

4 Melksham House, 27 Market Place (Grade II)

Melksham House was the home of George Blathwayt at the beginning of the War. He and his wife moved to Somerset in 1916. The House was then given over to the British Red Cross and became Melksham Hospital No.2 in November 1916. It housed 32 soldiers in 6 wards. After the War it was bought by the Avon India Rubber Works as their Sports and Social Club.



5 New Hall, Market Place

Built in 1877, New Hall was used as a reading room and accommodation for lectures and meetings. In March 1916 it became the location of the regular Military Tribunals which examined the cases of those men who were objecting to being conscripted.



6 Second Cottage Hospital, between 24 – 22 Bank Street

The Cottage Hospital was opened in 1895 and agreed to accept up to 50 wounded soldiers at the outset of the War. In 1938, a new hospital was built on Spa Road. The Cottage Hospital was used under the war time powers of the Wiltshire County Council and re-opened as a maternity hospital; many women came from London to have their babies in Melksham because it was safer. After WWII, it was used as an educational centre until it was taken over by the Labour Club in 1964.



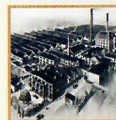
7 Liberal Club, 26 Bank Street

The Club opened in 1903 and from November 1914, like the Conservative Club across the road became part of Melksham No.1 Red Cross Hospital.



8 Avon India Rubber Co Ltd, Bath Road

The Avon Rubber Co moved to Melksham in 1890. During the First World War, so important was the output of the factory, that the Ministry of Munitions took over production from November 1915. Avon India Rubber produced a whole range of rubber goods for the Ministry of War including tyres, lifesaving apparatus, hosing and tubing.



9 Spencer & Co Ltd, Beanacre Road

Spencer and Co was founded by Charles Spencer in 1884 and moved to the Beanacre site in 1903. The present Foundry Close is a reminder that this was once the site of the Spencer Foundry. In 1914 there were 750 employees. Spencer & Co received contracts from the Ministry of Munitions to produce 9.2 and 18 pounder high explosive shells. They employed a large number of women and even had to open new facilities to accommodate them.



10 B Sawtell & Sons Ltd, Old Broughton Road

In 1850, Benjamin Sawtell founded a business in Challymead filling palliasses with straw for the army during the Crimean War. With his sons, he opened B. Sawtell & Sons, commencing a business cleaning feathers used for bedding at their factory in Old Broughton Road in 1892. During WW1, the company returned to their support of the war effort by supplying purified feathers for military bedding.



11 Wilts United Dairies Ltd, New Broughton Road

Wilts United Dairies was founded by the son of the rope manufacturer Charles Maggs. In 1888 the factory moved into a former dye works by the Town Bridge on New Broughton Road. They merged with a number of dairies including the North Wilts Dairy Co of Devizes. By August 1912 Wilts. United Dairies ran several wholesale depots in London for liquid milk and one for 'fancy provisions'. Condensed milk was made at Melksham.



12 Conservative Club (Constitutional Club), 17 Bank Street (Grade II)

This 19th century building became a ward for the Melksham No.1 Red Cross Hospital in November 1914 accommodating around 30 convalescing troops.



Acknowledgements

The Melksham Remembers Project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Melksham Town Council and Wiltshire Council Melksham Community Area Board.



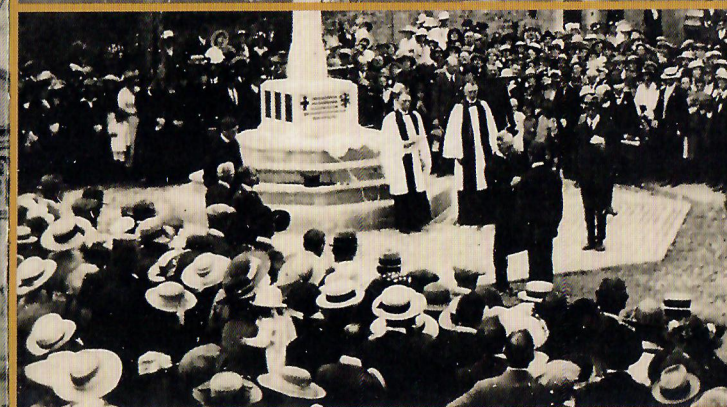
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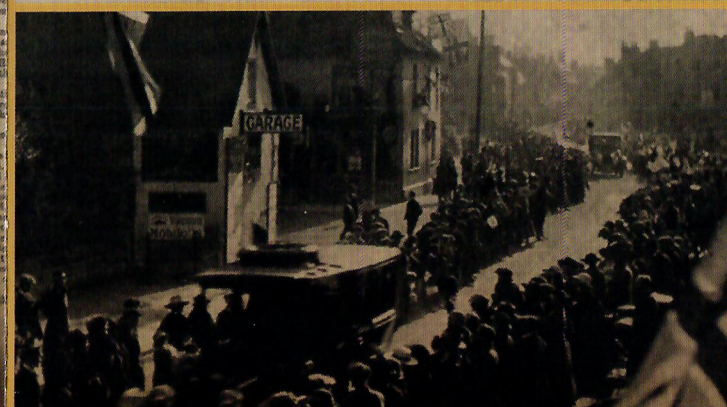
First World War

1914 - 1918

Melksham Remembers



Walking Trail



During 2018, as part of the First World War Centenary Commemorations, volunteers took part in a project to find out what was happening in Melksham during the First World War. This walking trail is a result of their researches and highlights some of the buildings that played a role in Melksham life during that time.

You can take the locations in any order, but they are numbered, starting and finishing at Church Street Car Park, and perhaps enjoying some refreshments in one of the many cafés and pubs in the town centre either on route or at the end.

 Find out more on the Melksham Remembers website www.melkshamremembers.org.uk. Follow our future activity on the Facebook page [MelkshamRemembers](https://www.facebook.com/MelkshamRemembers).

You can also explore the shops of Melksham during the First World War with your smartphone.

Please use this QR code to find out more about the shops and buildings in Melksham town centre on your smart phone.



1 Melksham War Memorial, Church (Grade II)

The War Memorial was unveiled on 23 August 1919 by Lord Methuen. The memorial cost £350 and the Vicar of St Michael, Canon Edwin Wyld whose son, Captain George Wyld was killed in December 1914, raised subscriptions of £200 from the family members of those remembered on the memorial and paid the remaining £150 himself.



2 Church of St Michael, Church Walk (Grade II*)

This Grade II* listed church dates back to the Norman period with extensive alterations in the late medieval period and in 1845 by Thomas Wyatt. The Churchyard contains a number of WW1 Commonwealth War Grave Commission graves.



3 Town Hall, Market Place (Grade II)

This building was built in 1847, as a Cheese Market. After the failure of the Melksham Market Company in 1898 the property was sold to Charles Awdry. It was purchased by the Melksham Urban District Council in 1914.



KEY

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- 3 Town Hall
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- 9 Spencer and Co Ltd
- 10 Sawtell & Sons Ltd
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- P Church Street Car Park