

# 100 Years on: The First World War in historiography

## Relevant to

Modules on the First World War; modern war

## Background

The Great War of 1914-18 has been studied in different ways over time. Over the past five decades, historians have given different answers to questions about the causes of the war, and the reasons for Allied victory. They have also asked new questions and opened up new areas for study. In this podcast, Professor Heather Jones discusses how the historical literature on the First World War has changed in this time. Listen here:

<https://www.unknownwarriorspod.co.uk/podcast/episode/2e3f6ca1/100-years-on>.

## Questions

- How did the developments of the 1960s (particularly the development of anti-nuclear campaigning) result in shifts in the historiography of the First World War?
- When and how has access to new archives changed understandings of the First World War?
- How have accounts of the causes of the Great War changed over time? How much enthusiasm for war was there in different countries?
- What do you think of the characterisation of the British army as 'lions led by donkeys'?
- What factors do we have to weigh up when thinking about the reasons for Allied victory in the war?
- How do historians' approach the question of morale now? How are emotions and camaraderie important in understanding the war?
- Why was the 'Home Front' in the First World War neglected until recently? How does our view of the war change when we add in the experience of civilians?
- Why was the jubilation at the Armistice short-lived in Britain and other victor countries?
- How has comparative and transnational history transformed understandings of the Great War since the 1990s?

## Further resources

Listen to the other podcasts in the 'Unknown Warriors' series here:

<https://www.unknownwarriorspod.co.uk/podcast/>. And see the bibliography that accompanies the project here: <https://www.unknownwarriorspod.co.uk/explore-further>.

The 1914-18 online open access encyclopaedia of the First World War can be found here: <http://www.1914-1918-online.net/>. This has many great and easily accessible articles by historians; everything on the site is peer reviewed.