916. at
Frocourt near Albert. France.

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Activity: 1 History

Investigate the different regiments and the role they played in the Battle of the Somme through these links on the internet.

<http://www.themanchesters.org/The%2019th%20bn%20part%201.htm>

<http://www.1914-1918.net/somerset.htm> <http://www.1914-1918.net/norfolk.htm>

<http://www.1914-1918.net/royalfus.htm> <http://www.1914-1918.net/essex.htm>

Or Go to these links to discover where these men were wounded and where their fallen comrades lie on this animated resource.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/interactive/animations/wwone_map_somme/index_embed.shtml

Discover where Carnoy, Delville Wood, Fricourt, Maricourt and Serre are on a Battle of the Somme map.

<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/places/somme-cemeteries.htm>

<http://www.frenchaymuseumarchives.co.uk/>

Right a report about what you find out, or draw a map of the area using the links.

Activity: 2 English

Write a letter home, as if you are one of these men. Describe how you might feel to be in hospital back home in 'Blighty' after your battlefield experiences? What would you be looking forward to most? Would you tell them what happened? Would you tell them how wounded you were?

Use the parish magazine entries of real letters from the time below.

Or

Search on the Frenchay Village Museum Website and discover what life was like in the Cleve Hill Hospital and what sort of entertainment they had whilst they were getting better, write about how this group, from the signatures, made friends in the hospital.

Extracts from: Frenchay Parish Magazine November 1916
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From our Lads at the Front.

"My dear Mother, I received your letter yesterday. I sent you one the beginning of last week, so I suppose they must have crossed. We have been up in the firing line for a week, and have just come back again to our little orchard. To-morrow we take up another position in a different part of the line. We were attached to another battery for instructions while we were up the line, they were all London chaps, and we got on with them very well. I would rather be in action than down at the wagon line.

We had our gun-pits in a gentleman's garden, with plenty of cherries, currants, and gooseberries to eat. The house must have been a lovely building at one time, but now it is smashed to bits. There was a village about 500 yards away all knocked to pieces, and the Church and graves were all upside down. The only thing that was left standing was a crucifix which stood about twenty feet in the air.

There are a lot of graves in the village, mostly of Canadians. We had two in the same garden as our gun-pits were. I could tell you a lot more, but it won't do. We rode up the line in buses and came back in them. I fired about 40 rounds when we were in action.

*You cannot realize that there is a war on, for everybody takes things so easy. What do you think of **Lord Kitchener**? Hard lines not to be able to see the War through. We all think out here that it won't last much longer (hope not). I don't want any leave till it is all over.*

I am glad to hear you have got a man to help a bit.

The women out here do all the work. There are hundreds of people in deep mourning about, and some of them can tell some nice tales of how they were treated.

Well, I must close now, as I am going on picket. This is the last night in the orchard. It's raining just nice at present.

Your loving son, Alf."

A.F., 12th June, 1916. (Alfred Flux)

Extracts from: Frenchay Parish Magazine November 1916
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*It is with great sorrow and with sincere sympathy with his relatives that we have to record the death of Bombardier **Alfred Ernest Flux**, R.F.A. who was at first reported as missing, but subsequently as having been killed on March 21st. He joined on the outbreak of the war, and had served in France all his time.*

The following is an extract from a letter written to his home by one of our Frenchay men, who was in one of the hospitals recently bombed by the Germans:

"What a rotten shame old Fritz's dropping bombs on the hospital down here; the poor boys had just come in, Oh! that night was the worst I have ever been in; I have been in ten hours' shelling, but it was nothing like the two hours bombing, for nurse and doctors were hit out, and we were helping the best we could."

***Frederick Hill** has been awarded the Military Medal, for keeping (his people say), the communication wire intact all night during an engagement - we presume, at some personal inconvenience and risk. He was recommended for this honour immediately the action ended, which was some months ago, and has been home since but never mentioned the fact. Oh! these modest heroes, of how much good "copy" they rob poor hungry editors.*

(Fredrick Hill was the cousin of Alfred Flux)

Our Lads at the Front.

Those who so kindly contributed to the fund for sending a cake, cigarettes, and a card for each of our young men from the parish now at the front, will like to know how greatly their gifts were appreciated. Several letters of thanks have been received from which we give a few extracts:

"Thank you for the lovely cake and card which I very much appreciated."

"How much things are welcomed in the trenches only we here can understand"

"Thank you one and all for your most delightful parcel."

"Thank you for most welcome cake and card, it was a kind and thoughtful gift."

"Thank all my friends for their great kindness. I hope this will be my last Christmas in the trenches."

"It is a great pleasure to know we have such good friends at home, thinking of and praying for us. I assure you this does much to cheer us and help us in our work."

"My hearty thanks to all for the splendid cake and cigs. I shall keep the card with its nice verses as a remembrance. It is good to see how cheerful our lads are, and our hope is that the spirit may prevail at home."

South Gloucestershire in the First World War Learning Resource

Other Free Learning Resources available are:

The Great War - Life in the Trenches - The Alf Flux Kit Bag (Plus a Loans Box)*

School Children in the Great War – Messages and Mufflers

The Girls who made Grenades – The Warmley Grenadiers

Empire Foods - The War at Sea - (Loans Box)*

The Amy Hill Autograph Book - Cleve Hill Hospital

The Amy Hill Autograph Book - Wounded on the Somme

The Hill and the Flux Family

Home Life during the First World War

The Armistice Day Investigation Quiz

* **Booking is essential for the loans boxes by emailing:** museums@southglos.gov.uk

For more information about this project please go to:

www.southglos.gov.uk/ww1

Thanks go to the following sources for their kind permission to use the information and images in these learning resources:

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South Gloucestershire in the First World War Project

Learning Resources Feedback Form

To mark the centenary of the First World War 1914-1918 these learning resources have been created to assist teachers in show the impact of the First World War in this area and also how communities were changed.

Please tell us what you think of these resources or if you have any comments or further information about the First World War in this area do let us know by filling in this form.

Please return to: museums@southglos.gov.uk

Name-----

School -----Date -----

Did you find the resources easy to use? Yes/No

How do you think the resources worked with your class?

Other Comments-----

Thank you for your participation

This is an HLF project supported by South Gloucestershire Council. For more information and more free learning resources on The First World War in this area please go to:
www.southglos.gov.uk/ww1



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