

Chatting . . .

with M. H. E.

● **HOW NICE** the lawns and flower gardens look these days . . . and for many people much of the hard labour involved in cutting a big lawn has been lightened with the use of a power mower. Power mowers have made lawn cutting so easy that even the ladies of the household who formerly bowed out of that little chore, have got in on the act . . . Which brings us to the point that power mowers are even more powerful than most women (and, we suspect, some men too) realize. They got of take you, along with them, sometimes, instead of vice versa, and when that happens at unexpected moments, a toe or a hand can become a casualty. There are at least a half dozen such cases of power-lawn mowments in town right now — to a word to the wise . . .

● **REMINDS US** that we often hear the expression "wise guy" — but over the week-end we saw and heard about some "wise birds."

We happened to be taking the morning train in to Toronto the other Saturday, and while we waited on the platform, we noticed about six large crates of pigeons. Inspecting them a little more closely, we saw the pigeons all had bands on their legs. And then we saw the big black letters on the crates telling the hour at which the birds should be released. Could they be homing pigeons? . . . We wondered . . . and so we enquired . . .

● **NO, THEY WEREN'T** exactly homing pigeons, they were racing pigeons, so CNR express agent Pete Manning told us and he should know, for it's his job to release the birds nearly every morning at the hour specified on the box, so that they can fly a race back home. The exact hour and minute the pigeons are released is marked on the empty crate, which is sent back to the owner by freight . . .

You see, these pigeons belong to members of "racing pigeon clubs." It's a sport that has become quite popular and is becoming more so all the time. The different clubs ship the birds from Windsor, London, Sarnia, etc., to a given destination. After the race home the fastest pigeons are picked from the different lots, and raced against the best pigeons from other clubs . . .

● **THE CANADIAN NATIONAL** acts as go-between in these races. This service is offered gratis to the racing pigeon enthusiasts for the business it creates. Sometimes the owners request the express agent to send a wire if the weather is unfavourable when the birds are released.

Usually the crates of birds arrive on the train that gets in Georgetown around 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. and the pigeons are released immediately after the trains are clear of the station. The agent simply opens the doors of the crates, which usually contain 20 to 30 birds, and out they fly . . .

As a rule the pigeons circle over the Provincial Paper Ltd. buildings first, before getting their sense of direction and heading back home . . . Mr. Manning says he has never seen one take the wrong direction yet. And when he was stationed at Cobalt, a crate of pigeons arrived from Belleville, a distance of approximately 400 miles by rail. It took them five hours to arrive back home, using the cross country route, of course . . . They are pretty wise birds, aren't they? . . .

● **WE WONDERED** if the birds would be trained to fly back to the owner's house, or club, or just how the race would be controlled at the "home base," for timing purposes. Mr. Manning wasn't able to tell us that, but he's going to give us the name of one of the men who ship the pigeons so that we can drop him a line and find out. When we do, we'll pass the information on to you.

● **WHEN SHE VISITED** in England last time, Mrs. Arthur Reeve, saw all the preparations being made against an expected German attack by air, land, or sea . . . There were air-raid shelters in everyone's backyard, blackout practices, and sand bags piled up in strategic positions. When she and her daughter Mary (now Mrs. Charles Gilbert, Toronto,) arrived back in Canada, World War II was declared just one week later . . .

A week ago today Mrs. Reeve embarked for another holiday trip home, on the "Samarra" from Quebec City. This time her niece, Betty Bradfield, of Hamilton is accompanying her. The English countryside will look very different this trip, and she is looking forward to seeing her people and the familiar landscapes in a much more relaxed atmosphere than last time. She is anxious, too, to see how the buildings which were ravaged by the war have been restored. During her two-month stay, Mrs. Reeve will have ample opportunity to do so, since she plans to divided her time between her brother in the suburbs of London, and her sister, whose home is in Norwich.

● **WHEN WE STARTED** to chat a bit about Norwich, we discovered we didn't know very much about that part of England. Norwich is the capital of Norfolk County, which is on the East coast. There is a Bishop's palace there, which was bombed during the war, but not completely destroyed. This is one of the things Mrs. Reeve is anxious to see . . . There is also quite a famous Anglo-Norman Cathedral located in Norwich. Nurse Edith Cavell is buried in the grounds of the cathedral . . .

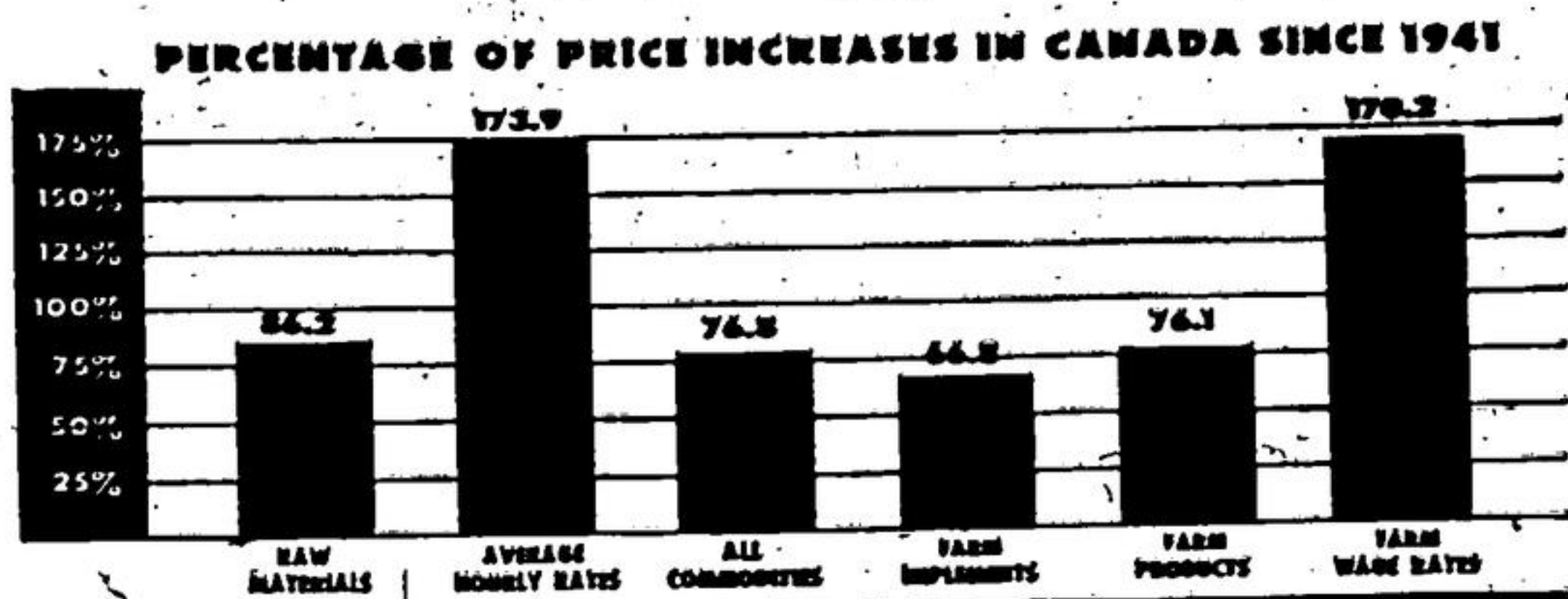
You'll doubtless recall reading about our Royal Family spending Christmas at Sandringham House. It is an old custom. And Sandringham House is located in Norfolk County, making a great tourist attraction when unoccupied. A guide will take you thru the church and the beautiful grounds. The flowers are gorgeous and the vegetable garden exceedingly large and meticulously kept. The vegetables from the Sandringham House garden supply the Royal Household . . . Part of Sandringham House is called York House, where all the late Queen's children were born. Mrs. Reeve treasures some snapshots she and daughter Mary had taken at the entrance of York House on their last trip . . .

● **ANOTHER PART** of Norfolk County which presents a great tourist and summer resort attraction is the "Wroxham Broads." This area is almost like the Muskoka Lakes, except that the lakes are smaller. A great many regattas are held here and yachting is the most popular way to spend a vacation. Mrs. Reeve's birthplace is just four miles from "The Broads."

Incidentally, in connection with Norfolk County, Mrs. Reeve lent us a book called Highways and Byways in East Anglia. It gives very good historical backgrounds of all the places of interest, in some cases taking you right back to the times of the Danes and Saxons. We would imagine that knowing all these legends, stories and superstitions would make a visit to the "Old Country," extremely fascinating . . .

● **WE SEEM TO** be travel-minded these days, but like all travelers, we have to come back home again in the long run. So this week, in case you don't know the occupants of some of the houses built by McNally Construction, on his subdivision near the park, here are some residents who live on Orchard Boulevard: Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Ussel - Mr. Ussel commutes to Toronto every day where he is employed with CIL; Mr. and Mrs. John (Scotty) Patterson - formerly lived in an apartment in the Mackenzie building on Mill St. next to the Roxy Theatre; Mr. and Mrs. Ian Ritchie - Mr. Ritchie is a retired insurance agent from Sudbury; Mr. and Mrs. John T. Armstrong - our mayor and family, who formerly lived on Ontario Street . . .

— Canada has 115,000 troops on active service but here is the harsh part for taxpayers . . . it takes 30,000 civil servants to administer these troops.



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