

42. Weeks 43 and 44 of Neston during the Great War, and a quieter Ladies' Club Day.

Ladies' Club Day 1915 took place without the Walk, though the Fair, with the beloved hobby horses, and everything else went on as usual, and the children had a half-holiday (not the whole day!). In church the choir led the congregation in 'O God, our help in ages past', then the Vicar spoke and suggested that the people of England did not realize the gravity of the war situation, and he commended the committee for deciding against a Walk, although there had been dissension. Mrs Youds ('Shand') provided an excellent tea in the Town Hall where the meeting took place. The society was reportedly already one of the oldest in the country and one of the richest for the number of members; 1914's event had been heavy on expenses because of the centenary celebration. The society had now invested £400 in War Loan.

Neston had so far suffered few losses in the War, but John Robert Jones, 1st Battalion Welsh Fusiliers, formerly a Ness farm bailiff, died in France in late May. A number of local men were actually being discharged as unfit for service before they had made much progress, for example William Jones, a fisherman from Liverpool Road was forced to leave the Army because of old injuries to his hand. He had signed on in Birkenhead in November .

Over 200 Neston young women attended a patriotic meeting in the Town Hall where a 'League of Honour' was being established. Mrs Pemberton (Red Cross leader and wife of Chairman of the Council), Vicar's wife Mrs Brooke-Gwynne and Lady Norman Hill from Leighton House, whose husband was a specialist on war insurance, looked after the girls who vowed to do all they could to assist the country and act as a good influence on the men-folk at this time.

Miss Matthews was one of those commendable people of Neston who spent much of their time organizing youngsters in the various Sunday Schools. She had arranged TWO weeks of events for the anniversary of the Colliery Mission Hall, which was known to have some very fine singers including little Nellie Roberts who sang 'When Love shines in'. Ivy and Ada Sheppard performed a duet and Joseph Tudor gave us 'A soldier child's prayer'. Julia Jones sang the intriguing 'My mamma would like two', and numerous other children played their parts, while Mr Watts the colliery manager did some managing of the children. Miss Matthews also ran bible meetings, and a Mrs Hoff from South America

had recently spoken to the group and 'declared many surprising details of life abroad upon which Christianity is being brought to bear'.

A.G.Grenfell of Mostyn House asked the council to amend nine feet width of the steps on the South Slip at Parkgate and create a slope for perambulators, bath-chairs, carts and boats and this idea had been accepted. The school itself had a new organ installed, a tubular pneumatic model, horse riding had been revived and a stable built. Swimming in the river had started again as the salt-water channel had returned to the area by the Parade. Mostyn House was a preparatory school, but many former pupils, having gone on to public school, were now serving in the War, usually as officers; so far only one had been killed in action.

There were some vacancies for women featured this week in the Echo, with a 'strong woman, early riser' wanted as a general servant at Broadlake Farm on Leighton Road and a good 'country woman' 25-30, needed at the Farmers Arms (where the present car sales are sited near the top of Boathouse Lane), for country beer-house plain cooking. Miss Lloyd from the Council School, Burton Road was getting married to the chief officer on the Orient company liner *Osterley* which was still managing to take mail to and from Australia. Much gratitude was expressed when Miss Lloyd agreed not to give up her teaching post.

Joseph Gray, threshing machine proprietor of the Mill on Leighton Road was in trouble with the law for the eighth time because he did not have the weight displayed on his wagon which was attached to his 'heavy locomotive'. Bridsons had similarly been caught under the 'Heavy Motor Car Act' a few weeks ago.

The bowling green at the Shrewsbury Arms saw a return match with the Glegg Arms on Saturday, with some splendid play; the home team won on aggregate by 18 points. Messrs Barlow, Eustance, Morris and Dodd were notable.

This article covers roughly the first two weeks in June, 1915.