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SPRINGTIME IN THE NIAGARA PENINSULA

No doubt many of you have seen the beautiful places in our own country as well as those in Britain, Holland and France, but we wonder if you have seen anything more beautiful than the Niagara Peninsula in the Springtime. Perhaps you would like to hear once again what this part of the country looks like as we enter the month of May.

After the long and steady winter with its heavy fall of snow spring came two or three weeks earlier than usual. As there was no frost in the ground all nature seemed to burst at once into life. The lawns, fields, and hillsides were soon unusually green. The crocuses, hyacinths and daffodils appeared and the tulips were soon keeping them company.

The shrubs were not far behind. First the yellow flowering forsythia with the purple lilacs and snow spirea following very closely.

While the trees were coming out in leaf and clothing themselves in all their springtime beauty "Blossom Time" was on the way. The blossoms did not wait for the traditional "Blossom Sunday" but put on their color without respect to calendar or custom. No sooner had the petals of the apricots and magnolias fallen than the cherry and pear trees became a mass of bloom with the peach trees ready to make their contribution to the beauty of the countryside.

For a few nights our fruit growers were very anxious. There was every indication of frost. In fact ice did form on pools of water. The trees and vines now give every appearance of having passed the danger to which they are annually exposed, but the situation will still be in doubt.

The "Falls" still thunders away and spreads its damp breath over the chasm as it has always done. The "Park" has been well cared for and become more and more beautiful. The ever changing lights at night add a weirdness to the scene that is undecipherable.

But we miss the crowds, especially our soldiers, sailors and airmen on leave. However, the war will some day be over and then we can all take that wonderful trip to Queenston and Niagara along our far-famed blossom-lined highways.

Mother's Day—May 13th

"Mother"—a word that holds the tender spell  
 Of all the dear essential things of earth;  
 A home, clean sunlit rooms, and the good smell  
 Of bread; a table spread; a glowing hearth,  
 And love beyond the dreams of anyone. . . .  
 I search for words for her . . . and there are none.

These lines from a poem by Grace Noll Crowell remind us that again the time is at hand when on a single Sunday of the year we express the honour and devotion we always feel for our mothers. Let us hope their own day finds their prayers rewarded in a dawn of peace, for no hearts will be moved with greater thanksgiving than theirs.

To our service folk scattered around the globe will come memories of Welland Avenue Church—the procession of kiddies bearing their baskets along the aisle, and



our custom of "Wear a flower and bring a flower." And many will echo the words of this "Prayer for all Mothers," by the American minister and novelist Lloyd C. Douglas:

"Our Father God, may the altar flowers be theirs today. Thou hast let them share with Thee in the mysterious labour of creation and entrusted them with an indestructible love resembling Thine. . . . Hearten them, we beseech Thee, in this troubled time. . . . Reassure them that all things work together for good in the lives of those who love Thee. And make their calmness ours. . . . Amen."

Dr. George W. Barker has received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity at a recent convocation of Victoria College.

More About Our Boys

Our Padre, Capt. Bell, has been ill—

"The pneumonia bug caught up with me about a month ago, but the good treatment I have received in the hospitals of Belgium and England has put me on my feet again. This respite has given me a chance to enjoy the beauties of spring in southern England. Best wishes to all the good folk of Welland Avenue."

Gordon Bunting, a faithful correspondent, writes from a British hospital on the continent—

"At the end of February I was wounded in the back by a piece of shell. Although still in bed (March 9) I am on the road to recovery. We are treated well, the English nurses will do anything to make us comfortable; the Red Cross tries to get us what we need—books, etc. It isn't as much fun staying in bed as you may think."

From John Colling we hear—

"To Welland Avenue Church I am indebted for many Christmas remembrances and I thank you for them all. I am having a most interesting time, seeing many famous places, and doing things that have long been an ambition. I have visited practically all the places in the news from the beaches of Normandy to Holland and am now (February) preparing for a return visit to England."

From "Newfie" Bill Showell writes—

"At present I am doing office work, but after my leave I expect to be drafted to a ship. We have been playing in the Inter-allied basketball tournament, held at the U.S. Naval Base. We won our first game against the Canadian Army; but were defeated in the semi-finals. If we had had more rest between our games we would have done better, but we had a good time. The lacrosse season opens with a practice on April 16."

Bill Caton writes from H.M.C.S. Kitchener—

For the gum and chocolates, many thanks. I receive the Newsettes regularly and it is a big help in keeping up with the whereabouts of the boys; I find it most interesting."

Some Impressions of Holland by Fred Vickers—

Before our vehicles rolled to a stop on our first position in this "low" country we had seen dikes and a few of the old-fashioned costumes still worn by some women over here. But at least 95% of the Dutch dress like you or me; if you were to put them on the streets of Toronto or St. Catharines you would not recognize them as strangers—as long as they didn't talk!

Wooden shoes are not worn here because the people are primitive by any means—they can make beautiful leather footwear. I was told back in Belgium that wooden shoes are worn by people who have to go about on the land much, since leather would quickly rot—and even though wooden shoes do not last very long, they are easily replaced.

One thing which has obviously not been replaced or replaceable is knitted wear especially stockings—it is not at all uncommon to see darn upon darn and literally dozens in one stockings; still the holes are stopped and not left—I can well imagine that, in better days, these people would be very neat.

Churches are Everywhere

In considering the appearance of this country—the feature secondary to its shadeless trees, is not the windmill but rather the church tower. It is a rare horizon which has less than a half dozen steeples showing at one glance; so far I cannot remember having seen two windmills at once although there is usually one in an area which would correspond approximately to a large township in Southern Ontario. They are still very much in use to grind the grist.

The last contribution to the landscape is made by water-towers which look for all the world like exceptionally tall and somewhat slender silos. Unfortunately they and church towers have provided many O.P.'s for our and enemy artillery observing officers—wherefore they have suffered from counter artillery fire and demolition by the Germans as they "withdrew according to plan. . . ."

JOYOUS WEDDING CELEBRATION

Wedding bells have again rung out for one of our boys in England. On March 17, P.O. Edward H. Edmonds, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. Edmonds, was married to Miss Nora R. Lewis, of Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. The marriage took place in lovely St. Mark's Church, Leamington, followed by a delightful reception. Among the guests were former St. Catharines residents, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Farr, brother and sister-in-law of Mrs. Fred Edmonds. Their honeymoon was spent at King Arthur's Castle Hotel, at Tintagel, Cornwall. Now they are at Carlisle, near where Edward is stationed as an instructor in the R.C.A.F.