

50th Anniversary of Armistice Day
CCHS meeting on November 16, 1978, Municipal Building, St. Johns
Interview with Luman Hall & society singing songs

Hila: [00:01](#) And this is Hila Bross a member of the oral history committee of the Clinton County historical society. We are meeting in the auditorium of the municipal building of St Johns, Michigan, and we are about to hear interviews of people with their recollections of the first Armistice Day, November 11, 1918. I am talking to Lumen Hall a member of the society who lives in Greenbush Township; and Lumen were you living in Greenbush at the time of the first Armistice Day?

Luman: [00:45](#) Well, I was in the service.

Hila: [00:47](#) Oh, you were in the service in World War I?

Luman: [00:47](#) Yes.

Hila: [00:47](#) Oh, I'm glad we found you ah well, where were you at the time that the war ended?

Luman: [00:56](#) Well, I was at what they call Michigan State University.

Hila: [00:59](#) Oh, were you in what was that in ROTC and...

Luman: [01:04](#) No, it was a regular army.

Hila: [01:06](#) It was a regular army camp on the campus of Michigan State University?

Luman: [01:12](#) There were I believe about 1,500 of various outfits there and there was the men in the service.

Hila: [01:25](#) And now were you on the campus at M. A. C.? Which I imagine it was called then all of the time during your service?

Luman: [01:39](#) Yes, they were all a group of high school graduates. We had to have credits in mathematics or languages, which we were supposed to have a minimum of three months and go to officer candidate schools. So this group, there were

somewheres around a dozen from St. Johns here. One you would know is Fred Lewis.

Hila: [02:16](#)

Oh, yes.

Luman: [02:16](#)

We were a company that was organized the first day of October 1918, so we hadn't been in [crosstalk] very long. We had a lot of schoolwork to put through a great hard series of schoolwork, all sorts of camp routine and camp sanitation camp government and all those things. We were supposed to be there a minimum of three months, but they took 18 out of our company in the inside of two weeks. Sent them to Waco, Texas.

Hila: [03:10](#)

Now did you live in tents or in dormitories?

Luman: [03:14](#)

We started out in our company, started in a brand new barracks made at the Chapman Portable Building

Hila: [03:25](#)

Oh, for goodness-sakes a St. Johns firm

Luman: [03:27](#)

and we only were there about 10 days when the famous 1918 flu hit and our new barracks were taken for hospitals. We were acquired in what they call Williams Hall one of the oldest buildings on the campus. A dormitory full of bedbugs and cockroaches.

Hila: [03:59](#)

But then did you have your own mess hall?

Luman: [04:01](#)

We had the end of the basement. The college was under contract with some women cooks. So we have, we were lucky in that essentially we had women cooks and we fared very well.

Hila: [04:15](#)

Well now do you recall what it was like on Armistice Day when they knew that the war was over?

Luman: [04:23](#)

Well they, the fire whistles began blowing off early in the morning and everybody rushed down to get in the indoor formation for reveille and on a Major Murche [sp?] came and said that that it's been reported that the armistice has been signed. It hasn't been confirmed so everything will proceed as usual. So we saw nothing of any celebration that they had all or heard of any.

Hila: [04:55](#) This is Hila Bross speaking. I am a member of the oral history committee of the Clinton County Historical Society. The date is November 16, 1978, and the society is holding its regular meeting in the auditorium of the municipal building in St Johns, Michigan. On November 11th 1918, 60 years ago this past Saturday, World War I came to an end after four bloody years of battle and death. Tonight we are going to commemorate this event by singing some songs which were popular during World War I. Alden Livingston will lead the singing and I will try to play this old beat up piano.

Singers: [06:40](#) "Keep the Home Fires Burning"

Hila: [06:40](#) I couldn't hear anything out there. Come on get with it.

Alden: [08:44](#) We're too loud, huh. We can quiet down can't we Don?

Hila: [08:45](#) Let's do it again. Everybody sing.

Alden: [08:45](#) Want to do it again?

Hila: [08:45](#) Yeah.

Singers: [08:55](#) "Till We Meet Again"

Alden: [09:47](#) And there are smiles. There are smiles that make us happy and smiles that make us blue.