



WHITE WATERS of the Eden Mills dam were a popular spot for anglers on the week end. —(Staff Photo)



Sugar and Spice by bill smiley

It's only when you're dying that you truly appreciate living. And I'm dying right now.

Don't scoff. I mean it. You'll be sorry next week when this column appears as a blank white space with a heavy black border around it.

I don't want any eulogies in that white space. At least, nothing fancy. Nothing like:

"Here lies a noble soul
Torn from this earth
before his time;
His words were nothing
But his soul sublime."

No, I don't really want that sort of thing. Although it was my first suggestion as I lay, gasping for breath, trying to choke down the rye and hot water and honey and lemon juice that somebody had suggested to my wife might save me.

We compromised, after some discussion concerning how much a letter to the tombstone man charges. And I will say this for my wife. She wiped my forehead and brought me cups of tea while she sorted through my insurance policies.

We settled on:

"After all
Bill knew
He'd die;
So do you."

It wasn't quite what I had in mind, but I don't quibble about these things, and I did like the last line. Also we saved \$367.80 on the lettering. That's almost enough to buy an automatic dishwasher. Let's put first things first.

There's been a lot written about the rights of spring: poetry, music and stuff like that. To be dying of the flu is one of the rights of spring in Canada. It's one of the few inalienable rights we have left.

Oh, there are other rights of spring in this country, but they're becoming polluted, like everything else.

There's the right to go trout fishing on Opening Day. This was once an indefinable and inexplicable delight. Nowadays, it's about as thrilling as climbing onto a subway train at rush hour.

There's the right to go out and shovel and sweep back onto the road all the sand the snowblower has thrown up on your lawn during the winter. This has a tendency to pall after the first five or six years.

There's the right to cheat on your income tax. This used to be day rigger, as we used to say, but so many people are doing it now that it's passany, as we say now.

There are all sorts of other spring rights, like giving birth to twin lambs, going for a swim as soon as the ice goes out, or discovering that your kid has quit university a week before final exams.

But we're not all cut out for these things. They're sort of spotty. The only spring right that has not been interfered with by government, big business, labor unions or the women's lib is the ordinary Canadian's spring right of dying from the flu.

I think it's probably the last spring right we'll have in perpetuity. And I think it's fitting that we should.

Practically anybody can die of practically anything these days, according to the experts. And they're probably right, though I have yet to know an expert to be right about anything.

But to die of the flu every spring is something that's fairly precious to us Canadians, and I hope the advertising agencies don't catch on to it, or they'll spoil the whole doleful business.

Can't you see the ads? "COME TO CANADA FOR A NEW THRILL! INSTANT INFLUENZA!" Probably sponsored by "drink Canada dry" and "relax with Canadian club." The Yanks would flock in.

Don't let them. Let's keep something for our mess of pottage. I'm dying of the flu, and I don't want a bunch of tourists horning in.

Conflict and Contrast

BY JIM DILLS

Jim Dills was one of 18 weekly newspaper men from five provinces selected for a two-week study tour including Israel, Cyprus, Germany and England. He writes his observations and conclusions in this series.



Salamis - an ancient city is reborn

The time had flown and we were on our way back to the airport and the return flight to Nicosia after a frisking, passing between metal detector plates and a close check of personal baggage.

Our arrival in Nicosia was in time to keep a promised date with Canadian Forces officers, entertaining them to dinner at the Cosmopolitan. It was a full meal from soup, salad, shishkabob, prepared fruit, and fresh fruit. It reinforced our ideas of the Eastern method of eating which makes it a full night's affair. I'm sure there were four or five changes of plates and cutlery during the meal which extended from 9 p.m. to 12 midnight. Eating there is in this leisurely fashion and the fresh fruit is huge. My two hands couldn't encircle one orange. It was larger than any grapefruit I've encountered.

The next day provided a short time in Nicosia before we began our return trip. Beginning before 6 a.m. we boarded a bus to visit the port city of Famagusta, stopping along the way for a look at an interesting excavation and restoration at Salamis.

The traditional founder of Salamis was Teucer, son of the King of the island of Salamis and one of the heroes of the Trojan war. It dated back more than 700 years B.C. and on the grounds we could see the very impressive theatre with its massive rows of seats stepping up in a semi-circle. The theatre had been built early in the imperial period and had been repaired and

remodelled during the first and second centuries. There were 50 rows of seats and the seats near the bottom had been dressed with white limestone. This was preserved in the first two or three rows. Standing in the centre of the theatre at the podium area, one's voice carried quite effectively to the top row where the 50th seat was available.

The reconstruction of this theatre was continuing as is work on the remains of the gymnasium and Roman baths which were equally impressive. Huge pillars outline the gym of the early Roman period and there are some fine restorations of early Byzantine baths complete to the mosaic lining of the baths themselves. The restoration work is impressive and gives an excellent view of a very interesting old city.

But on to Famagusta, a climb along the old walls and a look at the Othello tower made famous by Shakespeare. A look, too, at the Miami-like developments along the seashore and the beautiful beach. Row upon row of new apartments and hotels appear to be under construction, bearing no evidence of the distress which continues to divide the nation of Cyprus into Greek and Turk.

Back again to Nicosia along the broad, flat, lush green Messaorian plain. Shepherds were tending their flocks and in the distance ahead could be seen the Kyrenia Mountains. A brief spell in the sun on the Jasmim Terrace at the Ledra Palace Hotel where the first warm rays of the

summer season could be felt, and it was time for another bus trip to catch another plane.

Skipping lunch, we ate oranges which had been picked by one of our group in an obliging Cypriot owner's garden and our plane took off for an unanticipated stop at Athens, Greece.

There a young Canadian and two friends who had some problems. One was confined to a stretcher after his Volkswagen van had overturned and he had been hospitalized for two weeks. The Canadian Forces plane, accepting a call from the Canadian delegation in Athens had picked up he and his friends for a return trip to Canada.

We weren't able to leave the plane in Athens for a quick look at Greece and it was 13 hours since our last meal, but our plane was soon heading back up the coast of Italy, over Florence to Zurich, Switzerland and into our scheduled stop at Lahr, Germany.

So far away from home, it is unusual to be able to locate anyone who knows of places called Milton or Acton but in three cases we were successful.

Captain Jim McDonald, who was stationed with the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Cyprus knew of Milton. His uncle Dave McDonald had been a former herdsman at Aberfeldy Farms with Reford Gardhouse.

(Continued on Page C3)

Free Press Editorial Page

Must preserve heritage . . .

Imminent development on the south side of town, known locally as the "cemetery hill", has created municipal moving problems.

First, the cemetery gates had to be moved to a new site on Cobblehill Road, to make room for an apartment building.

Wisely, we think, Acton council decided to preserve the gates which were fashioned by a local craftsman using stone from this vicinity. Perhaps new gates could have been fashioned with less money than it cost to move present ones but there were more considerations than mere money.

The gates are a heritage in Acton, enhancing the entrance to one of the most hallowed places of the

community. They framed the entrance to Fairview cemetery, a tribute to the Women's Institute and others, who spent a great deal of time and work arranging the job in 1938.

Since the gates were an outright gift to the town from community-minded women and it would have been a discourtesy to have treated a gift shabbily, without proper consideration to those who first displayed the public spirit and initiative in having them built.

The new location shows the gates off very well and preserves a town tradition, which we think there are few enough of to be careful they do not fall to a wrecker's hammer.

Next landmark to disappear from

the "cemetery hill" will be the old water tower which has been a beacon for motorists and an Acton landmark. The tower hasn't been functional for many years but with its new baby blue cover conceived by former deputy-reeve Ted Tyler Jr. it took on new lustre in the last two years.

Certainly the town stands to gain from an agreement with Alteo Construction to move the municipal works department to a new site in the industrial park but we wonder if there isn't some way the old water tower couldn't be saved and turned into the town's conversation piece, much like the much discussed "Archer" in front of Toronto's city hall.

We'll miss it when it is torn down.

Penalty of leadership . . .

Having kicked around the community for several years, this writer can agree almost without reservation with an editorial which appeared in the Wingham Advance-Times regarding the penalty of leadership in this and almost any community.

The Wingham writer says he is sometimes amazed that small communities continue to provide men and women for public office when the rewards of service are bitter, to say the least.

"If you happen to be the type of person who feels some obligation, as a responsible citizen, to take your turn on town council, the public utilities commission or the hospital board, you

can rest assured that your unselfishness will bring you plenty of criticism and very, very few compliments. The vast majority of your fellow-citizens will "natter" on endlessly about all the things you are doing wrong but you can rely on the fact that very few of them will be seeking your office at the next election," says the Wingham paper.

Even the service clubs aren't immune from the unending critics and their bitter shafts. People who join the clubs with high motives soon discover that others who belong to nothing, and assist no one, are always ready to criticize.

The mayor is often the butt of every

carping tongue. His phone rings at all hours of the day and callers have lots of abuse and complaints. How many phone when they feel the mayor and council have done something well?

The Wingham paper wonders what would happen if all the men and women who continue to serve on these bodies were suddenly to decide it was the critics' time to run the show. How many would be willing to take over the responsibilities?

Valid criticism, of course, is vital to a democratic society but it must be backed with ability and willingness to suggest other, better alternatives. If these are lacking, the critic mustn't expect a very intelligent audience.

Safety first . . .

As an example of "horse sense", the Ontario Safety League points out that horses had the intelligence to be afraid of the automobile during the period when pedestrians laughed at it.

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Most drivers know car engines give off carbon monoxide, but few people seem to appreciate exactly how dangerous it is. It takes only about five minutes for an average car, left running in a closed garage, to poison the air to the point where it would cause death.

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Drivers, never try to pass another car if there is the slightest doubt in your mind that you have room enough.

The Ontario Safety League points out that if you are doing 60 mph and passing a car doing 45, it is like passing 40 cars parked bumper to bumper.

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A survey made by the Insurance Bureau of Canada has shown that 84 per cent of those questioned would favour laws requiring manufacturers to produce "harder to damage" cars, and 74 per cent would be willing to pay more for such cars. The Ontario Safety League says the results were based on 4,229 "detailed personal interviews" conducted throughout Canada in the summer of 1970.

Pregnant women often enquire if

wearing a seat belt might be damaging to the unborn child, in the event of a crash. Doctors reply that a belt worn correctly cannot hurt the child, and mothers-to-be have particular reason to be belted in at all times. The right position is for the lap belt to be comfortably snug and as low as possible, so that in the event of an abrupt stop the strain is taken on the strong pelvic bones.

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Generally speaking, a person's driving improves with experience, says the Ontario Safety League. But if a man starts out with bad driving habits and poor attitudes, through lack of proper instruction, years of experience may accentuate the deficiencies, rather than diminish them.

Free Press back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, May 10, 1951.

The first sod for Acton's new \$235,000 school was turned officially by Dr. F. G. Oakes, chairman of the school board, on Thursday morning of last week. Present for the ceremony were J. Hargrave, Tom Jones, C. Heard, Wes Wolfe and Jack Creighton of the school board. Although the bulldozer had been at work on the site, the first digging with the steam shovel began Thursday and school classes carried on an usual with the steady noise of the machines in the background.

Fred Krantz worked with his helper for nearly eight hours to cut down a 100-year-old elm tree on the school site. He said it was the toughest tree he ever felled.

There are several building improvements being carried out in the business section. Hinton's store has an addition which doubles the former size with full basement. W. D. Talbot has added a new brick and cement warehouse at the rear of his Mill St. store. It matches up his brick store and connects it to the former warehouse.

On Main N., Bilton and Perry's new show rooms and workshops are nearing completion. Brick is ready for the renovation of the front of Harry Mainprize's barber shop. This will mean an alteration in the front windows and shop entrance.

Jim Dills of Acton and Murray Scoyne of Ridgeway graduated this week from Ryerson with silver medals for proficiency. Graham Guild of Rockwood graduated from the School of Mechanical and Industrial Technology.

The first concert of the recently organized Acton Citizens Band was held in the Roxy Theatre.

Ray Arbic and Armand Braida receive their B.S.A. degrees from the O.A.C. next week.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, May 19, 1921

On Wednesday evening of last week a dance, advertised as being under the auspices of the 29th Battery, C.F.A., of Guelph, was held in the Town Hall. A number of young men accompanied the visitors who were a disgrace to any

company. Some were in uniform and others in civilian clothing. These young men were more or less under the influence of liquor, and behaved themselves like hoodlums and were guilty of vile language in the public street. They had flasks of liquor and brazenly drank from them at the Hall and also on the Manse lawn and on the street. Citizens were disgusted and some timid people residing near the Town Hall were alarmed. The Licence Inspector is looking into the matter and it is likely several of the offenders will find themselves mulcted of fines. The officers of this esteemed and reputable battery will do well to see that further orgies of this nature are not permitted in connection with functions held under its name.

The announcement was made that Rev. W. K. Findlay has resigned as pastor of Knox church and will go to Medina, N.Y.

Complaint was made at council by

persons who are desirous of beautifying their home surroundings and boulevards that delivery horses are let run on the boulevards and are destroying shade trees and shrubs. Offenders will be warned. Halton Rifles will be issued with new Lee-Enfields.

Mr. A. B. McLean has installed the latest type of automatic hot water heaters for his barber shop equipment.

Two autos collided in Georgetown Monday.

Motor traffic is growing larger here daily.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, April 30, 1896.

The Council met on Monday evening. The Orange Order was granted the use of the park on the 13th of July for \$3. The Committee on Finance reported paying R. D. Graham repairing lamps 50 cents, two torches \$1, postage \$1, feeding tramps \$1.20; Robert Morrow re-planting at park \$8.30; Robert Morrow trees and planting at cemetery \$8.30.

Symon Bros.—Hardware, tin and granite ware, jewellery, silverware, books, stationery, patent medicines, grocers and a full line of Gurney's famous stoves. Only eggs taken in exchange.

Thursday was an eventful day at Rockwood. About 7.30 a.m. George Pike, manager of the lime works dropped dead from heart failure at 73 years of age. About nine o'clock, John M. Morley, a farmer, dropped dead of apoplexy. He was 79 years of age.

Limehouse saw mill is running again for a few days.

Elegant full sized cabinet photographs of Her Majesty Queen Victoria are being sent to the buyers of Diamond Dyes.

Master Eddie Holmes of Acton has commenced working at Cripps shingle mill at Crewsons Corners. Eddie is a smart boy. He walks three miles from Acton every day. A very sudden death occurred at the home of Mr. Thomas Moore in Nassagaweya when his sister Miss Annie breathed her last. She had suffered from lung trouble but was fully resigned. The funeral was a very large one there being 153 carriages in the cortege.

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