



National Archives of Scotland

Military Appeals Tribunals

William Fyffe, 1916 – 1918

**Military Service Appeal Tribunal Records
(Lothians and Peebles)**

Reference HH30/25/3/13

William Fyffe, comedian and actor, appealed against his military service on grounds of national importance and serious hardship. While his first appeal for conditional exemption was granted on grounds of his health, his second appeal was dismissed due to insubstantial evidence for both reasons given.

A selection of images of documents on the appeal file (reference HH30/25/3/13) follows.

Transcribed extracts from the case papers can be viewed at <http://www.nas.gov.uk/about/081103.asp>.

Images of the original documents can be consulted in the National Archives of Scotland search rooms (<http://www.nas.gov.uk>).

RENEWAL

4430/25/3/13

(1-11)

Form 41 MILITARY SERVICE ACTS, 1916.

Name of Tribunal *Lothians and Peebles*

Number of Case *4946*

Renewal

APPLICATION AS TO EXEMPTION.

(The attached duplicate must also be filled up by the Applicant.)

Any person making a false statement or false representation is liable to imprisonment.

1. Man in respect of whom application made:—

(a) Name (in full) *William Fyffe*

(b) Age last birthday *33* Date of birthday *16th February 1885*

(c) Married or single *Married* If married, date of marriage *October 1900*

(d) Address (in full) *8 West Graham Str. Glasgow*

(e) Address at date of National Registration *Burdishouse, Midlothian*
(15th August, 1915)

Reg No 6177/4

(f) Occupation, profession or business (Give full and exact details)

Variety Artists

2. Whether engaged in the same or a similar occupation before 15th August, 1915. *Many Years*

If so engaged, (a) The precise occupation *Variety Artists*

(b) How long employed in the occupation before 15th August, 1915

(c) Name and address of last employer when so employed before that date

For many years
Variety Theatrical Proprietors

3. (a) Name of present employer, if any *A. D. W. Farlane*

(b) Address (in full) *136 Rempick Street, Glasgow*

(c) Business *Theatrical Agent*

4. Ground on which application is made. [See footnote on back of duplicate. It will be sufficient if the letter (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) or (g) (whichever is appropriate), is entered.]

a & d.

5. Nature of application. (A certificate of exemption may be absolute, conditional or temporary. Also, a certificate granted on conscientious grounds may be for exemption from combatant service only, or may be conditional on the applicant being engaged in some work which, in the opinion of the Tribunal, is of national importance.)

For Conditional Exemption

6. Reasons in support of the application. (These should be fully stated; if they are continued on a separate sheet, a copy should be provided. Any documentary evidence in support of the application should be forwarded herewith.)

See Separate Statement

7. Whether any previous application has been made in respect of the man, and, if so, (a) when, (b) by whom, (c) to what Tribunal and (d) with what result.

(Application for a certificate of exemption should not be made in respect of a man to more than one Tribunal.)

(a) 6 July 1917 (18) by William Byffe, sent by A. D. McFarlane, his employer, Local Tribunal (d) Application refused (e) Appeal to Sheriff, and after medical examination conditional exemption granted for six months from 20th September 1917

8. (a) Signature of person by whom application made *William Byffe.*

(b) Address (if not already stated) ... *8 West Graham Str., Glasgow*

(c) Occupation, profession or business. (If not already stated. If applicant is the military representative, this should be stated.)

Variety Artists

(d) If application not made by the man or his employer, or by the military representative, brief statement why application made by applicant for the man.

(e) Date of application ... *19th March 1918*

(For notes, see end of duplicate form.)

FOR TRIBUNAL.

9. Decision of the Tribunal. To be signed and dated. If exemption is granted it should be stated whether it is to be absolute, conditional (in which case the conditions to be entered on the certificate should be stated) or temporary (in which case the date to which the exemption is granted should be stated.)

Edinburgh 28th March 1918
Application dismissed.

Macintosh

TELEPHONES
Nos 161 & 162
(BOTH DOUGLAS)

AT HOME 10 TILL 2 DAILY
OTHER HOURS BY APPOINTMENT

179 BATH STREET
GLASGOW

18th March, 1918.

I hereby certify on soul and conscience that I
yesterday examined Mr. William Kyle aged 33 of 8 West Graham Street,
Glasgow and beg to submit the following report.

Mr. Kyle is suffering from a septic catarrh of the nose
and pharynx which has extended up through the eustachian tubes to
both ears causing middle ear mischief.

The left side is not badly affected but on the right side
there is marked deafness with a perforation of the drum through
which pus is constantly pouring out.

I consider that Mr. William Kyle, who has had this affection
for many years, is unfit for severe physical exercise of any kind
and while the ordinary anti-septic and sedative treatment for middle
ear disease may do all that is require meantime, there is only one
way by which Mr. Kyle can be thoroughly restored to health and
safety and that is by a mastoid operation.

John Macintyre M.D.

Lecturer on Diseases of the Nose and Throat, Glasgow University
Prof. of Laryngology, Anderson College of Medicine, Glasgow;
Hon. Staff Surgeon R. N. V. R. Clyde Division.

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The grounds of the application for exemption are (1) that it is, in the national interests that the Applicant should be allowed to continue in the work in which he is habitually engaged and (2) that serious hardship will ensue if he is called up for Army service owing to his exceptional financial and business obligations and domestic position. The Applicant has, after strenuous work and heavy expenditure, attained a position in the theatrical world which entitled him to be classed as a first rate entertainer, and he is under contract to perform in various Theatres in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and various provincial towns up to the year 1919. In this connection it is pointed out that the entertainment offered by such artistes as the Appellant is, in the opinion of both Medical and Military Authorities, one of the best tonics for soldiers and sailors on leave from the front, and for men who, having been wounded, are in convalescence.

If the Applicant is called up, the public will lose not only the entertainment provided by him, but also that of the Applicant's wife who works in conjunction with him, and she also will suffer serious financial loss

The Applicant and his wife are the principals engaged in a Revue appearing in the principal theatres in England. This show is almost entirely dependent on the Applicant, who is the leading actor. They employ about/

about 40 people, mostly girls, and have contracts to the end of this year. Should the Applicant be taken away the Revue would have to cease and serious hardship would ensue, both to Applicant and the proprietors, as it is absolutely impossible to get anyone to replace Applicant and without him the performance would be useless.

The Applicant is married and has two children who live with the Applicant's Father and Mother, and all four are dependent on him for their entire maintenance. The Applicant's Father is absolutely unable to do work of any kind and is dependent solely on his son. In these circumstances, serious domestic hardship will ensue should the Applicant be called up, as not only will his earning capacity be cut off, but also that of his wife.

The Applicant suffers from an affection of the ears, and is partially deaf. Medical men have certified that there is a large perforation in the drumhead of his right ear, and that it is not wise that he should go on service. The Applicant is classified C11.

Name of Local Tribunal Midlothian

Number of Case 2078.

R-44

NOTICE OF APPEAL.

~~DUPLICATE~~

No. 4170

TO BE FILLED UP BY APPELLANT.

1. Man in respect of whom appeal made.

- (a) Name (in full) William Fryff
- (b) Address (in full) Burdichouse, Midlothian
- (c) Occupation, profession or business Variety Artists
- (d) Whether he is attested or not attested Attested.

2. Grounds on which appeal made. (These should be fully stated.)

See Statement annexed.

3. (a) Signature of appellant William Fryff

If appeal not made by the man—

- (b) Address of appellant
- (c) Occupation, profession or business. (If military representative, state so.)
- (d) If appellant is not the military representative, why appellant acts for the man

Date 20th August 1917.

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This man is 32 years of age and married. He was originally classified B1. but on appeal to the Medical Appeal Board he was reclassified C(11). He and his wife are employed as Variety Artists in various theatres and Music Halls in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and other provincial towns. They work together.

The Local Tribunal considered that the work in which the appellant was engaged was not of national importance, and that a case of serious hardship had not been made out.

County Rooms,
Edinburgh, 25th August, 1917.

J. M. Trotter

Edinburgh 20th September 1917.
Direct the Local Tribunal to grant a
Certificate of Exemption to the man
till 20th March 1918 on condition of his
remaining in his present occupation.
M MacKinnon
Chairman -

The grounds of Appeal are (1) that it is, in the national interests that the Appellant should be allowed to continue in the work in which he is habitually engaged and (2) that serious hardship will ensue if he is called up for Army service owing to his exceptional financial and business obligations and domestic position. The Appellant has, after strenuous work and heavy expenditure, attained a position in the theatrical world which entitles him to be classed as a firstrate entertainer, and he is under Contract to perform in various Theatres in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and various provincial towns up to the year 1919. In this connection it is pointed out that the entertainment offered by such artistes as the Appellant is, in the opinion of both Medical and Military Authorities, one of the best tonics for soldiers and sailors on leave from the front, and for men who, having been wounded, are in convalescence.

If the Appellant is called up, the public will lose not only the entertainment provided by him, but also that of the Appellant's wife who works in conjunction with him, and she also will suffer serious financial loss.

Further the Appellant and his wife are engaged for one of the Glasgow Pantomimes for the season 1917-1918, and serious loss will result if the Appellant does not perform as arranged, in respect that the Appellant is the only artiste available for certain work required in connection therewith.

The Appellant is married and has two children, who live with the Appellant's Father and Mother, and all four are dependent on the Appellant for their entire maintenance. The Appellant's Father is absolutely unable to do work of any kind and is dependent solely on his son. In these circumstances, serious domestic hardship will ensue should the Appellant be called up, as not only will his earning capacity be out off, but also that of his wife.

The Appellant suffers from an affection of the ears, and is partially deaf. Medical men have certified that there is a large perforation in the drumhead of his right ear, and that it is not wise that he should go on service. The Appellant is only classified C11.

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W.F.

The Clerk,
Midlothian Military Tribunal,
County Rooms,
George IV. Bridge.

Encl. 4.

ROBERT WHITE,
S.S.O.
NOTARY PUBLIC.
TELEPHONE CENTRAL 5514
TELEGRAMS "ALBUS" EDINBURGH

*15 Frederick Street,
Edinburgh 4th July 1917.*

Dear Sir,

William Fyffe No. 2078

With reference to this application for exemption I send you as arranged two Medical Certificates along with 2 copies thereof. Mr. Fyffe is at present in Greenock and as I understand the procedure at the calling on Friday will be purely formal I have not asked him to come to Edinburgh. I shall ask that the case be sent to the Central Medical Board.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

Robert White

M.A.

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I certify that I have to-day examined the
Ears of Mrs. William Lyffe -

I find that the right Ear has discharged
for a number of years - There is a large
perforation in the Drumhead, foetid discharge
& granulation tissue - The hearing is somewhat
impaired -

The left Ear is not quite normal: there is some
thickening of the Drumhead & the hearing is
slightly defective -

A. Logan Thomas M.D.
June 30 - 1917

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C

THE FOUNTAIN,
LOANHEAD,
MIDLOTHIAN.

Thursditchy the
William Foffe wrote
knows time. He suffers
from a dis ease from
his right leg with
perception of the drum
He also has a certain
amount of depression
his left leg. I would
think it is wise that he
should go on service

30/6/19 James Jamieson
Inspector

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R-52.

VOLUNTARILY ATTESTED MEN.

Name of Tribunal Midlothian Number of Case 2078.

APPLICATION AS TO EXEMPTION.

(The attached duplicate must also be filled up by the Applicant and should not be detached.)

Any person making a false statement or false representation is liable to imprisonment.

1. Man in respect of whom application made:—

- (a) Name (in full) **William Fyffe.**
- (b) Age last birthday **32** Date of birthday **16th Feby.**
- (c) Medical Classification as shown on Army Form W. 3291. **BI**
- (d) Married or single **Married** If married, date of marriage **Octr. 1906.**
- (e) Address (in full) **Burdiehouse, Loanhead, Midlothian.**
- (f) Address at date of National Registration
(15th August, 1915) **Do.**
- (g) Where attested **Dunfermline** Date of attestation **12th Decr. 1915**
- (h) No. of group **36** No. on group card **66**
- (j) Occupation, profession or business. *(Give full and exact details.)*
Variety Artiste.
- (k) Address (in full) of place of employment
I change weekly

2. Whether engaged in the same or a similar occupation before 15th August, 1915.

- If so engaged, (a) The precise occupation **Have been at this work since leaving school.**
- (b) How long employed in the occupation before 15th August, 1915
- (c) Name and address of last employer when so employed before that date

3. (a) Name of present employer, if any **Geo. Gilbert.**

(b) Address (in full) **Palace Theatre, Aberdeen.**

(c) Business

4. Ground on which application is made. *(See footnote on back of duplicate. It will be sufficient if the letter (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e) (whichever is appropriate), is entered.)*

(a) and (d)

5. Nature of application. *(A certificate of exemption may be absolute, conditional or temporary.)*

conditional exemption.

6. Reasons in support of the application. (These should be fully stated; if they are continued on a separate sheet, a copy should be provided. Any documentary evidence in support of the application should be forwarded herewith.)

7. Whether any previous application has been made by or in respect of the man, and, if so, (a) when, (b) by whom, (c) to what Tribunal, and (d) with what result. (Application for a certificate of exemption should not be made in respect of a man to more than one Tribunal.)

No previous application - previously rejected.

8. (a) Signature of person by whom application made *William Pyffe.*
- (b) Address (if not already stated) ..
- (c) Occupation, profession or business. (If not already stated. If applicant is the military representative, this should be stated.)
- (d) If application not made by the man or his employer, or by the military representative, brief statement why application made by applicant for the man.
- (e) Date of application *7th June 1917.*

(For notes, see end of duplicate form.)

FOR USE OF TRIBUNAL.

9. Decision of the Tribunal. To be signed and dated. If exemption is granted it should be stated whether it is to be absolute, conditional (in which case the conditions to be entered on the certificate should be stated) or temporary (in which case the time for which the exemption is granted should be stated).

6th July 1917 / Case continued.

The Tribunal finds that there are not sufficient grounds to support this application. Therefore refuses the same.

*County Rooms
Edinburgh 17th August 1917.
Mr. Trotter C.*

Reasons in support of the application:-

I was examined at Whitehall, London, on 24th March 1916, and was rejected as medically unfit. Notice to go forward for medical re-examination was posted to me to Liverpool about 11th April. The Notice, however, did not reach me. I was advised by the Police Inspector at my house at Loanhead on my arrival at home on 2nd May, to go forward for re-examination, as the Military Authorities had been enquiring about me. I went forward for re-examination at Glencorse on 3rd May and was Classified BI. I suffer from perforation of the right ear and discharge and when I get cold I am almost deaf in both ears. I respectfully claim to be re-examined by the Central Medical Board.

Personal claim:-

My wife and I tour as Variety Artistes and have always worked together. Each is dependent on the other. We have two children dependent. My father and mother are also entirely dependent on us. I pay them £2:5/- weekly for the upkeep of themselves and my two children, who live with them. I also pay the rent and clothing for my father and mother and our two children. I earn £10 to £17:10/- weekly gross. We have continuous contracts to the New Year of 1918 and a few are fixed up for 1919. I am called upon to report myself on 18th June at Glencorse.

Army Form W. 3250.

Voluntarily Attested Men in Group System.

Form to be sent by Military Representative to
Local Tribunal.

Name (in full) of man in respect of whom application made to Tribunal

William Fyffe,

Number of case quoted on Application 2078

Date on which Notice of application received by Military Representative

12th June, 1917.

For "Observations" see reverse.

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OBSERVATIONS OF MILITARY REPRESENTATIVE.

[NOTE.—In cases to which Military Representative assents, he should write "I assent to the application." Where he objects to the application he should state briefly the reasons for his objection. If an absolute Certificate is applied for and the Military Representative considers that only a conditional or temporary Certificate should be granted he should state his reasons.]

- 1.—R 48. Section V., 5 (a).
- or
- 2.—R 48. Section V., 5 (b).

I object to the application. Facts disclosed do not in my opinion, justify exemption

Signature John Ross Clark Col.

Date 15-6-19 Military Representative.

The Military Representative must send this form duly filled in to the Tribunal within the time required by the Instructions issued by His Majesty's Government under the Act.

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Encl

The Clerk,
Local Tribunal,
City Chambers.

ROBERT WHITE,
S.S.C.
NOTARY PUBLIC.
TELEPHONE CENTRAL 5514.
TELEGRAMS "ALBUS" EDINBURGH.

15 Frederick Street,
Edinburgh 15th June 1917.

Dear Sir,

William Fyffe, Loanhead

I have been instructed by William Fyffe, Loanhead, to act for him in connection with the claim for exemption which was lodged on his behalf by Messrs Wight & Aitken, Advocates, Aberdeen a few days ago. Mr Fyffe is constantly travelling and it will be a favour if you will send any notification in connection with his claim to me as otherwise it may not reach him ^{quickly}. Kindly give a few days notice of the hearing to enable me to communicate with Mr Fyffe.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

Robert White

M.H.

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