

## THE WORLD IS AT WAR BUT LIFE IN THE VILLAGE GOES ON

**Halberton National School** was one of the main hubs of the village. The school room was a venue for Parish Council Meetings, Whist Drives and many functions throughout the war years as there was not a village hall.

There were approximately 120 children at the school but it was often closed...

‘Both Mr Jennings schoolmaster and Mrs Peardon infants’ mistress are ill. With sanction of the Education Authority the school is to be closed for a fortnight to give the teachers a rest.’

Devon & Somerset News 20<sup>th</sup> May 1915

‘Hay making is in full swing and the school has been closed to enable the children to assist where necessary’.

Exeter & Plymouth Gazette 21<sup>st</sup> July 1916

‘Halberton School has reopened having closed for 3 weeks owing to an epidemic of measles’

Devon & Somerset News 21<sup>st</sup> June 1917

‘School children of Halberton and Ash Thomas Sunday schools were entertained for tea at the Vicarage. Over 100 were present. Games and amusements took place after tea and bags of sweets hidden in the bushes. The older boys enjoyed a game of football’.

Devon and Somerset News 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1915

‘Annual tea and treats for Wesleyan Chapel scholars. Prize giving postponed owing to a delay on the railway and the prize books haven’t arrived’

Devon and Somerset News 27<sup>th</sup> January 1916

‘Miss Izat supplied wool to the school for the knitting of mittens for the Halberton boys at the front’

Tiverton Gazette 1916

The County Inspector visited both Halberton and Ash Thomas schools twice during the war years.

‘School Medical Officer visited Halberton and Ash Thomas and examined a number of children.’

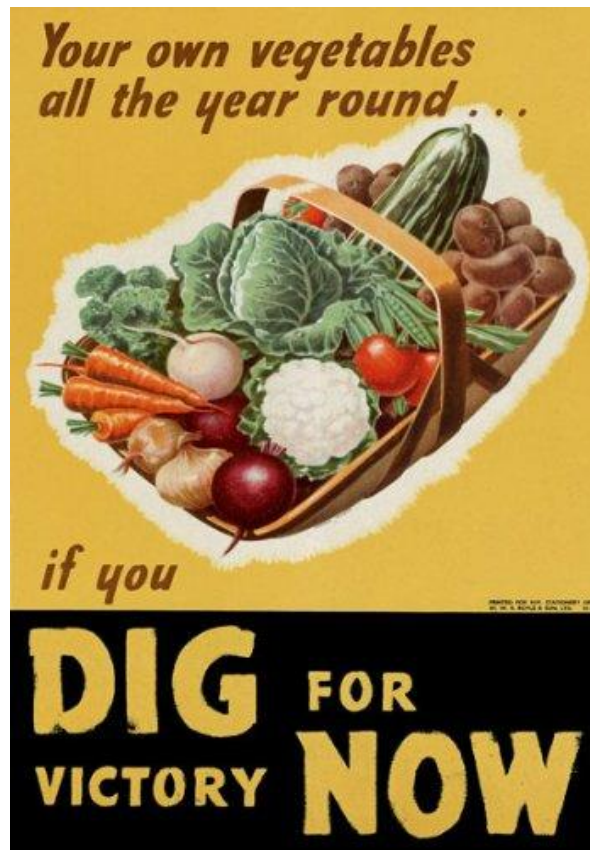
Devon & Somerset News 14<sup>th</sup> Sept 1915

In 1916 influenza was prevalent amongst the children.

The School Log Book 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1917 states that “there was a great fall off in attendance this week owing to chilblains especially among the infants”.

‘Evening school starting on 14<sup>th</sup> October; classes in Arithmetic, Geography and English’

Devon and Somerset News 8<sup>th</sup> October 1918



‘The Lancashire lassies who have been helping Mr Diggle to gather apples which he has bought in the district have returned home. Although the weather has been unfavourable for outdoor work, they have been most assiduous in their novel employment’

Devon and Somerset News Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 1917

‘Owing to the damp state of the ground people aren’t able to make progress in gardens. Severe frost played havoc amongst spring cabbage plants’

Devon and Somerset News 11<sup>th</sup> March 1917

‘Seed potatoes are expected by Easter from County but we are still waiting’

Devon and Somerset News 11<sup>th</sup> March 1917

‘The hay harvest is nearly completed in this neighbourhood.....Vegetables are very plentiful and many a household has been able to reduce the bread bill in consequence.’

Western Times 27<sup>th</sup> July 1917

The Parish Council organised a series of 12 cheese making classes. They were held at Lake Farm with kind permission of Miss Raymont.

### **THE BLACKBERRY CROP**

The Board of Education suggested that older children of the school should be released to help gather the blackberry crop for jam. A teacher would ensure that no damage was done to the hedgerows and only ripe fruit was picked. They would be paid 3d per pound by the jam manufacturers. The law states that if a farmer neglects to pick the blackberries on his land he must give access for others to do so. The public are allowed to pick blackberries for their own use if they can get there before the children!

Devon and Somerset News August 1918

### **CONKERS**

Who would have thought that the common conker (horse chestnut) was so important that the Board of Education sent an urgent plea from the Minister of Munitions to all schoolchildren, asking them to collect them?

Children were told that they were “essential for a certain industrial process”. In fact they ended up at a secret factory in Kings Lyn, Norfolk where they were used in the distillation process of acetone. This solvent was used in the manufacture of cordite (explosives).

August 1917

## **VILLAGE LIFE**

‘Uffculme Volunteer Training Corps accompanied by fife and drum band from St Boniface Home, Sampford Peverell, attended a service at St Andrew’s church’

Devon and Somerset News 20<sup>th</sup> May 1915

“Free concert in the school room on Thursday evening where they sang patriotic, sentimental, humorous and comic songs; organised by Mr Heywood Parish Church organist.’

‘Devon and Somerset News 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 1914

‘Halberton pond has been emptied and the mill stream to Higher Mill is having a thorough clean. Work is being carried out for Mr S Westcott owner.’

Devon & Somerset News 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 1914

‘Soldiers wives with children received a surprise windfall 1<sup>st</sup> post on Monday morning. A money order sent from the War Office for four weeks extra allowance from Jan 15<sup>th</sup> under the new scale. For instance if there were five children the amount per month was £1 8s’

Devon and Somerset News 1<sup>st</sup> February 1917