

'Ministers are providing an excellent example in recruiting. In the course of the last few days no fewer than six Church of Scotland ministers in the Lothians have enlisted as privates in Lord Kitchener's Army. The latest clergyman to join the service is Rev. John Drew, Armadale Parish Church'.

West Lothian Courier 27 Nov 14, p4

This week, the Rev. Mr Drew, Armadale who joined Sir George McCrae's Battalion, as a private, has been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. 'This promotion has been specially appreciated by the 30-odd men of West Lothian, who are in the same battalion, and who are bracketed together, and recognise Sergeant Drew as their leader.'

West Lothian Courier 25 Dec 14, p?

'As has been his custom since coming to Armadale Parish Church, the Rev. John Drew, although now serving in the Army, entertained his church workers to their annual social meeting in Forsyth's Hall last week, when the hall was crowded. The function was unique in the history of the church, in so far as the host came straight from his regimental training quarters in his military uniform, and was presented by the Kirk-session and the managers with an officer's sword.' (Commissioned as a lieutenant in the Royal Scots, McCrae's Battalion.)

Linlithgowshire Gazette 19 Feb 15, p3

'The Rev. John Drew, of [Armadale] parish Church, who is a lieutenant in the Black Watch, serving in the trenches in France, was the "star turn" in Armadale at his choir's social meeting on Friday night, and the church's social meeting to welcome him on Monday. Lieut. Drew is looking well and fit, and was able to interest his people with many stories of his experience at the front, both grave and gay.'

Linlithgowshire Gazette 16 Feb 17. p3

The Rev John Drew, Lieutenant in the Black Watch in France for the past three years, is welcomed home on leave with a 'whirlwind soiree' in his church - Armadale Parish Church.

Linlithgowshire Gazette 16 Nov 17, p3

'The Rev. John Drew, B.A. (Oxon.), minister of Armadale Parish Church, preached his farewell sermon to his congregation on Sunday, when the church was exceptionally well filled. At the close of the sermon he took the opportunity of thanking his congregation for the loyal help they had given him during the twelve years which he had been their minister. He specially thanked all the office-bearers and church workers for the support they had given him in the many schemes they had faced during that time, and the loyal way they had stood by him and the church during the trying time of the war when he was absent in the army. He appreciated all the great kindnesses they had shown him during his labours amongst them, and earnestly commended them to his successor as a loyal and dutiful people....

It was an affectionate farewell, and there was many a wet cheek as Mr Drew bade his people farewell as they passed out of the church. In the evening the church was packed... At the close of the service, Mr Drew again shook hands with the congregation as they passed out and so affected was he at the cordiality and the affection shown by the numerous friends at the parting that he completely broke down.

Since Mr Drew's coming to Armadale twelve years ago, he has been a very busy and popular man. Soon finding the church too small for his congregations, he set to work to have the building enlarged and successfully carried out the scheme, transforming the interior and making the church one of the finest places of worship in the district. The old manse he found unsuitable, and he also found the need of a church hall. He set himself the task of providing a church hall and a manse, and was in a fair way of seeing both accomplished when the war broke out. One of the first to join Colonel Cranston's Battalion (17th Battn) [*this is incorrect – it was McCrae's 16th Battn*] as a private. Mr Drew had not long to wait until he got his commission. And later he was transferred to the Black Watch in which he served throughout the war in France as a captain, and suffered from shell shock.

Since returning to his ministerial duties, Dr Drew took up the tasks he had set himself to before the war - the building of a manse and a church hall, to which he added a scheme for the erection of a memorial window for the fallen in the church. A large sum of money was quickly raised for the building of the manse, a palatial building just completed at the upper end of High Academy Street; and Mr Drew also arranged for the removal of the Y.M.C.A. Hut at Turnhouse Aerodrome to a site beside the church, to serve the double purpose of the Y.M.C.A. and a church hall. This has also been completed, but has turned out to be a more expensive undertaking than was expected. The estimated cost of removal and re-erection was £550, but it has really cost £1400, and still it would appear to be the property of the Y.M.C.A. and under the control of the Y.M.C.A. General Council.

Mr Drew took a very active part in all that pertained to the welfare of the district, and greatly encouraged sport amongst the young. Each year he organised a ten day's camp for his boys at one or other of the favourite holiday resorts and these camps were very popular and greatly taken advantage of, while visitors from home were numerous and were always made very welcome. Bowling in the summer and football in winter found in him an active supporter. He was a member of the Parish Council and the Education Authority, having been a member of the old School Board. Mr Drew also took a great deal out of himself in visiting the sick. He was always on the road with his bicycle, and Edinburgh Infirmary was not too far for him to visit any one he knew to be there, and he never went empty-handed.

Mr Drew has not been so robust since his return from war service, and his health having broken completely down, he resolved with dramatic suddenness to seek renewed health in retirement and under a more congenial climate. The suddenness of his resignation has made the subject of his going away the only topic discussed this week. He had asked for a long holiday to recruit his health, there is not the least doubt but it would have been readily granted. While he has not openly divulged his plans for the future it is understood that he means to take a long holiday in some Eastern clime. He carries with him the best wishes, not only of his congregation, but of the whole community.'

Linlithgowshire Gazette 3 Feb 1922, p2

The Rev. John Drew died at Cambridge on the 1st January 1950, aged 73.