

Exploring the effects of the past on the present and future of our community

Bonnyseen



The magazine from Greenhill Historical Society

SCOTMID co-operative

Issue Number 9 November 2014





Introduction

Phil Swierczek

Falkirk Herald

Extract June 1914

Brickie's Annual Trip

"The annual excursion of the employees of the Bonnybridge Silica and Fireclay Company took place on Saturday, the destination being Ayr. The company, numbering about 250, left by special train early in the morning."

We can imagine the excitement of the families as they set off on, what for most of them, would be their summer holiday. Little did they know, that in two months' time, their lives would be changed for ever. The "Great War" that was hoped would end all wars was a catastrophe which was neither great nor ended war. But amidst the anguish and pain endured by communities the world over, there were also displays of patriotism, heroism and humanity on a scale that was unprecedented.

In this special edition of Bonnyseen to commemorate the outbreak of WW1 we have tried to tell the stories of the families in the village whose young men went to fight at the front. As well as that, we also pay homage to those left behind who kept the wheels of industry turning, made sure that there was a supply of food for the community, worked hard to raise funds to make life just a little bit more bearable for the forces and literally kept the home fires burning. They all deserve to be remembered for the sacrifices they made in the sincere hope that lasting peace would be secured for future generations.

We are indebted to those members of our community who were willing to share their stories and precious photographs with us. Grateful thanks also to Bonnybridge Library, Falkirk Library and Callendar House for their invaluable assistance and advice. This edition could not have been possible without the meticulous research carried out by Irene Ryan and Sheena Lambie so we owe them a debt of gratitude.

SCOTMID co-operative

The Society relies on the generosity of the readers of Bonnyseen and Sponsors who enable us to pay the printing costs. We are delighted to announce that Scotmid have generously awarded us a grant for this special edition. We extend them our thanks and gratitude.

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WHERE TO FIND US



**GREENHILL
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

www.greenhillhistoricalsociety.org.uk or
greenhillhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Meetings The Society meets every Friday in the Scout Hall at the Community Centre (temporarily in Bonnybridge Library) from 2pm till 4pm and all are welcome to join us.

Greenhill Historical Society cannot be held responsible for any incorrect information in the course of producing this magazine although all effort has been made to ensure its accuracy.

Apology

We were unaware that our emails were not being redirected to our gmail account. This has resulted in many inquiries going unanswered and stories not being read. This problem has now been fixed and we can only offer our sincere apologies. Please resend any emails which you would like answered. Many thanks to Joe and Annette Shearer, who live in Australia, and who wrote a letter to us which flagged up the problem.

First Rush to Full Stop for many

by Irene M. Ryan



At the outbreak of the Great War many thousands of men rushed to enlist. They saw it as their duty to the King and for the protection of the country and their families from 'The Hun'.

The typical height of a Scottish recruit was 5ft 5inches, anyone over 5ft 7inches was uncommon, and the average age was over 30. In 1914 many young men saw the war as an adventure with their pals, an escape from poverty, the chance of better pay and three square meals a day!

Recruitment soon slowed as the casualty rates rose, so the age limit was changed in May 1915 to 40 years for men and 16/18 years for boys. The Bonnybridge Public Hall was used to encourage recruitment. Men and boys from the village could enlist or attest (defer going to the army for a time) there. Recruitment weekend was Friday 21st & Saturday 22nd May but so many turned up that the time was extended to midnight on the first two days and all day on Sunday. Mr James Anderson JP administered the oath and Dr John Young examined everyone. There were no uniforms for the new volunteers but 'armlets' stamped with a red crown and G.R. (for the king) was given to show they had enlisted. These 'arm bands' stopped the men being abused in the street or given 'white feathers', which were a sign of cowardice. The new recruits had to train with brush handles as there were no weapons for them.



The Government passed the National Registration Act on 15th July 1915. Everyone between 15 and 65 years had to register, stating their employment and why they had not enlisted. The Bonnybridge committee would assess whether their job or family obligations were important enough not to sign up, if ruled not, they would be almost immediately enlisted. This measure did not enlist enough men so there was no alternative but to introduce conscription (Compulsory active service) in January 1916.

According to J Waugh's book approximately 800 Bonnybridge men enlisted and fewer than 160 men lost their lives.

British Army statistics states 557,618 Scottish men enlisted and 147,609 lost their lives in the four year conflict. Scotland had only a tenth of the UK population but we lost twice as many men as south of the border.

There were 2,302,177 males in Scotland in 1914; four years later this had only increased to 2,311,607.

What did they get for the sacrifice? A country fit for heroes? A war to end all wars?

A country that was bankrupt!



A soldier's Webbing



The McPherson Family Experience

At the outbreak of war Daniel and Margaret McPherson were living at 20 Milnquarter Cottages, known locally as Stein's row, with their eleven children. They had moved to Bonnybridge from Prestonpans in 1905 and it is presumed that they moved for work. Only the youngest child, Margaret, was born in Bonnybridge. Daniel was a brick kiln worker, Robert was a fitter in an iron foundry and most of the other sons were fire clay workers.

Seated –Margaret, baby Alex & Millicent. Standing- Daniel & Father Alex (circa 1887)



Four of the sons went to the front in 1914, Daniel and Alexander with the Field Artillery and David and Stuart with the Gordon Highlanders.

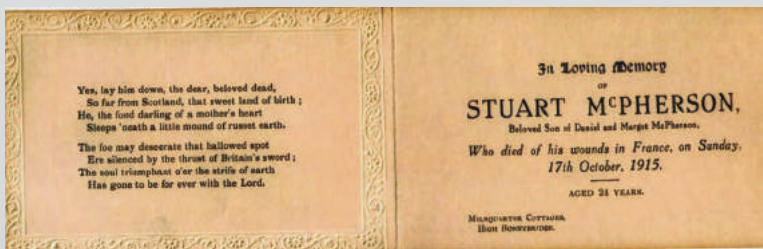
Left to Right Daniel David Stuart Alex



Stuart is buried in the Eastern Cemetery in Boulogne which is lovingly cared for in memory of the brave soldiers who gave their lives to fight for freedom from tyranny

Three of the boys survived but Stuart, who fought in Flanders and France was killed on 16th October 1915 at the age of twenty four.

Stuart's memorial card



Eastern Cemetery , Boulogne,France.

We are indebted to Rita McLaren (nee McPherson) for the wonderful photographs and mementos which she kindly loaned to us.

Births, Deaths & Marriages in Bonnybridge

by Hazel Wyle

A look at the births, marriages and deaths in Bonnybridge, in the few weeks running up to the start of WW1.

The following people never lived to see the events that took place.

Robert Wren died 23 July 1914 at Broomhill Inn. He was a widower and aged 81. He had been a mine manager.

Agnes Docherty Anderson was single and had been a housekeeper. Died aged 17 at Albert Place on the 28 July 1914.

Douglas William Edmonson Nettleship was 16 and an apprentice Civil Engineer. He was run down and killed by a 'co-operative engine' on the 25 July 1914. He would otherwise have been eligible to be called up.

The birth of those who would have lived through the war but never old enough to know what was going on around them.

Andrew Mitchell was born 27 July 1914 at Allan Park to Andrew Mitchell (Barman) and Agnes Mitchell, m.s. Carson

William Carson was born 25 July 1914 at Albert Place. His father was William Carson (Coal Miner). The mother was Agnes Carson (deceased) therefore, she must have died during or after the birth. His mother was actually the Agnes Docherty Anderson who appears above. If you are connected to this family and would like to know a little bit more, please contact the group.

Margaret Mary McMenemy was born at 16 Drum Terrace on the 31 July 1914. Her parents were William McMenemy (Brick Worker) and Mary McMenemy, m.s. Fitzpatrick.

John Duncan, born 21 July 1914 at Broomhill Place to Andrew Duncan (Gasman) and Jessie Duncan, m.s. Williamson.

John Henderson was born on the 3 August 1914 at Allandale. His father was Alexander Henderson (Clay Miner) and Elizabeth Gordon Henderson, m.s. Lauder.

There was one marriage in Bonnybridge on the 20 July 1914. This was the last marriage before the outbreak of war.

Peter Dunning (Coal Miner) of 56 Edward Place, Mossvale Chryston to **Margaret McEvoy** (Domestic Servant) of 61 Longside Road, Newlands, Glasgow. Although they both lived elsewhere, the marriage took place in Bonnybridge. Perhaps they were incomers or may have originally been from Bonnybridge.

Galkirk Herald Extract 3 July 1915

A Notable Record Twenty Sons Enlist from Five Bonnybridge Families

Never before in the history of Bonnybridge has so large a number of her sons been furth of the village for warlike purpose or perhaps-for any other purpose. Whatever anybody may say to the contrary, Bonnybridge has done well in helping to replenish the fighting strength of Great Britain and when the Bonnybridge Roll of Honour is compiled, it will compare very favourably with any village of similar size in the kingdom. Indeed the whole war movement and its effect on Bonnybridge constitutes a record of which the village may well be proud and of which if it will be(prouder)than ever in days that are remote. Few places are there that can boast of having five families from each of which four sons have gone forth to serve their King and country. Such is the proud record of Bonnybridge, and when the Roll of Honour is published prominence must be given therein to the following who have made a record of willing service

Pte Daniel McPherson Royal Field Artillery.
Pte Stewart McPherson Gordon Highlanders.
Pte Alex McPherson Royal Field Artillery.
Pte David McPherson Gordon Highlanders.
Sons of Mr Daniel McPherson. Brick worker.
Milnquarter Cottages High Bonnybridge

Cpl Jas Drummond 7th Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders Wounded at Hill 60
Pte William Drummond Royal Scots
Injured by fall of trench, and in hospital in France
Pte Hugh Drummond Royal Naval Division
Pte John Drummond Royal Naval Division
Sons of Mr John Drummond. Mason, Wortland Square Bonnybridge

Pte James Douglas Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
Cpl John Douglas 7th Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
Killed in Action 26th May at Hill 60
Pte Finlay Douglas Royal West Kent
Pte Hugh Douglas Royal Naval Division
Sons of Mr Thomas Douglas, Porter, High Bonnybridge Station North British Railway

PTE Duncan Finlay Canadian Force
Driver John Finlay Royal Field Artillery.
Gunner William Finlay Royal Field Artillery.
Pte Robert Finlay Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
Sons of Mr John Finlay. Miner, Blackill, Greenhill

Pte William Stevenson Scottish Rifles
Pte John Stevenson Canadian Royal Army Medical Corps
Pte Alex Stevenson Royal Scots
Pte Charles C Stevenson Seaforth Highlanders
Sons of Mr William Stevenson. Foreman cleaner Caledonian Railway

By Sheena Lambie

Voices from the Past

by Irene M. Ryan

There were many families from Bonnybridge who sent men to the Great War. Fathers, sons, brothers, family, friends, workmates all answered the call and the entire village was affected. Some Bonnybridge soldiers were interviewed by newspaper reporters who were desperate for firsthand stories. Here are two soldiers' accounts from the front and one soldier who paid the ultimate price.

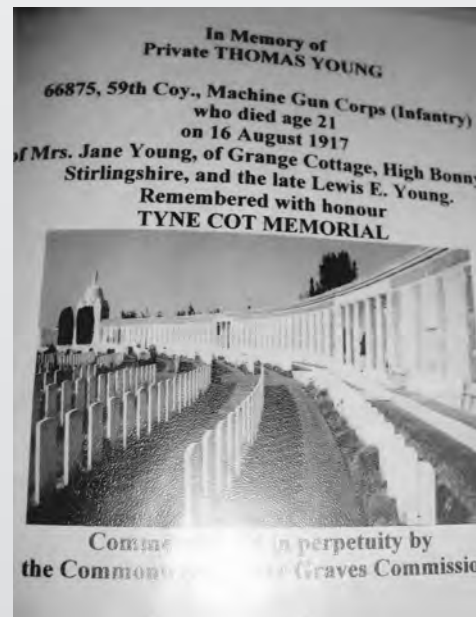


Private Peter Thomson

Peter Thomson from High Bonnybridge joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in early 1900's and spent four and half years in India before leaving to become the postman in Slamannan. He and his family were on holiday in Stirling when the Great War was declared and he re-enlisted immediately aged 33. Peter was one of the first to go to France where he was shot in the leg by a machine-gun at the battle of Mons but it took many days on a wagon before he got treatment. During that journey he told the reporter of seeing the pitiful conditions the Belgian people were in. Peter said they would offer the soldiers anything they had just for being in the country to help them. After treatment in many field hospitals, he was sent to London for surgery and while there King George V and Queen Mary paid a visit. The Queen stopped at Peter's bed and spoke to him about two flags he had brought back from the front. Peter survived the war and died in 1968.

The Falkirk Herald interviewed Robert Liddell of Bonnymuir Place, Bonnybridge in February 1915 when he was home on leave, a privilege only given to a few. Driver Liddell of the Army Service Corps had enlisted in 1913 and was part of the British Expeditionary Force. Robert crossed to France on 5th August and had been at the retreat from Mons, the battles at Aisne, Soissons, Cambrai and Ypres. When asked what it was like, he told of an incident just a few days before

before he left for home. He and a chum were in a cafe when German planes flew over and dropped bombs on a school where soldiers were billeted. Many of them were killed with several serious injuries reported. The vibration was so great it shattered the glass in his hand. He would not talk about the battles or conditions at the front but he revealed how soldiers made tea in the trenches without causing any smoke, as it would give their position away. A soldier would save up some fat from their morning rations and put it in a bully beef tin with a piece of rag and wood cut up as small as matches. When lit, it gave off no smoke and they could have a 'fly cup of tea'. Driver Liddell brought back a few spoils of war, one being a little revolver, taken from a German sniper, who, he said, had done 'deadly work' with it. Robert was leaving that night to go back to the front. If you know what happened to Robert after he went back to the front please let us know.



Thomas Young of Grange Cottage, High Bonnybridge was one of the first in the village to enlist in 1914 and he was posted to the Machine Gun Corp. Thomas had been a blacksmith with the Bonnybridge Silica and Fireclay Company but saw it as his duty to serve King and Country. He saw action on many fronts and was thought of as 'the best shot' on the machine gun in his section. A postcard was received by his family on 28th July 1917 saying he was quite well and he hoped to be home on leave around 19th August 1917. Sadly, Thomas was killed on 16th August. A compassionate letter was received by his family from his commanding officer telling of his death. His name is on the Bonnybridge Memorial.

My Grandfather's Experience

by Michael McMahon

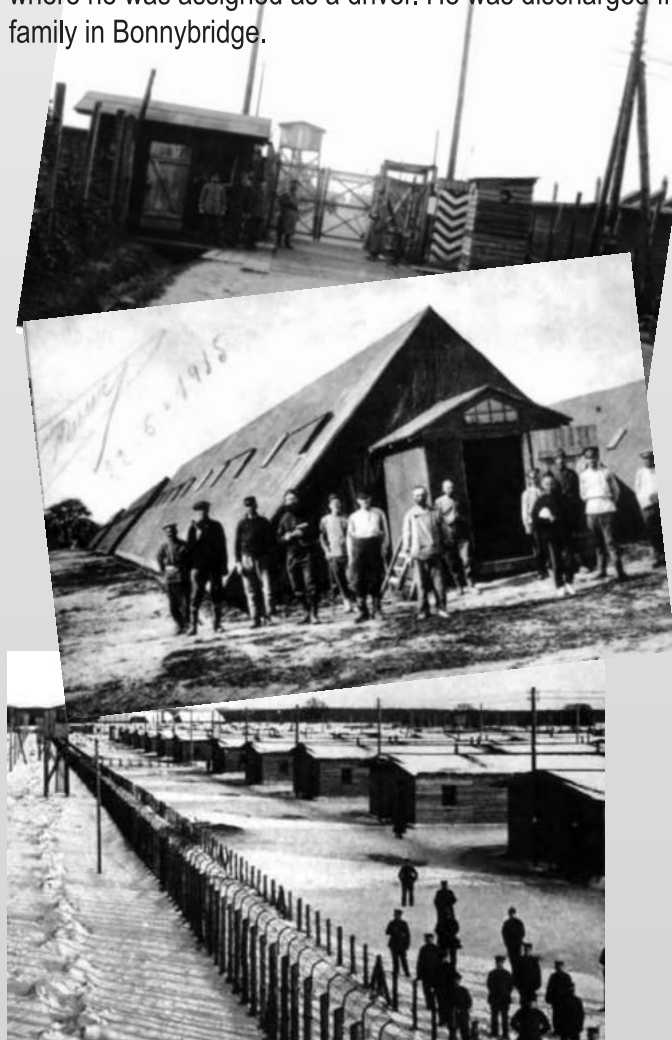


Michael Sylvester McMahon was born in 1892 in the barracks of the Royal Munster Fusiliers at Cawnpore in India to Sergeant James McMahon and his wife Elizabeth. The family came to Bonnybridge around 1913 and Michael found employment at the Smith and Wellstood factory. When he tried to enlist at Stirling Castle he was told that he was not tall enough to be considered for the regiment. He insisted that, as a son of a Royal Munster Fusilier, he should be allowed to join the regiment. Finally, in 1916, he was allowed to enlist, perhaps because the appalling casualty numbers ensured that the government were no longer able to abide by previous yard sticks. After basic training he was posted to the 16th Infantry Depot at Etaples on 10th February 1917. There he was assigned to the 3rd Infantry Brigade of the Royal Munster Fusiliers where he served from 4th March to 10th December 1917.

The division was involved in operations such as ; the German retreat to the Hindenburg line; operations on the Flanders coast; defence of Nieuport; Battle of Ypres; second battle of Passchendale. Having survived against terrible odds he was posted missing at Passchendale but on 10th November 1917 was certified as a Prisoner of War. He was imprisoned first in the holding camp at Dendermonde, Belgium, then moved several times to P.O.W. camps at Dulmen, Minden and finally to the Munster camp in Westphalia.

He was repatriated to Britain on 3rd December 1918 and was transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps in London where he was assigned as a driver. He was discharged from the army on 27th July 1919 and returned to his wife and family in Bonnybridge.

Photographs of the Prison Camps where Michael was detained.



ICRC

DC/ARCH/mgk Geneva, 09.03.2010

ATTESTATION

The International Committee of the Red Cross has received the following information:

Name and first name	McMAHON Michael
Date of birth	25.11.1894
Place of birth	Cawnpore, India.
Rank	Private
Unit	2 nd Royal Munster Fusil. B.
Service number	7083
Date and place of capture	10.11.1917. Ypres or Passchendale
Places of detention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prisoner of war in German hands, detained in Dülmen Camp, coming from Dendermonde (according to a list dated 19.11.1917). • Present in Minden Camp, coming from Dülmen (according to a list dated 17.01.1918) • Present in II Münster i/W., coming from Minden Camp (according to a list dated 12.06.1918)
From	Three lists issued by German authorities.



My Grandfather's Experience

by Mary MacMahon

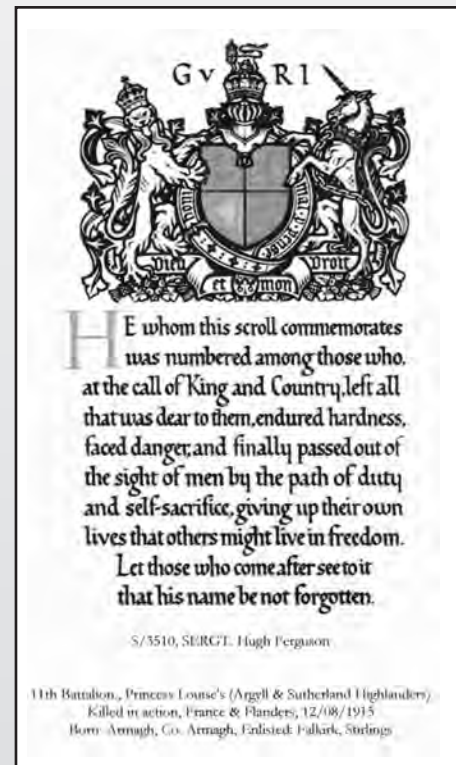


In 1914 my grandparents, Hugh and Mary Ferguson, were living at 33 Woodlea Terrace, High Bonnybridge where Hugh worked as moulder. When he volunteered for service in 1914 his records showed that he was 5ft 4inches tall with a 41 inch chest, well developed for a man of his height, but no doubt testament to his physical labour in the foundry. Records also show that on volunteering he had six children, when in fact he had ten, but he was sure he would be turned down if he declared the number of his dependents! Hugh was 41 years and 301 days old when he enlisted at Falkirk on 6th September 1914. His army pay was 10/2d per week and he arranged for half of this to be sent to Mary. When the 'separation' allowance was added she had 27/8d per week to sustain her family. This may have been sufficient for her and six children but must have been stretched to accommodate their other four children which Hugh did not tell the authorities about!

He had previous military experience, having served four years with the Territorial Army 9th division of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. His military background and his age probably gave him an edge and he was promoted to Lance Corporal on 23rd November 1914 and Sergeant on 27th March, 1915.

He was training troops on home soil when he volunteered for active service and was transported to France on 8th July 1915. Thirty five days later Hugh was killed in action. As he was found with three other NCO's it is assumed that a shell landed on the Sergeants dugout killing them all instantly. Hugh was buried in the Philosophe British cemetery which lies between the towns of Bethune and Lens in France.

His service medals, the 1914-15 Star, the British war Medal and the Victory medal were sent to Mary in 1921. On 28th February 1916 she was awarded a pension of 33/- per week but this dropped to 30/- in March of the same year.

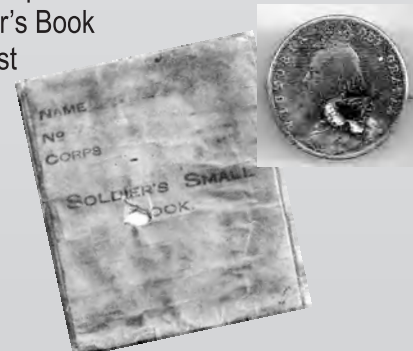


The Medals of John Huxtable of Bonnybridge



Piper Archibald McNeilage

His life was saved on 6th September 1914 when a piece of shrapnel struck a half crown and Soldier's Book in his breast pocket.



The Shearers of Main Street, Bonnybridge

by Joe and Annette Shearer, Australia

Joseph and Margaret (Maggie) Shearer, who lived in Main Street, Bonnybridge (opposite the Post Office) lost two of their sons during WW1, John and William.



John Shearer 1891-1918



William Shearer 1893-1916

John Shearer was 24 when he enlisted on 9 November 1915. He was a Lance Corporal in 1st/8th Battalion, Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders. He died of wounds in France (Flanders) on 15 April 1918. He is buried at Aire Communal Cemetery - Pas de Calais, France.



John, whilst on leave, married Maria McDowell Campbell, on 29 August 1917, at The Douglas Hotel, Glasgow, by a Minister of the United Free Church. The witnesses were Maria's sister, Bessie and William Hardie. (*I've been told that Bessie is wearing black chiffon, over her dress as a sign of mourning.*)



William was with the Seaforth Highlanders "C" Company, 9th Battalion. The Seaforth Highlanders arrived in France on 10 May 1915. William died of wounds on 23 June 1916. It would appear that he fought in the Battle of the Somme. He is buried at Daours Communal Cemetery Extension, France (Somme)

Watch out for Spying

by Irene M. Ryan



Police Station

The Chief Constable of Police for the Bonnybridge area during WW1 was Mr Charles Middleton and the local police officer in 1914 was Sergeant Turpie. Most village police offices were manned by Special Constables, who were retired officers; men unfit for war, or wounded soldiers. The Bonnybridge station had local men on duty as they knew the village very well and would recognize residents by sight. Anyone not from the district would stand out and would be questioned.

Chief Constable Middleton issued special orders to the Bonnybridge police station in October 1914. Officers had to be extra vigilant as the main underground and overhead communication cables ran through Bonnybridge Main Street to Edinburgh. Any construction work or opening of man holes in the district must have special orders; if no documents were provided the workers would be arrested.

Bonnybridge people were expected to assist the police and keep watch around their part of the village, especially outlying and remote areas, reporting anything unusual, suspicious people or strange activity, to the police. Everybody is responsible for the village; 'watch out for spies' said the posters.



The Post Office in Main Street under postmaster Mr A McWatt was also kept under special observation regarding any interference. It was essential to get all messages and parcels from the village to men at the front and just as important to receive letters. At that time the Post Office was open from 8am till 8pm Monday to Saturday and Sundays for an hour 9-10am. There were 3 deliveries a day to your home, about 7.00am – 1.45pm – 7.15pm. There were numerous Pillar boxes - four in the village, five in High Bonnybridge and other post boxes at the foundry and Glenyards. When the postman went to war two local women took on the job of delivering the mail, unfortunately Royal Mail did not register these women as they were 'just standing in' for the postman. If you know who they were please let us know.

Spy mania was sweeping across the country, every person, young and old, expected to be on the 'look out'.

The Home Front

Restrictions to Everyday Life

by Irene M. Ryan

The Government introduced many new Acts of Parliament, the first being the Defence of the Realm Act, 5th August 1914.

Under this act Bonnybridge residents could not; keep pigeons, except under strict licence and limits; fly kits; buy binoculars; light bonfires; set off fireworks; give bread to horses or chickens; use invisible ink when writing abroad; telegrams were censored; blackout was compulsory in all houses and vehicles; daylight saving time was introduced; no buying of brandy or whisky in a railway refreshment bar was allowed; no buying rounds of drinks in any bar; carry-out alcohol stopped completely and there was no white flour available at all. Failure to comply with any of these restrictions would result in arrest and imprisonment.

The Temperance movement were happy with reduced drinking hours and weak beer!



Pigeons were used to send messages.



The Government also censored all newspapers and could take over any factory, workshop or land it wanted. The country was definitely on a war footing.

As the war continued restrictions got tighter. All hotels, inns, boarding houses, lodging houses or anyone taking in boarders had to keep strict records of anybody over the age of 14 years staying at their premises. Information recorded was; nationality, name, age, usual address, reason for being in area, how and why they were travelling and a check made of their travel permit. Any non- Briton could not travel more than 5 miles from their permanent address without good reason. Police Officers would regularly check the householders' records; if incomplete the proprietor would be arrested and imprisoned.

More difficulties were to come before the war's end.



Temperance Hall

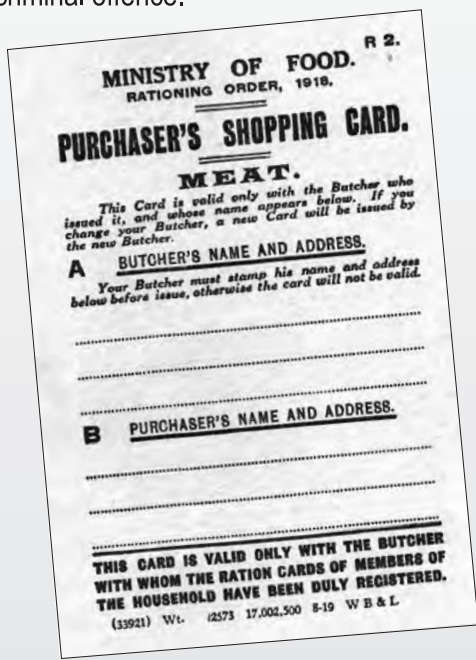


Royal Hotel

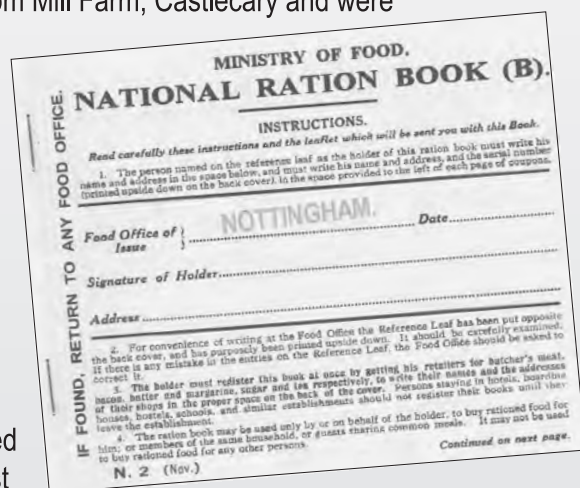
Food, Drink and Rationing

by Irene M. Ryan

The winter of 1915-1916 was very severe so the harvest was meagre. The potato crop in Scotland failed and the wheat yield was very small. As a result many people in the area had very little to eat and some went hungry. With no let up in the bad weather coal was also in short supply and it was rationed by the number of rooms in a home. Everyone was encouraged to be very careful with provisions as wastage was 'helping the Hun'. Through newspapers and posters the people were asked to 'spy' on their neighbours and report them for hoarding, which was considered a criminal offence.

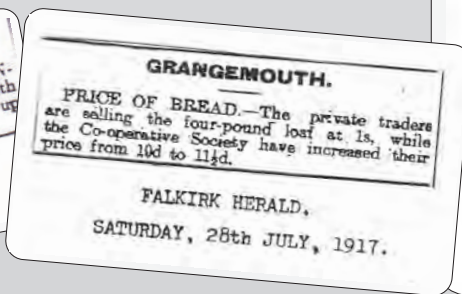
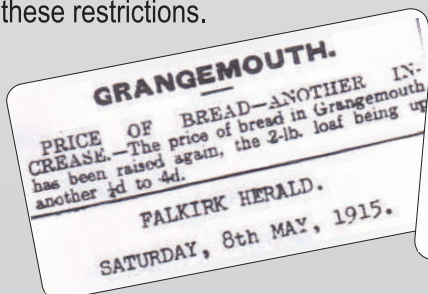


A voluntary rationing scheme was introduced in February 1917, with an allowance of; two and a half pounds of meat; four pounds of bread/cakes; three quarter lb of sugar per week. You could buy more if you had money but others turned to crime. An account from Falkirk Court stated that two boys from Bonnybridge were found guilty of stealing two turnips from Mill Farm, Castlecary and were sentenced to a fine of five shillings or two days in jail. Hunger makes people do reckless things.



Official rationing started in January 1918 with everyone being issued with a ration book which they had to register with a local shop. Most of Bonnybridge would have registered with the local Co-op but the village had many independent shops. One persons ration for a week was; fifteen ounces of meat; five ounces of bread; four ounces of butter and eight ounces of sugar. Cheese and margarine followed soon after and many of these foods were still on rationed into the 1920's.

Beer was not rationed but came under severe restrictions. The government ordered brewers to water down all beers and ended the buying of alcohol for anyone else or buying a carry out! Pre war pub opening hours were 5.30am till half past midnight but this changed. Public houses new opening hours were 12 noon till 2.30pm then 6.30 till 9.30pm. Because beer was so watered down the sales of spirits increased, this prompted a quote in the Falkirk Herald that it was '2d cheaper to buy a whisky than a weak beer!'. Depending on your beer taste the price difference could be between 3d a half pint, 5d for a 'big screw tap' to 8d for Guinness. Many local pubs struggled due to these restrictions.



A Soldier's Pay

by Irene M. Ryan

Basic rate of pay for a Private was a shilling a day, less stoppages. Married men normally had a compulsory stoppage to be paid to their wives of around six pence but this was supplemented by the government. So a Private's wife with no children could expect around 12s 6d per week. This included the overseas allowance of a penny a day when serving in foreign parts.



PAY RATES PER DAY AS OF 1914:-

Private	Sergeant	Lieutenant	Major	Colonel
1s 00d	2s 04d	6s 00d	13s 08d	18s 00d
(1/-)	(2/4d)	(6/-)	(13/8d)	(18/-)

(The value of a 1914 shilling today is £5.33)

At the start of the conflict many signed up and "took the King's shilling" to escape poverty, army pay being better than average wages but this changed during the war. Rates of pay increased from March 1, 1915, Soldiers Separation Allowances was now given to the wives and children of married soldiers and to the dependants of unmarried men and widowers.

WIVES AND CHILDREN OF MARRIED MEN

New Weekly Rates are as follows:-

	Private	Corporal	Sergeant	Colour Sergeant	Quarter Master
Wife No Child (12/6)	12s 6d (15/-)	15s 0d (16/6)	16s 6d (22/-)	22s 0d (23/-)	23s 0d
Wife 1 Child	17s 6d (17/6)	20s 0d (£1)	21s 6d (21/6)	27s 0d (27/-)	28s 0d (28/-)
Wife 2 Children	21s 0d (21/-)	23s 6d (23/6)	25s 0d (25/-)	30s 6d (30/6)	31s 6d (31/6)

With 2/- extra for each additional child

(The value of the 1918 shilling today is £2.48)

Although this rate of pay looks very good compared to 1914 the value of money had fallen quite considerably in the four years and the country was then bankrupt! The men who survived till the end of the war would be very happy to give up this money just to get back home to their family and a settled quiet life.

But reality was much less than promised.



Bonnybridge Fund Raising

by Irene M. Ryan

Shortly after the outbreak of war, news was filtering through to Bonnybridge about how the Belgium people were suffering. This prompted many charity events in the village. The Falkirk Herald reported that two girls, Agnes Wren age 11 of Glencairn and Bessie White age 9 of Annieslea had been making toffee and selling it around the village. All the money, which the Herald said was a 'substantial sum', going to the Belgium Fund. Both girls also did knitting for soldiers and Miss Wren got a postcard from a Private Perking, K.O.S.B. thanking her and her friends for the lovely gifts. These two little girls and another friend, Mary Dunsmore, also put on a concert in the United Free Church, High Bonnybridge in aid of the Belgium Fund. These were spirited girls doing their bit for the war effort.

The Falkirk Mail reported that Miss May Forrest from High Bonnybridge made £1.3s.7p (almost £120 today) selling toffee and she gave all the money to High Bonnybridge Church sewing class who were making and sending clothes to the front. Bonnybridge people must have had a very sweet tooth! Other charity collections were going on around the village. The employees of Bonnybridge Silica & Fireclay Company collected £10.9s (approximately £1000 today) at Christmas with £5 given to Queen (mother) Alexandria fund and £5.9s going to the Prince of Wales Fund. In 18 weeks the workers had sent £30.12s.6p to both these charities.



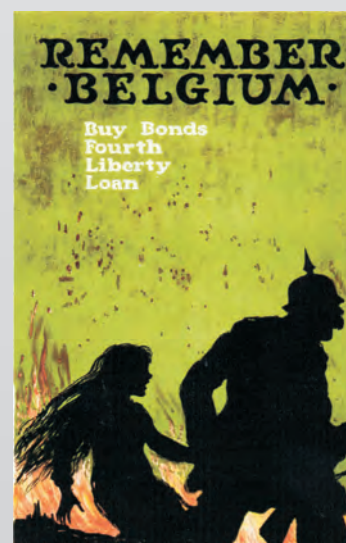
The amateur dramatic society was made homeless when the public hall was taken over to house recuperating injured soldiers so the Co-operative was asked for the use of their hall to hold a concert on behalf of the Belgium Relief Fund. Other concerts were also held in Mr Harris' Picture house. The soldiers housed in Bonnybridge, all 150 men, held a concert to thank the village for welcoming them. The drill hall was decorated with flags and bunting and all the village public figures were in attendance along with hundreds of villagers. They were entertained to songs, stories and poetry by the Soldiers and the evening finished with a dance.

Drill Hall

A Red Cross Concert was held to raise funds for the society. The large audience was entertained by Miss Helen Porteous, Miss J Wilkinson and Mr L Rae. The church choir, led by Mr J Gillespie with Miss Nettie Gillespie accompanying, also contributed to the success of the evening.

A concert was held weekly in the Territorial Army hall and there was always a huge attendance. One concert in January 1915, put on by the A.S.C. (Army Service Corps.), was a programme of songs. The audience were entertained by Mrs G. Ure, Nurse Sawyer, Corporal Marshall, Driver Robertson, Driver Calder and Driver Busby. A wonderful time was enjoyed by all.



There are many more examples of individual fund raising around the village and performers giving of their time to entertain in concerts held in Bonnybridge. The village today should be very proud of the fund raising going on during the Great War.



In Memoriam

In Memory of
Private
J Douglas
2327, 7th Bn., Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who died on 26 April 1915



Remembered with Honour
Seaforth Cemetery, Cheddar Villa

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of
Able Seaman
Hugh Drummond
Clyde Z4997, Howe Bn. R.N. Div., Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve who died on 13 November 1915


Remembered with Honour
Thiepval Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of
Private
J Drummond
2525, 7th Bn., Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who died on 24 February 1915



Remembered with Honour
Bailleul Communal Cemetery, Nord




Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of
Private
Charles Campbell Stevenson
242046, 4th Bn., Seaforth Highlanders who died on 20 July 1918 Age 24
Son of John and Elizabeth Stevenson, of Blackhill, Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire



Remembered with Honour
Soissons Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of
Private
J Stevenson
2125, 6th Field Amb., Canadian Army Medical Corps who died on 26 November 1918 Age 29
Son of John and Elizabeth Stevenson, of Blackhill, Bonnybridge, Stirlingshire, Scotland



Remembered with Honour
Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

In Memory of
Private
William Stevenson
16659, 9th Bn., Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) who died on 05 July 1915

Remembered with Honour
Thiepval Memorial

Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

A Soldier's Prayer

Do not stand by my grave and weep
I am not there, I do not sleep,
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the gentle autumn rain,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,

When you awaken in the morning hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight,
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand by my grave and cry
I am not there I did not die..

Anon.



A THANK-YOU TO BILLY BUCHANAN

Greenhill Historical Society would like to express their gratitude to Baillie William Buchanan, not only for his continuing support of the society, but for the excellent events he organised to commemorate the outbreak of WW1. On Monday, 4th August, he held a moving service in the Memorial Garden in Bonnybridge, which was attended by members of the community, the local churches and by the Provost Pat Reid. As part of this service, Greenhill Historical Society dedicated a newly planted tree and unveiled a plaque in commemoration of all who answered the call to serve their country. On the following Saturday he presented a poignant and evocative event in Falkirk Town Hall. It was amazing to see the participants of this superb event ranging in age from 16 years upwards. It was a sensitive and enjoyable experience and a wonderful way to show our respect and gratitude to those who fought for our freedom from tyranny.



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