

by William J. Stevens

Slightly edited from an article originally published in June 2008 and September 2008 Newsletters

In the June 2008 Newsletter a photo of a stone cairn located in Grantham Avenue Park appeared, which I suggested was placed there to honour Elva Stoneman who lived across the street from the park. No inscription is on the marker. Mrs. Stoneman was the first president of the Grantham Women's Institute in 1914. Her husband William James Stoneman died on February 9, 1917 in Grantham Township and is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery. Further information was requested and indeed received from Edie Williams who found Elva's death notice: Mrs. Elva Stoneman – St. Catharines, Dec. 11 – In the death of Mrs. Elva McCall Stoneman, at her residence, Grantham Avenue the Township of Grantham loses one of its well-known and highly esteemed residents. The deceased, who was in her sixty-eighth year, was born in Simcoe, Norfolk County, her parents being of U.E. Loyalist descent and one of the first families to settle in that District. She was a school teacher before coming to this district and on the passing of her husband resumed her profession and for several years was on the staff of the Grantham School Board. She was a former member of First United Church, St. Catharines, and latterly became affiliated with the Grantham United Church, taking a great interest in affairs of the church and Sunday School. She was also a member of the Women's Institute, being its first President. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. Harold Baines of St. Catharines, and one son, Gordon of Grantham Township; three sisters, Mrs. W.D. Cronkhite, Mrs. John Boyd of Toronto, and Mrs. W. H. Johnston of South River, Ont. (source: Niagara Falls Review, Monday, Dec. 11, 1933, p. 5 A verbatim obit. appears in the St. Catharines Standard, December 9, 1933, p. 2.)

Following up on the above information, her gravesite was located in Section 'J'. The monument inscription reads as follows: William J. Stoneman / 1865 – 1917 / His Wife / Elva G. McCall / 1866 – 1933 / Stoneman.

The Stonemans lived in a two-and-a-half storey home at 464 Grantham Avenue, in Concession 3, Lot 12. (source: the files at the St. C. P. L. Special Collections, binders arranged by street)