

FIRST WORLD WAR MILITARY TRIBUNALS

Berwick Advertiser, April 21st 1916

BERWICK MILITARY TRIBUNAL

A meeting of the Borough Military Tribunal was held at the Council Chamber at Berwick on Friday. Alderman Maclagan presided and there were also present – Messers Prentice, Morrison, Short and Herriot; also attending, Mr W. Hogarth, Military Representative and Mr Jas. Gibson, Clerk.....

IRONMONGERY FIRM'S APPEAL

The firm of Messrs Caverhill and Company, ironmongers, appealed for Robert Dodds, jobbing blacksmith, Low Greens, on the ground that he was indispensable, that it was impossible to find a substitute, and that there was no one to replace him in the country jobs.

Mr Barr supported the appeal, pointing out that Dodds was most useful in the discharge of particular work in connection with ranges and grates. He was married, and had three dependents.

In answer to Mr Hogarth, Mr Barr said that the firm had an older blacksmith named Nicholson, but he was no longer able to go to the country. He had also two apprentices.

The Tribunal agreed to grant exemption till 31st July.

Mr Barr in expressing thanks said that Dodds had no idea of being a shirker and would be quite willing to serve if called upon.

Mr Hogarth – “That is a very safe observation to make after the decision.” (*Laughter*)

CARTING CONTRACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Thomas Mark, carting contractor, appealed for his son of the same name, on the ground that he was indispensable, that no substitute could be obtained, and that they had contracts in connection with the Berwick and Tweedmouth Gas Company which involved government work.

Mr Hogarth said that the case had been altered by the fact that the son wore a Government badge, and he would ask that the badge and the appellant's card be given to him to make enquiries and that the case be adjourned till the next meeting of the Tribunal.

This was agreed to.

FISH CURER'S CLAIM

Mr P. P. Boston, fish-curer, Spittal claimed on behalf of Wm John Havery, who was said to be indispensable as a cooper and smoker of herring. All the other employees had offered their services. When the war broke out he had 17 men; now he had only six left. Herring could be easily damaged by steam or fire, and it required a very capable man to do this kind of work.

Mr Hogarth pointed out that it would have been impossible for Mr Boston to retain his usual staff owing to the want of business.

Mr Boston admitted that he got his son exempted and when the latter had to go to Yarmouth, this man took his place. If this man was taken, it would mean closing the business down altogether. The man was married and had one of a family.

The Tribunal agreed exemption so long as Havery remained in his present employment.

AN OPINIONATIVE APPELLANT

Robert F. Rennieson, Spittal, drapers' traveller, appealed on the ground that it was in the national interests he should remain in his present employment, that it would inflict serious hardship if he was asked to join, and that he had already four brothers serving. He asked if it was fair that a little brother should be asked to leave his family.

Mr Herriot – You have only right to state your opinion; you have no right to ask questions.

It appeared appellant was a married man, and had three of a family.

Exemption was granted until 31st July.

A MODEST CLAIM

Mr H. R. Smail, Berwick Advertiser office, claimed on behalf of one of his employees, Kerr Middlemiss (26) linotype operator. Mr Smail said he was the only operator left with mechanical skill and that his office had already been depleted by men being taken for the army. Eight of his employees had joined, and it would be impossible to go on without this man. In consequence of the depletion of his staff a double feeding machine was presently standing idle, and this itself was a serious loss.

Mr Herriot – You should state you have two boys serving, one of whom has been killed. It shows you are doing your best for the good of your country. You are far too modest.

Mr Smail replied that he did not desire to go into that; he only wished to appeal on behalf of his office staff.

It was explained that Middlemiss was a married man with one child.

Mr Hogarth enquired what had been become of another employee he had recently through his hands.

Mr Smail – “He has joined the KOSB's.”

Exemption was granted till 31st July.