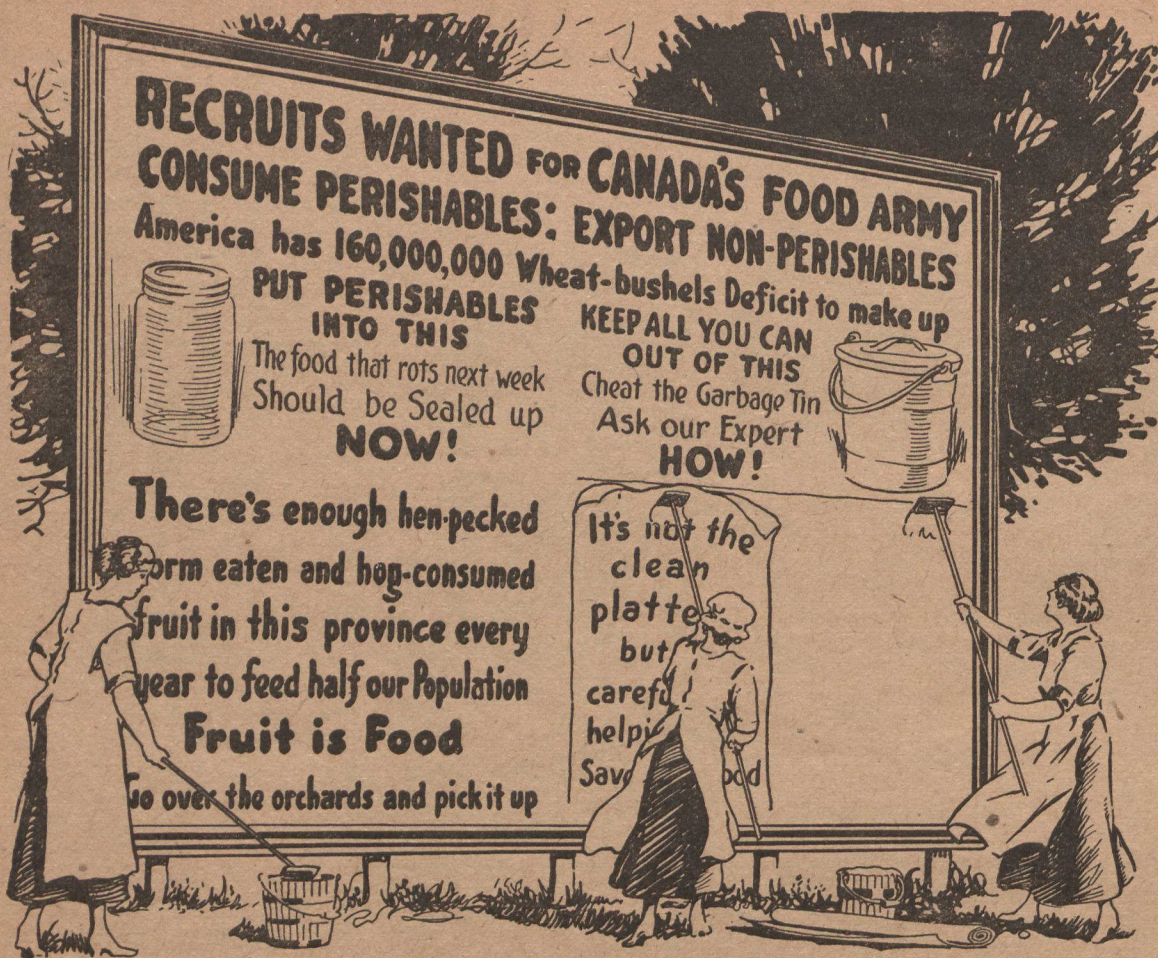




WILLIAM HARRIGAN had never shown any respect for his wife's mental ability. He was quite in the fashion. Most of the Beacherville mesdames were regarded as mild suspects by their husbands because they organized; especially since the war. Mrs. Harrigan, however, had joined nothing, because too busy with her children. She had never joined Red Cross or Blue Cross or taken a corner on tag day; always staying at home, reading whenever she had time—borrowing books and magazines from the public library. Mr. H. read the newspaper. He had little use for magazine articles, and his wife never discussed them in his presence, so that he had no idea what she knew or did not know about the war, though at times he suspected that she was better informed than he was. In strict confidence, we may say that Mrs. Harrigan is a college-trained woman, living in a small town, and in consequence a very prominent worker in the Women's Institute.

One night about ten days ago Mr. Harrigan went to bed at the usual hour, 11.10. He woke up as the town clock was striking midnight. The house was quiet. Night hawks and the distant throb of the power-house were the only sound. The babies were asleep. He sat up.

"Now, where in creation is she?"

He listened. He could detect a faint click-clack in the kitchen and a rustling of papers. For two or three days now his wife had been unusually agog over some crusade. He surmised what it was. Harrigan put on his dressing gown and crept below as he used to do on Christmas Eve.

He stood at the kitchen door.

And he was immediately afraid.

Only on fruit-canning occasions had his wife ever sat up in the kitchen like this—waiting for sealers to boil. It was a month early yet for canning. It was not fruit that surrounded her elbows. Papers, magazines, clippings, blank sheets of paper, an ink-bottle and a pen, a pair of scissors and a bottle of mucilage.

"Heavens, Maty!" he mumbled softly. "You look like a woman editor."

The cat blinked up at her in puzzled amusement. On the floor there was a clutter of strange-looking postery thinks rolled up in sections, and these things seemed now and then to distract his wife's attentions from the ruck on the table. She was having a gala night of it; happy with her literature and the cat, quite unaware that her resurrected and critical spouse was in the shadow of the doorway like a German spy.

Harrigan began to be hugely interested, as a spy always is. Presently his wife chased away the cat who was chasing its tail on the postery papers and

began to unroll them.

She covered the kitchen floor with three of them, each lengthwise, side by side across. It was a large kitchen. But there was just enough room for this poster puzzle which, when she had it all matched up, Harrigan could see as plainly as she could.

He smiled. He admired her. He was bewildered. What secret crusade of billposting was this? No doubt Hanna was at the bottom of it. She had been talking about Hanna. Here was the campaign coming head-on rampage into Beacherville, and to all intents and purposes Harrigan's wife was the head and front of the local executive.

Just what was on that large three-ply poster you may read at the top of this page. The sheets were not printed on the Beacherville Clarion presses. They were much too big. But they surely were made to catch the eye of the unwary.

Presently Mrs. Harrigan rolled up the posters and sat down again. After considerable rustling and conning over her papers she began to write. Quite oblivious of the tick-tock of the little kitchen clock she became absorbed in her new work. She was in another world than Harrigan's. This hard-working, earnest-souled little woman, who never had time to join anything, but wanted to be in everything for the good of mankind, had suddenly found herself in a position of strange and fascinating power. To Harrigan she was as bountiful as Ceres, as wise as Minerva, and as diligent as Dorcas. He hadn't the heart to disturb her. He knew now what she was doing. To-morrow there was to be a billposter brigade on the streets of Beacherville. His wife was the head of it.

But that was not all. Those flaring posters were to be the advance guard of something much more creatively interesting to Mrs. Harrigan. Those were her text. Her sermon was in the papers she had on the table and the things she was writing. Harrigan knew now what it would be. His wife had written things before. In the Beacherville Clarion she was known to the editor and a few other people as Joy Joyce, writing every now and then on household topics—and Harrigan had to admit, though he seldom read the stuff, that she had a gift of making things quite interesting. Quite probably the editor had given her a whole page in The Clarion day after to-morrow to expound her views on the food question. In that case she would be in bed about three a.m.; lucky if before daybreak.

So, feeling quite unimportant, Harrigan shuffled away to bed. And while he slept, his wife wrote out her little gospel of food, work and women. What she wrote that early morning we take the liberty of reprinting from the Beacherville Clarion. We understand that Mr. Harrigan read every word of this

The BILLPOSTERS

By THE EDITOR

Illustrated by T. W. McLean

after he had just about memorized the posters which his wife and two other women put up the next forenoon. For several days Harrigan felt like telling everybody he knew that Joy Joyce was his wife. But he kept it to himself because he knew she had no desire to shine.

WHAT MRS. HARRIGAN WROTE.

NO woman not willing to be sensibly alive in every pore of her being had better read this. Anybody who wants to waste time over fads and follies and fripperies had better pass it up. The others will please pass it along. It's only a woman's attempt to get together some of the facts about food and war-time economy and to present them in a simple way. Really, when you come to get into it this business of working with millions of other women on a campaign to win the war is more interesting than the latest novel or any bridge party or shopping for dresses.

Remember at the outset—

This is the first time the winning of the war has been put up mainly to the women. We have been knitting socks and making garments and sending parcels of food and comforts for nearly three years. But most of that was everybody working to please herself and to help somebody she loved or knew.

This campaign is different.

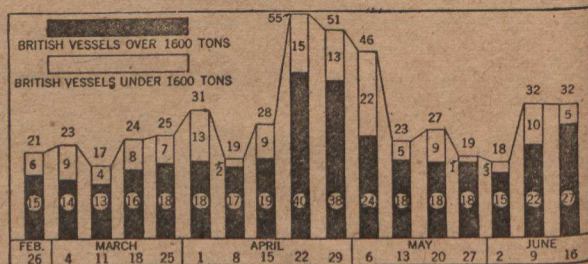
We are all—the women of Canada—pulling together on this rope. We are cutting out false moves and wrong starts and headlong enthusiasms. We are getting on to a common ground. We are trying to unite.

It's not the last shell but the last bushel apparently that will win this war. Men can go on making and firing shells on both sides just as long as they can go on eating and wearing clothes. But no longer. Those who produce the food and those who save it to send abroad are going to be the real winners of the war.

For the first time we realize the great fact about all we can do in the saving of food. It is—Absolutely Unselfish. It was not always so. Three years ago women began to hoard food and to save it. They were doing it selfishly.

Do you remember how in August and September, 1914, people in England—and in Canada—were hoarding food until stopped by the Government? Their only excuse was that if they didn't they would run short. They didn't stop to reflect that if enough of them did it, all the rest must go short because the supply would be exhausted and the price would go so high that a lot of people couldn't afford to buy food at all.

At least that was their own theory, if they had ever taken the time to frame it up. They had no faith in the British navy or the country, or the Empire, or in anything but panic and stampede. They hadn't the faintest notion then that in 1917 the war would still be on, that the United States would be into it and that German submarines would be sinking British vessels at the following rate:



AND they never dreamed that England, tearing up her great parks and ducal preserves, would still be importing food enough to fight Germany.

But here we are, the whole of us that produce food in great world quantities—except the Argentine and Brazil—into the war. We are all getting as near the non-producing class as we can. We are all producing destruction.

And it was the millions upon millions paid for munitions here and in England and the United States that kept many of us from being without