Newbold Verdon Branch 1937

This short collection of stories from the Newbold Verdon Branch was compiled largely from the legion's minute book in the year 1937 (which the book goes into the most detail about). This minute book is often lacking in detail (or completion of events), so some stories remain incomplete.

The earliest records that exist of the Newbold Verdon branch are from 1931. It would seem to have been founded by W.J.Preston. Meetings were held monthly, however the frequency of these meetings decreased during the Second World War due to certain impracticalities of meeting in a public place so often.

During the months of February through to March of 1937, there was disorder in the branch, as many members refused to take part in events unless a particular Standard Bearer resigned his post. However the Chairman retorted that "one must put the needs of the branch before individual matters" On the 3rd of March the decision to replace the Standard Bearer was carried at 5 votes to 3, but nobody could suggest a successor.

The Honorary Secretary expressed a desire to leave his post almost immediately after the previous dramatic turn of events. This motion was not carried, as 5 people voted against acceptance of his resignation and 5 abstained. Upon reconsideration the Honorary Secretary suggested he act in tandem with his successor until his successor felt he could manage the job. There was gentleman who volunteered to replace him temporarily.

On 13th March 1937 the Chair (G.W.Bevins) was about to open the meeting but prevented from doing so by the "organised rowdyism" from the Reverend and the Standard Bearer previously mentioned. The meeting was closed after just 25 minutes as the chair could not obtain order!

Church Parade - 18th July 1937

On 3rd Sept 1937 Honorary Treasurer T. Moore resigned and it was decided a new Honorary Treasurer would not be elected until the Annual meeting on Oct 2nd. The group talked about how interest in their organisation was lacking among the public. It was decided that "A parade should be held on the 18th in Barlestone to stimulate interest in the Legion among ex-servicemen."

On October 2nd the annual meeting is poorly attended and adjourned until Saturday 16th.

On Saturday 16th 1937 the **Annual Meeting** is held. The account of this event in the minute book contained many things the branch had accomplished during the year:

- The county committee should be asked to send a member to Barlestone to a meeting to try and renew interest amongst Barlestone ex-servicemen in the British Legion by joining more with Newbold or forming a branch of their own.

- The branch raised £30 in 1937 (the equivalent of £1,666 today!)

- £40 of this had been distributed to help needy ex-servicemen and their dependents (wife, children)

- 14 Parades took place in that year in these places – Broughton-Astley, Burbage, Bagworth (twice), Birstall, Croft, Desford, Ibstock (twice), Enderby, Leicester, Countesthorpe, Earl Shilton and Barwell.

- The Annual Remembrance Sunday Parade at the Cenotaph in Whitehall was well attended. The branch organised a trip of 70 people to see the Coronation decorations in London.

- Branch members attended the Royal Review Parade in Hyde Park on the 27th June.

This short account of a year in the Newbold Verdon Branch of the British Legion was typical of their years, except events were less frequent during the Second World War and the years following it. Although this branch was only small, they had a big impact, performing 14 parades and raising a huge amount of money in a single year, showing that even a divided, declining group like the Newbold Verdon Branch could make a difference with passionate members.

By Jonathan Williams

