

*100 years ago*  
**SALFORD at WAR**

Some learning activities  
based on the exhibition at  
Salford Museum and Art Gallery

**WORLD  
WAR ONE  
CENTENARY**  
SALFORD REMEMBERS



The Booth Charities



Salford  
Museum  
and Art  
Gallery





## The Exhibition

To mark the centenary of the outbreak of World War One, Salford Museum and Art Gallery opened in March 2014 its exhibition called **100 Years Ago: Salford At War**. The exhibition's focus has been on people with a connection to Salford and their stories. Different aspects of the war are covered in the exhibition, including local men who served in the armed forces, those who refused to fight due to their conscience, men and women who looked after the injured on the front line and those who served with the war effort at home.

## The learning activities pack

This pack uses material from the exhibition and invites young people to think more deeply about some of the issues involved. The pack can be used without visiting the actual exhibition but it can also be used to accompany a visit and help young people gain more insight as they view the resources on display.

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# Salford soldiers

When World War One broke out in August 1914 the British government asked for men to volunteer to join the armed forces. The City of Salford responded very positively to this request, with more volunteers than many other cities that had larger populations. The Salford battalions were hit particularly hard, especially as they played a key part in the attack on the first day of The Battle of the Somme (1 July 1916), during which tens of thousands of British soldiers were killed or badly injured.

Here are the stories of two Salford soldiers, both of whom volunteered to take part in the war and both lost their lives. Many thousands of other Salford men had a similar fate.

## William (Billy) Unsworth

Billy Unsworth was born in 1881 in Sunnyside Street, Ordsall, Salford. He served in the British Army in South Africa during the Boer War (1899-1902), receiving a medal. In 1904 he married Bella Roberts and they went on to have five children, though one died at the age of 13 months.

When World War One broke out in 1914, Billy was working at Glovers Engineering in Trafford Park, but soon after he re-joined the army. His engineering job meant that he would never have been forced to join the army because he worked in what was known as a 'protected occupation'. In the army he worked as a training instructor teaching basic skills to young army recruits, some of whom would be around 15 years of age having lied to get themselves into the army.

Billy wrote in one of his letters to Bella saying...

*"I don't think I will be coming home again until I have been to France as when I come back here from home it gives me such a melancholy feeling and it takes a full fortnight to get over it...."*

In 1915 Billy went with the army to Gallipoli in Turkey, to fight in a famous battle there against the Turks who were on the side of the Germans. The Gallipoli campaign was a failure and Billy was one of many British soldiers who lost their lives there. He was one of 119 men from his regiment, the Lancashire Fusiliers, who died attacking Turkish trenches on 21 August 1915.

Bella was expecting a child at the time of Billy's death and so Billy never saw his youngest son, also called William. Bella never remarried.



**Corporal 9417 William (Billy) Frankland Unsworth, 9th Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers Killed in Gallipoli - 21st August 1915 aged 33 yrs. Courtesy of Tony Gibbons**

**What do you think Billy meant by his letter to his wife?**

**What evidence is there in this story that many men were enthusiastic about the idea of joining the army to fight in the war?**



**Billy Unsworth with his fellow Lancashire Fusiliers. Courtesy of Tony Gibbons, Billy's grandson**

## Charlie Hunter

Charles 'Charlie' Hunter was born in Salford in 1896. When war broke out in August 1914, Charlie was living with his family in Ordsall, Salford and he worked as a Telegraph Messenger boy. This involved taking messages to people that were sent across the country through wires. Ordsall was one of the most poverty-stricken parts of the area at the time and people recruiting soldiers would target places like this, encouraging local men to escape from their situation by joining the army. At the time, many people in Salford were employed casually and were expected to work long hours for little pay. When war broke out this lack of job security made signing up for the army an attractive prospect for many Salford men, particularly as new recruits were promised one shilling a day and an extra two shillings for food while they were stationed in Salford.

Charlie volunteered to serve in the war in August 1914. He only just met the minimum age requirement to serve abroad. After about a year of training he went to the Western Front in France, part of the Salford Pals' Battalion. He and his colleagues fought at The Battle of the Somme. On 1 July 1916, the first day of this battle, only 150 out of 600 men in this battalion survived. It was the bloodiest day in British military history. Charlie was one of the men who survived.

However, a few weeks later, in August 1916 he was killed in action and was buried in France.

The padre of the battalion, Reverend Reginald French wrote to Charlie's parents following his death:

*"It is fearfully sad to think of so many brave lads giving their lives in this awful struggle, and yet they are so splendid that one almost loses sight of horror in the light of their nobility and self-sacrifice. The battalion has lost a promising soldier in your son and we mourn his loss with you."*

**Salford Battalion Lancashire Fusilier recruitment advertisement, The Reporter, September 19, 1914**

Dear Mother,  
I was glad to hear from you for it was rather late in coming but it was all the sweeter for waiting. I was glad you received the primroses alright for I had a very long walk into the country for them after tea last Saturday and I went into a shop to buy the box and write the address to catch the post. I must not forget to thank you for the stamps which will be quite useful to me, you are a good mother for sending them. I did get over my inoculation alright in fact there was nothing to get over except laziness after so much bed.  
Annie has not replied to my letter so just hurry her up for me and tell Father I will write a letter to him this week. Tom sends his best regards to all. I suppose Harold now thinks he is entitled to a partnership where he works, tell him to write me. Give my best regards to all old friends and my best love to all the children.  
I have had a letter from May and she told me about the little visitors on Sunday I would very much like to have been one. The work here has dropped off very much just lately so you may see we have a much better time than before. I will now...with best love and wishes.  
I remain your loving son,  
Charlie xxxxxx

**Private C. Hunter to his mother - 21/4/15**



**What does Charlie's letter tell us about his feelings at the time?**

**How old would Charlie have been when he joined the army?**

**We do not know definitely why Charlie was keen to join the army so quickly. From what we know about him and his background, what reasons might there have been for his decision?**

**Do you agree with the padre that the 'splendid' efforts of the soldiers would have helped people at the time to 'lose sight' of the horrors of war?**

**What image of everyday Salford life is shown in the recruitment poster?**

**Why do you think the designer of this poster showed Salford life like this?**

**What other methods of persuasion are used in the poster?**

# Conscientious Objectors

## What is meant by a conscientious objector?

In January 1916 the British Government introduced conscription. This meant that all men between the ages of 18 and 41 had to join the armed forces. Some men refused, because fighting was against their beliefs and their conscience. They were known as conscientious objectors.

## What part did Salford people play in the conscientious objection movement?

Three Salford men became well-known for their refusal to fight:-

### Harold Derbyshire

Harold Derbyshire of Patricroft (below) was dismissed from his post at Eccles Town Council for his anti-conscription opinions. He had to attend a tribunal in March 1916 to explain his refusal to join the army. He said that

*“it is impossible for me as a Christian to put my conscience at the disposal of the state”.*

Despite this plea, Derbyshire was sentenced first to six months hard labour at Carlisle Prison, followed by a later sentence of two years hard labour.



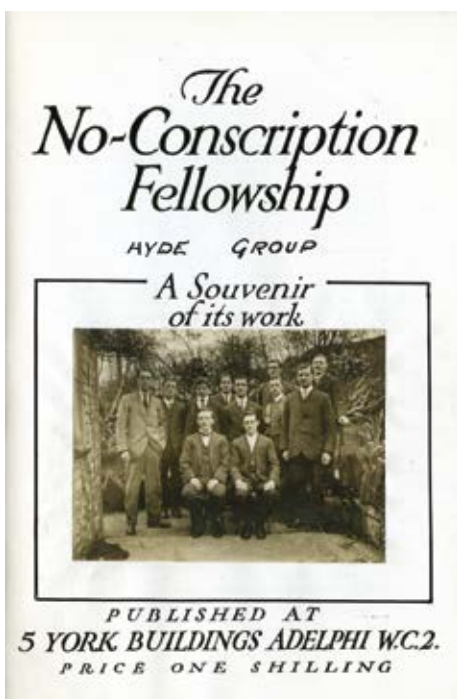
Harold Derbyshire, courtesy of Ann Hart and the Working Class Movement Library

### Fenner Brockway

Fenner Brockway published a weekly newspaper called the 'Labour Leader'. It was printed in Salford and read across the whole of Britain. Brockway also started an organisation called the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF), to campaign against conscription. The NCF, under Brockway's guidance, was very active in the Manchester and Salford areas. In 1915, the Home Secretary instructed Salford police to raid the printers where the newspaper was printed on Blackfriars Street, confiscating copies of the paper plus several anti-war pamphlets. Brockway was imprisoned in 1916 for his publishing activities and for refusing to take part in military service.



Fenner Brockway, courtesy of the Working Class Movement Library



A No Conscription Fellowship publication, courtesy of the Working Class Movement Library

## James Hindle Hudson

James Hindle Hudson was a geography teacher at the Salford Secondary School for Boys. His headteacher and many local councillors wanted to dismiss Hudson for his anti-war views but he held onto his job. In November 1916 Hudson was arrested for being an absentee soldier and was taken to Strangeways prison in Manchester, then later to Wormwood Scrubs in London. At his trial he stated

*“Though the law may deem me to be a soldier, no power on earth, military or other, can make me into a soldier”.*

Conditions in these prisons could be very harsh. Minor breaking of prison rules could result in a bread and water diet. James Hudson lost three stones after 21 months of hard labour and a report described Strangeways as ‘very unhealthy’.

**Explain the quotations from Derbyshire and Hudson in your own words**

**Why do you think the government put conscientious objectors in prison rather than just let them carry on with their normal jobs?**

**Do you think that these Salford men deserved to go to prison?**

**Why might some people at the time have been unsympathetic about the harsh prison conditions faced by James Hindle?**

Teacher James Hindle Hudson and his class at Salford Secondary School for Boys, just before the start of World War One.





Look at the picture. These boys would probably be about 15 years old at the time of this photograph. Imagine that one of these boys has just become 18 in November 1916, just before Hudson was arrested. Continue the possible conversation between the boy (let us call him 'Morris') and Hudson, as they meet in the street:-

**Boy:** Hello, sir. Not seen you for a while.

**Hudson:** Hello, Morris. How old are you now?

**Boy:** I was 18 last week. I should be getting my letter to call me up to the army soon. Why aren't you in the army?

**Hudson:** .....

**Boy:** .....

**Hudson:** .....

**Boy:** .....

**Hudson:** .....

**Boy:** .....

# Soldiers shot for 'desertion'

## What was meant by 'deserters'?

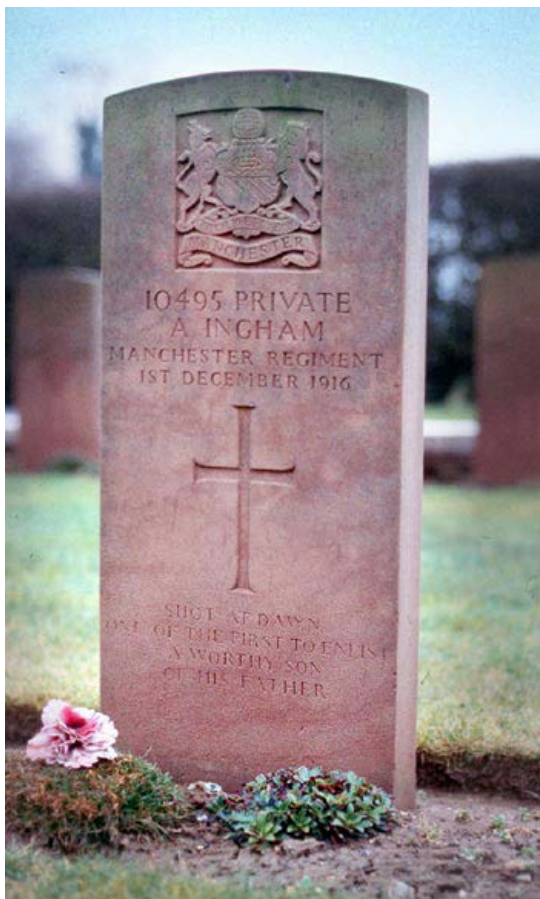
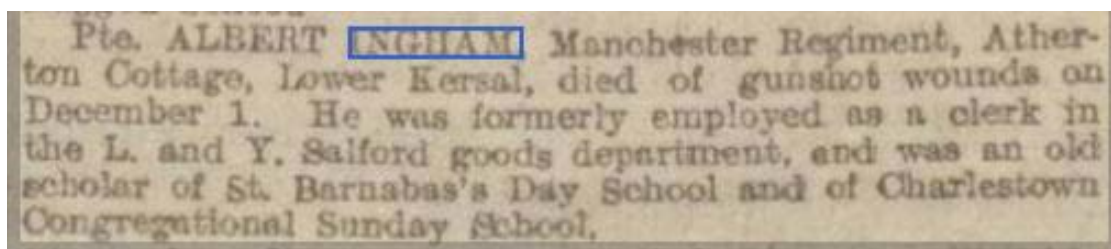
'Deserters' was the name given to soldiers who went missing from the army. More than 3000 men were tried by court-martial for the crime of absencing themselves from the trenches, and 306 of them were 'shot at dawn'. Most of them suffered from what is now recognised as post-traumatic stress disorder. The horrors and the noise of constant shelling led to more than 80,000 cases of 'battle stress'. This was nearly ten per cent of the entire British casualty rate and many senior commanders, through ignorance, treated it as cowardice.

## What happened to Albert Ingham of Salford?

A local example was Private Albert Ingham. Albert was born in Pendleton in 1891 and served in the army in both Egypt and France. On the night of 5 October 1916 he 'deserted'. Arrested by Military Police on 1 November, he was tried by court-martial, a special kind of court for the armed forces. Two of the three witnesses were not cross-examined by the court-martial and Albert was not represented by a lawyer. Despite this, Albert was executed by firing squad on 1 December 1916 and all three of his campaign medals were taken from him.

Albert's parents were told that he had died of wounds, and did not discover the truth until after the war. His father later amended Albert's headstone on his grave to read 'Shot at dawn. One of the first to enlist. A worthy son of his father' (see picture of Albert's grave in a cemetery in France). No other soldier shot for 'desertion' has anything like this on their gravestone.

After a 90-year campaign, in 2006 the British government agreed to pardon these World War One 'deserters', regarding them all as 'victims of the First World War' and recognising that they had not committed a crime.



Albert Ingham's grave at Bailleulmont Communal Cemetery, France, [The Heritage of the Great War website](#)

Why do you think the army had such a harsh punishment for soldiers accused of 'desertion'?

Why do you think that people at the time did not realise that these soldiers were probably very stressed, rather than being 'cowardly'?

Why were families told that the 'deserters' had 'died of wounds' rather than being told the truth?

Why do you think Albert Ingham's father chose those particular words for his son's headstone?

Do you agree with the government's decision to pardon the 'deserters'? Explain why or why not.



# The Deserter

by Winifred Mabel Letts (1916)

Winifred Mabel Letts (1882-1972) was born at 270 Great Clowes Street, Broughton, in Salford. She wrote novels, children's stories, poetry, short stories and autobiography during her long career. When World War One broke out in 1914 she became a Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse (V.A.D.) in Ireland and Manchester and also trained as a masseuse administering massage to wounded soldiers. She wrote 'The Deserter' during the middle of World War One.

There was a man, — don't mind his name,  
Whom fear has dogged by night and day.  
He could not face the German guns  
And so he turned and ran away.  
Just that-he turned and ran away,  
But who can judge him, you or I?  
God makes a man of flesh and blood  
Who yearns to live and not to die.  
And this man when he feared to die.  
Was scared as any frightened child,  
His knees were shaking under him,  
His breath came fast, his eyes were wild.  
I've seen a hare with eyes as wild,  
With throbbing heart and sobbing breath.  
But oh! it shames one's soul to see  
A man in abject fear of death.  
But fear had gripped him, so had death;  
His number had gone up that day,  
They might not heed his frightened eyes,  
They shot him when the dawn was grey  
Blindfolded, when the dawn was grey,  
He stood there in a place apart,  
The shots rang out and down he fell,  
An English bullet in his heart.  
An English bullet in his heart!  
But here's the irony of life,-  
His mother thinks he fought and fell  
A hero, foremost in the strife.  
So she goes proudly; to the strife  
Her best, her hero son she gave.  
O well for her she does not know  
He lies in a deserter's grave.



Winifred Mabel Letts,  
courtesy of Bairbre O'Hogan

Is the poet sympathetic to the 'deserters'? Explain why or why not by quoting parts of the poem?

In the final few lines, the poet suggests that it is better that the mother does not know the truth about what has happened to her son. Do you agree with the poet here?

Choose a favourite line or small section of the poem and explain why you like it.

Can you write another four lines of a poem on the same subject and in a similar style?

## Medical staff

As well as the soldiers who fought on the front line, many Salford people played a vital role as medical staff, looking after those who were injured. Their job could be dangerous too.

### Albert Batty

Albert Batty was born in 1893 and lived in Salford from 1903 until the First World War broke out in 1914. During the war Albert was part of an ambulance unit. We know so much about him and his unit because he kept a war diary that filled 15 notebooks and then in 1960 he wrote a book of notes to accompany the diaries. It is amazing to learn that all of Albert's ambulance unit seemed to survive the war. In 1960, Albert wrote a commentary on his original diaries where, looking at the list of the 39 men in his ambulance unit at the start of the war, he made the following point,

*'It is almost safe to say that not one in this list was killed during the war, which is not a little remarkable.'*



Albert Batty, back row, far left, pictured with his football team when he was about 17 years old.

### Minnie Wood

Minnie Wood trained as a nurse at Salford Royal Infirmary from 1905 to 1908, serving in Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS) during World War One in France and Belgium. For her efforts in the war, she was awarded the Royal Red Cross and the OBE. After the war she was treated for 'debility', probably a mixture of exhaustion and stress.



Sister Minnie Wood, who was awarded the OBE in June 1919

### Minnie Wood and Nurse Nellie Spindler

Minnie was present when one of her nursing colleagues was killed while they were working in a battle zone in Flanders, Belgium in August 1917. The story is told in The British Journal of Nursing, 8 September 1917:-

**Miss Nellie Spindler, Staff Nurse, was killed in the bombardment of the hospital at Abbeville by the Germans on 21 August, 1917.**

**Letter and telegram from the War Office state that she was "killed in action".**

**Private communications from Abbeville state that the hospital was shelled all day, that Miss Spindler was struck at 11am, became unconscious immediately and died twenty minutes later in the arms of Nurse Wood.**

**She was given a full military funeral and the "Last Post" was sounded over her grave, which is quite near the hospital and will be well looked after.**

**Miss Spindler was 26 years of age.**

**She was right in the danger zone but while recognising it her letters were hopeful and cheery.**

**Is there any evidence here to suggest that it was less dangerous and stressful to be a medical worker rather than a soldier in World War One?**

**What evidence is there here that the work of medical staff was still very dangerous?**

**War memorials and modern reflections on World War One focus mainly on the soldiers who lost their lives. Should we do more to remember the medical staff and, if so, what could be done to provide them with a suitable way to remember their efforts?**

# War Memorials

World War One ended in 1918 and in the next few years thousands of war memorials were created all over the country. Some of these memorials remembered all the soldiers in a town who had lost their lives. Others, like the ones shown below from Salford, were designed to remember people from particular groups who had fought in the war and especially those who had lost their lives. Some were groups of workers, like the **Patricroft Steam Shed** (below). The other example (next page) is from a group of men who had a common interest, the **Walkden Young Men's Bible class**. Photographs of the original memorials are shown here, along with a transcript underneath so that the words on the memorial can be read clearly.



## THE GREAT WAR 1914-18

THIS TABLET IS A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION OF THE SERVICE GIVEN BY THE 128 MEN OF THE PATRICROFT STEAM SHED WHO FOUGHT IN PRACTICALLY ALL THEATRES OF THE WAR AND IS IN PROUD AND IMPERISHABLE MEMORY OF THE UNDERMENTIONED MEN WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE.

JAMES BEBBINGTON	JOHN HUGHES	JOHN HENRY PRITCHARD
THOMAS BARROW	HUGH HUGHES	WILLIAM HENRY PARRY
WILLIAM DAVID BARTON	OWEN ELIAS JONES	CHARLES SHAW
LEONARD BRITTAIN	THOMAS LARNER	ALBERT SHERIFF
JOHN COWIN	GEORGE EDWARD MOORE	JOSEPH HEAP SIDEBOTHAM
GEORGE COTTAM	WILLIAM MCEVOY	GEORGE WILLIAM SHEPHERD
SAMUEL COOPE	WILLIAM FRANCIS MURDEN	HENRY THOMAS
FRED FRANCIS	WILLIAM ARTHUR MATTHEWSON	DAVID RICHARD WILLIAMS
WILLIAM GERRARD	JOSEPH ORLEDGE	JAMES WATKINSON

Forget us not, O Land for which we fell  
 May it go well with ENGLAND, still go well  
 Keep her proud banners, without blot or stain  
 Lest we may dream that we have died in vain



THE WORLD WAR  
What's Brave What's Noble Let's do it

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

## ROLL OF HONOUR

YOUNG MEN'S WALKDEN WESLEYAN BIBLE CLASS

### FAITHFUL TO DEATH

Alexander, John  
Chilton, Levi  
Cousin, Cyril

Evans, Harold  
Harrop, Joseph Arnold  
Holmes, Joseph Evans

Littlewood, Frederick  
Williams, Arthur  
Rushton, Granville

### CONSTANT IN SERVICE

Alexander, William Edward  
Berry, James  
Bradburn, Robert Nolan  
Cooke, Bertram Ralph  
Cooke, Norman  
Crompton, Ernest  
Crompton, James  
Davies, Fred senior  
Davies, Fred junior  
Davies, George Leonard  
Davies, James Henry  
Davies, John senior  
Davies, John junior  
Davies, William  
Dyson, Joseph  
Evans, Fred  
Hadcroft, Ernest  
Hadcroft, William  
Hallam, Frank  
Hallam, Harry  
Hardy, Thomas  
Holmes, George Stanley

Hyde, James  
Jones, George  
Jones, Herbert  
Lightbown, Bertram  
Littlewood, John  
Marshall, Thomas  
Mather, Frank  
Moores, James  
Morris, Fred  
Morris, George Price  
Morris, Harold  
Mullineaux, James  
Mullineaux, Jessie  
Mullineaux, Samuel  
Muskett, Ernest  
Muskett, Harold  
Owen, Harry  
Owen, Stanley  
Parkinson, Granville  
Parkinson, Levi  
Parkinson, Matthew  
Payne, Harry

Prince, James  
Ridyard, Albert  
Roberts, Benjamin  
Robins, Archibald  
Roscoe, Norman  
Roscoe, Ronald  
Rothwell, Thomas  
Rushton, Granville  
Rushton, John N  
Shaw, George  
Stott, Abraham  
Stott, Fred  
Stowell, George  
Stowell, Levi  
Travis, Albert  
Travis, Harold  
Twigg, Clifford  
Williams, Richard  
Wallwork, John  
Yates, Harold  
Yates, James  
Yates, John

**On the Patricroft memorial what is meant by ‘imperishable memory’ and ‘the supreme sacrifice’?**

**What are the differences in design between the Patricroft memorial and the Walkden memorial?**

**Which of these two designs for a war memorial do you prefer? Explain why.**

**How might the families of the dead soldiers named on these memorials feel when they saw the memorials on public display?**

**These two memorials are usually kept in the basement of a museum, where the public cannot see them. Should they still be on permanent public display somewhere or is this less important now that a hundred years have passed since World War One?**

## **A story about damage to a war memorial**

8 October 2011

### **Prestbury war memorial in Gloucestershire vandalised**

A war memorial in a Gloucestershire village has been knocked over and smashed into pieces. Police were called to the High Street in Prestbury late on Friday evening following reports of the damage. A police spokesperson said,

“This damage will have a significant impact on the residents of Prestbury and also the wider Cheltenham community. It’s particularly poignant as we are so close to Remembrance Sunday when a great many people attend the Prestbury service held at the memorial to honour those who have fallen in service of our country. Frances Moreton from the War Memorials Trust said the organisation deplored any damage to memorials but acknowledged it did happen fairly often.

“On average we get one report a week of graffiti, vandalism or theft,” Ms Moreton said.



**Why do you think that the police officer says that this vandalism of the war memorial will have a ‘significant impact’ on local people?**

**Is it worse to vandalise a war memorial or to vandalise a bus stop? Explain your thinking.**

**If you knew that another young person was planning to vandalise a war memorial, what would you say to try to stop them?**

# The significance of these Salford individuals

Look back again at all the Salford individuals who are mentioned in this pack.

**Soldiers who died in battle** – Billy Unsworth and Charlie Hunter

**Conscientious Objectors** – Fenner Brockway, Harold Derbyshire and James Hindle Hudson

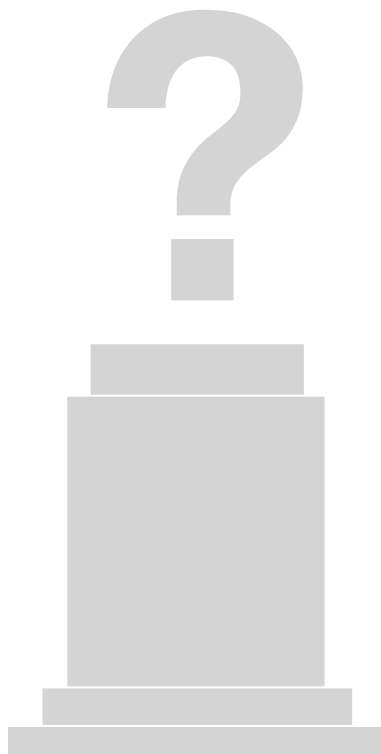
**Soldier shot for 'desertion'** – Albert Ingham

**Poet** - Winifred Mabel Letts (poet)

**Medical Staff** – Albert Batty and Minnie Wood

Imagine that Salford has the funding to create a statue in the city to remember just one of these people. Which one would you choose? Explain your choice by comparing your chosen person to at least one other person that you have not chosen.

When you have made your choice, write an inscription to go with the statue, saying what is special about this person. You can use no more than 20 words to do this.



This is to remember...

.....

Inscription - 20 words

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



The Booth Charities