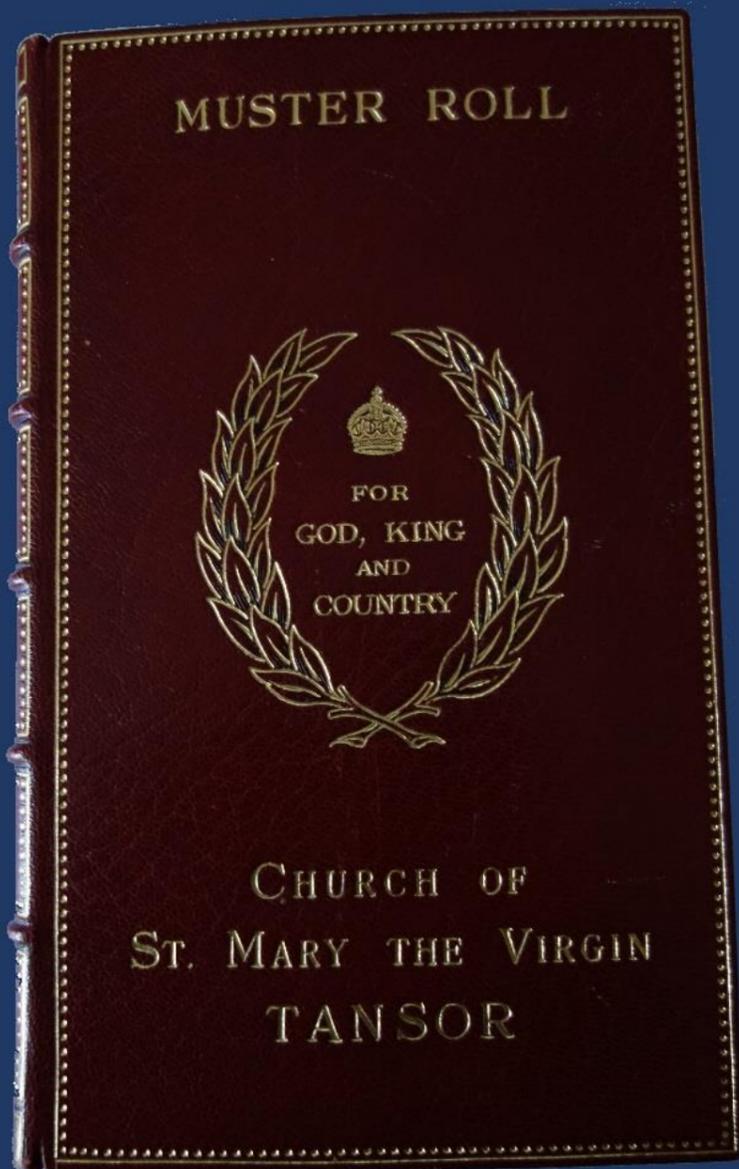


# The Muster Roll and the Roll of Honour



Possibly as part of the role of the post-war committee that raised funds for the war memorial, a Muster Roll – the reverse side of which is a Roll of Honour – was commissioned. The information contained within this beautiful volume seems to have been the work of locals, and has formed the main primary data source for this exhibition. The book is on display in the church, and can be consulted for the duration of the exhibition. Without it, it would have been significantly more difficult to have revealed anything of the stories of the Tansor men who fought in World War One. On the wall in the south aisle, there is also a framed list of the men. This differs slightly from the final book that was produced, and the reason for the disparity can only be guessed at. There are several men listed on the wall who don't feature in the book. This seems to have been because they did not live in Tansor at the start of the war, although at least two of them – John Butler and John William Butler of Tansor Wold – were

listed as living here on the 1918 Absent Voters List. Additional names on the framed list include two more Butlers – Hezekiah and Frederick. In the Roll of Honour at the back of the Muster Roll, Harry E. Bird is included. No trace has been found of Harry in any records, and curiously, his name was not carved onto the war memorial outside the church. All we know about him is that he was a Private in the 35<sup>th</sup> Training Reserve Battalion – even his regiment is not recorded – and that he was killed in 1917. This is a mystery that someone else may be able to resolve.

## A missing man? John Butler of Tansor Wold

As outlined above, John Butler features on the framed Roll of Honour in Tansor Church, but not in the book called the Muster Roll. He is listed in the 1918 Absent Voters List, from which we learn that he was at that time a Private with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leicestershire Regiment. This small scrap of information, alongside his regimental number was enough to locate the only additional record to feature him within the National Archives' collection – a medical note dated April 1917, when he had received medical attention for an inflamed finger. This confirms that he was with the Leicesters in that year when the regiment was serving in the Persian Gulf, at Basra. In early 1917, the British army and Allied forces were advancing along both sides of the River Tigris towards Kut and Baghdad, and John Butler would have been involved in these operations. The Leicesters' war diary records the fall of Kut on 26<sup>th</sup> February. In early March 1917, the Leicesters were on the outskirts of Baghdad, which was being held by Ottoman forces. They were immediately shelled, and Officers were instructed to send forward a company 'to locate the enemy position, his flanks, and if possible, his approximate strength'. It was certainly no easy task to advance into Baghdad, and the diary reported that the whole Battalion was in the front line, alongside the Indian army, and several men were killed or wounded. The detailed diary entries for 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> March 1917 paint a vivid picture of the front line efforts to liberate Baghdad, which was achieved by British and Indian forces on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

### 1.1.17

**"A periscope in an enemy's loophole...was smashed by our snipers, who are now firing more accurately, with the result that the fire of enemy snipers was now rather wild."**