

Enlistment, Conscription, Exemptions, Tribunals

RECRUITING

At the beginning of the War, the British Army consisted of regulars and volunteers. In many areas there was a flood of volunteers. However, Lincolnshire was considered to have poor recruiting numbers. In October Major Lowe, in command of a detachment of the 3/4 Lincolnshires on a recruiting march in the county, said that the reason recruiting was at a standstill in the district was because Lincolnshire farmers' sons were not doing their duty by volunteering. While they were driving about in motor cars and generally leading the life of the slacker, other men would not come forward. Those who had enlisted were principally labourers, but more would come if they got the lead.¹ In response to the recruiting drive, Boston sent 700 men, including 150 Artillery and 110 infantry. However, the majority of these recruits were townsmen. Recruiting meetings in the villages were well attended but not as successful as was hoped, except in Sutterton where twelve men came forward, eleven of whom passed the doctor at Boston the next morning. The recruiting meeting at Kirton resulted in only one man enlisting, but it was hoped more would follow.² To encourage recruitment, as Helen Fane noted in her journal, in early September at Deal women were fixing white goose feathers in coat lapels and hat-bands of young men found lolling on the beach and the promenade.³ There is, however, no evidence of this occurring in Lincolnshire.

At the De Aston School Speech day at Market Rasen in December, Lord Heneage, who considered his calculations quite as good as the statistics compiled by the War Office, stated he did not agree with figures showing Lincolnshire lowest on the list of counties for recruiting. Instead of 4,000, he said Lincolnshire had sent 12,000 men for service. Figures published in the *Grantham Journal* supported his claim, showing **the 17th** Recruitment area, Leicestershire, lower for the weeks given.

12.12.1914 RECRUITING STATISTICS

Statistics for the District in the past week as follows:

10 th Recruitment area (Lincolnshire)	137
17 th Recruitment area (Leicestershire)	79
45 th Recruitment Area (Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire)	366
Nottingham City	268

19.12.1914. RECRUITING STATISTICS

Number of recruits raised in No 6 District for the Regular Army and Special Reserve during the past week was 1,011.

10 th Recruitment area (Lincolnshire)	99
17 th Recruitment area (Leicestershire)	71
45 th Recruitment Area (Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire)	251

2.1.1915. RECRUITING STATISTICS

Statistics for the District in the past week as follows:

10 th Recruitment area (Lincolnshire)	69
17 th Recruitment area (Leicestershire)	45
45 th Recruitment Area (Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire)	128
Nottingham City	245

Table 2. Recruiting Statistics. *Grantham Journal* 1914 - 1915

By early November the Government was faced with the question of compulsory military service, thorny partly because volunteers were thought to make better soldiers than conscripted men and in March the Mayor of Lincoln called on tradesmen who had employees eligible for the army to allow them to enlist. However, this did not include men in engineering works, because most were engaged on government contracts and he said the man who made the rifle and the man who fired

it were equally vital. A Recruiting office was re-opened at the Drill Hall, later moving to an office at High Bridge. By 13 March 1915, 2,089 men had been examined and 1,868 had been accepted.⁴ The upper age limit was raised in May from 38 to 40.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION

The Government needed to know how many men of military age there were, and in what trades they were engaged. As the Trade Unions pointed out, it was impossible for all men to enlist or the economy would collapse. On 15 July 1915 the government passed the National Registration Act requiring each person to register. Boston was mapped out into nineteen Registration districts. On Sunday 15 August 1915, forms were completed by those between the ages of **15 and 65** who were not already in the military, giving details of their employment. Women, such as Eva Hipkin of The Limes, Stickford, Boston were included. She was given a buff coloured identity card bearing the printed words ~~£~~God Save the King, which she signed, and her **age, 30**, was recorded. Her husband, John Amos Hipkin, **age 39**, Grocer, Draper and Provision Merchant, was registered in the same way.⁵ The results of this census became available by mid-September 1915 and showed there were almost 5 million men of military age not in the forces but 1.6 million were in protected, or 'starred' jobs.

THE DERBY or GROUP SCHEME

On 11 October 1915, Lord Derby, who was opposed to conscription, was appointed Director-General of Recruiting and the scheme of voluntary registration officially called the Group Scheme was introduced. This classified men according to whether they were married or single and into 23 groups by their age, the upper age limit having been raised in May 1915 from 38 to 40. Full details are in the Appendix. At the same time, a war pension was introduced so that should men not survive they would know their dependents would be provided for. Men who attested under the Scheme were sent back to their homes and jobs until they were called up. Special armlets with a red crown were issued, men at Market Deeping receiving theirs on Thursday, 30 December. Such men were now ~~£~~Starred and Recruiting Sergeants could not touch them.

Grimsby advertised for canvassers of either sex for the Derby Scheme. However, men must be over 40 because otherwise they should be registering. Grimsby and Boston fishermen were told they were not expected to enlist under the Derby scheme. Fishermen constituted the only class of men with practical experience of the sea who could be recruited in any appreciable numbers in the Royal Naval Reserve. It was imperative they were left for recruitment in the Royal Navy and not taken into the Army. A considerable number of men without experience of fishing volunteered to join fishing fleets, but later regretted it and refused to sail. This was a serious offence. Although volunteers, such men were under the orders of the Shipping Company and the captain once they had signed the log. James Larter, fisherman of White Horse Lane, Boston, was summoned for refusing to go to sea on the *Carrington* steam trawler. He was fined £3 or one month's imprisonment. Another man who also refused to sail but had since been working on a transport ship out of Grimsby and was now working on Salisbury Plain, had the case against him dismissed. John Nesbutt age 52 also refused to sail on the *Carrington* on 1 December, 1915 because aboard was a short-sighted deckhand named Glover who had recently driven a truck into a wall because he was unable to see. He had been treated by the doctor for six months but nothing could be done for him. Despite the obvious danger of sailing with such a person, Nesbutt was given twenty-one days hard labour.⁶ On 11 December the Boston Deep Sea Fishing and Ice Co. reported that since the beginning of November there had been twenty-one defaulters and they might as well tie up the boats.

The Derby Scheme proved unsuccessful. The War Office announced that the last day of registration would be 15 December 1915 and it was abandoned. Local newspapers sent out mixed messages about it. Both sides of the issue of conscription were discussed including problems around the recruiting of farm labourers and the attitude of labour in Lincoln against compulsion. However, aided by newspapers the Scheme encouraged a culture of denigrating slackers. A Lincoln soldier's message from the trenches appealing to slackers to enlist was

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published on New Year's Day 1916 by the *Sleaford Journal* and repeated later in the month. In contrast, the views of local Quakers were explained in a Minute of the Annual Meeting of Great Britain held in the Friends' headquarters, Devonshire House, London, and published in the *Sleaford Journal*.⁷ The issue of 18 March also publicised a Lecture at Lincoln held to explain the Friends' ideal that human society should be founded on the Sermon on the Mount. Indicating the problem of loyalties split between duty to God and duty to the nation, a further item was 'That Troublesome Conscience.' The *Lincolnshire Standard* informed readers that, according to Lord Derby's Report, 1,029,231 single men remained unattested throughout the nation. On 15 January 1916 H.B. Sharpe, an agricultural engine driver and shepherd of Careby was starred. H. Archer, Horseman of Horbling was refused exemption as were Frank Ward of Swinstead, Horseman, and J.S. Thompson a groom of Haconby. However, R. Harrison of Billingham, driver of a gas engine and miller, was placed in Group 15.

Conscription became inevitable. In January 1916, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith introduced the Military Service Act which set down terms for mandatory military service for British men. This specified that men from the ages of 18 to 41 were liable to be called-up for service unless they were married (or widowed with children), or else served in one of a number of reserved professions (usually industrial but which also included clergymen).⁸ The clergyman W.W. Leeke enlisted despite the Bishop advising against it. He had attested, and in February 1916 was called up; the Bishop was uncertain of his position. The Manpower Bill of April 1918 which conscripted Clergy for Non-Combatant Service was a further cause of concern to Hicks.⁹ Helen Fane's butler was conscripted and in May 1916 she was looking for a parlour maid to replace him and also for two lady gardeners.¹⁰

Exemption was granted on a temporary basis and had to be re-applied for. On 26 August, 1918, Hipkin was notified that his application for conditional exemption from military service would be heard by the Local Tribunal at Spilsby Rural District, Council Office, on Friday, 30 August, 1918 at 2.05 p.m. His certificate of exemption, Number 2978, declares that he was given Temporary Exemption from Military Service up to and including 1 March 1919, on the grounds of occupation. His apprentice son was registered on 15 March 1918.¹¹

Prime Minister Asquith was against conscription, which is one of the main reasons why it did not take place sooner. He also wanted to give members of the Society of Friends, Quakers, who were traditionally pacifists and who, for religious reasons, would refuse to take up arms, a chance to appeal against their call-ups. However, there was one final attempt to get volunteers. In Grantham, the Joint Secretaries to the Recruiting Committee were officially informed on 7 January 1916 that the Group System of enlistment would reopen on Monday for both single and married men. A month's notice would be given to men attesting in Groups 2 - 9, inclusive. Appeals, if any, had to be lodged within ten days from the date of attestation.¹² Classes 2 - 5 began to be conscripted in the last two weeks of January 1916.¹³ Recruiting officials at Grimsby then drafted these men to Lincoln for their medicals and then to their units. Groups 6 - 9 were collected on 25 January 1916 at the rate of thirty men per day. They now might not be drafted to their local regiments.

On 6 August 1914 the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire, Captain C. Mitchell-Innes, had decided that no applications from members of the Force for active service would be entertained because their police duties were too important. He said that as an old soldier, he understood their predicament.¹⁴ Now Boston authorities debated how many police should be allowed to join the Army under the Group System, and voted an allowance of 10s per week to the wives of any married police officers called up.¹⁵ The Group System had its attractions, for out of 215 officers, 212 attested at once. The Spalding Parliamentary Recruiting Committee reminded local readers that in six weeks some who have still not attested will be fetched and have no right of appeal.¹⁶ The *Sleaford Journal* described how Lincoln's Married Derby Recruits held a protest meeting questioning whether they had been 'Hoodwinked' into attesting and charging the Government with breaking faith.¹⁷ During December 1916, twenty-one recruits enrolled at Grantham Recruitment

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Office, Westgate, but of these only three represented the Borough. This was despite the fact that the new army at Grantham needed Motor Drivers in the Mechanical Transport Army Service Corps where the rate of pay was 6s per day and all found, with separation allowance in the case of married men.¹⁸

TRIBUNALS

Three types of Tribunal were formed so that men could appeal against conscription. Firstly, Local Tribunals were appointed by the Local Registration Authorities designated under the National Registration Act 1915. They dealt with attested and conscripted men. Recruiting officers or other military representatives were entitled to attend any hearing and to question applicants. The Boston Town Council held a special meeting early in February to appoint a Local Tribunal. A further meeting at Lincoln on 12 February decided whether there should be one Tribunal for the whole of Lincolnshire, or three, one for each administrative area.¹⁹ Secondly, Appeal Tribunals were appointed by the Crown. Lincolnshire had three, one for each administrative section in the county: at Grantham, for Kesteven; at Spalding and Boston for the Holland area; the Mayor, Alderman C. Lucas presiding at the Appeal Tribunal in Boston, and Lindsey had panels at Lincoln and Grimsby. When problems arose at Grimsby, the authorities realised if that panel were abolished, all Lindsey area cases could be heard at Lincoln, thus simplifying things, but this was not done. Many men sought exemption at the Tribunals, in fact the *Lincolnshire Standard* reported seventy-five appeal cases for the week preceding 18 November, 1916. Conscription caused real hardships for the British people. It is evident from Lincolnshire newspapers that it brought resignation, anger and despair to many homes. Finally, there was a Central Tribunal based in London.

In Lincoln, Local Tribunals were held in the Guildhall where recruits' enlistment also took place. The first Tribunal was held during January with Mr C.T. Parker, Mayor, presiding. Messrs Haston & Son appealed against the conscription of their only piano tuner, claiming his work was necessary to the many Red Cross concerts and a woman could not possibly do it. Women had never been trained and it needed at least two years' instruction before becoming proficient. However, G.E. Jarvis considered that women could tune pianos much better than men. He asked ~~is~~ music necessary to win the war? The appeal was dismissed.²⁰ The first Appeal Tribunal was held in April 1916. Only one appeal was upheld, and an appeal by a conscientious objector was abortive,²¹ although as a *bonâ fide* conscientious objector he was entitled to complete exemption under the Military Service Act.

The question of whether words spoken by a member of a Military Tribunal at a meeting of that Tribunal were absolutely privileged was raised in the High Court by farmers of Co-Partnership Farms Ltd., at Wingland, near Sutton Bridge, who brought a slander action against the Rev. W. Harvey-Smith. They alleged he had maliciously spoken and published at a meeting of the East Elloe Tribunal, with the knowledge that newspaper reporters were present, saying amongst other things that the employees of the Wingland farmers had only been getting certain wages for a fortnight and that the whole farm and business of the Wingland farmers was a big swindle. An account was published in a local newspaper on 18 May 1917 giving rise to the legal action. The case was heard before Mr Justice Sankey with Messrs Henry Mossop and Syms, agents for Messrs Mossop and Mossop, arguing for the defendants. The decision rested on whether a Local Tribunal set up by the Military Service Acts, 1916 and the Military Service Regulations (Amendment) Order, 1916, was a judicial or administrative body. Tribunals owed their existence to the National Registration Act 1915, Section 2, and the Military Service Act, 1916, Schedule 2. His Lordship declared that the tribunal was a judicial body and statements made at sittings were absolutely privileged. Costs were awarded against the plaintiffs, but leave to appeal was granted.²²

Difficulties in Lincolnshire therefore had implications for the whole country as in the case of *Rex v Grimsby* Section of the Lincolnshire Appeal Tribunal. On 31 October, 1916 judgement was given at the Court of Appeal in London concerning an Appeal by Mr T.R. Stubbins, a wheelwright and

rate collector at Winterton, bachelor, (37) to quash an order of the Grimsby Appeal Tribunal refusing him an exemption certificate. He was chairman of the Winterton local tribunal and had claimed before it to be exempt. His application was heard on 23 February, 1916. The military representative objected that Mr Stubbins ought not to act as chairman, but he refused to retire. When his application came up he asked another member of the tribunal to take the chair but stood behind it while his application was heard. Mr Stubbins was granted a certificate of absolute exemption, whereon the military representative gave verbal notice to the clerk that he would appeal their decision. He applied within three days for the necessary form, but was informed by the clerk that the forms prescribed by the LGB had not yet arrived, so he handed to the clerk a list of names, including that of Mr Stubbins, in respect of which he intended to appeal. On 2 March the appeal forms arrived; the military representative filled in two, sending them as required to the local tribunal. Their Lordships decided this procedure was legal and dismissed the appeal, with costs.²³

The first Quaker conscientious objector to appeal was Henry Burt, 23 years old, of Brandon Lodge, Brandon, a small village in South Kesteven. He had previously been ordered for non-combatant service but appealed against it. The Friends Meeting supported his stand by deciding that he must not under any circumstances allow his conscience to be ruled by the military. Edward William Allan Baker, also of Brandon Lodge, age 19, worked for Henry Burt's father. He made the same appeal. On the outbreak of war his job as a nursery gardener came to an end, so he went home to Folkestone where he helped with the arrival of the Belgian refugees, staying there until just before Christmas. However, his health broke down and he began work for Mr Burt. His religious convictions were such that he had refused even to drill with broomsticks while at college. Both Brandon and Burt received exemptions, but on condition they undertook work of national importance. Burt thanked the court on its very fair decision. Sir Charles Welby responded that he must not comment on the decision of the Court. However, Burt, following the Quaker manner of plain speaking said that he felt quite at liberty, and I should like to do anything under civil authorities of national importance. Baker said he spoke for both of them. These men were both absolutist objectors. On 1 May 1918, an Attender of the Meeting, Arthur William Henry Butler, the son of Arthur and Florence Butler who were Members, appealed on conscientious grounds before the Lincoln Tribunal requesting to be allowed to join the Friends Ambulance Unit. The Meeting's Minutes recorded His Tribunal granted his request, and were exceedingly courteous. Butler was reported then being trained at the Quaker centre at Jordan's Camp.

As is now well-known, many conscientious objectors were subjected to considerable brutality. In September the Friends Minutes recorded that A graphic description of the hardship endured by men who have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment in Lincoln gaol has been given by one of our members who has visited them in prison. On the question being asked them what is it that has enabled you to undergo and bear all this? The answer given is It is the Power of God.²⁴ The Bishop was supportive of pacifist men's predicament and concerned at the way they were treated during and after their Tribunals. In April 1917 he drafted a letter to the *Times* pointing out that the Act which recruited these men provided for their exemption from service and while he had no wish to screen cowards, the will or capacity to take an enemy's life is not the only element in good citizenship. He referred to Tolstoy's interpretation of the Gospel, the rough treatment of Faithful as described by John Bunyan, and quoted from the well-known author, Mabel Dearmer, who wrote from Serbia, where she was in service with the Serbian Relief Fund, and where she gave her life on 11 July 1915, What chance would Christ have to-day? Crucifixion would be a gentle death for such a dangerous lunatic.²⁵ He ended by warning It is perilous to trample on conscience; we must not try to deprive the honest objector of the protection secured to him by the law of the land. He remained a minority voice. Detractors accused him of disregarding facts, of not verifying his references and of not showing that the law regarding conscientious objectors had been broken. They said such people should forfeit their share in the nation.²⁶ On one occasion Hicks returned from London to find Chapman, father of a C.O. waiting for me: sad interview - alas! On 6 September, 1918, he tried, apparently unsuccessfully, to visit

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Fenner Brockway, a well-known conscientious objector, Editor of the *Labour Leader*, who had been imprisoned since April and was in Lincoln jail. In October, he was concerned for a student, who, being a CO was in ill odour with many.²⁷

In July 1917 the ill-treatment of a Manchester man, James Brightmore, at a camp at Cleethorpes, was discussed in Parliament. He had been sentenced by District Court-martial to nine months imprisonment for an offence committed as a conscientious objector and on release from Lincoln Prison on 16 June was sent to Cleethorpes Camp where he refused to obey an order. When charged the officer would not allow him to state that he was a conscientious objector, but said ~~id~~ have no COs in my company. ~~id~~ make it so damned uncomfortable for you that you will be glad to start soldiering for your own protection. He was given 28 days solitary confinement, taken to the foreshore and put in a hole about four feet deep. This was deepened to seven feet and then twelve. Brightmore spent eleven days and nights in this hole, deep in mud and water. When the case was brought to the attention of the Director of Personal Services, a Staff officer was sent to Cleethorpes Camp to investigate, to interview Private Brightmore and any other conscientious objectors. The irregularities ceased and the Army Council considered what further action would be appropriate. Brightmore was subsequently sentenced to two years hard labour and taken to Hull Prison.²⁸ Nonetheless, in September, a further complaint of ill-treatment at Cleethorpes was made by another CO also from Manchester. This time a military policeman and a soldier used violence to try to force Cecil Foster into uniform, including stripping him forcibly, handcuffing, hitting him and twisting his arms. His kit was tied around his bare throat and he was forced to march that way for two miles. On arrival he was nearly choking. The results of this case were not reported.²⁹

CONSCRIPTION OF FISHERMEN

Fishermen were conscripted despite the Government's increasing awareness of the necessity of a good food supply. In March 1916, Charles Clayton (19) of Boston applied to carry on fishing. His employer had three smacks and only three men out of nine left to man them. Five men had enlisted and were mine-sweeping for the Naval Reserve and the applicant's brother was at the Front. In this case the Applicant was exempt conditionally upon him continuing fishing. R. Ladds, (21,) a fisherman working for his mother, applied in April 1916 for exemption on the ground that he was working for the interest of the country; another brother (15) was working with him and if he went to the front his brother would be out of work. He had two brothers serving and his father had been killed. He was working to feed his mother and six younger children. He was exempt until 11 August.³⁰

Some recruits were rejected on offering themselves under the Derby scheme due to health problems, but taken into the Army later in the year. In September 1916, George F. Rowlatt, farmer, (28) of Sutton St Edmunds, received a notice requiring him to be medically re-examined at Lincoln, and was passed as Fit A. However, less than a week later he died of consumption, the medical opinion being that his lungs had completely worn out. He was also suffering from rheumatic trouble. On 12 October the Medical Board at Lincoln held a Preliminary examination on Albert Barton, (22), son of Mr and Mrs J. Barton of Pulvertoft Lane, Boston. For nearly three years he had been in consumption and unable to do his work as a fisherman. He slept in a shelter near the house because sleeping in the open air was thought beneficial. He was taken to his Board by his brother to care for him on the way. There he was passed Category C3. This meant that he had been classified as only suitable for sedentary work. Below this was Category D which meant that the man was unfit, but could be fit within six months. On the Tuesday following his Board, his condition became worse. Six days later he received his calling up notice, but five days later he died and was buried on 4 November. Sarcastically, the *Lincolnshire Standard* proclaimed this as ~~A~~Another medical miracle.³¹ Such cases caused the Tribunals to be held up to ridicule and opened them to accusations of bias.

The fishing industry was put on a war footing. Fish and fishing were controlled and Local Fish Controllers appointed; in Grimsby it was Mr H.E. Knott, a timber merchant, who was also on the

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Tribunal. A Fish Docks Recruiting Committee with Mr A. Bannister as Chairman and Mr J.J. Sutton as Secretary, raised over 300 men for a Fish Dock Company of the 11th Reserve Battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment. A Fish Dock Advisory Committee took the onus of Tribunal work, and weeded out men for the armed forces. Fishing engineers helped in Naval repairs and making munitions.³² In February 1917 a selection of 441 fishermen was due to be called up by the Admiralty although at the same time there were endeavours to widen home demand for salted herring and cod.³³ In June 1918 the Fishermen's Registration and Recruiting Section of the Admiralty agreed that calls of certain categories would be made with the advice of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, who would probably agree also that a medical examination would be made before these men were required to leave their home ports.³⁴

CONSCRIPTION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Recruiting was unchecked in agriculture although the older average age of farm labourers gave some natural protection.³⁵ Eventually, in May 1915 the War Office instructed recruiting officers not to accept agricultural workers such as carters, cattlemen, horsemen and shepherds; ordinary unskilled labourers were not mentioned.³⁶ At first Farmer was not in the list of certified occupations, but later this was modified, subject to certain provisos.

In February 1916, under the Military Service Act, local tribunals were empowered to grant exemption, whereas formerly they could only grant postponement,³⁷ but not all took advantage of this. In late March, 1916, William Eaton, 35, a farmer and dairyman, appeared before the Tribunal. He had twenty-five acres of pasture and seventy-five acres of arable land. He employed two men and five horses, sometimes six. Of his two men, one was married, and therefore not eligible for conscription at that time, and the other had been rejected. Mr Harry, a Tribunal member asked: "Supposing you left, who would look after your farm?" Mr Eaton answered "I am sure I do not know." He was given exemption until 11 August when he would have to re-apply.

A variety of skills and occupations was necessary to keep the life of villages, and therefore of the nation alive. The Holland Appeal Tribunal was made aware of the results of drafting too many shoeing smiths. Mr Jackson was the only shoeing smith in Holbeach St Marks, five miles from Holbeach. At his original Tribunal there was another shoeing smith in the village, but since then he had shut up shop and left. They had no one left to do this work and 200 horses needed to be shod. The court was asked to put Jackson back into Holbeach St Marks until October, when they might be able to get a replacement. Captain Morris, the Military Representative, said he felt that the man was indispensable to the district. However, Jackson had enlisted that morning and if he had taken the oath it was now up to the Board of Agriculture, and out of the tribunal's hands.³⁸

Life became more difficult for farmers when, in March 1916, conscription rules changed and they were required to justify before the tribunals why they should retain men of military age. All foremen under 30 years of age and other farm workers under 25 became liable to military service unless they were shown to be indispensable. Employers had to give notice of intention to appeal within three days of their men receiving the call to the colours.³⁹ At the Welton Rural District Tribunal in West Lindsey, Mr Bardney applied for exemption for his son on the grounds of indispensability. The Tribunal was told that half the farmer's 614 acres was arable. He had 14 horses, 87 beasts and 100 sheep. To help him he had three yearly confined men, a casual labourer, a boy and his son. All his single men had enlisted. This time exemption was granted.⁴⁰

At a meeting of the Holland War Agricultural Committee held in Spalding on Tuesday 4 April, 1916, the Chairman, Alderman H.P. Carter, made the strange proposal to send a resolution to the government urging conscription all round, including married men up to the age of 41, and Ministers of Religion, also the total abolition of reserved occupations. This surprising motion, perhaps born out of desperation, was agreed.⁴¹ In contrast, in mid-April 1916, the Lincolnshire Farmers' Union met in Lincoln and discussed the recruiting of agricultural labourers. Mr Mountain said that if the Government took all single men under 25 years of age there would not

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be a man left on the heath to work the horses. Mr Powell had been told at an Advisory Meeting that it was intended to take every unmarried man he had after May week. The Chairman reported speaking to a farmer of 400 acres, which was principally ploughed land; all his single men had gone and he had two men, two boys to work eleven horses and feed ninety beasts. The lambing and calving had to be attended to, and the ordinary work of the farm to be done. He could not carry on as it was. If there were any further difficulties he would have to send for the Auctioneer and clear out. This was not an isolated case. A letter was sent to the Board of Agriculture telling them of the difficulties.⁴²

The unceasing demand for men to feed the war machine resulted in a policy of ~~combing~~ combing out those who might be available for conscription who formerly had been exempted. Farmers were to be combed out in November 1916. The Executive Committee of the National Farmers' Union demanded that no further depletion of agricultural labour should be made until all other industries had been combed out. It was possible for conscripted men to remain at their jobs if they found someone who would substitute for them and the Committee wanted representatives appointed by local agricultural bodies to be co-opted onto any Substitution Committee.⁴³

On 1 March 1917 Lord Derby said that of the men who had recently been taken from agriculture for the Army only 10,610 out of 30,000 had not been exempted, that is 19,390, nearly two-thirds, had been exempted. The War Office lent 15,000 men to agriculture in spring 1916 and 30,000 last August. Up to the present 2,400 had been released from the Army for temporary work on the land. They were given twenty-four hours' notice to go back. He hoped to have 5,000 German prisoners and agricultural companies to help. However, this was a small proportion of the number of men requested by farmers. Nonetheless, as Lord Derby also indicated, there were various legal loopholes and illegal methods by which men could avoid conscription. The latter included medical certificates passed from one man to another, sale of forged exemption certificates, purchase of seaman's papers from neutral nationals, bribery of recruiting officials and doctors, simulated symptoms of TB and other illnesses, and the use of drugs.⁴⁴ Mr C.W. Tindall, Chair of Lindsey War Agricultural Committee, spoke of the Government's appeal to plough up grassland for grain production and the consequent labour difficulties and legal methods of avoiding conscription. He said hundreds of young farm hands had left farms and gone to munitions works in the county, escaping conscription and the hardship of agricultural work.⁴⁵ An example was a Seacroft man, married, age 33, Class C, who arrived in Lincoln in May 1917 to work in munitions. He was employed on aircraft work, ~~than~~ than which there is nothing more important at the present time ~~said~~ said Mr A.G. Newsum, the Chairman. His appeal for exemption was allowed.

During March 1917 the Military Service (Review of Exceptions) Bill was debated in Parliament. Men who had been exempted through ill health were to be re-examined. Mr Peto (Wilts, Devizes, U) moved an amendment seeking to exempt men employed in agriculture from the scope of the Bill. He said farmers were suffering from the tug of war between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture. Mr T. Davies, Labour MP for Louth, supported the amendment. Although the importance of leaving fishermen at their jobs was also mentioned in debate, Lincolnshire MPs said very little and the amendment was withdrawn due to a difficulty over wording and meaning of 'agricultural labourer'. ~~did it include women, for example?~~⁴⁶ Lord Lincolnshire spoke of the ~~splendid~~ splendid courage and immediate success of the new conscription policy. ~~He predicted that the men at the front would come back to a new and happy England, and would be able to settle down in their villages, wanting no man's smile and fearing no man's frown.~~⁴⁷ When the Bill was passed this meant more regulations for Tribunal members to interpret and apply, the Bourne Rural Tribunal among them. On 22 October ten men applied and three were given Temporary Exemption to January 1919 and six to 31 March 1919.⁴⁸ The Military Service Bill of April 1918 extended conscription to all men between 18 and 51 and allowed for this to be extended to men up to 55. This further denuded villages of tradesmen, labourers and professionals such as doctors.

BIAS OF TRIBUNAL MEMBERS

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Much depended on how local Tribunals interpreted Government rulings, their views of the applicant's reason for objection, and the importance they placed on the work of individual workmen. Their personal opinions on such matters were affected by their involvement in the local economy as well as their views of the need for troops. At a meeting of the East Elloe Tribunal in September 1917, indignant protests were made by several applicants against being called away from work in the harvest field to attend the tribunal proceedings, only to be told that the military agreed to their exemption.⁴⁹

Lincolnshire newspapers show class and generation played important parts in who received exemption and who did not. However, they also illustrate the equivocal position of Tribunal members when dealing with the conscription of sons of other Tribunal members and of neighbours. In late 1916 and early 1917 there was a public controversy about the wholesale exemption granted *en bloc* by the Skegness Tribunal. The *Daily Mail* and the journal *John Bull* sent representatives to enquire into the matter. Exemption had been granted to twenty-two men until 7 September 1917. The men themselves were reported as being astonished, having made preparations to go. They had been exempted in monthly and three monthly spells for very nearly two years. Two of the men were sons of Tribunal members. One, George H. Randall (38), was the chairman's son, Class A, fit for service. The Chairman, Mr S.G. Randall, a greengrocer, told the *Daily Mail's* Harold Ashton that eighty per cent of Skegness men had been sent to the colours and for the sake of the town's business, the Tribunal thought enough had been done. Those who had been exempted were nearly all proprietors of one-man businesses with average ages of 35½. Mr Randall was reported as saying that Mr Rawnsley, the Military Representative, was even more leniently moved than we were. His suggestion was to exempt until 30 September to tide us over the Skegness summer season, but we thought 7 September sufficient. Asked why they did not make exemption conditional upon joining the Volunteer Training Corps, Mr Randall said this was because the Skegness Corps was conducted so badly. The men did not always turn up at drill and when they did, there was nothing doing. Consequently it was a waste of time and the men went home.

Perceiving unfairness in the Tribunal decisions, Skegness residents sent two petitions to Neville Chamberlain. Ashton had an interview with the War Office which ordered a full report. The Hon. Gerald Walsh, chief inspector of the Local Government Board, visited Skegness and interviewed certain gentlemen.⁵⁰ On 9 February 1917, members of Skegness Tribunal and military representatives met Major Everett of the War Office. A Report was expected in the course of a few months. However, on 2 March the exemptions were reviewed, Major Everett, who was the recruiting officer at Louth, attending. In total the review took four and a quarter hours, the last ten cases being disposed of in less than a quarter of the time taken for the other twelve. This was because to begin with the Tribunal members were working out which questions they should ask and how to deal with the variety of responses. The Military representative asked each man if he had had exemption since a certain date, and if the answer was yes, then he was asked if he had tried to make arrangements for his business to be carried on or sold while in the Army? There were no affirmative answers. Several citizens attended but departed quickly when they found that certain portions of the proceedings were held in camera. Out of the twenty-two suspect exemptions, seven men were compelled to join up but only three were Class A. Walter Sands, married, age 41, a byreman, was employed by Mr C.G. Grantham, a Skegness farmer. His job was a certified occupation so Sands was exempted as long as he remained in that occupation. In contrast, Harold Reynolds, (32), Class A, married, fishing boat owner, also a wholesale and retail fish merchant, and captain of the local fire brigade was told to go.

One of the applicants appealed on patriotic grounds. In May a Lincoln hairdresser, (33) married, Class A, faced the Skegness Tribunal. He said he could have escaped into munitions many times but preferred to remain in his trade. However, a German resident was also trading as a hairdresser. He had been interned once and was then freed, but the trade was gradually being squeezed into his hands. He said: If I go into the Army they won't let me come back to my business in three months' time. I'll go today if you'll fetch him and intern him. The Military appeal

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was allowed, but the man was not to be called up until 14 July. However, towards the end of March a member of the public attempted to influence a member of the Tribunal by making derogatory remarks about one of the applicants. Another member had received two letters doing the same. It was decided that the letters should be ignored. In this affair Skegness was linked odiously with Pembroke and Newport where similar events had occurred.⁵¹

GRIMSBY TRIBUNAL

A more complex case arose in August 1917, when T. Sowerby from Grimsby Docks made a complaint to the Secretary of the Recruiting Department at the Local Government Board about the disproportionate number of fishermen taken into the Navy, compared with fish merchants' and owners' sons who it was alleged were exempted *en bloc*. In several cases their fathers were members of Tribunals who had apparently combined together to exempt their own sons and also all others from the docks so as to make their own actions appear less unworthy. He wrote that there were two reserve battalions in the district and drafts left frequently for the Front containing men with three and four wound stripes. He considered this a cruel injustice while Tribunal members' sons were being exempted.

The matter was taken up with the Officer Commanding, 10th Recruiting Area, Lincoln, who looked into various cases. The law was that employers had to apply on behalf of their employees but in one questionable instance the renewal application, dated 31 October 1917, was signed by the applicant himself, Ernest Laurence Richardson, (37), married, Class A, as Secretary of the Good Rich Products Co. Ltd. When the Appeal was heard Richardson did not appear nor did any other regular officer of the Company. Raising further doubts, Mr Bloomer, the solicitor, when asked to give the names of the Directors of the company was unable to do so. Other cases included that of Thomas Elisha Dawes, of 52 Manchester Street, Cleethorpes, (28) married, attested and medical category A, a slaughterman employed by George Smith of Wood Street, Grimsby, a wholesale pork butcher. On 13 June 1917 the employer applied for renewal of Dawes' exemption on employment grounds. This was refused. The employer's appeal was dismissed and a rehearing applied for. On this occasion temporary exemption was granted to 28 February 1918 on the basis of new facts, which it was said were not forthcoming although there was a change was in the turnover of his business. The number of pigs slaughtered had gone up from 70 to 150. This case prompted the Board to make a complete register of everyone engaged in businesses connected with the fish trade.

The investigating officer, Captain G. Metson, who stayed at the County Club, Brewery Street, Grimsby, discovered that there were serious irregularities in the way paperwork was handled at Grimsby. Firstly, the local recruiting office had sent its documents down to Lincoln so there were no duplicate halves of the application forms, nor the card index of Tribunal exemptions or register of Tribunal cases. This left Major Crosby, the local National Service Representative, with no past history of the cases. Further, according to records at Lincoln, Cleethorpes Local Tribunal had issued apparently invalid certificates. E. Mosson had escaped liability to military service as a result of the invalid exemption certificate issued by Cleethorpes Tribunal.

John Barker, the Clerk to the Tribunal, raised the case of Walter Garratt, a wholesale fish merchant who applied for exemption on the grounds of hardship and national interest and was granted it to 8 August. Barker maintained that there was no real hardship. He explained how fish was auctioned in lots to fish merchants at the market who gave quotes to customers and distributed fish throughout the country, a large part being sold by telegram or telephone. He said the claim of National interest raised the issue of what would happen if there were no merchants but considered that as middle-men they could be eliminated. Nevertheless, the Fisheries Division of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries issued a serious warning that the traffic in a highly perishable article of food could be seriously prejudiced by any arrangements to dispense with the services of those with whom inland buyers were used to doing business and who had experience of the needs of various localities and of the various classes of buyers. Further, the conscription of the only man in a firm capable of carrying out his particular work could mean the business would

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collapse. For instance, while one smokier out of two might be withdrawn, the conscription of a firm's only smokier might mean closing down. In addition, certain firms catered particularly for particular classes of consumers, such as those taking prime fish, fish for frying and so on. It was essential that sufficient firms should remain at work. Finally, the Board believed the increased strain of working under war conditions had led to the partial retirement of older partners or directors, who were then replaced by younger and more vigorous men who should not be conscripted, because their businesses might fail.⁵²

There were local rumours of further irregularities, for example, that Sir George Sleight had appointed as Clerk to the Appeal Tribunal the solicitor who acted for him in the purchase of lands. Sir George Sleight, the Chairman of the Grimsby Tribunal, had an extensive knowledge of the Fish Trade and usually interjected some facts, almost invariably in favour of the exemption of the applicant. Further, Sir George entertained Tribunal members to a champagne lunch on most days when the Appeal Tribunal sat. Captain Metson, whose role was to reduce the number of exemptions, further described how, when it was being decided whether to grant leave for a rehearing, Sir George Sleight stated, it seemed perfectly fair despite having entered the Court towards the end and hearing only part of the case. Metson spoke with the Deputy Chairman, Mr Knott, and he considered the decisions of the Appeal Tribunal on 9 February were decidedly better. Indeed, a solicitor to one of the other parties put it down to the fact that Sir George Sleight was absent. Metson regretted that Mr Knott was not the Chairman, as he would have granted fewer exemptions.

Another complaint was that the public was excluded. On Metson's first visit, a snowy morning, the Appeal Tribunal sat in the County Police Court, but on 30 January and 6 February they adjourned to a small room where no public could be admitted and in which, owing to lack of space, both the applicant and his Solicitor had to stand. Although both these days were bright spring mornings, the reason given was that the large hall was cold. Metson suggested that the real reason was that on 30 January the reviews by the Appeal National Service Representative for G.F. Sleight and R.G. Roberts, both sons of Appeal Tribunal members, were down for hearing, and on 6 February the review by the Appeal National Service Representative for Collinson, Clerk of the Grimsby Section of the Appeal Tribunal was held. Men in the Fish Trade regarded as favouritism cases of Tribunal members' sons being held in camera.

Metson then investigated the position with regard to Sir George's son, George Frederick Sleight, Junior, which had been lodged with Grimsby on 23 June 1918 and heard on 28 June. This did not follow the required procedure since it did not appear on the agenda nor was the required three days' notice of hearing given to the Military Representative. In addition, there were open disputes in court between representatives of the Board of Agriculture. The Fisheries Division instructed Mr Hefford, their local inspector, to attend the Appeal Tribunal but he was given an unwilling hearing because the local agriculture representative, Mr Tindall had been instructed by the Board to oppose the application of the National Service Representative. This resulted in two Government officers fighting each other in open court. Tindall was a purely agriculture representative and it was questioned whether he had the right to be heard in a fishing case when a Fisheries Division representative was present. At the next hearing Mr Tindall failed to agree only to giving or eliciting facts, but wanted to give his opinion. Further, he considered he was there as a friend of Sir George and as representative of the Board's Food Production Department. It appeared, therefore, that Board representatives were affected by their relationships with local dignitaries. The Appeal Tribunal had previously refused the Appeal National Service Representative's review in the case of Allen E. Marrows, (28) single and class A, recently appointed Secretary to a small district War Agricultural Committee. The Chairman applied for exemption for him and in this case Mr Tinsley spoke in favour. Metson felt it questionable whether the Board of Agriculture would approve of their representative's attitude as Marrows was not engaged in agriculture. Mr Knott called the decision a scandal.

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Metson concluded that in the majority of cases a man refused exemption by the Local Tribunal obtained it on his appeal to the Appeal Tribunal, while the appeals of the Local National Service Representative from such decisions were almost invariably dismissed. A large number of Local Tribunals looked to the Appeal Tribunal for guidance, and their decisions instead of helping or strengthening Local Tribunals tended to weaken them. He suggested that as the Appeal Tribunal was so weak and partial to applicants of position, the LGB should consider the advisability of strengthening it or abolishing it. It was the bad example set by prominent men of Grimsby that caused the local feeling that the Tribunal cases were decided by influence rather than by fact. Metson applied formally for an adjournment but Sir George Sleight referred to this as persecution. The usual adjournment was a fortnight, but it was expected that the King was going to Grimsby on 10 April, hence the Tribunal adjourned until 17 April, in three weeks time.

Metson compiled the following chart showing exemption of the under-mentioned sons of Tribunal members or other holders of important local positions came before the Appeal Tribunal on 27 February, 1918.⁵³

Name	Occupation	Age	M or S	Medical Category	Position of Father & Decision of Tribunal
G.W.Moody	Head Buyer	36	S	A	Son of Chairman of Cleethorpes Tribunal. Conditional exemption withdrawn & exemption till 27.6.1918
R.G.Roberts	Head Fish Salesman	34	S	A	Son of member of Appeal Tribunal. Conditional exemption withdrawn & exemption till 27.6.1918
G.F.Sleight	Manager to Fish Merchant	27	M	A	Son of member of Appeal Tribunal . adjourned to 27.3.18 at my request in consequence of an instruction from A.D.R. Lincoln to apply for an adjournment
H. Moss	Ships husband	37	M	BII	Son of Mayor of Grimsby . refused exemption by Local Tribunal. Firm (father & Uncle) appeal to Appeal Tribunal . case adjourned
Nelson Sleight	Fish Merchant	33	M	A	Son of member of Appeal Tribunal. Case adjourned.

Table 3. Chart drawn up by Captain G. Metson
 Source: National Archive. NATS 1.923. Grimsby
 Ministry of National Service, Westminster, 6 March 1918. R.3/857

Lieutenant-Colonel Starkey, for the Officer Commanding 10th Recruiting Area, reported to the War Office that the matter had been thoroughly inquired into and a report prepared stating cases and names of Members of Tribunals whose influence tended towards the exemption of particular men. It also laid out the names of those members of Tribunals who had themselves got sons exempted. He stated that "The Grimsby section of the Lincolnshire Appeal Tribunal is thoroughly packed in this direction, and application has been made to have these cases transferred to another Tribunal. Holding exemptions as they do for their own sons, they are biased in favour of granting exemptions to others, and unfortunately the other members of the Tribunals have not been sufficiently strong to resist them." An important war-time concept was being flouted by these events, since it was claimed that "the decisions show no equality of sacrifice."

In January 1918 fish merchants and owners at Grimsby were asked by the Board to give information about their employees in relation to the increase or decrease over numbers in 1913. Staff occupations were given under thirty-three heads and men's health category recorded. The enquiry was designed to discover the effects of the depletion of the shore workers due to conscription, whether men of military age were eluding conscription but also to relate numbers employed to the quantity of fish handled. It enabled the authorities to see which men, if any, could be conscripted. It showed that of the men employed by forty-four fishing vessel owners'

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firms, only seventy-nine were men of military age, of whom thirty-four were unclassified and four were in one firm running thirty-one trawlers. Only nine men were category A1. The summary of the 225 returns by fish merchants and curers told a similar story. There were 345 men of military age, 56 in category A1 but 138 were unclassified.⁵⁴

Whether prompted by the Board's Census is unknown, but on 21 January 1918 it was announced that a meeting would be held of the Fish Merchants and Trawler Owners Associations early the following week, to consider how men in the higher medical grades could be released for military service. In one of the Tribunal Group Registers containing 814 cases, 374 had conditional exemptions. This seemed excessive.

The Committee of the Fish Merchants Association, Grimsby, met on 7 February at the Joint Arbitration Board's Offices. They asked for a complete list of the men who received exemption on any grounds from the:

- (a) Port Labour Committee
- (b) Grimsby Local Tribunal
- (c) Grimsby Appeal Tribunal
- (d) Cleethorpes Local Tribunal
- (e) Scunthorpe Local Tribunal

The list was to give the man's name, address, occupation, age, marital condition, medical category, employer and the grounds on which exemption had been granted, and the period of such exemption. Towards the end of June 1918, a Board of Agriculture and Fisheries Report concerning Fishermen, the Fish Trade and Military Service noted that the District Inspectors had received instructions as to the conduct of cases affecting the exemption of men in the Wholesale Fish Trade at the Ports.⁵⁵ It did not state what these instructions were.

A few months after this, conscription came to an end and there were efforts to release certain men connected with fishing so that the food supply could be increased. Military needs were no longer paramount.

¹ *Skegness, Mablethorpe & Alford (SMA) News*. 8.10.1915

² *Lincolnshire Standard*, 3.10.1914

³ LA. 9-Fane 1/1/4/5/ 2.09.1914.

⁴ *Lincolnshire Chronicle*. 13.3.1915

⁵ LA. LLHS/8. Papers of J.A.HIPKIN & Son (Grocers) of Stickney, relating to WWI, 1914 ó 1921.

⁶ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 7.7.1915, 17.7.1915, 26.10.1915, 20.11.1915, 11.12.1915

⁷ *Sleaford Journal*. 1.1.1916, 15.1.1916. 19.2.16.

⁸ *Lincolnshire Echo*. 8.1.1916

⁹ *The Diaries of Edward Lee Hicks, Bishop of Lincoln, 1910 - 1919*. Selected and edited by Graham Neville. Lincoln Record Society, 1993. (*Hicks Diaries*) 873, 18.02.1916. 1227. 13.04.1918

¹⁰ LA. 9-FANE/1/1/4/14

¹¹ LA. LLHS/8 Papers of J A Hipkin & Son (Grocers) of Stickney, relating to WWI, 1914-1921

¹² *Grantham Journal*. 8.1.1916

¹³ Chris Baker <http://www.1914-1918.net/derbyscheme.html>

¹⁴ LA. CONSTAB 2/3/1/2/1

¹⁵ J.R. Marshall, 'Lincolnshire in August 1914' in *Lincolnshire Life*, vol. 24 no 5. August 1984. pp18-19

¹⁶ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 29.1.1916, 22.1.1916

¹⁷ *Sleaford Journal*. 25.3.1916

¹⁸ *Grantham Journal*. 2.1.1916

¹⁹ *Boston Guardian & Lincolnshire Independent*. 12.02.1916

²⁰ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 12.02.1916. 29.1.1916

²¹ *Sleaford Journal*. 8.4.1916.

²² *Times*. 9.05.1918

²³ *Times*. 31.10.1916

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- ²⁴ LA. SOC Fr 100. Minute Book. Broughton Gainsborough, Spalding. Monthly Meeting, 1914. *Hicks Diaries*, 236 Lincoln, February; 247 Lincoln, September
- ²⁵ *Hicks Diaries*. 893. 2.04.1917. Her husband, Percy, was vicar of St Mary's, Primrose Hill
- ²⁶ *Times*. 4-6.04.1916
- ²⁷ *Hicks Diaries*. 1182. 2.02.1918. 1299. 6.9.1918. 1126 29.10.1917
- ²⁸ *Times*. 19.7.1917, 7.8.1917
- ²⁹ *Times*. 15.09.1917
- ³⁰ *Boston Guardian & Lincolnshire Independent*. 1.4.1916
- ³¹ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 4.11.1916.
- ³² W.H. Jackson. *Grimsby's War Work : an account of the Borough's effort during the Great War, 1914-1919, together with the Roll of Honour*. 1919. 5
- ³³ TNA. CAB 24.6 0051. *Board of Agriculture & Fisheries. Week ending 22.2.1917*
- ³⁴ TNA. CAB 24.55 *Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. Week ending 25.6.1918*.
- ³⁵ P.E. Dewey. *War and Progress: Britain, 1914 – 1945*. Longman, 1997. p.25.
- ³⁶ P.E. Dewey. *British Agriculture in the First World War*. Routledge. 1989. p.38
- ³⁷ *Times*. 7.2.1916
- ³⁸ *Boston Guardian and Lincolnshire Independent*. 1.4.1916. 22.4.1916
- ³⁹ *Times*, 28.03.1916.
- ⁴⁰ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 11.03.1916
- ⁴¹ *Boston Guardian and Lincolnshire Independent*. 8.4.1916
- ⁴² *Boston Guardian and Lincolnshire Independent*. 22.4.1916
- ⁴³ *Lincolnshire Standard*. 11.11.1916.
- ⁴⁴ *Times*. 9.7.1917
- ⁴⁵ *SMA News*. 23.5.1917
- ⁴⁶ *Times*. 31.3.1917. Man Power and the Army.
- ⁴⁷ *Times*. 1.03.1917. Lord Lincolnshire had estates of 26,000 acres, predominantly in Buckinghamshire and Lincolnshire, the maintenance and improvement of which were lifelong preoccupations. He advanced the cause of land reform until the First World War, pioneering smallholding and cottage-building schemes on his own estates. By 1914 a quarter of his estate was let as allotments or smallholdings.
- ⁴⁸ LA. 9 ANC 9/4/9
- ⁴⁹ *Times*. 15.09.1917.
- ⁵⁰ *SMA News*. 31.1.1917 to 9.5.1917
- ⁵¹ *SMA News*. 11.04.1917. 28.03.1917
- ⁵² TNA. NATS 1/923. Board of Agriculture & Fishing (Fisheries Division). 17.10.1917
- ⁵³ TNA. NATS 1/923. Ministry of National Service, Westminster, 6 March 1918. R.3/857
- ⁵⁴ TNA. NATS 1/923. Board of Agriculture & Fisheries, 54a Parliament Street, SW1. Undated Memo on shore workers in the fishing industry at Grimsby. BAF. 2720 FR. 25 January 1918. Fishermen's Register.
- ⁵⁵ TNA. CAB 24.55.0078 Board of Agriculture & Fisheries. w/e 25.6.1918.