

# Editorial Page

## County Treasure House

Stories of attic treasures coming to light after years in hiding always have a little story-book touch to them.

But right here in Halton we feel sure the number of such stories could approach the unbelievable.

Suppose a County Museum was developed. County Council actually gave serious thought to the subject for the first time in our recollection last week. Surely such an establishment would provide the key to unlock many historical attic treasures that are now only gathering dust in their separate ways.

We have a copy of the first issue of the Milton Reformer and some early copies of the Halton Journal that we accumulated in our historical research.

We have a series of glass negatives, priceless in historical values, that portray life in Acton at the turn of the century.

Why do we have them? Usually because they were on their way to the junk pile and someone fortunately inquired first if we would care to keep them.

This Friday is Dominion Day. In a few short years, at this Anniversary, we will be marking the Centennial of the Confederation. In other areas plans are already underway to fittingly mark the Centennial of this great young nation.

To begin now on Halton's plans for the Nation's Centennial is not at all ridiculous. It seems to us that no more fitting way could be found than to plan and develop a County Museum that would adequately portray the early life of this section of Ontario.

The early history of Halton is interesting and significant. From the early days of the Indian villages that dotted the country, through the times of early white explorers who buffered extensive fur pulled salmon from the streams and built their log cabins, through the land clearing, the development of mills, and the building of roads, to the present day of air travel, development of Canada's natural waterway, the St. Lawrence and our talk of inter-plane-

tery travel, the history is romantic and significant.

School children today may learn of the history of Ontario from a generalized text book but how much more the imagination could be stimulated if they could see an early horse power, a candle mould, a flat iron, a spinning wheel, an arrowhead, a tomahawk. Knowing that such articles came from this area would indeed bring the history lesson home.

Halton's one attempt at preserving County historical items was made by the Women's Institutes. Today the items are gathered in a display counter in the main lobby of the County Building. They have accumulated their share of dust, but they have been preserved. The display's inadequacies are evident to those who have looked.

In their continuing work the women of the institutes have been compiling Tweeds-muir histories of their specific areas.

It would seem to us a dramatic and opportune time for the Women's Institutes of the county to rally to the cause of a County Museum. Insurmountable though the odds might appear, the project is one in which there is an attainable and worthwhile goal.

It should not be expected that elected officials would not share interest in it. Every assistance possible should be extended in a co-operative effort towards a county museum.

Location is only one of the considerations necessary but it should not be allowed to overshadow the others or impede the progress of the project.

The ladies of the Halton Institutes can make a county museum a reality. With it they could make a rich contribution to the county through its educational and cultural development.

Stories of attic treasures coming to light might indeed be the order of the day. A place to keep the treasures is what is needed and we're glad to hear County Council even discussing it.

## The Challenge of Dominion Day

Friday is Dominion Day and most of us are familiar with the problems which confronted the Fathers of Confederation, the strategies at diplomatic meetings, political hostilities, petty jealousies and selfish interests. We know the factual history which brought about confederation. In short we can say that in 1864 delegates from the Maritime provinces assembled to discuss a maritime union. The Union of 1841 having been frustrated by recurrent instability, prompted the two Canadas to send delegates to this conference to propose a wider union for all of British North America. A conference was convened at Quebec after that year to discuss this proposal and to make recommendations to the Colonial office.

Under the B.N.A. act of 1867 which resulted Upper and Lower Canada (later Ontario and Quebec), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, were united in the Dominion of Canada, with provisions for the entry of other provinces.

But what did the general public of England and the Colonies think before all this came about? People had to realize the problems involved. The London Times early in 1867 tried to show the British people that 1. they would lose an army of 14,000, an army, the general public was told, that was inadequate to the pretensions to be maintained and the work to be done, 2. they would be separated by an ocean and most of the colonial peoples were in the heart of the continent, 3. perpetually, they thought they would have to keep watch and fortify a then hostile border which stretched from ocean to ocean. Most of the Royal Navy would have to be detached for this job, 4. perpetual weakness of England in comparison with other powers by the notoriety of this necessary deduction from Britain's disposable power.

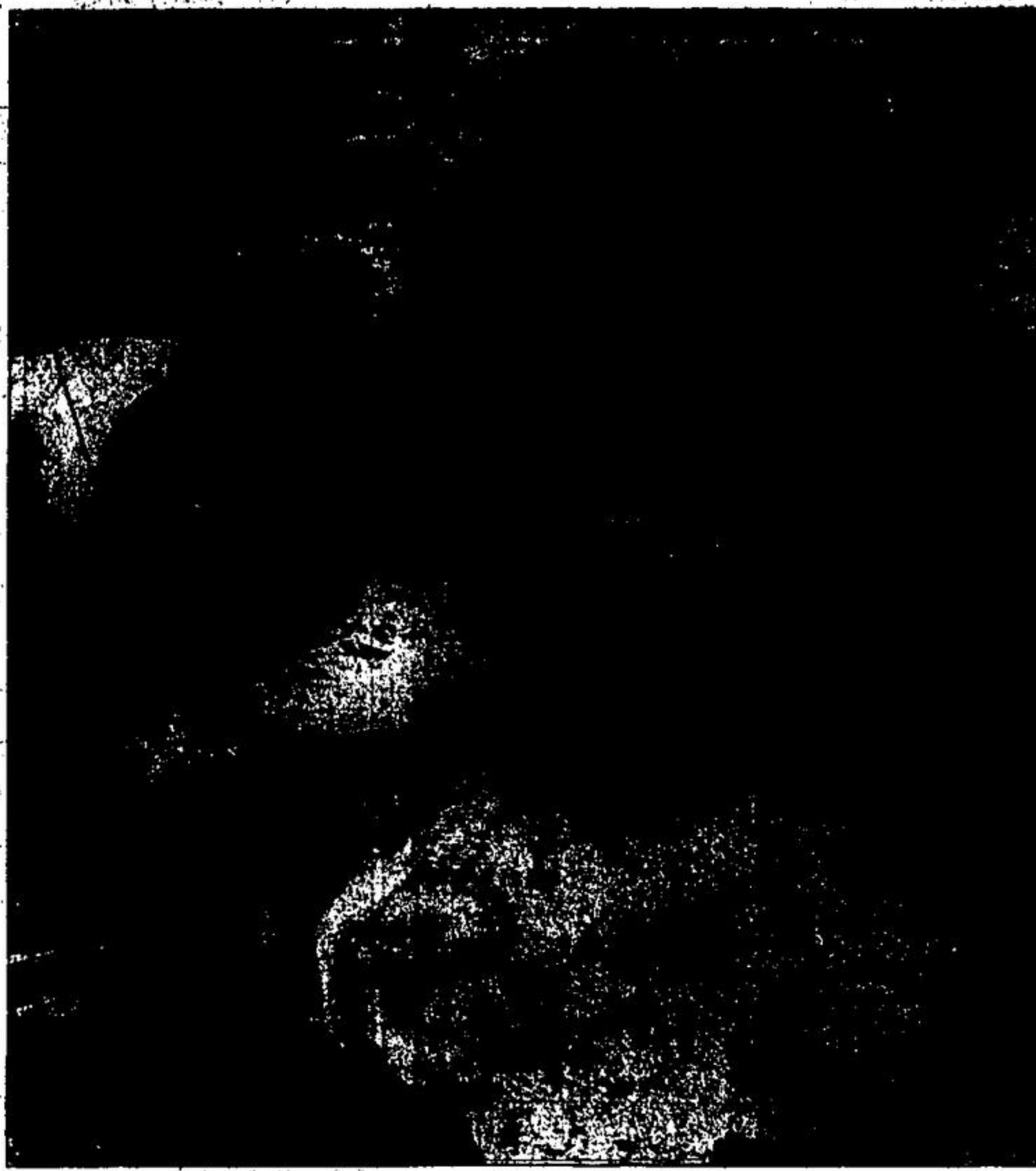
The Times said the Colonies would suffer more, although Britain would bear the brunt and would have to take up the quarrel, and their connection would be the political weakness through which the colonies could be invaded. Any question in which the Colonies may happen to have absolutely no concern,

may become the occasion of an attack, which if not fatal to their independence, would have to be resisted at fearful odds or bought off by intolerable penalties.

If they had to fight the U.S., Britain as the big partner may have the victory but their weaker partner would not be compensated for the actual injuries. These considerations would have hardly been applicable in the days of "Imperial unity and Colonial dependence," said the Times, "but they are everything now." It was for the Colonies to decide. "Responsibility goes with power, and the Colonies now being powerful, are also responsible." The newspaper said the English people were forced to consider what is "natural and spontaneous and therefore inevitable." It felt the Colonies were more like friendly allies rather than partakers of a federal tie. "The States are better known in England than Canada, the latter being seen through the veil of the former. Socially England is connected with the States; politically with Canada."

The Canadian Champion, Halton's only paper at that time said, "no one need to mistake the position of England's great organ of public opinion." Canadian visitors to England said public and private opinion was strongly in favor of our Independence. The Champion hoped the Imperial Government would not even hint at the mistaken policy as indicated by the Times.

We today as Canadians look back on a history filled with pioneers of startling courage and determination. Ideological and physical barriers were overcome by these attributes and today Canada with a relatively small population is one of the "middle powers." But as one peers over this past history, one can see similar problems confronting us today, for example defence, political and economic dependence, and the lack of a distinctive Canadian culture. We can achieve these fully if we take for ourselves the courage and determination of our forefathers. We are overshadowed by an even greater need to burst free and become leaders, not just followers.



—Photo by Esther Taylor

## "Becalmed"

## Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY

We old air force types are resting easier these nights, secure in the knowledge that the great traditions we helped to establish are in safe hands. I've felt this way since I read in the papers the other day about the new pamphlet for air force personnel.

Entitled A Guide to Social Recreation in the Royal Canadian Air Force, it is a 118-page document. They quoted only a few passages from it in the newspaper, stories. But these were enough to convince me that life in the air force these days is just as exciting as ever and a whole lot more fun.

The pamphlet is designed to help the airman get acquainted, be accepted socially, and lose his feeling of personal insignificance. To bring this about and help him feel that he is one of the gang, the booklet suggests some fascinating games that can be played at R.C.A.F. station parties.

Most of these ice-breakers seem to be played on your knees. That's as good a method as any of abolishing stiffness and reserve and levelling differences in rank. Here's one of them. It's called Rabbit. "All kneel on the floor in a circle. The leader asks each one in turn if he knows how to play Rabbit. When they admit they do not, he rises and says: 'Well, I guess we can't play it then, no one knows how.' That would certainly establish an informal, friendly attitude at any party."

Here's another. "All are asked to kneel in a circle to be initiated into the order of Siam. They are requested to repeat after the leader the oath of allegiance: 'Owa Tagoo Siam'. They say it slowly at first, then rapidly. One by one they realize that they are saying 'O what a goose I am.' Hey, wouldn't their faces be red?"

Just one more sample. "All players are told to get in a crouch position on the floor, with their heads down. They are told to repeat after the leader, line by line: 'With all my heart, with all my mind, I know that I stick out behind.' Imagine the roars of laughter, the gay camaraderie this one would produce."

All I can say is that it makes me sick with envy. We sure didn't have any fun like that when I was in the air force. Night after night we'd just sit around the mess and drink beer and argue. Heck, sometimes we'd have to get right out of the mess and cycle five miles through the blackout to a pub so we could get into a lively game of shove ha'penny.

Oh, we did have a few old games that might crop up once in a while at a station party. But they were pretty effeminate, badly organized efforts, compared to Rabbit, for example. We did have one, though, that was played on hands and knees, like these new ones.

Two large, preferably thick-headed young pilots were chosen. Each was given a weapon, consisting of newspapers or magazines, tightly rolled. They were blindfolded. Then, on hands and knees, they stalked each other. Idea was to find your opponent and club him unconscious. First to draw blood was the winner, and the loser had to buy a round for all hands.

Then there was Boomerang. This was played only when most of the players were leaving first thing in the morning for a new station. First, you gathered all the plates and saucers from the dining room. Two teams were picked and each retired hastily behind a barricade consisting of the piano or a large table turned on its side. Then you skinned a plate every time one of the opposing team stuck his head up. You'd get one right back at you, hence the name Boomerang. This was a jolly, cheerful game designed not only to break down the traditional reserve of the fighter pilot, but also every window in the place.

And of course, there was Mess Rigger. This was a high-spirited game in which any number could take part. Having to gallop over the chisterfields and around the tables made it more interesting. The smallest pilot in the mess was used as a ball and the game ended when somebody was successful in drop-kicking him over the bar.

I know that sounds like pretty anemic stuff compared to the red-blooded virility of Owa Tagoo Siam, but it wasn't our fault that we were born 20 years too soon.

## Our Birthday, Too

Dominion Day has a special significance for the Free Press because it was on Dominion Day 1875 that Joseph Hacking rolled the first issues from his press in Matthews Hall.

Tomorrow is the completion of 85 years. Next week's issue will launch another year.

One can only imagine what changes have taken place in the eight and a half decades that have been recorded by the columns of the Acton Free Press; what community advancements there have been. No one person can even recall all the changes, that have taken place within the Free Press itself.

At anniversaries though there is a tendency to look forward, look forward to changes that are inevitable in the role of a weekly newspaper, changes in the technical production of pages, changes not for the sake of change but changes towards improved standards.

Inevitably at anniversaries we reassess the role of a weekly newspaper in a community. We might even wonder if it is necessary, if it serves a useful function, if it fills a need. We sincerely think a community without a weekly would be a weaker community. Its natural lines of communication would be lost, its record of community life would be cut off. Probably that's why at anniversary time each year we stop to reassess and appraise the role of a weekly.

Like any business, the publication of a weekly is often a discouraging task. People have strong likes and dislikes in what they read, advertisers don't always find the pages of a weekly of sufficient value to merit use, outspoken editorials are not always appreciated. Like any business it can be discouraging.

But, then too, like any business it has its compensations. The occasional word of appreciation, the feeling of satisfaction at seeing a community project completed, the thrill in announcing new industries, and often the opportunity to be helpful in smaller ways to the life and progress of the community.

With 85 years behind it we sincerely hope it will continue for another 85 at least. With the much appreciated help of correspondents who faithfully record the news of their districts, the readers who find the Free Press a good paper to read and the advertisers who feel their message can best be carried in the town's weekly, the Free Press can look forward to a long life of service.

## Summer Party Held on Lawn

Mrs. Roy Brown of West Bower Avenue was hostess to a delightful summer euchre party last Thursday afternoon. The event was held on the back lawn, shaded with lovely trees and surrounded with pretty flowers.

Mr. Brown had added a colorful touch with red and white and blue streamers floating in the breezes and also with insect spray made sure no mosquitoes or bugs were around to bother the guests.

Prize Winners  
There were seven tables and prizes were presented the following: lone hands, Mrs. McHugh Sr., high scores to Mr. Milton and Mrs. George Fryer; consolation to Mrs. Lorne Dunn and Mrs. Geo. Lazenby; lucky draw to Mrs. B. Drey and Mrs. C. Mapleview.

The guests included members of the Acton W.I. and several friends and neighbors.

## Anniversary of Return

Mrs. Brown assisted by some of the ladies served a delicious lunch and said she was really celebrating the sixth anniversary of her return to the old town where she and her husband had spent the early years of their life. On behalf of the guests Mrs. F. Anderson expressed the pleasure of everyone for such a delightful afternoon and all were pleased they had come back to Acton to enjoy their retirement.

# THE GOOD OLD DAYS

## BACK IN 1910

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 7, 1910.

Following a despatch which appeared in a Toronto newspaper announcing that Beardmore and Company were moving their Acton plant to Bracebridge, the Free Press interviewed Mr. W. D. Beardmore, the head of the Beardmore interests here. Mr. Beardmore characterized the report as most absurd and said, "Does anyone think we are foolish enough to sacrifice our large interests here? Why, instead of removing, we are busily engaged in enlarging our present facilities at the cost of thousands of dollars." Mr. Beardmore noted that Bracebridge council appreciated the business value of the tannery in Bracebridge but no thought had ever been given to moving the works away from Acton.

The mercury descended 30 degrees in two hours on Sunday evening after a sweltering fortnight. The change was a most agreeable one.

The Royal City Lawn Bowling club held their annual tournament beginning Monday and 31 rinks are taking part, including two from Acton. Mr. Lehman and Mr. Gold from Acton are skipping the two entries from here and reports of the first games played have been favorable although near the end of the tournament they fell behind somewhat. The local bowlers put up a good show and provided plenty of competition for other bowlers.

Mr. Thomas Pappin brought to the Free Press on Monday a very fine sample of Red Clawson fall wheat, which he picked at random in a 20 acre field of Mr. James Dobbie on the fourth line. The stalks measure 56 inches. The field throughout is an exceptionally fine crop.

During the meeting of the Board of Education Monday evening in the town hall, resignations were received from Misses Kate Kennedy and Edith Nicklin. The board expressed their regret in losing these two valued teachers. It was also agreed to accept the application of Miss Ena Pearson for the teaching staff at a salary of \$400 per annum.

## BACK IN 1940

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, July 4, 1940.

Hughes Cleaver, M. P., was guest speaker during the Lorne school reunion on Monday when over 1,000 attended the affair. This was the first get-together since the school was erected in 1882 and some of the pupils who attended the school the first year were present to join with friends and reminisce over days gone by. The afternoon program consisted of games and races for everyone and a picnic lunch topped off the day's activities.

Knox church Sunday school held their annual picnic at Stanley Park, Erin, on Wednesday last and in spite of the uncertain weather, a large turnout enjoyed the program. Quite a number of youngsters and grown-ups participated in the races and games and sat down to a picnic lunch.

Everyone is ready for the first draw in the War Savings Stamp contest being sponsored by Acton merchants and this Saturday a large crowd is expected to attend as coupons are dropped in to a large drum and numbers picked out announcing the prize winners. Winners must be present to receive their War Savings Stamps and are allowed just two minutes after their name is called to collect the prize.

Miss Margaret Arnold, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Arnold, and Mr. Jack Graham, son of W. K. Graham, Acton, are among the successful students of Western University, London, this year. Both have passed their third year in the arts course.

June Talbot, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Talbot, successfully passed her Grade 111 piano examination with honors. June is a pupil of Mrs. L. A. Worden.

G. A. Dills, editor of the Free Press, received the awards won by the paper during the annual convention in Calgary, Alberta, recently—first prize for best front page, third for editorial, and fifth for all-round newspaper.

A bombing plane made a forced landing near Opeing Saturday. Many are viewing the plane.

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### TRAVELLERS' GUIDE

### GRAY COACH LINES

### COACHES LEAVE ACTON

Daylight Saving Time  
Eastbound  
8:33 a.m. (Daily except Sun. and  
Hul.); 8:58 a.m.; 11:33 a.m.; 2:08 p.m.;  
5:08 p.m.; 8:33 p.m.; 8:33 p.m.; 10:08  
p.m. (Sun. and Hul.)  
Westbound  
10:27 a.m.; 12:57 p.m.; 2:57 p.m.;  
5:27 p.m.; 7:27 p.m.; 9:13 p.m.; 11:23  
p.m.; 11:2 a.m. (Fri., Sat., Sun. and  
Hul.)

### CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS

### Standard Time

Westbound  
Daily except Sunday 5:44 a.m.;  
Daily except Sunday 9:13 a.m.;  
(flagstop); 1:14 p.m.; Sunday only  
8:01 p.m.; Daily except Sunday Flyer  
at Georgetown 8:21 p.m.; Daily  
Flyer at Georgetown 10:08 p.m.

### Westbound

Daily 12:29 a.m.; Daily except  
Sunday 8:29 a.m.; 9:44 a.m.;  
Saturday only 1:27 p.m.; Daily  
only 1:56 a.m. (flagstop); Sunday  
only Flyer at Guelph 1:28 p.m.;  
Daily except Sat. and Sun. 1:17  
p.m.

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David R. Dills, Managing Editor

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