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**DISTAFF**



Newfoundland  
339(6)  
Archives

*In Aid of*  
**RED CROSS BRANCH**  
**NEWFOUNDLAND**  
**W. P. A.**



EDITED BY  
MABEL W. LEMESSURIER.

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND.

PUBLISHED BY  
"THE ROYAL GAZETTE."

The loaded distaff in the left hand placed,  
With spongy coils of snow-white wool was graced,  
From these the right hand lengthening fibres drew  
Which into thread 'neath nimble fingers grew.

—Catullus.

His crown usurped a distaff on the throne.

—Dryden.



IN making our venture into the sphere of journalism, we offer no apology; our only excuse is that of obtaining funds to help the Red Cross branch of the Women's Patriotic Association. We are truly a woman's paper, devoting our space to an account of the work done in various spheres by energetic wives and daughters in Newfoundland. Our title, "THE DISTAFF," is a good old Anglo-Saxon word, which is used to express the place which women took in the home as "the distaff side," the distaff was always used by women, and was common to all ranks.

We heartily thank those who have so ably contributed to our columns, and we regret that want of space has prevented us from availing of all the matter received, but hope to have the pleasure of using it on some future occasion.

Since commencing our publication, we have learnt the names of many women throughout the Island who have been energetic workers for the W. P. A., the knowledge of which comes too late for publication. There are also, no doubt, many talented women in Newfoundland who are not known to us whom we should have liked to mention in our journal.

Miss Holloway's beautiful and artistic work is well-known, and to her we are indebted for a number of photographs on the following pages; and also to Mr. Parsons and Mr. J. C. Parsons, who so generously gave assistance.

To the contributors, and to those of our readers at home and abroad, we extend the Season's Greetings!

#### OUR ROLL OF NURSES ENGAGED IN WAR WORK.

Misses Gardner, Elsie Doyle, Forsey, McGrath, Frew, Pilot, Bradshaw, Parsons, Coish.

#### W. P. A. VISITING COMMITTEE.

THE sacrifices which war entails are not restricted to the men who go forth to join the colours, but extend to their women and children at home. These sacrifices are for the most part borne uncomplainingly; in the case of France, most heroically, for there wives and mothers vie with their husbands and sons in patriotism and bravery. Recruiting is largely affected by the attitude of the women, and it is noticeable that in Newfoundland the largest number of volunteers come from homes where the women have put selfishness aside and not placed obstacles in the way of the men, doing their public duty conscientiously. It is then but fair that these women who are sharing in the sacrifice being made for home and duty, should know that what they are enduring is not without appreciation.

It was with this feeling that Lady Davidson proposed the appointment of the Visiting Committee from the members of the Women's Patriotic Association. In response to her proposal,

thirty-three members have undertaken the work of visiting the relations of our soldiers and sailors. In St. John's the area visited extends from the Battery Road on the east to Kilbride on the west, and from the Southside to Mundy's Pond, along the northern suburbs and out the Torbay Road. In this area some four thousand five hundred visits have been paid.

Naturally the most important part of the visitors' work consists in calling upon the relatives of those whose names occur in the casualty list. When soldiers or Naval reservists are in hospital, they too are visited by members of the committee.

Regular monthly meetings of the visitors are held at Government House, and the Governor has made it a practice to address the meetings on matters helpful to the visitors in the conduct of their work. His Excellency has also favoured the committee by arranging for them to communicate direct with the Trustees of the Patriotic Association, when circumstances render this expedient. It is gratifying to learn that the visits are well received by all classes, and are understood in the spirit in which they are intended, as carrying the sympathy of the W. P. A. to the anxious and the bereaved.

JULIA HORWOOD.

#### OUR PROBATIONERS.

Misses Marion Saunders, Atwill, Makinson, Greenland, C. Jones, Henrietta Gallishaw, F. Cluett, Bertha Bartlett, Herder, Jean Emerson, Sybil Bartlett.



One of the many Women of Newfoundland who Spin Wool and Knit it into Socks for our Soldiers.



Little Helpers of the Red Cross—The Misses Ilana and Daphne Davidson.

## COMRADESHIP.

BY LADY DAVIDSON.

**I**N these twentieth century days of hurry, when we clip our speech and say what we have to say in as few words as possible,—cutting out all (what we deem) unnecessary adjectives,—spoiling the English language, and making it quite ungrammatical; when we allude to all our work, whether of a business nature or otherwise, by the first letters of their titles, to save time, (or shall I honestly say, out of laziness?) we are apt to lose sight of the sense and reason for what those letters stand. For instance,—W. P. A. What meaning does that convey to the stranger who comes for awhile to our shores? What is far more important, are we ourselves not in danger of forgetting what W.P.A. stands for to us all? The Patriotic Association of the women of Newfoundland. Do we not all wish to enroll ourselves into the Association which binds us in this fine old British colony to work together in unison, in every way that we can, for those brave men who have gone forth to fight for us.

Now what is this Association of ours, that we call for short "W. P. A."? Isn't it the united combination of women throughout the colony,—the united effort of the women of 196 towns and settlements in combination with the city of St. John's to do their "Bit" for the men fighting in the Great War? There is strength in numbers. What better illustration could we have than the story of the bundle of sticks? The one stick alone is weak and easily broken, but a bundle tied together are so strong that united they cannot be broken,—thus the work of one small place would be of little account, but a united effort of 197 places makes a magnificent showing.

Then again take some of the various branches of the work which is in progress under the heading of the Association:—the Surgical or Red Cross work, the Visiting branch, the Reception of the home-coming soldiers and sailors—all these are not done in the name or names of any particular individual—but in the name of you *all*—of all the patriotic women throughout the length and breadth



LADY DAVIDSON, PRESIDENT W. P. A.

of Newfoundland. All should feel that they are being represented in these works, from which circumstances, such as distance and home duties, prevent them from joining in personally.

In this our united Association, there is no such thing as *individualism*. Indeed, in greater things than the little work that we are carrying on here in our own Colony, individual effort will soon be a thing of the past. It is rapidly going out, the war giving it the final shove, and when we look back, if we are permitted to do so, in ten or twenty more years' time, we shall find that, in our sensible, practical way, we have taken a leaf out of our enemy's book and learnt that by a combination of our resources we shall achieve more than in the days when each person fended for himself. There is nothing that tests a people like a real national trial; and we shall learn more in the present time of stress than in centuries of the old self-satisfied days of peace and profit.

What have we learnt? Well, we have learnt to combine for our mutual good, for the common welfare of our men, and for the well-being now and after the war of the heroes who have stood out to fight our battles. And look at the "good standing" of the Colony. What was but a small community, isolated and little known—a mere name among nations—is now a full member of the greatest "Combine" ever dreamt of in the history of the world—the British Commonwealth. This mighty British Commonwealth has renewed its youth and its strength because, like us in the W. P. A., it has pooled its resources, and is now no longer in danger of being broken in pieces through selfishness or greed. And this little Island Colony will be worth one hundred fold more than in the old days, not so much because our men are brave and our women are constant, but because we have earned a new and deeper feeling of fellow-feeling, and the highest sort of comradeship.



Executive Committee of W. P. A. From left to right—Mrs. Pitts, Lady Horwood, Lady Davidson, Mrs. C. Macpherson (Secretary), Mrs. Emerson (Treasurer), and Lady Morris.

Total number of Socks, &c., turned out by the women of Newfoundland during the first two years:

Socks (pairs)	62,685
Shirts	- - 8,984
Cuffs (pr)	- - 6,080
Mufflers	- - 2,422

## TO THE MOTHERS.

DEAR MOTHERS OF OUR HEROES,—

I HAVE been asked to write a few words for this little magazine. It was my privilege for a year to visit the hospital at Wandsworth at least once a week, and very often twice a week, and to know that our dear boys were glad to see "some one from home." It was charming to watch their faces light up, and to find in most cases that if they did not know me personally, I was familiar with their names, and knew their parents or near relations, and the different parts of the Island which had the honour to give them birth. I was the first to hear the news of the "Great Push" of July 1st, "the Battle of the Somme," when so many of our "bravest and best" laid down their lives so gloriously on the field of honour or King and country.

To walk through the wards of "Our" hospital, as we may well name the 3rd London General at Wandsworth, through rows of dear, "broken" wounded on that day was indeed an experience never to be forgotten. Some 200 had arrived only the night before, and more were still coming in. While I was speaking to those in one ward, a sister came in from another ward, and said "Oh, do come to Ward C—they have heard you are here, and are asking for you." It thrilled me with mingled pride and sorrow to see those dear, brave lads bearing their pain with such grit! but the tale of how well they fought and suffered has it not been ably told by many pens infinitely more competent than my humble one? The charge of the gallant Newfoundlanders of the incomparable 29th Division on that memorable July 1st will be told by many a fireside, and thrill the hearts of sons and daughters long years after we have passed away.

In every hospital and convalescent home I visited, the matrons, sisters and nurses had nothing but praise for our dear soldiers, "So well-behaved, so good-looking, so grateful for all that was done for them, and such patience and fortitude in bearing the pain of wounds, or the dreadful dysentery contracted during the Gallipoli campaign, and in Egypt. I am proud to be one of the "mothers." In the words of the General who commanded them: "Newfoundlanders, I salute you!"

ISOBEL L. MORRIS.



The Ladies' Reception Committee. The Ladies who arrange Receptions for our Boys when they return from the Firing Line. Upper line, left to right—Lady Outerbridge, Mrs. Paterson, Mrs. Chas. Ayre. Lower line, left to right—Miss Dalton-Shea, Lady Bowring, and Mrs. Browning.

## A WAR REGISTER FOR WOMEN.

THROUGHOUT the Dominion of Canada, as in the British Isles, women have now declared themselves ready, if called upon, to be of service to their country. They will do all in their power to aid in professional, clerical, commercial, industrial and agricultural work.

Last May, at a meeting of the Women's Canadian Club in Montreal, a committee was formed to call an open meeting and inaugurate a Women's War Register. In due course a meeting was held and on June 6th, 1916, the Register was formed, based largely on the form and appeal of the Board of Trade of England issued in March, 1915. The girl's residence of McGill University threw open its doors and offered a temporary home, and before many days passed everything was in full swing. During the holiday season 203 women registered. It was understood that their services would not be required until three sources of supply, at least, were exhausted, namely, returned soldiers, men physically unfit for military service, and women employed, but temporarily out of employment. Still women were urged to register at once to demonstrate that a reserve of labour existed. From the middle of September to the end of October 117 names were added to the list, and on October 13th the Government announced that Women's National Service Boards would be established throughout the Dominion. It has now become a part of a national policy to call upon women

to contribute their services to meet the industrial and other needs of the country.

Why could not this be done for Newfoundland? The men of our Colony are giving up everything. Cannot the women do a little? The first objection made would probably be that after the war the women will not want to give up their positions to the men, but one of the things to be understood is that returned soldiers are to have the prior claim. Every day girls are leaving the Island to obtain employment elsewhere. Over 160 have gone to the United States within the last two or three months, and many have gone to England to do war work there. Why not keep them at home by letting them fill some of the positions now held by able-bodied men, fit for active military service?

HELEN FRASER.

## PRAY FOR "OURS."

Yet high or low be our degree  
We still can fall on bended knee  
And pray—pray—pray,  
For the lads that are far away!

Do Thou the God of battle stand  
In the dread front of war,  
Hold in the hollow of Thine hand,  
Our lads who fight afar.

WHAT SHE NEEDED.—A girl reading in a paper that fish was excellent brain-food wrote to the editor: "Dear Sir,—Seeing as you say how fish is good for the brains, what kind of fish shall I eat?" To this the editor replied: "Dear Miss,—Judging by the composition of your letter I should advise you to eat a whale."

## THE RED CROSS.

**W**HEN the call to arms sounded throughout the British Empire in August, 1914, and it was so soon found that while the men plied the weapons of war, the women must ply their weapons of peace with more and more assiduity, and the women of Newfoundland, under the presidency of Lady Davidson, banded themselves together into the W. P. A. for the making of shirts and socks and comforts for the soldiers, there still remained one branch to be organized, that of the Hospital or Red Cross work. What more appropriate than that that work should be undertaken by the nursing members of the St. John Brigade under the guidance of trained nurses? This was at once done, the work parties meeting twice a week at my home, Vigornia, as the Red Cross branch of the W. P. A. During the past two years, summer and winter, so very many of the workers, who now number over 50, have perseveringly increased the quantities of dressings and other necessaries, while the young girls have steadily piled up their parcels of beautifully rolled bandages. Thanks to the experience and advice of Mrs. H. Baird and Mrs. Anderson, Miss Southcott and Miss Duncan, all have worked with the feeling of assurance that what they did was right, an assurance corroborated by letters of thanks from the recipients.

The country's response to the request for old white material, is one of the most remarkable points in this work, which incessantly, for over two years, has continued a supply, using large quantities every week, and has never been without it, thanks to the generosity and kind thought of so many.

The school children also participate in the Red Cross work, shredding the ravellings and remnants of linen and gauze and making soft, small limb-pillows to ease many an ache.

The following statement shows the output of this Branch since the war began:—

Bandages of all descriptions	...	18,493
Sterilized Swabs	...	7,842
Pneumonia Jackets	...	394
Flannel Fever Shirts	...	65
Operation Stockings	...	144
Pillow Cases	...	598
Feather Pillows	...	57
Fleecy Shirts	...	294
Sterilized Dressings	...	96,136
White Handkerchiefs	...	476
Limb Pillows	...	97

A meed of praise is due the nurses at the General Hospital, who week by week give so many hours of their spare time to sterilizing the dressings and swabs.

Grand Fall's, Heart's Content and Carbonar also send in most excellent work, and new branches are opening throughout the Island. The month of September also saw a new branch opened at Government House, when Lady Davidson, ever responsive to the needs of the moment, gave a room over to Red Cross work, and this will greatly increase the amount sent forward by the Ancient Colony.

And now about the Nursing work of the Red Cross. Several trained nurses are upholding the credit of Newfoundland in the Old Country and at the front at this

critical time, and twelve members of the St. John Brigade are ably acting as probationers in England and France, and loving their work, while five volunteered for the temporary Naval and Military Measles Hospital, gaining valuable experience while they lent their help.

But other branches of work have not been neglected. Whenever a call for help comes from any source, the Red Cross workers try to respond. By numerous means, notably by holding tag-days, several thousands of dollars have been realized, and such calls answered as that for the French Hospital ship *Charles Roux*, the St. John Brigade Hospital at Etaples to which through their efforts sixteen cots were supplied, the funds of the W. P. A., the British Red Cross; to whatever appeal comes they try soon to make some return. Invariably favoured by brilliant weather, sporting the Wellington hat, or as demure probationers, they pace their beats, tagging each willing giver, and reaping a harvest of coin from the ever generous public of Saint John's, twice having collected over \$2000 in one short day.



Mrs. Browning, the indefatigable Red Cross Worker.

Then other talents were brought into action, and by means of different plays much money was realized. In this number will be found a scene from a pastoral play held in the open, when the young girls of St. John's surpassed themselves in the charm of their acting. Here fairies worked their charms, poor shepherds turned to princes and noble ladies became peasant girls, while sweet cupid hovered around with bow and dart. This play alone netted \$600 for the hospital at Etaples.

Lastly, we must not fail to mention the work of Private Phil Jensen, the hero at Ypres, in aid of the Red Cross. This young soldier, weakened by wounds and suffering, has spent the long months of his convalescence travelling throughout the Island, carrying his vivid account of the Great War from place to place, recruiting and incidentally in the last five months has netted over \$4,000 for the Red Cross. Of this sum part has gone to the British Red Cross, part to swell the Cot Fund, and over \$2,000 has passed to the Red Cross branch of the W.P.A. And finally, the greatest work of all, the proceeds of his later lectures have built a charming ward or camp for his fellow-soldiers and sailors who by exposure at the front have developed signs of tubercular trouble. Here are gathered some of both services, breathing in health and healing from the pines around, tended by experienced nurses, bright and happy, in this sunshine home given them by their brother-at-arms.



Private Philip Jensen.

This work of the Red Cross must continue to grow, the fiery red of energy and the cross, the symbol of mercy and self-sacrifice, must work together, and as time passes and those broken and maimed by this Great War return amongst us, these qualities symbolized by the Red Cross must flame brighter and brighter, and the energy of mercy and self-sacrifice must never falter, but must steadily increase, that it may never be found wanting by our brave and splendid men.

ADELAIDE BROWNING.

## SOME OF OUR LADIES OF THE LAMP.

"Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge. . . ."—Shakespeare.

MISS WATTS, daughter of Mr. H. J. Watts, H. M. Customs, was a nurse in New York when war was declared. A wealthy American woman, desiring in some way to help the French, made an offer to the French Minister of War to support for the duration of the war a ward in a hospital. The offer was accepted. An application was made to the Directors of the Roosevelt Hospital for a competent person to take charge, and Miss Watts was selected, having been recommended by two of the most celebrated surgeons in New York. She was given an open order to equip the ward in the most up-to-date manner. Miss Watts' photograph will be seen on our supplement page.



Who knits from early morn till  
night,  
And reads by yonder pale soft  
light  
A list of names in black and  
white?

Your anxious-hearted  
mother.

She knew there was 'fighting'  
on,  
And dreamed of you the whole  
night long,  
Yet schooled her heart and lips  
to song,

Your brave, heroic  
mother.

Who'll meet you at the open  
door,  
When flying shot and shell are  
o'er,  
And bells of peace peal forth  
once more?

Your mother, lad, your  
mother.

And should yours be the soldier's  
rest,  
Proving your love, supreme, the  
best,  
Again she'll clasp you to her  
breast.

In heaven, my lad, your  
mother.

## SACRIFICE!

Mrs. Bartlett, daughter of Jas. Stott, Esq., Gold Medalist and Graduate of the Middlesex Hospital, London, now attached to Royal Nursing Hospital, Gibraltar.

MARIE E. WAY.

WHO loved you, ere she gave you birth,  
And watched your sorrow and your mirth,  
Who understood your own true worth?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

Who heard your first faint infant cry,  
And wiped the tear drop from your eye?  
When friendships failed, who then stood by?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

Who cut and planned your little frocks,  
And mended all your tiny socks?  
Who combed and brushed your curly locks?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

Who'll go without her daily bread,  
That you her darling might be fed?  
Who bends in prayer her silvery head?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

Who watched you march away to school,  
And helped you keep the 'golden rule,'  
And taught you ne'er to play the fool?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

Who saw you by your father's side,  
In manhood's bloom with glowing pride?  
"So like him, when I was his bride,"  
She whispers soft, your mother.

Who heard the distant war drums peal,  
Setting upon her lips a seal,  
As tho' her heart she might reveal?  
Your mother, lad, your mother.

She heard the bugles blow and clang,  
When streets with 'Tipperary' rang,  
And poets pens of battle sang,  
She heard it all, your mother.



Miss Morry, who is at the Red Cross Military Hospital, Eccleshall, Staffordshire.

She dressed you in your khaki, son,  
Smilingly handed you your gun  
Whispering the while "Thy will be done,"  
Your noble-hearted mother.

She knew that you would play the man,  
Not dangle yonder lady's fan,  
While human blood in rivers ran,  
She knew you would, your mother.

Who kissed you as you said good-bye,  
'Mid soldier comrades standing nigh?  
Who saw the vict'ry in your eye?  
Your proud and happy mother.

## THE RED CROSS NURSE.

BY ROSE M. GREENE.

IN the grey dawn, the hurried message comes,  
"Their lines are broken, dead and wounded lie  
In countless numbers on the trampled field!"  
Lord, thou has named the price of victory high!

When dawn's grey cloak has fallen from the sky  
And morning holds above her golden rod,  
Poor mangled bodies writhe beneath her beams  
And lifeless eyes look seemingly to God.

Poor bleeding hands reach out in eager need  
And murmured names are swallowed in the din  
Of battle noise. Lo! burning lips would kiss  
In blest delirium, the lips of kin.

God smiles in supreme gratitude to see  
A soul so noble that the blood-red field,  
The groans of pain and agonizing cries,  
Affright her not, nor force her mind to yield.

A red cross shines upon her dress of white,  
And calmly confident, her fingers deft,  
Bind up the wounds, or moisten fevered lips,  
Or write in pity to dear hearts bereft.

"God bless you!" seals the lips of dying men,  
Whose lives for Britain and the cause are given,  
And o'er the strife and blood-shed of the world,  
"God bless you!" echoes from the throne of  
Heaven.

### Ladies!

Our Men's Wear Section is a Store in itself, and is THE STORE where so many of your male friends do their shopping. They know and like our goods, so you are perfectly safe in purchasing Gift Goods for your men folk from us.



#### Neckwear:

British and American Styles in handsome silk fabrics: 40, 55, 70, 90, 1.30. In Special Xmas Box: 40, 75.

### SUGGESTIONS

*Gloves*—Lined Kid: 75, 1.10, 1.50 to 2.40; Fur Gauntlets: 4.70, 13.50.

*Combination Gift Boxes*—1 pr Socks and Tie, 75; 1 pr Socks, 1 pr Garters and Tie, 1.60; Garters and Armbands, 65 cents.

*Dressing Gowns*—Comfort and elegance are features in these: 7.00, 8.50, 10.50, 11.50, to 15.00.

*Slippers*—Black Vici Everett: 1.50, 2.00; Black and Tan Romeo: 2.10, 2.40; Grey F. Cozy Sole, 1.50



*An Umbrella* makes a welcome and appropriate gift: 1.10, 1.40, 1.80, 2.80, 3.30, 3.80, 4.40, 5.50.

*Lounge Jackets*—Every man should possess one: 4.80, 7.00, 7.80, 8.00.

*Suspenders*—President, in Fcy. Xmas Box: 55 and 95 cents.

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OF EVERY KIND, AND OF THE FINEST QUALITIES.

### DON'T FORGET

*Your Christmas Hamper for our Soldier Boys, Either at the Front or Prisoners of War.*

## FALL 1916 CALLS FOR WISE BUYING

*FURS,*

*Ladies' and Children's Underwear,*

*COATS,*

*Ladies' and Children's Hats, Wings,*

*Ospreys, Mounts, Plumes,*

*Feathers, and an Endless Variety*

*of Fancy Goods!*

LOWEST PRICES AT

*Nicholle, Inkpen & Chafe,*

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MAIL ORDERS PROMPTLY AND CAREFULLY ATTENDED TO.



## In the Hospital!

*When the Wounded Soldier Needs a stimulant, "Bovril" is Always Used.*

"BOVRIL" is no less valuable to those at home.

You can be sure of being nourished if you take

"Bovril," and Bovril is "British to the Backbone."

# Special Electric Gifts!

Electric  
Grill,  
\$5.00 to  
\$6.50

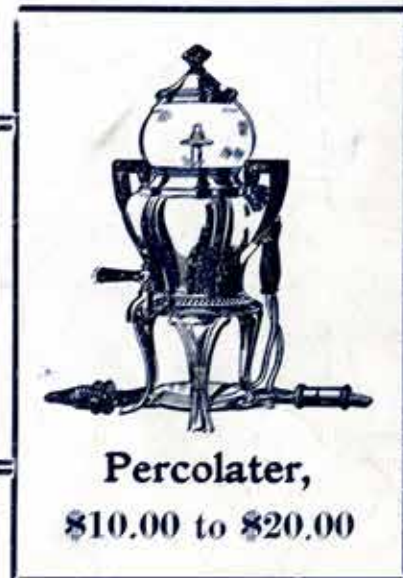


Chafing Dish—\$12.00 to \$20.00

Toasters  
\$4.00

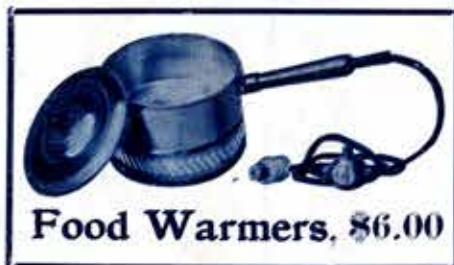


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