

Parish Magazine – 1914

September 1914:

My Dear Friends

Few of us thought a month ago that the end of August would find us in the midst of all the turmoil and anxiety of a great European war. But it is here, and we have to take our part.

– Rev Monck

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association exists to help the families and dependents of those who have been called to the front. Applications can be made to the Rev G G Monck at the Vicarage, or direct to Mrs de Grey, Brympton House.

The Chief Constable for Somerset having asked for guards, at a meeting called by the Chairman of the Parish Council, R N Southcombe Esq., an excellent response was made and for many days and nights Black Bridge (GWR) and Petherton Bridge were guarded in the day time from 6.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. by members of the Boys Brigade and the Church Scouts, and at night by armed volunteers, six at a time. This guarding has now been taken over by other authorities.

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Our Scouts answered well to the call of their King and Country for a new army. The full list from Stoke is inserted in this magazine. Of that number, the following were Scouts: In the Navy, Oliver Gale and Evan Dodge. In the Army, Percy Dodge, Sidney Richards, Archie Thorne, Alan Taylor, Hensleigh Male, Albert Jones and Walter Wardle. Most of these are with the other Stoke recruits at Ernesettle Camp near Devonport. Their letters are very cheery and they seem content and happy. Captain R N Southcombe who went down to see the recruits reports them looking very fit and healthy. It has left our Scout troop small in numbers and size but time will soon mend that if our young Scouts will stick to their work.

G.F.S. [Girls' Friendly Society?] will meet fortnightly in the church school for sewing and making useful things for the sick and wounded, beginning Friday 9th October when Mrs Quantock Shuldham of Norton Manor will give an address.

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Stoke has joined with South Petherton in undertaking the support of twenty four refugees; seventeen in the old Work room at Watergore kindly lent by Messrs Southcombe Bros, and seven at South Petherton in a house lent by Mr Poole.

The room was quickly and effectively fitted up for their accommodation and the following ladies formed into a committee for providing the furniture and the food needful for the next six months: Mrs R Southcombe, Mrs S Southcombe, Mrs Raymond, Mrs Clark and Mrs Jotcham. They report a most satisfactory response as to the weekly gifts towards the £3 a week needed from the two parishes.