

World famous woman born in Brant

The name Adelaide Hunter Hoodless is known around the world.

It was 75 years ago in February that this woman, born in Brant County, started an association of rural women that has spread to 108 countries. The affiliated membership of the Women's Institute numbers nearly 7,000,000.

Adelaide's grandfather, Joseph Hunter came to Canada from Monaghan Ireland, and settled in the Derry West section of the Township of Toronto, Peel County, 1836.

David Hunter, the fifth child, was about 20 at that time. He and his wife Jane settled near St. George, 45 miles from his father's home. It is here that, in 1851, David bought a simple clapboard house on the Blue Lake Road.

Here in this house, The Willows, South Dumfries, Brant County, Adelaide Hunter was born on February 27, 1857. She was the youngest of 12 children. Her father died several months before her birth, and the difficult times that ensued for the family may be viewed as a factor which influenced her work in later life.

Her knowledge of the problems of farm women was an intimate knowledge.

Her first child died at 18 months. His death was attributed to a lack of know-

ledge concerning infant feeding, as Mrs. Hoodless found out too late that the milk being fed to her son was unfit for human consumption.

A second son, Bernard Hoodless, later gave support to the suggestion that the death of his brother was a dominant factor in his mother's life, and that it led directly to the formation of the Women's Institute.

Her desire to save others from the grief she suffered, caused her to try and bring within the reach of all the education necessary to prevent needless tragedy.

Mrs. Hoodless contended that the educational policies should be shaped to fit the needs of all boys and girls, and should prepare them for their real roles in life.

The opportunity to implement her goal first presented itself in 1896. Erland Lee invited her to address the annual gathering of the Farmer's Institute at Stoney Creek.

At this meeting, Mrs. Hoodless spoke on the value of domestic science courses in the schools, the need for educational programs for rural women. Finding that many of the women present were most interested in her ideas, she suggested the formation of an organization that would further these aims.

The first name of this group was the Women's Department of the Farmers' Institute of South Wentworth.

Within a week, a second meeting was held and the name of Women's Institute was adopted.

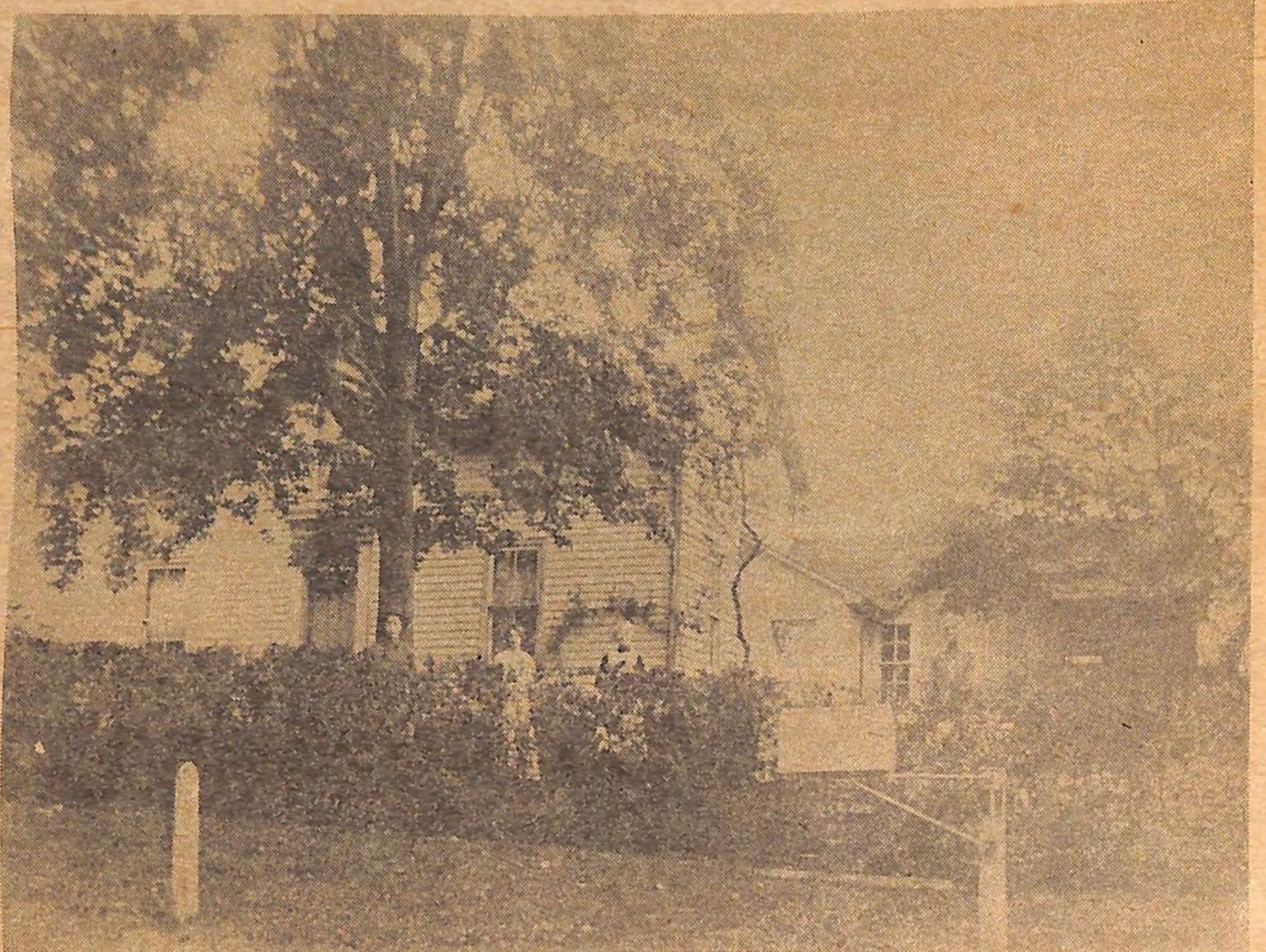
The first constitution de-

clared:

"The object of the Institute shall be to promote that knowledge of household science which shall lead to im-

provement in household architecture, with special attention to home sanitation, to a better understanding of economics and hygienic val-

ue of foods and fuels, and a more scientific care of children, with a view to raising the general standard of health of our people."

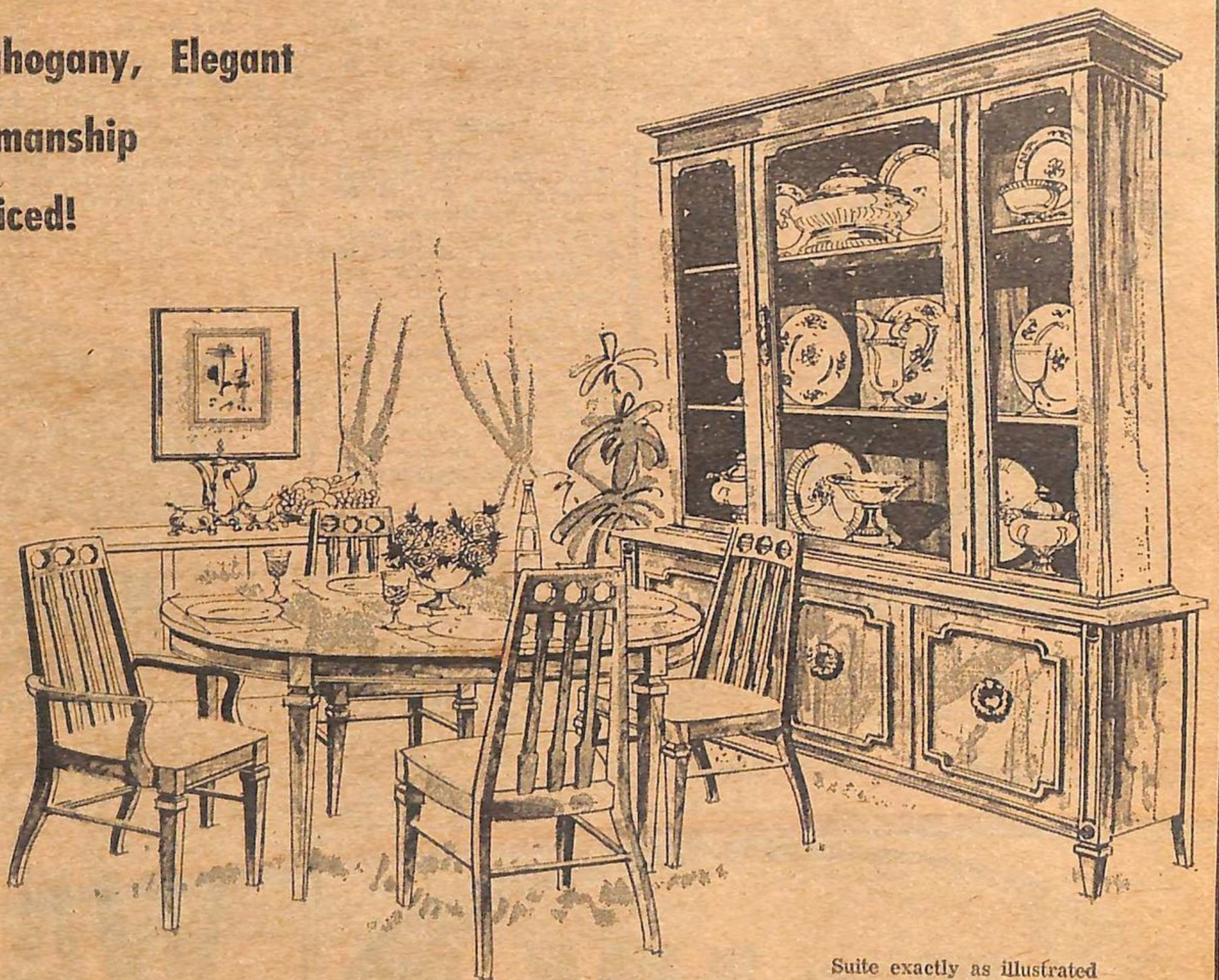


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