BITS AND PIECES OF BRANTFORD'S HISTORY
THE WAR YEARS – BRANTFORD DURING WORLD WAR II

BY
GARY MUIR

Index

INTRODUCTION
BRANTFORD AND WORLD WAR II

War - it had come again in less than twenty years after the "war-to-end-all-wars" had finished. Although not totally unexpected, the people in Brantford, along with other Canadians, had hoped and prayed that another global conflict could be avoided. Optimism was present right up to the declaration of war with Germany, and many in Brantford felt, as late as mid August 1939 that a peaceful solution could be found to the problems in Europe.

The declaration of war did not spark off a joyous celebration such as had accompanied the declaration of war in 1914. It would be accurate to say, that the reaction was one of positive determination to stop Hitler and all that he stood for. In some ways, to many, the war must have seemed like a re-run of what had happened in 1914-18. Brantford men hurried to join the armed services, although unlike the First World War, when the main motive had been patriotism, many saw the army as a means of getting three square meals a day, and of taking the pressure off of family budgets. High prices and shortages began to appear, and again unlike the First World War where the rationing had been voluntary, now the government had to intervene to ensure a continuous supply of essential goods. Brantford industry geared up for the war, and changed over to wartime production. As in the conflict twenty years earlier, suddenly there were more jobs than there were people, and again women stepped in to fill the gap, but in this case many war-workers, both male and female, had to be imported into the city to satisfy the demands of industry. Unlike the First World War, a housing shortage, such as the city had never seen before, developed, and this created problems for the city. During World War I Brantford had had its own battalions, the 125th and the 215th, and on occasion other regiments had been stationed in the city for a short time. In the Second World War, the city had two permanent military installations here for the duration of the war - No. 5 Service Flying Training School, and No. 20 Army Basic Training Camp. As in the first conflict, Brantfordites were asked to give generously of time and money, and in this regard they responded generously. Finally, as in the First World War, Brantford gave up many of her native sons in a cause she believed to be just.

THE WAR ARRIVES IN BRANTFORD

Even with the threat of war in the air during 1939, many other issues were preoccupying the citizens of Brantford. Twentieth Century Fox had dared to release a film on the life of Alexander Graham Bell without giving Brantford any recognition. Civic protests led to the film being banned in Ontario, until a prelude of scenes from Brantford, and a statement that the telephone had been invented here, were added. The renowned Schubert Choir performed at the New York World's Fair and received excellent critical notices. Work on the Shand Dam, which would lead to a measure of flood control on the Grand River, was finally begun. Tim Buck, leader of the Canadian Communist Party was refused permission by the Brantford Board of Education to use the facilities of the Brantford Collegiate for a speech. *The Expositor*'s letters to the editor columns were filled to overflowing with letters on the subject of working mothers; and the City Council was being asked to remove the street cars from Brant Avenue as they were a "noise nuisance," Perhaps the most memorable event was the brief visit in June of His Majesty King George VI, accompanied by his wife, Queen Elizabeth.

However, Brantford citizens were well aware of the possibility of war. Large crowds had gathered outside *The Expositor*'s offices in September of 1938, to view bulletins on the Munich crisis. In March of 1939, as Hitler moved into Czechoslovakia, it was announced that all ex-servicemen and women from the city ware to be registered. On April 17, *The Expositor* reported:

"A call was issued this afternoon for fully fit unemployed war veterans in Brantford, including Canadian veterans and Ex-Imperials, to report at the Canadian Legion Headquarters at 8:00 this evening in order that man might be selected to go on guard duty at the Brant Hydro sub-station between Brantford and Paris."

The telegram ordering the above call was received by Major J.J. Hurley, Adjutant in charge of the National Survey of Veteran Personnel. It stated:

"Re registration: Wire me names and addresses of 15 men required for duty at Brant Station between Brantford and Paris. Must be entirely reliable, capable day or night duty. Sobriety on job essential. Secure from unemployed. Will be paid. Expect they will be put on guard duty this week."

Later, during August, further precautions were taken. On August 25, orders were received to guard the armouries. On August 29, 8 men, Brantford's first group of volunteers, from the 54th and 69th batteries, left to join Canada's permanent forces in Halifax. As wall, orders were received that all sewage pumping stations, hydro stations and the C.N.R. subway were to be guarded. Even so, an *Expositor* survey on August 25 had shown that most people felt that war would again be avoided, and local travel agents reported that few passages for overseas travel had been cancelled.

When war did come on September 1 1939, the reaction in Brantford was positive, but lacking in the emotional displays that had accompanied the city's reaction to the declaration of war in 1914. The local legion and Imperial clubs noted a large number of veterans had reported, and were willing to fight again. *The Expositor* put out an "emergency" Sunday edition on September 3, to announce the circumstances surrounding the declaration of war. In a prepared statement Mayor Waterous commented:

"Brantford has been proud of its loyalty in the past, and will be equally so in the days to come...." I ask all our citizens for that measure of co-operation and assistance that I am sure they will give freely and whole-heartedly as loyal and patriotic subjects of His Majesty, the King."

As well, on September 3, over 4,000 people attended a civic religious and patriotic service in Victoria Park, during which the loyalty of Brantford to the British Empire was reaffirmed.

In response to the crisis, the City Council passed a resolution ensuring that the jobs of civic employees who went overseas would be kept open for them, and the chairman of the Board of Education stated:

"The assurance can be given to any employee of the Board who enlists, and who is called upon to serve his country in any way, that his or her position will be held as a sacred trust and will be available to them on their return to civilian life."

For some it would be a long six years before they returned. For many others, there would be no return.

THE MILITARY PRESENCE 1939-45

During World War II, Brantford became an "armed forces" city. This began immediately upon the outbreak of war with the local units recruiting for men, and it was intensified when the camps for the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, and the soldiers conscripted under the National Resources Mobilization Act were opened. The people of Brantford were very accepting of the military presence during the war, and in many cases went far out of their way to supply facilities and kindnesses to make the men more comfortable.

On September 2, 1939, the day after war was declared, the 54th Battery of Brantford was ordered to mobilize. The 54th was to be the first and only unit from this community to proceed overseas as a body during the war. Within two weeks they had been brought up to full strength. On November 27, *The Expositor* reported that the 54th was on parade in full war kit. In actual fact the unit left Brantford on that date, but censorship forbade the newspaper from announcing their departure. It was not until Christmas that *The Expositor* could announce it, after the men were safely in England. The 54th was away for the duration of the war, and did not return until December of 1945.

As of January 1940, the 89th Battery from Woodstock, New Brunswick, was stationed in Brantford. They were well received by the people of Brantford. This is attested to by the fact that in March, *The Expositor* announced what was to be the first of several marriages of soldiers from the 89th to Brantford girls. When the Battery left in April, they were given a royal send-off by the local citizenry.

On April 10, 1940, 32 men from the Dufferin-Haldimand Rifles left for Hamilton as part of a draft for the Royal Canadian Light Infantry, and five days later a second draft left. As the situation in Europe darkened, further units from Brantford were mobilized. In May, orders were received for the mobilization of the 69th field battery; and in July the Dufferin-Haldimand Rifles were asked to mobilize for active service. Although recruiting for these units was brisk at first, it quickly slowed down so that in April of 1941, recruiting for the 69th was reported as "slower than expected," and Dufferin-Haldimand Rifles announced that they were going to carry on an intensive recruiting campaign. In July of 1941, a nation-wide "Call To Arms" was issued by the Hon. J.L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence, and it were formally read by Brantford's mayor, J. P. Ryan, in a ceremony on the steps of the City Hall. In part the proclamation stated:

"Whereas Liberty is threatened throughout the world by the forces of tyranny.... And whereas victory cannot be assured without the help of every loyal citizen in this Dominion. Now be it known that there is urgent need for stout-hearted able-bodied men to volunteer for active service in the Canadian army. Wherefore Canada sends out a call to arms and charges all true Canadians to heed and to help."

In spite of the appeal, by October 1941, the Brant County Recruiting Committee had to report that this district was lagging behind other centres in supplying men for the army. The actual numbers were referred to as “startlingly low,” by one official.

Because of slow enlistment, and the sudden turn of events in Europe with evacuation at Dunkirk, the Canadian government, in 1940, announced that there would be a registration of all citizens for wartime purposes, and that as of July 15, 1940, all single men would be eligible for conscription for home defence. (It was reported that on July 14, Brantford saw an increased number of applications for marriage licenses). Then on August 13, 1940, *The Expositor* reported that Brantford had been chosen as a militia training centre under the compulsory training plan. It was to be known as No. 20 Canadian Army Basic Training Camp. The Mayor's official announcement stated in part:

“This project will be located on the Glebe Lands, a 97 acre tract lying south of East Colborne Street between Rawdon Street and the entrance to Mohawk Park. These lands are owned by the Six Nations Indians, and last evening a special meeting of the Indian Council was held and they approved the lease of these lands to the Department of National Defense at a nominal rental of $1.00 per year for the duration of the war, a very fine patriotic gesture on the part of the Six Nations.”

Little time was wasted in the construction of the camp, and on October 9, 1940, the first trainees arrived for their month long session. (This was later extended to 3 months). At the end of their training period the soldiers were to be attached to the Non-Permanent Active Militia.

Earlier, in April of 1940, Brantford had received the news that a service training flying school was to be established six miles from Brantford on the Burford Road, and that auxiliary airports were to be set up at Burtch and Hagersville. This was to be part of the Commonwealth Air Training Plan, and the station near Brantford was to be known as No. 5 Service Plying Training School (S.F.T.S.). (Prior to this announcement, the facilities of the Brant-Norfolk Aero Club had been used in the training of R.C.A.F. personnel). In November of 1940 the school was opened, and airmen from all over the British Commonwealth began training there. In January 1942, a detachment of the women's air corps, the C.W.A.A.F., also arrived for training at No. 5. During its operation over 2000 men graduated from number 5, and over 100 of these received decorations, one a posthumous - Victoria Cross. In March 1944, news of its intended closure due to a surplus of pilots led the city of Brantford to try to have the government retain the station as a commercial airport after the war. On March 20, 1944, *The Expositor* suggested that something positive would be done with the airdrome; this was based on a letter received by Brantford's M.P. Ross Macdonald. Then in October 1944, in an editorial, *The Expositor* reported:

"On July 8, the citizens of Brantford were informed that undertaking had been given by Hon. C. D. Howe, Federal Minister of Transport, that No. 5 Service Flying Training School would be taken over by Trans Canada Airlines, a Government aeronautical enterprise. Brantford's place on the post war air map of Canada was thus described as "assured." It now appears that this "assurance" was none too sure. According to a report presented to the City Council by its General Executive Committee, the information that No. 5 School was a commercial airport was "later denied" (although this denial was not made public), so that there is "no concrete plan at the present moment for Brantford's airport to become part of a chain of commercial airports." The report adds the encouraging postscript, "although this is highly probable." ...The loss of "No. 5" as a potential airport - "on the main line of T.C.A." was the original understanding - would be a serious blow to this community, particularly in view of the aeronautical possibilities of this country in the postwar period...."

Nothing came of the post-war proposals, and on November 17, 1944, the base was officially closed.

If the army and airforce were well represented in Brantford, the city was also connected with The Royal Canadian Navy through the many men from Brantford who served on the seas, and also through the corvette, the H.M.C.S. Brantford. In October 1940, the Brantford City Council passed a resolution urging that a Canadian destroyer be named after the Grand River (the Canadian Government had purchased a number of destroyers from U.S., and were intending to name them after Canadian rivers), and that a corvette be named after Brantford. The resolution argued that a destroyer should be named after the Grand on the basis the loyalty of Joseph Brant and the Six Nations to the British cause, and that the corvette should be named "The Brantford" in honour of Admiral Nelles of the Canadian Navy, a former resident of Brantford.

The request for the destroyer was passed over, but on October 16 the city received word that a corvette, to be called the H.M.C.S. Brantford, would be built. In September of 1942, the ship was launched at Midland. In a speech to guests at a special luncheon, Mayor J. P. Ryan promised:

"I say to the Navy representatives here today that we are determined there shall be a personal touch between the City of Brantford and these men on H.M.C.S. Brantford."

In May 1942, Brantford citizens had an opportunity to view the ship as it was anchored in Pt. Dover harbour, and a special Lake Erie and Northern radial was chartered to take Brantfordites there for the occasion.

Another aspect of the military in Brantford during World War II was the Home Guard. The worsening situation in Europe in 1940 prompted calls for a home guard. It was felt that such a unit could help check subversive elements in the communities across Canada. When in May 1940 the government called for volunteers for a veteran's home defense force, over 700 men in Brantford signed up. These were all war veterans from the First World War, and under 50 years of age. In July of 1940, orders were received in Brantford for the formation of the 21st Infantry Reserve Company of the Veteran's Home Guard, and in September the force was registered and sworn in.

As well as a Home Guard, a Civilian Defense Committee (A.R.A.) was also formed in February 1941, after Brantford was listed as a “vulnerable point” in Ontario. An organization was set up and over 400 volunteers were secured. However, by September of 1941, Brantford's designation as “vulnerable” had been dropped and this meant that government aid would be cut off. The committee decided to disband, but encouraged by the City Council it stayed together. Because Brantford was theoretically within range of German bombers, and because of the large amount of war industry in the city, it was reclassified as “vulnerable,” and in January, 1943, a campaign for 1,000 volunteers was launched.

The presence of the military in the city during the war proved of mutual benefit to both parties. Both camps, number 5 and number 20, were constructed using Brantford labour, and were maintained largely by people from Brantford. In January 1944, a report estimated that 25 percent of the food for number 20 was bought in Brantford, along with canteen supplies, fuel, and other material such as lumber. As well, the money spent by the servicemen and their friends or dependents was of great benefit to Brantford business.

But Brantford was good to those in the forces as well. Along with personal kindness shown by individual citizens, various groups in the city did their best to make the soldiers and airmen feel at home. In February of 1940, the Brantford Public Utilities Commission agreed to let all Canadian Active Service Force (C.A.S.F.) personnel ride the buses of Brantford free. According to the Railway Act, the P.U.C. had no right to allow this, but the Commission ignored the ruling, feeling that this was but a small way of showing appreciation to the men in uniform. Later, in May, the city gave a reception for all men of the city and county who were serving in the C.A.S.F., and who were still in Canada. This included a large parade through the city of over 600 marchers, a banquet, and a church service.

As non-Brantford service personnel arrived in greater numbers, measures were taken to make their stay more enjoyable and comfortable. Early in 1941, two clubs for service personnel were opened - one of these was the War Services Club run by the Canadian Legion. Perhaps better known was the Maple Leaf Club which was run under the auspices of the Brantford Citizens War Services Committee. At these clubs, dances

and entertainment took place. Local organizations, such as the I.O.D.E., took on special projects with regard to the camps. In the case of the I.O.D.E., they campaigned for books for the libraries for the bases. A local construction firm also offered -to excavate the hole for a swimming pool at number 5 if the personnel there could raise $1800 for the materials. No difficulty was encountered in raising the money, and the pool was built.

Relationships between the men at the bases and the citizens of Brantford were always cordial. Little or no friction was evident, either between the personnel of the two bases, or between civilians and the armed forces. There were some minor complaints, such as the letter to the editor of *The Expositor* in April 1944, which protested against low-flying planes from number 5, and pointed out that a farmer was thrown from a wagon as his horses reared when a plane swooped to within twenty feet of the ground. But generally speaking co-operation was the key-note.

Brantford citizens also looked after their men who were overseas, and the dependents of those men who were in Brantford. This latter point is well illustrated by a letter that appeared in *The Expositor* in July of 1941. It was from a soldier, and was addressed to the mayor.

"Just a few lines to express my thanks for the generous policy of looking after a soldier's wife and children when in trouble. I received word that my boy was in hospital with a broken leg, and I know, with the family that I have, my wife would not be able to do justice to my family and pay the hospital fees. But a few days later I received a letter telling me that through your generosity it was being looked after, and it makes me proud to belong to the City of Brantford, the place where I have lived for eighteen years. Also, it is a place well-worth fighting for. So please accept these thanks until the day when I can deliver them personally."

The men overseas were well taken care of. A letter from Rev. G. Deane Johnston of Brantford, a chaplain in the R.C.H.A., in January 1941, thanked the people of Brantford for making Christmas a little brighter for Brantford boys. In part it stated:

"...At 1 o'clock the first sitting were on hand and found that beside each place there was a Christmas cracker and a little pile of presents. On the bottom of the pile there was a gift box from the Brantford Y.M.C.A., then there came two packages of cigarettes, one donated by the Polish people of Brantford, and one by the Brantford Branch of the Order of the Moose. On top of that still another package of cigarettes, this time presented by the Knights of Columbus."

A year later, the Brantford Citizens' War Services Committee set as its goal, a parcel for every Brantford man on active service overseas. To help raise the money needed, the Lions Club arranged for a radio broadcast to be held at the Brant Theatre, where people would phone in contributions which would be announced on the air. In this way, over $1,000 was raised, and parcels went out to Brantford men overseas.

When the corvette H.M.C.S. Brantford was launched, the officers and crew were showered with gifts from the people of Brantford, even though the recipients were non-Brantfordites. The local chapters of the I.O.D.E. "adopted" the ship, and supplied it with over $700.00 worth of comforts, including many knitted articles. A local firm contributed leather jackets, and the Kiwanis Club supplied some games.

Those who returned were not forgotten either. The local Legion requested the City Council to pass a by-law giving ex-servicemen the preference in granting civic appointments, and they protested vigorously a month later, in March 1944, when the Brantford Playground and Recreation Commission appointed a non-veteran as temporary director of playgrounds when two veterans were available and qualified.

In January of 1945, the Legion and Red Cross organizations set up a committee to run a "Welcome Home" booth at the C.N.R. station. Volunteer workers were to man the booth (the Local Council of Women took on that responsibility during daytime hours), and help to welcome those returning. The names of the returning veterans were to be phoned through to the Fire Department and relayed to the proper authorities, who would inform the relatives of the returnees so they could be on hand when the train arrived. On one occasion, over 5,000 people gathered at the station to cheer a group of returning veterans. A letter to *The Expositor* from the Legion, commenting on this occasion, noted:

"...The gathering at the C.N.R. station demonstrated that the folks in Brantford are still loyal to the core..., the turnout last night will serve to reassure us all that the bonds which have always united us in true community service are as strong today as ever they were."

During World War II Brantford accepted its role as an "armed services" town. In fact, it did more than accept the role; it went far beyond what was necessary in order to make the servicemen who trained here feel at home. As well as looking after those at home, and those who returned from overseas, the citizens of Brantford also did every-thing possible to let the men overseas know that what they were doing for the country was being appreciated.

RESTRICTIONS AND CONTROLS

During World War II, the people of Canada found their lives much more strictly regulated and controlled than ever before. One method of controlling the distribution of certain commodities was through a rationing system, and although not fool-proof by any means, this method did serve the purpose of limiting quantities of certain items.

The government did not immediately introduce rationing. Initially it was not necessary because supplies were still flowing relatively freely across the Atlantic, and the armed forces overseas were not yet demanding the supplies they would later need.

Prices were affected by the outbreak of war. The Brantford police received several complaints in the early stages of the war that prices for some goods were being raised without justification. This was caused in part, by a heavy buying-spree by the public in an attempt to stock-up, and this left a shortage of supply in some areas. For example, the day war was declared there was a rush on sugar by Brantford women. In an attempt to slow down this run on certain lines; of groceries, local grocers instituted a form of rationing for sugar, tea, coffee, and flour, whereby limited quantities of these goods were sold to each customer. For a time, self-rationing and self-restraint was encouraged and allowed by the government. However, as prices continued to rise due to shortages caused either by war demands or hoarding, the government found it necessary, by the end of 1941, to institute price controls. The wisdom of this move was proven two years later when the government was able to report that the total cost of living had risen about 30 percent in four years (1939-43), as compared to 125 percent for the same time period during World War I.

Even before war with Japan was declared, managers in Brantford shops were reporting that supplies of silk stockings were dwindling. In 1940, the government had asked silk hose manufacturers to cut down the amount of silk in their stockings to a maximum of 50 percent, but even so, these "50 percent silk stockings" were selling as fast as they could be secured. Women took great care with the nylons they did have, and many mended "runs" when they occurred. Expositor surveys showed that Brantfordites, generally speaking, were not in favour of bare legs, and one of the most feasible substitutes discovered for silk stockings was leg-painting. A special paint applied by sponge, damp cloth, or hand, complete with a seam down the back drawn with an eyebrow pencil, allowed the ladies to have "liquid stockings." Commenting on the art of applying leg paint. *The Expositor* noted:

"Girls with artistic leanings are really perfecting this leg treatment and producing masterpieces that dare the male to distinguish between them and their peacetime sisters. However, a "Michaelangelic" complex is not essential for the successful application of the underpinning paint....
... Men, ... stated that barelegs are bearable but far preferable are the painted pins."

The two great drawbacks to leg painting were the time needed to apply it, and the weather. If- it rained an irreparable run resulted. As popular as leg painting may have

been, especially among the younger women, there was no way that this method was going to replace the "real thing." When a local shop, in March of 1945, offered 300 pairs of nylons for sale, they were sold within an hour; and when *The Expositor* ran a count on worsen passing the corner of Market and Colborne on July 23 1945, it showed that more women were wearing stockings than were going without, and those without stockings had for the most part not painted their legs. The leg painting fad had obviously run its course.

The saying, "the greatest thing since sliced bread," had to undergo a temporary hiatus during the war as the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (W.P.T.B.) prohibited the sale of sliced bread as of August 11, 1941. Brantfordites were told to get the family bread knife sharpened as they would be slicing their own bread, and hopefully not their fingers. This measure, along with the using of plain wrappers and the prohibition of double wrapping for bread, was introduced in order to make unnecessary a possible increase in the price of bread.

The great need for rubber and gasoline by the armed services led to an acute shortage of those products throughout the war. In the early stages, people were encouraged to conserve on gasoline and tires through self-rationing, but slowly more and more restrictions were imposed in regard to these two commodities. At first, gasoline was rationed to gasoline stations on a daily allotment, and even though most of the stations rationed amounts to regular customers, they often ran out of their daily quota early in the day. People were encouraged to carry their own parcels instead of having them delivered, and to "bulk your weekly grocery needs so that one delivery a week will be sufficient." In August of 1941, the W.P.T.B. limited delivery by bakery wagons and trucks engaged in house-to-house rounds to regular deliveries only, and no special deliveries were allowed. In December, bread deliveries were restricted to three days a week. Advertisements appeared in the newspapers outlining the various ways that one could save on gasoline. In March 1942, the W.P.T.B. ordered that trucks were to be run with full loads only, and in this regard Brantford coal dealers urged citizens to order their coal at least two days in advance so that the dealers could plan their deliveries and make fewer trips. Even after gasoline rationing was introduced in 1942, further restrictions were brought in. The speed limit was dropped from 60 MPH to 40 MPH, and later no one was allowed to carry anyone in his car, except a "necessary assistant." The Brantford City Council protested this last measure, pointing out that it was particularly hard on servicemen, many of whom depended on hitch-hiking as a means of transportation.

Tires were also rationed eventually, and were very difficult to obtain. This led one local grocery store to limit deliveries to all orders over five dollars. Its advertisement explained:

"Tires Cannot Be Replaced, or even re-treaded, nor can new trucks be obtained. With a little careful planning, the average family will find no difficulty in making their food orders a little larger and less frequent."

Later, in 1944, no new automobile tires were to be issued to civilians unless they were engaged in essential war-work, and even then they were not always available when needed. This shortage of tires led to an increase in the number of tires stolen, and there were innumerable accounts in *The Expositor* which reported that a spare tire had been stolen from the trunk of someone's car. The restriction on tires throughout the country was not modified until December 1945, and not completely eliminated until June 1946.

Several other commodities were also rationed. These included sugar, tea and coffee, butter, evaporated milk, some cuts of meat, clothing, and coal. Of these, the greatest inconvenience possibly came from the shortage of sugar. Each household was allowed 3/4 of a pound, per week, per person, and it was illegal to purchase more than two weeks supply at any one time. (As well, there were to be no sugar bowls allowed in restaurants). However, a special allowance was set up for people who wanted sugar for canning purposes and people managed to improvise to develop such things as sugarless icings.

In May of 1943, meat rationing came into effect. This led to meatless Tuesdays in restaurants, and a search for substitutes for meat. An *Expositor* article proposed that eggs could act as a good substitute, and suggested such recipes as “Golden Glow Eggs,” “Egg and Mushroom Patty,” and “Snow Eggs.” Meat rationing was ended as the war came to a close, but suddenly reintroduced in September of 1945 in order to help the world food situation. Two weeks after its introduction a Brantford butcher stated:

“The sales for meat have declined so much in this City since the beginning of rationing, and the wastage has been so great that some local butcher shops will be forced to close shop unless rationing is lifted.”

The problem was that people refused to give up their coupons for the cheaper cuts of meat, and as a result the butcher shops were overstocked, with a great deal of meat going to waste. Butchers across Canada protested and threatened a strike, and although the government responded by lifting rationing on “fancy meats,” most meat continued to be rationed for some time.

Because of a shortage of cloth needed for defence purposes, the W.P.T.B. moved to conserve on this product. In April of 1942, Brantford clothing dealers were asked to hand in the names of anyone who had bought three or more suits since February 1. This was to act as a check on men who might be hoarding. As well, the W.P.T.B. ruled that cuffs could no longer be put on men's pants as 54 cuffs were equal to the material for one suit, and that material was needed for the war effort.

Some local businesses found themselves very restricted by W.P.T.B. policies. For example, in June 1942, the Brantford Laundry Ltd. placed an advertisement in the newspaper noting the restrictions that had been placed on them by the W.P.T.B. They were:

1. Only three pickups or deliveries may be made to any one customer each week.

2. Shirt boards, studs and cuff fasteners are eliminated.

3. Garment hangers must be returned at time of delivery, or a substitute must be given our salesmen.

4. Dry cleaning bags placed on garments for your protection must be returned to our salesmen."

The rationing system itself, as set up by the government, was as effective as could be expected under the circumstances, and operated in Brantford the same way as in other centres. The main distribution centre for Brantford was London, and the ration books for Brantford were sent to the City Hall. Ration books were mailed out from here at first, but later, public centres were set up for distribution, and some industries agreed to distribute them to their employees. Names were recorded when the books were issued, but it was a very difficult job to keep track of the names of all the people to whom the books were issued. Consequently, rationing operated to a large degree on the honour system, and although some people did try to take advantage of the situation by getting more than their share, most people complied with the rules. A local ration board was set up in Brantford, "to facilitate the settlement or adjustment of the ration problems" of the people in Brantford. This board gave consumers full information on all aspects of rationing, and helped solve problems concerned with rationing, such as loss or damage to ration books, and the question of extra rations.

Generally speaking, Canadians coped quite well with the rationing system. They were meant to feel that it was their patriotic duty to co-operate. For example, a housewife's wartime pledge was instituted which called on housewives:

1. To take care of what I own
2. To buy only what I need
3. To spend what dollars I must, to the best possible advantage.

An *Expositor* editorial entitled "Simply Must" People, pointed out that rationing was introduced to ensure equitable distribution, and concluded:

"The great majority of the "I simply musters" readily grasp the idea, once it is explained to them. The small minority which still selfishly clamours for more, had better refer complaints to Berlin or Tokyo."

Often people found that they had more ration tickets for one product than they could use. They would then trade their coupons with someone else, and thus acquire some products that they needed. In September of 1943, the W.P.T.B. moved to halt this practice by issuing an order prohibiting the exchanging of rationed goods, and coupons. In spite of this order, it would seem that the practice of trading coupons and goods was neither strictly observed, nor enforced.

There were penalties provided for ignoring the government regulations on rationing and prices, and there were several instances in Brantford of people being prosecuted for offenses connected with rationing, especially as related to the sale of gasoline and tires. One man was convicted of selling a used tire "at a price greater than that set by the schedule issued by the Wartime Prices and Trade Board." Another man was charged as follows:

"Did sell an inner tube without an order from the Board; did sell a used tire without receiving an order; did sell a used tire and a new tube at a price in excess of the price laid down by the Board; did sell a new inner tube without an order from the Board."

A gasoline dealer was fined $100 for selling gasoline "without the surrender of coupons." One Brantford citizen was fined for failing to surrender the ration book of a dead brother, and two restaurant men were fined for exceeding the quota allowance for butter. The charges were not always against the seller. As late as October 1945, a man was convicted of acquiring two tires without obtaining the proper permit.

Rationing was a necessary evil during the war. Most Brantford citizens accepted it and coped with it, knowing that by doing so they were aiding the war effort in some small way.

HOUSING AND THE WAR

One of the most pressing problems that Brantford faced during World War II, and one shared with many other Canadian cities, was that of a housing shortage. The locating of two armed services bases in the vicinity, and the arrival of war workers from the Canadian East and West, put a strain on Brantford's housing facilities that the city was hard pressed to cope with. A chronological look at the problem will allow one to see just how the problem arose, how acute it became, and how it was handled.

On September 16, 1940, *The Expositor* reported:

"Despite a shortage of houses, building operations have dropped one-third from the corresponding 1939 level. Agents are "besieged" with requests for houses for rent, and rents have risen about ten percent. About 100 new homes will be needed when the new airdrome and training centre open next month."

Later that month, the Federal Government ordered a "rental standstill" in order to check the soaring increases in some parts of the country, but it was not until December 1, 1941, that rent controls were actually introduced by the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. (W.P.T.B.)

Earlier, in the spring of 1941, the Brantford City Council had taken its own steps to check high rents and deal with the shortage of houses. They set up a committee to investigate the rent situation, decided to offer city lots for $50.00, and passed a resolution asking for a removal of the eight percent sales tax on building materials. When it was learned that several soldiers wives were threatened with eviction the Mayor declared:

"One thing we are not going to have in Brantford so far as I am concerned, is soldiers wives distressed. Many other citizens are being evicted, but our first obligation is to the wives of the men who are making it possible for there still to be landlords in this country."

The situation worsened. In March of 1942, two Brantford landlords were found guilty of violating rent controls. Later, in October, another landlord was fined $100.00 on each of three counts for violating W.P.T.B. regulations with regard to rent ceilings, even though the landlord pleaded that he had recently made extensive renovations, and had received little during the pre-war years when most of his tenants were on relief.

Houses were still in short supply. A report to the City Council by the Trades and Labour Council described the housing situation as "serious and becoming worse," and recommended the construction of 300 homes. The City Council had for some time debated the type of house the city should construct to meet the shortage. Finally, in May 1942, they decided to ask Wartime Housing Ltd. "to make an immediate survey of the needs of homes here, and to undertake such a building programme as might be found necessary," and they also requested that the Board of Health investigate the possibility of rehabilitating "any available housing facilities in the City." There was opposition to this

move on various grounds. Some felt that soldiers morale would be damaged as the wartime houses were only for war workers; others worried about the quality of the houses, and wanted assurances of their removal after the war. *The Expositor* commented on the problem as follows:

"Chronic for some time, the housing shortage in Brantford has become acute, and the City Council was well advised to take steps in an attempt to alleviate it....War conditions have placed handicaps and restrictions on private building which, in any case, will continue to present difficulties. The move to seek immediate action by having Wartime Housing Limited make a survey and undertake such building as may be necessary is one of "forced choice."
...Permission to put up either frame or pre-fabricated homes in certain defined areas night help considerably toward meeting the scarcity, while at the same time maintaining a suitable standard of construction....
In this regard, however, the time factor is a serious drawback, and considering that, it is difficult to find an alternative to the Wartime Housing scheme....
With regard to Wartime Housing, its provisions apply, at the moment, only to war workers, and the Council wants them extended to soldiers
families. This indeed is a logical proposition: if a soldier is not a war worker, who is?
The obvious and principal objection to Wartime Housing buildings is their quality of construction. They are not intended to be permanent, but as sore observers fear, once such houses are put up, the tendency may be for them to stay up, thereby creating an unfavourable condition in the future. It should be possible, however, to counter this danger by making specific and rigid provision for their removal after the war. Indeed, following procedure adopted elsewhere, this would ordinarily be stipulated in any agreement as between the City of Brantford and Wartime Housing Limited."

The City Council approved the construction of frame houses by Wartime Housing Ltd. under certain specified conditions, one of them being that these houses be removed when the war ended. A committee was set up to handle applications for the homes that were to be built. There were to be 200 houses erected by Wartime Housing, plus three staff houses or hostels for single men and women war workers.

Evictions continued to be a problem in Brantford. In August of 1942, a war veteran had been evicted from his home and the only thing that could be offered him was tent space in Mohawk Park. As late as October, a number of families were reported living in tents and trailers in Mohawk Park. Citizens were encouraged to make spare rooms available for rent to war workers; and six families, with a total of twenty-two children, were reported housed in the empty General Steel Ware building on Elgin St.

The city struggled through the 1942-43 winter with an acute housing shortage. Local war industry was agitating for more homes for war workers as they knew their employment lists would be expanding over the year. They reported that they needed 2,500 workers immediately, and that that figure would soon expand. The Mayor commented:

"There is not much use in building war plants and not having men available. And the number of men available will be limited if there is no housing accommodation for them. I have been told that some prospective employees of a local plant refused to accept jobs because no houses were available."

In April 1943, the hostel for women war workers was opened, and was adjudged "comfortable," "bright," and "home-like." Over 400 girls were to be registered there, and according to *The Expositor*'s description, it provided all the amenities of life, including a beauty parlour, games room, ping-pong room, bowling alleys, and a "date" parlour. The article pointed out that each wing of the residence would have a matron who would act as a mother to the girls. The article also noted that no men were to be allowed in the dormitories.

Throughout 1943, evictions became "the order of the day" according to the Mayor. For example, one local soldier returned from being overseas for two years to find his wife and family housed in a small highway cabin, after being evicted from their apartment in the city. Several solutions were suggested. The City Council placed an advertisement in the paper asking if there were a "sufficient number of desirable homes..." available for conversion into apartment suites. At its first meeting, after the summer recess, the Mayor declared:

"I want this Council and the general public to realize that the housing situation in Brantford is now at its worst."

Several members of the Council suggested that compulsory billetting might be the answer. The Trades and Labour Council passed a resolution supporting this suggestion, and at the same time urged that evictions be prohibited.

Tragedy struck in October 1943, indirectly caused by the housing shortage. Two young girls died from coal gas inhalation while living with their father in a trailer in Mohawk Park. Their father had recently moved to Brantford to take a job in war-time work, and because no houses were available, had had to accept accommodation in the trailer.

In April 1944, the Mayor again reported that the housing situation was "at its worst." An *Expositor* article related:

"Brantford's housing problem which has been steadily developing in recent years under the stress of war conditions has now reached its most critical stage, with no fewer than 17 families facing the prospect of eviction within the next ten days, while hundreds more who find it necessary to move are unable to find new housing accommodation.

It was further reported, that at least 300 families were in a position of having received notice to move, or finding it necessary to move without having a suitable place to go. An *Expositor* editorial pointed out that Brantford's population had grown by 4,000 since 1939, when houses were, even then, at a premium. It argued that the scheme tried thus far to solve the problem had either failed or were inadequate.

"...The urgent need is for a housing policy, operated in concert by Provincial Government and municipalities, and stemming from the Federal Administration. Even if the municipalities were willing, they would not be economically able to meet the crisis unaided, or from their own resources."

In a later editorial, a month later, the newspaper stated:

"...What Brantford needs, and has needed for months past, is an extension of Wartime Housing or similar project. The need will exist for some - perhaps many - months to come. It may even be increased as more and more servicemen return to civil life and set about re-establishing their families. For this "tide-over" period, as well as for the housing emergency caused by redistribution of war workers, a well-defined system of temporary dwellings, whether under Wartime Housing or other auspices, would appear to offer the only means of relief."

In late May, the City Council asked Wartime Housing to erect 100 more houses to help alleviate this shortage. These houses were to be only for dependents of service men, and for returned soldiers and their families, and were to be of a semi-permanent type. Some of the aldermen were not happy with some of the terms surrounding the deal, such as no basements, and the city's having to guarantee the rent of men serving overseas, but at that time the housing predicament was such that the Council had little room to manoeuvre. While congratulating the city fathers on their initiative, *The Expositor* expressed the feeling that although 100 houses would help, they would not be sufficient.

Mention has been made of the families living in the abandoned General Steel Wares premises, nick-named the Elgin "Apartments," or the "Ryan Apartments" (after the Mayor). May 1944 found eleven families still living there. According to an *Expositor* article, some of the families had been living there for twelve months, and all indications pointed to a longer stay because of the housing shortage in the city. The living quarters were cramped, and drab. The partitions that divided the apartments did not extend to the ceiling, and made privacy next to impossible. The article concluded:

"They achieve the minimum housing objective of providing a roof and shelter for some three-score persons who otherwise would be homeless. But after having accomplished that purpose for more than a year, they are still a temporary measure, falling far short of being adequate as a permanent arrangement."

Several factors were helping to make the housing shortage even more acute during 1944. Many landlords refused to let apartments to people with children, and thus forced many families to live in small rooms where accommodation could be found. The

shortage of labour, because of men in the services and in war-work, meant that the construction of the Wartime Houses, due to be completed by mid October, was behind schedule. This situation was further complicated by the difficulty in getting some building materials. The labour shortage presented another problem - there were few men available to work as movers. This often meant that some people were unable to move immediately into adequate quarters when they were found. On the other hand, it also meant that many evictions had to be postponed.

The crisis continued into 1945. In January, the Mayor again termed the housing shortage the "worst ever." Far from improving, the situation worsened during 1945 as the end of the war meant returning servicemen would swell the city's population, and place an even heavier demand on the city's already intolerable housing shortage.

To help alleviate the situation somewhat, the hostel for women war workers was divided so that men could live there as well. In March, a delegation from the city had journeyed to Ottawa to seek government aid. While there, they secured assurance that the government would release enough building materials and fixtures to the city for the construction of up to 200 homes, but were turned down in their request that the buildings from No. 5 S.F.T.S. air base be given to the city for emergency housing. To help returning servicemen who planned to build their own homes in Brantford, the Council proposed to set aside 100 building lots for the veterans, at a purchase price $100.00 below the normal price. As well, in mid-June, the City Council found it necessary to ask for 100 more wartime houses of a semi-permanent nature for returning soldiers and their families. This latter measure was opposed by the Canadian Legion in Brantford who felt that 200 houses were needed immediately. *The Expositor* opposed the idea, arguing that permanent hones were what was needed and that they could be constructed just as quickly and at approximately the same cost. It pointed out that the materials promised by Ottawa had not yet arrived, and even if they had they would have been of no use because of the labour shortage. The paper quoted C.D. Howe, the Minister of Reconstruction, as having pointed out to the Brantford delegation that saw him in March:

"I have expressed the view that Brantford, having 300 other temporary or semi-permanent houses, should look for other methods of meeting its problem as I fear that the building of more semi-permanent houses would not be a wise development for your city. I have suggested that the best solution will be to have your citizens build a permanent type of small house..."

It urged the City Council to reconsider its move on the semi-permanent homes, but in late July the Council gave its consent for the construction of 100 more Wartime Houses.

Even before approval for construction of the additional Wartime Houses had been announced, the City Council's Housing Committee, after studying the City's acute housing problem, stated that "at least 500 more homes" would be needed during 1945. However, three basic problems, finance, labour, and materials, made any action very difficult.

As more and more men began to return from service overseas, the Canadian Legion in Brantford became more involved in the housing situation. They were very critical of anyone they considered to be price gouging the veterans as far as rents were concerned. When they were asked to send a representative to the civic Housing Committee they twice refused on the following grounds:

"The Legion cannot consent to put the claims of the families of those who are serving, or who have served, on an equal basis with the claims of those who preferred to remain behind."

They further felt that the Housing Committee was a "subterfuge" on the part of the Council to cover its failure to deal adequately with the problem.

"Homes are needed now for service men's families. That need is known, and requires no further deliberation by any group."

The crisis continued during the rest of 1945 and into the next year. The "Elgin Apartments" were finally closed in July 1945, but only because a manufacturing concern wanted the premises. The city again asked that the military buildings in the area be made available for emergency housing, and finally this was approved. As well, when the war workers' residences closed in December of 1945, the city was able to procure two of them for emergency housing needs.

Brantford was not unique in its housing problems during the war. The problem was nation-wide. But, the large amount of war-work being carried on in Brantford doubtless made its housing shortage somewhat more acute than in many other centres.

WAR ISSUES

During the war years, 1939-1945, certain issues tied directly to the war had to be faced by the citizens of Brantford. These included the questions of subversion, censorship, and conscription.

The question of subversive elements working in the city raised its head almost with the outbreak of war. The Overseas Artillery Association passed a resolution in September 1939 which dealt with this question. The resolution stated:

"Whereas certain subversive elements in this city are active in opposing a proper and loyal participation by Canadians in active service and full support of the Empire in this vital struggle for the maintenance of Christian democracy and, whereas a common knowledge exists of insults being cast upon our enlisted troops and the military in general, be it therefore resolved. That this Association goes on record, approving the immediate registration of all aliens, urging that those who are known or who may be deemed to be hostile to the ideals which Canada is supporting through its participation in this war, should be interned without further delay."

The Association also recommended that "the rush for naturalization should be closely watched for undesirables, that any naturalized subject who acts or speaks in a disloyal way should be deprived at once of the protection of citizenship, that measures for the internment of all undesirables should be instituted at once, and that local employers should fill any vacancies caused by enlistment of any of their staffs, with citizens of British origin, and particularly veterans, many of whom can still do a good day's work."

Commenting on the charges of insults to men in uniform, a local police magistrate stated that it was the duty of any citizen who heard such remarks to lay charges, and failure to do so would make him an accessory. He also pointed out that anyone aware of the facts could prefer the charge, and the Crown would subpoena all witnesses required.

Steps were taken in the early part of the war to check possible subversive activity. All enemy aliens (a total of 18), were to register at the Police Station in Brantford, and the local police were given the power to arrest a person without a warrant if a war offence was committed, or even suspected.

When France fell in the spring of 1940, the reaction against possible subversion intensified in the city. On May 20, the Brantford City Council called on "every loyal citizen to lend aid in stamping out any subversive elements which may be in existence here," and passed a resolution that would set up a Citizens' Committee, if necessary, to co-operate with the authorities in stamping out any subversive activities in the city. The Council also suggested that as some people might be nervous about reporting suspicions to police authorities, that a committee of private citizens be set up to receive these complaints, and they could refer them to the police. The City Council also appointed six new constables as a war emergency measure, and required that all aliens (those not born in the British Empire) on relief take - an oath of allegiance.

In May 1940, the principal of the Brantford Collegiate, and the Inspector for Public Schools, were ordered to take action to prevent possible subversive action in the school, and when it was announced that some students in Hamilton had refused to salute the flag, the Chairman of the Brantford Board of Education announced that failure to do so in Brantford by a student would result in expulsion. As well, all employees of the Board were to take an oath of allegiance.

Italy's entry into the war on the side of Germany, in June of 1940, led to a flurry of events connected with possible subversion. Even though the local Italian community gave assurances that their loyalties. were to Canada, not Mussolini, several of them were cut off relief, all those naturalized since September 13, 1939 were to register at the police station, and "a handful" of local Italians were rounded up for internment. A letter to the editor of *The Expositor* in June of 1940, suggested that many Italians in Canada were living off the "fat of the land," and not really contributing to the war effort. It concluded:

"Therefore, I would like to make a suggestion to our City Council or the powers that be, to make an investigation of all Italians in this City to see what support they are willing to give our Government by buying war bonds in this hour of need, and the present struggle for freedom."

In the early 1930's, a local magistrate, S.A. Jones, had written a book entitled, Is Fascism The Answer? In writing this book he had received the co-operation of the Italian government, and the book itself was an exhaustive study into the workings of the fascist state in Italy. With Italy's entry into the war against Britain, the magistrate suddenly found himself the object of suspicion by some people in the city. He wrote a letter to the paper defending himself.

"Judges and magistrates are, generally speaking, supposed to "take it lying down" when slandered on the street. There is one slander, however, which anyone is justified in publicly denouncing, and that is one casting aspersion on a man's loyalty to his King and Country. It is being whispered from mouth to mouth that I am a Fascist. This is an absolute falsehood. I am not a Fascist. I have never at any time been a Fascist, and have never advocated Fascism as a system for us to follow.

His letter went on to point out that the book had been written with the permission of the Attorney-General of Ontario, and at a time when Britain and Italy were on "the friendliest terms." He concluded:

"I am well aware that I am not the only man in Brantford who has been subjected to similar vile slanders. The mischief of it is that those who start these miserable rumours refuse to lay or to support any charge, but content themselves with spreading false news."

This latter point was well borne out by a police report in June, 1940. The police reported that they had investigated over 100 cases in regard to rumours of disloyalty, most of them received by telephone calls or anonymous letters. In all cases "spite work, petty jealousies and neighbourly rows' were found to be responsible.

In June of 19ft, two Jehovah's Witnesses (then an outlawed organization), were convicted under the Defense of Canada Regulations Act, for distributing pamphlets, "likely to be prejudicial to the safety of the State of the prosecution of the war." Police had acted on complaints from some city residents, and when they investigated they discovered the men distributing a pamphlet entitled "Choosing "Riches or Ruin."

Posters and the newspapers were constantly warning people about not chatting about "vital topics" connected with the war. One Expositor editorial outlined how the father of a soldier had been overheard on a bus talking about information that might help the enemy, such as when his son was leaving, from where, and the name of the ship involved. The editorial concluded:

"...Assuming that there was no enemy agent aboard the bus, the strong likelihood remains that those who heard the account passed it along in further conversations. By such means it could conceivably get to people who would use it with deadly effect. The grim truth is that German submarines are operating in Canadian waters. Will people never learn that chattering of the sort here described is a potential aid to the enemy?"

The reaction to possible subversive activities was not without its humour or irony. The police received one report of four young people taking pictures near the overhead bridge on Brant Avenue. Investigation revealed the four people to be Californians taking pictures of a sign advertising Brantford. One June 23, 1941, *The Expositor* reported:

"Within the past few weeks, as many as 50 local citizens have telephoned to the Police Station, reporting what they believed might be the activities of a foreign agent. In all instances, the man upon whom suspicion lay was said to have been "taking pictures and making notes," and was described as having the appearance of a Japanese."

However, the young man concerned was a Chinese student enrolled at the University of Toronto, and he was preparing a map and thesis on settlement and agriculture in that part of Ontario in the Grand River Valley, north of Brantford. If nothing else, the incident illustrated that the message of being on guard for subversive activities and agents had at least been received by many people in Brantford.

Censorship was another war-time issue that directly affected Brantford. There was, of course, military censorship regarding troop movements, but Brantfordites found the issue touching them even more personally. In an editorial entitled "Censor Not A Bogey," *The Expositor* tried to explain the censor's role.

"The Censor - really there are several of him - is not an omniscient being, and the label "Passed by Censor" does not by any means assume the character of a hall mark of authenticity. This is something Canadian newspaper readers should know. Censors have a job to do and they carry it out to the best of their ability, being a trifle over-zealous on occasion. But, as has been stressed in these columns time and again, their business is principally to prevent the release of news that might endanger our own war effort or furnish information of value to the enemy. Restricted to this, the scope of the censors is fairly limited. Generally speaking, censors do not possess any more information - usually they possess far less - than the newspapers.... Censorship in this country has not meant and will not mean an end to the "freedom of the press." As a matter of fact, such are the patriotism and good judgement of the great majority of Canadian editors that whatever censorship is essential would safely be left to them."

Nevertheless, in spite of these high-sounding phrases, the government issued periodic lists of publications which could not be transmitted by mail in Canada.

Censorship went beyond just the newspapers. Letters coming back from overseas were subject to the censor's pen, but mail sent within Canada was also inspected. In 1942, members of parliament were complaining about this censorship within the country, and it came to light that a local Brantford citizen had had several letters opened and re-sealed by the Government censor.

Another kind of censorship was proposed by the Brantford City Council in 1941, when they asked the Brantford Public Library and the Board of Education to remove any books written by Charles Lindbergh, (a noted American pacifist and admirer of Hitler), as they were "not sympathetic to Great Britain and the cause for which our Empire is fighting." *The Expositor* attacked this suggestion in an editorial.

"During a momentary lapse from its accustomed good judgement, the City Council the other night passed a resolution calling for the "removal" of any publications written by one Mr. Charles Augustus Lindbergh. The resolution, as will have been observed, was not exactly characterized by that laudable British trait of tolerance. Indeed a stickler for logic might have said that it advocated precisely the suppressive measures we deplore and disdain in the Nazis.... To ban Mr. Lindbergh's writings would be to arouse new interest in them, and give them undue and free publicity...."

Just as in World War I, conscription became a contentious issue in Canada during the second World War. The Canadian government had placed itself in a rather binding position by declaring at the war's outbreak that there would be no conscription for overseas service. A modified form of conscription was introduced when the government announced, in 1940, that it would call up certain classes of men for training for home defense. One of these training camps was in Brantford - No. 20 Canadian Army Basic Training Camp. As the need for men for the active overseas force increased, due to casualties abroad and slow recruiting at home, the government decided that a modification of their stand on overseas conscription was necessary. To this end, they ran

a plebiscite to determine whether the Canadian people would free them from their earlier pledge of no conscription for service overseas.

Prior to this announcement, there had been some agitation in Brantford for total selective service. A letter to the editor of *The Expositor* in December 1941, had noted:

"...One has only to walk down our main street on a Saturday night to be disgusted at seeing countless young men who have no idea of enlisting, and I myself have yet to see any entering the recruiting office on Dalhousie Street. Let us urge our present Government to participate whole-heartedly in this war, and conscript both wealth and manpower, for we surely need both.

The Expositor, on January 13, 1942, in an editorial entitled, "Write To Your Member," urged Canadians to write to their member of parliament urging "compulsory selective service 'for the farms, the factories, and the forces,' for the home front and for overseas." The editorial commented that Brantford's member, W. Ross Macdonald, had already expressed himself in favour of "a comprehensive conscription system,"

but that citizens' letters would add weight to his stand. As well, the Legion across Canada had drawn up briefs to be presented to the government. The briefs called for unrestricted selective service, and a total war effort. *The Expositor* reported:

"Indication and illustration that Brantford is going "all out" in backing the Canadian Legion demand for a total war effort is revealed in the endorsations of the brief... which have been received from local organizations - municipal, labour, women's, fraternal, and veterans…"

When the government announced its intention to hold the plebiscite on conscription, the Brantford City Council attacked the idea claiming it would breed disunity and waste taxpayer's money, and they called for total mobilization. *The Expositor* attacked the proposed vote as being, a political device as unnecessary as it is undesirable, and as "an evasion of Parliamentary responsibility and a waste of money and time." The newspaper concluded:

"...In the meantime there will be throughout Canada, a strong feeling of resentment that, in the national interest, the Government could not see its way clear to give leadership where leadership was so urgently demanded. If there is to be a vote however, it must be taken with the least possible delay, and it is to be hoped it will carry by an overwhelming majority."

To help achieve an "overwhelming majority," a Brant County Plebiscite Action Committee' was formed. This committee held meetings and issued press releases to encourage people to get out and vote in favour of the plebiscite. As well, the committee arranged for transportation to the polls for those unable to make it, and this was no small task with the country suffering under tire and gasoline restrictions. The Brantford City

Council called upon the Mayor to issue a proclamation urging people to support the plebiscite, and this was done.

To the question, - "Are you in favour of releasing the government from any obligation arising out of any past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service?" Brantford and Brant county citizens voted an overwhelming yes. The ratio was more than seven to one in favour of the plebiscite. The actual results were:

	Yes	No
Brantford	11,899	1,693
Yes Majority 10,396		
Brant County	6,363	827
Yes Majority 5,536		

Even with the overwhelming mandate to use conscription for overseas service, the Mackenzie-King Government stalled, hoping to be able to get through the war without using conscription. As the Allies advanced toward Germany in late 1944, the cry went out for more men - for conscription. *The Expositor* attacked the government for its failure to take action:

"At a time when the fate of Canadian servicemen is at stake, the people will not tolerate a situation where precious lives are played for political pawns."

The paper continued its attacks, urging the government to use the "Zombies" (those who had been trained under the National Resources Mobilization Act, but who refused to sign for overseas service). In another editorial the paper charged:

"The plain truth of the matter is that through adherence to a policy dictated by political expedience, and through failure to exhibit statesmanlike courage in this case, the Government has itself created an embarrassing, vexatious, and potentially dangerous problem."

The Local Council of Women, and Branch 90 of the Canadian Legion, led the campaign in Brantford to put pressure on the government to enforce conscription. The Local Council of Women circulated a petition that urged the government to use the "Zombies and the Legion organized a mass meeting of citizens to protest government inaction. *The Expositor* accounts of the meeting began:

"A large and representative audience assembled in Victoria Hall here Monday evening, by a standing vote, unanimously called upon the Dominion Parliament to make the Zombie Army immediately available for reinforcement of the Canadian army overseas."

Obviously, many people in the city wanted some action taken.

The issues of subversion, censorship, and conscription were not unique to Brantford during the war, but people in the city obviously took a keen interest in these issues, and had very definite opinions on how each one should be dealt with.

GIVE, GIVE, GIVE

During World War II, Brantford, like many other Canadian cities, was deluged with numerous campaigns and drives for a variety of causes. The emphasis was constantly on giving to the war effort. Money was collected for Victory Bonds, War Savings Certificates, War Savings Stamps, weapons, and war relief. At the same time, Brantfordites were asked to donate to collections of clothing, rags, metal, and salvage. Various civic organizations got involved in these campaigns, and different methods were being continually tried in order to get citizens to donate generously. To cut down the number of campaigns, several local organizations combined to form the Brantford Federated Services. These included the Salvation Army, Victorian Order of Nurses, Citizens' War Services, the Y.M.C.A., and the Y.W.C.A.

The first major drive for money during the war occurred in November 1939, when the local Red Cross, as part of a national campaign, set out to raise $50,000. A large rally, reminiscent of the patriotic rallies of World War I, was held at the Capitol Theatre, complete with bands, banners, speeches, and songs, and 1,000 people were turned away. The campaign went $10,000 over its objective very quickly. Red Cross drives continued throughout the war, including one for “Our Gallant Russian Allies,” to raise $500,000 for Russian relief. As well as money raising, the local Red Cross was busily engaged in making war supplies such as socks, sweaters, gloves, and scarfes, for servicemen, British civilians, and hospitals.

Throughout the war, there were nine Victory Loan Campaigns Sponsored by the Federal Government. The idea behind these “loans,” was that the people should lend the Government money for the war effort through the purchase of Victory Bonds. In return, the Government would pay back the loan, with interest, on a specified date. The money subscribed was not necessarily paid directly, nor in a lump sum, but was often taken on a weekly basis from the subscriber's pay. The campaigns to sell these bonds were usually attended with catchy slogans such as, “Nothing Matters Now But Victory,” and “Work, Save, and Lend for Victory,” and elaborate opening ceremonies. The first campaign, in February 1941, involved various events that were to be spread over a week. These included parades and concerts, war demonstrations, and a mock air raid. This latter event was to involve a city-wide blackout to impress upon Brantfordites the terror that England was enduring. During the “raid,” searchlights on the market square were to search the skies, anti-aircraft guns were to fire, and fire trucks and soldiers were to rush to Earl Haig Park where a fire was to be blazing. To launch the second Victory Loan Campaign in June 1942, the organizers stated that they had arranged a series of events that would make citizens in Brant County more war conscious than they had been since hostilities were begun. “Torch Day” was declared by the mayor, and a massed celebration was planned for Agricultural Park. The events included a military parade with floats, the lighting of a torch, and a pledge of loyalty to the Empire. The pledge stated:

"I hereby declare my belief in Almighty God and reaffirm my loyalty and allegiance to His Majesty the King, and further declare my support of British institutions.
I pledge myself and my all to hold the Torch on high, and to march shoulder to shoulder with the United Kingdom and her allies in our righteous cause to victory and enduring peace."

"Commando Dagger Day" was the name given to the special day for the Third Victory Loan. The events during this drive included church services, a large military parade, and a patriotic meeting in the armouries. Invariably, these Victory Loan drives easily met and surpassed their objectives, and in the first eight Victory Loan drives Brantford citizens subscribed $61,735,250.

The ninth and final campaign came in October 1945, well after the war had ended in both Europe and the Pacific. The reasons for the drive were clearly outlined in an *Expositor* editorial.

"In a military sense, victory has been won. Why then, should there be a Victory Loan? For several simple reasons. First, Victory in the full meaning of the term has not yet been secured. Second, the winning of the war will prove futile unless the peace is also won... Third, while the Government of Canada followed a pay-as-you-go war finance policy as far as possible, war commitments and indebtedness did pile up enormously; in other words, much of victory's bill still has to be paid. ... in preference to paying taxes in increasing amount and getting nothing in return, the Canadian people are invited simply to loan the moneys needed and collect interest thereon."

As well as Victory Bonds which were worth $50.00 and over, Canadians could purchase War Savings Certificates in smaller denominations, and War Savings Stamps, which came in even smaller denominations. War Savings Certificates were available at any time, and often for these a community was given an objective, not just in terms of total dollars, but in terms of what the investment could purchase in regard to war needs. For example, in November 1941, Brantford and Brant County residents were asked to invest sufficient money in War Savings Certificates to permit the purchasing of a tank a month. War Savings Stamps were popular "among school children. At the Brantford Collegiate, a specified time was set aside each week during classes for students to purchase the stamps. As an added precaution, to ensure they would have enough money for the war effort, the Federal Government introduced compulsory savings in June, 1942. By this, the government was to have access to a minimal savings requirement from everyone, and this was to be returned after the war.

During the war, the Brantford Local Council of Women made it their major project to collect scrap for the war effort. Scrap included anything from rags, to newspapers, to metals. As well as providing a depot where people could deposit scrap, the Local Council of Women held a yearly "Salvage For Victory" drive, often assisted by troops from camp No. 20 because of the labour shortage. By 1944, they had raised over $45,000 through their paper and salvage drives, an obviously outstanding contribution to the war effort.

Other campaigns for specific purposes were also held in Brantford during the war. Among these, the Kinsman Club raised money for the "Milk For Britain" fund; and local Brownies and Girl Guides baked, scrubbed floors, and baby-sat, in order to raise money for "Empire Guides gift" of air ambulances.

Brantford citizens, and citizens across Canada, were asked to "give until it hurts," in regard to donations to various wartime drives and campaigns. It must have seemed to many that they had scarcely finished donating to one drive when someone else had his hand out for more. People in Brantford accepted the need to give generously to the war effort, and this is amply demonstrated in their contributions in money, materials, and time.

FACTORY AND FARM

The Second World War has been described by some people as, “a good war.” They use the term to refer to the economic prosperity that accompanied the conflict. This is generally true of most wars, but perhaps after ten years of relief lines and soup kitchens, anything that generated prosperity would be looked upon as “good,” no matter what the accompanying circumstances - even war.

There can be no doubt that Brantford had “boom times” during the war and immediately after. Many industries received lucrative war contracts, and several converted to war-time production almost exclusively. The increased demand for goods brought higher wages (although rationing limited what those wages could buy), and increased demands by workers for better conditions of work. The rise of labour unions accompanied the war effort in Brantford an in other areas; and a social revolution took place when women came out. of the kitchen to work in the factory on war-work. As well, the demands on the farmer to increase production were present, but he was faced with the problem of a lack of hired help, and ironically, was often urged to work in the factories over the winter to help alleviate the labour shortage that existed there.

Brantford firms began receiving orders for war materials in the early stages of the war. In March of 1940, Kitchen Overall and Slingsby's received orders for uniforms, a commodity that was in very short supply at the outbreak of hostilities. Other Brantford factories found themselves manufacturing war materials that ranged from tank parts, to gun mounts, to munitions, to boilers, to airplane wings. Some, such as Massey-Harris and the Cockshutt Plow Ltd., found themselves producing both war materials and their regular line of manufactured goods. At Cockshutt's, a special plant was opened in December 1942. Called Cockshutt Moulded Aircraft Ltd., this plant turned out fuselages for Avro-Anson bombers, using a revolutionary technique of moulded plywood.

In the realm of industry, one of the outstanding features was the shortage of labour that affected every industry in the city. This had very wide-spread repercussions for the city as it required the bringing in of outside workers to carry on the war work, and this in turn put a considerable strain upon the city's facilities, such as housing, which were already at the breaking point with the presence of two armed services bases. it also led to the hiring of women in many of the factories and this in turn necessitated certain changes in facilities, training, and child-care.

Realizing that the possibility of a labour shortage might occur, the Federal Government, in August. 1940, ordered the registration of all people in Canada 16 years of age and over. By this means they hoped to gain an accurate idea of the extent of the labour force in the country. When the shortage in manpower became obvious, just as they had in other areas where shortages occurred, the government introduced restrictions. In June 1942, it became illegal for any employee to hire anyone without the approval of a Selective Service officer. Later, workers in essential war-work found themselves frozen to their work, and workers in some non-essential places of employment, such as barber shops and service stations, found themselves liable to

transfer from that job to one that the government deemed more essential. At the same time, employers in certain industries were forbidden front advertising for workers without government approval.

As well, another control introduced in 1942 was Wartime Wage Controls. This was in order to stabilize wages. In Ontario, the labour shortage was so acute that the provincial government, having passed a law in regard to hours or pay and vacations in 1944, postponed its implementation "as long as the present crisis exists."

Other steps were also taken to help solve the manpower shortage. Men who had retired were encouraged, if they were physically fit, to return to work. High school students were encouraged to help out, particularly on the farm, during their school vacations. People who were not working, or who refused to accept jobs assigned to them by the Selective Service, were subject to heavy fines or jail terms. To some it did not seem to matter. One Brantford man, who had been given 20 places to work by the Selective Service between 1942-1944, admitted he could make more money shooting pool. Another claimed that he maintained himself by gambling.

The most significant step taken to secure additional labour was through the recruiting of women for work in war industries. Between September 1942 and June 1945, the Brantford Office of the National Selective Service placed over 14,371 women in all types of work in the city. Many of those women were from the Brantford area. Still more were recruited from Western Canada and the East Coast. These women took on jobs that varied from assembly line inspector to lathe operator, from moulder to welder. Training for those jobs was carried on in emergency war training courses at Brantford Collegiate. Classes were held in two shifts when school was not in session. The need for women in war-work led directly to the setting up of Brantford's first day care nursery under the auspices of the Community Wartime Recreation Council; and the large influx of single women into the city led to the construction of a women's residence for these workers. Although the number of women in the work force declined with the war's end, their role in the war effort gave them a new status, and made the idea of the working mother much more acceptable to society. In an editorial on "Women and the Future," *The Expositor* concluded:

"...It looks as though this world will be a much more complicated place in which to live after the war - judged by any previously accepted standards at all events."

Further mention should be made here of the Community Wartime Recreation Council (C.W.R.C.). Just as facilities were arranged for the servicemen stationed in and near the city, so this organization sought to make life more bearable and enjoyable for the large influx of war-workers into the city. The membership included representatives from several city organizations, the City Council, and the workers themselves. Its activities were many and varied. It organized clubs in such activities as dramatics and photography, ran lectures and brought in speakers, arranged for entertainment nights which included amateur shows and card tournaments, and it set up a league for workers in such sports as basketball, hockey, and softball. The C.W.R.C. provided an outlet for

the many interests and skills of the war workers in Brantford, and gave them a sense of companionship with each other.

As early as July of 1941, complaints were heard in Brantford of a lack of skilled labour, and it was also noted that, because of the availability of jobs, many children were leaving school at an earlier than legal age. In July 1942, the unemployment commission here spoke of the need for 1,000 women, and for all types of male labourers. In October, the manager of the local National Selective Service office reported that over 1500 people were placed in jobs during the month of September. During 1943 the shortage continued, in spite of the arrival of over 200 war workers from the Canadian prairies and the East Coast. Several men were moved out of jobs considered non-essential to the war, and transferred to war-work. It was even reported that half a dozen physically fit men from the home for the aged were working in war factories. In October, farmers from the area were requested to help the war effort by working in war-work over the winter months - an ironic twist considering that the farmer's themselves were suffering from lack of help. Even when over 500 workers were laid off during November and December, they were quickly placed in other employment, and the Selective Service still reported that the demand for workers exceeded the supply.

Two factors led to 1944 being the year when the shortage of manpower was at its worst. Many women in the city, feeling that the war was almost over, began to leave the factories and return to the home. Coupled with this and continuing war demands, large orders for agricultural implements, in preparation for post-war reconstruction, began to flood into the city. Commenting on the situation, J.S. Duncan, President and General Manager of Massey-Harris, noted:

"It would be difficult to find a City which typifies more than does Brantford the essential requirements of past war Canada, namely a healthy and prosperous agriculture, and an active and expanding foreign trade."

He went on to point out, that if Brantford could not meet the agricultural implement demands, come of the orders would have to be shifted elsewhere. For this reason, he encouraged all those who were able, to come forward and work, and for the city to encourage other workers to come to Brantford.

In April 1944, the Selective Service, reported 127 9 vacancies in the city, 954 of them in industry. Massey-Harris in Brantford, already taxed to capacity, reported the need for 800-900 workers to answer large agricultural implement orders. By June the number of openings had risen to 1754.

War industry was not the only area to be hit by labour shortages. In February 1943, the Brantford General Hospital reported a serious shortage of workers, and by July was stating that unless personnel could be found, certain essential services would have to be curtailed. In June 1943, the mayor asked the provincial government to, defer the effective date of a new amendment to the Fire Department Act, which dealt with the number of men required by a local fire department and the number of hours they would

be able to work. If implemented argued the mayor, it would necessitate the hiring of a dozen additional firemen in Brantford at a time when manpower was at a premium.

By July 1944, over 1800 jobs were available in Brantford, and a further order for agricultural implements in September, by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association, increased the demand for workers. In October, when a war contract for fuel tanks was cancelled, Universal Cooler laid off 102 employees; but in November, Mayor Ryan was still urging citizens to open their homes to newcomers so that local factories could get the needed workers. Ironically, the labour shortage was also affecting the construction of the wartime houses ordered by the city, some of which could have housed part of the work force.

During 1945 the situation eased somewhat. Government restrictions on employment were lessened. As of November 1945, employers were allowed to advertise for workers without first getting government permission, and workers in some industries were allowed to leave and seek other employment, or return to their former trades. One priority set by the government was in home building, and men experienced in this area were allowed to leave other essential work in order to "assist the home building program." In fact in August, all men skilled in building construction were required to register with the Department of Labour.

Many war contracts in Brantford were cancelled in 1945, but the orders for agricultural implements took up the slack. In March, Massey-Harris announced that they would erect a modern foundry in Brantford on the Verity Works site at a cost of $1,500,000, and in April, advertisements appeared for workers. In September, Massey-Harris was still advertising, and reportedly needed 800 workers. The Cockshutt Moulded closed in August of 1945, but there again, orders for farm implements provided employment in the Plow Works for those who were laid off. In other areas, many Brantford industries were able to convert successfully to peacetime production. For example, Van Evera Machine and Tool Works, which had produced tools and dies for war industries and some aircraft parts, converted to manufacturing toys, and by November 1945, found that its staff had increased from ten to twenty-nine employees and was working two shifts a day.

The labour shortage war partially relieved during 1945 by the return of many discharged veterans to their former jobs. Government regulations ensured that all discharged servicemen had to be accepted back into their former employment if they wished to return. Some preferred to seek work elsewhere, and some felt that they were not being fairly dealt with by former employers, but a survey in August 1945 showed that over 50 percent of discharged veterans from Brantford were returning to where they had worked before enlisting, and were remaining there.

The necessity of maintaining high food production during the war was just as vital as achieving high rates of production in war plants. However, like the factories, the farmers found themselves greatly handicapped by the lack of manpower. As in industry, the serious shortage began in 1942 and carried on throughout the war. Several solutions

were attempted in order to alleviate this problem, but few were very successful. To save on produce needed to feed the home population, Canadians were urged to plant a "Victory Garden and the city made vacant lots available to citizens who did not have land of their own for this purpose. Campaigns were mounted to have urban dwellers go to the farm to help out the farmer, but generally the response was poor. In 1944, the Brantford Emergency Farm Help Committee was established, and it appealed to people to work on the farms on the Dominion Day holiday. It had hoped for l,000 volunteers, but only 275 showed up. One of the most successful sources of labour for the farm was found in the student population in the high schools. The Department of Education encouraged schools to urge their students to work on the farms, and was even willing to allow the delaying of the opening of school in order to assist the farmer.

Labour strife in Brantford during World War II was minimal, but it did exist. In December 193 9, the employees of Watson Manufacturing Company went on strike over a question of wages. In July 1941, a strike was held at the Canadian Car and Foundry Co. Ltd., again over wages. The Federal Government interfered here, and telegraphed that because the plant was filling war orders, "any strike is illegal and employees concerned are liable to severe penalties."

When wartime wage controls were introduced in 1942, the main source of disputes between labour and management shifted to who was to be recognized as the collective bargaining agent for the workers. The unionization of many of the larger plants in Brantford was perhaps one of the most significant steps made by labour here during the war. Organizing the men was not an easy task, and although management was not generally openly hostile to the organizers, they did nothing to help them. One union organizer was fired from his job for supposedly signing up men in company time, tut a protest showed this not to be the case, and he was reinstated.

The companies much preferred the company run Industrial Councils, which had representation of both management and the workers, but in its report on collective bargaining, a special committee of the Ontario legislature, with Brantford's M.P.P., H.L. Hagey, as Vice-Chairman, recommended that associations overly-influenced by management be outlawed. When a vote was taken in the Canadian Car and Foundry Co. Ltd. and the Cockshutt Plow Co. Ltd. in May 1943, the employees of the former company voted to accept the C.I.O. as their bargaining agency, while those at Cockshutt's chose to remain with the Industrial Council. However, union organizers continued to sign up men at Cockshutt's, and within the year they too had voted for the U.A.W. - C.I.O. as their bargaining agent.

Brantford's total involvement in the war is no better illustrated than by the amount of war-work that went on here during the war years. The factories engaged in essential industries ran 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, throughout the war. Production on farms in the county was maintained, in spite of acute labour shortages. The problems encountered in being a "war-work" city were met, and if not surmounted, at least were coped with adequately.

LIFE WENT ON

During World War II Brantfordites tried to follow, as much as possible, the normal routine that they had been used to before the outbreak of war. However, it is difficult to find some aspect of Brantford life, from entertainment, to education, to civic issues, which was not in some way affected by the war effort.

The city's financial situation was quite healthy during the war. As 1939 drew to a close, civic officials were able to announce that welfare and relief costs were down substantially for 1939, and that the city would show a surplus for the year. This led to a reduction in taxes of l ½ mills for 1940. This surplus continued throughout the war, and in large measure was due to the city's “pay as you go” policy of no capital expenditures unless there was money available. In his 1941 inaugural address, Mayor Ryan had called for a “five year holiday on capital expenditures” in order to allow the taxpayer to spend his money in aiding the war effort. This policy was followed throughout the war, and taxes did not rise significantly.

The office of mayor itself was affected by the war. R. J. Waterous had been mayor since 1938. In September 1940, he was granted an indefinite leave of absence in order to accept an important post in the war services department. J.P. Ryan replaced him, and remained as mayor for the rest of the war years.

Several civic issues, indirectly or directly connected with the war, came to the fore during the war years. During the 193 9 civic elections Brantford had turned down the idea of daylight saving. The issue was raised again in the 1941 election, and a by-law on the issue was included in that election. The city was very much divided on the issue. Arguments against called it “a lot of humbug,” and felt it would create problems with rail and bus schedules which were on standard time. Those in favour pointed out that No. 5 S.F.T.S. camp was on daylight saving time, and as a result they found it difficult to enjoy a night out in Brantford because their late passes required them to be back at the base at 9:30 p.m., city time. Others argued that a longer time in the sun would be good for the health. The by-law was turned down in the election, but in January 1942, the Federal Government announced that, as of February 9, the whole of Canada would go on daylight saving time.

The Public Utilities Commission was presented with certain problems because of the war. In November 193 9, in line with the changeover from street cars to buses, five buses were ordered by the P.U.C. to complete its conversion to motorization. Because of complaints of overcrowding, the P.U.C. ordered three more buses in April 1940. In November 1942, the P.U.C. proposed running a Sunday bus service as an aid to war workers, many of whom were working a seven day week, and it was proposed that the issue be voted on in the upcoming civic election. In a November survey by *The Expositor*, a minority of workers said they would use the service, but a later survey in early December showed that a majority would use the Sunday buses. One letter-writer to *The Expositor* had these comments to make:

"...Our workers don't even have transportation to and from work. It is not fair. Why can't something be done about it?
How many of the Public Utilities Commission have to work seven days a week at odd hours? How many have their own cars? If it were all investigated I'm afraid you'd find none of them depended for their Sunday work transportation on the bus!
Wake up and give our war workers some consideration...."

The actual vote on the issue was 3,657 for, and only 327 against. Approval was received by the transit controller of Ontario (who had stated that because of the tire and gas shortage only a transit service that was "essential for the direct furtherance of the war effort" would be approved), and the Sunday buses went into operation. On the first day only 346 people took advantage of the service, and officials termed the response "disappointing." Six months later the Transit Controller ordered Sunday bus service in Brantford halted because few people were using it. An application for a renewal of the service in May 1944 was turned down, and not until wartime restrictions were relaxed in May 1945 was Sunday bus service restored.

The P.U.C. was also involved in the conservation of electricity during the war. Advertisements urged people to use a minimum amount of electricity in order to aid war production. In aid of its own requests, the P.U.C. removed every other light on city streets. However, the City Council felt that this was too extreme a measure, and requested that lower wattage be used in the bulbs, and that all lights be replaced. This conservation continued until September 1944, when *The Expositor* was able to announce:

"Brighter lights will shine in Brantford streets, advertising signs will be lighted up once more, and other non-essential power will be resumed as wartime restrictions are lifted on October 1st."

There was an urgent need to conserve on coal as well as electricity. The Wartime Prices and Trade Board was urging people to save on coal by cutting down temperatures in homes and wearing warmer clothing. Like most other commodities, coal supplies were regulated. When a fuel shortage threatened in the autumn of 1943, the city purchased two carloads of soft coal, and 1,000 cords of wood. Commenting on the city's action, the mayor stated:

"I don't want the impression created that the City is going into the fuel business. The City will lose money, but the loss can be charged as a service to our own citizens to keep them from being cold next winter."

This crisis was increased because of the shortage of volunteers, experienced in truck driving, to deliver the coal. Over 1,000 homes in the city were estimated to be without fuel.

Because of the shortage of men due to overseas enlistment, and the increasing demands for more productivity in the field of war-work, women were encouraged to accept jobs in war-work. In many cases the women were willing, but they were unable to

work because they had small children at home. To encourage women to work, the city began a day care school especially for the care of children of war-workers. The P.U.C. arranged to pick up the children at the factories and deliver them to the day nursery. The experiment was a success, and a second wartime day nursery was opened before the war ended.

Brantford did set a record during the war. In November 1940, Lt became the first city of over 25,000 to be free of diptheria for ten years, and this represented a World Health Record. It was also luring the war years that Brantford seriously considered putting fluoride in her water. In June 1943, the Brantford Board of Health asked the Provincial Department of Health to conduct research into the relationship of tooth decay and fluoride, and after a trial run, in September of 1945 Brantford became the first city in Canada to add fluoride to its water. Also in the realm of health control, the Young Men's section of the Board of Trade launched an "all-out community attack to stamp out V.D." They hoped to educate the Brantford public on the dangers of venereal disease and thus hopefully reduce its occurrence.

One issue that did arise, independent of the war, was the question of street signs. From all quarters came complaints that it was almost impossible to find one's way around the city because of the Lack of street signs. *The Expositor* lashed out in an editorial in February 1945:

"The street sign situation, confusing, annoying, and embarrassing, should be dealt with immediately ... This is a City, not a hamlet, an organized community not a maze or labyrinth."

Citizens, servicemen, and visitors concurred that the situation was annoying and confusing. One war-worker stated:

"Brantford streets! Don't even ask me! I've been in the place six months and I still won't put my nose out of door without a map of the city in my purse."

A salesman commented:

"I have been in a good many Canadian cities, but this one has "stumped" me completely as far as finding my way around."

And a representative of the local Kiwanis Club noted:

"It would certainly be a great help to strangers as well as citizens here, if the streets were properly marked. I have found that business associates from out of town encounter considerable difficulty in finding various firms in the City."

The pleas were heard, and the city moved to rectify the situation.

Education in Brantford was also affected by the war. This was particularly true at the level of secondary education where many courses found themselves following topics closely related to the war effort. Subjects such as first aid, aircraft recognition, air frames construction, and wartime conservation, were integrated into the regular curriculum. Students contributed directly to the war effort through making garments in sewing classes, and by buying war stamps and certificates. The war was affecting education in another way. Many students were leaving school earlier than normal to accept jobs in war industry, or to enlist in the armed services. This fact is reflected in a drop in enrolment at Brantford Collegiate from 1939 to 1943 of over 475 students. Students who remained in school were also getting involved in the war effort during their vacations. An October 1942 survey showed 89 boys and 29 girls had actually been engaged in war-work over the past summer, and 82 boys and 75 girls had worked on farms. Elementary school children also contributed to the war effort through such activities as bringing food for ditty bags, buying war savings stamps, and gathering milkweed pods for parachute material.

Another way that Brantfordites got involved in the war was by baking in several children from Britain who had been evacuated from their homes. Several of these children came to Brantford to live with Local families, and while here they attended school and became a part of the community.

People in Brantford were less occupied with politics than they lad been before the war. Their energies were directed toward the war effort, and there seemed to be little time for political squabbling. At the municipal level, civic elections lost the colour and excitement they had possessed in the 30's. The Ontario government had declared that after 1940, elections to municipal office were to be for two year terms until the end of the war. However, opposition to this move was so strong, Brantford included, that the government backed off, and the municipalities were left free to decide on the frequency of elections. In a by-law vote in the 1940 municipal election, Brantford rejected the two year term, and thus elections continued to be held here on a yearly basis. One significant breakthrough was made in 1940 when Mrs. Jennie Steer became the first woman elected to the City Council.

At the provincial level one election was held in 1943. In Brantford, a surprise result occurred when the Liberal incumbent, H.L. Hagey, was defeated by C.A. Strange, the C.C.F. candidate. In the county, Harry Nixon who had succeeded Mitch Hepburn as Premier of Ontario, found himself elected, but his party defeated.

Federally, there was only one election during the war, and that was in 1940. The Liberal government was attacked on its war record, or as the Conservatives charged, its lack of a war record. However, the Liberals did win the election across Canada, and in Brantford W. Ross Macdonald had little difficulty being elected to a second term.

Entertainment in Brantford during the war years was very much geared to the war. The movies were perhaps the most popular form of entertainment. Many of the movies were war-oriented, and many were in the nature of “propaganda” films. Dancing ran a close second as a form of entertainment. New dance halls were opened to meet the needs of Brantford's swollen population. Some were exclusively for service such as the Maple Leaf Club, but most were open to anyone. Many famous personalities, such as Gracie Fields and Gene Autry, visited Brantford in regard to the war effort. When Gene Autry stopped over here on his way to Toronto, school children were dismissed early in order that they could see him. The Brantford Community Concert Association continued to function during the war years and sponsored appearances by such people as the Trapp Family Singers, and James Melton, a leading tenor with the Metropolitan Opera Company

Sporting activities in the city were also curtailed to some degree because of the war. For example, there was no senior or junior baseball in Brantford in 1944. However, Brantford teams did prove successful in some areas. In 1941 the Brantford Lions won the O.H.A. Junior B championship, and this marked the first time in 51 years that a Brantford team had won a provincial title. In 1944 the Brantford Collegiate junior girls basketball team captured the Ontario Ladies Basketball Association Junior Championship. Then in 1945 the Waterous Ladies basketball team won the O.B.A. crown, and went on to win the Dominion Intermediate “A” Basketball Championship. That same spring, the Brantford Y.M.C.A. Pirates captured the Ontario Men's Intermediate “B” Basketball Championship.

Just about every aspect of Brantford life then was touched in some way by the Second World War. This not only serves to point up the all-embracing nature of that conflict, but also emphasizes the total committment of the city of Brantford to the war effort.

CONCLUSION

When the end of the war came, Brantford was not totally unprepared for it. Various committees had been set up by the City Council to help returning veterans readjust to civilian life. As early as September 1944, both the City Council and the Board of Education were trying to decide what to do on "V" day.

When the official news of Germany's surrender reached the city on May 7, 1945, the plan of action arranged by the city went into effect Factory whistles, fire sirens, and church bells sounded. Crowds appeared in the downtown streets, the most vociferous group being the students from the Brantford Collegiate, who were only too happy to leave school and join in the celebrations. Stores, factories, and official buildings, such as the Post Office, shut their doors for two days. (People had been warned previously to keep in a two day supply of food, as a two day civic holiday would be declared); and a Mosquito bomber, scheduled to fly over the city a few days earlier in connect with a savings drive, but which had not appeared then, suddenly swoop low over the city and gave an extra touch to the victory celebration; In a front page editorial, *The Expositor* reminded people;

"Victory in Europe means much but not all. It must be the precursor of victory around the globe. What has now been accomplished must make certain the complete and final eradication of the elements which sought to enslave the races of mankind. Only then can the title deeds to human progress be fully redeemed."

The "eradication" of those "elements" came on August 14, when Japan surrendered. The celebration of this victory took place in the evening, and seemed to be much louder and more spontaneous than its predecessor in May. Celebrations went on until 2 a.m., consisting mainly of shouting, singing, and throwing confetti and toilet paper. One special feature was a kissing bee, started by the men but carried on by "high school bobby-soxers and young feminine war-workers," who according to *The Expositor*, "rushed at every young male figure, especially those in uniform, to add their marks of victory to already lipstick-plastered, but beaming faces." The paper also noted that "hardly a soul was seen without brands of bright red lip-prints on her smiling face."

Almost unbelievably, after six long years the war was over. It had brought with it many demands for self-sacrifice on the part of Canadians. In Brantford the war had meant both hardships and prosperity. The presence of armed service bases in or near the city meant more money was being spent in the city. The large amount of war-work that went in Brantford meant that the city's factories were enjoying a prosperity that had been absent for some time prior to the war. At the same time the added population of servicemen and their wives, and the large industry of war-workers, put a strain on Brantford's facilities that led to problems in areas such as housing.

During the war Brantford had given freely of her time, money, manpower, for the war effort. But once the war was over the city made the transition back to peacetime living in remarkably quick time. Many who had come to the city for war-work remained,

and the large number post-war orders for agricultural implements meant that there was work for them. As the veterans returned, many took up jobs with their former employers, and as restrictions were lifted the people of the city returned to their peacetime pursuits.