Commercial Life Active Through Full Range of Business Categories

From a concentrated downtown business section, fanning out along the main arteries of the town, Acton's commercial section, handling an estimated $5,500,000 in yearly retail sales includes 97 retail and service firms.

With Acton growing in an easterly direction, this particular area has been built up and beginning at the border of town is Acton Jersey Dairy in a building built in 1953 operating on modern equipment. Several garages, a restaurant, grocery store and brewers' retail store have been developed during the past decade.

Blends in Residential

Continuing westward the business area blends itself with the residential section and gradually converts to a full scale downtown section.

In Acton there are 11 garages, three barber shops, three doctors, two dentists, three lawyers, a veterinarian, a nursing home, two hardware stores, six clothing stores, three variety stores, a pool room, five restaurants, a music store, three appliance stores, two dairies, a creamery, two banks, five grocery stores, four butcher shops, two bake shops, two confectionery stores, a theatre, a bowling alley, a funeral home, two drug stores, a stationery store, two jewellery stores, two shoe repair shops, two cleaners, a laundry, five insurance agencies, two furniture stores, Dutch shop, two taxi stands, two hotels, an automotive supply store, six beauty parlors, a brewers' retail store and post office.

Major Changes

During the past ten years as Acton expanded, so did the business section and bit by bit new additions sprang up and major renovations took place.

On the northern side of Queen Street, Franklin Prouse Motors garage was erected, Ballentine's garage underwent a major overhaul and is now occupied by the British Petroleum Company, and the Maylan Restaurant was built, changing ownership several times.

On the southern side of this section, following the building of the Glenlea subdivision, the brewers' retail store was built, Toth's service station was erected and changes made at Grant's Motors.

Proceeding down Young Street, Whitham's Garage underwent a major facelifting and Ruddick's Grocery Store was established. At the corner of Young and Mill Streets, J. McCallum's garage was renovated.

Garage Altered

A former garage occupied by Thompson Motors was completely remodelled and now houses the Canadian Tire Store at the corner of Mill and Wilbur Streets. On the north side of this area the Station Hotel underwent minor changes and renovations as well.

Between Wilbur and Frederick Streets, Marks' Grocery on the north side has had renovations and the inside of the building remodelled for stock and a larger customer area.

At the corner of Wilbur and Mill on the south side of the street, the building formerly occupied by McEachern's Electric now houses several apartments, an electrical supply store and insurance office.

A major fire transformed the north corner of Mill and Elgin Streets when the former E. E. Barr block was completely gutted by fire. It was replaced by a modern three-storey apartment building housing the Acton Hydro Electric Commission, an electrical supply store and a butcher shop.

Opposite this building on the south corner of Mill and Elgin Streets, the Baptist church underwent several changes and opposite this, still on the south side of Mill, the United church removed a residence to make way for a new church building.

Beside the new Van Gils block are a Dutch shop and beauty parlor.

On the northern corner of Mill and Elgin Streets, the store owned by G. Benton received a major face-lifting and for the past several years has been operated as a butcher and grocery store.

Free Press Moves

In the block between Elgin and John Streets, the former Free Press building housing the Dills Printing and Publishing Company was occupied by a station ery store since the Free Press moved to new quarters on Willow Street. Next door at the corner of John and Mill Streets, the Manning Electric Block, built in 1954, houses an apartment, appliance store and jewellery shop.

The Rumles Shoemaker funeral home on the opposite corner has been kept up-to-date with renovations each year and takes in half a block at this location.

From the corner of John and Mill Streets, many changes have taken place both on the north and south sides of the street. Beginning at Acton Home Furnishings and proceeding west to Willows Street, practically every business has undergone major changes in the past decade.

Modern Store Fronts

The furniture store has received a modern store front and many changes to the interior. Bradley's Meat Market has been altered, and Symons Hardware received a major face-lifting to blend with the modernization of the Mill Street business section.

Next to the hardware store, the Edna May shop caters to the ladies. What once was Rachlin's men's and ladies' store is now divided to house the T. Eaton Co. mail order office and a men's clothing store. A bake shop and jewellery store share the remainder of this business block.

Continuing west on Mill Street on the north side, Cooper's Drug Store underwent a major overhaul when a modern store front was installed and inside renovations made. Next door is another clothing store, supplying a general variety of goods, which was altered to meet the new owner's requirements.

Adams' Furniture Store is located next door in a brightly lit, modernized building in the Pallant Block. At the corner of the block at Willow and Mill Streets, an up-to-date ladies' clothing store is located where the Bank of Montreal was situated before moving to their new site across the road.

On the south side of the block stretching from John to Willow Street, not as many major changes were noted during the past ten years but at the corner a building owned by the town's oldest barber underwent a facelifting and now houses a barber shop and music store.

Minor Y.M.C.A. Changes

The Y.M.C.A. next door has received a few minor renovations as has the town office in the same building. G. Holloway's barber shop underwent minor changes and the Bank of Nova Scotia building next door installed a night deposit system. Baxter's Drug Store has undergone a number of minor changes in keeping with the times and now offers a more spacious shopping and display area for customers.

Acton's growth warranted the erection of a new Bank of Montreal building at the corner of Willow and Mill Streets in the next block and after land was purchased, the former Elliott Brothers' dry goods and grocery store was demolished and the fine new building was erected. The advancement of the town can be seen in the bank staff personnel which grew from an original two in 1900 to 15 members today. The bank last week celebrated its 60th anniversary.

Next to the bank stands Benson's Shoe Store. There have been shoe stores on this site for a number of years and the building has received alterations several times during the past decade.

Hinton's variety store recently underwent a general modernization when a new store front was installed and a section added to the rear of the property to offer a larger selection of goods to the customers.

Modernize Restaurant

Watson's Restaurant next door was perhaps one of the first buildings in this section to undergo major changes when an up-to-date front was installed and new lighting added as well as air conditioning and other changes.

Frank Toth Sr. has a shoe repair store next door and during the past ten years has brought his business up-to-date with modern machinery, renovations and increased stock. The business block next door has perhaps undergone the most major renovation in the past ten years after Eisen's clothing store vacated this building to provide room for expansion of a large grocery chain store. Steinberg's grocery area was enlarged to include the former clothing store.

Dron's Meat Market is presently occupying the building in the same block formerly used by Lovell Brothers prior to moving to their new location in the Van Gils apartment building.

Newton's 5c to $1 store occupies the portion of the building directly west in the Leishman block. It was renovated after the Chainway sold out. One of Acton's oldest business places situated at the four corners at Mill and Main Streets now houses a men's clothing store, and law office.

Side Streets

Two businesses are situated on Willow St. branching off Mill, a bake shop on one side and a notions shop on the other.

On the southern side of this block between Willow and Main Streets, Gordon's Hardware has undergone a few minor changes during the past ten years. To the west of this is situated C. F. Leatherland's law office and next door a confectionery store and bus depot operated by Acton's oldest businessman, Harold Wiles. The Wiles' building has seen quite a number of changes recently and has been remodelled, a portion of the building serves as an office for the Public Health Nurse.

Next door is Acton's second shoe repair business.

Next door the Royal Cafe restaurant is situated with an insurance and real estate office adjoining. Acton's theatre is located to the west of this building.

The Clansmann restaurant is established next door to the theatre and recently came under new management. A pool room rounds out the business section in this block. It was established here after Ledger's I.G.A. supermarket moved to larger quarters on Main Street.

A taxi stand and lunch counter and Acton Motors are located to the south of the pool room on 25 highway. Acton Woodcrafts, Acton Auto Body and A. Brazda law office mark the end of the business section on Main Street South to the limits of the town. J. B. Mackenzie and Son, coal and lumber merchants and general contractors, are located on Church Street as well as Fong's laundry.

Across Main St. S. are located a garage and beauty shop. Acton Farm Supply is on Mill St. W.

Proceeding north on Main Street, the Bell telephone office occupies a portion of a block at the corner of Mill and Main Streets on the western corner as does the Simpsons - Sears mail order office.

Next door a modern I.G.A. store was established in a former garage building. It has been expanded several times. A large parking area is included and shipping and receiving areas have been added. Above this building on the second floor a modern six-lane bowling alley is being operated by K. Hulford, who took over from the original builder, E. Jennings.

The Dominion Hotel is located next door and this building has been improved at various times in the past decade.

On the opposite side of the street a modern dry cleaning plant is in operation with a barber shop next door. Acton Creamery, which supplies butter and eggs, fresh fruit and vegetables, is located next door on the Main Street business section.

At the corner of the extension to Bower Avenue and Main Street stands Thompson's Garage built in late 1950 by Lorne Garner.

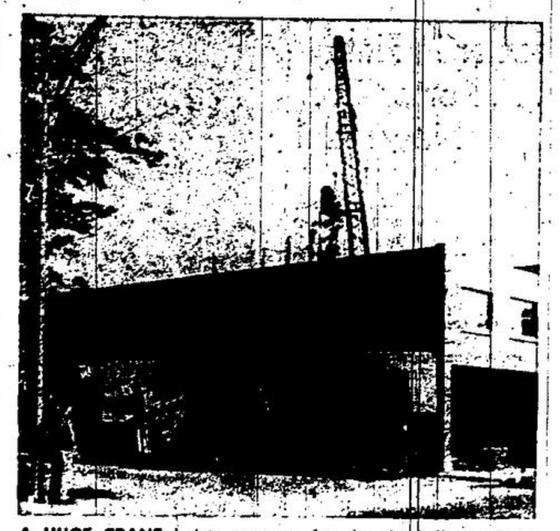
Newly Renovated

Proceeding north on this street there is a newly renovated building occupied by C. K. Browne who operates a confectionery store. Next door is another garage owned by Sandy McIsaac which has stood in this location for a number of years and recently was renovated.

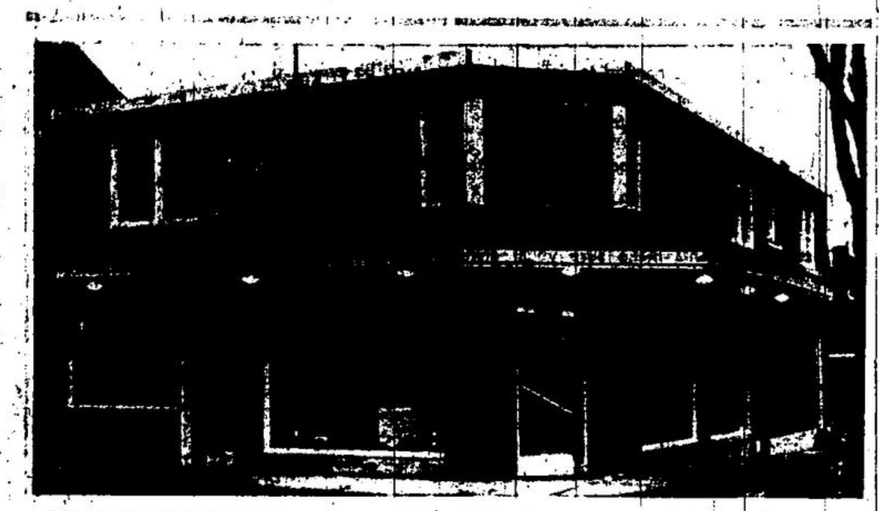
On the west side of Main Street is another new building in Acton occupied by Teg Pro Products. The last business place within the town boundaries before leaving Acton on No. 7 Highway is Frank Toth's service station, built since the war.

On Main Street North over the C.N.R. tracks is Masales Dairy. The owner established a modern dairy bar in this building a few years ago. The building houses all up-to-date machinery.

Although it only takes a matter of minutes to drive through Acton on the highway, many business places offer motorists a variety of goods in the four mile stretch on Nos. 7 and 25 Highway.



A HUGE CRANE hoists concrete for the third floor of the Van Gils building at Mill and Elgin Streets. The building started in 1958 and now completed houses the Hydro Commission office, Lovell Bros. meat market and Wigo TV on the ground floor. On the second and third floors there are six apartments.



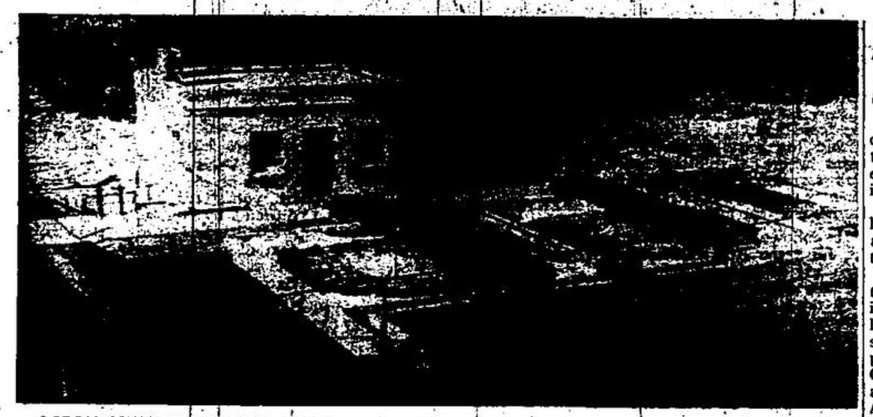
NEW BUSINESS BLOCK at the corner of Mill and John Streets was an addition to the town's business section in 1954. The modern red brick structure was built by Doug Manning, owner of Manning Electric. Also located in the building is Don Bexton's jewellery store and an apartment on the second floor.

Health Unit Serves Acton

Halton county health unit, in operation just 12 years, has an excellent reputation and an enviable record already. There is a branch office on Mill St. from which stems the planning for regular clinics, home visits and school inspections.

Dr. James Mather was director at its inception and Dr. Archie Bull is in charge now. Public health nurses assigned to Acton include Miss Margaret Langtree, Miss Jean Rowe, Miss Marion McAdam and Miss Sheila Harty. Dental hygienist Miss Donna Cranswick made her headquarters here for several years.

1950 was the first full year of a dental health project. Chest X-rays were available here in a mass survey in 1952 and again in 1957. Polio vaccine was first given to school children in 1955.



ACTON SEWAGE DISPOSAL PLANT on the Third Line of Esquesing, went into operation May, 1952. The picture taken on a Monday shows a great deal of bubbles caused by the Monday wash day. Citizens were urged to connect to the sewage system as quickly as possible since the plant would operate more efficiently with a heavier flow of sewage. In May 300 permits had been issued for connection to the system. On the completion of the system it was reported that the plant was one of the most efficient in Ontario. $600,500, in debentures were issued to cover the cost of installation of the system and extensions.

Manufacture Special Refractory Crucibles In Local A. P. Green Fire Brick Plant

In August, 1950, company officials of A. P. Green Fire Brick Company Limited met with Acton Town Council to discuss the availability of local labor and of local housing facilities when they decided to open a manufacturing plant in Acton.

From August to October of that year, plant manager George Barbeau worked with plant personnel that had been hired locally in reconditioning a plant building in preparation to setting up a refractory product production program.

By November 16th, 1950, the first car of crucibles had gone through the kiln and a new local industry which was to serve the crucible needs of the mining industry of Canada was in steady production.

Serious Fire

On August 15th, 1952, the Acton plant was destroyed by fire. While this was a serious blow to the company, steps were taken immediately to rebuild the plant. While temporary production facilities were arranged to take care of current industry requirements, other members of the Acton plant staff set about clearing the rubble of the fire in preparation for the plant rebuilding.

By December of that same year, the rebuilding program was completed and a new plant was reopened by company officials.

Sound Decision

The work of its Acton employees was acknowledged by an open house celebration to show the results of their efforts. The co-operation of the Acton employees at a time such as this proved to company officials that their decision of locating in Acton had been a wise one.

Since then, the Acton plant of A. P. Green Fire Brick Company Ltd. has shown steady, sound growth. Over the years, new products have been added and production facilities have been improved.

Today, the Acton plant is one of three that A. P. Green Fire Brick Company has in Canada manufacturing quality refractory products for the ever growing needs of Canadian industry. W. G. Twyman is the general manager and vice-president of the A. P. Green organization in Canada. A coast-to-coast sales organization is headed by G. M. Bray, general sales manager and vice-president. George Barbeau is Acton plant manager and Orval Chapman is plant foreman.

A. P. Green Fire Brick Company Limited looks forward with confidence to the bright future of the Canadian economy of its progressive Acton organization.

Warren Grove

In the fall of 1953, residents of the "Wartime Housing" voted to name their subdivision Warren Grove. The name was chosen from an earlier unofficial designation to the area.

Added Improvements, Masses Meet Population Expansion

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic church has felt the growth in the town and responded with increased number of Masses and a variety of improvements.

In 1955, Father Morgan began having two Masses every Sunday at both Acton and Georgetown to accommodate parishioners.

The towns of Acton and Georgetown both grew so rapidly that in April, 1956, the Roman Catholic churches were established as separate parishes with resident pastors: Holy Cross church at Georgetown had previously been a mission of St. Joseph's Church, Acton.

Make Survey

His Excellency the Most Reverend J. F. Ryan, Bishop of the Diocese of Hamilton, with the pastor, Rev. Vincent J. Morgan, made a thorough survey of the increase in the Catholic population corresponding to the growth of the towns.

Father Morgan will have completed 19 years of service in Acton next May. He is held in highest regard by his parishioners.

Many Improvements

The church has undergone many improvements in the past decade including new pews, new floor, new side altars, new Stations of the Cross, new electrical fixtures, new oil heating system, and the installation of an electric organ. The vestry has been renovated, the hall retiled and painted and the exterior brick repointed.

Angelus Peals

Since July, 1959 the angelus peals three times a day from the tower of St. Joseph's. The bell is rung automatically by a timing device. The bell, being electronically controlled, can be rung by pressing a lever or handle in the vestry or by pressing a button in the sanctuary.

Families Increase

During the decade, the number of families in the parish has increased from 20 to 25 per cent. Sunday school enrolment is up from 70 at the beginning of 1950 to 110 now. The Jesuit Brothers from Ignatius College in Guelph teach the Sunday School.

In the 1950's there have been 16 weddings performed in the attractive church, and 46 funerals conducted. There have been 191 infant baptisms and 38 adult baptisms, 82 children confirmed and 34 adults confirmed.

Scout Group Committee Active Builds Hall, Boosts Membership

A decade of progress is easily defined as far as Cubs, Scouts, Brownies and Guides are concerned!

It was just four months over 10 years ago — October 3, 1949 — that the scout hall was opened at a ceremony that filled the brand new building to overflowing. The groups finally had a home of their own.

The deed for the land in the school grounds was presented by Tom Jones to Johnny Goy, chairman of the Scout Group Committee. Billy Middleton, leading promoter of the new building, turned it over to trustees Johnny Goy, Wes Wolfe and Dave Dills.

In the decade since, the building has thoroughly proven its worth. Groups were soon cramped for space and in the summer and fall of 1957, a full basement was added and 12 feet of additional space was built on the front.

The hall is in use every week day with two Brownie packs, one Guide troop, two Cub packs and two Scout troops.

Culmination of the decade was the first formation here of a Rover crew for older boys at the beginning of 1960. Its name—the First Billy Middleton Rover Crew—honors a man active in Scout and Scout Group Committee affairs here for many years.

There is a busy Scout and Guide Mothers' Auxiliary.