

Sunday Masonic Paper No 771
Remembrance Day – Pride, Glory and Sacrifice
by a high school student from Dartmouth Nova Scotia

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, Canadians come together as one nation to pause for a moment to remember. In this moment of remembrance we are honouring the heroes of our country who gave everything to defend and maintain the security of not only Canada, but the world. These brave Canadians are the ones we think of every time we hear Canada's national anthem. It is those Canadians who deserve our gratitude because they are responsible for the security Canadians have today.

However, as time passes, what will we tell the younger generations of Canadians when they ask why we wear the poppy? We will tell them that Canadians wear poppies to remember. We wear the poppy proudly because it represents pride, glory and sacrifice that was made by our national heroes.

Pride. What made thousands and thousands of young Canadians leave the security of their homeland to fight in foreign countries in wars that Canada didn't even start? The answer is pride. When the world called on Canada to defend it for the sake of peace, the Canadians came. This pride for Canada brought our soldiers overseas on more than one occasion. This pride was inside the heart of every soldier, sailor and airmen who served in our nation's military. This pride is unique, it is a Canadian pride, and every time we hear the national anthem and sing the words "We stand on guard for thee" we can feel what our soldiers felt when they went to defend our country. This pride is what kept many Canadians alive in the horrifying situations that they took part in, and pride what kept the thought of failure out of their minds, and what gave them intense courage. Pride is what won many brave Canadians Victoria Crosses and is what made many Canadians make sacrifices that we cannot fathom.

Glory. Every time we wear a poppy, we remember the glory that comes with it. This is the glory that Canadians brought home with them after serving their missions. It was the Canadian soldiers who captured Vimy Ridge in the middle of a sleet and snow storm; it was the Canadians who spearheaded the final breakthrough of German lines in one hundred days of continuous action during the First World War. In the second World War, it was the Canadian Navy who played the vital role in protecting Allied convoys from the Nazi submarines, and the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Canadian Army were the ones who emerged with proud records and the respect of other nations, especially because Canada was such a small nation with only eleven million citizens at the time of World War Two. It was also with the aid of Canadian soldiers that helped liberate Korea.

Sacrifice. The defenders of our nation gave up a lot for Canada to exist as it does today. Imagine leaving your home, your family and friends, and your own country along with everything you had ever known to go and fight in a foreign land. You would even have to acknowledge the fact that there would be a possibility of never coming home again. Some soldiers experienced that possibility and fell in honour of Canada. In the First World War, Canada's largest contribution was on land, fighting alongside the British and the French. Canadians were among the first to experience the horrors of chlorine gas before Ypres and Sain Julien. One battle alone, Passchendaele, claimed sixteen thousand lives, and only twenty thousand had set out that day. Canada lost 66,655 brave men and women in this war. In World War Two, one particular battle, the Dieppe Raid, stands out where, of the 4,963 Canadians who set out, only 2,210 returned to England. In World War Two, Canada lost more than 45,000 brave souls. In Korea, Canada lost over 500 soldiers, and many Canadians have given up their lives every time we have entered a peace keeping mission. Since 2002, 158 members of the Canadian forces have been killed serving in the Afghanistan mission.

On the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month, we as Canadians show our respect for those who gave Canada the opportunity to be a free nation. Every time we see a poppy, hear a lark sing or listen to the Last Post, we remember. Not only do we remember the soldiers, but we remember the pride, the glory and the sacrifice that was made on behalf of Canada in the hope that our country would remain a peaceful nation. It is because of them that Canada is filled with peace. I, along with millions of others, am proud to be a Canadian and will never forget the ones who sacrificed everything to give all of us the gift of freedom, peace and security.

As Masons, let us continue to enjoy the rights and freedoms that were preserved for us. Let us continue to support others that wish to join our Fraternity and to try to become better men. Let us continue to support Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Let us continue in an effort to make the world a better place in which to live and a better place for the generations to follow.

Brethren, I'll close by asking you, on Wednesday the 11th of November, and on all future Remembrance days, to take a moment for serious thought and reflection. Try to give honest, sincere thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe for all of the sacrifices made. Try to think what it must have been like for those in action as well as for those millions of others who lives were taken or destroyed as part of the brutality of those conflicts. Try to think of your current freedoms and privileges and just try to imagine what your life would have been like without them. And, please Brethren, if you do nothing else, remember the fallen in your thoughts and prayers.

In conclusion, I leave you with this quote from John F. Kennedy. "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

Excerpt from article to appear in Ontario Mason Magazine

Vimy Memorial being Constructed

Masonic Connection Proposed

In 2016, Camp (CFB) Borden located approximately 100 kilometres north of Toronto, will celebrate its 100 year anniversary of service. In 2010, parts of the original 17.7 km's of 1st WW era trenches were discovered near the Base entrance. It was said at the time, WW1 trenches were unknown outside of Europe. In 2011, with foresight by the Base Commander, parts of these trenches were excavated using the same tools as those soldiers who had originally dug them in 1916. It has since become a domestic as well as international attraction to visit the Base.

Trench Warfare was part of the new "Modern Warfare" to engage the enemy, with hand-to-hand combat a regular daily occurrence. Advancement of a position was still measured in feet and yards; a far cry from today's remote drones and nuclear weapons. Of the 650,000 who fought for Canada in the "Great War", 350,000 were trained in trench warfare at Borden. This training at Borden would prove invaluable the following year at what was to become the defining moment and coming of age for the nation of Canada; the victory at Vimy Ridge in France.

In 1936, the Vimy National War Memorial was opened near Arras France. It is considered by many to be one of the finest examples of operative Masonry that exists in the world today.

A committee of base and community leaders formed what is now called the "Legacy Project" to come up with ideas to further recognize Borden's contributions over the past century. It was proposed to build a Vimy Memorial inside the Base entrance with a walking path and respite benches leading to the previously discovered trenches nearby. This new Memorial would take the shape of "trench walls" made of granite. Also included would be battlefield soil taken from Vimy this past summer, which would be integrated into the new monument. The public would not be able to touch it, but can be seen within it. The soil is meant to represent the blood/DNA of all soldiers who had fallen or were wounded serving Canada.

It was suggested that Freemasons may have a part to play in the project. As an organization, a fraternity devoted to service and making good men better, we must take every opportunity to publicize the contributions to our national identity and way of life that our brethren have made and continue to make. This project would be funded entirely by private donations (estimated over \$500,000) and is being considered as a gift from the community. It was hoped that the fraternity could assist with funding for the benches and pathway. If a minimum \$25,000 was raised by 01 Mar 2016, one or more benches would be emblazoned with the Masonic Square and Compass with the letter "G" in the centre. Inscribed on the bench would be a script commemorating past wars and conflicts, peacekeeping and service of Freemasons to Canada.

It would be a bench for visitors; Masons and non-Masons alike, to reflect on the contributions of Freemasons then as now; to ponder that Freemasons when the time comes, and it did and continues to do, we are side-by-side with our non-Masonic brothers, fighting for the Canadian cause.

Many members within our own jurisdiction are often envious of what other jurisdictions have done. We search the internet looking to find interesting historical Masonic objects, things or projects others have done. We rarely, in recent times, create something of a lasting nature on our own. This is an excellent opportunity to create something new to spark interest and reflection of the Craft in a quiet, sombre setting.

Almost every reader has some past or present relative, family member or friend who was either a Freemason or served their country or both; let their sacrifice live on in a pathway and Masonic bench of reflection. Planned is for the Memorial wall to be unveiled and inaugurated by His Excellency the Governor General of Canada on 09 June 2016.

Each Mason, Lodge, Masonic Assn and concordant body can help see this project reach its goal by making a donation.

Please send your Tax Deductible donation to:

The Masonic Foundation Of Ontario
361 King St. West Hamilton, ON L8P 1B4
Please quote project #2605 - Borden Legacy Project - on your gift

A tax receipt will be issued, so please include your name & return address with your donation.