



Keevil Tribunal Exemption Appeals 1916

On 27th January 1916, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith's government passed the 1916 Military Service Act and introduced conscription to the British Isles. It came into force on 2nd March, 1916. Previously the British Government had relied on voluntary enlistment, and latterly a kind of moral conscription called the Derby Scheme.

William Henry Ghey

age 39, dairy farmer, of Keevil, was conditional exempted.

William Salter

Charles Dixon

28, in the employ of J.W. Griffin, farmer, of Keevil. Was exempted till July 30th, and Charles Dixon (40), in the same employ, was exempted till September 30th.

Source: Wiltshire Times and Trowbridge 1 July 1916.

William Salter

Rural Tribunal held Tuesday afternoon.

Mr. Griffin, of Keevil, made an application in respect of William Salter, aged 28, married, cowman, and said the man had previously had one month's exemption. He had 43 milking cows, and he had six men and one woman. Three of these "men" were boys and Salter was the only experienced man he had with the cows. He had not tried to get a substitute, and, indeed, did not know where he could do so. His farm consisted of 247 acres, 50 being arable. Further exemption was refused.

Source: Wiltshire Telegraph 19 August 1916.

OPC Note: Not everyone in Britain supported the war, however, and not everyone welcomed conscription. The Military Service Acts put in place a national system of local tribunals to which conscripts could appeal for exemption from service. Among the grounds for exemption, along with hardship, illness, education and the essential nature of their work, men could also claim on grounds of a conscientious objection to military service.