

# Plattsburg, Port Henry and Other Champlain Resorts Now Wartime Centres

## Unusual Relief Organization Has Three Hundred Members at Mining Camps Near Port Henry

By FRANCES FISHER BYERS

The Champlain Valley, rich in historic tradition, saw the idea of military preparedness in this country brought to life at Plattsburg, and it is now seeing a coordination of patriotic efforts to bring America "through" which will mean a big contribution to the completion of the nation's war job.

For the reserve officers' training camp on the lake is only the focal point toward which New Yorkers and New Englanders are looking. It is perhaps the most efficient, the farthest advanced of the various patriotic activities along the lake. It is, of course, the most important.

But the women of the valley are going forward vigorously with relief work of various kinds, operating through the National League for Women's Service, the Red Cross, which has a Clinton County organization; the formation of motor detachments, of which there are three already in Plattsburg, and the home gardening movement. From Fort Ticonderoga to Plattsburg and along the Vermont shore from Burlington to St. Albans, north to Chazy and Rouse's Point, where the American women almost reach across and clasp hands with their Canadian sisters, the Champlain Valley is upholding its patriotic traditions. All the intermediate towns, Port Henry, Westport, Elizabethtown, Crown Point, Port Kent, Valcour and Peru, are giving their quota in service and relief work.

A few miles down the lake from the officers' training camp the Junior Plattsburg Camp, at Long Point, is beginning the season's work—a promising institution which is planned to afford military training under camp conditions for boys between the ages of fourteen and twenty.

Occasionally, along one of the roads out of Plattsburg, you can see a long column of the men from the training camp marching out to a field problem, singing song after song. I saw one such column swing past a house at which an old woman sat, hands folded, enjoying the sunshine. She rose and waved an American flag as they went by. She was a very old woman, probably out of the ranks of active service. But I have no doubt that her daughters, if she has any, are giving their best, for that is the spirit of the valley.

The work being done by Mrs. Walter C. Witherbee, of Port Henry, has attracted widespread attention. As chairman of the Essex County branch of the National League for Women's Service and chairman of the Navy League unit, she is developing these organizations to the highest degree of efficiency. With her daughter, Miss Louise Witherbee, chairman of the American Fund for French Wounded, her relief

America. At her beautiful estate, Ledge-top, on the shore of Lake Champlain, overlooking the historic Crown Point and Fort St. Frederick, she keeps a force of six assistants constantly at work.

Six miles back in the mountains, where the big iron mines of Northern New York are located, at Witherbee and Mineville, an unusual and interesting situation in relief work is being developed. Twenty-six nationalities are represented among the 1,200 miners employed. This does not include the American college men employed as engineers and electricians.

Three hundred of the miners' wives, daughters and sisters have joined the National League for Women's Service and are also doing work for the American Fund for French Wounded, and they are making hospital supplies and



Members of Plattsburg relief organizations helping Garden Association near Plattsburg Barracks. Left to right: Mrs. Harry Baker, Mrs. Charles Watson, Mrs. George Weed, chairman of Garden Club; Mrs. Levy, president of Civic League; Miss Ellen Ross, Miss Finn, Mrs. Pierce, commandant of motor detachment; Miss Mary Barber, Mrs. F. E. Smith

Coal miners at Witherbee, N. Y., of 26 nationalities, who have formed a strong home defence league. (X) Silas Witherbee, Yale athlete, son of Walter C. Witherbee, who has given his houseboat Silouan to the U. S. government for a hospital.



PHOTOS BY INTERNATIONAL FILM SERVICE.



Officers in charge of Junior Plattsburg, Long Point, Lake Champlain. Left to right: 1st row—Colonel Appell, chief surgeon; Colonel Martin, U. S. A. 2nd row—Student Capt. Brewer, Phillips-Exeter, a camp recruit. The Rev. Dr. Carter, chaplain, pastor of Throop Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, and Quartermaster Moffitt.



Left to right: Mrs. Walter C. Witherbee at Port Henry, N. Y., chairman of Essex County Branch, National League for Women's Service, and head of Port Henry section of Navy League. Miss Louise Witherbee, chairman of American Fund for French Wounded.



Mrs. Frank E. Smith, chairman of Plattsburg Branch, National League for Women's Service.



Members of Junior Plattsburg at Long Point, Lake Champlain.



Miss Helen Palmer, chairman of Unit One Relief Workers, Plattsburg

Mrs. Wallace Pierce, commandant of Motor Detachment at Plattsburg.



Members of Witherbee and Mineville branches National League for Women's Service and American Fund for French Wounded.

in New York State. The bill took effect on June 15 and has met with striking success. Mr. and Mrs. Witherbee have given their houseboat, the Silouan, named after their three children, Silas, Louise and Anne, for hospital use.

This particular family has had at hand an opportunity to carry out a very individual organization, but the same wholehearted endeavor is characteristic of family after family on Lake Champlain.

The officials of the officers' training camp asked the local chapter of the National League for Women's Service, of which Mrs. Frank E. Smith is chairman, to establish a rest room for the student officers and their friends on the reservation. The result is Hostess House, which rose magically and has proved a thorough success. It is used daily to capacity.

The league is working in connection with the local committee of the National Federation for Training Camp Activities. A sub-committee consisting of Lieutenant Colonel Wolf, chairman; Mrs. Frank E. Smith, chairman of the local chapter of the National League for Women's Service; Mrs. William Levy, chairman of the Civic League; Miss Shafer, of the Y. W. C. A., and Mr. Hedges, of the National Federation for Training Camp Activities, is in charge of the work.

The Clinton County chapter of the Red Cross is steadily increasing in membership, having already reached a total of 3,000. The chairman is Mrs. C. J. Verst.

The overseas detachment, the commandant of which is Mrs. Bryant, is successful in promoting sociability among the officers' families. The organization meets at private houses three times a week.

Those who are enlisted in the three motor detachments of the National League for Women's Service, of which

work in that organization since the beginning of the war has been commented upon in official circles in France and England, as well as in

garments for the destitute French villagers. When congratulated upon the efficiency of this organization, made up of

so many elements, Mrs. Witherbee said with characteristic modesty: "I have always lived close to our people and have tried to help them develop, and

now that we want their cooperation in this great international crisis they have rallied to the flag, irrespective of race and creed."

Mr. Witherbee, in time taken from his big industrial interests, is acting as chairman of the Home Defence League. He is the author of the now

famous Brown bill, which was designed, and effectively so, to limit the proximity at which liquor may be sold in the neighborhood of industrial plants

the women realize that it is a great opportunity to receive instruction from the mechanical experts furnished us by the various automobile companies even if they do not have to put into practice many of the details which they are learning, although we are informed that we will have plenty of chances, as the war promises to be of long duration.