

### **Nurse and WW2 Spy - Edna of Scarborough by Mr E**

Edna was born and grew up in Scarborough. She was a nurse and during WWII and she was stationed in Nazi occupied France. She worked full-time as a hospital nurse but was also working for the resistance where she would pass on messages and documents to those active in the resistance. Unfortunately, Edna died in recent years aged 102 and so we do not have a first-hand account of her war memories. She was partly blind in her later years and was a client of the Yorkshire Coast Sight Support (YCSS). It is through that organisation that we came to know about her. She did not talk a great deal about her time in France and was a very quiet person but as a Scarborough girl she was very proud of the role she played in the war where she referred to herself as a 'spy'.

She said the reason that nurses were so well suited to the work was that many ordinary French people were terrified of attending hospitals because of the constant presence of the German officers. If possible, ordinary French people wanted medics to visit them at their home to avoid any chance of them being targeted and accused of something or if their papers were not quite in order. Nurses were, therefore, able to move around quite freely and often having to do so to tend to those having been discharged or just to visit those being reported sick at home. Many were recovering from the wounds of war and there were large numbers of them. But resistance work was very dangerous. The Germans were constantly on the lookout for them and being found meant certain death. Many of the French or other nurses did not support those working for the resistance. They saw risks to themselves if they knew those involved and didn't report them especially if they were neighbours or working closely with them in their professional work. For that reason they never admitted being involved to anyone including close friends.