



What role did Barking and Dagenham play in WW1?

War Hero - Job Drain



► Job Drain

On the 26th of August, 1914, the 37th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, had lost four of their six howitzer guns in action. Driver, Job Drain, born in 1895, was one of the soldiers who volunteered to recover the last of the guns. Under intense fire, he led his team of horses to within metres of the German lines, retrieving the last remaining guns preventing them from falling into enemy hands.

The following is a statement from Drain about the moment in World War I which got him the Victoria Cross Medal. - Essex Weekly News 1915.

We opened fire during the morning of Wednesday August 26th, coming into action on a big plain. There was no cover or hiding place whatever, so we had to get on with it the best way we could. There were 18 pounder batteries on either side of us, and there were hundreds of our infantry going up to meet the enemy. Siege batteries were in the rear of us. The Germans soon started shelling, and both sides were firing as hard as they could. It was now getting terrible. Shells came all ways in sixes and tens at the time. They were bursting all over the place - on the tops of our guns, and over our wagon lines, with plenty of spare rifle bullets flying about. Men and horses were getting wounded and killed. We received the order to get mounted. It was terrible. Shells were still bursting over the top of us. Other batteries were getting smashed to pieces. Lumps of shells and bullets were flying down in between us. We could not get anywhere for shelter, so we had to sit on our horses with our heads bent down between the animals. Most of our drivers got wounded and we had given up all hope of escape, and only waited for our turn at any moment to come. The shells burst like rain.



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Our Major, who was at the observing station, sent down the order that the 37th Battery would never retire.

► An example of battery guns used in the first World War.



Teacher's Pet



Historic England



**Barking and
Dagenham**



What role did Barking and Dagenham play in WW1?

Our Captain then took control of the Battery. We stayed in action until we had lost nearly half our men, which was about 60 or 70, killed or wounded. The cries of the wounded and the shouting of the men was something terrible. I do not think there was a man on the field that day who did not say his Prayers.

At last a general retirement was ordered. The 18 pounder Battery on the right of us went up to get their guns, but most of them were blown to pieces. Two teams only escaped, and they came down to our Battery, and our Captain claimed them to take two of our guns away. There were now four guns left in action and the question was what was to be done. The Captain sent down for wagon teams and gun limbers, and we made a dash for it. Only two teams reached the guns; they were F and B sub-sections. We managed to get two more guns away safely and took them to the nearest village. Then our Captain said, 'We must have more guns', so F and B turned round and went back at a mad gallop.

This time the German Infantry were only 100 yards off our guns. Driver Luke and myself went back at a mad pace, but Driver Cobey, my centre driver, was shot from his horse. There were then only left myself and Driver Luke, who was also awarded the VC, Captain Reynolds VC, Legion of Honour, who is now a Major in the Artillery, and two or three others. It was the worst time of my life. Shells and bullets were flying like rain from the clouds.

This was my VC ride, and it was a ride of either life or death. I do not know how we managed to escape, but we saved two guns.



© Relief carved on back of Job Drain's public statue

- After the war, Drain lived in Barking until his death in 1975. There is a blue plaque and bronze statue located in Barking to remember his heroic actions that day.





What role did Barking and Dagenham play in WW1?

War hero: _____

Born: _____

Died: _____

Active in: _____

Awards: _____

Heroic Actions: _____



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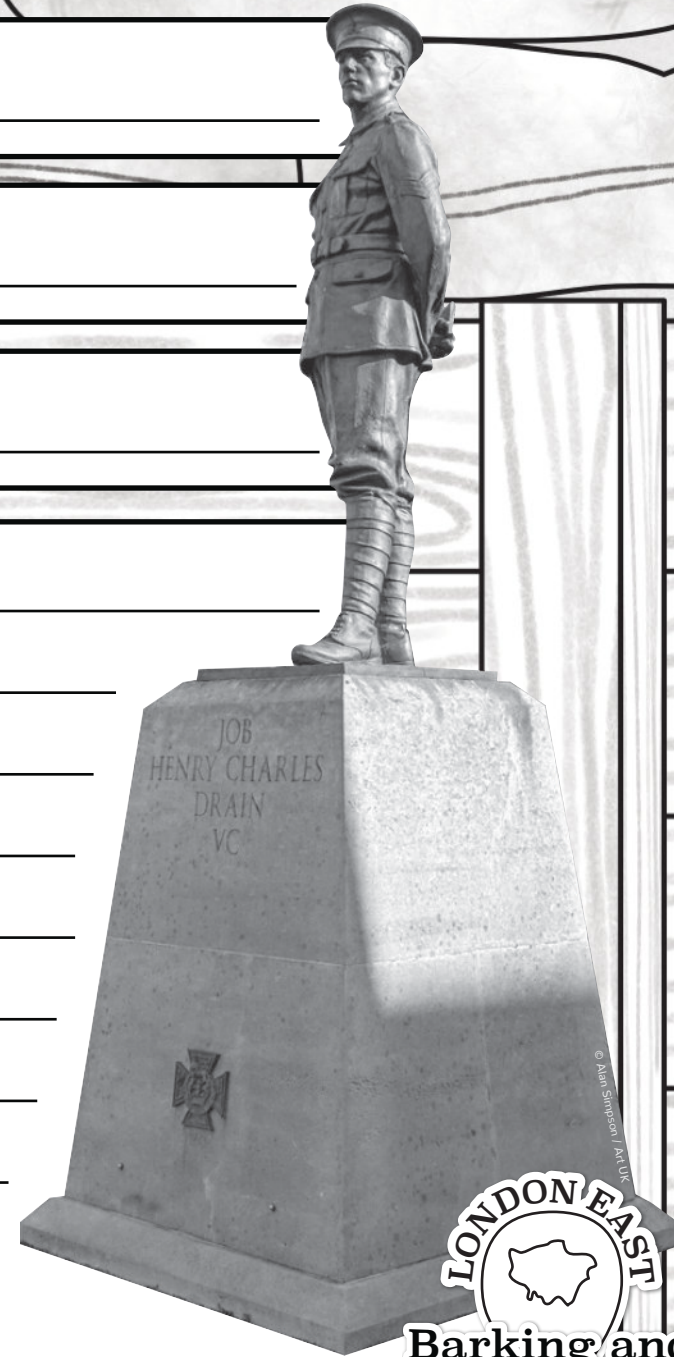
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Died: _____

Active in: _____

Awards: _____

Heroic Actions: _____



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Teacher's Pet



Historic England



Barking and Dagenham

Local History

Historic England and Teacher's Pet have come together to bring you a collection of free resources that you can use in your local history teaching.



Historic England



Teacher's Pet

Who are Teacher's Pet?

Teacher's Pet have been providing downloadable and playable educational content to early years and primary school teachers for over 14 years. We cover all areas of the curriculum and use a team of in-house teachers and designers to create engaging and memorable concepts, that the children will love.

Why local history?

At [Teacher's Pet](#) we want to empower primary school teachers by giving them the tools they need to deliver inspiring and thoughtful lessons about the local area and its history. We believe local history teaching has such an important part to play in a child's wellbeing – helping to give children a sense of pride in where they live.

Our Local History project is designed to provide teachers across the UK with everything they need to successfully carry out a full scheme of teaching about their local area, through key enquiry questions and source led activities.

Working with [Historic England](#) gives us access to archived maps and photos for resources and information from knowledgeable local historians, as well helping us to provide the content to you free of charge.

For more information about our Local History project or to find out more about Teacher's Pet Classroom Resources, please visit our website.