

Life in Marlow

In the Winter of 1915

The South Bucks Free Press reported a number of events in Marlow during the second winter of the War in 1915.

Fire at the Compleat Angler Hotel

Just two days before Bonfire Night, a 'destructive fire' broke out in a house adjoining the Compleat Angler at the foot of Old Marlow Bridge. The cause of the fire was not known, but two houses were burnt to the ground and it was with 'much difficulty' that the inhabitants, including three children, escaped alive. It was estimated that Mr Cresswell lost £500, although his stock of wines and spirits was preserved.



The Compleat Marlow as it was, courtesy of Michael Eagleton

Call to Arms

As part of regular updates on the numbers of men from Marlow serving in the armed forces, an entry on 19 November 1915 lists three sets of five brothers serving and ten sets of four brothers.



The Boys' School, Wethered Road, Marlow, c1915/16, courtesy of SWOPS

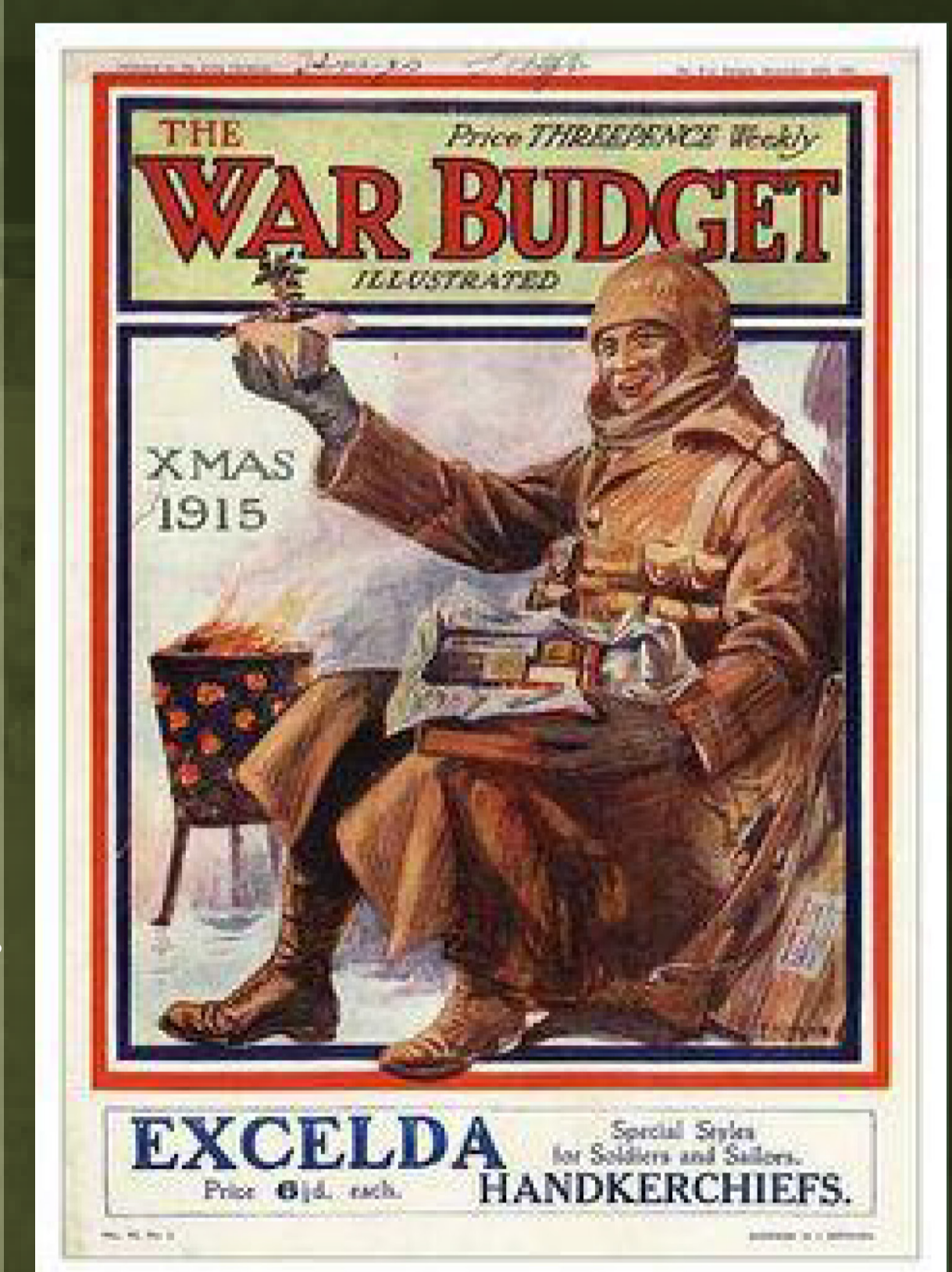
School Economies

In December 1915 the Church of England School in Marlow was asked to stop taking children under the age of five: This new national regulation was being enforced to reduce costs.

In Marlow this meant that one teacher was let go.

Christmas

The papers reported that the second Christmas of the War passed 'quietly' at Marlow, the weather being 'mild and rainy'. There were considerably fewer soldiers home on leave compared to the previous Christmas. The Post Office was busy however, as the number of parcels being posted rose, even though the number of Christmas cards reduced.



A magazine cover from Christmas 1915

Bank Battalion

The Bank Battalion which was raised across the country in the summer and autumn of 1915, was welcomed into Marlow and specifically to Bovington Green camp. The local press reported frequently on its movements and noted that the people of Marlow liked having them around. In the middle of November following a storm at the camp which knocked over their tents, the men were moved into empty houses in the town, including the Armoury. By the end of November the battalion, having grown from 80 men to 500 had moved out, marching down the High Street to the train station.