

# LOCAL WORLD WAR I STORIES



The 184<sup>th</sup> Battalion marches through Manitou in 1916 (Margie Durham Collection)



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**M**anitoba's hundreds of local histories, produced over the past 50 years, are a remarkable achievement, containing a wealth of information –community developments, family histories and usually an impressive collection of early photographs.

Many of these Manitoba histories feature sections devoted to local military efforts in the First World War, as well as for World War II, the Korean War of 1950-53, and more recent conflicts. But it is the focus on the Great War, of 1914-1918, that is of special interest for this project, and which also often contains the most poignant and interesting information that helps place Manitoba's war memorials into a community context.

# Argyle

## The Gun Club and the Home Front

A passage in the R.M. of Argyle history book, *Come Into Our Heritage* (1981) provides some background about the “home front” in World War I:

When war broke out in Europe in 1914, Manitobans rushed to support the British cause. Even before the outbreak of war, rifle clubs had been formed so that, in the words of a 1910 [edition of the] *Baldur Gazette*: “in the event of an invasion of our Dominion we have numerous companies of men, that after a couple of weeks licking into shape by a smart drill sergeant of the regular force, would be quite capable of defending the hearth and homes of their country”.

The Rock Lake Gun Club, the oldest continuously active trapshooting facility in Manitoba, was established by Joe Avery in 1912. At first there was some opposition to the club by local council that it was a hazard to continue at its site just above the north shore of Rock Lake. Members of the club were welcomed into the armed forces when war broke out in 1914. As soon as Britain declared war there was intense pressure for all eligible men to join up. Monster recruiting rallies were held during the winter of 1916, the local units of the Southern Manitoba Battalion were set up. The 233rd Infantry was nicknamed the ‘Scandinavian Vikings,’ Giant farewell socials were held for each troop as it left its own town. Those men who did not join, found it difficult to justify in the face of such a passage as this taken from the *Gazette*, August 23, 1917:

### TRENCH THAT FRITZ BUILT

This is the maid, who treats with scorn the shifty slacker, all shaven and shorn, and his shining car with the tooting horn, but honours the farmer all weary and worn and his wife who helps him hoe the corn and milk the cow in the early morn, for she loves the son who to them was born, who in front of the battle all tattered and torn, still mans the gun that killed the Hun who lay in the trench that Fritz built.

Honour rolls were posted – not so much to honour those who had joined up, but to show who had not. Soon, lists of soldiers killed in the trenches “somewhere in France” were being published in local papers. The *Gazette* consoled those who had lost sons: “It must be immensely gratifying for the parents to know that their boy died a hero, fighting for his country’s freedom.”



Argyle area men of the 222<sup>nd</sup> Battalion posing for a group photograph while training near Baldur in 1916.

People at home joined the total war effort. Patriotic Associations were formed to raise money for the war effort. Women formed Ladies' Patriotic Sewing Circles, sewing and knitting for the troops. Teen-age boys joined the 'Sons of the Soil' and received badges of honour for working on a farm for three months in the summer. Boys also joined the 'Earn and Give Program,' working at odd jobs and pledging their earnings to the war effort. Men, women and children in towns formed Harvest Clubs going out to work on farms at harvest time. (In fact many children stayed out of school to do farm work.) Victory bonds were sold. When each area reached its quota it was given an 'Honour Flag.' For every 25% over the quota a crown was affixed to the flag.

In 1918, when conscription came into force, each district set up a National Service Board to which all men had to apply, be examined and declared fit or unfit. A man could apply to a local Exemption Tribunal to be exempted. In most cases men with families and farms to support were granted exemptions. However, by the end of the war almost all the eligible men were in the armed forces.

When the war ended on November 11, 1918, a half holiday was declared. Every town held giant 'Welcome Home' celebrations for each batch of returning soldiers. 'Welcome Home' funds were collected for returning soldiers; local branches of the Great War Veteran's Association were organized. In spite of the general celebrations, memories endured of those who had lost their lives.

The influenza epidemic that swept the world in 1918 did not bypass Argyle. There was a ban on visitors to the area for five weeks. In December, 50 cases had been reported in Baldur and several in rural areas.

In 1919, the general depression that followed the ending of the war also hit the farmers of Argyle. The decade which had begun with so much hope had seen one generation cut down and farmers in a precarious position because of lower grain prices.

# Austin

## The Home Front

In the local history, *A History of the Austin and Surrounding Districts*, there are accounts of local fund-raising efforts to support the Canadian war effort:

Space will not permit a detailed account of all the war work done on the home front. However, a few items from old newspapers of that time will give a general picture of those worthwhile activities.

The "Admiral Wemyss" Chapter of the Imperial Order daughters of the Empire was organized in Austin (on Tuesday, Sept. 22nd, 1914 at 3 p.m. in the Canadian Order of Foresters Hall) by Mrs. J. J. Garland (Vice-Pres. Provincial Chapter) of Portage la Prairie. The fee was \$1.00 per year. The aims of the Society were purely patriotic, and to alleviate suffering in any part of our empire.

Mr. A. Pickering was of great help to the I.O.D.E war workers at this time. He spent countless hours collecting money which he turned in to the Society. This money was used by them to buy wool and materials for knitting and sewing articles of clothing for the overseas.

In 1914 there was a collection campaign in aid of a Daughters of the Empire Hospital Ship. Miss Eva Stinson of Austin collected \$18.50; Miss Connie and Miss Mabel Sharpley of Arizona, collected \$27.85.

On Dec. 2nd, 1915 the "Admiral Wemyss" Chapter held a meeting at the home of Miss Mary Madill in Austin, and decided to place a cot in the Convalescent Hospital for Wounded Soldiers in Winnipeg. Mr. and Mrs. Robt. Leckie made a generous cash donation to the fund at this time; a credit to the Sight Hill district where they lived.

In 1915 the people of Sidney and district donated over \$1,000.00 for a machine gun for the front. They also started a Red Cross Fund which met with great success.

Many entertainments, charging admission, were held during the war years, with the proceeds going to the I.O.D.E, the Red Cross, the Returned Soldiers' Fund,

etc. The Orangeville school house was noted for its successful concerts and dances. Similar evenings were enjoyed in many of the country school houses.



The Emmeline "Willing Workers" (*A History of the Austin and Surrounding Districts*, 115)

In March of 1917 a dance was held in F. Ritzer's farm home in Emmeline. On this occasion tickets on a quilt donated by Mrs. F. Kilfoyle were sold. (This quilt was sown by Miss Annie Emerson.) On this same occasion, \$13.95 was given by Mr. Gale, Mr. Turner, Jim Collier and Trevor Poyser, the proceeds from the sale of wood.

In April of 1917 a spelling match and 10c tea was held in the Austin school. Homemade candy was sold. Proceeds went to the Belgium Relief Fund.

On Thursday, July 26th, 1917, the Emmeline "Willing Workers" held a garden party at the farm house of Mr. and Mrs. P. Poyser. During the evening, baseball, tennis and comic races were enjoyed by the people present. Proceeds of \$32.00 was spent on comforts for the boys overseas.





Boys who enlisted for World War I (*A History of the Austin and Surrounding Districts*, 112)

The Firdale, Pine Creek and Forestville Chapters of I.O.D.E. held a picnic at the farm home of Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Manns in 1917. Proceeds were used for patriotic purposes.

Miss Jean McKenzie, an outstanding artist in the district, who had paintings valued at \$500.00 at that time, donated an oil painting to be raffled in 1917. A motion was made by Mr. Thorn and seconded by Mr. Annison that the Council grant the Red Cross Society \$200.00, and the Serbian Relied Committee \$150.00. Carried.

The amounts of cash mentioned in the foregoing narrative might sound like trivial sums to the present generation. It should therefore be pointed out that, in those days, a dollar was harder to earn than it is today. But, by the same token, it brought more that it does today.

### **From the *MacGregor Herald* 1918**

North Norfolk has not only sent its large contingent of young men to battle for the Empire, but the splendid response to the Victory Loan in this municipality proves that the people are ready to back up the boys with their money.

On Monday the MacGregor district reached its allotment of \$130,000.00 and has been awarded the Governor-General's honor flag. Since then another \$40,000 has been subscribed and one crown has been won.

The canvassers are still busy and hope that before the campaign closes Saturday night that at least one more crown will have been awarded, and that the total subscription will have reached over \$200,000.00.

Austin and Sidney are also meeting with splendid response, and on Monday reached their allotment of \$70,000.00 and thus won the honor flag. Since then they have gone over the \$100,000.00 mark, and they too are out for a number of crowns.

North Norfolk is among the leading Municipalities which proves once again that our people are loyal both in supplying men and money.

### **The Austin Area Boys Who Never Came Back**

Boys who made the Supreme Sacrifice in World War I: Arthur Allwood, J. Bilton, A. Bishop, C. Cairns, L. Cairns, James Collier, Roy Campbell (died later from wounds), R. Dodwell, M.G. Duncan, G. Edward, S. Fowles, Wellington Grey, Geo. Hunt, G. Ireland, Stanley King, W. Lunn, John Lauder, Wm. McElrea, Alex McNab, J. L. Pell, E. Penrice, J. Price, A. Phelps, G. Prior, J. A. Smith, A. Smith, C. Stringer, Joe Sexton, B. Swan, W. Swan, R. Terry, E. Wheeler.

# Binscarth

## The Cenotaph

James H. Orr, in the Binscarth local history, *Binscarth Memories*, from 1984, describes activities associated with the construction, unveiling and ongoing commemoration of this fine figural memorial:

The Binscarth Cenotaph was erected in 1919 and was unveiled and dedicated June 2, 1920. June 2nd was chosen because five Binscarth soldiers were killed in action about that time. They were George Bradshaw, W. Johnson, John Durant, R. Hallam and Chub Sherritt. General Byer of Minnedosa cut the ribbon at the unveiling.

The monument is fine red granite and the soldier on top is White Italian marble. The cost of the monument was \$1,625.00 and \$1,900.00 was raised by public donations to pay for it. The metal ornamental fence and spruce trees were added later. Donald Mann, a local veteran and blacksmith, made the fence. The spruce trees were donated by Tom Clements who wanted to thin out the trees he had planted on his farm. The pilot was donated by Frank McPherson and the location was decided by the fact that it was near both churches.



Binscarth Memorial at an early commemoration service.

A memorial service is held each year at the Cenotaph on the first Sunday in June, where the names of those who died during the 1914-18 and 1939-45 wars are read out and wreaths are laid. The Binscarth Branch No. 74 is the only rural branch in Manitoba who has held to this tradition each year.

On the 11th of November each year a short service is held to also lay wreaths. On the monument and plaque are the names of those who died in the two wars. On the monument are listed the actions in which the first World War veterans took part: Neuve Chappelle, Ypres, Festubert Givenchy St. Eloi, Sanctuary Wood, Somme, Vimy Hill 70, Passchendaele, Amiens, Arras Canal de Nord, Cambrai, Valenciennes, and Mons.

Ever since the end of the 1914-18 war, when the Cenotaph was set up, Decoration Day has been an annual event on the first Sunday in June. In the early years all the school children marched with the Legion members to the Cenotaph and sat on benches there for the service that followed. The names of those who made the Supreme Sacrifice were read and chosen pupils placed a floral tribute in their memory. This was followed by a speech by some dignity.



Flower girls (and boy) at the 1927 Decoration Day at the Binscarth Cenotaph.

Decoration Day has changed in the years following and now the Legion members march from the school and gather around the monument for the service. The many names are still read and floral tributes still placed by anyone who wishes, and the audience and Legion go to the Community Hall for the speeches and lunch served by the Legion Auxiliary.

Decoration Day has changed but we still REMEMBER.

# Binscarth

## A Nursing Sister

Manitoba nurses who served near the front lines of World War I battles are also considered veterans, and there are stories of their ultimate sacrifice.

Two nursing sisters from the Binscarth area served overseas during World War I. Nurse Nora Holloway served in Serbia, and survived the forced retreat with the Serbian Armies. Nurse Margaret A. Lowe, saw service in France, and was severely injured when the hospital in Etaples where she was tending the wounded was bombed. Nurse Lowe ultimately died of her wounds and is buried in France. It is presumed that it is Nurse Lowe who is mentioned on the Binscarth war memorial.

Two other nursing sisters from the Binscarth area served overseas during the Second World War: Nursing Sister Elva Honey served in Italy, Sicily and England, and returned safely to Quebec; Nurse Sadie Horning, served overseas and was awarded the King George Cross for Distinguished Service. She returned safely to Canada went on to nurse at Deer Lodge in Winnipeg.



Nursing Sister Margaret Lowe, of Binscarth, c. 1915. (*Binscarth Memories*, 177)



Two images of the funeral for Nursing Sister Margaret Lowe, of Binscarth, who died of wounds received during a raid by Germans at Etaples, France, May 1918.

# Boissevain-Morton

## Memories

The local history of the Municipalities of Morton and Boissevain, *Ours is a Goodly Heritage*, provides some information on local activity during World War I:

Our past recorded history of men and women from the Boissevain district who chose to serve the path of freedom gives us an insight into how much they valued their way of life and their determination that it should not be changed. They fought so that we would live as we choose, and to help other lands whose very existence was threatened by the forces of aggression from their neighbours.

The history of participation of men and women from this area is a proud story of unselfish conduct in times of trouble. Our fighting men have been involved during the past hundred years in the Boer War, the Riel Rebellion, World War I, and World War II as well as in the Korean conflict.

World War I, 1914-1918, so called "the war to end all wars," saw our young men flock to the colours along with their sisters in the nursing service. The long list of those who served from the Boissevain area, a small community, prays tribute to their belief in a just cause. Many died in the service, but all are remembered in service lists of those who gave their life to guarantee the freedom of world.





222<sup>nd</sup> Overseas Battalion, C.E.F., April 17, 1916 (*Ours is a Goodly Heritage* Morton-Boissevain 1881-1981, 303)



Cenotaph at Memorial Hospital  
(*Ours is a Goodly Heritage*, 295)



Decoration Day 1952 at Cenotaph (*Ours is a Goodly Heritage*, 297)

# Carman-Dufferin

## Answering the Call

The history of Carman-Dufferin contains the following passages concerning local activity focused on World War I and then on the opening of the Memorial Hall.

With the outbreak of World War I, young Canadians were called to fight against aggression. Twenty-eight young men from Carman and district went immediately. Tom Watson, with authority from Ottawa, recruited in Carman. War had been declared on August 4, 1914. Before the end of that month, those twenty-eight men had left Carman, spent two days in Winnipeg and were entrained for Valcartier, Quebec, for training. Before the end of October they were on Salisbury Plains in England for winter maneuvers. Tom was seventeen years old. When queried recently about his age, he said, "I was tall. Nobody asked." Colonel Lightfoot of the 222nd Battalion opened a barracks in Carman and trained men for several months. Most of the single men and many of the married men answered that call.

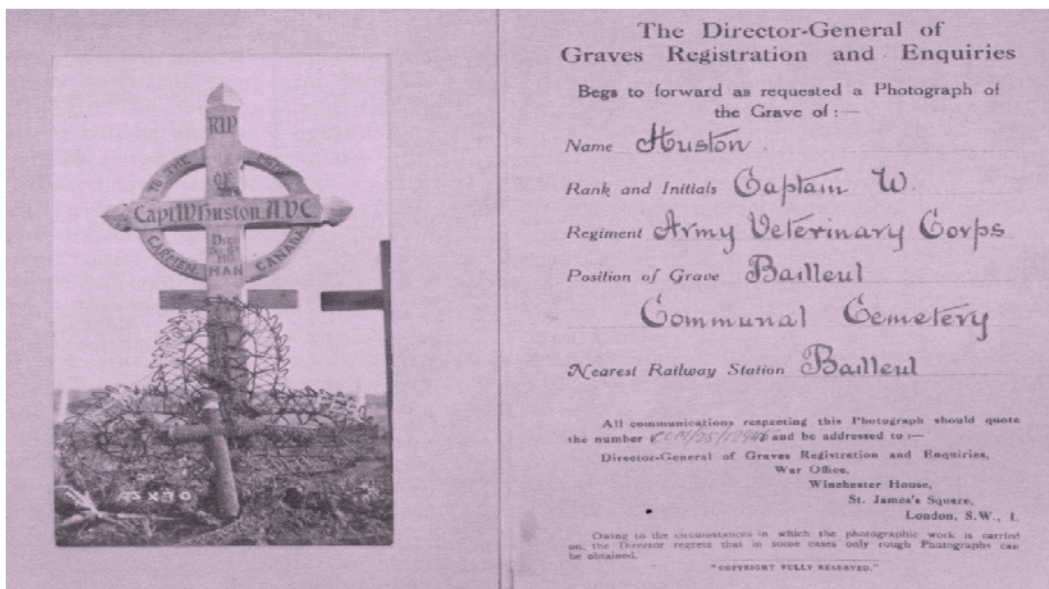


Tom Watson, Mrs. E. Watson, Leish Bruce, Edmund Watson in 1914. (*The Rural Municipality of Dufferin 1880-1980*, 263)

The combined population of the R.M. of Dufferin and the Town of Carman was approximately 4,000 in 1914. It is difficult to give accurate figures of war statistics because of the overlapping communities, however, there were about eighty local

young men killed in World War I. There is no available record of the wounded or handicapped. Also, we have no statistics for our region for World War II. Our loss cannot be imagined.

Those who returned soon set aside any adverse emotions and took up service to the community they fought to protect. Embraced in the comradeship of Carman Branch No. 18, Royal Canadian Legion, they gave uninterrupted support to sport and recreation, education, housing and health. Their dedication to a better life for all has inspired a generation that has never seen the blood of battle to formally join them in fulfilling their objectives.



Card with photograph noting the gravesite of Captain William Huston, a Carman-Dufferin man lost in World War I (*The Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 269*)



William Huston, the subject of the memorial card above (*Rural Municipality of Dufferin, 265*)

## Memorial Hall

Built in memory of the men from Carman and Dufferin who fought in the name of Canada in World War I, the Memorial Hall stands on 2nd Avenue S.W. (Walnut Street) between Main Street and First Street S.W. The following news item was taken from *The Dufferin Leader*, October 2, 1919:

### **Large Crowd Attend Ceremony of Laying of Corner Stone of Memorial Hall Major-General Ketchen Performs Ceremony**

One of the most impressive scenes witnessed in Carman for some considerable time took place Friday afternoon last, being the occasion for the laying of the corner stone of the Carman-Dufferin Memorial Hall by Major-General H.D.B. Ketchen, G.O.C. M.D. 10.

The day was most favorable for the occasion, although at one time a few heavy clouds passed over and threatened to mar the proceedings with a downpour of rain, but fortunately, however, this did not materialize.

Reeve Thos. Harrison acted as chairman during the ceremony, and, after the school children, who were singing of "O Canada," called upon Mayor J.A. Munn for the initial address of the afternoon's proceedings.

The Mayor, during the course of his excellent address, dwelt mainly on the construction and equipment of the hall, and will be of interest to many people, especially those who are yet in ignorance of the project.

The hall, which is being erected on the corner of Fournier Avenue and Walnut Street, is being built through the combined efforts of the citizens of Carman and Dufferin municipalities, in remembrance of the soldiers of the district who made the supreme sacrifice, and also as a place of recreation for the boys who have returned. The total cost of the building, which will be in the neighborhood of \$60,000, will be raised jointly by the municipalities of Carman and Dufferin, and will be raised by taxation.

The plan of the building is as follows:

Basement – The basement will be used as a gymnasium and dance room, and will be fitted with washrooms and shower baths, and will be used as a place of recreation for the young people of the district.

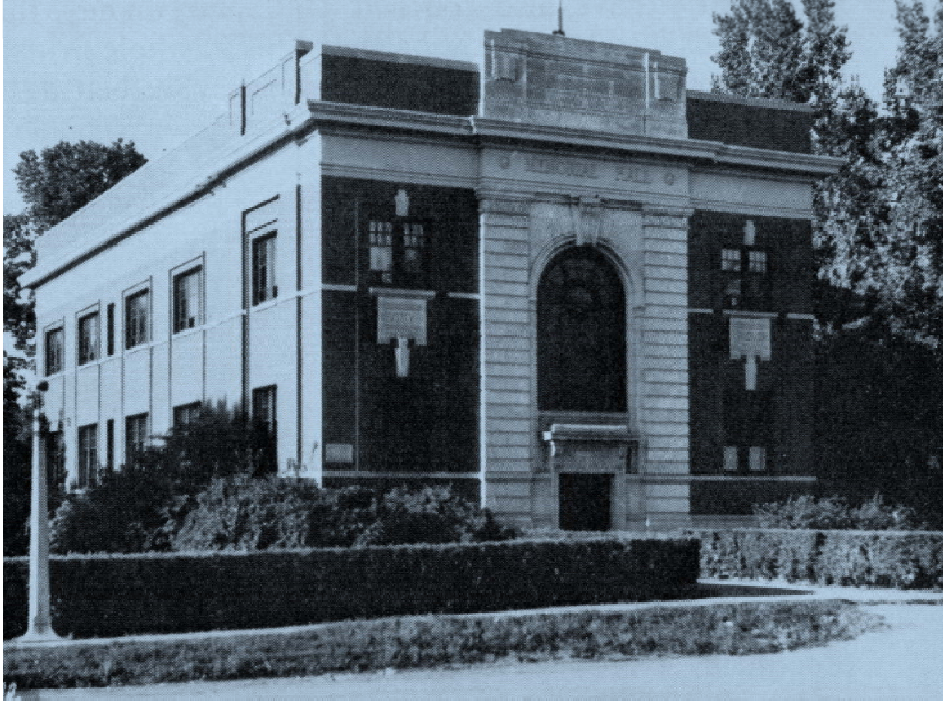
First floor – On this floor will be various rooms and offices. The main room on this floor will be the Memorial Room, in which will contain a large tablet on which will be inscribed the honor roll of the district, and will bear details of all the soldiers who left the district for overseas; this room will also contain relics and trophies of the war. The Blain Haverson Chapter of the I.O.D.E. will undertake the furnishing of the room. On this floor will also be the County Court room, municipal offices for Carman and Dufferin, council room (this room will also be used as headquarters for the local branch of the Great War Veterans' Association). There will also be a rest room, to be used as a social meeting place by the ladies of the district, and also to be a place of rest for the ladies coming in from the country. At the rear of this room will be a kitchenette. The ladies of the Homewood Soldiers Aid Society have undertaken the responsibility of the entire furnishing of this room.

Top Floor - The top floor will be used as an auditorium for entertainment, and will be fitted with motion picture screen. The seating capacity of the room will be between 500 and 600 people. The Soldiers Benefit Society will undertake to furnish this room, and there will also be two pianos which will be donated by the Torchbearers Club, one piano for the auditorium and the other for the basement. At the rear of the hall will be constructed a fire tower and apparatus. This is the complete outline of the building.

During his remarks, the mayor also made special mention of the splendid activities of the women's societies during the war. They had raised nearly \$26,000 for patriotic purposes and had knitted over 4,600 pairs of socks, which is undoubtedly a splendid record.

Although the district had a population of less than 3,500 people, over 500 of the young men went overseas, and 83 had made the supreme sacrifice.

Before the ceremony of laying the corner stone was performed, brief and interesting addresses were also given by E. A. August, M.P., H.E. Robinson, K.C., and Rev. Hugh Hamilton, who offered up a fitting prayer for contents of the corner stone box.



Memorial Hall. (*Rural Municipality of Dufferin*, 271)

After the school children had sung “Rule Britannia” came the most important part of the afternoon’s proceedings, the laying of the corner stone by Major-General Ketchen, during which he gave an eloquent and very appropriate speech. He said: “Memorials such as this one will remain as monuments to the magnificent traditions established by our fighting men. The building will assist in recalling the fact that our Canadian soldiers proved on many a hard-fought field the tenacity and courage of our race. I am sure I am speaking on behalf of the part the Canadian s played in the great world war.

“The gallant men who have fought and fallen – whilst they have illuminated with a fresh lustre the glory of the homeland – have also touched with new dignity the households they left for the battlefield. The whole British Empire owes them gratitude, and shares with their dear ones at home in the pride for their valor, and partakes with them in their grief for the fallen.

“Canada cannot forget the services rendered by her fallen heroes – they have displayed indomitable courage, calmness and perseverance in circumstances that often appeared desperate, also under circumstances which imposed a test of endurance as hard as any men have ever been required to bear. I am proud to say that they invariably bore these with an outstanding spirit of pluck and cheerfulness.”

The ceremony was brought to a close with the singing of the National Anthem.

After the laying the corner stone, the building proceeded. It is constructed of red brick and Manitoba limestone. In tribute to the Canadian soldiers who fought so valiantly in the horror of the battles of VIMY and MONS, these two names were engraved in stone blocks to be placed in the facade. During construction, Dr. H.C. Cunningham, when passing by, noticed that one block had been placed upside down and read SNOW. Upon advising the contractor in time, the correction was made. Over the double-door main entrance, a large, arched window of green, yellow and clear glass lights the staircase to the auditorium.

The Memorial Hall opening ceremonies were held on May 24, 1920. The Memorial Hall, in 1980, continues to stand firmly in the little park in the centre of town. It has withstood severe flooding of the Boyne River twice. The Veterans no longer meet in the room allowed them. The Great War Veterans' Association reorganized into the Royal Canadian Legion, Carman Branch No. 18, and built their own substantial accommodation. Annual Armistice (Remembrance) Day Services were held in the auditorium for about fifty years. The Great War Veterans' Association room is now the Council Chambers. Court is also held in this room on a regular basis, and it is rented out for various meetings.



# Darlingford

## Memorial and Loss

A passage in the local history book, *The Darlingford Saga* (1972) describes the background for the Darlingford War Memorial:

In August 1914, World War I came as a great shock to most of the civilized world. Recruiting depots were opened at both Morden and Manitou and in the next four years, almost one hundred young men left our district, some never return. In 1918, when the survivors began to return the loss of so many fine local lads intensified the feelings of both the folks at home and the lads who left some stout friends behind. At the very outset of the proposed Memorial it was stressed that it should be placed in memory of all who gave their lives for their country, unfettered by affiliation with any creed or cult, or even with the Municipality or the Provincial government – just Darlingford people – young and old alike. This has been adhered to as you will note.

The ground work was started in 1920 by several committees and by that grand old man, Ferris Bolton, who drove the first spike by donating the property, close by the school, so that all school children would see and memorize those three words “Lest We Forget” worked in stone in front of the Memorial Property.

Through some oversight in storing of the early records, we have no specific mention of the actual people involved but we do have a large minute book dating from 1923 [onwards]. To overcome the loss, we turned to any other sources available and an excerpt from the “Western Canadian” (Manitou) reports as follows: “It was on July 5, 1921 that the grand opening of the Memorial and dedication of the plaque of names of those who fell and “sleep in Flanders fields” as McCrea so aptly put it. The main speaker for the event was Sir James A.M. Aikins, the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba and himself the honorary Colonel of the 90th Winnipeg Rifles. To grace his arrival, a body-guard of lads from the Manitoba Mounted Rifles of Morden were waiting at our C.P.R. Depot and, after the customary ritual, the M.M.R.’s, together with the band, led the parade up to the newly completed grounds. Other speakers were the late Hon. J.L. Brown of Pilot Mound, member for Lisgar Constituency and, of course, the late Ferris Bolton and others. The rest of the afternoon was enlivened by three baseball games and races held on the school grounds close by. A fitting celebration to be sure.”



The 1921 dedication ceremony for the Darlingford War Memorial.

While prices were not so high in those days, it is understood that the actual cost of the building and legal fees, etc., came to well over \$5,000 and we do have one definite reference to finances. At the outset over \$1,200 was received in personal pledges and a like amount in cash. Naturally the rough labor was done gratis and all bills paid by a bank loan with the board men to roll up a “really big show” for the next year.

On July 12, 1923, a monster joint picnic and sports day was planned by joining forces with the Grand Orange Lodge. Pages could be written of this event but a few facts will have to suffice.

From the Minute Book we find the baseball tournament cost \$150 in prizes, etc. The band received \$34, bread almost \$20, meat \$150 (cooked ham came at 50 cents per pound), rent of dishes (used for meals served in rink) \$27.50 and so on to a total of \$1,100 paid out of which the L.O.L received \$115. The great news next day was that all indebtedness was paid off with \$220 to the credit in the bank account. Oh Darlingford, we stood on guard for thee that day.

The next problem was not so easily solved: planting grass, shrubs, trees and landscaping as well as endless hours of caretaking in the years that followed. We must mention that the entire layout was set up by the Superintendent of the Dominion Experimental Station, Morden, and trees, etc., provided by them. If it

was not Dr. Leslie in that early beginning, it must be recorded that he often dropped by to keep a watchful eye on the many plantings and for many years was on call in case of problems.

One project that made this Park possible was the installation of a huge metal tank at the school to catch rain water, which was piped underground across to the park. Perhaps one of Manitoba's first pipe lines! It worked wonders.



The Darlingford War Memorial honours men of the 184<sup>th</sup> Battalion, including three sons of Ferris Bolton who never returned, with two of them circled in this photograph: Harry Bolton at the middle left and Bert Bolton at the far right.

To the late Mr. James Rice fell the task of caretaker and even though partially crippled he really took care of it all for several years, until his health forbade. The Darlingford ladies' groups also were often quite militant if the work got behind and joe'd hubby on to hit hoe-handle evenings. With the only revenue for upkeep coming from annual services, it is remarkable how even through those dry thirties the Park was always well kept. The other names of long standing service are the late Massrs, Dan Kelly, Griff Williams, and David Hunter.

From the very outset the hope was that an annual Remembrance Service at the memorial would involve the younger children. It was also stressed that it be kept as non-military as possible, with little pomp and show. To achieve this end a service was laid out where, after the formal opening, the list of names of those who did not return would be called out in pairs while two small children carried

up small bouquets of flowers to be placed on a large cross held for that purpose. The children then took up positions at the front also forming a cross. After the second war another was added. Many grown-ups in our district remember taking part in this ceremony in their tender years.

The names of 87 local persons of all ranks who served in the Great War are carried on the plaque.

# Dauphin

## Billy Barker

In the Dauphin local history, *Dogtown to Dauphin*, a passage describes the life of the great WWI flying ace, Billy Barker, a local boy:

Apart from the eighty-two men from the Dauphin district who died in service, no greater contribution was made to the war effort than that by “Billy” Barker, the son and grandson of pioneer Dauphin families.

Bill Barker was born in Dauphin Lake district in 1894. His grandfather came to the Dauphin area to live in 1888 and to ply his trade as a blacksmith. The blacksmith shop was located in Dogtown, a mile north of the present town. When Gartmore and Dogtown moved to the new townsite in 1896, George Barker Sr. became the first village mayor. His son, George Jr., married Jane Alguire in 1893. She was also the daughter of a pioneer family.

They farmed in the Dauphin area, and for a few years near Russell, Manitoba. George was a pioneer in the use of the new steam engines to run the threshing machines and to break the land. There was a family of nine children, seven sons and two daughters, amongst whom was William George Barker, an air hero of World War I of 1914-1918.

Bill Barker initially enlisted in a cavalry unit in 1915 but soon transferred to the Royal Flying Corps where he distinguished himself in action in France and Italy in the late war years of 1917 and 1918, flying Sopwith “Camels.” His exploits as a machine gunner in the air over the Somme, and as a fighter pilot along the Peavee river front in Italy, are legend.

He is credited with having destroyed fifty-two enemy aircraft and nine enemy balloons. He flew with #28 Squadron. He earned a Military Cross with Bar, a Distinguished Service Order and the Victoria Cross, presented to him by King George V in March of 1919.

He has been described as “the greatest of them all” by Edmund Crosgrove in “Canada’s Fighting Pilots.” Stephen Franklin, writing about heroes of the high skies says, “The most indestructible of all great Canadian air aces, however, undoubtedly was Major William G. Barker who flew a greater variety of sorties

for a longer period of time than any of his countrymen and won the Victoria Cross on October 27, 1918 in the most lop-sided air battle in history." The battle referred to took place about twenty-one thousand feet above Cambrai when Barker attacked a German reconnaissance plane only to find that nearby were three squadrons of German Fokkers, sixty planes in all. Before the battle was over Barker had downed five enemy planes, had suffered severe wounds in his right thigh, left leg and left elbow and had brought his bullet-riddled plane in behind allied lines. He himself was critically injured, dazed and bleeding.



William George Barker, V.C., D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C. (*Dogtown to Dauphin*, 123)

Sadly, Billy Barker lost his life in an air crash over Upland airport in Ottawa in 1930 while he was test-flying a plane.

# Dauphin

## Reflections on the Great War

Passages in the Dauphin local history, *Dogtown to Dauphin*, describe local perspectives on World War I:

“The greatest war in the history of the world war is now in progress”, the editor of the *Dauphin Herald* wrote on August 6, 1914. He went to say, “In this war Great Britain is a participant. As part of the Empire, Canada is also at war and is ready to take her part in whatever way she may be called”.

While these sentiments well expressed the views of the great majority of Canadians, there were to be some dissenters. In any event, the statement defined the colonial view of Canada which was evident at the time.

This news of war was the first that many in the district had of World War I. News of previous months, at least in the local publications, contained few comments about forthcoming conflict. The realization of war seems to have come, in Dauphin’s case, to a largely unsuspecting populace. The *Dauphin Herald* of the previous week, July 30, 1914, made no mention of the possibility of war, nor had the newspapers of earlier months discussed such a possibility. Indeed, as late as March 26, 1914, the *Dauphin Herald* carried a news item reporting a speech by Philip Scheidemann, the first vice-president of the German Reichstag. Scheidemann was quoted as saying that “there will never be another war in Western Europe because working people are organized as socialists in opposition to war and are resolved not to fight each other at the command of their rulers”.

Scheidemann’s prophecy was inaccurate in all respects. Not only did war in Eastern Europe occur within a few months of his prediction but working men from all walks of life, both in Germany and the Allied countries, flocked to their flags to fight one another.



Dauphin Pioneers Banquet in the Pollon Block, 1916. (*Dogtown to Dauphin*, 128)

The response in Dauphin to the news of war was quick and spontaneous. Within the next week young men of the district were applying for service and by August 13, 1914, it was reported that Garth Johnston, Neville Munson, Frank Bumstead, H. H. Moore, E.C. Herrick and Neil Birss had made application to go to the front. By the end of August they were posted for training to Valcartier, Quebec and by early November some of these men were already on their way overseas.

War news and wartime activities began to occupy the major attention of the townspeople. War news dominated the newspapers. A great deal of what was written was propaganda intended to stimulate recruitment of young men and to encourage investment in war bonds for the national effort. Dauphin responded to these approaches to a high degree. By February, 1915 one hundred and eight men from Dauphin and district had enlisted.

There were reports of fierce battles in France and rumours that ten thousand men on each side had been killed. The rumours of the Kaiser's illness with pneumonia in late 1914, the "saving of Calais" by the British in April, 1915, the German sinking of the Lusitania by submarine in May of the same year, the battle of Ypres and the report of the use of poison gas in the trenches in 1915, all helped to spur the organization of patriotic groups, soldiers' welfare societies and bond drives. Recruiting was active and the war effort was carried on with fervour and sacrifices on the parts of many of Dauphin's citizens.



The intensity of the struggle in France appeared to increase through 1915 and 1916. Pages of news and reports of heavy fighting along all fronts continued throughout these years. Dauphin received the reports of injuries and death with the same degree of shock and determination that characterized all Canadian communities. There was a particular shock by such reports as occurred in January, 1916, when it was learned that four brothers were killed together in a bomb blast in France. Surely, war was hell.



The July 1, 1919 parade down Main Street, Dauphin. Baptist church in background, left. (*Dogtown to Dauphin*, 123)

January of 1917 ushered in a very cold spell as temperatures dropped to -40 degrees F. One hundred men from the Dauphin area had enlisted. There were reports of “wonderful fighting in the air” by Canadian members of the Royal Flying Corps, amongst whom was Bill Barker. Archie Chute and Jack Ramsden were leaving Dauphin for active service, one to report to his battalion, the other to enlist after having passed his law examination for entrance to the bar. Enlistment had so reduced availability of local labour that work on the Hudson Bay railroad ceased. Soldiers, as well as available townsmen, pitched in to help reap the harvest in the fall. Many Sunday church services became memorial services as the list of wounded, missing or dead, lengthened. As local citizens and organizations pitched in to help in the war effort, they were successful in over-subscribing all the war bond drives and in donating in liberal amounts to those who were sending clothes, cigarettes and treats to the men at the front and to the wounded in hospitals. Neighbour helped neighbour through crises resulting from the war action. But the struggle was long. As time elapsed news

came of Ypres, St. Eloi, the Somme, Arras, Hill 70, Lens, Amiens, Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele.

The speed of enlistment was not sufficient to keep pace with the number of casualties. Canada faced the knotty problem of conscription. By September, 1917, a "Win the War" meeting was held in Dauphin to support the cause of conscription. By October of that year conscription was a fact by dint of the Military Services Act, promulgated by the Borden Government. Exemption boards were established and young men, not already in service, began to receive their calls. Names of allowed and disallowed appeals against conscription were published weekly. In November a "First Victory Loan" was advertised with a 5.5% interest. Merchants of Dauphin urged to purchase of these bonds; the goal was one million dollars, to be raised in the northern districts of Manitoba. Dauphin raised four hundred thousand dollars. A committee consisting of J.W. Bossons, R.M. McCall, Dr. G.C.J. Walker and Thomas Little was established to take applications for service in the Royal Flying Corps. A Dauphin War Committee was very active in obtaining food supplies and in urging on the townspeople, conservation of all goods and materials.

At the Gary Theatre, local patrons were seeing such movies as "The Kaiser, Beast of Berlin" and documentaries of the Battle of the Somme. Coal was in short supply and local fuel merchants were advising citizens to "buy now or freeze." In August of 1918, the Governor-General, the Duke of Devonshire visited Dauphin; Charlie Chaplin was playing at the Gay theatre; and memorial services were being held for one of Dauphin's sons, Lieutenant Willis Code, whose father had brought Dauphin its first creamery.

Such were the valleys and peaks of Dauphin's emotional life.

# Dauphin

## War Memorial

In the Dauphin local history, *Dogtown to Dauphin*, a passage describes the unveiling of the Dauphin War Memorial:

At the local level, several matters of concern were settled in the decade of the twenties. After many meetings and considerable debate, a war memorial was unveiled on a rainy day in mid-June of 1924. Sir James Aikins, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and John Bracken, Premier of Manitoba, attended the unveiling of a beautiful memorial column, topped by a nine-foot figure of Miss Canada and inscribed on two sides with the names of 82 Dauphin and District men who had fallen in the 1914-18 war. The inscription read "There Is No Wealth But Life – These Gave Their All". The memorial was paid for by public subscription and was contracted by Guinn and Simpson of Portage la Prairie, at a cost of \$5,500.



The Cenotaph, Dauphin. c. 1930. (*Dogtown to Dauphin*, 123)

# Dropmore

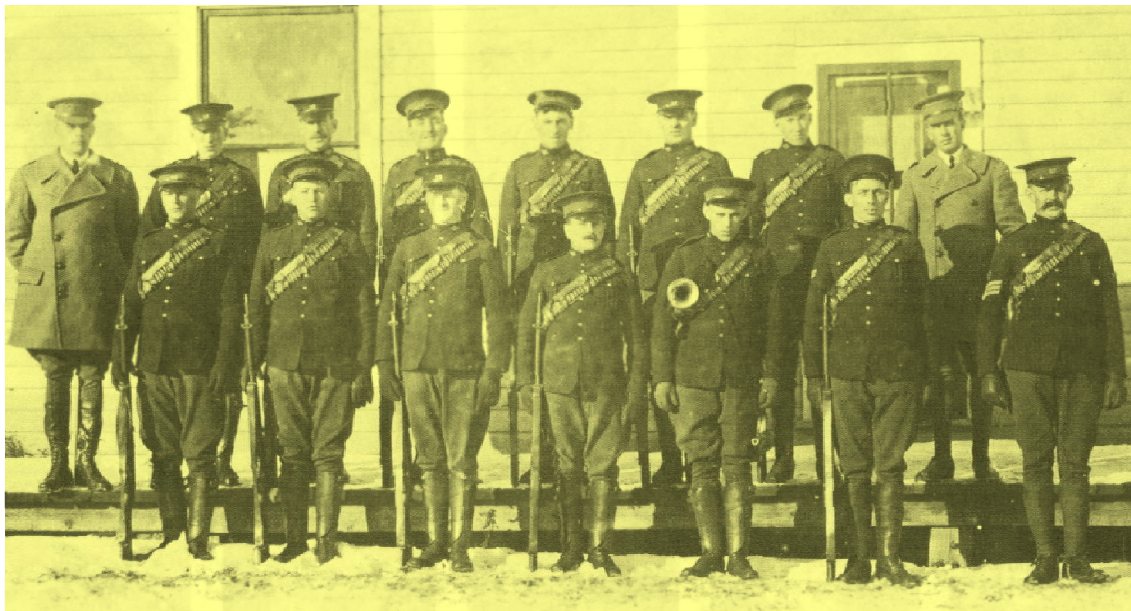
## War Memorial

In the local history, *Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, Mildred Rawlings provides a description of the 1919 unveiling of the war memorial at Dropmore:

In 1919, the people of Dropmore and surrounding districts erected a ten-foot high, white marble, needle-stone memorial in memory of the boys who were killed in The Great War 1914-1918.

It was unveiled on May 24th by Mrs. Neville with Captain Selkirk in charge of the ceremonies. Three rounds were fired by A.H. Goodbun and J. Dugan, F. White, B. Bradley-Hunt, E. Pope and A.W. Brown represented the returned men, while Mr. Lewis hoisted the "Canadian Ensign."

The following men lost their lives in World War I: Ken Clarke, John Grey, Frank Hunt, Arthur Hunt, Ira Leflar, William Watson, Leonard Gyson, Hugh Heather, Ralph Neville, and Ernest Theobald; and in World War II – James Hunter was killed in action.



Soldiers of the First World War at Roblin (*Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, 134)

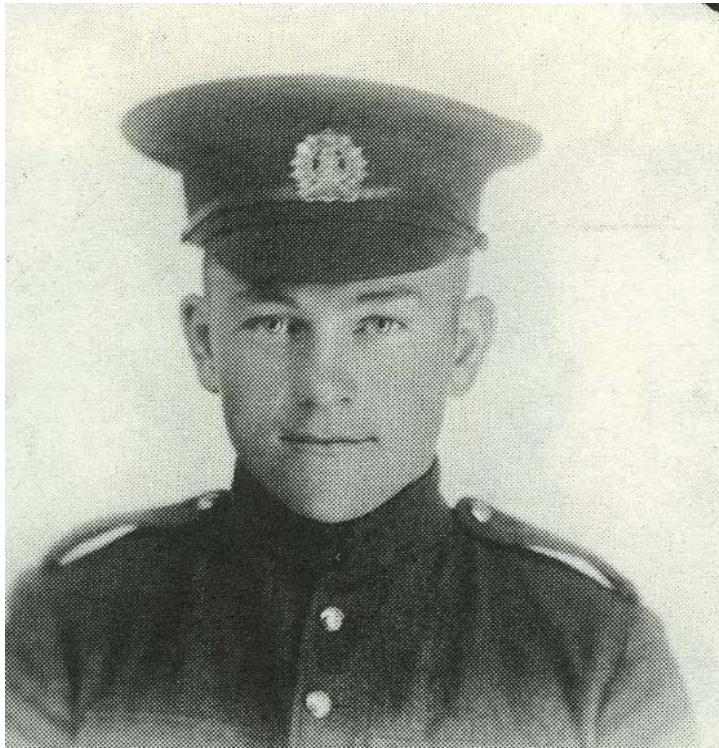
# Eddystone

## A Survivor's Tale

A passage in the Eddystone local history book, *Patience, Pride and Progress* (1983) includes the harrowing story of Jim Olafson, with the title, "The Empty Stretcher."

Margaret Cantelon interviewed a veteran of the First World War, and told his story in the first person. This veteran was her brother, Jim Olafson, a pioneer of the Reykjavik area:

I came out of darkness into a world of devastation. The memory of my last moment of consciousness was so vivid I was sure I was dead – looking back. The darkness was complete and there was stillness around me, although I could hear noises far off, harmless noises to me. I was dead. A blinding flash and it was all over, no pain.



Jim Olafson, the subject of "The Empty Stretcher."

Then I realized that I could see, the darkness was not all the same. I could move my eyes. Mounds and bumps, and I remembered we were in mud. I knew I was somewhere in France, and I knew I wasn't dead. I could feel the cold air on my face. Something was on top of me and I couldn't move. Nothing would move, only my eyes.

I wondered how long I had been there. My last memory, clearly my mind brought back the words of the sergeant as he had handed me the rum can: "Here, Jim, and take a snort yourself before you start off. You need it if anyone does. How you find your way about it in the mud I'm sure I don't know." But this was the very reason I had been chosen for this task – to take the rum ration to the boys out there somewhere in the swamp.

I was known as something of an expert on swamp travel, by night or day, for I had spent my boyhood in the marshlands of Lake Manitoba but here I was, at age 17, flat on my back, my swamp lore at an end. But I thought about it lying there in the mud, I even felt some pride in my craft. I was a scout, often sent out into No-Man's-Land to creep within listening distance of the enemy trenches. I always came back. My comrades said I had charmed life.

The words came back to me. I remembered somebody saying: "Jim, neither a bullet nor a German will ever get you, for a bullet will just slip off you, and you will always slip away from any German." Maybe he was right but there are more than bullets and Germans in the front line. It must have been an artillery shell that got me, maybe the first one to come over the night. It had been quiet and then suddenly nothing more to remember.

I could hear voices. I couldn't hear the words. Were they Germans? They were coming closer. Would it be the bayonet? Then I heard English words, men talking in subdued voices, stretcher-bearers; I could see their flashlights. I tried to shout and couldn't speak. But I could hear them – "I don't think there is anyone alive here . . . They're piled up on top of each other – poor fellows, they're out of their misery."

A tall man pulled the body from on top of me, and then another took a close look at me. I could see him but there was no recognition in his eyes. "Let's move on." somebody said, and suddenly I was afraid. They were going to leave me.

I could never tell you the agony and fear I felt – to be left in the mud alone. I had no way to express my frustration and desperation. I lay there in disbelief that it

was all to end this way. Then another voice said: "Look, this chap moved his eyes!"

They gathered around and put a flashlight on my face. Now I was paralysed – I couldn't move my eyes, and I just stared straight ahead into the light. Then hope within me died. They could see no movement. But I heard the same voice again, "I saw him move his eyes."

And then another voice added, "Let's take him anyway – we've got an empty stretcher."



The base of a war memorial as shown in the Eddystone local history book.

# Gimli

## The Cenotaph

*The History of Gimli* contains a reference to the development of the cenotaph:

To climax several years of planning, an attractive stone and brick cenotaph, in memory of the fallen in two World Wars and Korea, was erected by the branch on the centre strip on First Avenue, as their 1967 centennial project. Designed and built by a local artisan, Leonard Ciszewski, it was unveiled and dedicated in a solemn, simple ceremony as part of the Remembrance Day service on November 11, 1967.

Since then, the wreaths presented each Remembrance Day are laid at the Cenotaph, but most years the service is held at the Legion Hall, due to the coolness of the weather. For a year or so the service was held at Gimli Composite High School.

The Gimli Legion conducts the annual Poppy Day tag day on the Saturday prior to November 11, which has always been supported generously by the community. Proceeds help to employ handicapped veterans who make the wreaths and poppies. The Fund also provides emergency aid to families of veterans and servicemen when required.



In remembrance. (*The History of Gimli*, 355)



# Gladstone

## Photographs

The local history, *Gladstone Then and Now*, contains interesting images of the war memorial:



Gladstone Cenotaph (*Gladstone Then and Now 1871-2001, 2*)



Dedication of Gladstone Cenotaph, 1 July 1923 (*Gladstone Then and Now*, 2)

# Hamiota

## The War Effort at Home

In the Hamiota local history, *Grain of a Century*, Catherine Johnston collected some information about efforts on the home front:

Like most Canadian Communities, Hamiota and district rallied to help out the War Effort in both wars 1914-18 and 1939-45. War at its worst brings out the patriotism of a community at its best.

In 1915 the Ladies' Patriotic Society was active. Meetings were held in the basement of the Methodist Church. These ladies did sewing, knitting and packed parcels for Red Cross shipments to the military. They also shipped Christmas parcels to the Convalescent Home for soldiers in Winnipeg.

The boys and girls in the High School sent each of their soldier classmates a box of chocolates at Christmas.



World War I Parade (*Hamiota: Grains of Century*, 299)

In 1916, in an answer to an appeal through the *Echo* for food for returned soldiers in Winnipeg, the following was received – 37 sealers of fruit and pickles, 33 chickens, 1 duck, 3 turkeys, 2 Christmas puddings, 29 lbs. Butter, 10 lbs. Honey 6 Christmas cakes, 2 boxes cookies, 3 boxes candy, 200 lbs. beef and pork, 2 cans corn and 1 box cigars. Obviously, patriotism ran high.

On Wednesday, February 14, 1917, a Calico Ball was held in McConnell's Hall, with proceeds to be devoted to cotton dresses – wearing silk or chiffon was not allowed and a fine of 50 cents was imposed on those not wearing cotton. People donated money to a prisoner's fund," which was sent to the Prisoner-of-War Department of the Canadian Red Cross in London, England. In January 1917, \$25.00 war saving certificates were sold for \$21.50 - \$50.00 for \$43.00 and \$100.00 for \$86.00. Individual purchases were limited to \$150.00.

By December of 1917, the Ladies' Patriotic Society presented many unique ways of collecting money – concerts, teas, dances, a "foot measure" on pasteboard to be filled with dimes. They said "we must remember in this war, there are only two things to do – either FIGHT or PAY, and we who are paying are shouldering a very easy part of the burden". They bought field shirts for the soldiers in France, at \$1.18 each from the factory.

In 1917 women got the vote under special circumstances. "The qualifications for women voters were – the mother, wife, sister or daughter of any persons (male or female) who is serving in the military forces without Canada and in any naval force within or without Canada.



The 1914 boys on the march to the Cenotaph grounds (*Hamiota: Grains of Century*, 299)

Registration booths were set up in the public schools with the school teachers volunteering their assistance on Registration Day. People seemed to realize the need for co-operation in time of war. November 7/18 – talk of peace in the papers! Hamiota's quota for Victory Loans of \$225,000.00 went "over the top" to \$260,000.00. When the news of the Armistice reached Hamiota at 2 A.M. Nov. 14, 1918, people celebrated in a holiday fashion. On October 3, 1918, it was reported that Pte. Alex Brereton of McConnell had been in Oak River but resided for many years on his farm east of McConnell – a great honour indeed for the Private from McConnell and in reflection, for the community he represented. The war was almost over but a new enemy raised its head. In October 1918 public gatherings were banned due to the Spanish Influenza Outbreak – No Children's Aid Concert that year.



Memorial Day after W.W.I. (*Hamiota: Grains of Century*, 299)

# Hartney

## The View from Home

One of Hartney's local history books, *The Mere Living*, by Hazel McDonald Parkinson (1957), contains some vivid descriptions of a community's reaction to developing news of the First World War:

In Manitoba in August 1914 the crops were ripe and the harvest well begun. Interest was divided between garnering the grain and the news in our daily newspapers. War was so far from our experience that we had no conception of what its coming might mean.

The news that Britain had declared war on Germany flashed over the telegraph wires on August 4, to all the towns of the province. It spread to the townspeople and was telephoned to the farm homes. People were bewildered. Few realized how closely Canada would be involved although there was no question but that, if Britain were at war, we were at war too.

Day by day the newspapers reported the alarming story of the German advance through Belgium. Calls for recruits appeared in the papers. The *Hartney Star* for August 13 stated "There have been no decisive battles yet. There is a need for men, money and supplies to aid Motherland. Let us keep business and industry steady to preserve efficient aid." The August 29 issue of the *Star* reported "Terrible battle in Belgium. Britain loses 2,000 men. Namur occupied by Germans." A realization that this was a bigger war than our people had yet seen began to grow in our minds.

Early in September word reached Hartney that Chas. Fee, who had been working in Winnipeg, had joined the 79 Cameron Highlanders for overseas duty. Thus the first Hartney boy to enlist was the son of one of Hartney's first settlers. It seemed fitting that it should be so. Chas. Fee would see five years of fighting before his return to Canada.

In October, five men from the Hartney district enlisted: Russel Butchart, the first child born in the town; George Lumsden, a Scotsman who lived for several years in the district; Herbert C. Batty, another native son; C. G. Webb the Manager of the Union Bank at Hartney and C.A. Anderson who worked on a farm near that of Russell Butchart. Herbert Batty joined the 1st C.M.R.'s and the other the 27th

Battalion, all with headquarters in Winnipeg. C.G. Webb was discharged shortly after enlistment on medical grounds, but in 1917 was accepted with C.A.S.C. and served in France and with the Army of Occupation on the Rhine. Russell Butchart, C.A. Henderson and George Lumsden were with the Army of Occupation after November 11, 1918.

In December 1914 A.P.F. Singer and Henry Strickland from Barber District and Arthur Andrews of the Bethel Community enlisted in the 45th Battalion. All three were killed at the front before 1916 ended.

Stories of the fighting and suffering in Belgium filled the daily newspapers and spurred the citizens to do something to help. The Home Economics Society was the first to act. In September 1914 they instituted a fund for Belgium widows and orphans which they supported by a tea-room in the J.C. Callander store building, where the women took turns as hostesses each week, supplying tea, sandwiches, and cake or pie, to Saturday shoppers. In November the women allocated their receipts to the purchasing of blankets for the Belgians and reported \$119.50 received.

In July 1915, under the leadership of A.C. West and E.A. Eastwood, a Home Guard unit was organized, with representatives of surrounding towns meeting in Hartney for squad drill and target practice.

Shortly after its organization the leaders were informed that if fifty men were recruited in the locality they could become a unit of an overseas battalion, and could be billeted, and receive their preliminary training in their home district. The officers of the home guard met with the town council to discuss the matter and to secure a room for a local recruiting office.

Interest in enlistment was strengthened by letters received from Hartney boys already serving in France. The first such letter was from Pte. Wilmer McActer to his mother, and was printed in the *Star*. In it he described the grain fields of France and told that he was in the trenches and was determined to trust in the Almighty and keep his head down.

A letter from Pte. Herbert C. Batty to Rev. C. A. Blay four months later stated, "I am in the trenches up to my knees in mud. You would laugh if you could see me now. I have a pair of leggings made of sand bags to keep the mud from my legs. I look a tough bird but I'm happy as a lark, or a pig in a mud puddle. The country

is badly wrecked, but although there are graves in the fields, the farmers work their farms just behind the trenches as if nothing was going on.”



Hartney War Memorial, 2011.

A letter that appeared in the *Star* in September 1915 was from a soldier who knew Robert Joslyn, the son of Rev. J.H.L. Joslyn, who attended Hartney School 1905-09. “Joslyn won the D.C.M. at Ypres, where, as a runner he was carrying messages from command headquarters to a forward trench after the telephone wires were down,” he wrote. “I saw him after he’d made the run two or three times. His face was white for he knew he was facing death but he was determined to do his duty.

“I saw Joslyn last at an old house on April 25. I was sitting beside the house trying to bind up my wound. He saw me and told me to wait while he delivered a message and he’d help me to the dressing station, but we missed one another in the rush, as there was heavy firing and the enemy was advancing about two hundred yards en masse, and our boys were holding strong to the trenches and any shelter to take up the frontage.

“When I arrived back to the battalion from hospital ten days ago Joslyn was missing. The boys said the last they saw of him was when he jumped over the trench to make the charge on May 24. The boy next him saw him fall and put up his hand and say ‘O Canada’.”



Word reached Hartney that Pte. A. P. F. Singer who enlisted from the Hartney district in 1914, was killed at Ypres in June and that Pte. James Watt and Pte. Henry Strickland had all died in the Somme fighting in September.

On October 5, 1916 Lyall Rea, the son of D.W. Rea, was reported "killed in action" on September 19th, at the Somme. A letter from Pte. Jas. Watt, written just before his death, to Mrs. George Will, at whose home he was billeted in Hartney, said that he knew that Lyall was a prisoner of the Germans. This hopeful message was confirmed by an official telegram to Mr. Rea that his son was in German hands where he remained until the end of the war.

Early in 1917 Nurse Margaret McKie, the district nurse in Hartney, enlisted for overseas service. She saw nineteen months' service with the 9th Canadian Stationary Hospital in France before returning to resume her position as district nurse.

In April 1917, Pte. Howard Fry died of pneumonia in a hospital in France and after the severe fighting at Vimy Ridge, Sgt. Harry Brassine, Lc. Corp. Kenneth Ross, Pte. F. A. Peturson, Pte. Daniel McCuaig, Pte. Robert J. Gallinger and Cpl. Charles Walker were reported killed in action. Pte. Thomas Pettypiece and Pte. John Hardy died at Passchendaele before 1917 closed.

At the war's end Hartney district, including Lauder, had sent 261 men and one nurse to the forces, of whom 42 had died. The Hartney contribution to the Manitoba Patriotic Fund was \$1,791.65, and to the Red Cross \$5,979.58. The Soldiers' Aid Tea Room had raised \$10,839.46 while 18,111 sewn and knitted articles had been sent by the women of the district.

On May 29, 1919, a Returned Soldiers' banquet was held in the town hall. There were over five hundred people present including over one hundred soldiers with their wives and families. Reeve George Morrison was chairman; Professor Racine came from Souris to conduct an orchestra, and a speaker for the Great War Veterans' Association, that was in process of formation at the time, spoke on the aims and policy that body would pursue for the benefit of returned men. At the close of the program Rev. C. A. Blay presented a roll of honor to the town. This roll contained not only the names of men whose homes were in Hartney but those who had enlisted in Hartney, including the men of the 22nd battalion. In following years other organizations remembered those who fell in the war by the erection of various memorials. In April 1921 St. Andrew's Anglican Church unveiled a memorial tablet bearing the names of Kenneth Ross, W. Baker,

Charles Walker, J. Simmons, Fred Peterson, A.F. Singer, D. McCuaig, Fred Trevitt, William Cross, Fred West, T. Pettypiece, R.J. Gallinger, members and adherents who lost their lives. On this occasion Lieut. Colonel G.A. Wells, D.C.M. was the speaker and reminded the congregation of the sacrifice and service, not only of those who died, but of all who had served. A spray of flowers from returned men bearing the inscription "We'll never forget" was placed beside the tablet by T.P. Drew.



Detail of the Hartney War Memorial, 2011.

It was not until July 1, 1928, that a memorial shaft of granite, bearing the names A. Anderson, E.A. Eastwood, H. V. Fray, R. J. Gallinger, J. Hardy, H. Henderson, W.W. Irvine, W. Jackson, J.P. McCann, D. McCuaig, F.A. Peturson, T. Pettypiece, K.T. Ross, A.J. Slimmons, F.W. Trevitt, C. Walker and J. Watt was erected in the bandstand park on East Railway Street and unveiled at a solemn service. On that day a troop of the Manitoba Rangers under Captain Robertson of Souris, with members of the Canadian Legion from Souris, Wawanesa, Elgin, Virden, Boissevain and Reston, and all men of the Hartney district who had served in His Majesty's forces, marched from the bridge at the Souris River to the monument, led by a pipe band, and were drawn up as a guard of honour during the unveiling ceremony. Wreathes were laid by societies of the town and by next-of-kin and the "Last Post" was sounded. Similar ceremonies have been held each successive summer to commemorate Hartney's war dead.

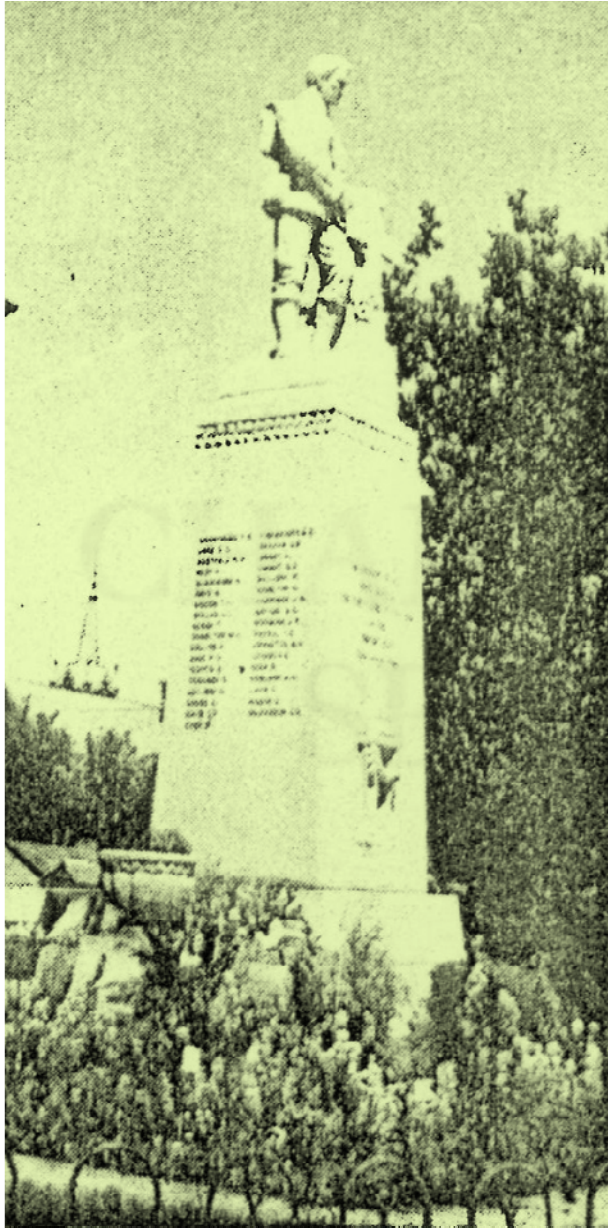
# Killarney-Turtle Mountain Memorial

The local history, *Then and Now: A Condensed History of Turtle Mountain Municipality and the Town of Killarney*, contains the following observations about war and the creation of the local memorial:

The colonies joined in the fray (before the Commonwealth came into being) and Canada did a big job in preparing the finest of our men and also women to give assistance to the "Mother Country," as Britain was affectionately called in these days. Canada was linked up with Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, and other members of this Commonwealth of Nations and fought the frenzied fanatics to a finish, after having so gallantly rushed to the help of down-trodden European masses which were nearly brought to their knees by a brutal, barbarian band of brigands, as the forces of the Kaiser proved themselves to be until their arrogance was beaten to the dust.

On November 11th, 1918, the hostilities came to a halt, but the sacrifice had been great and among the casualties were a great many Killarney young men, many of whom enlisted of their own free will and at a tender age, some just out of their teens, others barely so. The list of those who did not return to their homes here will be noted at the end of this "Jubilee Tribute to Their Memory." Some too returned to us maimed and broken in health, of these a number have passed to their heavenly reward, while a few are still with us as a reminder of those poignant days, 1914-1918.

Spurred on by the tragedy the First World War brought to Turtle Mountain and Killarney (nearly 100 lost their lives in it) from this area, stout hearted residents, including many who are still resident here, banded together to create some suitable memorial. The response to their call for funds was good and resulted in the erection in 1920 of the outstanding cenotaph which graces the front of Killarney's town hall. The committee handed this over to the town as its caretaker, after the unveiling. Here the annual memorial service is held and residents of town and district still assemble in goodly number to place their floral tributes and offer testimony of their great regard for fallen warriors.



Killarney War Memorial. (*Then and Now: A Condensed History of Turtle Mountain Municipality and the Town of Killarney*, 1957)

# Manitou Photographs

A History of Manitou and Area contains two important photographs



Memorial on the SW corner of Main and Park (with additional tablets from World War II). This beautiful monument was erected jointly by Manitou and Pembina and was one of the first of its kind in Manitoba. (*A History of Manitou & Area*, 138)



Death notice for Corporal. Wm. Hodgson. (*A History of Manitou & Area*, 142)

# Mariapolis

## Letters Home

The Mariapolis local history book, *Echoes of Our Heritage* (1991), contains samples of letters sent home from the front, and even one from a mother to the Minister of Agriculture and Immigration:

When Great Britain declared war in 1914 against Germany, Canada immediately took steps to aid the British War effort. The first Canadian soldiers landed in France in February 11, 1915. Canadian soldiers played key roles in places like Vimy Ridge, Ypres, Arras and Mons.

The soldiers life in the trenches of Europe was often a very difficult one as is shown but the following excerpts from a letter printed in *La Liberté*. The date is November 3, 1917. The letter is from Henry Trudel of Mariapolis, a private with the 78th Battalion, stationed in France.

*"Dear parents.*

.... I believe that you have learned that I was wounded by a blast of shell fire, on my left knee and also to my head. These are not serious injuries...we marched 3 miles to get to the Red Cross under a storm of shells. From there we took the Red Cross train. It took several hours to get to the hospital . . . . Here, it rains every day. We are in the mud up to our butt. The cold in Canada is still better than the weather here . . . *Will this terrible nightmare ever end?*

From your son who thinks of you always in his prayers. Kisses to the whole family,

Henry."

Another letter dated July 20, 1918 from the same Henry Trudel.

*"Dear parents,*

I believe that you have already heard that I was gased the night of my birthday, July 22. After several days of rest, we took the train to go to the battlefield. All went well for several days, when one night, while we were digging a trench, at about 11 o'clock, the Germans bombarded us with shell fire and gas and all sorts of shells imaginable. We had to leave the area and walk two miles with our gas



masks. Everything was going pretty well until the next morning when we became sick and blind. I lost my sight for 5 days . . . one morning I saw daylight next to my little nurse whom I had never seen before. Several soldiers of my battalion are here because of the same incident.

Your son who loves you always,  
Henry.”



*Archie Joseph Arthur Charette* – Enlisted and joined the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion overseas and was a victim of mustard gas poisoning from which he suffered until his death in 1942. (*Echoes of Our Heritage: Mariapolis and District 1891-1991*, 213)

In Canada the war effort kept everyone working hard to help the families of the soldiers with physical and moral support. Canada was truly the bread basket of the world. The farmers could sell everything they grew at a good price. Things are never as simple as they seem however and so it was with grain production. The crop of 1917 was not bountiful. The plight of the families left to work the land is shown by the letter to the Minister of Agriculture and Immigration from a Mariapolis mother begging for the return of her son to help on the farm. It is dated June 11, 1918.

*"Dear Sir,*

I am not educated but my heart will speak for me. I write to you to beg of you to give me back my son. He is my only support and he has sowed 200 acres which will be lost if I cannot get him back for at least 6 months . . . I cry to you, let my son come back for 6 months. Take pity on me for it means ruin for myself, him and my two other young children . . . I am a widow and my case is certainly a deserving one.

Hopefully yours,  
*Hermine Desrochers*  
(My son is Albert)"

The newspapers printed articles asking for contributions for the Red Cross and for the Tobacco Fund. "For every 25 cents you contribute to Canada's tobacco fund some soldier on active service will receive a large package of Canadian Manufactured Tobacco regularly priced at \$1.00." Sugar was in short supply as was fresh fruit. Reported in the December issue of both *Baldur Gazette* and *La Liberté* papers, Mr. August Delichte did a door to door appeal to collect shin plasters (\$.25) to buy flour destined to help the Belgium War Victims. He collected the great amount \$200.00

# Melita

## Local Military Life

Our First Century, the local history for the Town of Melita and Municipality of Arthur, contains these extracts concerning local military life, and of the unveiling of the war memorial:

The "C" Squadron was first formed in Melita in April, 1908 with Lieutenant G. W. Archibald in charge. In 1909 the "C" Squadron 12 Manitoba Dragoons under Captain J.G. Rattray gave a good account of itself at brigade camp in Brandon: drill riding – 90; outposts – 85; horse Q & C – 95; care of horses and saddlery – 90; care of lines – 90; dress and discipline – 85. Best shot badge was won by Corporal Williams of Melita.

The first annual Military Ball in Melita on February 19, 1909 was a great success as were those to follow. In 1910 the Melita Department changed districts. What was to be known as the 20 Border Horse was being organized. This was to include troops from Reston, Pipestone, Melita, Weyburn, Estevan and Carnduff. Major Rattray was promoted to Colonel. In March of this year "C" Squadron of the Twelfth Melita Dragoons became "A" Squadron of the 20 Border Horse. Through 1914 the annual camp was attended at Sewell.

In 1911 Lieutenant Archibald became Major and the squadron was considered to be part of one of the smartest militia cavalry regiments in Western Canada. In August, 1914 the Melita Department sent out instructions for volunteers to leave for the east. A large number of citizens and the band assembled at the station to wish them godspeed. In November 1914 an impromptu farewell was arranged by leading citizens for local departing members of the second contingent.

In 1921 Tom Ring visited Melita trying to organize the 20 Border Horse and in 1924 several members of Melita attended Camp Hughes. In 1925 "The Black Cat" premise was being fitted up for an armoury for B Squadron Border Horse in command of Captain Art Ross. Captain Ross, Schnell, Snedden and others attended a Border Horse function at Virden in December. In 1926 the annual banquet was held at the Palace Hotel, with Virden, Elkhorn, Oak Lake, Lauder and Melita represented. The camp was moved from "Hughes", 10 miles south, to Shilo in 1935. Captain Schnell, A. And R. Lawson and George Dowse were in training at this new camp in 1935.



Melita Dragoon, 1910. (*Our First Century: Town of Melita and Municipality of Arthur*, 171)

### **Cadet Corps 1914-1916**

On June 14, 1914 Colonel E. A. C. Hosmer, Virden, Commissioner of Cadets was in Melita officially. A cadet corps was formed here at that time with Rev. Forbes Robertson in charge. The boys received training and drill in the evenings when they held their meetings. The boys spent two weeks at camp in Sewell in July, 1914 and they presented a drama at the Opera House in October to raise funds. In December 1915 the boys placed fourth in the Award of Strathcona Trust for drill and efficiency. This brought a grant of \$35 to the cadets. In the following year Mr. Eadie and Mr. Moore, both qualified instructors assisted Rev. Roberston.

### **Soldiers of the Soil – 1915**

March 18 – Mr. Paris was appointed enrollment officer here. Messrs. Lamont, Estlin and Duncan were on a committee to look after placement of the boys with farmers and to see to their welfare. Boys between 15 and 19 years were eligible. In this way 25 or 30 thousand youthful helpers assisted in keeping the Imperial bread basket full. Some who enlisted were Joe Donahue, Howard Kenner, Ernest Oxley, Douglas Sturgeon, Tom Park, Tim Oberlin, James Garrett, Fred Estlin, William Dingwall, George Pitcher, Frank Graham, Harold Edwards, Borden Dobbyn and Clair Heath. Badges were awarded after three months of service.

### **Victory War Loans**

Victory War Loans were organized by The Dominion Government. On November 1, 1917, a Victory War Loans Committee was set up in Melita. This committee consisted of: President, John Williams; Secretary, A.B. Estlin; and committee members J.H. Kenner, R. Sterling and F. Walker. In 1940, a Victory War Loans Program was again established. All elevators in western Canada and theaters sold war saving stamps. Unit 37 included the Rural Municipalities of Arthur, Edward, Albert and Brenda plus the village of Napinka and town of Melita.

### **Memorial at Central Park**

The plans for the Memorial at Central Park were approved by all concerned in July, 1931. The main base of the cenotaph was to be 10 feet square, two smaller squares to be on top of this before the memorial shaft, nine feet in height and four feet wide is erected. Marble panels with the names of those who died in the Great War will grace the sides of the shaft. Cinder walk will lead to the north east and south west corners of the grounds with a drive way from the cenotaph to wrought iron gates on substantial posts of Manitoba field stone at Oak and Summit corner. Flower beds will be placed at intervals throughout the park. Cost was about \$1,100.

The War Memorial Dedication took place November 11, 1931 with Mayor Lamont, Lieutenant-Colonel Clingan, E. Willis M.L.A., Hon. D. L. McLeod. Reeve McCallum (Arthur), Reeve Hartry (Branda), Revs. Franklin and Lee, and W.R. Cosgrove Secretary Treasurer, Napinka on the platform. This cenotaph was re-dedicated to the memory of those who gave their lives in World War II, 1939-1945.

# Miniota

## War Memorial

An entry in the local history for the Rural Municipality of Miniota, *Bridging the Years*, focuses on the war memorial:

The first community Memorial Service was held in the Miniota Hall, presided over by Reeve Mitchell. The music was led by the Miniota Band, and the offering was donated to the Miniota Memorial Fund. These services were then held annually.

In August 22th, 1926, over two thousand persons attended the Memorial Service and the unveiling of the Cenotaph, which made it the outstanding event in the area. It was presided over by Reeve Mitchell. The church choirs of the district performed. The outstanding feature of the service was the unveiling of the Soldier's War Memorial, erected by the citizens of the municipality to the memory of those who enlisted and sacrificed their lives. The duty of unveiling was undertaken by the Officer commanding Military District #10: Major General H. D. B. Ketchen. The District Padre read the Honor Roll which included forty-one names.



Cenotaph (*Bridging the Years: Rural Municipality of Miniota*, 47)

For several years during the Thirties the Brandon Salvation Army Band, with Bandmaster Sergeant Major George Dinsdale M.L.A., and sons Walter and Harold, headed the parade and supplied the music. Also taking part in the parade were flower girls representing the Sunday Schools of the municipality, Miniota Brownie Pack, Girl Guide Company and Birtle and Miniota Boy Scouts. The band also held a concert on the Sunday evening which was well attended.

Over the years many of our Veterans have passed on, and there is a decreasing number left to take part in the service honoring comrades. Services are still held annually with the combined church choirs in attendance. Lunch is served to the Veterans and their families after the service by members of the Women's Institutes of the Municipality.

"Whatever their own philosophy, these men died for us. Memories mean responsibility – not just to reassure the past but to conquer the future. There can be no greater tribute than to crown the sacrifice of war with the abiding victory of peace. This is not someone else's responsibility, but ours – yours and mine."

# Minnedosa

## Local Soldiers

In the Minnedosa local history, *Minnedosa Valley Views*, various passages suggest the activities of local men in service:

With the exception of Armistice Day and Memorial Day, we tend to forget our servicemen and women. Generations are growing up not knowing of the sacrifices made by these men and women. The following chapter will present the information available to us in our effort to record Minnedosa's contribution to these efforts.

Following declaration of war in August, Major Dyer was requested to hold his company in readiness and before the month passed they were off for more training at Valcartier, Quebec, Rev. Wells with them. By September, a second Minnedosa group joined them.

Troop trains began passing through Minnedosa going east. First Canadian killed in action was a cousin of E.O. and a committee of Mesdames Andrew, Mellor, Cannon, Gugin, Drummond and Miss Shaw sprang up.



Minnedosa Soldiers off to War -1914. (*Minnedosa Valley Views*, 88)



By October Minnedosa troops were aboard the *Laplant* en route to Salisbury Plains, England. Lt. Robin Harrison continued recruiting more men at home. Dyer and Wells kept the folks here informed on Minnedosa troops overseas throughout the war.

In December, after a farewell dance, a large group left Minnedosa as part of the 32nd Battalion; 75 more recruits still training here. Charlie Roar began buying horses for the Army. By February 18, 285 men from Minnedosa and immediate district had enlisted. The 75 recruits, together with men from Brandon, Souris, Dauphin, and Virden, became part of the 45th Battalion. Minnedosa's first white resident, Al Scouten, tried to enlist from Riding Mountain but was rejected as too old.



Minnedosa Soldiers -1914 (Photo from *Minnedosa Valley Views*, 88)

Letters from men at the Front arrived. Frank Sewell writes from France that German biplanes try to bomb them every morning. Major Dyer is seriously wounded in Belgium while carrying a message when lines are down thereby 'saving thousands of Canadian lives' and gets a DSO; later a CMG and CB. Basil Ewens and Lt. F.R. Elliot have died of disease and exposure.

Wounded in spring 1915 include Cpl. Henry Dunbar, John Attenborough, machine gunner Cpl. (later Lt.) W.J. Burgess at Festubert, John Rogan, W. Ramsay, George Sparling, Lt. F.M. Davies, George Wollrow, Sgt. Ernest

Constable, James Lamont, Ed Hodgson, Lt. R.L. Denison, John White. George Sparling describes his platoon 'mowing down with rifles and machine guns' a mass formation of charging Germans at 60 yards. Dyer describes Minnedosa and other Canadian soldiers holding fast when German gas rolls in while others like those of France panic and flee.

First Minnedosa soldier killed in action was John Comrie in March, followed several weeks later by Harold Hulbert; soon after, G. Black, George Holder, Cyril Hunsley and A.M. McNair.



Cpl. Logie Cutchart. (*Minnedosa Valley Views*, 87)

D.A. Gill is one soldier killed that fall. Cpt. E.C. Jackson gets a DSO and J.H. Lindsay a DCM; Dyer writes his battalion has acquired the nickname 'the Fighting Fifth.'

At home, persons with German and Austrian backgrounds are refused Canadian citizenship at the courthouse, soldiers training at the armoury enter the 226th and help with seeking before going overseas. A homeguard again operates and Minnedosa Patriotic Association helps the federal government register all persons in the area. Many families are deeply involved in the war. By May, 1916 the H. McLeans have four sons in the service, James McKays and F. Greens three,

Mrs. E.O. Denison, Mrs. S. Fairbairn, C. McQuarries, Ed. Pearsons, Grovers, T. Donlons, J. Burgees', Mrs. Sewell, A.J. Bells, W. Wrights, John McQuarries, two, and many with one. Wounded during the first half of 1916 include Harold Fairbairn, Harvey Foster, T.L.O. Legion of Honor; Ed Wolf killed in action.

One local woman at the Front was nurse Lulu K. Walker.

Eric Pearson who has just received a bullet through the chest in the Battle of Courcellette when the 5th 'went over the top.' 'The Somme's some lace alright.' Flt. Lt. Stanley Kerr adds, "I think every one of the 37 who came from Minnedosa have been knocked out." Wounded include Lt. Harry Dyer, P.M. Kinney, E.S. McQuarrie, E.A. Chandler, Younger, Sgt. J. Sangster, Bryden, Alex Coote, Wm. Devlin, Harvey Rea, 'Scotty' Stevenson.



Minnedosa Armoury (*Minnedosa Valley Views*, 89)

Minnedosans pioneered in the air war in what later became the Air Force. These included W.J. Burgess, who transferred from the Army, Stanley Kerr, Frank McArthur, G.T. Turley, Vernon Dixon Lawrence Roche, M. Bigg. Con Farrell, who listed his hometown as Minnedosa, enlisted before he was of age and flew in the same unit as 'Wop' May with whom he became close friends. Former Minnedosan W.G. 'Billy' Barker of Dauphin became a world famous ace by destroying 50 German planes, winning the VC, DSO, MV. Another former resident, Cpt. Sutherland Stewart, was shot down in flames, survived but died in Egypt in 1920.

Following conscription, of 175 men registered at Minnedosa post office in November, 132 claim exemptions. For families like one with seven sons of whom one was killed in the Boer War, two already in this one, two now in trenches and another just enlisted, such attitude seems intolerable.

Suddenly the terrible war's over. Minnedosans flock to a united service of worship in the armoury 'to return thanks to Almighty God for bestowing victory and peace on us.' When the joyous news came over the wires at 2 a.m. to get everyone out of bed, 'pandemonium reigned supreme. Whistles were blown, bells rang, Roman candles burned and firecrackers exploded without number, the noise getting farmers up for miles around. During the day the greatest procession of automobiles ever seen here, gaily decorated with flags and streamers, went through several streets. A band of music was secured. Kaiser Bill was burned in effigy, and field guns were brought into action.' As the troops came home, a special welcome celebration ceremony's held in the Lyric theatre.

# Minto

## The Memorial Hall

A passage in *Minto Memoirs 1881-1979* describes in detail the November 29, 1921 opening of the Minto Memorial Hall:

Great deeds deserve due commemoration, and the district with Minto as its centre, flocked on Tuesday last to the new Memorial Hall, to pay tribute to its glorious dead. Fully four hundred people were crowded into the auditorium to witness the unveiling ceremony and hear the dedicatory address.

Promptly at 3 o'clock, Sir James Aikins, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, followed by Dr. Finley, M.P. and Mr. George McDonald, M.L.A., entered the hall and were accorded a great ovation. Mr. McDonald occupied the chair, and did not waste any time in opening the proceedings. The first item on the program was the singing of "O Canada." The chairman in his opening remarks, congratulated the people of Minto and district on their splendid achievement, and complimented the committee in charge for the efficient manner in which they had terminated their efforts.



James Albert Manning Aikins, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba 1916 to 1926.

Dr. Finley then spoke along patriotic lines, and recalled the gallant deeds performed by our Canadian soldiers in France. Then came the unveiling of the Memorial Tablet, which is a magnificent piece of bronze, and a genuine work of art. The tablet was set upon a raised dais on the stage, draped with the Union Jack. The dedicatory sentences pronounced by Sir James Aikens were most impressive, and at a given signal from Sir James, two returned soldiers, in uniform, raised the veil and the beautiful tablet was exposed to public view for the first time. Those who paid the supreme sacrifice and bronze are: John Abbott, David M. Calderwood, Alistar Girg, Sidney Halliday, Charles Lovat, James Meek, Alfred McLatchie, Elmore Pringle, David Ribbons, Zachariah Sheppard, Thomas Tyreman, Norman Waddell, James Wark, Lawrence ward, Harold White, Angus McIntyre.



Minto Memorial Hall, ca. 1925. (*Minto Memoirs 1881-1979*, 47)

Sir James called the roll, and in answer to each name a floral spray was placed at the foot of the tablet by the school children. Then a choir of 25 voices, directed by W.F. Carter, sang Kipling's "Recessional"; Mrs. Blakely at the piano. This ended the unveiling ceremony.

Sir James then launched forth into one of the most stirring addresses ever heard in Minto, he eulogized the members of the C.E.F. and as compared with the heroes of the past, our "Tommys" were the greatest heroes of all time. In speaking of those who rest in Flanders Field, Sir James said: "that no matter what their shortcomings in civil life might have been, they had accomplished a purpose, and thereby proved themselves the very highest type of manhood."

"Great as may have been our achievements, loyal as may have been our hearts, glorious as may have been our sacrifices, the gallantry and unselfish devotion of our men would mean little indeed to the generation yet unborn, had no cost been made to preserve their memory, and Minto has every reason to be proud of its beautiful tribute to its fallen heroes."

The Minto orchestra, under the direction of W. Oliver, very ably assisted in the dedicatory services.

# Moline

## Plaques and Cairn

The local history for Rapid City and area, *Our Past for the Future* (1978), provides some observations about local honour rolls and the war memorial:

Immediately after World War I the Moline Womens Institute erected an Honour Roll for the men of the community who had served in the war. Mr. Harry Fulcher of Rapid City was hired to make a wooden plaque and have the names printed on the plaque. This was built of oak lumber. The top and sides were shaped to give a pleasing effect. This Honour Roll was placed on the front wall of the Moline Church behind the pulpit and altar where it could be viewed by all.

Following World War II the community wished to have another Honour Roll. They were fortunate to be able to obtain Mr. Harry Fulcher's services – now semi-retired – to make a plaque to match the one of the first war. When this was completed the two plaques were placed in an attractive setting at the front of the church.



The Honor Roll of World War II also made by Harry Futcher of Rapid City (*Rapid City and District: Our Past for the Future*, 150)

When the church closed in 1972 the Honour Rolls were moved to the Moline Community Centre and placed on the south wall of the south room.



On the same day of the Moline Co-op 50th Anniversary – June 27, 1964 a ceremony was held to unveil a cairn recently built by the community on the N.W. corner of the townsite on Sec. 8-14-20. This cairn was dedicated to the memory of the men in the two World Wars 1914-1918 and 1939-1945. Also to the memory of the pioneers of the district from 1878 and on. This cairn was financed by money from the sale of the Moline Rink and the one plaque was bought by the surplus of money raised to send boxes to men overseas.



Cairn at Moline, unveiled 27 June, 1964 (*Rapid City and District: Our Past for the Future*, 150)

The cairn was unveiled by Mrs. James (Edith) St. John and Mrs. Fred (Agnes) Yorke. Rev. Victor Bowins offered a prayer of dedication for the cairn and gave a short address. Mrs. George (Mary) Underhill placed a wreath at the cairn in memory of the members of the services that had paid the supreme sacrifice in the two World Wars. To conclude the ceremony Donald Gilchrist of Rivers – on the bugle sounded the Last Post.

# Neepawa

## A Calendar's Story

The Neepawa local history, *Neepawa Land of Plenty*, contains a brief passage from Mr. John Graham:

This 1917 calendar was saved by my wife Edith, and now hangs on my wall in East View Lodge. It is a cloth calendar and is precious because it reminds me of my brother-in-law Private R.E. Jones who enlisted in the 181<sup>st</sup> Battalion Canadian Expeditionary Force on January 1, 1917 and of my brother Private Sam Graham of the 226<sup>th</sup> Battalion C.E.F. Neither of these young men returned to the home fires which their families kept burning.



The Way It Was – A Calendar's Story. (*Neepawa Land of Plenty* 1883-1983, 221)

# Oak Lake

## The Cross of Sacrifice

In the Oak Lake and area history, *Ox Trails to Blacktop*, an entry describes the origins of a local Cross of Sacrifice:

The members of the Women's Institute had always been involved in the upkeep of the cemetery. This seemed to be their special project and they and their husbands did hours of work out there. Their idea was that a suitable memorial to the men killed in World War I should be placed at the cemetery, not in town.

In 1922 they obtained a plot in the cemetery and had a flagstaff erected there. The Union Jack was flown from the flagstaff and a very impressive dedication ceremony was held on Remembrance Day that year.



The Cross of Sacrifice when it was in Oak Lake Cemetery, 1932 (*Ox Trails to Blacktop*, 104)

In 1923 the ladies canvassed the women of the town and district raised enough money to have a monument, "The Cross of Sacrifice" was built. Messrs. J. Daum, T.J. Smith and J. Rozell did the work. The Cross of Sacrifice was placed in the

cemetery, in front of the flagstaff erected the year before. For years after that, the Memorial Day services were held at the cemetery.

In the late 1930s the Cross of Sacrifice was moved to the town park. In 1972, the property was sold and the monument was moved to the yard of the Legion Hall.

# Pipestone

## War Memorial

The local history, *Trails Along the Pipestone*, includes a section devoted to the war memorial and park:

The museum which stands on the grounds is another story but the history of Reston Park has its foundation on the war memorial for which it was to be a fitting background. The monument is of Italian marble and it is topped by the figure of a Canadian soldier. The cost, when purchased, was \$3,600.

It was unveiled by Sir James Aikins, Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, on June 30, 1922. Dr. Chapman read the names inscribed and the address was given by Lloyd Armstrong. The agenda stated that a parade then proceeded to the chautauqua tent where addresses were given by Sir James Aikins, Dr. Clingan M.P.P., Colonel Rattray, and John Williams M.P.P.



Memorial statue Reston Park (*Trails Along the Pipestone*, 1981, 418)

Since then, memorial services have been held yearly on the spot. The treed arbor or grove where these services, and also family picnics, are held was originally a filled-in slough and it was landscaped in 1923. There are also picnic tables and electric wiring there now.

In 1915, bronze plaques were added to the monument. These were paid for by donations. Previous to this, the monument had only the names of First World War victims, one half on each side. As the monument is a very light grey, these did not show up very well so the decision was made to put on the plaques. Inscribed in the bronze on one side are the names of the twenty-three First Great War victims and on the other side the names of the seventeen from World War Two.

The flag staff was donated by the Women's Auxiliary to the Canadian Legion Elizabeth Branch. It was made by Vulcan Iron Works Supply from second hand piping. It sits in a cement base with the date of erection and the donor name on the bronze plaque.

Alf Archer received no salary. At an annual town meeting, it was moved that he be given \$100 a year, not as salary, but as a donation in appreciation of his services. At different times, this was raised and, in the last years, it was \$400. In 1962, the Manitoba Horticultural Society honored him by making him a life member and the local park board followed suit with a surprise presentation of a purse of money.

It was felt that something more should be done to honor this man who had taken the lead in making this village park a spot about which a local tribute said, "there is not a spot to equal it anywhere in the western part of the province, for a place of its size." So in 1967, money was collected and a memorial gate was erected at the west entrance to the park.

The plaque faces the street and the wording on it reads: "Erected in memory of Alf Archer who gave with complete dedication of his time and talent toward the development of this park. 1922-1967." The gates were unveiled and dedicated in 1970.

The flowers and shrubs and trees are memorials also. Those who watch the tulips bloom in spring, the peonies, delphiniums, lilies, roses and other flowers in summer, and finally the chrysanthemums in autumn, know that it has all been well worthwhile.

# Portage la Prairie

## Stories about the War

In *A History of Portage la Prairie and Surrounding District*, a variety of information about World War I can be found:

It is impossible in a book of this size to list the names of all the boys from Portage and district who joined the fighting ranks between 1914 and 1918. However, a list of names of the first volunteers who passed the medical inspection carried out by Dr. H. J. Hassard on August 13, 1914 are as follows: Fred. C. Mills, Herman Hartley, Jack King, James Woods, George Robertson, Charles Rea, Charles Tarling, Sidney Bonney, John Edward Lamb, Fred Archie McKenzie, Fred Morand, Elmer Prout, Thomas Carmichael, Stanley Garrioch, Charles Abbott, Alvert Livesay, Jack Prereth, W.J. Guttridge, Francis William Mirtle, George E. Willis, Frederick Fletcher, William Baldwin, Fred Trevelin and William Pedin.

Just two weeks later, the Manitoba Liberal paper published the names of the men who entrained at Portage for Valcartier. The list was made up of: Lt.-Col. C.D. McPherson, Major D. M. Ormond, Capt. Chas. A. Ogletree, Sgt. Macdonal, Corp. Stewart, Corp. Douglas and 105 Privates.

Men were selected on their physical fitness, ability as shots, and training received in militia was also a factor. Unmarried men were the first selection, married men without families second and with families third. Height could not be less than five feet three inches, chest 33 ½ inches.

At Valcartier, Quebec, the soldiers received rigorous training before continuing on to the battle front. It was there also that they were introduced to mother earth as a bed!

Women contributed much during the war years too. Housewives made as any sugarless recipes as possible and every cent that could be saved went toward the war effort. There wasn't an organization in Portage la Prairie that ignored the needs of comforts and necessities for the boys overseas. The work done by the Salvation Army, Red Cross and I.O.D.E. is well known.

Four Portage ladies who deserve special mention here are: Mrs. M. B. Snider, Miss Younghusband, Miss Bertha Barnes and Miss Mary Panton, the latter two

being graduates of the Portage General Hospital. After war was declared they immediately offered their services to go to the front in the capacity of Red Cross nurses.

On November 7, 1918, the Daily Graphic carried big headlines – “VICTORY IS OURS” and in only slightly smaller letter – “GERMANY SURRENDERS.”

At twelve minutes to twelve the city bells announced to the people of Portage la Prairie that the Allied armies had been successful and that the war was virtually at an end. The ringing of the city bells was followed by those of churches and with the din of whistles from the railway yards it was not long before people knew that the terrible war had at last come to an end, that right had triumphed over might and that all sacrifices had not been in vain.



Portage la Prairie War Memorial. (*A History of Portage la Prairie and Surrounding District*, 92)



Mayor Marlatt got out a proclamation declaring the rest of the day a half holiday, asking the business places to close and for stores and homes to be decorated and illuminated that night. "Make all the noise you want to," he said. "Make it a day long to be remembered"

The celebration was a little premature but the handwriting was on the wall by that time anyway. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled to Holland on November 11, 1918; and on June 28, 1919, a Peace Treaty was signed at Versailles.

Sixty thousand Canadians never lived to rejoice in the victory. Some of them were boys from Portage la Prairie and surrounding districts.

Two hundred thousand Canadians came home wounded. Some of them from Portage la Prairie surrounding districts too.

No one has ever tried to estimate the number of tears that were shed by broken-hearted mothers, wives and sweethearts.

Names of the Portage boys who made the Supreme Sacrifice for the freedom of others, are engraved on a cenotaph which was erected by the Prairie Gateway Chapter of the I.O.D.E. in the centre of the city on Saskatchewan Avenue.

# Rapid City

## War Stories

The Rapid City local history, *It's Time to Remember*, contains the following observations about life during World War I:

Locally, Camp Hughes (Shilo today) was established as a training ground as a huge tent city appeared. The first boys from our district had enlisted and left for training at Valcartier, Quebec, by August 13, 1914, under Major (later Brigadier General) H.M. Dyer of Minnedosa.

The 226th Platoon was trained at Rapid City by Lieutenant Paul Kane and many men from the district signed up there. Some boys, thrilled with the new idea of flying, rushed to join the Royal Air Force, and later the Royal Canadian Air Force trained at Camp Borden.

In the family histories and the pictures of the Rapid City Platoon are given most of the names of the local volunteers. We cannot attempt to make a list. Cooper Stone, in the Reporter, kept a close account of enlistments, military honors and the missing, wounded and killed in action.



War Memorial service at Rapid City (*It's Time to Remember*, 192)

On the home front, food production was increased, the work being done by the older men and young boys and girls. A "Soldiers of the Soil" group was organized to encourage young boys, 15 to 19 years, to do their bit on the home front. Patriotic meetings were called and drives made for funds for the war effort. Victory Bonds were sold. Red Cross organizations were busy knitting, sewing and packing boxes for the troops overseas. At harvest, troops from Camp Hughes were given time off to help with the harvesting.

Finally on November 11, 1918, an armistice was signed. The Allies had won the war but at a terrific price.

Large celebration were arranged to welcome the boys home again. Memorial services were held for those who were not returning. The Dominion Government passed a Veterans' Land Act to help returned soldiers get established on farms, if they so desired; others were offered free higher education.

# Reinland

## Conscientious Objectors

The local history book, *Reinland: An Experience in Community*, provides some valuable insights into the thoughts and lives of those young men who chose to stand against the war – a group that came to be known as conscientious objectors:

World Wars I and II were different experiences in some respects. Despite what was probably the strongest national fervour that Canada has known, the government, in World War I, adhered strictly to the Privilegium of 1873. In World War II this adherence took some different forms. A large number of Mennonite young men volunteered for military service including some from Reinland. When conscription came there was no blanket exemption as in the previous war. Provisions were made for alternative service. In effect the conscientious objectors became involved in forestry and other types of service in the 1870s.

### **WORLD WAR I**

When World War I broke out there was some uneasiness in the churches. Would the Privilegium stand the test of war? In November 1916, three Reinländer Mennonite Church elders, Johann Friesen of Manitoba, Abram Wiebe of Swift Current and Jacob Wiens of Hague-Osker, visited Ottawa. The uneasiness of these leaders was temporarily allayed, at least to a degree, by the guarantee of Prime Minister Robert L. Borden that the 1873 contract would be observed to the letter.

Elder Isaak M. Dyck, a young minister in Manitoba at this time, later described anxieties from his viewpoint. The large sums of money that soon had to be raised for the Red Cross were viewed with misgivings by Dyck. The reason was certainly not stinginess because at various times considerable sums had been raised voluntarily for relief programs even before the war. His stated concern was that while this money was not being used directly for military purposes it, nevertheless, supported the war effort and hence helped to intensify the war.

Fears also surrounded the January, 1917, government manpower survey and Elder Johann Friesen returned the National Service Cards for the Reinländer Church to Ottawa. At a meeting in Reinland of leaders and laymen of both the

Manitoba and Saskatchewan congregations of that body it was decided not to complete the National Service Cards.



Camp 3 at Riding Mountain National Park. Many Reinland conscientious objectors worked at forestry camps in World War II. (Photo from *Reinland: An Experience in Community*, 237)

Another delegation to Ottawa in January, 1917, consisting of Elder Abraham Doerksen of the Sommerfelder Church, Rev. Benjamin Ewert of the Bergthaler Church, Rev. David Toews, Rosthern, of the Rosenorter Church, and Mr. Klaas Peters of Saskatchewan was also assured that the Privilegium would be honored, but was told that the National Service Cards had to be completed though the word Mennonite could be written across it to give it special treatment. They were even assured that Mennonites who had joined the forces because of undue pressure on them and who wanted to be released could be freed. The delegation was satisfied.

The registration issue would come up again. A year later, hard on the heels of the Conscription Act, the Canada Registration Act of 1918 was passed. The superintendent of registration for Manitoba, P.C. Locke, called it "an effort by the Dominion Government to classify the available man and woman power of the Dominion." Organized resistance developed because of the doubt as to the real purpose of the Act. Mennonites had been exempted from the Conscription Act under the Privilegium and now claimed that therefore they should not be required to participate in this registration. The government was concerned that the defiance of the Manitoba Mennonites would spread to other parts of the

country. Locke was aware of this danger and determined to deal with the situation. He met with Mennonite representatives in Winnipeg and also worked through the lawyer who represented the Reinländer Church, Mr. Alexander McLeod, and K.C., of Morden. Finally a meeting was arranged between Mr. Locke and Reinländer leaders from both Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Locke arranged for McLeod and W.J. Rowe, Manitou, to accompany him. The meeting was to take place in Reinland on June 13, 1918. The registration deadline was June 22, 1918. This law made provision for fines and imprisonment if there was no compliance.

An exciting drama unfolded in Reinland that meeting day. At a brotherhood meeting at the church that morning it was decided not to register. Locke claims that he had been invited to that meeting for eleven o'clock and seemed to feel let down by finding out later that the conference had been held at 6 a.m. Elder Isaak M. Dyck simply states the "Registrarherr" arrived after the brotherhood meeting to find out about its results. It has not traditionally been the policy of the Reinländer Church to permit non-members to participate in its decision-making meetings with the brethren. What probably happened was that Mr. Locke was deliberately invited to meet with the elders and the rest of the ministry at eleven o'clock and an invitation for the brotherhood meeting was never intended.

Locke wrote about what took place at that meeting in the home of Rev. Peter Harms, Reinland, that day:

I arrived at Morden about ten o'clock on the morning of the 13th. Mr. Rowe and Mr. McLeod met me. We drove out by car to the village of Rhineland situated about 14 miles from Morden. When I got three or four miles from there I could see horses and buggies, teams and democrats, streaming away in all direction from the village. That wasn't a healthy sign to me. My driver knew many of the people in the reserve. A team came towards us. I said to my driver, "Joe, turn your car crossways on the road." A democrat came along drawn by a beautiful pair of horses. Joe said to me in a low voice, "That is ----, he is the head man in one of the villages here." I got out of the car and walked over to the driver, put my hand out and introduced myself. I said, "You are Mr. ---- and you are head man at ----? I was invited to a meeting of the congregations his morning. Why is everybody leaving Rhineland?" He looked rather gravely at me and said, "the meeting is over. We met at six o'clock this morning and prayed to the Lord and he told us not to register." That was rather a facer. I said to him, "Why was the meeting held six in the morning when I was invited for eleven o'clock?" He looked

rather shamefacedly at me and said, "Mr. Locke, you know Mr. Harms?" In return I replied that Mr. Harms was a very old friend of mine. "Well," he said, "he expects you to go to his house. I think I will turn back to Morden but you people will have to register."

Mr. McLeod, Mr. Rowe and I had a little talk and Mr. McLeod thought that I should go to Rhineland, although he was very frank in saying that he thought it was a waste of time. I drove into the village of Rhineland. I went up to Mr. Harm's house which was one of the largest houses in the village and as my car pulled up at the front gate, Mr. Harms came out. He invited me to come in and, of course, invited Mr. McLeod and Mr. Rowe with me. I said to him, "Mr. Harms, I don't think your people are playing fair with me. I met one of your men (naming him) on the road and he tells me that you people have decided to defy the provisions of the Act." He said, "Yes, we had a meeting at six o'clock this morning but I have asked the bishops and predigors to meet at my house and to meet you and to discuss the matter with you. We want to point out that we are not deliberately defying the Dominion Government."

I walked in to the house and there I met the bishop from the west reserve, a large number of Mennonite preachers and a tall, handsome man from Rosthern, Bishop Walls. I was introduced to each man in the room. A number of them were younger than I was some of them older. We sat down around the sides of the room. Mr. McLeod, Mr. Rowe and I in one corner. Bishop Walls explained to me that he had been asked to act as interpreter. In the centre of the room was a small table, perhaps a foot and a half square, and lying upon the table was a large leather bound Bible. We started our conference.

Most of the conversation was between Bishop Walls and myself. I read them extracts from it; I read them letters received from Senator Robertson, and other members of the Dominion Government. I pointed out that this was simply an endeavour to get the man and the woman power of the Dominion made up so that the Government would know what efforts could be put forth should the war, then in its fourth year, carry on indefinitely. My knowledge of the German is not great. I was able to follow some of the conversation between Bishop Walls and the other members of the conference but not all. I used every argument I could think of. The answer was "no, we cannot register, the Lord will not let us." Mr. McLeod said to me, "I am afraid we cannot do anything." I said to the Bishop, "Bishop, I have known

the Mennonite people since my childhood. If you refuse to register it is my duty to enforce the Act and I propose to do so. The Act provides for ten days' imprisonment for failure to register, and for a fine of so much a day for each day after the 22nd of June you fail to register. I propose to enforce that. I cannot have the authority of the Dominion Government flouted." The old Manitoba Bishop then broke silence. He said to me in English. "You cannot put all the Mennonite people in jail." I said, "No, but I guarantee you one thing, and that is that you and every man present in this room who fails to register on the 22nd of June will be imprisoned on the 23rd. Again the old Bishop spoke. He said, "I want you to clearly understand we do not blame you for doing your duty. If we don't register any man of us whom you want we'll report to Mr. McLeod's office at Morden on the morning of the 23rd ready to go to jail." I said, "Bishop, there is also a fine." He said, "Yes, and we will bring you in our bank books, the titles to our farms and lists of our stock." The answer was certainly a facer. Mr. McLeod again leaned over to me and said, "There isn't a thing we can do." I realized what a difficult situation was being created. I knew that in all probability other communities in other parts of Canada would defy the government's mandate. The Mennonite people had called my hand. They knew that I knew that they did not fear imprisonment or confiscation of their worldly goods in defence of a principle. No one realized that any better than I did. For a while nothing was said. I was desperately groping for some way out of the entanglement. Arguments and cajolements had got me nowhere. Threats of enforcing the rather unpleasant penalty provisions had had just a little effect. What was left to do?

I did a lot of serious thinking. Then I got up, walked over to the middle of the room, picked up the Martin Luther Bible lying on the small table, and took it back to my seat with me. All eyes followed me. The Bible was in German. I had stated and a good many of those in the room knew that my knowledge of German was a very scanty one. I leafed over the pages turned up the second chapter of St. Luke, the first verse. There it was: "And it came to pass in those days that there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed and all went to be taxed, everyone unto his own city, and Joseph, also went up from Galilee to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife".

To make sure I called my friend Mr. Harms over. I said to him, "Mr. Harms, my German, as you know, is rather faulty, but you will correct me if my English translation is not correct?"



Many years before I had remembered at Sunday School, Archbishop Matheson speaking about the same passage but an enrolment of registration and he then he said to his class, "The Martin Luther version is right, the King James version is wrong." Anyway, there was the word in the old German Bible 'engerracht'. Mr. Harms confirmed my translation. I walked back into the centre of the room, placed the open Bible on the table and said to the conference. "I have known your people as long as I can remember. A good many of the older men were clients of my father. Some of your people I know quite intimately. I know that this book is the Mennonite's law. Am I right?" I am quite sure that none of them knew what was coming except Mr. Harms. "My friends, if I can show you authority for this registration in the Bible will you do what I ask you to do?" Some of the men thought I was going pretty far. I am quite sure my friends, McLeod and Rowe thought I had taken leave of my senses. I said, "This Government is only asking from you the same thing that Caesar Augustus asked the earthly father and mother of our Lord to do, and they did so. Will you listen to this passage from St. Luke's?" I read the first five verses of the second Chapter of St. Luke and I read it in German. I then translated it into English. There was rather an awed silence and then the members of the conference began to talk among themselves. They gathered in little knots around the two Bishops. Then the old Manitoba Bishop turned to me. His voice was shaky. He was evidently very deeply stirred by what I had said to him. He walked over to the centre of the room where I was standing. He said, "Mr. Locke, we are deeply obliged to you. You have shown us the truth. We believed we were right this morning when we told you that we had been advised not to register. We have put the Government to a good deal of expense. Will you let us register our own people under your direction? We will give you all our young people who read and write and speak English well and they will do whatever work is necessary without expense." I said to him, "Bishop, I should be very glad to have the assistance of your young people, but as I am paying all my help in other parts of the Province I do not think that I should accept the offer of free services of our people here in the reserve. They will be paid the same as all the rest of my staff.

There was no more trouble. Bishop Walls went back to Rosthern and in no part of Canada was there a more complete registration than amongst our Mennonite Canadians.

One of the fascinating revelations of the account is that a position that stood firm in the face of a summons to Winnipeg, threats of fines, imprisonment and confiscation of property, yielded to a simple appeal to Scripture. Perhaps this incident provides a clue to a much misunderstood aspect of the so-called “stubborn” attitudes of the old Reinländer Church.

# Rhineland

## The World We Have Lost

A moving section of the local history book, *The Rural Municipality of Rhineland, Volost and Municipality* (1984), describes the effects of war on a Manitoba community:

The period from the beginning of the First World War until the conclusion of the 1920s saw the end of life in the R.M. of Rhineland. Theocratic Mennonite village life, with its open field economy, had been in retreat since the late 19th century, but developments after 1914 spelt its end. Nationalism, war, and technological change would alter the very face of Rhineland society. Even Rhineland's boundaries, encompassing most of the Mennonite settlements in the area, were altered with the western half of the former West Reserve transferred to the R.M. of Stanley in 1916.

World War I did not, in most cases, directly affect the lives of Rhineland's residents, but it did indirectly change many things. English Canadian nationalism, evident before the war, became even more intense after the war broke out and led to changes in Manitoba's school laws. This new legislation wiped out many Mennonite school privileges causing large numbers of Mennonites to emigrate to Mexico and Paraguay. With them went the last vestiges of the open field economy, organized village government and the Mennonite private school system. Most of the Mennonites who remained chose to accommodate to the modern Canadian society.

The War also had other indirect effects on the R.M. of Rhineland. In Russia, war and revolution ended another way of life for Mennonites there and many of these refugees found their way to Rhineland in the 1920s. While these immigrants represented some continuity with the world that was lost, their settlement in Rhineland never restored this world.

There was one other development in this period which speeded the passage of the traditional way of life in Rhineland. This was the technological transformation within rural Canada. The automobile and telephone brought the outside world to the farmer's doorstep, while mechanization and agricultural education began to change the farmer's attitude toward farming. All pointed towards a new way of life in Rhineland.

## **THE EFFECTS OF WAR**

The outbreak of World War I, in August of 1914, was regarded quite differently by the various groups in Rhineland. The English Canadians, residing mainly in Gretna and Plum Coulee, reacted with the patriotic fervor of most other English Canadians, wholeheartedly supporting the war effort as a prime opportunity to defend the British Empire. Mennonites, on the other hand, reacted with dismay that civilized nations would resort to bloodshed. Their strong commitment to pacifism, moreover, made them resist active participation in the war effort. This divergent reaction caused some friction in Gretna and Plum Coulee, but no serious incident resulted, due in part to the overwhelming preponderance of Mennonites in the municipality.

While the Mennonites were dismayed at the outbreak of war, they did little in the way of voicing their objection to the war. They were far more concerned with maintaining their exemption from military service and keeping their young people from voluntarily joining the military service. As early as 1916, the Bergthaler Church served notice that any member who volunteered for active service was automatically excommunicated.

The first threat to the Mennonites' military exemption came in late 1916, with the announcement that a national service registration would take place in 1917 to make an inventory of available manpower in Canada. Under this program all males 16-65 years of age were asked to fill out registry cards. Fearing that this was the beginning of conscription, a delegation of Mennonite leaders travelled to Ottawa to investigate the matter.

These delegates, including Abraham Doerksen of the Sommerfelder Church and Benjamin Ewert of the Bergthaler Church, were assured that their exemption from military service would be fully respected, but the cards had to be filled out. The Reinlaender opposing any form of registration sent no delegate. Reassured by these promises, the Mennonite group represented by this delegation, co-operated with registration. It is interesting to note that the Reinlaender Church, refusing to either register their men or provide the government with a list of males 16-65, was not forced to comply.

The introduction of conscription on August 29, 1917, presented another threat to Mennonite exemption from military service. While Mennonites were among the categories of persons exempted from the Act's provisions, Military Service Act, difficulties began to develop. Problems arose particularly when young

Mennonites appeared before local tribunals to prove their identity as members of the Mennonite Church.

Much of the problem was the uncertainty among government officials as to who was a Mennonite. It became evident that some government officials were restricting military exemption to those who had been baptized. Since the legal age of induction was eighteen and many Mennonite youths were not baptized until twenty or twenty-one years of age, quite a number of youths were in danger of induction.

This was finally clarified in 1918 when Abraham Dyck of Lowe Farm was inducted into the military as a test case. Leaders of the Mennonite Church in Manitoba were called to Winnipeg to testify on the Church status of an unbaptized Mennonite child. This testimony confirmed that the Mennonite Church considered its unbaptized children and young people as its own as much as the baptized members and were accepted as such by the government.

The last threat to the Mennonites' exemption from military service in Manitoba came with the national registration of 1918. Finding difficulty in securing recruits for service overseas, the Canadian government called for universal registration to facilitate this objective. Mennonites were assured that the government would fully honour its promises to the Mennonites but insisted that all, without exception, must register. With these assurances even the Reinlaender Church was prevailed upon to register its members.

While Mennonites in Rhineland took all necessary measures to avoid active service, they were willing to financially support organizations such as the Red Cross and the Patriotic Fund. In this they were motivated both by their desire to provide relief to war victims and also "to secure the goodwill of their Canadian neighbours who would be less likely to press for Mennonite enlistment if they saw evidence of voluntary sacrifice." The Bergthaler Mennonite Church went so far as to make these contributions to the Red Cross a carefully planned annual affair, developing an informal property tax by 1918. Mennonite contributions to these relief organizations amounted to close to \$150,000. The 6,452 Manitoba Sommerfelders alone contributed \$46,000, or over seven dollars per member.

The purchase of victory bonds in Rhineland was a more controversial issue, since this clearly represented financial support for the war effort. The Bergthaler Church leaders considered it their duty to financially support the government and accordingly left the decision up to individual members whether they wished

to participate. The Sommerfelder, Reinländer, and Mennonite Brethren Churches, however, refused to support the Victory Loan program until the government promised to devote that money raised among the Mennonites to relief purposes. Following this concession, Manitoba Mennonites purchased close to \$700,000 worth of Victory Bonds in less than a year.

The favourable war-time treatment of the Mennonites in Canada was looked upon with envy by Mennonites and Hutterites in the United States. When the United States entered the War in 1917, Mennonites and Hutterites had considerable difficulty gaining exemption from military service and began exploring emigration to Canada. While the majority of United States Mennonites migration to Canada settled in Saskatchewan and Alberta, some did not come to Manitoba. The Canadian Government still considered Mennonites a desirable class of agriculturalists and encouraged its U.S. agents to facilitate their migration into Canada. This policy also applied to Hutterites, who were assured of military exemption and religious freedom.

But by 1918 local feeling began to turn against the influx of Mennonites from the United States and the government revoked its blanket military exemption from American Mennonites and Hutterites. By this time, however, a large number of Mennonites and sixteen Hutterite colonies had been established in western Canada. Six of these Hutterite colonies were located in Manitoba.

The Hutterites that settled in Manitoba were known as the *Schmiedeleut* and came from South Dakota. They purchased land in the Elie district, west of Winnipeg and established a number of communal colonies. These initial colonies, however, proved too small for the growing population and more land was purchased. Between 1918 and 1929 four additional colonies were founded in Manitoba, one of which was located in Rhineland. The colony became known as the Blumengart Village lands from Mennonites departing from Mexico in 1922.

The war also influenced a number of other developments which affected the quality of life in the R.M. of Rhineland. The demand for Canadian foodstuffs during the war stimulated agricultural production and raised the prices of agricultural products. Receiving good prices for their wheat, Rhineland farmers increased their already heavy concentration on wheat farming. This specialization in wheat continued through the 1920s and would cause severe dislocations in the 1930s.

The greatest impact on the R.M. of Rhineland during this period, however, was caused by the changes in the educational laws of Manitoba and the Russian Revolution. The first would lead to the mass emigration of Rhineland Mennonites to Mexico and Paraguay, while the second resulted in the immigration of Russian Mennonites to Rhineland.

# Roblin

## A Soldier Remembers

In the local history, *Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, the war-time recollections of local soldier George McNeill are collected under a section entitled "War Memories:"

I joined the Army – 107 Battalion Infantry C.E.F. on May 26th, 1916, and spent the early summer at Camp Hughes, six miles west of Carberry on the C.P.R., before going overseas in August. We were seven days on the train and seven days out of sight of land on board the Olympic, the largest ocean-liner then afloat and one which travelled without escort all through the war. Thanks to its speed the German boats never succeeded in destroying the Olympic and I was fortunate enough to come home in June 1919 on the same boat. The 107 Battalion was broken up in England to provide the replacements for the Canadian units which were more or less wiped out in the Battle of the Somme, and within three months all that remained of the 107th Battalion was Colonel Glen Campbell, former Minister of Interior and Indian Affairs. Glen's father had been a Scotch Hudson's Bay Factor, and Glen grew up with the Aborigines, later marrying a full-blooded Aboriginal woman and raising several children. His son was in the 107<sup>th</sup>.



Soldiers of the First World War at Roblin (*Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, 134)



As Minister of Indian Affairs Glen was well-known to the Aboriginals all through Manitoba and when he recruited the 107th Battalion he took on some two hundred and fifty or three hundred Aboriginals so that A Company, with the exception of several N.C.O.'s, was made up of Aboriginals, many of whom had never seen a train before coming to Winnipeg to join the Army. However, Glen had several ex-Hudson Bay men with him and was able to drill the Aboriginals into shape and the 107th, with its pipe band leading, the A. Company Ranks, filled completely with Aboriginals, always caused considerable comment wherever we appeared.

However it was decided to keep the Aboriginals in one Unit after our arrival in England so that the 107th was again filled with Aboriginals from all across Canada, and in January 1917 we set sail for Boulogne to replace the 1st Pioneers who had been wiped out on the Somme a few months earlier.

The transport officer of the 107th was a Captain Bryant from Shellmouth and through his arrangements practically the whole Roblin Platoon was placed in charge of the transport which consisted of ninety-eight horses and mules. The mules either were hitched to the wagons or used as pack animals and we had both general service wagons such as they used in the Boer War, as well as pack saddlers of similar vintage.

Fortunately or unfortunately measles broke out in our hut shortly after we arrived in Witley Camp and the hut was quarantined for three months so that by the time we got out of quarantine practically everyone else except the Aboriginals had gone to the 44th Battalion, 16th Battalion and the 1st C.M.R.S., who once we arrived in France, used to visit us and sneer at us for being with the pioneers instead of with some of the famous CDM Regiments. However life with the transport was anything but secure or pleasant. Each night we went up the line either with G.S. wagons or with pack horses and often when we arrived the Infantry would not move out of their trenches to accept the supplies, and so we would be travelling on the surface road while the Infantry followed their communication trenches and almost every trip we would move to the side opposite which enemy machine guns were operating so that the mules provided a certain amount of cover for our bodies at least.

In 1917 I was sent down the line to a field to the 107th reinforcement depot just behind the lines a few miles. Here a Sergeant, who had gone with us from Canada, was in charge of the office and for old times sake, postponed sending us back into the line as long as recruits continued to come in sufficient numbers to make up the required drafts for the Regiment and so he put me on a draft and we

marched some seven or eight miles with full packs on our backs and reported to the Company Orderly Room for duty. Unfortunately the Orderly Room discovered that they hadn't put my name on the draft and I was instructed to march back the seven or eight miles. A few days later, before another draft was sent forward, the Germans broke through some fifteen miles to the right of the Canadian held line. Every available man in the various reinforcement depots back of the line were issued 250 rounds of ammunition, several hand grenades and marched into the front line to hold the German advance and for the next month I was in the line, waiting for a big attack from German troops, who held a sunken road about four hundred yards from us.



The 32nd Manitoba Horse Regiment in 1912 on the Main Street in Roblin. (*Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, 125)

One morning orders came through for us to attack the sunken line, so over the top we went and in open attack order rushed the sunken road only to find that the Germans had pulled out in the night due to attacks on their flanks along the salient they had held in our lines. A few days later some fifty of us were sent to the 12th Royal Cdn Engineers and I finished the war as a Sapper. Shortly before the Armistice I went on my one and only leave to England, going first to Belfast and then by boat to Scotland.

On my return some three week later, the Germans had more or less collapsed and were retiring all along our front. On November 10th, 1918 we were just in

front of Mons where the British Regulars had first met the German Army in 1914. Unfortunately the 4th Division was ordered into reserve while the 3rd Division marched into Mons and certain amount of glory. On November 11th, orders came through telling of the Armistice and the end of the war. We could hardly believe the war was over and that we had lived through it, however the guns remained silent all day and we finally concluded that it was really the end of hostilities.

The 4th Division being the last to go to France was given the doubtful honour of turning over Canadian Military supplies and equipment and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of equipment, horses, mules, artillery pieces and ammunition trucks.

We returned to Witley Camp at the same spot as we left to go to France, and on the 19th of June arrived in Toronto where we were demobilized and given railway tickets to our homes. So without delay I took the train and arrived in Winnipeg to find the 1919 strike in full bloom, with the R.C.M.P. patrolling the streets to prevent bloodshed. I took a train to Roblin at the first opportunity and was met at the station by Jim and Locksley in a Chevrolet car. They had been quite small boys and I had to look at them twice to recognize them, as they were both taller than I. This was my war experience as I remember it.

(George was the son of Daniel and Jane McNeill, pioneers of the Roblin district. In 1922 he went to Winnipeg to attend University. In 1924 he married Edith Grassie. He then studied theology at United College and was ordained by the United Church. George served as a Padre in the Second World War and went overseas with the Fort Garry Horse Regiment. After his return he served as a Chaplain at the Stony Mountain Penitentiary. George is now deceased.)

# Roblin

## An Act of Mercy

In the local history, *Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, a poignant passage reminds us of kindness even on the battlefield:

In the fall of 1914, the first volunteers from Roblin district left for overseas. Amongst them was Walter Day, who was reported missing and then killed on April 23, 1915. His parents never received any of his personal effects, and no more information as to how or where he died, and it was surmised that that he died during the Langemarck battle when the Canadians were subject to the first heavy gas attack. Now, nearly nine years later, Mr. and Mrs. Day, who now reside in England, received a parcel from Dresden, Germany containing their son's paybook and will.

The story, as told by a young German soldier, is that while he was walking over the battlefield he came upon a young British soldier, who had both his legs blown off; he asked for a drink, for he was dying fast. The British soldier then handed his paybook and will to the German soldier, who says he carried it with him, waiting to find someone he could trust to send it to the British parents. An American journalist in Dresden heard the story and saw the German who gave him the paybook and will. He then forwarded them to Mr. and Mrs. Day. The British soldier was Walter Day who left Roblin in 1914. Thus, after nine years, his parents and brothers knew how their son and brother died.

# Roblin

## War Memorial

In the local history, *Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, a passage taken from the October 27, 1927 issue of the *Roblin Review* describes the fund-raising for the local war memorial:

The long-sought-for war memorial to the men of Roblin and district who fell in the Great War has been erected on the site donated by the Union Church. Many thanks are due to all the institutions who combined to make this possible, and also to those citizens who assisted financially. The objective of \$1,700.00 still lacks some \$600.00 and it is hoped that this sum will be realized before the unveiling several weeks hence.

An appeal is made to all people in the community for donations, large or small to help meet this balance and a hearty response is looked for, as this is the only means we have of paying tribute to the men who gave their lives so that we could live and enjoy our freedom. Donations should be forwarded either to Mrs. Old, Secretary or Dr. Drach, Treasurer, or to any member of the War Memorial Committee. The following is a list of how the funds were obtained.

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Afternoon teas           | \$48.25 |
| C. Parks                 | 10.00   |
| Anglican Guild           | 27.00   |
| Collection July 2, 1927  | 23.30   |
| Mr. N. Kapey             | 25.00   |
| The Perriots             | 106.35  |
| Mr. W. Thompson          | 10.00   |
| Football Club            | 50.00   |
| Cromarty W.I             | 15.00   |
| Jewish Ladies Aid        | 5.00    |
| Cromarty Soft Ball Club  | 10.00   |
| Union Ladies Aid         | 25.00   |
| Business Mens Soft-ball  | 10.00   |
| L.O.L.                   | 50.00   |
| Tummel W.I.              | 50.00   |
| Shell River Municipality | 200.00  |
| Village of Roblin        | 200.00  |

|                     |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| Mr. and Mrs. Belton | 15.00  |
| L.O.B.A.            | 25.00  |
| F.Y. Newton         | 50.00  |
| Elks                | 100.00 |
| Masonic Lodge       | 50.00  |
| Rebekahs            | 40.00  |
| I.O.O.F Lodge       | 50.00  |
| Maaten & Hayward    | 5.00   |
| J. Chapman          | 5.00   |

Friday, November 11, 1927 is the ninth anniversary of the ending of the Great War and on that day the unveiling ceremony of the War Memorial to the men of Roblin and district will be held. The ceremony is timed for 2 P.M. and it will be of a most impressive character. It is hoped that as many people as possible will be present.



Boys of the 107<sup>th</sup> at Roblin (*Memories of Roblin and Rural Districts*, 129)

And in the same local history a passage taken from the November 17, 1927 issue of the *Roblin Review* describes the unveiling of the local war memorial:

A simple, but most impressive ceremony, marked the unveiling and dedication of our long-awaited-for War Memorial on November 11, 1927 at 2 P.M. before a large gathering of citizens, who in spite of the inclement weather turned out to witness the ceremony and pay their respects to the honored dead.

The memorial is a beautiful one with the figure of a soldier in stone standing on a black pedestal on which is engraved the names of those from this district who fell and the names of the engagements in which Canadians took a distinctive part. It will stand forever, not only to the memory of the terrible price paid by the boys of this district, but perpetuated in stone and marble, it serves to remind us of the common sacrifice and the united effort made by Canada in the long ordeal of war.

The ceremony of unveiling and dedicating the monument was conducted by the Rev. A. E. Cousins, M.C. and Hon. C. F. of Dauphin, in a truly military and most sympathetic manner. In his dedicatory remarks, that solemn reflection in which the panorama of great events and splendid men marched before our mental vision, stirred all profoundly, and left with a deeper and more sincere respect for the sacrifice they commemorated. The ceremony was attended by the veterans who marched to the scene of the unveiling in a body, together with nearly four hundred school children.

# Thompson

## Lest We Forget

In the R.M. of Thompson's local history, *Thompson Chronicles*, a collection of observations and letters from the front suggest life during war-time:

War is a fact of history. When the call came for recruits, promoted as an opportunity to see the world, the local young men and women did not hesitate to volunteer. Many saw this as a duty to serve their Country and the Monarchy, not knowing the dangers and hardships that would be involved. They rose to the challenge and went for their training where many life-long friendships were made. These young people served in the Army, Navy and Air Force and saw action in many countries overseas. Unfortunately, not all those who enlisted returned home to their family and friends.

### The Tonkin War Memorial

Through the generosity of the late Mr. Frederick W. Tonkin, a monument to the fallen soldiers of the Great War from this district has been erected on the north-west corner of Broadway and Kerby. The monument is a tall shaft of grey granite after the style of "Cleopatra's Needle," on a raised dais, and on three sides are the names of thirty-three men who paid the supreme sacrifice. On the other side the following is inscribed, "Dedicated to the memory of those of The Rural Municipality of Thompson who gave their lives in the Great War by the benevolence of the late Frederick W. Tonkin."

The unveiling of the monument took place in November, 1930 before a large crowd from our community. Roland, Carman, Morden, and Winnipeg were also represented.



After the War of 1939-45 an impressive plaque was erected on the same grounds, where all the names of the veterans of this war are listed.



The Tonkin War Memorial (*Thompson Chronicles*, 125)

## World War I Letters

This letter was received by William and Mary Burnett in 1917, from their son Sandy, twenty-one years old, who was in France at the time. It was written on March 25, 1917 just fourteen days before the battle took place on Vimy Ridge.

\*\*\*\*\*

France, March 25, 1917;

Dear Father and Mother;

Received your most welcome letter the other day and was glad to hear from you. I hope you are all well.

The weather is still and cold out here, as usual. I don't think it will ever dry up over here. I wish it would.

Dick and I got a bundle of mail yesterday.

We are living in a great chateau now, about 200 years old. "Fritz" used it for billets in 1870, they say. Some historic old place, believe me!

I suppose you'll be getting ready for farming now, eh?

I got a letter from Russell Snider the other day. How is Harvey getting along?

I heard he had joined the army but I guess he didn't.

It is raining out to beat "Sam Hill." How is Walter Rutter getting along? It's too bad about Gordon and Morley [Gordon Burnett from Roland lost an eye in the war]. As far as they're concerned, they're better in England.

I wish I could have one good meal at home now, I'm aching for pie as anyone could be, believe me!

I suppose the girls will all be out working this spring, eh? I asked Dell and Anne if they are going to wear the new uniform. You should be in England now, you would think you were in a theatre or circus to see all the girls in trousers – Karki at that. They certainly look swell, got the old-fashioned dresses beat a mile.

I am going to write about a dozen letters this afternoon. It's pretty near dinner time so I guess I will have to close for now this time.

Love from your son, Sandy.

\*\*\*\*\*

France, April 1, 1917

Dear Mother and Father;

Well how are you all. We are pretty well. Just came out of the line last night, had a pretty hot trip, the weather was bad too.

Say, Alex Bruce was killed this trip in. He was hit with a high explosive shell, killed instantly.

We are getting along fine. I suppose you are getting ready for spring work. I had a letter from Molly the other night. I haven't got much news this time. We haven't got any parcels lately. I guess they have got lost some way.

Things are looking pretty good over here now, I think a few months should finish it.

Love, Sandy

\*\*\*\*\*

France, April 3, 1917

Dear Father and Mother and all;

Just a few lines to let you know how we are getting along. Dick and I received an awful bunch of mail the other day, just the news, no parcels. I expect some right away soon.

That mail delivery will certainly be "jake," won't it? I should think they could bring it a little closer than that.

You will soon be at work again. Work will be the lightest kind of pleasure. I always did like certain kind of work – but not all kinds.

With love, from Sandy.

\*\*\*\*\*

Next is a letter received by Mr. and Mrs. Burnett from the office of the 1st Canadian Mounted Rifles, sometime in May 1917.

1st Canadian Mounted Rifles; # 187.510, Pte. H.A. Burnett.

Informant states that on April 9th between Vimy Ridge and the enemy's first line a shell dropped and killed H.A. Burnett instantaneously.

Eye witness: Yes.

Description: Nickname "Sandy" average height, light complexion, light blue eyes, about 24-25.

1st, Canadian Mounted Rifles,  
Tottenham Hospital,  
Middlesex.

\*\*\*\*\*

1st. Canadian Mounted Rifles. H.A. Burnett, 187510. Killed 7-10. 4-17. Det. D/B/.

I have seen his grave on top of Vimy Ridge. There is a cross over it with his name on. He came from Sperling Manitoba, Canada, where he was a friend of mine before the war. I have written to his family.

Reference: Pre. J.A. Steeves, 292244

No. 11 Con. Camp, Buchy nr. Rousen, 14.9.17



Military parade. (*Thompson Chronicles*, 128)

# Wallace

## Lest We Forget

The R.M. of Wallace local history, *Building our District*, contains some interesting entries concerning the home front and post-war activities:

### **A Letter Home: The Limit in Mud**

Sergt. Wilson of Hargrave writes from Belgium. The following letter had been received from Transport Sergeant T.C. Wilson by his wife at Hargrave.

Somewhere in Belgium.

My Dear ---, I am feeling fine as I write this letter. Lots of work to do, which makes things interesting. The boys have been in the trenches from Saturday night until Tuesday night, out three days and going back tomorrow (Friday). Billie Forsythe had a thrilling experience last time he was in the trenches. His dug out was blown in on him and the boys tell me Bill came out through the earth like a badger. But we are all of one opinion and that is that the 1<sup>st</sup> C.M.R.'s are sure in luck so far. Old Fritz keeps shelling the road that we take the rations upon, but he is out of luck, the closest he has got us is to knock down a building close by and the flying brick scattering in the road and hitting some of the horses. It has rained here steadily for two weeks and the mud is indescribable, ten times as much as ever was seen in Canada. The boys when they start to march into the trenches, have no chance to rest along the road side, as all the country is cut up and in mud to the knees. I had a most elegant joy ride the other night, taking rations up to the trenches. I was ahead on my horse and he fell into a Jack Johnston hole and you should have seen us climbing for dry ground. (Did I say dry ground? I mean where there was only two feet of mud.) But of course there is no stop in a case of this kind, you must go ahead wet or dry (dry preferred) but I hope to get a rest soon. I see by the Virden paper where Pete Dingwall is coming home. I bet I have been in most of the places he told me of, since I came over here. I believe now all he told me of this country. I am camped right beside the Strathcona Horse from Winnipeg and I see all my old pals whom I used to be so familiar with in days gone by at Fort Osborne Barracks. But some of them have gone where we cannot meet them again in this life. Well, I must lie down on these old boards again for a few hours rest, so will say good-night.

Tom



World War I Training Camp (*Building our District*, 112)

(January 4, 1916 edition)

## Patriotic Social at Hargrave

### **Mr. and Mrs. W. Hitchins Provide Splendid Evening for Big Crowd. Patriotic Work Benefitted.**

The grove at the farm of Mr. and Mrs. W. Hitchins was the center of attraction for a large crowd last Wednesday evening, when a most enjoyable time was provided. The arrangements were all that could be desired, and reflect much credit on the entertaining ability of Mrs. Hitchings, and her band of assistance. The grove is a beautiful spot, particularly well-adapted for just such a social gathering. Inside the grove is a natural field for baseball, and among the attractions was an interesting game between Hargrave cup holders and Virden, the former winning by a 5-3 score. To one side, among the trees, numerous tables and seats were arranged for those wishing refreshments and, needless to say, this part of the social was well-patronized and efficiently-handled. A bean bag competition, as well as a fish pond, provided an abundance of amusement and incidentally some shekels. Virden Band contributed a nice musical program, which helped to enliven the evening and was much appreciated.

During the evening, tickets were sold and, later, the lucky ticket holder, Mr. Ted Boiteau, with ticket No. 65, was presented with a splendid cake.

Short addresses by Rev. Arthur Smith and J.A. McLachlan dealt with the work of our men at the front, as well as the ladies and men at home, in the effort to wrest victory from the terrible Huns.

Following this, Virden's popular auctioneer, W.M. Pineo, offered several cakes for sale by public auction and in his own peculiar and convincing way, demonstrated that the cakes had a very superior value, especially in view of the object for which the purchase price was being used. As a result the prices realized were entirely satisfactory.

Mr. and Mrs. Hitchins have asked that we convey their sincere thanks to all who contributed in any way towards their splendid success achieved.

Another resident of the district has asked us to say that "the thanks of the community are due Mr. and Mrs. Hitchins for their patriotic spirit in providing their beautiful grounds and for their efforts to ensure the pleasure of those who attended."

The financial result is as follows: Proceeds from ice cream and lemonade. \$53.90; cake draw, \$18.25; bean bag competition, \$11.25; sale of cakes by Mr. Pineo, \$41.20; collection, \$416.10; total receipts, \$146.55; expenses; \$40.50. A small private contribution brought the net proceeds up to \$107.00, which was divided equally between the Red Cross and Y.M.C.A. funds.

### **A Hymn for Soldiers**

The hymn books of our churches contain very few hymns for soldiers, and the following verses contributed by Rev. Arthur Smith of Hargrave are appropriate at this time. This hymn can be sung to a common meter tune and we commend it to the choir leaders of the town and district.

#### **A Hymn For Soldiers**

We pray thee for our soldiers, Lord!  
Defenders of our land,  
Who at her need, with unsheathed sword,  
Bravely her foes withstand.

Of many a tribe and nation they,  
From varying climates brought  
The Empire's honour, night and day,  
In field and trench they sought.

We thank Thee for their courage bright  
In deeds of daring shown,  
Of death and wounds e'en making light,  
Torn flesh and shattered bone.

Support in them the patriot mind  
For home and truth to fight,  
Which ruthless foes with hatred blind  
Menace in cruel might.

O God! Give victory to our arms,  
Arms that the weak defend  
And, vengeful, from the tyrant's harms  
Deliverance will lend.

O be thou by the soldier's side  
Should death his struggles close;  
In that dark vale be Thou his guide,  
Sweet help and safe repose.



### **Hargrave Welcomes Soldier Heroes**

Hargrave was en fete last Friday evening, when the people of the district gave a formal welcome to the men who have returned from overseas. A luncheon, served with the usual generosity of the people of this district, was followed by an address of welcome home by Mr. R.A. Knight, who paid a splendid tribute to the soldiers of Canada and the soldiers of Hargrave whose service and deeds of heroism contributed a full share towards the victory of the Empire and her allies. On gratefulness that so many of our men were spared to return and he thanked them most sincerely for the splendid service they have rendered.

Mr. John Davis, president of the Virden R.S.A., also made an excellent speech eulogizing the splendid spirit of sacrifice shown by the men of Hargrave in common with the men of Canada and the Empire, through which the power of right over might has been demonstrated to the world.

About twenty returned men formed up for the reception and they were greeted with rounds applause.

A baseball game between Hargrave and Virden proved interesting and while the latter won with a score of 6-3, yet it was anybody's game until the finish.

An enjoyable dance completed the programme.

There was plenty of food, ice cream and refreshments and everything was free. An interesting and enjoyable function which will long remain a pleasant memory.