

Free Press Editorial Page

Waste of talent...

One of the unfortunate side-effects of an election is the amount of experience lost when incumbent candidates for office are defeated.

In Acton, for instance, council will lose the knowledge of Reeve Hinton and Councillors Drinkwater and Williams. Their combined municipal experience cannot be easily duplicated. Much of it would be invaluable to the new council.

All three, of course, recognized the hazards of running for office and chose to take the risk of defeat. It will be the municipality which loses their wealth of experience, however.

One of the wise practices in Acton has been to see that those who ran for office, and lost, got the first chances to serve on appointed boards when vacancies occur. We

hope council will continue to exercise this prerogative which may not give full scope to their abilities but certainly will help keep interest in municipal work alive.

At this writing there are vacancies on Planning Board and the Parks and Recreation Committee which require able men or women.

Meanwhile, school board trustees will act in an advisory capacity to the new County Board of Education, at least until the board decides they can dissolve. This is another case of waste of administrative talent.

We would hope that when regional government comes into effect some effort will be made to recognize these abilities. Let's certainly hope their duties do not pass into the hands of professionals who do not have to answer to the electorate.

Last council election?...

Perhaps the most controversial and talked-about election in Acton's history is over. The successful candidates are basking in popularity while the losers are wondering where they went wrong.

Congratulations to those who will again sit in office for the next two years. The public has entrusted them with running a million dollar business and expects their best effort at representing them.

The losers do not need our condolences. They will escape the headaches, late nights and decisions which will afflict those in power. They can sit back relatively immune to municipal politics until the next election rolls around.

If there is another municipal election that is!

Regional government with all its implications seems destined to land on us sometime around the '70's. At least that's the way municipal officials around here see it.

These views, termed radical not too long ago, now seem prophetic in the light of what the Hon. D'Arcy McKeough, Minister of Municipal Affairs had to say last week. He stated specific proposals on regional government for the Halton area are

expected "within the next few months."

The Minister suggested that at this stage it was not clear whether there would be one or two regional governments in the Halton-Peel area, although he believed that in the long run one would prove to be the best solution.

Jim Snow, M.P.P. for Halton East, thought the Minister's statement indicated legislation to implement the proposals would appear imminent in the current session of the Legislature. However, it also appeared to him as if the earliest possible implementation of the program in Halton would be in January, 1971.

So it is quite likely last week's election will be the last municipal election as we know them in Acton and the surrounding townships. There will still be elections, but on a smaller scale, with perhaps one representative in the place of the present council. He will sit on a larger body and represent the entire municipality.

Regional government has gone from a remote possibility to an imminent fact in the last five years.

Editorial notes...

If all good people were clever, And all clever people were good, The world would be nicer than ever We thought that it possibly could.

But somehow, 'tis seldom or never The two hit it off as they should; The good are so harsh to the clever, The clever so rude to the good.



FIRST ICE of the season on Fairy Lake is covered by a light mantle of snow, broken only by the tracks of animals. Dredging this summer has deepened the lake, making it dangerous for youngsters to venture onto areas which once reached only a depth of a few inches but now reach down several feet. (Staff Photo)

Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

I love to sing. Just as some crows do, Have you ever stopped and felt a pang of pity for that crow who was trying to get a little vibrato into his "Caw-aw-aw"? I have. I know exactly how he feels.

There are strong, rugged men throughout the British Commonwealth today who turn pale and shudder every time they remember my trying to get through such intricate melodies as Knees Up, Mother Brown, or There Was An Old Monk of Great Renown.

There are tenors and altos and sopranos and contraltos, and all sorts of other singers. I sing bass.

As a lover of singing, and the possessor of a bass voice, I am particularly obnoxious at pre-Christmas parties where everyone, after a few belts of orange juice or something, starts warbling beautiful descants to the carols.

I just saw away at them, and they all come out sounding much the same. Good King Wenceslaus comes roaring out on a Silent Night, decks the Herald Angels with Bows of Holly and goes back in for another bash at the wassail bowl.

A map...

Last Sunday was Bible Sunday. So what?

The bible makes you think of a large, musty book, written in archaic language, tracing ancient customs and outdated beliefs. It is an anachronism today.

If that's the way you're thinking you are not with it, man! Things have changed.

Translators have taken the Scriptures even that word, repels you, doesn't it? and made them relevant to the modern age. As a result the New Testament in Today's English Version outsold all mass-distributed paperbacks in 1967. It topped the best-seller lists with sales of 7,815,042.

You'd be surprised at the similarity between the troubles those venerable prophets experienced and the pack we are having now. When the words come out in modern idiom there's almost an uncanny resemblance.

And why shouldn't there be? Times may have changed but man hasn't. There were just as many hypocrites, pharisees, violent and peaceful men around then as there are now.

The bible is a book which speaks about man and specifically the Perfect Man. It portrays the infinite possibilities of life for man if he lives in a right relationship with his Creator.

The bible is like a map to a rich and full life.

After a lot of thought, I've decided that it's the words that are wrong, not my voice. I know the first line of all the great carols and Christmas songs, but after that, I just sing, "Ho Ho Ho and Yah Yah Yah and Something Nice and Something Else."

New words; that's what we need. We must remember that these lovely carols were written, for the most part, by people who didn't realize that Christmas was going to turn into the biggest cash-register-ringing season of the year.

They were monks and priests and reverends and musicians who thought that Christmas was a time of joy. They weren't with it. They didn't even know that the turkey was a sacred bird. They didn't know that an atom-bomb toy was just the thing to make sparkle the eyes of your little boy. Or that a necklace of real pearl was just the thing to make sparkle the eyes of your big girl.

And that's why I decided our carols and Christmas ditties have to be brought up to date, with words that relate to the 1960's. Thus, we'll remember the words better, and won't have to fill in with stuff like, "Di Do Dee Dah Dee Dum Dum."

These songs are both sacred and secular. But enter into the spirit and you'll see how important the up-dating is. Now, I haven't the time, energy or talent to write complete versions I'll just give you the first verse. Then you're on your own, and the whole family can join in the game.

All together now. The first is to the tune of Jingle Bells. From there on I won't give you a clue. And don't mind the odd spot where the stanza has a few extra words. That's half the fun.

Jingle war, jingle war, Jingle all the way, Oh, what fun it is to shop On a mad December day.

God rest ye merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay, You'll have your Christmas bills all paid, By the 24th of May.

Good old Stanslaus looked out At the Czechs all beefin' And the Russ stood all about Deep and Crisp and even a little ashamed of themselves.

Hark, the Herald's ads all sing, Big, fat gifts are all the thing, Don't be scared to ask for lots, Cheaper junk will please the tots.

Oh come, all ye faithless, Hopeless and on acid, Oh come ye to Yorkville And worship the grass id.

Deck the dolls with poison ivy Then you won't be tempted to Get all warm and sort of live-y And end up in a cold, domestic stew.

See what can be done? We Three Kings of Orient are... What rhymes with "are"? That's right, "Car," not "camel." Go to it.

Free Press

back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, December 16, 1948.

Children have had their first skating on the ponds this week. It can be recorded that the first real winter snow storm came this fall on Wednesday, December 15.

A Christmas gift we would appreciate is the levelling of some of those holes between Milton and Acton. We have had them all summer without any effort to improve them.

Various merchants and the theatre manager are planning a Christmas party for the children in the Roxey Theatre December 24. Movies will start at 10 a.m. and Santa Claus is scheduled to appear around 2 p.m. There is no charge.

The plan for the new Wartime Housing subdivision has been presented to council for approval. There will be a Municipal Board hearing in January for the annexation of three parcels of land to be used for the project.

Warden George Cleave was host in Georgetown Legion Hall on Tuesday evening for the annual Warden's Dinner. Guests came from all over the county.

A new 2,000 KVA transformer station will be erected in the eastern section of town. It is expected it will be in operation by July 1949.

Because of the hydro shortage, Christmas decorative lighting will be allowed only between December 24 and January 2 inclusive.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, December 14, 1893.

A big shooting match is announced to take place in the park Christmas Day. Ranges for rifles, shotguns and revolvers will be fixed and attractive prizes are offered.

Mr. John C. Nelson, who has been in the north-west for some months, has disposed of his business here to his sisters, who will continue it under the firm name of L. B. Nelson and Co. Mr. Nelson has purchased a hoof and shoe business in Woodstock.

William Gurney thinks he has the best cow in these parts. She commenced giving milk May 14 and last week made 11 1/2 pounds prime butter and the week previous 10 1/2 pounds. This high standard is maintained every week.

A number of the employees of Acton Tanning Co. were "laid off" this week till after New Year's.

Wood cutters are in demand. The large quantity of fallen timber is being cut into firewood.

\$11.00 was raised here for the Salvation Army last week. Capt. M. Rees desires to thank everyone for their generosity.

The provincial fat stock show at Guelph closed Friday with a sale of the animals on exhibition. Nearly all were sold at fair prices.

The dairy business is improving and butter is down to 20 cents.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, December 19, 1918.

Among the workers who have done splendid service in the preparation of supplies for soldiers on the field and in the hospitals, is Mrs. James Henderson, Maria Street, mother of acting-Reeve Henderson. She has knitted 86 pairs of socks, 19 pairs of wristlets, made 101 hospital suits and 17 pairs of bed socks.

T. A. King, Hornby, breeder of Siberian hares, sold a doe to a Cobalt man at the Guelph Winter Fair for \$500 and refused \$500 for a buck.

It is announced that Toronto's new Union Station will be ready for occupation by May 1, 1919.

Miss Jennie Whitley is home from McDonald Hall, Guelph, for the Christmas holidays.

Mrs. W. A. Stewart and her son, Pte. Robert W. Stewart, who recently returned from France, spent Saturday with Georgetown friends.

Canada may well be proud of her soldiers. General Currie says that the Canadian army in the last two years of strenuous fighting has never lost a gun, has never failed to take an objective, and has never been driven from an inch of ground once consolidated.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Canadian Champion, Milton, December 10, 1868.

We would direct the attention of the authorities interested to the unsatisfactory manner in which juries are selected in our county. A case is called and ballots are all taken out of a TIN CUP, and the juries selected from the names successively called out. If the ballot is not intended to be a mere sham, let a proper revolving ballot box be at once procured, and the names drawn therefrom. Jurors' names, like medicine, should be well shaken before taken.

Friends and Neighbors: I am informed that our present Mayor, Mr. Smith, has his card distributed among you. Asking to be a third time elected Mayor of this town. Now, Friends, can you give your support to one for your chief Magistrate, who sells intoxicating drink, who can sell a bottle or quart of grog tonight, and sit as judge next day on the poor creature who buys and drinks that grog, dealt out by his hands? Who can tell what crime can be committed under the influence of that grog? Go ask the inmates at present in the jail, especially that poor boy Butler, who sold him the drink that caused him to raise his hand against his mother? Awake to a sense of your duty, ratepayers of Milton, and free yourselves from this awful responsibility.

Salt and Pepper

by hartley coles



When you get on the long side of 40, the subject of hair is taboo for many males. Too touchy.

When the subject is broached we reach automatically for the scalp to reassure ourselves there's still something there, muttering trite phrases such as, "Grass never grows on a busy street. Heh, Heh!"

It's not difficult for the delighted passers of smart remarks to see that where once thick, luxuriant hair nestled, defying the strongest of combs, there are now a few strands artfully concealing the scalp. Despite use of all the popular nostrums, guaranteed to grow hair and attract women to boot, the shiny pate peeks through.

These "bald" spots at which some friends point derisively as they glint in the sun, seem to become larger as the years go by. Sometimes they cause ego-shattering moments of doubt that torment the over-40 male and make more hair fall out. Some of them actually lose faith in their hair tonic.

However, most normal males bounce back from minor setbacks with strongly worded rebukes to enquiring friends and relatives. "Thin hair? Me? Who wants fat hair, anyway? Heh, Heh."

This kind of answer is guaranteed to shut the nosy tormenters up for at least two shakes of a mongrel's tail and give you time to think up something objectionable about them, something like: "Me bald? Well you are just plain fat!"

That retort not only changes the subject but is guaranteed to lose you friends galore. Your relations? You're stuck with them, anyway!

Insufferable egotists though we males be, the loss of hair precipitates a major crisis. It is useless to argue that people completely devoid of hair live normal lives. But it is true, some of them even look handsome. They've managed to preserve their sanity even if they couldn't save their hair.

Most frequent complaint of the bald ones concerns their barber. He still charges full price for a haircut when all he has to do is make one pass with the clippers, click the scissors and rub your scalp.

Treatment like that is enough to make a man switch to a hair dresser. After all, you don't see many bald women. Innumerable trips to the salon where hair is combed, set, rolled, pinned, shined, dyed, baked, washed and curled don't seem to bother it a bit.

Sometimes the unkindest cuts of all come from the women who feel secure about their own mops. You'll remember back in biblical days, simple Sampson was taken in by daring Delilah. She clipped his hair while he was sleeping one off. This drained old Sampson's strength and his enemies took over. There's been a running feud between men and women ever since, modern Delilah's draining old Sampson's strength by demanding frequent trips to the barber.

The men are finally starting to wise up. Sometimes you can't tell the fellas from the gals. The problem will iron itself out but in the meantime barbers, reacting to styles, are starting to call themselves hair stylists.

He shows you a series of pictures and asks how you want to look. Depending on taste it will be either like Rock Hudson or Gregory Peck. Few choose Yul Brynner. It is surprising what a hair trim and a bit of rearranging will do.

Anxious to experiment, I took a different tack. In lieu of looking at someone else's picture I took one of my own and with an art pencil rearranged hair and added a beard complete with sideburns.

The effect pleased me so much I showed it to the other half of the marriage contract. She uttered five words.

"You look like the devil."

Back to the hair tonic.

Photos from the past



THESE EARLY ACTON FIREFIGHTERS posed for the late Jacob Bauer at least 65 years ago. Back row: left, W. D. Williams (Red Bill), Robert Scott, Roy McIntosh, Tom Hurd, William Anderson. Fourth row: William Hall, William Warden, Isaac Coon, Roy Hurd, James Miller, Robert McCartney, Newton Hurst. Third row: Jacob Bauer, Edward Gamble, Peter Masales, George Soper, Henry Grindell, James Cooney, Howard Mas-

ales, James Hall. Second row: Donald MacGregor, Nelson Moore, unknown, Fred Masales, Norman McLeod, Thomas Gibbons, J. B. Mackenzie, Fred Gamble. Front row: J. L. Moore, Thomas Gamble, Fred Graham, Daniel Graham. As far as we know, the only one still living. The print was made from an old glass negative measuring 11 inches by 14 inches. Herb Ritchie made the identifications.