The First World War and Leeds

The First World War broke out after the crisis created by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on the 28th June 1914. During 1914-1918, Leeds continually supplied men and munitions to the warfront, with over 20,000 men from Leeds being killed or wounded in action. After the war, Leeds became a centre of socialist politics, with the Leeds Socialist Convention being established in 1912 and the Leeds Socialist Club being set up in 1915.

The people of Leeds experienced the effects of the war in a number of ways. Leeds offered a large number of hospital beds, helping to prepare for war by producing blankets, bandages, and medical supplies. Many men answered the call to arms, including those from Leeds Parish Church. Many women worked in munitions factories such as Burmantofts Munitions Factory. Leeds industrial worker William Booth was cremated as a friend of the German, who attempted to blow up the city in December 1915, but only by transforming in the explosion. These women continued to work for the war effort, with 1,000 women from Leeds serving as nurses in London and Manchester.

The health consequences of the war are evident in the increased mortality rates in Leeds during the war years. The death rate increased from 10.5 per 1,000 in 1911 to 14.5 per 1,000 in 1915, with a peak of 16.5 in 1916 and 1917. The increase in mortality was due to the lack of medical supplies and the spread of disease. The war also led to the establishment of Leeds Royal Infirmary, which opened in 1879, and the expansion of the Leeds General Infirmary, which opened in 1846.

The war also had a significant impact on the Leeds economy. The war brought a boom in the textile industry, as the demand for textiles increased. The war also led to the establishment of the Leeds Municipal Munitions Works, which produced shells and other munitions.

The war also led to significant changes in the Leeds landscape. The war brought about the destruction of many of the old buildings in Leeds, including the Leeds Grammar School, which was destroyed in 1917. The war also brought about the establishment of the Leeds Peace Memorial, which was dedicated to the memory of those who died in the war.

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