

FLOWER COLORS

A golden sunbeam lost its way
And wandered at its will;
It kissed the yielding, soft brown earth;
Up sprang a daffodil.

THE OLD MAN OF THE BIG CLOCK TOWER



MAPLE SAP

They're burnin' pine and hickory bark,
An' rotten beech, for I can tell it.
They're burnin' fence rails in the dark;
They're usin' pitch, for I can smell it.

I've been having a real rest the past
few weeks, and I've enjoyed reading the
history of other sections about Acton,
as pieced together by others. The editor
and I were having a chat the other day
and he turned, all of a sudden, and
said: "I've something here from a sub-
scriber I want you to read you,"

To be honest about the whole situa-
tion, the facts of the matter are that
I've been presiding over this column for
about thirteen years. To be exactly
accurate, I find, on looking up the
records, that the date of the first effusion
from my pen appeared in THE FREE
PRESS on February 13, 1919. Do you
know that in the first article published
over thirteen years ago I stressed the
advantage of having a mortuary for
Fairview Cemetery. Must have been a
cold winter that year.

Well, in the years intervening, Fair-
view Cemetery has not secured the mor-
tuary, but there has been a fine start
made in the cemetery in the way of
improvements. Possibly the mortuary
will come along after the other improve-
ments are arranged and paid for. That's
one thing about Acton, they believe in
paying for their elaborations and meet-
ing the expenditures, as they come due.
When I read about some of these other
towns and cities who are in such bad
financial shape I'm rather thankful that
I live in a community where most of
the folks don't live beyond their means.

communities around Acton that THE
FREE PRESS serves, and I like to record
their historical facts. They tell me that
Ebenezer Church, out in Nassagawey
will celebrate its hundredth anniversary
this year. If I can manage it, I hope
to get hold of the history from that
event. The editor tells me that he has
some friends out here that may assist
me.

There now, I've written three pages;
with nothing but a bunch of explaining
of why I don't need any Holy Green
Mountain Oil on my arm. Among my
relatives the other day I came across an
old historical atlas of Halton County,
published in 1877. My, what a flood of
memories it brought back. The book
was well-illustrated. It showed many
of Halton's fine farm houses. They
looked so fine in those pictures that I
could scarcely recognize many of them
to-day.

There was the W. Laird homestead
at concession 6, lot 6, in Esquesing, and
George Cooke's at lot 10, concession 6,
in the same township, and a picture of
his flourishing saw mills. Then there
was Barber's paper mills at Georgetown,
and the woolen mills of B. Williams,
and the flour and saw mills of Jos. H.
Williams, at the Glen. And other groups
of fine farms of Robert F. Bessey, John
S. Bessey, J. R. and J. B. Bessey, at
Georgetown, and Jas. Zimmerman, at
Georgetown, and Jas. M. Russell in Trafalgar;
and the County Court House and
Town Hall and residence of C. Free-
man and John Dewar, in Milton; Milton
Sash, Door and Blind factory; the Do-
minion House, in Acton; Robert Noble's
residence, in Norval; and John Walde
& Co.'s store in Burlington.

Another page contained pictures of the
residences of Sidney Smith and Dr. Mc-
Garvin, in Acton; Robert Noble's flour
mills at Norval; the farm residence of
Patrick Fitzsimmons, in Esquesing; and
W. H. Lindsay and James Moffat homes
at Milton. Then there was a whole page
picture of Joseph Brother's residence and
Agricultural Works, at Milton; and an-
other of the Palermo Agricultural Works
at Palermo. Another elaborate picture
showed the "Ocean House," at Burling-
ton Beach. It was termed "The
Long Branch" of Canada, and said to
be the coolest and healthiest resort on
the continent.

I wonder how many of you old cod-
gers are following me as I revel among
these bygone pictures of the old days?
Well, I am coming to the end, so we
might as well enumerate them all. There
were the residences of Duncan R. Laid-
law in Esquesing; and Donald Campbell,
in Nelson; and then the Clark Hotel
and Georgetown Carriage Works in our
neighboring town of Georgetown; and
the Brant House, in Burlington; farm
residences of John Molyneux, in Nelson;
John Harrison, in Trafalgar; John Breck-
on, Sr., in Nelson; and Arthur Ford, in
the same township; Barber's Block, in
Georgetown, and the store and resi-
dence of J. Matthews, in Acton; W. G.
Beaty's farm, in Trafalgar; Robert Had-
dow, in Nelson; John McColl, Esquesing;
T. J. Onisholm, Hornby; Peter Campbell,
Esquesing; and the Canadian Hotel, in
Oakville.

Brain Bros', brewery and estate, in
Esquesing Township, was shown on a
full page illustration, while the page
opposite showed Alex. Duffie's store in
Burlington; W. J. Douglas' saw and
planing mills at Port Nelson; the Com-
mercial Hotel, in Milton; and residences
of W. McGraney, Oakville; Duncead
Stewart, Esquesing; Davidson residence,
Port Nelson; and the last page of pic-
tures was of Nelson House, at Nelson;
and the residence and farm properties
of Charles Williams, Glen Williams; R. B.
Ireland, Nelson; and William Dixon, in
Trafalgar.

Of course there were the maps of the
various towns and townships and ham-
lets and the autographed photos of many
notables in the County. If you old folks
have been following me, in this ramble,
I'll continue with their names in my
next contribution, and give you some of
the historical facts recorded in this
volume.

I'm reminded that next year, 1933,
Acton will be sixty years old. It'll be
the Diamond Jubilee of this community;
next year, as Acton was incorporated in
1873. I suppose they'll be having just
such another fine celebration, as they
had at the fiftieth anniversary, back in
1923. And I was just thinking that I'll
gather up a lot of my old records and
such like and if the younger and more
energetic folks of the community take a
notion to celebrate the occasion as it
should be, I'll have these old records
to give to the editor of THE FREE PRESS
to put in the window where the old folks
can come and view them when they
come home again.

Guess that's looking pretty far ahead
for an old duffer like me, but Mary
says that now February is over again
for this year and spring seems at hand
that she feels we've got a lease until
next winter at least. And maybe we'll
be spared again until we witness an-
other home-coming, such as we had in
1923, and meet all our old friends again.
A few more cracks like that one from
Jack out in the West, and I
hope I'll have the opportunity of show-
ing him that my arm's all right, without
his Holy Green Mountain Oil. It's
powerful good stuff, but I haven't seen
any for a long time.

"LISTEN, SON:
'I am saying this to you as you lie
asleep, one little paw crumpled under
your cheek and the blonde curls stekily
wet on your damp forehead. I have
stolen into your room alone. Just a few
minutes ago, as I sat reading my paper
in the library, a hot stifling wave of re-
morse swept over me. I could not resist
it. Guiltily I came to your bedside.

"These are the things I was thinking,
son: I had been cross to you. I scolded
you as you were dressing for school be-
cause you gave your face merely a dab
with a towel. I took you to task for not
cleaning your shoes. I called out angrily
when you found you had thrown some of
your things on the floor.

"At breakfast I found fault, too. You
spilled things. You gulped down your
food. You put your elbows on the table.
You spread butter too thick on your
bread. And as you started off to play
and I made for my train, you turned
and waved a little hand and called,
'Good-bye, Daddy!' and I frowned, and
said in reply, 'Hold your shoulders back.'

"Then it began all over again in the
late afternoon. As I came up the hill
road I spied you down on your knees
playing marbles. There were holes in
your stockings. I humiliated you before
your boy friends by making you march
ahead of me back to the house. Stock-
ings were expensive—and if you had to
buy them you would be more careful!
Imagine that, son, from a father! It
was such stupid, silly logic.

"Do you remember, later, when I was
reading in the library, how you came in
softly, timidly, with a sort of hurt, hunt-
ed look in your eyes?—When I glanced
up over my paper, impatient at the in-
terruption, you hesitated at the door.
'What is it you want?' I snapped.

"You said nothing, but ran across, in
one tempestuous plunge; and threw your
arms around my neck and kissed me,
again and again, and your small arms
tightened with an affection that God
which even neglect could not wither,
and then you were gone, pattering up
the stairs.

"Well, son,—it was shortly afterwards
that my paper slipped from my hands
and a terrible sickening fear came over
me. Suddenly I saw myself as I really
was, in all my horrible selfishness, and
I felt sick at heart.

"What has habit been doing to me?
The habit of complaining, of finding
fault, of reprimanding—all of these were
my rewards to you for being a boy. It
was not that I did not love you; it was
that I expected so much of you. I was
measuring you by the yard-stick of
my own years.

"And there was so much that was
good, and fine, and true in your charac-
ter. You did not deserve my treatment
of you, son. The little heart of you was
as big as the dawn itself over the wide
hills. All this was shown by your spon-
taneous impulse to rush in and kiss me
good-night. Nothing else matters to-
night, son. I have come to your bed-
side in the darkness, and I have knelt
there, choking with emotion, and so
ashamed!

"It is a feeble atonement, I know you
would not understand these things if I
told them to you during your waking
hours, yet I must say what I am saying.
I must burn sacrificial fires, alone here
in your bedroom, and make free confes-
sion. And I have prayed God to streng-
then me in my new resolve. To-morrow
I will be a real daddy! I will chum with
you, and suffer when you suffer and
laugh when you laugh. I will bite my
tongue when impatient words come. I
will keep saying as if it were a ritual:
'He is nothing but a boy—a little boy!'

"I am afraid I have visualized you as
a man. Yet—as I see you now, son,—
crumpled and weary in your cot, I see
that you are still a baby. Yesterday
you were in your mother's arms, your
head on her shoulder. I have asked too
much, too much.

"Dear boy! Dear little son! A pen-
itent kneels at your infant shrine, here in
the moonlight. I kiss the little fingers,
and the damp forehead, and the yellow
curls.



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