

COs in the Military

Objectors who were unrecognised or who rejected the terms of their tribunal decision were handed over to the military. If they refused to obey orders they could suffer ill-treatment and unofficial punishments as well as trial by court-martial and military punishment for their refusal to obey orders.

Some were beaten & tortured. 50 (including the '[Richmond 16](#)') were sent to France in 1916, where they were on active service and were told that they faced execution for their refusals to obey orders. 30 of them were indeed [sentenced to death](#), although this was swiftly commuted to 10 years & the men were returned to the UK and imprisoned. Their willingness to die for their beliefs, however, reportedly inspired at least one officer to salute them.

After a while, COs in the military who refused to obey orders were sent to ordinary rather than military prisons following court martial. When they had served their sentence, however, they were immediately returned to the military, court-martialled for refusing to obey orders & sent back to prison. Some COs, therefore, served multiple prison sentences during the war.

Bristol born CO Frank Merrick's court martial charge sheet can be seen [here](#).

Some COs were held in [Horfield Barracks](#) in Bristol.