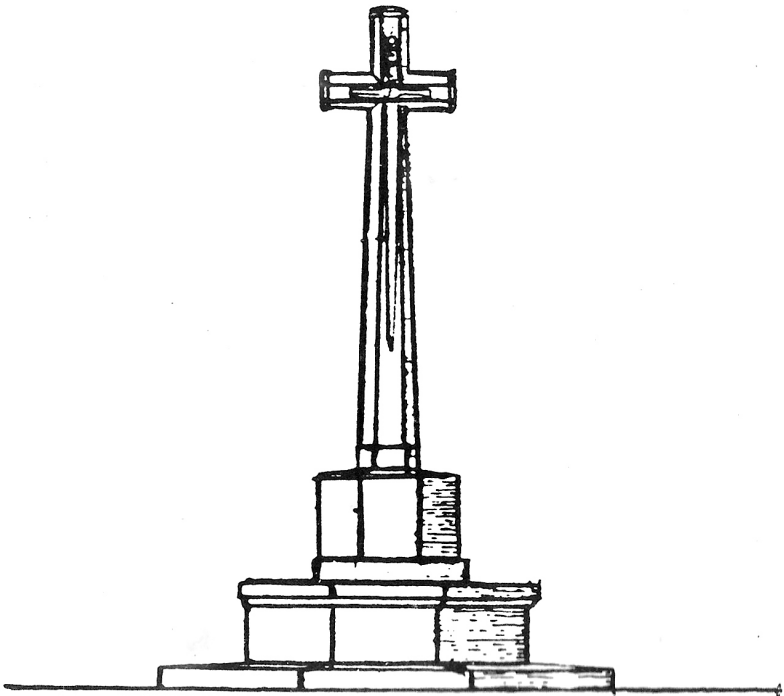


BOURNEMOUTH
AND THE
FIRST WORLD WAR

THE EVERGREEN VALLEY

1914 TO 1919

M A EDGINGTON



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Cover illustration: Memorial to Servicemen buried
in the North Cemetery

October 2013

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INTRODUCTION

Primarily this pamphlet sets out to give an idea of what happened in the town during the Great War and what the people living here did to aid the war effort. It is not a military history even though it chronicles the military events which occurred locally.

It is hoped that the reader may find many things of interest and that this short account will shed a little light on a period of local history which has not had a great deal written about it.

The author would be grateful for other information regarding Bournemouth 1914 - 1918. Photographs and reminiscences would be welcomed.

1914

"The holiday season started in April 1914 with bright and sunny weather. Records set at previous Easter holidays were broken for the crowds which descended on Bournemouth were phenomenal. The rush commenced on Thursday April 9th when thousands of people came from all over the country. Excursion trains were packed, and by Thursday night nearly all the accommodation in the town was taken. The sands and promenade were crowded, the paddle steamers had a busy time, and 30,617 people strolled along the Bournemouth Pier as against 20,501 the previous year.

As far as Bournemouth was concerned the black clouds of war which were starting to appear over the Continent did not exist. The town settled down anticipating a bumper year".

That is how the Bournemouth Guardian described the beginning of the holiday season of 1914 when the events which started the "War to end all wars" were to happen.

Bournemouth in 1914 was just over 100 years old. In 1910 the Centenary fetes had marked the official celebrations of 100 years since the Founder of Bournemouth, Lewis Tregonwell, came to the area and purchased land on which he built a summer residence, which still remains as part of the Royal Exeter Hotel.

Since that early beginning the town had expanded from 905 people in 1841 to 78,674 in 1911, and was continuing to grow. It had changed from a small health resort to the premier holiday resort in England. The coming of the railway in 1870 had been a major factor in the rapid development of Bournemouth. Excursion trains now brought to the seaside thousands of trippers. An advertisement for the London and South West railway gave notice that on Thursday 9th April 1914 there would be a special service of express trains running from Waterloo to Bournemouth every half hour between 1.20 p.m. and 7.50 p.m. for the Easter holiday. There were also trains from other parts such as the Midlands, especially Birmingham. Large numbers or "excursionists" came from the West, Portsmouth, Winchester and Southampton, as well as from London.

However August Bank Holiday was by no means the bright and happy day that it usually was for the shadow of war in Europe now lay over England. The crowds on the sea front were not as large as at Easter. Sea trips to the Isle of Wight and other long

distance places were cancelled, and the longest trip was to Weymouth. On the railways arrivals were a record on the Saturday, but the Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday were extremely quiet. Excursion trains were cancelled and only the hurried departure of the local Naval Reservists caused any attention. The fleet had been ordered on 28th July to its war stations and Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, had decreed full mobilisation of the Naval Reserve on the night of 1st/2nd August.

War was declared on Tuesday August 4th and many visitors returned home sooner than planned, whilst others who had intended to come cancelled their bookings for hotels and boarding houses. The local Reservists and Territorials were called out to guard the railways station and the cliffs, sentries being posted between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. The closing of the banks for three extra days after the Bank Holiday by an Order in Council caused a considerable shortage of money in the town, but was necessary for the Treasury to push through the printing of the new bank notes. When the banks re-opened the gold sovereigns were called in and the first £1 and ten shillings notes were issued to the public. There was some panic buying of food on the Wednesday. Many grocery shops had to shut their doors at some time during the day because of the over-whelming rush. The price of nearly all foodstuffs rose considerably. Sugar doubled in price, while cereals, bacon, butter, cheese, tinned and fresh meat all went up. Bread, too, rose from 3d to 3½d. then to 4d for a 2lb loaf in the space of three days.

After the initial shock Bournemouth attempted to resume its interrupted season. The Town Clerk, Herbert Ashling, issued a letter to newspapers and to all hotels in the town pointing out that conditions were as normal, and that visitors should not heed the rumours which said that the town was in a state of siege, that the street lights were extinguished at an early hour, and that the pier, beach and all amusements were closed. Another rumour, which was given a great deal of credence, was that the beach minstrels had been given notice to move as the beach was to have anti-invasion barbed wire entanglements on it. This produced a quiet joke "Why would the Germans want to invade Bournemouth?" The answer being "Because they are a musical nation and would like to hear Dan Godfrey!"

This letter had little effect at first but slowly the visitors came back and although the sea front was not as full as usual during late August and September the beach entertainers were as cheery as ever, and the curtailed steamboat trips were well patronised. On the Pier and in the gardens the bands still played to a large number of people. The National Anthems of England and France were always received with cheers and sung with gusto.

On August 14th Bournemouth, amongst other coastal areas, was declared a prohibited area by regulations made under the Defence of the Realm Act 1914, the Act which in effect put Britain under martial law. This meant that no person of German nationality was allowed to remain without a special permit from the Police. All aliens were required to register at the Law Courts and were then asked to leave the area. It was estimated that there were between 1,200 and 1,300 aliens in Bournemouth at the outbreak of war, many employed as hotel workers. These expulsion orders naturally were very hard on people who had lived in Bournemouth for many years, and who had become highly esteemed residents.

The Municipal Orchestra and the Military Band suffered the loss of several of their members in this way. One member of the Orchestra was Mr. Wustenhagen who left even though he had a permit. He came to England in 1891 and was one of the original members, joining in 1893. His wife was English and his son, who had never been out of England, could not speak German. The Town Council debated his presence with the Orchestra, some members resenting fact that the Council was employing a German. Mr. Wustenhagen, however, even though he applied for naturalisation, resigned his post and left Bournemouth.

The Orchestra too, came under criticism because Mr. (later Sir) Dan Godfrey did not remove the music of the German composer Wagner from his programmes. He received a postcard which read "What the devil do you mean by playing German music, you beastly pro-Germans? A disgusted Englishwoman". This was rather unfair because during the 1914/15 season the Orchestra played more British works than any other.

On Wednesday August 5th in accordance with the proclamation mobilising the Territorial Forces the members of the local units reported to their Headquarters. Large crowds assembled outside the 7th Battalion Hampshire Regiment's Drill Hall in Holdenhurst Road, and the 6th Hants Royal Field Artillery Drill Hall in Lansdowne Road to cheer the men as they reported for duty.

The local recruiting of volunteers for both the Regulars and the Territorials proceeded steadily. By August 26th about 550 had Joined the Regular Forces and 200 the Territorials. A new body, the Athletes' Volunteer force (Bournemouth) Unit also attracted many recruits. This recently formed force was confined to men who were compelled to stay at home, yet wished to be trained to help defend their country should the occasion arise. These men, in their spare time, learnt the rudiments of rifle shooting and drill, using the Drill Halls at Bournemouth, Boscombe and Christchurch.

September 3rd saw about 100 members of the Bournemouth Battalion of the National Reserve leave the Central Station for Aldershot. The National Reserve was a voluntary register of Officers and other ranks who had served in any British or Imperial naval or military force, had retired and were available for call-up. A huge crowd gave them a hearty send off, each man receiving a small present from an invalid lady before leaving.

Bournemouth was amongst the seaside resorts asked by the War Office if they could provide accommodation for wounded and sick soldiers. The Hospital Committee of the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital at Boscombe offered to provide beds, and at a mass meeting, chaired by the Mayor, Alderman McCalmont Hill, it was proposed to turn Crag Head, a large house on the East Cliff into an emergency hospital.

By the middle of September the temporary wards at Boscombe Hospital for the wounded were ready and so was Crag Head (Details of both these hospitals will be found in Appendix One). At the same time the news was broken that a large force was to be billeted in Bournemouth for the winter. Accommodation was needed for 10,000 to 12,000 Territorials drawn from all parts of England and comprising both infantry and mounted men. Billeting officers were busy arranging accommodation from Branksome to Moordown, and in Winton, Malmesbury Park, Boscombe and Pokesdown. The centre of the town was to be left out of the areas used for billeting. It was to be a fresh experience for Bournemouth to resemble a garrison town .

However at the beginning of October only the Reserve Battalion of the 7th Hampshire Regiment and the 6th Hants Battery Royal Field Artillery under the command of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu arrived. The 500 men were all housed either around the Holdenhurst Road or between the West Station and the Triangle. This caused a great deal of disappointment to the people in other parts of the town who had hoped to have soldiers billeted on them. With the rises in food prices and the growing unemployment, the money received for billeting would have helped many families. Rumours were circulated that the cancellation of these arrangements was because of representations to the War Office by certain people that the troops would not be welcome. One of the names mentioned in this connection was that of Sir Merton Russell Cotes, an ex-Mayor and the owner of the Royal Bath Hotel. He wrote a letter, published in the local papers, denying this allegation and pointing out what he was doing to help raise funds for the troops.

But even with this small number, khaki uniforms would now be seen strolling along the street or drilling in the parks , permission having been

granted by the Town Council for recruits and the Reserves to use the parks for training. Bournemouth was now also receiving Belgian refugees from Antwerp and surrounding districts. The Belgian Refugee Committee set up to help these visitors had been kept very busy. A proposal that Tachbrook, the Corporation's property next door to the Belle Vue Hotel, should be used to house the refugees was made. Many of them however, were found accommodation with families. Then, in early November, Bournemouth became a prohibited area for Belgian refugees. This order did not affect those already in the town, but stopped any more from coming.

The first contingent of wounded British soldiers arrived at Boscombe Hospital from the front on Friday 9th October. The Boscombe Railway Station was crowded with well-wishers after the news had spread rapidly through the town. The soldiers arrived by ambulance train and were met by the local St. John Ambulance Brigade. Some had to be carried on stretchers across the Ashley Road, but others were able to walk. There were 100 men in all, but only a few were from local Regiments. Wednesday 14th October saw 101 wounded arrive at the Central Station and these were taken to Crag Head. Owing to the short notice of their arrival there was no transport available, so the wounded were taken by taxi, horse cabs and private cars.

The next batch of wounded was 50 Belgians from Netley Military Hospital and these were found beds and a number of nursing homes (A list of these can be found in Appendix One).

The first death of a wounded soldier occurred at Boscombe Military Hospital on October 21st. Private William F. Stevens of C Company, 1st Wiltshire Regiment, aged 25, died of wounds sustained in the Battle of Mons. He had been badly hit by shrapnel in the hip, and had lain helpless on the battlefield for 15 hours. His remains were taken by guncarriage, draped with the Union Flag, through Kings Park to the East Cemetery where he was buried with full military honours in the area set aside for the War dead.

At the beginning of November another 76 wounded arrived at Boscombe. Some of them had had a very quick journey having been wounded in France on Friday and being in Boscombe Hospital by Monday lunch time.

News arrived of a local Nurse who had been hurt whilst nursing the injured in France. Miss Kathleen Nunn, daughter of Dr. P.W.G. Nunn, late Medical Officer for Bournemouth, had attended an injured German, then proceeded to dress the wounds of a Belgian. While she was doing this the German threw acid over her. She

sustained bad burns to her hands and wrists. This report make anti-German feeling run even higher, especially after reports of German atrocities in Belgium.

The Belgians buried their first soldier in the Boscombe War Cemetery on 11th November. Sub-Lieutenant Lucian Dome, 2nd Regiment of Carbiniers, died in the Stagsdean Nursing Home, aged 29, on 6th November from wounds sustained in October's fighting at Keyem, Belgium. He was buried with full military honours provided by the 7th Hants Battalion.

A large number of soldiers requiring billets arrived in November. Some 16,000 were housed in the Springbourne, Winton, Moordown, Southbourne and Boscombe areas. Camps were also set up between Iford and Tuckton. Generally 2 or 3 men were allocated to a house; the only grounds for refusing were if there were no male in residence. The troops were met at the Stations and were marched to their billets, each Company being led by a Boy Scout so that they would not miss their way. No troops were billeted in the centre of the town and this provoked a few complaints from Boarding House owners who would have liked soldiers quartered on them. These new arrivals used King's Park for their daily drills and training, plus the large open spaces not yet built on off Charminster Road and near Strouden Park. Queen's Park Golf Course was also used. 9 holes were retained for play, the remainder used for drilling. The unused greens were protected by fences.

More wounded Belgians were reaching the town and a large house in Western Avenue, Branksome Park, called Grata Quies, was offered as a hospital for them (Details in Appendix One).

The wounded from France were now coming in a steady stream. The Mont Dore Hotel was taken over by the Government in November and became a hospital for Indian troops (For details see Appendix One). The Bournemouth Graphic, 27th November 1914, reports that "the visitors, however, fully appreciated the circumstances, and rendered all possible assistance in the Matter" when they were asked to move to other hotels.

One hundred Indian wounded arrived together with men from the RAMC and from the Madras Infantry Regiment to look after them. Many were suffering from shrapnel and bayonet wounds.

Local recruiting had slowed down and in November it was estimated that between one and two thousand men were eligible and free to join the ranks of Lord Kitchener's Army, as it was commonly but inaccurately called. In order to revive interest Lord Montague inaugurated a local "Pals" Company of the 7th Hampshire Reserve.

The 7th Battalion Hampshire Regiment was recruited from Bournemouth, Christchurch, the Avon Valley up to Breamore, and the New Forest area as far East as Lymington and Sway. It also included men from Canford, Rockbourne and Godshill. Whether this helped the recruiting campaign it is difficult to say, but the need for more men was emphasised by the Rev. E.J. Kennedy, Chaplain to the 7th Army Division. The Rev. Mr. Kennedy, Vicar of St. John's Church, Boscombe, who had volunteered for active service as a Chaplain to the Forces, gave a lecture on his experiences at the front, and told how the 20,000 men he had embarked with from Lyndhurst had dwindled to about 5,000. He recalled how his horse was shot under him, and he had been trapped by its body. He had been sent home on convalescent leave and was now taking the opportunity of informing the people at home of the possibility of a German invasion of England.

Recruiting posters and advertisements were appearing in the local papers to try and encourage men to sign on. The Parliamentary Recruiting Committee were the instigators of the following campaign. All householders in Bournemouth received a form which they were asked to fill in with the name and age of all males between 19 and 38 living at that address, who were willing to enlist for the duration of the war. This "Householders form" also asked for names of anybody serving in the Forces. It was hoped that this would give a much needed boost to recruiting for both the Regulars and the Territorials.

In November news arrived of the safe landing of the 7th Hampshire Regiment and the 6th Hants Battery (RFA) in India. They had departed on 16th October and were accorded the distinction of being the first Territorials ever to be sent to India to relieve a Regular Battalion.

At home one of the pressing problems was recreational facilities for the troops. Not only were there 16,000 in Bournemouth but there were also men billeted in Poole, Christchurch, and in surrounding districts, who needed somewhere to go in their spare time. Church halls were utilised and donations of cards, chess sets, dominoes, games, books, magazines and newspapers were requested. Concerts were given by both professional and amateur artistes to the troops and to the wounded in the hospitals.

A new YMCA hut was built in record time in Winton and also one at Pokesdown near the Railway Station.

The Regiments billeted in Bournemouth at this time were the East and North Lancashire Regiment, the Shropshire Regiment and the King's Liverpool Regiment. The Bournemouth Graphic,

November 13th remarked "Their marching and daily evolutions in the parks are attracting much interested attention. We hope that the town's people will do all in their power to make their stay enjoyable and their presence will stimulate recruiting".

The management of the Boscombe, Bournemouth and District Laundry, Avon Road, realising that the majority of the troops billeted locally would have little or no facilities for hot baths provided them free at their premises every Sunday. Over 400 soldiers took advantage of the offer every week.

While all this was going on the usual life of the town was trying to proceed normally. In November the Borough Council elections were held. These were necessary because the Boundary Extension brought Queen's Park, Lower Charminster and Strouden into the Borough. This meant the redistribution of electoral wards. All but one, Boscombe West, were contested. This was the first local municipal election in which ladies contested seats; however, neither Mrs. F. L. Laney nor Mrs. A. Tiller was successful. The war and bad weather did not help the poll, and the votes cast were extremely low.

Bournemouth's first honorary freeman, Field Marshall Earl Roberts, died whilst on a brief visit to France to see the Indian troops. He had opened the Drill Hall in Lansdowne Road when he came in 1902 to receive the freedom of the town after the Boer War.

Like many shops and businesses, the Corporation was finding a shortage of personnel. The Public Libraries had their opening hours cut because 50% of the staff had joined up, and the Tramways were short of drivers.

The Bournemouth Traders Federation issued an appeal to their customers, asking them to take their parcels, whenever possible, with them as they were having difficulty in finding anybody to make deliveries.

During August the Bournemouth General Committee representing the main organisations of the town met to appoint an Executive Committee to deal with the relief funds donated by the people of Bournemouth. One of the first actions of this new Committee under the Chairmanship of the Mayor, which became known as the Mayor of Bournemouth's War Relief Committee was to allocate £750 to help pay for the extensions to the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital, for use by the wounded.

In the meantime the women of Bournemouth had not been idle. The Mayoress of Bournemouth's War Working Party, which met at St. Peter's Hall,

had in the two months from August sent clothing and comforts to the forces and to the wounded. They had provided 1,579 shirts and 1,296 pairs of socks together with many other items.

The Women's Emergency Corps held a meeting at the Theatre Royal, Albert Road to explain their work. The Corps was started at the outbreak of war and was a body of "capable" women who were determined to help the war effort. In Bournemouth they were helping with the Belgian refugees by acting as interpreters. They also provided employment for women who were unemployed owing to the war (for further details see Appendix Two).

During the weeks prior to the first war Christmas the local shops made their preparations. Beale's Fancy Fair had Father Christmas as usual and the shops displayed a large variety of British and Allied toys. War games were especially popular. Many shops stocked comforts for the troops, cap comforters, gloves, scarves and other items of warm clothing. The windows of the stores were gaily dressed and lit. It did not seem much different to the previous year, except that the visitors were not expected to come. But that was not the case. The slump that was predicted for the stores and boarding houses did not come. People streamed into the town and in spite of the war Bournemouth had a most successful festive season. The pantomime at the Theatre Royal, "Mother Hubbard" attracted full houses at all performances, as did the Hippodrome and the cinemas.

At the Military Hospitals the wounded were given Christmas Fare and every man received a present. The soldiers billeted in the town were entertained in various halls. 900 soldiers of the Lancashire Regiment sat down to a traditional Christmas dinner at the Stourfield School. A large Army camp had been erected on the land where the Junior and Secondary Schools now stand. The camp spread right down to the present playing fields, and along Cranleigh Road. 100 men of the Royal Engineers and the Cyclists Corps were given a supper and entertainment in the schoolroom of the Westbourne Wesleyan Church on Christmas evening, and when they left each man was presented with a scarf or some other comfort.

However behind the gaiety were the ever present thoughts of the casualty lists which were appearing in the newspapers. The obituary columns recorded those who had been killed in action at Mons, or on the Marne, or at Ypres. The list of those wounded included members of the nobility of the district. Lord Leven the owner of Talbot Woods, had been wounded in the leg whilst serving with the Scots Greys. Captain Llewellyn Meyrick, son and heir of Sir George Meyrick, owner of the East Cliff, was also among the wounded.

Despite this there was a feeling of confidence and hope in an early ending to the war, as nobody foresaw a long struggle.

Apart from the War, 1914 had been a good year for Bournemouth, notable events being the opening of the Law Courts in January, the extension of the Undercliff Drive from the East Cliff Lift to Boscombe, opened by the Earl and Countess of Malmesbury, and the Boundary Extensions. The long saga of the Pavilion had drawn nearer its end by the Corporation securing the powers to construct a Pavilion on the site of the Belle Vue Hotel, but owing to the hostilities nothing could be done.

1915

The first Christmas of the war was over. The Christmas truce in which the fighting troops of England and Germany had met in No Mans Land between the trenches was now just a bizarre memory. The main thing on everybodys mind was the coal shortage. There were two reasons for this. Firstly the mines and railways were short of staff and, secondly, the Army's needs came before those of the civilians. Therefore the large number of military trains was given priority over the ordinary freight trains. This was hardly any comfort, for the weather had been wet and colder than usual.

The news of the safe arrival of the 7th Hants Territorial Reserve (in which many Bournemouth men were serving) in India was received with relief. There had been a persistent rumour that the transport ship carrying the troops had foundered in bad weather. The Reserve had left Bournemouth together with the Reserve Battery of the the 6th RFA, on December 12th 1914, travelling to Southampton where they embarked for India.

As far as possible all the usual cultural events were happening. The Messiah was sung by the Municipal Choir at the Winter Gardens, a Dickens recital was given by the son of the famous novelist, a grand patriotic concert by the Male Voice Choir of the 10th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers was highly commended, and the concerts by the Municipal Orchestra were always full.

The Theatre Royal, after its popular pantomime "Mother Hubbard", presented the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. Cinemas, whist drives, lectures and many other social events flourished. The people of Bournemouth were determined not to let the war completely rule their lives. At the Westover Palace there was a boom in roller-skating, the dainty cinema teas served from 3pm to 6pm were crowded, with many of the patrons in uniform, the vocalist and orchestra receiving "a warm reception".

The Times, 8th January 1915, contained a short article on the town under the heading "England in time of war - the South Coast". The article stated "not even London is so set in her ways as a winter resort on the South Coast of England. The inhabitants are nearly all elderly and few robust. Habit is the prop of their lives and their devotion to habit affects all about them. At first sight Bournemouth of this winter is precisely the same as the Bournemouth of last winter. The 'Neue Freie Press' (a German newspaper)

is wrong in stating that Bournemouth is absolutely deserted and even the permanent residents have fled panic stricken. Behind and around the residential, invalidish part of the straggling town there is activity enough with some thousands of the new Army billeted, and trade enough with their 15 shillings (75p) per head a week in circulation. But they make strangely little show, these troops. One must almost look for them; as one must look for the wounded Indians in the Mont Dore Hotel. The whole impression is that people are going on just the same".

A large number of residents resented the image this painted of Bournemouth, that it was chiefly the home of invalids. Had not the Town Council suggested that the name "Invalids Walk" be changed to "Pine Walk" to dispel this impression; however, this did not become its official name until 1917.

January also saw more more soldiers arriving, some to be billeted, some for the hospitals. Amongst the latter were Gurkhas and Sikhs, many suffering from frostbite.

In "50 years of Southbourne Parish 1876 -1926" the Rev. E.G. Forse states "By January Southbourne was utterly disconcerted by the billeting of a thousand soldiers on the parish; they were new recruits for the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment in tempoaray blue uniforms; and under the circumstances they behaved remarkably well. It is pathetic to remember how grateful they were for any little kindness. I believe every single one of them was killed". He went on to say "In October we had our Church windows covered with thick green distemper, because of the Lighting Rules under the Defence of the Realm Act. It made the Church (St. Katherine's Church) very dark.

The Rev. H. Bloomfield, in the history of St. John the Baptist, Moordown, writes "The winter, 1914-15, the first winter of the war, will be remembered for its torrents of rain which led the Military Authorities to billet Battalions of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and South Wales borderer in our parish. Right pleased were the men after their terrible experiences on Salisbury Plain to find a sound roof over their heads and a comfortable bed beneath it. The first R.W.F. Battalion was terribly cut up in the War, but a number of the scanty list of survivors formed links with our Parish which eventually led to a number, we believe, of happy marriages with Moordown girls".

At the end of January King's Park was the parade ground for the inspection by the local Officer Commanding of the troops stationed in the town. The soldiers extended practically the whole of one side of the park and the march past took over half an hour to pass the saluting base.

Recruiting had picked up again and an appeal for cyclists to enlist with the 9th (Cyclist) Battalion Hampshire Regiment met with great success. Bournemouth's famous authoress "Rita" (Mrs. Desmond Humphreys) gave a boost to the recruiting fervour by writing the story for a film entitled "1914". The loyal critic called the film "One of the finest forms of rallying recruiting". The film was shown at the Electric Theatre, Commercial Road, to large audiences.

More National Reservists left in February and were given a rousing send off with a band and a crowd of well wishers; the Commanding Officer reminding them that they belonged to a very important town and they were expected to do it credit.

On 18th January 1915 the General Officer Commanding Southern Command issued a proclamation requiring that all lights which might be visible from the sea along the coast from Littlehampton to Portland Bill were to be completely shaded or extinguished during the hours of darkness. This order was followed by another in April which required all public lights to be switched off, except those which were indispensable for public safety and even those had to be shaded so that they were invisible from above. Cyclists as well as motorists were to carry on their machines a light at the front and a red light at the rear. The Undercliff Drive and the cliffs now had no lights, even the lights on the top of the trams were shaded so that the Zeppelins would not be able to bomb the town. No Zeppelin ever came near Bournemouth but there were several scares. There were, in fact, two occasions in 1916 when according to the Fire Brigade's annual report the Brigade was required to "stand by" because "Zeppelins have been abroad". Sir Dan Godfrey recalled in his autobiography "Memories and Music" that at one evening concert he was told by the police that they had just received information from Portsmouth that a Zeppelin was heading towards Swanage. It was feared that it would "visit" Bournemouth and if this were so the audience would have to be evacuated from the Winter Gardens. This was a false alarm. Owing to an error Swanwick, Hampshire, had been written as Swanage.

A rumour which circulated in the Midlands and the North at this time was that Bournemouth had been badly damaged by bombs. Many anxious enquiries were received by the Town Clerk about the safety of people on holiday. Bournemouth an fact was well away from the raids and bombardment. Many people who would have holidayed abroad and many who regularly went to the East Coast came to the town. Scarborough's and the French Riviera's loss

was Bournemouth's gain.

The first person to be summoned for showing a light seawards and not complying with the regulations was the Manager of the Royal Bath Hotel, who was fined £5.

February saw the formation of a "Woman's Patrol". These were ladies who voluntarily took upon themselves "the duty of safe-guarding the welfare of girls from the dangers and temptations of a town which had a large number of troops". The National Union of Women Workers was the instigator of this idea and the local patrols consisted of 45 ladies. These Patrollers wore armlets marked NUWW and carried cards of authorisation. They walked in couples patrolling for two periods a day, each period not exceeding two hours, on beats arranged by the Police. How efficient they were is really not known, but they helped start girls' clubs to keep them off the streets. These Empire Clubs were at Winton, Pokesdown, Malmesbury Park. The activities held in them included physical training, drill, singing classes and dressmaking.

Recruiting was slowing down, so there was a special Recruiting Week held from 22nd to 27th March. Open air meetings were held in different parts of the Borough, including the Square, Moordown, Winton and Fishermen's Walk. The rate of enlistment improved, but the demand was always for more men. For some time about 15 a week were enlisting, but during the Recruiting Week it rose to over 30. The same was found for the Territorials, the 7th Hants Battalion having a dozen recruits instead of the usual 5 or 6.

The Battle of Neuve Chapelle brought more wounded to the town, 160 Indians arriving direct from the Front. It was in this action that Corporal Cecil Noble, 2nd Battalion The Rifle Brigade, became the first Bournemouthian to win the VC. He was badly wounded and did not live to receive his medal. (For full details of the award see Appendix Three).

Easter was exceptional; even though no excursion trains were run the visitors came, not the day trippers, but those who stayed for the whole weekend. The hotels and boarding houses were full enough and although the weather was dull and rainy the holiday weekend was a success. As it was the beginning of the season both visitors and residents were wondering what the attractions would be like. But apart from the absence of the paddle steamers and those events in the evenings which were curtailed by the lighting restrictions all normal entertainments were to be found. Even those on the pier and beach did not close too early because of the lighter evenings. The most noticeable

thing was the mood. The visitors were more sedate than usual. The town was quieter, everybody taking their pleasures without singing and dancing and noisy goings on. They paraded on the pier, along the seafront and in the gardens in a peaceful manner. It had been just before Easter when the railway companies had taken the drastic step of dispensing with all excursion and cheap tickets on the grounds that it was necessary to keep the lines as free as possible for military and naval traffic. This meant to Bournemouth the loss of about 20,000 day trippers who usually came at Bank Holidays. They would have arrived at the Station, walked down to the seafront, congregated around the Pier, spent their money in the shops and then tired but happy would have walked back to the train in the evening. The small shopkeepers were the ones who really noticed their absence.

On Wednesday 21st April 1915 there was a ceremonial review of the 74th Infantry Brigade held at Hengistbury Head between Double Dykes and Warren Hill. Several thousand people, including the Mayor, saw Major-General Ventriss inspect the troops. Those taking part were the 8th Loyal North Lincs, the 9th Loyal North Lincs, the 11th Lancashire Fusiliers and the 13th Battalion Cheshire Regiment, all of whom were billeted in Boscombe or Southbourne.

By the end of April most of the troops billeted locally had departed for various training grounds before being posted to France. Several "Farewell" concerts and socials were held before the soldiers left. The majority of the remainder had left by the middle of June, with the exception of the Reserve Battalion of the 6th Hants RFA. They still had their Headquarters at the Drill Hall near the Lansdowne and were still using fields "somewhere in Talbot Woods" as a riding school. They eventually left to continue their training under canvas in Somerset.

As well as wounded British soldiers the town had been sent many injured Belgians. They were originally sent either to nursing homes or to the Grata Quies hospital, Branksome Park, but the need for this accommodation declined after February, so in November Grata Quies was transferred to the British Military Authorities as a hospital (For details see Appendix One). Between November 1914 and November 1915 over 594 sick and wounded men from the Belgian Army had received treatment in the hospitals and nursing homes in the Bournemouth area.

During May local building workers staged a strike for more pay. The rising cost of food and all the necessities of life together with their wages having remained the same gave rise to a fortnight stoppage. It ended with an agreement to go to arbitration. The award was that all men in the building trade

should receive $\frac{1}{2}$ d per hour more, with the exception of labourers who received $\frac{3}{4}$ d per hour.

On 24th June the award of the VC to Lieutenant George Roupell, 1st Battalion East Surrey Regiment, the second son of Colonel and Mrs. Fyler-Roupell of Westbourne was announced. Lieutenant Roupell was not a native of Bournemouth, however, being born in Tipperary, but his parents had lived in Bournemouth for many years. (For details of the award see Appendix Three).

Another local VC was announced in September, that awarded to second Lieutenant Sidney Woodroffe, The Rifle Brigade. He came from Branksome Park and was killed during the counter-attack for which he was awarded the highest honour for bravery. (For details see Appendix Three).

A row over the Concert Party on the beach and its employment of young men eligible for the forces came before the Town Council's July meeting. Several protesters had complained that young men were playing the parts of the Pierrots when others were fighting in France. The Company said that they had tried to use older men but this had not been successful. They had released the principal comedian to join up and the others were at liberty to do likewise. They also pointed out that the Concert Party had entertained a large number of wounded soldiers free of charge and it was a great morale booster. The Corporation said that they had no jurisdiction over the Concert Party Company and could not be held responsible. This protest came just after it had been announced that it was estimated that $\frac{1}{4}$ of the male population of the town between 19 and 40 had volunteered for the forces.

By the middle of July the summer season had started, not as busy as usual because of the cut-back in excursions and cheap tickets on the trains. On the beach the bathing tents stretched from Southbourne to Alum Chine and the sea bathers were out in force. On the Promenade the wounded sat in the sun, men with arms, heads or legs bandaged, some walking with the aid of sticks or crutches, some wheeled in invalid chairs, some enjoying the much maligned Pierrot Show or Punch and Judy. At Boscombe the newly-built cloisters and cliff paths, opened by the Mayoress at the end of May, proved very popular amongst both residents and holidaymakers. But the seafront also showed the effects of the cutting back of the excursions. There were very few trippers and parties. The crowds that used to meander along the promenade, buying souvenirs and showing high spirits, were no more. Those who did come had a less crowded beach and could see the Punch and Judy better. The ice cream sellers did not do such a roaring trade and the beach donkeys had a much easier year.

One of the attractions which was no longer available was the sea trip. No paddle steamers plied from the piers, and the rowing boats which could be hired were not permitted to go past the end of the pier. Now a different trip was being offered, a drive inland to see the beauty spots around Bournemouth. A fleet of motor charabancs were kept busy taking trippers into the New Forest and into Dorset.

Because of the lighting restrictions the evening concerts on the Boscombe Pier were not able to be held as the Autumn evenings closed in, so a stage was erected in Boscombe Chine Gardens for the Bands and Concert Parties. The Rev. E. J. Kennedy, Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe, protested that in wartime such "tomfoolery" as Pierrot entertainments should be discontinued. The local hotel and boarding house owners did not take kindly to this criticism arguing that unless attractions were provided the visitors would not come to Boscombe. In fact the Boscombe Chine concerts proved very popular and the outlay on the stage well worth while.

As well as the demand for men to join the forces there was also the demand for money. Flagdays were a regular occurrence; not only for the usual funds such as the Red Cross, Poland, France and the Hospitals, but also for Wounded and Sick Army Horses and Sandbags. "Sandbags for Soldiers" was the cry one August Saturday when the Women's Emergency Corps organised a street collection to provide sandbags for use in the trenches. There was a parade of decorated motor vehicles through the town, one car being covered with sandbags; the amount realised being £502. That sum was the lowest given in 7 flagdays. The Red Cross made £757, the Belgian Hospitals £745, Poland Day £755, Russian Day £761, French Day £573, and Hospital Day £648. There were also various other funds such as the Bournemouth Belgian Fund, the Mayor's Local War Fund and the Prince of Wales Fund - all asking for donations.

The Bournemouth Belgian Fund had originally been two funds, one for Belgian Refugees, and the other for the Relief of Victims of the War Still in Belgium. It was decided to amalgamate the two, with the Mayor as President and J. E. Beale as Chairman to streamline the administration. The new fund appealed for donations as the expenses were mounting because refugees now living in Bournemouth had exhausted their money and were approaching the fund for help. Not only was money required but also furniture to complete the furnishing of the houses which had been lent for the refugees. As well as Tachbrook, Alberta House in King's Park, Oakley, Cotlands Road, Simcoe, Howard Road, and 34, Irving Road were used for the Belgians. The Irving Road house was also used by Belgian soldiers on leave and because of this was

almost self-supporting. The Belgian Fund Committee also tried to find employment for those refugees who needed it. Positions such as governesses and nursery nurses Were sought.

As the casualties mounted the Government moved towards conscription. Their first priority was to find out about the Nation's manpower. So on August 15th a Census was carried out. This produced a National Register of everybody between 15 and 65. Each person had to fill up and sign a form - there were different forms for men and women. After people had been registered they were given a registration form which included their address. If they moved they had to return the card with their new address on it, so that an accurate register could be kept. About 70,000 forms were delivered and collected. Of these approximately 15,000 were for visitors and these forms were sent to their home towns. When the work of sorting the forms had been done, those for males of military age were sent to the Officer Commanding 37th Recruiting Area, Winchester. These numbered 7,164, or about 50% of the registrable male population.

This was followed by the "Derby Scheme" which was put into operation by Lord Derby, Director of Recruitment. That was the last chance for voluntary recruitment. All men between 18 and 41 were asked to say that they would join the Army when called. Those who volunteered were issued with a khaki amulet bearing a red crown. These recruits were divided into classes according to age and circumstances, the classes being called up when they were needed for service. Despite a large campaign the scheme did not succeed, and conscription then became inevitable.

Bournemouth was now helping to provide munitions. The West of England Munitions Committee, of which Bournemouth was a sub-branch of the Southampton Division, met in July 1915 to place contracts with local engineering firms for the manufacture of 18 pounder high explosive shells. The following firms were awarded contracts:-

Bournemouth Motor Syndicate - Hunt & Company -
Bournemouth Gas & Water Co. - Motor Mags -
Edwards & Company - Bournemouth Tramways Depot -
Bournemouth & Poole Electricity Supply Company

The output of some of these firms by the end of the war was:-

Bournemouth Motor Syndicate, over 250,000 shells - (the greatest number of shells made by any one firm in the West of England).

Hunt & Co., 103,621 shells

Bournemouth Gas & Water company 21,630 shells.

Also other firms were making special munitions, gun mountings and

aircraft parts. Several woodworking firms were helping by constructing wooden spare and replacement parts for the Royal Flying Corps.

Many of the firms organised a three-shift routine, so that the production line was running 24 hours a day. Bournemouth Manufacturing Co. in Ashley Road employed 150 women and girls who succeeded in repairing and remodeling over 1 million 4.5 howitzer cartridge cases in 18 months. These were rejects from other firms, and would have been scrapped.

The following advertisement was placed in the local papers:-

“Gentlemen having lathes and desirous of turning discs for shells can obtain particulars from the Honorary Organising Secretary, E. Crompton Crump, The Hirst, Branksome Park” .

From these volunteers the Amateur Ordnance Volunteers was founded. The members worked at home and at their own expense. Several thousand discs, shrapnel sockets and other munition parts were made locally by the members of the AOV.

The Munitions Committee arranged, at the Municipal College, for simple lathe operations to be given to the many professional and retired men over military age who wished to help. The course consisted of 12 lessons of 3 hours each and cost 10/- (50p). Nobody thought that 36 hours training would make a skilled turner who could then manufacture shell cases. The idea was to teach the unskilled jobs, thus freeing the skilled worker to do the more important work. No employment was guaranteed, but it was considered that the demand for such workers would grow. These classes were initially for men but many women asked if they could be trained. Those who had their own lathes and had mastered the necessary basic skills generally joined the AOV and turned out the discs or plugs for the bases of shells. Plans and sketches of these were available from the Munitions Office, which was in the Town Hall, then situated in Yelverton Road.

By now the jobs left vacant by men joining up were being filled by women all over the country as well as in Bournemouth; not only in the banks and offices, but also in other occupations. Some were employed to deliver parcels by bicycle, and one lady was seen delivering milk from a horse-drawn cart in the Bath Road, and in Boscombe there was a postwoman who "during the great Christmas rush performed the same work as the men in spite of the additional strain of harder labour and longer hours". Women were also employed by the Post Office as drivers for the vans clearing the pillar boxes. Even jobs on the railway were now

being carried out by women. At West Station they were employed as refreshment vendors on the platform, whilst many were carriage cleaners. Ladies were not, however, employed as conductors on the trams. Boys under military age were used; some were described as being too exuberant, rushing passengers on to the trams.

On Monday, 6th September the Bournemouth War Hospital Supply Depot was opened at Thornleigh, Bodorgan Road, the house having been lent by Mrs. Twells, widow of Canon Henry Twells, late Canon of Peterborough, hymn writer and poet, who died in Bournemouth on January 19th 1900. The Depot was associated with the St. Marylebone Central Depot Surgical Branch of Queen Mary's Needlework Guild and supplied surgical dressings, bandages and hospital requisites to local hospitals. All the work was done on a voluntary basis administered by the Mayoress's War Work Committee.

This was followed in November by another auxiliary hospital opening in Bodorgan Road, which was for soldiers taken ill whilst billeted in the town. The house had been lent to the St. John Ambulance Brigade to be used to relieve the pressure of minor illnesses on the main hospitals so that they could cope with the wounded from the front. (See details of the hospital in Appendix One).

In May Messrs. Bobby & Co., Drapers of Margate, Eastbourne and other towns, opened a new department store in the Square. This store, (now occupied by Debenhams) was described as a shop "where ladies could find practically everything that the feminine heart desires, providing an alternative to the London shops".

Later in September another enterprise also opened in the Square - Woolworths. On the other side Plummer Roddis, the department store in the Old Christchurch Road, had added a new tea room and roof garden, which proved extremely popular. Bournemouth was not letting the war stand in the way of commercial progress.

The winter evenings had now arrived and the lighting restrictions were causing difficulties. Trees in the roadway and curb-stones were painted white to help the pedestrians who ventured out after dark. It was not an uncommon sight to see people making their way with various forms of lighting, ranging from matches to the feeble flickering light of a lantern with a candle in it.

Shop windows were not now lit up at night. This caused one shopkeeper to put a notice in his window prior to Christmas urging people to "inspect the window in daylight". These

severe regulations caused great annoyance as they applied only to the County of Hampshire, so that whilst Bournemouth people groped their way at night Poole folk walked in a comparative blaze of light. However later on in 1916 the same regulations were applied across the boundary into Dorset.

The second Christmas of the War was brisk. There were plenty of visitors, Bournemouth being out of the firing line for Zeppelins and the German Navy being a great help. The shops reported that trade was good, especially on useful presents for the troops. Places of entertainment were crowded and the wounded in the hospitals were not forgotten. The principal players at the Pantomime were some of the many people who entertained at Boscombe, Crag Head and Stourwood Hospitals.

On Christmas morning 94 wounded men arrived direct from France reaching Boscombe Hospital in time for the traditional Christmas dinner. During the year 38 soldiers had died in the hospitals in Bournemouth. 20 of these were due to wounds received in action, 7 of pneumonia and 11 from other causes.

Two unusual schemes to help the forces came into operation during the year. The first was the National Egg Collection for the Wounded. The object of the operation was to collect and deliver new laid eggs free of cost to wounded servicemen. A centre was established in Westbourne for the collection of the eggs, or money to purchase them.

The second was that run by the Vegetable Products Committee, which had a depot in the Triangle, open every Thursday, to receive gifts of vegetables, or money to provide them, for the men on the minesweepers and warships in the North Sea. About 4 to 5 cwt. were sent carriage-free by rail to Lowestoft every week.

1915 did not go down as a memorable year in Bournemouth's history. No major scheme was put into action. Only the improvement at Boscombe had been made on the seafront, except for any necessary repair work. On the War side a tenth of the population of the Borough had joined some branch of the Forces or a war organisation, and the War Funds had received £31,000 since August 1914 of which more than £5,000 had been raised by street collections.

1916

Bournemouth was again a garrison town. Between 2,000 and 3,000 soldiers had arrived in January and had been billeted in Southbourne, Pokesdown, Malmesbury Park and Westbourne. The Borough Engineer reported that he had given consent to the Army to use for training purposes the following land:-

For drill purposes:- Redhill Common, Winton Recreation Ground, North Cemetery, Queen's Park Extension and land other than golf course, Meyrick Park Football Ground and King's Park - a total of 220 acres.

For trenching:- Facilities were given on Redhill Common, common land near North Cemetery, Queen's Park Extension and King's Park.

For firing:- Permission was granted for the use of a gravel pit in Charminster, and the Corporation's Range for 4 days per week.

For stabling:- The stables at Rookery Farm, Southbourne (30 horses) and off St. Paul's Road (5 horses).

A disagreement between the Military Authorities and the Town Council occurred in January. The Officer Commanding 2/1st Wessex Division Royal Engineers proposed to provide field latrines for the troops billeted in private houses in Southbourne and requested the Corporation to provide a cleansing service daily. The Corporation disapproved of this and refused, pointing out that all the houses used as billets had proper bathrooms. The Town Council Minutes, 11th February 1916, stated that the "order had been countermanded".

The "Derby Men" were now being called, proceeding daily to their depots and then to their units. The Local Tribunal was busy with claims for postponements to later groups. Much depended on the attitude of those on the Tribunal. They had to take due regard of the demands of the Army and also of the demands of industry and the hardship when refusing appeals in cases of financial, business or domestic difficulties. There had to be personal grounds for the appeal and not just being indispensable to an employer. The employer had to appeal and prove that case himself.

The withdrawal of the Indian Army Corps from France enabled the authorities to transfer to other uses most of the institutions provided for the Indian troops. In England the only buildings

kept were the Pavilion Hospital at Brighton, the Lady Hardinge Hospital at Brockenhurst, and the convalescent depot at Barton-on-Sea. The hotels at Barton were utilised for this depot. In July 1917 an obelisk of unpolished Devonshire granite was erected in the grounds of Barton Court Hotel to commemorate the establishment of the depot in 1914. The obelisk can be seen on the island at the junction of Marine Drive and Barton Court Avenue. Barton Court Hotel has now been converted into flats. During the 18 months the Indians were there 7,500 men passed through the depot, and only three died. After the men had recovered from their wounds or illness they were sent on to Milford-on-Sea, and then kitted out to go back to the front. Those unfit for further service were sent back to India.

The Mont Dore was changed from an Indian Hospital to a British Military one in November 1915. From January 1916 the nursing of the 500 wounded in the Mont Dore was done by a contingent of the South African Medical Corps until the middle of the year, when they were sent to France.

A new YMCA hut was opened in February on vacant land opposite the junction of Victoria Place and Holdenhurst Road. The hut was named the "Kennedy Memorial Hut" after the Rev. Kennedy, Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe, Chaplain to the Forces, who died in October 1915. He had had a great regard for the YMCA and his death was a great loss to the Association. The Kennedy Hut replaced a tent which had been blown down twice in gales. Soldiers arriving by train in the early mornings to be billeted in the town were sometimes given accommodation and refreshments there before being taken to their billets. There was also another hut at Pokesdown, for both these areas had many soldiers in them, and needed recreational facilities. The two huts erected the winter before at Winton and Pokesdown had been moved to other places when the soldiers had left in the Spring. The YMCA were now running 8 huts in the town and neighbourhood for the soldiers, either together with the local church authorities, or by themselves.

February saw the first meeting of the Bournemouth Chamber of Trade. The Mayor, addressing the inaugural meeting, pointed out that Bournemouth had but one main industry, that of entertainment of visitors, and therefore the town had to be made so attractive that visitors would continue to come, and eventually become residents. When the Chamber had done that it would be up to the Council to govern wisely and well, so that the residents would be happy and content, and Bournemouth would be the most desirable residential locality in Britain.

The beginning of the year brought several changes in the

town. The clock at the Municipal College no longer struck between dusk and dawn. The cause was a military one, the suppression of sounds which could guide enemy aircraft or airships to the town. Another was the suspension of the Municipal Band, for economic reasons, during the summer, and the curtailment of the tram service after 10 o'clock at night. During the year, the Theatre Royal commenced some of its evening performances at 7pm instead of 8pm so that patrons could catch the last tram home at 10 o'clock.

The Tachbrook Toy Factory, Bath Road, was officially opened in February. Originally started at the Grata Quies Auxiliary Hospital under the supervision of Miss H. A. Smith, a number of Belgian soldiers had made wooden toys as a source of income. When the Belgians left in November 1915 the British Wounded who were sent to Grata Quies did not continue the work. It was then decided to move the factory to Tachbrook to employ any Belgians and any discharged soldiers in need of employment. This was the start of what eventually became, after the War, the Workshops for the Disabled Soldiers and Sailors in Wimborne Road, Winton. The War Relief Committee's report in March states "The Committee understands that the demand for toys is so large that there is no fear of shortage of work." Later on in the year a sale of toys at the Westover Skating Rink realised £42. In 1917 there was a "Wounded Warriors Exhibition" in London in which handicrafts made by injured servicemen were on display and for sale. A complete set of the toys exhibited by the Tachbrook Toy Factory was purchased by an American doctor and sent to the States to be used as examples for the American wounded. Some of the toys attracted a great deal of attention and also large orders. Queen Mary and Queen Alexandra both purchased toys from the stand. The Hospital Woodworking Club established in October 1915 to construct articles for use in hospitals, both at home and in France, was also kept very busy (For details see Appendix Two).

In March the first sitting at the Law Courts of the Local Tribunal, set up under the Military Service Act 1916 to hear applications from men who, because of personal principles, wished to be exempt from military service, was held. These tribunals were different to those set up for the "Derby" men. There were 26 applications, 15 claiming to be conscientious objectors. The tribunal, consisting of local businessmen and a military representative, exempted them all from combatant service only. This was the first of many such sittings. The cases were reported in the local papers in detail so that those with "sincere principles" would only be viewed with sympathy by the local community.

What were probably the first set of Air Raid Warnings in

Bournemouth was published during March. They stated:-

"Although it is considered extremely unlikely that hostile aircraft will make raids in the vicinity, all possible precautions have been arranged. Under such arrangements warnings would be received a considerable time before actual danger threatened. The gas and electricity pressures would be reduced and street lamps extinguished. As a reduction of light might be deemed necessary on receipt of a preliminary warning such reduction would not necessarily mean the imminence of danger. Only total darkness of all public lamps and vehicle lights and a reduction of domestic and lighting pressures would indicate that".

In fact only friendly aircraft were seen over Bournemouth and they came mostly from the new aerodrome at Talbot Village. The aerodrome, which was opened in November 1915, and run by the Bournemouth Aviation Company, was stated to be "one of the finest private ones in England". It was situated within easy walking distance of the trams at Winton, "just at the top of Talbot Avenue, Winton" as the advertisement put it. It was approximately where the Dorset Institute of Higher Education has been built. Exhibitions of flying were given and spectators were encouraged to attend. Admission was 6d (2½p) and 1/- (5p) and passenger flights were from £5. The flying school there trained future pilots for the Royal Flying Corps, and for the Belgian Flying Corps. In April 1916 there were 16 pupils, some of whom were Belgians, and two instructors. There was a hanger which could take four aircraft, the school planes being 3 Caudron biplanes of 35, 45 and 60 horsepower, a fourth being in course of construction.

Edgar Brynildsen, the chief instructor and test pilot, was nearly killed when testing one of the planes. He was looping the loop over the Square when his engine stopped. He put the aircraft into a vertical dive from 2,000 feet in the hope that this would restart the engine. At 100 feet the engine did start and he was able to pull out of what might have been a fatal dive. He remembers several crashes, some fatal, such as the time that two airmen in a plane swooped low to wave to a pretty girl, the pilot lost control and the aircraft crashed. One man was killed, the other escaped, but with serious injuries.

In September, Bournemouth Aviation Co. purchased at auction Ensbury Farm, an estate of 88 acres, at a cost of £8,600 - a quite exceptional figure for that time. The flying school moved there in the early part of 1917.

The last advertisement for

flying at Talbot Village appeared in the Bournemouth Graphic in the issue dated 9th February 1917. Training pilots for the RFC continued and the aerodrome's name became RFC Winton. In late September or early October 1918 the RFC Wireless Telegraphy School was transferred there. However Winton became too small for the growing School, and when in the Spring of 1919 it was transferred again, this time to Beaulieu, the airfield reverted to being a civilian aerodrome. The Ensbury Park airfield eventually became the Bournemouth racetrack, and after that it was sold for building.

It was at Talbot Village aerodrome that Second Lieutenant Edward Rebbeck was killed in a flying accident. Lieutenant Rebbeck, whose father had been Mayor of Bournemouth in 1891, was commissioned in the 60th King's Rifles and was training for the Royal Flying Corps. Early on Monday 24th April 1916 he flew to Bournemouth, arriving about 7.55 am. After a short stay he took off, only to crash just outside the aerodrome boundary. He was taken unconscious from the wreckage but died almost immediately. Lieutenant Rebbeck was buried with full military honours in Wimborne Road Cemetery.

Another crash occurred in June 1917, this time at Southbourne. The plane had been flying across Pokesdown when the engine started to misfire. As the aircraft was descending rapidly the pilot tried to land in a field by Carbery Avenue. However the engine then picked up and the pilot started to climb. Unfortunately the engine suddenly stopped and the plane crashed into a clump of trees between Carbery Avenue and Watcombe Road. Both the pilot and his passenger were shaken but not hurt. The plane was very badly damaged.

During a gale which raged on March 27th a large steamer, the SS Leander, 3,000 tons, went ashore at Southbourne. She had been bound from Boulogne to Cardiff with a crew of 56. The crew were brought ashore by lifesaving equipment operated by the Coastguards. The Poole lifeboat was launched but was not needed. The stranded steamer was a great attraction and many people went to the Southbourne beach to see her. Even though the ban on taking photographs was in force one was taken and was published in the Evening Echo in 1972. The Leander stayed on the beach until the summer when she was refloated.

The ban which prevented the taking of photographs on the beach or in the town, plus restrictions on sketching and photography near any place of military importance, had been reported by the Town Clerk to the Borough Council at their meeting in October 1915. Then in the local newspapers at the end of July 1916 there was a public notice which gave the details of the

Order made under the Defence of the Realm Act 1914 which "prohibited the making of photographs or sketches within 4 miles of the coastline from Hurst Castle to Lyme Regis without an official permit". The only exceptions were those made in a private house or garden or studio.

This regulation was not widely known by either the residents or the visitors, so that during the year a large number of people, both local and holidaymakers, were fined for breaking it. One visitor was fined 10/- (50p) for carrying a camera in Christchurch Road at Pokesdown, whilst another from London was charged with sketching at Branksome Chine without a permit and was fined 7/6d (37½p).

Another restriction had come into force at the beginning of the year. This time the Order was made by the Liquor Traffic Control Board (created under the Defence of the Realm Act 1914) in June 1915, because of the problem of excessive drinking in the munitions, transport and shipbuilding districts. They were now extending their regulations regarding the "treating of drinks" to other parts of the country. The "Non-Treating" Order came into force in Bournemouth on 28th February 1916, which meant that everybody had to pay for and drink their own purchases. A husband could not even buy his own wife a drink!

Even before this, under the Intoxicating Liquor Temporary Restrictions Order 1914, the opening hours of public houses had been restricted. On the 3rd December 1914 the Borough Licensing Justices had curtailed the hours of public houses and registered clubs. They could only open between 8am and 9pm on weekdays, and on Sundays between 12.30pm and 2.30 pm, then from 6pm to 9pm. In March 1916 the hours were further restricted to 12 noon until 2.30pm, and from 6pm to 9pm everyday. This brought many complaints from hotel proprietors on the compulsory closing at 9pm. They saw it as detrimental to their businesses. Bournemouth was not noted for drunkenness, but with such a large number of soldiers billeted in the town it was considered prudent to take these steps. The "Non-Treating" Order was not always observed and a number of people were fined for breaking it. Even with the lighting and licensing restrictions the visitors flocked in at Easter. The majority of hotels and boarding houses were booked to overflowing. There were, however, very few Easter Eggs, as they were mostly made in Germany, and there was a total absence of hot cross buns, unless they were home made.

Saturday 6th May was the last day that the Bournemouth Municipal Band played on the Pier before it was suspended for the

summer, recommencing its Pier concerts on 9th October. It had been formed in 1912 to relieve the Municipal Orchestra from playing in both the Winter Gardens and on the Pier, but the lighting regulations and war economy caused its temporary disbandment. During the summer months music on the Pier was played by the full orchestra in the mornings and sections of the orchestra in the afternoons. There were no evening concerts.

The local Volunteer Training Corps in June 1916 became part of the Hampshire Volunteer Regiment under the administration of the Territorial Force Association. The Bournemouth Volunteer Training Corps (formerly the Athletes' Volunteer Force) formed the basis of the 4th Battalion The Hampshire Volunteer Regiment. This Corps, together with other Corps all over the country, had now been given the proper status which it had been seeking for nearly two years. All men of 17 and over could join. Those who had attested under the Derby Scheme could also join until they were called up. Volunteers could be called to the Colours only if there was an invasion, and they were able to resign if they so wished. Since it started in 1914, the Bournemouth Corps had sent no less than 500 members to join the regular forces.

The two local companies of the 4th Battalion trained a large number of men under military age and also men who were temporarily exempted by the local tribunal, a condition of the exemption being that they joined the Volunteers. At the Mont Dore Military Hospital Volunteers acted as stretcher-bearers, and provided guards for all the hospitals, as well as providing the cliff patrol every night. One of the reasons for forming the Corps had been to relieve regular troops of such work as local patrols, as well as for home defence. However even though the Corps now came under the Territorial Force Association no uniforms or equipment were provided by the authorities, and an appeal was launched to provide them. The target set was £2,000, enough to purchase arms, equipment and uniforms for 800 men.

The Battle of the Somme commenced on 1st July and as the casualties mounted the Red Cross Ambulance trains brought large numbers of wounded men to Bournemouth, as many as 400 being admitted to the local military hospitals in three weeks. By now the St. John Ambulance Brigade had adopted a standard procedure for the transfer of the wounded from the trains which arrived at the railway stations to the hospitals.

The majority of the ambulance trains discharged their wounded at Boscombe Station, but those wounded destined for the Mont Dore or Grata Quies were sometimes taken off at either the Central or West Stations.

As soon as the train was expected, messages were sent either by telephone or messenger to the Brigade members, who then went to the railway station with the ambulances. When the men arrived they were all allocated duties, some to unload the train, some to be with the waiting ambulances to load them and some to go to the various hospitals to help unload and carry the patients to the beds. Quite often the Ambulance men had a long wait because of delays on the line. Then the men of the Brigade either slept on the stretchers or played cards in the waiting-rooms. On night calls cocoa, bread and cheese were provided by the kitchens at Boscombe Hospital, until rationing was enforced. The Chairman of the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital, Mr. D.H.W. Robson-Burrow, wrote to the press in July 1916 regarding the St. John Ambulance Brigade and the wounded at Boscombe. He said:-

"The last three trains have arrived at about 2 o'clock in the morning, bringing 100, 95 and 119 cases, not less than 45 men of the Brigade turning out on each occasion. It must be remembered that these men are for the most part working hard all day".

The first out of the train were the walking wounded. Generally these soldiers were in the front part of the train. Then the rest, the cot cases, who had travelled in two-tier bunk beds, were lifted out and placed gently on the waiting stretchers. As the stretchers were carried off the train Surgeon General Stevenson, the Officer in Charge of the Military Hospitals, or his staff, decided to which hospital the patient should be conveyed, having taken into account the injuries suffered.

If the ambulance train had stopped at Boscombe then the patients for the Boscombe Military Hospital were carried across Ashley Road, sometimes through a crowd of well-wishers, into the reception hall and then on to the appropriate ward. Later on trolleys were used to transport the wounded instead of the ambulance men having to carry the stretchers across the road.

The heaviest work was done by the stretcher bearers. The carrying of a man from the train and across the road to a bed in the hospital was no easy task, nor was it to carry a patient on a stretcher from an ambulance to the top floor of one of the other hospitals. The Mont Dore was a case in point. The lift was often out of order and nearly all the wounded had to be carried up the steeply curved staircase.

If the soldier was sent to Crag Head or the Mont Dore he was taken by one of the motor ambulances, or by one of the private cars lent for the occasion. Some of the Indian troops, when the Mont Dore was an Indian Hospital, were transferred by charabanc.

A report issued in September 1915 estimated that since October 1914 over 2,000 cases, British, Indian and Belgian, had been dealt with very successfully by this arrangement. During the period 1914 to 1916 over 50 Red Cross trains had arrived at Boscombe Station and by January 1919 that number had risen to 156. This number does not include convoys of Indian troops for which there were no records kept. The final number of wounded brought by ambulance trains and off-loaded by the Brigade was 10,206.

The ambulances which met the trains were provided by several private individuals or organisations. By 1916 there were 10 ambulances available which could carry 28 stretcher cases. Of these 5 were purpose built, whilst the other 5 were tradesmen's vans which were converted for transporting the wounded when necessary. The first ambulance was purchased by a Bournemouth resident, Miss Laura B. Starkey of Grove Road, in the first few weeks of the war. The vehicle was used extensively not only in Bournemouth but all over Hampshire and parts of Dorset. Miss Starkey drove the ambulance herself as well as paying for its upkeep. She also bought 3 more, again defraying all expenses. Another ambulance was provided by Mr. W.W. Graham, the Managing Director of Elliotts charabanc firm, which later became the Royal Blue Coaches. First of all he sent a small charabanc to transport the wounded to the hospitals. This vehicle was not very suitable for stretchers. The only way was to put them across the seats, which was not at all safe or comfortable. He therefore converted two hire cars from his fleet into ambulances. One was used as a very basic mobile X Ray Unit. This vehicle visited all the auxiliary hospitals in the town, and also some outside, such as Lady Lee's at Lytchett and Lord Shaftesbury's hospital at Cranborne, travelling over 2,000 miles in the 4 years. It was also used for the Belgian soldiers who were in the various nursing homes in the town (Listed in Appendix One). In the walking cases Mr. Graham regularly sent the larger charabancs as well as supplying the ambulances for the stretcher cases.

Other local businessmen converted trade vehicles into temporary ambulances and many owners used their cars without any recompense. The magazine "First Aid" September 1916 had an article by Dr. F. C. Bottomley, Acting Superintendent Bournemouth Division St. John Ambulance, entitled "Improvised Motor Ambulances" which described the method used. The Women's Reserve Ambulance, the vehicle attached to the Mont Dore Hospital and the 4th Hants all gave assistance.

It is impossible to give the total number of patients carried by these ambulances, but it amounted to several thousands, as the number included not only patients from the auxiliary hospitals,

but also from the Mont Dore from the time it was used by the Indian troops and for the transfer of patients between hospitals. The Brigade's own ambulance was provided by the organisation, but its running costs were paid for by several ladies who wished to remain anonymous.

In June an appeal was made for assistance in establishing another much needed auxiliary hospital for wounded officers. The Red Cross needed more accommodation and were offered Branksome Gate, Western Road, Branksome Park. Gifts of money and furniture were provided, the Mayor of Bournemouth's Fund making a grant of £200.

The blue uniforms of the wounded could be seen all over town. In the Square four seats were given for the use of the wounded. They were placed on the central island, and there was also one on each side of the entrance to the Lower Gardens. However absent-minded visitors sometimes ignored the notices "For wounded soldiers only" and so the seats on the island were moved inside the "paddock", which was a railed-off part around the light standard in the middle. The soldiers did not like this - as one said "It was like being in a cage to be looked at".

As well as these, seats were also given and placed at Boscombe, and several deck chairs were provided by residents for the use of the wounded on the beach at Bournemouth and Southbourne. A canteen was set up for them in the cloisters by the Bournemouth Pier. The first three cloisters at the East end of the Undercliff Drive and one of the terraces above were used for serving the teas. The canteen had been started by Mrs. E. Hughes of the Norfolk Hotel, who, with a few friends, had provided refreshments at a beach hut. This proved so popular that more accommodation was soon needed for the large numbers who arrived every day. The matter was brought to the attention of the Mayor, Alderman H. Robson, who arranged through the Beach Committee to put the canteen in the cloisters. It was opened on 3rd August 1916, its hours being from 3 o'clock each day, weather permitting. The running of the canteen was by an organisation entitled "Wounded Soldiers Rest Shelters" made up of ladies who gave their time voluntarily. There was also a bathing tent on the beach which was for the soldiers' use. During the first ten days that the cloisters were open 2,000 teas were served. The cloisters were hung with flags and banners, the Corporation provided 50 chairs, with the bar being situated at one end. There all kinds of non-alcoholic drinks, cakes and cigarettes could be obtained free of charge. The lady volunteers took turns in staffing the teabar and the cost was defrayed by donations. It was estimated that the cost was £10 - £14 per week. From August 1916 to September 1917,

when the canteen temporarily closed, 71,780 free teas and refreshments had been provided.

The official documentary film "Battle of the Somme" was shown to packed houses at the local cinemas in September. This was filmed during the first weeks of the fighting and was really only a series of incidents, but it created a sensation amongst the public. In addition Wests' Pictures projected a picture of Lieutenant Robinson VC onto the screen at each performance. This was received with cheers and applause because Bournemouth was proud of having a connection, albeit distant, with Lieutenant W. L. Robinson, who won his VC for shooting down a Zeppelin at Cuffley on September 2nd 1916 (For details see Appendix Three).

The death of Lord Kitchener, drowned when HMS Hampshire struck a mine on 5th June, was keenly felt in the town. There was a memorial concert given by the Municipal Orchestra on Bournemouth Pier, the Last Post being played by the buglers of the 4th Volunteer Battalion Hampshire Regiment. Although the day was cold and wet nearly 5,000 people attended. At the time that the memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral on Tuesday 13th June most of the shops closed, householders drew their curtains, and the bell of St. Peter's Church was tolled.

The War Charities Act 1916 came into force at the end of September making it unlawful to appeal for money or articles for any war charity, or to raise money by bazaars, sales, entertainments, exhibitions or similar means for any such charity, unless the charity was registered and approved. Bournemouth Corporation became the local registration authority and there were initially 11 bodies which registered. They were:-

1. Bournemouth War Relief Committee
2. Bournemouth Branch of the Women's Emergency Corps.
3. Catholic Women's League (Bournemouth Branch)
4. Catholic Women's League (Boscombe Branch)
5. Bournemouth Borough Needlework Association
6. Hampshire Football Association Wounded Soldiers' Fund
7. Boscombe Military Hospital Wounded Soldiers Entertainment Fund
8. Christchurch and Bournemouth Women's Liberal POW Parcels fund.
9. Vegetable Products Committee
10. Crag Head Hospital Men's Recreation Fund
11. Wounded Soldiers' Rest Shelter on the Front.

All these organisations had to keep proper accounts together with minutes of all committee meetings. Audited accounts had to be submitted to the Registration Authority regularly.

(For details of some of these organisations see Appendix Two. Others are mentioned in the text).

Two typical fund raising events had occurred just prior to the start of the Act. The first had been a Garden Fete held at Crag Head Hospital in aid of the recreation fund. Not only were there sideshows and competitions, but also an entertainment including performers from the show at the Hippodrome. An unexpected highlight was a visit by an aeroplane from the Talbot Village aerodrome which flew low over the garden and showered cigarettes and flowers on the heads of the spectators.

The other was to celebrate the anniversary of the War Hospital Supply Depot, Bodorgan Road. A report on the work done during its first year was given, stating that 64,500 articles had been made, all the work of volunteers. The following list gives some indication of the many ways in which money was collected during 1916 for the war and other charities:

12 January	Belgian Relief Concert
12/15 January	Concerts in aid of local Red Cross Hospitals
20 January	Entertainments held to provide a Nurse Cavell bed in Boscombe Hospital
3 February	Cafe Chantant in aid of British POWs
8 February	Pageant at the Theatre Royal in aid of the Waifs and Strays Society
9 February	Volunteer Training Corps Concert at Winter Gardens
2 March	RSPCA Dansante and Musical
6 March	Concert for homeless Polish children
29 March	Pierrot Entertainment in aid of Women's Emergency Corps
26/27 April	Entertainments in aid of British and French Orphans
31 April	"Blinded Heroes" Benefit Matinee at Hippodrome
27 June	Pageant at The Knole, Knyveton Road, in aid of the Waifs and Strays
13 September	War Hospital Fete at Thornleigh, Bodorgan Road
16 September	Mayor's Fund Military Sports in Meyrick Park
1 November	Women's Emergency Corps Musical Tea
5/6 December	French Plays in aid of British War Orphans.

In August the local newspapers were reporting that there was a large number of holidaymakers in the town. One report said "The wonder is with so many men away at the war, or tied up in munitions, where the folk come from, and how they can in such strenuous days find the time for a holiday."

One attraction which stopped at the end of August under an Order in Council was the trips by motor charabancs. Petrol had been rationed from 1st August and no provision had been made for pleasure motoring. The Bournemouth Guardian, 2nd September 1916, reported:

"The contrast between the Square on Thursday morning and Friday was marked. The new Order in Council prohibiting the use of petrol for charabanc and other pleasure vehicles came into force on September 1st and in consequence all the giant cars that have been running during the summer months were laid up in their garages. The shining "Silver Fleet" had disappeared and the gay blues of the "Rover Squadron" were no longer ranging in lines on both sides. Not a car to be seen, nor a vehicle of any sort, except for six or seven old horse wagonettes".

One charabanc firm, Messrs. Elliot Bros., was fined on 5 summonses for using paraffin in defiance of the Order, which stated that charabancs must not be run on "motor spirit". Paraffin was, according to the local Magistrates, a "motor spirit" under the Order. Later on the same firm was again found guilty on 7 other summonses for the same offence.

October saw the start of the winter billeting. The troops, having been under canvas for the summer, were now being housed in vacant properties as well as with families. Between 1,000 and 2,000 arrived early in the month and the church halls were open again providing recreational facilities.

The Roll of Honour of Bournemouthians killed and wounded grew longer every week. In the newspapers their photographs and names took up more space. Churches started to erect War Shrines. The first was in the grounds of St. Alban's Church, Charminster Road, consisting of three panels. The middle one gave the names of the parishioners and their relatives killed and the two outside panels had the names of all those serving in the Forces. The Shrine was dedicated on 10th December 1916.

The Imperial War Economy Exhibition was held at Prince's Hall, Grand Hotel, from 23rd to 28th October. The object of the exhibition was to help those "who desire to learn simple methods of creating less consumption and more production". This was done by lectures on economical cookery, housecraft, poultry keeping, together with practical demonstrations. There was also on exhibition a German "Aviatic" aeroplane, machine guns, grenades, German helmets and other war items. All this was held in conjunction with the Christchurch and Bournemouth War Savings Week.

The third War Christmas was undoubtedly affected by the restrictions on the railways - soldiers going on leave had priority - but Bournemouth was fairly full for the holiday. During the early part of Christmas week the trains were well filled, but by the end of the week there was a considerable falling off, as compared with previous years. Most of the large hotels and boarding houses had no vacancies; it was the small establishments which did not do so well.

Christmas Day was fine, though cold, and for the first time since they started running there were no tramcars. Another first during the year had been the cancellation of the Whit Monday and August Bank Holidays in compliance with the Government's suggestion, so that war production would not be lost. However, this did not seem to affect the number of visitors coming to the town. Reports on bookings suggested business as normal all through the year.

Editorials in the newspapers were advocating "Shop early for Christmas", not only early in the month, but also early in the day. From October most shops were compulsorily closed at 8 o'clock on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, with an extension of one hour on Friday and Saturday.

At the hospitals the patients were entertained as usual. Appeals for comforts and Christmas fare were generously subscribed to. The Boscombe Military Wounded Soldiers' Entertainments Fund in their appeal also asked for donations to continue their work during the coming year. In the past two years over 3,000 men had been taken for car trips, mostly by private owners. Over 5,000 men were taken to various places of entertainment and afterwards given tea before returning to the hospitals, and more than 300 concerts or entertainments had been given to the patients who could not move from the wards. Those taking part included some of the artists appearing at the Hippodrome and Winter Gardens.

Because of restrictions, the Corporation had not been able to do many improvements in the town. However, they had built several groynes along the Bournemouth seafront to stop the loss of the sand, and these had been quite successful. The cliffs needed repair work after several storms, and a gale in November had done a great deal of damage to the sea wall and the slipways at Boscombe.

1917

The year opened with an emphasis on food. The German submarines had been successful in sinking many of the merchant ships bringing supplies to England, so the new Ministry of Food, set up in December 1916, began to encourage the cultivation of every spare piece of land. At the Town Council meeting in January 1917 the Borough Engineer reported that there was approximately 175 acres of land in the Borough available for growing food in areas such as the Seafield Estate at Southbourne, Redhill Common, and the Moordown Pleasure Gardens. Building land on the Boscombe Manor Estate was also parcelled out in allotments, and neglected gardens throughout the town were dug and planted with vegetables. The Women's Emergency Corps helped by arranging for the gardens of soldiers on active service to be cultivated, so that their families could have fresh vegetables and soft fruit. By April there were over 400 plots under cultivation, the area being 85 acres. One year later, April 1918, the number had risen to 820 covering 110 acres.

At West Howe the YMCA started the Red Triangle Farm Colony, the first of its kind in the country, to provide training for ex-servicemen who had been invalided out of the Army suffering from tuberculosis. An existing sanatorium which was situated on the piece of land enclosed by Ringwood Road, High Howe Lane and Deep Dene Lane, its buildings and an adjoining farm, were purchased from a local Doctor, Dr. W. D. Johns, who had established it around 1910. The Colony started in February 1917 with 12 men, who were taught on the 35 acre farm how to run a smallholding, how to keep pigs and how to grow flowers and fruit. The men were given regular hours of work and were supervised by a doctor. The main object was to give them outdoor employment as they were not fit enough to return to a sedentary or indoor occupation. There were 20 farm buildings, 6 sleeping huts for 24 people and an administration block, which included a recreation room, a dining room and the kitchens.

In November 1917 there was a fire at the Colony which caused a great deal of damage. The fire engine from Pokesdown answered the alarm, arriving in 24 minutes, quite a remarkable feat, but the fire had gained such a hold on the administration building that the firemen were unable to put it out. They were able to save the neighbouring huts. The project was able to continue and eventually closed in 1920.

The potato harvest in 1916 had been poor, so potatoes were in very short supply, and when it was learnt that the German Prisoners of War at Dorchester were being given potatoes in their rations there was a great outcry locally. Owing to the indignation aroused, the MP for South Dorset drew to the attention of the War Office "this undesirable use of potatoes".

The Ministry of Food attempted to impose a voluntary scheme of food rationing in bread, meat and sugar in February 1917. The King restricted himself to the voluntary ration, authorising a proclamation exhorting the public to practice food economy. This was read in all churches and chapels in the town on Sunday 6th May 1917.

The Bournemouth Food Control General Committee, appointed to persuade people to cut down on food, at its meeting in June reported that its first objective was to give every householder in Bournemouth an opportunity to respond to the King's appeal for food economy by signing the pledge issued at the same time as the proclamation by the Ministry of Food. A pledge card was therefore sent to practically every house in the Borough along with an "Honour Bound" card with the request that this card should be placed in the window so as to encourage other people. Of the 16,650 cards sent out only 5,509, a third, were returned. It was suggested that every person should restrict themselves to 4lb of bread, 2½lb of meat and ¾lb of sugar each Week. This "ration" was really out of touch, as most working people did not see that much meat every week. Bread rose steadily in price. In April 1915 it cost 8½d per loaf, in January 1916 9½d and eventually in March 1917 1/-. During June the Food Control Committee plastered the town with "eat less bread" posters. It was at this time that because of saving paper, large posters and newspaper posters were forbidden. The Theatre Royal had its forthcoming announcements painted on canvas, and displayed on the hoardings. Meat prices were also fixed in August and they had to be displayed in the butchers' shops.

In the Bournemouth Echo dated 20th December 1917 there were two advertisements. The first was placed by the Bournemouth District Master Butchers' Association, who stated that "it will be impossible for them to guarantee anything like the usual supply to their customers after Christmas". The other advertisement was from the Bournemouth and District Dairymans' Association giving notice that "owing to the shortage of milk, the two deliveries a day would be cut to one a day after Christmas".

As well as meat and milk, sugar was also in short supply, and it was rationed on December 31st 1917. The amount at first

was ½lb a week per head, but this was later reduced to 6 ounces. A card was issued to each householder by the local Food Committee, and card holders were only able to obtain supplies from the grocer with whom they were registered. Each householder received an application form for the sugar card through the post. Prior to rationing those people requiring a large amount of sugar for preserving and jam making from fruit grown in their own gardens could apply for extra supplies under the Sugar (Domestic Preservation) Order 1917. However a large number of people were charged with making false applications, and were fined by the Magistrates. One lady applied for 24lbs of sugar, affirming that it was for preserving gooseberries. The Food Inspector found several old gooseberry bushes in her garden but no fruit on them. The Defendant told the Bench that as she had 18 bushes she felt that she was justified in getting the sugar. She was fined £2.

At the beginning of the year the Regulation of Meals Order 1916 came into force restricting meals to 3 courses in local restaurants and hotels between 6 and 9pm and to 2 courses at any other time. Another Order required that Wednesday should be observed each week as a "meatless" day in hotels and restaurants. No potatoes could be served except on the meatless day and on Fridays. This Order was revoked later on in the year. However a new Order was announced early in 1918 which decreed two meatless days a week.

Bakers could no longer make light fancy cakes, muffins, crumpets or the like. Any cakes, buns, scones or biscuits which were made had to conform to laid-down requirements as to the amount of sugar and flour used. The Daily Mail Staff Reporter visited the town in May and wrote an article on "Crowds in Tea Rooms, and Gay Wartime Scenes". Part of it read:

"The Sunshine Express to Bournemouth was packed. Bournemouth itself was a blaze of glory. The town and the beautiful sea front were in carnival dress. Thousands were out enjoying themselves in the sparkling air. Strolling from the sands through the beautiful gardens to the centre of the town I found the tea restaurants, mostly run in combination with the big drapery establishments and stores. Here they make a show of speciality teas with music, pretty waitresses and all kinds of dainties to be had for the asking. Pretty girls by the score, romantically sunburnt, hurried in early so that they could get the pick of the basket of quite unnecessary sweeties, and gallant young officers danced in attendance".

Bournemouth had never been dull, and even though the town

took the war seriously, as the recruiting, money raising, and the wounded showed, nevertheless the recreational atmosphere had been maintained and efforts made for the town to be a happy place for war-worn soldiers to forget the horrors of the Front.

The Daily Sketch, too, had an article on the town:

"Bournemouth never hibernates, as some seaside towns do, but when the warm weather comes the old gentlemen and old ladies and the invalids drive boldly anywhere in the town. Those funny little conveyances, bath-chairs, drawn by shaggy little ponies which are distinctive of Bournemouth, were out in full force. A novelty of Bournemouth is the afternoon Sunday tea in the Kings Hall (Royal Bath Hotel). Many little tables and chairs are set about on the dance floor and the soldiers of all ranks from the neighbourhood garrisons, and Bournemouth's own soldiers, give tea to the other sex, waited upon by very neat little damsels, who are the waitresses of the hotel. The Management told me how difficult it was to keep Waitresses, for the men in uniform - more especially the overseas troops - believe in lightning marriages, and a girl may be a waitress one day and 3 days later the wife of a prosperous young farmer who has left wide acres in a colony".

At the February meeting of the Borough Council a Councillor moved that all refreshment rooms, buffets, etc. under the control of the Council should be closed for the duration of the war to save food. The motion was defeated by 23 votes to 15.

March saw the departure of the troops who had been billeted for the winter. The Comander in Chief, Southern Command, wrote to the Mayor expressing his thanks for the hospitality, the accommodation and the help given. He went on to say:

"I wish also to say how much I appreciate the services of all those ladies and gentlemen who, of their own initiative and often at much personal inconvenience, have contributed so much to the welfare of the troops during their stay in Bournemouth".

For some time the YMCA had wanted to build a hut for the soldiers in the Square, but they were unable to find a site. Eventually the Borough Council offered them one just off the main path from the Square in the Upper Pleasure Gardens by the first bridge, within easy walking distance of the Mont Dore Hospital and the tram shelters. The Kennedy Memorial Hut in

Holdenhurst Road was moved there, opening on Thursday 26th July 1917.

On the 5th November the Mayor opened a YMCA club in Boscombe for the New Zealand troops. The club was situated in The Grange, Christchurch Road, large premises next to the Post Office, the cost being born by the New Zealand people. It had writing, games and reading rooms, a canteen and a small hostel for New Zealanders spending weekend leaves in Bournemouth. New Zealand troops were billeted in Boscombe and Southbourne, and there were camps in the New Forest, with a New Zealand Military Hospital at Brockenhurst.

The weekly magazine "John Bull" had the following note in a June issue :

"A number of Bournemouth ladies have, we understand, written to a high authority, complaining that on Sundays our sick and wounded soldiers stroll and sit about in conspicuous parts of the town instead of attending divine worship - wherefore an order has been issued that no soldier will be allowed to leave the hospitals on the Sabbath before 12 noon, except for the purpose of attending church or chapel".

This caused a great deal of annoyance amongst the townspeople, for if such an order had been given it was considered to be harsh and unnecessary. It reminded many of the rumour which circulated at the beginning of the war which had implied that the people of Bournemouth had not wanted troops billeted on them, and which had been completely untrue.

In fact the wounded soldiers were still being entertained and looked after. The Theatre Royal, for instance, had at Christmas put on a special performance of the pantomime "Sleeping Beauty" for 1,000 soldiers from all the hospitals in the district. Not only were the seats free, but the men were given cigars and chocolates in the interval. Transport was provided by the Women's Reserve Ambulance Corps and private motorists.

Motor Mac, one of the best known motor firms in the area, which was now making munitions, had its annual works outing in August to Mudeford. Included as guests were men from Heron Court Auxiliary Hospital and the Red Cross Hospital at Christchurch.

Also in August military sports were held in Meyrick Park and military aquatic sports, in connection with the Royal Garrison Artillery Officer Cadet School were arranged off the Bournemouth Pier. Water polo, swimming contests, wrestling on a raft and rowing races were all in the program.

Then in September a Grand Children's Fete was organised on behalf of the Mayor's local War Fund. The festivities were in two parts. The first consisted of the Municipal Orchestra playing for the children to dance. During this Morris, Country, Hornpipes and Maypole dances were performed, plus an exhibition by the St. John's Church Handbell Ringers. The second half was sports for the wounded soldiers, such as "Thread the Needle" and "Egg and spoon races". Later on in the month an unusual sporting fixture was arranged, the first baseball match to be played in Bournemouth. Between 8,000 and 9,000 people saw an American Army team beat a Canadian Army team at Meyrick Park on Sunday 29th September.

The war had practically stopped organised football in the South of England. There had not been many matches played at Dean Court since May 1914, but in October a charity match in aid of the Hampshire Football Association Wounded Soldiers' Fund and Portsmouth Charities was played there, between a team of ladies from Portsmouth and a team of discharged servicemen employed at the Naval Cordite Factory, situated at Holton Heath between Poole and Wareham. The result was a draw, the amount raised being £50 for the two charities.

The Naval Cordite Factory at Holton Heath was the biggest munitions factory in the area, and employed a large number of people, mostly women. The Bournemouth Town Council, at a meeting at the end of 1916, had its attention drawn, by the Mayor, to a letter sent to the local Labour Exchange stating that women and girls were urgently needed for munitions work at Woolwich, and a large party could be sent from Bournemouth. The Town Clerk was instructed to write to the Labour Department, Board of Trade, pointing out that a large number of women were required to work in the hotels and boarding houses as without their help many such businesses would not be able to continue. This would have stopped many people enjoying a well-earned rest away from the war, the munitions factory, and the front line. Also, the Holton Heath factory was being extended, and at least 1,200 more women and girls would be required from the area. The factory had been started in April 1915, and by December it was producing cordite. During the period 1915 to 1918, nearly 4,000 people, half of them women, produced on average 150 tons of cordite each week. After the Armistice, the factory was practically closed down, and the majority of the workforce was dispensed with.

Another demand for workers was made in March.

An appeal for men to volunteer to register for National Service was made. The object was to form a register of the older skilled workers, in the less essential trades and industries, willing to replace men of military age in exempted jobs in the essential industries, who could then join the forces. The men were asked to sign a voluntary offer of service so they could be requested to undertake work of national importance, if and when they were wanted. No volunteer would suffer any inconvenience or loss of pay. The Government introduced this scheme in the hope of avoiding compulsory re-deployment.

In July the Bournemouth National Service Committee Women's Section advertised for 500 women from the town to work on the land. The Committee held meetings at Fisherman's Walk, on the East Cliff, and a mass meeting in St. Peter's Hall. These meetings were to encourage women to undertake farm work to help provide the food needed to feed the people of England. This was not the first such appeal, for in March 1916 the Women's National Land Service Corps had advertised for recruits. They had asked for strong, healthy, educated women under 55, stating that training would be given for this work, second only in importance to the making of munitions. At one time the Dorset Education Committee had suggested that boys could be released from school to help on farms because of the shortage of labour. This did not find favour with the Kinson Parish Council, and the idea was not put into practice locally.

The cost of the war was rising rapidly and to help pay for it, in addition to increased income tax, the Government issued a generous 5% 50 year War Loan. The Bournemouth War Loan Association heavily advertised the issue. All the trams were plastered with large red-lettered posters and the Red Cross motor cars were similarly decorated. A banner was strung across Old Christchurch Road, and within the circular island in the Square a huge hoarding with an appeal for funds was crowned with a 'clock', the hands indicating from day to day how much had been contributed. A meeting, addressed by Lt-Colonel H. Page Croft, M.P. for Christchurch, was called to encourage Bournemouthians to lend their money. The Corporation, as well as a large number of people, invested heavily.

Bournemouth now had its own National War Aims Committee. Appointed in August, it held its first meeting on the 16th. The object of the Committee was to keep a true statement of affairs relating to the war constantly before the public. An outdoor campaign was arranged and various meetings were held in different parts of the Borough, to tell people exactly what the war aims of the Allies were.

In 1916 there had been no Whitsun holiday by Government decree, but in 1917, to the relief of the hoteliers and residents, as well as the visitors, the holiday was re-instated. The railway companies ran extra trains to the resort packed with holiday makers. Even with the higher rail fares, and though petrol was not to be used for pleasure purposes, many flocked to the town. Bournemouth's shops, the sands and the trams were busy with the visitors. Because of the crowding on the trams, a queuing system was suggested.

"If anything could be done to prevent the frequently disgraceful scrimmage in connection with boarding, the regular users of the trams would be grateful" was the comment of one passenger.

According to a London newspaper report Bournemouth was probably the best patronised of the seaside towns, even though the holiday was marred by heavy rain. There were still no pleasure steamers, and pleasure craft were not allowed outside the prescribed area, which at Bournemouth had been extended to a line drawn between the Martello Tower near Branksome Chine and Southbourne. Charabancs were back on the road running excursions to the New Forest and Wimborne, using coal gas as fuel. The gas was kept in large bags attached to the vehicles. Filling stations where gas for cars could be obtained were provided at Bourne Valley Gas Works, Gas Company Showrooms, Old Christchurch Road, and the Water Tower in Palmerston Road. Several commercial vehicles were also converted to run on gas - the Bournemouth Gas and Water Company had three lorries. and there were some motor buses in the Corporation fleet.

But the holiday Monday started not with an excursion train, but with a Red Cross Ambulance train, which arrived at 1.15 am with 119 wounded soldiers, 65 being cot cases, for the St. John Ambulance Brigade to transfer to the Boscombe Hospital, and to Crag Head.

Earlier in the year the Bournemouth Visitors Directory had reported that the number of visitors coming to the town "keep up a very satisfactory figure. The presence of a large number of billeted troops helps to pay the rent of occupiers of many of the houses in the artisan districts (Winton and Springbourne) and the general trade of the town is good. Some of the Municipal Undertakings, the Piers and the Winter Gardens, are showing a big falling off in receipts, but the tramways show a rise over last year's figures".

During the year there were many attractions for both visitor and resident alike, both indoors and outdoors. Dan Godfrey, in an

interview about wartime music, said that entertainment was essential. In 1917 he had booked Vesta Tilley and George Robey, amongst others, to appear at the Winter Gardens. The Winter Gardens depended on the money taken in the Summer at the special concerts. August and September's takings returned a profit, which enabled the winter concerts to be put on. Mr. Godfrey pointed out that the increased calls for military and national service, plus increased rail fares, had cut the number of visitors taking a holiday in the town, but the "enormous wages of the munitions workers" enabled them to take more than one weekend break, when they patronised the theatres and the concert parties, such as the Impromptus, Vivandieres and Gay Gondoliers, who performed on the Boscombe Gardens stage.

In August at the Winter Gardens the Mayor had the pleasant duty of presenting to Corporal Jeffers, Royal Army Medical Corps, the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Cpl. Jeffers had been awarded the medal for his gallantry at the Battle of Loos in 1915, for rescuing and attending to the wounded. Later on in November the award of the Victoria Cross to Second-Lieutenant M.S.S. Moore, the Hampshire Regiment, was announced. The Bournemouth Graphic claimed him as a Bournemouthian, but his home was actually over the county boundary in Branksome Park (For details of the award see Appendix Three).

A sad event had occurred just a month previous, when the body of a man had been found washed ashore on the beach by the East Cliff Zig-Zag on 17th October. The body was dressed only in a pair of navy blue trousers. Thought to be a sailor, his identity was never discovered, and the inquest returned a verdict of "Found drowned". He was buried in Boscombe Cemetery, in the war plot. Two more bodies were washed ashore at Hengistbury Head in February 1918. Neither was identified, and both were buried in Christchurch Cemetery.

The year saw more war shrines being erected at several churches. Like St. Alban's, Charminster Road, some placed them in the grounds of the church, whilst others, such as St. Peter's and St. Augustine's, had theirs inside. The form varied from a triptych with the centre panel giving the names of those killed, with the names of those on active service on the side panels, to a chapel used for intercessions.

Again flag days for various charities and war organisations were held throughout the year. Sums collected ranged from £657 for the Wounded Army Horses Fund to £710 on Lifeboat Sunday.

A different type of collection was that of horse chestnuts..

Bournemouth schoolchildren were amongst the hundreds all over England who assisted in collecting "conkers". Several tons were despatched by rail to the drying centres before being used by the Directorate of Propellant Supplies in making munitions. Newspapers, rags and bottles were also collected by children to aid the war effort. There was also an appeal for fruit stones and nut shells. These made a type of charcoal which was used in gas masks to filter the air. All greengrocers were centres for collection. The stones and shells were sent to the Department of National Salvage for processing.

In the Autumn, wartime economy classes were run at the Municipal College for the second year. They were designed to help the housewife. Cookery, home sewing and laundry were featured as a help to the working woman. The war with its high prices was causing many women anxious moments wondering how to make the money go further. The courses consisted of 12 weekly lectures, plus demonstrations, and cost 1/- (5p).

The Personal Service Association started in October. This was not another war relief organisation. Its particular purpose was to bring together those who needed help, but through ignorance did not know where to obtain the help, and those willing to provide that service. The Mayor at the first meeting said "There is no one place in the town to which anyone can go for complete information, nor is there any one place where those willing to render social service can get precise information as to the opportunities to practice it". The Association compiled a list of those wishing to give assistance and in what subjects they were expert. The Association then directed enquirers to the best person to help them.

The weather at Christmas was bright and seasonal. Even though the town was crowded with visitors there was a distinct absence of the festive spirit. Everybody was subdued. The need for economy and travel restrictions contributed to an unusually quiet Christmas. Queues for food, margarine and chocolate were to be seen all over the town. All the wounded in the hospitals were entertained and well looked after. As usual each man received a small present provided by donations from the public. The men at the St. John Ambulance Hospital, Bodorgan Road, had a musical entertainment by the Municipal Orchestra, whilst on Christmas Eve at Crag Head the choir of St. John's Church, Boscombe sang carols.

The Headmaster of Bournemouth School for Boys, Dr. E. Fenwick,

sent the following message on a postcard to all Old Boys of the School serving in the Forces:

"In spite of all our hopes the war has extended into a fourth year, and a fourth Christmas finds you still in arms against oppression. At this season, we, your friends at the School (Dr. Fenwick, the Masters and Boys) would like to be present in your thoughts, as you are in ours, and we send you this card with the assurance of our deep interest in, and close sympathy with you in the time of stress that you are facing with so much courage. We hope that our message may remind you of the happy days you spent here, and that their memory may help you to 'carry on' patiently, and without complaint, until the achievement of that honourable peace for which you are so nobly striving.
Xmas 1917 " .

The report in the "Bournemouthian", the School magazine states:

"If one may judge by the number and nature of the replies received, our wishes were very widely and warmly appreciated".

1918

The long-awaited Bournemouth School for Girls was opened on January 3rd 1918, the official ceremony being performed by the Mayor and Mayoress, Alderman and Mrs. E. E. Bishop, on January 30th. The success of the Boys' School, founded in 1901, had given rise to the feeling that there should be an equivalent school for the girls of the Borough. However other projects, such as the Municipal College building, which opened in 1915, and the Law Courts in 1914, had been given precedence. Then with the advent of war the scheme was shelved, even though the Higher Education Sub-Committee of the Council had already decided to undertake such an enterprise on the Ascham House site.

Just before war broke out the opportunity to purchase Ascham House, Gervis Road, arose, but the financial restraints caused by hostilities put an end to all capital expenditure of that kind. Even so the Corporation proposed buying the property by making arrangements for a deferred payment to Sir George Meyrick, the ground landlord, and to Mr. J. J. Norton, the owner. Ascham House had been used as a school once before. When Bournemouth had been regarded as a health resort Dr. Charles West, a well-known paediatrician, had opened it as a school for asthmatic boys. Later on the school became a "crammer", preparing boys for the Royal Navy.

The Board of Education (now the Department of Education and Science) gave permission for the school to start, using the Municipal College classrooms, providing that the new buildings would be available within five years. The rooms that the new school occupied at the College were in 'Strathearn', one of the original houses on the site, which was incorporated in the new building at its East end. The first headmistress, Miss Edith Burras, had been appointed on November 7th 1917, together with a staff of six, plus several visiting teachers, for the initial 160 girls.

The Municipal College started classes to teach disabled ex-soldiers fancy leather work. They learned to make handbags, purses, writing cases and many other objects in leather. Later on in November a leather goods factory was opened in the old Springbourne Infants' School, at the corner of Spring Road and Cleveland Road. This factory employed the men who had been trained at the College. The project was so successful that the Ministry of Pensions wrote to the Education Committee suggesting that more classes for the disabled should be run in subjects such

as cabinet making, watch and clock repairing, bookbinding and tailoring.

The magazine 'John Bull' again printed a slur about Bournemouth. Headed "Wicked Women" the article stated :-

"Beautiful Bournemouth shelters some ugly beasts, visitors and settlers. Some of them - described by themselves, but nobody else, as ladies - objected to the presence in the town of wounded and maimed men in hospital blue. The sight affected the creatures' nerves and complaints arose that the landscape and seascape were spoiled. It is a shameful, discreditable story, but it seems that the wounded men have been removed from the town and patients at Boscombe are forbidden to enter it. What, gentle reader, is your opinion of those females?"

The Mayor wrote to the editor of the magazine telling him that there was no truth in the story. The rumour that objections were made to the presence of the wounded appeared to have arisen in consequence of the War Office deciding to change the Mont Dore from a Military Hospital to a Convalescent Home for Officers. This necessitated the transfer of patients to other local hospitals or further afield. Some of the transfers were made by the ambulances of Miss Starkey and the St. John Ambulance Brigade.

At the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital, Shelley Road, a new ward, called the Bournemouth Ward, was opened for soldiers, releasing beds in the main building for civilian patients.

In January publicity was given to the instructions recently received by the Police Force in case of air raids. Warnings would be given by constables riding bicycles through the streets wearing a placard. When the alarm was raised the placard would read "All take cover" and when the danger was past it would carry the message "All clear". In London and some other towns Boy Scouts on bicycles were used to signal "All clear" on bugles. No records of any plans for them to do so in Bournemouth has been found, but the Bournemouth Graphic, 5rd January 1919, states that:-

"The New Year was ushered in by the ringing of merry peals and the sounding of "all clear" by Boy Scouts".

There were a number of aeroplane crashes in the neighbourhood, several of the aircraft coming from the Winton Aerodrome at Ensbury Park. A most spectacular crash occurred on 22nd July 1918, near the Lansdowne. Major John Locock, D.S.O., M.C., the pilot, and Captain P.G. Bridgewood, observer, were flying a Bristol fighter over Bournemouth when the aircraft crashed in

Christchurch Road, at the corner of Annerley Road. The accident happened just after 4 p.m. The aircraft had been flying at about 100 feet when a wing struck the top of a tree in a garden at the corner of Annerley Road and Christchurch Road. The speed of the plane had been approximately 100 miles an hour and it had immediately plunged into the ground. The observer, Captain Bridgewood, was released from the wreckage just before it burst into flames, but unfortunately the pilot was killed. Petrol from the fuel tank leaked into the tramlines and caught fire as it ran along them. The Fire Brigade from Holdenhurst Road was on the scene in a few minutes and quickly put out the flames. An eye witness said that the plane had been flying very low, more like 50 feet than 100 feet, and had made several passes over the gardens in Annerley Road. It was during one of these passes that the wing tip hit the top of a particularly tall tree and the plane crashed. A rumour had it that the pilot had been "buzzing" the house of a girl friend when the accident happened. The Jury at the inquest on Major Laycock recommended that low flying over built-up areas should be banned.

Earlier on, in May, Second Lieutenant J. C. Barker, a Canadian, was killed in a flying accident on Redhill Common. Another crash claimed the life of Second Lieutenant L.W. Messenger in June. He was found by a farmer unconscious near his wrecked machine, also on Redhill Common. He was taken to Boscombe Military Hospital where he later died.

An ambulance train constructed for the use of the American Army in France was a big attraction when it was put on view at the West Station in May. Over 9,000 people visited it and more than £350 was collected for the War Charities.

The Business Men's Week held in March was held to raise £150,000 in War Bonds, to provide a destroyer for the Royal Navy. The Square was decorated with flags and streamers. On the central island the hoarding, which during the past year had been a notice board with posters urging recruitment and voluntary rationing, now had a big black picture of a destroyer named "HMS Bournemouth" under full steam. The tramcar the Corporation purchased a few years before, to be let out on hire for school outings and private parties, was put on the tram siding. Its windows were plastered with placards exhorting the public to fight the Germans with War Bonds. Inside it was fitted up as a Bank, run by local bank staff, for the receipt of contributions and issue of certificates and bonds. The response was much greater than anticipated, the final total amounting to £252,895, enough to pay for a Monitor, which was a heavy gunboat, larger than a destroyer.

Earlier in the year an editorial in the Bournemouth Guardian disclosed a grumble which had not been voiced publicly up to then:

"This district has not yet seen a solitary captured gun set up in a public place. Other towns have guns presented to them in some sort of semi-recognition, we suppose, of their war services, but in Bournemouth we have not even had the visit of a real tank. About the only war trophy that we can recollect seeing placed in the Square for a day was a battered van that had been through the war zone, and was used to direct attention to a meeting in aid of some war fund" (it was in fact a shell shattered Ambulance which had been used at Verdun) "Yet if any town can claim to have done well, both in sending men in proportion to its adult population to the front, or in finding money to carry out the war, Bournemouth has a very high record".

The town was eventually offered a tank, and a site in Meyrick Park was decided on, but when the Town Council discovered that they would be responsible for its maintenance they declined the donation.

Ironically it was not until after the Armistice that tanks were seen in Bournemouth. The occasion was the Victory Bond Week in December. Six tanks, plus a Whippet tank and a captured German howitzer arrived at the Central Station. They formed a procession from the Station through Boscombe, down Christchurch Road, via the Lansdowne to the Square. Above them a large airship Z6 sailed over the route dropping Victory Bond literature on the crowds. One tank was left at Boscombe and another sent to Westbourne, whilst two more went to Meyrick Park, leaving two, plus the Whippet and the captured gun, parked in the Square. At the formal opening of the Victory Bond Week the Mayor spoke from the top of one of the tanks. Later on in the week two of the tanks showed their paces in Meyrick Park on the rough ground at the end of the golf links, before a large number of people. The week raised the immense sum of £630,000.

Another procession had been seen in the town in March when members of the Local Women's Land Army paraded to attract recruits. The procession left the Boscombe Arcade, headed by the Band of the New Zealand Engineers, and proceeded to Boscombe Pier via Sea Road, along the Undercliff Drive to Bournemouth Pier, where recruiting speeches were made using a farm waggon as a platform. In August an interesting exhibition to boost the recruiting for the aircraft industry was held to show the work being done in

the factories. The Ministry of Munitions urgently needed women between 18 and 35 to help build the planes required by the RAF.

Recruits were also required for the Hampshire Volunteer Medical Corps 1st Field Ambulance. These volunteers undertook work in the hospitals as orderlies and helped with the transport of the wounded from the Stations. A large number of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, and the Ambulance Section of the 4th Battalion The Hampshire Volunteer Regiment, joined. A great rally was held in September by the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps, also known as the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), to attract new members. As well as listening to the speeches, the crowd at the Bournemouth Pier Approach was entertained by the Band of the New Zealand Engineers. New Zealand troops were still billeted in Boscombe, Southbourne and Pokesdown. Another hostel, Khartoum House, Christchurch Road, Boscombe, was opened to accommodate New Zealand and other soldiers on leave. Originally the headquarters of the Gordon Boys' Brigade, Khartoum House was situated nearly next door to The Grange, the first YMCA Hostel for the New Zealanders.

At Easter the Bournemouth Visitors Directory reported:-

"Bournemouth is crowded. That goes without saying. When is it not? In addition to its natural attributes it has enjoyed during the war an immunity from the pains and perils of the strife for which we cannot be too thankful. For this preservation Bournemouth has not been slow to show her gratitude. No town has a better record for war work, whether on behalf of the distressed peoples of other lands, or tending the wounded and the broken men who have so splendidly upheld our cause. In addition to refugees from air dangers, there are, of course, many people for whom a change and rest from the stress of the times are essential, and these so far as they are able and accommodation is available, have sought solace amid the beautiful environment and social amenities of Bournemouth. We read of queues at the London termini of would be passengers, eager to avail themselves of the unrestricted facilities for reaching the town".

The Whitsun holidays, even with the restricted train service, was also very busy. The number of visitors arriving at the stations during the weekend was as large as usual, and the demand for hotels and boarding houses was heavy. The Piers were well patronised and the seafront crowded. The editorial in the Bournemouth Guardian, 17th August, stated that even if the train

fares had risen by 50%, that the rail service was curtailed, that ration books were necessary, and that there were still no sea excursions, people with "well lined pockets" still streamed to the town with its beautiful gardens and quiet promenade.

A noticeable feature, however, was the comparative lack of fit men on the seafront. The wounded and convalescent were enjoying the good weather, so were the women and children, but because of the heavy fighting in France through the German offensive, only a few unscathed men were on leave.

Now even fit men who were over military age and under 50 were being asked to volunteer for home service with the Royal Garrison Artillery, or the Army Service Corps, also the RAF and the Royal Engineers. More men were needed for the 4th Battalion Hampshire Volunteer Regiment, of which Bournemouth provided two Companies. The 4th Battalion had been ordered to cover local guard duties to relieve other troops, who could then be sent overseas. However, the consent of their employers was needed before any of the Volunteers could undertake a duty of 24 hours duration. An intriguing item in the Bournemouth Visitors Directory, 6th July, said that members of the 4th Battalion, who had volunteered for special service duties, had departed for their destination, but gave no indication of where they were going, or what they were going to do there.

Earlier, in April, a new Military Service Act raised the age of conscription to 51. In June a considerable number of local businessmen who had not dreamed of being soldiers reported for their medical examinations.

For some time the Food Control Committee had displayed a poster in the Square highlighting its food economy campaign which read:-

'Britons Obviate Universal Rationing Now. Every Morsel Omitted Undermines The Hun. For Only On Drastic Economy Can Our Nation Overcome Many Years Continual Anxiety. Much Patriotism Always Inspires Great Nations'...

...the capital letters spelling "BOURNEMOUTH FOOD ECONOMY CAMPAIGN".

In February a new scheme for food rationing was adopted by the Food Control Committee for butter, margarine and meat. Every household was sent an application form for food cards which, when completed, were taken to the Church Hall at Holy Trinity Church, Old Christchurch Road (now demolished after a fire) where the ration cards were issued. There was one card for meat and bacon, and one for butter, cheese and margarine.

Each holder had to register with a butcher and a grocer to receive the ration of 15 ounces of meat, 5 ounces of bacon and 4 ounces of butter or margarine each week. The queues for butter and margarine, which had been seen all over the town, now disappeared. Ration Books took the place of the cards in October. The idea of such a book was reputed to have been the suggestion of a Bournemouth lady, Miss Emily Sidebotham. She had written to the Food Controller, Lord Rhondda, pointing out the advantages of a book over the card. Tea and coal were also in short supply. Large advertisements in the newspapers in June had urged readers to register at their grocers for tea, and at the fuel merchants so they would be assured of a supply. Coal, coke and other solid fuels were rationed to 1 ton per month for a private house for the period 1st November to 30th April.

Queues which did not disappear were those for the trams. In the Square the pushing and shoving for places was thought to be dangerous, and experimental queues were tried at the stop at the foot of Richmond Hill. By August these queues had turned out to be a great improvement, and it was decided to extend the scheme to other parts of the town.

The 22nd May marked the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the founding of the Municipal Orchestra, and the appointment of Dan Godfrey as Director of Music and Entertainments. He was presented with an illuminated address, together with War Bonds purchased by public subscription, by the Mayor at the June Town Council Meeting.

The summer season of music arranged by Dan Godfrey had the full orchestra playing on the Pier each morning. A section of the orchestra entertained each afternoon, except Wednesdays. On Sunday evenings there were concerts on both Bournemouth and Boscombe Piers. One of the seven concert parties, either the Vivandieres, Gay Gondoliers, Queens, Shrapnels, Scarlet Entertainers, Bohemians or the Purple Belles, performed on the pier each day, and also in the Boscombe Chine Gardens.

For the first time in Bournemouth films were shown on Sundays. Under the auspices of the Ministry of National Service, films on the war and National Service were shown, and there were also rousing speeches about the national need for men, money and economy. These were well attended, as were most war meetings, for they helped to fill in the evenings which otherwise might have been spent in a cold house. One move to help conserve food, gas, coke and coal was the

setting up in April of two National Food Kitchens, one in St. Andrew's Church Hall, Shelbourne Road, and the other in the Old Parish Hall, Peter's Hill, Wimborne Road, Winton. These districts were chosen because of the large "working class population, who are the main users, even though the Kitchens were for all classes". The food was cooked on the premises and was then sold to be taken away to be eaten. Later on dining rooms were opened so that the food could be consumed on the premises at an extra charge of 1d. Lady Rhondda, the wife of the Food Controller, opened both the Kitchens, pointing out that they were not soup kitchens, but places where cuts from a joint, vegetables, potatoes and a pudding could be purchased at a very reasonable price. They were a great help to those women who went out to work and who also had to run a home. During the first five months 175,575 meals were sold to be taken home, whilst 6,654 people were served in the restaurants.

The Bournemouth Guardian, 26th October, had this to say about the Food Control Committee:-

"The common idea of a Food Committee seems to be that of an irresponsible and arbitrary body whose functions are to worry us all by rations and restrictions. The Local Committee have not confined their duty to rationing. They have made vigorous efforts to help us with the difficulties".

The Committee set up a Food Conservation Bureau in the Gas and Water Company showroom in Old Christchurch Road, opposite Horseshoe Common. Demonstrations and exhibitions were arranged to help the housewife plan menus using the amounts of food available on the ration. The first exhibition was on food production especially for the allotment and small-holder. In October the National Kitchens were taken over by the Borough Council and placed in the hands of the Food Control Committee, who opened a third kitchen in Boscombe on the corner of Warwick and Christchurch Roads in February 1919. All the kitchens were closed on 22nd May 1920.

During the summer a number of fetes to aid the War Charities were held. Ensbury Manor was the site for one, whilst the gardens of Crag Head were used for another. The Band of the New Zealand Engineers played at a number of functions and the New Zealand Maoris, together with the Band, entertained a full house at the Winter Gardens. There was a military gymkhana held at Meyrick Park in August and among the displays was one of raft building by the New Zealanders. A mock court was convened which brought remarkable charges against a number of the town's leading citizens.

Meyrick Park was also the scene of a rally of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in June. The Boy Scout movement had flourished in

Bournemouth, and a large number of its members helped in different ways during the war years. Some Scouts acted as coast watchers, joining the Coast Guards, others helped the YMCA as messengers and guides for the troops, and some collected wood for the Hospital Woodwork Supply Depot. The Girl Guides had not previously prospered, but in March 1918 the movement had been restarted and re-organised, and by June 13 companies of about 2,000 Guides were in existence to be inspected, with the Scouts, by Sir Robert Baden-Powell (later Lord Baden-Powell) Chief Scout, on his visit to the Rally.

Also in June, on the 26th of the month, in common with many other towns, a Great Intercession Service was held in Meyrick Park. Over 5,000 people assembled to join in this public service for peace and for victory. A large number of shops and offices closed between 3 pm and 5 pm to enable members of staff to attend.

Cricket had not been played at Dean Park since August 1914, when the outbreak of war brought the first class cricket season to an abrupt close, leaving the County Championship unfinished. In September the first match to be played since then was arranged for the benefit of the Hampshire Prisoners of War Fund and the Mayor's Local War Fund. Large crowds watched a leisurely match. Both teams included players who at one time or another played County Cricket at Dean Park.

The second baseball match to be seen in Bournemouth was played on June 29th between two American Army teams from Camps at Worgret, Dorset and Beaulieu, Hampshire, in aid of the Mayor's Wounded Soldiers' Shelter and Tea Fund. The match attracted nearly 5,000 spectators, and was played at Meyrick Park.

Two more Victoria Crosses were awarded during the year to Officers with local connections. The first, Lieutenant-Colonel C.E. Hudson, Notts and Derby Regiment, had lived with his parents at Langton Dene, Portarlington Road, Westbourne, and Lieutenant R.D. Sandford, RN, who won his VC at Zeebrugge, had been educated at Old Ride, Martello Road, Branksome Park (For details of Col. Hudson's award see Appendix Three).

The signing of the Armistice on November 11th was received with great rejoicing and jubilation. The news arrived in the town about 10 o'clock, and the Mayor proclaimed it outside the Municipal Offices in Yelverton Road. As if by magic, the town was festooned with flags of all the Allies, with the Union Flag predominant. Offices, shops and factories closed, and their workers joined the happy crowds thronging the streets. The schools closed in the afternoon, and the children joined in the festivities. St. Peter's Church bells rang out, cars sounded their horns and

carried flag-waving passengers, some riding on the bonnets and even on the roofs. Soldiers, both wounded and on leave, were fêted.

At one o'clock a thanksgiving service was held in the Square, led by the Mayor and the Bishop of Winchester, who was staying in the town. The Mayor and Corporation attended a special thanksgiving service in the evening at St. Peter's Church, and similar services were held in many places of worship in the town. At dusk the town was illuminated with Chinese lanterns, the blackout screens were removed from shop windows and fireworks were let off.

The streets were thronged until late at night by good-humoured, happy people.

But even though the war was over there was still the influenza epidemic which was claiming many lives all over the country. Until September 1918 Bournemouth had escaped almost entirely from the epidemic which spread so rapidly. However, during the latter part of the year there was a fresh outbreak, and even though official statistics showed that out of 96 large towns there was only one which had a lower mortality rate from flu than Bournemouth, there were still 112 deaths, 47 men and 65 Women, in the town. Schools were closed for about a month during the Autumn term because of the epidemic. The Bournemouthian, the magazine of the Bournemouth School for Boys, reported that because of the havoc played with the attendance, the Governors closed the school from October 19th to November 11th. Although there was a large number of cases at the school few were really serious, and fortunately none proved fatal. Amongst the precautions taken in the town were that visitors were not allowed in the Hospitals, and the cinemas and theatres were regularly disinfected by the Engineers' Department.

The Armistice did not remove the soldiers in the town immediately, and the YMCA huts were still heavily used. Some people had not seen the need for the Kennedy Hut in the Square, because there were no soldiers billeted in the immediate neighbourhood. But this hut provided much needed facilities for soldiers visiting the town centre. Many of them would not have had anywhere to go without it. For example over 2,500 used the hut on Christmas Day 1918. It was also appreciated by the wounded from the local hospitals. The hut at Pokesdown, close to the railway station, plus the marquee at Iford, supplied the needs of the soldiers encamped at Iford, and billeted at Pokesdown and Southbourne. At Barton-on-Sea there were three YMCA huts to serve the military convalescent hospital. The YMCA International Hospitality League opened its Overseas Hospitality Bureau in a kiosk at Horseshoe Common on 2nd October. Its aim was to assist overseas soldiers who were billeted in, or passing through, the town to obtain full information as to the hospitality offered by the residents,

the places of entertainment, and to generally assist them in making their stay pleasurable. All these huts were run from the YMCA Headquarters in St. Peter's Road, where as well as the main offices there was a hostel which could accommodate as many as 84 visitors over a weekend.

The last meeting of the Local Tribunal for appeals against the call-up was held at the Law Courts on 15th November. Since January 1916, when the office was opened, there had been 306 meetings at which 4,659 decisions had been made involving 5,014 men. The members of the Tribunal had to weigh carefully the balance between private and national interests. They had to so their duty in securing a proper supply of men for the forces and yet not handicap too harshly the business of the town.

Under the Representation of the People Act 1918, Bournemouth became an independent constituency, having previously been part of Christchurch constituency. Three candidates stood at the election in December - Brigadier General H. Page Croft (National Party), Mr. F. J. Hopkins (Labour) and Mr. T. D. Keighley (Liberal). Polling Day was Saturday, 14th December, but the result was not announced until Saturday 28th December, as the votes from those serving in the forces did not arrive until after Christmas. Brigadier General Page Croft was elected with a majority of 8,746. The Liberal candidate, Mr. Keighley, lost his deposit. Page Croft had previously represented Christchurch since 1910, and his mother had presented to the town the four-faced clock in the Municipal College tower. His nephew, Gerald Hoare, who was wounded in action on 27th May 1918, died in the Mont Dore officers Convalescent Home on August 1st, aged 19.

The year ended with a feeling of well-being and complacency. Everybody was looking forward to the men in the forces coming home. The street lamps in the main roads were lit again after many months of "groping our way in blank darkness" as one newspaper report put it. The Town Council was looking forward to the future and proposed that the Mont Dore be purchased for a Town Hall when it was no longer needed as a military hospital. This idea caused a great deal of controversy, but eventually the proposal went through, and in 1921 the Mont Dore became the new Town Hall. The Bournemouth Guardian, however, aimed its editorial on 30th November at the easy-going attitude:-

"Bournemouth has done so well in the last two years of the war that there are people in it who assume that the abounding prosperity of today is sure to continue. It may be so and we hope so, but it would be wise to begin to look ahead...

Something, perhaps, of the wonderful seasons we have had has been due to its distance from any war alarms, combined with its comparative nearness to London and the big centres. Something is due to the fact that this part of the South has been almost a military camp owing to its proximity to the chief war seaport to the front (i.e. Southampton). We must get to work. Bournemouth must be in the re-construction, and not delay".

Christmas at the hotels and boarding houses was more or less on the pre-war scale. All the attractions were well patronised by the many visitors. At the hospitals the wounded were entertained as usual, and for the troops still stationed here the residents opened their homes and provided them with hospitality. This was especially appreciated by the Americans, who were billeted in the town.

1919 AND AFTERWARDS

The New Year arrived in great contrast to the previous four. Instead of no bells, no real festivities, and silent streets, 1919 was ushered in with much merrymaking to the happy sounds of bells pealing from church towers all over the town.

The Local War Organisations started to close down, marking the passing of the voluntary work that had for all the war years absorbed the time and attention of many people.

The Auxiliary Hospitals emptied as the wounded were either discharged, or moved to other military hospitals. Stourwood closed just after Christmas 1918, as did Heron Court. Crag Head followed in January, Bodorgan Road in February, and Grata Quies in March. The Boscombe Military Hospital also closed in March, with the exception of the Bournemouth Ward which continued to be used for local cases. The Mont Dore remained as a convalescent home for Officers until midsummer, when it too was shut down.

Mr. Alfred Ives, Commandant of the Stourwood Hospital, stated in a letter to the Bournemouth Guardian that he felt sure that one of the principal features in the recovery of the wounded had been the provision of suitable entertainment both in the hospitals and out of doors. Every Friday 50 seats had been provided free of charge at the Hippodrome and for other entertainments complimentary tickets were also available. There had also been free admission to the Winter Gardens and invitations to have tea with local families were also numerous. There had always been willing volunteers to provide transport, not only to the places of entertainment, but for drives out into the countryside. When the charabancs were running many of the more mobile wounded had enjoyed the trips into the New Forest.

The work done by the War Hospital Supply Depots was no longer required, so all of them, Bodorgan Road, Southbourne, the Hospital Woodworking Depot and others shut down during the early months of the year. At the closing ceremony at Bodorgan Road the Mayor expressed the wish that the voluntary help so unsparingly given should not cease, but be channelled into some other welfare work. This led to the Bournemouth Remembrance League starting in October 1919. Some of the former members of the War Hospital Supply Depots and the Women's Emergency Corps banded together to recommence making dressings, bandages, clothing, slippers and other requirements for the local hospitals, and to help social

welfare societies as well as the overseas medical societies.

The Women's Patrols were disbanded at the end of April, but the three Empire Clubs for Girls at Pokesdown, Springbourne and Winton, which had been started early in the war, continued to do excellent work.

The Special Constables were also disbanded. In August 1914 volunteers had been called for to act as "Specials". These volunteers were mostly men over military age, who did the police work on top of their normal jobs. Initially they did not have uniforms, but in 1917 they were provided with a badge, a cap and a mackintosh. Nearly 400 joined over the 4 years; some of them were called up and some left the district. They patrolled the streets, the cliffs and the Undercliff Drive. This allowed Bournemouth to be policed with only two-thirds of its proper strength. Out of the 150 men at the end, 34 were entitled to the Special Constables Medal for service of 3 years or more.

Another group to be demobilised were the Sea Scouts engaged in coast watching duties with the Coastguards. A meeting of local Scouts was held on February 8th at the Bournemouth Pier Approach, when a message from the King thanking them for their Work during the war was read. One local Scout from Southbourne volunteered for duty as a coastwatcher on the East coast, where he spent the winter of 1916-17 in charge of a patrol of six scouts at a spot so isolated that they had to fend for themselves entirely, and had a 2 mile boat journey to collect supplies. When he reached 18 he joined the RNVR and became a Wireless operator on a mine sweeper.

In July the Bournemouth Flag Day Committee held their last meeting. They had arranged 36 Flag Days for many worthy causes and had raised a total of £28,000. The Mayor's War Relief Fund closed at the end of July. For over 5 years since it began there had been a great many subscribers and a list of their donations was published weekly in the newspapers. The donations were listed under the names of the funds for which they were given: War Relief Fund; Relief of Belgians in Bournemouth; Wounded Soldiers and Sailors Fund, and Bournemouth Prisoners of War Fund.

The toy factory at Tachbrook, Bath Road was allowed to continue by the Corporation. Disabled British servicemen replaced the Belgians in making toys. This was the start of the Disabled Sailors and Soldiers Workshops which were eventually established in Wimborne Road, Winton at the top of Peter's Hill in 1920. The site was the old Parish Hall where the Winton National Kitchen had been situated. The original workshop in Wimborne Road was

an old army hut; however in February 1950 a modern brick building was opened by Countess Haig. The men extended their range of goods to include leather and basket work. The workshops were purchased in the early 1960's by the Corporation, and renamed Bournemouth Workshops for the Disabled.

The repatriation of the Belgian refugees started at the end of 1918 when 85 left. The remaining Belgians departed at the end of March 1919. They went in two parties, the first numbering 74, and the second 50. Many had been in the town since 1914, under the care of the Bournemouth Belgian Relief Committee. Most of the cost of their stay had been met by donations. Some of them had been able to find work in the town. In 1918 at least 15 of the 50 members of the Municipal Orchestra were Belgian. However, the demands on the fund grew towards the end of 1918 because a considerable number, who up to then had not asked for help, found that they could not find work to support themselves. Early in 1919 the fund was nearly depleted and the Committee had to appeal for more funds. After the last Belgians had left in March the Committee was disbanded. Each member of the Committee received a letter from the Belgian Minister of the Interior expressing thanks on behalf of the Belgian Government for the generous hospitality and assistance given during the war.

Khaki uniforms were becoming less predominant by April. The soldiers billeted in the town were leaving. The New Zealand Engineers left to return home. Their Band, which had been so popular, gave their last concert in March at the Winter Gardens, when the Mayor, Alderman E. E. Bishop, and Mr. Dan Godfrey thanked them for their delightful playing. As a memento of their stay the Commanding Officer of the New Zealand troops presented to the Town Council a New Zealand flag. A framed photograph of the Band was also given by Sergeant Major Parnell, the leader of the Band, on behalf of its members. The Mayor, in his turn, gave a dinner to the Officers, as thanks for the "happy relations" which had existed between the troops and the town during the billeting in Southbourne and Boscombe.

In March the local YMCA took over both The Grange and Khartoum House in Boscombe from the New Zealander YMCA, to use as hostels for all soldiers spending their leave in the town. The Hospitality Hut on Horseshoe Common was removed in July and the wounded soldiers' rest shelter in the cloisters also closed.

Men of the 7th Hampshire Regiment were welcomed home in July. They had left for India in 1914, and had then gone to Mesopotamia in 1917. Their rearguard arrived back in August. The 9th Hampshire Regiment, in which some Bournemouthians were serving

returned from Siberia in December, after sailing from Vladivostock at the end of October.

It is impossible to tell how many men and women from the town served in the Forces, or in some voluntary capacity, but from Bournemouth School for Boys alone 615 Old Boys joined up. Of these 91 were killed and 94 wounded, 214 were commissioned, and there were 17 MCs, 35 MMs and 2 DFCs awarded for bravery.

A Peace Thanksgiving Service was held in Meyrick Park in July. Unfortunately the Peace Day Celebrations in the middle of July were marred by bad weather, and several events had to be postponed. The Mayor presented a souvenir Peace medal to all the school children in the Borough.

The National Association of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors together with the Comrades of the Great War Association and the Town Council arranged a united open air memorial service for the Bournemouth men killed, on Sunday 21st September in Meyrick Park. It was attended by several thousand people, and was preceded by a procession of ex-servicemen from the Lansdowne.

The two-minute silence at 11 o'clock on Armistice Day, the wish of the King, was observed all over the town. Everything stopped and a great hush fell. In the Square many hundreds of people gathered there just before 11 am. All the trams came to a standstill, the power being cut off at the depot. In the churches special services were held as Bournemouth joined the nation's tribute to the fallen.

The question of a war memorial was put to a public meeting in June. The meeting decided to establish and endow homes for discharged disabled men from Bournemouth and the district, as well as erecting a permanent memorial in the centre of the town to the Bournemouth men who died in the War.

It was proposed to build several houses in Charminster and also a Temple of Memory with bronze panels giving the names of those killed, but the War Memorial Committee found that the donations received for this did not cover the estimated cost. It was impossible with the funds at their disposal to proceed with building and endowing homes within the Borough, so the Committee arranged with the Village Centre at Enham, Hampshire, to reserve in perpetuity six vacancies for the residence, treatment and training of eligible ex-servicemen from Bournemouth and district. Enham Village Centre had been set up in 1918 to combine the treatment and training of men who had been disabled in the war.

The War Memorial was designed by Mr. E. A. Shervey, the Deputy Borough Architect, and constructed by W. A. Hoare (Sculptors) Ltd. of Boscombe. It was built of Portland stone and was erected on a platform of four steps. Doric columns can be seen at the four corners, which carry the canopy having classic urns over each column. The memorial is enclosed by a balustraded approach up a flight of steps guarded by marble lions. This elegant design was accorded much praise. There had been some argument that, as many churches in the area had erected their own tablet or monument commemorating the fallen of the parish, a Bournemouth war memorial was not needed. However the idea of a central memorial at which the town as a whole could pay homage to the dead was at last accepted. The War Memorial Committee came to the conclusion "that the memorial should be placed in a comparatively central, but not too public, a position". This was achieved by siting it in the Upper Pleasure Gardens, opposite the junction of Braidley Road and Bourne Avenue, facing the Town Hall. The memorial is surrounded by lawns and rose beds in a position easily accessible, but away from the traffic noise in the Square. The names of the fallen are not recorded on the memorial, but a bronze tablet has the following inscription:-

"To the Glorious Memory of those Men and Women of the County Borough of Bournemouth who made the Supreme Sacrifice in the Great War 1914 - 1918"

A similar tablet commemorates the dead of the Second World War.

The unveiling and dedication of the War Memorial took place on Wednesday 8th November 1922. Major-General The Right Honorable J.E.B. Seely, Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, performed the unveiling ceremony, whilst the Bishop of Southampton gave the dedication prayer. On the following Saturday, 11th November, the Armistice Day Service was conducted at the Memorial for the first time.

During the Second World War a bomb fell thirty yards away from the memorial. Luckily there was no damage done; it was only covered with mud and soil. This was hosed away with water from the Bourne Stream, by pumps supplied by the Fire Brigade. In 1980 the memorial was cleaned and restored, the cost being defrayed from the proceeds of the town lottery.

The War Memorial Committee also compiled a Book of Remembrance giving the names of the War dead. The 650 names were obtained by advertisement and by asking the churches and other religious organisations for the names of their parishioners or members who had been killed. The Book itself was written on vellum, and is kept in a shrine kept in the Hall of Memory at the Town Hall, where there is the memorial to the Officers of the Borough who died.

Copies of the Book were printed for distribution to relatives, and other interested people. The shrine also holds the Book of Remembrance, listing the dead of the 1939-1945 War.

Fampoux Gardens, between Green Road and Firbank Road, at Five Ways, Charminster, was constructed as a memorial to the gallant stand made by the Hampshire Regiment at Fampoux, in the Battle of Arras, March 1918. The work was done by unemployed ex-servicemen, the cost partially being met by the local British Legion. The Corporation provided the ground, plant and tools, whilst more financial assistance was given by the Rotary Club. The completed garden was opened on Saturday, 21st April 1925, by Major-General Sir H. Brooking, Vice-Chairman of the local British Legion.

In 1922 the Imperial War Graves Commission, now the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, requested the Corporation to grant right of interment in perpetuity for all the war graves in the Borough cemeteries. This the Council was pleased to do. They also agreed to maintain the grave of a German Prisoner of War, who died at Dorchester in March 1918 and was buried in the East Cemetery. The Commission laid out the War Graves Plot in 1922, erecting the Cross of Sacrifice, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, RA, as used in British War Cemeteries all over the world. The War Plot contains 76 graves, and there are 45 graves scattered throughout the rest of the East Cemetery. A similar Cross was erected, and dedicated, six years later, just inside the main entrance to Wimborne Road Cemetery, to commemorate the 48 war dead buried there. The Commission placed its standard headstone on all the graves which did not have a private memorial. It also erected a headstone in the War Plot to the memory of two soldiers who were drowned off Bournemouth in January 1915, and whose bodies were never found. Throughout the town, memorials were erected to the fallen in Churches and Chapels, public buildings and places of work. They are too numerous to list, but the following are some of the different types:-

A Memorial Cross was dedicated at Talbot Village Church in memory of the men of Talbot Village and Wallisdown.

At Bournemouth Head Post Office a War Memorial tablet was unveiled to commemorate 23 members of the Post Office who were killed out of the 270 who served.

St. John's, Boscombe, replaced a wooden porch with a stone one as their memorial.

The three members of the Salvation Army from the Boscombe Corps who were killed are remembered on a memorial at the Citadel.

And in the churchyard at St. Peter's, the Chapel of the Resurrection was built in 1925/6, as a memorial to those of the Church who died.

During the first post-war year Bournemouth was honoured with two Royal Visits. In February Princess Beatrice, Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, opened extensions at the Russell Cotes Art Gallery, and Princess Marie Louise, Queen Victoria's granddaughter, opened a Bazaar at St. Luke's, Winton, on 20th May, held to raise money to pay off the debt incurred in the formation of the new Parish.

Two other famous visitors came later in the year. Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty and Field Marshall Earl Haig received the Honorary freedom of the Borough on 30th October at a ceremony held in the Winter Gardens.

The first Lady Councillor was elected to the Town Council in January. Mrs. Florence Laney won her seat in the election held for the Boscombe West Ward. She had tried to become a Councillor before, but had not been successful. This was the beginning of a long and useful career. Mrs. Laney served on the Council for many years, becoming an Alderman in November 1933. She died in February 1935.

As Mrs. Laney started her public service, Miss Laura B. Starkey of Grove Road finished hers. She had fully equipped and maintained four motor ambulances during the war. Driving one herself she was a well-known figure, admired in every hospital between Southampton and Weymouth. Amongst many tributes and gifts she was presented with a silver salver by the members of the Red Cross Hospital at Christchurch, and a silver rose bowl by the staff at Boscombe Hospital. Surgeon-General Stevenson was similarly honoured for his work in charge of all the military hospitals in the area.

The 1919 holiday season was a great success. The beaches were thronged with holidaymakers, but several mines were washed up causing some alarm. These were rendered harmless by the Royal Engineers. Many people from Bournemouth visited Poole in January when U107, a German submarine, was tied up at the Quay. Over 10,300 people viewed it in ten days, raising over £700 for the King's Fund for Disabled Officers and Men. Another surrendered German submarine intended for Japan got into difficulties in Studland Bay in January's bad weather. Manned by Japanese and escorted by "Kanran", a Japanese destroyer, U143 grounded on the Bull sands. The crew was taken off and ferried to Poole. When the weather abated the crew was returned, and the submarine refloated.

The peak holiday period saw many of the annual events which had been cancelled during the war years revived. The Lawn Tennis, Bowls and Croquet Tournaments were played, and the Cricket Week at Dean Park attracted many spectators. The Regatta was not held, however, until August 1920, nor did the paddle steamers return until May of that year. But there were boat trips run from Bournemouth Pier to Swanage and Studland using two motor boats, Nosey and Lavinia. In August Supermarine Flying Boats were giving joy-rides around the Bay. One accidentally became submerged on landing. Happily there were no injuries, even though the pilot and passengers were thrown into the sea.

Ensbury Aerodrome was handed back in May to the Bournemouth Aviation Company, who started a passenger service from London to Bournemouth. The inaugural flight was on June 6th when the Mayor, Alderman E.E. Bishop, the Deputy Mayor, Alderman H. Robson, and the Town Clerk, Mr. H. Ashling, flew in a Handley-Page aeroplane from Cricklewood Aerodrome. There were also joy-flights which proved extremely popular all through the summer.

September saw the visit of HMS Barham and HMS Malaya. They anchored in the Bay and were open for inspection by the public. Also in September, the Schneider Trophy was competed for at Bournemouth. This, the third of the international seaplane contests, was held under the auspices of the Royal Aero Club on September 10th. Only one competitor, Guido Jannello of Italy in a Savoia flying-boat, completed the course because of fog, and he was disqualified for missing the marker at Swanage. However, the trophy was eventually awarded to Jannello.

The railway strike in September caused great difficulties to a large number of holiday-makers. No trains were run from Saturday 27th September until Monday 6th October. Many visitors were unable to return home on the day planned. Some cut their holiday short by a day, leaving on the Friday. Charabancs were used to convey people to London, Bristol, Birmingham, Bath and other large towns. The Square looked like a railway station with hundreds waiting there with their luggage hoping for seats in the coaches. Lorries were used to bring in food supplies and military guards were placed over petrol pumps in Springbourne and Boscombe.

1919 had been a good year for Bournemouth. The first post-war holiday season had been excellent. So too had the first real post-war Christmas. The shops reported brisk business and the hotels and boarding houses were full.

The editorial in the Bournemouth Guardian, 27th December, stated that:-

"From all appearances this is a Christmas more after the old fashion than for many years past ... the national spirit seems to be recovering its buoyancy".

With such a first-class start the town was now looking forward to a prosperous future after the restrictions and stagnation of the War years.

APPENDIX ONE: **HOSPITALS**

Apart from the established hospitals, and the Mont Dore which was a military hospital under War Office supervision, the local auxiliary hospitals, set up for the large number of wounded sent to the town, were mostly large houses which had rooms suitable for conversion into wards. Some also had large grounds in which marquees or huts were erected. A number of these houses were situated outside the Borough. Details of those which came under Surgeon-General W. F. Stevenson of Boscombe Military Hospital have been included regardless of situation. It was his task to co-ordinate the work of all these hospitals using Boscombe Military Hospital as his Headquarters.

Statistics of patients treated in the hospitals are not fully available. Until December 1917 some were published in the reports sent to the Mayor's War Fund, but after that none were made public. The number of patients admitted to the Mont Dore after the Indians left was never given. Newspaper reports on the closure of some of the hospitals, but not all, mentioned the number treated. The figures available have been given in the information on each hospital in this appendix.

All the hospitals were staffed by trained nurses, some of whom were members of either the Red Cross or the St. John Ambulance Brigade, and many VAD's. The duties in the hospitals were hard. An article in the Nursing Times, 18th September 1915, on the Crag Head Hospital, reported that a probationer was on trial for three months. 'The first month she was employed as a ward maid, preparing meals, washing up and keeping the ward clean and tidy. The second month she was transferred to the wards performing elementary nursing duties, and the last month was spent on night duty. The hours were 8.30 am to 2 pm or 2 pm to 8.50 pm. Night duty was from 8 pm to 8 am.

Although the abbreviation VAD was used to describe the voluntary workers in the hospitals, VAD actually stood for Voluntary Aid Detachment, an organisation formed nationally in 1909. The members were to supplement the Territorial Army medical service. The VAD was co-ordinated by a joint committee of equal numbers of members from the British Red Cross, St. John Ambulance Brigade and the Territorial Forces Association. At the outbreak of war there were over 2,000 VADs, with over 70,000 members.

Both men and women belonged to the VAD, but there had been a misconception that only women could join at the beginning. Many men over age or exempt from military service did exemplary work. All classes helped, shop girls, clerks, members of the aristocracy and factory workers. The members had to pass the examinations of either the St. John Ambulance Brigade or the British Red Cross Society. Those trained by the Red Cross wore a red cross, whilst those examined by the St. John Ambulance Brigade had the white eight-pointed star. They were worn on an armband or on the nurse's apron. VAD members worked in all the hospitals, both in the military ones as well as in the auxiliary. They were nurses, orderlies, ambulance drivers and cooks. Many worked a full-time day job, helping in the hospitals during the evenings and weekends. Some volunteered to go to other hospitals in England. Local VADs helped at Southampton to nurse the wounded from the Somme. Others went to France and nursed in the Army hospitals there. It was in France that Miss Lilian Audrey Forse, VAD (sister of the Vicar of St. Katherine's, Southbourne) performed the action for which she was awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty under enemy fire.

She was in charge of a marquee used as a ward at the 53rd General Hospital, when the ward was hit by a bomb during an air-raid. Many patients were injured and the marquee was badly damaged. Miss Forse "showed admirable coolness in the performance of her duties and carried on as if nothing had happened".

The names of many VADs working in local hospitals were "brought to the attention of the Secretary of State for War for valuable services rendered". Sister Porteous of Branksome Gate Hospital was invested by the King with the OBE for her work. The furnishing and equipment for most of the auxiliary hospitals was borrowed or purchased with donations. Many people lent bedsteads, mattresses, sheets, pillows, blankets, towels, cutlery, chairs, tables and many other useful articles. When the hospitals closed those who had lent articles could claim them back, if not they were sold at auction. All around Bournemouth there were many other military and auxiliary hospitals and the names of some of these have been listed with brief details when known. Also listed are the names of the nursing homes which were used for the Belgian troops in 1914 and 1915.

BOSCOMBE MILITARY HOSPITAL, Shelley Road

Surgeon-in-Charge: Surgeon-General W. F. Stevenson, C.B., K.H.S., A.M.S.

Shortly after the commencement of the war the Hospital Authority proposed to the War Office that they should provide up to 200 beds for the sick and wounded who might be sent to Bournemouth. This was approved and the Committee decided to erect marquees in the grounds of the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital, Shelley Road. The Bournemouth War Relief Committee voted £750 from the Mayor's Local War Fund for erecting and equipping these extra wards. These new wards were named King George, Queen Mary and Lord Kitchener, and were built on raised boarded floors to permit air to circulate under them. One was 80ft x 35ft containing 30 beds, and the other two were 50ft x 25ft with 18 beds each. In addition, the Child Clark Children's Ward was used, the patients being transferred to the Lowther Road Hospital. This building is now being used as the Teacher's Centre.

Later on, to accommodate the vastly increased number of patients, the Hospital Board, with the help of public funds, erected another ward and modified the existing ones. The new ward, Queen Alexandra Ward, was built entirely of wood and contained 34 beds. The original marquees were given Rubberoid roofs to replace those damaged in a gale, but they retained their canvas sides. These could be partially let down to admit fresh air. The cost of the new ward and the repairs, plus more equipment, was defrayed by a grant from the Mayor's Local War Fund amounting to £1,500. In November 1917 the Mayor's War Relief Committee made another grant in aid of the provision of covered ways between the main building and the temporary buildings.

In May 1918 a new ward was opened as a gymnasium for the wounded. Its official title was the "Mechanic-therapeutical Department" or, in other words, a department for mechanical treatment. The various forms of apparatus provided means of coaxing life and suppleness into limbs which had been stiffened through wounds.

Another temporary building, L-shaped and built of wood, named the

Bournemouth Ward, was opened on 29th July 1918, releasing beds in the main building for civilian patients. There was a large number of children waiting for admission so the Child Clark Ward was reopened for them. The new ward accommodated 52 beds and cost £800, £500 of this coming from the Mayor's Fund. Later on in the year covered ways were provided between the main hospital and the Bournemouth Ward.

The report of the Hospital Board for 1916 said that 801 patients had been sent back to their units fit for service again. 336 had been transferred to other local hospitals, and there had been only 7 deaths. The number of military patients treated during the year had been 1,246 in-patients and 921 out-patients. The number of military beds had risen to 240 and the Boscombe Hospital had virtually become a purely military hospital. A previous report covering October 1914 to December 1915 said that the number treated had been 1,318 in-patients and 1,714 out-patients with 12 deaths.

As well as dealing with the administration for the Hospital, all admissions, discharges, clothing, travel, pay and leave for all other military hospitals in the area were carried out at Boscombe.

Crag Head Red Cross Hospital, Manor Road

This Hospital originally provided 100 beds for wounded and sick soldiers. It was opened by the Red Cross in October 1914 as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers from the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, Hampshire. It was started by the Branksome Park Detachment of the Poole Division of the British Red Cross, who collected furniture and money for all the equipment needed, and also for its maintenance. The house was kindly lent for the purpose by the executors of the late G. J. Fenwick, Esq. The hospital was started on 12th August and was ready by the end of September, the first 100 patients arriving on 14th October.

In December 1914 owing to the large number of troops billeted in the area without medical accommodation, it was decided to utilise it for acute cases of all kinds. The hospital was therefore taken over by the War Office and placed under the supervision of Surgeon-General Stevenson of Boscombe Military Hospital.

The hospital was divided into 14 wards arranged on 3 floors. Lifts were provided to carry patients between floors and speaking tubes on the landings were another labour-saving device. An operating theatre was fitted up so that operations could be carried out on the premises instead of sending the patient to Boscombe Hospital.

In 1915 the nursing staff consisted of the Matron, four Sisters (one for each floor and one for the operating theatre), one night superintendent, four staff nurses, four ward nurses and twenty Red Cross probationers. These probationers were all drawn from the local Voluntary Aid Detachments.

Crag Head has spacious gardens in which the soldiers could sit on fine days and enjoy the sunshine. There was a large conservatory which could be used when the weather was bad. The gardens were also used for fetes and parties to entertain the patients and raise money for the Hospital.

The hospital return of July 1915 states that 837 patients had been treated at Crag Head from October 1914 and that 76 were there at that time. By June 1917 the number treated had risen to 2,196. The last figure

available is for November 1918 which was 5,470. The number of deaths was 26.

Crag Head Hospital was closed at the end of 1918, the equipment being sold by auction in February 1919.

Crag Head was built in the 1870's and Queen Sophia Wilhelmina, Queen of Sweden, stayed there in the early part of 1881. She returned with her husband the King of Sweden, Oscar II, in May 1881, when on 25th May he laid the foundation stone of the Mont Dore Hotel, travelling along a decorated route through the town from Crag Head. It is a strange coincidence that these two buildings should both be used as hospitals during the war. Crag Head was demolished in 1972 and a block of luxury flats erected on the site in 1973.

GRATA QUIES AUXILIARY HOSPITAL, 29 Western Avenue, Branksome Park, Poole

Although not in the Borough of Bournemouth, Grata Quies was under the supervision of Surgeon-General Stevenson, Boscombe Military Hospital, and was worked as an auxiliary hospital in association with the Mont Dore Hospital and Crag Head.

Grata Quies was lent originally by Mrs. Mounsey-Heysham as a home for Belgian refugees, but on Poole becoming a prohibited area that project was abandoned. The house was then equipped for use as a hospital for wounded Belgian soldiers. When it was opened on 21st November 1914, Grata Quies had 40 beds, but in May 1915 a new ward was built to provide another 30 beds. An anonymous donor gave £150 to provide a new operating theatre and a recreation room. The new ward measured 52ft x 23ft and was designed by Mr. F.W. Lacey, the Borough Engineer of Bournemouth, and was known as the Burgess Ward.

The hospital was governed by a Committee nominated by the Bournemouth War Relief Committee and was maintained by:

1. A capitation grant from the War Office
2. Special voluntary contributions, and
3. The Mayor's War Relief Fund

After February 1915 no more Belgian soldiers were sent to Bournemouth from the front, and as the Belgian authorities had more accommodation than they needed it was decided to transfer Grate Quies to the War Office for use by British soldiers. With the consent of Mrs. Mounsey-Heysham this was done in November 1915, the British wounded coming initially from Crag Head and the Red Cross Hospital at Christchurch. The remaining Belgian soldiers were transferred to other hospitals away from Bournemouth. Between 30 and 40 men from Grata Quies and other nursing homes were sent to London, some to the King Albert Hospital for Belgians, only one officer and three men remaining behind because their injuries were such that they could not travel. Over 240 Belgians had been treated at Grata Quies, five dying of their wounds. They were buried in Boscombe Cemetery. After the war some were exhumed and their bodies sent back to Belgium.

The hospital return for March 1916 stated that 110 cases had been cared for at Greta Quies since November 1915, of which 44 were still there. Between 1914 and May 1917, 850 sick or wounded Belgian and British soldiers had been treated there. By the end of the war nearly 1,700 patients had received treatment.

very popular and later on the workshops were moved to Tachbrook, near the Belle Vue Hotel. This toy factory was the start of what eventually became the Workshops for Disabled Soldiers and Sailors in the Wimborne Road, Winton. The hospital closed on 18th March 1919, the remaining patients being transferred to Cosham Military Hospital. The house has been demolished and the grounds redeveloped.

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HERON COURT AUXILIARY HOSPITAL, Hurn, Christchurch

Heron Court Auxiliary Hospital, run by the Red Cross, Bournemouth and Christchurch Division, was attached to the Boscombe Military Hospital under Surgeon-General Stevenson, even though it was not in the Borough of Bournemouth

It was situated in the home of Lord and Lady Malmesbury and was opened on 4th November 1914, when it was then attached as a convalescent home to the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley, but in May 1915 it was transferred as an annexe to Boscombe.

Only those men who were convalescent and did not need a great deal of nursing, who only required dressings, massage or rest were sent to Heron Court. Originally there were two wards, one called "England", the other "Belgium". The former had 12 beds, the latter 8. This accommodation was extended at the end of 1916 by the erection of a hut giving 10 extra beds. The hut actually held 18, but 8 were moved from "Belgium" ward. This ward was then used as a much needed recreation room with a billiard table and tables for writing.

The Hospital was intended for non-commissioned officers and men. In 1914 some Belgian soldiers were nursed there, but by the end of December 1915 there were only British troops.

The Hospital was supervised by Lady Malmesbury, who was the Vice-President of the Bournemouth and Christchurch Division of the British Red Cross Society, who had a staff of 10 nurses plus VAD helpers. Between November 1914 and December 1916 this small hospital treated 257 patients.

The patients used the grounds to walk in and to play croquet and golf, as well as boating and fishing in the River Stour. The Bournemouth Guardian, 30th December 1916, reported that "Concert parties and entertainers of all descriptions are constantly giving their services to brighten the hours of convalescence and everything possible is being done to make the men's stay as pleasant and happy as possible".

The Hospital closed in December 1918 and is now Hurn Court School.

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MONT DORE MILITARY HOSPITAL, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth

The Mont Dore Hotel was taken over by the War Office for conversion into a hospital for the Indian Wounded on 20th November 1914. 20 Officers and men of the RAMC arrived from London on Sunday 22nd November and they were followed by 30 to 40 soldiers of the Madras Infantry Regiment who were to look after the wounded. The first batch of about 100 wounded Indian soldiers arrived at the end of November. From then until November 1915

there was a constant stream of Indians arriving, and when fit going elsewhere, sometimes to the convalescent hospital at Barton-on-Sea.

In November 1915 the Mont Dore, together with other Indian hospitals, became a British Military Hospital. This was because of the withdrawal of the Indian Army Corps from France. The Indians at the Mont Dore were moved either to the Indian Hospital at Brighton, or to Lady Hardinge's Hospital at Brockenhurst. It is said that the ghost of an Indian soldier who died at the Mont Dore can be seen in the basement.

After the departure of the Indian soldiers nearly 500 British wounded were moved in to be nursed by members of the South African Medical Corps. The SAMC had left South Africa in October 1915 and arrived in Bournemouth in January 1916. The 1st South African General Hospital left for France in July, leaving the RAMC to run the Mont Dore.

Australian and New Zealand soldiers were admitted as well as British, but in 1918 the Hospital was changed yet again into a convalescent home for Officers. The existing patients were transferred by train and car all over the country. The men of the St. John Ambulance Brigade took men by road as far as Swanage, Yeovil and Cosham.

A number of the convalescent Officers formed themselves into a Pierrot Troupe and gave concerts to help the Mayor's War Fund and the Women's Emergency Corps. Others made up teams to play cricket and football against local clubs and the Bournemouth School for Boys.

In November 1918 many of the patients were Officers repatriated from Prisoner of War Camps. Unlike the Auxiliary Hospitals no statistics of the number of wounded admitted were published, so it is impossible to say how many were treated there.

The Mont Dore closed in 1919, but it did not revert to a hotel. It was purchased by the Bournemouth Corporation for use as the Town Hall, opening in 1921.

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE HOSPITAL, 2 Bodorgan Road

The Hospital was opened in November 1915 as an auxiliary hospital with 25 beds, increased later to 27. Then in June 1917 two marquees, each having 15 beds, were provided by the War Office, bringing the number of beds to 57. It was staffed by VADs and St. John Ambulance nurses with the assistance of several qualified Sisters. Mrs. Bottomley, who joined as a Sister, became Matron in December 1917. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross Medal for her work.

The house had been placed at the disposal of Dr. Bottomley and Dr. Eleanor Bond, who organised a committee to carry out the work. Originally it only took cases from the troops billeted in the town and the camps in the area, but later on it received patients from the front. From 28th April 1916 it became an Annexe to the Boscombe Military Hospital. The building had six wards, an operating theatre and a dining room. It was the only auxiliary hospital in the town to have its own dispensary. When the building was taken over it was modified, redecorated and equipped by the members of the Brigade, who also erected the marquees on the lawn. The Brigade also provided men to act as orderlies during the day and night.

From November 1915 to 28th February 1919 when it closed 1,414 patients were admitted, of whom only 5 died, even though there were numerous operations.

The cost of the hospital was met partially by the War Office and by grants from the Mayor's War Fund, but the main source of finance was from donations and the Brigade.

STOURWOOD AUXILIARY HOSPITAL, 3, Bracken Road, Southbourne

An auxiliary hospital for the Boscombe Military Hospital, Shelley Road, under the supervision of Surgeon-General Stevenson. It was situated on the corner of Grand Avenue and Bracken Road, in a house newly built just before the war and which had never been occupied. Its first tenants were wounded soldiers. The first batch to arrive were wounded Belgians straight from the front on 1st December 1914. The initial number of beds provided was 10.

In May 1915 other provision was made for the Belgians, and Surgeon-General Stevenson, who was responsible for the local military hospitals, took it over, increasing the accommodation from 16 to 26 beds, and eventually to 30.

In October 1915 an extension was opened. This was a wooden hut for dining and recreation purposes. Later on in 1916 the military authorities provided two large hospital marquees, each containing 16 beds, and various wooden extensions were built in the garden. An extension to the dining room and recreation room, bathrooms, surgical dressing room and other equipment, which cost approximately £700, was provided by the Mayor's War Fund. These extensions were opened by General Page Croft, the local M.P., in December 1917. In April 1918 there were 52 patients being looked after by a staff of 8 nurses plus 6 VADs. The total number of patients treated is unknown. The figure for November 1918 was 1317. Stourwood Hospital closed down after Christmas 1918.

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OTHER LOCAL MILITARY AND AUXILIARY HOSPITALS

Balmer Lawn Hotel: Brockenhurst. 100 beds. Originally for Indian troops.

Barton-on-Sea Convalescent Camp: Originally used for Indian troops, it was later an English Military hospital. About 35,000 men passed through Barton in the 3 years it was open. It closed in March 1919.

Branksome Gate Hospital for Wounded Officers, Western Avenue, Branksome Park. Opened June 1916.

Brownsea Island: "Mrs Van Raalte, owner of Brownsea Island, does valuable work in taking severe cases of officers suffering from shell-shock and nervous breakdowns, and doing wonders in the way of restoring them to health again, in the peace of the castle garden" - Bournemouth Daily Echo, September 21, 1917.

Christchurch Red Cross Hospital: Started in October 1914 with 50 beds, which increased until in mid 1918 it could accommodate 300 patients. Closed February 1919. Nearly 5,000 patients treated there from October 1914 to the end of January 1919. The buildings used are now part of the Christchurch Hospital.

Cornelia Hospital, Poole: Two new wards were built for the wounded, having 60 beds. These were funded and equipped by the Poole Division of the British Red Cross. Forest Park Hotel, Brockenhurst. 100 beds. Set up for Indian troops.

Sandacres, Shore Road, Parkstone: Sir Ernest Cassel's Convalescent Home for Soldiers.

Sandhills, Mudeford: Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital of 20 beds.

Springfield, Castle Hill, Parkstone: A Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital for convalescent troops.

Somerley Manor, Ringwood: Convalescent Home for Officers.

South Lytchett Manor: Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital of 40 beds.

Thorney Hill Auxiliary Hospital, Bransgore: Attached to the New Zealand Hospital, Brockenhurst. .

Westworth Lodge, Southbourne: Convalescent Home for Officers.

NURSING HOMES USED FOR THE BELGIAN WOUNDED

Aston Grays, Knole Road

Miss Barger's, Dorset House, Kimberley Road.

Miss Brigham's, Westways, Forrest Road, Branksome Park.

Herbert Convalescent Home, Alumhurst Road. (Used entirely for the Belgians from October 1914 to June 1915. It had 60 beds. Re-opened for civilian patients July 1915).

Home of Good Hope, Portchester Road

Miss Judkin's, Fernside, St. Stephen's Road

Miss Rowley's, St. Catherine's, 25/27, Middle Road

Dr. Scorer's, 19 Christchurch Road

Stagsden, 14, West Cliff Road

Mrs. Wilson's, Mont Serrat, 24, Lorne Park Road

Plus

Royal Victoria Hospital, Lowther Road. Sometimes known as Miss Churcher's, who was the Sister in Charge. The building is now the Teachers' Centre.

APPENDIX TWO: WAR ORGANISATIONS

Many organisations came into being during 1914-1918 to help the war effort in different ways. The aim of the majority was to give assistance to the armed forces in some tangible way, such as providing comforts, hospital supplies, nursing and helping to entertain the soldiers billeted in the town, as well as the sick and wounded. There were others such as the Ordnance Volunteers, whose members helped to make shell cases using their own workshops and lathes, and the Volunteers who, under the Territorial Force Association, guarded the cliffs and assisted in the hospitals.

This Appendix gives details of some of these organisations, others are mentioned in the text, and there is a list at the end of names of organisations which have been found during the research for this pamphlet, but unfortunately without any details being traced.

BOURNEMOUTH BOROUGH NEEDLEWORK ASSOCIATION

The Bournemouth Borough Needlework Association was formed in January 1916. It was registered and approved by the Mayoress' Committee of Working Parties for the War. Work began in the Boscombe Ward, followed by all the other Wards in the town. Each Ward had its regular workers, but besides these other people made contributions through the Association. The total number of workers at the end of the Association was 1,176.

Funds to purchase the materials needed were raised in each Ward and in many cases the volunteers paid for the material themselves. Gloves, scarves, warm underclothing and socks were amongst the articles made.

The total number of articles despatched was:
Gifts to combatant British troops 26,920
Gifts to sick and wounded in hospitals 23,876
Gifts to British Prisoners of War 278
Gifts for Allied troops and foreign troops 20,696.

BOURNEMOUTH PRISONERS OF WAR FUND

This fund was started in March 1915 and like all other war organisations received generous public support. By January 1918 it had 78 local POW's on its books to whom parcels of food and tobacco were sent. The German offensive of March 1918 nearly doubled that number and at the end of the war there were 130 men in captivity. During 1918 6,370 parcels were despatched and repatriated men said that they owed their lives to the contents of the parcels. The fund closed in December 1918.

BOURNEMOUTH WAR HOSPITAL SUPPLY DEPOT, Thornleigh, 5 Bodorgan Road

In August 1914 the Mayoress of Bournemouth started a Ladies Executive Committee in connection with the Mayor's War Relief Fund. The members met in each other's houses to make bandages and surgical supplies. In September 1915 the Depot was opened at 3, Bodorgan Road, the house being lent by Mrs. Twells, with 333 workers on its register of helpers. By September 1916 the number of volunteers had doubled, and one year later had risen to 975. All the work was done voluntarily and the funds for running the Depot plus the materials used were donated. The workers gave what time they could, the Depot being open five days a week from 10.30 am to 5.15 pm.

The Depot was associated with the St. Marylebone Central Surgical Branch of the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild, and in February 1916 received a certificate for excellent work. The work was divided into 3 :

1. The making of bandages, dressings, swabs, bed and hospital equipment, garments and slippers.
2. Carpentry work, crutches, bed rests, tables and splints.
3. The management, organisation, storing and despatching the finished articles.

From August 1915 to the end of January 1919 the total number of articles made was 805,461. In the twelve months September 1916 to 1917 over 150,000 articles were sent to the local hospitals, whilst 52,400 went to hospitals abroad.

The Depot closed on 5th February 1919. The surplus funds left were used to equip a Roumanian Hospital with blankets, sheets and towels.

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BOURNEMOUTH WAR HOSPITAL WOODWORK DEPOT

Started in October 1915 by Mr. W. Mold, a teacher of carpentry and Joinery at the Municipal College, with the aim of utilising the services of skilled men in their spare time to make useful articles for hospitals, from wood which could be obtained either as a gift or at a very low price. The basic material used was chiefly clean wooden boxes, especially 3-ply tea chests. These were carefully taken to pieces and used for various purposes according to the thickness and type of wood.

Articles made were bed-tables, bed-rests, bed-side tables, trays for dressings, knife boxes, writing desks, lock-up ward cupboards for drugs and crutches. Thousands of crutches were needed and in co-operation with the Kensington War Hospital Supply Depot, Bournemouth War Hospital Supply Depot provided hundreds of them, made to a very high standard.

The local Scouts were engaged in collecting the wood used and also in helping to pack the finished articles. The crates were sent via the Hampshire Football Association Wounded Soldiers Fund, who added hospital comforts, then despatched them to the hospitals, both in this country and France, by rail.

Appreciative letters were received from the Matrons of various hospitals in France. One letter thanked the Workers for designing and making bed-tables for men who had the use of only one arm, so making it possible for them to read and write in comfort.

The actual work was carried out in the workshops at the Pokesdown Technical Institute on the corner of Hannington and Christchurch Roads. The building was opened in 1899 and is now used as the Pokesdown Clinic. Originally it was open only on Thursday evenings from 6 pm to 9.30 pm, but later on the depot functioned every day with 14 workers in the day and 9 in the evening. At first the workers were skilled woodworkers, but as they were called up or went to work in the munition factories, semi-skilled amateurs took their places.

The Depot closed on 20th March 1919, having made a total of over 3,000 articles, 1,602 of them during the last war.

BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY

In 1914 there were two local Divisions of the British Red Cross Society, one covering Bournemouth and Christchurch, the other Poole and district.

The Bournemouth and Christchurch Division had as its Vice-President the Countess of Malmesbury, who also acted as the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. It consisted of 3 Detachments, two in Christchurch and one in Bransgore, with nearly 100 members. The two Christchurch Detachments ran the Red Cross Hospital at Christchurch (500 beds) plus the auxiliary hospitals at Heron Court (30 beds) and Sandhills, Mudeford (20 beds).

The Dorset County Branch Poole Division, had as its Vice-president Cornelia, Lady Wimborne. It consisted of five Detachments, two in Branksome Park, one in Parkstone, one in Poole and one in Kinson. The members numbered approximately 200. The Parkstone, Poole and Kinson Detachments raised the money to build two new wards for the wounded at the Cornelia Hospital, Poole, and also equipped them. The two Branksome Park Detachments equipped the Crag Head Hospital in Bournemouth and collected funds to maintain it as well as helping to provide the staff.

Red Cross Nurses from all Detachments worked at all the hospitals in the area.

HAMPSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION WOUNDED SOLDIERS FUND

The Hampshire Football Association Wounded Soldiers Fund was started in October 1914 to supply comforts to the wounded soldiers in hospitals in France. Boxes, limited in weight to 56 lbs, were sent to different types of hospitals, from Casualty Clearing Stations to Base Hospitals. Originally these numbered 9 but at the end of the 1st year another 5 had been added. By the end of the war over 60 general hospitals, ambulance trains and depots had been supplied by the Fund with over 1,200 cases.

An average of 6 cases were sent each week containing food, cigarettes, razor blades, games, magazines and books. Gramophones, with records, soap, hot-water bottles and air cushions were also included.

The Association was the idea of Mr. W. Pickford, Honorary Secretary, whose sister-in-law, Sister K. E. Flower, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve, went to France in August 1914. He arranged for

the Hampshire Football Association as part of its war effort to send a few parcels to her hospital. As she moved about the work of sending comforts grew larger. In the summer of 1915 the Association was officially formed and was registered as an official war charity in August 1916.

In conjunction with the Bournemouth War Hospital Woodwork Depot hundreds of splints, crutches, bed-tables and other wooden articles were included in the cases.

The funds required to pay for this charitable work were obtained from football matches played for charity, plus grants and donations.

The Association closed down at the end of 1918.

MAYOR'S WAR RELIEF COMMITTEE (also called the Bournemouth War Relief Committee)

This was started by the Mayor of Bournemouth at the outbreak of war. The formation of a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Mayor comprising representatives from all the charitable organisations and other interested organisations in the town was to ensure that there would not be any overlapping and therefore wasted endeavours.

The two main aims were :

1. To deal with the distress arising in the town caused by the war.
2. To help the local military and auxiliary hospitals with donations for extensions and running costs.

The Committee dealt with the raising of funds and with the allocation of the money donated to the Mayor's War Relief Fund. Every week it placed an advertisement in the local papers giving the amounts subscribed to the different charities under its jurisdiction.

The Mayoress also ran a Committee which registered and looked after the voluntary working parties making comforts for the troops. One of its tasks was to co-ordinate the distribution of the articles to the troops, treating all regiments with equal fairness.

Both these Committees closed down in 1919, the Mayor's in July and the Mayoress' in October.

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE, BOURNEMOUTH DIVISION (Hants VAD No. 9)

The Division started in Bournemouth in December 1892 and when the War broke out its strength was 30 men. Some of these joined the Military Home Hospital Reserve Scheme leaving Bournemouth to work as orderlies in Military Hospitals elsewhere and on ambulance trains. Between 1914 and 1919 118 men joined the Brigade, out of which 62 left to serve in the Army.

The Brigade was involved right from the early months of the War. They helped meet Red Cross trains at the railway stations, carried patients from the trains to the Boscombe Military Hospital, transported the wounded to Crag Head, Mont Dore, Greta Quies and the Belgians to the nursing homes in the town.

This most important work was at first made rather difficult by the lack of equipment of every kind, including vehicles. At the start the Brigade had only 8 stretchers and 56 blankets and no ambulance. However generous donations to the Brigade funds eased the situation and also the loan of cars and vans made their work easier. They also helped in the hospitals working as orderlies, sometimes even in the operating theatres.

When the house in Bodorgan Road was lent for use as a hospital the members of the Brigade did the majority of the conversion work. The hospital was staffed by fully trained Sisters with the help of the St. John Ambulance Nurses and VADs. As well as the hospital work the Ambulancemen undertook the transfer of the sick from their billets and from camps outside the town. They were also on call for any crashes at the Talbot Village aerodrome and later at the Ensbury Park airfield. Members of the Brigade accompanied patients by train from local hospitals to all parts of the country, going as far away as Scotland.

There was also a Nursing Division at Southbourne with 58 Nursing Sisters. This Division helped at various hospitals. Members worked at Boscombe Hospital, Christchurch Red Cross Hospital and St. John Ambulance Hospital, Bodorgan Road. Many served in Military Hospitals in other areas.

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SOUTHBOURNE HOSPITAL SUPPLY DEPOT

Originally started at 15 Belle Vue Road in premises lent by Dr. T.A. Compton, the developer of Southbourne. The Depot was later transferred to 9 Grand Avenue, and 65 & 66 Southbourne Grove. It was open for 3 days each week from 10.30 am to 12.50pm and 2.30pm to 5pm, and was affiliated to the Kensington War Hospital Depot in London. The Southbourne Depot, like the Bournemouth Depot, provided bandages, dressings, slippers etc. Local hospitals had first claim on its work, but 2 hospitals in France were also supplied.

A report dated Septemner 1917 stated that since it was established in 1915 no less than 71,000 articles had been made by the 100 volunteers.

The Depot closed early in 1919. All surplus articles were then sent to the Central Depot at Kensington.

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WOMEN'S EMERGENCY CORPS (later renamed Bournemouth War Emergency Corps)
The Women's Emergency Corps was started in October 1914 by a Bournemouth lady, Miss Ransoke, as a bureau for helping those women who were seeking work to find employment, either voluntary or paid. Girls who lost their jobs because of the war were employed making toys in the WEC workroom. The finished toys were sold, the profits going to help those in need. Subsequently when the girls found work because men were leaving to join the Forces, the toy workroom was no longer needed.

The WEC opened a Soldiers' Club, where refreshments and amusements were provided. Members of the WEC gave French and German lessons to the soldiers and also supplied interpreters for the Belgian refugees. Clothing was provided for the Belgians and they were helped in other ways, such as furniture for the houses and apartments lent to them, and jobs whenever possible.

The Corps also worked for the soldiers in any way that they could by setting up voluntary work rooms to make articles for the troops. Large numbers of hospital garments, bandages, respirators, slippers, sun-shields, mattress and stretcher covers, as well as socks and underwear were produced.

One special order made at short notice was for mosquito nets for the troops in Egypt. These nets fitted on a tin helmet and were long enough and wide enough to cover the wearer and anything he was eating, a great boon in a country infested with insects and mosquitos. One of the specialities of the WEC was the "Treasure Bag". These bags were used for the personal belongings, such as purses, wrist watches, pay books, letters from home, etc. of the wounded so that they would not be lost. If the soldiers did not recover, the bag containing their valuables was sealed and sent back to the next-of-kin through the War Office. The treasure bags were considered to be of great importance. Many stretcher cases sent home on the ambulance trains were dressed only in pyjamas and the contents of the little bags were the only possessions that they had.

Other activities carried out were providing a library service for the military hospitals and cultivating gardens for men who were away on active service. The money required to pay for all this work was provided by fund-raising concerts and entertainments, plus donations.

Over 500 members had enrolled in the Corps by November 1917, but numbers do not include many voluntary workers.

The Corps started its work in a small room in the Old Christchurch Road, then it moved to two empty houses at the top of Poole Hill. Later it transferred its Headquarters to 205, Old Christchurch Road, a shop lent by a local company. Eventually premises at 9 St. Peter's Road were used. The Corps was renamed Bournemouth War Emergency Corps in December 1917 and was disbanded in June 1919.

WOMEN'S RESERVE AMBULANCE, BOURNEMOUTH, or GREEN CROSS CORPS,
(later renamed Bournemouth War Service Corps)

The Bournemouth branch of the Women's Reserve Ambulance was formed in June 1915. Its object was to provide a trained, disciplined and efficient body of women to help at war hospitals, and with other forms of emergency war work. The Battalion consisted of 45 members with 3 officers, all volunteers, who wore khaki uniform.

In March 1916 the Battalion was presented with a Sunbeam Motor Ambulance which could take 4 stretchers, or 8 sitting cases. They assisted in moving wounded soldiers from the ambulance trains which arrived at Boscombe, Bournemouth Central and West, Christchurch and Wimborne Stations to the various hospitals in the district. All members were trained in the use of stretchers. The ambulance was also used to take soldiers to various entertainments and to take the Mont Dore nurses to and from their homes.

The members also worked as ward orderlies, ran messages in the mornings for the YMCA HQ., supplied canteen workers for the YMCA huts, as well as cleaning the recreation room at Boscombe Hospital, and helped at the War Hospital Supply Depots. They also provided day and night canteen workers for local munitions factories. No funds were received at all for this work and the WRA relied entirely on subscriptions and donations.

The Branch closed down in September 1918 because for some time great difficulty had been found in recruiting volunteers and finding work suitable for a khaki-uniformed Corps. The branch was not justifying its existence, so reluctantly the order to disband was given. However most of the members realised that there were further services which they could provide, so a new body was formed under the title "Bournemouth War Service Corps". This organisation continued to help at the hospitals and to run an ambulance, which covered over 2,000 miles between October 1918 and March 1919. The members were finally "demobilised" in March 1919.

ORGANISATIONS FOR WHICH NO DETAILS HAVE BEEN FOUND

Boscombe Military Hospital Wounded Soldiers Entertainments Fund

British and Foreign Sailors Society, Bournemouth Branch

Catholic Women's League, Boscombe Branch

Catholic Women's League, Bournemouth Branch

Christchurch and Bournemouth Women's Liberal Prisoners of War Parcels Fund

Crag Head Hospital Men's Recreation Fund

Hampshire Regiment Comforts Fund

Mont Dore Hospital Newspapers Fund

APPENDIX THREE: THE VICTORIA CROSS

Many Bournemouthians were decorated for bravery during the War. They were mentioned in despatches and were awarded medals up to and including the Victoria Cross, the highest decoration for bravery. It is impossible to say how many medals were awarded, with the exception of the Victoria Cross.

Out of the 633 VCs awarded for conspicuous valour two went to men from the town, Corporal Noble and Sergeant Riggs, unfortunately both posthumously. There were five other recipients with local connections, who have been credited to Bournemouth in books and lists on the Victoria Cross. Details of all these have been included in this appendix, plus briefer details of several who came to the district after the War.

HUDSON, Charles Edward Temporary Lieutenant Colonel, The Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Hudson was born on 29th May 1892 at Derby, the son of Lieutenant Colonel H. E. Hudson, Sherwood Foresters. He was educated at Sherborne School and at Sandhurst, joining the Army in November 1914. Although he was not a Bournemouthian he lived for a time with his parents at Langton Dene, 36, Portarlinton Road, Westbourne. It is a coincidence that the house is just around the corner from that of Colonel F. Fyler-Roupell whose son, Lieutenant G. R. Roupell, also won the VC. The details of that award are given later in this appendix.

Lieutenant Colonel Hudson went to Italy in November 1917 and was wounded in the action at Assiago in June 1918, when he won his VC. The citation in the London Gazette, 11th July 1918 states:-

“Charles Edward Hudson, Capt. Temporary Lieut-Colonel, D.S.O., MC., Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regt. For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty when his battalion was holding the right front sector during an attack on the British front. The shelling had been very heavy on the right, the trench destroyed, and considerable casualties had occurred, and all the officers on the spot killed or wounded. This enabled the enemy to penetrate our front line. The enemy pushed their advance as far as the support line which was the key to our right flank. Lieut-Colonel Hudson, recognising its gravity, at once collected various headquarters details, such as orderlies, servants, runners etc., and, together with some Allies, personally led them up the hill. Driving the enemy down the hill towards our front line, he again led a party of about five up the trench, where there was about 200 enemy, in order to attack them from the flank. He then with two men got out of the trench and rushed the position, shouting to the enemy to surrender, some of whom did. He was then severely wounded by a bomb which exploded on his foot. Although in great pain, he gave directions for the counter-attack to be continued, and this was done successfully, about 100 prisoners and six machine guns being taken. Without doubt the high courage and determination displayed by Lieut-Colonel Hudson saved a serious situation, and had it not been for his quick thinking in organising the counter-attack a large number of the enemy would have dribbled...

...through and a counter-attack on a larger scale would have been necessary to restore the situation".

He was awarded the DSO and bar in 1917, the Croix de Guerre, the Italian Croce de Valore, the Military Cross, and was mentioned three times in despatches.

Lieutenant Colonel Hudson retired in 1946 with the rank of Brigadier after being ADC to the King from 1944 to 1946. He died on 4th April 1959 in the Scilly Isles.

MOORE, Montague Shadworth Seymour.

Second Lieutenant, 15th Battalion,
The Hampshire Regiment.

Second Lieutenant Moore was born on 9th October 1896, son of Mr and Mrs. F. Moore, Goathland, Tower Road, Branksome Park, Poole. He was educated at Bedford Grammar School and afterwards he received tuition from Mr. P. H. Lee Evans of Stirling House, the Army coaching establishment in Manor Road, as did Lieutenant W. L. Robinson, VC. In March 1915 he entered the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and was commissioned in the Hampshire Regiment on August 16th 1916, being sent to France in September 1916. Lieutenant Moore was wounded in the leg in June 1917. He returned to the front only 10 days before the action at Tower Hamlets on 20th September 1917 in which he won his V.C.

The citation in the London Gazette, 8th November 1917, states:-

"Montague Shadworth Seymour Moore, Second Lieut., attached 15th Battn. Hampshire Regt. For the most conspicuous bravery in operations necessitating a fresh attack on a final objective which had not been captured. Second Lieut. Moore at once volunteered for this duty, and dashed forward at the head of some seventy men. They met with heavy machine-gun fire from a flank which caused severe casualties, with the result that he arrived at his objective - some 500 yards on - with only a Sergeant and four men. Nothing daunted, he at once bombed a large dugout and took 28 prisoners, two machine guns and a large field gun. Gradually more officers and men arrived, to the number of about sixty. His position was entirely isolated, as the troops on the right had not advanced, but he dug a trench and repelled bombing attacks throughout the night. The next morning he was forced to retire a short distance. When the opportunity offered he at once reoccupied his position, re-arming his men with enemy rifles and bombs, most of theirs being smashed, and beat off more than one counter-attack. Second Lieut. Moore held this post under continual shell fire for thirty-six hours, until his force was reduced to ten men, out of six officers and 130 men who had started the operation. He eventually got away his wounded, and withdrew under cover of a thick mist. As an example of dashing gallantry and cool determination this young officer's exploit would be difficult to surpass".

After the war Captain Moore went to Africa where, in 1921, he joined the King's African Rifles, retiring in 1926 with the rank of Major. He then joined the Tanganyika Game Department. Major Moore was Game Ranger from 1926 to 1944, and then Game Warden until 1951. He was appointed Tanganyika's Chief Game Warden and was one of the main architects of the Serengeti National Park for the preservation of wildlife. He died at his home in Kiganjo, Kenya, on 9th September 1966 aged 69. His ashes were scattered in the game park.

NOBLE, Cecil Reginald Acting Corporal, 2nd Battalion the Rifle Brigade.

Corporal Noble was born in Bournemouth on 4th June 1891, son of Mr. and Mrs. F. Noble, 175, Capstone Road, Malmesbury Park. He was educated at St. Clement's School. From there he won a scholarship to the Art and Technical School, then in Drummond Road, to study drawing.

He enlisted in the Rifle Brigade at Winchester on 27th March 1910 and had been promoted Acting Corporal in the 2nd Battalion, when on 12th March 1915 at the battle of Neuve Chapelle he and a fellow NCO, Company Sergeant-Major Harry Daniels, performed the deed for which they were both awarded the VC.

The 2nd Battalion The Rifle Brigade were attacking the German trenches when they found that the barbed wire entanglements which were supposed to be destroyed by a bombardment were still intact. Cpl. Noble and CSM Daniels braved the withering fire, running to the wire entanglements and cutting them away rapidly. Although they were both badly wounded they succeeded in breaching the enemy wire leaving wide gaps for the rest of the "Greenjackets" to pass through to capture the enemy trenches. Unfortunately Corpl. Noble died the next day on the ambulance train taking him to hospital. The citation in the London Gazette, 28th April 1915 reads:-

"Harry Daniels, No. 9665, Company Sergt-Major, 2nd Battn. Rifle Brigade; Cecil Reginald Noble, No. 3697. Acting Corpl. (late). March 12th 1915 at Neuve Chapelle. When their battalion was impeded in the advance to the attack by wire entanglements and subjected to very severe machine-gun fire these two men voluntarily rushed in front and succeeded in cutting the wire. They were both wounded at once and Corpl. Noble has since died".

The Town Council in May 1915 passed a resolution expressing its "high appreciation" of his conduct, and expressed its sympathy with his parents on the "loss of their gallant son through his heroic self-sacrifice". A memorial tablet which bears the following inscription was unveiled on Monday, 1st November 1915 at St. Clement's School by the Mayor, Cllr. J. Druitt

"In memory of Cecil Reginald Noble, VC, Act. Corporal, 2nd Rifle Brigade, who died the day after performing an act of heroism at Neuve Chapelle, March 13th 1915".

His Victoria Cross was presented to his Mother by the King at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday 29th November 1916.

Corporal Noble was buried at Longuenesse Souvenirs Cemetery, France, and as well as the memorial in St. Clement's School, Reginald Noble Court, Surrey Road, a Royal British Legion Housing Association block of flats for ex-servicemen and their families, was named after him, as was Noble Close at Wallisdown.

RIGGS, Frederick Charles Sergeant, 6th Battalion Yorks and Lancaster Regiment

Sergeant Riggs was born in Bournemouth on 28th July 1888. He was adopted when he was five years old by Hrs. G. Burgam, 39 Capstone Road, Malmesbury Park. (The same road that Corporal Noble, the other Bournemouthian to win the VC lived in).

He was educated at the Malmesbury Park Council School, and worked for Messrs. Pickfords & Sons, Carriers and Furniture Removers. He joined the Army as a Private in the 15th Hussars on 4th September 1914. Transferring to the 6th Battalion the Yorks and Lancaster Regiment he went to France in 1915. From there he was sent to Gallipoli until the evacuation, when he spent some time in Egypt. Posted back to France, he was severely wounded in the head at the Battle of the Somme. After a short period of convalescence in England he again went to France and was killed on 1st October 1918 near Epinoy. He had already been awarded the Military Medal.

The award of the Victoria Cross was announced in the London Gazette of 6th January 1919.

"Frederick Charles Riggs, MM. No.20695, Late 6th Battalion Yorks and Lancaster Regiment. For most conspicuous bravery and self-sacrifice on the morning of 1 October, 1918, near Epinoy, when, having led his platoon through strong uncut wire under severe fire, he continued straight on, and although losing heavily from flanking fire, succeeded in reaching his objective, where he rushed and captured a machine gun. He later handled two captured guns with great effect and caused the surrender of 50 enemy. Subsequently when the enemy again advanced in force, Sergt. Riggs cheerfully encouraged his men to resist and while exhorting his men to resist to the last, this very gallant soldier was killed".

Sergt. Riggs' name is on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, France, and Riggs Gardens, Wallisdown was named after him.

There is a memorial tablet to Sergt. Riggs in Malmesbury Park School.

ROBINSON, William Leefe Lieutenant, Royal Flying Corps.

Lieutenant W. L. Robinson was born at Tollidetta, South Coorg in Southern India on 14th July 1895. Although not a native of Bournemouth, he has spent six years as a child in the town, as well as attending Mr. P. H. Lee Evans' Stirling House, the Army coaching establishment in Manor Road, before joining the Army at Sandhurst in August 1914.

He had also spent many holidays in the town prior to and during the War, regarding Bournemouth as his second home.

In December 1914 he was commissioned in the Worcestershire Regiment, then joined the Royal Flying Corps as an observer in March 1915. He obtained his pilot's licence in September 1915 and was attached to a night fighter squadron, No.39 Home Defence Squadron. It was on the night of 2/3 September 1916 while flying a BE2c that he shot down in flames an Army Schutte-Lanz SL 11 Zeppelin at Cuffley, Hertfordshire, during the biggest Zeppelin raid of the war, when 16 airships attacked London.

In his report on the action Lieutenant Robinson wrote:-

"I flew at about 800 feet below it from bow to stern and distributed one drum along it (alternate New Brock and Pomeroy). It seemed to have no effect ... I gave it another drum ... without apparent effect. I then got behind it and concentrated one drum on one part. I had hardly finished the drum when I saw the part fired on begin to glow. In a few seconds the whole of the rear part was blazing". His Lewis-gun was firing two types of bullets, the New Brock and Pomeroy, the drums being loaded with a mixture of both. The Brock bullet was explosive and was also an incendiary, exploding and catching fire on impact. The Pomeroy had qualities similar to the Brock. The citation in the London Gazette, 5th September 1916 reads:-

"War Office, 5th September 1916. His Majesty the King had been graciously pleased to award the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned officer. Lieutenant William Leefe Robinson, Worcestershire Regiment and Royal Flying Corps. For most conspicuous bravery. He attacked an enemy airship under circumstances of great difficulty and danger, and sent it crashing to the ground as a flaming wreck. He had been in the air for more than two hours and had previously attacked another airship during his flight".

Lieutenant Robinson was posted to France in March 1917, when he became a Flight Commander with No.48 Squadron. On 5th April when leading a formation of 6 Bristol Fighters from No. 48 Squadron Captain Robinson, during an action with 5 German Albatros Scouts headed by the German Ace Von Richtofen, was shot down. He was taken prisoner and after several attempts to escape was kept in solitary confinement. He was repatriated on 14th December 1918 suffering from the results of his imprisonment, and died from influenza on 31st December 1918 at Harrow Weald, Middlesex. He was buried in Harrow Weald (All Saints) Churchyard Extension and is commemorated by a plaque at St. Bee's School, Cumberland. A public house in Harrow Weald was named after him. Lieutenant Robinson was the first person to win the VC for an action of bravery in the United Kingdom.

ROUPELL, George Rowland Lieutenant, 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment.

Lieutenant Roupell won his VC at Hill 60 in Belgium on 20th April 1915. The Citation published in the London Gazette, 23rd June, 1915, reads:-

"For most conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on 20th April 1915, when he was commanding a company of his battalion in a front trench on Hill 60, which was subjected to a most severe bombardment throughout the day. Though wounded in several places, he remained at his post and led his Company in repelling a strong German assault. During a lull in the bombardment he had his wounds hurriedly dressed and then insisted on returning to his trench, which was again being subjected to severe bombardment. Towards evening his company being dangerously weakened, he went back to his..

..battalion headquarters, represented the situation to his commanding officer, and brought up reinforcements, passing backwards and forwards over ground swept by heavy fire. With these reinforcements he held his post throughout the night and until his battalion was relieved next morning. This young officer was one of the few survivors of his company, and showed a magnificent example of courage, devotion and tenacity which undoubtedly inspired his men to hold out until the end".

Lieutenant Roupell was born in Tipperary, Ireland on 7th April 1892. His parents, Colonel and Mrs. F. Fyler-Roupell, lived at Chartham, Grosvenor Road, Westbourne. The Bournemouth Guardian, Saturday, 26th June 1915 in giving the details of the award said:-

"Another Bournemouth man has been honoured by the award of the Victoria Cross for we may fairly consider Lieut. G. R. Roupell as such, his family having been resident in the town for the past eight years".

He was also awarded the Russian Order of St. George.

Lieutenant Roupell survived the War and commanded the 36 Infantry Brigade and the 105 Infantry Brigade during the Second World War. He retired in 1946 with the rank of Brigadier, and died at Shalford, Surrey, on 4th March 1974.

WOODROFFE, Sidney Clayton Second Lieutenant. 8th Battalion, The Rifle Brigade.

Second Lieutenant Woodroffe was born at Lewes, Sussex on 17th December 1895, the fourth son of Mr. & Mrs. H.L. Woodroffe of Woodmore, Branksome Avenue, Poole, just over the border with Bournemouth, and now known as The Avenue. At that time the postal address was Bournemouth and several reference works on the VC have given Bournemouth as his home town. Indeed the Bournemouth Graphic, 10th September 1915, has a headline "Another Bournemouth VC" and has a portrait captioned "Bournemouth's Third VC".

Lieutenant Woodroffe was awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously. The London Gazette, 6th September 1915, gave the following citation:-

"For most conspicuous bravery on 30th July 1915, at Hooge, Belgium. The enemy having broken through the centre of our front trenches, consequent on the use of burning liquids, this officer's position was heavily attacked with bombs from the flank, and subsequently from the rear, but he managed to defend his post until all his bombs were exhausted, then skilfully withdrew his remaining men. This very gallant officer immediately led his party forward in a counter-attack under intense rifle and machine-gun fire, and was killed whilst in the act of cutting the wire obstacles in the open".

He is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial, Belgium.

Two of his elder brothers were also killed in action. Lieutenant K.H.C. Woodroffe, 6th Battalion, The Rifle Brigade was killed at Neuve Chapelle on 9th May 1915, and Captain L. Woodroffe, M.C., 8th Battalion,

was severely wounded in July 1915 at Hooge at the same time that Sidney was killed. He was again wounded on the day of his return to the front and died of his wounds 3 days later. Mr. and Mrs. Woodroffe received their son's VC from King George V on 29th November 1916 at Buckingham Palace.

OTHER VC's WITH BOURNEMOUTH CONNECTIONS

BARTER, Frederick Company Sergeant-Major. 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh Fusiliers

Born in Cardiff on 17th January 1891, CSM F. Barter won his VC at Festubert, France on 16th May 1915. He died on 15th May 1953 in St. Anne's Hospital, Canford Cliffs and was cremated at Bournemouth on 19th May 1953.

DAVIES, Joseph John Corporal. 10th Battalion The Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Corporal J.J. Davies was born at Tipton, Staffordshire On 28th April 1889. He enlisted on 19th August 1909, was wounded in 1915, and after convalescence promoted Corporal. He was awarded the VC for bravery during action at Delville Wood, France on 20th July 1916. After the War he moved to Poole where he died on 16th February 1976, and was cremated at Bournemouth on February 25th 1976. Corporal Davies was also awarded the Russian Order of St. George, 1st Class, the highest decoration that Imperial Russia could bestow.

McNESS, Frederick Lance-Sergeant. 1st Battalion Scots Guards

Lance-Sergeant P. McNess was born on 22nd January 1892 at Bramley, near Leeds. The action in which he won his VC took place at Ginchy, France on 15th September 1916. He was very badly wounded and suffered afterwards from periodic bouts of depression and headaches. McNess retired to Bournemouth, where he died on 4th May 1956. He was cremated on 8th May 1956, his ashes being scattered in the Garden of Remembrance.

POLLARD, Alfred Oliver Second Lieutenant. 1st Battalion The Honourable Artillery Company.

Lieutenant, later Captain, A.O. Pollard, the author, died at his home in Queens Park Gardens, Bournemouth on 5th December 1960, aged 67. He was born on 4th May 1893 at Wallington, Surrey, and was awarded the VC at the age of 24 for his gallantry during an attack on German trenches between Gavrelle and Oppy Wood, France on 29th April 1917. Earlier the same month he had been awarded the MC, and on 23rd April he gained a bar to this decoration. He had already won the DCM as a Sergeant at Sanctuary Wood, France, in 1915 when he led a successful counter-attack. Despite his brilliant war record it will be as a prolific writer of thrillers that he will be best remembered. His first book was published in 1930, and from then on he wrote over 50 popular thrillers and adventure stories. Captain Pollard was cremated at Bournemouth on 7th December 1960.

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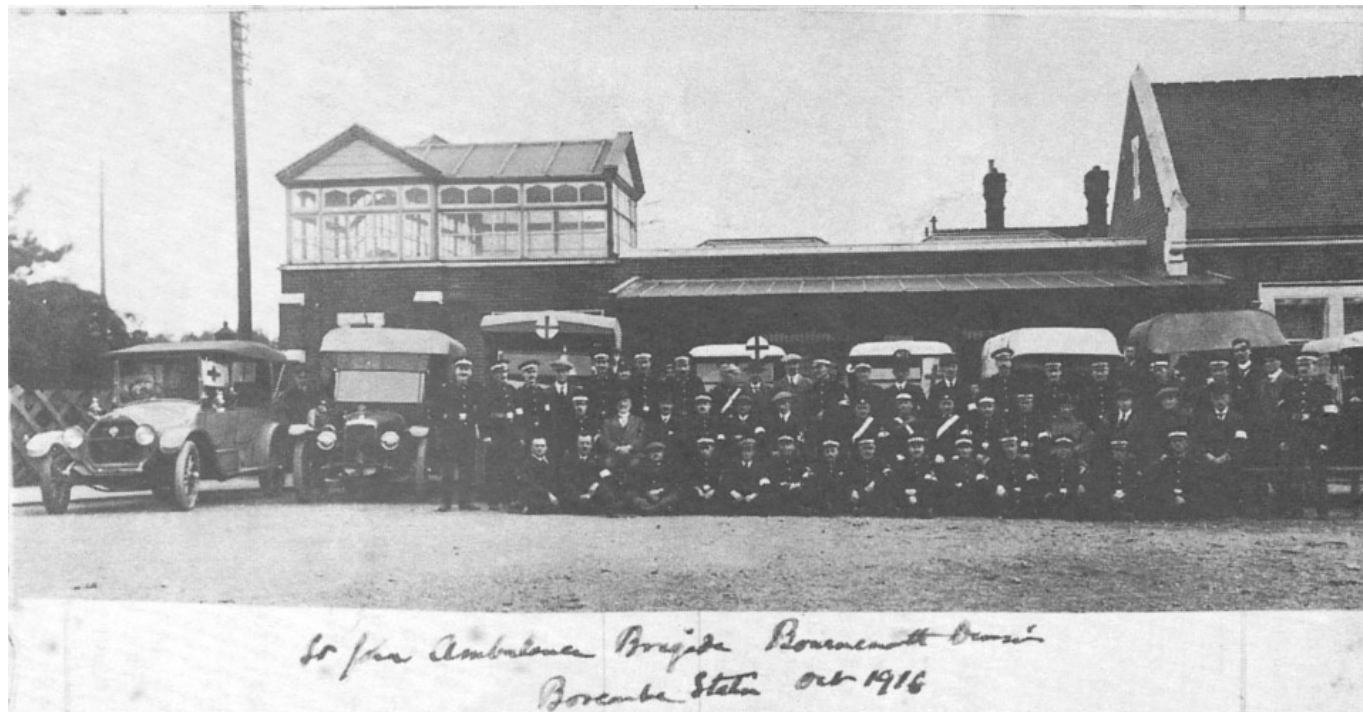
All these books, directories and newspapers are in the stock of the Bournemouth Reference Library, with the exception of "English Life in the First World War" by C. Martin.



Alexandra Ward, Boscombe Hospital. Erected in 1917 for wounded soldiers.
The ward is decorated for Christmas 1917



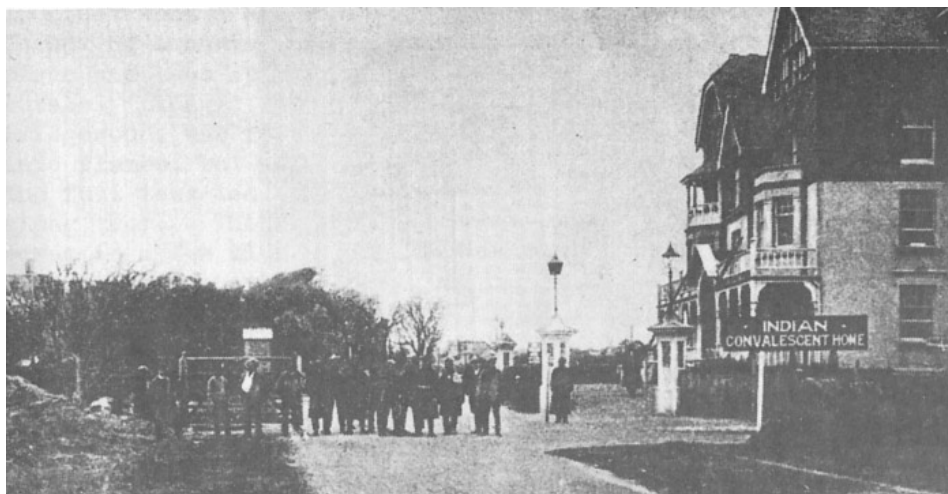
The Mayor, (Ald. H. Robson), the Town Clerk (Mr.H Ashling) & Dr. J. D. Jones with members of the Town Council marching to the National Intercession Service at Richmond Hill Congregational Church on 31st December 1916



The St John Ambulance Brigade Drivers with their ambulances at Boscombe Station awaiting the arrival of wounded. October 1916



Unloading wounded soldiers from an Ambulance Train, Boscombe Station, October 1916



Indian Troops at Barton-on-Sea, outside Barton court Hotel,
then used as a hospital.



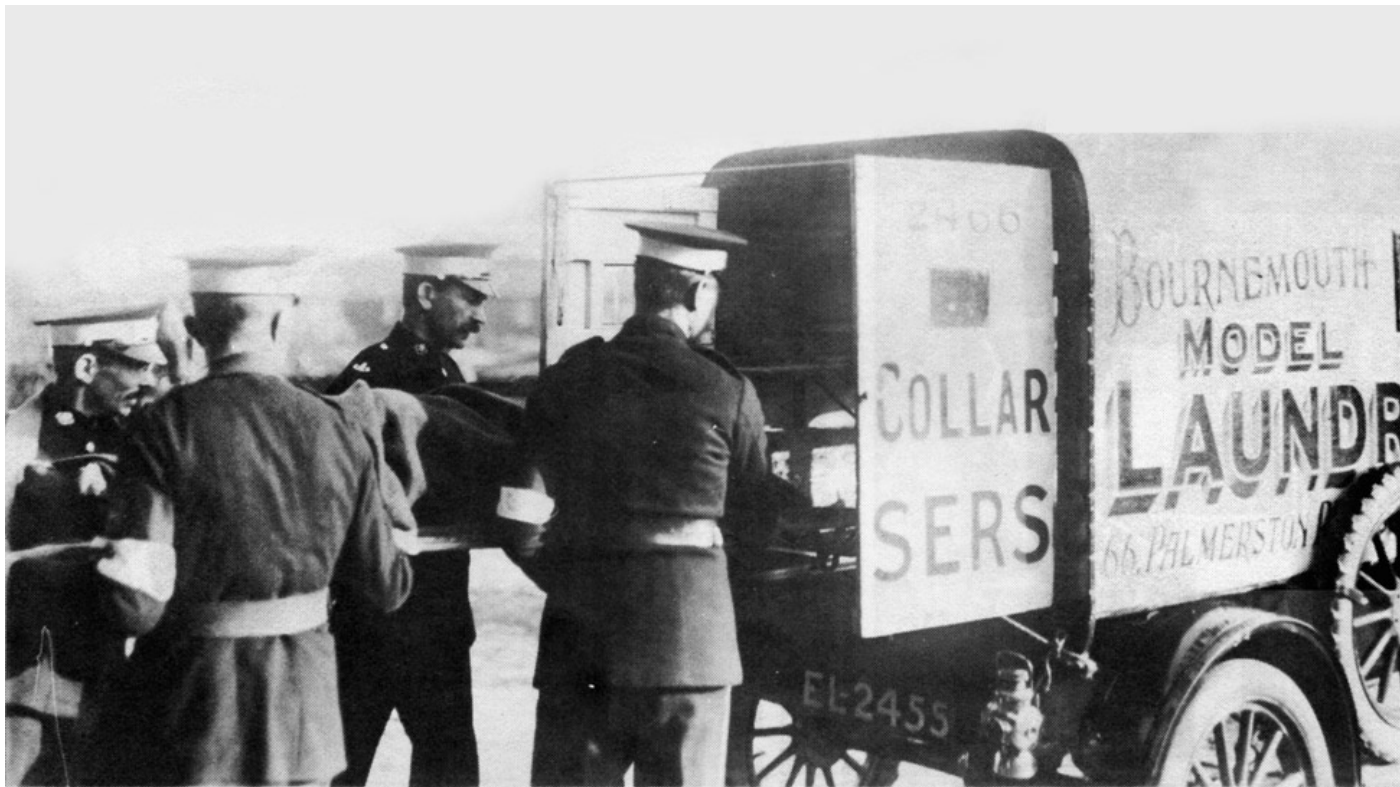
Indian Troops at Barton-on-Sea



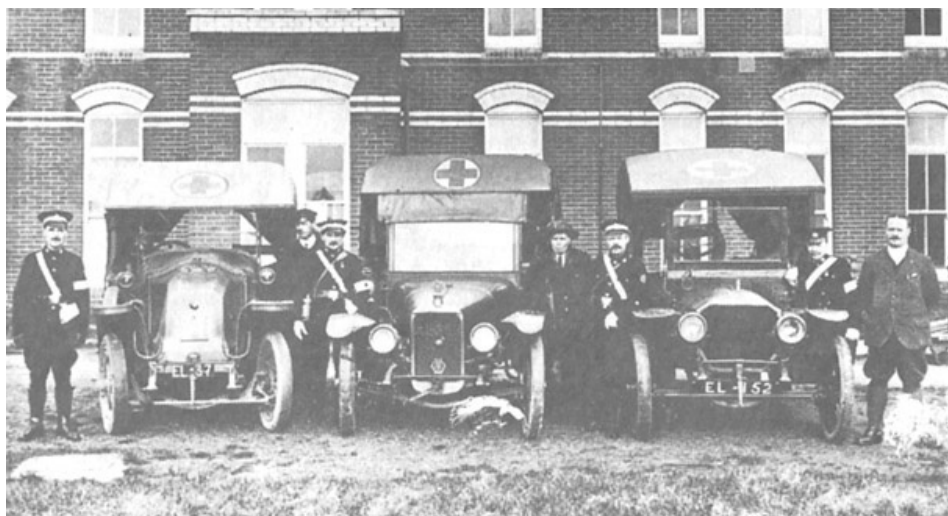
The Bournemouth War Memorial, just before it was unveiled on 8th November 1922.



Wounded Soldiers out to tea with an unknown family



The St John Ambulance men loading a wounded soldier into one of the tradesmens' vans, which were converted ,whenever necessary, into ambulances to transport the wounded to the Auxiliary Hospitals from the ambulance trains. October 1916



Three of the ambulances used to transport the wounded from trains to the Auxiliary Hospitals. This was taken outside Gloucester Rd Hospital. The lady is Miss Starkey who bought and maintained four ambulances, driving one herself.



St John Ambulance Brigade (Auxiliary) Hospital, Bodorgan Rd.
The Matron (Mrs. Bottomley) with two VADs in a ward.