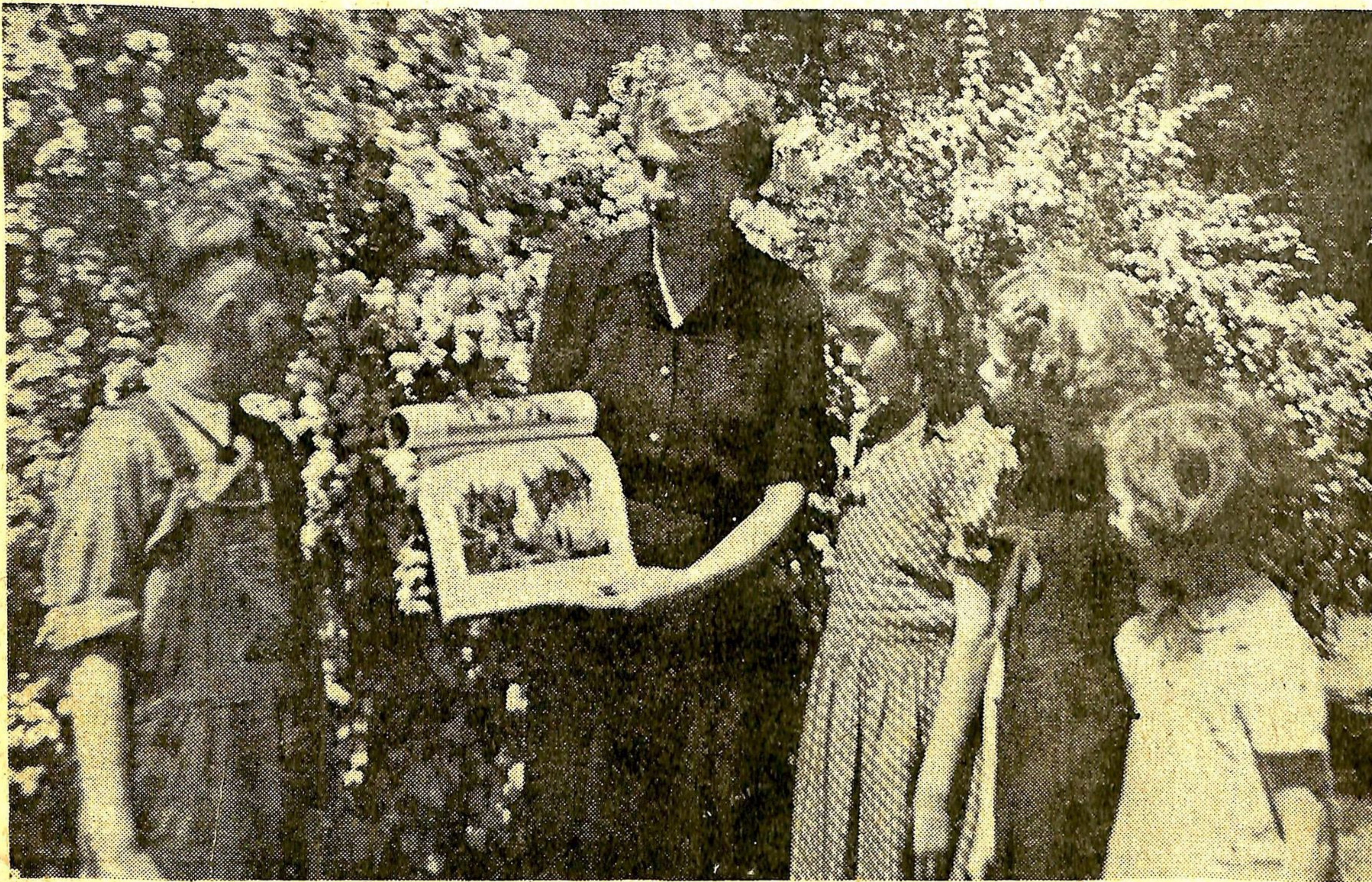


Children Hear News of a Far Country



In the garden at Barr School children listen interestedly as Mrs. T. C. Hewitt of Elderton tells them something of the schools in Australia where she lived for nine years. Mrs. Hewitt is the

former Margaret Marshall of this city and was a teacher before her marriage. In the above picture are seen, from left to right, Raymond Corsault, S.S. 5; Mrs. Hewitt; Mary O'Neil, S.S. 3 and 4; Betty Duncan, S.S. 5 and Margaret Rawlings, S.S. 5.

The Australian School

BY MARGARET MARSHALL HEWITT

(Mrs. Hewitt, wife of T. C. Hewitt, is a former Londoner. She taught in Northern Ontario, and, following her marriage went with her husband to Australia. They returned to Canada last winter.)

It is a universal complaint that teachers are underpaid.

Because other professions are more lucrative and less restricted, able men and women, who might otherwise enter the teaching profession, are not attracted to it.

Australia is no exception. And teachers in state schools in Australia have another disadvantage to face which does not exist here in Canada, for the teacher is sent where the Department of Education, on the advice of the inspector, thinks suitable. It is probable this practice was begun to ensure that teachers would have employment and that all schools, even those in isolated and unattractive districts, would be provided for.

In one state at least a bond is posted by the parents as a surety that the trainee will remain with the Department of Education for at least two years. This is another attempt to regulate employment, and to prevent expense of training people who will not continue with the work.

It seems that our Canadian method of appointing teachers is preferable. Here, each local Board of Education takes a personal interest in the selection of applicants, and the teacher should be able to feel she has the support of that body. Every

effort is no doubt made on the part of the respective departments of education to place a teacher where she will be suitable and happy, but it does not always work out that way. Canadian teachers are not one hundred per cent content, either, but an unfavorable situation is more easily borne when it has been a matter of choice and not compulsion.

The enrolment at private schools is proportionately greater in Australia than here. There is a real effort on the part of almost all parents, who can reasonably afford to do so, to send their children away to school, following the English tradition in this respect. There is wide range of educational standards, in the various private schools. As one Australian educational authority says: "There exist today far too many private schools which do not provide adequate education in any sense and exist precariously on the basis of snobbery for the benefit of those who do not wish to send their children to a state school and cannot afford to pay the fees

of a recognized private school. At the opposite end of the scale come the great church schools which have played so illustrious a part in the educational history of Australia." Some of these schools are remarkably fine, and accomplish the aim most desired by true educators, the combination of a desire to further knowledge, preparation for earning a living, an increased interest in cultural pursuits, and a wish to serve the community.

School uniforms are generally worn by pupils in both state and private schools in Australia. There is a democratic atmosphere within a group all dressed alike, and uniform emphasizes pride in the tradition of the school, just as our school colors mean much to students. Twenty-odd years ago there was a suggestion made by a then member of the high school board in this city to have the children wear uniforms. It created much discussion at that time, and the chief argument against the idea was the practical one that made-over clothing handed down by the older members could not be

put to good use by thrifty mothers.

At present, school leaving age in Australia is 14, but efforts are being made to raise it to 15 or 16. Some educationalists there have expressed the opinion that, before the age be raised, great consideration be given to the question of the form further education should take. Further study should fit the student for the sort of work they intend to do, as many have finished with all the formal school education likely to be of use to them. Greater attention to intelligence and aptitude tests is advocated to make

further education of greatest service.

Comparison of the curriculum of an Australian school with a similar one here would involve long discussion but it is safe to say that current changes are made in the curricula in both countries with the idea of preparing for citizenship as well as importance in any Australian school should be the study of economic and political problems. Voting is compulsory and every student should be trained to think intelligently on political matters so that he may exercise his franchise wisely.

Father, Two Sons Given Citizenship Papers Here

A FATHER and his two sons were among the group of seven London and district residents receiving their Canadian citizenship at naturalization ceremonies here yesterday.

Alfons DeBlock, of Denfield, took his place before Judge Ian MacRae at the Middlesex County courthouse to accept with sons Frank and Albert, the certificates admitting them to full rights as Canadian citizens.