



## Bill Smiley

As I recall, my last column was a tale of woe, relating the dreadful things the gods had done to me in 1972.

I should have kept my mouth shut. The same gods, annoyed at my tiny protest, decided to show me what they could really do.

Take a cat. Go on. Any old cat. Take a freshly-waxed floor. Take a guy with an armful of milk and eggs. Take a wife who is upstairs watching TV when she should be helping that guy with the groceries.

O.K. The guy comes in. He takes off his boots so he won't make a mess on the newly-washed-and-waxed kitchen floor. He is in his sock feet. Right?

Out of the grocery bags he takes two quarts of milk, a dozen eggs and a case of pop. He heads for the kitchen counter.

At that very moment the cat, unfed, hurls herself at his legs, meowing and rubbing. He lifts his right foot, gently, to burf her out of the way, spins smartly on his left metatarsal, and goes down like Niagara Falls.

He fails to eject the grub, out of some dim, primitive idea that you hang onto the grub at any cost. The first thing that hits anything is his noggin, which tries to tear the copper off the cupboard door handles.

The next thing that strikes hard-pan is his nose, which bounces off the floor in a spray of blood and milk.

His erstwhile wife and protector comes down and finds him sitting in something like a Masai wedding, two parts milk to one part blood, a cold cloth on his torn scalp, eggs all over the place, and his nose going up like a balloon being filled with hydrogen.

But there's no fret, no sweat. He's had his nose broken three times before, and by far better people than a cat, or his wife's waxing.

Sitting there among the eggshells and milk and blood, he remembers fondly the time his future brother-in-law gave him an elbow and cracked the old bezer during football practice.

And then he thinks of that beautiful free-for-all with the Royal Marines, outside that pub in Wrexham, North Wales, when the fighter pilots proved only that they could not fight.

And he remembers, almost with pleasure, the day he was being beaten up by the German guards, and nobody had even broken his nose yet, and then the little guy who was engineer of the locomotive came rushing into the circle and kicked him right in the snoot.

And I'd like to say this mutt sat there happily for ever after, thinking about the other times his nose had been broken. But she wouldn't let him.

Her first thought was pure Florence Nightingale. "Everyone will think I did it," she wailed. "Yes, I would think they would," I countered. "Knowing you."

"They'll think you were drunk," was her next contribution. "Well, that's what I'd think, if someone told me he'd lost a one-round bout with a cat," I suggested.

"How am I going to get the blood out of that towel," she queried. "Well, you might pretend you were a vampire, and suck it out."

"People will think you've been beaten up," she worried. "Yes," I rejoined. "Snugly. No answer."

"I'm going to lock the door, so nobody can see you." And I replied, "I'm going to call a press conference, and admit it was all your fault, because you'd waxed the floor, and you hadn't put the cat out, and you weren't down to help me with the groceries."

Ah, heck! I shouldn't put her through all that. It was not her fault, except that she'd waxed the floor and hadn't put the cat out and didn't come down to help with the groceries and insists I take my boots off when I come in onto her rotten polished floors.

It's not so bad, really. Apart from the cuts on my nose, which look as though a gang of Glaswegians had worked me over, there are only the eyes.

For some reason, when you break your nose, there's a great sympathy from your eyes.

They don't weep, except for the first six hours. They swell up and up and up. At first they are red. Then they begin to look like a couple of tea-bags that have been on the booze. And when the worst is over, they turn a sort of bilious yellow.

When that happens, you know you are home free, and that all you have to do is think up witty answers for the query: "Will beat you up again?"

Proposed splitting of the new city of Cambridge in new electoral boundaries indicates the federal commission was unaware that Preston, Galt and Hespeler were to be linked together as the new city January 1, under the provincial government's regional government scheme. It also clearly indicates that the two higher levels of government need to put their heads together and come up with a joint plan for electoral districts instead of these hit and miss tactics that continue to confuse voters.



ICY WINTER WATER races down the rock chute alongside picturesque Hortop's Mill, in the heart of Everton, before plunging over the falls into a boiling cauldron scooped out of limestone by centuries of wear. Then it regains some of the tranquility of the mill pond above as it continues on to Rockwood and more turbulence. —J. Jennings Photo

## Mini-Comment

According to reports from Ottawa, the Government has hired a bus service to ferry M.P.s from their offices to the Parliament buildings, a scant two blocks. Cost of the service, which uses four mini-buses, is \$626 per day. We would suggest that the government could do better by hiring Tyler Transport Ltd. from Acton. They charged the town only \$58 a day for a Christmas bus service, which did very well.

Far away fields may look greener to some Acton shoppers but one man from Bramalea said he did much of his Christmas shopping in Acton from advertisements in the Free Press. He dropped into the Free Press office the other day to take out a subscription because he enjoys reading the paper. Closest place he could buy it at a news stand was in Georgetown, and he wanted to ensure getting it each week. No comment needed.

The Financial Post says Bell Canada is clearly ahead in its new battle for rate increases but still must face the Ontario and Quebec governments, the association of municipalities of Ontario before the war is won.

Stories circulating that Ph.D. graduates cannot find jobs and some end up as taxi drivers were given the boot by figures released by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies showing per cent of 1971-72 Ph.D.'s had jobs when they handed in their theses. Figures for the previous year were similar. What we want to know now—who starts the rumors?

N.D.P. leader David Lewis is bolstering public confidence in his party by deciding to back the Liberal Government in its legislative program as outlined from the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Lewis has correctly gauged the feelings of the Canadian people, who do not want an election now or soon. We feel he has acted responsibly in the matter despite some pressure. The decision to back the Liberals until there is a piece of unacceptable legislation indicates a genuine desire to act on behalf of the country. It would be the same way if the situation was reversed and the

Conservative party was in power. The election is over and it is time to make the best of it until all parties are at loggerheads.

The unseasonable weather during the Christmas season has left us a legacy of icy streets which no amount of salt or sand seems able to dissolve. In certain sections of town sidewalks are impassable so pedestrians must take the roads. This has compounded the hazard for both motorists and walkers. Pedestrians must be careful to avoid injury and at the same time not interfere with traffic. Motorists must be doubly careful of pedestrians and themselves where roads are slippery. In contrast to town streets and rural roads, most highways are bare and conditions good.

When it comes to participating in TV quiz shows the members of the Given family, who originate from the R.R. 2 Acton homestead, must have set a new record. Six of them have appeared on one CTV show and all have come away with a prize. Don't know of any other family group who can match that record.

The death of former Conservative premier and leader George Drew last week was another in the chain of obsequies for well known political figures from another era who have changed the course of history. Mr. Drew got his political start in nearby Guelph, the Royal City, and somehow he always seemed to embody all the attributes which used to identify the Conservatives. His tall erect figure and British bearing seemed most at home when he was the Canadian trade commissioner in Britain but we always felt he was misunderstood outside of Ontario. If Mr. Drew had been born a century earlier there is no doubt he would have been prime minister of Canada but his appearances at the national level never got past the statesmanship of Louis St. Laurent who defeated him at the polls. But newsmen have said Mr. Drew was really a personable, warm character in private who froze in public, the opposite to Mr. St. Laurent who seemed to come across in public but was personally very correct and cool.

## New boundaries create concern

Federal election boundary commissioners used representation by population guidelines as they remade the electoral map of Ontario. Theoretically they have arranged new boundaries for a quotient of 84,649 people, but in practice may have set up some unwieldy ridings where the population has little in common.

Take the new Wellington-Dufferin electoral district as an example. As Halton M.P. Terry O'Connor points out, the rural townships and towns in this conglomerate do not share a common geography, a single large population centre or similar history on problems. The farmer in Arthur has little in common with the burgher in Acton or Rockwood. However, it is well to remember that quite likely the same conditions existed when the County of Halton riding was set up.

The main objection to the proposals as we see them would be from the politician's angle. It is doubtful any politician could make sense out of this mixed bag, mainly rural, with towns such as Georgetown, Orangeville and Acton accounting for almost half the vote. Lumping the north end of Halton

with Erin and Eramosa townships accounts for well over 40,000 of the riding's estimated 76,449 population, indicating strongly where the decisions would be made.

This is all very well from a local viewpoint. It would be fine to be in a position of power for a change after so many years in the shadow of such Halton giants as Oakville and Burlington. By the same token, is it fair to the farmer in the outer fringes of the riding in townships such as West Luther, Maryborough and Peel?

There is also going to be some screaming from politicians who will lose support over the re-adjustment of boundaries. We can understand their concern when they lose a township or town where there were plenty of votes and in its place an area is substituted where the other party cornered the vote.

One redeeming feature as we see it is that the elected representative from Wellington-Dufferin would have to expend considerable energy getting to know all corners of the riding, a factor we do not find the least bit unpalatable, although it will be difficult to feel the

pulse of so vast and varied a population.

We can also understand the objections the people in Milton have in being lumped with Oakville. Although there will be all kinds of official denials the two centres have been rivals for decades and Milton would not have the support of other northern municipalities in any concerns they may feel which differ from the huge vote to the south of them.

In any case the proposals have been made public and the commission is asking for comments on the proposed boundary re-adjustments. Something is being done to straighten out real inequities in the political structure of the country. The ball is now in the public's court, either to reject or accept.

We anticipate there will be objections to the new boundary lines but none will be valid unless they are accompanied by workable alternatives. Perhaps they may run second fiddle to regional government proposals from the provincial government due to be released at McMaster University, January 22.



B2 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, January 10, 1973

## Sunday — a pause that refreshes

In 1906 federal legislation made it criminal to work on Sunday. It was an attempt to suppress almost all Sunday activities except church-going.

In today's pluralistic society neither those who observe, nor those who make the laws, would wish to interpret them so narrowly. Much of today's secular society has lowered the emphasis on church-going but a large percentage of society would favor a common day of rest and recreation for all.

Despite this, observance of the Lord's Day Act has been nibbled at from all sides. You can shop for

groceries, see a movie, bet on a horse, or ride a ferris wheel on Sunday.

The concern of those who would continue to enforce the Lord's Day Act is not for those who participate in these activities, but for those who must work on Sunday in order to keep the stores, theatres, and amusements open.

Most of the activity is not necessarily unsuitable — perhaps the family where both parents work need that Sunday afternoon trip to the supermarket. Perhaps it is a real family event to shop together. But what of the cashier, the meat cutter, the man who fills the

shelves?

Their families are denied their company. The fact that they don't work on Mondays doesn't compensate. By Monday the rest of the family is back at school or work.

While no one would deny that certain vital services must be carried on over Sunday, the increasing de-emphasis of Sunday as a day of rest for as many as possible is a creeping blight whose growth we should stop.

There is a need for a uniform weekly pause — one that refreshes.

## Back Issues of The Free Press

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 15, 1953.

Ice-broken hydro- and telephone lines blacked out Acton and district for hours at a time over the weekend, when an ice storm, described as the worst in a decade, covered the area. Sunday services continued in churches but choirs were led by piano and churches dependent on oil burners were cool.

Richard Harris has begun his 25th year of corresponding from Rockwood for the Free Press.

Be sure gifts packed in ditty bags for seamen will keep a long time. During the last week, Mrs. Ellerby of Limehouse received a thank you especially for cookies and candy from Able Seaman D. C. Russell of H.M.C.S. Athabaskan, which recently returned to our west coast. In answer to an appeal by the Navy League, Mrs. Ellerby packed the ditty bag during the summer of 1944. The sailor just received it for Christmas 1952.

Osprings was without power for 26 hours in the ice storm. About 600 Acton school students heard Ron Cooksley of the public relations department of the Hydro speak on power and safety. From Acton he went to Rockwood where he addressed 200 more.

It looks as if Baxter Labs. might repeat their feat of last year and win the Shemey Test trophy. They have only lost one game. The two new additions to the team, John Cunningham and Phil McCristall, have added a lot of scoring punch. It's the nearest Acton has to O.H.A. hockey. They play every Monday night in the arena.

The Legion held its annual banquet by candlelight.

The first Elizabeth II coins go into circulation this week.

Town workmen have kept ice in the arena despite milder weather.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 4, 1923.

Sir Henry Thornton, president of the National Railways, has decided not to sell the Toronto Suburban Railway system until he has made a personal survey of the lines to Guelph and Woodbridge to ascertain if same are a necessary part of the national system of Railways. The Hydro Commission had hoped to have the deal completed. The Community House (now the funeral

home) has been renamed the Sunderland. This is quite consistent with its history. When the late W. H. Storey erected this fine building for the family residence 40 years ago it was called Sunderland Villa in honor of his birthplace, Sunderland in England.

Misses Margaret and Jessie McNabb of Toronto were with friends here for the holidays. Mr. and Mrs. William McNabb and Master Cameron also visited here.

Mr. and Mrs. William Algie of Brampton spent a few days with Mr. and Mrs. Amos Mason.

Mrs. C. A. Smith of Detroit, formerly of Acton, died of septic poisoning in an extracted tooth. Her brother, customs officer R. M. McDonald attended the funeral.

Acton L.O.L. officers elected are W.M. E. T. Thetford, D.M. Geo. Anderson, chaplain Rev. Baugh; J. P. Scarrow; E. F. Kennedy, H. Smethurst, Wm. Beavers, Herb Ritchie, Ed Gamble, V. Wheeler, George Dutchburn, H. Masales, W. H. Smith, E. K. Cook, Wm. Hall, J. H. Denny.

The Baptist congregation welcomed their new pastor, Mr. Howard.

Rockwood elections were held New Year's Day and despite icy conditions 126 ballots were cast out of 175. Commissioners elected are W. M. Harris, Fred McWilliams and S. R. Peart.

In the old days a ford was the place where you crossed the river. Now it's everywhere you try to cross the street.

### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 15, 1898.

Lot was hardly more alarmed when the fire fell down from heaven and licked up the town he was living in, than the good people at Sodom church in Nassagaweya last Friday morning when Mr. James Monehan rushed in shouting to the worshippers "Help, help, my barn is on fire." Fire had broken out in the straw stack of Frank and James Monehan. The worshippers rushed out and gave the fire fiend battle, saving all the stock and about 600 bushels of wheat, also the implements. Hay, roots and feed were destroyed. The barn and outbuildings were wrecked. Loss will be \$2,000 with \$1,400 insurance.

The members of the Crockinole club and their visitors, in all nearly a hundred, spent a delightful evening in the town hall Monday night. It was the club's first gathering. Crockinole games were played from 8 to 10 when the ladies served cakes and coffee, after which there was a short business session. The Jubilee Orchestra enlivened the proceedings.

Local Master McKinnon sold at Guelph Saturday morning the farm of the M. Sayers

of Ballinad. Fifty acres were sold to Francis Longstreet of Belfountain for \$1,650 and 50 acres to G. B. Sayers of Ballinad for \$1,620.

Come, ye maidens, almost thirty, do not cavil at your fate, Father Time may send a sutor, in the year of 'ninety-eight.

Messrs. John Mann, J. L. Warren and Wm. McDonald have been elected trustees of Bannockburn school for 1898.

Toronto now has a population of 225,000. Last Thursday Messrs. Chas. Davidson, N. F. Lindsay and G. and A. MacDonald had their herds of cattle dehorned with the latest improved method by Mr. Allan McDonald V.S., Erin.

### Safety corner

—Safety is being orderly in all that we do.

—Safety is a respect for law and order, and a striving for good government.

—Safety seeks freedom without license, justice without fear.

—Safety is a way of life.

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