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## **Great War 100 Reads**

### **Commemorating the centenary of the First World War in books**



## **Monday Monuments and Memorials – Cenotaph, Acton ON**

[January 23, 2017](#) by [greatwar100reads](#)

The cenotaph in Acton stands on Mill St E between Elgin and John, in front of Trinity United Church. It was unveiled on 11 November 1920, notably on the same day as the Unknown Soldier was interred in Westminster Abbey.

The Acton Citizens Band led 300-400 students in parade from the school grounds to the ceremony. The program, with an impressive list of dignitaries, was printed in the 11 November edition of the Acton Free Press. The newspaper's 18 November account of the ceremonies includes an impressive list of regrets from many said dignitaries.

The land was donated by the Methodist Church. The Stanstead granite monument was erected by the citizens of Acton, in honoured memory of her soldiers who fought and those who fell. A wreath surrounds a maple leaf (described in the 25 November Free Press as a weatherproof alloy of copper and bronze, from Canadian mines) above the names of 21 local men. Battles are listed on the sides – Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Amiens, Arras, Bourslon Wood, Cambrai, Douai and Mons on the right side, and Ypres, Festubert, Givenchy, St. Eloi, Sanctuary Wood, Hooge and The Somme on the left.

The stele is 7.5 by 6 feet at the base and 16 feet high. It was made by the McIntosh Granite Company of Toronto. Two side panels were added after WW2.

One name and battalion stands out: Capt T.A. Arthurs, Chaplain, Chinese Labour Battalion. Rev Arthurs was educated at the University of Toronto and served as a missionary at a Presbyterian mission in Honan, China. According to the U of T roll of service:

*In March 1917 he left China with a Chinese Labour Battalion. In France he served at Zenneghem and Le Havre with No. 30 Company, and also acted as Interpreter. Shortly after the Armistice he was taken ill with pneumonia and died in Hospital at Le Havre, where he was buried in Ste. Marie Cemetery.*