

Free Press Editorial Page

Keep your garbage

The recommendation of a location near Ashgrove for the big regional garbage dump arouses plenty of questions here in the north of the county. And a few suggestions for fellow Haltonians down there.

Trucking 80 per cent of the county's garbage up into Esqueping township isn't going to appeal much to the nearby residents. And they've had experience with trucks on rural roads, as their council representatives well know. Dust, speed, flying stones, noise and danger in an area expected to be peaceful all meet with disapproval from the neighbours.

The proposed dump site at Ashgrove is said by some to be too near the headwaters of the Oakville creek. There seems to be plenty of evidence that dumps can pollute nearby water courses, but sometimes not till years later. (The garbage dump site map shown to councillors also includes two dots just north of Acton as possible future sites for dumps. These spots are located near watercourses which run south, too.)

Trucking garbage to fill up new

sites is an expensive and a temporary solution. Better to truck the smaller amount of garbage from the north down to the south.

The report states the region isn't ready yet for reclaiming of garbage. A couple of meetings here in Acton, arranged at the time of the proposal to fill quarry sites with Toronto garbage, convinced listeners reclaiming garbage is a sensible and inevitable answer to the growing problem. Wicked Willie Johnson, one of our northern neighbours, isn't going to let us forget reclamation.

And, as the Georgetown Independent points out, "It seems politicians in the south of the region make many of their decisions on population figures. For instance, when the site of the new regional headquarters was being discussed, representatives from below Highway 5 argued it should go in the south end of the region where 80 per cent of the people of Halton live. Now that the Solid Waste Management Study has recommended a site near Ashgrove we can't wait to hear their reaction. We doubt they will insist the dump should be where most of the people are located!"

Worrisome question

A question for Acton: If we had our own council, would an application requesting accommodation for senior citizens have been passed and pushed until some action was obtained? Legion members tried in vain to get Ontario Housing Corporation to buy their old building at a specially low price, as a community service. They knew—doesn't everybody know?—more senior citizens housing is needed. And especially with that perfect

location downtown.

But O.H.C. turned down the offer. A letter arrived last Monday with the official news. O.H.C. officials claim there had been no request from Halton Hills council.

Our representatives thought otherwise. If the motion was indeed passed, what became of it?

The same worrisome question again: would this have happened if we still had our own council?

Editorial notes

Inflation: something that cost \$10 a few years ago and now costs \$15 to get fixed.

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The Canadian Printer and Publisher has an article and pictures

with favorable comment on The Georgetown Independent. Author is well-known newspaper authority Edmund Arnold of the Journalism School of the University of Syracuse. The Independent is a year old this week.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Sudbury of the South?

Dear Sir:
I was heartened to see the impressive turnout at the Speyside School last Friday evening. With, I think, only one exception, those present agreed that no rezoning for extraction purposes must take place on the Niagara Escarpment.

The Niagara Escarpment, a very beautiful and natural phenomena, has been, and

is being shamelessly abused by the extraction industries. Further rezoning and subsequent desecration will result in North Halton becoming a moonscape, or the Sudbury of the south. I could dwell on the various implications but the very thought sickens me.

William A. Johnson,
R.R. 2 Rockwood.

Another quarry on escarpment?

Dear Sir:

For some years a steady assault has been made on the Niagara Escarpment by the aggregate industry. Piece by piece it is being removed to Toronto to build highways and buildings and help generally in the pursuit of a larger and higher megalopolis. With mounting public concern over the gradual disappearance and disfigurement of the Niagara Escarpment, a unique geological feature, the Ontario Government was eventually forced in 1973 to establish the Niagara Escarpment Commission. With the setting up of the Commission a good portion of the Niagara Escarpment was zoned restrictive. This meant that no new licences would be issued in the restrictive area until the Commission has made public its findings.

Standard Industries owns some 600 acres of escarpment property southwest of Speyside and is bent on starting quarrying operations there as soon as possible. The official plan, submitted by Esqueping Council to the Ontario Government for adoption, zoned the Speyside property rural. Standard Industries contested this zoning and requested that it be zoned extractive.

Instead of throwing Standard Industries out on its ear, since after all the escarpment was zoned restrictive under the Escarpment Commission, the Ontario Government passed the zoning change application on to the Ontario Municipal Board for its ruling.

Since no new licences to quarry can be issued until 1976 or later, when the Escarpment Commission presents its report, it appears that the Ontario Government seems to have forgotten that it even set up the Commission, or possibly it sees no harm in wasting public funds on senseless Ontario Municipal Board hearings.

The property is heavily treed and abounds in wildlife including beaver and deer. It is enjoyed year round by local residents and people from other areas for recreation. A picturesque section of the Bruce Trail is routed through this property.

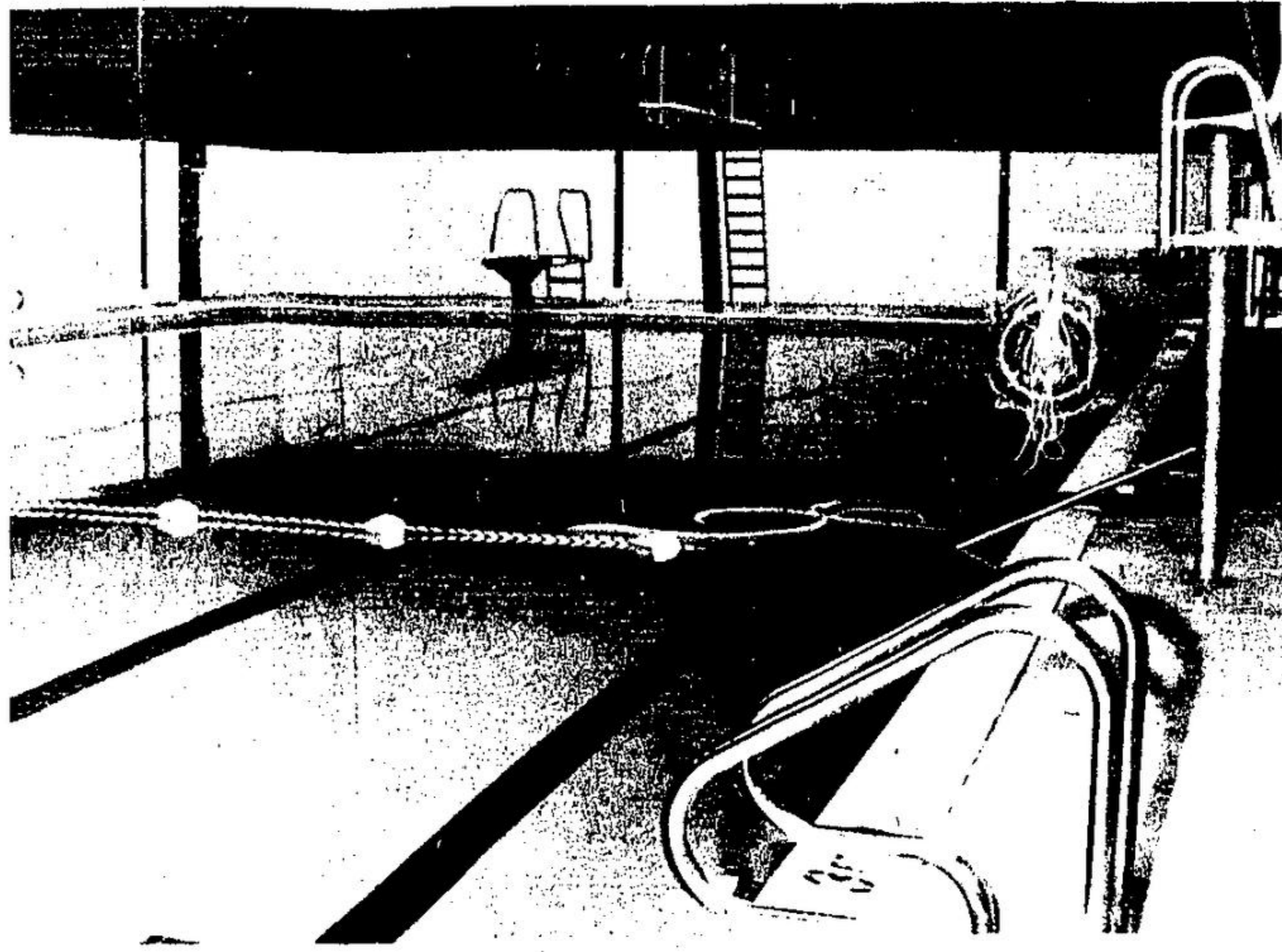
Many new estate type homes have been established near the proposed quarry. The social disruption to local residents by blasting, crushing and trucking operations would be considerable. Indeed, the only feasible way of transporting the crushed stone would be by truck, using the already overcrowded and dangerous Highway 25. The more economical and environmentally and socially acceptable way of transporting crushed stone, by rail, is completely impractical from the Speyside site.

The rehabilitation plans proposed by Standard Industries sound impressive, but are they feasible? To suggest that a lake could be created behind 1000 feet of fractured and heavily jointed rock is ludicrous. What would be left of the Escarpment would be a great wall rising above the surrounding area with the Bruce Trail conveniently routed along its top—a monument to bad planning. Of course little of this would be realized within our lifetimes. What a legacy to pass on to our children! Better use for the area could be made by establishing a provincial park and wildlife sanctuary—now, not in 50 years.

Already many alternatives to crushed stone have been developed. These should be utilized as much as possible. Sources of aggregate other than the Niagara Escarpment should be investigated so that its rape can be called to a halt.

People wishing to assist in preserving one of Southern Ontario's last frontiers are invited to attend a meeting of concerned citizens at Speyside School on Friday, October 11 at 8 p.m.

W. A. Dale, P. Eng.,
R. R. 33, Milton.



Ready and waiting for us . . . Acton's first indoor swimming pool



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Things at last seem to be looking up for Canadian writers, after generations of neglect by their own countrymen.

With a few notable exceptions, it used to be that to be a writer in Canada was almost on a par with being an Untouchable in India. If you were not openly scorned, you were quietly ignored, which was worse.

The big publishers, most of them British or American, with an affiliate in Canada, shied away from Canadian writers, as though they had the plague, at the same time fostering insignificant American and British writers.

One of the exceptions was Stephen Leacock, who made a lot of money and became a well-known character in this country, after his first book had been accepted by a British publisher.

Typically, Leacock was ignored, if not despised, by the people of Orillia, Ont., when he was alive. He had a summer home there. Many Orillians detested him because he poked wicked fun at some of their leading citizens in his Mariposa tales.

Not so today. Some sharp people finally realized that Leacock was commercially viable as a tourist attraction.

Nowadays you'd think Leacock had walked down from a mountain with stone tablets, into Orillia. It is the in-thing to belong to the Leacock Society Museum, with a full-time curator. There is a Leacock annual award for humour, a Leacock medal, a Leacock weekend culminating in a huge dinner at which the saint is paid proper homage. I'll bet the old guy is doubled up in his grave, laughing.

It was all so Canadian, in its approach to writing, that it would be funny, if it weren't a little sad. Canadians are builders. They'll

spend billions on railroads and transcontinental highways and canals and dams. But when it comes to culture, the approach is always a two-bit one.

A few dedicated souls formed the Leacock Society. They had no money. But every year, they'd persuade a few people to act as judges, and these idiots would pick out the funniest book published in Canada that year. I know. I was one of those idiots for about four years, which gave me some insight into Canadian humour. Most of the books submitted were about as funny as a broken leg.

Let's say you are Eric Nicol of Vancouver (a very funny writer, by the way). This would be about 15 years ago. You are informed by wire that you have won the Leacock Award for Humour and are asked to attend the Leacock Dinner, receive the Leacock Medal (worth about 80 cents in a pawnshop), and make a witty speech which will take you hours to write. The dinner is absolutely free, but you pay your own way from and back to Vancouver.

Today of course, it's different. The dinner price has gone up from \$2.50 to \$7.50 and the drinks from 45c to whatever. I believe that at long last, some brewer has actually put up \$1,000 to go with the Medal. Big deal.

So much for that. I digress. During the long, painful aridity of the '20s, '30s and '40s, the names of Canadian writers were not exactly household words.

A few writers loiled on in the Canadian desert. Morley Callaghan, a fine writer with an international reputation, pluggd away. When he produced a new novel, it would be avidly snatched up by as many as six or seven hundred of his fellow countrymen. To make a living, he had to do hack work in journalism, radio, and later TV.

Ironically, Callaghan, at about the age of 70, was given two whopping great cash

prizes by a brewer and a bank for his contribution to Canadian literature. He was also awarded a Canada Medal or something like that, which he refused, in disgust. And good for him.

Then, after the war came, not a spate, but at least a surge, of new writers, bold writers: Hugh Garner, Mordecai Richler, Pierre Berton, Farley Mowat. They knew they were good, and they demanded recognition. And money. And they got it, though it was like prying diamonds out of rock.

After them came another rash of writers: Alden Nowlan, Al Purdy, Robert Kroetch, Margaret Atwood. A few courageous independent publishers gave them a voice. They sell. Now the younger ones are coming on, pell-mell. After years in a cultural desert, oases are springing up everywhere.

This entire diatribe was triggered by an announcement sent out to English department heads from an outfit called Platform for the Arts. It will send "poets, novelists, journalists and playwrights" right into our classrooms to read and discuss their works with the students. Good show. At only \$30 each. Yet they can pay these people \$75 a day and expenses, owing to government grants.

One paragraph in the letter fascinates me. "Please indicate whether you would like a poet, prose writer, or playwright to visit your school. Choose one, two or all three separate tours."

Okay, chaps. Send us a poet, and I don't want Ethel Kartoffeln of Hayfork Centre. Send a handsome guy with a smashing beard. And one blonde playwright with a large bosom. That'll keep the students of both sexes happy. As for a journalist, send along any old one. I'll handle him or her. In this field, you can scarcely distinguish between the sexes, anyway.

Say. At a second look, that whole tour looks pretty good, at \$75 per diem and expenses. I'm a journalist, of sorts, if you want to stretch a point or three. Maybe I'll quit teaching and join the tour.

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, October 7, 1954

A veteran bread transport driver climbed uninjured from his truck early this morning after it crashed through posts and guard wires on No. 7 highway at the Eden Mills sidemad and flopped over on one side. Volunteer auctioneers Roy Hindley and Jack Elliott called "Sold" hundreds of times on Saturday afternoon and evening as they circled the collections of goods around the arena at the Y's Men's annual auction sale. Articles ranged from furniture to livestock and books to clothing.

Disagreements between the town and Warren Grove sewer extension contractor George Schultz were resolved Monday night but not before both parties in the disputes, which had precipitated a two months' work stoppage had their innings in argument with each disclaiming blame for the contract rupture.

However as a result of this week's get-together of council, contractor and engineer, work is scheduled to resume next week after the contentious well points are installed and put into operation. Expense of the well points, estimated at a monthly cost of \$2,500 is to be borne equally by the town and the contractor.

Reported in natural gas potential to be the "largest single well in the province", an 1800-foot shaft in Esqueping township six miles south of here below the Speyside sidemad has according to drillers' testing, gauged over 700 pounds of rock pressure, and at the earliest test, metered a steady flow of 64,000 cubic feet of natural gas.

Experimenting with a means of communication between the various fire pumps in the case of Mutual Aid practice, live pumps converged on Oakville, Sunday, September 26.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, October 16, 1914

A Masquerade Dance will be held in the Town Hall on Halloween under the auspices of the Hewetson Hall Club. Prizes will be given for the best costumed couple and lucky number dance. McMillan's six-piece orchestra, of Galt, will furnish the music.

The Halloween parade of masqueraders, that was such a success last year, under the auspices of Acton Citizens' Band, is being arranged again for this year. Prizes for the best costumes etc., are being looked after and with a fine evening the affair should be larger than last year. Full details as to the parade and prizes will be announced later.

The concrete pavement from Postville right down to Oakville station entrance has been completed. The last concrete was laid on Tuesday morning and the plant was at once loaded on cars and shipped to the Ottawa District, where Mr. King has a large contract. The pavement is now open for traffic from Postville to the upper middle road and a gang is at work grading the shoulders between the upper and lower middle roads.

The concrete pavement will be ready for traffic in a couple of weeks, when there will be a general rejoicing among users of this much travelled highway. Heave Morden and his Council should arrange for some formal opening ceremonies.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, October 19, 1899

Kruger's ultimatum of last week was given a very cold reception. It's impossible terms were not entertained by the British government.

From the latest reports there has been some stiff fighting between British and the enemy north of Mafeking. Three engagements are reported in all of which the Boers were repulsed with considerable loss. The armoured trains of the British carried Maxim guns, which were used with a deadly effect.

Victory has surely perched upon the banner of the Crescents of Acton.

Three times in succession, during the past week, in three of the stiffest games of lacrosse this season, they have proven their superiority in point of skill, endurance and effective combination work and come off victors. This splendid feat has been all the more appreciated by the friends and admirers of our boys, when it has been realized that their opponents were the champions of the Western and Northern Districts.

Eight Hamilton boys were taken before Hamilton Magistrate Jells last Friday morning for shouting and otherwise disturbing the service at St. Luke's Church while loitering at the door and windows.

Some hoodlum prowling about the streets at unreasonable hours of the night, fired a revolver bullet through one of the Post Office windows. The provincial penitentiary has a place for characters of this calibre.

HALTON HOISTER

GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE UP!

IT'S THE ANSWER TO THE "HALTON GARBAGE PROBLEM." HOT AIR FROM ALL THE PRESSURE GROUPS WILL KEEP IT FLOATING IN AIR INDEFINITELY!!

IF IT EVER FLOATS OVER QUEEN'S PARK LOOK OUT!!

THE ACTON FREE PRESS

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Business and Editorial Office

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