

FORD MOYNES

Feb. 26/69
**on the
MAIN STREET**



Mere modest mention of the name Paton stirs up an avalanche of memories in the minds of many readers at home and abroad. Alex Mitchell Paton had railway blood in his veins in the days when monster steam engines travelled the iron rails, and when as many as twenty-five trains steamed in, through, and out of Lindsay.

He was brought up in the Town of Cobourg, but gained much of his railway experience at Hastings before being transferred to Lindsay to become Station Master.

When he retired from active service he did not actually retire but used his talents and ingenuity and set up an extraordinary School of telegraphy in the hall at the foot of Kent Street now occupied by the Knights of Columbus. Not in the least daunted by this experience he started a school on the top floor of the Academy years before the theatre was revamped. We visited this school and saw a number of male and female amateur operators busily engaged in learning and ticking out the code of dots and dashes. The long narrow room was filled with miniature poles all carrying cross bars and glass insulators resembling telegraph wires and poles. Telegraph tickers were humming and it was

in this school that many young operators passed their exams to become expert telegraphers.

It was, however, as a lover of sports that Alex. Paton was best known and he did a lot for strictly amateur sport in Lindsay and in the Counties of Victoria and Haliburton. Three and four score years ago he was an expert bowler in the days when Lindsay had a champion cricket team and he is reported to have an uncanny knack of retiring strong batsmen with his speedy ball and his deadly aim at the wickets.

In his supposed to be retiring years he was directly responsible for many successful hockey tournaments, especially in the running of the Sam Hughes tournament. Alex Paton was a stickler for amateur hockey and in the Hughes Cup tournaments he barred all Ontario Hockey Association players. Most of the big battles for the Hughes Cup took place between teams from Haliburton and Lindsay and many a special hockey train brought hundreds of fans from the north to jam the Lindsay rink to over capacity. Alex. Paton handled the tournaments all by himself and old time fans picture him walking around the rink with a scratch pad in one hand and chewing

on a short stubby lead pencil. It would be nice to hear where that old Hughes Cup is resting today.

Apart from his interest in sports, Alex Paton was a "hot" Liberal and a dedicated Liberal.

Many readers will recall

Alex Paton as Lindsay's Poetic Bard and a man who could write stanzas by the yard and most of them were good most of them long and most of them dealing with local situations and local "characters" and they were numerous. One of these poems follows and it is a fitting "Omega" to this story:

SOME FIGHT, OTHERS BITE

When the war's at an end and the roll has been called,

Our wounded and well will be free —

In their own native land where with heart and with hand,
Their loved ones will greet them with glee.

But, it's what will we say of the lads who are lost
To grief-stricken mothers who mourn?

In their sore, sad despair we must all do our share
To lighten the load of the shorn.

'Tis the widow, the orphan, the mother and dad,
Whose loved ones fell facing the foe,

Who with tears in their eyes, see a sweet by and by,
Which comforts and cushions the blow.

It is hard, yes, 'tis hard to become reconciled,
It strings a new chord in the heart,

But a fond mother's love, ever mild as a dove,
Is willing for freedom to part.

If the people's the country — and this we admit —
Is our worth a life or a limb?

As our casualties climb and the clock ticks the time
They soak us full up to the brim.

There's the cute profiteer who contributes a mite,
And adds it ten-fold to his wares,

While our men in the trench midst the shrapnel and
stench

Get naught but this counterfeit's prayers.

In this beautiful land, with its crops and its clime,
And foodstuffs as flush as a flood.

'Tis a hard thing to say, but it's done every day,
They squeeze out our very life's blood.

All hail the dear mothers who reared the brave lads,
Who now keep the foe from our shore,

When the last shot is fired, they'll come home good and
tired

But Germans we'll hear of no more.

The extortionists, too, will get down off his perch
And try to crawl far in his hole,

As the boys he will meet minus hands, minus feet,
Will smart him clear through to the soul.

Lindsay, Ontario, May 18, 1917

—A. M. Paton