



# Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

(hristmas.)

Thank goodness for work and routine. They're the best therapy there is in the neurotic world we live in.

The highly-touted "holiday season" should be enough to make a great many people agree with me.

Looking back, I predicted a quiet holiday. And it started out all right, Kim came home from college a couple of days early, quite happy, just like her old self. But each day her face lengthened as she sorted the Christmas mail. Nothing for her, Day after day.

Her secret desire, of course, was a message from the loved one, who is spending the winter up around Hudson Bay somewhere. Nothing. She alternated between reviling him and glooming about the place.

The day before Christmas, it came — long letter, so personal that she would read only bits to her avidly-interested mother. And the thing that really killed her was that in the same mail she received an equally ardent letter from a young man she's been seeing at university. "Just to pass the time until Joe gets home." She chortled at the irony of it all.

Gentle granded arrived and we settled in

to spend a quiet Christmas Eve. All serene. Then comes a phone call from son Hugh, from some god-forsaken village in deepest Quebec. He and a friend had been in a car accident. The car was a write-off, but they were both alive. (They weren't even supposed to be coming home for

They arrived the next day, all racked up and bruised and abrased and cut. The only thing that hadn't been damaged in the accident, it seemed, was their appetites. They got through about eight pounds of our nine-pound goose.

Then there was a round of X-rays of chests, calls to insurance adjusters, and confessions that some people had six essays overdue, that others had an exam right after the holidays and hadn't done a tap of studying and that others were out of a job.

This was all very good for my wife's nerves. Combined with the general slob-biness of the young people — they all smoke makings and there's tobacco all over the floor; they eat and drink coffee in a continuous process for 24 hours and never wash a dish; their clothes are draped all over the house; and the hi-fi goes at a brain-shattering decibel count — all this made her come down with what seemed like stomach 'flu but to me was a break-down.



Frustration takes a lot of the joy out of

But there has always seemed to be some lighter moments to go with the disappointments. They turn the worst situation into a lot less of a catastrophe.

Recently, for instance, I was at a meeting where there was an important speech being made. I scribbled with all my might trying to extract the main points and keep up with the speaker. It was a losing proposition but I doggedly kept on, convinced before the speech ended I would win the battle. I broke about even.

Still convinced of the superiority of the pen over the tongue, I made a mental note to ask the speaker some pointed questions about his first remarks in the event I had slipped. After my hand got back to normal, of course.

It was at this juncture a folded document was passed over to me at the press desk.

"What's that?" I asked the giver with a blank stare.

"A copy of the speech just made," he replied matter-of-factly.

The joys of living!

Did you notice where a Toronto proprietor of three ladies' wear stores called Crazylegs stuck signs in his windows advertising pantyhose for men. He sold all 80 pairs (at \$7.95) the first day.

Before you get feeling a bit queer, let me explain that these Mani-Hose are considered ideal for firemen, policemen, postmen, skiers and other outdoor he-men. They are warmer than thermal underwear, sturdier than women's pantyhose and look better on the leg than long johns when trousers creep up over socks.

Now firefighters who wear them can be known as the hose wearing hose toters. Funny thing. These supposedly new fangled garments look surprisingly like the get-up the men wore in medieval movies a la Romeo and Juliet.

If you think some of today's fashlons are a bit kooky, how about these gems reported in Style, a women's wear newspaper for Canadians:

-Underpants were worn only by "loose women" until 1840, for to don them was to make the indecent acknowledgement that one had legs.

-To make filmy dress fabrics cling, women often sprinkled water over them, and sometimes came down with pneumonial

-Large bonnets were worn on Sunday because it was considered indecent for a woman to show her profile in church.

AN IDEA OF HOW the language would suffer if executives of large corporations set the standards was provided by the recent verbal fireworks over the Bank of Montreal hiring an American owned company with their advertising contract.

After extensive interviewing and evaluation of all facets of the problem, said a senior vice-president of the bank, "we wanted to set up a decision process by which as much objectivity as possible could be brought to bear in a very subjective area."

Now why couldn't he have just said "we want to make a decision based on common sense"? He wouldn't have guys like Councillor Coats on his tail then and everyone would likely have understood what he meant.

I'M CONSTANTLY amazed at the pull no punches journalism in the Free Press of 75 years ago. Problems then are very much like the ones we have today. But how they treated them!

in the case of a youth who died suddenly it was recorded in the obituary that he

She threw up regularly. She couldn't ent or sleep. She had no energy. She snarled. She whimpered.

As a result, I was busier than the proverbal one-armed paperhanger. Talking to Kun about her love life. Assuring Hugh that he couldn't die, even though every time to coughed it was like an arrow in the chest. Calling the doctor. Getting Alex in touch with insurance people. Telling my wife to get off her tail and give me a hand.

And I cooked everything from the Christmas goose to the New Year's ham. And washed dishes until I couldn't bear a TV commercial about the beautiful hands you have if you use Ivory soap. And didn't have time to watch TV anyway. And would come down in the morning to read my paper and find that the young gentlemen had selzed a section each and were immersed in it and their third cup of coffee.

But the worst thing of all was the complete lack of privacy. I am not antisocial, but I do need an hour or two a day to escape from people, read, think, sleep.

The only privacy I had was when I locked myself in the bathroom, and then my wife would be shrilling from her bed, "Are the dishes done? Who's going to vacuum the rug? There are four loads of washing in the basement!"

The only other private moments were when I went shopping. And baby, I didn't bustle through the supermarket. I strolled like a tired tortoise, enjoying every voluptuous moment of it.

All in all, it's wonderful to be back to work.

FINALLY decided to live henceforth a Christian life after attending special services at an Acton church. My question, of course, is —What was he doing before?

And there was unemployment, too, but the attitude towards the unemployed was markedly different than today's.

Says the Free Press of 1895:

The tramp problem is likely to prove a serious one during the present winter and municipal bodies should be prepared to deal with the perambulatory gentry. The municipal stone pile scheme has been found to work well. Its success does not lie in the accumulation of a lot of nicely broken stone. The presence of a pile is an effectual means of avoiding visits of tramps who soon get posted and keep away from towns where they are made to work."

Aren't you glad you weren't out of a job in those days?



Founded in 1875 and published every Wadnesday at 59 Willow St., Acton, Ontaino Mamber of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the CWNA and OWNA. Advertising rates on request Subscriptions payable in advance, \$6.00 in Canada, \$9.00 in all countries other than Canada; single copies 15 cents. Second class mail Registration Number -0515. Advertising in accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for but the belance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising it merely an offer to self, and may be withdrawn at any time.

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Free Press Editorial Page

## Mutual respect the key . . .

The current uproar about regulating use of snowmobiles stems from irresponsible use of the machines by a few drivers. The majority who operate the machines are reasonable, law abiding citizens, open to suggestions for cutting down annoyance to others.

Despite this, municipalities, including Acton and Georgetown have, been forced to legislate hours and post regulations on speed as well as banning machines from sidewalks, boulevards and median strips. Several streets in Acton may only be used when the machines are either on the way out or into town.

Snowmobilers in some places may thing the regulations are a bit harsh but the sudden surge of popularity brought penalties as well as an upswing in sales charts. People who were willing to overlook annoyance from a few machines weren't so charitable when

with three months to go in the current season, Ontario has already equalled last year's record of 28 fatalities and is working on a new record that few would venture to guess where it will stop. Quebec has recorded 24 deaths — more than twice as many as last winter.

Fortunately there have been no fatal accidents involving machines in this area so far, but with irresponsible drivers around the possibility must not be overlooked. By-laws passed were designed to save the irresponsible

element from themselves.

We were pleased to see that before

Acton council considered any legislation to curb misuse of snowmobiles they conferred with members of the local snowmobile club which is equally concerned with prevention of accidents and responsible drivers. There are two sides to every issue and this action on the part of council is recognition of the

Snowmobiling can be a lot of fun without disturbing others. We hope drivers in this part of the province recognize this by respecting the rights of those who prefer to enjoy other sports or recreation.

By the same token we would expect the non-snowmobilers to respect the rights of those who own and operate the machines.

### Need transportation policy . . .

Much of the current controversy over the Scarborough railway hearings is a carbon copy of events in Acton when the Railway Transport Committee of the Canadian Transport Commission held hearings which resulted in the eventual all but closure of station doors.

There is no doubt that both of Canada's railways are anxious to dispose of their passenger service and, like those beautiful TV ads, operate a romantic freight service over the high mountains, broad plains and green valleys of our country while Gordon Lightfoot croons a schmaltzy ballad. Of course, they are doing this, as M.P. Rud Whiting has said, despite the cost to the public in convenience and in some cases, hardship.

Apparently the extent of organized opposition in the present case has surprised commissioners of the Transport Committee who would learn a lot if they kept ears tuned to the public instead of the noise that

emanates from the spokesmen of the railways.

In Acton's case commissioners seemed so eager to display their sympathies to the railroad they accepted testimony from railway

spokesmen over the testmony of the paying public.

Encourage passengers? Commuters from this area can youch, with a great deal of experience to back opinions up, that little thought goes into that end of the railway business. Hauling freight? That's the railway's cup of tea at the moment, thank you, and a very lucrative business.

Decisions to cut off passenger service are difficult—for smaller municipalities to fight because as Mr. Whiting has said again the railway is represented by a battery of lawyers and slide rule experts while the local town has neither the manpower or resources to fight effectively.

Indeed the entire situation smells to high heaven of irrelevancies, red tape and has its share of herrings dragged over the hearings.

Anyone with a smattering of knowledge realizes that transportation routes into Toronto, to take an example, are clogged with cars emitting blasts of pollutants. They require roads that cost hundreds of

millions of dollars to build.

How much simpler it would be to use existing railroads to transport commuters in and out of the country's big smokes.

That means a transportation policy for the province and the country which would take into account not only the railways' need but consider the poor passenger, as well. There have been many gestures in that direction by the province, but as yet nothing concrete implemented.

Taken with the lack of decision on the location of the new Toronto international jetport, the transportation system in Canada seems to be due for an overhauling.

### Spirit and letter of wedlock . .

One intriguing aspect of the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women has received comparatively little notice in that there is a list of discrimination against man—not very long, mind you, but still substantial.

The Financial Post noticed it and comments with tongue-in-cheek that if common sense prevails, perhaps it will be possible to get changes in the law without waiting for a Men's Liberation pressure group to spring up.

The commissioners refer to husbands and wives in the report as "spouses" entitled to equal right before the law. They call for the abolition of discrimination in a number of cases where it is the men, not the women, who are getting the thin end of the deal.

Under section 186 of the criminal code, every parent is liable for the support of his children and every husband for the support of his wife. Non-support is a criminal offense. The commissioners recommend that the code be amended "so that a wife may

be held to support her husband in the same way that the husband may now be held to support his wife."

As regards provincial legislation, the report notes that in nine provinces the laws dealing with support of a spouse reflect the traditional concept of the wife's dependence on her husband. Only on Alberta and the Yukon Territory is the obligation made reciprocal.

The Financial Post goes on to say it would be sensible for Ottawa to get rid of discrimination against men during the next revision of the criminal code. It is time that the provinces also undated laws.

updated laws.

Of course, the r

Of course, the report is interested only in the legal aspect of reciprocal support. In a good marriage this has always been the accepted mode of conduct. If the husband through some misfortune or handicap is unable to support the wife and family, the distaff side reverses roles and endeavors to keep the financial tide from engulfing

the family. A kind wife would also feed the husband.

We know of several marriages where a man has been cut down by disease or incapacitated in other ways where the wife has shown this mutual dependency by providing the family's sole income. There was no need for legislation. She recognized the need and went to work.

It certainly would be a lot easier in this day of equal pay for equal work than it was a few years ago when a woman was expected to work for much less than a man. However, it still entails considerable sacrifices.

Mutual dependence may be legislated by law but how much better for both man and wife if it can be done on their own volition, without coercion. The same applies to any facet of the law which affects both partners in the married state.

The spirit of mutual love in a marriage will always be stronger than the letter of the law.

Free Press

back issues

#### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 11, 1951

Week of Prayer is being observed in all the Protestant churches in Acton. The first night was observed Tuesday in the Baptist church with Ernest West in charge. Ted Hansen was at the organ and Charles Landsborough played a cornet solo. The speaker was Rev. E. A. Currey. Wednesday the service was in St. Alban's with Rev. Robert Armstrong the speaker. Thursday the service will be in the United church with Miss Lampard at the organ. Rev. Luxton will give the address. Friday, the final night, the service will be in the Presbyterian church. The speaker will be Egerton Young from the British-Foreign Bible Society.

Acton's first baby for 1951 is Janice Ann Papillon, daughter of Dorothy and Francis Papillon. She arrived at the Nursing Home on January 9. Another distinction is awarded the little daughter of Dorothy and James O'Rourke, who was the last baby of 1950, born a few hours before midnight in Guelph General Hospital.

The Friday night dance at the Y was very successful. Gord Lawson and Jacky Watkins won the elimination dance. Verna St. Denis and Doug Norton won the spot dance. Those who helped prepare for the dance were Roy and Betty Kirkness, Jack McCutcheon, Betty Lawson and "Uke" Zajac.

Classes in Basic English begin at the high school this week. Miss Isabel Gammie is the teacher.

A second class in sewing has begun at the Y. A similar course was given before Christmas.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, January 13, 1921.

Commercial slaves of Canada paid to Uncle Sam \$1,000,000,000 for goods they could have bought at home in 1920.

The tanneries are now running five days

a week. However, the men are gratified they are not closed down altogether.

Rev. Mr. Tyler, who is continuing his course at McMaster University, has been

called to the pastorate of the Baptist church here.

While skating on Fairy Lake young Eugene MacPherson had the misfortune to break through the ice when under the bridge of the Toronto Suburban Radial. He could not get out by his own effort and his cries

Mr. Stanley Russell has purchased the undertaking and furniture business in Erin and has excellent prospects for success.

brought Ray Gamble and Telford Kenney to

Council is considering receiving remuneration for their services. The cells will be furnigated and whitewashed and a

new mattress and quilt purchased.

Mrs. James Symon entertained about 25 ladies at a dainty afternoon tea at the pretty family residence on Willow St.

For several years (name given) has been spending a month or so each year in Acton. She was generally considered to be mentally unbalanced. However during an acute stage she was noticed walking up and down the railroad track with little clothing and gesticulating wildly. Chief Cooney took her to Drs. McNiven and Nelson and pronounced her insane. She was conveyed to the hospital for this class of patient at Hamilton.

#### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 1, 1896.

Mr. George Storey reports having heard distinctly the lizards croaking in the swamp on Christmas evening. He has been in Nassagaweya for over 50 years and never heard of such a thing before at this season of the year.

Mr. William Cook, cleaner and dryer, has engaged Miss Rockola and is now prepared to execute all orders for cleaning and dyeing clothes, hats. etc. Miss Rockola is experienced in hair work and this branch will also be carried on

will also be carried on.

Christmas passed very pleasantly notwithstanding the usual accompaniments of frost and sleighing were wanted.

The Sunday School anniversary in the Methodist church Christmas evening attracted about 700 persons. Over 200 children were admitted free and the receipts nearly reached \$60. Telegraphic despatches from Santa Claus en route were read at intervals during the program and when he arrived in the fireplace at 9.15 the little folk reached a zenith of delight.

Neill the Shoe Man, Guelph — 100 pairs of gents' stylish lace shoes for skating, walking, for church or anything you please, for \$1.25, regular price \$1.75 and \$2.

The men who laid the foundation of this municipality are fast passing away. The news has been received of the death of Samuel Smith Esq. of Deloraine Manitoba. He was an active resident of Acton 40. years ago. He was engaged in the tanning business here and subsequently in the shingle and stave business.