

U.S. buying us out?

The Parti Quebecois, Rene Levesque and the threat of separatism has everyone worried about the fate of the country. French versus English, Rene versus Pierre and similar conflicts have kept those who care with knots in their stomachs.

However, pressing danger to Canadian nationalism lies not to the east of us, but to the south. The United States of America has slowly wrapped its fingers around the necks of the nation and is silently squeezing. We are choking in a mass of American ideals.

Last week's news that Simpsons, a Canadian institution, is in the works of selling out to the States has many alarmed. Of course it seems only natural. After all, Sears, from the states have infiltrated Canadian malls. Why not have the Americans buy out Simpsons—save them the trouble of opening more Sears stores.

Also announced last week was the fact that 12 other Canadian companies are seeking permission to sell to U.S. buyers. Only two were turned down.

Why waste millions in a national campaign for a one Canada? Why not just let Jimmy Carter declare Canada the 51st state?

Unemployment, inflation, loss of identity, and a pote tial unity crisis are Canadians' present and future.

With more and more companies selling out, pouring more and more money into the States, what chance is there of making the scales balance out.

Maclean's magazine is not helping any.

For a supposedly Canadian magazine, they showed a lack of taste, and poor timing with the cover of Jimmy ter, U.S. president, his wife and cronies. "Canada's Newsmagazine" they call themselves. Yet why a colored front of the American president?

One argument might be that there was nothing important enough for the cover going on in Canada. If that is so—it's a crock. Inside the same issue was a story, hardly noticeable telling about the recent Commonwealth Games and Canada's first place finish. Our athletes earned 42 gold medals. What recognition do they get in their own country's 'newsmagazine'?—"All the fine young people" as a head and a few almost unrecognizable photos.

Even the Canadian Football League cheerleaders got better coverage than the Commonwealth games in this issue.

It is little wonder Canadians feel more a part of the U.S. than they do of their own country. Only in Canada you say—pity!

Back needs scratching

If the old adage about you scratch my back now and I'll scratch yours later held any water Halton Regional Council would have had to succumb to Pat McKenzie's logic in his plea for uniform water rates.

In putting forth an argument in favor of uniform water rates McKenzie acknowledged the move would be of benefit to his constituents. He conceded that the impact on Acton could be substantial if that area had to shoulder the costs of improvements to the water system on its own.

But Pat McKenzie, in one of his more eloquent addresses, made the point that if Acton did benefit from the move, it was about time.

He recalled supporting the cost of hospital expansions in various parts of the region, even though Acton has no hospital and in fact most of its people are treated in Guelph.

He recalled supporting contributions to the regional road system which Acton doesn't have a

mile of. He recalled agreeing that Acton should share in the cost of day care even though the region doesn't operate a centre in Acton.

Pat McKenzie told regional council that surely, if the principal of sharing was right and fair when it meant extra costs to Acton, it must be right and fair now when the shoe was on the other foot.

Oakville Councillor Mac Anderson provided an answer for McKenzie's querries in a blunt fashion.

"If Acton has a problem that's tough. Let them work it out."

Thank you Mr. Anderson and so much for the spirit of regionalism and sharing.

Is it any wonder that people in Acton squawk about regional government and that groups of citizens threaten to withhold taxes.

As of now, all they've been treated to is the negative side of the ledger. But according to councillor Anderson "that's tough."

A pause to remember

The death of Laura Wiles this week closes an era in Acton's history that is too personal and interesting for the history books but shouldn't go by without a reflection.

Laura and brother Harold operated Wiles Bus Depot and candy store on Mill St. for over 50 years. They knew all the comings and goings of Actonians who boarded buses and shared many confidences with the passengers and Gray Coach Lines, whose first bus stopped at their store in 1927. Their store was a friendly place to pass a few moments in catching up with local news and happenings and many residents took advantage of it.

Both Laura and Harold made out tickets, looked after parcels, dispensed candy, magazines and

other confectionery but always found time to pass the time of day with friends and acquaintances or give out information on bus schedules to enquirers. They did this for over 50 years.

That's what makes the small towns of Ontario—friendly, outgoing businesses and personal service. In too many places that spirit has been replaced with hustle and bustle of the times.

Laura Wiles celebrated her 85th thday this year at the Acton Seniors' residence and the people of Acton and district had an opportunity to convey their congratulations to her at that time.

Her passing reminds us of many good times and the spirit of an age all of us could well take lesson from.

Tourism is industry

Tourism spending of \$4.3 billion in 1976 contributed a further \$3.4 billion as it worked its way through Ontario's economy, a new report just received from the Ministry of Industry and Tourism states.

The 31 page report, titled The Importance of Tourism to the Ontario Economy, 1976, includes charts and tables detailing the contribution of tourism dollars, contribution to provincial income as well as expenditures and destinations of tourists.

Tourist dollars have a considerable effect on employment, with the original \$4.3 billion generating a total 405,400 man years of employment in activities directly and indirectly related to tourism.

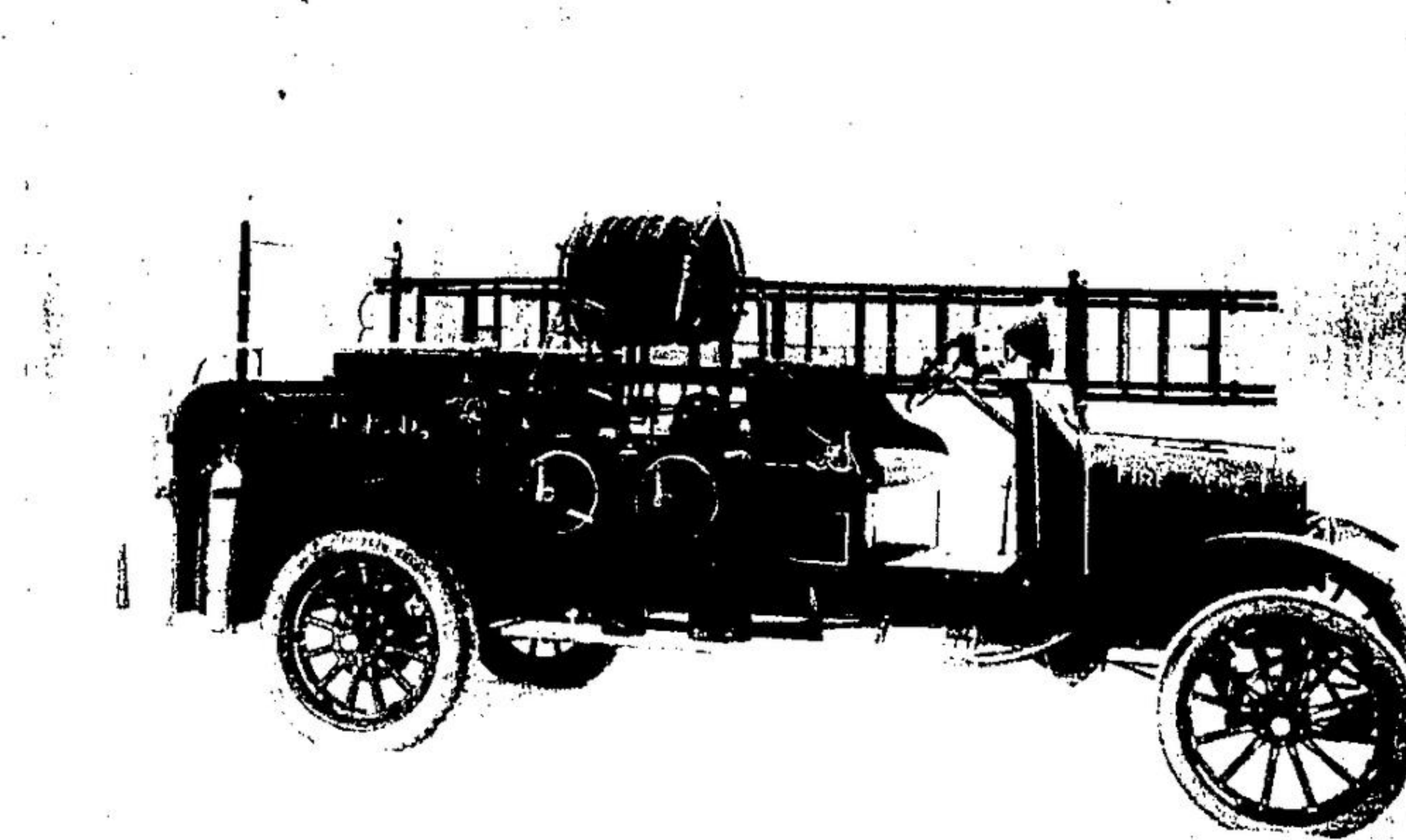
The report shows Ontarians as their own best customers in terms

of numbers and expenditures, followed, in order, by visitors from the U.S., from other provinces and then from other countries.

Of the 4.3 billion, three hundred and fourteen dollars spent directly on tourism in Ontario during 1976, 1.2 billion was spent on food and beverages, 736 million at service stations, 670 million on public transportation, 600 million on accommodation and 760 million on retail sales and miscellaneous services.

This spending generated a further 3.8 billion dollars in indirectly-related activities, such as agriculture, real estate and the like, for a total income of 8.1 billion dollars.

Tourism is the world's fastest-growing business. It is already this country's sixth-largest generator of export dollars.



Old time fire truck reflects days gone by



Sugar and spice by Bill Smiley

YOUR Heading this week is misleading. When this appears, Bill Smiley will be in Rome or somewhere, to some runs in a fountain. The perpetrator of the following is Rover Bell, a young English teacher, poet, motorcyclist and general disturber of the status quo. He is also a wit, sardist at the best of times, about, busy writer, and unusual farmer. His rabbits look like red softballs. Take it away, Rover.

I am, as Smiley stated in his rather flattering introduction, a novice motorcyclist, recently introduced to this liberating and exhilarating pastime. Lately, however, this freedom and excitement have become tempered by all-consuming fear, and I am falling victim to a psychological malady called Highway-Bway Paranoia.

It happens almost everytime I crank up my two-wheeled beast and ramble down the roadways: some idiot, in his two-wheeled, gas-guzzling monstrosity attempts to verify the natural law which states that, if struck by an auto, bounce 12 times on his cranium before skidding to a halt on gravel-gauged hands and knees.

It has reached the point where I question how most of these pilots of destruction received their licences in the first place. Some, obviously, were given the right to run over anything that twitches, in the days when a driver's requirements consisted only of being able to see the end of this nose, and having the ability to spit and walk simultaneously.

Others must have received their permits from mail-order universities or boxes of Crackerjacks. A third group is those having connections high up in the Ministry of Transport. The rest, I suppose, were granted licences out of sheer desperation by harassed examiners who were afraid

of further risking their lives with those people in future tests.

By now you're feeling I have an over-blown ego. "This turkey," you scream, "thinks he is the world's best driver." I am. At least, I have to feel that I am, in order to survive the army of motorized assassins who lurk in the asphalt jungle surrounding my home.

This army has all types of killers, each trained in his own special method of annihilation.

There are the snakes, those decelerated demons who poke along, waiting for some unsuspecting victim to hurtle into them from behind and get a mouthful of tail-light.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are the quicksilverers, who feel that dogs, kids and little old ladies are hindering them in their attempts at setting a new land speed record.

The gawkers usually inhabit country roads. These are rubberneckers, who, stargazing at nature's beauty or intoxicated by the aroma of fresh cow dung, allow their vehicles to meander drunkenly across centre lines, onto the shoulder, wherever.

There are also the creepers, those timid souls who halt at stop signs, then nose forward into traffic, and their black-sheep cousins the ignorants, who feel that God put them on earth to be aggressive. Why should they yield the right of way? Let the other slab stop.

We have the opposites, a bunch who signal a left turn, then swing right, catching unwary fools who follow the rules by surprise. Occasionally they will cross up potential victims by not signalling at all, then abruptly changing direction.

Finally, we examine the just plain malicious, those loonies who delight in scaring the hell out of others by approaching at Warp Factor Five from behind, then tailgating for five miles. They gleefully speed up when someone attempts to pass them, leaving the passer stranded and fair game for oncoming cars. They slobber with joy when they can run a cyclist into the ditch or squash someone's family pet. They are the most formidable and dangerous road opponents because, instead of being incompetent, they are irrational.

What frightens me more is that, instead of declining, this horde of motorized maniacs is proliferating. In view of this, I have some solutions for self-defense.

I could mount a recoilless 30 mm tank cannon on my handlebars. Whenever the need arose, I could blast the offender to Kingdom Come, and sail obliviously onward.

I could buy a war surplus tank and clank fearlessly along, crunching snails and opposites undetected, secure in the knowledge that whoever ran into me would suffer more than I.

The government could come to my aid and institute a new licensing system with only two categories—Good and Bring in the Ambulances. Those drivers in the latter category would be required to have flashing neon signs on their car roofs to warn good drivers of their presence, giving us time to seek sanctuary.

It is unlikely, however, that these solutions will prove acceptable to the powers that be, so I continue my present tactics of self-defense—riding along with fears in my mouth and a wall of profanity around me so thick that a jet-powered Mack truck couldn't penetrate.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Discusses constitution

Dear Friends: This summer recess is a pleasant time to reflect upon what is in store for all of us in the short and the long term.

The developments of the last few months in Ottawa lead me to believe that we are on the right track in trying to build our future on an even more solid base. There is a full schedule of activities planned to restructure the very heart of our country, the constitution. Furthermore a whole array of measures announced by the Prime Minister on television recently should go a long way toward bringing renewed confidence in our economy. This is the type of stimulus which should deliver unprecedented growth in the long term through an intensive effort toward a final recovery from the pressures of the past.

We will limit this correspondence to constitutional change and take up our discussion on the economy in our next letter. Most of you will have received, by now, a copy of the government's White Paper entitled "A Time For Action" or its highlights which was sent to all persons on our mailing list. If you have not received one simply contact my office.

It is imperative, I feel, that we move ahead and change the parts of our system which do not conform to present day reality. In this sense the Prime Minister has tried to reconcile regional disparities and a complete Charter of Rights to become integral parts of our constitution. The provision made for the provinces to opt into this Charter recognizes the fact that for some of the provincial governments it may not yet be acceptable. Hence it leaves the door



"Acton? . . . Acton? . . . Never heard of it! Is it near China?"

(Continued on Page 5)

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of August 21, 1968

Plans for a shopping plaza and a 300 home subdivision on the Mel McCullough farm were revealed to the Free Press this week by realtor Alec Johnson. Mr. Johnson said the 100 acre farm, situated along the eastern end of town on No. 7 Highway has been sold to Heritage Homes Ltd., which is part of the Rubin Corporation. The firm, one of the country's largest builders, has plans for a large shopping plaza complex to run parallel to No. 7 Highway and will build homes on the remainder of the property.

Following the annual meetings of the shareholders and directors of Beardmore and Co. Ltd. on August 14, G.H. Dickson, chairman of the board announced the election of N.J. Braida as president and his appointment as general manager.

Bus service through Acton will halt Friday if the transit strike takes place. Gray Coach Lines is a TTC subsidiary and will cease all operations in the event of a strike of the Toronto transit workers.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of August 28, 1958

A recommendation submitted in the form of a motion to engage Aldo Braida, solicitor, to draw up a new store closing by-law was met on Monday, August 25 in the council chambers.

Three Guelph district youths have been charged following an alleged escapade that wiped out years of work and caused inestimable damage when they entered the Mack bird sanctuary in Puslinch township.

Acton Fire Department reversed their methods on Monday evening of this week when they purposely set a condemned building on fire in Acton Park.

A public hearing following an application by the Town of Acton to the Ontario Municipal Board for construction of storm sewers and paving certain streets, including compacting of trenches and sodding to the amount of \$119,000 has been set for Friday, September 12.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 23, 1928

Rev. H. D. Cameron, M.A. of Oakville was the preacher at Knox Church last Sunday. Impressive discourses were delivered morning and evening. In introduction, Rev. Mr. Cameron expressed the pleasure it afforded him to be in his native town again. He spoke of his work of his sainted father as minister of the church here 60 years ago and of the fact of the removal of the family when he was three years of age. Rev. Mr. Cameron will always be accorded a hearty welcome in Acton.

At the beautiful grounds and surroundings of Beverly House, the home of Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Beardmore, the annual garden party of St. Alban's church last night was a successful.

The United Church, Acton was the scene of a pretty wedding on Saturday, August 18 when Olive May, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Mowatt, was united in marriage to Lawrence Henry, son of Mrs. Baxter and the late Mr. W. E. Baxter of Hamilton.

Mr. and Mrs. Earle Brown of Kitchener spent the weekend with their parents Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Brown, Bower Ave.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, August 23, 1878

The school bell again rings gladness to the hearts of parents.

A great number of children who could not attend school in the neighbourhood, when it was opened Monday, were reported sick.

A reply has been received to the petition signed by ratepayers asking for four mails a day instead of two. We will now have one additional mail per day. The reason is that a letter could be sent west in the morning and a reply received at night, if desired, thus giving all the facilities needed in that direction. The mail accommodation east was not nearly enough to satisfy the demands of our increasing population and business. A great deal of inconvenience was experienced on account of the meagre service. Three days usually elapsed between sending a letter to Toronto and receiving a reply. Now with our additional service we will be able to receive a reply to the letter the same day, or at least the next morning. Two hours will elapse in Toronto between receiving the mail and the dispatching of it for this place, which will give ample time to mail a reply.

During a great storm of lightning, thunder and rain, at Ballinafad, the deputy-receve Wm. McEnery, was leading one of his horses away from the field when it was struck and killed by lightning.

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