

## The Patriotic Fund Introduction: From Canadians for Canadians

The Patriotic Fund played an important role in the First World War for the women left behind on the home front. The money was used for the wives, mothers, sisters, daughters etc. of men who had gone off to fight. It was used to supplement the income they received from their soldiers so that they could live at least comfortably. The average wage for Canadian men fighting in the First World War was \$1.10 a day, too little for one man to live on, never mind a family.<sup>1</sup> One dollar in 1914 is the equivalent of approximately twenty-four dollars in 2016. The low wages and the loss of the primary caregiver is the reason the Patriotic Fund was reborn. It was a charity that had begun during the War of 1812, was used in the Crimean War and the Boer War before the First World War.

The Patriotic Fund was used to meet the need for pensions, family support and medical care as well as provide for widows and orphans of the war.<sup>2</sup> There were questions during the First World as to the fund spending methods and the methods it used to track the recipients of the money. The fund was administered by the public, generally wealthier, older women, who reprimanded individuals they felt were not living well.<sup>3</sup> However, despite all of this by 1916 the fund was supporting 55, 000 families across Canada.<sup>4</sup> These cases were all investigated and all cases would continue to be investigated throughout the war to ensure citizens were only getting the amount of aid they needed.

The fund was well received by the Canadian public who immediately began donating and continued to do so, throughout the war to help those in their communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers Families in the Great War*, (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2004), 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> "Duke's Appeal for Patriotic Fund," *Port Arthur Daily News Chronicle*, August 27, 1914, page 5.

<sup>3</sup> Desmond Morton, *Oxford Companion to Canadian History*, (London, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2006), 110.

<sup>4</sup> Desmond Morton and J. L. Granatstein, *Marching to Armageddon: Canadians and the Great War 1914-1919*, (Toronto, Ontario: Lester and Orpen Dennys Limited, 1989), 22-23.

Employees of big companies were encouraged to give a day's pay to the fund.<sup>5</sup> In Fort William, employees of the Kam Power Company gave a day's pay to help start a Patriotic Fund.<sup>6</sup> There were patriotic events held across Canada in support of the fund and women and men alike did what they could to help their neighbours. There were teas, dances, knitting clubs, movies and more held weekly across the country; Fort William and Port Arthur were no different.<sup>7</sup> The Patriotic Fund continued to receive support throughout the war, although it would have to contend with other groups who were also looking for donations.

There have been recorded concerns and complaints about the Patriotic Fund. Two of the largest complaints about the Patriotic Fund, were the way in which money was given to deserving women and how the fund decided who was deserving. The Patriotic Fund was not run by the government and relied on volunteer societies in each community to investigate cases of need and decide on their level of need. However, these volunteers were known to stop giving women the money if they behaved in unfitting ways, i.e. getting pregnant while their husband was overseas, or spending money carelessly. This made the Fund undemocratic and not an efficient system because there was no governing body checking in on the volunteers.<sup>8</sup>

Also, the Fund had a hard time, initially, deciding on who received payments. It began with only supporting wives and children but there were soon complaints from mothers who were reliant on sons, as well as sisters reliant on brothers. The Patriotic Fund needed to adapt to meet these needs and, have a way to track legitimate and illegitimate claims. This fell to the volunteers, since they lived in the same community as the soldiers and their families, they would

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<sup>5</sup> Desmond Morton and J. L. Granatstein, *Marching to Armageddon*, 22-23.

<sup>6</sup> "For Patriotic Fund," *Port Arthur Daily News Chronicle*, September 17, 1914, page 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Port Arthur Daily News Chronicle*, December 19, 1914, page 2.

<sup>8</sup> Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 114.

know if a claim was legitimate.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay*, 99-103, "All Cases of Help to Be Investigated," *Port Arthur Daily News Chronicle*, November 17, 1914, page 1 and "Patriotic Society is Caring for All Cases," *Fort William Daily Times Journal*, December 21, 1914, page 2.

# DUKE'S APPEAL FOR PATRIOTIC FUND

OBJECT IS TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
NEEDS OF THOSE WHO WERE  
DEPENDENT UPON THE VOL-  
UNTEERS—AID IS NEEDED

In response to urgent appeals from many parts of the Dominion, I inaugurated the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the object of which is to provide for the needs of the wives, families and dependent relatives of those who go to the front to fight the battles of Great Britain and her allies.

Unless generous-minded citizens come to their aid, there will be, during the coming winter, much hardship in many families owing to the absence of the bread-winner.

I have the greatest confidence in those that are in a position to give, need but the opportunity of doing so, and that the response will be widespread and generous.

During the past few days the Canadian patriotic fund has been duly organized, a strong executive representing the whole Dominion has been appointed and a central bureau established at Ottawa.

I sincerely hope that in every city and town throughout the Dominion branches of this organization may be formed, full particulars of which can be had by addressing the Honorary Secretary, Mr. H. B. Ames, M.P., Ottawa.

By co-ordinating and harmonizing benevolent efforts in this way, the danger of overlapping on the one hand, or neglecting deserving communities on the other hand, may be met and overcome.

I am convinced that all Canadian hearts will go out to their brave fellow citizens who have gone to the front. A prompt and hearty response to this appeal will put all anxiety at rest about those near and dear to them and will also afford to those who cannot go, an opportunity of doing their duty to Canada and the Empire.

(Signed) ARTHUR,

President Canadian Patriotic Fund.  
Government House, August 26, 1914.

### For Patriotic Fund

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Montreal, Aug. 29—At this morning's meeting of the board of Merchants Bank of Canada, \$25,000 was unanimously voted to the Canadian patriotic fund and \$5,000 to the Canadian red cross society.

At a meeting of the directors of the Provincial Bank of Canada today, five thousand dollars was subscribed for the national patriotic fund.

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# TRYING TO WORK PATRIOTIC FUND

SOME OF PORT ARTHUR'S POPULATION SEEM PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO SHARE IN THE CHARITY DISTRIBUTION.

WHAT THE COMMITTEE FOUND OUT ABOUT ONE MAN AFTER INVESTIGATING HIS CASE.

If all Port Arthur's foreign population displayed as much resource and ingenuity in getting work and saving money as some of them do in their attempts to "slip one over" on the officials of the city's patriotic and relief fund, they would not need but very little help during the winter months. Here is one example.

Toney Closky, living at 9 Rutlan St. went to the officials of the relief fund and put up a pitiable tale of misery and woe. Tony told them in his glib way that some good people allowed him to sleep in a little shack at the back of their house at 9 Rutlan street and all the food he could get was what they and others gave him. He said he could not get work and had not had a good meal for a long time.

Tony looked the part. He was dressed in old and poor clothing and his appearance and manner quite impressed the relief fund officials that he was a genuine case. They therefore gave him some slight assistance, intending to help him out further after investigation.

Upon investigation, it is said, Tony was found not only to be the owner of the house and lot upon which was the shack in which the "good people" were allowing him to live, but to have money in the bank. Tony, it is said had the house rented to the "good people," who had shown him charity, and lived in the shack and dressed poorly in order to hoodwink the officials in charge of the city's relief fund.

Another case was brought to light the other day, when two Austrians taking before Mr. J. M. McGovern for registration put up a story about "No money, no work." On being searched they were found to both have a substantial sums of money in their pockets.

## **BRAVO, PORT ARTHUR !**

So far success has rewarded the efforts of those volunteers who came forward to assist in the movement to establish the Port Arthur patriotic fund.

While a great amount of credit is due the workers, the subscribers to the fund must not be forgotten. The response to the canvassers was generous and spontaneous. In many instances, there can be no doubt, sacrifices were made by individuals inspired by loyalty to do their share in behalf of those whose fortunes in life have been affected by the war.

Those of us who are posted on the peculiar conditions prevailing in Port Arthur, due chiefly to mixed population, can appreciate the difficulties that faced the canvassers and place full value upon the loyal sentiments underlying the willingness of all classes to help.

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# ALL CASES OF HELP TO BE INVESTIGATED

**PATRIOTIC FUND WILL BE ADMINISTERED CAREFULLY—  
GOOD COMMITTEE NAMED TO  
HANDLE IT**

On recommendation of the finance committee of the Port Arthur Patriotic and Relief Association a disbursement committee was appointed yesterday afternoon to investigate and oversee all disbursements made by the association.

The committee appointed consists of Mayor Oliver, Mr. J. T. Emmerson, Mr. I. L. Matthews, Mr. William Morgan, Mr. F. S. Wiley, Mr. C. O. Smith, Mr. J. Dix Fraser. Every case where help is rendered will be thoroughly investigated first.

The women in charge of the different sections of the city will report themselves or through the president of the Women's Relief Society to this committee cases that are brought to their notice and after investigation this committee will recommend disbursements according as it judges the need.

A number of cases were dealt with at the meeting yesterday.

# MANY APPLYING FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE RELIEF FUND

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NO WORK AND NO LUCK STORIES ARE NOW BEING TAKEN TO THE CITY OFFICES IN LARGE NUMBERS.

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SOME OF THEM ARE GENUINE AND BEAR FRUIT—ALL ARE INVESTIGATED — PAY DAY TOO.

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The majority of families seeking assistance from Patriotic Relief Association so far have been foreigners and they say they are in need, for the most part of food, and fuel. There are, of course, a number of pathetic cases which come to light, but for the most part they are not of utter destitution but requiring partial assistance. There are cases too, that are pure bluff. Healthy, plump women and big slouching men give stories about hard luck and hard times, "no work, no money, no food," etc, but the investigations being made are very thorough.

This morning the city offices were overrun with foreign women, clad in big hob nailed boots, red bandannas on their heads, shawls around their shoulders, waiting for their turn. It was also pay day at the city offices and foreign men with dinner palls, overalls, slouch hats and heavy boots leaned against the walls and lined up in a string before the treasurer's office.

These were men who have been engaged in clearing land for the city. They have worked three days this week and last night laid off to give another gang a chance to do three days' work.

The work of relief is entailing an immense amount of office work, the bulk of which falls upon the office staff of the city clerk and Commissioner Hackey. It also requires the business men who are on the disbursement committee to give up an hour of their time every day between 11 a. m. and noon to hear the applications for relief.

## **FOR PATRIOTIC FUND**

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One day's pay from each of the local employes of the Kam Power company, together with a donation from the head office, totaling \$1700, has been turned over to Mayor Young by Local Manager Bird as a start for a patriotic fund in Fort William.

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# BIG GIFTS SWELL PATRIOTIC FUND

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**Canadian Pacific and Its Employees  
Will Raise Two Hundred  
Thousand Dollars.**

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MONTREAL, Aug. 28—The directors of the Canadian Pacific railway, Wednesday morning voted \$100,000 to the Canadian national patriotic fund. It is expected that the employees of the road will give a full day's pay, aggregating another \$100,000, as Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, president of the Canadian Pacific, has requested this.

The Canada Sugar Refinery has voted \$10,000 to the fund.

Other contributions to the fund today were \$20,000 from the Imperial Tobacco company, and \$10,000 from the Montreal Light, Heat and Power company.

# PATRIOTIC SOCIETY' IS CARING FOR ALL CASES

Considerable comment has been caused around the city regarding the action of the patriotic society in the case of a woman, Mrs. Martha Clarke, whose husband went with the first contingent and was later drafted to Bermuda. Mrs. Clarke asked the committee to give her transportation to join her husband at Bermuda, and when the matter was discussed the committee was quite prepared to do this, if the application of the husband were endorsed by his commanding officer. Accordingly the following letter was sent to her, dated December 2, to which no reply has yet been made.

Mrs. Martha Clarke,  
361 Frederica street,  
Fort William.

Dear Madam:

In connection with your application for transportation to Bermuda to join your husband, who is stationed there, before the committee can consider this matter, it would be advisable to write your husband and ascertain whether he is to be permanently located at Bermuda and whether he concurs in your desire to move there. Mr. Clarke should take the matter up with the commanding officer of his regiment as to the advisability of your moving. When you hear from Mr. Clarke, we will be glad to place this before the committee for further consideration.

S. C. YOUNG, Mayor.

Meanwhile Mrs. Clarke is in receipt of the same assistance from the funds of the patriotic society as all the rest of the dependents of the men at the front, and will continue to share in the benefits to which she is justly entitled.

The committee would not give the case this publicity, were it not that the story is being circulated to the effect that the city is doing nothing to assist Mrs. Clarke, and is anxious to shift the responsibility of providing for her to some other shoulders. It is liable to create a feeling antagonistic to the patriotic society. There is no desire to get out of any responsibility, and Mrs. Clarke will be provided for as long as her husband is in his country's service.

**THE PATRIOTIC FUND**  
**NOW NEARING \$4,000.00**

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Previously donated . . . . .	\$3166.10
A. Faulkner . . . . .	2.00
A. Friend . . . . .	1.00
B. Goldike . . . . .	5.00
Mary I. L. Black . . . . .	48.00
Mrs. Sinfield . . . . .	12.00
Mrs. H. Ashly . . . . .	5.00
J. A. Cranston . . . . .	5.00
Defia Smith . . . . .	7.00
Mrs. H. Brown . . . . .	1.00
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$3252.10</b>

# PATRIOTIC FUND

The following is a complete list of donations to the Fort William patriotic fund to date:

Oscar Hudson Co. ....	\$ 25.00
Corona theater concert .....	216.05
The Nordeau club .....	71.70
Geo. H. Riegger .....	100.00
B. Davies .....	5.00
D. Hodgson .....	2.50
R. M. Mahon .....	2.00
E. Allen .....	3.00
Geo. A. Graham .....	1200.00
Jas. Murphy .....	1200.00
A. May Walker .....	1.00
West Algoma equal suffrage association .....	60.00
L. J. Karam .....	25.00
B. Nisby .....	25.00
S. Faria .....	15.00
A. Berock .....	5.00
J. Cutsy .....	5.00
M. Bomensour .....	5.00
M. Asseff .....	5.00
L. Eadre .....	5.00
Mrs. Milham .....	5.00
P. McDoctor .....	3.00
A. Abdou .....	3.00
J. J. Karam .....	2.00
H. Wakem .....	2.00
T. J. Karam .....	2.00
Widow Abdou .....	1.00
Fort William Opera Co. Ltd..	171.00
L. Lyons .....	.25
A. Faulkner .....	2.00
A. Friend .....	1.00
B. Goldtke .....	5.00
Mary I. L. Black .....	48.00
Mrs. Sinfield .....	12.00
Mrs. H. Ashly .....	5.00
J. A. Cranston .....	5.00
Della Smith .....	7.00
Mrs. H. Brown .....	1.00
W. Faulkner .....	12.00
T. G. Jones .....	20.00
Ohlgreen Bros. ....	5.00
Grace King .....	3.00
E. A. Conrad .....	18.00
J. Tessiman .....	12.00
J. A. McDonald .....	5.00
W. Millar .....	6.00
S. G. Cole .....	5.00
A. J. Boreham .....	5.00
Wm. Hind .....	10.00
Wm. Webster .....	24.00
Rex Theater .....	160.50
Kam Power Co. ....	1000.00
Kam Power Co. employes .....	458.84
E. K. Andrews .....	3.00
Mrs. Bailey .....	10.00
John D. Nichol .....	30.00
Scholars of Fort William schools—	
Central school .....	36.73
Drew street school .....	5.02
Francis street school .....	15.57
Franklin street school .....	15.30
Isabella street school .....	11.35
Ogden school .....	9.80
Wayland school .....	2.00
M. H. Braden .....	50.00
W. H. O'Brien .....	60.00
D. A. Forster .....	10.00
McKeilgan Bros. ....	100.00

Lusie McKellar .....	5.00
Margaret Deacon .....	10.00
Mary McKellar .....	10.00
Lusan McLaren .....	5.00
Geo. H. Williamson .....	24.00
Lodge "General Wolfe," Sons of England .....	5.00
A. Blair .....	5.00
A. M. Robertson... .2 blks. Potatoes	
S. C. Young .....	300.00
Thos. Hender .....	3.00
Mr and Mrs. P. H. B. Deacon	50.00
W. E. Ellis .....	4.00

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**Total .....** **\$5776.39**

## **Patriotic Fund For Local Requirements.**

The committee in charge of the women's patriotic fund wish it to be expressly understood that all receipts from the sale of badges, donations from societies or private parties, will be used exclusively for local emergencies. All the supplies, even the ribbon for making up the badges, will be purchased from our own merchants and every cent will be used for the benefit of Fort William, and those residing here who through conditions brought about by the war, have a claim on the services to which the funds are to be devoted. The badges have been selling at 25 cents each, but there is a great demand for the patriotic emblem that means a contribution to the fund, that less expensive ones will be made up when the present supply is exhausted, the new ones to sell at ten cents each.

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# PATRIOTIC FUND HAS REACHED \$233,940.00

OTTAWA, Sept. 16.—The following subscriptions have been received by the minister of finance, honorary treasury treasurer of the Canadian patriotic fund.

Previously acknowledged, \$155,367.78. Canadian patriotic fund association, transferred to Canadian patriotic fund per J. M. Courtney, esq., treasurer, debentures \$50,000 and cash \$25,972.62; the Foundation company, limited, Montreal, \$1,000; F. R. McQueen, Minneapolis, Minn., U. S. A., \$500; Mrs. Alexander MacDougall, Montreal, \$100; Canadian order of Foresters, per J. A. Stewart, high chief ranger, Perth, Ont., \$1,000. Total \$233,940.40.

The F. R. McQueen mentioned in the above despatch as contributing \$500 is well known as a member of the firm of Earnet and McQueen, elevator builders, and is an uncle of S. J. McQueen, engineering contractor of this city.

**PATRIOTIC FUND IS TO BE RAISED IN  
THE CITY FOR EXCLUSIVE PURPOSE OF  
ASSISTING FAMILIES OF MEN AT WAR**