



Free Press Editorial Page

B2 The Acton Free Press, Wed., September 19, 1973

What others say . . .

HOW GOOD WERE THOSE "GOOD OLD DAYS?"
The Osbourn Star
We have always been a bit suspicious of those old movie scenes from the picturesque "good old days" of the horse and buggy on the town's main street.
To get right down to what bothered us—we always wondered about how much horse manure there was on the streets. We recall, even in the last few years of even the most recent "olden days", that there was a fair amount around the feedmill in our town. And in the winter there was always a reasonable supply of frozen horse manure available when you wanted to get a shiny game going on an icy road.
Now, someone has come right out and said it. Those old days weren't good.
We heard a speech by Charles L. Gould, publisher of the San Francisco Examiner. He was speaking to the International Association of Advertising Executives. This is what he claims.
In 1906, there were 120,000 horses in New York City. The horse was the prime mover of freight, food and people. But the horse also created monumental problems.
"They created traffic jams of horrendous proportions," said Gould. "Their iron shoes together with the iron wheels of the giant drays beat a merciless tattoo on the cobblestones and created a noise level that was deafening at times." (Anybody ever hear of noise pollution?)
But that was just the beginning!
Says Gould, "The removal of horse dung from the streets and from the barns was a logistical problem of major magnitude."
Gould goes on from there. Flies, he said,

infested the cities, carrying epidemics of all sorts. By 1906, about 20,000 New Yorkers died each year from cholera and other diseases spawned by horse manure and spread far and wide by flies.
Says Gould, "The good old days were not so good."
He cites a lot of other things as well about the "good old days" that we tend to forget. He quotes a researcher from the Smithsonian Institution with the facts that a century ago, in the U.S., the crime rate was twice as high as today; that drug addiction—as a by-product of medication commonly used—was far more prevalent than today; that prostitution plagued all urban centres and VD was more widespread and harder to cure; that hundreds of thousands of children under 12 worked 10 hours a day in factories, on farms and in mines; that social welfare as known today was nonexistent.
L. Gould, "Yes, I for one, will not cast my vote for a return to a dream world that never was—a world where death and disease marched in lock-step with human suffering."
Guess you can count the rest of us in, too. But we still like the movies.

FROM HICK TO SOMEBODY

(The Listowel Banner)
Because we are all consumers, none of us are too ecstatic about the present high cost of living. However the high price of meat and other food stuffs has had one good spin-off. It has made a lot of people take another look at the farmer.

The man who used to be a nobody, or worse still the butt of jokes, has suddenly become a somebody. Like the 97-pound weakling who picked himself up out of the sand, he is now a force to be reckoned with.
For the first time in decades, the farmer has the opportunity to get an honest return for his work. As a result he has assumed status in the community. Words like hick, rube, plow-jockey and so-called bumper are fast disappearing. All of a sudden we have city-slickers dedicating songs to the farmer. We have sociologists telling us that the farmer, because he can readily see and appreciate the fruits of his labor, because he is involved in a job from beginning to end, has an enviable occupation. Now instead of laughing at their country cousins, we have city children who boast about the fact that they spent a week or so on a farm during the summer. And instead of heading for the beach, many city folk are looking for farm vacations.
Yes, time has changed; and as meat and bread are rationed, or disappear from our grocery shelves, the farmer's place in our society will climb even higher. And why not? After all, the fishermen of Iceland are among that country's best paid workers. In Russia a truck-driver in the north receives a salary equal to the doctor in the city. For too long we have been judging people by the cut of their clothes or the color of their fingernails. It's high time we learned that straw hats and overalls are as respectable as a business suit and brief case and the tractor as impressive a piece of machinery as the limousine.

Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 24, 1953.
A sudden cloudburst scattered the limousine livestock parade at the fair as wet weather hampered the day's program and dwindled the crowd. The fair set a new attendance record for Friday night for a variety program and band concert. An innovation was a square dance competition won by the senior North Halton set that were finalists at the Royal Winter Fair. The junior set also competed with music by Harry Shortill, Ralph McKeown and Joanne Julian. Howson Ruddell called off judges for the event were Mrs. Gerry Candler, Gib Kingsbury and Alex Near. On Saturday the band paraded in the rain. Children were disappointed with the small midway. Hall exhibits were above average but livestock exhibits were lighter because of the weather.
Prize-winning babs were Susan Marie McGilloway; David Bittorf; Marjorie Bayne; Judith Anne Ritchie; Robert Frank Crump; Ann-Marie Davies; Larry Holmes; twins Dorothy Ann and Dianne Graham. A presentation of money was made to Dwight Patterson, pastor of the Baptist church, who is preparing for missionary service in Africa. He is being replaced by Ray Costerus.
The new dial phone is now in operation in Ballinac and no doubt some will have trouble getting used to it.
Three night courses will likely be held in Acton this fall as well as the regular courses in Milton. Mrs. W. J. Beatty is chairman of the local committee.
Acton's application for annexation of 300 acres has been turned down by the O.M.B. Town officials admit being stunned and township officials are also surprised.
Limehouse W. I. gardens display was held in the hall Monday evening and prizes were awarded for garden plots. Bruce Fargeter was judge.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 20, 1903.
Mr. Frank Guild of Rockwood, who has been making his mark as a vocalist of high quality, has been awarded a special operatic scholarship from the Eastman School of Music, Rochester. Mr. Eastman, the head of Eastman Kodak, has awarded seven scholarships to those ready to enter a musical career.

Mr. Boddy, the new teacher at Limehouse, is getting the school well disciplined. It evidently needed a man teacher just at this epoch in the history of the school.
Last spring Robert Sprowl, third line, was seized with an affliction of the back from which he never recovered. He died Thursday at the age of 61. He was born on the homestead.
At the meeting of Esqueing council business dealt principally with repairs to roads.
Premier Ferguson made the announcement that Dr. Samuel Webster had been re-appointed sheriff in this county. The action will displace A. L. MacNab, who was appointed by the late government just prior to the election. The premier said "the appointment of Mr. MacNab was obviously political, made in the heat of a political campaign and should not stand." Dr. Webster and his friends are quite jubilant.
The tender plants were badly frosted Sunday.
A motor car is to be purchased for the use of town police by Oakville council.
Hughy McKay, noted local fisherman, landed the largest bass so far caught in Fairy Lake. It measured 15½ inches and weighed 2½ lbs.
The first funeral cortege which has passed over the new highway between Acton and Crewsons Corners was that of the late Mrs. Brock Swackhamer on Sunday afternoon.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, September 15, 1898.
The G.T.R. painting gang spent about a week here and repainted the exterior of their old depot, water tank etc. There is an improved appearance but our citizens unanimously think that a town which gives the G.T.R. an annual revenue of upwards of \$50,000 is deservng of more consideration. A cost of paint is a very insignificant substitute for the long-hoped-for new depot.
For the past 12 months Rev. F. W. Luxford has been pastor of the Disciples church here. He bid farewell in an impressive and laudatory sermon Sunday and is moving with his family to North Carolina. During his term some 50 persons have been brought into the church.
Last Friday afternoon three well-known Georgetown ladies decided to enjoy a wheeling trip to Acton to visit friends. When

little more than half way the clouds became black and the rain subsequently came down in splendid volume for the newly-sown wheat. With considerable pluck they continued their journey drenched and mud-splattered. When they arrived they presented a spectacle miserable in the extreme with their pretty summer costumes completely ruined. They tarried until morning before making the return trip.
Fashion dictates from Paris, London and Berlin, black figured fabrics as correct this season. Our leadership in black dress goods is undisputed. Also fine kid gloves \$1. Gurney and Co. Mill St.
Upward of 800 tickets to Toronto were sold on the railroad during the fair. This volume was never exceeded in any week since the G.T.R. station was opened.
Don't forget Ballinac Civil Holiday on the 21st. A grand concert at night.
The change in weather makes people like the vicinity of the stove these days.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS
PHONE 853-2010
Business and Editorial Office

Canadian Community Newspaper Association

Founded in 1973 and published every Wednesday at 19 Willow St. Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the CCNA. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance. 24¢ in Canada, 39¢ in all countries other than Canada. Single copies 15¢. Second class mail registration number: 4513. Advertising is accepted on 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 paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising space or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is inserted on other terms, and may be withdrawn at any time.

Outs Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.
David R. Dills, Publisher
Harvey Coles, Editor
Dan Ryeer, Advertising Manager
Copyright 1973

Favor Parkway for steel curtain

There must have been jubilation among those who worked to find a suitable route for the controversial 500 KV Hydro corridor through this neck of the woods, when Bruce Howlett, the environmental consultant recommended the marching towers should follow the Parkway route rather than erecting a steel curtain around North Halton.
It was a suggestion which came from the public meeting in Acton that stimulated discussion on a "Modified 'Q'" for the swath of towers that environmental consultant Howlett found followed a route which was preferred above three other alternatives the study had uncovered. It came from John Schneider, a resident of the Fourth Line, Erin township, who discovered that System "R" which had been rejected by Hydro could be improved.
In essence, Schneider proposed the lines should follow 401 Highway and cross the escarpment at two points rather than the one outlined in system "R". This would eliminate many miles of line and allow joint use of the transportation corridor 401 Highway provides. Hydro preferred to call it a "Modified 'Q'."
The power corridor originally was to have passed through the north end of Peel County and then take a straight line through the south end of both Erin and Eramosa townships before going off in a tangent across Nassagaweya township. Public

concern over the route spearheaded by a group known as the Coalition of Concerned Citizens resulted in the province appointing the Solandt Commission to study the matter in June, 1972.
The one man commission headed by Dr. Solandt decided Hydro's choice of a route indeed lacked public acceptance and traversed areas it had no business in. The commission subsequently engaged B.H.I., a firm of environmental consultants headed by Bruce Howlett, to pick alternate routes for the corridor which would be less harmful to the environment. Howlett's firm had successfully done similar work in the United States.
B.H.I. produced three alternate routes from the study and another—"R"—which Hydro rejected.
Howlett said in theory the best route would be the shortest, have the least number of lines in the corridor, the fewest sub-stations, least impact on the environment and highest public acceptance. After many months of study his firm recommended the Modified "Q" as the route which meets the criteria best.
Well you would think that after all this study and public meetings there would be some consolidation of thought. But even greater public acceptance is being sought.
Dr. Solandt had proposed another series of public meetings to augment the dialogue over the preferred route. He has said it is

Another outstanding parade, Fair

One of the weaknesses which we noted and which has been brought to our attention by a newcomer to Acton concerns the people who lined the parade route in thousands not officials of the Fair at all. That was the reticence and silence which greeted the outstanding bands, floats and other parade entries which wended their way down Mill St. to the park.
There was some smattering of applause at different points along the route but in the main only silence greeted participants in the parade. It was hardly an inducement for future participation.
A new resident of town called the Free Press Monday and said she always understood Acton was friendly town but she was beginning to have doubts when she observed the lack of enthusiasm for what she considered an outstanding parade.
"Don't they realize the amount of work that goes into preparation of floats and the preparation that goes into the parade?" she enquired.
The lady said she applauded when the Acton Citizens' Band went by. Others standing near looked at her askance, as if there was a wierd on the loose. There was little applause along the route, we noted, but we have always felt this was due to the natural reticence of people who don't want to be the first to applaud.
Now we wonder.
We don't want to be accused of the same negligence so we applaud everyone who had anything to do with making the 1973 Acton Fair another outstanding event from President Bert Hinton down to the boy or girl who entered a pet rabbit or wrote a poem in the school children's section and perhaps never won a prize.



At least one child applauded.

Bill Smiley
"Well, how did you find England after all those years?" This is the favourite question for people asking about our jaunt. I have a stock of stock answers.
"No trouble at all. We just went where the pilot took us." That sometimes shuts them up.
Another retort: "Just kept going until we heard a lot of Limericks chirping." I save that one for the Britons out here who haven't lost their accent.
Well, I found it greatly changed and much the same. Despite the levelling off economically, the old class system is still there, and causes even more animosity than it used to.
That is, the poor are better off, and the rich are taxed inequitously, so there's less of a gap financially. But you are still labeled by your accent, your occupation, and your background.
There is still woeful inefficiency in a multitude of things and amazing profligacy in others.
The standard of living has risen a good deal, but so have costs. The papers are headlined with rising food costs and their real estate took an upward surge a few years ago. A house there costs about the same as a similar one here.
Food is a little cheaper than ours. Drinks a little cheaper and a little weaker. Transport is a bit cheaper and twice as good as ours. That's because of the short distances, the heavy population, and the high cost, for the working man, of owning a car. Through trains rocket along at speeds up to a hundred m.p.h.
Employment? Almost complete, if you want a job. There are supposed to be half a million unemployed, but a businessman told me this represents only the unemployables, and those who don't want to work.
Everywhere, newspapers, store windows, there are "Help wanted" ads. Admittedly, a lot of the jobs are menial, but not all, by any means.
The Brits don't want the more lowly occupations. And that's why the blacks have moved in, mostly from the West Indies. They are the bus conductors, subway workers, waiters and unskilled labourers.
And whenever things tighten up a bit, there is resentment, and racial violence.
But there is a great shortage, right now, of both skilled and unskilled workers. The Post Office is desperately understaffed. Postal workers are working overtime, and some of them, beats a newspaper, are falling asleep at their jobs. That has a familiar ring, somehow.
In London, the bus service is away below par, because it is short 4,500 bus drivers.
A chartered accountant told me that it's almost impossible to hire girls who can operate business machines. In desperation, he japed a former employee, a good operator, into coming back for a month. She

was seven months pregnant. Slight catch. She lasted one hour. Couldn't get close enough to the machine to punch the keys.
A publisher in London advertised extensively for a secretary. He offered about \$25 a week, a month's vacation and a bottle of champagne upon engagement. He got zero answers. In frustration, he printed 1,000 handbills and had his staff pass them out on the streets to likely-looking candidates. Result, four phone calls. Two of them were not interested. The other two made appointments for interviews. Neither turned up.
Another aspect of England that has changed, sadly, is the increase in violence. I met two young fellows in a pub. They were both employed and making about \$100 a week. They both boasted of being Borstal boys (reform school). The elder, who seemed seething with rage at the world in general, and ready to start a row with anybody, had also been in prison. They were working class, but hated everybody above them in the system.
There have been racial riots involving white, blacks and Indians.
London bus stop signs warn that "Owing to hooliganism and attacks on our staff" such and such buses will not run after a certain hour.
This summer there was an outbreak of sheer viciousness and vandalism among some groups of football fans. Drunken fights at the games. Ripping up railway cars and kicking in compartment doors and abusing passengers on the way home from the match. Motorcycle gangs terrorizing villages.
It sickness me to hear of this sort of thing in dear old England, for years one of the safest and most peaceful countries in the world. But it's there.