

Free Press Editorial Page

Acton protests appointment

Considerable annoyance and upset resulted in Acton when members of the recreation committee and library board were not personally notified when their term had expired, and that they should reapply for their positions.

Previously, under Acton council, a letter of appreciation was sent to a person whose term was over, thanking him or her for services rendered and inquiring if he or she wished to serve the town again. This was apparently also the accepted practice in Georgetown and Esquesing prior to the introduction of regional government. Surely that is only common courtesy.

This year, an advertisement in the Free Press informed all readers that terms were expiring. The deadline for reapplication was the following Monday—five days after the only time the ad appeared.

Not one soul on the recreation advisory committee applied. They have another chance.

But Fred New of the library board assumed he had to the end of the year to apply. Next thing he knew, his place on the board was filled by a Georgetown woman who had applied.

Mr. New has served on Acton library board for years, and on the south-central regional library board. He is a valued member. His loss leaves Acton with only one

person sitting on the eight-member board, George Lee. He did not have to reapply as his term wasn't up yet.

Mr. New is, we are sure, disappointed. So are those he has served in Acton so well for so long. As for the library staff and councillor Les Doby, they are extremely annoyed—to put it mildly.

The decision was made at a meeting of Halton Hills council when the public was barred. Les Doby has assured the Free Press he opposed the decision to oust Mr. New without having even spoken to him on the subject. What happened, the people will never know, since the public (which includes the press) were not allowed in.

Apparently there is no legal requirement for Acton to have a certain representation on the board.

There are two main libraries in Halton Hills—ours and Georgetown's. Both are fine facilities. There is also a small branch library in Stewartown.

Surely there must be a better representation than one person, for the library of which our town is so proud.

But consideration and courtesy could have prevented this awkward situation.

Mr. Councillors, Acton protests.

The first year is over

A happy new year to us all... Our first year of regional government is over. We have been assured the first year will be the most difficult.

Town and township councillors have been interviewed in today's paper so readers may hear their opinions on a wide range of controversial subjects. We know readers will be much informed by their splendid answers.

Pat McKenzie, Joe Hurst and Les Doby have had a demanding and difficult 12 months, and

deserve a great deal of consideration and thanks for what they have done. Their personal reactions have ranged from hopeful pride to exhaustion to infuriation.

But the three town representatives have maintained the gentlemanly traditions of Acton's past council, and presented themselves in a highly commendable manner. The Esquesing councillors, too, deserve bouquets.

Thanks to them.



BIRD'S EYE view of Acton high school gymnasium and the Christmas concert festivities held last week. Acton's citizens' band and the Legion Chorallers provided the entertainment.



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

And the same to you! I probably should have sent off a Merry Christmas column to all my readers about the first of November, to make sure it was received by December 25th.

I know this won't be. But it's not your faithful chronicler's fault, nor the fault of your favourite weekly newspaper. The entire blame must rest on the broad shoulders—they have to be broad—of that modern phenomenon of efficiency, Canada Post.

People in that august institution must be afraid of getting their hands soiled by handling the average weekly newspaper, full of violence, rape, murder and muggings. They probably use a shovel. Shovel it into a corner until some day, between coffee breaks, they are so bored that they resort to sorting and sending the weekly paper.

When I was in the business, we used to mail the paper on Thursday, and people in Ohio or Texas would receive it on Monday. Nowadays, I count on my weekly paper being a week late in arriving. Time after time, I've been tempted to take up my typewriter and dash off an encouraging note to a weekly editor who has written a particularly pungent editorial, only to pause in the certainty that by the time I'd received his paper, and the time he'd received my letter, the hot issue he'd attacked or defended would be three weeks old, and as cold as corpse.

Well, we mustn't be mean at Christmas, must we? Although I don't see why not. The same miserable sods are going to be around on Boxing Day, and the same inefficient, insolent institutions will be back in business on Jan. 1.

Since it's too late to wish everyone a Merry, I'll put everything in the past tense.

I hope you got exactly what you wanted for Christmas, whether it was a baby or a kazoo or a sober husband.

I hope you got Joy. And if you didn't, I hope you were happy with Myrtle or Hazel or Pearl or Genevieve.

If you wanted a pair of those foam-rubber kneepads for scrubbing, I hope you got them. And if you wanted a mink wrap, I hope you didn't.

I hope you were not pregnant if you didn't want to be, and were if you wanted to be.

I hope you didn't bust your bum on those new down-hill skis, or bust your heart on those new cross-country skis, both of which you are too young or too old to be doing anything with except feeding the living-room fire.

If you are old and lonely, I hope you received a warm telephone call—about 15 minutes worth, and not collect—from someone who is young and loves you. And if you are young and lonely, I hope you got a long telephone call, collect, from someone who is old and loves you.

If you are a farmer, I hope you slept on Christmas Eve with visions of sugarplums and reindeer fast in your head. Jeez, a guy can't make any money on beef these days. Might as well get into reindeer.

If you are a schoolteacher, I hope you remembered at Christmas that you too were once a fat and ugly duckling, riddled with pimples, shy to the point of fainting if asked a question, lazy as a cat, sort of dirty, really, and yet a striving, yearning, beseeching human bean.

If you were a mother at Christmas—well, all I can say is that I hope you believe in a life after death.

And if you were a father, well, all I can say is that I hope you, too believe in a world in the hereafter. Preferably segregated.

If you are a business tycoon, a union leader, or anyone in the upper echelons of education, I hope your ulcer ruined your Christmas dinner.

If you are an old maid, and have been lurking these many years in the fold of your "sick" mother's nightgown, I hope you died at Christmas to unluck. Same for old male spinsters. Unluck. Boy, that

almost sounds like a dirty word, if you practise. Try it. Unluck!

Whatever happened at Christmas, hang in there. We need you. We hewers of wood and drawers of water, as Canadians are known, have to stick together and keep on hewing drawers.

Every time there comes a crack about hewers and drawers, I burst into a hue and cry. Bursting into a hue is fairly simple. I can turn purple on very little provocation, as my family will tell.

Almost anybody can hew or hue. But the drawers are the problem. Nobody wears drawers any more. How can you cry them when there ain't none. This is a problem that Canadians are going to have to give a good deal of thought to in the coming year.

Well, those are my season's greetings to Aw! and Sundry (my legal representatives), as well as to all you faithful readers.

And lang may your lum reek, on New Year's Eve.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Need more on library board

Editor, Acton Free Press:

As the kids say: "It's a Rip-off!" And in the Yuletide season, too, to make it more ironic.

Thanks to the Regional government Santa, who only got into the hand-out business a year ago, Acton, also dubbed Ward One (but not by old Actonites) has now just one representative on Halton Hills Library Board. Halton Hills in case anyone has forgotten derived from a shotgun union of Acton, Georgetown and Esquesing. Who carried the shotgun? Queen's Park, or our provincial politicians, the friendly rascals!

Last year, Acton's library board spokesmen were two veterans George Y. Lee and Fred New. Mr. Lee, ex-chairman of the Acton board, pre-RG (regional government) has another year to serve. Mr. New, who has served since 1966 is a one-year council appointee. His term expires December 31.

When Acton was paddling its own canoe, and doing quite well, thank you, the municipal council authorized letters of thanks to all incumbents of appointed boards, whose terms of office wound up at the end of the year. At the same time, they were queried about continuing their various roles.

Acton's new political partner, Georgetown did things differently. Council advertised the open positions, selecting suitable replacements from written applications.

Halton Hills council, opting (match) for the Georgetown method, advertised once in the weekly press for library board candidates, deadline for replies, December 16. Acton Free Press carried the ad on December 11. No Acton applications were received by the deadline. At an in camera meeting two weeks ago, council on a majority vote, appointed a Georgetown woman to replace Acton's Mr. New, who not having seen the Free Press advertisement, assumed he had until the end of December to inform council he was willing to continue on the board.

Consider the make-up of Halton Hills Library Board. Last year, there were four Georgetown representatives, two from Esquesing and Acton's tandem. In 1975, there will be five Georgetown spokesmen, plus two from Esquesing, and Acton's lone member. Mr. Lee is a very able, conscientious citizen who understands thoroughly the ins and outs of library service. But he is still only one person and one voice. Obviously Acton was outnumbered in 1974, but there was scope for lobbying if the need arose.

It's all very well for to mouth platitudes about All-for-one-and-one-for-all, and down with parochialism. Human nature doesn't function thusly. If any proof were needed, consider 12 months of regional government. On almost every issue with rare exceptions, the majority ruled. Unlike the good old days when Georgetown and Acton tussled in baseball, lacrosse and hockey. Acton won

some, and lost some. Likewise, Georgetown. The rivalry and outcome of same, was not one-sided, as in the case in regional politics. Georgetown by virtue of its size and population has gained most and will continue to benefit most from the unlaying union of North Halton municipalities.

If as former Acton councillor Jack Greer advocated, the question or regional government had been put to a public vote, Actonites would have rejected it resoundingly. With one year's experience, of its dubious blessings, local citizens are well-nigh unanimous. RG are dirty words around Bella Actona.

Why the flak over the loss of an Acton voice on Halton Hills Library Board? This is just another example of a majority rule. It would have been nothing more than courtesy to ask Mr. New the incumbent if he wished to be re-appointed. He did not see the advertisement in the Free Press. With apologies to the local press—and to quote another irate Actonite: "Who in hell is to say you have to buy a paper?"

Acton has a fine library, the building itself and site envied by larger municipalities. A Centennial project, it is by way of being a monument to former Mayor Les Doby, now a Halton Hills councillor. He strove mightily to get a new library for Acton, and has continued to be interested in this town's library service.

It will not be necessary for Acton's three councillors Mr. Doby, Garnet McKenzie and Joe Hurst to go hat in hand to Halton Hills, asking for help to build a library. Acton's library, thanks to Mr. Doby and a few other dedicated and determined citizens, was a fait accompli before regional government.

How does Councillor Doby view the political screw-up that reduces Acton's weight on Halton Library Board. He is fighting mad, an unusual state for a normally cool character. To quote the former mayor: "It was improperly done. The incumbent should have been written, thanked, and asked if he wished to continue."

Councillor Garnet McKenzie tags the set-up as "Unfortunate." I'm sorry it happened this way.

Other old-time Actonites disagreeing with the "big is better" syndrome are concerned about the trend to uniformity in regional library circles. "More and more, it looks like the experts figure on rolling out libraries and librarians like cookies."

In order to retain its autonomy and distinctive small-town atmosphere, Acton library should have at least two spokesmen on the Halton Hills board. Our local board got along very neatly before RG. With their background of experience and practical know-how both George Lee and Fred New are able appointees. The year-old Halton Hills board can not afford to lose one of these veterans.

Esther Taylor

The Free Press Back Issues

20 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press December 30, 1954

One of Acton's busiest industries, Ajax Engineers Limited will enter 1955 on the threshold of major expansion, it was learned this week when official announcement was made.

Engraved gold watches for 10 years service with Baxter Laboratories were presented to Mrs. A. Hufnagel and Lloyd Robinson when the plant held its annual Christmas party on Wednesday evening of last week. The Y Ladies' Auxiliary catered to the dinner for plant employees in they Y.M.C.A.

Cream, butter and other dairy produce was spilled over Highway 6, Monday when a truck driven by Nelson Hutchinson of Rockwood was involved in a collision with a car driven by Joseph Smith, Rtl. 1, Puslinch. The produce in Hutchinson's truck sustained \$350 damage and the vehicle was damaged to the extent of \$100.

Tuesday evening members of Acton Women's Institute with Rev. F. A. Curvey and Rev. Robert Armstrong, presented a program at Halton Centennial Manor. Members of the band accompanied the group and played carols.

The public school closed for the Christmas vacation on Wednesday afternoon last week after the senior assembly in the auditorium. The different classes contributed to the program with a pageant one of the highlights of the afternoon. Bill Heeley was master of ceremonies while Miss Potter played the piano.

50 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press January 1, 1925

The mails on Christmas eve and Christmas morning were the largest in the history of the Acton Post Office. There were more Christmas cards than ever before and the number of Christmas parcels was enormous. There were upwards of a thousand parcels in the Christmas morning deliveries. The rural route carriers were overworked during their splendid work during the Christmas surfeit of mail matter.

Last Saturday morning about five o'clock when the household of Mr. Fairbanks' Bakery began to stir for the day's duties, several of them were found to be almost overcome from gas fumes from the furnace in the basement. Severe headaches prevailed, and Miss Knowles Schram, in going from one room to another, was so overcome that she fell downstairs. Fortunately she was not seriously injured. The doors and windows were opened and those who were affected recovered. Had it not been for the early risers the consequences might have been serious. The furnace is a new one and quite gas proof, but unfortunately the smoke flue had not been reversed after the night's supply of coal had been put on.

Mr. C. F. Lucas, accountant of the Bank of Montreal staff, has been transferred to Holstein, where he will have charge of the Branch. His removal from Acton is regretted but his friends here are congratulating him on his preference. His successor will be Mr. C. F. Lewis of Toronto. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis will take up their residence in Mr. Conway's duplex house on Church Street.

75 years ago

Taken from an issue of the Free Press December 28, 1899

The nomination meeting at noon last Friday was not largely attended, but there was no lack of nominees for the various positions of honor within the gift of the municipality.

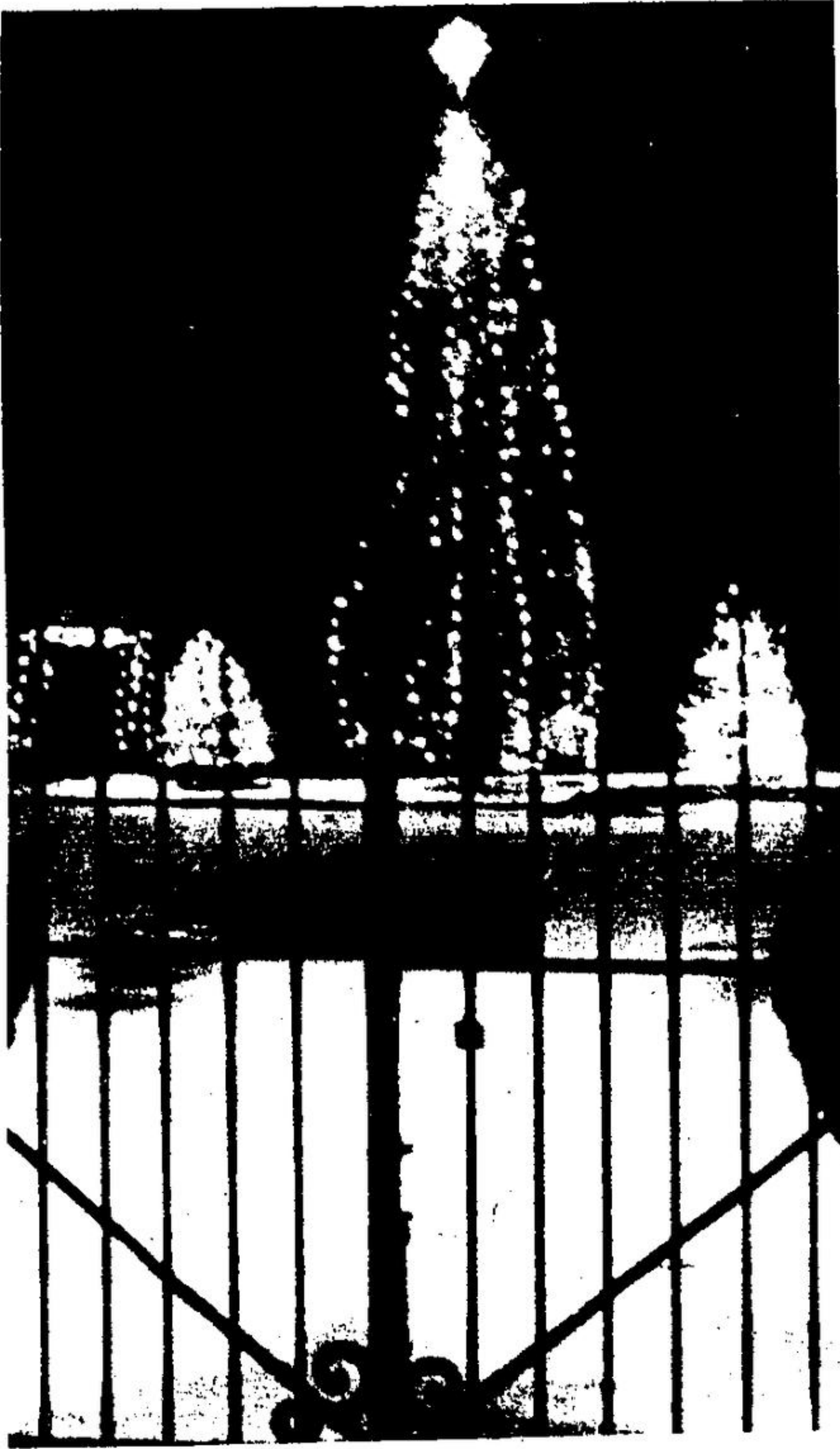
Messrs. John M. Warren and Paul S. Kennedy attended the sale of W. D. Platt of imported thorough bred Durham cattle at Hamilton last week. Some sixty head were sold and the females averaged over \$400 each and the males from \$150 to \$300, a bull calf four months old sold for \$300. Pretty fancy prices, farmers, weren't they? Buyers were present from many points in the United States and Canada.

Miss Clark will continue her class in music after the new year. Pupils desiring information as to terms, etc., will be informed upon application at her home on Frederick Street.

Mr. Anthony Mason has secured a position at Firstbrook Bros. fish ponds, and removed his family this week to the new house just finished there. His teaming business has been purchased by Mr. Edward Kingsbury.

Miss Maggie McQueen has been appointed teacher of the school in section No. 4, Nassagaweya.

Knex Church Sunday School New Year's entertainment will be held in the hall next Monday evening. The programme is an excellent one.



The giant Christmas tree at Beardmore's gate

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