



THE WAR RECORD AND THE CENOTAPH
1914-1918 1939-1945



IN FLANDERS' FIELDS

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing fly,
Scarce heard amidst the guns below,
We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe,
To you from falling hands we throw
The torch - be yours to hold it high;
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.



AMERICA'S ANSWER

Rest ye in peace, ye Flanders' dead,
The fight that ye so bravely led
We've taken up. And we will keep
True faith with you who lie asleep
With each a cross to mark his bed,
And poppies blowing overhead,
Where once his own lifeblood ran red,
So let your rest be sweet and deep
In Flanders' fields.

Fear not that ye have died for naught,
The Torch ye threw to us is caught,
Ten million hands will hold it high,
And Freedom's light shall never die,
We've learned the lesson that ye taught
In Flanders' fields.

Our Women's Institute had only been organized in the interests of "Home and Country" a little over two years, when the great World War of 1914-1918 broke around us on August 4th, 1914. Many of our young men signed up and after a brief training were sent overseas. For such an inexperienced group it did not take long to see where the greater need for service lay and under the capable leadership of Mrs. Ira Shaw, who was then President, a home front was set up to work in connection with the Red Cross. The members of the Masonic Lodge gladly offered their anteroom of their lodge as a permanent sewing centre. Sewing machines and tables were brought in and for the duration of the war women worked every week to prepare material, pack bales of pillows, pillow cases, towels, bandages, pyjamas, bed jackets, night shirts, hospital supplies and socks by the dozens of pairs. Ditty bags by the dozens were filled for the navy - the Roll Call at our meetings were usually a donation for Ditty bags. Comforts were sent the local boys at close intervals and all through the dreadful years of war the Women's Institute members not found wanting wherever service called.

November 11th, 1918 brought peace - the peace for which all had worked and prayed and hoped it would endure. Many of our gallant boys paid the supreme sacrifice and to their glorious memory a war memorial was erected in 1919 on the Agricultural Fair Grounds just opposite the entrance over the bridge. Some of the men who worked tirelessly for it's erection were Mr. E. Marchant, Dr. A.F. Kay and Sir William Mulock who unveiled it at the dedication ceremony. The W.I. planted flowers and cared for the plot as long as it was there.

Now a time of readjustment was with us, for- "Peace hath her victories,
No less renowned than war."

It was a testing time and the W.I. must not be found wanting. Every member had an opportunity to participate in the great work of building the kind of homes and country worthy of the sacrifices that had been made in the cause of freedom.

In September 1939 we were again hurled into the second World War and again the Institutes set to work to meet the emergency - but this time women seemed to have a new sense of the calamity of war and a feeling for the brotherhood of man everywhere in spite of war making. By this time we had acquired Club Rooms of our own above the Imperial Bank. These were immediately put at the disposal of the Red Cross with which we were again affiliated; and the same procedure of serving and knitting and bale packing; of saving and sacrificing was entered into without a murmur. This time quantities of money were needed to send jam and foodstuffs to Britain, who was very hard pressed - comforts of all kinds as well as thousands of cigarettes were sent to local boys who had again answered the call. Money was raised by salvage drives, catering, collecting any papers; War Savings Stamps were used as prizes for euchres. There was nothing too small to be overlooked and nothing too large to be attempted. The women gave to the utmost of their time, money and ability to complete the Women's Institute patterns for Victory. We gave to the Central War Charities Fund; to the sugar and jam fund; toward buying two Mobile Canteens and two Mobile Fried Kitchens for Britain; to the British Childrens' War Service Fund and many, many others worthy and necessary causes. Figures at their best can never tell the story of the tireless effort in knitting, sewing, canning, raising money and packing parcels.



Presidents through our war years were Mrs. Ira Shaw, Mrs. E. Marchant during the first war and Mrs. E. Pearson, Mrs. B. Skinner, Mrs. A.F. Kay, Mrs. G. Edwards and Mrs. G. Shoultis during the second conflict, with Mrs. B. Skinner and Mrs. D.B. Davis giving outstanding service as War Work Conveners.

Again in October 1945 we emerged victorious from a war that has thrown us a challenge of building toward a future that will outlaw and banish war forever; and a challenge of making every Women's Institute a model of World Peace.

Again came the task of welcoming home the heroes and honoring those who paid the supreme sacrifice. On September 11th, 1946 the W.I., assisted by the Victory Club, sponsored a turkey banquet for the Veterans of the two wars and their ladies. Nothing was spared to make this a gala affair. The hall was beautifully decorated with autumn leaves and flowers, flags and streamers. More than a hundred sat down to the banquet which was followed by an hour long program. Mr. Lorne Goodfellow, reeve of the township was Chairman. Mr. Ken Maynard proposed the toast to the King. Mr. Gladstone Lloyd, a veteran of world war I gave the address of welcome and Mr. Lex McKenzie M.P. also a war I veteran, addressed the returning heroes. Rev. W.J. Burton of Bond Head was the guest speaker. The evening soloists were Miss Gwyn Marchant, who sang "Land of Hope and Glory" and Mrs. I. Proctor, who chose "The end of a Perfect Day". A public dance was held in the upper hall following, and gifts of bill folds containing a sum of money were presented by Dr. M.K. Dillane, assisted by the knitting Club, to seventy-five men and women who had served their country well and returned to our midst. The mothers of each of the three boys who gave their lives were presented with a Bible. These boys were - Bill Pagan, Harry Kay and Ross Rutherford.

In 1935 it was thought advisable to move the Cenotaph to its present position since a more suitable place was provided when the roads were changed to the entrance to the village. The monument and grounds are cared for by the members of the Horticultural Society and the well kept corner is a silent declaration to all who pass by that: "We will remember them", whose names are inscribed thereon.



"They shall not grow old
As we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them."

In 1961 the Dep't of Highways found it necessary for safety reasons, to alter and widen the corner at 27 Highway, which necessitated the re-location of the Cenotaph. After considerable discussion it was moved to a site on the Arena grounds in the summer of 1962, where it is being cared for by the village. The members of the Horticultural Society had cared for it for twenty six years, and feel they have kept faith with those veterans who entrusted them with the task, and have since passed to their reward.

