

Stonehouse in World War One

This display by Stonehouse History Group attempts to give an impression of the effects that World War One had on Stonehouse and its community.

- The tragedy for families.
- The bravery of its men and women who served at home and abroad.
- The coming of the V.A.D. Hospital at Standish.
- The sacrifice made by young men from Wycliffe College.
- The memorials erected and preserved in the Town today.



In August 1914, men who were already soldiers, like Albert Baker of the Spa Inn, Oldends Lane, Stonehouse, had gone to fight in France.

By September the Government's recruitment drive was encouraging thousands more to join up.

Stroud News describes an enthusiastic scene in and around the Petty Sessional Court in High Street, Stonehouse, when 27 young men stepped forward as volunteers.

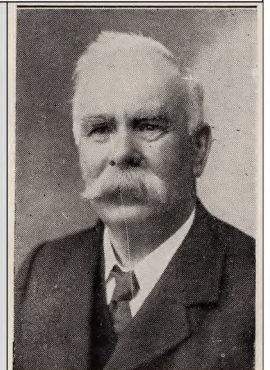
The first mention of the War in the Parish Council Minutes comes in March 1915 when Councillors commemorated the deaths in action of Private Baker and Rifleman Bullock.

Early in 1916 the street lights were turned off for fear of attacks by Zeppelin airships and the Parish Council asked shopkeepers to turn off their outside lights.



Rifleman Percy Bullock, one of the first Stonehouse men to be killed in action.

- In March 1916 the Government introduced compulsory military service for all single men aged 18 to 41 and later included married men and those up to age 51.
- Military Tribunals were established to adjudicate on whether men could claim exemptions from military service.
- In the Stonehouse area, James Kimmins chaired the Tribunal. In April 1918 he made a public statement indicating that few exemptions would be made from that time.
- The issues that surrounded compulsory service during the War were so sensitive that practically all of the records of such tribunals were destroyed shortly after the War. The judgements that had to be made by local people such as Kimmins, must have posed many difficulties and heartaches.



Mr. J. C. C. KIMMINS, J.P., C.C., Honoured with the Order of the British Empire in recognition of his services as Chairman of the Stroud Rural District Military Tribunal.

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More details about the topics featured in our display can be found in Stonehouse History Group Journal Issue 4, May 2014.

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