



Founded in 1875 and published every Thursday at 24 Mill St. E., Acton, Ont. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, the C.W.N.A. and the Ontario-Quebec Division of the C.W.N.A. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance. \$200 in Canada; \$4.00 in the United States; six months \$1.75, single copies 1c. Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

Published by the
Dills Printing and Publishing Co. Limited
G. A. Dills, Editor-in-Chief
David R. Dills, Production Manager
James A. Dills, Managing Editor
Business and Editorial Office: 1th 400 Acton.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 1957

Impeding Progress

We recall well in the days around the turn of the century father came home one day and gave the word that it would be useless for me to learn the printing trade. A new machine had been put on the market to set type and printers would not be required to get the news to the public. But the years passed and not having seen the complicated equipment we blithely went ahead and learned how to set type by hand. Ten years later we came to work alongside the Linotype and five years later we were struggling with it ourselves. A couple of years later we operated the first one in Halton County. It displaced three young men. It was our first initiation into the field of automation.

Today where six men toiled on two papers to set all type by hand, 20 are finishing full employment, with decreased hours, better conditions and 40 times the pay. It largely came about by automation in the printing industry.

This all came to mind when we read last week of the threatened strike on the CPR. The company has declined to hire more firemen on diesels for positions in which they are not required.

Men already engaged in these positions will be transferred to other service at the same rate of pay. Blocking the path of progress the union declares more men must be hired and no saving in costs can be made. Pretty soon railway employees and their families may find themselves without any free travel accommodation.

The other day a story was published from Windsor telling that a factory which makes car engines had made its yearly quota in six months. To cure this situation the union suggested a 30-hour week and guaranteed annual pay. Not a word about reducing the price of cars or giving a return to the management who had bought the new expensive equipment to make the job less laborious. We recalled the first deluxe cars that cost us \$875 and the last one that cost over \$3,000 and was not considered deluxe. A large part of the increase is in taxes and certainly a bigger and better car. It came about largely through automation.

If the unions of the past 50 years had acted as they are today, we would still be digging ditches by hand, using hand plows and doing our cooking and heating with wood. We owe our present day standard of living not to automation but to acceptance and encouragement of better methods. We are told that in Bethlehem shepherds tend their flocks and peasants till the soil as they did 1900 years ago. We in Canada may well ponder why. Somebody must have stood in the way of progress and it must have been a majority group.

No one group of Canadians has a special right to use the force of itself and other groups to inflict undue hardships on the rest of Canadians. Unions are not solving any problems by their present tactics. We need leaders who are broad enough to see the welfare of all rather than the selfish interests of a few.

Co-operation at Least

The streets about town could be kept in much better condition if the general public would co-operate and not leave cars parked on the streets overnight. Of course, there is a law against such practice and cars can be hauled away and you can get up some stormy morning and find your car missing.

It would be a lot easier for all concerned if motorists would obey the law and park cars off the street every night. Then when the snow plow is clearing the roads during the night or early morning it would not need to leave a wide swath of unplowed street around your car.

Another word might well be added for the benefit of pedestrians. It is the duty of every citizen to shovel the sidewalk from their property after every snowstorm. Maybe you don't want to use it but those who pass that way should not be denied the privilege. They helped pay for the sidewalk, too.

Appreciation

The last days of 1956 in Acton were marred by some of the worst fire losses of the whole year and fought in the coldest days of winter. When one reads of losses sustained elsewhere in Canada, citizens here may consider themselves fortunate that the total loss was confined to the building in which the fires originated.

Difficulties under which the firemen fought on the week-end were not confined to the fire. The efficiency of two pumps from Acton and one from Georgetown was cut considerably by the below zero weather on Saturday night. To give Acton protection until repairs were made another pumper was loaned from Georgetown to stand by until repairs were made.

A repaired pumper and the Georgetown machine were available when the Sunday night blaze broke out. Thanks to the Halton Mutual Aid, more equipment from Georgetown and Milton could quickly have been called in if it had been necessary. A word of praise is not only due our own fire brigade, but also to our good neighbors and to those who have worked over a period of years to bring this mutual aid to its splendid effectiveness. A word is also well deserved for the co-operation of those who worked long hours to make speedy repairs to damaged equipment.

The emergency created during the week-end also focussed attention on the need for expediting the erection of Acton's proposed new fire hall. It is to be hoped the way will be cleared immediately for a start on the building. Any one connected with municipal affairs knows full well the delays that are encountered in any undertaking. The need has been known for a long time. It's no time to fiddle while Rome burns. The impediments of procedure should be cleared and a start made as soon as weather will permit.

Demanding Field

The removal of two nationally known magazines — Colliers and Woman's Home Companion — from the field brings to attention the fact the publishing field is getting a bit over-crowded. Both had gained in circulation recently but in these days of high production costs the gain was not large enough to meet the rising costs.

Recently a very prominent television performer announced his intention of withdrawing from the field because of loss of some \$90,000 from three shows he had recently put on television screens.

With the amount of bids for the leisure time of folks these days some of the media of mass communication is having quite a struggle. Messages which are designed at big costs must prove themselves acceptable and produce results to the advertiser to get their share of the advertising dollar. Many of them do not give adequate proof of their readership interest. Advertisers demand facts well substantiated.

This is the reason why several years ago this newspaper joined a growing group known as the Audit Bureau of Circulations to give local and national advertisers the proof that the local paper is paid for and wanted by the readers in its field. The Bureau covers this continent and is made up of advertisers and publishers. Its figures are accepted in all circles and its rules are very rigid. This year the growing number of weekly newspapers has received recognition by having a representative appointed to the Board. Not all media can give proof of paid circulation. We are happy to offer it for users of this newspaper's columns.

Past and Future

We would be remiss indeed if at the close of 1956 we did not take time to pause and express our appreciation of the many good things which featured 1956. As we look back over the closing 365 days we like to ponder on the many fine things that came from so many fine people with whom we have been associated and have made the year so good.

It would not be wisdom to attempt to enumerate or to classify them since a community newspaper touches on so many in the district it serves and beyond. Even being an editor of a weekly newspaper is a role we cherish since it allows one to serve and be familiar with so many people: Won't you all who read this accept this note of appreciation as being directed to you personally.

In the same broad sense we would like our good wishes to apply to all who read. We promise that the year 1957 will have our best endeavors here at the Free Press to give the folks of Acton and district the best hometown paper we possibly can. There must always be a forward look. There can be no pausing in this fast growing part of a rapidly expanding Canada.

Thanks for 1956. The best for 1957.

Brief Comment

Our attempt at poetry last week was a bit further confused when the wrong line was taken from one of the verses. We are discouraged and will hereafter stick to prose to express our thoughts even at the risk of having the same thing happen there.



Shadows of Winter

Chronicles of Ginger Farm

Christmas at Our Place

By Geraldine F. Clark

Now I can tell the whole story. I mean the story of Christmas at Ginger Farm. I couldn't before because as you may know, this column has to be written well ahead of time to be ready for the Christmas and New Year's papers. So now we'll travel "backwards" in time for the little odds and ends of domestic upheavals that happened and some that didn't happen. The first upset was about two weeks before Christmas when little Edward took the measles. He wasn't particularly sick, our main worry was David's and ours. I wasn't going to have measles for Christmas! You can be quite sure he was watched very carefully but — no measles. This is the third time he has been exposed to infection without taking them as it looks as if he has built up some kind of immunity.

The next problem was our TV. I think I mentioned before it went out of kilter — sound but no picture — just when we were looking forward to the special programs. Of course no one had time to fix it. Then Bob came along, worked on it two separate days and got it going again without any new tubes or parts. But he still doesn't know how or why it works.

Then came the story of the stuffing. I was busy making the turkey dresses, had the onions and celery frying in butter, and almost done when a man came to the door. A Dutchman wanting to know where another Dutchman lived. By the time I had managed to understand what he wanted and had given him directions which I hope he understood, the onions and celery were burnt to a crisp. Worse still, I had just my last onion. Another trip to town, more onions and more celery to chop and cook.

Came Christmas Day — everyone here and everyone happy — except me. I was sure the dressing would be unattractive and the pudding a failure! But do you know they were both particularly good. So you see I feel sorry about the things that never happen.

After dinner, the Christmas Tree and no one enjoyed it more than seven months old Edward. He sat on the floor among the wrappings and boxes, coming and chucking to himself. David, of course, was thrilled. Beyond measure. The grown ups had never very well pleased and there were frequent exclamations of, "Oh, look — just what I wanted!"

Partner's present to me caused a good deal of amusement. It was a copper bottom frying pan! Apparently he was tired of hearing complaints about my old aluminum frying pans to which everything stuck closer than a brother. So that was one time when the squeaking wheel got some grease.

All together it was a most enjoyable Christmas particularly as the weather was "perfect" for traveling so we had no worries about those on the highway. Another thing — there was such a happy family feeling, no bickering, no petty jealousies, no one thinking he or she was less favored than someone else. And what a difference that makes. Unfortunately there are families where such a happy relationship does not exist.

A case in point, the son who will visit his parents if the other son is there because the two wives are not on speaking terms. Can you imagine a more unpleasant situation for the mother and father who make matters worse. Live in a somewhat isolated part of Ontario. An occasional spat is forgivable but a long term family feud is to my way of thinking, absolutely

stupid, selfish and unpardonable. It makes everyone miserable not only the parties chiefly concerned but every member of their respective families.

Well, that concludes the story of our Christmas — nothing spectacular — just a quiet family affair. Now we are looking forward to a visit from sister Kathleen and nephew Kleon from Oshawa. After that, it will be back to normal living again at least I hope it will be normal living.

I would like to think the tempo of life will be a little slower, a little quieter in the New Year than it was before Christmas. But I suppose that is a futile hope. But yet, we are sometimes compelled to slow up whether we want to or not. I saw an instance of this yesterday.

Driving home from town, I had to stop for red lights at a railway crossing. A very long freight train was pulling into the station, so long that when the first section was in the station, the middle section blocked the crossing. And there it stayed.

The time was 12:05 and employees of an industrial plant were on their way home for lunch. The line up of cars got longer and longer and I could imagine the drivers seething at the wheel. The train eventually went on its way — after ten or ten minutes but judging by the expressions faces of most of the drivers it must have seemed like half an hour. A ten minute wait — ten minutes out of 24 hours — could it really have made very much difference?

Draw Winners

With a 20 per cent coupon drawn Edna Fraser won \$20 in Youth's Saturday at the Appreciation Draw. Harold McIntyre won the runner up when he was again a lucky winner. This time he took the \$5 award.

Next week's chest is up to \$200.

Represent Teachers At Assembly in City

In Acton, Principal, Greenwood School, and M. N. Mayes, principal, Wellington Square school, Burlington, represented the men teachers of Halton County at the provincial assembly of the Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation held this year in Toronto from December 27 to 29.

During the three day session, 140 delegates from all parts of the province represented the Federation's 5,700 men teachers in hearing reports and making decisions on a wide variety of subjects concerning educational teacher welfare. The delegates this year were qualified in duties and principal; educational finance, Federation sponsored summer courses, teacher education and qualifications, salary policy and superannuation.

BIG OBSTACLE LONDON, Ont. (CP) — Other methods having failed, the works department has called on army engineers to blow up a giant rock standing in the path of a new extension of Adelaide St.

Three-quarters of a million dollars' worth of cream is used every year in Canada by makers of candy.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1907

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 3, 1907

The nomination day has come and gone and, as the Free Press predicted, four candidates were put up for the reevehip and eleven for council positions. At nine o'clock on New Year's night it was found that Reeve Swackhamer had been elected by acclamation and that only three of the candidates for council had put in their declarations of qualification. Dr. Gray, Alex Bell and N. W. Hirst. The latter is disqualified owing to the fact that he is assistant engineer of the fire brigade and therefore a paid servant of the corporation.

Members Francis, Grandell and Dr. Hill were elected by acclamation to the public school board. At the public meeting, Reeve Swackhamer was the first called upon. He was proud to be able to report that notwithstanding heavy expenditures the council was able to show a balance of \$1025. He believed it would be of great benefit to Acton to have power supplied by the Hydro Power Commission. Dr. Gray believed the town was growing and the population would soon reach 4,000.

Councillor Lackey believed the firemen should have a room for themselves and be as comfortable as possible. Members of the Church of England propose to make a bold attempt to build a new church next summer.

The January thaw came a day in advance of the month. Sleighting was jeopardized. Registrar reports that there were registered in Acton last year 36 births, 27 deaths and 20 marriages.

Messrs James McIntosh and Sons disposed of their fine property at the corner of John and Mill Sts. to Messrs John Stone and Co. for \$2,800. It is the intention of the purchasers to remove the present house and erect a new and more attractive.

BACK IN 1937

Taken from the Issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 7, 1937

One of the most widely known clergymen in this section of Ontario, Rev. John Little of Hockwood, who gave up a flourishing business as a sign-maker to enter the ministry, died at his home on New Year's Day. Mr. Little, who was in his 82nd year, took a heart attack a year ago and had been in failing health. However, he preached on 27 occasions during the last summer. He was born in 1855 near Moffat.

The last 1936 public school monthly reports were issued. Those standing first in the different grades were: Hilda Crapps, Kathleen Wedge, Evelyn Brazley, Jack MacIntyre, Helen Holmes, Jack Stewart, Matthew Ottoway, Arnold Brazley, Joan Dunne and Barbara Nelson. The teachers were: Miss M. Z. Bennett, principal; I. Fother, M. Orr, J. Anderson, A. W. MacMillan, M. Young, J. Howe and T. F. Hall.

Mr. H. T. Arnold, president of the Story Globe Company, Acton, and one of the oldest best known glove manufacturers in the Dominion, passed away in his seventy ninth year in hospital in Toronto. As a young man he came, here from Newmarket in England and started his first glove shop in Acton.

Last Thursday evening, New Year's Eve, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph McGeachie observed their silver wedding anniversary. They were married in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1911. For 11 years the family have been returned residents of Acton.

Canada's air mail this year reached a new high. Shirley Temple comes to the Gregory Theatre this week in The Poor Little Rich Girl.

A good crowd enjoyed the social evening and dance in the town hall on New Year's night under the auspices of the St. Alban's A.Y.P.A. Mr. R. N. Brown, who has been superintendent of Knox Sunday school for several years, completed his term of office with the close of the year and has resigned from his position. Joe Kenner and Bill Coen are managing the Intermediate this year.

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