



The Acton Free Press

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G. ARLOP HILLS, Editor
Telephone
Editorial and Business Office
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EDITORIAL

Meet You At The Fair

This Friday and Saturday Acton Fair presents its annual show window of the agricultural district. But the Fair this year will be reminiscent of pre-war years since the arena is again back into use and the hall exhibits can be put on display again. It took a lot of loyalty and additional effort to carry on Acton Fair during those war years and the Board and visitors were sometimes disappointed with their attempts.

But now this 1946 event is almost free from wartime restrictions. Folks have a first opportunity to visit again in the home community on Fair Day. Attendance records at other Fairs indicate that all are taking advantage of this opportunity for attending Fairs again. And so on Friday and Saturday we'll see you all at the Fair. Granted good weather, you'll enjoy every minute of the program arranged.

The Newspaper—Public Servant

October 1-8, 1946, has been set aside as National Newspaper Week. It is most fitting that a time be set aside for the newspaper to remind the public of the services which it is constantly performing for the benefit of the community.

Too many people accept their newspaper and the benefits it brings in the way of information, ardent support of community projects, campaigns for better government, and efforts to improve the general welfare as they accept all of the other vital necessities of life—taking it for granted that these things belong to them as a right, without a realization of the fact that free people have such rights mainly by virtue of their constant defense by the newspaper.

"The slogan of National Newspaper Week in 1946 is 'A Free Press—Voice of Freedom, Guardian of Liberty'. No other single instrument is so aptly named. 'World War II might well have been avoided had all the peoples of the world had the newspaper as a Voice of Freedom, Guardian of Liberty'. World War III may be prevented through that self-same means."

Now What Do You Think

A subscriber who wants us to guess his name, in reply to an editorial note which recently appeared in this column, sends us a clipping he had on file which appeared in a farmer's magazine. It is headed "This Farmer is Hard to Please" and we are quite sure the incident didn't happen in Ontario. But here is the item our reader asks us to republish in our editorials.

"To prove that his wife's charges of cruelty and incompatibility are without justification a defendant in a divorce suit at a county seat told friends of his unusual kindness to and consideration for his wife. He recited that every night during the recent cold spell he had brought the ax in and stood it by the fireplace so that the cold handle would not chill his wife's hands when she cut the breakfast wood. He exhibited their store bill where he had allowed her 25 cents worth of soap every three weeks and recalled that he had 'batched' for three years before he was married the last time and that 25 cents was more than he had spent for soap in the entire three years.

A year ago when she had threatened to leave him unless he quit tobacco he had advanced her \$1.50 for a new dress to win her back. To humor her whims, he had consented that the dogs be excluded from the fireplace room except on the coldest nights. When his wife was laid up last summer by a fall from the hay wagon, he had milked the cows himself and taken the hoe and kept the garden free of weeds. He hopes his next wife will be more appreciative of kindness."

The item in our column which brought forth this clipping was "No woman, says a philosopher, really makes a fool out of a man, but she sure can give him an opportunity to develop his natural capacities." Maybe the philosopher was right.

Preserving the Past

Recent excavations of Indian villages in the vicinity of Waubashene and Orillia, Ontario, are focusing the attention of archaeologists and people generally on early life in Canada. The discoveries will throw more light on a period of history about which comparatively little is known because surviving records are few and at times inaccurate. Reconstructing history from ruins is a painstaking task and at best lacks much of the detail a written account could furnish.

Even so, these districts will from now on draw many visitors who can be directed to a concrete answer for the frequent question "What is there to see in your town?" All places are not fortunate enough to have the nation's past unearthed at their doors, but many have their spots of historic interest well and prominently marked.

Perhaps an old fort recalls the days of frontier fights with the Indians or the rivalries of old trading companies, some monument commemorates an incident in the war of 1812-14 or territory formerly in dispute between Canada and the United States, large cities erect statues of their founders, the whole basin of the St. Lawrence River has the marks of history and human interest stamped upon it.

All this sounds romantic and it is romantic. But every place where pioneers broke ground for settlements has a human story to be preserved. The fight for survival in the backwoods and on the prairies threw into relief deeds that make good telling and are reason for local pride. The facts should be recorded before time blots them out. The building of the first commercial boat, the erection of the first church, the site of the first meeting to organize local self-government should be appropriately marked and careful records kept in town archives to supplement the necessarily brief public tablets.

The Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plays a big part in the selection of important national and international sites, but the history of our country grows as much in little places as in better known centres. What is our town doing to preserve and publicize the history of its area?

The Slaughter of the Innocents

Yes, one might almost come to that conclusion after studying the record of loss of life of children by fire as contained in the Statistical Report of Fire Losses in Canada, 1945, prepared by the Dominion Fire Commissioner.

It is not implied that parents deliberately slaughter their children in this way, but the results are the same. We find that over the ten year period, 1936-1945, 1,231 children have lost their lives by fire in Canada. In 1945, 146 suffered this cruel fate. Twenty-one died when their homes caught fire in the absence of their parents. Ten died as the result of playing with matches. Seven were burnt to death when their clothing ignited from stoves. Eight received fatal burns when gasoline was used to light the fire and fourteen when kerosene was similarly used. Fourteen died when trapped in burning buildings and ten more by smoke and gas suffocation. And the gruesome story continues until the total of 146 is made up.

Who are the responsible parties in this "Slaughter of the Innocents"? Fire preventionists point an accusing finger at the parents and say if they had been more careful with fire, if they had taught their children the elementary principles of fire prevention, if they hadn't gone out and left little children alone—in fact, if they had applied plain common sense or had fulfilled their responsibilities as parents should—most of these children would have been alive today. Granted that "accidents will happen in the best regulated families", there is no need for this appalling loss of life among helpless children. Let us hope that Canadian fathers and mothers will awaken to their responsibilities and put a stop to this march of death. Parents, the remedy is in your hands!

EDITORIAL NOTES

There is a lot of difference between what is good and sound and what merely sounds good.

Don't know whether it was Indian summer we had last Saturday but it certainly was summer weather.

We slipped back to Standard Time on Sunday and since practise makes perfect it seems the change created less confusion than usual this year.

Professor L. Joslyn Rogers, provincial analyst, speaking at Guelph the other evening said that liquor was the chief contributing factor in at least 50 per cent of major highway accidents. Murder deaths in Ontario are as nothing compared to the number of highway deaths due to liquor. Professor Rogers told his audience a driver who had consumed only a pint of beer should not drive a motor vehicle.

Our thanks to the many readers who expressed appreciation of our editorial last week headed "He Profits Most Who Serves Best" and agreement with our opinions and also to those who may not agree. Incidentally, most readers took the same viewpoint of service to the community which we expressed and we feel that the Liquor Control Board should require a complete analysis of what backing the application has, both in the interests of the Branch and of Acton as a whole.

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St., Phone 188

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