



SCOTLAND

BRITISH LEGION SCOTLAND

Notes for Speakers

(These Notes contain information for those addressing meetings or giving guidance to prospective members, upon which to base a speech or a talk. **The Notes are in no way speeches in themselves.**)

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The British Empire Service League — Overseas "Legion"

16. Our Organisation is a constituent member of the British Empire Service League, which can be described as the co-ordinating body of the "British Legions" of every country throughout the different parts of the Commonwealth, under its Grand President, Admiral The Earl Mountbatten of Burma. (Should, for instance, any Scotsman require help in any part of the Commonwealth, co-ordination through the various constituent members of the League is assured.)

Press Most Helpful

17. In all this activity the Legion owes much to the goodwill and co-operation of the Press. A hundred years ago—even fifty years ago—the veteran of the wars, as those who remember Kipling's "Tommy Atkins" know very well, enjoyed neither public regard nor favour; his different status to-day is due largely to the Press and in this transformation the Legion can rightly claim an effective influence. The Press, both National and Provincial, is kind enough to give some 4,000 annual references to its work, including photographs, throughout the year, and the B.B.C. regularly announces our Events.

The Legion's Rest Home

18. The British Legion Scotland's Rest Home at Bradbury, North Berwick, provides accommodation for any ex-Service men and women needing recuperation. The Home is a first-class one and ex-Service holiday applications are also considered. Applications are received by the Bradbury Committee at Headquarters.

"The Claymore" Official Magazine Keeps You in Touch

19. The official monthly magazine "The Claymore" keeps members and the public informed as to the up-to-date activities of the Legion in Scotland and reports on the latest developments regarding our endeavours to better the lot of the War Pensioner and his dependants. (Price 4d. from branches or 6/6d. p.a. (per single copies monthly) from Headquarters.)

Only a Small Staff

20. The Organisation employs only a very small staff at Headquarters and in the Areas which attends to the needs of the hundreds of voluntary workers throughout the Branches, and to the requirements of the 60,000 Members.

Door is Open to All Ex-Service Personnel

21. One final note which is most important. Any ex-Serviceman who has any War Pension or "civvy-street" problem need not, of necessity, be a member of the Legion. This also applies to his widow and dependants, i.e., the ex-Serviceman during his lifetime need not have been a member. Any ex-Serviceman, of whatever Service, can call on our assistance with no strings attached.

The stronger the Legion is in membership means the more effective will be its approach to Governmental authorities.

The door is open to all who have served the Crown and are now ex-Service.

Notes for Speakers

Formed by F.M. Earl Haig

1. The British Legion Scotland was formed by Field-Marshal Earl Haig, in 1921, and is democratic, non-sectarian and allied to no political party whatever.

Eligibility for Membership

2. Ordinary members comprise all ex-Servicemen who have served whole-time in the Armed Forces of the Crown for seven days, ex-Service-women who have served whole-time for seven days in certain categories, and British or naturalised British subjects who have served whole-time for at least seven days, during hostilities, with the Forces of an Allied Nation.

A point worthy of particular mention in Scotland is that members of the Merchant Navy who have served afloat during hostilities outside territorial waters are also eligible for membership.

Allegiance to the Crown

3. All Members have to declare that they owe allegiance to the Crown.

Promotes Ex-Service Interests

4. The Legion exists to promote and to protect the interests of the ex-Service man and woman. All matters relating to pensions (including those to widows and orphans), resettlement and rehabilitation and re-adjustment to civilian life form one of the primary concerns of the Legion. It has made continuous representations to Government Departments both directly and indirectly; it has marshalled public opinion on behalf of the ex-soldier and his dependants; it has attended pensions tribunals and in every possible way sought to secure justice and sympathetic recognition for all who have served the country in any of the three Services.

Highly Skilled Organisation

5. In so doing over the many years of its existence the Legion has developed a highly experienced and competent organisation where the problems of the ex-Service man ("civvy-street" included) can be dealt with sympathetically and quickly.

The work of the Pensions and Resettlement Departments at Headquarters is conducted by experts who have a wide knowledge of such matters.

Comradeship Fostered

6. Besides this, the Legion exists to preserve the spirit of comradeship and solidarity characteristic of Service life. It is concerned with the welfare of all who have served in the Royal Navy, the Army or the Air Force. Many branches have organised social centres and meeting places, where amusements, sports, games and many other forms of common activity are available.

Women's Section Flourishes

7. The Women's Section comprising relatives of ex-Servicemen is particularly flourishing with 160 Branches and a membership of 10,000 which does valuable work. A notice regarding the Section will be found regularly in the "Annual Report." Its President is the Countess of Haddington.

"Poppy Day" Assisted

8. By judicious publicity the Legion has kept the cause of the ex-Service man and woman continuously in the public mind. It has supported such events as "Poppy Day", now a recognised national celebration, and plays a major part in the organisation of the Annual Collections. The Organisation is represented on the Earl Haig Fund Committees on all levels. It has encouraged and taken a prominent part in Commemoration Services, many of which it sponsors in various parts of Scotland. "Remembrance Day" and "Founder's Day" are two of its major activities, and "Anzac Day" is now a regular commemoration.

Pilgrimages to War Cemeteries Arranged

9. Pilgrimages are also arranged to War Cemeteries overseas through our sister organisation across the Border: these particularly apply to children whose fathers fell in the field of battle.

"Facts Tell" Brochure

10. The pamphlet "Facts Tell" (copy attached) gives a condensed résumé of our achievements. (A Membership Form is on the reverse.)

The Official "Handbook"

11. In the introductory pages of our official "Handbook" will be found the Purposes, Principles and Policy of our Organisation.

"The Constitution"

12. The "Constitution" is the formal document of the Organisation. The Organisation is autonomous and is quite separate from the British Legion (Headquarters in London) with whom, of course, we work in close co-operation.

The Annual Report

13. The "Annual Report" gives an account of the work of the year and the sub-headings of the various reports are a good guide.

Branch the Corner Stone

14. There are 450 Branches in Scotland with 60,000 members. The Branch, of course, is the foundation stone of the British Legion Scotland, and the Branch delegates at the Annual Conference elect the Office-bearers and the National Executive Council from representatives from the nine Areas. The Conference is regularly reported each year in the issue of the July "Claymore" (the official journal of the Organisation, published monthly, which circulates not only in Scotland, but throughout the world).

Supported Entirely by Voluntary Contributions

15. The Organisation is supported entirely by voluntary subscriptions and donations from members and by the proceeds of the Events run by its National Organiser which are attractive to the public. The Pensions and Resettlement Departments are financed by the Earl Haig Fund ("Poppy Day") which relies for its funds on the generosity of the public. The Organisation receives no Government grant whatever.