

Bottesford in the Great War - Music and readings

Final Script

Narrator		Part 1 & 2	Malcolm Owen
Choir	U3A	Part 1 & 2	
Choir	Primary School	Part 1	
Readers	Primary School	Part 1	
Reader	Belvoir High School	Part 1 & 2	Jack Simpson
Readers	Volunteers	Part 1 & 2	Elaine Marlow, Vic Martin Sue Middleton, Dave Slater

Entry Organ Music Chris Coe
Part 1 (45 mins)

Narrator Introduction

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending the 1st event in St Mary's since the refurbishment of the West End etc (eg., safety announcement).

In good times and bad this Church has been a place to gather in creating our own performances and entertainments.

Tonight we will listen to words and music telling the story of Bottesford in the Great War.

Words describing how the community coped with cared for each other in difficult times.

Music of the time, heard then, listened to now.

Bridging past and present, evoking shared sentiments, raising funds and morale.

A warm welcome to:

- The Vale of Belvoir U3A Choir directed by Barbara Cobb;
- The Primary School Choir and readers organized and conducted by Liz Mills;
- Both accompanied by Judy Holborrow;
- Readers from Belvoir High School and the Bottesford Parish WW1 Centenary Project;
- and Chris Coe our Church organist.

Before the declaration of War on the 4th August 1914 Bottesford life appeared untouched by the world at large and the unfolding international crisis.

The Grantham Journal reported regular Concerts and events.

The Choral Society and Brass Band featured along side numerous whist drives, Cricket and Tennis dances, pig and angling club suppers and Church and Chapel fund raisers.

The U3A Choir will start with two popular pieces that could well have been heard by village audiences from that period

'It's love that makes the world go round' from Gilbert & Sullivan's Iolanthe

Followed by – 'Drink to me only'

U3A Choir

It's love that makes the world go round

Drink to me only

Mobilisation and recruitment

Narrator

On the 3rd August 1914 Germany invaded Belgium and declared war on France. The next day Great Britain declared war on Germany after their refusal to recognize the neutrality of Belgium.

That declaration would change life in Bottesford and the surrounding villages.

Mobilisation and recruitment prominently featured in national and local news.

Young men on summer camps with Territorial Regiments were called to volunteer for active service.

Recruitment meetings rapidly swelled the ranks of local volunteers.

Frank Pacey a Private with the 5th Territorial Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment wrote home from their training camp in Luton to his father and family:

Reading 1 Frank Pacey's Letter

(Jack Simpson – Belvoir High School)

Dear Father

Sorry I haven't written before. I am getting on alright.

It's a lot better here than at Milford Derbyshire. It was all hills there.

We live a lot better here as well. Officers come every meal to see that we have plenty.

We have plenty of training, ten mile march every day and Battalion drill when we get there, but we have got used to it now.

Well Dad, they have asked who are going to volunteer for the front.

I think all the Bottesford Squad will volunteer, so of course I shall go with them.

What do you think about it? Do you think I ought to go?

I think they will send us to Gibraltar or France.

Of course if we go abroad, we must expect to see bit Of the war, but we must fight for our Country.

We have a fine general and a good captain and the Sergeant of our section is a decent chap, he has no favourites.

I expect we shall have a day or two off before we go, to get things together a bit.

We had our bayonets sharpened in Melton so we look like business, and we carry 150 rounds of live ammunition.

Give my love to all at home.

Your affectionate Son

Frank.

Reading 2 Recruitment Meeting

(Vic Martin – WW1 Project Volunteer)

Others were also urged to volunteer.

The Grantham Journal reported details of a crowded recruitment meeting held in the School at Bottesford on Friday 18th September 1914.

The Duke of Rutland spoke alongside prominent members of the community, including the local Rector, the Reverend Vincent Jackson. The Duke argued the case for signing up.

He emphasised at the outset that we must realise it is not much above 400 or 500 miles away that the, English and French Armies were confronting the Germans over a front extending some 150 miles. (...) All this war fare was going on not very far away, and he wanted to bring it home to them that if England and all of them did not play up, that 400 or 500 miles might be very considerably reduced, and we might find ourselves somewhat in the position of the unfortunate Belgium peasantry and inhabitants of towns in the vicinity of which the Germans and Belgiums had been waging this

wonderful War. He asked them not to think for a moment. (...) You have to see it through, not only for your sakes, but for the sakes of your allies (Applause). It is not to be a half-and-half measure. There can be no compromise (Loud Applause). ~~Germany is to be beaten utterly, thoroughly and completely, or everyone one you will suffer 19s 11d in the pound. You can take your choice (Renewed Applause)~~

Narrator

Music and song mustered men and boosted morale at home and on active service.

Welcome to the Primary School Choir

Primary School – WW1 Songs

It's a long way to Tipperary

Pack up your Troubles

Oh Oh Oh It's a Lovely War

News from home and away

Narrator

News from home and away chronicled how the war affected the village.

Mr Collet, the head teacher at Bottesford School, recorded in the school log book the impact of the war on the School and the community. Children from today's Primary School will read to you some of those entries.

Reading 3 School War efforts

(Primary School Pupil)

20th November 1914 - Scholars are practising for an entertainment, to be given about Christmas-time, in aid of war funds.

11th January 1915 - On January 1st scholars gave an entertainment and raised £5 for the British Red Cross Society.

On Tuesday afternoon, a Roll of Honour, on which appears the names of ex-scholars who have joined the colours, was put up in the school.

17th September 1915 - Scholars have given 2 pounds 2 shillings in pence towards the purchase of wool, they have knitted in school: 10 scarves, 10 pairs of men's socks, 16 pairs of men's mittens, and 4 body-belts. These are to be sent to the British Red Cross Society.

Narrator

The Parish Magazine for September 1915 included a letter from 2nd Lieutenant Montagu Vincent-Jackson serving with the Sherwood Foresters, the Rector's only son.

Reading 4 – 'In the line'

(Dave Slater – WW1 Project)

This is now my third night in the first line, and I am getting almost used to the incessant ping of rifle bullets, and the dull thud of cannon. I wish you could see me now, lying on a wooden bed in my dug out, surrounded everywhere with sandbags, shells and rifle bullets. Night is like daytime here, and all officers are on duty in turn for three hours, which are spent in continually patrolling up and down the trenches to see the sentries are on the alert. Sniping and machine-gun fire goes on all night, mostly directed against working parties, gun-fire is restricted to the daytime.

I had rather a thrilling time last night, when I took out a party to reconnoitre the grass between our trenches and the Germans, who are not more than 75 yards away. We crept out on our hands and knees through a tunnel, and I then spent an hour crawling over masses of barbed wire and rattling tin cans. I came back with my clothes torn and covered in mud, but without being hit.

Narrator

Throughout the war local news would feature how music and song would both to entertain and raise funds within the community.

The U3A choir will now sing two more songs from the period:

'Marianina' and 'Watching the Wheat'

U3A Choir

Marianina – 1911

Watching the Wheat – c.1700

Children & collections

Narrator

The School Logbook also lists many fund raising flag days and collections undertaken by the Scholars at Bottesford School. We shall hear the many ways in which the School made vital contributions to the local war fruit for sailors, eggs for wounded soldiers; horse chestnuts for explosives; wastepaper for recycling.

Reading 5 School Collections

(Primary School)

The scholars brought oranges for 'Jack's Orange Day' . A large boxful was sent away to sailors.

Monday was a day for collecting eggs for the wounded. A total of 144 collected.

Rain yesterday afternoon interfered with blackberry gathering – only four and a half pounds got. Weather promising School closed this afternoon for blackberry picking

Total quantity of blackberries sent to Melton today 24 pounds and 11 ounces. Total up to date nearly 85 pounds.

A good start has been made this week with the collection of horse-chestnuts - 2 hundred weights collected .

School waste paper (2 and a half hundred weights) sent from the school to Melton Mowbray.

War Charity entertainment in the evening. Total subscriptions War Savings

to the end of January 1919 are 8 hundred pounds .

(Over 50 thousand pounds in today's money! That's a lot!)

Followed by WW1 Songs with no introduction - Primary School

Hush Here comes a wiz bang

Bombed Last Night

Conkers

Followed by Period Music with no introduction - U3A Choir

My Ladye Greensleeves 1881 – 1961 arranged by Henry Geehl

Casualties & Conscription

Narrator

News of the 1st casualty in 1914 did not reach Bottesford until early 1915. The Grantham Journal published the following announcement on the 9th January

Reading 6 - 1st Local Casualty

(Elaine Marlow WW1 Project Volunteer)

The inhabitants of Bottesford heard with great regret on Wednesday morning, that the name of Pte. Fred Shaw , 1st Leicestershires, had that morning appeared in the list among the killed under date November 25th. Pte. Shaw is the first man who has given his life for his country in the war, As a reservist, he re-joined the colours last August, and had been in all the fighting. He had for the past eight years worked for Mr P. Palmer, of Beckingthorpe Farm.

Narrator

By January 1916 the numbers of casualties were taking a heavy toll both nationally and locally.

Bottesford and Muston lost 6 men in 1915; 11 in both 1916 and 1917; and 13 in the final year of conflict.

Barely five months after Montagu Vincent-Jackson had written about the excitement of active service the following news was received.

Reading 7 News of Montagu Vincent-Jackson + School logbook entry

(Vic Martin - WW1 Project Volunteer)

In the Grantham Journal for February 19th 1916 – We announced last week that news had been received that Lieutenant M.J. Vincent- Jackson, (...) had been wounded in France, and was “missing”. At the beginning off this week, the War Office reported him “missing believed killed” and since then, we regret to say, no further news has been

obtainable.

The head teacher made this short entry in the School Log book for 30th March 1916

School closed this afternoon for a memorial service for Lieut. M. J. Vincent-Jackson, only son of Canon Vincent-Jackson, Rector of Bottesford.

Followed by Period Music with no introduction - U3A Choir

All in an April Evening

Narrator

By the end of 1915 losses were greater than the rate of recruitment and compulsory war service was introduced for all single men

Reading 8 Conscription

(WW1 Project Volunteer – Dave Slater)

Grantham Journal February 19th 1916

Announcement - All single men of military age who have not been granted exemption from service are immediately to be called to the colours. The Royal Proclamation notifying this step was issued on Monday, and the date upon which the first of the men to be affected by the order are asked to present themselves on March 18th

Narrator

Within a few months conscription would apply to all men single and married up to the age of 41.

Reading 9 Pte Arthur Mayfield Grantham Journal 2/11/18

(WW1 Project Volunteer – Elaine Marlow)

Reported in the Grantham Journal 2nd November 1918.

Mrs. Mayfield, Bottesford, has been informed that her husband, Pte. Arthur Mayfield, Sherwood Foresters, has been killed in action, in France. Before joining the forces, he carried on the business of hairdresser, tobacconist etc., He leaves four young children.

Arthur Mayfield is buried in the Roelincourt Military Cemetery on the Somme – he lies close by the children's playground.

Followed by Song with no introduction - Primary School Choir
When Morning comes

Narrator

Before please join with the choirs in singing two songs – popular now as then - It's a long way to Tipperary and Pack up your Troubles – but with a difference!

Barbara Cobb and Liz Mills will explain and direct.

WW1 Songs – Primary School + U3A Choirs + Audience
It's a long way to Tipperary/Pack up your Troubles

Narrator

We will now have a 20 minute interval - refreshments available etc.,
But before that - a big thank you to the Children from the Primary School, Liz Mills, their director and Judy Holborrow, their accompanist.

Interval - Background Organ Music (20 mins)

Part 2 (45 mins)**Narrator**

Welcome back everyone and to the U3A Choir

Period Music - U3A Choir

Joshua fit – 1865

Home Sweet Home – 1823

Heroes & Honours**Narrator**

As the war gathered unstoppable momentum news of gallantry awards to local men boosted morale and provided some cause for celebration.

Mr. Collett, the Head Teacher, entered in the School Logbook the military honours of former scholars.

Reading 10**Jack Simpson - Belvoir High School**

School Log book

2nd November 1915 - Ernest Jallands, Driver R.F.A., an old scholar, awarded the D.C.M. and the Russian medal of St. George – arrived home. Presentation to him in school tomorrow- Saturday evening.

15th February 1918 - A Note concerning old scholars and the War. The Head Teacher places on record that Sergeant Walter Hardy has been awarded the D.C.M. and Sergeant Charles Albert Bend a Military Medal.

17th January 1919 - Sergeant Edgar Culpin of Leicester Regiment and a former scholar of this school has been awarded the Military Medal for Services in the Field.

Reading 11 Driver Ernest Jallands DCM

(Dave Slater - WW1 Project Volunteer)

Driver Ernest .H. Jallands served with the Royal Field Artillery and was decorated for conspicuous gallantry for twice rescuing horses in no mans land during battle despite severe injuries.

The Grantham Journal for Saturday 6th November 1915 reported his homecoming from hospital.

On Friday evening last week, most of Bottesford people united in an endeavour to give a hearty welcome to their fellow villager, Driver Jallands, who, as is well known, has honoured himself and his home by gaining two coveted distinctions – the DCM, and the Russian medal of St George.

Our local hero was expected to leave hospital at Manchester early in the day, and was due to arrive in Bottesford at 6.53 pm.

When the train drew into the railway station, the Bottesford Band struck up a strain of welcome.

By some mischance, however, Jallands had missed the train, and the crowd was very disappointed. In no ways daunted, the villagers assembled at 8.20 pm to await the next train, and it was not long before Driver Jallands was seen, welcomed, and acclaimed.

Three cheers were called for, and heartily given. Driver Jallands said a few words of thanks for his kind welcome home. The National Anthem was heartily sung, and Driver Jallands, in company with his parent, was driven home to Easthorpe in a motor-car lent by Mr. George Goodson.

Narrator

The U3A Choir will continue tonight's entertainment with 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot'

Period Music - U3A Choir

Swing Low sweet Chariot - before 1862

Entertainment & fund raising

Narrator

The war did not deter the Village from organizing the usual outdoor summer entertainments. The Grantham Journal for the 7th August 1915 reported on the Bottesford Gymkhana in aid of

the British Red Cross Society . As always - the weather too played its part

Reading 12 Work for the Red Cross

(Sue Middleton - WW1 Project Volunteer)

The unfortunate weather conditions of the Bank Holiday marred in great measure the praiseworthy efforts of the Bottesford Brass Band who promoted a 'gymkhana' to still further add to the British Red Cross Society local funds. (...) The afternoon rain quite put a stop to the cricket match (Bottesford CC v 24th Manchester Regiment) and the sports which were to follow. However, some, including the soldier cricketers, entered the skittles contest (for a live pig) and other amusements.

24th Manchester Battalion was stationed in Grantham between April and September 1915

You wonder if the soldiers won the pig, and, if they did how they took it back to Camp in Grantham

Reading 13 – Bank Holiday Gymkhanas

(Sue Middleton - WW1 Project Volunteer)

In the summer of 1916 the August bank holiday was cancelled in an effort to increase war production and to free rail transport for the movement of troops to the Somme offensive.

The organizers of the Bottesford Gymkhana were not to be deterred and decided it was too late to cancel their August event.

Some in the village thought such entertainments were not in order in times of distress.

Canon Vincent-Jackson found a middle way when he declared the August Gymkhana open stating that

“ their purpose was to consecrate their amusements to a good object. And they were to give the proceeds to their fellow-citizens who were prisoners of war in other countries, and especially in Germany”

Over £70 was raised.

The 1917 Gymkhana raised even more money - £90 - the equivalent of over £5000 today!

There would be no Gymkhana in 1918.

Narrator

The Choir will now perform a song from 1905 'Villia'

Period Music - **U3A Choir**

Vilia – 1905

Shortages & food production

Narrator

By 1917 shortages staple foods necessitated national initiatives on self sufficiency and food economy

Reading 14 - Shortages and Self sufficiency

(Jack Simpson – Belvoir High School)

School logbook 1917

Lessons have been given this week on Food Economy and War Savings.

Feb. 23 This week, the Head Teacher has, through the scholars, made a special effort to encourage food production in the parish. The parishioners have been informed of arrangements made for the supply of seed potatoes and of arrangements whereby cottagers may help in pig-keeping.

Apr. 27 A start was made, with the newly registered class, in practical work on Tuesday and Thursday this week in the school garden.

There are 14 boys in the class, working in pairs. Owing to the food shortage, the teacher does not propose to set apart a plot for flowers but to devote the flower plot to the cultivation of vegetables. Each of the other plots will include Broad Beans, Potatoes, Cabbages, Dwarf Beans, Carrots, Parsnips and Onions.

Reading 15 - Distribution of seed potatoes

(Elaine Marlow – WW1 Project Volunteer)

Distribution of Seed Potatoes – A well attended meeting, convened by the Parish Council, was held in the School, on Friday evening week, for the purpose of considering the request of the Leicestershire War Agricultural Committee to assist locally in the distribution of seed potatoes (...)

After discussion it was resolved to form a Committee and to make arrangements for distribution as requested. (...)

The seed potatoes will be delivered in 1 cwt bags at Bottesford railway Station and the price fixed by the authorities.

No one grower will be allowed to purchase more than five bags. Growers who only need small quantities of less than 1 cwt should combine with a neighbour in the purchase of 1 cwt.

Narrator

The Choir will now sing – ‘Now is the hour’ followed by ‘Mine Eyes have seen the Glory’

Period Music - **U3A Choir**

Now is the hour

Mine Eyes have seen – 1862

Armistice & Peace

Narrator

1918 would see no let up in losses of and injuries to men serving from both Bottesford and Muston.

On the Western Front all the territory gained and held by the Allies over the previous 44 months was lost in the German Spring Offensive of 1918.

However, the final 100 days of the war saw a rapid turn of the tide in the Allies favour.

A war of defense and attrition became one of attack and advance.

It came at great cost.

9 local men lost their lives in the last 3 months of conflict.

The last local person to die before the Armistice was Pte. Jesse Norman, age 38, on the 4th November 1918

Finally at 11.00 am on the 11th November 1918 hostilities ceased.

The entry in The School Log book simply records:

The news of the signing of the Armistice on Monday morning last reached Bottesford before noon. The Union Jack was hoisted and the children had a half days holiday

The Grantham Journal gave more details

Reading 16 Grantham Journal 16th November – Armistice News

(Vic Martin - WW1 Project Volunteer)

In Bottesford the news of the signing of the Armistice was welcomed with intense joy (...) Scholars were permitted to announce the intelligence by the ringing of the School bell for half-an-hour.

Bunting was displayed from private houses and there was a general cessation of work for the day.

The Church ringers rang a merry peal after tea, and the rector, the Rev. F. Walford, gave notice of a service of thanksgiving in the Church at 7.30.

This was largely attended. The national Anthem and hymns of thanksgiving (...) were sung with fervour.

Narrator

The Choir will finish their performance with a short medley of WW1 songs.

You are then all invited to join in singing 'with fervour' - 'Jerusalem' and as was sung after all

concerts in the 1st World War the 'National Anthem'.

Period Music - U3A Choir

WW1 Medley

Finale - Organ, **Choir** + Audience

'Jerusalem'

'National Anthem'

Background Organ Music Chris Coe