

Started in 1909

Harold Wiles Operates Business 50 Years

Acton's oldest businessman and merchant, Harold Wiles and his sister Laura on Tuesday of this week celebrated their 50th year in the tobacco and confectionery business at 18 Mill Street. Their store also serves as the Gray Coach Line bus depot in Acton.

After working two years for Beardmore and Company Limited, Harold Wiles left the tanning business in 1909 in favor of a grocery store and ice cream parlor, then owned and operated by the former Miss Laura Ryder, now Mrs. Robert Elgie.

Many Changes

Through the 50 years they have been in business, both Harold and Laura have seen many changes in

the town and especially on the main business street.

They recall many of the former business people who 50 years ago were prominent on the main street are now deceased.

One of the many memories for most in Mr. Wiles' mind was the inauguration of the bus service through Acton. In 1927 the first bus called through town to stop at his store, then the official bus stop just as it is today.

The vehicle was given an official town welcome by George Hynds, reeve at the time and H. P. Moore, publisher of the Free Press, as well as many other citizens and businessmen.

First Bus Service

The bus service extended between Toronto, Kitchener and London and was known as the T.K.L. Bus Service, named after the route which was followed.

Harold will remember the first trip the bus made in the new service. The vehicle was equipped with mechanical emergency brakes.

The first time the driver applied the emergency, it bore the rear end out of the bus. After this, the buses went without emergency brakes for a number of years.

Following the T.K.L. was the

"Arrow" Bus Lines. They continued in operation from 1929 until 1936, when the present Gray Coach Lines bought the business.

On weekends and special excursions, the bus depot is packed with people and every day sees quite a number of passengers loading the bus for points out of Acton.

Reside at Store

After operating the business as a grocery store and ice cream parlor for 18 1/2 years, Harold and Laura moved from the family home on Church Street, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Tom Kelly to the store location.

The year following their move, the couple began serving meals and expanding the business. Only during the past few years have they discontinued their lunch counter service.

The familiar couple may be seen every day in their store and Harold takes pride in serving his tobacco and magazine customers from his favorite spot near the front of the store.

Their shop is one of several where *The Free Press* is on sale.

Through the years, many have assisted in serving the customers. At present there are Mrs. Orval

Johnson, Miss William McIntyre and Mrs. Norman Elliott.

Built in 1835

The building occupied by Harold and Laura Wiles was built originally by a Dr. McGavin around 1835 which he used as a drug store with a consulting room at the back.

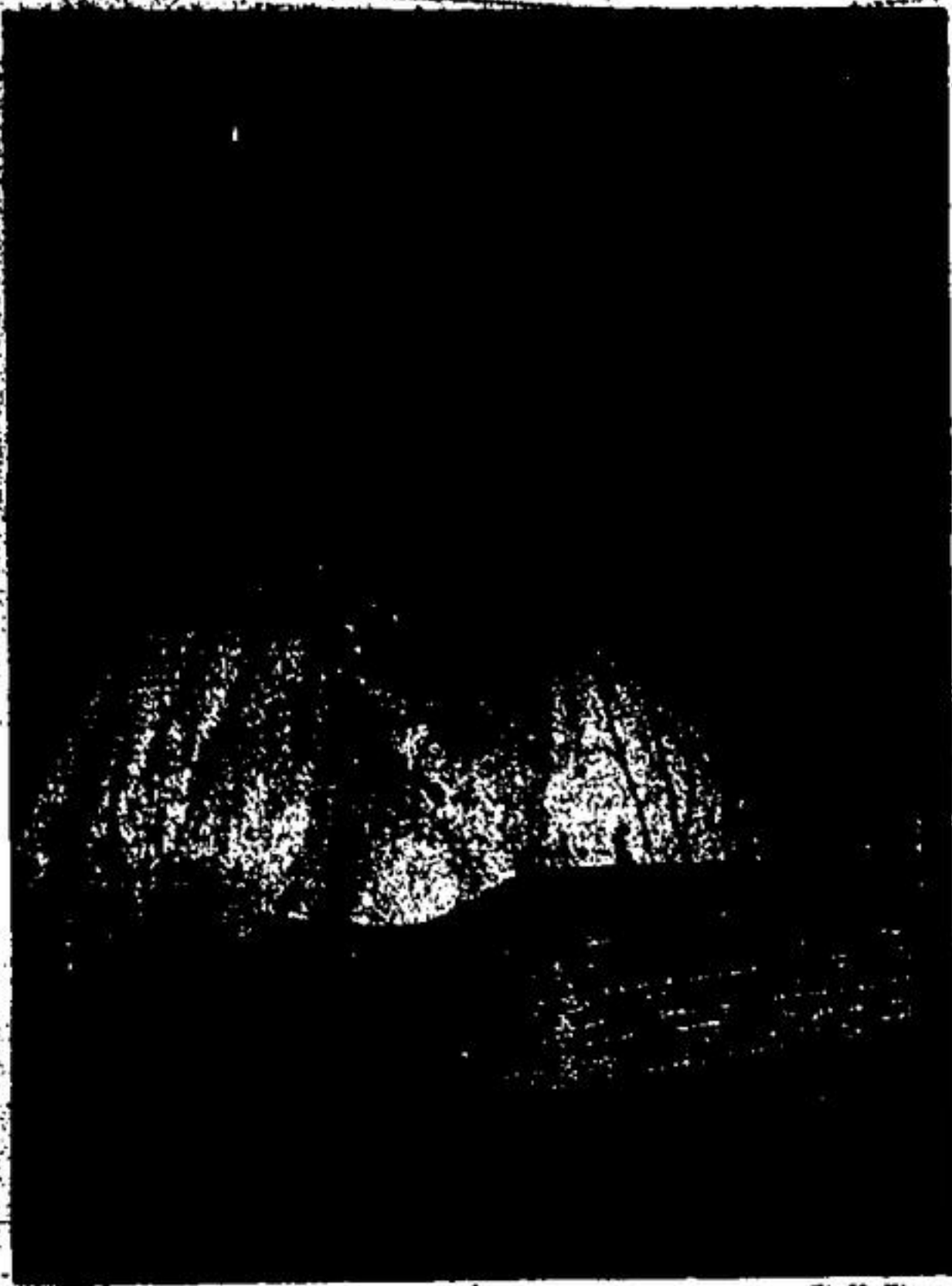
Later Dr. Morris Colclough in the same profession and then Dr. Foster of Stamford John Stodd used the building after this for a hardware store and then later, it was converted for use as a factory shop.

Thomas Agnew and George Stovell conducted a boot and shoe business in the establishment before moving to Guilph.

The building has had many occupants but none with a record of service such as Harold and Laura Wiles.

A cherry wave greets all familiar friends of the couple as they pass by on the street, and this week, they are receiving congratulations on their 50 years in business and enjoying a few leisure hours of chatting and reminiscing.

Citizens generally join with the Free Press in wishing Harold and Laura Wiles many more years of continued success.



—Staff Photo

50 YEARS IN BUSINESS Harold Wiles celebrated the occasion very quietly on Tuesday of this week when a number of friends dropped in to congratulate the Acton merchant. Back in 1909, Mr. Wiles purchased a grocery store and ice cream parlor from Miss Laura Ryder, now Mrs. Robert Elgie, and has operated the business since that time. Mr. Wiles is pictured above at his favorite counter, selling the *Acton Free Press*.



—Staff Photo

MISS LAURA WILES is pictured above as she punches out a ticket for the bus at Wiles Bus Depot. Miss Wiles and her brother Harold have been operating the business in Acton since 1909 and on Tuesday, August 11, marked the 50 year mark in business at the same location. The brother and sister have seen many changes in the business section of Acton and have through the years offered their own store a number of times.

Visitors Photograph Acton Many Miles From Destination

Visitors with Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Talbot brought with them a surprise—photographs they took in Acton when they were hundreds of miles away. Traveling up to Canada from "Los Angeles, California, Mr. and Mrs. E. Merrill and family passed through a town with the name of "Acton" many, many miles before they expected to see it.

They took some snapshots of the

Press display window this week. The first picture shows the sign at the outskirts of the town reading "Acton". Population figures are lacking. Big hills, can be seen in the background of the pleasant vista.

The second picture shows the post office, a small plaster building which also houses "Acton Grocery". It appears to be a typical country

chatting. Lettered on one window is "United States Post Office Acton Calif."

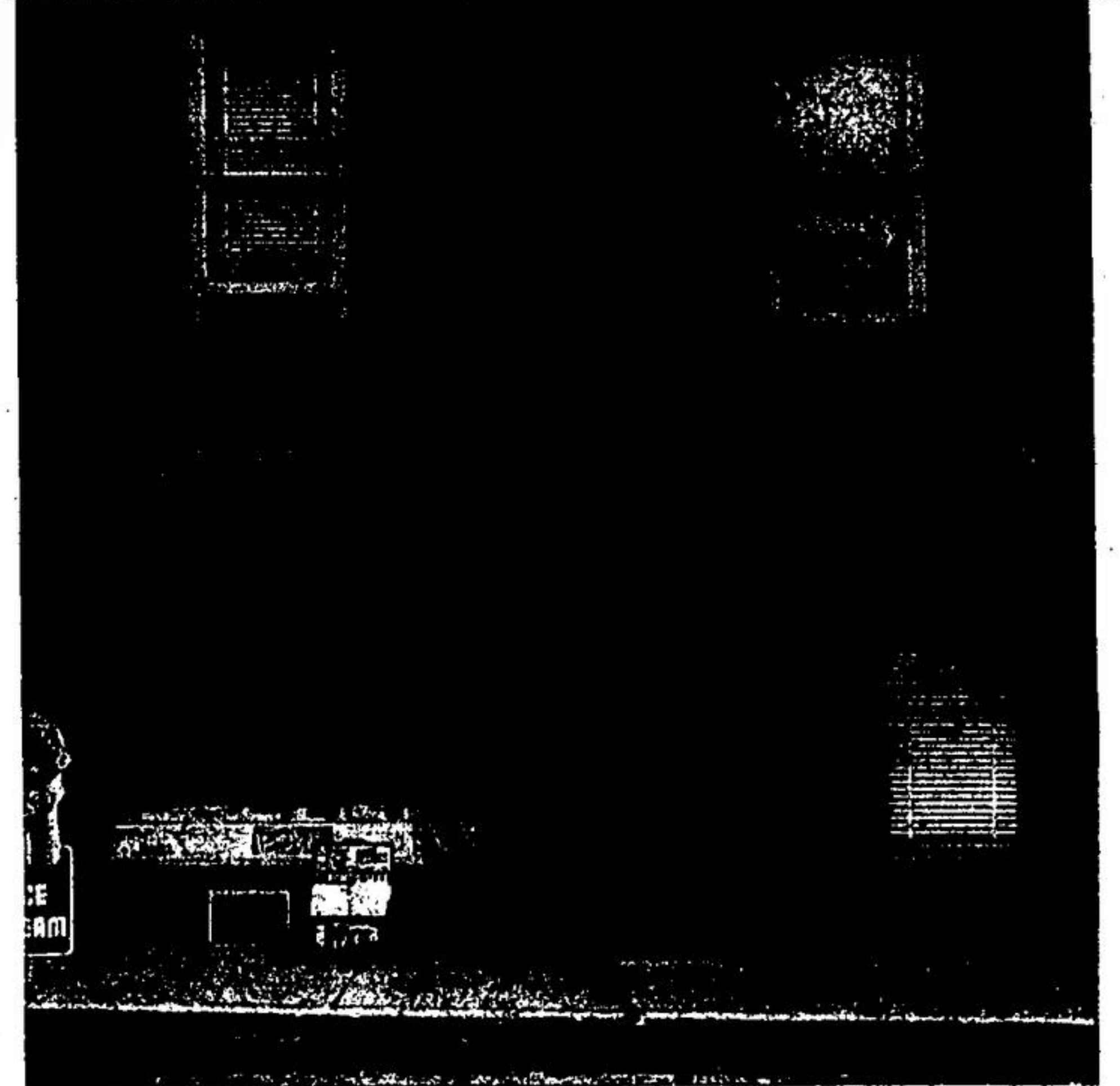
Surprisingly enough, just last week the Free Press received a post card from Acton, California—and this week the pictures! Previously, we didn't know the place existed, although there has always been a tie between this town and Acton, England.

Blown Out Fuse Is Danger Sign

Fuse blown out? This is a danger sign. You could have a faulty electric appliance—or you could have too many things on one circuit.

Fuses are the safety valves of your electrical system. They protect you from fire. Never replace a 15 amp. fuse with a higher value or you will destroy this fire safeguard and invite the possibility of fire into your home.

It's time to take stock of the possible electrical fire hazards in your home. Check your wiring and if you have any doubt as to its safety, call in a Hydro inspector at once. Your action might well save your life and that of your family.



—Staff Photo

A WELL KNOWN SITE is Wiles Bus Depot and confectionery store owned and operated by Harold and Laura Wiles. 50 years ago Harold Wiles bought the business and along with his sister has continued to the present day. The store itself has undergone a few changes since 1909 and part of the building is occupied by the Halton County Health Unit. The owners of the store sell tobacco, confectionery, magazines and operate the bus depot.

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