



**Catholic Women's League Annual Pilgrimage
to the
Wayside Shrine, Ripon
Thursday 27th June 2013**

Members of Leeds Branch of the Catholic Women's League and visitors gathered at St Wilfrid's Catholic Church, Ripon for Mass celebrated by Canon Paul Moxon before visiting the Wayside Shrine, 2 miles away at Studley Roger for their annual pilgrimage. There, the third Luminous mystery of the Holy Rosary was recited, prayers for peace said and a wreath laid in memory of those servicemen of Ripon Camp who gave their lives in both world wars.



CWL Leeds Branch Pilgrimage to Shrine 27 06 2013

It is hard to believe that in the First World War an enormous encampment was established around Ripon to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of British, French-Canadian and Australian troops for their final training before sailing from Hull for the trenches of the Western Front – a journey from which so many never returned.

In 1916, the Catholic Women's League opened a Canteen at Studley (known as the Ripon Hut), where members working around the clock daily served meals to nearly 1,000 men from the Camp, for whom a library and games room was provided. There was also a small Chapel where Mass and Benediction was celebrated every Sunday by the Chaplains and sometimes by the priests from St Wilfrid's.

At the end of the war, the Hut was sold and in 1921, with some of the proceeds, the Wayside Cross at Studley was erected on the site, the land being given by the Marquis of Ripon who had become a catholic. The Branch erected a Wayside Crucifix. The huge plinth on which there is a memorial dedication was also a gift from the Marquis.

The chalice and paten used at Mass on the day of dedication were presented by the League to Father Levick, the then Parish priest of Ripon.

From that year, the Catholic Women's League members have organised a pilgrimage there every year since 1920, on a Thursday nearest to the feast of Sts Peter and Paul (29th June) and July 1st, the anniversary of the

Battle of the Somme where so many from Leeds and other parts of Yorkshire as well as those from Canada and Australia, after training at Ripon died in action. Today this is carried on by the members of Leeds and Middlesbrough Branches of the League. The grateful thanks of the Catholic Women's League is extended to Leeds Branch who have recently had the Shrine refurbished and for their care of it over the years.



Plinth and Memorial Dedication

The inscription on the shrine reads: *'This shrine was erected in 1921 on the site of their chapel and canteen by the Catholic Women's League of Leeds Diocese in memory of the British and Canadian servicemen of Ripon Camp who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-1918.'* *'It also commemorates their successors who died in World War Two 1939-1945. May they rest in peace.'*

The shrine stands alongside the B6265 road between Ripon and Fountains Abbey. If you pass that way, spare time to stop, visit and pray a while.



The Wayside shrine, Ripon