

RESEARCHING THE GREAT WAR

HOW DID MY BOOK ON ESSEX AND WW1 DEVELOP?

1. Firstly as a study of Colchester's war memorial
2. Then into a wider study of Colchester & WW1
3. Finally into a county-wide study of the war.

WHAT QUESTIONS DID I ASK MYSELF?

- 1 How did people in Essex react to the start of the war?
- 2 What was the political, social and economic impact of the war?
- 3 How did people cope with the huge losses of the war?
- 4 How did the war affect religious faith?
- 5 Did the war produce a change in the status and role of women in work and society?
- 6 How significant was the issue of conscientious objection?
- 7 In what ways can we view the experience of Essex people in the light of the concept of total war?

- 8 How did people react to the fact that Essex was a front-line county in this new type of warfare?
- 9 How did people interpret the war at the beginning, during the conflict, and at its conclusion?
- 10 How did this contemporary interpretation match the views that have developed about the war in the later 20th century?
- 11 What was the long-term impact of the war?
- 12 How did those who lived through the war commemorate their victory and the sacrifice of so many?
- 13 Why has the war been commemorated for a whole century?

So what did I find out that surprised me, (but sometimes only moderately so)?

- A The extent to which the idea of 'we're all in this together' was not practised by everyone
- B Resistance to the campaign to get women employed in men's jobs
- C The extent of hostility to organised sport, esp. football
- D The extent of wartime tolerance
- E The existence of intolerance
- F The controversies which bedevilled the war memorial movement after the war