

# Warfare and British society, c1250-present

## The nature of warfare



### Weapons:

- Shortbow
- Crossbow
- Longbow
- Spear
- Pike
- Schiltron
- Gunpowder
- Cannon

Infantry were peasants (bottom of feudal hierarchy) - treated poorly and wore leather

Mounted knights were gentry and nobility - wore chainmail and rode horses

Everyone had to serve 40 days unless they paid scutage

Muskets and wheel-lock pistols replaced longbows as bullets could be cheaply produced and break through metal armour

Soldier employed full time and standing armies developed. e.g. New Model Army

Social structure still reflected in army composition

Cannons less effective as stronger defensive walls developed



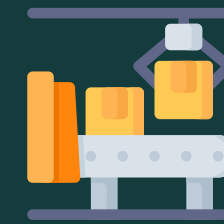
Harsh army discipline, e.g. flogging was abolished

Army was increasingly professionalised

Technological advancements brought machine guns, rifles, field guns and heavy artillery

Scale and cost of warfare increased

Cadwell's reforms organised army regiments regionally and chose officers based on merit



Industrial revolution allowed mass production of weapons and ammo

Key event: Industrial Revolution 1760-1840

Development of nuclear weapons



Conscription used in World Wars

Development of 'total war'

Government use of propaganda and censorship of media covering wars



Increase in specialised training



**Medieval**  
c1250-c1500

**Early Modern**  
c1500-c1700

**18th & 19th Centuries**  
c1700-c1900

**Modern times**  
c1900-present

## The experience of war

By the end of the period a permanent paid army was established to fight instead of civilians

Army paid more than land working



Forced requisitioning of supplies for the army

- Case studies:
- The Battle of Falkirk (1298)
  - The Battle of Agincourt (1415)

Invading armies terrorised civilians and destroyed homes and crops



Medical care was not easily available

Key event: English Civil War 1642-1651

Forced requisitioning of food during the Civil War impacted civilians

Civilians forced to host soldiers in their homes during the Civil War and were highly taxed

- Case study:
- The Battle of Naseby (1645)

Sieges caused poor living conditions and spread disease



Civil wars had a greater impact on the population than foreign wars

Developments in communication, e.g. radio, allowed organisation of armies over large distances

Developments in transportation, e.g. steam trains, allowed easier transportation of troops and supplies

Public opinion increasingly important - rising literacy meant newspapers gave people info on wars

Requisitioning unpopular and impactful - Corps set up to provide food and transport instead of civilians



- Case studies:
- The Battle of Waterloo (1815)
  - The Battle of Balaclava (1854)

Taxation rose in times of war to fund armies

'Total war' meant civilians were targeted as well as armies



- Case studies:
- The Western Front and the Somme (1916)
  - The Iraq War (2003)

Key event: World Wars 1914-1918 1939-1945

Social attitudes play a role in recruitment and war efforts

Fear of nuclear warfare

