

WELCOME HOME

Welcome Home events were arranged throughout the war when soldiers were on leave, especially to mark the award of medals (as with Private Joseph Willis MM, who was presented with a gold wristlet watch by the “miners and officials connected with Westerton Colliery” in 1917). As the War came to a close, Committees were formed to fund raise and organise events.

In May 1918 the Urban District Council began collecting for a “War Heroes Fund” as described in the press cutting below.

In August 1918, Sister Kate Maxey MM RRC was presented with a set of “silver salts and spoons” by Spennymoor Ambulance Brigade and Nursing Division at St. Andrew’s Mission Hall in Cheapside.

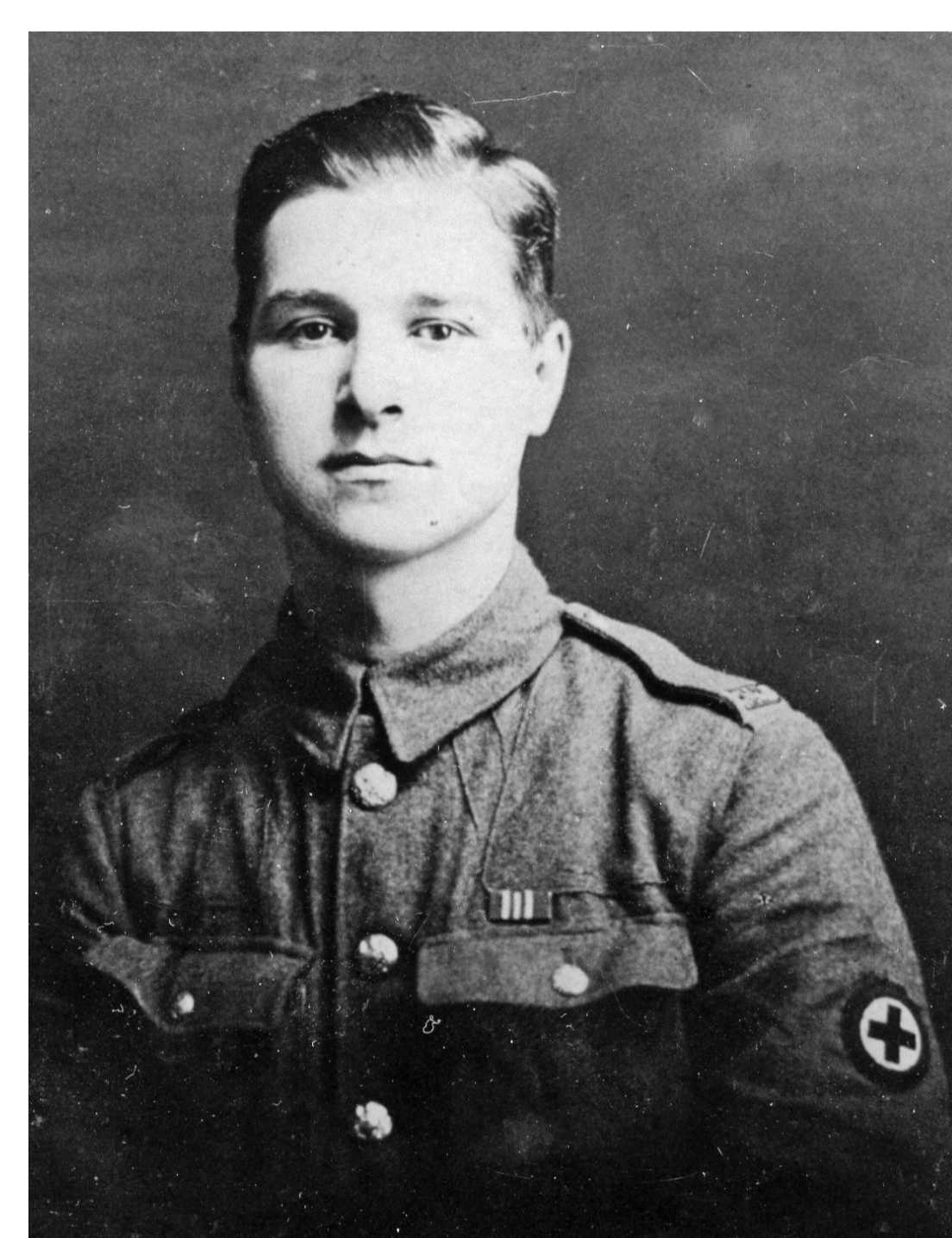
On 13 March 1919, Corporal Samuel Bott MM was presented with a “gold guard and necklet” at Spennymoor Town Hall along with seventeen other “Spennymoor heroes”.

On 8 May 1919, John Leckie was among 105 teachers honoured at the Welcome Home Gathering at the Town Hall organised by Spennymoor and District Teachers’ Association.

War Heroes’ Fund.
 A meeting was held in the Urban Council Chamber on Thursday evening in connection with the War Heroes’ Fund, the attendance including representatives from the Anglican and Nonconformist Churches, Salvation Army, Temperance Societies, Workmen’s Clubs, Trades Unions, and members of the Council.
 The meeting was opened by Councillor Geo. Rhymer, who explained the object of the gathering, which was to recognise local jads for their heroic actions on the battlefield. The following officials were appointed: — Chairman, Councillor W. White, J.P.; vice-chairman, Councillor G. Rhymer; secretary, Mr. J. Large; treasurer, Mr. J. White, National Provincial Bank, Spennymoor.
 Councillor White then took charge of the meeting, and the decisions arrived at were:—That subscription lists be opened and employers of labour approached for support; that a gala be held in the Park, with a concert in the evening; that all picture hall proprietors in the district be asked to give a night for the benefit of the fund, and the churches to take up a retiring collection on a date to be named later; that the respective ladies’ working parties be invited to organise a flag day; and the local brass bands to give concerts in the Park during summer evenings.
 The committee would esteem it a great favour if relatives of soldiers or sailors who have been awarded military distinction medals would leave their names at the Council Offices.



Left: Auckland Chronicle 23 May 1918, Durham County Record Office ref. d_wp0004_0041_23may1918_0002
 Portraits clockwise from top left:
 Kate Maxey (portrait in the Imperial War Museum)
 John Leckie with fellow schoolteachers in 1923 (second left back row)
 Samuel Bott (far right in group studio portrait).
 Joseph Willis



Spennymoor and District Teachers' Association

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

OF THE

“Welcome Home” Gathering,

To all Teachers in the Spennymoor Education District who served with the Colours during the course of the World-War, 1914 to 1919,

TO BE HELD IN THE

TOWN HALL, SPENNYMOOR,

ON THURSDAY, MAY 8th, 1919, AT 7 P.M.

- (1) PROGRESSIVE WHIST.
- (2) LIGHT REFRESHMENTS.
- (3) ADDRESSES BY:
 - (a) Alderman R. Richardson, M.P., Chairman. (Durham County Education Committee.)
 - (b) A. J. Dawson, Esq., Director of Education. (Durham County Education Committee.)
- (4) VOTES OF THANKS.
- (5) DANCE.
 - JOS. W. R. MASON, President.
 - JAS. W. ROYSTON, Hon. Sec.

