

The First World War

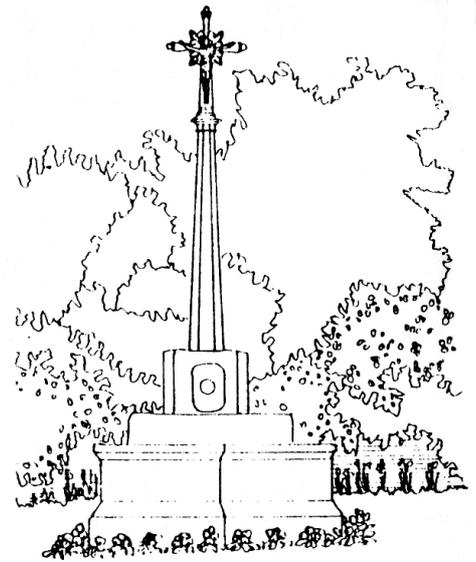
Stratfield Mortimer and Mortimer West End suffered greatly in the 1914-1918 War by the deaths of so many of their young men. Seventy men from the two parishes lost their lives, and many more must have suffered afterwards from the effects of their war service. Even before 1914 had ended two men had been killed, for Reservists were called up immediately and went straight to the front.

Great sadness was felt at the death of Ernest Andrews, the headmaster of St. Mary's School, for he was not a young man and it was thought that he could have avoided service, but chose to go.

Coping with vast numbers of men recovering from war wounds was a national problem. The Men's Club in The Street was turned into a convalescent home run by the local Red Cross. Several other large houses, Stanmore in West End Road, and Chatwood at Wokefield Green among them, became homes for recovering servicemen.

The villages were largely agricultural, and it was realised from the first that food production was important, so farmers were not encouraged to join up. However, this did not apply to their employees, who went into the Services in large numbers, leaving older men to work the land. It was nearly too late when this was realised to have been a mistake, and only a few weeks' food supply for the nation was in store.

Mortimer Common had been noted for its pine woods, stretching to Burghfield, Ufton and Padworth. This timber was needed for the war effort and the Canadian Forestry Corps, recruited from professional lumbermen, was called in to do the felling. These men were accommodated in a camp at Ufton, just over the Mortimer boundary. The road is still called Camp Road.



Mortimer West End War Memorial

