

Editorial Page

Working Against Odds

Citizens generally will welcome the fact that Acton arena will apparently be operating this year even though the budget is causing some concern.

Those who would be expected to applaud the operation most loudly are the dozens of youngsters who will be playing hockey and skating there.

Strangely enough this appreciation seems rather shallow with some. Damage done by vandals at the arena recently included breaking the rear doors, tearing off a sheet of the new siding and leaving lights burning.

It has been quite sufficiently pointed out that necessary repairs, following the collapse of the curling rink roof, left only about \$500 in the operating budget for the arena. There have been many expressions of concern about the future of the arena but somewhere along the line this information has failed to penetrate the thinking of the vandals who still find expression in destruction.

A Board Decision

The decision as to whether the new program of driving instruction for schools is to be adopted lies with local high school boards.

The course has been drawn up by the department of transport and that department will supply text books and certain mechanical equipment. The course would be conducted outside of regular school hours and be voluntary.

Boards who participate receive grants from the Department of Education on the same basis as the department now pays towards night school.

Quite basically we're opposed to cluttering up school curriculums with more and more subjects but this is clearly in a field by

It is not difficult to appreciate the problem town fathers face in balancing budgets, keeping taxes to a minimum and still operate all the desired facilities in the face of wasteful vandalism.

The big difficulty is in getting the message and the problem in front of those who choose to destroy rather than build.

Certainly editorials won't reach them but perhaps somewhere along the line parents can get the point across that the waste is one that can't continue if the arena is to continue.

In a community like Acton we can't afford to adopt the "who cares" philosophy so prevalent in "modern" thinking. No community was ever built or ever maintained on that kind of thinking.

We all care whether the arena operates and similarly we're unhappy when someone cares to destroy "our" property. Let's find that line of communication and reach those who haven't yet adopted their role of citizenship.

It's almost necessary for survival in this highly mobilized age.

Like most problems, however, it is not one that can be overcome by a "yes it's a good idea". All instructors in the course have to be licensed by the Department of Transport and that after having completed a course. As far as we know no qualified instructor is available in the local high school if the Board did decide to offer the course.

It is something to plan for, however. The sooner we can get a generation mentally and physically prepared for proper and safe driving, the sooner we'll cut the needless waste of lives and dollars on our Canadian highways.

Which Way to Move

Building for municipalities in this day and area of progress, changing municipal boundaries, changing uses and increasing facilities presents its problems as the Building Committee of county council is aware.

Faced originally with finding accommodation for expanding county administrative offices the building committee and county council have now been advised by the Halton Law Association that new quarters are also required for the administration of justice.

In their brief to county council last week the lawyers reported an architect had declared renovations of the present stone building, to accommodate justice administration alone, impractical.

There are many factors to indicate the eventual result of it all will be a complete relocation of county facilities to a 10 acre

site recently purchased immediately north of Milton. Perhaps this is a natural evolution but before such an extensive and expensive course is settled on, the boundary turmoil in the county should be a great deal more settled.

Amalgamation of Oakville and sections of Trafalgar, the already existing "big town" Burlington are factors that can weigh heavily on the future of Halton County. Elevation of one of these to city status would drastically affect Halton's taxing area.

The way is not clear cut or the decision easy on the direction in which the Building Committee of County Council should move. The already approved order for preliminary sketches of a building to house county administration and justice may indicate more clearly the price tag on the project. And that may be one of the greatest determining factors.

Taken for Granted

We often take for granted those things that are almost automatic. Mailing facilities are a classic example. The post office plays a vital role in modern day business and communication yet how seldom we give it much thought.

Actually this year marks the tercentenary of the birth of the British post office with the passage of the Charles II Act of 1660 establishing the "general letter office."

Although the carrying and delivering of letters is an ancient occupation — there are several references to it in the Bible — it was not until 1935 that Charles I put the delivery of mail on a regular footing in Britain.

He made it possible for the great public to send their letters almost anywhere in England and Wales by his "post-boys," provided that the postal costs, depending on the size of the letter and the distance carried, were paid.

The post boys carried the letters on horseback from post office to post office. They did not collect them from letter boxes or deliver them at houses.

The citizen of those days had to take his letter to the post office, or send it there by messenger.

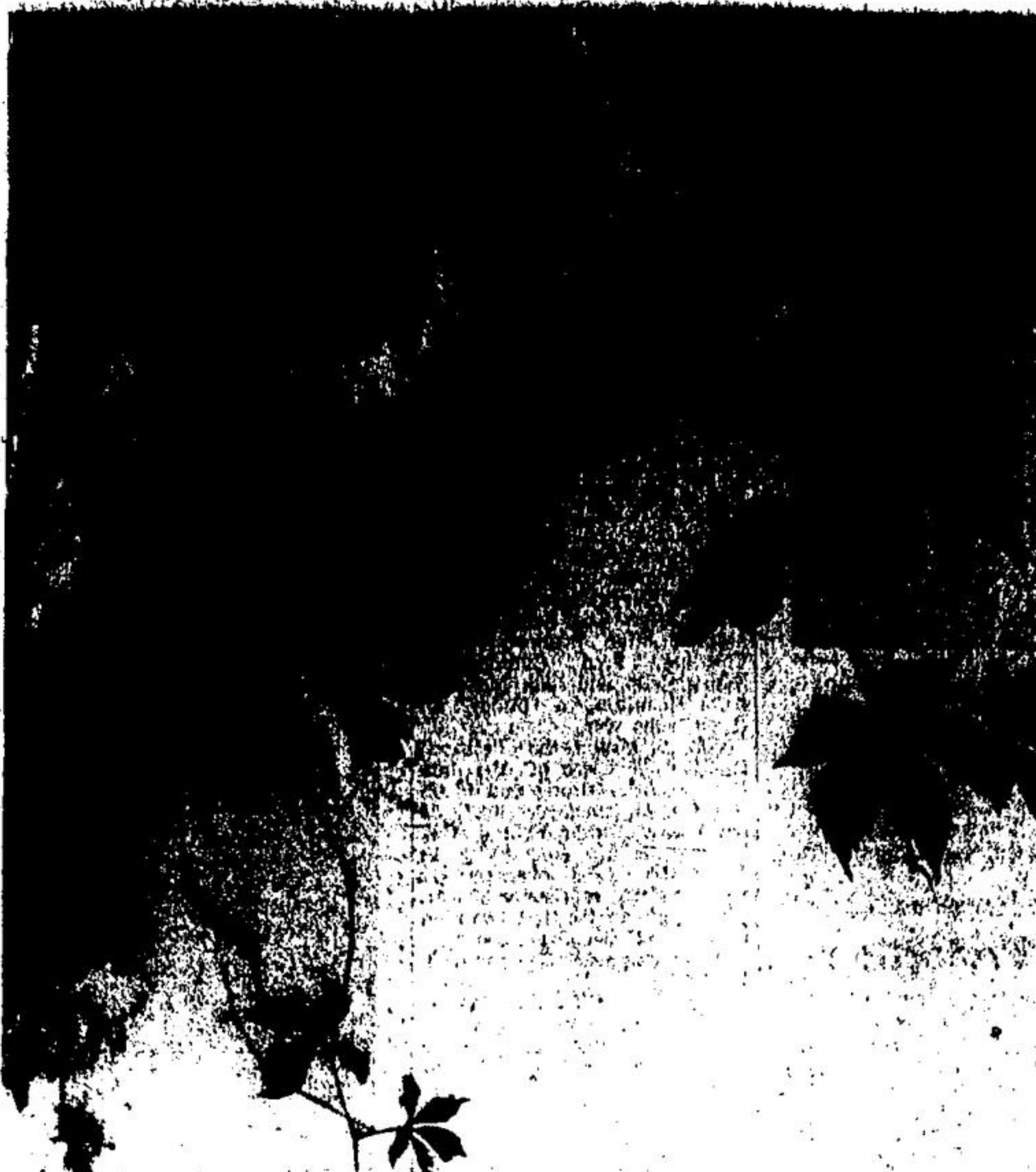
At the other end of its journey, the letter would be kept at the post office until claimed by the person to whom it was addressed. As a rule, postage was paid by the person who collected it.

The addresses on the letters were often ambiguous. Houses in those days were not numbered and many streets had no names. A typical example of the way in which most letters were addressed 300 years ago is this legend, taken from a letter sent in 1774: "Delyer to Thomas Paxton, gentleman, at the Sign of the Golden Cross or if he is not there at his lodgings near the Stock Market, London."

The writer sometimes added "God preserve you" and if the letter was urgent, he would write across the front "haste post haste, for life for life."

Not infrequently he would add a drawing of the galleys — in case the post boy could not read.

In those early days, envelopes were not used and postage stamps were unknown. The letters simply were folded over and sealed with sealing wax, the postage to be paid being written by the postmaster in red or black ink across the address.



"Gypsy Pattern"

—Photo by Esther Taylor

Sugar and Spice...

BY BILL SMILEY

Well, the school board hasn't had me on the carpet yet for that last column, which urged the abolition of religious instruction from the curriculum. Maybe it's just because they haven't had a meeting in the meantime. Before they do, I might as well unload all the other bees I have about the educational system.

Its major flaw is that it costs money. Municipal councils wail with increasing regularity that the economy of Endsville is being wrecked by those madmen on the school board. Educators observe with equal monotony that we spend more on smokes, or liquor, than we do on schooling.

Most of us who have children don't kick too much. After all, if you have garbage, you expect the cost of its pickup to be added to your taxes. But when a farmer retires and moves to town, it hurts when he finds that half his tax bill is made up of education costs. He forgets, of course, that his grandchildren who live in the city are being educated at tremendous cost, and half the tab is picked up by some poor old trout who is trying to hang onto her house on the old age pension and the income from her husband's \$4,000 insurance policy.

Another thing wrong is the tremendous waste. Every day, skilled teachers are found climbing the walls after trying to insert in some Neanderthal brain the rudiments of learning. Apparently there are to be no hewers of wood or drawers of water in this brave, new Canada. In this democracy of ours, it seems that you can't scrub a floor or fill a gas tank unless you are able to identify an intransitive verb. You are not able to carry a plank from here to there unless you are 16 and have learned more mathematics than I knew when I was living a \$50,000 apartment in the service of his late Majesty, Gen. V.I. You can't even have a baby until you've made a weed collection or taken some options.

Then there's this business, for the teacher, of being "on stage" all the time. Every classroom should have a little alcove to which a teacher could retreat, at least once a period, and make sure his fly is buttoned, or her slip isn't showing.

It's 35 to one, and I have a lot more sympathy now for some of those drill sergeants I hated so intensely in the air force. The other day, for example, the kids were killing themselves laughing

at me, and I didn't even know what was going on.

I'd asked them to build a portrait of Brutus, from the play "Julius Caesar," by giving them imaginary details of his appearance. I asked a boy first, and after shuffling and snuffling for four minutes, he blurted, "Well, he's medium height and medium weight." A dazzling thrust of imagination, as you can see. I asked a girl to add to the picture. She suggested he had dark brown hair. Immediately, there was a class snicker, and several kids hollered, "No! He has gravis hair, sorta curly."

So I wrote that down, scowling at them about the snicker. Next kid said Brutus had a sort of red face. It didn't sound much like a Roman senator to me, but I put it on the blackboard, in

Grass Fire Cannot Improve Lawn, Yard

Don't start a grass fire in the belief it will improve your lawn or backyard. The result may seem to be "greener" grass—and quicker—but the disadvantages far outweigh the advantages. Fields or other patches of dead grass should not be burned off just for the sake of doing it. The dead leaves, grass, twigs etc. will eventually rot and return to the soil to assist in building it up to support more paving growth such as trees.

These early fires destroy all near growth and, if any area is continually reburned, some nutrients from the decayed materials are lost to smoke, with the result that the soil may become poor and support little growth outside of weeds and brush," they declared.

the midst of another wave of giggling. Another volunteered that Brutus had a big nose, and the entire class dissolved into hilarity. I got pretty sore, and told them they'd probably fail in their examination, and such like. It wasn't until they'd left, still chortling, that I looked at the portrait they'd drawn in words, and realized that they were describing, with the utmost glee, their gravis-haired, red-faced, big-nosed teacher.

Another thing wrong with the educational system is that there are too many common people getting into the teaching profession. When I was a kid, teachers knew their place. When the last lout was released from the last detention, about a quarter to six, the teacher hurried nervously home, eyes fixed carefully on the ground. You know what some of them have the nerve to do nowadays? They hunt, fish, play golf, have a smash, drive a nice car. They act just as though they were like other people, and I think it's time somebody put a stop to it.

The only other major complaint I have concerns the teacherly of the students. I spend hours telling my wife what a delightful, intelligent, well-mannered young girl is Susan, and what an utterly irresponsible, insolent young monster is Sam. Then we're downtown. We go into the supermarket. The "monster" is working there, after school. He smiles broadly, carols "Hello, sir" and hustles around giving me the super service. My wife says: "That's one of the nicest boys I've ever met." We come out of the store. And flying past on the rear seat of a motor cycle thumbing her nose at me is delightful, intelligent, well-mannered Susan.

...Dodging 'Round the District

BY ROY DOWNS

MILTON—Ice is in the arena (artificial ice, of course) and Saturday night the first skating of the season was enjoyed, while hockey practice got underway there Sunday. This week a hockey school was opened for youngsters.

STRETSVILLE—There may not be a pie in the sky, but there are rewards on the rooftops says a local car dealer. With a flair of showmanship unrivalled by Barnum and Bailey he hosted four cars to rooftops in a new subdivision and reports Canada's first rooftop car sale was transacted there last week when a customer clamored up, inspected, and bought a car.

BURLINGTON—Local students have shown no interest in a \$100 scholarship donated by the Burlington and District Kennel Club. The scholarship is for students intending to enter Ontario Veterinary College at Guelph, but to date no Grade 13 student has accepted it.

GEORGETOWN—Elections are a few weeks off yet, but the DeLorex Ratepayers already have their candidates chosen. First men to indicate their intention to seek office as councillors for next year are Bob Burke and Jim Brown who have both been given the backing of the multi-member association of ratepayers in Georgetown's new DeLorex area.

ORANGEVILLE—Cannon, cannon, who's got the cannon? One of four cannons purchased by the county and stored on the Legion Hall grounds for use as decorations on the courthouse grounds, was removed sometime recently and everybody's in a quandry. It is rumored an Army truck hauled the big gun away — but where, nobody knows.

BRAMPTON—This town is faced with the problem of whether or not to amalgamate the present public and high school boards into one Board of Education, feeds D. Earle McInnis, vice-chairman of the public school board. He said it is essential that the overall picture be viewed realistically before action is taken.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1910

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, October 20, 1910

During council meeting Monday night contractor H. E. Croft, of Guelph, was engaged to lay the new pavement on the widened portion of Mill Street. The building on the Artburn and Second properties are being moved back to the widened street line and it is expected before frost sets in, this portion will be widened from six to eight feet and a new pavement laid to replace the old worn out blank walk.

On Monday last a caretaker Harvey had completed the digging of a grave at Fairview Cemetery and had climbed out, a large section of the earth at the side, weighing a ton caved in. The grave had been dug between two others and was therefore not solid.

Mr. A. J. Lehman, of the Dominion Hotel, was charged before Mr. H. P. Moore and Reeve Hynds on Tuesday evening that he did unlawfully keep intoxicating liquor for sale, trade or barter therein on the 20th September. This was the result of the provincial inspector on the above date when samples of the beverage on tap at the bar and stored in the cellar were taken.

The result of the analysis by the provincial Analyst of the samples taken were: Kuntz hall, 4.06 per cent; Kuntz beer, 7.51 per cent; Gobals beer, 1.75 per cent; Cider, 5.15 per cent; unfermented port wine, 8.83 per cent. As the liquor laws make the maximum per centages of alcohol contained in liquor kept for sale in local options district 2 1/2 per cent, it will be seen that all liquors but one were above the average.

The managers of the Boy Scouts, have secured the brick building on Mill Street across from Hill's weight scales, for a drill hall and recreation room. Turnips are coming in freely to market this week and the price is only ten cents per bushel. City engineer Hutchinson of Guelph, was in town this week, for the street line for last properties where Mill Street is being widened.

BACK IN 1940

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, October 24, 1940

Transfer of the Mason Kitting building on Willow Street was completed this week and Baxter Laboratories are presently renovating the inside to meet their requirements. Some equipment has been moved. In it is expected the Company will be in operation at the Acton site sometime next month.

The committee in charge of the Spiffie Carnival met last night in hear details and wind up the affairs. Reeve Chalmers presided and heard a favorable report given when it was learned that net proceeds amounted to \$1,009.94. This money will be sent to Mayor Bickett, of Acton, England, to assist in the fund being raised to purchase a spitfire.

A very pretty wedding was solemnized between Charlotte Leckie, third daughter of Mr. Earl Marshall and the late Mrs. Marshall and Charles Henry "Mick", elder son of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Holmes, by the Reverend E. A. Brooks, St. Alban's Church in Acton, on Saturday, October 19, 1940.

During the past week Win Halliday and Son, Toronto, has purchased the frame store and land on Mill Street between A. B. McLean's barber shop and E. J. Hassard's drug store. The building and land were formerly owned by J. E. Patten.

Mr. Halliday has taken out a building permit for the erection of a one story building. Details of the prospective tenant or owner of the building, when completed, are not known. This building is the last frame front on Mill Street business building.

Good congregations joined in the 97th Anniversary Services of Acton Baptist church here last Sunday. It proved an occasion of deep interest, not only for the congregation but throughout the community. Force Electric bowlers were again successful in their play at Guelph and came home with a victory against the first place leaders Royal Hotel, when they knocked them out of top spot with a 5-2 victory.

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The Acton Free Press

Published by the Dilks 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 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 \$1.75; single copies 7c.
Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department,
Ottawa.

The only paper ever published in Acton

G. A. Dilks, Editor-in-Chief

David R. Dilks, Managing Editor

BUSINESS AND EDITORIAL OFFICE PHONE 600, ACTON