

THANKSGIVING DAY, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7

(Dauphin Herald, 29 September 1921)

Armistice Day and Thanksgiving Day, provided one is proclaimed, will be held jointly this year, for the first time, the general holiday falling on Monday, November 7, which is the Monday of the week in which the actual Armistice Day (November 11, 1918) occurs, in accordance with an act of parliament passed last session and assented to June 4.

The act respecting this holiday reads as follows:

"Throughout Canada in each and every year the Monday in the week in which the 11th day of November shall occur being the day of 1918 in which the Great War was triumphantly concluded by an armistice, shall be a legal holiday, and shall be kept and observed as such under the name of Armistice Day.

"The holiday commonly called Thanksgiving Day being a day usually appointed in the month of October or November by proclamation as a day of general thanksgiving to Almighty God, shall whenever appointed be proclaimed and observed for, and on Armistice Day."

8 May 1930

W. J. WARD TO PROPOSE ARMISTICE DAY BILL

W. J. Ward, M.P., at the request, verbally presented, of returned men of Dauphin and district, has consented to introduce in parliament a proposal to fix Armistice Day permanently on Nov. 11, and stop its wandering between Nov. 9 and 15.

The resolution of the returned men which was presented informally to the federal member for the district who was about to start for Ottawa on Saturday, was adopted at a large and representative meeting of the Armory, presided over by Capt. Frank Scrase, with Douglas Kitney as secretary. After adopting a motion by Percy Wodehouse, of Makinak, seconded by W. P. Wright, of Dauphin, to organize a returned soldiers' association as a branch of the British Empire Service Legion, the following officers were elected: President, Capt. Frank Scrase; vice-president, James Watson; second vice-pres., Percy Wodehouse; executive, a dozen representatives of a district with a radius of 60 miles from Dauphin, and more to be added.

The Armistice Day resolution and the decision to ask Mr. Ward to introduce a private bill

incorporating the resolution, in the house of commons, came from the motion by C. D. Bates, seconded by C. B. Recknell.

A satisfactory number of members enrolled at the meeting, and as quarters are provided through the courtesy of the Manitoba Horse, in the Armory, a meeting place is assured. Plans are already under way for a proper celebration of Armistice Day next fall in which all ex-service men, regardless of affiliations, will be eligible to take part.

31 July 1930 - Conservatives Make Sweep, W. J. Ward defeated by Bowman

2 April 1931 - Armistice Day Act

Apr. 2, 1931, page 2:

ARMISTICE DAY ACT AMENDMENT

The following is taken from Hansard, proceedings of March 18th. It will be of interest to the returned men's organization of the town which made special efforts to have this matter taken up by the government.

Mr. A. W. Neill (Comox-Alberni) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 8, to amend the Armistice Day Act.

He said: The Armistice Day Act, passed in 1921, comprises two sections. It provides that the Armistice day celebration shall be held on the Monday in the week in which November 11 falls. The second section provides that thanksgiving day shall be held on the same day. The bill I now ask leave to introduce repeals both these sections, substituting for them one section which provides that the celebration of Armistice day shall be held on November 11 in each year and on no other day. It makes no reference to Thanksgiving day and therefore the procedure in regard to that will revert to the practice that prevailed prior to 1921, when by proclamation the government could fix the day at any time they liked. I do not say anything in this bill as to thanksgiving day, I leave that entirely open; I provide in one section that Armistice day shall be celebrated on November 11 and upon no other day.

Mr. Bourassa: I am opposed to that

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

7 May 1931 - Armistice Day Bill passes

May 7, 1931, page 1:

ARMISTICE DAY BILL PASSES IN HOUSE

Is Supported by J. L. Bowman, K.C.

The bill to set apart Nov. 11th each year as a legal holiday, to be known as Remembrance Day received its three readings in the House of Commons and on Tuesday, April 28th was passed. The following is taken from Hansard of that date:

Mr. J. L. Bowman (Dauphin): May I say a word in favour of this bill? The views I wish to express are very ably set forth in a memorial which I received within the last day or two from the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League. This communication, which is addressed to myself as a member of the house, was sent to me as follows:

Re Observation of Armistice Day

At a recent meeting of the Dominion executive council of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League held in Ottawa, I was directed to invite your kind attention to the following resolution which was unanimously passed by the dominion convention of the Canadian Legion, held at Regina, Saskatchewan in November, 1929, and reaffirmed at the meeting above referred to:--

"Whereas November the eleventh is the anniversary of the cessation of hostilities in the great war and is a day sacred to all ex-service men and women and which should be sacred to the people of Canada;

And whereas the day now set apart for the observance of this anniversary does not generally coincide with the actual day.

And whereas by reason of this, the observance of this anniversary loses much of its significance, and its sacred character is thereby much impaired:

Be it therefore resolved that we request that the parliament of Canada be requested and we do hereby respectfully request it, to enact legislation whereby in place of the present Thanksgiving day, November the eleventh in every year shall be set aside as a national holiday to be known as Remembrance Day."

I also wish to bring to the attention of the house a resolution passed by the returned men at Dauphin, Manitoba, under date of November 11, 1929. The resolution reads:

"Whereas this gathering of returned men of Dauphin and district is of the opinion that the day which marked the end of hostilities in the great war should be fittingly and thankfully observed by all of the citizens of Canada in perpetuity.

And whereas we believe that the maintaining of Armistice day as a day of national import would be of inestimable value in the furtherance of ideals of peace among the nations.

And whereas in our opinion the identity of Armistice day as being the eleventh day of November is in grave danger of being lost by reason of the extent in which Armistice day has been and is being confused with Thanksgiving Day in the minds of the people of Canada.

Now therefore this gathering of returned soldiers, sailors and airmen of Dauphin district, met together for the purpose of observing Armistice day, hereby records its conviction that in order that the significance of Armistice day may ever be preserved, November eleventh in each year should be set aside as a national day of observance and as a public holiday, and further that Thanksgiving day should not be permitted in any way to detract from the memories and ideals which Armistice day should inspire in Canadians."

In accordance with the sentiments so ably and clearly set forth in these two resolutions, I have much pleasure in supporting the bill which has been introduced by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill).

Hon. Murray MacLaren (Minister of Pensions and National Health): This bill, if it were adopted, would have the effect of making Armistice Day a fixed day, the 11th of November in each year. It would be a day of observance, apart altogether from any day celebrating or commemorating any other occasion. There is in my judgment no necessity of its interfering in the slightest degree with the celebration of Thanksgiving. Coming as it does in November, it will allow ample time in October for thanksgiving, if fixed in that month, thus avoiding the difficulties that might arise from two of these public holidays occurring within a short period of time, and more especially avoiding what I think would be an unfortunate feature, namely, that of both being celebrated on the same day. These commemorative occasions are distinct and different, and it would be unfortunate longer to try to couple the two together. Therefore I favour the passing of the bill.

What is of importance is not one's personal views, but how the proposed measure will be regarded in the country. One can judge only from personal observation, from meeting people and from general information. My view is that it will be most acceptable; that it will meet with the approval of a very large number of people. I believe its adoption will be a source of gratification and comfort to the returned men, their families, their dependents and their descendants. I therefore support the object of this bill and strongly favour its passage.

Several other members then spoke to the bill, mostly in its favor, and it was passed.

17 September, 1931 - October 12 set as Thanksgiving

REMEMBRANCE DAY NOV. 11 ANNOUNCED AS FULL HOLIDAY

(Dauphin Herald, page 3, 19 Oct 1933)

Remembrance Day, Nov. 11, is a statutory holiday. Announcement to this effect was made by the secretary of state department Tuesday in response to many inquiries as to whether Remembrance Day was a compulsory holiday.

In a statement the department explained that only Sundays are compulsory holidays. "Nevertheless, all throughout Canada general public recognition is usually given all holidays which are prescribed by the statutes of Canada." The statement follows:

"Chapter 4 of the acts of the parliament of Canada, 1931, provides that throughout Canada in each and every year the eleventh day of November shall be kept and observed as such under the name of Remembrance day.

"Remembrance day is, therefore, a statutory holiday the same as Sunday, Christmas day, New Year's day or Labor day. Under the statutes of the Dominion and of the provinces, Sunday is the only holiday which is compulsorily observed by the closing of factories and stores. Nevertheless, throughout Canada general public recognition is usually given to all holidays which are prescribed by the statutes of Canada."
