

Editorial Page

Decoration Day's Growth

It is good to see the growth that the annual Decoration Day event is experiencing and if this year's event is an indication it will be continuing for many years.

The parade, service at the cenotaph and cemetery, very fittingly led to the placing of beautiful geraniums on the graves honoring the fallen of the wars and the veterans who had died since.

We particularly like too, the idea of inviting others to decorate the graves of their relatives many of whom were life long residents of the town or who called the town their home. It seems particularly fitting that the beautiful setting, that is Fairview, should be further enhanced by the annual remembrance that is Decoration Day.

The event has grown from early beginnings when flowers were placed on graves, we believe by the I.O.D.E., and this was expanded to include the many other

local organizations that now participate in making the day important and meaningful.

It is fortunate too that there is such an event to remind us of the Pioneer Cemetery behind Knox church. We don't know just how possible it might be but it would be nice if some part of the main service could be conducted at the Pioneer Cemetery some year although we realize the parade route is already a tiring one.

Decoration Day is proving to be a rather successful "old home day" too with many returning to town for the event feeling sure they will meet some of their friends that might not otherwise be seen.

Decoration Day 1960 was dignified and impressive, it evidenced the work of the committee in its smooth running operation and it was successful in fittingly paying tribute where tribute is due.

Tied for Twelfth

Presumably in the hope of bringing to the polls a higher proportion of eligible voters in this U.S. presidential election year, a reprint of an article from that useful annual, the Information Please Almanac, is being circulated south of the border. Some copies have strayed into Canada, and the facts presented are not without interest.

In a comparison of the percentages of votes cast by those eligible to vote in elections in 16 countries, Canada is ranked 15th, putting up a better show only than the United States. Actually, the Information Please editor is a bit behind the times as far as the Canadian record is concerned. He gives 67 per cent. for Canada as his listing of "the percentage of voters who turned out in recent elections abroad." That figure is correct for Canada's 1953 national election, but in the 1958 election the proportion had improved to 79 per cent. However, even if that most recent figure had been used in the table, Canada would only move from 15th place in the list to a 12-place tie with Norway and Britain.

The turnout of voters in U.S. presidential elections seems very low, until certain domestic factors are taken into consideration. In the 10 elections from 1920 to 1956, the vote varied from a low of 43.6 per cent. of

the potential in 1920 to a high of 62.7 per cent in 1952; in the second Eisenhower election, 1956, the percentage was 60.4. Part of the reason for this poor record is obvious in the statistics of the voting by individual states, in the south the Negro is virtually denied his vote. In 1956, only 22.1 per cent. of eligible voters in Mississippi got to the polls. "Mississippi," the article explains, "requires two years' residence in the state; makes payment of a poll tax a condition for civilian voting; and does not allow registration after the first week of July. It also imposes a literacy test that requires voters to read, write, and interpret reasonably any section of the State Constitution—a requirement susceptible to discrimination on the part of the examiners."

A significant point in the international comparison is that Austria ranks first in proportion of eligible voters exercising their franchise, 95 per cent.; then come Italy, France, Turkey, West Germany, Greece, Indonesia and Israel — and all are well ahead of Canada's best election record. Within the memory of the voting-age citizens in most of these countries there have been times when they had not yet achieved, or had lost, the right to vote. No doubt that is why they now value that right so highly.

Overflow Market

In what was certainly an unrigged television quiz, fifteen students at the University of Manitoba caused a furor by seeming to know more about American than Canadian affairs. The interviewed students were in their first, second, third and fourth years at the university and while all knew that George Washington was the first president of the United States, more than half could not name Canada's first prime minister. Every student identified Davy Crockett as an American frontiersman, but not one of the fifteen could place all four of La Verendrye, Hearne, Champlain and Dollard. More than half failed to name any American poet, writer or novelist, but more than three-quarters could not call to mind any Canadian in those categories. Asked to identify any Canadian magazine, the answers included The Saturday Evening Post, Time, Newsweek and The Times. None of the fifteen could name four Canadian political parties; more than half did not know the date of Confederation.

While the student's lack of knowledge about Canada is regrettable and rather astonishing, their familiarity with things American is hardly surprising. We are influenced by the United States and not by chance, in every field of communication—popular music, magazines, books, motion pictures, radio and television programs. In all these fields the Americans produce more than can be sold in their 180,000,000-population market, and the 17,600,000-population Canadian market is a handy place to dispose of the surplus. The same situation applies to a multiplicity of manufactured articles.

But while the factor of Canada's limited population presents the Americans with few problems as an overflow market, it gives the

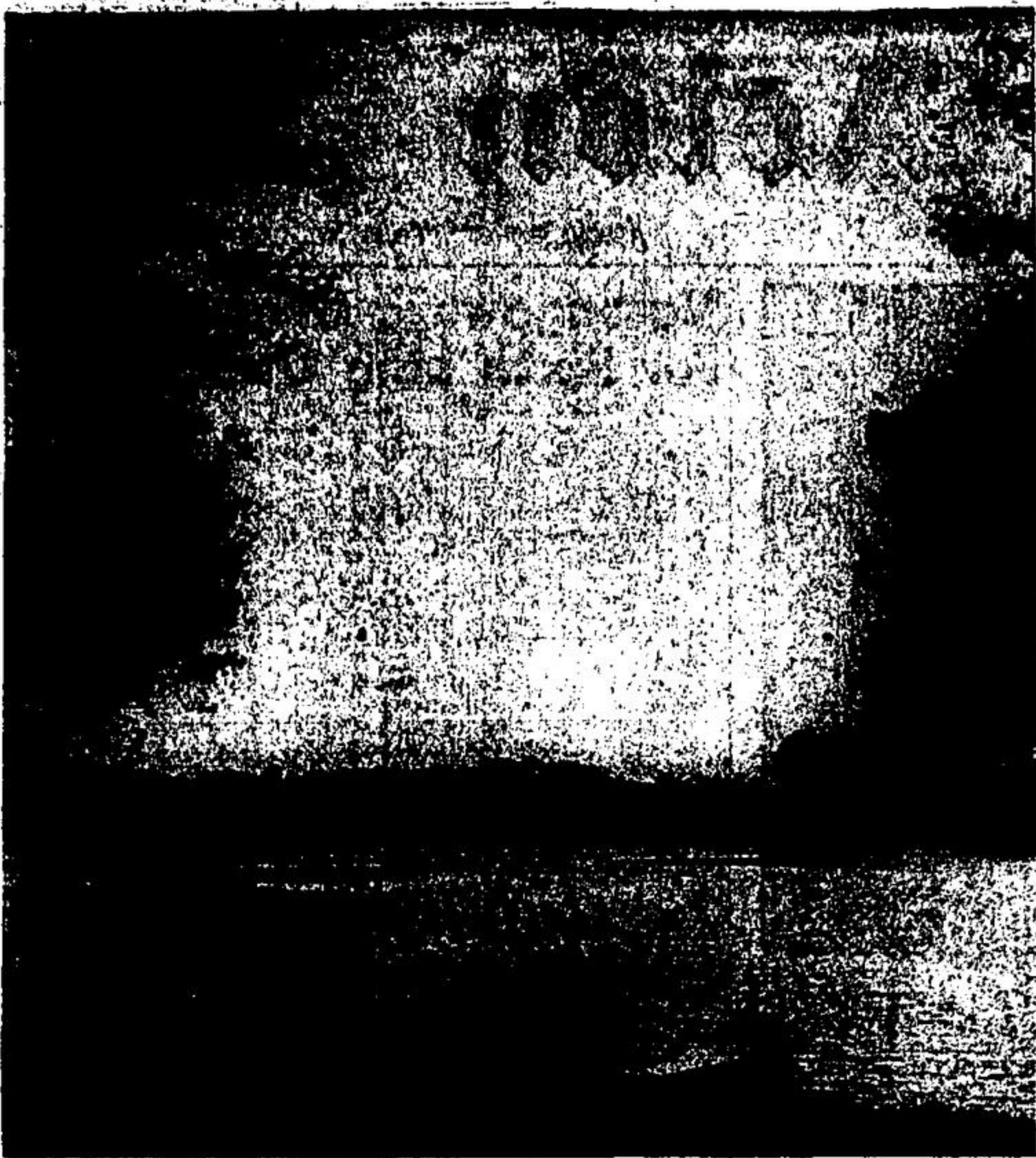
Canadians many problems as a main market. Book publishing is a ready example. On even a really well-known Canadian book about, say, Sir John A. Macdonald, the typesetter is likely to make more money than the author, while the publisher and his shareholders would count themselves fortunate if the venture recovered its cost. With ten times as many potential buyers, as in the United States, many more such volumes could be written.

At some time in their schooling the fifteen Manitoba students must have known the answers to the Canadian questions they flunked. Perhaps they should have learned their lessons better, and perhaps those lessons should have been better taught. But if most Canadians don't know enough about Canada, one reason is the country's relatively small, widely scattered population.

Brief Comments

Oren Arnold: Do you think we are likely to have any inflation? I read where a man recently was paid two dollars an hour to demolish a house he had built in 1930 for three dollars a day.

Hon. Samuel Pettengill: In recent years society has gone nuts on the cult of security guaranteed by government; in short, a nation of parasites. The illusion of the age is that people can vote themselves rich, that social security depends on the promises of politicians, not on the character, competence and courage of men. It is a fable and a fraud that the output of society can be greater than the input of individuals.



—Photo by Esther Taylor

"What Is So Rare"

Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY

This is the time of year when hundreds of thousands of young people across the land have one foot in the air, ready to take a big step. They are the graduates. It's a little sad for older folks in June, as the graduation pictures flower and the year books sprout. It means the old vulture with the scythe has put another notch in our particular post.

But it is comforting to know that the reserves, fresh, strong and well equipped, are being rushed up to support the tattered, weary, front-line troops in the battle of life. We need them.

High school graduates are not so ecstatic about leaving. In fact they're almost reluctant, in many cases. They'd never admit it to their parents, but they've had a ball for the last four or five years. Now the cord must be cut. Friends must be left. The familiar and comforting dependence on parents and teachers is at an end. Life looms ahead, large and faceless. Within them lurks a delicious fear, mingled with the excitement of knowing they are almost men or women, and will have the freedom and responsibility this entails.

I hope nobody tells them, but they're probably going to have to settle for making a living, writing letters to the editor, finding a cure for their hemorrhoids, building a house with a mortgage, and fighting a running, inconclusive battle in the hut, or domestic war.

Graduates! We who are about ready to cry, salute you. May the roses along your pathway have fewer thorns than did ours. Keep a stiff upper lip. Look life squarely between the eyes. And if at first you don't succeed, remember what W. C. Fields said: try, try again, and then quit before you make a damn fool of yourself.

Finishing public school and just busting to get into high school and be real teenagers is the grade eight gang. No nostalgia for them. They liked public school but that's kid stuff now and the sooner they're out, the happier they'll be.

For the boys, it means they will no longer be treated as children, which is the bane of their existence. Now they'll be students. It means they can start sneaking into the pool-room, shaving, giving their parents a little more lip, and getting their hair cut the way they want it. It also means pimples, paying girls' way to the show, and the first, and worst, experience with love. But they don't know that, so they're happy as turkeys.

It's even more exciting for the girls leaving public school. For some reason, girls in grade eight are a foot taller than boys in grade eight. This makes love affairs, in which girls are interested even in grade eight, rather awkward. Moving on means they'll be mixing with real BOYS, their own size, who treat them as members of the opposite sex, and not with stunted demons who wrestle them, push them, trip them, punch them and mock them.

For many of those leaving high school, graduation is surrounded by a special, rosy aura, because they are in love. It may not be deep and lasting, the stuff that will carry them through 50 years of domesticity, but it's just as real, just as painful, just as blissful as any they'll ever experience.

Within a year, the high school sweetheart may be just a pleasant memory, but right now, it's true love, and they burn with it, languish with it, and have their hearts broken by it. They don't remember that the heart is merely a very tough pump, which goes right on pumping after it has been allegedly fractured, split in two, or torn to ribbons by love.

Then we come to the university graduates. Scarcely can they be recognized as the gawky, small town adolescents who went off to college four years ago. They are blasé, well dressed, opinionated and sophisticated. On the outside, at any rate.

These are the people who are going to make a great deal of money, write hit plays and successful novels, find a cure for cancer, build mighty bridges, or win the cold war.

...Dodging 'Round the District

BY ROY DOWNS

GEORGETOWN—Rodeo week is coming, and the whole town is upside down. Mayor (Tennessie) Eric (Raw) Hyde issued a proclamation stating a \$100 fine would be imposed on owners of horses that mess up the Main Street. Police chief "Sheriff Matt" Haley and "Deputy Chester" Scott will team up with the Mayor for a horseback ride in a gala parade along with an impossible posse of Lions club members, who are sponsoring the rodeo. Localities are slated to drop buttons and bows and dress in western garb.

BURLINGTON—Within two years, the Chedoke Expressway (Highway 403) from downtown Hamilton to central Burlington should be completed, planning director Norman Pearson said last week. He predicted it would change the face of Burlington considerably, and its completion would probably mean a "population explosion" in the largely vacant areas of central town.

STREETSVILLE—Toronto Township Reeve Bob Speck says he'll have to stay on duty 24 hours a day to receive coded messages on air raid warnings from the Oakville Emergency Measures centre, but he doesn't know what to do with them. "I understand the coded messages, but no one ever told me what to do when and if I got one," he told township council.

BRAMPTON—Chinguacousy township residents had happy news of a one mill decrease in the general purpose tax levy, but had news followed shortly behind. Because of varying school costs throughout the township, most of which are increased due to new construction, the average township taxpayer will have slightly higher tax bills. You can't win 'em all!

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1910

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 16, 1910.

On Thursday evening about 6.20, the smoke stack at Henderson's saw mill was found to be on fire. Red hot cinders flew out in all directions, alighting on the roof, lumber piles, and dry slabs. A bucket brigade of near-by citizens held these in check until the fire brigade arrived and their powerful streams averted all further danger.

Nearly a year ago the barber shop of Dan Van Norman of Rockwood was burglarized and nearly everything portable was carried off, including an unknown amount of money. Last week the stolen property which included razors, cigars, tobacco and six cents, was found in a farmer's hay loft in the village, where the thief had deposited it and failed to recover it again.

The annual tournament of the Central Lawn Bowling Association will be held in Acton on Tuesday and Wednesday and in view of the tournament, the greens have been improved and enlarged and a sufficient number of rinks can be laid out in order to complete the games in two days. The Acton club will welcome the visitors but warn them they are out to win.

During the council meeting Monday evening, the members reviewed once again the unsafe conditions of the bridge on Main St. near River St. and it was decided to build a new stone and cement bridge to replace the present one.

Two resignations in the school staff were received by the board of education Monday evening. It was decided to re-engage W. H. Stewart as principal at a salary of \$850. Applications for the two vacancies will be received shortly.

Mr. Robert Elgie, who has been ticket agent and day operator at the G.T.R. station here the past three years, has been promoted to the position of agent at Dunnville. All wish him success in his new position.

Thursday of last week was the 25th anniversary of the induction of Rev. A. Blair, B.A., as pastor of the Presbyterian churches in Nassagaweya, and his congregation presented him with a purse containing \$300. in gold.

BACK IN 1940

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, June 13, 1940.

During a meeting of interested citizens Tuesday evening a juvenile ball club was formed and the following officers elected to head the organization: president, Jack Chapman; vice-president, F. MacDonald; secretary-treasurer, G. Masales. The following committee will assist the officers: F. Terry, E. Masters, R. Anderson, H. Walters and A. White.

Another meeting will be called next Wednesday and it is hoped to be able to promote Midget and Juvenile ball in Acton and endeavor to bring on players right here in Acton to give a good ball team to the community.

Amos Mason, Acton, was chosen president Friday evening at the annual meeting of the Halton Conservative Association held in Milton. C. F. Leatherland was also chosen to act as treasurer.

On Monday the regular meeting of the Scout Mothers' Auxiliary was held at the home of Mrs. F. H. McDonald, when routine business was conducted. A social evening followed. A contest conducted by Mrs. Somerville was won by Mrs. J. Adamson and Mrs. Johnson.

Since Acton hasn't any baseball entries this year, the boys who want to play ball are playing in other centres. Norm Morton is on the pitching staff of the Guelph Maple Leafs. He is credited with a win over Brantford.

In the Guelph Juniors, Don Ryder and Johnny Goy are proving a battery of help to the Alerts. Don turned in a one-hit no-run game when Guelph trimmed Brantford 12-0. There are other Acton players on both Guelph teams who are delighting the fans of the Royal City.

Thirty-eight boys and 41 girls answered the call at the initial "learn to swim" campaign which began this week at Fairy Lake. The campaign is under the auspices of the YMCA and is an effort to have every boy and girl between the ages of eight and 15 a good swimmer. Because of the size of the classes, it is almost impossible to give individual instruction.

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The Acton Free Press

Published by the Dills Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.
Founded in 1875 and published every Thursday at 59
Willow St., Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau
of Circulations of the C.W.N.A. and the Ontario-Quebec
Division of the C.W.N.A. Advertising rates on request.
Subscriptions payable in advance. \$3.00 in Canada; \$4.00
in the United States; six months \$17.50; single copies 7c.
Authorized as Second Class Mail. Post Office Department,
Ottawa.
The only paper ever published in Acton
G. A. Dills, Editor-in-Chief
David R. Dills, Managing Editor
BUSINESS AND EDITORIAL OFFICE PHONE 800, ACTON