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All entries from Harrogate Advertiser with the exception of entry of 28.11.1945

HOME FROM HOLLAND 06.01.1945

Local Man on Leave

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At six o'clock on Wednesday morning Sapper Harold Stocks, R.E., knocked on the door of his house at 18 Scriven Road, Knaresborough, and received a joyous welcome from his wife, who had expected his arrival the previous night. He was also given a welcome by his young son and a baby daughter, born last October, whom he had never seen.

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Sapper Stocks is a Harrogate man, whose mother lives at 11, Pine Street, and before joining up in 1942, was in the building trade employed by Messrs. C. A. Nettleton and Co. of Harrogate. He went to France on "D-Day" and landed with the assault troops. He referred, in an interview with a Press representative, to the Nijmegen sector and to Eindhoven, and spoke very appreciatively of the kindness of the Dutch people. "When I got news of the birth of my little daughter," he said, "the people in the house in which I was billeted made all kinds of little dresses for me to bring home. They invited us to drink their coffee, and though we didn't want to take their food we could not refuse without offending them."

Whilst in Holland he met a Belgian woman who once appeared in a conjuring act in the Royal Hall, when it was known as the Kursaal. She had married a Dutchman who owned three cinemas in Eindhoven. He had also met three other Harrogate men – Keith Purchase, who is in the C.M.P. camp, Jack Horner, of bilton, his brother-in-law, and Arthur Rankine, son of the late "Tommy" Rankine.

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Sapper Stocks said the journey from Holland to the port of embarkation was rather tiring, but when they arrived in this country they had a special train from the arrival port to London, and special buses to take them to the main line station, on on the train coaches had been reserved for them.

Just before Christmas he received the gift from the Mayor of Harrogate, and said it was very much appreciated.

KNARESBORO MAN HOME 13.01.1945

From Burma

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A soldier who has been fighting with the famous Chindits behind the Japanese lines in Burma is one of the men from overseas who has been welcomed home in Knaresborough this week. He is Cpl. George Peter Boyle of the Royal Corps of Signals, son of Mrs Eastwood, of The Groves, Market Place, and the late Mr J. H. Boyle.

Cpl. Boyle gave his mother a surprise when he walked in at nine o'clock on Tuesday night, as although she knew he was on his way with the men who are being repatriated from Burma, he had not been able to let her know the time of his arrival. A railway telegraphist with the L.M.S. at London Road station,

Manchester, before the war, he has served for four years in the Middle East and the Indian theatre of operations, taking part in three desert campaigns and in the recent fighting round Manipur and Imphal on the Burma front. He is now on three weeks' leave.

Difficult Country

10 Talking over his experience with a Press representative, Cpl. Boyle, who has been a cipher operator with a Signals unit, said he could confirm that Burma was about the worst country in the world to fight in, mountainous, inhospitable and extremely wet. During the Chindit operation, when the British columns penetrated behind the Japanese lines, the men had to fight the country as well as the enemy. They forced their way over steep mountain tracks, using mules as transport, and when the mules could get no further, carrying their equipment themselves. The rain was terrific during the monsoon season, tracks were washed away or blocked by landslides, and streams became too swollen to cross. The men had no spare clothes, and when they got wet, they stayed wet. Occasionally, it was possible to find shelter in the bamboo and grass "bashas" of the natives, but more often than not the men had to spend their nights in the open. There was the ever-present danger of malaria and dysentery, but fortunately, Cpl. Boyle managed to keep fairly fit during the strenuous campaign, though after existing for some time on the rather Spartan rations dropped from planes, he felt unwell for a few days on returning to normal diet at the base.

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Met Knaresborough Officer

Cpl. Boyle mentioned that Major Donald Fairman, son of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Fairman, of Victoria Avenue, Knaresborough, was Signals officer of the unit during the fighting on the Burma border, and said he had also met him at a base in India. He intended to see Mr and Mrs Fairman and tell them that their son was fit and well.

30 Speaking of entertainment for the troops, Cpl. Boyle said he had seen one or two E.N.S.A. shows in India, but when he first went to the forward areas, there was very little entertainment for the men. The position was improving, however, and more amenities were being provided for the 14th army.

HOME FROM FAR EAST 20.01.1945

40 Flt.Lieut. H. R. Lonsdale, of Buckminster, Greengate Lane, Knaresborough, who was formerly with the Westminster Bank at Harrogate and Knaresborough, has returned to this country on leave after several years' service with the R.A.F. in the Far East. He spent a short time in Java and Sumatra before those countries fell to the Japanese, and has since served in India and Ceylon. He is naturally glad to be back home, but for the first few days he was keenly conscious of the difference between the climate of Ceylon, which is only a few degrees from the Equator, and an English winter, his arrival having coincided with a heavy fall of snow.

JOTTINGS

By "FREE LANCE"
27.01.1945

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A Leeds man now on leave from the Far East, who took part in the rescue of wounded Chindits from behind the Japanese lines, was second engineer on a Sunderland flying-boat, whilst the second pilot of another was Flt.-Sergt. H. W. Smith, whose wife lives at 30, Cavendish Street, Harrogate. The task of these 'planes was to fly 300 miles from the Brahmaputra river over the mountainous Japanese-infested country to take supplies to the Chindits and to bring back the sick and wounded. To clear the mountains and reach the landing lake the planes had to fly at ten thousand feet in bad weather conditions. Another difficulty was that the machines could not remain on the lake for more than an hour or they would have been vulnerable to Japanese fighters. Altogether three hundred men were taken off.

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OPERATION RUSSIAN

HARROGATE INQUEST

An inquest was held by the York District Coroner (Mr E. T. Heap) in Harrogate, on Monday, on a Russian prisoner of war stationed in the district, who died following an operation in Harrogate General Hospital.

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Lt. G. D. Seymour, R.A.S.C, an interpreter to the prisoners of war, said that deceased's name was Sapar Kalishew, and his age was probably about 27. His record card showed that his home was in the Urals, and he was stationed with a working party at Ripon. Lt. Seymour last saw Kalishew on December 30th, at the Harrogate General Hospital, prior to the deceased's having an operation for kidney trouble.

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Dr. D. Zimmerman, house surgeon at the Harrogate General Hospital, said Kalishew was admitted to hospital suffering from a complaint which was later found to be an infection of the right kidney. An operation was performed on December 30th, and the patient died at 4 pm on January 1st. The cause of death appeared to be loss of blood and surgical shock arising from the operation.

Dr. Sinclair Miller, who performed the post-mortem, said Kalishew would have died from the infection had not the operation been carried out. The operation had been carried out perfectly and nothing had been overlooked in the attempt to save Kalishew's life.

Returning a verdict of "Death from Misadventure," the Coroner said he wished to record that everything possible had been done for Kalishew, and the procedure of the operation had been right and proper.

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Harvest Camps
17.03.1945

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Harvest Camps: - Cockburn High School, Leeds, will again hold a harvest camp at Knaresborough this year, from August 11th to September 15th. Other school camps arranged in the district include those of Roundhay School at Minskip, and of the Crossley and Porter School, Halifax, at Kirk Deighton. Arkendale Hall, near Knaresborough is again to serve as headquarters of one of the volunteer agricultural camps in the West Riding. This camp, and one at Boroughbridge, will open on July 14th.

HOME GUARD AWARDS 31.03.1945

GALLANTRY AND GOOD SERVICE CERTIFICATES

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The following Certificates for Gallantry and Good Services have been awarded. Officers and other ranks in the local battalions of the Home Guard:-

5th West Riding Bn. (Harrogate)

Good Service Certificates –

Sgt. J. A. Baldwin (D Coy.),

C.Q.M.S. W. Hill (D Coy.)

C.S.M. H. Hinchley (A. Coy.)

Sgt. G. H. Threlfall, D.C.M. (B. Coy.)

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Sgt. G. H. Hampton (F. Coy)

Sgt. C. Wood (H. Coy)
C.S.M. C. P. Brooks (B. Coy)
Col-Sgt. W. Crompton (F.. Coy)
Pte. J. R. Bielby (C. Coy)
Pte. W. Gill (A. Coy)
Pte. T. Teal (B. Coy)
Pte. W. Wray (D. Coy)

6th West Riding Bn.

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Good Service Certificates –
Major H. L. C. Aked (Knaresborough)
2nd-Lieut. K. W. Bowes (Ripon)
C.Q.M.S. J. B. Eveleigh 9Knaresborough)
Sgt. T. Webster (Ripon)
Sgt. W. Emmett (Knaresborough)
Sgt. G. Chater (Knaresborough)
Sgt. S. Ewbank (Knaresborough)
Sgt. C. J. Little (Ripon)
L.Cpl. G. R. Harker (Burton Leonard)
Pte. H. Hullah (ripin)

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1st North Riding Bn.

Certificates for Galantry –
Lieut. A. B. Goggs, M.B.E. (Yarm)
Cpl. G. McElroy, B.E.M. (Yarm)
Good Services Certificates –
R.Q.M.S. A. Swift (Thirsk)
C.S.M. J. W. Neesam (Thirsk)

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11th North Riding Bn.

Good Services Certificates –
Capt. J. P. Bradford (Masham)
C.S.M. W. J. Horner (Aysgarth)
Sgt. A. Bailey (Jervaulx)
Sgt. J. M. Dinsdale (Askrigg)
Sgt. J. T. Ellwood (Jervaulx)
Sgt. E. B. D. Johnson (Bedale)
Sgt. W. J. Lawson (Aysgarth)
Cpl. A. V. Mood (Masham)
Pte. J. W. Gates (Jervaulx)

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KNARESBOROUGH STACK FIRE 25.04.1945

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Knaresborough N.F.S. was called on Monday afternoon to a stack fire at Stony Flatts Farm, Halfpenny Lane, Knaresborough, owned and occupied by Mr J. Wood, Scriven House, Scriven Road. The firemen extinguished the outbreak in about two hours, confining the fire to the stack, which contained four tons of wheat straw, and preventing it from spreading to a Dutch barn.

CLARO AREA'S 82 ALERTS 26.05.1945

**Only Two Fatal Casualties
During War**

Though the Claro Civil Defence Area was visited by enemy planes on a number of occasions during the war, fortunately serious incidents were few, and damage and casualties very light. Only two persons in the whole area lost their lives as a result of enemy action, both fatalities occurring in raids on Harrogate and Knaresborough in 1940.

10 The area had 82 alerts during the war, the first being sounded during the night of Sunday, September 3, 1939, and the last at 9.50pm on Saturday, March 17, 1945. Many of the warnings were occasioned by enemy aircraft passing over the district on their way to attack Manchester and Liverpool, or by planes raiding Hull and other places on the Yorkshire coast. In addition to the public warnings, Civil Defence personnel turned out at all hours of the day and night in response to preliminary messages.

Bombs at Knaresborough

20 The first enemy action in the district occurred at 11pm on August 31, 1940, when several bombs were dropped in the Knaresborough area. Happily, the "stick" missed the town proper, only one bomb falling close to property. This made a small crater in a field at the side of Boroughbridge Road near the junction with Park Grove, a few yards from a house. Fragments struck a bus proceeding along Boroughbridge Road, and one passenger, a member of the R.A.F., was killed. Six other passengers were treated for slight cuts. The house near which the bomb fell was damaged, and the occupier received treatment for shock. The windows of a number of neighbouring houses were shattered. The remaining bombs fell in open fields, and several cattle were killed or injured.

Daylight Raid on Harrogate

30 A daylight raid was made on Harrogate by a single machine under cover of low cloud just before one pm on September 12, 1940, three bombs being dropped. One exploded in Ripon Road, completely demolishing a house at the junction with Swan Road and shattering many windows. Another bomb, which did not explode, penetrated the roof of the Hotel Majestic and lodged on the top floor in Room 528, necessitating the evacuation of the building. The hotel roof and several bedrooms were damaged, and a large number of windows in the hotel and neighbourhood also suffered. The bomb was removed on the following day by a Bomb Disposal Squad, and was subsequently exhibited in aid of various local spitfire funds. Sixteen people were injured in the raid, one dying later. The third bomb fell in the grounds of the hotel.

40 In succeeding months, a number of bombs, both high explosive and incendiary, were dropped at the eastern end of the area, incidents with negligible damage, occurring at Hammerton, Moor Monkton, Nun Monkton, Thorpe Underwood, Aldwark Bridge, Widdington, Knapton, Rufforth and Cattal. Incidents were also reported from Pannal, Ripley, Mickley, Warsill and Dallowgill, and a number of incendiary bombs were dropped in Ripon and district on January 2, 1941.

Ouseburn "Strafed"

The last incident in the area occurred on the night of March 5th this year, when the village of Great Ouseburn was strafed by cannon shells. Slight damage was done, but there were no personal injuries.

50 Although the Civil Defence services in this area have not been tested as full in action as some of their comrades in other parts of the country, the members have always been enthusiastic and well forward with their training. Frequent practices, often on a large scale, have been held, and long hours of stand-by duty were performed from the outbreak of war until the reduction in enemy activity enabled precautions to be relaxed last year.

Crashed Aircraft

Much splendid service has been performed by Civil Defence workers when Allied planes, limping home after attacks on enemy territory, have finally crashed. Some of these machines have fallen in the difficult moorland country above Pateley Bridge, and time after time the Civil Defence volunteers in that area have spent hours on rescue work under the most exacting conditions. They have gone out and searched the moors in deep snow and have carried wounded men for miles across country to the waiting ambulances, and their conduct has earned the highest commendation.

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One of the most serious incidents arising out of an aircraft crash occurred at Rufforth last November, when a plane struck a farmhouse and set the premises on fire. The farmer, Mr G. R. Hildreth, a member of Nidderdale Rural Council, and his wife and eldest son, were killed, and two other members of the family were injured. In March this year, a plane which crashed near Little Ouseburn damaged the roof and windows of the village church and the roof of a nearby W.L.A. hostel.

Another incident of note was the commendation by the King for gallantry of Police constable Graham, of Pateley Bridge, in 1943, for his assistance in the rescue of airmen from a crashed and burning Wellington bomber, and his efforts despite the explosion of ammunition, to get through the smoke to rescue the one remaining member of the crew.

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On another occasion he was commended by the Chief Constable for devotion to duty when an aeroplane crashed on a lonely and dangerous stretch of Nidderdale moorland.

Transport of Wounded

Civil Defence ambulances did much useful work in the transport of wounded from Harrogate station to an American hospital on the outskirts of Harrogate, and also in taking men from the hospital to a Yorkshire aerodrome to be flown home. Help was also given with the transport of child patients who were evacuated from a southern hospital to Scotton Banks Sanatorium, Knaresborough, during the flying bomb attacks. In addition, Civil Defence drivers have run the town's ambulance at Harrogate, and have conveyed many maternity cases from Harrogate and Knaresborough to the General Hospital and to Stockeld Park.

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The Claro Area is an extensive one, covering some 340 square miles and stretching from Great Whernside in the west to the York boundary in the east, and from Mickley in the north to Buttersyke Bar south of Harrogate. The personnel, including wardens, has totalled about 3,000, many of whom first volunteered in 1938, and served continuously until the stand-down. The first organiser was Mr. G. A. McDowall, who retired at the end of 1942, and the post has been held since then by Mr. F. A. Keighley. Coun. C. Jack Simpson has been Sub-Controller. Mr T. C. Taylor has been Training Officer since the beginning of the war.

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“EVACUEES SPECIAL” 09.06.1945

Back to London

One hundred and fifty-two London evacuees who have been billeted in Harrogate, Knaresborough, Pateley Bridge and Ripon, returned home on Thursday when the first “evacuees special” left from Harrogate Station.

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Twenty-four of the evacuees had been in Harrogate, all of them mothers and children. The unaccompanied children are still left and will, the “Advertiser” is informed, be remaining for about three weeks at the least.

Arrangements for Thursday's departure were in the hands of Mr F. A. Keighley, Claro Area Civil Defence Organiser, who acted as entraining officer on behalf of the Ministry of Health. Billeting Officers from all the Areas concerned assisted, the party from Harrogate being in charge of Mr D. M.

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Christelow and Mr F. L. Justice, Corporation Billeting Officers. They were assisted by members of the W.V.S.

The evacuees' joy at their return home was plainly marred by the thought of having to leave all the many friends they had made during their stay in the district. All of them spoke highly of the treatment they had enjoyed and one lady, Mrs F. Curtis, from West Ham, who for the present is remaining in Beckwithshaw, where she is billeted, told our representative "These have been the finest people in the world, I never want to go home."

10 Seventeen of the women and children who made up this first "Back to London" party had been billeted in Ripon, forty-nine in the Ripon and Pateley Bridge Rural District, twenty-seven in the Nidderdale Rural District, and thirty-five in the Knaresborough Urban Council area.

More evacuees joined the train at York, where liquid refreshments were supplied by the W.V.S.

TWELVE MONTHS FOR KNARESBOROUGH MAN 14.07.1945

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At Leeds Assizes on Friday John Albert Armitage Sigsworth, labourer, living in lodgings in Knaresborough, was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for setting fire to a stack of wheat straw at Knaresborough.

14.08.1945

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Harvest Camp – Boys of Cockburn High School, Leeds, are again holding a harvest camp at Knaresborough this year. Thirty-five boys, in charge of one of the masters, Mr H. Kerry, will take part, and will be available for farm work in the district from August 20th to September 15th. In previous years, the camp has been a tented one, but this time, a large wooden hut, now being erected by German prisoners, will be used for sleeping and meals. This should also prove useful for recreation in the evenings when the weather is bad. A certain amount of work has already been arranged for the party, but more would be welcomed. Farmers desiring help are asked to communicate either with County Coun. Ernest Alton, Scriven Lodge, or with Mr Kerry, 1, Coverdale Drive, Knaresborough.

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The "whirligig of time" brings in some strange revenges. A colleague who visited an agricultural show and fete out at Ouseburn on Bank Holiday Monday found among the large crowd many Italian co-operators who are now working on farms in the district, and it struck him as an ironic reversal of fortune that these men, taken prisoner while fighting against the Allies, should in the course of time be paying their shillings to swell the local "Welcome Home" Fund, in support of which the event was held. The men were rigged out in a motley collection of uniforms, or rather parts of uniforms, and lent an exotic touch to a typically English countryside scene. Some sported forage caps of the rounded American pattern and American khaki jackets, while others were attired in odd bits of British uniforms. One furnished striking contrast by wearing a pair of shabby blue denim trousers with a khaki battledress blouse. They wandered about in groups, chattering away in Italian among the stolid Yorkshire countryfolk, and one wondered what they made of the British idea of rural entertainment.

Ex-P.O.W.'s Charged

15.09.1945

Two former prisoners of war, now serving with a battalion of the Parachute Regiment stationed in Knaresborough, pleaded guilty to stealing a metal pipe cleaner, valued at 1s. 3d., the property of Harry Pilbeam, from a shop in Station Parade, Harrogate. Defendants were Cpl. George A. Spencer and Pte. William S. Reid. Spencer pleaded not guilty to a further charge of assaulting P.W.R. Horton.

10 Detective Inspector Stubbs said that at 11.45pm on September 2nd, P.C. Foster, of the Halifax police, was passing the shop in a car when he heard the sound of breaking glass and saw a soldier in the shop doorway. He went to the shop with P.C. Pike, and they found Spencer in the doorway with a pair of Army boots in his possession. The window was broken, and someone could be heard moving about inside. Spencer was taken to the police station, and at 2.30 am Reid was arrested as he was leaving the shop in his stockinged feet. He had with him the pipe cleaner, and admitted having taken it from the shop. He said he "went after some cigarettes." While at the police station, Spencer attempted to escape, and in stopping him, P.W.R. Horton was hurt.

20 Spencer said that he and Reid, whom he first met in a prison camp in Germany, had had a few drinks and were "merry". They had no intention of breaking into a shop. They lost their sense of responsibility and acted on impulse.

Reid said it was a very stupid thing to do. He did not realise what he was doing at the time.

Observing that defendants would have to learn to be good citizens after being good soldiers, the Chairman said the summonses would be dismissed under the Probation of Offenders Acts. Spencer would have to pay £1. 19s. 3d costs and damages and Reid 17s. 3d.

WEDDINGS

30 **FAIRMAN – BUCK**
27.10.1945

The marriage has taken place at St James's Church, Tunbridge Wells, of Captain Donald Fairman, of Victoria Avenue, Knaresborough, and Miss Irene Joyce Buck, of Tunbridge Wells. Brother officers of the bridegroom formed a guard of honour.

40 The bridegroom, who is well known in Yorkshire athletic and football circles, was one of the fortunate few to escape on the fall of Singapore. The ship in which he escaped was bombed and sunk, but he finally reached India, and later took part in Chindit expeditions into Burma.

The bride, who has served 4½ years in the A.T.S., wore a navy dress and spray of orchids, with a light blue feather hat. She was attended by her sister, Mrs Audrey Howles.

The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Percy Kingston, who also served with the Chindits behind the Japanese lines in Burma. During the ceremony the bridegroom's father, Mr Malcolm Fairman, sang the solo "Be thou faithful."

S.Sergt. H. Bryant, R.A.F., of Knaresborough, was best man.

50 The honeymoon was spent at Midhurst and Knaresborough.

WEDNESDAY GOSSIP

Harrogate Herald

28.11.1945

The Scars of War.-The major scars of war will, naturally, take a long time to heal, but even the minor ones are slow to disappearing in many cases. Kerbstones and pavement flags chipped and broken by the tracks of tanks several years ago, have not yet been able to be repaired in some areas, and one field at Knaresborough still shows traces of its use as an ammunition dump during the winter of 1943, when preparation for the invasion of Normandy were going forward. There, one can still see the tracks made in the soft turf by the heavy army lorries, which were then using the field.

Liabie to Recall 02.12.1945

In the House of Commons recently, Sir James Grigg, Minister of War, said:- "Members of the Home Guard are liable to recall if the need arises. The instructions make it clear that should the home Guard be required for active duty members will report for duty complete with the articles of clothing and equipment which they have been allowed to retain. It will not be until actual disbandment that members will be allowed to dispose of or have their greatcoats or trousers dyed for use as civilian clothes."

Jeweller's Window Broken 15.12.1945

Three members of a Parachute Regiment holding battalion stationed at Scriven Park, Knaresborough, we charged jointly with committing damage to the extent of £40 to the window of Messrs. Hardcastles, jewellers, Princes Street, Harrogate, and with stealing from there, a silver sauce bottle holder, value £3. Evidence on a charge of breaking and entering was not offered.

Samuel A. Williams, who had seven previous convictions, and who was on licence from a Borstal Institution, pleaded guilty to the charge of damage, and not guilty to the other; Albert C. Lee, pleaded not guilty of stealing, and not guilty to that of malicious damage. Barker had one previous conviction.

Mr M. D. Shaffner, of the County Solicitor's department, prosecuted, and alleged that on November 24th, the manager of Messrs. Hardcastles left the premises at five o'clock, leaving them secure. There was about £500 worth of property in the window, including the silver sauce bottle holder in question, which was at the back of the window.

At about 10.55pm that night, P>C> Wilson was on duty in Albert Street, when he heard the crash of breaking glass. He ran to the scene and saw two of the accused standing in front of the window and the other in the act of withdrawing his hand from the broken pane. He closed with them and detained them until two other policemen arrived. As they were being taken away, one of the accused ran away behind two youths standing in a side street, and he heard the sound of something falling. The sauce bottle holder was recovered from this spot. When cautioned and charged, it was discovered that Williams had particles of glass embedded the toe of his boot.

Williams admitted breaking the window, and said that he did not know why he had done it. They had had a lot of drink and had not very much idea what they were doing. Each defendant denied that the offences were part of a plan to rob the shop, and said they had no intention of breaking in. Barker said he did not remember much about it but he recollected taking the holder from the window.

The case against Lee was dismissed on grounds of insufficient evidence, Barker was fined £2, and Williams was sent to prison for one month.

