

In The Days When The Porcupine Was Young

By G. A. Macdonald

No. 103. National Registration Day in Timmins in 1918.

Old timers in Timmins have reason to remember June 22nd, 1918. It was the Dominion of Canada's first National Registration Day. On that day every man and woman in Canada from the age of sixteen upwards was required by law to register and answer a long list of questions. It was to be penalized by a fine of \$100.00 and one month's imprisonment, while the announcement also added: "You will be unable to purchase food, lodging, or transportation, or to secure employment." It was an offence, moreover, for anyone to employ a person who could not produce a registration card.

In Timmins, neither those of alien origin, those of Canadian or other British birth nor those of United States citizenship, liked this idea of mass registration. The aliens did not like it, because they had been used to it, and others did not like it because they were not used to it.

I thought Canada was different, but just like Germany or Austria or Russia, eh? The only answer possible to that was to emphasize the fact that

it was strictly a war measure and that it would end with the end of the war. Patriotic people, while realizing that the registration was necessary in the war effort, hoped in their hearts that it would not develop that the registration plan would be any thin edge of entry for European red tape and registration.

During the war of 1914 to 1918, the people of the Porcupine were always ready to do anything, or accept anything, to help along the war effort. The results of the National Registration Day here was another proof of this fact. Although the population of the Timmins area (Timmins, Moneta, Rochester and Gilles Lake) was little over 4,000, counting men, women and children, the total registration exceeded 2,600. The deputy registrar for Timmins area said at the registration that he believed that practically every man and woman eligible to do so had registered in Timmins as required.

At that time, Timmins did not include Moneta, Rochester or Gilles Lake townships, nor was Mattagami Heights a part of the town of Timmins. The registration for Mattagami Heights was held at Hill's Garage, and 269 males and 150 females registered there a total of 419.

At the time, there was little question in the minds of most people here as to the desirability of registration of man power and woman power. The war was at a critical stage, and it was felt that every effort and every resource that Canada could supply should be offered to win the war. Men, munitions, supplies, and food especially, were the great needs of the day, and it was evident that these could not be made available without intimate knowledge of the resources of man power and woman power, as well as record of materials. It was believed that all effort was not being directed along the best lines. Some were engaged in nonessential, or even undesirable, occupations. Many were anxious to do more than they were doing but had no direction or leadership. It was hoped and believed that the registration would right these.

Whether National Registration accomplished all that it was hoped it would be open to question, but there is no doubt but that the actual registration itself was a genuine feat. To register, 5,050,000 men and women on the one day, and to do the work smoothly, effectively, and at less cost than a plebiscite or an election certainly should be set down as an achievement.

Following the usual plan followed by the Union Government in its wartime enterprises the organization for National Registration was started at Ottawa, and then delegated to the several provinces, who in turn passed the work along to the cities, towns, countries or other organized municipalities.

Timmins at the time was a part of the immense District of Temiskaming, which stretched from Latchford to James Bay. Dr. C. W. Haentschel, of Haileybury, was named as registrar for the District of Temiskaming. He appointed H. E. Montgomery, then town clerk and treasurer of Timmins, as deputy registrar for the Timmins area. Mr. Montgomery, in his turn, secured the assistance of D. A. Hoggarth (principal of Timmins public school), Thos. H. Torrance (magistrate here in early days), H. C. McDonald, (manager Timmins branch of the Imperial Bank), J. P. Tallon (manager of the Timmins branch of the Bank of Commerce), B. V. Hart on (then manager of the Porcupine Telephone Co.), Geo. Wagner and Dayton Ostrosser. These assistants, in turn, enlisted the help of a large number of other workers.

Registration for Timmins, Moneta, Rochester and Gilles Lake was held at the public school, Timmins, from 7 a. m. to 10 p. m. on Saturday, June 22nd, 1918. The hours show the consideration given the general public in the matter. That was typical of the times and the people concerned.

Another evidence of the thought for the public convenience is the fact that on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday preceding June 22nd, arrangements were made for any who found it convenient or necessary to register on those days to do so at the clerk's office, then in the Courtemarche building, next to the Advance office. Literally hundreds took advantage of this convenience, and each of the three days there was a continual line-up before the office in the building that now houses the Mayfair hotel. On the Thursday the crowd was so large that pressure became so great that the plate glass window in the office was broken. Of course there was no way of proving who was responsible for this damage, and no one tried too hard to find out. It is interesting to recall that none in the line-up were required to pay in whole or in part for the broken window. The town simply had it replaced, charging the cost to profit and loss. "It just means a few less feet of sidewalk this year," said Councillor Brazeau.

The accidental breaking of that window was only the outward incident in all the registration. At the school on the Saturday everything went like clockwork. There was not even a rush there.

Of course, the registration was not as simple or easy as it may sound now in reading about it. For example, there were about forty questions that had to be answered by each man and woman registering. For weeks pre-

vious to the registration, The Advance featured the questions in its news columns, and urged all to familiarize themselves with the correct answers so that registration might be facilitated.

In addition to questions as to age, place of birth, date of birth, marital condition, nationality, race, occupation, employer, etc., males were asked if they had physical disability, their serial number on being registered under the Military Service Act, whether or not they had been brought up on a farm, and if they could drive a tractor, handle horses, use farm machinery, and finally if they were willing to do farm work. Other questions included: "What other work can you do well?" and "Do your circumstances permit you to serve in the present national crisis by changing from your present occupation to some other for which you are qualified?"

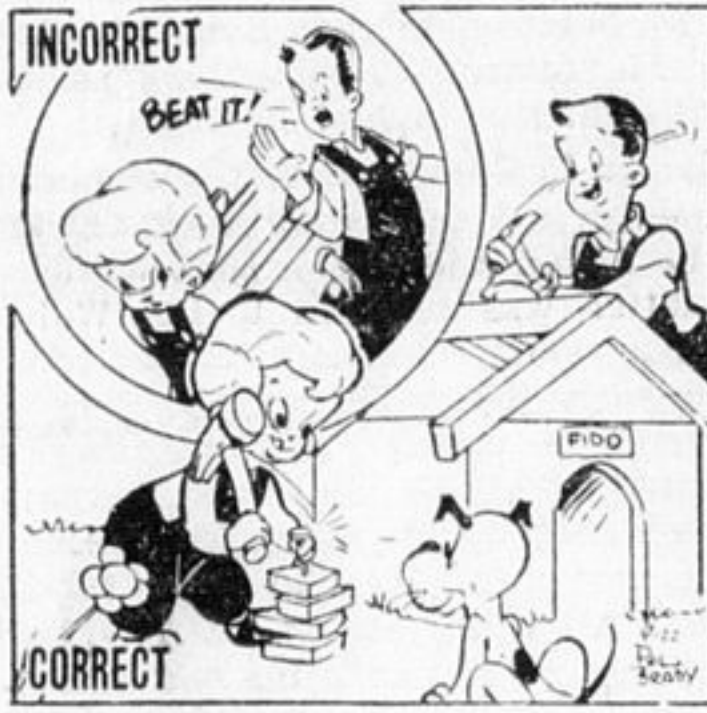
The questions for females were much the same as those for males. Both series took notes of the number of children dependent on the person registering. The ladies' questionnaire asked: "Do your health and home ties permit you, if required, to give full-time paid work?" "Do your circumstances permit you to live away from home?" "In what capacity do you think you could serve best?" "Can you drive a motor car? Tractor?" "Can you do plain cooking?"

The last question for females was "Do your circumstances permit you to give full-time service without remuneration?" Why wasn't that question on the male side as well?

Although none of the deputy registrars, or their deputies, would say a word as to answers of supposed replies. One man was reported to have answered "Yes" to the four questions, "Single?" "Married?" "Widowed?" "Divorced?" It must have been the same fellow who was credited with claiming that he was not a British subject, but was a naturalized Irishman. But it was another who listed his physical disabilities as "Cold Feet!"

Family Scrapbook

BY DR. ERNEST G. OSBORNE
WHY NOT TRY THIS



Should Children Be Allowed to Fight? Most of us don't like to see children fight. Our religious training, our ideas of what is right are settling differences in this way. Some of us even feel that wars between nations would be less likely if all children were kept from fighting.

We believe that a warlike spirit in adult life can be built up through childhood squabbling. But when young children are involved, there may be worse things than fighting - the pulling and hauling that goes on when two children want the same thing.

If, for instance, teacher or parent always steps in and settles things, youngsters will be less likely to learn how to work out differences among themselves. A study of nursery school children shows clearly that those in groups were no scuffling, pushing and hitting are allowed are more likely to continue a fighting attitude than those who are allowed to settle little differences themselves. They seem to get the fighting urge out of their systems if it isn't squelched too early.

Unless children are hurting each other badly or one youngster is completely unable to defend himself, it seems best not to step in too soon when the day-to-day quarrels develop. The kids usually will settle things satisfactorily themselves.

Mr. Stu Woodruff has left for Sudbury where he has accepted a position. His family will follow later on.



On Monday we had several prominent visitors looking over our new Memorial Hall among them were: W. Harvey, Minister of Nipissing in the Provincial government, W. Gemmill, Minister of Mines and L. P. Cecil, Minister of Travel and Publicity, we do hope they enjoyed their trip up here and their stay in Timmins.

The big news on Tuesday was that Bill P. tried to join the local Regiment and I believe they signed him up in the Cubs, he was on the short side he said. There are quite a large number of the members of the Fifty Dollar reward that the Branch is offering and if you are not in the running you had better get in, see the notice on the board downstairs and see the Secretary or the Steward and they will put you up with the rest, no carry fee. In the Cribbage Skunk Trophy race or June there is only one so far, no name. The Dart league season is now closed and I see many of the dart players are now taking up Billiards, instead of going round the board they round the table and they get there just the same.

Comrade Allan McCann was married on Wednesday and we wish him the best of luck in all his little troubles.

The Secretary is in his office day for those who wish to pay their dues, and those seeking advice or assistance not forgetting those who want to make application for membership, he will make you welcome, so come in and sign on the dotted line. Great preparations are being made for the anniversary of our opening of the Memorial Hall, the first of July, lots of help will be needed so come around and lend a hand. To our sick members, comrade Jim Keen, J. McFarlane, L. Strongman, G. Starling, and Frank McDowell we wish them a very speedy recovery and hope to see them around soon.

The next General meeting is slated for June 27th there will be lots of discussions especially for the first of July to be there in force, wear your Beret, and if you haven't any get one from the Secretary or at the Steward on duty.

Having heard the different opinions of the members and those who attended been decided the best way, there was a large attendance and the musical program was really good, everyone enjoyed it. The artists were, Carl Johns, Mr. M. McGrath at the piano, vocalists were, George Hamelton, of the Porcupine Ramblers, C. Major, Ed Tonkin, Ross Taylor and Mickey McGrath and his cornet, the singing was really good and a hearty vote of thanks go to those artists. Len Spears was in charge of affairs with his aid de Camps, J. Miraa, J. Bourke, O. J. Menard, Bob Dumont and Bill Colbert who always do a good job.

At the week end the Legion Hardball team beat the Combines 4 to 2 it was a real good game and what I could see there was a little laxity in support, you want to get out there and give them your support, it goes a long way sometimes and you want to see your team win and go places, so come around and lend your support.

Comrade Tom Gardiner late of this Branch now of Toronto was a visitor to Branch '88' and Timmins this week, we hope he enjoyed his visit to the old Timming ground.

Owing to the Federal election being held on the 27th of June the General meeting will be held on Thursday June 23rd instead of the 27th, so make that a special date. Preparations for the First of July will no doubt be discussed and lots of help will be required and more than likely, bring your own tools, so don't forget, be there. There will be a limited number of tickets sold for the Memorial Dance on July 1st so if you want to get them now, from the Steward or any of the Committee. One of the attentions on the First of July is the Five man rassing bout and it will be fun no doubt, but I think we could pick out another Five in the old Cornwall style and that would be fun also, I might refer to Jack Parkyn.

The Orchestra for the July 1st Dance will be supplied by Ed. Scheculski.

The dart season is now over, and I see some of them have taken up Billiards and they just go round the board but they get there just the same.

On the notice board you will see a

full list of paid up members and those who are not paid up and if you are one of them (the latter) see the secretary and get your name transferred to the former all members should be in good standing, and all ex-service men should be in the Legion in their Region and not forgetting all should attend their Legion general meetings, you have a voice in all matter.

If you wish for information or advice the Secretary will see you in his office daily, this also applies in paying your dues or making application for membership. There are quite a number of members after that Fifty Dollar reward the Branch is offering and if you are in the running see the Steward or the secretary and they will see that you are in the running, see the notice board.

The Cribbage Skunk Trophy race for June is being led by Lou Raymond with a two stripe lead over J. Gordon and Joe Raymond. Comrade Harry Moss a Dart enthusiast who loves a game can't under stand this under hand stug he can't beat it, he is going to sign up next season, but he would like to bar the under hand work, unless he is on this side of it.

We hope comrade Frank Robinson enjoyed his holidays, for one thing he fulfilled a promise made long ago that he would bring me a fish out of his

catch, he did and it was a beauty, others who made promises take notice. To our sick members, comrade Jim Aston in Hospital, Toronto, comrades, J. McFarlane, Jim Keen, L. Strongman, J. Wilkinson, and Phil Lenard in Haileybury, to them we send our weekly best wishes for a speedy recovery and hope to see them around soon. To our comrades overseas and those late of Branch '88' comrades, Fred Curtis, K. Hulme, J. Fortin, G. Stacey, J. Fairnie we wish them the best and hope they are well. Your next social even-

ing Saturday June 25th, Les Nicholson in charge, come and bring your wife or lady friend and enjoy a good evening of music and song.

Till next week,
J. Gordon.

By Bus - North Bay to Toronto



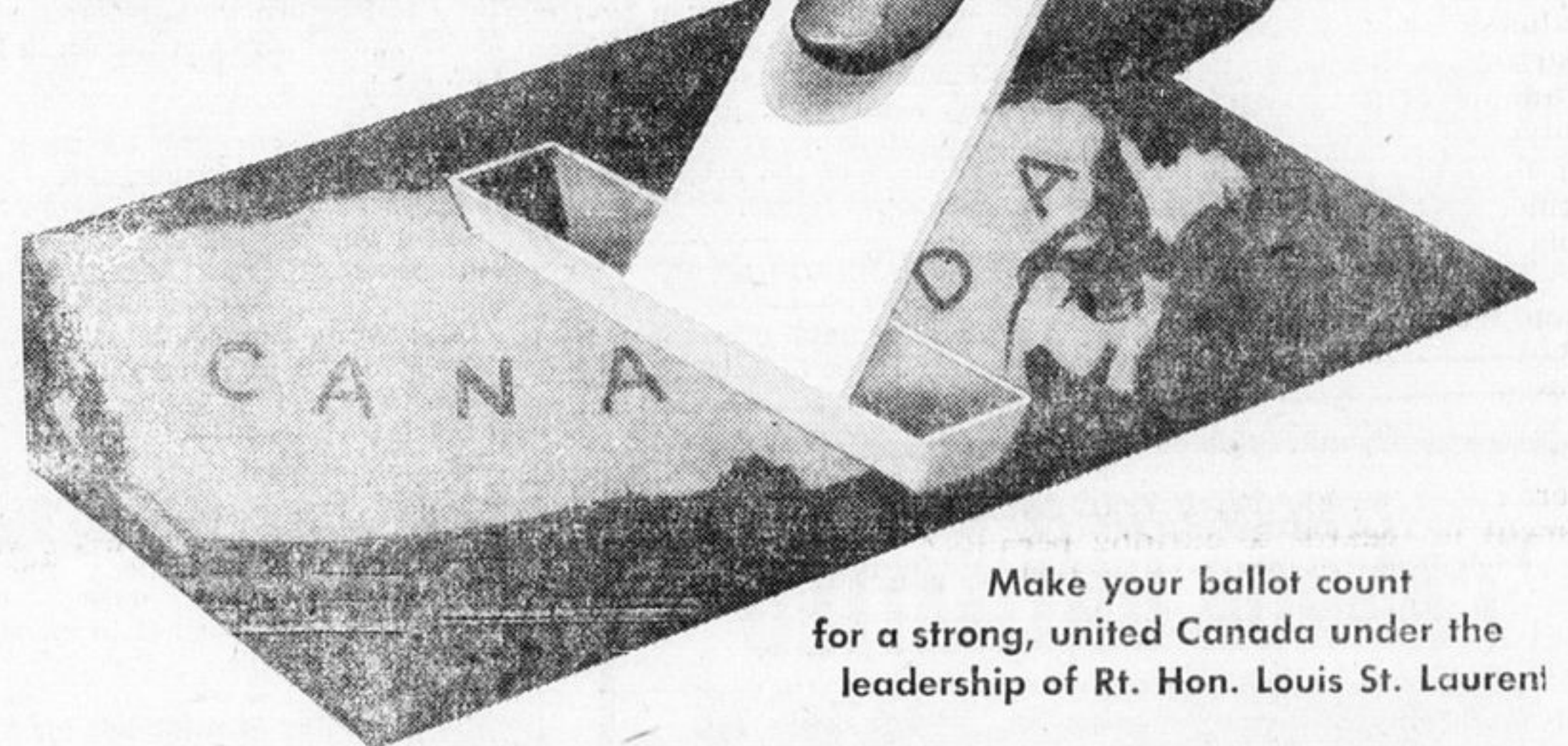
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June 26, 1949

FOR PARTICULARS APPL. TO LOCAL AGENT

24,2526