

29. Week 24 of the Great War, and Sergeant Bee deals with some local problems

Still not a lot happening in the War and no more rush of Neston men to enlist after last year's enthusiasm. On Tuesday (19th) a new tactic was used by the Germans when bombs were dropped on some east coast towns by Zeppelins.

The girls of Burton Road (Neston Council School) had been knitting woolly garments including vests, scarves and mittens for weeks and before Christmas had passed them to the Red Cross office to distribute to the soldiers; they were now finishing off a further batch, which were being sent to men on minesweepers in the North Sea. They had some thank-you letters from old pupils, who were presumably from the school's early days when it used the old building on Little Neston Green while Burton Road, which opened in 1909, was being built. Some of the boys at the school had also made an attempt at knitting but soon got fed-up, and raised money to buy wool instead. They were selling apples and pears donated by Mrs Joseph Mealor from White House Farm on the Green in Little Neston. Some of the lads, under Mr Hacking's guidance, had made toys in the woodwork department and given them out to soldiers families and the Belgians refugees.

Sergeant Bee and the Neston police, ever vigilant, had observed a dog that was worrying sheep on one of the fields in Ness belonging to Haddon Hall Farm but used by Kemps the farmers from Denna Hall Farm. They had managed to trace the dog and had it destroyed. That vigilance proved useful again when the said Sergeant, in plain clothes, noticed 17 year-old John Lewis from Liverpool Road with a mate acting suspiciously, with two lurcher dogs and bulky pockets. After initial denials Lewis admitted that he was carrying two rabbits, and he had got them from Jones's field (the far side of Liverpool Road bridge) without permission. Fine 5s plus 8s 6d costs, or seven days.

There was yet another fund-raiser in the Town Hall when Neston District Bowling Club with Sam Mealor from High Street as M.C., held a whist drive and dance on Wednesday, enjoyed by around 160 people. Sam was a fishmonger in the third shop up High Street from the White Horse. Mr Jamieson, who had a nursery on Church Lane, decorated the Hall and Mrs Youds (Shand) did the catering. The money raised on this occasion was for the National Relief Fund, administered locally by a Soldiers and Sailors Families Association, solely for cases of military and naval family distress. It was only available if the Government 'separation

allowance' was being claimed . If people refused to claim the latter they could not claim from the Fund. By the start of January Neston and Parkgate had paid out £60, a relatively high sum compared to the other forty-three sub-committees in the county.

Financial assistance, termed 'outdoor relief' provided by the Guardians at Clatterbridge was still a necessity in Neston and district. Mrs Bulley had been to the Guardians a few months earlier to request extra money for a Ness family, and there was a regular list of Neston families being assisted.

Next week - Report from Little Neston Ploughing Match at Mealors' farm.

