

Festival floundering . . .

The future of the North Halton Music Festival hangs in the balance following the annual meeting in Acton.

Almost everyone at the meeting seemed to feel that the idea of a festival was no longer feasible under the new county-wide Board of Education but there is much interest in filling the vacuum with something just as meaningful.

There is some dragging of feet from those who consider the idea of music and festivals as old fashioned or out of place in the jet age but they seemed to be in the minority. There is also some opposition from some of the educational figures who believe competition in any form is harmful to children.

The day when each school in the county had its own music teacher has passed, apparently. In place of the itinerant teacher, there are five music consultants to look after an average of 17 schools each. In some schools music is taught by classroom teachers with advice from the consultants. This and a shortage of auditoriums relegates music and singing to a less important place in the curriculum.

We can agree that the music festival probably does need some streamlining but it does seem too bad there is an apparent lack of interest from the new county Board of Education in keeping the festival functioning. Music has always been an important part of the curriculum in North Halton schools and in a day when much of the music is horribly similar it would seem there should be more, rather than less emphasis on it.

We don't like to inject a sour note in the discussion but it is the

children who benefit from musical training, not those who teach it or those who administer the schools. The festival helps to foster the idea of perfection as well as leading to a better appreciation of singers and singing.

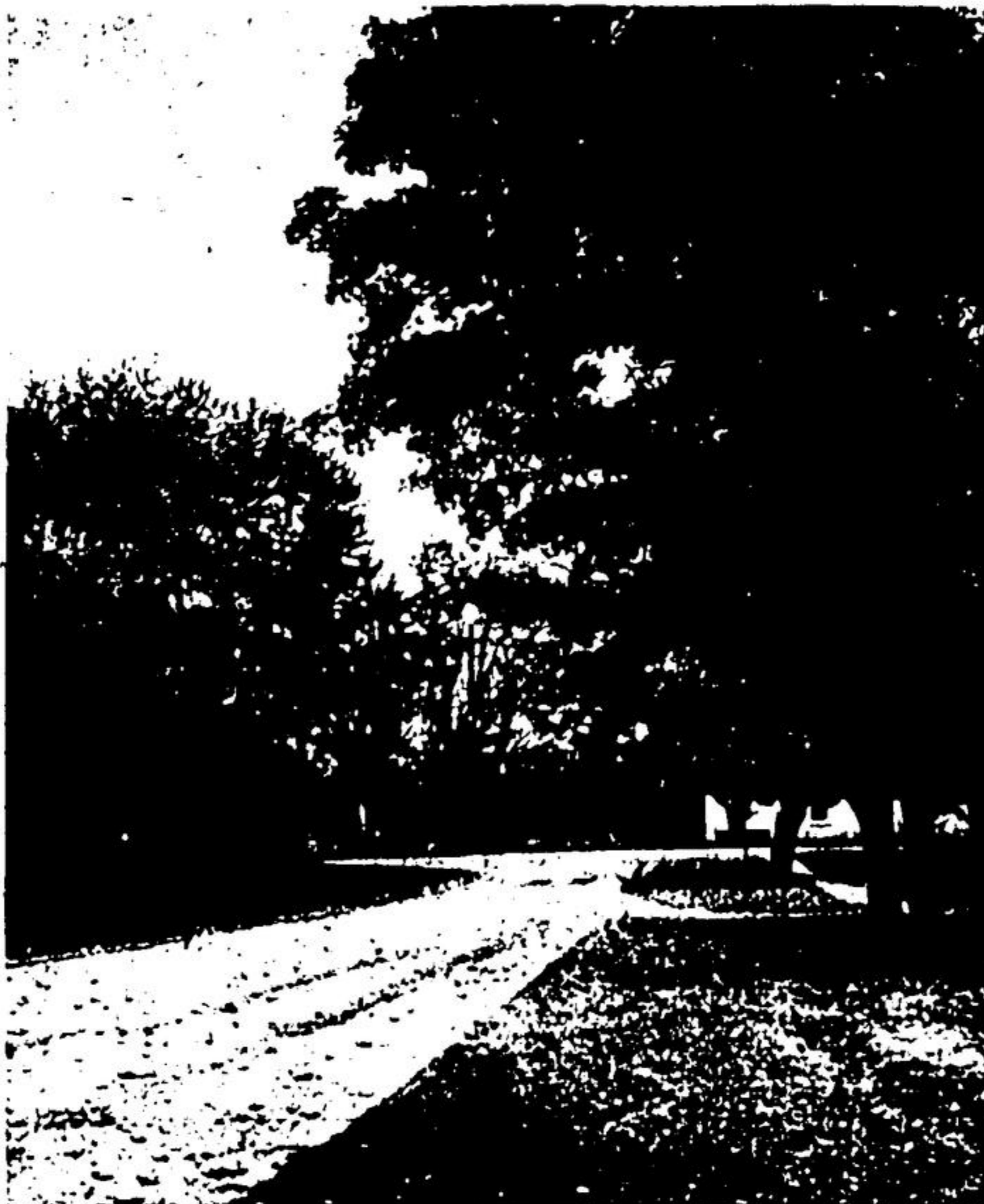
There has been some suggestion that the festival could carry on without a system of marking so there are no disappointed losers but this again is a needless genuflection in the direction of those who cannot stomach the thought of competition.

Without the competition there would be no interest whatsoever in a day set aside for hearing repetitious singing. It is the competition between schools and singers which gives the festival its flavor . . . and fun.

Are you in favor of retaining the North Halton music festival? Or do you have some suggestions for keeping the annual competition going? Secretary Glenda Benton would be delighted to hear from you.

Incidentally the Festival has received excellent support from the Women's Institutes over the past few years and their donations have kept going up. Some members of the executive of the music festival feel there is still a very strong desire from the public to keep the annual festival going and they point to the excellent financial statement as evidence of public support.

We might add that it is still a delight to attend one of the festival sessions and listen to the students sing. The large attendance at the evening sessions indicates this feeling is general.



SNOW FELL ON Tuesday night but several streets still exhibit some colorful fall foliage from tall maples which beautify the town before the dull grey of November rides in on a cold gale.—(Staff Photo)



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

This is the time of year when the hunting stories are flying around. Each time they are retold, they become a bigger lie or a little funnier.

I don't mind the stories when they're funny, or big, fat lies. But there's nothing more boring than listening to a hunter telling you in deadly earnest the entire story of how he would have got his bag of ducks, or bagged his deer, if the fates and the weather, and anything else he can think of, had not conspired against him.

It's as dull as listening to someone relate what happened on every hole of his golf game, or every hand of bridge. He would have shot par or made his grand slam if, if . . .

Getting back to hunters, you'll never hear that earnest, serious teller of tales admitting that he couldn't hit the side of a barn with a handful of beans, from three feet. Or that he's as quiet in the bush as a tank on a hot tin roof. No. There's nothing wrong with him. It's the gods, or his gun jammed, or sheer bad luck.

Quite a few of the chaps on our staff who are keen hunters urge me to join them. This means standing around in a swamp and chest-high boots after walking an hour to get there, gazing sullenly for hours at a sullen sky filled with blackbirds and swallows and non-existent ducks.

I've been able to fight off the temptation for several years now. I used to be a fair shot. There's many a tree, fence-post and tin can in the country that can testify to that, and I used to enjoy hunting. It really was pleasant to get away from the old battleaxe for a few hours on a lovely, autumn day.

But I've never been a fanatic. Any tendency I had toward becoming one was cured forever last time I went deer hunting. I got lost twice, was almost shot once (he hit the bound instead of me), and was derailed nearly drowned on the way home from a remote island, in a blizzard, a high wind, and a leaky boat.

Hunting is for the birds, literally. In proportion to numbers, there are more hunters killed, wounded, or disabled for life from heart attacks and arthritis, than birds.

Another thing that puts me off is the type of people who hunt. There is a large percentage of "high-grade" morons among them.

Et Cetera

Self-sympathy is the super highway that leads to misery.

A man hopes his lean years are behind him — a woman that hers are ahead.

Egotist: One who thinks if he hadn't been born the world would wonder why.

Salt and Pepper



by hartley coles

I've always harbored a secret admiration for the salesman who had the temerity to sell his products on a day-in and day-out basis with no lack of enthusiasm and a brave face brimful of confidence for gummy buyers.

That is; until last week, when I ran into three sales enthusiasts who almost turned me inside out and still wound up with a no sale sign in my eye.

Maybe you ran into them — or more likely — they ran into you. All females — reasonably attractive — with a high pressure line that would charm a chick out of an Easter egg.

You guessed it: They were selling magazines. But you'd never have known it from the way they laid the groundwork for the trap.

I (said the girl who buttoned onto me just as I was leaving for lunch one day last week), am working my way across Canada on a bonus system. She grabbed my hand and pumped vigorously making me think she could be an old friend or a long lost relative I hadn't laid eyes on for years.

I grabbed the storm windows which hung loosely out of a pocket, adjusted them on the end of my nose — and peered! Well the sure didn't look like anyone I knew but I wasn't taking any chances.

"How-dee-doo," I purred, shaking her hand like I'd known her 'way back when.

"How are you?" she asked sweetly, turning on the charm like I turn on the radio. "Fine, fine," I answered still smiling and trying to place her among my numerous connections by relation.

She fished in her purse.

Then she pulled an official looking document out of her purse, asking me in the same motion if I was married. My nod drew the comment, "You hardly look old enough. Got any children?"

Two, I said proudly, still smiling sweetly. "Just toddlers I bet," she purred.

"Both in high school," I answered. "You're kidding," she said, "you're not old enough."

Oh, oh, I reasoned. There's something fishy here. Only last week the better half laughed raucously when some nephews asked her if I was her "daddy."

The document identified the girl as part of an across-Canada tour financed by selling magazine subscriptions. So many points for each sale.

"I'll put you down for Toronto Life," she said sweetly. "I get more points for it."

"Wait a minute," I demurred as her two companions brushed by in pursuit of further prey. "You aren't selling me any magazines. What kind of a line are you trying to give me?"

"You mean you won't help me on my trip?" she pouted. "Nope," I said, "and you and your companions can peddle your papers somewhere else."

I ushered all three out of the door with a sigh of relief. Never thought any more about it.

That afternoon I heard a commotion downstairs. The same three dolls were being pursued by the boss who was ending a conversation with " . . . and don't bother coming back."

They had returned about a half hour before and started touring the plant — minus a guide. They were unceremoniously given the boot.

A few minutes later they re-entered by another door with the mistaken impression the boss was down another flight of stairs.

Surprise, surprise! He arrived at the top of the stairs as the long-haired, dark-eyed brunette was accosting the office manager. Their exit on this occasion was more hurried.

So, as I said earlier, my estimate of the magazine sales force has dipped a notch and it will be a while before I trust young ladies travelling in threes.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, October 20, 1949.

The athletes who won the greatest number of points for their schools at the North Halton Athletic Meet in Acton were Bob Sales of Milton, Jean Debaulieu of Georgetown, Don Anderson of Acton, Dorothy Williams of Georgetown, Jean Palmer of Acton and Ruth Brazier of Milton.

At the request of some of the farmers of the district, a committee of officers of Acton Baptist church recently decided to repair the only church shed left standing in the town for the convenience of all farmers who make Acton their business centre and have occasion to come to town by horse-drawn vehicle. A new steel roof was put on the shed at a cost last Saturday. It is hoped and requested that cars and trucks not use this shed, but that it be left only for the convenience of horse owners of the district.

The Soldiers War Memorial committee is glad to inform the public that work on the monument is progressing nicely. The new wing columns will be ready for unveiling on Remembrance Day. There is still need of financial support. Mr. W. Clayton is treasurer.

Citizens filled the council chamber and hallway when over 40 appeals were heard against the new county assessment. The old bridge over the creek on Main St. is being demolished and a new one built, as part of the program of improvement of No. 25 highway. The old bridge was built in the summer of 1906.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, October 23, 1919.

Ontario's Citizens Emphatically Outlaw the Liquor Traffic! Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow! Every polling place in the county gave a large majority of Noes. Acton nobly sustained her reputation for standing up for the best things for the home, the family and the community.

To the women of the community a great share of the credit for the prohibition victory is due. Never again will any reasonable man presume to say that the women are less capable or less observant in these matters than men. It is generally recognized that a new power for good has come into public affairs and it has come to remain permanently.

As canvassers and scrutineers the women worked with enthusiastic energy and concentration that was an inspiration. Men who have had long experience in political campaigns were impressed by the

appearance and mental activity of the women workers.

To the following members of the committee great credit is due for the magnificent results: chairman Rev. J. C. Wilson; vice-chairmen Mrs. George Havill and A. T. Brown; secretary W. H. Stewart; asst. sec. R. H. Wansborough; treasurer Miss Minnie Z. Bennett; captains Rev. I. M. Moyer, Mrs. Annie Somerville, Frank Kennedy, Miss Elizabeth Graham; general organizer C. C. Henderson.

Mrs. Jane Diamond, who lives with councillor and Mrs. Bell on Church St., polled her first vote in her 97th year and it was a good straight vote for prohibition.

The local Liberty League had a scrutineer in only one polling booth. However, the campaign was conducted without acrimonious attacks even during the excitement of election day.

Good old Acton, your heart's all right!

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, October 25, 1894.

We have been informed of the serious nature of Rev. G. B. Cook's illness at Chicago. It was thought that his ailment was catarrh of the stomach but now his medical attendants are of the opinion that a seed of some small fruit had lodged in his stomach and taken growth. Carbolic acid is being administered for the purpose, if possible, of killing the germ. The public here are anxious to learn of his speedy recovery.

The school board acted wisely in directing that all children affected with chicken pox should be prevented from attending school until such time as they are free from the disease.

The brick work was commenced on the new Presbyterian church.

The country is being scourged for a brutal fiend who outraged and murdered a 14-year-old Listowel girl. When discovered, her body was covered with moss and rotted wood. The girl's remains were buried on Sunday, but previous to this Dr. Watson performed an operation that may aid in finding the identity of the murderer. The eyes, it is believed, sometimes bear after death the impression made upon the retina by the last object seen in life. The eyes of the dead girl will be photographed in the hope that something may be discovered from the enlargement of the photo. It is believed that the girl opened her eyes last when the man bent over her in the woods in the act of cutting her throat.

Last Sunday was lively at the railroad in Rockwood as the iron bridge underwent repairs. About 50 men were engaged in the work. The remaining half of the new timbers will be put under the bridge next Sunday.

Messrs. W. H. Storey and son are erecting a new beam house in connection with their tannery.

50 years of franchise . . .

Amidst universal acclaim and predictions of a better world for all, the women of Canada received the franchise to vote in the country's elections 50 years ago.

Acton women "nobly sustained" their reputation in their first trip to the polls by helping to retain prohibition in the province of Ontario. The Free Press of that day exultantly proclaimed that the "noble women of the town polled their first votes for home and children's sake."

"As canvassers and scrutineers the women worked with enthusiastic energy and concentration that was an inspiration to all who are desirous of advancing the welfare of Ontario by retaining its prohibitory law," the Free Press said. Never again will any reasonable man presume to say that women are less capable or less observant in these matters than the men.

"It is generally recognized that a new power for good has come into public affairs and it has come to remain permanently," this newspaper pontificated.

Well, 50 years of water has gone over the dam since the women of Canada got the franchise. Perhaps

this would be a good time to review the matter and decide whether this battered old piece of global real estate is any better off or whether the males were foolish to allow women to have the vote.

It is generally recognized that women are more peace-loving than men but since they received the franchise we've had a real dilly of a world war and at least four or five major skirmishes, which indicates the ballot does not control the war-like tendencies of the male of the species.

Whether the people of Canada are more civilized than they ever were, is a matter of opinion, but looking at it from a strictly male angle it would be hard to dismiss the efforts of women to clean up some of the male messes as futile.

We think the old world is a better place to live in now and certainly much of the credit must go to the female influence. Therefore we would conclude that the men of the country knew what they were doing when they gave the "vote" to women half a century ago.

But we still can't help wondering whether all the good things wouldn't have come anyway with strictly male voters.

Antiques for the affluent . . .

One of the more harmless but certainly amusing fads which has emerged in this age of affluence is the widespread urge to collect "antiques". And that word has undergone a complete metamorphosis since free and easy money has become a part of our way of life.

There was a time when an antique was some item of furniture, or perhaps pottery, which had survived two or three centuries in relatively good condition. Perhaps it was an original Chippendale chair, the product of a master craftsman, or an authentic Stradivarius violin or a Ming dynasty vase.

We know a fellow who has his house jammed to the eaves with odds and bits from the older homes in the district and he expects to reap a tidy profit on every one of them. High on the list of desirables are the old-fashioned commode sets—pottery basin, water pitcher, toothbrush mug and the

you-know-what. Apparently these sets fetch a handsome price, as high as a hundred dollars if they are complete.

All they do for us personally is bring back memories of a more uncomfortable way of life before we enjoyed the blessings of warm bathrooms and running water. Most folks paid a great deal more than a hundred bucks to get rid of those old things.

An antique no longer need be beautiful nor even particularly old. Pieces of harness, a chunk off a plough, a homely old kitchen range, a wash board—all have achieved a new status in this age of sophistication.

And brother, if you happen to have a 20-year-old car stashed away in your barn, hang onto it for dear life. It's probably worth a thousand dollars right now and it's climbing at about an extra hundred every six months.—Wingham Advance-Times.

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