WARTIME IN THE SOUTH AINSTY

Introduction

The impact of both world wars was felt across the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. While the experiences of those in rural areas many have been different in some respects from those in the towns and cities, none could escape it.

Surprising amounts of evidence survive from the First World War, if you know what to look for, although the remains of the Second World War are more plentiful and easier to recognise.

Even more important than the physical impact on the landscape was the impact on people.

The removal of large numbers of adult men from communities was felt in a number of ways, not least in a change in the role of women, who took up new jobs in farming and industry. In the 2nd World War, many of the men left at home, for whatever reason, were recruited into the Home Guard.

Men from all the communities in the South Ainsty went into service in both wars; several of the war memorials record not only those who died, but also those who served and came home.

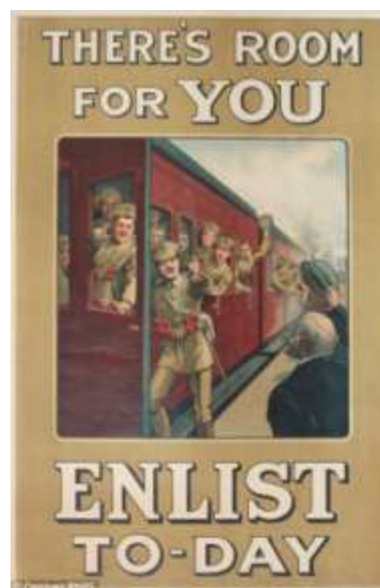
This report is based on a small exhibition that SAAS mounted in 2016 to explore the impact of the two wars on the landscape and communities in the South Ainsty – we hope you find it interesting.

We would like to thank all those who have allowed us to use their images and memories.

Recruitment

Soon after war was declared on 4 August 1914, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was dispatched to France. The BEF consisted of only a few thousand men, but in the weeks following the declaration of war, men rushed to join up, with recruiting offices set up in almost every town. Adverts

appeared in the local newspapers, encouraging men to join up. The language was emotive: 'Your King and Country Need You'. The main York Recruitment Office was at set up in the Exhibition Buildings (now the Art Gallery), with men recruited in to various regiments such as the East Riding Royal Garrison Artillery, the Prince of Wales Own and the West Yorks. The number of recruits in York was low, possibly because a soldier's pay was less than that of a skilled worker in the chocolate factories or on the railway.



An Appeal to all York Men.

King and Country
100,000 MEN.
TERMS OF SERVICE
PAY AT ARMY RATES.
HOW TO JOIN.

A Call to Arms.

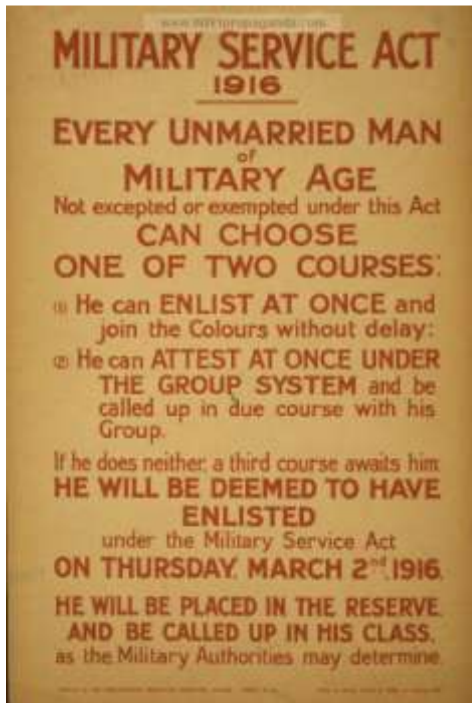
Drill Halls also served as recruitment offices. Many of these halls were built in towns and villages across the country in the late 19th/early 20th century, where local recruits could be taught the basic skills necessary for combat. Such halls often included a firing range and a gym.

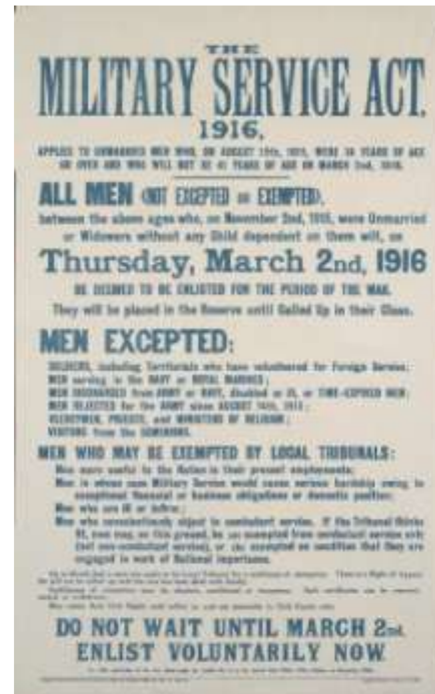
In Tower Street, a drill hall opened in 1885 was the HQ for the 6th and 7th Battalion, 1st East Riding Royal Garrison Artillery. The HQ for the A, B, and C Companies of 5th Battalion, Prince of Wales Own West Yorkshire Regiment, opened in 1872, was situated in Colliergate. This hall still stands and is now part of Barnitts, with the ornate entrance on St Andrewgate.

Extract from a 1914 film

In the early months of the war, the number of volunteers was sufficient to meet the army's needs; and besides, people believed it would 'all be over by Christmas'. However, by late 1915, with a rising death toll and no end in sight, the government was forced to consider conscription. The Military

Service Act was passed in January 1916 and required all single men aged 18 to 40 to register for service; in May it was extended to married men and the age limit was later raised to 51.



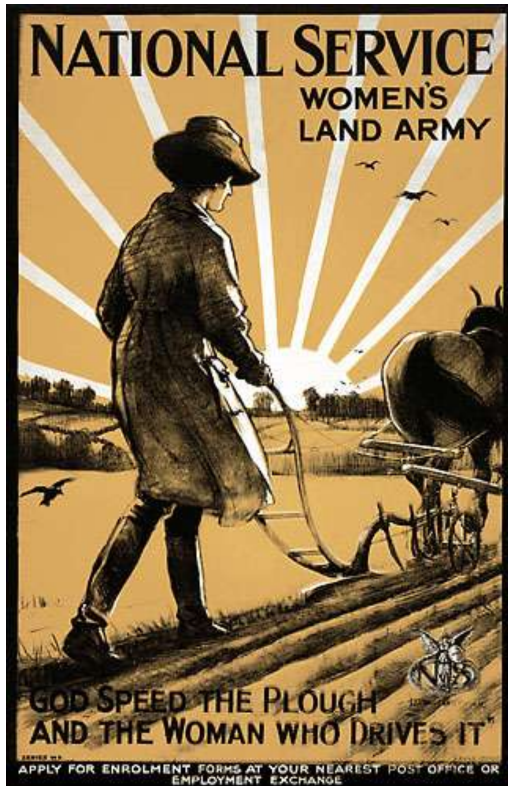


Over 5 million men were enrolled in the army during the war, with an approximately 50/50 split between volunteers and conscripts. The impact of conscription was huge: men from all walks of life were required to join up, with severe penalties for those who tried to avoid it or absconded. Thousands of men appealed their call-up and appeared before Military Tribunals; very few appeals were successful. In York, many Quakers were Conscientious Objectors, who refused to fight; some were recruited in to non-combatant roles, such as stretcher bearer, but many others refused to have any involvement in the war at all. Such was the strength of feeling about 'doing one's duty', some patriotic women were seen to give white feathers to men who were not in uniform.

At the start of the 2nd World War in 1939, conscription applied from the beginning but this time there were special tribunals for COs which were much less harsh than those in the 1st World War. Many COs were diverted to jobs in farming, mining

or forestry. Some ten COs were sent to work on the Appleton Estate in 1941 and Martin Minogue remembered his parents and a few other like-minded people welcoming them into their homes without preconceptions, but many other COs had a difficult time with local people.

Women's Land Army



While the Women's Land Army had been set up at short notice during the 1st World War, it was expanded and better organised in the 2nd World War, when thousands of 'Land Girls' were recruited and sent to work on farms across the country, carrying out all the normal agricultural tasks. In this area, many of the girls were recruited in the towns of the West Riding.

Elsie Oddy was born in Bradford in 1921, and having failed to persuade her father to let her join the WRENS, she was allowed to join the Women's Land Army. In 1940, at the age of 19, Elsie arrived at Mount Pleasant Farm in Acaster Malbis. Elsie was to work on the farm for 20 years, until it ceased trading, and spent the remainder of her life there; she died in 2015, aged 94. She often said she would have liked to have been a farmer.

As well as Land Girls and COs, German and Italian PoWs from camps at Tadcaster and Selby were sent to work on the farms. Martin Minogue's father recorded in his diary how the Italians refused to work if it was raining!

Home Guard

The Home Guard (or Local Defence Volunteers, as it was originally known) was formed in May 1940, at a time when there was a serious fear of invasion. Some 1.5 million men were enrolled from those otherwise ineligible for military service, either by age or occupation, leading to the nickname 'Dad's Army'. Many of the young men were later enlisted into the regular Forces. The Home Guard's principal role was to provide a first line of defence in the event of invasion, allowing time for the regular Forces to re-group. In some areas, particularly around the coast, they manned anti-aircraft guns and other artillery defences.

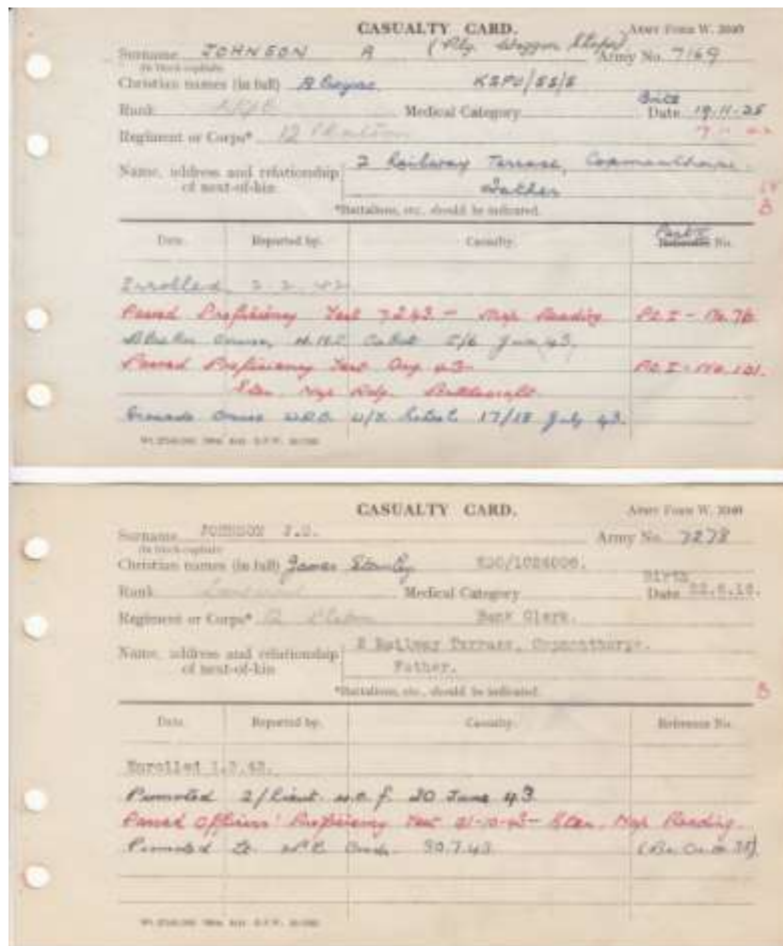
Bishopthorpe Home Guard outside the Palace

The Home Guard were issued with uniforms and basic weapons – often obsolete guns from the 1st World War – and attended various training sessions.

The Hudson Family at Nova Scotia Farm, 1914

Jackson Hudson from Appleton Roebuck noted that he and his fellow recruits knew more about guns than the local gentry who were commanding them, having always had guns and gone shooting. A detailed log was kept of all those who enrolled and

the qualifications they passed. The Bishopthorpe log survives as it was kept by Margaret Smith, whose father, Sgt Charles Dixon Cox, was the commander of the Bishopthorpe platoon.


CASUALTY CARD.

Surname JOHNSON A

Army No. 7169

Christian names (in full)

Rank

Medical Category

Date 19.11.25

Regiment or Corps*

Name, address and relationship of next-of-kin: 2 Railway Terrace, Copmanthorpe. Father

*Battalion, etc., should be indicated.

Date	Reported by	Casualty	Reference No.
Enrolled			
Grenade Course		17/18 July 43.	

CASUALTY CARD.

Surname JOHNSON J.S.

Army No. 7278

Christian names (in full) James Stanley

Rank

Medical Category

Date

Regiment or Corps*

Bank Clerk.

Name, address and relationship of next-of-kin: 2 Railway Terrace, Copmanthorpe. Father.

*Battalion, etc., should be indicated.

Date	Reported by	Casualty	Reference No.
Enrolled			
Promoted 2/Lieut. w.e.f. 20 June 43			

Examples of Home Guard records – Johnson brothers of Copmanthorpe

Local villagers also served as Air Raid Wardens – they were responsible for making sure everyone went to their local Air Raid shelter when the siren sounded and that they were carrying their gas mask. Harold Smith of Acaster Malbis described how the Wardens would go around the village blowing a whistle to warn people there was about to be a raid. The two First Aiders would go to the Institute (Memorial Hall) and wait until the 'All Clear' was announced by ringing a handbell. In Acaster Malbis the man in charge of Civil Defence was Capt Raimes; he would receive a warning by phone when German aircraft had crossed the coast.

Fred and Mabel Stott – Air Raid Warden and Post Mistress, Acaster Malbis

Impact of recruitment

In the York area, huge changes were seen in both farming and the railways in the 1st World War. At a time when there were serious food shortages, and the railways were busier than they had ever been, thousands of men who worked the land and ran the railway either volunteered or were called-up. While some key staff roles, such as engine drivers, were exempt from the call-up, many other railway and farm workers were gone. There was only one solution: women. Almost overnight, women found themselves in completely new roles, with freedoms and money not previously known.

During both wars, in rural areas like the South Ainsty, many women took on the running of farms, assisted by children and parents/grandparents. While farmers' wives had often helped with tasks such as milking, they now assumed much greater responsibility.

An added problem in the 1st War was the requisitioning of large numbers of horses for military use, making farm tasks even harder. In Copmanthorpe, a field opposite the Royal Oak was used as a collection point for horses, before they were moved to the depot at the Barbican cattle market, near Walmgate Bar. Mr King, a former resident of the village, described carrying trusses of hay for the horses while they were being stored at the pub.

These horses, known as 'remounts', were transported by train to large depots and then shipped to France. Mr King remembered what happened to the remounts at Aldershot:

I was working among the remounts there. I went across to France three times, but I never saw it. I was down below, looking after the horses. We used to take them across and bring more back … horses that had been wounded, [got] scurvy or something. Some of them went for sale and some for slaughter …

Requisitioned horses at the Barbican Cattle Market, c 1914

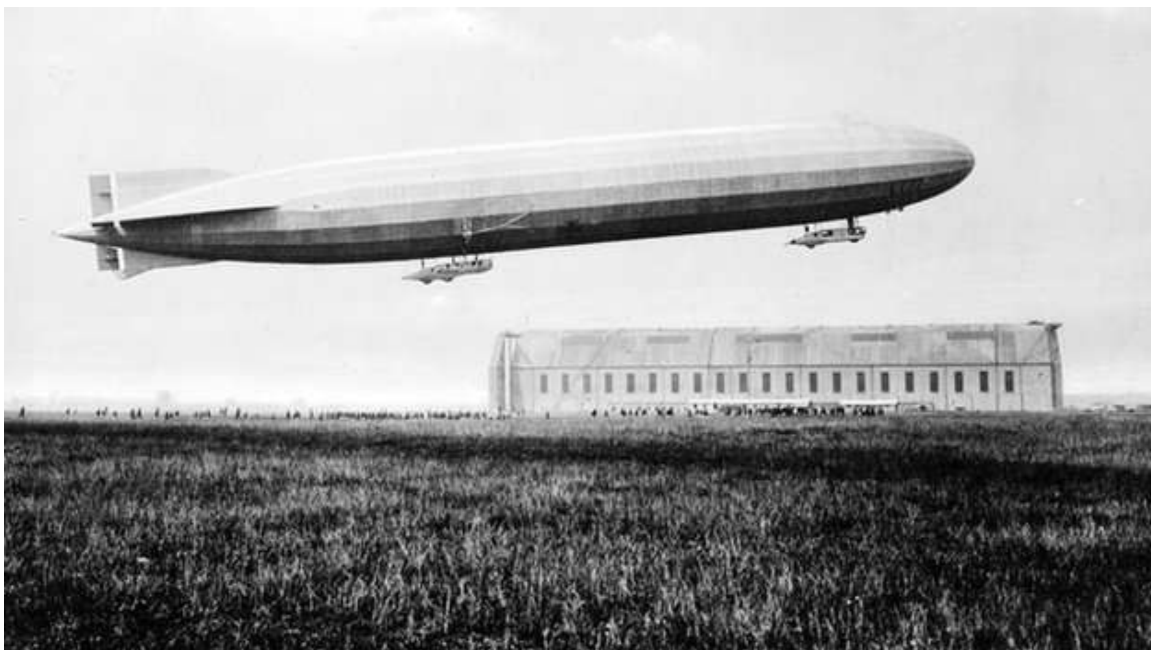
Life at Home

While it would have been hard to forget that the country was at war, life did go on as 'normal' in lots of ways. On the farms, the animals still needed tending and the fields needed ploughing, planting and harvesting, and in the villages, the normal cycle of births, marriages and deaths still continued. Christmas and birthdays were celebrated in the usual way and the influx of newcomers meant a lively social scene. Indeed, the Appleton Roebuck School Logbook makes no mention of the outbreak of war in 1914; the first reference to the war was an Apple Day in November 1914 to provide fruit for the Fleet. In February 1915, it records the first casualty of an ex-pupil – Corporal John White of the Northumberland Fusiliers, who was killed in training.

However, for those with family members in the Forces there was constant worry. Communication was primarily by letter (or occasionally telegram) and many millions of letters were written by both soldiers and those left at home. Mail from the

Front was all subject to censorship, but was reassuring for loved ones.

Nativity Play, Appleton Roebuck, 1944



Zeppelin Bomber

On a few occasions, the war came very close, for instance the Zeppelin Raid on York on the evening of 2 May 1916. Many residents of local villages remembered seeing it fly over – a frightening experience. Miss Beedham, who was 14 at the time and living in Copmanthorpe, described how they all came out into the street; while the Zeppelin did not have any lights on, they could see its massive shape.

The first bomb was dropped on Nunthorpe Avenue, and the second on Upper Prices Lane. A total of 18 bombs were dropped and nine people killed across the city.

Zeppelin damage on Price's Lane, York

In 1915, the Ministry of Munitions requested children gather horse chestnuts which could be used in the manufacture of acetone, an essential ingredient of the explosive cordite. Over a period of six weeks, the children of Appleton gathered 150 stone (950kg) of conkers!

Harold Smith was 19 when war broke out in 1939. His description highlights how labour-intensive farming still was at that time.

The day war broke out we were leading corn. In those days it was all manual work, leading with horses and wagons. The corn was cut by a horse-drawn binder and the sheaves were stooked by hand and left in the fields for two or three weeks depending on the variety and the weather.

The War Agricultural Executive Committee was formed and officials came round the farms and ordered the farmers to plough grass out in order to grow arable crops. The land had been down to grass for a long time and was landed. I ploughed our fields with a pair of horses; it was very hard work.

People on the move

Both world wars saw vast numbers of people on the move, around the UK and abroad, with new recruits sent to training camps across the country. For many men and women, who had previously never travelled more than a few miles from home, this must have been a strange experience. As we have seen, it wasn't just military personnel but also people like Land Girls. Large areas of land were requisitioned by the government for military bases of all kinds, from camps to airfields to firing ranges, while large houses like Nun Appleton Hall were requisitioned for hospitals and convalescent homes.

At the same time as men were leaving, incomers were arriving to local military installations. In the 1st World War, officers might be billeted with local families but during the 2nd, personnel were largely accommodated at purpose-built camps. When off-duty, the men and women would head for the local pub or dance hall, mixing with local people.

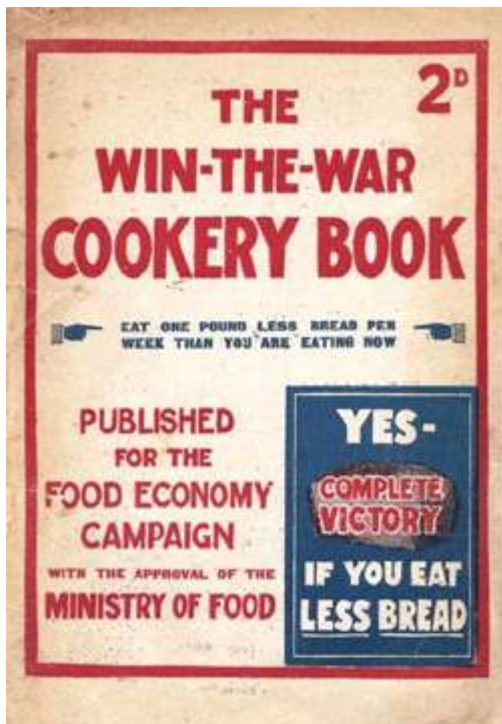
Miss Beedham, a Copmanthorpe villager, remembered Canadian lumberjacks being brought in to fell the trees on the site of Copmanthorpe aerodrome in 1915. She also talked about concerts for the airmen and villagers: *For all it was war … we had good times … Australians, Canadians, Americans …*

Appleton Lads of all ages in the 1940s!

Air Ministry Plans of Acaster Malbis Airfield in 1944 reveal just how extensive the site was. Several hundred people might be stationed at Acaster Airfield at any one time, requiring Sykes Bus Company to provide additional services to get them to and from the station in York on weekend leave, or to the cinema in Tadcaster – the so-called 'Picture Bus'. Syd Winterburn reckoned he had 90 passengers on a 35-seater one night! The airfield also provided a lot of employment for local people.

Rationing

Contrary to what many people think, rationing was not introduced until very late on in the 1st World War. There were, however, shortages of certain foodstuffs, in particular wheat, following a bad harvest in the US in 1916 and the Atlantic blockade operated by German submarines which restricted shipping crossing the Atlantic. At this time, over 50% of wheat



was imported, resulting in strongly worded appeals for people not to waste bread; special cookbooks were produced suggesting alternatives. For farmers, there was pressure to increase production not only of wheat but other foodstuffs as well, including new crops such as sugarbeet; quite a challenge when labour was so difficult to find.

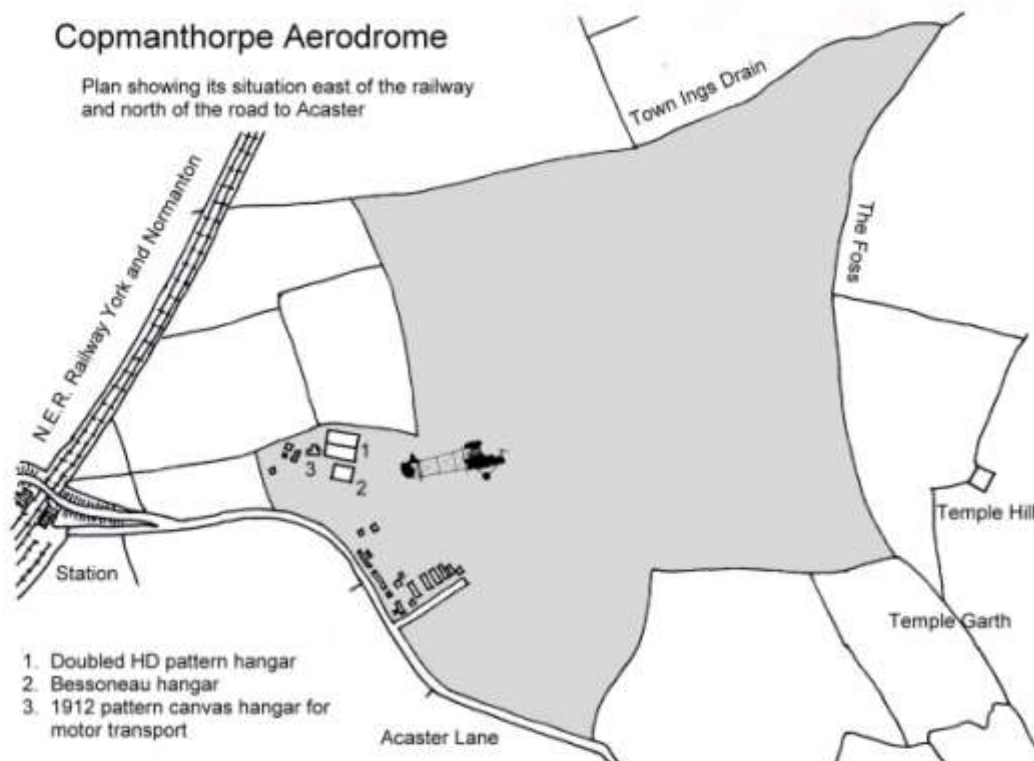
Petrol Coupons

In rural areas, where many people grew their own vegetables and kept hens, and maybe even a pig, food shortages may not have been too severe, at least in the 1st World War. In the 2nd World War, however, rationing was introduced early on and was severe; for example, if you kept hens, your egg ration was reduced, although there was plenty of illicit ham and pork production! As well as food, everything from soap to clothes to fuel was rationed. Petrol became unavailable to civilians in 1942, with supplies limited to essential users such as the military, public transport and farmers. The final restrictions, on meat, were not lifted until July 1954.

Copmanthorpe Aerodrome

In 1914, when war broke out, aeroplanes were a new phenomenon – powered flight was less than 20 years old, and what might be described as a 'modern' aircraft had only appeared in 1909. It is hard to imagine what the residents of Copmanthorpe, particularly the young boys, thought when it was announced that an aerodrome was to be built on land off Temple Lane.

Opened in 1916, Copmanthorpe Aerodrome was situated on land to the north of Temple Lane, with buildings in the area of what is now Drome Road. It was home to squadrons from the Royal Flying Corps (RFC). It was a basic airfield, consisting simply of a grass field that had been cleared and levelled; there were no runways and aircraft took off according to wind direction. Like several other airfields in the York area, it was too low-lying, and Fred Reed, talking in the 1970s, recalled that had the war continued in to 1919, there was a plan to relocate the airfield to more elevated land along Colton Lane.



The airfield was first occupied in June 1916 by B Flight from No. 33 Squadron, RFC which had been flying from a temporary airfield on the Knavesmire; this later became No. 57 Squadron. In September 1916, A Flight from No. 76 Squadron was also sent to operate from Copmanthorpe. While take-offs went largely away from the village, planes landing would generally come in over the village; a number of crash landings are recorded, including two on fields south of Temple Lane and one near the gatehouse of Moor Lane Crossing. Night flights were an essential part of training; as Miss Beedham remembered, *They did a lot of flying, through the night as well as the day.*

A search-light similar to this was established on the aerodrome before the planes arrived. It was operated by local volunteers, including Thomas Russell of The Bungalow on Horseman Lane, Fred Weatherill and Herbert Knowles of Main Street and Stanley Dykes of Yedmondale, Low Green. They operated the light until September 1917 when the Royal Engineers took over.

Initially the aircraft were housed under canvas but two timber hangars were later constructed, including a large one measuring 40m x 37m. Motor vehicles were housed in a canvas hangar. A number of buildings were erected in the vicinity of what is now Drome Road, including accommodation

blocks, a cook-house, mess blocks and ablution blocks for the various classes of men. The site was fenced-off and entry was controlled via guard posts. While the majority of men were housed on site, some of the officers were billeted in local farms – one resident remembered the commanding officer being billeted at Ivy House Farm and walking to the airfield with a swagger stick under his arm and gleaming riding boots!

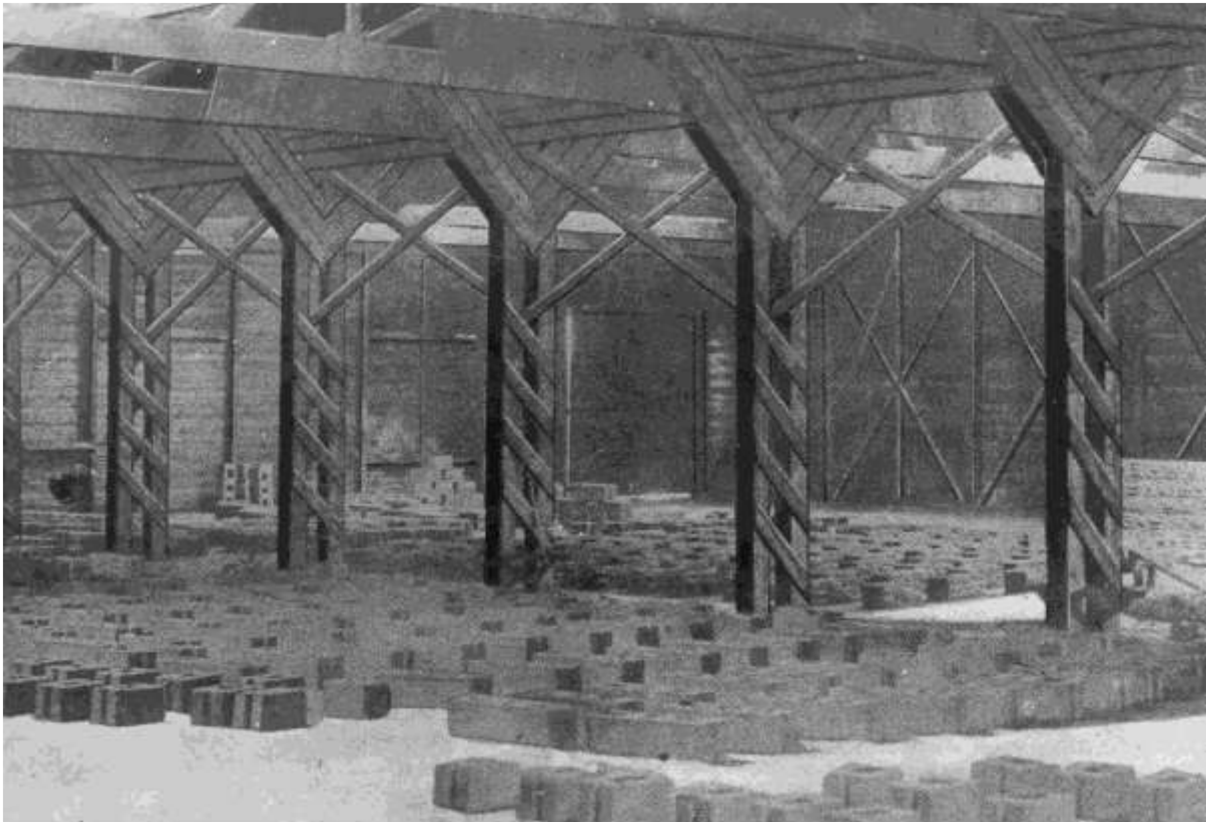


Photo (dated 1920) showing interior of hangar in Drome Road, with blocks manufactured for Y.M.C.A. building

The hangars were built of timber and were later used for a variety of purposes including, as seen here, the manufacture of concrete blocks to construct the WI Hall. According to Miss Beedham, at least one came to a sad end when it burnt down, roasting the pigs that were being housed in it.

Despite being a relatively small airfield, a large number of people were employed at the site. A 'Flight' usually consisted of eight aircraft, each with a pilot and observer, but many more people were engaged in keeping the aircraft flying. These

ranged from the military staff such Commanding Officer, administrators, armaments and equipment officers, various craftsmen including carpenters and sailmakers, engine fitters, electricians and a vulcanizer, to the local people employed as cooks, waitresses and mechanics. A staff of 150 or more was probably employed on site.

Flying was a hazardous business at this time, for a number of reasons. Aeroplanes were very new technology and very fragile. Runways were bumpy grass fields; navigational instruments were basic; and open cockpits meant exposure to the elements. This picture of Lt Alan Reed, from Copmanthorpe, shows him in his flying gear, designed to keep him warm in freezing night-time temperatures at altitude. Alan served in the RFC and survived the war; he died in 1988, aged 90, so he is only about 18 in this photo. No. 57 Squadron had completed its training by December 1916 and left for France where they flew both reconnaissance and offensive patrols in the spring of 1917.

No. 76 was a Home Defence squadron, so they remained at Copmanthorpe, becoming operational as a night-fighter unit in summer 1917. They flew a number of sorties in search of Zeppelins which were reported to have crossed the North Sea. A sortie in August 1917 saw seven aircraft leave; one only got as far as Shipton, another crashed on landing back at the airfield, and three had to land elsewhere, including one at Flamborough Head. Hopefully the other two made it back

safely. The Squadron was disbanded at Tadcaster on 6 June 1919.

After the war, Copmanthorpe was one of 120 airfields that the Air Ministry specified was to be made available for civil aviation; it was suggested as a stop on flights from London to Edinburgh, between Doncaster and Catterick. However, as aircraft technology improved, such sites rapidly became unnecessary and the land was later sold for development.

Acaster Malbis Airfield

Acaster Malbis Airfield was situated close to the west bank of the River Ouse, between Acaster Malbis and Appleton Roebuck. In January 1940, three farms – St Andrew's, Nova Scotia and St Andrew's Appleton Roebuck – were requisitioned by the Air Ministry for construction of a grass fighter strip, which was to be a satellite of Church Fenton; construction began immediately, the workers lodging at nearby farms. Contemporary aerial photographs have revealed that 'field boundaries' were painted on to the ground, in order to disguise the runways. The land between the runways continued to be used for food production!

This Luftwaffe aerial photograph of the airfield has recently come to light. The photo was taken by a reconnaissance mission on 16 November 1940, when the airfield would still have been under construction. However, enough clearly existed for them to identify it as an airfield. The photo was found in the papers of a lady who was born in Appleton Roebuck. Her husband, who served in the army during the war driving bomb convoys across Europe, found the photo during one of his trips and brought it back for his wife. When the lady died, her daughter passed it to someone in Appleton Roebuck.

A large number of buildings were constructed at various points around the airfield. Billets for the air men and women were built on farms such as Woodside, Beechlands and Nova Scotia. A searchlight battery sited opposite Woodside Farm was operational throughout the war.

The first aircraft arrived on 6 January 1942 – US Airacobra fighter planes belonging to the Canadian Airforce 601 Squadron. Only a month later, AH602 crashed in icy conditions; it was the first of many such crashes, caused by a combination of bad weather and technical problems.

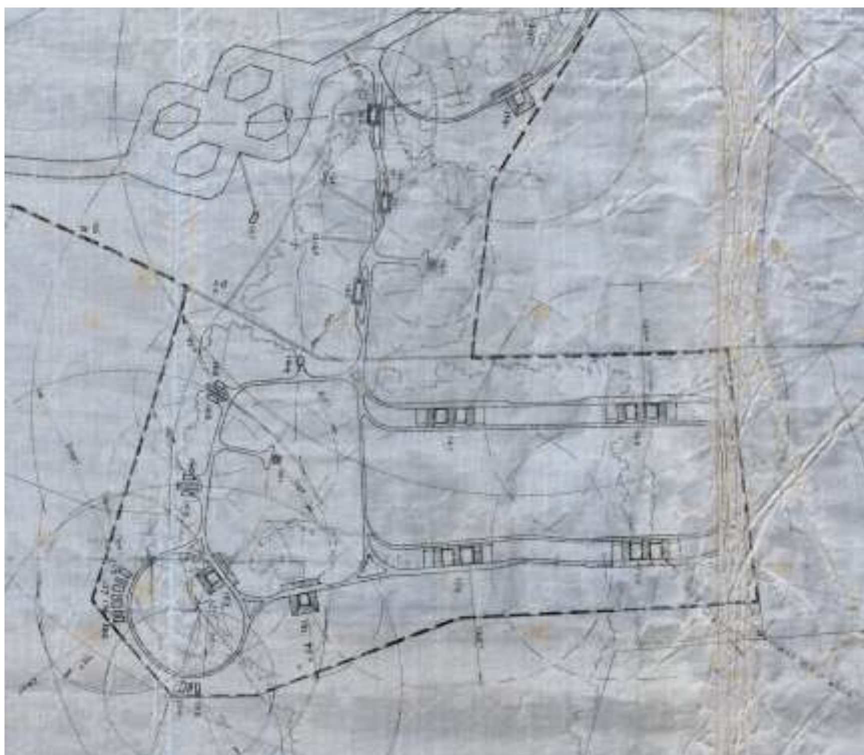
In April 601 left, to be replaced by W and X flights of 15 (Pilot) Advance Flying Unit which was training newly qualified pilots on twin-engined Oxfords. The airfield's location so close to the river meant it was frequently fog-bound; no fewer than three crashes are recorded in fog in October 1942.

In January 1943 the airfield closed and was rebuilt as a heavy bomber station with three concrete runways: one of 5940ft (*c* 2166m) and two of 4020ft (*c* 1224m).

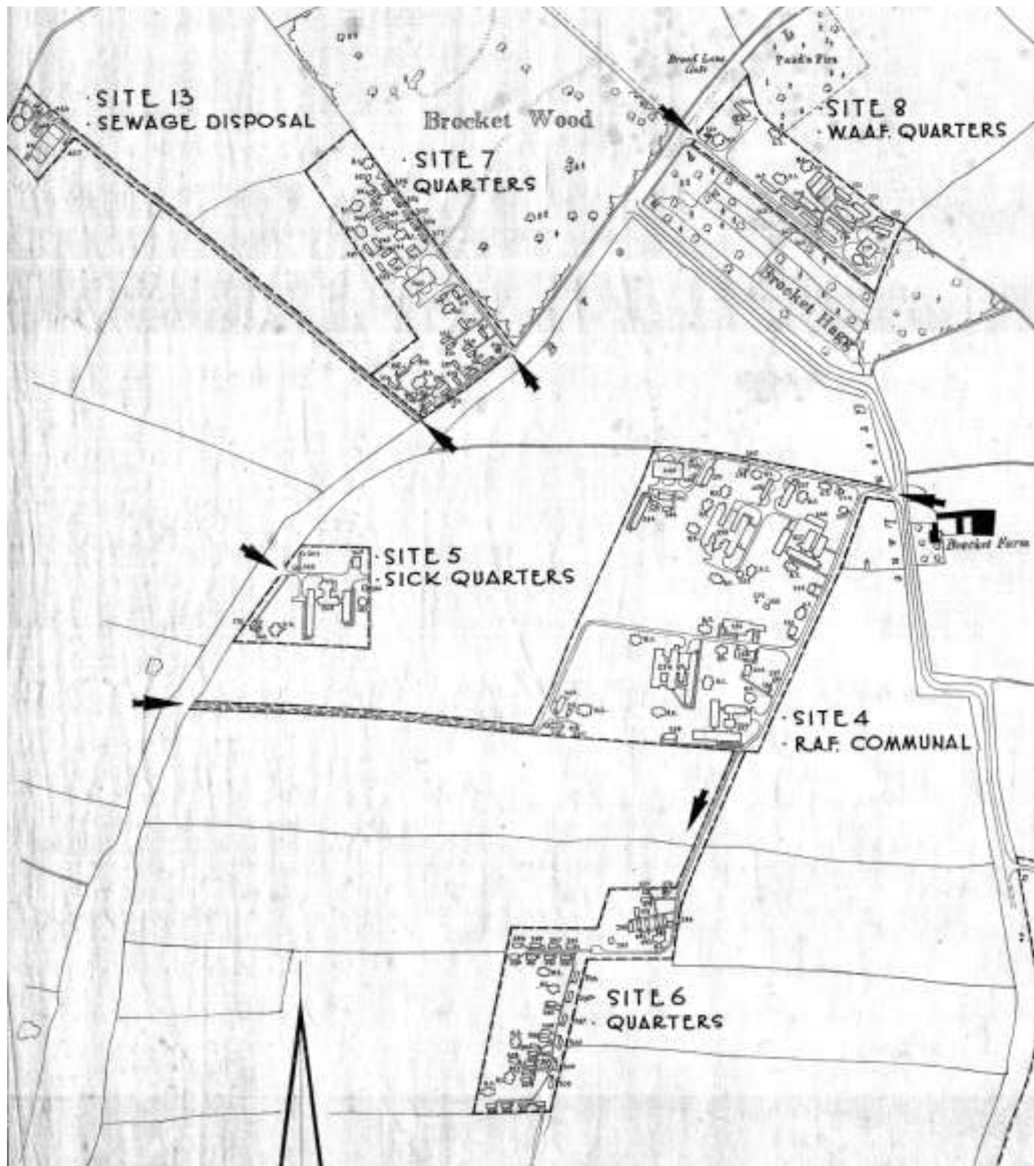
An array of different buildings was constructed on and around the airfield, ranging from steel hangars and a control tower to Officers' Mess and Quarters, WAAF Quarters and sick quarters. Air Ministry maps of the time show the extent of the site.

The site reopened as part of No. 4 Group Bomber Command, but never had bombers actually stationed there. It served principally as a relief landing ground for Rufforth and Marston Moor. In November 1944 No. 4 Aircrew School moved in; a non-flying unit. By 1945, some 200–300 RAF personnel were living on site. The site was used by 91MU (Maintenance Unit) for the storage and disposal of munitions, Stubb Wood providing excellent cover for the large bomb stacks.

Stubb Wood today and plan of bomb stores 1945



While the airfield closed officially on 28 February 1946, the munition stores remained until the 1950s, and it wasn't until 1963 that the site was finally decommissioned. The land between the runways remained in cultivation throughout the war.

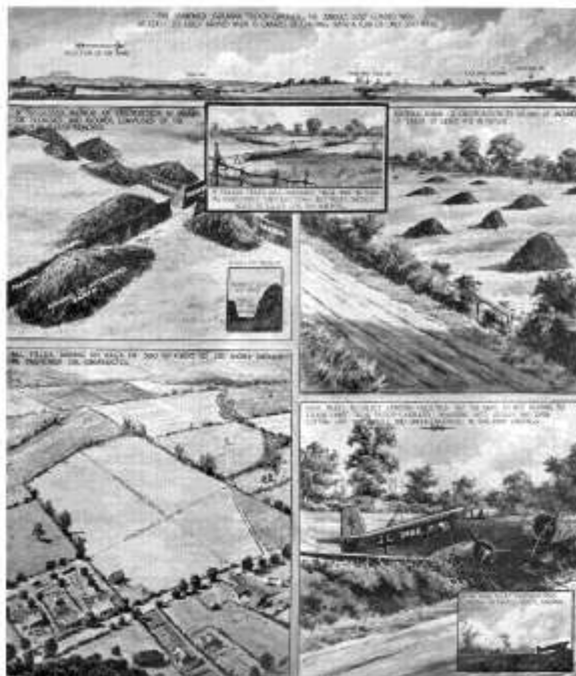


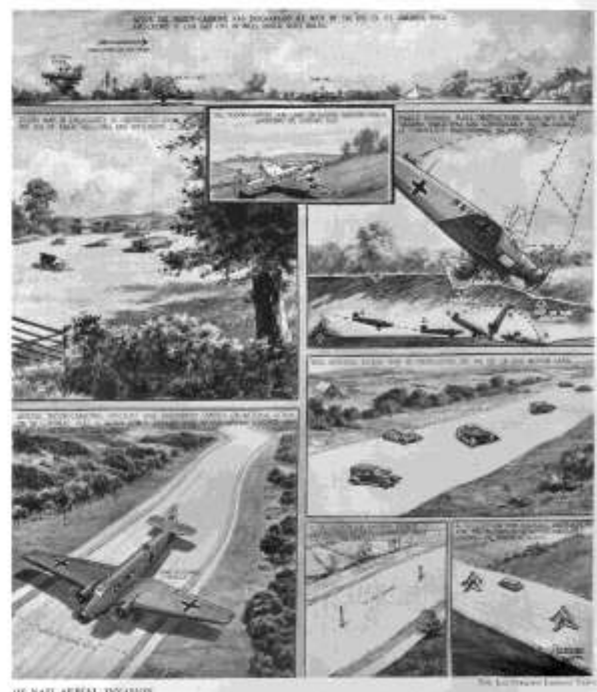
RAF Plan of Dispersed Sites, Acaster Malbis Airfield, 1945

In the last 50 years, the runways have been largely broken up and many of the buildings have been demolished, but a surprising number still remain, either as ruins or converted to other uses. While these are on private land, many can be seen from roads and public footpaths.

Anti-aircraft posts

By the 2nd World War, aeroplane technology had moved on considerably and a wide variety of planes was in use by both sides. There was considerable concern about enemy planes – both powered and gliders – landing and unloading people and equipment. A variety of different obstacles were employed to prevent aircraft landing or taking off on large fields. Of particular concern were the large German Ju52 transport planes. At Manor Heath, Copmanthorpe, a barrier of concrete posts was erected, with many still surviving today. These were carefully positioned such that a Ju52 could not fit between them.





Aircraft crashes in the area

Not surprisingly, given the number of airfields around York, there were a number of crashes in the area. These provided great excitement for local children and many would have taken a 'souvenir' – a piece of wreckage.

Crash of Hawker Hurricane into Copmanthorpe Wood, 16th July, 1940

In the summer of 1940, a Hawker Hurricane fighter plane from Church Fenton aerodrome crashed into a wood near Copmanthorpe, and burst into flames. The pilot, 22 year old Sergeant A D W Main, of 249 Squadron RAF, was on a night flying exercise. He was killed.

The blaze in the wood and the noise of the exploding ammunition woke people in Copmanthorpe village, and many rushed to the scene. Six year old Malcolm Bisby was not one of them, but never forgot the incident.

Malcolm and his mother and sister were evacuees from Leeds. They stayed on in the village after the war and he attended a local grammar school. In 1990, then living in Whitby, he located the surviving family of the pilot in Dundee, and corresponded with the RAF, and a memorial service was held for Sergeant Main.

249 Squadron later played an active part in the Battle of Britain. Flt.Lt. J B Nicholson (whose home and parents were in Tadcaster) won his V.C. flying with the squadron.

Crash of RAF bombers near Copmanthorpe in summer 1943

At 10.50am on 29th August 1943, a 4-engined Halifax heavy bomber took off from Riccall RAF station on a cross-country flying exercise. Five minutes later and at a height of about 1000 ft, it collided with another Halifax which had just taken off

from the RAF airfield at Rufforth. It was thought that the pilot of the Rufforth aircraft, which was flying south, had been dazzled by the bright sun.

All 14 crewmen of the planes were killed, and a farmer and his lad working in a field below were burned when flaming fuel descended on them and ignited their clothing.

Most of the airman, who had an average age of 23, were British and were buried near their homes. Those who were not, who included two Canadians, were buried in the Stonefall Cemetery, Harrogate. Nearly all of the nearly 1000 Second World War burials in the cemetery are of airmen, two-thirds of them Canadian. Many died in the military wing of Harrogate General Hospital.

Crash of Junkers Ju88 M2+Ch near Crockey Hill

In 1942, Hitler made the decision to bomb historical British cities in what became known as the Baedeker raids. The name Baedeker was the result of the German air force using guide books printed in Germany before WW2 which had a series of maps showing British historical points of interest.

York was inevitably one of the targeted cities and British fighter squadrons were directed to defend these targets by attacking German bombers and their fighter escorts. As a result of these actions, a number of enemy aircraft were shot down and crashed around York. On the night of the 28th April, 1942, a German Junkers JU88 aircraft was shot down by Free French pilot, Warrant Officer Yves Mahe, in his Hurricane BN292 from 253 squadron based at Hibaldstow, Lincolnshire. Mahe attacked the Ju88 and damaged the starboard engine but the plane must have also been struck elsewhere as photograph of the tail also shows damage. When it went into a steep dive, the pilot ordered his crew to bale out but he was unable to get out in

time and was killed when the aircraft crashed at approx 03.00 hours near Crockey Hill. The pilot's body was initially taken to Pocklington Airfield before burial in Barmby Moor churchyard, but he was later reinterred in the military cemetery at Cannock Chase in Staffordshire. The three surviving air crew became prisoners of war.

WO Mahe landed his aircraft safely at Church Fenton. After the war he was presented with the Croix de Guerre by General de Gaulle at a ceremony in York Mansion House.

Wreckage of Junckers JU 88

Legacy and Remembrance

In the months following the Armistice in November 1918, there was a growing call for both local and national memorials to commemorate the sacrifice of the war. These ranged from the Cenotaph in London's Whitehall to small memorials in towns and villages across the country. While many were traditional crosses, as can be seen in Copmanthorpe and Appleton, others were designed to serve the living community, such as the Acaster Malbis Memorial Institute. The latter, funded by public subscription, didn't open until 1927. The names of the donors are recorded on concrete plaques in the front wall; £5 for a small plaque, £10 for a large one. Many of the memorials had the names of the casualties of the 2nd World War added in 1945.

Acaster Malbis Memorial Institute

The Appleton Roebuck memorial was funded by the Comrades of the Great War and a branch of the British Legion was also set up in the village, with its own hall – the 'Legion Hut'.

As thousands of soldiers began to return home, there was a campaign to provide 'Homes fit for Heroes'. These were houses built by local authorities with government subsidies under the 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act, in an attempt to address the chronic pre-war shortage of affordable housing. While the lofty ambitions of the Act were soon whittled away, over 170,000 homes were constructed. In the West Riding, the local authority adopted an enlightened approach in rural areas: in 1920 it purchased land from the Wenlock Estate in the South Ainsty area which was divided into small farms of *c* 32 acres (13 ha), complete with a small brick-built farmhouse, for returning servicemen. Whitemoor Farm at Acaster Malbis was one of these farms.

The end of the 2nd World War in June 1945 was greeted with celebrations across the country. The local Home Guard commander, Sir Benjamin Dawson from Nun Appleton, threw a party for everyone on VE (Victory in Europe) Day with a bonfire and Hitler as the 'guy'! There was a national day of Victory Celebrations on 8 June 1946 for which Souvenir Programmes were produced.

Memorials

War memorials can be found in all the principal villages of the South Ainsty. Photos of these can be found below.

Research into the individuals named provides an interesting commentary on the difference between the two wars. While those who died in the 1st World War were killed (and buried) mainly in France, those from the 2nd reflect the wider arena of conflict, with graves as far away as North Africa and the Far East. A separate document on the website gives details of some of the men recorded.

In **Acaster Malbis**, the men who both served and died are commemorated on plaques in Holy Trinity church and the Memorial Hall.

Amongst the names is that of Rev Edward Gibbs, who was Chaplain to the Archbishop of York at that time, Cosmo Gordon Lang. Rev Gibbs was aged 32 when he died on Palm Sunday in 1918. As clergy were exempt from conscription, he had volunteered to serve.

The memorial at **Acaster Selby** stands in the grounds of St John's church.

The memorial at **Appleton Roebuck** stands on the main road through the village, close to All Saints church.

The **Colton** memorial takes the form of a ring-headed Celtic cross situated in the graveyard of the church.

At **Bolton Percy**, there is a stone memorial beside the path to the church door in the graveyard, and a large metal plaque inside on the wall of the south aisle.

The **Copmanthorpe** memorial stands on the green, between St Giles church and the Old Vicarage.

There is also a plaque inside St Giles.