

THE HOME FRONT

Based on the profile of the population in the 1911 census we estimate that there would have been **between 100 and 120 village men on military service** during the war. We can hardly begin to imagine the emotional impact this had on their families and friends back home. For many the anxieties may have been tempered by receiving a reassuring letter or card from the war zone or the arrival of their husbands or sons on home leave. Silk embroidered postcards like the one illustrated here were typically hand made in French and Belgium housewives for sale to servicemen.



(Reproduced by kind permission of Jim and Joyce Gardner)

But **twenty-five of the men lost their lives** while on service and their families felt the grief and despair of their bereavement. We provide a profile of these young men and their families elsewhere in this report.

There are few contemporary reports available about village life over the period of the war but we suspect there were three main concerns:

Bereaved families:

Providing spiritual support and comforting the bereaved would undoubtedly been a major pre-occupation for members of the clergy, the **Rev. Claude Sandwith** the vicar, the **Rev. John Mark** the retired, but still active, congregational minister, and the Wesleyan circuit minister.

Help for the sick and wounded:

From the outset the Ettington branch of the **Mothers' Union** member were hard at work as the following cuttings show:

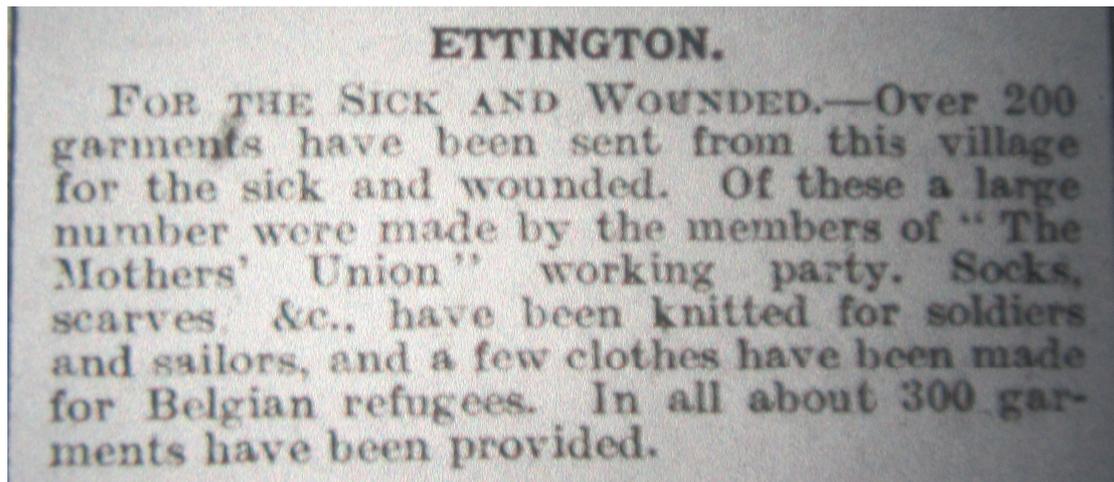


Figure 1: Stratford Herald 23/10/1914

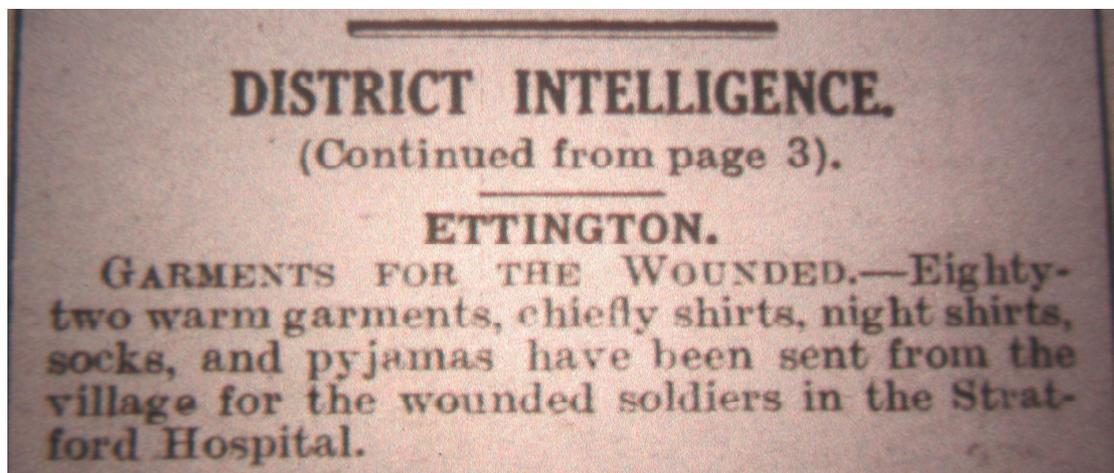


Figure 2: Stratford Herald 6/11/1914

Miss Mary Margaret (May) Lowe was among the leading organizers of this sort of activity. The following website provides a lot of information about the wartime nursing services. It identifies Miss Lowe as the private organizer of one of the **War Hospital Supply Depots**: <http://www.scarletfinders.co.uk/178.html>

The same website lists all of the Auxiliary hospitals. Several were in and around Stratford, Warwick, Leamington and South Warwickshire. At least two ladies from the village were among the staff and helpers at the **Clarendon Auxiliary Hospital, Kineton**. They were **Mrs. Margery Peirson-Webber** of The Manor, Rogers Lane, who was a quartermaster, and **Mrs Georgina Mary Leaf** of Foss Hill. (The names of all the staff and helpers are listed in “Kineton in the Great War” by Gillian Ashley – Smith.

It is quite possible that other ladies and girls from the village helped at the auxiliary hospitals, but we have not found any records. One of these was at the Manor House in Halford Village.

It is definite that many were actively supporting fund-raising activities. The following article from the Herald of 7/1/1916 gives a good example of the efforts made:

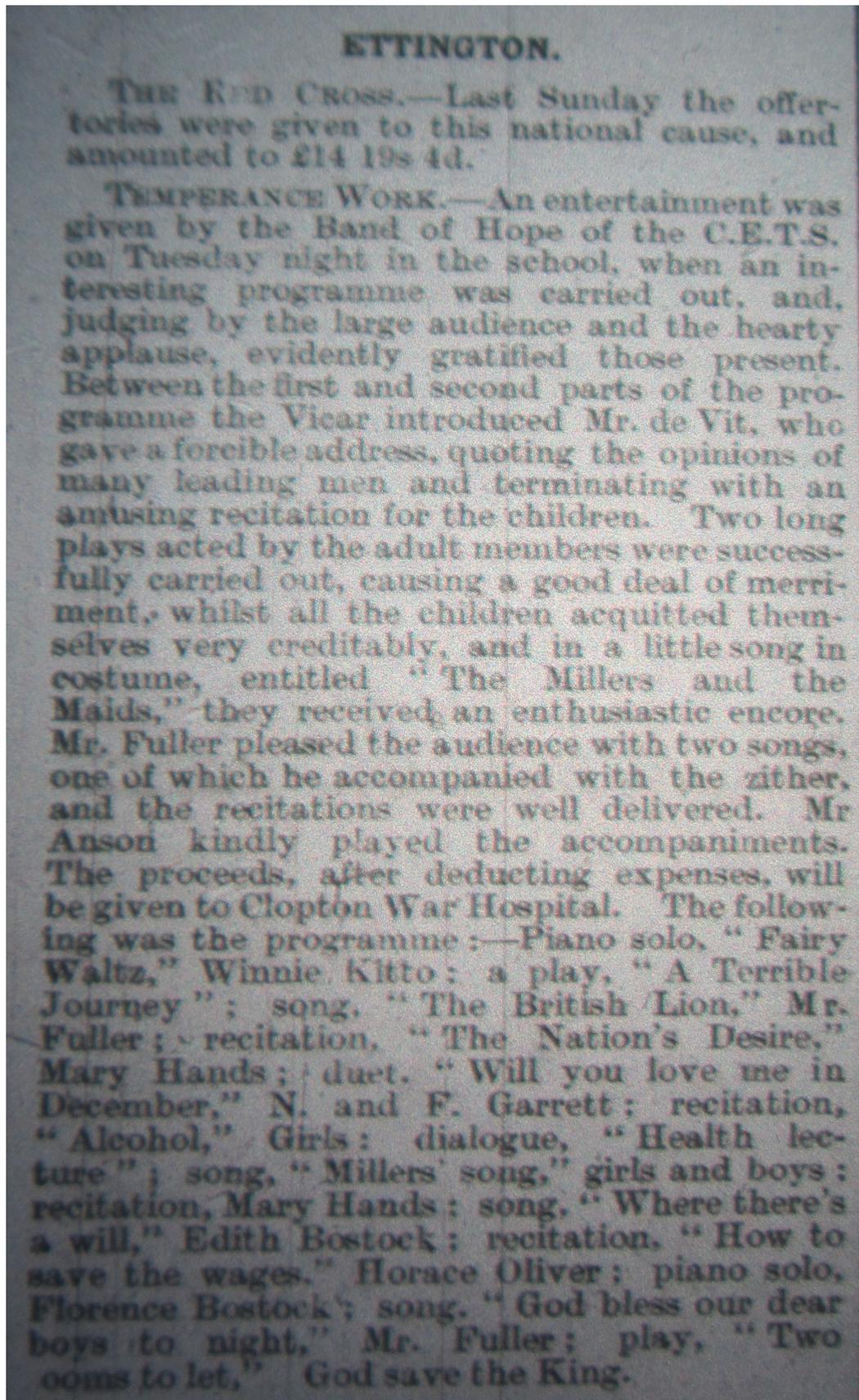


Figure 3: Stratford Herald 7/1/1916

Homegrown produce:

Food shortages became a problem from 1917 onwards as the German U-Boats severely disrupted the import of grain and other commodities from the US and Canada. The government urged people everywhere to turn over their gardens and allotments to vegetable production as the following article indicates:

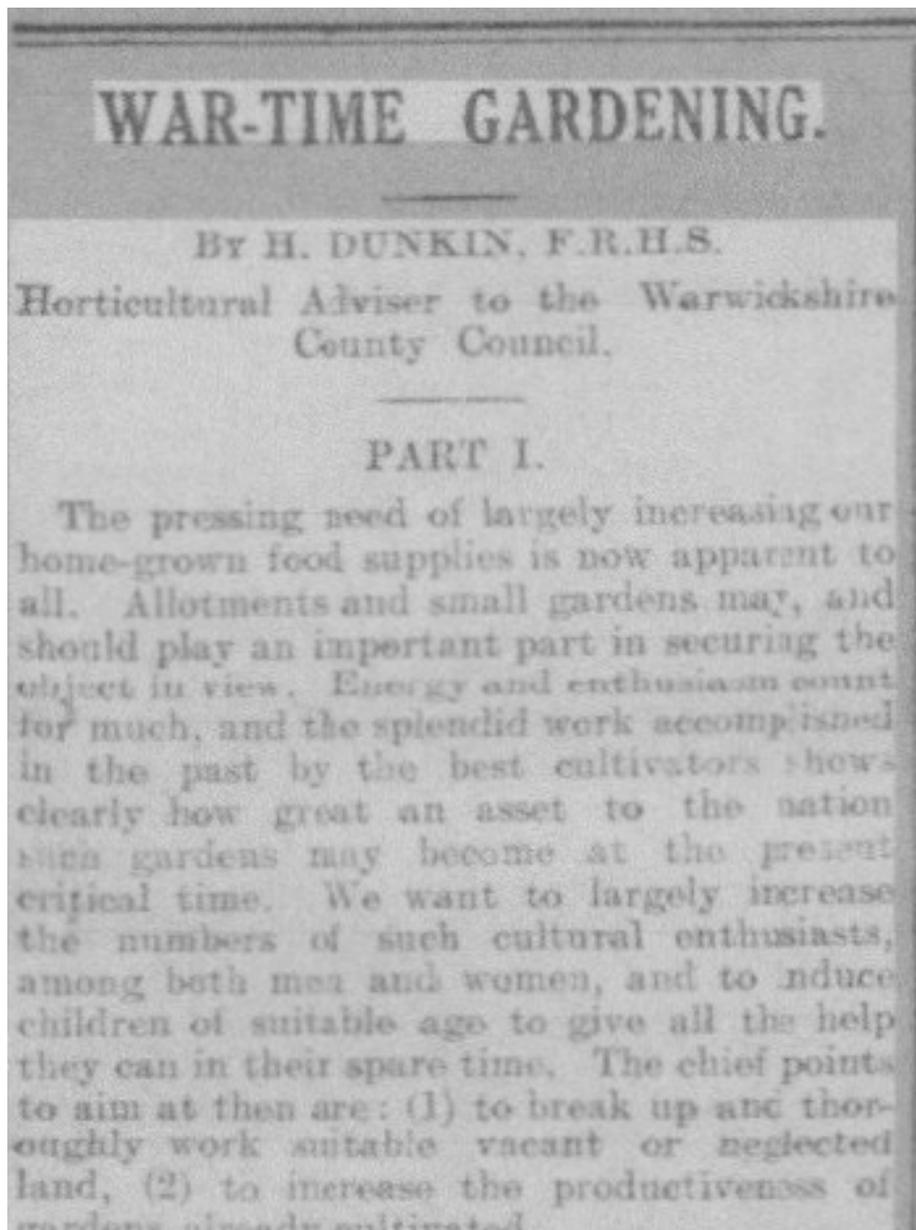
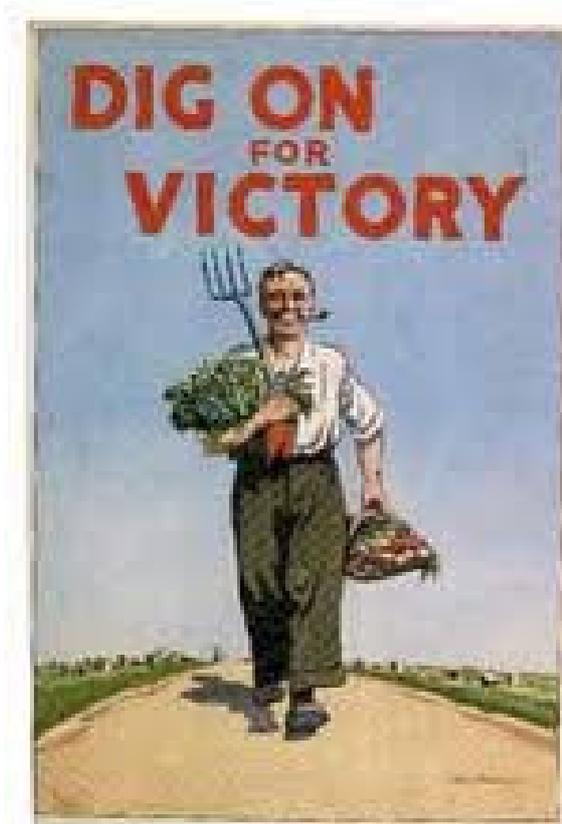


Figure 4: Tamworth Herald 2/3/1917

The article goes on to advise about waste or neglected land and states: “in **districts such as Ettington**, where stiff clay-marls abound, thorough working during the previous summer or early autumn is necessary to bring the land into a suitable condition for cropping.”

Rationing was introduced early in 1918. The poster below is one of many printed at the time to be found at:

<https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=rationing+in+ww1&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=QHi3UaLeGovKObS-gdAG&ved=0CEAQsAQ&biw=1280&bih=866>



World War 1 poster

Other aspects of village life

We have a few snippets only:

1. The fundraising evening reported in the Herald on 7/1/1916 (Figure 3) tells of evening of music, song and light-hearted sketches performed by the villagers, with both adults and children taking part, and enjoyed by a large audience. It was the festive season and there was “a good deal of merriment”.
2. Licensing restrictions: On 12th November 1915 the Coventry Telegraph reported on the “drastic regulations” ordered by the Central Control Board (Liquor Traffic) for the Midlands Area. The Order covered most of the County but surprisingly the parishes of Atherstone-on-Stour, Easington and Whitchurch were excepted. No explanation is given of the exceptions and no

reference is made to any separate regulations. Perhaps Ettington people were already sufficiently virtuous!!

3. The school: We have no information about specific school activities during the war, but we have two school photographs from 1915 .



Group I: Teacher Miss Frances Rose Brandish



Group II: Teacher's name not known

Deaths

A separate section provides brief notes on the villagers known to have died during the period of the war. The section also includes a few who died very shortly after the end of the war as a result of the influenza pandemic which swept the country (and most of the world) in 1918-19.

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