

13. Week eight of the war: Rev Brooke Gwynne not recovered from injuries

The Vicar's bicycle accident had prevented him from attending the September 1914 meeting of the Parish Council, but he sent word that he was concerned that they would not be able to make ends meet if they did not hold the annual sale-of-work, and parochial work would have to be cut. Rifles and ammunition were being bought for the Young Men's Club miniature range, a wicket was being prepared on the cricket field for them, and a new cloth was provided for their billiard table.

Parkgate Mission Church (now St Thomas's) which was a rented property, was in serious need of a heating system but the owners were refusing to contribute half the cost. St Michael's Mission Church in Little Neston, a brand new timber building 'in the Gothic style' which had only opened in 1913, needed the grounds tidying.

The Belgian refugee families were apparently settling well in Parkgate, and were greeted by a large crowd when they were motored to the Town Hall for some entertainment, suitably adapted for non-English speakers, by a group called 'The Fuchias'. Gifts of sweets and cigarettes added to the refugees' obvious enjoyment of the evening.

Some families had several sons in uniform:- four Griffiths brothers from Chester Road, three Clover brothers from the ship-building family at Rose Lea, (the sandstone house on the road to Willaston,), four Davies brothers of Liverpool Road, four Palmer brothers of the Royal Oak in Little Neston, and three Pakenham-Walsh brothers from the old Vicarage at the Cross. Some of these men were already in the army when war broke out, and these were the men who were at the Front.

Lewis Price, one of the two serving sons of the Neston bank manager who lived at Moorside House, on the corner of Moorside Lane, was amongst those who had joined the Liverpool Pals, as had Harry Earl from Burton Road. Alfred Bigland, the Birkenhead MP, had been to Chester to look into the problems of quartering the hundreds of men who were pouring into the city to join the colours, such as the 'Wirral' Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment which included a number of Neston men. There had been some trouble when some of the men had no temporary accommodation in Chester as everywhere was full including pubs and hotels being used as billets.

Neston's casualties were slight so far; Tom Swift of Badger Butts had been temporarily posted home from the Front where he was serving with the Scots

Guards, suffering from dysentery. Lieutenant John Roland Beazley who had been shot through the thigh at Mons was recovering and had been transferred from France to a London nursing home.

Lieutenant Beazley had been a pupil of Mostyn House in his younger days before going on to public school. He was just one of two hundred Mostyn House former pupils who were already in the forces. The school had started a Rifle Club Association in 1902, and Headmaster A.G. Grenfell suggested that if every school had two hundred trained youths to offer, Lord Kitchener would now have an army of 8,000,000.

The usual problems filed through the Petty Sessions at the court-room on Park Street; the licensee of the Farmers Arms (on the High Road at the top of Boathouse Lane) was summoned for assault after punching the bar-maid when he discovered she was drunk in the cellar and had let the beer run out while he was away for a few hours. A 33-year-old labourer from Golden Lion Yard, an area of very poor housing off the High Street behind the present site of 'Concept Interiors', was given fourteen days imprisonment for stealing fruit from the Old Hall gardens where Hallwood now stands.

On Saturday 26th the 'Camels' (Lairds) were beaten at home on Prenton Road North by Neston Nomads, who were going through a good phase, and were the first Neston team ever in the first division of the West Cheshire League. Neston Parish Church played Prenton Vics in the intermediate division of the Wirral Combination.