

# CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS IN WW1

## United Kingdom

The country recognised the right for individuals not to fight in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century following problems with attempting to force Quakers into Military service. The Militia Ballot Act of 1757 allowed Quakers to be excluded from military service. It then ceased to be a major issue, since Britain's armed forces were generally all-volunteer.

However, 'Press Gangs' were used to 'beef' up army and navy rolls on occasions from the sixteenth to the earlier nineteenth centuries. Pressed men did have the right of appeal, in the case of sailors to the Admiralty. The Royal Navy last took pressed men in the Napoleonic Wars in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

## Peculiar People

The 'Peculiar People' were originally an offshoot of the Wesleyan denomination, founded in 1838 in Rochford Essex, by John Banyard, a farm worker's son born in 1800. They derive the name from an alternate translation of the phrase 'Chosen People' taken from the book of Deuteronomy 14:2 and Peter 2:9. The Peculiar People is also a phrase used to describe the Quakers, which they adopted with some pride.

It is noted, without suggestion, that the children of John and Mary Hockley (great grandparents of Ernest Hockley) were Baptised in the Non-Conformist Chapel at Nevendon in the 1830's. (see page 7).

## Foundation and spread in Essex.

Banyard attended a service in the local Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. The preacher's message had a profound effect on him, to the extent that he regularly attended the church. Before long he became a reputable preacher on the Wesleyan circuit. In 1837 he and William Bridges took a lease on an old workhouse at Rochford which became the first chapel of a new group which Banyard and Bridges called the Peculiar People.

In the mid-1850's they spread deeper into Essex, much of which was agricultural land occupied by a naturally conservative population. The Peculiar People preached a puritanical form of Christianity which proved popular, and numerous chapels sprang up throughout rural Essex. They also practised 'faith healing.'

There is an account of the 'Peculiar People' in 19<sup>th</sup> century Plumstead in "Unorthodox London" by Charles Maurice Davies. In Blunt's Dictionary of Sects and Heresies (1874), the Peculiar People were described as 'a Sect of very ignorant people.'

The Peculiar People practised a lively form of worship and considered themselves bound by the literal interpretation of the King James Bible. They did not seek immediate medical care in cases of sickness, instead of relying on prayer as an act of faith.

This led to judicial criticism when children died due to lack of treatment. In response to the concern about refusing medical care, which led to some parents being imprisoned after a 1910 Diphtheria outbreak in Essex, the sect split between 'Old Peculiar People' who still rebuffed medicine, and the 'New Peculiar People' who somewhat reluctantly condoned it. The split healed in the 1930's, when in general, the New Peculiar position prevailed.

During the two world wars, some Peculiar People were conscientious objectors, believing, as now, that war is contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Church membership had peaked in the 1850's with 43 chapels, but it declined until 1956, when the Peculiar People changed their name to the less conspicuous 'Union of Evangelical Churches.'

The movement continues with regular worship at 15 remaining chapels in Essex and London.



## in Nevendon Road Wickford

Some traditional distinctive features mentioned, have been abandoned. So that the Union of Evangelical Churches are similar to other Evangelical churches. They are situated in Camberwell and Canning Town in London, Chelmsford, Corringham, Cressing, Daws Heath, Eastwood, Great Wakering, Little Totham, Rayleigh, Shoeburyness. Southend, Stanway, Wickford and Witham in Essex although it is noted that services have been discontinued at Shoeburyness Evangelical Church and suspended at Rayleigh Evangelical Church.

### **The First World War**

A more general right to refuse military service was not introduced, until the First World War, when Britain introduced conscription with the Military Service Act of March 1916. The Act allowed for objectors to be absolutely exempted, to perform alternative civilian service, or to serve as non-combatants in the army, according to the extent to which they could convince a Military Service Tribunal of the quality of their objection.

A belief that human life was sacred was a central feature of the Peculiar People's belief. Whilst a few young members may have joined the armed services, this became a real issue in 1916, when conscription was introduced. There was a special meeting of the Church Council, who affirmed their views that human life was sacred and so war and bloodshed was the work of Satan. The Council did not forbid followers from joining up but made it clear that they would support any member who became a conscientious Objector.

Some members took employment in agriculture or other exempted occupations, whilst some joined the armed forces in areas such as medics, where they would not be called upon to take lives. Others refused to join the armed service as their belief was that to have any part in the war would be unchristian and many were convicted, serving sentences of 'hard labour' in prisons.

At a time of great patriotism, the actions of these conscientious objectors caused very negative feelings towards the Peculiar People movement. The leaders of the movement appealed against their conscription up to Kings Bench Division, on the basis that Ministers of many religions were exempt. The court dismissed this appeal, although accepting the movement as a religion, they felt that Ministers were self-appointed with no training, and as such did not qualify for exemption. Most Elders of conscription age, then became conscientious objectors.

Around 16,000 men were recorded as conscientious objectors, with Quakers, traditionally pacifist, playing a large role; some 4500 objectors were ordered non-combatant duties, but around 6,000 were forced into the army, and when they refused orders, they were sent to prison.

When the pacifist and religious writer Stephen Henry Hobhouse was drafted in 1916, he and many other Quaker activists took the stand of refusing both military and alternative service. These men were sent to prison.

### **Military Service Tribunals**

The Middlesex Appeal Tribunal which, between 1916 and 1918, heard appeals from men who had previously applied to a local tribunal for exemption from compulsory military service. The reasons provided by applicants were varied, with applications made on moral grounds (conscientious objectors), on medical grounds (disability), on family grounds (looking after dependants) and on economic grounds (preserving a business).

The vast majority of cases related to the impact of war on a man's family or their business interests, and the papers reveal some fascinating and tragic stories. Cases regarding conscientious objectors, formed only a tiny proportion of Military Service Tribunal's cases, estimated at about 2%; in the first six months of following the Military Service Act, tribunals heard 750,000 cases, of which 16,000 (the total number of conscience cases for 1916-1918) is 2.13%.

Tribunals were notoriously harsh towards conscientious objectors, reflecting widespread public opinion that they were lazy, degenerate, ungrateful 'shirkers' seeking to benefit from the sacrifices of others.

### **Common questions asked by Tribunals**

<b>Generality</b>	How and when did you decide against the military service? Why can't you arrange military service with your conscience? What prohibits you from serving in the military?
<b>Military Service</b>	Do you fear having to fight, or to use force? Do you want to abolish the army? What do you think about the phrase "We have the army to defend us, not to kill others"?
<b>Use of force</b>	What would you do if you were attacked? What do you feel when you see that others are attacked? What is violence, exactly? Would you rather experience losses than having to use force?
<b>Belief</b>	What do your beliefs say? Would you describe yourself as a pacifist? What basic values, besides objecting to violence, do you have? What entity gives you the certainty that your thinking and your feelings are right?
<b>Implementation of your beliefs</b>	Why didn't you choose to go into prison if your conscience is that strong? Why didn't you use medical reasons to avoid military service? What do you actually do to further peace, or is your attitude the only peaceful thing about you?
<b>Personality</b>	Who is in charge of defending your children in case of armed conflict? Do you live to your ethical principles inside your family? What books do you read? What do you demand from yourself? Are you merely a leader, a follower or a loner?

Some thirty-five objectors were taken to France and formally sentenced to death but immediately reprieved, committed to ten years in prison; conditions were made very hard for conscientious objector prisoners. Ten died in prison, and around seventy died elsewhere as a result of their harsh treatment.

Many objectors accepted non-combat service, for example working in the dangerous role of stretcher-bearers. Conscientious objectors who were deemed not to have made any useful contribution were disenfranchised for five years after the war, but there was no administrative machinery to enforce such issue. Britain's 1916 Conscription Legislation did not apply to Ireland, despite its status as part of the United Kingdom; although the prospect of its introduction led to the conscription crisis of 1918.

On 4 August 1916, it was reported that the Ilford Tribunal had so far heard 1,896 cases, in addition to considering the positions of hundreds in certified occupations (i.e. men whose jobs kept them out of the military). They had been holding three meetings per week, with around two hundred applications received each week and with three hundred and fifty still to be heard. By the end of 1916 almost three quarters of a million men had applied to tribunals in Britain.

Over the same period around the same number had joined the army, suggesting that more men appealed against serving than went without an appeal (if one assumes that some of those new soldiers had failed in application to tribunals).

An unattested man, aged 35, who was described as an electrician on a private estate, applied for temporary exemption. The agent who represented the employer said that the applicant looked after the electric lighting plant. They could not find a man to fill his place, and if he were not exempted the whole of the premises at which he was employed might be plunged into darkness at night.—The Military Representative: How long would it take a man to learn to manipulate the electric lighting apparatus?—The Agent: That would depend upon the character of the man.—The Military Representative: Would you agree that a man of commonsense would learn it in a month?—The Agent: But it's getting a man with commonsense. (Laughter). What we want is a little time to pick up another man.—Application refused.

The Non-Combatant Corps (NCC) was an attempt to give those who objected to taking human life, a way to serve in the army. Many were allocated to the NCC including those who objected to military service as a whole, either for religious or political reasons, or who simply could not countenance serving even in this unit.



For some, though, it was an appropriate vehicle for them to serve their country, when the law mandated that they should, without having to take part in the fighting. Other objectors took up the work in the Royal Army Medical Corps in order to save lives rather than take them (just as many Quakers had joined the Friends Ambulance Unit early in the war).

CHARGE SHEET

The accused No, *32115* Private John George Sadler, 3rd Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment, a soldier of the Regular Forces, is charged with:-


Charge: Disobeying in such a manner as to show wilful defiance of authority a lawful command given by his superior officer in the execution of his office,

*Section 9(A) Army Act.*

in that he

at East Walker, on the 7th November 1916, when personally ordered by No, 5253 C.S.M. G.L. Johnson, 3rd Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment, to put on uniform, being dressed in civilian clothes, refused to do so, saying " I refuse on conscientious grounds, I am a conscientious objector".

Wallsend-on-Tyne. *C. H. Lawes* Lieut Colonel.  
10/11/1916. Commanding 3rd Bn North Staffordshire Regiment.

NAME.		ADDRESS.		NEW ADDR
PENROSE Lionel Sharples		Oxhey Grange Watford.		11/1493
Brassard N° <del>1196</del> 16535	Date 19.6.18	Place of Birth London	Nearest relative J. Doyle Penne	
Cap Badge N° <del>1147</del>	Unit N° 1045	Date of Birth 11 <sup>th</sup> June 1898	Address: Oxhey Grange Watford.	
Passport N° 191618	Date 8.6.18	Nationality British.		
Exemption <i>by Military for F.O.U.</i>	Grounds <i>Conscientious Objection</i>	Married or Single Single.		
Cert. N° 397	Tribunal Watford Rural	Med. Classification		
	Vaccinations 5.6.18	Religion { Member } <i>Soc'y of Friends</i>	Uniform supplied	
	191	{ Attender }		
	Inoculations 25.5.18	Previous occupation Student.		
	1.6.18	QUALIFICATIONS.		
191	Hospital 1 <sup>st</sup> Aid B.R.C.S.			
191	Motors -			
Kit Expenses to	Languages French - a little.			
<i>Pump over</i>	Special -			
Agreement dated June 1917	Training <i>Jordan's 5.4.18 - 20.6.18</i>			

### Dartmoor Prison

Dartmoor Prison was originally built for French prisoners from the Napoleonic wars. At the end of 1916, it was reopened to house over one thousand British conscientious objectors and renamed 'Princetown Work Centre'.



There was a mixture of 'religious groups of all kinds,' from Plymouth Brethren down to anything from Salvation Army, Christian Scientists, and of course Methodists and Congregationalists.

The Bishop of Exeter refused us the use of the Church in the prison. But if we had been murderers we'd have had a free hand and we could have sung 'God Save the King!'

Two hundred of the conscientious objectors were put to work inside the ex-prison's walls. The rest were sent out to the moors, either for farm (crushing grain) or to work in the quarry (carting granite) for nine hours a day. In the midst of the moor, the conscientious objectors cleared a rectangular patch and built a seven foot high dry-stone wall. It had no use or purpose, and decades later was still known as 'conchies fields'.

One of Dartmoor's thousand was Eric Dott, a young Scot from Edinburgh, who would later become a General Practitioner. After solitary confinement in Wormwood Scrubs, Eric found Dartmoor refreshing. His cell (which was called a 'room') wasn't locked; there was sufficient food, a library, a games room, and a gymnasium. Concerts were arranged, conversation and debate were continual, and 'I had to substitute self-discipline for prison discipline! said Eric. What he didn't enjoy was stone-breaking ('I was cold and desperately fed up') but doctors decreed that men wearing glasses shouldn't do such work: Eric went back to sewing mailbags in his 'room'. Eric Dott admitted, 'You had to be fit to stand it. There were many older men, and men with worries at home, for whom it was very difficult. Those who weren't strong, suffered - you slept on boards with only thin mattress and there was almost no medical treatment'.

By 1917, the comparative comfort of Dartmoor was arousing anger in the press, enraged that 'The Coddled Conscience of Men' were 'Princetown's Pampered Pets'. A Member of Parliament suggested they should be exchanged for wounded prisoners-of-war captive in Germany. In the House of Lords, a Princetown visitor reported on the 'intellectual anarchy' he had found there. 'Why not send the Conchies somewhere they could be put in touch with enemy bombers? The dropping of a bomb might bring about a sudden conversion, or at least a truer view of the political situation.' Sometimes the prisoners were assaulted by resentful civilians.

**The Hockley family during the First World War.**

Ernest Hockley chose to become a Conscientious Objector in the First World War but equally other siblings chose to join the war effort.

His brother, Walter (1891-1954) fought at Ypres in Belgium and during the Western Front Campaign although his service records are amongst those destroyed by fire during the Second World War conflict.

His sister, Esther Hockley, chose to support the socio-economic and industrial demands of the nation by taking a job as a Bus Conductress with the Southend-on-Sea Tram Corporation. The Southend-on-Sea Corporation Tramways served the town of Southend-on-Sea from 19 July 1901 until 8 April 1942.



Ernest Hockley 1889 - 1985 and Ivy May HOCKLEY 1897 - 1974



Walter Hockley

Esther Hockley a 'Clippie' on Southend trams.



Ernest Hockley in Dartmoor Prison

**Ernest Hockley wrote:**

'As the war proceeded, owing to the losses of men, Conscriptio was declared for the army. So, as I was opposed to the taking of human life, as it was contrary to the teaching of the Holy Bible, I protested, and so I was called to the local tribunal to state my case, but as my appeal was dismissed, I eventually received my 'Call-up' papers and I did not respond to them. I was arrested and taken to Barking police Station and put in cells for the night'.

'Several weeks before I was arrested, at the Tuesday night Bible Study and as we sang Hymn No. 535 'O' Christians Awake' a vision appeared to me – I was looking up to the ceiling of a prison cell with thick stone walls and narrow barred windows, and myself in a convict suit, and I was rejoicing in the love of God'.

For in this vision, there was a stream of fresh water, flowing through the cell, and for me, what I saw would be verified, for it was a definite sign I would have to serve a term of imprisonment, which later was confirmed.

When I went for my second tribunal, before doing so, I prayed and asked the Lord to speak to me, and he gave me the following scripture: **Philippians** – 1: Verse 29 “For unto you is given in the behalf of Christ, not only believe on him, but also suffer for his sake” Ruth Hockley (daughter) mentioned in an interview, that this was on the 22 May 1916 and she was reading from her Dad’s Bible that he took with him, when he went to prison. But unfortunately, all his possessions were taken from him, and he was given a prison Bible eventually.

Upon being processed through Tribunals, Military Service and the Policing authorities, he wrote a letter dated 19 January 1917, in poem form, to his beloved Ivy and their daughter Ruth has allowed the transcript of her reading that letter, an important document of the time.

*My dear little Ivy, clinging and true – Once more I write a few lines to you.  
Hoping this letter will find you quite well – Cheerful in spirit and sound as a bell.  
This letter leaves me on this Sabbath morn – From friends whom I love, from whom I have been torn.  
But nevertheless feeling happy and bright – Determined as ever to push on in this fight.*

*The 18<sup>th</sup> of this month, six months it will be – Since favoured I was to say I was free.  
I’m sure you remember that day very well – When I was taken from you I was placed in a cell.  
To refresh your memory now I will try – Of relating to you what befell your dear boy.  
The 18<sup>th</sup> of July in the year 1916 – Was the brightest of the day that could be wished to be seen.*

*In the morn you remember, I was preparing to paint – As the paint on the fence had worn very faint.  
So, I washed it and left it in a fit state – The fence to be painted by my dear mate.  
And just after dinner, but we’d not had our tea – A Sergeant knocked at the door and came after me.  
And said I was going to see the dear Colonel – Whom he saw me and used some language infernal.*

*Told the Sergeant to take me out of his sight – Lock me up quite secure in a cell for the night.  
In the morning to take me to Stratford by train – And said all he could to make me afraid.  
You remember quite well, without me saying more – How at nine the next morning on the station I saw.  
Sister Esther, you and Auntie and Uncle as well – Were coming to Stratford to bid me farewell.*

*At ten I appeared in the Prisoner Dock – Sentenced, placed back in a cell which was locked.  
At 1015 I had to bid you farewell – Feeling happy and cheerful though locked up in a cell  
About four hours later the escort arrived – Two strong burly guardsmen who promised me a rough ride.  
I was taken by them around to Grove Crescent – And had an experience which was not very pleasant.*

*From there up to Pentonville I was escorted – Their Headquarters where I was to be reported.  
From there to the Police Station at Kings Cross taken – And locked up in a cell for the night at that station  
Next day I was found again in a train – To Wilton in Wiltshire, whence it was all in vain.  
As by God’s help, I intended on principle sound – To keep close to him and stand firm my ground.  
But I must cut this short as it’s now rather late – It’s taken me long, this tale to relate.*

**In the Guardroom I spent about nineteen days during which time I was sentenced to One hundred and twelve days.**

*To Winchester Prison I was taken from there – An experience to me which you know was quite rare.  
Five days in the ‘Scrubbs’, a life far from communal – I spent there, before appearing at the Central Tribunal.  
After three weeks I was transferred there up to Dyce – Which after prison, I found indeed very nice.  
You know what happened since then very well – So I will refrain from poetry, my story to tell.*

*But I will state this, I had a true friend – Who helped me supported, whose love knew no end.  
He’s been unto me all he promised to be – And will be to each one, as our hearts he doth see.  
And dear, I love you, as you know very well – I’ve loved you indeed, more than I can tell.  
And to see your dear face, would cause me much pleasure – For you on the earth, my love and my treasure.*

*I’ve loved you, you know, since you were a wee girl – With your hair hanging down in many a curl.  
And since you’ve grown up, I love you the same – As I did years ago, when we had many a game.  
But dear, with others, we’ve had to part – Which in your case and mine, came close to our heart.  
But never mind dear, the day will soon come – When back to you darling, I speedily come.*

*‘Til then we must do as we’ve done in the past – Trust firmly in God, right up to the last.  
Trust him with all confidence, on him cast your care – The heaviest burdens, he’ll help you to bear.  
As your servant to write to my dear old mate – As she is so dear, the others must wait.  
So dear, still press on to the end of your journey – Goodbye, fondest love from your true sweetheart Ernie!*

**CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS**

**Mr. Morrell** – asked the Under-Secretary of State for War, if he had yet obtained a report as to the allegations of brutal ill-treatment and cruelty, perpetrated on 17 June and other days by Lance-Corporal Barker and others, upon a number of conscientious objectors at Prees Hill Camp, near Whitchurch, Salop; if he will say what the nature and conditions of the enquiry that was held; whether the men themselves were questioned and examined; and whether any independent person from outside the Army, took part in the investigation?

**Mr. Tennant** – I will read to the House, a report which has been made by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command.

**Chester 28 June 1916.**

1. On 19 June 1916, a telegram was received from Mr. Bland, 203, Barkerhouse Road, Nelson, to the effect that certain conscientious objectors in 17th Battalion Cheshire Regiment at Frees Heath Camp, were being ill-treated by a Lance-Corporal Barker.
2. A Copy of the telegram was sent at once to the General Officer Commanding Frees Heath Camp, for a full inquiry and report.
3. The report has now been received and is as follows: ‘Private Carradice arrived in camp under escort and was placed in the guard-room. He stated that, as a conscientious objector, he could obey no orders. The next day he was sent to his own tent, and when ordered to turn out on parade, would not do so. Lance-Corporal Barker then seized him by the back of the neck and ejected him. As he would not march anywhere, Lance Corporal Barker cuffed him along. Private Carradice was next taken to the bath cubicle, and, refusing to wash, was handled somewhat roughly by Lance-Corporal Barker – having his ear pulled.

**The case of Private Ingham is practically similar.**

The Commanding Officer states that these men (with five others) were seen by him on arrival. They refused to answer any questions, were most disrespectful in manner, and stated they were conscientious objectors. He consequently directed that they should be handed over to a N.C.O. (Non-Commissioned Officer) who was a good disciplinarian.

On visiting the tent where these men were first placed, he found it in a dirty and disgraceful state. The men absolutely refused to clean up. He then directed Lance-Corporal Barker to have the tent cleaned, and as is done with all recruits, to see that they had a bath. He (the C.O.) states he has never seen any violence offered to these men, nor have they made any complaint to him.

**Mr. Williams** – Will the Right Hon. Gentleman cause enquiries to be made of the Colour-Sergeant who rescued Davies from the brutality?

**Mr. Morrell** – Asked the Under-Secretary of State for War if he can give any information with regard to Llewellyn Hughes, a conscientious objector, who was tried by court-martial at Chatham on 1<sup>st</sup> June and transferred to Wandsworth on 9 June; whether he has been kept for some weeks in solitary confinement; whether he has suffered severely in health; and whether he will soon be transferred to civil custody under the Army Order of 25 May?

**Mr. Tennant** – This man was admitted to Wandsworth on the 9 June and on 10 June was awarded punishment for refusing to obey orders. He was in hospital from 13 June to the 26 June and was visited in hospital by his mother as a special case.

On 27 June he refused to parade and there is reason to believe he is a malingerer. I understand the man has been remanded for trial by court-martial, in which case he will doubtless come under the conditions of Army Order No. 10 of 26 May. My hon. Friends suggestion that he has been kept some weeks in solitary confinement, appears to be without foundation.

**Mr. King** – Asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the thirty-five conscientious objectors sentenced to death in France have now been brought to England; if not, when are they expected; whether it is his intention to recommend the exercise of the Royal prerogative, so that the commuted sentences of Penal Servitude shall not be carried out; or whether they will be treated under the scheme announced on 29 June 1916?



**Mr. Tennant** – The hon. Member may rest assured that all prisoners sentenced to Penal Servitude are sent to England as soon as the necessary arrangements for their movement have been made. The hon. Member is doubtless aware that sentences of Penal Servitude cannot be carried out in France. It is not the intention to recommend the exercise of the Royal Prerogative, and the conscientious objectors under discussion will be treated under the scheme announced on 29 June 1916.

It is undeniable that undue force was used by Lance-Corporal Barker, who was carried away by excess of zeal in his efforts to carry out the instructions of his superior officers. No permanent injury was inflicted, however, and what roughness he used was under very great provocation, as the men appear to have been in league to disobey all orders given to them. As Lance-Corporal Barker has crippled fingers, it would appear to be physically impossible for him to have struck severe blows.

It may be added (a) that disciplinary action has been ordered to be taken against Lance-Corporal Barker for his treatment against these men, and that he is not in future to be placed in charge of conscientious objectors.

(b) Mr. Bland has been written to, informing him that disciplinary action has been taken in this case.

(c) Orders have been given that in future no attempt is to be made to compel soldiers physically to disobey orders, but that, if insubordinate, they are to be forthwith remanded for trial by District Court-Martial.

**Sir Stephen Collins** – Asked the Under Secretary for War (1) Whether his attention has been called to the case of a conscientious objector named Sydney Cooper, of Leeds, who, on or about Monday 29 May at Richmond, was roughly handled, then frog-marched until blood rushed from his mouth; whether he will use his best endeavours to put a stop to such treatment; what steps he proposes to take; and (2) whether he will inquire into the allegations that have been made with regard to the treatment with certain conscientious objectors, including Fred, Charles and Harry Walker, are believed to have undergone at the lower barracks, Chatham, on or about 18 May, and in particular if he will ascertain whether these men were knocked-about in such manner that one of them fainted twice; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter?

**Mr. Tennant** – If the hon. Member will forward me definite statements upon which inquiry can be based, I shall be happy to have the same instituted.

**Mr. E. Harvey** – Was not the first case brought before the House a month ago by the hon. Member for York, and the full details given then?

**Mr. Tennant** - I do not know. I could not be expected to put the two things together.

**Mr. Llewelyn Williams** – Asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether the investigator whom he sent down to inquire into the alleged complaints of Private Ithel Davies as to his treatment in the Mold Detention Barracks for refusing to obey military orders on conscientious grounds, saw and examined Private Davies; whether the Staff-Sergeant and the Corporal who are accused of having ill-treated Private Davies have now been removed from Mold Detention Barracks; whether the investigator saw and examined these two non-commissioned officers; and whether, in order that he may not be imposed upon or placed in a false position before coming to a final decision as to the facts alleged by Private Davies, he will cause the investigator to obtain from Private Davies himself, an account of the treatment which he received from the Staff-Sergeant and the Corporal during the first three days which he spent in the Mold Detention Barracks?

**Mr. Tennant** – In the supplementary answer I gave on the 27 June, where I spoke of an independent investigator, I was referring to the detention barrack visitor mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Rules for Military Detention Barracks and Military Prisons. My Right hon. Friend will realise from my former answer that an exhaustive inquiry has been made into this case.

The main facts elicited are: That Davies, though given ample opportunity for making a complaint to the visiting officer, made none; that four non-commissioned officers state that, so far as they are aware, Davies was never struck or ill-treated in any way; that there were no marks of ill-usage to be seen upon Davies; that the Sergeant-Major took him aside, talked to him, endeavoured to give him good advice, but could not exert no influence over him; and, finally, that Davies told the Medical Officer that he had no complaint to make. I trust the House will agree that this is a complete answer to this question.

**Mr. Williams** – Will the Right hon. Gentleman answer the questions I have put down, namely, whether the staff-sergeant and the corporal who are accused of having ill-treated Private Davies have now been removed from Mold Detention Barracks?

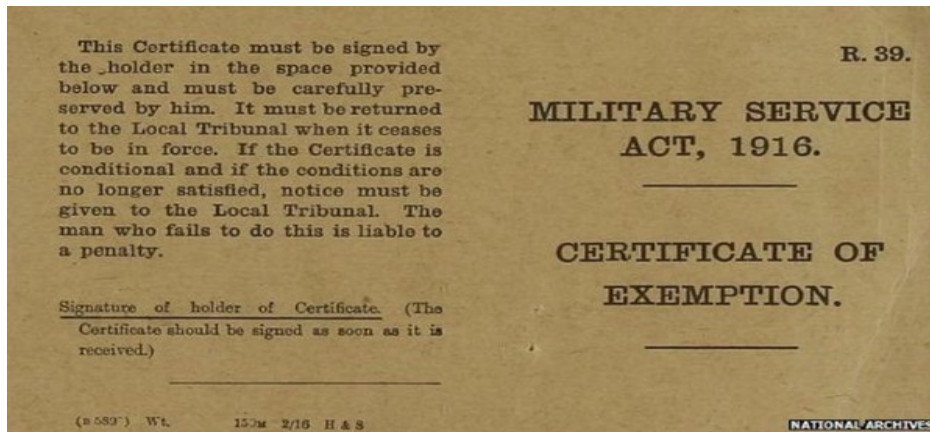
**Mr. Tennant** – The answer to that is in the negative.

**Mr. Williams** – And whether the investigator asked a single question of Private Davies?

**Mr. Tennant** – I gave my hon. Friend a very complete answer to his question.

**Mr. Williams** – No!

**Mr. Tennant** – Whether the visitor actually cross-examined Davies or not, I cannot say.



### **Arthur Robert MURRAY**

Arthur Robert Murray was born to parents Jonathan and Mary Ann Murray (nee Brett) in the second quarter of 1878 in Nevendon. According to the 1901 Census he was aged 22 years and a Railway Porter living at 8 Halin Cottages Pitsea.

He married Clara Louisa May in 1903 and they went on to have six children (one child passing away in 1911) and the remainder living very full lives. The 1911 Census shows the family living at The Bell in Nevendon Road Wickford.

His enrolment papers for 13 October 1916 describe him as a Roadman aged 38 years and married, but also that, on appeal on 27 September 1916 at the County Appeal Tribunal in Chelmsford, he had been exempted from combatant service. His Army number was 3059 and rank NCC (Non-Combatant Corps).

At this time the local newspapers were full of those applying for exemption and in his case the report read: "Conscientious Objector Arthur Robert Murray, a Roadman, of Nevendon, applied for exemption on conscientious grounds and said he would do service in any way except the shedding of blood.

The Tribunal Chairman, Mr. Collingwood Hope KC, after reading the applicant's statement of grounds of appeal, said "I am not going to ask any questions on this subject of conscientious objection. I am going to take the advice of the Essex County Chronicle and keep quiet. Captain Howard, you can ask questions."

Captain Howard: "It is very difficult – may I do the same?" Eventually Captain Howard asked the applicant to explain how it was that he is a married man, could be a conscientious objector. Applicant: "That is all right, I would protect my family but I would not slay." The applicant was ordered to take non-combatant service. Arthur Robert Murray died in 1951.

W10667/2476 500s 2/18er G.A.S. RECORD OF SERVICE. **DUPLICATE** Army Form B. 2513. 310691

**ENROLMENT PAPER**

For men deemed to be enlisted in H.M. Regular Forces for General Service with the Colours or in the Reserve for the period of the War, under the provisions of the Military Service Act, 1916.

No. 5054 Name Arthur Robert Murray Corps A.P.S.C. A.C. 6

Questions to be put to the Reservist on Enrolment.

1. What is your Name? ...	1. <u>Arthur Robert Murray</u>
2. What is your full Address? ...	2. <u>Wickford Wickford G.</u>
3. Are you a British Subject? ...	3. <u>Yes</u>
4. What is your Age? ...	4. <u>38</u> Years <u>4</u> Months
5. What is your Trade or Calling? ...	5. <u>Roadman</u>
6. Are you Married? ...	6. <u>Yes</u>
7. Have you ever served in any branch of His Majesty's Forces, naval or military? If so, which?	7. <u>No</u>
8. Have you any preference for any particular branch of the service, if so, which?	8. <u>No</u>
9. Are you desirous of serving in the Royal Navy, if so, state your qualifications.	9. <u>No</u>

I, Arthur Robert Murray do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true.

Arthur Robert Murray SIGNATURE OF RECRUIT.  
Thos. Dwyer Signature of Witness.

EXEMPTION FROM COMBATANT SERVICE ON CONSCIENTIOUS GROUNDS.

If the Recruit has been exempted by a Tribunal on conscientious grounds from serving as a combatant it should be so stated here. Exempted from combatant service only by the County App. Tribunal Wickford 27.4.16

MEDICAL CLASSIFICATION AS TO FITNESS FOR SERVICE ON **FOOT** SERVICE.

Classification\* D.I. (a)

\*To be filled in by the Recruiting Officer after Classification by the Medical Board.

**ACCEPTANCE** Certificate of Approving Officer.

I approve the enrolment of the above-named man, and appoint him to the A.P.S.C. A.C. 6

Date 12-10-16 }  
Place Wickford } Approving Officer.

\* If so, the Recruit is to be asked the particulars of his former service, and to produce, if possible, his Certificate of Discharge and Certificate of Character which should be returned to him encircled in red ink, as follows, viz.—(Insert) on the (Date)

Norman Bambridge.  
Basildon Borough Heritage Society.

January 2023.