

The Acton Free Press

The only paper ever published in Acton



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Expect to Pay

One of the suggestions in the preliminary report of the Gordon Commission was that residents would have to pay for the services they expected and this could only result in increased municipal taxes rather than reductions through federal and provincial grants. It would seem time, too, that we accepted the fact that with required additional facilities municipal taxes can hardly come down. There would seem to be a deterioration of the number of volunteers who are prepared to undertake community service without remuneration and this is just one more reason why taxes go up.

Acton and Georgetown are faced with the necessity of providing ambulance service if they want it continued. Those who have been carrying on the service as part of their business have found it not only unprofitable but poor public relations and often unappreciated. They have been very understanding, however, in granting extensions while the municipalities wrestle with the problem of continuing the service.

In Acton at the first public meeting there were eight volunteers accounted for to assist in providing the 24 hour service with the majority of those employed out of town. Georgetown claimed a list of 41 volunteers. It would seem probable that if 24 of the 41 continue that town might be able to inaugurate the service.

Acton's only alternative would seem to be the purchase of an ambulance and the hiring of at least two full time men. Of course, the town could gracefully forget the need and be subjected to untold criticism when a major accident occurs, perhaps this year and perhaps next.

The one sure thing, however, is that this appears headed to becoming just another municipal service that taxpayers must expect to bear the cost of if they want its advantages.

Fantastic Prophecies

Every once in a while a prominent individual turns his attention to the business of prophecy. In these days of "terrible development" and "unprecedented growth" it is not unusual to hear things predicted that in the light of present conditions appear fantastic. While the prophecies of present day long term planners may make headlines because of their unusualness there is seldom a reporter around to see how many of the prophecies materialize.

For this reason old papers often turn up interesting facts. In going through the paper of 1937 for this week's 20 years ago column a news item came to light where a Dean had turned prophet.

Among the things he saw in 1936 were Canada electing to become part of the United States in 1952 or 1953, Spain going fascist in 1937, Germany and Japan winning a war against Russia and China in 1940, Hitler dying the following year "cause unknown", another depression in 1942, a second World War between 1946 and 1949, Germany under Emperor Hermann Goering conquering the Italian empire in 1952.

It really doesn't matter who the individual was who set his sights ahead and saw the events listed. And, too, it would hardly be fair to criticize that all the events did not come off as expected. Then, too, the fact that some of the dates were a little out should hardly be termed a major error. But when you get right down to it what good was the prophecy except to cause a lot of worry to some individuals?

Today's long term planning in industry or government is still a bit of prophecy with plenty of room for hitches along the way. But there is a strong contribution to our thinking through prophecy since those with imagination can stimulate those of us without imagination, to visualize greater things.

It's always fun to compare some of these long term prophecies with the actual events but too often it's just the prophecy that gets the headline.

Country's Worst

"The facts are in, boys; and you just don't make the grade. You as a group between the ages of 16 and 25 think you're the world's best drivers; but the low down is this... you're the country's worst. The facts are there and your insurance rate has gone up anywhere from 20 to 50 per cent."

That's the opening blast of a paragraph from a strongly worded editorial printed in the Lakeville, Conn., Journal. And perhaps it's time some of the punches were no longer held back in this "accident business."

"Think it over, lads... and dads. The insurance people are no dopes. They don't care whether you're handsome and have the females in a dither, they don't care whether you have a piece of junk lovingly tuned to a raceway song; they don't care if you can name every part of every motor built or that you can rebuild one with your eyes closed. All they care about is poor performance on the road."

That's the truth and the insurance figures bear it out. Maybe the 50 extra bucks this year will give you pause. Of course, you may be the exception that proves the rule. Certainly everyone of you isn't that bad.

"But as a group you are and what are you going to do about it? Are you going to be one of the gang that pays homage to the hot road artist who ought to be in jail and will be soon, or dead? Are you going to go along for the ride so as not to appear chicken and let some bragging twerp at the wheel gamble with your future? Are you going to encourage these "buddies" of yours to keep on boosting your own cost of driving a car? What's the percentage in acting like that?"

The editorial continues in just as plain language to deal with "you spoiled brats thinking you can handle 130 horsepower when you can't handle one boypower". In concluding the editor suggests:

"Don't fool yourself about the cheap adulation of the kids around you who don't know any better. And don't think your girl is impressed by your hot shot antics the next time you take her out. She and most of your buddies have you tabbed for just what you are, a clump. They're just too polite or too scared or disgusted to tell you."

Enthusiasm on Ice?

Perhaps we're too busy to enjoy hockey games in hometown arenas now or perhaps the abundance of activity has sharply cut the number of those who enjoy watching hometown hockey.

The facts seem quite plain though that nobody attends games until the play offs have reached the semi-finals or finals.

We don't know just what the reason is and it's certain hockey executives across the country are all searching for the answer on how to lure the elusive supporters out for league games and teams.

There has often been the cry that if you haven't got artificial ice you can't get a good enough team to attract spectators. That seems pretty well ruled out now.

In Acton with the Junior D entry as the main supporter of hockey laurels crowds stay down to a very few hundred with attendance at minor games not even reaching 10 per cent of the paments.

Isn't that there's anything wrong with the brand of hockey. Spectators can get just as excited with any of the leagues as they want. There are always suggestions on just what is involved to get the crowd out but it would seem to us perhaps there's a guiding subconscious requirement that insists above all we must be comfortable and that is best accomplished in an easy chair in front of TV.

Round Peg, Square Dance

Square dancing has become immensely popular throughout the country and if you fellows will wait until I adjust my suspenders a bit, I'll be glad to explain the thing to you.

To begin with, square dancing is done in a circle for reasons that many people do not understand. Including me.

Anyway, the first or basic information is for four couples to gather in a circle and join hands. You join hands so that the reluctant ones cannot get away.

But I'm getting ahead of my story. Before the circle is formed, each fellow chooses a partner. A lot of men automatically select their wives as their partners, but to me this doesn't seem wise because somebody is going to have to get up with the children in the morning.

However, to resume, the music will soon start and a chap who works as a railroad terminal announcer in the daytime will begin chanting. It helps, of course, to know what he's saying but actually this is secondary. The important thing is to keep from being maimed.

The novice should not become discouraged, however. Square dancing is like a lot of other things; it's like falling out of an eighth storey window. The first time is the hardest. Sooner or later the command will come to "Swing your partner". This is your chance. When your partner swings you, spin off in a north-easterly direction and out some unguarded door. Cleveland Plain Dealer.



Navigation at a Standstill

Chronicles of Ginger Farm

What a Puzzling World it is

By Gwendolene P. Clarke

We often hear of plane crashes and we think "How dreadful!" and then I am afraid we forget about them. But when some of the dead and injured are known to us, then the tragedy really strikes home.

In the recent crash of the American Miami bound plane, there were several Canadians aboard. One of the critically injured and one of the dead were well known in this district. Mr. and Mrs. Hartley Anderson. In fact, Hartley and our son Bob went through school together and contacted in the same class in both of the County music festivals. His wife Joy was a very lovely and accomplished girl and came from a farm just a few miles from here.

Naturally everyone around here is stunned by the tragedy, knowing that five little children have been left motherless. We fervently hope that Hartley will make a speedy recovery from his injuries and be spared to his children.

Just to think that so much suffering, grief and heartache can be caused in such a few minutes. But it could happen just as easily in a car, that is something we need to remember. In fact, I would guess the percentage of fatalities in the air is considerably less than those on the road.

What a puzzling world this is. For the life of me, I can't understand what is really happening. The rising cost of living is usually laid at the door of organized labor and high wages, short working hours. And yet I have spoken to many working people who just can't

make ends meet behind in their payments on this, that and the other, husbands sometimes laid off for a few weeks, unemployment pay not enough to keep them going.

And then we come to the farming population. Cattle prices dropping, eggs at almost a giveaway price and the cost of production higher than a year ago. Pigs seem to be the only paying proposition. All along the hog credit is getting tighter. But still it isn't as tight as it was in the 30's. Anything bought by instalment then carried seven per cent interest on promissory notes payable to the bank. To get a loan from the bank itself, farmers had to give a complete list of their stock and implements as collateral, and then almost had to get down on their knees to get it.

Times changed. For a few years, loans were easy to get while interest on savings accounts went down as low as one and a half per cent. So if you had any money, you were almost encouraged to spend it. Now the situation is reversed. We are encouraged to save. That is fine - for those who are able to save, but there are not many farm folk in that category at the moment. It makes one wonder what the future holds in store for the farmer, in either a big or a small way.

Some agricultural economists say the hundred-acre farmer is on the way out but one speaker at a recent convention prophesied there would be more hundred-acre farms in the future but that they would be better farmers, with a greater production from a lesser acreage. We hear, too, that the amount of good farm land being taken over for road construction, industrial development and housing is little short of a tragedy.

On the other hand we hear of vast areas of undeveloped land that could be farmed quite profitably. All the so-called "adventurous" spots are very confusing, but at least it will be interesting to watch developments.

Developments are always interesting, but sometimes a little unpleasant for those caught in the middle. For instance, for years I always reach a State of near panic every time we get a few inches of snow in our lane. We have been stuck so often trying to get out. Sometimes we would get halfway and then have to be dug out or towed in or out as the case may be.

Or I would sometimes go to town alright and then find the ruts would be filled in again. That meant more digging for Partner. Especially when we had the little Morris.

This winter, we equipped our Canadian-built car with snow tires. "No need to get stuck now," said Partner. He is right, but now it is my confidence that is at fault. I guess I need some kind of morale tires. The trouble is I see a few inches of the fluffy white stuff ahead of me and I just think "I'm going to get stuck." Actually, I haven't had any trouble at all. The car seems to go through everything. But I still find it hard to be stuck and put it down to luck more than the snow tires.

Speaking of snow, yesterday I thought I had heard the very latest. A young people's organization thought it would be great fun to have a sleigh-riding party. But the sleigh was to be pulled by a tractor. Shades of our grandparents - what would they have said could they have looked into the future and seen the young folk of 1937 going for a sleigh ride behind a tractor? No sturdy, sure-footed farm team? No sleigh bells, no plunging through heavy drifts, worse still, no romance. Ah well, I suppose what the young folk don't have they don't miss. Only we who are older know of the thrills and spills that used to belong to the winter wonderland.

People buy the Free Press to read and read the Free Press to buy.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1937

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, February 11, 1937

Canada, it appears will soon have a regular commercial air service. The proposed route is more profitable than the rail service it now operates.

A recently published news article gives the information that new battleships cost \$35,000,000 to build and \$2,000,000 a year to operate. They are manned by 1,500 men and will hurl a 2,000 pound shell 17 miles and can pierce 12 inch armor or plate ten ft. A great game for supposedly civilized nations to be engaged in? Wouldn't it be better to use the money to help people to live right?

The regular monthly meeting of the Women's Institute was held at the home of Mrs. F. Salt. Mrs. Gamble presided. The roll call was given by Mrs. Widderson and answered by Mrs. Salt. Current events were given by Miss Elliott and an instrumental selection by Florence Salt. Mrs. J. E. Gamble gave the subject Historical Research in Halton County, recounting first political meetings and adventures with bears and wolves.

Last Thursday evening Mrs. Wm. Middleton was hostess for her niece, Miss Betty Watts, and a group of school girl friends. The evening was a little social evening in honor of Molly Ivers, who leaves this month with her mother and her brother to make her home in London, England.

The regular meeting of the Dublin Literary was held in the form of a box social on Friday evening. Mr. Davidson acted as auctioneer for the boxes after the program with Mrs. Robertson, John Black, Muriel Crossman, Mrs. Ross, Flora Sayers, Dorothy Steele and Wilma McLaughlin taking part.

The monthly meeting of the Rockwood W.C.T.U. was held at the home of Mrs. A. K. Thomas.

On Thursday evening Jim Rickwood a travelling concern put on a motion picture in the town hall there featuring Hood Gibson and Wild Horse.

The girls of the Orange, Owen Sound and their friends have received an invitation to a party on Thursday night at the home of Mrs. Dorothy Church, as guests of Mrs. Evelyn MacArthur, Mrs. Mary Mac-

BACK IN 1907

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of February 7, 1907.

The Free Press subscription lists continue to grow with very satisfactory progress. New subscriptions are being added to our lists daily.

Reverend Swackhamer has received samples of street signs to indicate the names of all streets. The design is plain gold-blue enameled letter on white enameled steel and is quite attractive. These signs are the same as those in use in Toronto, Ottawa, Brockville and other points in Canada. All the main streets and cross streets in town can be spelled with these signs at a cost of less than \$50. The matter is worthy of the consideration of the council.

Oakville First, Acton Next. The population of the towns of Halton is growing. Acton appears to have done the best during the year. In 1906, only 21 less than Oakville. Georgetown has also had a gain with Burlington and Milton about the same as last year. The population according to the assessment roll of 1906, Acton 1763.

The Boardman are doing big things for Acton and, if reports are true, they are only at the commencement of great things that are now in prospect.

Winter after winter, Canada is swept from ocean to ocean by an epidemic of influenza.

21 years - We are of age today. Customers might be interested to know that it is 21 years Monday since we opened business in Guelph. G. H. Ryan and Co., Guelph.

While at work on a splitting machine in the tannery of the Acton Tanning Co. last Friday morning, Mr. R. Gregory had the first three fingers of his right hand seriously lacerated. The accident would be considered unfortunate at any time, but doubly so on the eve of the marriage of a bright young man like Mr. Gregory.

Going to bed with a cigar is not a wise policy. Mr. Alex. Bunyon, who is stopping at a local hotel retired on Friday night with a cold in his mouth and before he knew it the bed clothes took fire. The clerk attended on the scene in time to pull him out from the sheets and get the blaze out.

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