The impact of the Great War of 1914-18 on tourism in the UK: Implications for tourism research

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A B S T R A C T

This paper examines an overlooked feature of tourism management – the relationship between the state, the population and their holidaytaking habits and behaviour during World War One in the UK. The paper provides a series of important insights into a period of traumatic social and economic change to illustrate how a state anti-tourism policy evolved, utilising various policy sanctions and tools to try and limit the demand for holidays and leisure travel. The research is paradigm shifting in terms of addressing a major research gap and misconceptions that the war led to a cessation of tourism, or constitutes a period of limited research interest. As a study of tourism management and policy, it demonstrates the protracted problem of seeking to change tourist behaviour, even in periods of major crises and global upheaval that offers important lessons for governments and other policymakers in addressing issues such as overtourism and sustainable tourism.

1. Introduction

Historical knowledge and inquiry illustrate the forces that have shaped modern day phenomenon, including tourism and how it has been planned, developed and managed by the public and private sectors at different geographical scales. Appreciation of historical perspectives assist in illustrating what has or has not worked in the past, and why. Globally, the academic pursuit of tourism history has seen a sharp increase in both interest and output among tourism and history scholars alike over the last decade, with an increasing assemblage of monographs that chart aspects of destination development through time as well as a growing number of publications in specialist journals (e.g. the *Journal of Tourism History*) and more generic history journals (e.g. the *Journal of Contemporary History*). Much of the published research draws on established methodologies used by historians to reconstruct the past (e.g. Morgan & Pritchard, 1999), typically analysing the extent to which tourism as a phenomenon endured or changed in time and space, and often within a specific resort setting (Walton, 1983). Many of the founding studies in tourism research in the UK were embedded in historical dimensions (e.g. Gilbert, 1939; Lennard, 1931; Lickorish & Kershaw, 1958; Ogilvie, 1933; Pimlott, 1947). Towner and Wall (1991) reviewed the development of the field to the 1990s, and subsequent updates in the new millennium by Walton (2000, 2005), Zuelow (2016) and Christou (2022) continue to illustrate the wider role, value and development of tourism histories.

One area that has attracted a historical perspective is the relationship between tourism and war (Butler & Suntikul, 2013), with war being defined as a state of armed conflict between two or more nations (i.e. at an international scale) or groups within a society (e.g. a domestic civil war). A simple, yet common, interpretation of war is that, because peace and stability are prerequisites for tourism to prosper, tourism stops. If one accepts Marwick's (1968) assessment of war as a shock event that creates disruption and destruction, then war is the antithesis of stability invoking challenging and turbulent conditions, underpinned by fluidity, uncertainty, anxiety and distress. Yet studies such as Butler and and Suntikul (2013) challenge these assumptions within a tourism setting, recognising that a complex series of relationships exist between people, destinations, and the way tourism operates. Thus, reassessment of war as a limiting factor for tourism through a finer exploration of evidence reveals a more nuanced understanding. We argue that this complexity has not been explored in any significant way in relation to the first major global war, World War One (WW1), 1914-18. Various responses by tourists, the state and the tourism sector saw tourism evolve, develop, adapt and contract temporally with different spatial outcomes for destinations, businesses and people.

This paper addresses a long-standing criticism of historical research for its neglect of tourism during WW1, particularly the way the state intervened to manage tourism alongside its primary focus - the war effort. To date, most studies make only passing mention of the effect of war on UK tourism in general, which effectively bridge narratives of tourism and society pre-1914 and post-1918. A number of studies of the effects of the war have been undertaken on the construction of

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memorials (e.g. Winter, 2009; 2019) and a focus on sites (e.g. battlefield tourism after 1918 to visit sites of sacrifice and pilgrimage – see Lloyd, 1998). But how tourism developed during WW1 at a global and country level seems to have remained a black hole for historical analysis with only a limited number of studies that briefly reference the effects of war (e.g. Barton, 2005; Durie, 2017; Walton, 2000) and Walton's (1996) more detailed analysis of Blackpool and San Sebastian. Thus, a more critical review of tourism and WW1 is long overdue.

By highlighting the value of adopting a more holistic assessment, this paper makes a theoretical and conceptual contribution to the wider debate on the historiography of tourism research. To critically assess the interaction between tourism and war at a national scale, we integrate perspectives from tourism, business, social, and political history and prevailing concepts from tourism research with source material to create an evidence-based narrative. We seek to address three research questions: (1) what policies, actions and outcomes are evident from key actors in the tourism system (e.g. the state, businesses and local government)?, (2) how did they impact tourism during the Great War in the UK?; and (3) how did the population respond to these policies and actions in terms of the patterns of demand?

The paper is structured as follows. First, the historiography of tourism history research is considered along with methodological issues of evidence reliability, representativeness and the lenses through which historical interpretations are drawn in addressing the research questions. The paper then moves on to the examine evidence for and interpretation of tourism during WW1, structured around three key constructs: the role of the state and its attempts to control tourism demand, the demand for tourism, and the experiences of destinations. From this evidence base, a series of implications are drawn, identifying potential avenues to enrich the study of tourism and war.

1.1. Historiography and tourism research

Historiography focuses on the methodology of the study of history underpinned by the interpretations of specific phenomena, such as tourism, that historians develop (Spalding & Parker, 2007). Becker (1938) and Burns (2005), as a later proponent, argued that historiography as a methodology needed further development, while Towner (1995) was equally critical arguing that tourism history research was often embedded in an implicit empiricism without broader interpretation, theorisation and contextualisation. Whilst progress has been made to address Towner's (1995) criticisms, the tourism scholar possesses an armoury of concepts, theories and approaches from management and social science that may help understand the wider implications of empirical knowledge.

Within tourism history, the considerable reliance upon case studies and in-depth analyses of a restricted phenomenon in time and space raises methodological challenges: how representative is the data being used? What lens do these data sources require to understand the validity or nature of the archives being used? For what purpose was the material collected? What type of voices does the archival data contain? Does it represent the general population, or does it focus on elites and atypical experiences? These questions raise important epistemological issues in relation to the different methodologies and approaches used within historical research on tourism.

Furthermore, sub-disciplinary approaches to tourism history highlight three broad developments in modern history and methodological approaches. First, economic history with its focus on quantitative analysis and the collection of empirical economic data, aligned to tourism as an economic activity (Walton, 1985), which views tourism as an economic phenomenon and its sub-area, business history (Gras & Larson, 1939), focused on individual enterprises. The second perspective, often represented in some of Walton's studies (e.g. Walton, 1978) and outlined by Engerman (1994), is social history with a focus on the theoretical advances in social analysis such as inequality, class conflict, and the evolution of holidays in Victorian and Edwardian society. Barton

(2005) epitomises the social history focus and the human dimension of tourism – the tourist, and their behaviour and views. Within social history, a proliferation of specialist areas of research has also developed, most notably oral history (Thompson, 1978). Lastly, administrative and political history (see James, 1976) has focused on how governments, bureaucracies, and the development of legislation have shaped the economy and society, with particular emphasis on the effect of underpinning political ideologies. In this paper, these three perspectives are utilised to address the research questions in a pragmatic and holistic manner.

2. Methodology

The first stage of the study was to complete a detailed literature review, which identified a limited range of previous studies of tourism during WW1 and the range of data sources they used. The literature search utilised existing electronic search engines (e.g. Scopus) alongside more conventional reading of published histories of the WW1 period and several key monographs. The next stage was to begin compiling the types of historical data that would yield different perspectives on tourism in WW1. A number of national research archives were consulted and visited (e.g. National Railway Museum, York; British Library, London; Department of Munitions reports deposited in the National Archives, London; and transport archives and official records) as well as regional archives with online catalogues (e.g. Heritage Centres in Devon and Somerset). The process also involved correspondence with specialist national collections (e.g. the Caledonian Railway Association Archive, Museum of Scottish Railways and the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford). In addition, trade journals, local and regional histories of the period, the extensive University of Exeter online historical archives, and other administrative data from government departments including parliamentary inquiries were searched. The Thomas Cook Archive (Leicestershire Record Office), as a major player in domestic and global travel (including its monthly *Traveller Gazette* publication), was consulted and newspaper reports were searched (e.g. *The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Observer*). At a local level, Minutes of Tourism Advertising Committees in major resorts in Council Minutes, and autobiographies, letters from soldiers on leave in various archives and diaries were read.

The scale of information relating to WW1 in any one archive is voluminous (e.g. 100,000 plus items exist in the University of Exeter online archive) so narrowing down the search to specific themes was achieved by cross-searching terms to obtain the most relevant material. Newspapers were a key data source as a major communication tool for the wartime period with a circulation of over a million copies a day for some of the working-class newspapers like the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Mail* (McEwen, 1982). The volume of material in newspaper archives further illustrates the scale of review required. *The Times*, a national newspaper that often followed an establishment line, was a 16-page broadsheet published six times a week with a 150,000 circulation and contained features and advertising on tourism issues of the time. *The Manchester Guardian*, a liberal broadsheet, which had a predominantly northern England audience, and *The Observer,* a conservative Sunday newspaper with around a 150,000 circulation (McEwen, 1982) published similarly relevant features. *The Manchester Guardian* was described by McEwen (1982: 476) as an *'instrument of journalistic authority scarcely inferior in influence to that of The Times'* even though its circulation in 1914 may have only been around 35,000 copies a day. These three newspapers generated over 1000 articles related to this topic, and the political ideology or leanings of each title and their readership are acknowledged in our analysis. The methodology outlined by Nicholson (2012) for digital searching of historical newspapers using keywords (e.g. tourism, travel, hotels, holidays and associated terms) was deployed. These searches helped trace the evolution of ideas, corroborated, where possible, with official reports or historical interpretation to provide more depth and context to the issues (e.g. comparing Council Minutes, newspaper

reports and material in trade magazines where the same information was reported in various sources).

Much of the material generated from historical archives is highly subjective (and often opinion-based), requiring an assessment of the agenda being pursued and whether they were 'interest-only' and factual in the main, an opinion of the situation or a feature based on verifiable evidence (e.g. official statistics that record actual patterns and trends). Adopting an interpretivist approach, our analysis recognises the limitations of the data and the context within which the data or sources were created, including the values of the society and wartime context. In addition, it is important to note that newspapers were censored between 1914-18 to prevent information on troop movements and volumes from reaching the enemy. As Greenslade (2014) observed, the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) (1914) allowed the government to stifle journalistic criticism of its actions in the war and to speed legislation through parliament. Keil (2023) suggested that DORA created a commissary dictatorship where the state ruthlessly repressed anti-war dissent (e.g. the Easter Rising in 1916) and industrial unrest (especially after Lloyd George became Prime Minister). The state balanced this approach by adopting a compromise position to avoid conflict on the home front. For example, in 1918 DORA introduced permits for travel to Ireland which were obtained from the police and had to be presented to the port Alien Officer like a passport. The state military intelligence (MI5) and police also collated blacklists of subversives not permitted to travel between Ireland and the UK (Home Office, 1918). British newspapers did not always comply with the state interest (e.g. *The Times* published the damning 'shells crisis' story in 1915 about the shortage of British munitions), yet most remained steadfast in supporting the government and its war effort (Greenslade, 2014). In essence, DORA was designed to protect public morale and avoid causing alarm. Tourism appears to have been a paradox where the state did not want to encourage travel but chose not to censor articles and reports, probably as they provided a semblance of normality against the backdrop of depressing news coverage associated with wartime losses. Instead, propaganda via posters was seen as a more effective counterweight in an attempt to shape public opinion against taking holidays. The most severe censorship was directed to the more critical left-wing newspapers that opposed the war and the state used 747 of its infamous 'D' Notices issued by its Press Bureau to censor the press, issuing them to over 2100 editors 1914-19 (Monger, 2021). We now turn to an outline of the nature of British society and tourism at the outbreak of WW1 in August 1914 to understand how it changed 1914-18.

3. Edwardian society and tourism at the outbreak of World War One

Edwardian society, 1901–1910 (normally extended to 1914) (Read, 1982), marks an important turning point in British history and provides essential context for understanding society during WW1. First, it marked the cumulative achievements of capitalism after a period of rapid industrialisation that produced huge wealth for a nouveau riche (e.g. industrialists, as illustrated by the first-class passenger lists from transatlantic liners), created a bigger middle class and cemented the wealth of the established landed elites, often labelled as the leisured classes. Indeed, by 1911, 1 per cent of the UK population owned 70 per cent of the country's wealth (compared with 40 per cent in 1960 and 23 per cent in 2002) (Page, 2019). By 1901, the current pattern of urban development was established which created the basis of Edwardian tourism demand for the working, middle and affluent classes including the nouveau riche, the latter who displayed exuberant levels of luxury in holidays both in domestic and overseas travel. Second, this period emphasised huge social inequalities between the wealthy and working population, marked by the continued existence of an urban underclass (Stedman Jones, 1971) as part of the capitalist mode of production. The underclass was represented by casual labourers who sought temporary work on a daily basis to accommodate the rhythms of business cycles

that saw highs and lows in demand for production reflected in periods of employment and lay-offs. Third, more socially enlightened liberal governments during the Edwardian period attempted to address some of the extremes of hardship (see Rowntree, 1901), introducing reforming legislation measures. While trade unions were beginning to engage in strikes, few inroads were made into changing how capitalist business owners treated labour. Fourth, despite extreme hardship, Barton (2005:11) concluded that *'holidaymaking, though still a luxury affordable to a minority, had become part of the expectations of mainstream English working-class culture by 1914'*.[1] This statement does, however, need more qualification since taking holiday was spatially and socially dependent upon both time to participate and the financial means to do so, with day trips and leisure pursuits like spectator sports becoming popular pastimes for the working classes, as resorts increasingly promoted their attractiveness to visitors (Health Resort Association, 1904).

Walvin (1978: 61) suggested that *'the inability to afford such pleasures did not prevent the poor from believing they had a right to enjoy them … leisure as a natural aspiration of life became a major feature of English society, contemporary social investigators were surprised to discover'* such as Rowntree (1901). This historical interpretation was also reinforced by Read (1982:31) who argued that *' … not all Edwardians could afford to patronise the theatres or music halls … eight out of ten Edwardians were working class, and most of these passed large parts of their lives below the poverty line'*. A useful illustration of class distinction in tourism and leisure was provided by Fox (1958: 409) (cited in Barton, 2002) who found that Leicester's boot and shoe trades workers in 1914 sought equality with office staff, who received seven days paid leave and Bank Holiday entitlement. As Barton (2005:111) found, *'by the middle of the war some shoe operatives were receiving holidays with half-pay. In 1918, workers in the co-operative movement shoe factories were granted six days' paid leave'*. Yet such observations about holidays in WW1 are relatively rare in tourism history. So why has the 1914-18 period been neglected?

4. The neglect of tourism history 1914-18

There are potentially several explanations for the lack of debate about tourism history 1914-18. First, from an economic history perspective, data on the demand for and supply of transport to facilitate wartime tourist travel remains largely absent. At the outbreak of war, much of the pre-war rigour and zeal for compiling statistical data ceased, particularly for rail travel (Hurcomb, 1925). Even where general overview statistics exist, it remains difficult to disaggregate the effect of war-related and leisure travel. Thus, when considering the major increase in financial performance of Britain's railway companies (e.g. from a £8.6 million turnover in 1914 to £41.9 million in 1918 and a drop to £23 million in 1919 during an influenza pandemic, see Johnson, 2006), the war effect tends to be the main explanatory variable in most interpretations. The state took over the strategic management of the railway system through the auspices of the Railway Executive Committee (REC), with its main concern being the war effort as mandated by the Board of Trade. Second, the focus of the state in WW1 was to appeal to the population's patriotism and thereby to stimulate labour demand for armed service, industrial production and the emancipation of female

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[1] The term 'holiday' may have many meanings in the wartime period depending on the type of tourist under consideration. For example, for the *leisured classes* they had unconstrained time to take holidays (where they were not volunteering or gainfully employed). In contrast, wartime households depleted of males (who had enlisted), meant a growth in the single female or two (or more) female companions travelling together as well as female-headed households taking holidays with children. This is epitomised in the Great Eastern Railway (1915) *Travel Guide*, a lavishly and artistically designed free sepia publication, describing the resorts to travel to around the east coast aimed at the London market. Each of these markets are identified through subliminal advertising, promoting the benefits of coastal and rural holidays.

labour. State management of the war and impact on society has tended to dominate historical research, especially the voluminous archives associated with DORA. Other domestic issues, such as the German U-boat campaign and shelling of England's East Coast in December 1914 (Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby) and subsequent Zeppelin and bomber raids, created interest in attacks on the UK population (HM Treasury, 1915). These raids were prominently featured in the national and local press, with some resorts blaming these incidents for a decrease in visitors. The anxiety was depicted by Brittain (1978) on arrival in wartime Lowestoft noting local concern about naval attacks and subsequent Zeppelin raids, with buildings blacked out. These concerns were not unfounded given the 51 Zeppelin raids on the UK 1915-17 (557 people killed and 1358 injured, after almost 6000 bombs were dropped), mainly in the Home Counties and east. A further 52 heavy bomber raids killed 857 and injured 2058 people, as the first example of air raids.

Consequently, the war effort developed as a major area of sustained research. Indeed, holidays, leisure and the pursuit of pleasure seem insignificant against the scale of human suffering which the war induced (Greenwood, 1942). Walton (1996: 604) argued that the historiography of war and social change research was drawn from a paradigm that *'regard[s] leisure and tourism as frivolous … while historians of leisure towns, resorts and tourism regard wars as irritating distractions from the unfolding of a story with very different priorities'*. We overcome that neglect, demonstrating how tourism became viewed by the state as a pernicious feature of society that potentially impacted the war effort, as Messinger (1992) discusses with regard to state propaganda-inspired responses. This interpretation reflects the pivotal role of labour to the war effort (and holidays as a potential disrupter to production) including maintaining the military strategy of the major offensive as a tactic on the western front (Terraine, 1964; see also an alternative interpretation by Griffith, 1994).

5. The state and tourism 1914-18

Conventional administrative histories of the state and WW1 (e.g. Hardach, 1977) cover much of the familiar territory of how the state organised, managed and directed the war effort on the home front, alongside associated military histories. It was recognised that under the premiership of Asquith (up to 1916) the war was managed in a liberal laissez-faire manner. In contrast, the move of Lloyd George to the Department for Munitions, then to the position of War Secretary and to Prime Minister saw a progression towards what has been described as *total war,* a term more familiar with the Second World War and Nazi Germany, with authoritarian domestic policies. Total war describes a situation where the state appealed to all citizens to play their part so that the state could mobilise all the resources it could muster to defeat the common enemy. It also marked a greater control of society and the economy by the state and removal of unnecessary distractions from the goal of beating the enemy (see George, 1918 for a review of the war goals). Pleasure travel and the pursuit of tourism was to be avoided. Yet deeper political economy analysis, particularly from a social history perspective, frames the labour-state relationship as one of growing conflict 1914-18, as labour recognised its pivotal role in the war effort. State control of munitions (Adams, 1975) ended labour stoppages by the abolition of strikes (in favour of regional tribunals) (Rubin & Rubin, 1992). Some studies (e.g. Whiteside, 2008), point to working condition improvements for some workers, but Braybon (2012) challenges the conventional historiography of the emancipation of female working-class workers in WW1, who experienced prejudice from the state, trade unions and employers. Most historians agree the war created a full labour market, but labour conflict and calls for improvements to working conditions were counterbalanced by the state focus on labour productivity improvements in munitions production including time lost that drew upon the influence of Taylorism and scientific management principles (Taylor, 1911).

5.1. Women's employment and increasing incomes

Women's participation in the workforce rose from 24 % in 1914 to 37 % by 1918, and mass production of munitions was only achieved by their employment that comprised 47 % of the munitions workforce (see Abbot, 1917). By 1916, the state had become the largest employer of workers in munitions work, and the state became responsible for 38 % of GDP 1914-18. Woolwich Arsenal in London, for example, employed 28, 000 female munitionettes (Fara, 2023). Munitions work created a greater disposable income for households, potentially generating income for tourism and leisure spending. However, this is a complex issue to disaggregate. As Crew (1989) indicated, UK real wages declined 1904-14, yet women's wages rose from 48 % of male equivalents in 1914 to 66.6 % by 1918. Incomes overall rose by 35–40 % 1914–17, although inflation reached 80 % with incomes only catching up by 1918. But as Crew shows, using data from 1917 in the case of women as employees, 22 % had not been employed in 1914, 30 % remained in the same occupation, and 17 % left lower paid employment such as domestic service for more lucrative industrial work. By 1918, 50 % more women were employed than in 1914. Crew (1989: 42) concluded that *'efforts to improve wages brought sufficient increases…to cover increased living costs'*. In addition, munitions work allowed women to earn much greater absolute incomes than pre-1914, potentially generating greater real levels of disposable income. The long hours of wartime work meant discretionary spending was focused on concentrated periods of leisure time, as acknowledged in reports of munitionettes holiday activity. As munitions work was a demanding occupation, with an average of at least 60-h weeks in 1916 (Ministry of Munitions (1918), some trade unions and newspapers promoted the need for rest and holidays to offset the fatigue of mass production in munitions factories. Anon (1915a) extolled the virtues of taking a break in the interests of productivity and defended factory closures.

5.2. Requisitioning and tourism infrastructure

The state impact on tourism infrastructure was demonstrated through its policy of requisitioning buildings (e.g. hotels for hospitals – see Durie, 2006 and occasionally entire resort areas as illustrated by Dawson, 2007) to billet troops (for example, in 1914-15, 10,000 soldiers were stationed in Blackpool). The state also requisitioned different forms of transport. Paddle steamers were in prolific use up to the summer of 1914 around the coast for pleasure travel. By September 1914, with the build-up of naval activity on the south coast, excursions from Bournemouth to view the fleet at Weymouth proved popular, although limitations on strategic routes and ports had been brought in and the government told operators to cease sailing by the end of the month (Megoran, 2020). Suitable vessels were requisitioned by the Admiralty to join the war effort, particularly as minesweepers but also for troop transportation and as hospital ships. For example, the REC (1916) minutes reveals that of the 23 pre-war paddle steamers operating on and around the Firth of Clyde, connecting Glasgow with coastal resorts and communities, 12 were requisitioned. The most extreme example noted in previous studies (e.g. Walton, 1996) was the Isle of Man. By requisitioning the majority of the island's steamers by 1918, which were responsible for transporting tourists to the island, the state effectively removed its main transport link for tourism to the island. The result was a virtual collapse of the tourism sector as a major destination for Edwardian holidaymakers (Walton, 1996). In contrast, the state turned the island into an internment camp for 'aliens', following the actions set out in the Alien Restriction Act of 1914 that changed the status of foreign or 'alien' citizens, allowing the state to determine who were 'friendly' and 'enemy aliens'. The impact on tourism was substantial for an island with a 50,000 population routinely expanded by 635,000 visitors a year from England, Scotland and Wales prior to 1914 (Thomas et al., 2020) by steamers. As *The Manchester Guardian* reported on August 3rd' 1915, travel from Manchester to the Isle of Man (and Ireland) had fallen away

while on December 29th, 1916, the newspaper reported from a meeting of the Manx parliament that *'the third tourist season in succession was destroyed owing to the lack of steamboat communication [and now] the situation of the island would be desperate'*. However, on May 20, 1918, *The Manchester Guardian* reported improvements in streamer tourist traffic during the Manchester Whitsuntide Holiday period with five steamers crossing to/from the Isle of Man completing 22 trips and a modest recovery in tourism.

While the age of mass motoring was yet to arrive, it is worth noting that many vehicles, including omnibuses and private cars, were commissioned by the army to service the front line and other military functions. Some car owners, including women, even went with their vehicles to France as drivers (O'Connell, 1998), and, indeed, it was policy to enlist drivers of "mechanically propelled vehicles impressed for military service" (Hansard, 1914). While private car ownership was rising rapidly, with around 132,000 vehicles in 1914, the use of cars for pleasure purposes became very restricted due to state rationing of petrol. The effect on nearby holiday resorts, such as Southend-on-Sea, was a substitution of road for rail travel as 50,000 visitors travelled to spend the weekend there during Whitsuntide 1917, while the day trip market declined, as *'motors and buses were almost entirely absent on account of the petrol restrictions'* (Anon, 1917a). While omnibus services continued to operate in London, requisitioning of vehicles that resulted in more limited timetables. Hallifax (2014) illustrated the effect of requisitioning which made daily travel more difficult within cities (e.g. the 3057 omnibuses in service in London in 1914 were reduced to 2277 by 1918). Demand continued during wartime, as 2 billion journeys were undertaken on public transport in London in 1913 which rose to 2.37 million by 1918, 682 million of which were by omnibus. At peak holiday times, such as Bank Holiday Monday in London in 1915, 2 million passengers travelled by omnibus for leisure day trips to out-of-town locations such as Epping Forest and Hampton Court (Anon, 1915b).

5.3. State control of holidays

Perhaps the most notable impact by the state was in implicit and then explicit attempts at social control (Donajgrodski, 1978) to create order and compliance with the state war effort (Marwick, 2006). As Greenslade (2014) noted the crisis of munitions in 1915 led to increased state focus on production, culminating in the creation of the Department of Munitions (see Department of Munitions, 1916a) and a rise in munition-related newspaper articles. *The Manchester Guardian* had drawn attention to this very issue in 1915 when the shell crisis on the Western Front first attracted public attention. For example, on May 25, 1915, the newspaper featured munitions workers on Tyneside where thousands took additional holidays. Similarly on July 22, 2015 the story *'Clyde Munitions workers and shorter holidays'* and again on July 23, 1915 entitled 'Clyde munitions workers holidays' in Glasgow pointed to the fact that only 25 % of workers restarted work, taking an extra Monday off work after the Glasgow Fair [holiday] period described by the newspaper as attracting *'notoriety'* and reflecting *'tardiness'*. *The Manchester Guardian* also drew attention to the Blackburn Munitions Workers who had chosen to ignore the government request to suspend their holidays, as they were no longer working as many 24-h shifts, which the article reported as *'shock amongst the town's population'* over this holiday behaviour.

Asquith continued to support holidays as rest for workers in Parliament as *'holidays were necessary for workmen to prevent further strain'*, including the continuation of the Bank Holidays (*Derby Daily Telegraph*, June 7, 1915). However, the thinking on what constituted holiday had clear parameters with respect to the war effort, as indicated in an indirect attack on the tourist trade (construed as luxury spending) in a speech at London's Guildhall to businesses, arguing *that 'All money spent in these days on superfluous comforts or luxuries, whether in the shape of goods or services, meant diversion of energy which could better be employed in the national interest'* (the war effort) (*Evening Telegraph*, June 29,

1915). The focus on luxury re-emerged in relation to the Luxury Duty Tax in 1918 (see later). Conversely, as Morgan (1991) observed in Ilfracombe, the loss of tourist trade led to defaults and bankruptcy for 100 people and businesses in 1915-16 despite advertising by Great Western Railway (GWR) on three occasions in 1915 to promote Devon and the West Country (Batten, 2013) and by the London and South Western Railway Publicity Department (1915).

Continued concern about holidays and tourism was readily expressed by the state in relation to allowing munitions workers a summer holiday break to rest and recuperate given the very demanding nature of war work. While the Easter Bank Holiday of 1916 was postponed to focus on war production, the desired effect of curtailing holiday time was ineffective. The impact was recognised in the Prime Minister's speech of 1916 (see Department of Munitions, 1916b) reported in *The Times* (May 27, 1916) and other newspapers following a press briefing (Department of Munitions, 1916c). The crux of the speech was that during the Easter holidays of 1916, munitions output declined by 50 %, which *The Times* described as *'The Deplorable Effect of Easter'*. The private thoughts of Field Marshall Haig, who commanded the British Expeditionary Force in France, expressed his dismay at the situation in his diary on April 17th, 1916: *'I wonder what the future historian will write about Great Britain, whose inhabitants in a period of crisis, insist that these holiday makers should be given preference in travelling to soldiers for the seat of war, as troop movements were cancelled to allow civilian holiday traffic to flourish'* (cited in Blake, 1952). But as Brooks (1918: 197) concluded for the UK railway system 1914-18 *'since the outbreak of the war the British railway must have carried to and from the different ports of embarkation and shipment, for purely military purposes, not less than 13,000,000 persons, about 2,000,000 horses and mules, at least 70,000,000 gallons of petrol, 1500 tons a week of mail matter, and something like 25,000,000 tons of explosive'* that is a counterbalance to the Haig narrative. Even so, the state and Haig's concerns are validated by Tarran (2004) as few effective restraints were imposed on travel, at least until the end of 1916 (although excursion tickets were abandoned). Other features evident from railway magazines of the time are that express passenger services were impacted by cancellations or amended timetables. Yet many mainline services were equivalent to pre-1914 conditions with restaurant car services in existence until later in 1916, while Great Eastern Railway (GER) maintained many until 1918. Anon (1918: 91) argued that GER were able to operate a winter service to pre-war standards (i.e. October to June timetables) minus summer trains. GER saw their revenue rise from £64 million in 1913 to £85 million for passenger and goods traffic in 1918. This challenges studies such as Tarran (2014) in relation to the effectiveness of the REC in dampening tourism demand, especially long-distance travel. For example, in December 1916, the REC issued a poster to try and limit travel with the recorded purpose being to *'dissuade people from useless travelling during Christmas and New Year holidays'* (REC, 1916). The lack of impact on travel habits, saw GWR (: 17), reiterating its comments from 1916, of *'no diminution of demand … in the matter of passenger carrying'* and long-distance travel from London to South West England resorts for holidays is testament to this.

In June 1916, the state decided to cancel the Whitsuntide Bank Holiday to promote increased war efficiency in the lead up to a 'big push' on the western front. This was followeded by Haig's request for workers to forego their holidays in July 1916 to help the war effort through a poster-based propaganda campaign (Haig, 1916). The Committee set up to examine the way holidays were impacting war production by being clustered concluded that introducing a relays system would seriously affect output of munitions, and from a tourism perspective, cause the *'the continuance of the holiday spirit and lead to an amount of travelling which, so long as the relays lasted, would cause congestion on the railways and affect the transport of troops and munitions and other material required for war purposes'* (*The Manchester Guardian*, August 24, 1916). Nevertheless, the notion of rest and relaxation was endorsed by the committee proposing a 4-day holiday period in September 1916 to recompense for holidays not taken since Easter 1916.

The Minister of Munitions (1916) speech noted that *'The response to our appeal for a postponement of Bank holiday is a very good example, and it has been cheerfully accepted on both occasions by the workpeople. We have decided to inaugurate a period of rest at the end of September for certain munition works where relay holidays have been found to be impossible'*. The state response was based upon the Munitions Department own analysis of the problem (Department of Munitions, 1916d,e). But the holiday did not materialise.

5.4. Transport measures and restraint

A further tightening of opportunities for tourist and leisure travel was introduced in September 1916. Day trips and holidays by charabanc were prohibited under DORA by banning the use of motor fuel in charabancs (early motor coaches) for pleasure purposes, which were popular for works outings. As Anon (1916a) observed, pleasure trips were taking place every day to seaside resorts on the south coast, which the author suggested was an issue given that these vehicles consumed a gallon of petrol every 6–8 miles. The state adopted a more conciliatory approach in November 1916 with the Ministry of Munitions proposing two extra bank holidays at Christmas for munitions workers (*The Manchester Guardian*, November 23rd, 1916) *'subject to military exigencies'* to address complete factory shutdowns. The concern with munitions workers and holidays continued for the rest of the war as evident in the REC Minutes where the issue periodically reappeared as an item 1915–1918. Even so, the attempt to stymie tourism demand remains a key question to consider in terms of how far attempts at social control restricted tourism. The report in *The Manchester Guardian* on December 24, 1916 suggests demand was substantial, where a *'large number of munitions workers left Birmingham yesterday for holidays in various parts of the country. The numbers of passengers for Ireland was so great that officials were compelled to stop steamship bookings. The munitions workers proceeded on their journey it being understood that preferential consideration would be shown to them in any steamship accommodation available'*. Further, Halifax's (2012) examination of the Essex wartime economy noted that constraint measures did little to stymie demand although some overnight tourism from the London region was converted to day trips to resorts. However, evidence from railways as a primary mode of travel provides a more compelling picture.

The REC raised rail fares in early 1917 and then withdrew some services. The justification in the *Railway and Travel Monthly* was that *'Pleasure travel has also increased as a result of the war. So many hundreds of thousands of people who are earning wages largely in excess of those obtaining in normal times spend a proportion of their income in pleasure trips, that the trains are crowded with unnecessary passengers. From January* 1st *new restrictions [apply] – an increase in fares (50 % for long-distance) with exceptional consideration in cases of travelling on business of national importance'* (Anon, 1917b: 33). These new restraining measures were effective enough to prompt the War Cabinet (1917a) to respond to the agenda item ('Holidays for Munition Workers') thus: *'The Minister of Munitions should issue a notice to the effect that the Government do not think it necessary on this occasion to interfere with the ordinary Easter holidays, but urge upon all workpeople the importance of returning to work promptly'*. The Transport Select Committee (1918) retrospectively noted the effect of increased war incomes to obviate fare increases and a reduction in train miles to 60 % of pre-war levels, yet these demand management measures failed to suppress the appetite for leisure travel by rail, especially the continued concern in REC Minutes about the scale and impact of munition workers' leisure travel. The state also looked at whether the 1917 Whitsuntide Holiday should be cancelled as part of supporting the war effort. Similarly, in the summer of 1917, the government asked the working population to forego summer holidays of 7 and 14 days in duration. The restraint was premised upon reducing pleasure travel due to major logistical problems with the war effort and munitions, a problem which the REC had reinforced in May 1917 arguing that it wanted to reduce the number of ordinary passengers in the railway network. However, this did not stop *The Times* newspaper carrying a full-paper advertisement (May 21, 1917) entitled *War worker holidays*, with destinations promoting holidays and guide books to prospective war workers with the means to take holidays. This was in spite of the state's concern with food rationing as imported food was in short supply due to shipping losses as a result of the German U-boat campaign.

While motoring was still an elite activity for the wealthy, pleasure travel by car was severely impacted by government restrictions on petrol brought in during 1916. Monthly petrol allowances were awarded strictly according to use of the vehicle through the Petrol Supply Commission (PSC). If only for pleasure purposes, the allowance was very limited, and the driver was obliged to produce a card on which each purchase would be recorded. When the monthly limit was reached, no further fuel could be purchased. *The Evening Telegraph* (June 7, 1916) outlined the restrictions and the "[m]easures to reduce joy riding", reporting that the government chose not to adopt the PSC's proposal to stop Sunday pleasure motoring. While there was an element of fraudulent activity around petrol allowances and completion of driver cards (Anon, 1917c), the desired outcome was a dramatic decline in the number of vehicles on the road for leisure purposes. Biss a "well-known motoring expert" writing in 1916 (Biss, 1916) described a long road trip to collect a car, crossing England from north to south, which provides a rare glimpse into the motoring experience that year. He found *"cars few and far between … no touring parties or week-enders … and they told me the same tale at hotel after hotel …"* and concluded that *"touring without objective is as expensive as it is unsatisfactory"*, recognising the poor road surfaces that created *"pock marked adventure mile after mile"*. Biss also observed that the garage population had "thinned out" with men gone to war or to work in munitions factories. Cecil Harmsworth MP (Harmsworth, 1903-1945) diaries describe a family holiday trip from London to Cornwall by train, where they were collected by a wagonette from the station to travel to their final destination because *"motors are now well-nigh out of the question because of petrol restrictions"* (September 5, 1916). On January 4, 1917 Harmsworth writes of using his mother's car for a local trip, describing it as *"a rare luxury these days"*.

5.5. Tourism promotions, restraint and propaganda

An interesting response to holiday restraint from Thomas Cook was to promote travel to 12 UK health and spa resorts in the *Travellers Gazette* in June 1917. The decision was premised on the argument that *'we are told by a high medical authority that the chief benefit of a holiday is change of thought and surroundings'* as a counterweight to the state argument for *'back-yard holidays'* (i.e. at home) (Anon, 1917d). Cook's had a long-standing collaboration with the Midland Railway on joint advertising. These resorts were frequently featured in newspaper reports on the weather conditions for holidaymakers that presented a 'business as usual' attitude, which explains why Cook's would have built on existing evidence of continued interest in coastal and inland spa resorts. The same promotional case was repeated in the December 1917 *Travellers Gazette*. However, Cook's suspended all promotional campaigns in 1918 after the Government introduced a Select Committee Inquiry on Luxury Duty (House of Commons, 1918) to examine *'articles and places of luxury'* (e.g. restaurants and hotels) with a view to imposing duty on spending that was beyond the *'necessary items of life'*. The Select Committee aims were to follow a similar approach to that adopted in France in 1917, to reduce wasteful and extravagant living at a time of national emergency in food and supplies of goods. The state again was seeking to manage the war effort by proposing tax increases for unnecessary consumer spending on tourism, for example, by drawing national attention to extravagance. Whilst the Duty Bill was deferred in October 1918, it illustrates the precarious state of the war economy from the state perspective. Even though holiday activity was not stopped and the measure was withdrawn just before the cessation of hostilities in 1918, the Bill provides further evidence of the dual purpose of seeking to dampen demand among more affluent classes while also generating additional taxation.

The state also called for munitions workers to work through Easter 1918, with estimates of over 50 % of workshops in the Lancashire area supporting the call (*The Manchester Guardian*, March 29, 1918). Conversely, on May 28, 1918, *The Manchester Guardian* reported *'difficulties with travel due to overcrowded trains and relief trains'* because of the Whitsuntide Holidays. Even so Thomas Cook highlighted, due to food rationing, the need to pre-book holidays in the May 1918 *Travellers Gazette* for impending summer holidays, also advising of mid-week travel to ease pressure on an already stretched and overloaded rail network (also observed in autobiographies such as Brittain (1978) and other diaries such as Harmsworth ,1903-1945). Even *The Times* noted this demand for travel (August 5, 1918) entitled *'Holiday Traffic'* commenting that.

> 'The tide of holiday traffic which had been steadily rising during the week came to a flood on Saturday … the crowds at the mainline station recalled those of pre-war times when competition in cheap excursions was not restrained by military needs … the crush was greatest at London Bridge, [London] Victoria and [London] Waterloo … At Victoria, the chief bookings appeared to be Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings … At London Bridge the queue of waiting passengers, which began to form at 4am, extended from the booking office across into the station yard … Waterloo was equally crowded …Liverpool Street had its long queues which began at 6am'.

Running in parallel to this campaign to downplay the taking of holidays, especially among munitions workers, was a state-sponsored propaganda poster campaign (Table 1) (Demm, 1993) to appeal to a sense of duty and patriotism, using visual persuasion, based on the successful campaigns pre-1914 by businesses promoting the sale of branded goods. As a form of opinion manipulation, propaganda sought to win over public opinion to the state position, directly controlled from the cabinet in wartime Britain (and those delegated to orchestrate it in 1917 when the War Propaganda department was formed). This characterised state involvement in mass communication to directly speak with the public (Messinger, 1992). The iconography of these posters (see Christopher, 2016) remains striking for the use of working-class female workers or soldiers on the western front to show the unintended consequences of taking holidays for the duration of the war, portrayed in a practical manner that people could understand. The images and language used were designed to have an emotional appeal to affect behavioural change, in much the same way that railway companies and destinations sought to influence people to take holidays and use their services by creating a behavioural desire to travel to a resort or locale.

6. Tourism demand: the population response

6.1. Transport and travel

The short run effect of the outbreak of war saw *The Observer* newspaper report on August 16, 1914 that *'Holidays resumed: Fresh start for the seaside season'*, illustrating the well-established nature of holidays. A similar headline from *The Manchester Guardian* on August 3, 1914 pointed to a limited concern with war among the tourists travelling from Manchester to the Isle of Man, Ireland, Blackpool, and Wales. Steamship services to Scandinavia were resumed and were advertised (e.g. Newcastle to Bergen) with Thomas Cook re-establishing cheap day trips from London to the East Kent resorts. Warships gathering at ports such as Felixstowe became a spectacle for people to go and observe whilst local councils such as Southend on Sea and Torquay were keen to highlight that they were 'open for business'. Likewise, Ambulance Trains developed for repatriating wounded troops became popular visitor attractions at stations when they were displayed, with viewing through a donation to the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VAD), a Red Cross detachment with 90,000 volunteers. Ambulance Trains were striking as they could be a third of a mile long and their novelty made them a visitor attraction even when in use (Anon, 1914a). At the same time, the outbreak of war saw

Table 1

Surviving examples of War Office and Department of Munitions Posters with straplines used 1914-18.

Date	Poster Title/*Strapline*	Repository poster is curated in	Reference number
1914–18	Ongoing campaign 1914-18: *These women are doing their bit, helping to make munitions*	National Archives	EXT 1/315/17
1916	Postponement of Holidays: The Big Push – *'Well I'm not taking a holiday myself just yet, But I am sending these kids of mine for a little trip on the continent'*	National Archives	EXT 1/315/11
July 1916	Field Marshall Douglas Haig Poster, Commander of the British Army and the Big Push in 1916 for the Western Front*: Fritz!, Fritz!: Are these British munitions workers never going to take a holiday!* (with two German soldiers sitting in a trench)	Imperial War Museum	
July 26, 1916	Appeal by Sir Douglas Haig: Letter appealing for postponement of holidays and government response.	National Archives (uncatalogued and folder copy of folded black and white poster)	T90814 26
1917	*Munitions Workers: Stay at your work*	National Archives	EXT 1/315/10
1917	*These women are doing their bit: Learn to make munitions*	National Archives	EXT 1/315/17
1918	*More Aeroplanes are Needed. Women Come and Help!*	National Archives	EXT 1/315/2
No specific date attributed: likely to be 1916–1918)	German Trenches on the Front: (1) Before bombardment (2) After bombardment: *Munition's workers see the efforts of your work: Postpone your holidays and pile up the shells*	National Archives	EXT 1/815/4

Sources: National Archives, London; Imperial War Museum, London.

British tourists stranded in Europe, *The Observer* reporting on August 16, 1914 that a shortage of steamers was preventing their prompt repatriation. 'Business as usual' rapidly changed in December 1914 with the shelling of the East Coast resorts, as discussed earlier.

Tourism was displaced after East Coast raids to many other regions, as Durie (2006) noted, including the Highlands of Scotland and resorts in South West England but tourism to these resorts did not cease: it reduced in scale. Anon (1916b) dispelled the myth of the unsafe nature of East Coast resorts on a day trip to Clacton from London, returning home to find London had been bombed by Zeppelins. The poor state of affairs on the East Coast were epitomised by a letter to *The Times* newspaper on July 13, 1916 *'East Coast Resorts: Holiday visitors wanted'*, with the author describing hoteliers on the *'brink of despair'*, as also noted in Southend. A debate in Parliament (Hansard, 1916) drew upon experiences in Lowestoft where: *'The position of these towns is that they have lost their visitors, upon whom I understand they depend for something like 40* per *cent of their income'*, which had also been accompanied by lobbying by tourism interests of the Local Government Board (Bellamy, 1988). The government unusually provided limited compensation for the resorts affected by naval shelling; Scarborough received a £10,700 grant for the loss of rates due to unoccupied houses and the loss of rate

income after the shelling of the resort. The outmigration of the population to munitions work replaced some of the lost employment in tourism. Hansard reported that up to £30,000 in total, was distributed in compensation to a wide range of East Coast resorts but the Borough Councils deemed this inadequate.

After the outbreak of war, railway companies continued to advertise tourist and leisure travel by train. This questions Thompson's (2011) assessment that the vast majority of railway advertising ceased in WW1, with a narrow use of the pictorial poster. Some companies continued with visually appealing colour poster campaigns for summer and off-peak holidays that were well-established before 1914. Posters and pamphlets and brochures also continued to be used to promote leisure travel, with some organisations maintaining the poster as an art form (see Hewitt, 2000). Despite Zeppelin attacks on London and the Home Counties, London Underground's poster collection for 1914-18 contains 152 wartime promotional railway posters focusing on day trips to the urban fringe and individual coastal resorts such as Southend. Probably the most striking was the 1915 colour poster with the strapline: *'Why bother about the Germans invading the country? Invade it yourself by underground and motor bus'*. As commercial entities, railway companies benefitted from tourism and military leisure travel. For example, the Midland Railway saw fares rise 50 % 1916-17; in 1917 receipts increased £250,000, on a turnover of £14,430,000 which was £500,000 greater than its highest earnings recorded in 1913 (although company dividends were limited for the duration for the war). It is clear that war workers did not heed state advice and restrain themselves from travel and holidays. Munitions workers were a new lucrative market for tourism, as evident from an advertisement in *The Times* with a full one page spread advertising sheet on entitled 'Resorts for War Workers' (May 18, 1917). In that article, a wide range of English resorts and tourism establishments promoted themselves in much the same way as pre-1914. Even in the more austere climate of rationing in 1917, *The Times* (August 4, 1917) noted that *'August Holiday: Holiday resorts crowded'*, outlining demand displacement from East Coast to South and South West coastal resorts. These levels of demand are not surprising with the state providing bonuses of 7.5 %–12 % (depending on the type of work/grade and method of payment for munitions workers) as reported on January 24, 1918 by *The Times* ('Munitions Workers Bonus'). However, such bonuses had an effect of stimulating discontent in other areas trades, with strikes in London and several resorts in August 1918. *The Times* reported how stoppages occurred among hospitality workers throughout the August Bank Holiday in Bath, Brighton, Hove, Bristol, Folkestone, Hastings and Weston-Super-Mare (aside from London) at *'seaside resorts crowded with holiday makers'*. But what impact was reported of wartime tourism on resorts?

7. Experiences of resorts

At a resort level, destination marketing had been firmly established in the Edwardian period (Ward, 1995; Pritchard and Morgan 1999) but examination of the war period remains neglected (Warner, 2021 being the exception). One reason for the limited number of studies is that many of the promotional materials, such as destination guides, have been lost, destroyed or decayed but a number survive (e.g. Personal Communication, 2024; Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, 1915; Exeter, Devon, 1915; 1916, 1917; Teignmouth, Devon, 1915; Ilfracombe, Devon, 1915; Bournemouth, Hampshire, 1915) many of which were reprinted through to 1919. Warner's (2021) study makes a key contribution to one of the most studied Victorian and Edwardian resorts – Blackpool, with its working-class markets and considerable established body of knowledge (e.g. Walton, 1978, 1983, 1996, 2000). Warner (2021) reaffirms the role of the town's advertising committee, which was critical in the promotion of the town and especially the attempts up to 1915 to expand the tourist season, and after 1916 in growing new middle-class markets from London and further afield (e.g. southern Scotland) to diversify away from a working-class demographic through

targeted newspaper advertising. Town Councils continued their collaborations with railway companies through posters advertising a free illustrated destination guide dating to the work of the Health Resort Association after 1904 (Health Resorts Association, 1904). Yet where guides no longer survive, minutes from the Joint Advertising Committee and local council show that guides continued to be published and distributed while advertising continued apace (e.g. Torquay in South Devon). In contrast, The Official Blackpool Town Guide and Autumn Season Guide was suspended after guidance from the Board of Trade for financial prudence (Warner, 2021). Blackpool was the only resort permitted to charge advertising to local ratepayers but only reduced its budget spend by 15 % throughout the war.

Individual businesses continued to advertise regularly in *The Times*, *The Manchester Guardian* and many regional newspapers such as the *Western Daily Press*, *The Hull Daily News* and other regional examples. Some weekly advertising-driven newspapers in holiday resorts, such as the *Minehead and West Somerset Advertiser Visitor List* survive 1914-16 and these show that paid visitor listings continued and actually increased numerically during the summer months. There is also evidence of the extension of the season into late September in 1916. As Durie (2017) observed, Scotland and its health resorts (including those hotels not requisitioned) continued to prosper, with businesses placing advertisements on a rolling basis. However, tourist travel patterns in the north of Scotland were restricted by DORA, with the region deemed a special military area due to the military significance of bases after 1916, making residents and visitors obtain passes to visit these areas (BBC, 2014). The cumulative impact of travel demand, including for leisure, was evidenced by Earnslaw (1990), who noted that in summer 1915, railways saw a 30 % increase in passenger traffic, exceeding the record levels of 1913, while for northern resorts such as Blackpool and Fleetwood (during the August Bank Holiday weekend), the resorts received 1000 Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway trains. Even by 1918, the demand for Easter travel had still exceeded the 1913 records for volume of travel by 22 % according to Earnslaw (1990), of which resorts would have been major beneficiaries. Information for holidaymakers continued to be produced by railway companies (e.g. GWR's *Holiday Haunts*, first published in 1906, was produced in 1914-16 but suspended for the remainder of the war) (Personal Communication, 2024). It ceased publication probably due to a shortage of staffing to coordinate and compile the guide as staff had enlisted and paper begun to be rationed in 1917 (War Cabinet, 1917b). However, London and South Western Railways continued to issue its comparatively shorter *Hints for Holidays* booklet throughout the war.

Newspaper advertisements continued to be targeted at specific holiday periods. *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Times* newspapers carried a series of articles between 1915 and 1918 illustrating that specific resorts experienced peaks of tourism demand. An article entitled *'Holidays at Home: Heavy traffic to South Coast resorts'* (*The Manchester Guardian*, April 2, 1915) noted the addition of relief trains to cope with Easter demand and the impact on *'Brighton, Folkestone, Eastbourne, Bournemouth and Torquay [which] attracted the bulk of holidaymakers'*, with hotels and accommodation establishments having *'full houses'*. Similarly, the Isle of White, Matlock and Buxton *'attracted thousands'*, while *'Blackpool and other resorts'* were busier with a *'greater use of bicycles and special omnibuses'* to reach the destinations. These trends were reiterated in an article *'Holiday Prospects: Busy season expected at chief resorts'* (Manchester Guardian, July 31, 1915). A similar article for Easter 1916, *'Seaside Resorts Crowded'* (April 22, 1916), commented on Brighton being a *'town full to eclipse all records'*. Likewise on April 25, 1916, *The Times* also reported crowding in London (*'Holiday Sightseeing: Crowds in London'*), especially at key visitor attractions. In the same issue of the newspaper, a commentary - *'Report from Seaside Resorts'* provided an overview of the divergent experiences of coastal resorts during wartime where the demand for west coast areas greatly outperformed south coast resorts. The East Coast remained much quieter as an analysis of national newspapers for April 1916 reported fewer visitors in the main.

Within resorts, data on the experiences of individual businesses and tourism supply issues has been relatively scant, with the exception of James and Northey (2022). The greatest impact was in the London region for a multitude of reasons (e.g. continued business travel in the colonial capital and centre of British administration, the billeting of troops, hotels used as hospitals and hotels as convalescent centres) (James & Northey, 2022). In the case of the Kent coast resorts, an initial decline in tourism saw their trade replaced by convalescence and hospital functions. Yet by 1915, London had lost the bulk of its American visitors as *The Times* (March 30, 1915) noted, with the headline '*The American Summer Invasion: Prospects in London*' after President Wilson had warned US citizens not to summer in London. Even so the article also reported that London had found other guests to fill the void. Adaption and new market development remained a key feature of hotel resilience, with the South East and Chatham Railway company's hotel operations impacted thus: the company announced a £15,000 profit (1914) which reduced to £1732 in 1915 although the levels of occupancy and financial out-turn varied by railway companies as the financial records of several railway companies survive as ledgers (e.g. Grand Central Railway, Midland Railway, London and North Western Railway). Nevertheless, hotel companies continued to advertise between 1916-18, in national and local newspapers and with posters as Railway Company Minute books show, where they survive.

8. War-related tourism

Within the historical literature on tourism, some studies have identified the role of militourism (Cozzi, 2009) while other studies have examined the soldier as a tourist (on both the war front and home front (Nicholson & Mills, 2017; White, 1987). There is also a developing literature on this issue. For example, Lisle (2016) analysis of holidays in France, Nicholson and Mills (2017) analysis of soldier tourism and photography, and Yolun's (2025) investigation of Turkish soldiers and mobilisation illustrate this growing quantum of knowledge on the First World War, mainly in a non-UK context. The key debate, which is often framed from a tourist studies perspective, is that many colonial and domestic recruits were first time travellers overseas. As a result, researchers have examined their experiences of being in-transit on ships, being billeted and on leave as tourists. The arguments for examining the en-route travel, arguably as business tourists, is an unusual but fascinating area of inquiry, with evidence drawn from diaries of individual troops. Other studies (e.g. White, 2014) have built on this, examining New Zealand troops on leave in London with tours provided by Thomas Cook from their hotel accommodation in London. The War Department in 1915 approved next of kin visits to mainland Europe or UK hospitals for dangerously wounded troops as described in detail by Brittain (1978). These trips were organised by the military or Red Cross. Overseas troops visiting the UK added to the general expansion of visits to major cities such as London (Maguire, 2016) as over 60,000 New Zealand troops alone transited through the London during 1914-18, many becoming tourists in the process. Tourism guides such as *The Colonial's Guide* highlighted many of the sites familiar to tourists today, including guided tours, including the effect of troops on prostitution (see White, 2019) and impact on an already busy city with many other nationalities of troops in situ (see *The Manchester Guardian* September 28, 1918 for a vivid description of '*The soldier and the city streets*'). The problem of prostitution and the potential to contract venereal disease for troops on leave in London led the Canadian Commander in London in 1918 to complain about the impact of prostitution on imperial troops. Such comments were the polar opposite of advertisements in the *Times* (March 6, 1915) for resorts such as Buxton, a place where '*soldiers can undergo…special treatments … recovering from wounds or illness contracted in conflict*', a feature already promoted by the Travellers Gazette in 1916 and 1917.

The experience of wartime Brighton, as summarised by D'Enno (2016: NP), as a '*welcoming resort that afforded sanctuary and entertainment to besieged Londoners and other visitors from every stratum of society*' seems an apt assessment for those resorts that were able to maintain a facade of business as usual. Even so in the case of Brighton, it treated wounded soldiers in requisitioned buildings as well as housing Belgian refugees who fled to Britain at the outbreak of war. There was also a perception that all overseas travel ceased with the war, but as *The Manchester Guardian* (July 25, 1915) article '*Welcome to France*' observed, outside of the war zone France was open to tourists as promoted by the Touring Club de France in association with the French railway companies. In 1918, promotion of Paris for troops on leave increased in national newspapers. Throughout the war, shipping companies frequently advertised itineraries to many colonial territories as business travel continued despite the persistent threat of U-boat attacks on sea traffic, given the complex colonial pattern of territories and wartime interdependencies that were managed from London.

9. Implications for the management of tourism

The evidence reviewed in this paper is necessarily selective, resulting from a rigorous process of searching and triangulating different sources to highlight key debates about the tourism demand for, and management by the state. Yet synthesising the existing evidence needs to be accompanied by a deeper theoretical explanation based on the data as observed by Bricker and Donohoe (2015). Building on Jasso (1988) arguments that any theory development needs to be based on '*observable implications as many and varied as possible; and … that its observable implications include phenomena or relationships not yet observed*', we synthesise phenomena not previously observed in the tourism literature. To aid a better theoretical explanation, we draw upon key tourism concepts to help make sense of the empirical data based on our three research questions. The main implication is that there is much still unknown about tourism in modern history, and that broad brush accounts of specific periods may not reveal the intricacies of social life, economic responses and the role of the state. The richness of data that needs to be finely researched and interpreted can reveal hitherto taken for granted complexities in relation to the three research questions.

(1) *What policies, actions and outcomes are evident from key actors in the tourism system (e.g. the state, businesses and local government)?* The first step was to establish an overview of the data and for this purpose, informed by Leiper's tourism system concept (Leiper, 1979) to help understand the different actors, sectors and stakeholders that are interconnected to create a wartime tourism system (Fig. 1). The state is the controlling element of the model, managing and leading the war effort, using often subtle, explicit and blunt instruments in a coercive or pragmatic manner in pursuit of compliance that often created conflict within the tourism system. As Lasswell's (1927) seminal study of propaganda illustrated, propaganda was successful in steering the masses towards its war objectives (George, 1918) but not in the case of tourism and holidays. There are also external factors unique to wartime, such as rationing, attacks by air and sea on the population as workers/residents and visitors. In addition, the process of marketing communication by destinations (e.g. advertising) was also impacted by the state through propaganda and removing the use of destination posters from railway billboards. The implications are that the tourism system constantly adapted to an ongoing crisis and state responses to try and limit demand and supply, accommodating tourism in a fluid manner in spite of barriers and obstacles to day-to-day operations.

(2) *How did the state impact tourism during the Great War in the UK?;* As total war developed as an ideology, control of military production achieved considerable success but this did not translate across into managing the population's leisure or tourism behaviour, which is the dynamic element in Leiper's model – the
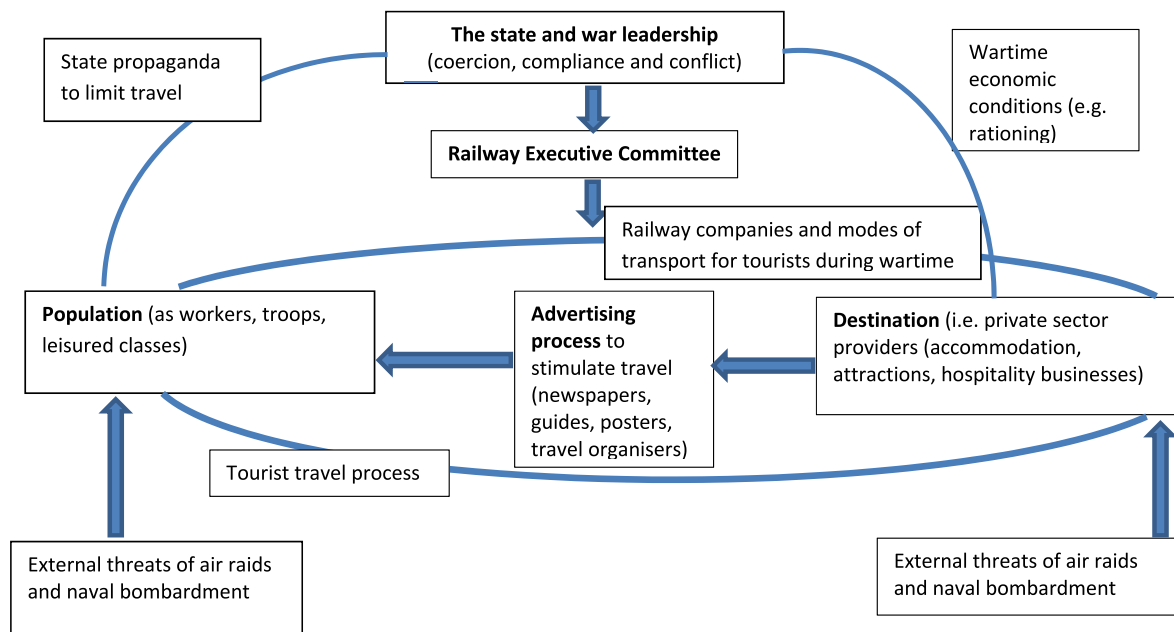
Fig. 1. The wartime tourism system.

geographical movement of tourists in time and space. The literature that exists on leisure as resistance (e.g. Genoe, 2010) offers a potentially deeper understanding of the socio-psychological challenge the state faced with its largely anti-tourism ideology as tourism remained an embarrassing and persistent disrupter to state policy of total war. But the state counterbalanced this perspective by acknowledging hard-pressed workers' need for leisure. Such recognition reinforces Walton (2000) and Barton's (2005) arguments that tourism and holidays were a key element of social life in the Edwardian era that continued 1914-18. There are parallels here with the British state response to the Covid-19 pandemic that deprived people of holidays and travel but where an underlying craving for travel unfolded: first, as leisure, then domestic tourism, until a return to international tourism was permitted (Mitev & Irimiás, 2021). These parallels demonstrate the challenge of trying to control social life during a crisis, and the implications are that quelling demand through constraining travel is by no means a simple task.

(3) *How did the population respond to these policies and actions in terms of the patterns of demand?* The evidence shows that the outbreak of war largely reduced international travel by leisured classes (and created a short-term impact on travel to some resorts as the *Western Times* on August 29, 1914 noted with the *'season killed'* by cancelled bookings in the West Country). But as the wartime economy and its workforce expanded, demand for holidays did not abate: tourists adapted, substituted and redefined the nature of the holiday and fitted it to available places and spaces. The more affluent substituted international travel with domestic holidays, even with reduced options. A range of geographical patterns of demand emerged. Table 2 illustrates a range of wartime tourism mobilities, underpinned by greater time compression for holidays (with longer working hours) and a more limited range of places and spaces to visit due to war impacts or prohibited areas. A range of processes were simultaneously shaping these mobilities spatially including: (a) a spatial reorientation of demand from unconstrained Edwardian patterns; (b) a

spatial concentration of leisure-related trips by workers and troops within cities as a substitute for tourism, expressed as intra-urban trips destined for the city centre or urban fringe/countryside; (c) a greater spatial clustering of industrial workers in factories, sometimes away from home (e.g. Irish workers employed in the munitions works in north-west England) who took trips back home; (d) a degree of geographical continuity in preferred destination types (e.g. the coast), with connections by rail from centres of demand and new forms of demand (e.g. imperial and domestic troops on leave and voluntary workers such as Red Cross nurses); that concentrated in cities and resorts for compressed time periods; (f) repatriated wounded servicemen dispersed across the UK who sometimes filled the vacuum left by tourists; (g) a degree of continuity in business travel on government business epitomised by the diary of the MP Cecil Harmsworth 1900-48 that depicts wartime travel conditions and destinations visited for work and pleasure (Thorpe & Toye, 2016). Despite pressure on transportation, and increasingly strict rules for travel, the paradoxical position of tourism in society was summarised by the North Eastern Railway in its tourist guides, where restraint was advocated followed by the contradictory arguments of the need for holidays for workers, children and families (see Plate 1 and 2). Similarly, railway companies still ran additional train services at peak periods where capacity existed as they were still ongoing commercial concerns, despite restrictions and the REC oversight of railway operations. Propaganda and successive regulations designed to hinder pleasure travel had a limited impact in the long-term, with demand recorded at record levels by many railway companies (e.g. Great Western Railway). With the pressure of rationing, the state considered a Luxury Tax that would have impacted tourism, although it was never implemented. The implications are that it is difficult to constrain tourism behaviour and the need for rest and recuperation that tourism provides. The state reluctantly recognised the need to balance the ideology of regulation and restraint with the pragmatism of allowing tourism to persist albeit with constraints and longer working hours.

Table 2

Examples of continuity and change in geography of tourism in wartime Britain.

| Geographical scale	Continuity in activity	Change in activity
International	Global business travel to the empire continues	Transatlantic liner travel ceases UK-Scandinavia steamers suspended after U-boat attacks in late 1914
National	Business travel by rail Doubling of fuel cost for cars in 1916 had limited impact on those who could afford cars could afford fuel. Resorts still advertise for the motoring visitor.	Some dining cars removed after 1915/16 making long-distance business travel less comfortable
	West coast and inland resorts see an increase in demand The Cambrian railway in north and mid-Wales introduces scenic railcars in 1916 to meet increased demand	Shelling and bombing of east coast resorts leads to displacement to west coast and inland
	Inland spas continue to grow their traffic as safe locations to visit with a health focus with continued advertising to promote their attributes	Some railway companies provide female attendants (e.g. GWR) to attract the single female traveller and to assist women travelling on holiday with children on key routes
	Major west coast resorts such as Blackpool continue to attract peaks of visitors on key holidays along with other west country destinations	The billeting of troops in some resorts and requisitioning of tourism infrastructure for hospitals and convalescent homes creates a broader visitor mix
	Existing markets such as the leisured classes staying in resorts continues for extended periods	New visitor types emerge: • Munitionettes • Farm holidays to help the war effort (working holidays) • Troops on leave or in-transit and new accommodation forms emerge – the temporary accommodation at stations • The single female traveller and mother with children, actively advertised by railway companies in Guides (e.g. the Great Eastern Railway's artistic 1915 Travel Guide (resorts around the east coast) • Greater interest in wartime activities and charitable events to support the war effort and wounded soldiers billeted in resorts
	Long-distance travel continues but the cost increases pushing some demand to trams for day trips	Larger cities in northern England report the tram network being heavily used on holidays for day trips as visitors substitute train travel for trams
	Day trips at weekends in London are continuously promoted to resorts and the urban fringe including the emergent suburbs (Metro-Land) surrounded by countryside	Greater geographical extent of the commuter infrastructure is utilised for inbound travel for leisure into London (e.g. to see its attractions) and for residents to travel outbound
	Steamers to the Isle of Man reduce capacity for mass tourism but some volume continues	Steamers withdrawn from some resorts (e.g. Blackpool and Ilfracombe) and railway advertising highlights suspension. But alternative travel options are highlighted in advertising such as the Furness Railway's 1916 publication *The English Lakeland: Paradise of Tourists*
Regional	Railway companies continue with regional travel itineraries through popular guidebooks they provide such as North Eastern Railway's to Grace Darling's Country and Lindisfarne and resort-oriented leaflets	Scotland is actively promoted by destinations through Guidebooks, posters by railway companies and commercial guidebooks (e.g. The *Handbook to the Highlands Railway and West Coast*, 37th edition, 1918) for golfing, itineraries of the region by train and key attractions
		Some railway companies promote inland destinations on their network as an alternative to coastal trips to urban destinations and their surroundings diversifying the options available
	Regional destination marketing organisations continue to promote clusters of resorts (e.g. the North Wales Advertising Association)	Additional marketing to attract the displaced tourists from the east coast resorts by regional marketing organisations as a safe alternative
Local	Individual resorts continue to promote two-season tourism (winter and summer visits) such as Torquay and Weston-Super-Mare	Staff shortages and problems in recruiting members for the entertainment via bands due to wartime enlistment
	West country resorts continue with national advertising but also widen their appeal through regional and local advertising in the region's newspapers to draw upon shorter distance visitation	Problems at key holiday periods of accommodating demand and effects advised to pre-book at popular resorts and other smaller resorts, such as Minehead report demand being displaced, due to accommodation shortages to the wider region to meet needs creating a wider resort effect
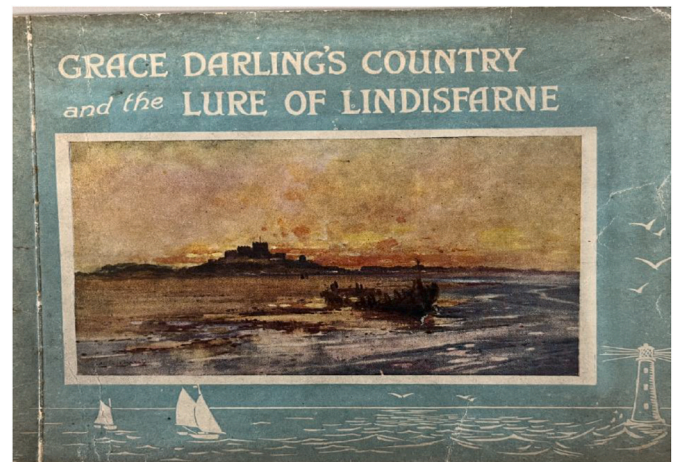
Plate 1. Cover of the Great Northern Great Eastern Railway (1915) Guide book – Grace Darling's Country and the Lure of Lindisfarne, Copyright, Board of Trustees of the Science Museum. All rights reserved.

10. Conclusion

This paper is a confirmatory study of the notion developed in Butler and and Suntikul (2013) that tourism does not necessarily cease during periods of conflict. Tourism adapted, developed and was displaced, while new forms of activity emerged including militourism. Our knowledge and understanding of tourism in this critical phase of history at a national (and global scale) remains based on highly generalised
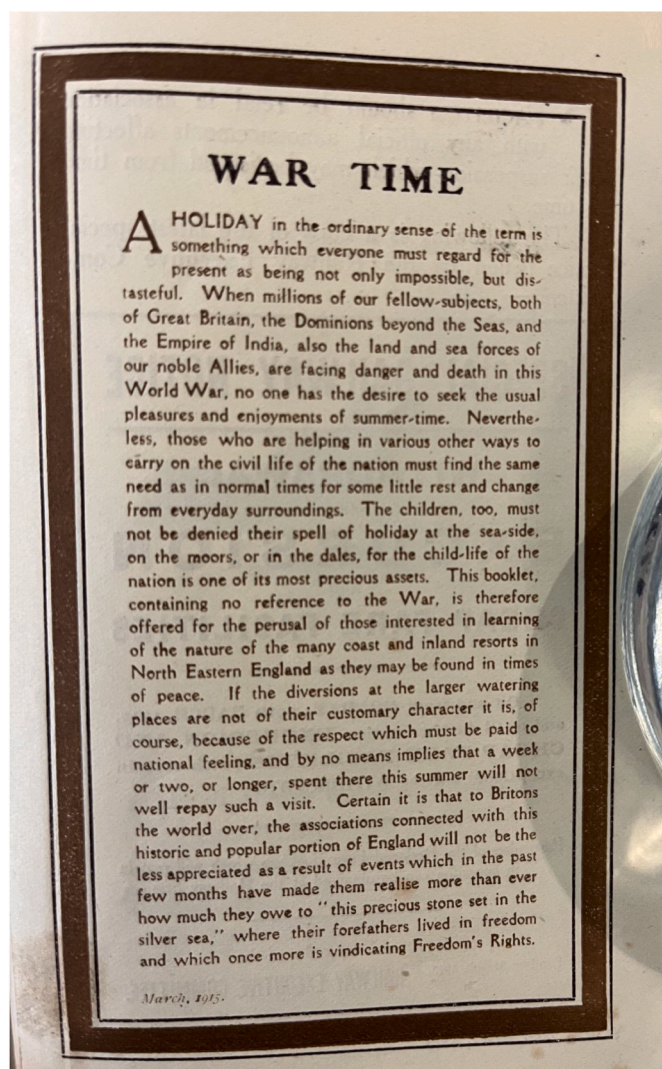
Plate 2. Sticker inserted by the railway company in wartime copies of the Grace Darling (And other similar guides) distributed to the public, Copyright, Board of Trustees of the Science Museum. All rights reserved.

assumptions and statements or it tends to be glossed over in books and articles. Despite a period of major loss, trauma and grief created by war, tourism and leisure offered important outlets for personal pleasure and relaxation. Patriotic calls to minimise the excesses of pleasure travel and consumption by the state and military leaders placed tourism in direct conflict with the objectives of total war. These tensions, along with labour disputes (and a state concern after 1917 with civil unrest, see Keil, 2023), the privations of wartime rationing and other supply shortages were marked by a population's resilience and responsiveness to state control only up to a point. The volatility of tourism demand for consumption in safe places is not something new: it is a natural response in a crisis. The holiday and leisure ideology was not easily erased from the population's collective consciousness by subliminal messages through propaganda. Lasswell (1927) argued that propaganda had a role to play in maintaining morale, as a tool that seeks to control and manage opinion, using symbols and imagery. But state propaganda did not remove the desire or influence worker behaviour towards taking a holiday or travelling to resorts. The historical experience of WW1 may have a wider applications to current debates on overtourism and sustainable tourism if we focus on the intransigence of tourist behaviour and the types of measure that do and do not work such as pricing, state communication and leadership and political conflict between the local and national state. The parallels here are that the social and cultural significance of holidays cannot be underestimated. As Walton (1996) highlighted, even after the UK recovered from the effects of the influenza pandemic 1918–1919, tourism rapidly recovered. *The Times* newspaper (August 6, 1919) reported *'Crowding at resorts'* based on two key drivers of a *'pleasure rush'*: *'first, the general release from the anxiety after five years [of war] and hailing our freedom by doing as little work as possible'*. The 1919 recovery is also a major topic to be progressed further. A review of the newspaper evidence from *The Times* and *The Telegraph* regarding the Easter and summer holiday period contains extensive coverage of resort visitation. Both newspapers contain similar phrases in their reports referring to *'crowded conditions'*, *'accommodation full'*, *'recovery'* (especially for East Coast resorts), *'the most successful season ever'*, *'no lack of money'*, *'a rise in continental travel (including battlefield trips)'*, *'high prices'*, *'crowded trains'* and *'record crowds'*. An overview by *The Telegraph* (*'Record holiday season'*, August 20, 1919) described the *'extraordinary amount of travelling this year'* with queues at stations from 4am and working-class visitors travelling further afield and in excess of five days. The article also interviewed a Thomas Cook representative who described the surge in bookings as *'abnormally high'* with *'money not the difficulty'*. For the nascent period of motoring, petrol restrictions were withdrawn by the end of 1918 although licences were still required. Anon (1919) referred to an anticipated "motoring revival" for that summer, especially the return of charabanc trips for which holiday resorts were noted to be preparing. For private cars though, the lack of garage services and labour to repair cars that had been little used was considered a barrier to an immediate return to the numbers of pre-war pleasure motorists. This paper has highlighted the scope for deeper research on elements of wartime tourism and posed important questions for further theoretical analysis. Continuity and change are important themes in the history of wartime tourism that have largely been a hidden facet of the home front in existing historical research.

Among the limitations of the study is the absence of the voices of the wartime tourists as a working population in northern towns and other urban centres. Where diaries exist, these tend to reflect the upper social groups (e.g. Brittain, 1978; Thorpe & Toye, 2016) and so may shed light on contemporary conditions but not the behaviours, decision-making and spirit of wartime tourism. The demand for tourism was driven by much higher disposable income among new working populations. Such spending, arguably, was a counterbalance to long, dull and monotonous working regimes and the war. Militourism is one area for further examination through diaries and oral histories, including being a wounded soldier in a resort over an extended period as well as soldiers enjoying rest and relaxation. Innovations at major railway termini such as the provision of temporary facilities by charities for soldiers on leave or in-transit offer one direction for further analysis (Anon, 1914b).

Limited evidence also exists of the role of travel organisers and how they adapted, as businesses, to a new domestic tourism reality and how they collaborated with the supply chain (e.g. resorts, accommodation and attractions) in helping shape new geographies of tourism, to substitute for lost international tourism business. For resorts, research to date has been over-reliant on a limited number of case studies so understanding the generalisability of their experiences is needed to develop a better understanding of the new geographies of wartime tourism, even though there is evidence of ongoing marketing and advertising of individual localities in the wartime guidebooks and posters. A degree of resistance and adaptation to the state total war ethos at a resort level also requires further investigation. It poses a theoretical challenge that needs further examination from a political perspective, focusing on tensions in local-state relations as the state under-estimated the economic, social and cultural importance of holidays and leisure. A much deeper analysis of tourism accommodation and hospitality in wartime is needed beyond the contemporary descriptions in trade magazines that are largely empirical and promotional in focus. We have not examined the role of commercial publishers, who continued to publish tourist information (i.e. guidebooks) for visiting destinations,

which is virgin territory for researchers. These complemented the work of destinations and businesses who advertised their products and guidebooks in newspapers, posters and other printed forms. Although the state sought to restrict railway advertising from 1917, destination marketing did not cease in wartime.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Stephen Page: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Validation, Software, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Joanne Connell:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Software, Resources, Methodology, Investigation, Conceptualization.

Impact statement

This paper has a number of distinct impacts on the research community comprising academics, government and policymakers in terms of its content and key findings which can be summarised as.

- For *the academic community*, this is a cross-disciplinary study that spans many different areas from tourism studies, to social, economic and political history, crisis management and political ideology and marketing, demonstrating how the state managed the First World War and adopted an anti-tourism policy, using different tools to try and stymie demand.
- For *governments and policymakers* interested in tourism behaviour change and what tools may work (e.g. advice through to blunt instruments such as taxation and bans on travel), it illustrates the intransigence and continued pursuit of holidaymaking even in the midst of a national and international crisis.
- For *crisis managers*, it demonstrates the resilience, adaptability and way the tourism system continued to operate, and how the population tolerated discomfort and restrictions in pursuit of the benefits holidays offer.
- For the users of this journal, and wider community of scholars the paper demonstrates the importance of tourism history in helping to understand not only the immediate research problem (i.e. managing tourism in wartime) but also the wider value of historical research methods in understanding continuity and change in the way tourism phenomena develop, change and continue through time.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest and the paper has not been submitted elsewhere and is not under consideration by any other journal.

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