

The Acton Free Press

The only paper ever published in Acton



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Those Who Labored Here

Next Sunday in Acton will be decoration day, a custom which started a few years ago and with the aid of organizations, Council and citizens is growing in popularity. In the United States decoration day for many years has had a broader application in the country and is widely observed. Perhaps some day more and more towns will find its observance worth while. It's surely not essential to proclaim a public holiday because we don't believe the purpose would be as well served as the Sunday service is here in early June.

We and many citizens in Acton and district and former residents find the annual observance of Decoration Day a most pleasant and comforting occasion. Its continued success can only be assured by the public interest and attendance. The leadership is there. So next Sunday make it a date to be on hand when we honor the memory and pay tribute to those who have down through the years worked and labored to build this community and district. Just pause a moment and reflect.

More Older People

Canada is one of the younger nations of the world but like most highly developed countries, in average age of population we are among the oldest, declares The Financial Post. The reason is simple. Thanks to better medical care, better food and better hygiene our people are living far longer than in the early days and far longer than people in primitive countries today.

Thirty-five years ago only 2.8% of our population were over 70 years of age. Fifteen years ago it was 4%. Now it is almost five. And that tells only part of the story. Because our population is growing the number of people in this over 70 group is growing, too, three quarters of a million today as against less than a quarter of a million in 1921.

Delinquent Voters

In the 1953 Dominion election only 67 of every 100 eligible voters went to the polls. This showing reflects a lack of appreciation on the part of many Canadians of both their privileges and responsibilities under Canada's parliamentary system of government.

Roughly one-third apparently overlook the continuing significance of the long, historic struggle in England between parliament and throne from which the present form of parliamentary government evolved.

It would also seem that they are unaware of the equally long struggle between the people themselves and parliament which brought gradual widening of the franchise until now in Canada every person 21 and over has the right to vote.

Some of the fault may lie in education. How can children who find history dull be expected to grow up with an understanding of the drama, the violence and the heroism of the conflict between king and parliament? How can they appreciate the deep sense of conviction that led men on both sides to risk property and life for their beliefs?

Men and women with an awareness of these things of the past will not let small modern obstacles or inconveniences, keep them from the polls.

Some folks stay home from sheer indifference. They are doing all right, they say, and what does it matter to them who governs the country? Only a major issue or one that affects them personally will stir them to voting activity.

What is the solution? Some people favor compulsory voting. Another way is a continuing process of education, not only by political parties, but also by individual men and women possessed of the abiding conviction that to keep the ballot they must use it.

Figures Often Confusing

We are not particularly proud of our winning \$10 on a TV quiz program recently. The question was simple and the answer was published in our papers two weeks previously. The question was, "What is Halton's present population." Our guess was 5,000 out and yet we won the prize. Fortunately, not many were interviewed but in a business in which questions are being constantly asked by the public we find references for accuracy are constantly necessary.

We marvel often at the glibness of many who can roll off figures in the millions, answer questions on many subjects with seemingly little consideration and we concluded long ago that our line was not on a quiz show unless we had reference material at hand.

Our own shortcomings of knowledge on subjects close at hand is shared by others, too. This helped to alleviate our feelings. An editor we noted in another town advised that over a century of service in printing had been rendered that community by the local papers which actually was not founded until 1866. In these days of big figures what does 10 years or 5,000 mean on any subject. Anyway, the general public is not too much concerned in what year Columbus discovered North America and greatly confused in the billions of dollars quoted so often by politicians.

Business in Two Countries

Some excellent advice to American firms contemplating operating in Canada, was offered by W. O. Twaits, executive vice president of Imperial Oil, in a Rochester speech, says The Financial Post.

The really important thing to realize, Mr. Twaits told his American listeners, is that moving to Canada is not merely the extension of existing business. It is or should be regarded as the establishment of a new business.

A move to Canada is not like establishing another branch in the United States warned Mr. Twaits. Canada is a different country. While both nations are democratic they have arrived there by drastically different routes. "Your Canadian venture will take on a character of its own," and "when the home office insists on laying down the same rules for the branch in Moosemin, Sask., as it does for the one at Tonawanda, N.Y., then the headaches multiply and the operation deteriorates."

And that new business, he added, should not only mean supplying the Canadian market but eventually a large chunk of the international demand including the parent firm in the United States "with all or at least a major part of its requirements of specific components or completed products."

As a senior executive of a Canadian firm that has long been affiliated with a major U.S. corporation, Mr. Twaits, says The Post, speaks from practical and successful experience. American firms planning to cross the border can save themselves money, headaches, embarrassment by heeding his advice.

Brief Comment:

An election could be held quite successfully with less public utterance and fanfare but it could not be held without the work done by that silent group which carry out the processes of the election act previous to and on election day.—Estevan (Sask.) Mercury.

Planting of new trees along the highways in this section is encouraging and to be commended. They are being placed well back along the fences.

It does no good to have the finest citizens in the country offer their services if the electors do not choose them; it does no harm if the "worst nincompoops and gangsters are named on the ballot if the voters are careful to vote against them by supporting men and women of principle and courage. The supremacy of Parliament rests always in the hands of the voters.—Cochrane (Ont.) Northland Post.

Real estate authorities report that population is beginning to flow back towards the centre of Toronto. The same trend has been noted for some time in the larger cities in the United States and no doubt it is also apparent or soon will be in other Canadian centres.—Barrie (Ont.) Examiner.

Spring is here and so is grass-fire time. Members of the Lachute Police Department and volunteer firemen are being driven crazy with unnecessary calls for minor fires. Nothing can be gained by excitement and in the event of a serious fire, much can be lost.—Lachute (Que.) Watchman.

Post Office is thinking of giving up the number system for metropolitan postal districts, reports The Financial Post. Instead there would be an allocation of names. Reason: letter writers who have difficulty remembering that a certain district is, say Toronto 21, may be less prone to forget that it's Bueria Vista Heights. Wonder if it would speed up city delivery?



"The Big Rock"

From Ginger Farm to Halfway House

Church Remains the Background

By Gwendolyn P. Clarke
In pioneer days, the centre of community life could be found in the church, the school and the tavern. Its chief industry, the grist and sawmills. Its shopping centre, a small general store.

Times have changed considerably in little more than a hundred years. In most places, water-wheel grist and sawmills have been replaced by industrial plants and high-powered feed and planing mills, the tavern where the stage-coach changed horses has disappeared and we now have motels and restaurants. The schools have gone modern—buses provide transportation for the pupils.

But the centre of the community, especially where the historical past is respected and treasured, remains in the church or churches of the neighborhood, whatever their denomination. Each has its own congregation, its creed and doctrine, but collectively the church remains the centre of the community.

Ever since we came to Ontario, I have loved the little Anglican church sitting high upon a hill overlooking the Valley of the Credit. I always wanted to go inside the church but never did. Last Sunday, I finally had that privilege and found the church and service lived up to all my hopeful expectations.

The history of the church goes back to 1825 when an Anglican congregation at the Credit was established by General Peter Adamson and other prominent settlers who were instrumental in having a frame church built near the village of "Springfield".

An Irish clergyman by the name of James Magrath was the first rector. He and the General worked together in perfect harmony for a

number of years and then a feud began over a division of property which resulted in the General withdrawing from St. Peter's in 1830 and buying MacNab's Mills at Norway. However, at his death he was buried in the Anglican church yard at Emerald, as was the Reverend Mr. Magrath.

The present church was built in 1887 and is known for miles around. It is a very lovely little church with particularly fine stained glass windows. There is an excellent choir and quite obviously a very active congregation. In fact there was a much bigger congregation last Sunday morning than I have seen in many larger churches. The service was mostly choral—which pleased me—and there was a professional and recessional hymn, which I also liked.

The sermon was well delivered and gave one food for thought. Strangely enough, although it was the first service I had attended at this church, I felt very much at home. Why, I don't exactly know. Perhaps it was its familiar name, or the order of service, or maybe the friendly spirit of the congregation which, in some explicable way, made itself felt. Be that as it may, I felt at home.

On the whole, the village seems a queer intermingling of my childhood days and the many years we later spent at Ginger Farm. We are in a different county but yet practically on the borders of Halton, and, as Halton Peol have often shared various public services in the past, we just feel we have only moved "around the corner".

That is, until it comes to politics. Right now we wonder if this district knows there is an election in the offing. We haven't been ap-

prached by any person or any party whatsoever and only one piece of political literature has been left in our mailboxes. Partner was getting worried so we made a special trip to our old ward in Halton to make sure our names were on the voter's list there.

It wouldn't be Partner's fault if we lost our votes. On that trip we took a run up to the farm and found it completely boarded up. It was a sad looking place. We didn't mind coming away from it at all.

On the way home, we made a slight detour on a surprise visit to Bob and Joy—and Ross, of course. We had supper there but left for home before dark. During the week I took the morning bus into Toronto to help celebrate Eddie's first birthday. And when Eddie waded into his chocolate birthday cake, his face was a sight to behold! The whole family brought me home at night. I thought how nice it was being so much nearer to our children and grandchildren.

Every time Partner and I have occasion to go out with the car, we explore different roads, finding ways to go places without traveling the highway all the time. On one of these trips we found the new South Peol Hospital, still under construction, only two miles from where we are living—almost on our own road.

On that same road we found what used to be the "Copeland Violet House". A lovely spot but the Copelands went out of the violet business last September and bought a motel. One of the cards left us by the "Welcome Wagon" was from a nursery and florists in the same district, so that gave me an excuse to go in and browse around. I came away with the gift of a potted geranium and additional bedding plants that I thought I shall make a return visit before long, so if it works that way with other people, I would say "Welcome Wagon" advertising pays off.

OBITUARY

William Nelson Eight Year Old Buried Recently

William Gordon Rae Nelson, R.R. 4, Rockwood, passed away suddenly in Queen's General Hospital on May 15. In his eighth year, he was a son of Mrs. Margaret and the late William Gordon Nelson.

Two brothers and a sister also survive. Clifford, Leslie and Carol, all at home. He was a pupil at Ermour township school and attended the United Church.

Funeral service was held from the Rumley funeral home, Acton on May 18, with Rev. Mr. Ward officiating. Interment was in Rockwood cemetery. Follow pupils from his school section acted as a guard of honor.

Pallbearers were neighbors, Alex McPhedran, Harvey Bayne, Charles McNabb and Ed Maude.

Of the about 1,200 children born in Canada every day, three out of four are born in a hospital.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1937

Taken from the issue of The Free Press, Thursday, June 3, 1937

The monthly meeting of the Ladies' Aid was held at the home of Mrs. Fred Cleave, Tuesday afternoon.

Most everyone about town wondered Monday morning what could have gone wrong with Acton's water supply. The taps were all dry. It seems that a pipe at the Beardmore plant broke during the night, and the water systems of both the town and the company were completely drained. Repairs were soon made and pumps put into action when the trouble was noticed and the supply was adequate in a short time.

Crashing through the rotten wooden platform over a well onto which he had collapsed, William Smith, 67, Main St., Milton, drowned in a foot and a half of water.

A business change has taken place on Mill St. this week. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Watson, who have successfully conducted Watson's bakery for the past 12 years, have sold the business to Mr. Francis Wilds, who took charge on Tuesday. Prior to coming to Acton, Mr. Wilds was in business in Grand Valley for 25 years.

Acton friends offer hearty congratulations to Miss Beth Harrison of Toronto on her success in her year's examinations in the medical course at the University of Toronto.

Miss Pearl Wallace, Mrs. Newton Hurst of Acton were rather badly shaken up and sustained painful, but not serious injuries in a motor collision at Cooksville on Tuesday morning.

The local electrical dealers are offering attractive terms on electric ranges during the range campaign. With cheaper power in sight, it would seem an ideal time to make a change to electric cooking.

At the monthly meeting of the Acton School Board on Tuesday evening, it was revealed that all the teachers had been re-engaged for the coming year.

Playing smart baseball behind superb pitching by Ike Lambert, Acton came from behind once again to pull out a 4-3 decision over Burlington in the park here last night. Lambert went the route and allowed only six hits. Terry Bus Morton and J. Waterhouse were the big hitters for Acton. Guthrie's catch in the fourth brought a tag hand from the crowd.

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