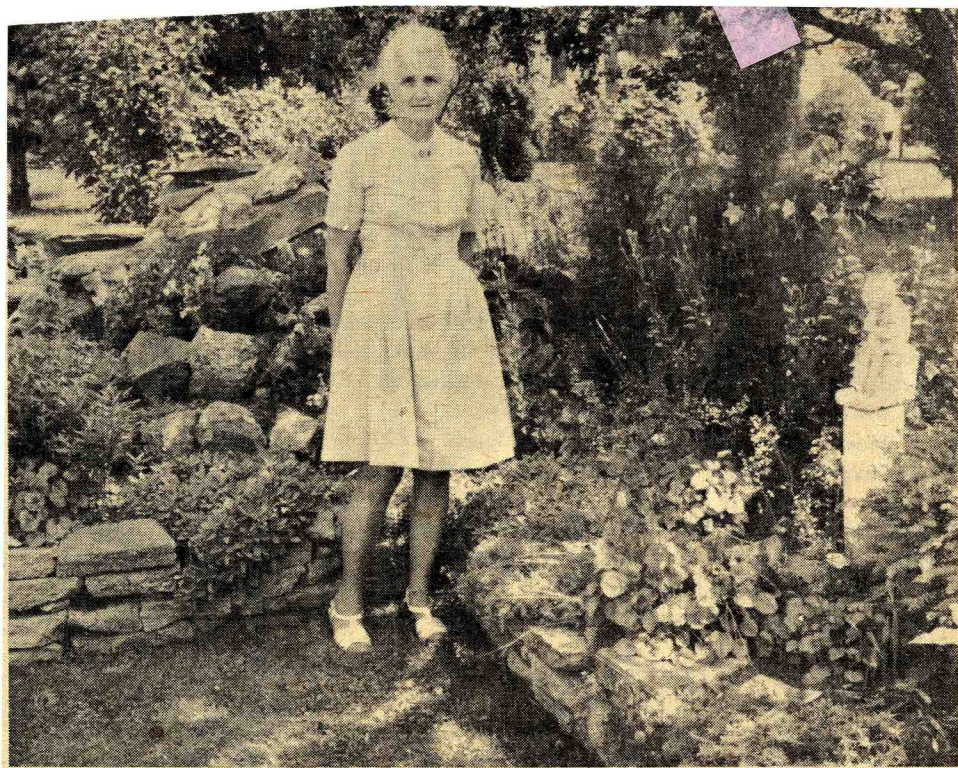


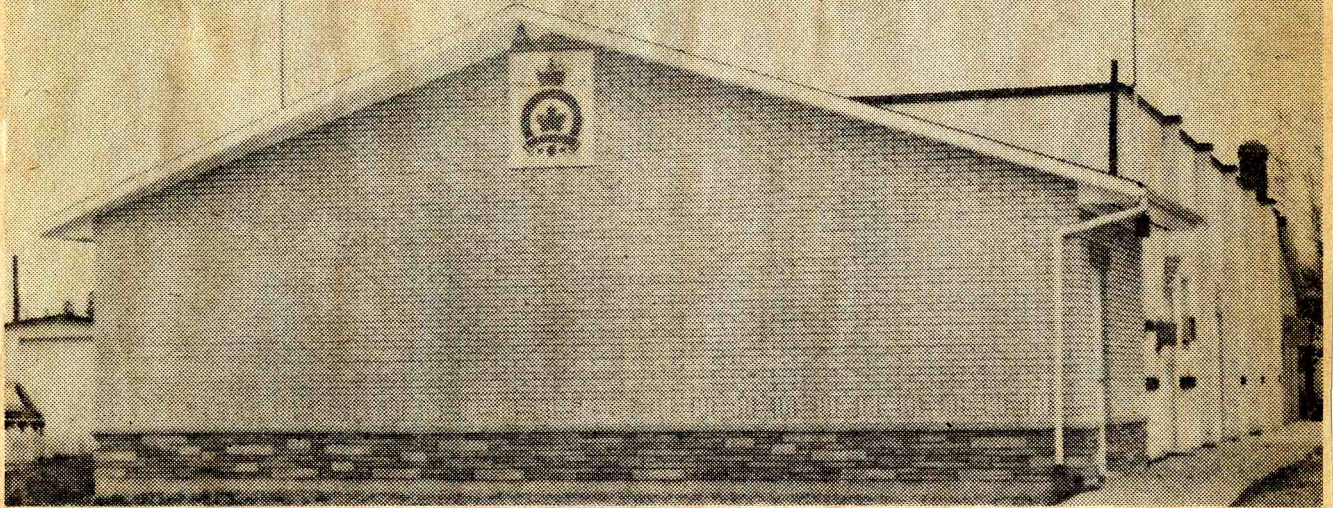
Excavation for Rodney's Post Office was made in July 1965



Excavation for Rodney's new post office was made in mid July 1965 by John McColl, on the site of the former Johnston and Kelly Garage. Several sidewalk superintendents collected daily to watch proceedings in the center of town.



**BABE OLIVER MAINTAINS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GARDENS AND PROPERTY IN** Rodney, which keep her busy two or three afternoons a week. She figures her rock gardens contain between 75 and 100 varieties of flowers, cacti and plants. With so many some are in bloom all the time, giving the gardens beautiful color, which are of their best earlier in the season. Behind her is a waterfall.



**WEST ELGIN BRANCH 221** — The West Lorne Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion is shown above. West Elgin

Branch 221 received its charter on April 20, 1932. (T.-J. Photo).

## History of West Elgin Branch 221

**WEST LORNE** — The charter for West Elgin Branch 221 in West Lorne was granted on April 20, 1932.

The charter members were: Gordon Ainslie, John Atkinson, John Baldock, William Bird, Charles Bonner, Mrs. Florence Bonner, James Carmichael, Alex Campbell, Ross Colley, Victor Cousin, Arthur De Long, Frank Drew, Walter Frederick Earl Gardiner, Ernest Gardiner, Earl Lemon, Roy Carpenter, Frank Janaway, Ted Newman, William Britton, Dr. A. C. Steele, John Messerschmidt, Charles Petherick, Reuben Byfield, Jack MacDonald, Alex Colthardt, Allan Stuart and Robert Kew.

Earl Lemon was the first president. He recalled that a pipe band came from St. Thomas for the charter night torch-lite parade. Earl had soaked the brooms in coal-oil for 10 days previous to the big evening of April 20, 1932. Such a spectacle has never been duplicated in West Lorne.

In the 1930s the membership was drawn from the West Lorne and Rodney areas as the Legion executive of 1936 shows President Jack McDonald, Vice-President, Jim Scott, Secretary Frank Janaway and Treasurer Dr. A. C. Steele. At the beginning of World War II the Dutton men joined the

Legion.

In the 1930s the meetings alternated between Rodney and West Lorne. The Community Hall was the West Lorne meeting place until 1959 when the A. McKillop lumber office was bought and converted into a Legion Hall. This was at the corner of Argyle and Elm streets.

On Friday, April 22, 1960 this first official headquarters of the Legion was opened. Al Harris, regional vice-president of Districts B, D, and E, officially opened the building and Rev. James Fleming padre dedicated it. James McBain MP and Jack Spence MPP brought greetings and congratulations. For over 10 years this served as an adequate centre.

The opportunity arose to purchase a larger building on John Street. This was a building erected originally for a machine shop. The building was bought from Erie Flooring in 1969.

A great deal of volunteer work was done to get the building in shape. Two club rooms, a bar, a kitchen, three washrooms and an auditorium were fashioned. On April 3, 1971 the building was opened and dedicated. Bob Jeffries, provincial third vice-president, officiated.

The old wooden storage shed

at the south end of the Legion was torn down in August 1975. A cement block building replaced it as well as a 20 foot by 19 foot addition to the southeast corner of the lot. This should give us plenty of storage room and a meeting room.

So much for the buildings. In 1957 the silver jubilee was held. Fourteen of the charter members were given 25-year pins. In 1952 Rodney Legion 525 was granted a charter. At present the two West Elgin branches alternate Nov. 11 ceremonies between the two branches. This year, 1975, it is Rodney's turn.

Branch 221 boasts 7 living members with life memberships. They are John Boonman and William Wilson of Dutton, Earl Lemon, George Berdan, Earl Gardiner of West Lorne and Lawrence Peters, William Doolittle both at Westminster Hospital, London.

In 1967 two members were honored with Centennial medals. They were Earl Lemon and George Berdan. The Citations read in part: "The centennial medal is conferred in recognition of valuable service to the nation."

President of the branch have been: John MacDonald, A.C. Steele, Frank Janaway, Edward Newman, Ernie Lashbrook, Jim Scott, Dr. M.G. Graham, J. Ward, Victor

Swain, Harold Lancaster, Alex Scott, John Atkinson, Frank Drew, Ray Peckham, Eric Lippold, George Lippold, George Berdan, Allen Ross, Lloyd, Elliot, Bernie Fluker, Ron Ross, Robert Bragg, George Gilbert, Bruce Stalker and Tony Champion.

In 1968 a past president, George Berdan, was awarded the highest honor in the Royal Canadian Legion — the Medal of Meritorious Service. District Commander Bing Forbes of Windsor presented the medal. The first World War II veteran to hold the presidency for two years was Victor Swain now of RR 1 Dutton.

A rather unique feature was the 35th anniversary in 1967 when the charter president Earl Lemon and the two officials who installed him were present. Earl Burgess who was zone secretary and Ian Cameron zone commander at the time of the charter night, April 20, 1932 were in attendance.

It would be remiss if the Ladies' Auxiliary were not recognized in this history of West Elgin Branch. During the past four years they have contributed over \$9,500 to the Legion for which it is grateful. They also furnished the kitchen and clubroom. We are proud to be a branch in Zone 17 which was organized in 1953.

AGREEMENT:

VILLAGE OF RODNEY AND RODNEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

This Agreement made in duplicate the ( Tenth) 10 th day of October in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty Two. 1952

BETWEEN:

The Corporation of the Village of Rodney, in the County of Elgin, here in after called the Parties of the FIRST PART The Women's Institute, of the said Village of Rodney hereinafter called the Parties of the SECOND PART.

Whereas the agreement entered into between the Community Hall Board acting for the Corporation of the Village of Rodney and the Women's Institute dated December Nineteenth, 1931 expires on December Nineteenth 1952.

Therefore this agreement witnesseth that the previous agreement dated December Nineteenth 1931, shall and is hereby extended for a further term of Five Years definite and automatically renewed after Five years for further Five years terms until such time as either party shall give notice in writing requesting its termination.

Witness further that the terms and conditions expressed shall apply excepting that in event of the loss by fire or other cause the Corporation shall not be liable and this agreement shall become Null and Void.

In Witness whereof the Reeve And Clerk of the said Corporation and the President and Secretary of the Women's Institute hereby affix their hand and seal.

Signed, Sealed and Delivered  
in the presence of Albert Leibner  
this 10 th day of October 1952.

) Mrs. W. McMillan  
) Mrs. Frank Graham  
) Robert F. Coles  
) Geo. Mistele  
)  
)  
)  
)