

# Wycliffe College and the War

## Contribution at home

During the summers of 1916 to 1918, aid was provided to local farmers. They were paid 4d per hour and all proceeds went to wartime charities.

In April 1917 nearly a hundred of the boys had gardens or potato plots. The whole field on the north side of the Midland Railway Branch Line had been dug over. The Headmaster commented: "*Whatever Wycliffe is likely to lack in the coming twelve months, it certainly will not be potatoes!*"

In summer 1918 there were many fewer labourers available to bring in the harvest. The Ministry of National Service appealed for help from the schools throughout the country. Wycliffe provided working parties of boys.



### Wycliffe College War Squads

Communications to be addressed to the Secretary,  
Springfield, Stonehouse, Glos.

Name of Farmer \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Squad Leader \_\_\_\_\_  
(who is responsible for the work and conduct of his squad)  
Number of Boys in squad \_\_\_\_\_  
(including leader)  
Total number of hours worked \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., number of boys multiplied by hours of work)  
Value of work at 4d. an hour \_\_\_\_\_  
Is another squad wanted? \_\_\_\_\_  
If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_  
Any comments or complaints \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Farmer \_\_\_\_\_  
These cards must be signed on the day the work is done.

## Serving their country

Immediately the War broke out almost half of the former pupils who had left Wycliffe in the previous 30 years joined the Forces.



By the end of the War around 550 Old Wycliffians had served. Of those 77 had died. Six D.S.O.s, 37 Military Crosses, 4 Crosses for flying, 17 other military awards and 36 "mentions in despatches" had been awarded.

2nd Lieutenant T.M. Sibly, a teacher at Wycliffe, was mentioned in despatches for his service in France and the Balkans.

The death of Rex Bird at the Somme in 1916 was a great blow to all who knew him. He had led an exemplary life, being successful in academic work and on the sports field, while also setting an example of gentlemanliness and kindness to all.



Captain Rex Bird

## Wycliffe Chapel Clock Tower and Spire



After the war it was agreed to commemorate the men who died by building the clock tower and spire on to the Chapel.

A plaque inside the Chapel giving the names of the dead reads:

*The tower of this chapel is dedicated to the memory of the old boys of Wycliffe College who gave their lives for England in the Great War 1914 – 1918.*

*Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

*These served and died in the deathless cause of right and liberty. Their names are written in the book of life and are engraven here that we who read with what a great price freedom still is bought, may pay our tribute of reverence, gratitude and affection, and give all praise to God.*