

Press Release

31 October, 2014, for immediate release

and note to accompany complimentary copy of

They Were a Wall Wheatley in a World at War 1914-1919

The Wheatley Branch of the Royal British Legion and the Wheatley Society have pleasure in presenting you a complimentary copy of the above book, on which we have worked together over the last few months. We are enabled to do this thanks to the generosity of the Heritage Lottery Fund and of a Wheatley resident, Mr. Edward Hess. Complimentary copies are being given to schools, public libraries, museums and the like, as well as to families who assisted us with details of family members who fought in the Great War, or helped with relevant photographs and artefacts.

The book will be on public sale at a meeting to launch it in **The Merry Bells, High Street, Wheatley at 7.30 pm on Friday evening 14 November**; and at an accompanying Exhibition which will be open at the same venue from 10 am on Saturday 15 November. You are warmly welcome to attend either or both of these functions. Thereafter copies will be available for sale @ £4.99 from the Wheatley Village Archive, The Merry Bells, High Street, Wheatley, OX33 1XP: please note that the Archive opens to personal callers on Thursday afternoons only.

The book runs to 144 pages and is copiously illustrated. There are six short historical chapters dealing with the origins of the War; the village's experience over those five years; the Tribunal which met to consider applications for deferment or annulment of conscription in individual cases; the changing roles of women in Oxfordshire at the time; the service medals awarded; and the story of the village's two war memorials. There are also brief pen-portraits of some forty men of Wheatley who lost their lives, whether in 'France and Flanders' or further afield at Salonika, Baghdad, Beirut or Jerusalem; and of nearly 140 others of the village who also served but survived.

Fabled names appear in the pages - Lady Ottoline Morrell, Stanley Spencer, the von Richthofens, Vera Brittain, Lloyd-George. As do many of the place-names legendary for both courage and slaughter such as Passchendaele, 'Plug Street', Tyne Cot, Ypres and Gallipoli. But above all the purpose of the book is to remember the villagers themselves and their relatives caught up in the maelstrom - among them five Sheldons, three Averys, three Lifes, three Davises, three Chapmans, three Joneses, three Heaths, two Harrises, two Cricks and two Yates. Including cousins, eleven Shorters, ten Munts and eight Shepherds served. And in one family alone, the Whites, four brothers and three sons.

In 2014, the best that Wheatley had to give in 1914-19 are not forgotten.

For further information or for interviews, please contact in the first instance:

Bill Jackson, co-Editor, on telephone 01865 872428