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**Knaresborough Post**

**9 September 1950**

# **KOREA BRINGS 12 C.D. VOLUNTEERS**

## **Public meeting to aid recruiting**

10 DURING August there were 12 volunteers for the Civil Defence organisation in Knaresborough. This brings the total registered in the town to 15. "Civil Defence recruiting is smartening up a bit," said Mr W. E. Brown (Clerk to Knaresborough Urban Council) this week. "But unless there is a further increase it is likely that present volunteers will have to wait some considerable time before undertaking any training."

**In order to bolster C.D. recruiting in the Knaresborough and Nidderdale areas, a joint public meeting has been arranged at the Town Hall, Knaresborough, at 7.30pm on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>**

At Monday's meeting of Knaresborough Urban Council, the Chairman (Coun. B. Aykroyd) declared: "I do not think I need emphasise, in view of the present situation, how important is  
20 is that the country should be ready in the event of any trouble.

"Although we may not have bombs dropped in Knaresborough in the first five minutes, there is no doubt that we shall not be able to expect the same warning as last time. WE must be prepared to deal with any emergency that may arise."

Coun. Aykroyd appealed to all the ratepayers who felt they could give up a little time to the calls of Civil Defence to come to the public meeting. The chief training officer for the West Riding County Council, he said would explain in detail just how individual members of the public could help, what help was wanted, and those who were eligible for the service.

**It is understood that about 20 volunteers will be required before training can begin. Volunteers for the special constabulary service are also wanted urgently.**

30 "The service is still greatly below strength," Inspector Scanion told a staff reporter this week. At the moment 25 "specials" are enrolled.

In the Nidderdale area, Civil Defence recruiting is at a complete standstill. Present strength of the service remains at three. In addition to taking part in the public meeting in

Knaresborough, however, the rural authority, it is understood, has already applied to the County Council for aid in holding recruiting meetings in the country area.

It is believed that the intention is to hold public meetings in Boroughbridge and Killinghall in the near future.

## **Knaresborough Post**

**23 September 1950**

10 **C.D. RECRUITING.** – Enrolment forms will be ready for any Civil Defence volunteers at the close of next Thursday's public meeting at Knaresborough Town Hall to aid recruiting in the Knaresborough and Nidderdale areas. Coun. B. Aykroyd is expected to take the chair at the meeting, which is organised jointly by Knaresborough Urban Council and Nidderdale Rural Council. Representatives of the various C.D. branches in the Claro Division are to speak on the work of their departments and current requirements in manpower. These speakers include Supt. Cockroft (Special Constabulary), Mr F. A. Keighley (head warden) and a representative of the Harrogate Division of the County Fire Service. County Coun. A. C. Crowther will represent the West Riding County Council, which is the local Civil Defence authority.

## **Knaresborough Post**

**23 September 1950**

### **Defeatist attitude about atom bomb?**

A "DEFEATIST attitude" about the atomic bomb may be the reason why only 100 people have enrolled for Civil Defence in Harrogate, thinks Mr F. A. Keighley, chief warden for the Harrogate Police Division.

20 "It is a great disappointment," he told a staff reporter on Monday, "We want thousands."

"Many people," Mr Keighley continued, "think that nothing can be done about an atomic bomb. This is a defeatist attitude. An efficient civil defence could save many lives if an atomic bomb were dropped."

There is to be a special effort, beginning on October 16, to urge people to join the Civil Defence. The appeal is to be national, but local authorities have been asked to make their own arrangements.

**Knaresborough Post**

**23 September 1950**

# **Knaresboro' Echoes**

10 LAND GIRLS – Although the Women's Land Army is to be officially disbanded at the end of November, it will be "work as usual" at the girls' hostel in Halfpenny Lane, Knaresborough. As from September 30 the hostel will be taken over for administrative purposes by the West Riding County Agricultural Executive Committee. Opened in 1941, the hostel at first accommodated 40 girls who were employed on farms around Knaresborough. Latterly, there have been 20 at the hostel. These girls will continue their work on local farms, but in future they will be paid by the County Committee. Only change in status will be their loss of uniform replacements and four free travel warrants a year.

**Knaresborough Post**

**30 September 1950**

## **One-fifth of C.D. force now recruited**

### **Apathy condemned at public meeting**

**KNARESBOROUGH needs at least 100 volunteers for the Civil Defence services. In addition, 40 auxiliary firemen, reserve services are urgently required.**

**Volunteers for all these services are also needed throughout the Nidderdale area.**

20 This was stated at the joint meeting organised by Knaresborough Urban Council and Nidderdale Rural Council at the Town Hall, Knaresborough, on Thursday evening, to aid recruiting. Representatives of the various Civil Defence organisations stressed the importance of immediate training to meet any emergency.

Speaking from the technical angle, Mr G. Shaw, West Riding County Training Officer, said Civil Defence had to be accepted. It was to be a permanent service on a par with the armed forces. It was an insurance against the future.

The answer to the atom bomb, to saturation bombing and to the new nerve gas ("that is a killer") was Civil Defence.

30 "We have plenty of equipment for training purposes in Yorkshire," he went on. "I insist on training being thorough because I am responsible for it."

Mr Shaw said that in 30 of the 89 district authorities in his area training was ready to begin Knaresborough was one of those areas. There were six sections open to volunteers, and to begin with their preferences would be met.

It was recommended by the Home Office that training should consist of 180 hours spread over three years. That meant one hour a week. It was preferable, however, that instruction should consist of two hour sessions. To begin with there would be 32 hours of general training for each volunteer.

“We try to apply instruction when you want it,” he declared.

Coun. B. Aykroyd, Chairman of Knaresborough Urban Council, who presided, told the 30 or so members of the public present: “I hope we may have the support of everyone here tonight in spreading the gospel, if I may use such an expression.”

10 Introducing the representatives of the various Civil Defence organisations, Coun. Aykroyd said it was a very sad reflection indeed on our times that such a meeting had to be called (hear, hear). He had no doubt, however, that the last war might have been avoided altogether if the situation had been faced squarely in the days before 1930.

Today, as he saw it, our only hope of peace was in the strength of the United Nations and the Western democracies.

The news from Korea so far as the fighting was concerned was very much better. He regarded that in some ways as a very dangerous situation. As soon as the fighting died down in Korea then people would tend to think that all danger had finished completely.

20 That surely was a very false outlook indeed, because Russia’s aims of world domination had not ended in Korea any more than they had ended when the Berlin air lift forced them to lift the blockade. There were many other places where they could try their strength, and there were many perils to come.

**Coun. Aykroyd emphasised that more than ever today it behoved us to defend our traditional and Christian way of life against the rule of the secret police and the fear of the concentration camp, which existed behind the iron curtain, and which they would very much like to impose on us.**

An aggressor, there was no doubt, would begin a way by long range bombing, probably atomic. No part of the country would be free from the effects of such bombing, either directly or indirectly.

30 **England was probably more vulnerable to an atomic bomb than any country in the world. Even though in Knaresborough there might at the moment be a certain degree of apathy there was no possible justification for it. Knaresborough, as he saw it, would have a very important part to play in dealing with the stream of evacuees from attacked areas.**

Although it was in a country district, Knaresborough was on the fringe of one of the largest industrial areas. People there would need help.

He thought that apathy existed all over the country. It was something which would have to be fought.

The Chairman ended: "I do feel most sincerely that there are many people in this town of Knaresborough who will help in ?Civil Defence if they realise that they are wanted, and if they are told what they can do to help."

County Coun. A. C. Crowther, speaking on behalf of the West Riding ~County Council , the local C.D. authority, remarked that the response so far had been extremely poor.

Anyone considering world affairs must know, he said, that never in history had the country faced such a problem. With a power the size of Russia with its different ideology against us, there was but one thought: were we strong enough to tackle such a power?

10 To be prepared everyone had to do his bit. Those with experience of World War II would be welcomed in Civil Defence. They were essential. It was grand work, not wasted work. Even if nothing came it would still be useful training. Every able bodied man and woman was needed.

Urging his audience to persuade their friends to serve in some capacity, Coun. Crowther concluded: "We want advantage to be taken of the latest knowledge and methods."

A vote of thanks to the speakers was proposed by Mrs E. B. Bentley and seconded by Coun. J. Coles. An apology for absence was read from Capt. W. H. Featherston, Chairman of Nidderdale Rural Council, who is ill.

**Footnote: By noon on Thursday total number of Civil Defence volunteers in Knaresborough had reached 22.**

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### **Knaresborough Post**

**7 October 1950**

**CD RESPONSE** – Since last Thursday's public Civil Defence recruiting meeting in Knaresborough, no further volunteers have registered at Knaresborough Urban Council offices, or Nidderdale Rural Council offices. One recruit for the wardens' service has applied at Knaresborough police station.

**Knaresborough Post**

**7 October 1950**

**FROM THE W.L.A.**

Before a farewell gathering of about 900 past and present members of the Women's Land Army, farmers and their wives, hostel wardens, clerical staffs and committee members at York on Saturday, Miss W. Jacob Smith, of Knaresborough Country, County Organiser for the North and East Ridings, is presented with a lamp shade by Lady Celia Milnes-Coates, of Helperby, Chairman of the Welfare Committee. The lamp shade, with its W.L.A. crest, together with a cheque, were subscribed for by Land Army girls in Miss Jacob Smith's area.

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**Knaresborough Post**

**14 October 1950**

**DOWN ON THE FARM** – Miss D. Jacob Smith's Park Corner Farm, Scriven, has been the scene during the past three weeks of one of the first general instruction courses in farming matters for West Riding School teachers. Meeting on Saturday mornings, the teachers – from a wide area of the county – walked round the farm and heard all about crops and farm buildings. Last Saturday they completed their short course with hints on stock management. Idea behind the scheme is for teachers to be able to take school children on agricultural visits and explain the methods used in farming.

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**Knaresborough Post**

**28 October 1950**

**LEGION "MAKES LIVES BRIGHTER"**

**Helps all ex-servicemen**

THE main platform of the branch's work was benevolent, said Mr H. Butterfield, secretary, in his report to the annual meeting of Knaresborough branch of the British Legion on Friday.

The average man, he remarked was a good fellow. He worked and perhaps, was stricken down. Then he could not exist on National Health Insurance benefit.

30 During the past year, said Mr Butterfield, 45 cases had been helped "and 45 families' lives have been made brighter through that help." Of the cases assisted, 75 per cent were not members of the British Legion. The Legion helped all Ex-Servicemen. Theirs was not a charity. Poppy Day funds were available to all in need.

The secretary also reported on pension appeals on which official representation had been made. Appeals, he stated, had also been made to six Government departments, and five regimental associations. The branch was represented on various local welfare organisations

and on the police Court Mission. To carry out their work the committee had held 12 meetings during the year.

Mr J. F. Wilson, hon. Treasurer, reported that the branch's balance in hand was £52. 14s. 9d, a decrease of £4 on the previous year. He reminded members that funds for benevolent work came from headquarters and did not affect local funds. He regretted that the membership was down by 30, to just under 300.

### **Knaresborough Post**

**28 October 1950**

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#### **Ukrainian's Knaresborough Bride**

Mr Paul Thatch, a Polish Ukrainian, whose parents are still living in Poland, was married to Miss Joan Ibbotson, daughter of Mr and Mrs R. H. Ibbotson, of 4 Park Parade, Knaresborough, at Knaresborough Parish Church on Saturday. The bridegroom came to England three years ago, and has been in Knaresborough for the past year. He was formerly at the Scriven camp, and is now employed at the Lingerfield quarry.

The bride, who was given away by her brother, Mr Samuel Ibbotson, was dressed in white taffeta over net. She also wore a locket and chain, and carried a bouquet of pink chrysanthemums. The bride was also attended by her two nieces, Miss Maureen Ibbotson and Miss Jacqueline Fenn, who were dressed in peach taffeta and carried blue posies.

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Mr Walter Ornelamowies was best man, and the bride's brother, Mr A. Ibbotson, and Mr E. Parsons were groomsmen.

### **Knaresborough Post**

**18 November 1950**

## **School harvest camps to end next year**

The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries has decided that the school harvest camps scheme, in its present form, shall come to an end after the 1951 harvest.

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At the final meeting of the committee on Wednesday, the Minister gave high praise to the work which schoolboys and schoolgirls, and the schoolmasters and their wives and the school mistresses, had done to meet the emergency on farms during the war, when so much depended on the safe gathering of the harvest. Hardly less valuable was the help which the schools had continued to give since the end of the war, when they had so many other claims on their time and attention. Over the whole period of the Scheme, 1,045,000 boy and girl weeks had been put in on the land.

The Minister said that a number of schools would no doubt retain their interest in agricultural camps, and the question of giving them some measure of assistance after 1951 would be



considered. Furthermore, there would be consultation with the National Farmers' Union to see what might be done to maintain the contact between schools and farmers which had been built up over the period of the scheme.

## **Knaresborough Post**

**23 December 1950**

### **HELPED TO MAKE THE ESCAPERS' "WOODEN HORSE"**

10 **THIS is the story of a Harrogate man born and bred, a Fighter Pilot prisoner of war, who made three attempts to escape – including the famous “break” through the 360-foot tunnel out of Stalag Luft III, when he was lucky enough not to be chosen as one of the 50 shot out of hand as a “deterrent” by the Nazis – and helped to make the famous wooden horse through which three other officers actually did escape and made their way safely to England.**

He is Flight Lieut. W. J. H. Greenaway, aged 36, now handicraft instructor at Western Modern School, Harrogate, who lives with his wife and five children, all boys, in St Mary's Avenue, Harrogate.

20 It was through a chance remark about the film of Eric Williams's very successful book “The Wooden Horse,” in which Williams described his own escape and which is coming to Harrogate in the first week of January, that a staff reporter learned of Mr Greenaway's part in the adventure.

Mr Greenaway was a Pilot in Spitfires when, on November 8 1941, in a sortie over the Channel he was shot down, b led out and was picked up on the island of Alderney, wounded in the head (he nearly lost, the sight of one eye) and legs.

In captivity, he became not merely the camp carpenter in chief, but also the chief forger of false documents for escapees.

And, of course, as carpenter he came into the Wooden Horse adventure, so let him tell it in his own words:

30 “The system at Stalag III was that any prisoner or group of prisoners could put up an escape scheme to the committee. If it were approved as being practicable for that group, they themselves did the tunnelling work, but all the other work of the attempt – providing clothing, forged papers, money, security, sentries to guard the attempts, and so forth, were looked after by the vast organisation which had grown up in a camp of about 10,000 men.

“In this case the idea was put up by Eric Williams and two companions, a fellow R.A.F. officer and Army officer, who had been taken when on a paratroop job.

#### **“Left lying about”**

We constructed a perfectly normal vaulting horse from ~Red Cross packing with stout carrying handles made from bed posts. The horse was left lying about on its side so that the Germans could see that there was nothing inside it. Then we formed a P.T. class and started

using the horse as a vaulting horse, carrying it out from the canteen every morning and gradually getting the Germans accustomed to seeing it in a particular position near the wire. This went on for some time – but presently when we carried it out first one and later two of the escapees would be standing huddled on the framework battens inside it, and as we noisily leaped over the horse they tunnelled away down below.

“A false cover, exactly corresponding with the top layer of the ground, was constructed, and this had to be replaced after each day’s tunnelling.

10 “It took them three months to dig that tunnel about two feet square and 40 feet long – but they got clear away in October 1943. On that occasion there were no punishments or murdering.”

That is the story of the Wooden Horse, Stalag III version, and when the film comes here, F/Lt Greenaway is arranging a display of his escape maps, scrap book and other relics at the Regal Cinema.

The opportunity is also being taken to use the film to encourage recruiting for the R.A.F. On December 31, F/Lt A. Renton, C.O. of No. 58 Squadron of the A.T.C. Otley Road, is arranging an “exercise” to test his lads’ ability to get into a given place without being detected. They will be dropped at points some miles from Harrogate and will be required to make their way to the Regal Cinema; there will be prizes for the first in.

20 The Harrogate Police and the Civil Defence authorities have already agreed to cooperate in providing patrols and checks to make it as difficult – and as realistic – as possible for these cadets to get into Harrogate, and to make the exercise even more valuable and interesting about 20 ex-POWs, or Commandos are asked to volunteer to accompany the cadets and show them how this sort of thing can be done.

Volunteers should contact F/Lt A. Renton, Royal Air Force, Bishop Monkton, as soon as possible – the operation is planned for December 31.

The first volunteer is F/Lt Greenaway who had considerable experience of moving around Germany undetected on his three attempted escapes.

30 His first bid was made from Stalag Luft I when he used the simple and sometimes successful method of stepping through the barbed wire in broad daylight at a chosen moment – but he had reckoned without the dog guard and his freedom lasted only a few minutes.

### **Away for three weeks**

On the second occasion he was away for three weeks, from Stalag III, and was making good progress towards Stralsland, on the Baltic near the Danish frontier, when some of Hitler's young people spotted him in a railway truck – and that was that.

The last time, of course, was through that astonishing air conditioned electrically lighted tunnel, 30 feet underground, in which 2,000 men had a hand and through which it was planned to liberate anything up to 800 officers. F/Lt Greenaway was responsible for much of the carpentry and designing of this incredible, record breaking escape to danger.

10 He was one of those who got clear through. He spent a week at liberty, but the concentrated search by 25,000 Gestapo and troops was too keen and with practically all the others was caught (only three escaped to England). He was taken to a high Gestapo H.Q., where he saw several other escapees, and was closely interrogated. Then with 10 others he was returned to Stalag III. They thought they were merely being split up into different groups, and knew nothing of the fate of their companions until . . . but let F/Lt Greenaway tell the story in his own words as recorded in his private diary:-

### **The biggest break**

“March 24/25 1944: Tonight the biggest break in the history of the R.A.F. Kriege (POW) Camp, 80 men getting out of our tunnel. Good show.

20 “March 25: (Greenaway was then at liberty and this entry was made later in retrospect) Great flap. The goons (German guards) in at 0600 hours complete with heavy artillery – against unarmed men. This ostentatious display of arms makes them look so stupid, as usual. The kitchen and cook house were closed: they were shut in all day long; there was no mail for goodness knows how long. The attempt to stop food was counteracted by Geneva.

“March 26: the best news yet – the Commandant has been relieved of his post. Great rejoicing throughout Stalag Luft III.

“April 6: Black Easter – The blackest day in Air Force history. The Gestapo have murdered 41 of our escaped boys and the whole camp is in mourning. All these Huns will pay for this: it is very hard to realise it has happened. If England doesn't do anything about this atrocity I shall definitely kill 41 Huns myself, if I am still alive at the end of the war.”

30 It was not until April 15 that the Germans gave the camp a list of 47 escapees who had been shot dead “attempting to escape.” The total was subsequently found to be 50 and it was never discovered in what principle the Germans chose those particular 50. Their ashes were returned to Stalag III, where they were buried in a beautiful vault designed by F/Lt W. Wylton Todd, A.R.I.B.A., and constructed largely by Mr Greenaway, the names of the dead being carved on four plates by some Polish fellow prisoners.

So now, five and a half years after liberation, F/Lt Greenaway is to help some lads of the A.T.C. to make their way from a point “X” to the Regal Cinema – without being stopped by the Police of Civil Defence; this exercise should be equally valuable to both sides and it is hoped that it will have full public support.

