National Records of Scotland

Preserving the past | Recording the present | Informing the future

Bruno Longmore, National Records of Scotland

Wellcome Trust Funding
Cataloguing of WW1 Pensions Appeal Tribunal Records
National Records of Scotland Experience

‘Meet the Funders’ Event, Edinburgh

18 June 2019

Overview

- NRS experience and why applied?
- Details of current NRS funded project
- Impact, benefits and outcomes from project
- Lessons learned

Why Apply for Funding?

- ❑ Support cataloguing & preservation projects
- ❑ Beyond capacity of own organisation to deliver
- ❑ Proposals must highlight research potential
- ❑ Demonstrate significance to scholarly community
- ❑ Assist medical humanities & social science research
- ❑ Not for commercial use
- ❑ In competition – only 20% chance of success
- ❑ May not cover all costs

First Experience

- NRS first application submitted - 2012
  - Mental Welfare Commission Notices of Admissions by Superintendents, 1858-1901.
- Considered twice – ultimately unsuccessful
- Records not considered unique
- But a valuable experience
- What committee looking for?
- Understand the language and fit research themes
- Key follow-up advice/support from Wellcome
- Apply for condition and content survey

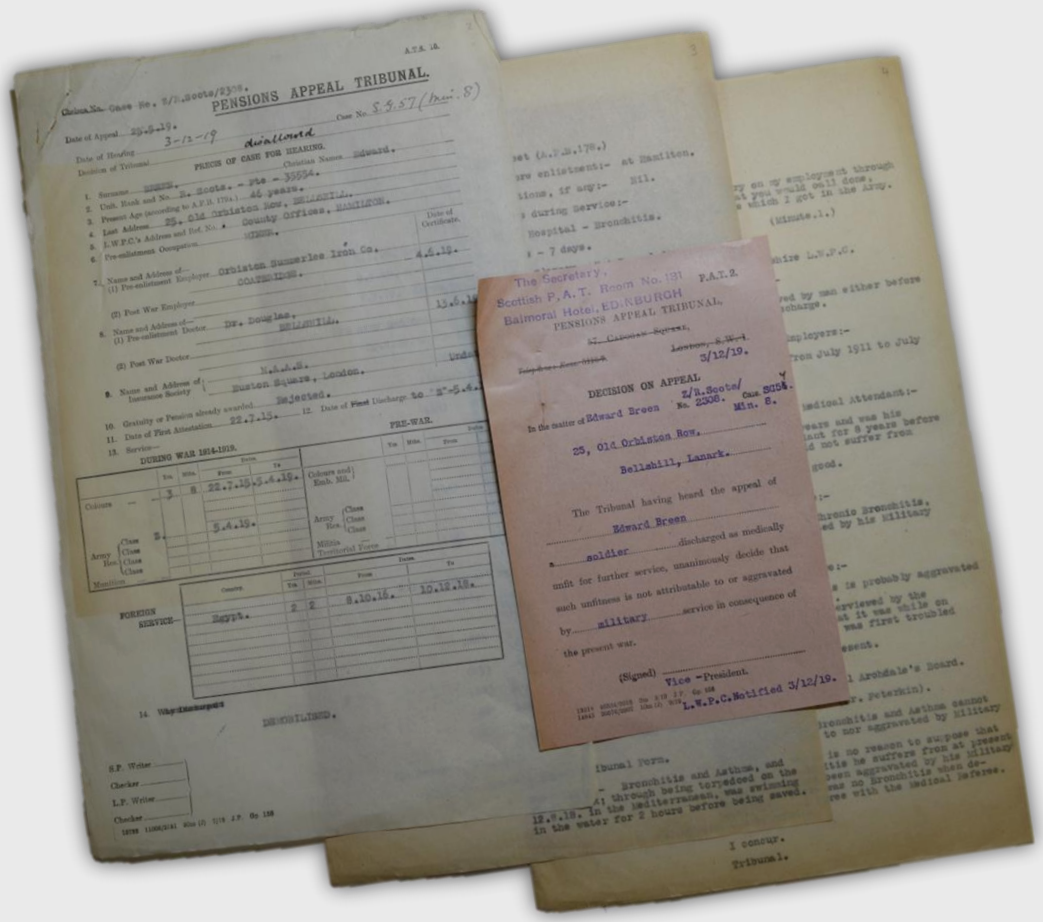
Scoping Study

- ❑ Limited to one scoping grant application
- ❑ Applied and approved (£11,650)
- ❑ Feb-Mar 2014 (archivist & conservator)
- ❑ Assessed suitability of three key NRS collections
  - WW1 Pension Appeals (PT6) 1919-1932
  - Sheriff Court Workmen's Compensation Scheme applications (SC records) 1897-1946
  - Scottish Office infectious diseases and other public health files (HH58 & HH65) 1843-1974
- ❑ Reports confirmed suitability for research themes
- ❑ Springboard for grant application – approved 2016

Key Issues

- ❑ Ensure senior management buy-in
- ❑ Know have institutional support
- ❑ Resourcing and IT support
  - Create an Advisory Board
  - Project Board
  - Dedicated and stable team
- ❑ Ensure objectives achievable
- ❑ Objectives must match funding grant

The WW1 Pension Appeal Records



Impact of War

NRS Ref: BR/LIB/S/5/63/115

What are WW1 Pension Appeals?

- Appeals by WW1 ex-servicemen, or widows
- Reflect post-War needs of survivors
- Complete all-Scotland record
- Cover all War years (1914-1919)
- Reflects medical content & circumstances – many families destitute

PT6 Cataloguing Project

What are the records?

30,000 appeals of Scottish ex-servicemen against previous decisions by The Ministry of Pensions

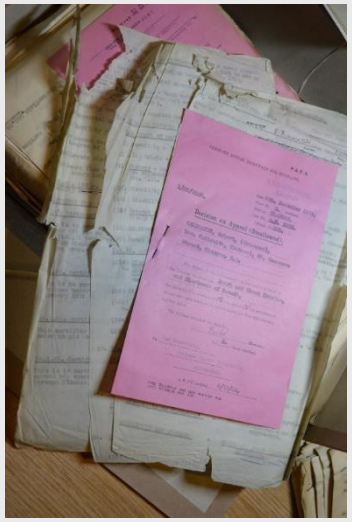
What do they contain?

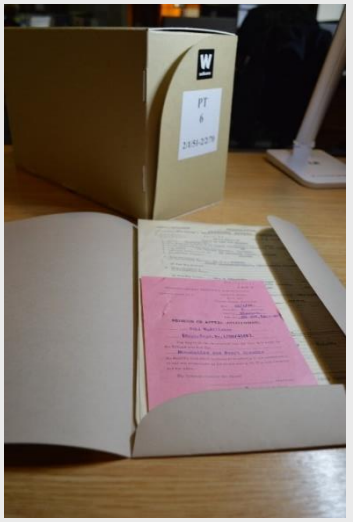
- Service history
- Medical Information
- Personal Statements
- Supporting evidence

What are we doing?

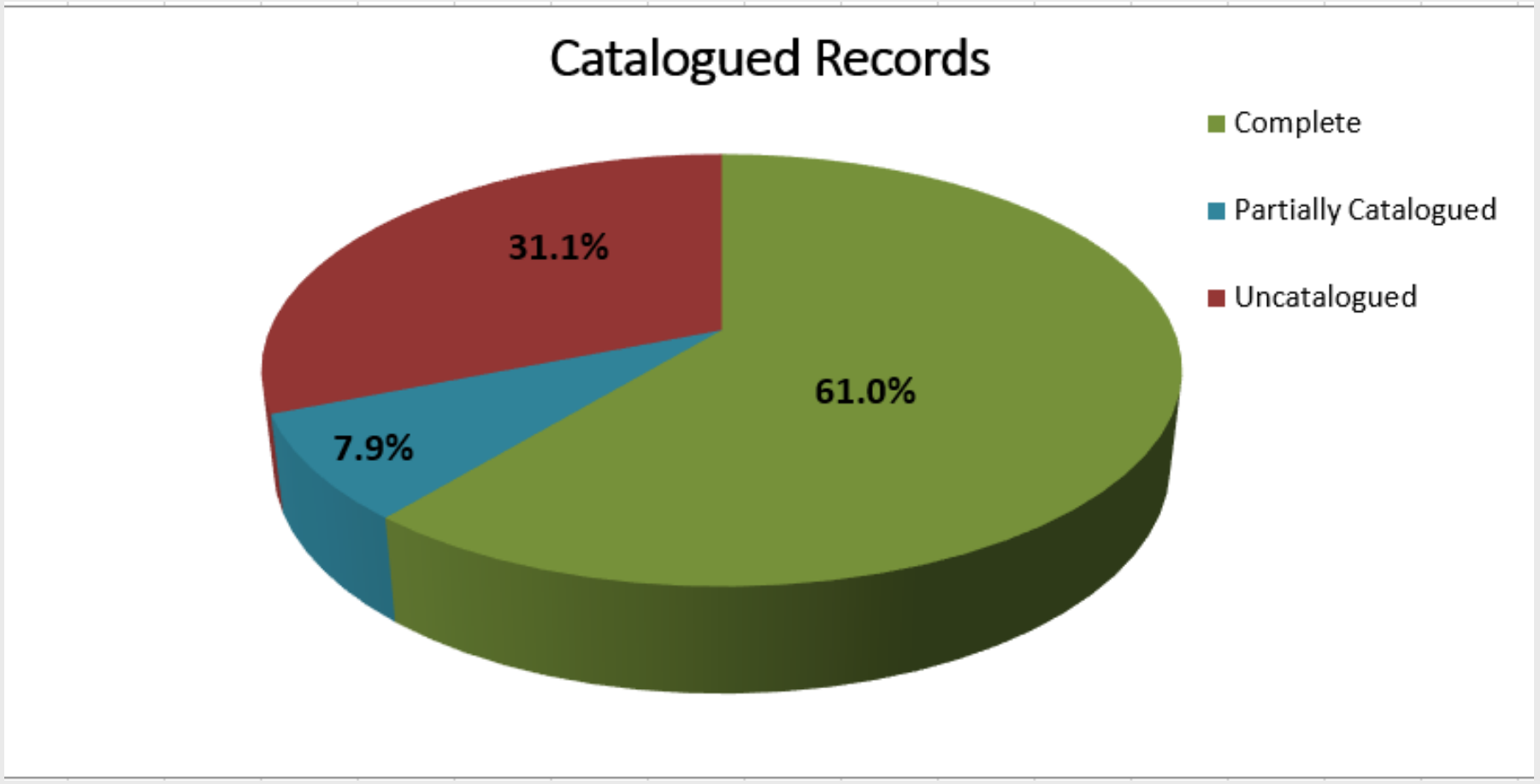
Cataloguing using a custom-built database
Rehousing the records
Undertaking essential preservation
Making available on-line

Before and After

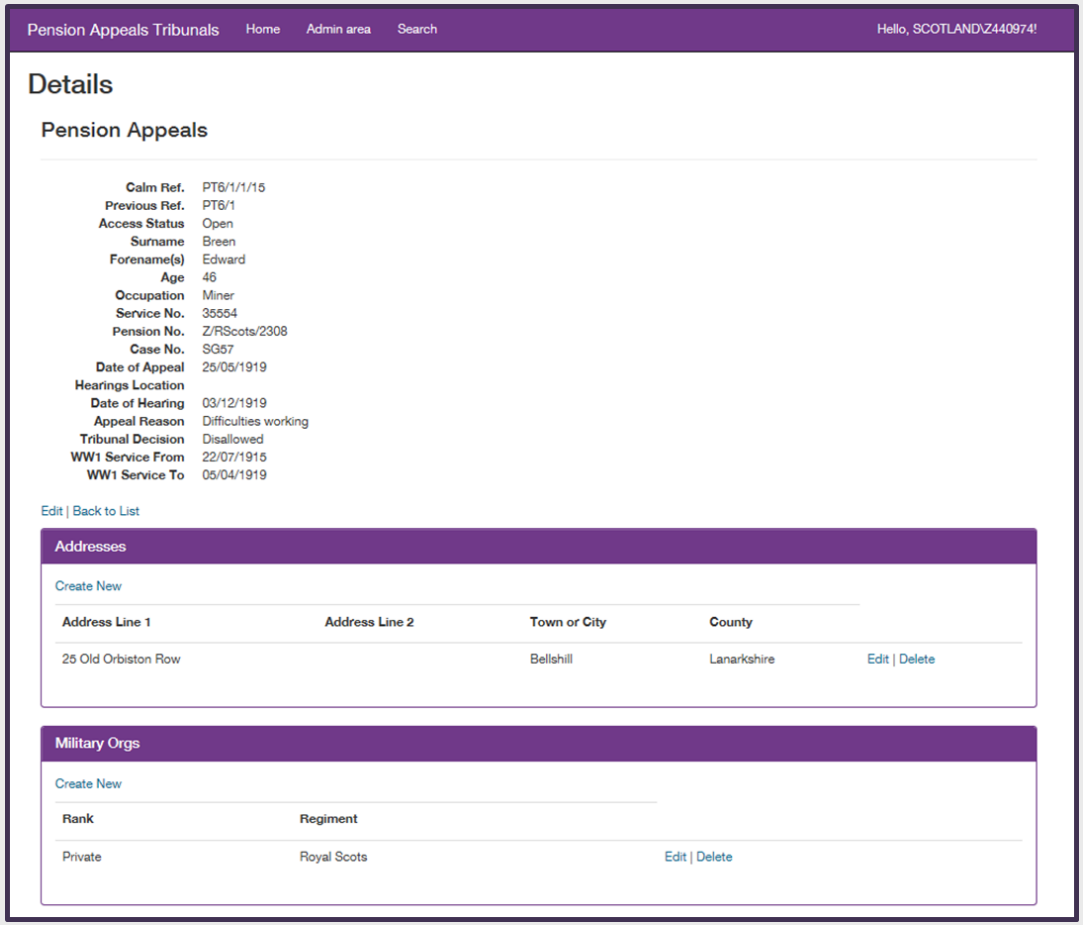




Progess


Catalogued Records
Complete
Partially Catalogued
Uncatalogued
31.1%
61.0%
7.9%

The Database



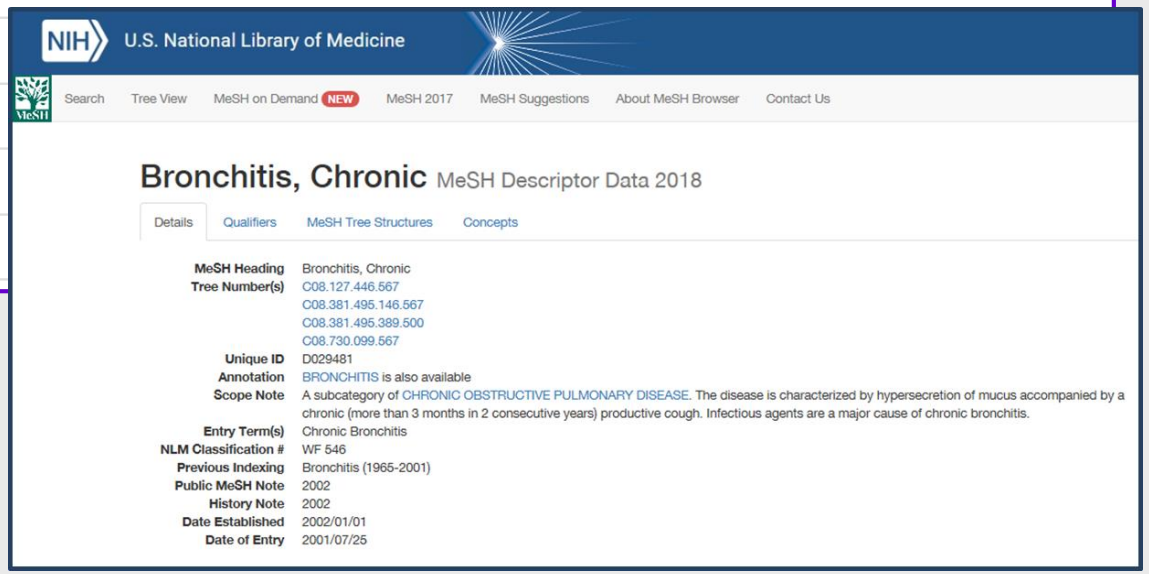
MeSH

https://meshb.nlm.nih.gov/search

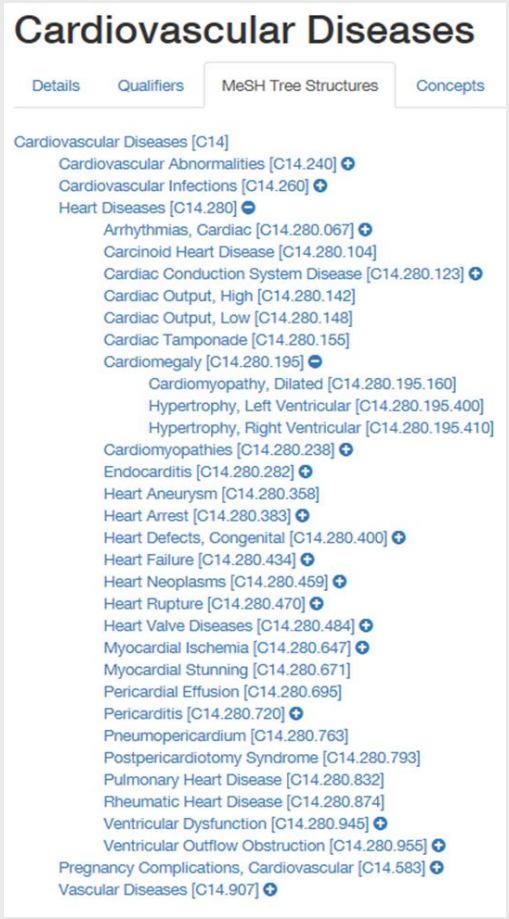
MeSH Conditions

Create New

MeSH Code	MeSH Condition	Medical Notes	
D063806	Myalgia		Edit | Delete
D029481	Bronchitis, Chronic		Edit | Delete
D014948	Wounds, Gunshot		
D005356	Fibromyalgia		
D012216	Rheumatic Diseases		
D017116	Low Back Pain		



Medical Terminology



Cardiovascular Diseases

Details | Qualifiers | MeSH Tree Structures | Concepts

- Cardiovascular Diseases [C14]
  - Cardiovascular Abnormalities [C14.240]
  - Cardiovascular Infections [C14.260]
  - Heart Diseases [C14.280]
    - Arrhythmias, Cardiac [C14.280.067]
    - Carcinoid Heart Disease [C14.280.104]
    - Cardiac Conduction System Disease [C14.280.123]
    - Cardiac Output, High [C14.280.142]
    - Cardiac Output, Low [C14.280.148]
    - Cardiac Tamponade [C14.280.155]
    - Cardiomegaly [C14.280.195]
      - Cardiomyopathy, Dilated [C14.280.195.160]
      - Hypertrophy, Left Ventricular [C14.280.195.400]
      - Hypertrophy, Right Ventricular [C14.280.195.410]
    - Cardiomyopathies [C14.280.238]
    - Endocarditis [C14.280.282]
    - Heart Aneurysm [C14.280.358]
    - Heart Arrest [C14.280.383]
    - Heart Defects, Congenital [C14.280.400]
    - Heart Failure [C14.280.434]
    - Heart Neoplasms [C14.280.459]
    - Heart Rupture [C14.280.470]
    - Heart Valve Diseases [C14.280.484]
    - Myocardial Ischemia [C14.280.647]
    - Myocardial Stunning [C14.280.671]
    - Pericardial Effusion [C14.280.695]
    - Pericarditis [C14.280.720]
    - Pneumopericardium [C14.280.763]
    - Postpericardiotomy Syndrome [C14.280.793]
    - Pulmonary Heart Disease [C14.280.832]
    - Rheumatic Heart Disease [C14.280.874]
    - Ventricular Dysfunction [C14.280.945]
    - Ventricular Outflow Obstruction [C14.280.955]
  - Pregnancy Complications, Cardiovascular [C14.583]
  - Vascular Diseases [C14.907]

Antiquated and Unusual Terms:

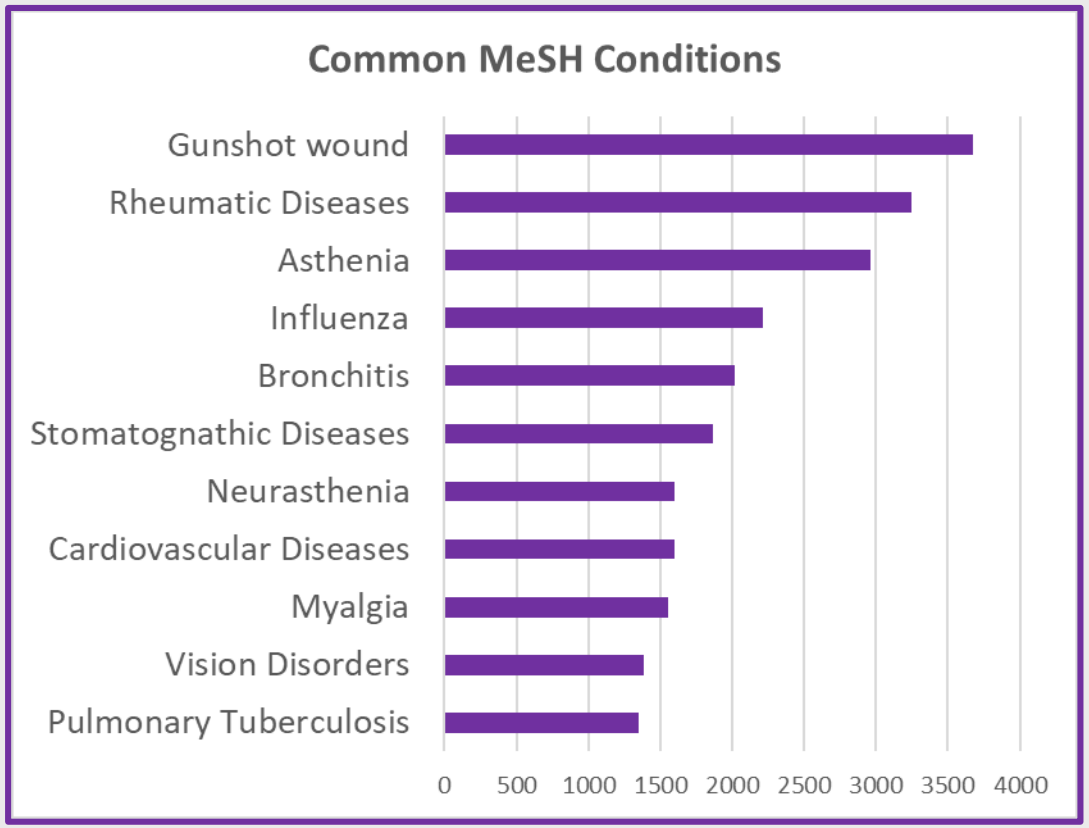
- Phthisis
- General Paralysis of the Insane
- Moveable Kidney
- Morbis Cordis
- Narcomania
- Neurasthenia

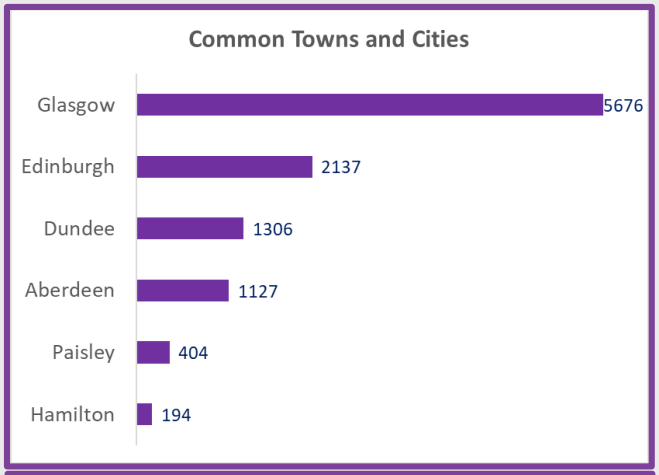
Vague Terms:

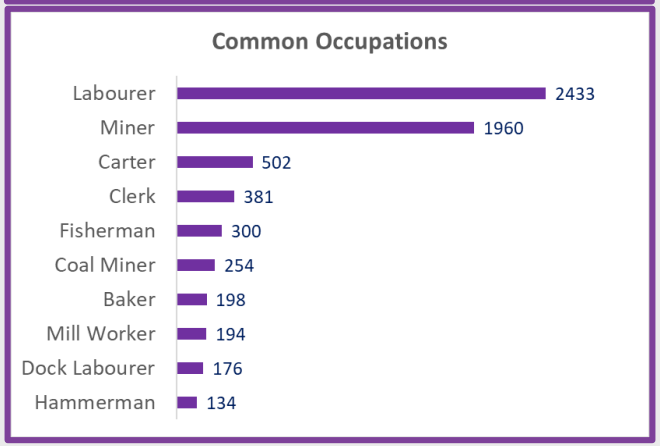
- Weak Chest
- Heart Trouble

Abbreviation	Condition
PUO	Pyrexia Unknown Origin
VDH	Valvular Disease of the Heart
DAH	Disorderly Action of the Heart
VDS	Venereal Disease Syphilis
VDG	Venereal Disease Gonorrhoea
ICT	Inflamed Connective Tissue
GSW	Gunshot Wound
NYD	Not Yet Diagnosed

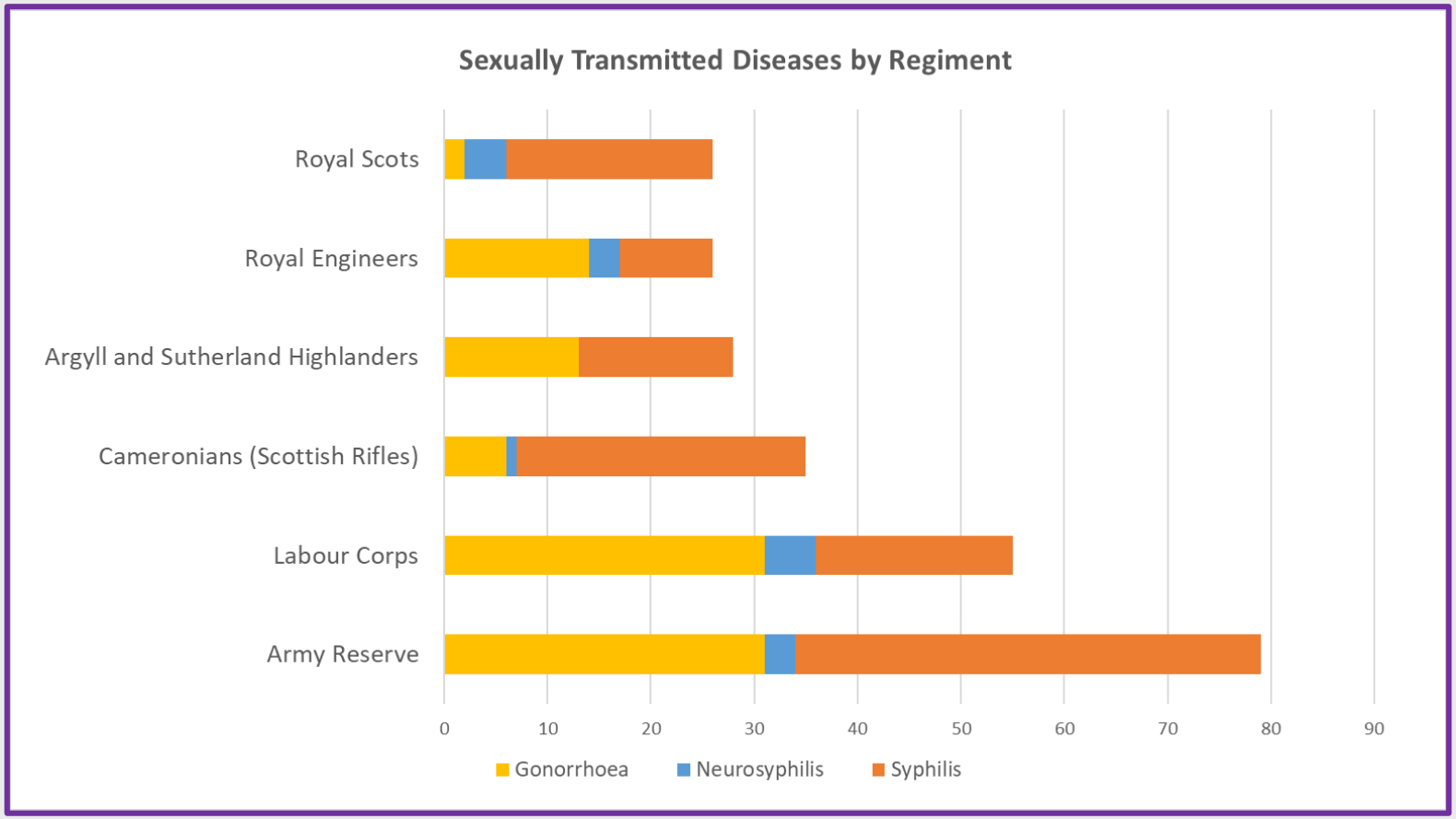
Data Visualisation



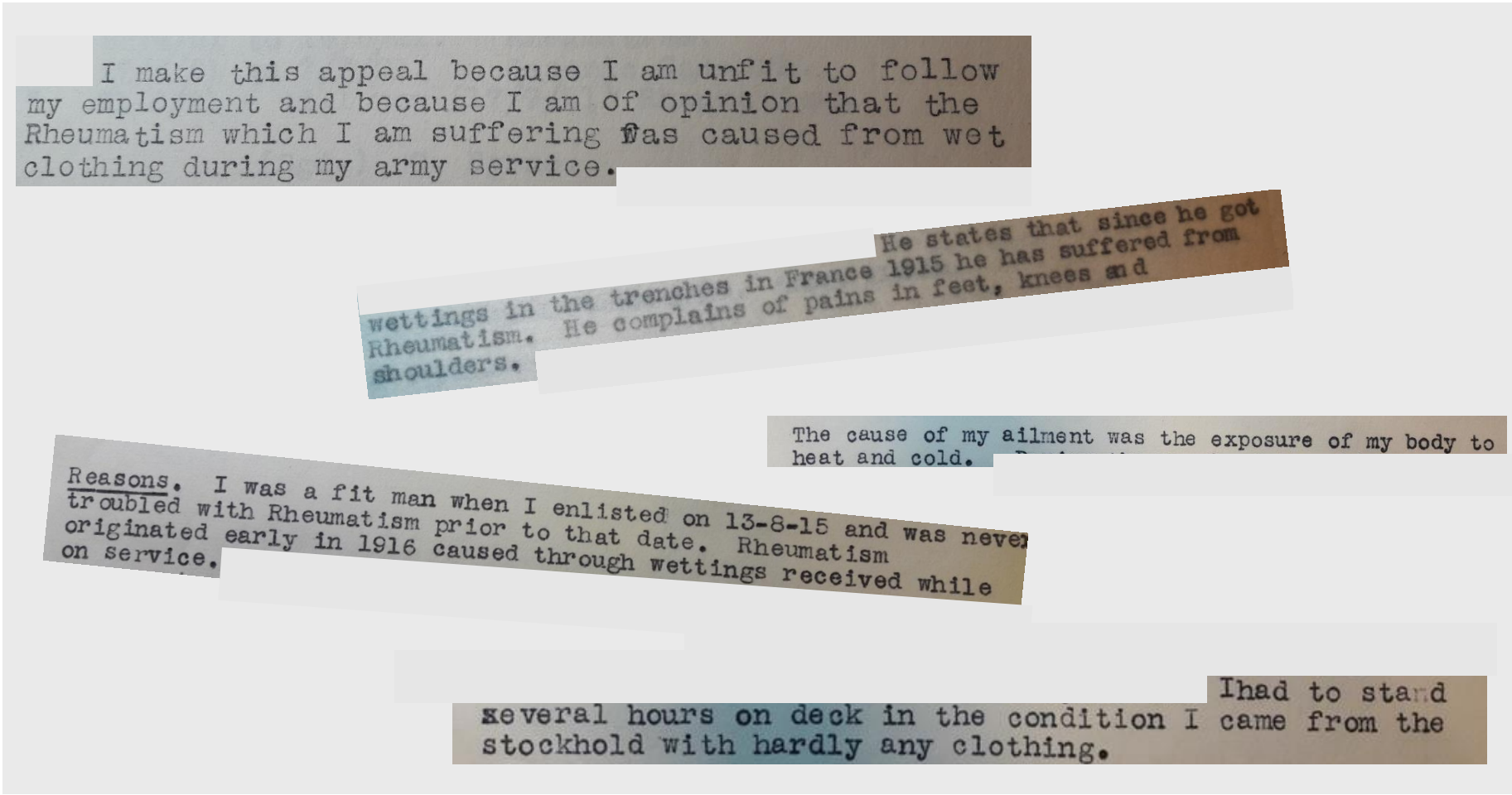




Medical Conditions: by Regiment



Emerging Stories



Resourcing - Initial Estimates

- Project manager – 15-20% (NRS supported)
- Archive cataloguers (x2) (Funded)
- ICT developers (x2) – (start and finish) (Funded)
- Conservation materials (Funded)
- Conservator & boxmaker (NRS supported)
- Digital imager - >5% (NRS supported)

Resourcing - Actual

- Project manager – 25-50% (NRS supported)
- Archive cataloguers (x2) (funded)
  - Data inputter (x1) (funded)
- ICT development
  - Internal (start) (NRS supported)
  - External (finish) (funded)
- Conservation materials (funded)
  - Conservator and boxmaker (NRS supported)
- Digital Imaging - well over 5% (NRS supported)
- Institutional support key throughout

Lessons Learned

- Early investigation crucial – build in 6 months at start
- Senior management support vital
- ICT requirements evolve – changing record formats
- Advisory group & project board - keep project on track
- Allow for unexpected risks
- Engage with funder - extremely helpful
- Publicise the work

Good Luck!

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