

Citation read at Civic Night banquet honors Citizen of the Year, Fred L. Wright

The citation to the Citizen of the Year, Fred Wright, was written by former neighbor Miss Esther Taylor with her usual verve and humor. Rising to address Mr. Wright and his wife at the Civic Night dinner Thursday she read:

Acton's 1966 Citizen of the Year and his lady were Second-Liners in high standing.

The term for all its sportive connotation had nothing to do with rugby or football. A second-Liner lived on the northern part of Main St. Long-term residency was only one qualification for membership in an unofficial club, embracing town and farm Actonites up to the old Brick Church.

Neighborhoodness in the old-fashioned sense was a prime requisite. On this count, no one scored higher than Fred and Edith Wright.

As gold-ribbon Second-Liners, the friendly couple, with their English accent and droll sense of humor, won the affection and respect of kids as well as adults on the town's vintage street.

Their firm-textured neighborhoodness withstood all manner of strain and stresses that would spell ruination for contemporary versions of the same character fabric. The Depression years produced some inventive young hellions and the Second Line had its share.

When a lean-logging canine, pet of four such urchins (female) nabbed the Wrights' Sunday roast — and a lemon pie — in a single raid, news of the shocking crime literally broke the sound barrier!

Least perturbed, were the dinnerless Wrights and young son Norman. The teaking accomplices and their Fagan colleague pleaded guilty — expecting the worst. The worst turned out to be a mild reprimand (with an undercurrent of amusement) plus the butter tart treatment, one for each sinner, including the pilfering pooch.

On a street renowned for its good cooks, no one whopped up more delicious butter tarts than Edith Wright. And no one was more lavish with hand-outs to youngsters with bottomless breadbaskets.

For an ex-Second-Liner, commissioner to write this year's Chamber of Commerce Citizen citation, the stolen roast episode is typical of the Fred Wright story.

One can dispose with the conventional honor-and-pleasure bromide. This goes without saying in a 40-year association with Acton's newest Citizen of the Year.

To do justice to the lad from Kendal, Westmorland, England, and the Isle of Man, in a few words — the main point of the issue. It poses a walloping challenge.

Fred Wright is 73. Some 60 of these years have been spent in Acton. In that time, a citizen of such calibre can pack a tremendous amount of living.

Part of Mr. Wright's unstinting community service is on record. It tells only part of the story.

For a solid start: Branch 179, Royal Canadian Legion, Legionnaire Wright served 20 years as secretary of the Acton branch, which he helped to organize in 1932. This makes him a charter member, and the Dominion Command conferred a life membership on Ex-Sergt. F. L. Wright.

As service officer, his duties ranged from helping pension applicants to voluntary commitments, such as meeting the homecoming Acton servicemen after the Second World War. By actual count he greeted 165 at Toronto, Hamilton and London.

"I didn't miss one — except my own son, who went on to Hamilton," he recalls ruefully.

During the Hungry Thirties, when money faced the same plight as the Passenger Pigeon, Fred L. Wright inherited half a dozen lean organizational bank books. He was treasurer of Knox Presbyterian Church, and Acton Fall Fair Board's Depression secretary-treasurer both for 10 years.

In the role of Acton YMCA Board secretary, he helped to nurse the infant organization after the building went up in 1935.

He is a charter member of Acton Rotary Club and belongs to the Chamber of Commerce.

His multiple unpaid treasurer jobs necessitated frequent trips to the Bank



SMILING CITIZEN OF THE YEAR, Fred L. Wright is circled by daughter-in-law Mrs. Norman Wright, grandchildren Carolyn, Valerie and David, and son Norman of Guelph, following the Civic Night dinner last Thursday. Mrs. Wright, who has been ill, left early.

—Staff Photo

of Montreal, where he made the first deposit when the bank reopened in new quarters in 1960.

Mr. Wright also claims the distinction of being the number one depositor 49 years earlier at the opening of the old Merchants Bank across Mill St.

The Second World War found Fred Wright up to his tie (McIntyre hunting tartan) in Victory Loan campaigns and other community war efforts. He earned star salesman rating in north Halton, selling 80 per cent of the county's Victory Bonds.

In proof of the maxim: "If you want

a job done give it to a busy man", during the last war, Mr. Wright handled the Farm Labor Force in conjunction with Acton council and Halton Federation of Agriculture.

His boyhood links with Acton and district farmers accounted for two stints as Reunion secretary July 1930, and again five years later for Dublin School Old Boys and Girls.

Younger Actonites associate Mr. Citizen 1966 with the town's Junior Pipe Band he helped to organize, finance and shepherd. This group, a source of tremendous pride to the community, was dis-

banded after leader Phil Caddick left town.

Fred Wright comes honestly by his love of pipe music. The Wrights are a sept of the McIntyre clan. They were artisans as the name implies. The clan motto is "Per Ardua", by the heights, or, colloquially, "hard, uphill work". An infusion of Irish and Manx blood provided the Celtic strain in his make-up.

Among Mr. Wright's favorite family pictures are colored photos of son Norman and himself in the uniform of Guelph Pipe Band. Father is president and Norman, 43, a drum major, has belonged for 15 years. David Wright, youngest of three grandchildren, is keeping up the family tradition as Guelph Junior Piper.

More on the family side: granddaughter Carolyn is a nurse in training at Hamilton General Hospital. Valerie attends John F. Ross C.V.I.

By tradition, if Acton C. of C. Citizen of the Year boasts a wife, her share of the award is a bouquet of roses. This year's winner would be the first to endorse the floral tribute.

The boy from Kendal married a girl from the same town whom he met for the first time on leave from France.

"It was a lucky meeting. I have considered myself lucky ever since," says Mr. Citizen, 1966.

Fred Wright's birth in Kendal happened — or so he claims — on a whim of the stork. "I could just as easily have been born in Plymouth."

The family moved to the Isle of Man where his parents died when Fred was eight. The next move was to Toronto, Canada, with two sisters and a brother; and then to the Acton district for a stint of farming as a sprout of a hired hand.

Carpentering figured in the early chapters of the Fred Wright story. He apprenticed with J. B. Mackenzie, later returning to the firm as an estimator and appraiser. His farming, carpentering and bookkeeping experience proved very useful when he launched into the real estate business combining it with his insurance agency.

Mr. Wright has been hailed as the Dean of Acton insurance and real estate agents, a well earned title.

Fred Wright was 21 when the First World War erupted. He enlisted from Acton with the Lorne Scots, to join the 4th Infantry Battalion "the Mad Fourth".

Number 11187 Private Wright landed on Trafalgar Day at Plymouth, October 21, 1914. He was in the trenches early the next year. "For gallant and distinguished services on the field" in the Battle of Ypres, he earned mention in a despatch from Field Marshal Sir John D. F. French. The citation, dated May 31 was presented to the Acton private in 1919. It bears the signature of Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for War. On this count alone, the framed certificate is one of Legionnaire Wright's most prized possessions.

Fighting on Hill 70, in 1917, Fred Wright was wounded and gassed, and evacuated for convalescence to England after wintering in French hospitals.

The wartime romance between Edith Walker and her sweetheart from the "Mad Fourth" wound up at the altar in their home-town of Kendal. They were married April 1, 1918.

The foregoing chapters of the Fred Wright story are a matter of record. Countless Actonites with personal experience of the couple's thoughtfulness and generosity, could add many more incidents that would keep this audience on their butts until next May.

Typical recollections: "Fred Wright gave me my first typewriter. By today's standards it was a wackety old wreck. "No gift ever made me happier."

During the Depression when we were growing up, without an extra cent to rattle in our jeans, the Wrights bequeathed us their radio after getting a new set. We were the happiest kids on the street. I still remember those chilly winter nights, and the gang of us huddled around our treasure in the deep-freeze front room listening to King of the Royal Mounted."

Acton Chamber of Commerce chose wisely and well in naming Fred L. Wright Citizen of the Year.

From a former Second-Liner, here with a salute and congratulations to two outstanding Actonites and a pair of the finest neighbors old N. Main St. ever produced!!

Close "good book"

Split Halton musical festival

After 35 years of successful operation, the Halton Music Festival Association became a thing of the past on Wednesday evening of last week.

A motion was passed declaring the two sections of the Association — the South Halton consisting of the Town of Oakville, and the North Halton which includes Milton, Acton, Esquering and Nassagaweya — would become completely separate and autonomous.

From a music standpoint there will be little change, since both sections have been independently operating their festivals for several years. From a management standpoint, however, there will be a change since the management of both sections has been co-ordinated through Association secretary-treasurer Mrs. Eileen Martin of Milton.

A major reason for the change is the tremendous growth in the Town of Oakville where more than 5,000 youngsters took part this season in music festivals. Because of the increased number of pupils involved it became necessary to use larger quarters for the festivals, church halls, and in one instance the Club Galaxie. The result was a tremendous increase in expense. It is now probable that in Oakville any music competitions will be conducted through the schools rather than through a separate association, and it is possible there will be partial sponsorship of the competitions.

In her report to the annual meeting, secretary-treasurer, Eileen Martin stated, "since 1928 residents of Halton County have dedicated themselves to the purpose of the Association which is as set out in the constitution, the encouragement of vocal music in the schools of the County. Year after year this Festival has drawn high praise

from adjudicators for the quality of performance which reflects credit on the supervisors and the conduct of the pupils participating which has been due to the excellent standard of behaviour demanded by the teachers and principals."

In closing she suggested, "it's always sad to have to close a good book. The Halton Music Festival Association was a good one. It had 35 chapters, each full of drama and special memories for so many different people who are scattered all over the world. It will not be forgotten. However, it is with a sense of excitement that we realize two new books are about to be written. Our best wishes go to the executive committees who will be responsible for the chapters in these books. May the proud traditions of the past be your guide, and your ef-

forts be crowned with success."

In North Halton, festivals were held in the Robert Little School auditorium, Acton, on Tuesday, April 5, on Wednesday evening, April 6. Three classes were adjudicated at that time and the winners of the previous day entertained the capacity Wednesday audience of interested parents and friends. Approximately 1,800 pupils participated from 15 schools in the division. This year there were 20 trophies presented in the 10 classes.

In South Halton five complete festivals were held with about 5,000 children taking part. They were held on March 28 at the Club Galaxie, March 29 at Calvary Baptist Church, March 30 at St. Paul's United Church, March 31 at E. A. Orr Public School and on April 1 at St.

Jude's Anglican Church.

No medals were given out but 59 cups and shields were in competition and third place certificates were presented in classes with five or more entries. Radio Station CHWO taped all programs for rebroadcast.

SKIN CARE

Cleanliness is important to health and beauty. The body rids itself of waste matter through perspiration and unless this waste is washed off by daily baths, the pores may become clogged. Teenagers who have skin troubles may find their complexions improved by washing the face gently with warm water and mild soap. Girls should remove all make-up when retiring. Severe skin troubles should have medical attention.

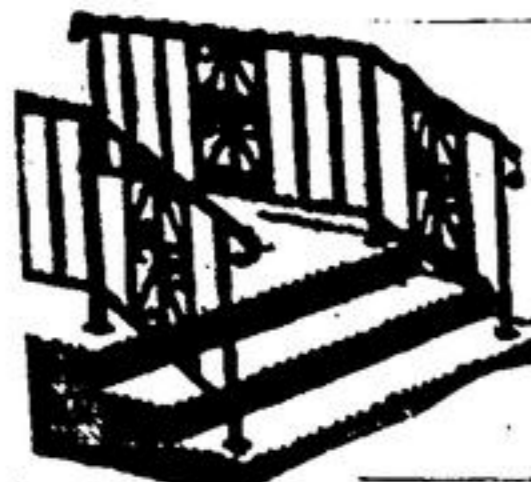
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Final exams

Grade 13 high school students finished writing their confidential exams Tuesday noon. On

June 6, all grades begin writing final exams and it is expected students will be dismissed when exams are completed. School officially closes June 29.

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