

# peace pledge union

## Local and Community History Month Conscientious Objection in World War 1

Notes for researching the perspectives and experiences of Conscientious Objectors from your local area

**Source material:** <https://menwhosaidno.org/>

The Men Who Said No website holds information about the Conscientious Objectors (COs) of the First World War and their supporters, wives and partners, who laid the foundations of today's nonviolent protest movement in Britain. After the war many were at the forefront of prison reform and other progressive causes. Many more continued to campaign for the abolition of war and a just settlement of conflicts. Their voices were often marginalised and ridiculed at the time; you can use this website to discover more about their perspectives and experiences.

### Curriculum areas:

<b>Northern Ireland Curriculum KS3/ 4</b>	History/ Religious education Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities
<b>Curriculum for Excellence</b>	Responsible Citizens/ Successful Learners
<b>Curriculum for Wales</b>	Humanities Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
<b>National Curriculum KS3/ 4</b>	History/ Religious education Citizenship

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Born:</b>	<b>Died:</b>
<b>Where did they live?</b>	<b>What was their reason for objection?</b>	
<b>Did their case go to tribunal? What was the outcome?</b>		

**What happened after the war?**

**What else did you find interesting about this story?**

**Reflections and further discussion:**

- Do you agree or disagree with their reasons for objection? Why?
- There are currently hundreds of people around the world are imprisoned or forced to flee their home countries for refusing to join the armed forces or participate in military service. What would you do in their situation?
- Is there anything that you feel strongly enough about to risk going to prison?
- How might the COs experiences change their lives or beliefs (current or WW1)?
- How might their actions impact their families? What might the families and children of soldiers think or say about the COs?
- Why does learning about conscientious objection matter?
- What can this story teach us about our own lives?
- How could this situation be avoided in the future?

**Further information:**

Map of current COs around the world:

[www.ppu.org.uk/international-conscientious-objectors-day-may-15th](http://www.ppu.org.uk/international-conscientious-objectors-day-may-15th)

War Resisters International, for information about contemporary COs:

<https://wri-irg.org/en>

About First World War COs from New Zealand and Ireland:

<https://conscientiousobjectorsww1.weebly.com/maori-objectors--irish-objectors.html>

Welsh resources on COs: <https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/discovery?fields=resources&language=en&query=conscientious%20objectors&sort=relevance&strict=1>

Stories of First World War COs from Scotland:

<https://peaceandjustice.org.uk/what-we-do/legacies-of-resistance-to-first-world-war-in-scotland/>

Stories of First World War COs from Wales:

<https://www.wcia.org.uk/conscientiousobjectors/>

**About Peace Pledge Union:**

The Peace Pledge Union is the oldest secular pacifist organisation in Britain. Since 1934 it has been campaigning for a warless world. For more information see: [www.ppu.org.uk](http://www.ppu.org.uk)