

Myrtle Stinson

The boys and men of Company G from the Greenfield area served valiantly during World War I, but the Great War was represented by a woman who often found herself near the front. She was Miss Myrtle Stinson, who grew up in the Lyndon area and became quite active in canteen work in France.

After doing at home as much for the war effort as possible, she believed she could do more going near the front. In the fall of 1917 she secured a position with the Y.M.C.A. and sailed to France. There Stinson and Mrs. Augusta Haring of New York, were assigned to work with the area at Menton, acting as business managers of a canteen with eighteen French maids and two French men assisting with the work.

In the summer of 1918, a Polish regiment arrived in France to help fight the battles of the allies. This regiment was known as the "1st Regiment Chasseurs" and belonged to what was known as the Polish Legion under command of the French. Stinson and Haring were sent to help feed and cheer the soldiers on their way to battle and to comfort and assist them when they returned. It was not easy being in a French army section and working with men who spoke no English. They performed their duties well and were known as "The Godmothers of the Polish Army." Both ladies were decorated with the full insignia of the regiment by Commander Colonel Jastrynska.

At her request Miss Myrtle Stinson was later transferred to the American army and was sent to Nancy, a short time before the armistice was signed. She served there during the return of English and American prisoners from Germany. In letters home she told of their terrible experiences, many of them being mere living skeletons.