

# Converted farm buildings house animated film studios

By Brian Ward  
A small industry is flourishing in northern Nassagaweya township under the guidance of two township councillor Allan Ackman, who is well known as

one of Canada's best animators. Mr. Ackman started his career before the Second World War by taking a commercial art course in Toronto. At the start of the war he joined the R.C.A.P. and

while doing his stint, organized art classes for the men in the service with him.

Right after V.E. Day, day, he joined the National Film Board animation department and soon came to know and became a protégé of Norman McLaren who was one of the first men to experiment with pop art and new techniques in films. Mr. Ackman worked on animated maps and technical diagrams for the NFB's many educational films and gradually built up enough knowledge about the business to enable him to go out on his own.

He married in 1949 and he and his wife moved from NFB's headquarters in Ottawa to Toronto where he went to work for an advertising agency, Rapid Grip and Batten. Mr. Ackman organized the animation department there and it was designed to turn out film commercials although this changed as early television productions demanded animated commercials.

Mr. Ackman operated his own studio in Toronto in 1954, doing

work for advertising agencies. He had a staff of 14 technicians drawn from all over the world working on educational animation, technical animation work, public relations animation work and various fund drives such as producing animated commercials for the Heart Fund.

While working in the field of animation in Toronto, Mr. Ackman also became involved in municipal politics. He headed up various citizens' committees and worked on the campaign staff for Margaret Campbell who successfully ran for the position of controller in Toronto.

Five years ago, he moved out to northern Nassagaweya to re-establish himself once more, but this time it was to be away from the pressures of city life and highly competitive advertising. He started Animation Productions Limited on Nassagaweya's First Line near 25 Sideroad.

He and his wife have converted a farm and outbuildings into studios and offices for their staff and Mr. Ackman transformed what was

once swamp land around his farm to stable recreation land, complete with a well-stocked pond.

What was the barn has been transformed into a three-level studio which is the main work area for Mr. Ackman and his staff. The basement is used for storage and there is also a large camera which is used to photograph, frame by frame, the hand-drawn animated pictures. The first floor is used as a reception area while the second floor, which is a converted hay loft, is used as a studio for both staff and free-lance artists who do the individual drawings which, when combined, make up an animated film. Film editing, sound editing and film previewing is also done on the second floor.

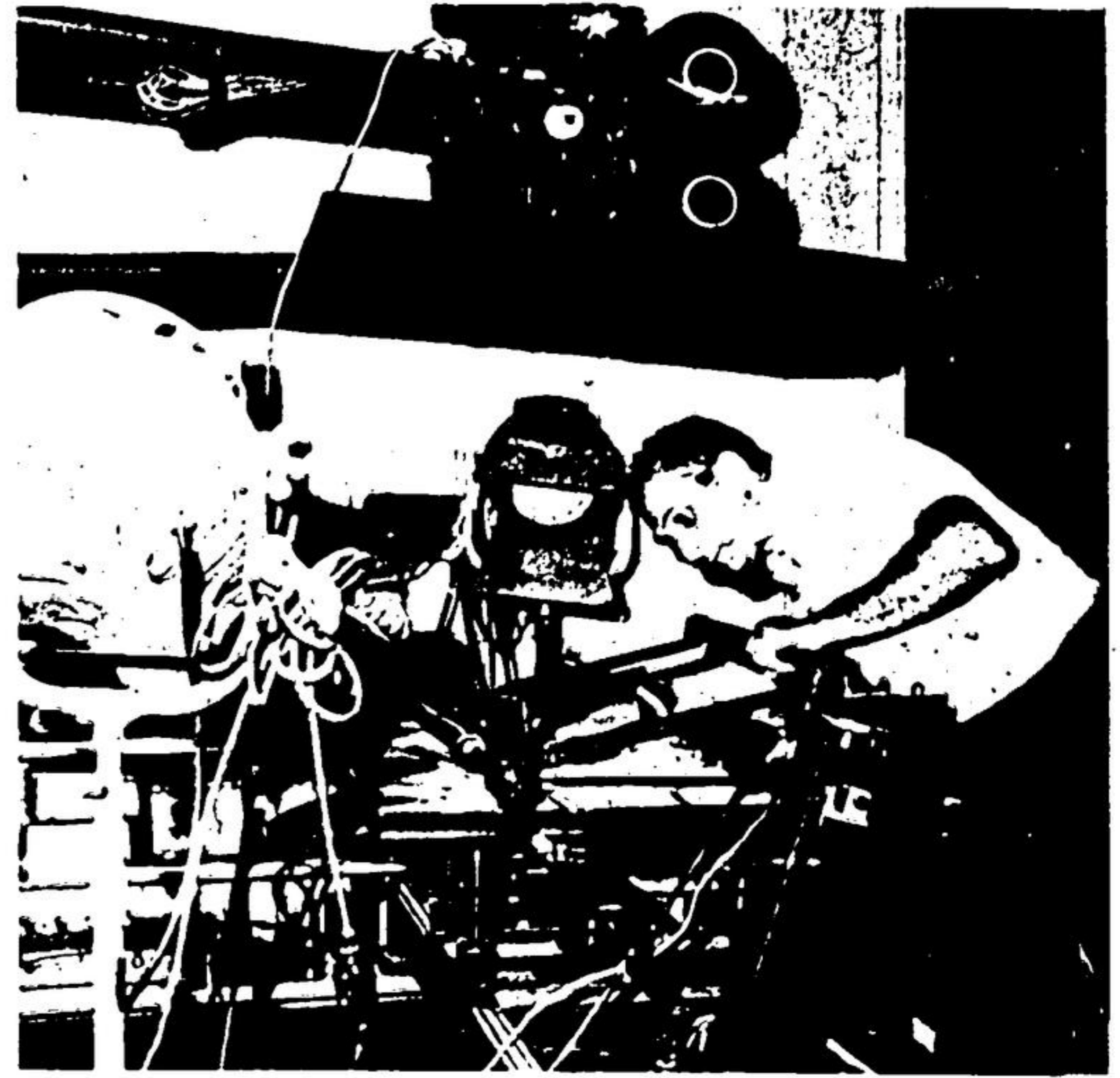
Mr. Ackman is still very involved in the animation field which he says "is a lifetime of study." He explained this study involved watching the movements of animate objects and finding out how they moved in order to reproduce them on paper and then on film.

He said the future of animation is in education but criticized some of the methods used in schools today. He explained schools have lots of equipment to train the students but they need more experience in the field to learn what it's really like to get out in the real world.

Presently Mr. Ackman is doing some educating on his own. He is trying to teach smaller businesses that it is not too expensive to advertise on television and to prove his point, he and his company, Animation Productions Ltd. have produced "Instant Commercials".

There are 30-second "spot" commercials which have already been made and just require a dealer's name to be put on them. Mr. Ackman says he is running into some opposition from television stations which already have their own slides which they believe are adequate for smaller advertisers.

He also has some very strong



FRAME BY FRAME, each hand-drawn animated picture is photographed onto a piece of movie film on this animation zoom stand. At the top of the picture is the camera which takes a single picture of each drawing placed, as Mr. Ackman is doing, at

the bottom of the camera stand. The camera may be zoomed in or out on a drawing to give a gradual impression of coming toward the viewer or leaving when the finished product appears on the screen.—(Staff Photo)



THE FIRST STEP in producing an animated film is to design and draw the figures in separate poses for each movement they make on the screen. Mr. Ackman is working on drawings of a horse and rider where each picture is equal to one frame on the film and 24 frames on the film is the equivalent to one second of picture on the screen.—(Staff Photo)



SOUND FOR EACH FILM is currently being recorded in Toronto or Montreal but Mr. Ackman hopes to convert this sound recording studio for permanent use as a studio in his home. Sound is put on the film after it has been produced and the animators have to make the film character's lips move with the sound on the screen.—(Staff Photo)

## ESQUEQUING Township Council MEETS

At their regular meeting Monday night, Esqueving township Council:

- Passed a resolution that the Council of the Township of Esqueving respectfully request that the Council of the County of Halton consider the immediate installation of "automatic traffic lights" at the intersection of "The Village" Road and Steeles Avenue, since the present installation is very definitely dangerous. The resolution was passed after a request for some action on the intersection by Halton County Board of Education trustee William Lawson.

- Passed a resolution agreeing to lend some snow fencing and posts to the Georgetown Agricultural Society on the understanding that the Society would be responsible for returning same.

- Instructed clerk-treasurer Delmar French to send copies of a letter to ratepayers in the Milton Heights area informing them that a meeting to discuss the water situation in that area will be held September 23 at Lagny School at 8 p.m.

- Received an invitation for councillors to attend the official opening of the Good Shepherd Manor in Orangeville, Sunday September 28 at 3 p.m.

- Received an invitation from the Halton County Board of Education to tour schools in the county which provide special education, Saturday September 27.

- Received a letter from the Halton County Board of Education indicating their concern over the erosion they say the Credit River is causing near Glen Williams school and suggesting that some type of retaining wall is needed.

- Received a letter from Acton Board of Parks Management and Recreation Committee criticizing the handling of the dredging operation in Fairy Lake Acton and making recommendations to the Credit Valley Conservation Authority for the future success of similar projects.

- Received a letter from Pete Pomeroy Sports of Georgetown

requesting permission to sell hunting licenses in the township.

- Rescinded a previous resolution to take out membership in the Central Ontario Regional Development Council because of a misunderstanding about membership fees.

- Decided to rescind a by-law passed last year which limited the number of non-resident hunting licenses sold in the township to 200 per year.

- Granted permission to Alan Francis a resident of the 5th Line near Limehouse to build a garage on his property closer to the township road than the 68 feet that is normally required. Mr. Francis, a Gray Coach Line bus driver, explained to Council that having the garage closer to the road would make it much easier for him to get to work on time in the winter.

- Received a letter from the Ontario Association of Mayors and Reeves urging Council to join the Association at a membership fee of \$60 a year.

- Decided that if Committee of Adjustment is undecided in the future about allowing persons to build houses on unmaintained township roads, they should send a representative to Council and the two bodies would come to a decision between themselves.

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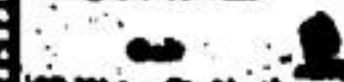
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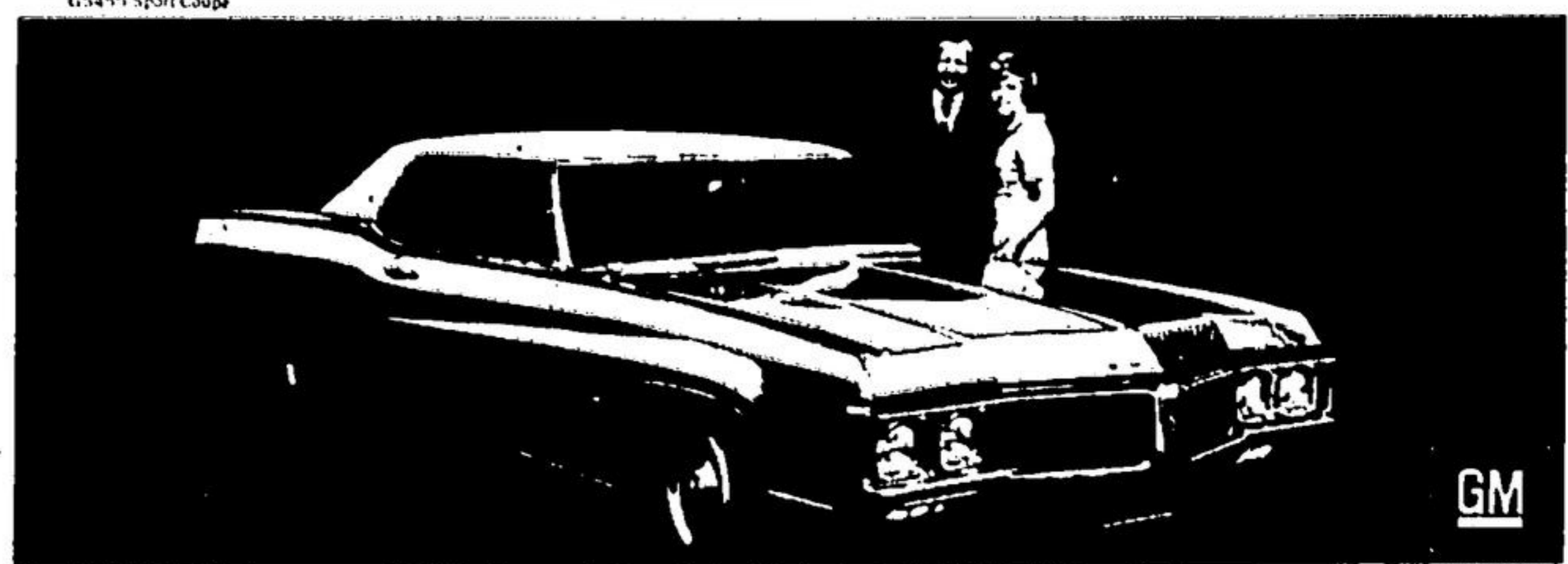
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