

# Free Press Editorial Page

## Christmas creed

A Christmas Creed:  
 I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the Gospel that began in Bethlehem.  
 I believe in Him whose spirit glorified a little town; of whose coming only shepherds saw a sign, but for whom the crowded inn could find no room.  
 I believe in Him whom the kings of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand;  
 Whose paths were among the common people;  
 Whose welcome came from men of hungry hearts.  
 I believe in Him who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible; whose cradle was a mother's arms, Whose home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth;  
 Who looked at men and made them see what His love saw in them;  
 Who by His love brought sinners back to purity, and who lifted

human weakness up to meet the strength of God.  
 I confess our everlasting need of God.  
 The need of forgiveness for our greed and selfishness,  
 The need of life for empty souls,  
 The need of love for hearts grown cold.  
 I acknowledge the glory of all that is like Christ; The steadfastness of friends,  
 The blessedness of homes,  
 The power of compassion,  
 The courage of those who dare to resist all passion, hate and war.  
 I believe that only by love expressed shall the earth at length be purified.  
 And I acknowledge in Christ; a faith that sees beyond the partial fact,  
 A trust in life redeemed that looks beyond our present evil,  
 And I pray that this redemption may begin in us.

## Comment ca va, Ridgetown?

From the Ridgetown Dominion:  
 "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery" is an old saying and while we had nothing for them to imitate, yet we are happy that our Acton friends have seen more merit in an idea of ours, than our local people have.  
 Which of course gets us to another old saying about a prophet not being without honour save in his own country.  
 The idea we suggested some time ago was that those local people who could speak French would form a

volunteer group who could be phoned if someone speaking French stopped at any of the local shops or businesses. Nothing came of the idea in town. But the town of Acton is acting on the idea. They have prepared a list of French-speaking citizens who are willing and available to translate if the need arises.  
 We congratulate the Acton citizens for this practical step towards Canadian unity. We think we can't do much, but we can each do what we can.

## Let judge rule

Halton Police Commissioners are faced with the problem of what to do with the ruling of Halton Police Chief Ken Skerrett over charges that Sergeant Jason Field slapped a Georgetown youth.  
 Skerrett ruled that Field used unnecessary violence in slapping Gary Sparling twice in the face after the police-car chase last May. The Halton chief acted as judge and jury in the open hearing conducted under the Police Act at Oakville Friday, December 10.  
 The penalty Skerrett called for would reduce the Georgetown police officer from a sergeant to a first class constable, a severe one in view of the 18 years' service of Sgt. Field.  
 If the police commissioners overturn the chief's verdict they are in

effect rejecting the fairness of the chief of police and his findings.  
 If they accept them they do it on questionable evidence that unfolded in a case following close on the tails of charges of police brutality. Two slaps left no marks, apparently not so much as a red face.  
 The only fair way out is to put the case into the hands of a county court judge and let it be tried by normal processes of law. After all, the police commissioners were not at the hearing where evidence was heard.  
 Every effort should be made to see the accused as well as the accuser is given every opportunity to be tried under our judicial system, which the police enforce.

## Of this and that

The Christmas montage on the front page was photographed and designed by John Bottomley. The choristers and scene on the left are taken in Acton; other component parts are taken in Kingston and Mississauga. The candles on the editorial page are also photographed by John. He specializes in photography and sports.  
 The illegal post office strike, precipitated by nine people in Toronto, is over. Mail is moving

again. Thanks a lot for that Christmas consideration.  
 Participate in your local newspaper! Write a letter to the editor!  
 How about a resolution...right now. "During the Christmas and New Year's holidays, it is my intention that, if I have been drinking, I will NOT drive a car. Instead, I will drive with others or go by taxi...or stay home."



Recent snow fall blankets branches



"So long as one Christmas light is kindled somewhere in the world, Christ walks again on earth."



## Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

Do you find it harder and harder each year to get revved up for Christmas? You have company.  
 When the advertising begins right after Thanksgiving, and the Santa Clauses become ubiquitous by mid-November, and the carols are mere clichés by mid-December, it's hard to reach that peak of emotion that combines Christian joy for the birth of Christ and pagan revelry to celebrate the equinox, by the time Christmas itself rolls around.  
 One of the trite remarks of modern life is that Christmas has become commercialized. But don't blame the merchants. Blame ourselves. We can call this a plastic age, but it is we who use the plastic, whether it be in the form of goods, ideas, or entertainment.  
 It is we who scurry madly through those overheated stores, going slightly paranoid over the business of buying gifts for people who don't need them.  
 It is we who eat and drink too much at Christmas, which, if the truth were told, should be a time of fasting and purification, until our heads were as light as our hearts.

do at home, where I have to stuff the bird, mash the turnips and wash 8,000 dishes far into the night.  
 I think I might just possibly be able to forego having to find a Christmas tree, dragging it in covered in snow, and spending four hours trying to get the damn thing to stand upright.  
 It would be a wrench, but I might even be able to stand not watching my grand-boys rip the paper off 48 gifts and go right back to beating each other on the head with a couple of drumsticks. Real ones, not the turkey kind. It's one of their favorite games.  
 However, as the hired man said in Robert Frost's poem of that name, "Home is where, when you go there, they have to let you stay." And it looks as though that's the way my daughter feels.  
 We tried to fill up the house with other people. But my son is in Paraguay, one brother and his wife in Costa Rica, the other brother way up at James Bay.  
 So we're stuck with the kids, and I'll be happy if I see the New Year without being on my hands and knees.  
 With that wrapped up, there's nothing left to do but send my best wishes for the

holiday season to all sorts of people, through this column.  
 To my old friends in the newspaper business: hope you all got that big Christmas issue out without being hospitalized with total exhaustion.  
 To my teaching colleagues everywhere: hang in there; it's only six months until June.  
 To the prime minister: dear Pierre, hope that other turkey doesn't turn up and spoil your Christmas.  
 To all the people to whom we used to send Christmas cards: it's the thought that counts, and we think of you every six or eight months.  
 To all those people who want a baby so badly: hope you get twins twice in the next two years.  
 To all those people who don't want a baby at all: hope you don't get pregnant, not even a little bit.  
 And to all the people who bother to read this column at all, whether you agree or not, a merry, merry Christmas, with a special thanks to those who write. God bless us, one and all.

## OUR READERS WRITE:

### More than reasonable doubt?

As reported in "The Acton Free Press", 14th Dec., 1977 issue, concerning the case of a Police Sergeant being found guilty of striking a person and being subsequently demoted to Constable, the following summary and comments appear to be in order:  
 1. Evidence presented of an alleged conversation disputed by the defendant.  
 2. The two policemen present during the alleged incident denied seeing it.  
 3. The Sergeant denied the incident.  
 4. The complainant says the incident occurred.  
 5. The complainant's companion, a witness, says he saw the incident.  
 6. The proceedings makes clear that the complainant's companion, the only witness, was not in a position to see the incident, and when asked to explain how he could possibly see the incident, was unable to explain.  
 7. The defence lawyer brought to the judge's attention the inadmissibility of the charge due to the statute of limitations that apply. The judge did not rule on this vital point, but proceeded with the hearing.  
 When the legality of the hearing is questioned, as in Item 7 above, it must be incumbent upon the judge to define the law and explain his action in the form of a ruling to establish the legality of the hearing before proceeding any further.  
 The purpose of law is to provide order, protection for all, and in the event of disagreement a judicial ruling promoting and securing justice for the parties concerned.  
 To this end, judgement is reached after examining evidence and reasonable doubt.

As reported, more than a reasonable doubt appears to exist as to the alleged incident occurring. Couple this with the very real possibility that the charge was inadmissible and therefore the whole judgement and hearing being unnecessary and wrong, and a person may wonder about law and justice.  
 In our society it is not only necessary that the law be administered and justice done, but equally important that justice be seen by all to be done to maintain the credibility of and respect for the law.  
 Speculation presumes an appeal, at which time I feel the verdict will firmly establish the scales of justice in balance. "Anonymous"  
 To the Editor,  
 Dear Sir:  
 The naming of rural roads and lines on North Halton, I am particularly interested, as it looks as though I will be living on Sodom Rd.  
 To rehash an old story, I can visualize in about the year 2,000 a tourist will stop somewhere along the Sodom Rd., and ask a man mowing his lawn: "Why do they call this road Sodom Rd.?"  
 The man will answer, "I really don't know, but wait a minute and I will ask my wife." He will then open the door of the house and shout "Hey Charlie, why do they call this the Sodom Rd.?"  
 William A. Johnson

## The Free Press Back Issues

### 10 years ago

10 years ago today  
 Taken from the issue of the Free Press December 29, 1967  
 Glenlea Park is now 75 per cent of the way to completion, Brendan Aherne told the Parks and Recreation commission members at their short meeting last Thursday night. He recommended spotlights for existing poles for night tobogganing and he was duly instructed to inquire about the method and cost, and proceed.  
 "Escalating wages, salaries, interest rates" which boosted Ontario Hydro's interim rates for power will not affect Acton consumers for the next year at least. Acton Hydro Electric commission passed a motion at their last regular meeting Thursday to leave the present rates as they are in spite of the increase in cost to them.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, December 22, 1927  
 On Christmas Eve, Acton will hold its first Community Christmas Tree. Mr. J. B. Mackenzie had the tree erected with the help of the Hydro officers. The Junior I.O.D.E. are filling treat bags. The Women's Institute will decorate the tree. Superintendent Wilson is arranging for the lighting of the grounds. The Glee Club, the moving spirit in the affair, will lead in singing. Acton Citizens' Band will enliven the evening.  
 An enjoyable time was spent at Dublin School Friday evening. There was a pleasing program and fine numbers by the Junior and Senior Dublin orchestras. Santa Claus appeared but the most appreciated gift was a fine, neat platform presented to the school by the secretary, Mr. Lorne Mullin.  
 Don't be impatient if your mail is late these days.

### 100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, December 20, 1877  
 The Georgetown hotels are doing a lively business. - From the Milton Champion. No doubt they do, when the editor of the Champion is in Georgetown.  
 The teachers of the Church of England Sabbath School intended having an entertainment on Xmas evening. There will be a Panorama, Xmas tree, and Social Tea. The proceeds are to be appropriated toward replenishing the school library.  
 Something worth buying for Christmas presents at G. Hynds' Jewellery store. Ladies' shell and ivory purses, pearl card cases, shell hearts, glove boxes, real Bohemian glass vases, handkerchief boxes, the best stock of albums in town, lots of plated goods, warranted, gold finger rings, gent's gold studs, gold cuff buttons, silver thimbles, ladies' gold sets, gold and silver chains.  
 Many, hotelkeeper, is getting a new porch in front of his hotel.  
 Public school examination tomorrow. Christmas presents are in order.

# Merry Christmas

God's great gift of love to us is born again at Christmas in the lives of people who care.

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