



Fund-Raising in Saltfleetby During World War II

Entertainments Committee Whist Drives

Since the early 1930s, Saltfleetby's Entertainments Committee had been arranging numerous village events such as summer Fete and Sports Days, concerts and New Year's Eve Socials in the schoolroom. Two veterans of the First World War were chairman and secretary, and acted as Master of Ceremonies (MC) at their events. Saltfleetby stationmaster George Ingham, had served in France in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Percy Epton, a market gardener on North End Lane, saw action in the Middle East as a member of the Lincolnshire Yeomanry. The committee were lent use of Orchard Bungalow on the Main Road, by retired Methodist evangelist Miss Frances Fletcher, of The Retreat, who owned cottages in the villages that she rented out. Here they held numerous whist drives on Thursdays, to raise money to provide comforts for members of HM Forces.

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WHIST.—Held by the Entertainment Committee a whist drive on Thursday was to provide funds for wool for comforts. Orchard Cottage had been lent by Miss Fletcher. Mr. G. Ingham was M.C. and 12½ tables were in play. Winners:—Ladies: 1. Mr. P. Epton (as lady); 2. Mrs. Kidd; 3. Miss Vickers; Gents.: 1. Mr. A. Lusby; 2. Mr. H. Holmes, Saltfleet; 3. Mr. E. Adlard, Skidbrooke; miniature: Mr. P. Epton and Mr. C. Lar-der.

Louth Standard 3rd February 1940

The village was shocked when George Ingham died suddenly in March 1942, age 64 after a short illness. Well-known in Saltfleetby, he also established and contributed to other local voluntary organisations such as the Village Billiards League, and Social Club.

Women's Voluntary Service



National Recruiting Poster for the WVS, Imperial War Museum

The WVS were established nationally in 1938 to help with air raid precautions when extra assistance may have been needed. Their work expanded to all kinds of duties such as first aid, knitting items for servicemen, collecting and distributing aid.

The Saltfleetby WVS was established in October 1940 by a number of local women, including Mrs Gwendolen Aley, the wife of the headmaster of the village school, Cecil Aley who had served in the RAF in the First World War. Miss Annie Stones, sister of village blacksmiths Samuel and Harry Stones, was also an active member in her 70s.

In July 1941 they gave £12 10s to the Red Cross to provide 10s parcels for prisoners of war. They raised the money from whist drives, for which over 40 prizes had been given by members and friends.

In the first eight months since their founding, they had raised £38 13s 6d (about £2,300 in today's value) from weekly whist drives, where all prizes were donated. This was used to buy 1,212 ounces of wool, which they knitted into garments for men on minesweepers. They had made 43 pairs of minesweepers' gloves, and turned 50 yards of material provided by the American Red Cross into garments for people in the bombed areas. They collected large quantities of second-hand clothing for people affected by bombing. They had also made twenty-three

pairs of curtains for a canteen at a searchlight camp (at Sea View on the Saltfleetby coast). The ladies took it in turn to do the darning for the men at the camp.

A whist drive in May 1942 raised £6 for St. Dunstan's, the charity supporting blind veterans.

Mr and Mrs Aley left the village to move to Rattlesden in Suffolk, where Cecil took up a new teaching job. In July 1942, after an event demonstrating *mint bottling*, Miss Stones presented Mrs Aley with a leaving gift of an electric boiling ring and electric fire, in appreciation of the work she has done as organiser of the WVS since its formation.

A series of Whist Drives organised by the WVS, Home Guard and National Fire Service (NFS) resulted in £138 12s sent in April 1943 to Saltfleetby Comforts Fund, YMCA, British Seamans's Society, Merchant Navy Comforts Fund, Aid to Russia Fund, Marsh Nursing Association, WVS Wool Fund, NFS Benevolent Fund, and RAF Benevolent Fund.

Penny-A-Week

The British Red Cross and St John's launched their *Penny-a-Week* campaign in 1939, to raise money to fund their humanitarian work during the war, including sending food parcels to prisoner of war camps and soldiers overseas. Based on voluntary contributions from wage earners, giving a penny from their weekly wage, and also collections and house calls. In Saltfleetby the WVS ladies led by Mrs Dorothy Taylor of the Old Orchard, Main Road, managed to collect a quarterly total of over £11 for the fund throughout the war. Mrs Taylor and the WVS continued their good work long after the end of the war.



*Promotional Poster for the Red Cross Penny-a-Week Fund,
Wellcome Collection*

Garden Fêtes

In August 1941, the WVS held a Garden Fête at Saltfleetby House, then owned by railway clerk Jim Luck and his wife Annie, who had held charity events there before the war. The proceeds amounted to £22 17s 3d which was divided between the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund, the Lord Mayor of London Air Raid Relief Fund, and the Saltfleetby WVS Wool Fund.

Saltfleetby House was later in use by the army as a place to billet soldiers and use the grounds for target practice.

The Auxiliary Fire Service, run by local volunteers, merged with the National Fire Service in 1941.

In Saltfleetby their station was in front of Vicker's Fishing Ponds on the Main Road. It utilised an old warehouse to house equipment (site of the former village shop). This area of the Fisheries became a location to hold fund-raising fêtes and sports days. In July 1943 money was raised here for the NFS Benevolent and Welfare Fund.

The Saltfleetby team won the *Tug-of-War* at Skidbrooke's 1942 fete organised by The Civil Defence Service in aid of the Red Cross. Other sports for children and adults included a *fancy-dress race*, *one mile cycle race*, *slow cycle and sack race*. £27 was raised over the day.

In June 1944 the annual WVS fete was held at the Fisheries. Mrs Luck judged the competition for children's *decorated cycles with wild flowers*. Other competitions included *shooting*, *skittles*, *bowling for a pig*, *ball game*, *treasure hunt*, *red white and blue*, *tank* and *darts*.



Louth Standard 17th July 1943

Percy Epton conducted a sale of goods, and there was a dance later at Sea View. The net proceeds for the day's events came to £91.

Dances at Sea View

A wooden recreation hut was put up for use of the searchlight company based at Sea View. This was also used for fund-raising dances, organised by local women. In March 1944 Miss Grace Holloway and Mrs Kathleen Graves (nee Brown) organised an event in aid of the Red Cross. The MC was Sgt Jones, items were donated as prizes. Misses Margory Larder and Edna Richardson were in charge of competitions. Home Guard Captain Jim Odlin conducted the sale of gifts.

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RED CROSS.—A dance in the "Sea View" Recreation Hut for the Red Cross was organised by Miss Grace Holloway and Mrs. S. Graves, and Sgt. Jones was M.C. Pillow cases (given by Mrs. Campbell), won by Mrs. G. Vickers; groceries, A. C. Ingamells; fancy mats (Mrs. Campbell), Mrs. A. Stubbs, returned for sale. Those in charge of competitions were Misses M. Larder and E. Richardson. The sale of gifts was conducted by Capt. J. E. Odlin, and refreshments were in charge of Mrs. A. Stubbs, Mrs. Wells, Mrs. W. H. Stubbs and Mrs. Campbell. The sale realised £7, and the total of £30 included donations.

Louth Standard 11th March 1944

A total of £30 was raised. Kathleen Graves organised further events at the hut with many contributions from locals. A dance in April 1944 raised £15 for the Red Cross, and £14 in June 1944.

After the war the recreation hut remained disused at Sea View, until it was bought by the village and moved to the Main Road, where it served as Saltfleetby Village Hall for decades.

Home Guard at the Prussian Queen

The village pub closed to became the headquarters of the Saltfleetby Home Guards. Made up of local volunteers led by many veterans of the First World War. James Edward Odlin of Poplar Farm, who had served in the trenches in France as a member of the Lincolnshire Regiment, became the captain. As well as local defence duties and training they also organised fund-raising events.

Lindsey 9th (Louth) Battalion Home Guard commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Oscar Dixon of Kenwick Hall, Louth, granted permission for the Prussian Queen to be lent for occasional social events to help the war effort.

At a whist drive in November 1943 in the Prussian Queen, Captain Odlin was MC. Several gifts of hares, chickens and produce were sold, raising £9 18s, giving a total of £20 0s 1d for Red Cross Funds.

In December 1943 Capt. Odlin and Mr G. T. Jaques organised a whist drive in which £10 15s was raised for the Red Cross Agriculture Fund. Among the prizes won that night were soap, envelopes, a hare, whisky, two partridges, a chicken and rabbits. Another one organised by Capt. Odlin and Mr Jaques in December 1944 raised £16 for Red Cross Funds.

Salvage Collection

The Louth Rural District Council (RDC) organised a salvage campaign for the collection of wastepaper, metals and other waste products which could be put to good use for the war effort. Extra incentive was given by setting villages in competition with each other to see which could donate the most. In August 1941 they reported that Withern was in first place with 7½lbs of salvage per head of the population. Saltfleetby

was second with 6lbs. Third place was shared by Aby, Claythorpe and Belleau with 5½lbs each.

Collecting depots were set up throughout the area, with volunteers assisting in the scheme. A large space was set apart in the forecourt of the Louth RDC offices for the reception of salvage, which was filled to overflowing, especially on market days.

Louth Rural Area Good Neighbour Scheme for Leytonstone

Many useful household items such as beds, mattresses, pillows, sheets, blankets, cups and saucers, glass and cooking utensils, teacloths and cushions etc, were donated by the people of Saltfleetby and surrounding villages. The appeal was organised in March 1945 by regional WVS member Mrs Doreen Palethorpe of Claythorpe Manor, Alford, to help the people of Leytonstone in London who had suffered heavy bomb damage.

Victory in Europe Day



Twelve days after VE day, on Whit Monday 1945, a village fete was held at The Fisheries. As well as the usual games, it also included a fancy-dress competition, Victory Cake and port wine, *flags, guess the dog's name* (it was "Vic"), and *guess the name of the doll*, which no-one guessed correctly, so it was sold. There was a *bring-and-buy stall* and an auction sale conducted by Percy Epton. Refreshments were served during the evening. The net proceeds amounted to over £100 (worth £5,500 today) which was donated to the Services Comforts Fund.