



Research Toolkit 4: Discover more about life after World War 1



Research Toolkit 4: Discover more about life after World War 1 (WW1)

This Research Toolkit has been developed by Gloucestershire Archives (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives). It will help you to find out about what life was like in Gloucestershire after WW1. It is organised into the following sections:

- 1) records detailing the activities of official bodies in the immediate aftermath of the war (**pages 4-7**)
- 2) records held at Gloucestershire Archives concerning WW1 war memorials (**page 7**)
- 3) records to help you research particular themes, including post-war politics and the push for equal enfranchisement of women, the role of women in society, children, rationing, and health and well being (**pages 7-14**)
- 4) other resources available to help further your research (**pages 14-17**)

Each section contains information on the sort of records you might need to look at, what you might find in them and how you can find these records. When searching any online catalogue it is worth trying variants on the term 'First World War' (such as 'Great War', 'WW1', 'WWI', or even simply 'War' because people creating documents during WW1 did not know there would be another global conflict).

Through this and other toolkits available to download at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/WW1/resources, the Gloucestershire Remembers WW1 Project (www.glosremembers.co.uk) is enabling people to learn more about soldiers from the county who served in WW1 and the impact that the war had on local areas throughout the county. If you or an organisation in your area are undertaking research or any other commemorative activities for WW1 please let us know. If you would like to develop your research into a larger project see the **Next Steps** section on **page 16**.

Share what you find

The Gloucestershire Remembers WW1 Project is committed to sharing information commemorating any aspect of the impact of WW1 in the county. You can share what you've found with us by adding it directly to the Glos Remembers Facebook (www.facebook.com/GlosWW1), Twitter page (<https://twitter.com/GlosWW1>), or send it to us at archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk or Gloucestershire Archives, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW.

Preserve what you find

As part of the Gloucestershire Remembers WW1 Project, Gloucestershire Archives would like to preserve original material and information about any aspect of WW1 and Gloucestershire as a legacy for future generations. Please contact archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk or write to Gloucestershire Archives, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW if you have original documents concerning WW1 or research or research notes that you would like to donate to the archives.



How can I access the resources mentioned in this toolkit?

Access to Gloucestershire Archives and the documents there is free but please note that there is a charge for using the onsite car park. Access to the Ancestry and Find My Past websites is also free at the [Gloucestershire Family History Society Resource Centre](#), although the same car parking charge applies.

Some of the original resources at Gloucestershire Archives have access restrictions for data protection reasons. It will usually be possible for you to see these items, but you may be asked to sign an agreement about sharing information from them.

The online resources listed are all available to view. Searches of the databases on the Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk) and Find My Past (www.findmypast.co.uk) are free, however if you access the websites from home you may be asked to pay a fee or set up a free trial with them in order to view their images of original records. However, if you access the Ancestry and Find My Past websites from Gloucestershire Archives or libraries around the county you will be able to view the images of original documents on them for free.

Background to life after WW1

A total of 994,138 British people died during WW1 – 2.2% of the total population. Thousands more had been terribly injured. Servicemen returning from the Front found the country very different from that which they had left in 1914.

From being the world's dominant economy at the start of the war, Britain had incurred debts equivalent to 136% of its gross national product, largely to the United States. The rate of inflation more than doubled between 1914 and 1920, while the value of the pound sterling fell by 61.2%.

When the war ended, wartime industries, such as the munitions industry, shrunk and soldiers returned to unemployment, rationing, and poverty. Trying to re-incorporate demobilised troops into the civilian workforce gave rise to serious concerns in government circles. Aside from the sheer logistical problems involved in integrating returning soldiers into society, these soldiers were also seen as possible rallying points for labour unrest and Bolshevism.

This gave a real boost to the development of socialism and the power of the trade unions, paving the way for a wave of strikes in 1919. In the same year, some 2.4 million British workers were involved in strike action – over 300,000 more than in Germany, the country widely regarded as the likeliest home of the next Communist revolution. The level of unemployment reached 11.3% in 1921, which resulted in severe public spending cuts in 1922, and ultimately the General Strike in 1926.

This situation was not helped by the demobilisation scheme that was in force. It had been drawn up in 1917 by the war secretary Lord Derby. He proposed that the first men to be released from service should be those who held jobs in key branches of industry. However, these men were usually those who had been called up last and it resulted in men with the longest service records being the last to be demobilised.

This resulted in a wave of minor mutinies and when Churchill became the new war secretary in January 1919, he immediately introduced a new and fairer

demobilisation scheme based on age, length of service and the number of times a man had been wounded in battle.

There were other social changes as well. A high percentage of the casualties were amongst the landed classes, so the traditional class hierarchy gradually began to erode.

Women had been recruited to work in industry and agriculture during the war, but when the men returned they expected their jobs back. With the contraction of industry there were fewer jobs to go around, so after the war there were actually less women working than there had been before it. However, the important part that women had played during the war helped to pave the way for their partial inclusion in the electorate for the first time in 1918, and ultimately full inclusion from 1928.

Britain was also confronted with a rising tide of nationalist demands from Empire countries that had contribute to the war effort, in particular from Ireland where the nationalist movement was in full swing by war's end. This required the ongoing presence of British troops and ultimately the partition and the creation of the Irish nation.

1. Records of Official Bodies

Like today, administration of any area within the county would have been the responsibility of the following:

- The County Council
- District or Borough Councils
- Parish or Town Councils
- The Petty Sessions (Magistrates') Court

The Quarter Sessions was still in existence, but most of its administrative duties had become the responsibility of the County or District Councils or Petty Sessions Courts. The Quarter Sessions did continue to share oversight of the County's Police force though (see **page 6**).

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC)

GCC had overall responsibility for the delivery of the county's administration, with particular emphasis on ensuring the provision and quality of services such as education, health, highways and police. The Council also created an executive committee to oversee administration and direction of war relief funds.

How can I find GCC records?

Proceedings of all general Council meetings and all meetings of sub-committees are minuted, and these minutes are held at Gloucestershire Archives. The minute book for meetings between 1917 and 1920 bears the reference [C/CC/M2/13](#). Subsequent minute books bear the next number in the sequence (i.e. C/CC/M2/14, etc). Separate committees usually had their own minute books, such as C/CX/M.

Borough Council records

Gloucestershire Archives holds records for the boroughs of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury. Responsibilities within their specific areas (the city of Gloucester and towns of Cheltenham & Tewkesbury) included: the provision and quality of services such as cemeteries, education, engineering and surveying (public works), fire brigade, health, housing, rating and valuation, recreation, water supply, and borough property and contracts.

How can I find Borough Council records?

For Gloucester City Council, the 1918-19 minute book recording the Council's proceedings bears the reference GBR/B/3/53, with subsequent books bearing successive numbers (GBR/B/3/54, etc).

The 1918-19 minute book for Cheltenham Borough Council bears the reference CBR/C2/1/2/16, with subsequent books bearing successive numbers (CBR/C2/1/2/17, etc).

The location of the Tewkesbury Borough Council minute books for this period is not known.

District Council records

With the exception of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, the administrative unit below GCC were the Urban or Rural District Councils. In 1918 there were 18 Urban and 24 Rural District Councils covering all of the historic County of Gloucestershire, including the area that now comprises South Gloucestershire. Their responsibilities included: cemeteries, fire brigade, health and hospitals, highways, housing, rating, sewers and sanitation, and water supply.

How can I find District Council records?

Records are held at Gloucestershire Archives, and each of the Councils should have their own set of minute books. In the listing of this material, each District Council has been given its own reference number beginning with DA. The sequence proceeds alphabetically. So, for instance, Awre Urban District Council has the number DA1. The minute books have the sub-number 100. Thus, to identify the minute books available for the immediate post-war years, you can search the Archives' online catalogue

(<http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/DServe/DServe.exe?dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Index.tcl>) by choosing "Search the Archives only", entering DA1/100, DA2/100, etc, in the "FindingRef" field, and clicking search. A list of all the minute books for that Council will then be displayed, with their covering dates.

Parish Councils

Records for most Parish Councils are held at Gloucestershire Archives, but a few may be retained by the Councils themselves. Each Council maintained minute books, and had local responsibility for: cemeteries, health, housing, lighting, recreation grounds and water supply. Many also commissioned or assumed responsibility of the upkeep of their communities' war memorial in the years after the war.

How can I find Parish Council records?

Each Parish Council has its own running reference number, allocated alphabetically, and prefixed by a “P”, and ending in an “a/PC”. Hence, parish Council records for Abenhall bear the reference P1a/PC. The minute books bear the sub reference 1.

Thus, to identify the minute books available for the immediate post-War years, you can search the Archives’ online catalogue

(<http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/DServe/DServe.exe?dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Index.tcl>) by choosing “Search the Archives only”, entering P1a/PC1, P2a/PC1, etc, in the “FindingRef” field, and clicking search. A list of all the minute books for that Council will then be displayed, with their covering dates.

Quarter Sessions/Police records

By 1918 the Quarter Sessions had lost most of its administrative functions, although it still shared a responsibility to ensure the provision of a County police force with GCC, which the Quarter Sessions largely administered.

How can I find Quarter Sessions/Police records?

Police records held at the Archives are listed under the reference Q/Y, with relevant subsections as follows:

- 1) Personnel
- 2) Administration
- 4) Criminal police duties
- 5) Civil police duties

Thus, to identify what personnel records may be available for the post-1918 period on the online catalogue, in “Search the Archives only” you should enter Q/Y/1 in the “FindingRef” field, and click “Search”. A list of all the personnel records will then be displayed, with their covering dates. To find Administrative Records enter Q/Y/2. To find Criminal police duties enter Q/Y/4. To find Civil police duties enter Q/Y/5.

Please note that police records less than 100 years old will generally be closed to public inspection without the written permission of the Chief Constable of Gloucestershire Constabulary. Also, only a limited amount of police material from the immediate post-war period has ever been deposited at Gloucestershire Archives.

The National Registration Act 1915

The National Registration Act legislation required a register of every adult in the country between the ages of 15 and 65 to be created. It was administered by the Registrar General acting under the direction of the Local Government Board, while the local authorities (metropolitan and municipal boroughs and all urban and rural districts) were the local registration authorities. It remained in force for 1919 only.

The National Register information is mostly held at the National Archives in London, but some records were retained locally, although they are somewhat piecemeal in nature – such as isolated movement registers (indicating the movement of workers in and out of local areas) and enumerators’ books. The only relevant documents held

at Gloucestershire Archives for the 1919 registration are a Dursley Rural District Council Register of arrivals, 1915-19 (reference number: DA26/226/1) and National registration cards (reference number: D4175/3).

2. Records concerning the county's war memorials

The County Council set up a temporary War Memorial Committee in 1919. Relevant documents are held at Gloucestershire Archives (reference number: C/TC/10).

Cheltenham Borough Council also formed a War Memorial Committee in 1919 the records for which are held at Gloucestershire Archives too (reference number: [CBR/C2/3/9/2](#)).

A downloadable PDF document titled “**Documents concerning War Memorials held at Gloucestershire Archives**” giving details and reference numbers of all the documents concerning war memorials in the immediate post-WW1 period can be found here: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/WW1/resources>.

3. Records to help you research particular themes

Post-war politics

The period following WW1 was a watershed period in British politics. Increased interest in socialism and trade unionism were given strong impetus by the conditions encountered by soldiers returning from the war. This also led to an upsurge in interest in the Labour Party. This was at the expense of the Liberal Party whose support was in rapid decline.

Collections held at Gloucestershire Archives of particular interest for this period are:

Finding Ref	Description
C/CX/M2/2	GCC Miscellaneous Committees: Motor Car, 1914; War Relief Executive, 1914-21; War Relief Unemployment and Distress sub-committee, 1914-16
D6/X6/10	Magistrate's involvement in railway strike, 1919
D2999/1	Minute book of National Union of Journalists, Gloucestershire branch, 1908 – 20
D3128	Records of the Gloucester Labour Party; and the Gloucester Branch of the National Union of Railwaymen Women's Guild, 1905 – 1980s
D3983	Records of the Graphical, Paper & Media Union and predecessor organisations: Gloucester and local branches,
D5277	Local Employment Committee records, including news cuttings on trade union issues in the Gloucester, Stroud & Forest of Dean areas, post 1917
D6035/3/10	Programmes of Fabian Society lectures, 1921-1924; socialist and labour hymns printed by the Independent Labour Party, n.d.

	[The Fabian Society was founded in 1884 as a Socialist debating group supported by the voluntary subscriptions of its members. The Fabian Society archive is held at the British Library of Political and Economic Science]
D6059/2	Minute book of Gloucester branch (no. 65) of United Patternmakers Association, 1919 – 32
D6666/3/4	Material on local Liberal politics, 1911-1953
D8687/1/1	Annual, general & committee meetings of the National Union of Teachers: North Gloucestershire Association, 1917 - 29
D9008	Minutes of Gloucester Labour Club and Institute, later Barton Street Working Men's Club, and its committees 1912-1996. There are many references to Gloucester labour unions
Q/Y/2/2	Gloucestershire Constabulary general and weekly orders
GAL/G5/39582	Policing Cheltenham in the 1920s, an appreciation of Police sergeant John Hughes by his son, I V Hughes, in <i>Charlton Kings Local History Bulletin</i> , no.5, Spring 1981

The role of women in society

During the war the contraction of the available workforce meant that women eventually replaced men in many jobs in industry and agriculture. However, when the war ended, the returning soldiers, combined with reduced industrial production caused by the lessening demand for munitions, and the country's economic situation meant that there were fewer jobs available for women than there had been even before the war.

Women quite rightly felt that they had more than proved their worth during the war and the extension of the electorate (meaning that women aged over 30 who met certain property qualifications received the right to vote in 1918) was viewed as only partial recognition of this. Thus the immediate post-war period became a watershed in the fight to achieve full electoral equality with men. It paved the way for the extension of the right to vote to all women over 21 under the Representation of the People Act in 1928.

Anyone interested in investigating this theme in detail would be advised to consult the archives held in the Women's Library held at the London School of Economics (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/library/collections/featuredCollections/womensLibraryLSE.asp>).

Gloucestershire Archives holds a number of relevant collections, including:

Finding Ref	Description
D2659/24	Diaries of Emily Blathwayt, supporter of the Women's Suffrage movement
D2659/27	Diaries of Mary Blathwayt, supporter of the Women's Suffrage movement
D4595	Records of the National Council of Women: Cheltenham branch

D5277/2	Records of the Women's Sub-Committee of the Gloucester & District Local Employment Committee, 1918 – 27
D8004	Records of various friendly societies for women, around Stroud & Gloucester
D8497	Interviews, transcripts and programmes made by BBC Radio Gloucestershire for the BBC's millennium oral history project, The Century Speaks, reflecting, amongst other themes, the changing lives and roles of women in the 20 th Century
GDR/A17/12/2	Diocesan Board of Women's work minutes, 1922 – 57

Children

The war had a devastating effect on many families, with many fathers not surviving its end. Organisations like Barnardo's (http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/who_we_are/history.htm) proved key in providing support for families that could not cope. However, in many cases, the first on hand were the local Boards of Guardians, who could provide financial relief or take a family into the workhouse (see **Health & well being** on **pages 10-11**).

Examples of relevant resources held at Gloucestershire Archives include:

Finding Ref	Description
D2429	Records of the Gloucestershire Federation of Child Health Clinics, post 1915
D6633/1/1	Diaries of Geoffrey Warren Fisher of Stroud, 1919 – 87 (Geoffrey was 13 in 1919)
D8497	Interviews, transcripts and programmes made by BBC Radio Gloucestershire for the BBC's millennium oral history project, The Century Speaks, reflecting, amongst other themes, contributors' memories of childhood
GBR/L/6/23/B691	Gloucester town Clerk's miscellaneous child welfare file, 1921 – 23
P78/1/SP2/1	Minutes of an aftercare committee visiting children in Cheltenham, 1915 – 20
PC1449	Childhood reminiscences of Mrs Rose Gardiner of Upton St Leonards, 1920s
G	Additional information on these records can be found in Gloucestershire Archives' Boards of Guardians' research guide: http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/CHHttpHandler.ashx?id=58234&p=0 .

Rationing

Food remained scarce after the end of the war, so rationing was continued. Meat was rationed until 15 December 1919, butter until 30 May 1920, and sugar until 29 November 1920. The milling of flour continued to be regulated until 31 March 1921.

While rationing remained in force, the Food Control Committees, which had been established in early 1918 through local Councils, continued to regulate the enforcement of rationing. Although few records of the Committees appear to have survived locally, a minute book for the Newent Rural District Council Food Control Committee is held at Gloucestershire Archives, and the minutes include those for the year 1919 (reference number: [DA30/118](#)). Enforcement of food control orders is also noted in the County Council minute book covering the years 1917–20 (reference number: [C/CC/M2/13](#)).

Health and well being

Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) Hospitals

Within a few months of the war ending, approximately 30 VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) hospitals that had been set up by the Red Cross to care for wounded soldiers were all closed down. Only one set of records from the VAD hospitals in Gloucestershire is known to survive. These records are of the Leckhampton VAD Hospital (Glos. 42). They mostly comprise photographs of patients taken by fellow patients and also by nurses. The records can be found at Gloucestershire Archives under the collection reference **D10203 (Leckhampton Court Red Cross Hospital)**.

Although little documentation survives about most of these hospitals (or the soldiers convalescing in them) some information about Gloucestershire's hospitals can be found here: <http://www.angelfire.com/az/garethknight/redcross/glosva.html>.

You can also find slightly more detail about the eight VAD hospitals in Cheltenham here: http://www.remembering.org.uk/vad_hospitals.htm.

Asylum records

As a result of their experiences in the war, many soldiers were admitted to either the County or City asylums when they returned home. The County asylums at Horton Road and Coney Hill in Gloucester were public establishments, unlike the City asylum at Barnwood House, which was a privately run asylum.

A wide range of records covering both patients at and administration of all three asylums are deposited at Gloucestershire Archives. However, for data protection reasons, records of the patients are closed to public access for 100 calendar years. To obtain information about ancestors while in the asylum you should contact Kathy Humphries at Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Trust Headquarters, 1 College Lawn, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 7AG.

Board of Guardians' Records

Poverty and unemployment were features of the post-war scene for many people. The Boards of Guardians played a role in easing the effects of them. The Guardians were active until 1930 when the Poor Law Unions were abolished. A full range of minute books are available at Gloucestershire Archives for most of the unions in this County. You can find a list of the surviving records of the unions by searching for the term "Poor Law Union" in Gloucestershire Archives' online catalogue here:

<http://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/DServe/DServe.exe?dsqIni=DServeA.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Search.tcl>

Very few admission and discharge registers survive for the County's workhouses, which were administered by the Boards of Guardians. An admission and discharge book is held for Tewkesbury workhouse covering the years 1916-23 (G/TEW/60/1) and a similar book is held for the Cheltenham workhouse for the years 1918-22 (G/CH/60/27). There is also an admission and discharge book for the children's home attached to the Cheltenham workhouse covering the years 1918-22 (G/CH/126/2).

The minute books for individual Boards of Guardian may provide information about inmates entering the workhouse for particularly unusual or notable reasons and may also reflect the feelings of the Guardians towards any effect that the end of the war may have had on admissions. Although the minutes were written chronologically they are still awkward to search because there are no indexes to them. For Gloucester Union, the year books (which include the clerk's annual reports) are held for the years 1906-30 (G/GL/4/2). These may also provide evidence of the effect of the war.

A few records of the Comrades of the Great War (a non-political association that was formed in 1917 to represent the rights of ex-servicemen and women who had fought during the War) are held at Gloucestershire Archives. The Comrades amalgamated with other ex-service associations in May 1921 to form the British Legion. The records available are as follows:

Finding Ref	Description
RR229.73	Printed material relating to the Comrades of the Great War (Gloucestershire branch)
D10820/A1-2/z	Report and balance sheet of the Cirencester branch, 1919

Industry

Despite being a mostly rural country, Gloucestershire had a large industrial base and engineering was the county's second largest industry in terms of workforce, volume of output and value (next to agriculture). Heavy industry and engineering was well represented with large firms such as Fielding & Platt Ltd, Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Co., R. A. Lister & Co. Ltd, H. H. Martyn & Co. Ltd, Kell & Co Ltd, William Sisson and Co. Ltd and Wm. Gardner & Sons (Gloucester) Ltd to name a few. There were also many smaller firms, producing items like cloth, elastic, walking sticks, pins (a traditional local product), hair-pins, safety-pins, hooks and eyes and wire. There were also a number of large flour mills, such as J. Reynolds & Co. Ltd,



that were sited to take advantage of the county's excellent transportation links (especially with regard to the canals and rivers) and the Severn.

Gloucester itself suffered significantly from the war as the city had a large foreign trade links (especially importing timber from Europe) which fell away to almost nothing and did not recover to its pre-war level until the 1930s. The city remained important as a centre for water, rail, and road transport and as a gateway to the Midlands, but grain and oil-seed imports were increasingly destined only for local industry rather than national or regional markets. Several warehouses were abandoned or put to other uses. Attempts to boost the city's industry during the post-war slump were generally unsuccessful with the most notable casualty being the Standard Match Co. Ltd's new match factory at Hempstead, which opened in 1920 but closed in 1923. More successful was a factory built at Llanthony in 1919 for the manufacture of incubators and poultry houses which was still in business in the 1930s.

One wartime concern that was to flourish was The Gloster Aircraft Company, which had been formed in 1917 as the Gloucestershire Aircraft Company. This acquired the wartime aircraft business previously carried out by H. H. Martyn and the Aircraft Manufacturing Company. Despite a curtailment in orders at the end of the war, aviation escaped the worst of the post-war slump and then recovered as re-armament began in the 1930s.

Another county success story was plastics. In 1912, casein plastic began to be made under the trade name 'Erinoid' at Lightpill Mills in Stroud and it proved immensely popular, not least for buttons for military uniforms. Upon war's end, it was able to maintain its position as it offered manufacturers many new applications and provided a cheap substitute for many expensive materials (such as ivory, amber, horn, tortoiseshell, coral, ebony and bone).

The best way to research this aspect of post-war life is to look for business records by name or by subject. Many business records are financial in nature, but they frequently contain minute books which may contain references to employees. A few companies also retained staff records which again may hold information.

There is also a wealth of published material on local industry, such as company histories and material in local history journals. The latter are published by individual local history societies and often contain articles on local firms researched by society members. The journal of the county-wide Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology (www.gsia.org.uk/reprints) is another key resource for all aspects of local industry. The journals of most local societies (including the GSIA) can be found at Gloucestershire Archives and various Library Local Studies Centres. For information on journal articles related to Gloucestershire and WW1, download the document **Books and journal articles on Gloucestershire and WW1** from www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/WW1/resources.

Newspapers (see **page 15**) are also another invaluable source for businesses, in terms of advertising, news and even social events.

Example Gloucestershire Archives reference numbers include:



Finding Ref	Description
D4014/4	'Gloucestershire; the story of successful endeavour in the task of reconstruction', Chance & Bland Ltd., Gloucester, 1920
D4251	Papers relating to Erinoid Ltd (earlier Syrolit Ltd) of Rodborough, plastics and artificial fibre manufacturers, 1911- 1947
D5355	Priday, Metford and Co of Gloucester, flour millers, 1886-1982
D4791	Gloucester Railway Carriage and Wagon Company, engineers,
D3310	R A Lister and Co of Dursley, engineers, 1867-1971
D4331	Critchley Bros Ltd of Brimscombe, pin manufacturers & engineers, 1883-2000
D5922	H H Martyn and Co Ltd of Cheltenham, sculptors, woodcarvers and architectural decorators, c.1900-2003
D7338	Fielding and Platt Ltd.

Agriculture

Being a largely rural country, this was a key industry in Gloucestershire and was seriously affected by the war. The main issues were the sudden reduction in manpower, followed by the interventions of the County War Agricultural Committees, especially after they were given executive powers. The creation of these executive committees meant that, for the first time, the government could officially intervene in the lives and workings of everyday farmers. Not only could they impose new rules and regulations but they could also dictate how their farms were to be managed, how they were run, and what crops should be grown and how much produce should be created. This was often strongly resented by many farmers who felt that such committees didn't take into consideration local knowledge (especially with regards to the suitability of land for growing various crops).

The War Agriculture Executive Committee and the various sub-committees created a wealth of archive material relating to Gloucestershire agriculture including detailed information about equipment and manpower, surveys of farmland, use of women workers, children, and prisoners of war (POWs). They also include useful statistical information about machinery and horses, which can provide an understanding of the logistical problems they faced when trying to increase food production. They also provide an insight into the immediate post-war period with details of training schemes for would-be farmers, including disabled ex-servicemen.

There is a wealth of information about post-war agriculture in Gloucestershire Archives, including references in various business records (such as estate and farm records), personal diaries and correspondence. Newspapers (see **page 15**) are also another invaluable source of information, especially in terms of advertising, news, government policy, animal and crop prices and even social events.

Finding Ref	Description
D6/X6/31	Papers relating to War Agricultural Executive Committee, including details of officer's agricultural training scheme (1919), 1914 - 20
C/CWA	War Agriculture Committee and sub-committee minutes and papers, 1915-21, various volumes that include detailed information about equipment and manpower, surveys of farmland, use of women workers, children and POWs, etc.
D540/F61	Coln St Aldwyn Co-operative Farming Society Ltd: prospectus, annual reports and accounts, 1894 - 1921
C/CE/Z/9	Instructions and notes for the guidance of agricultural executive committees on the training of disabled ex-service men in agriculture
D2176	Estate records of the Price family of Tibberton Court, 19 th – 20 th C
D2267	Hyatt family of Snowhill estate papers and farming accounts 1799-1931
D2299	Bruton Knowles and Co of Gloucester, estate agents, surveyors and auctioneers. Records include inventories & valuations, sale particulars and records of condition of farms, 19 th – 20 th C.
D2426/E	Estate accounts & correspondence of the Gambier-Parry family of Highnam Court, 1839 - 1944
D2660	Records of Gloucester Farmers Ltd, 1911 – 60, including minutes, accounts & annual reports
D4084/Box 34/11	Miscellaneous papers including circulars from Board of Agriculture about diseases; printed material from other agricultural societies, 1865-1938
D4128	Records of the Plumbe family of Ablington Manor Farm, Bibury, including diary, accounts, milk yield and breeding records 1915-46
D4241/2	Fred Boughton's Memories of Mitcheldean and district, including details of coal mining, iron mining, farming and day to day life, c.1890-1928
D5435	Letter book relating to Haymes Farm, Bishops Cleeve 1830-1924; estate and family papers of Holliday family of Cheltenham 1778-1965
D9400	Cullimore family of Manor Farm, Morton, Thornbury, and Chester
D6266	Farm accounts & diaries of Ampney Crucis, Ampney Sheephouse Farm, 1904 - 80
D7324	Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies and predecessor bodies, formerly the Gloucestershire Pig and Potato Production Committee (1918-1940) and the Gloucestershire Home Food Production Society (1940-1968), 1911 - 92
D8497	Interviews, transcripts and programmes made by BBC Radio Gloucestershire for the BBC's millennium oral history project, The Century Speaks, including contributions from farmers, farm workers & land owners

Other resources to help with your research

Newspapers

Gloucestershire Archives holds copies of the daily *Citizen* and weekly *Gloucester Journal* papers on microfilm, as well as bound paper copies of the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic* (which provides a pictorial record of the post-war years). Some editions of other local papers are also held at the Archives, or at the County's [Local and Family History Centres](#). You can find a full list of the papers held and their locations here:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=24402&p=0>

You can also access the Times Digital Archive online through Gloucestershire Library service's virtual reference library:

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/libraries/vrl>

Electoral registers

These annual registers listing people eligible to vote will provide evidence for the enfranchisement of women in 1918 and 1928. The post-war registers also mark (with an "a") people who were absent voters because they were continuing to serve overseas. The names of conscientious objectors deemed not to have made a useful contribution to the war do not appear in rolls for the first five years after the end of the war. Electoral registers for Cheltenham are held at [Cheltenham Local and Family History Centre](#). The post-war registers for the rest of the County are held on microfiche at Gloucestershire Archives.

School log books

Although these are largely concerned with the administrative running of the school, they can also provide a wealth of information about life in the wider community that they serve. If your interest is in a particular area, it would certainly be worth checking Gloucestershire Archives' online catalogue:

<http://www3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/Dserve/Dserve.exe?dsqIni=DserveA.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqCmd=Search.tcl>

Search for the place name you are interested in then, when the results are displayed, choose the option to refine your search. Entering the words "log book" in the "Any Text" field and click on the "Narrow" button. You will then be able to see whether log books survive for your place of interest or not.

Diaries, correspondence and other material

Gloucestershire Archives holds a few diaries or items of correspondence for the immediate post-war period which may be of interest. The diaries of Emily and Mary Blathwayt are noted in the "**Role of Women in Society**" section (on **pages 8-9**), while the diaries of Geoffrey Warren Fisher appear in the "**Children**" section (on **page 9**). The following may also be of interest:

Finding Ref	Description
D37	Correspondence of Maynard W Colchester-Wemyss, particularly with the King of Siam, 1903 – 25. These letters include a wealth of information about local conditions and events, as well as also making political observations
D873/C112	General correspondence of Percival Scrope Marling, 1880 - 1921
D3549/27/4/13	Granville Edwin Lloyd Baker's diaries, 1915 – 19
D4180/4	Scrapbook of WW1 events, 1917 – 19
D10828/1/1/47	Letters from Edmund Sidney Pollock Haynes, 1917 – 22, including a reference to all religion being unpopular because of the War

Reminiscence and oral history

Memories and stories that have been passed down in families and communities are powerful and important sources of information about our past. As such, they are valuable sources of information about WW1. Although memories of WW1 are now almost out of living memory, many still alive today will have grown up knowing parents and grandparents who lived through it. Speaking to people about memories that they may have heard about wartime (and its aftermath) is a valuable way of gathering information about the period. Such memories are usually unique insights and impressions into the wartime experience, even if they are by their very nature partial and short. If no one asks about memories and stories that may have been passed down then these unique impressions will be lost with the passage of time. When memories and stories can be told, they should be recorded (by whatever means possible), preserved, and shared.

Next steps

Why not find out more about your local area during the war too? Download our free “Research toolkit 3: The Home Front in WW1” from www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/WW1/resources. You can also download our free “Research Toolkit 1: First Steps in tracing Servicemen in WW1” and “Research Toolkit 2: Discover More About Servicemen in WW1” from the same address. There are many other resources available to download for free at this address that may help with your research into WW1 too.

Want to develop your research into a larger project?

If you are considering your own WW1 project, why not take advantage of the Gloucestershire Archives' Project Advisory Service? We can provide you with advice about how to proceed, including how to apply for funding. We can also help to broker joint bids from a number of organisations (e.g. a group of parish councils, a local heritage group or a school) for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund's [First World War: Then and Now](#) programme (www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/FirstWorldWarThenandNow.aspx#_UtaEUjiYbiU). More information can be found at about the project advisory service



can be found at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/communityheritage or contact Gloucestershire Archives on archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Further reading

The following published sources are held at Gloucestershire Archives. The reference number for each source is given in parenthesis after author's name.

Politics and the Police

Britain on the breadline, a social and political history of Britain between the Wars – Keith Laybourne (GAL/F2)

A history of British trade unionism – Henry Pelling (GAL/F5)

Agricultural trade unionism in Gloucestershire – Nigel Scotland (GAL/E3)

A history of Gloucestershire Constabulary – Harry Thomas (GAL/E1)

Women

800 years of women's letters – Olga Kenyon (GAL/F2/52632)

Countrywomen on the land, memories of rural life in the 1920s and 1930s (GAL/F2/52667)

Agriculture & Industry

English farming, past and present – Lord Ernle (B220/51891)

Wages and conditions of employment in agriculture, 1919 – Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (GAL/G1/52351)

Gloucestershire; the story of successful endeavour in the task of reconstruction, 1920 – Chance & Bland Ltd. (D4014/4)

Farming: Sources for local historians – Peter Edwards (B681/52170)

History of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester – Roger Sayce (GAL/D2)

Diaries

A Gloucestershire Diarist, Lt Col A B Lloyd-Baker of Hardwicke Court, the early years, 1897–1919 – Joyce Popplewell (ed) (GAL/L2/47616)