

# The Acton Free Press

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## We'll miss Tom

Big, bluff Tom Hill, first mayor of Halton Hills and with a long record of public and community service, is dead. He died Saturday at Georgetown hospital. Shock waves went through the entire Town of Halton Hills, as word spread of his untimely demise at age 63.

Tom Hill was a man of immense common sense who brought it with him when he first invaded the political field as a councillor from the old Township of Esquesing. His family's roots went back into the history of Glen Williams. When he spoke at township meetings councillors were aware he was not only speaking for himself but for the people of the Glen.

Unlike some modern municipal politicians who posture in platitudes or tackle topics in an obtuse manner, Tom Hill met them head-on. His opinions were delivered directly in plain language no one could misunderstand. He could play politics, too, with the best when it was necessary.

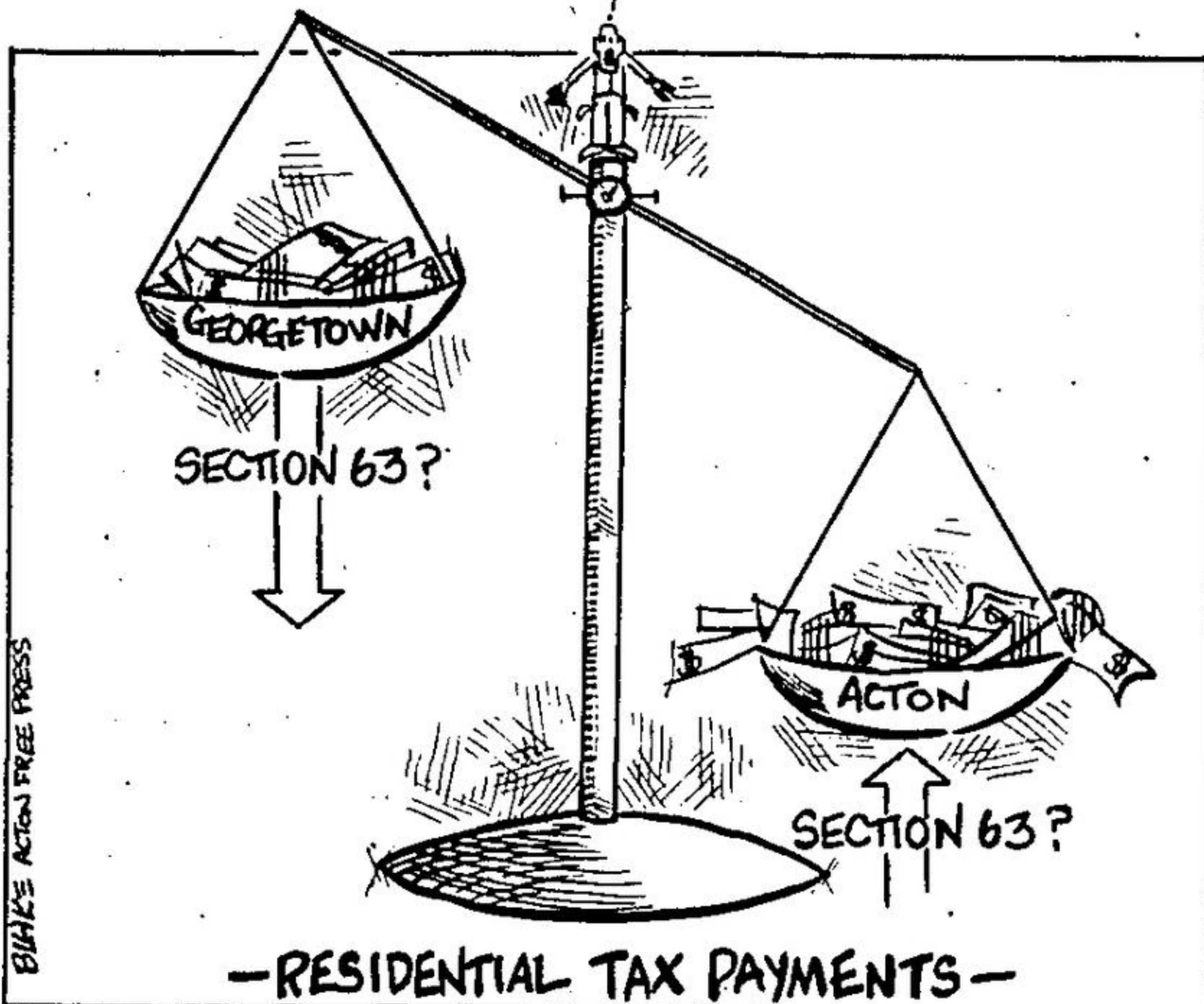
Tom's manner could either delight or enrage the hearer. It was more the former than the latter when he ran for the offices of mayor for the newly created Town of Halton Hills after coming up

through the ranks in the township, first as councillor, then as deputy-reeve and finally as reeve. He easily became the first mayor of Halton Hills and his skill at politics in those early formative years had much to do with the strong financial position the Town is in now and created the foundation for the present municipal operation. He was also a strong voice for Halton Hills in the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.

Defeated after two terms in office by present mayor Peter Pomeroy, Tom Hill retired from active politics until last year's elections when improving health allowed him to once again run and win a council seat for Ward 2, the Township of Esquesing.

Aside from his political career Tom Hill was a likeable man. Like all of us he was afflicted with weaknesses. Illness plagued him over the last several years but he never changed. Those who knew him and saw the heart of gold beneath that bluff exterior will miss him knowing he is one of the last of a vanishing breed.

Our condolences to his family and close friends.



## From the editor's desk

### Dear Otto: About Brian...

Dear Otto: Well, long time no hear or see. Since space is limited, I'll dispense with pleasantries.

So, Otto, you're not too wild about some of the things I've written about your leader, Brian Mulroney.

That's understandable. I haven't been too complimentary. I must say I expected to hear from you sooner—right after the convention when I climbed on my soap box and spoke, admittedly quite harshly about your new leader. For the benefit of those reading this column (from the editor's desk, for yours and many others' information, is a column, not an editorial and reflects only my views, not necessarily the views of the paper which are found to the left in the editorial column) I'll reprint your letter here.

Dear Gord: As you know, I am not in the habit of responding to editorials. However, after having read your comments in the August 17, 1983, issue of the Acton Free Press entitled "Mulroney prospers saying nothing", I felt I should attempt to set the record straight.

"I naturally respect your views, as I know that you respect mine. Nevertheless, I feel that you are somewhat misinformed when it comes to what I believe to be Brian Mulroney's in-depth policies. If you took the time to read the book 'Brian Mulroney—Where I Stand', you would notice that he has spelled out detailed policies ranging from social and welfare programs to productivity and free enterprise. 'I will not at this time outline our Party's positions since Mr. Mulroney's leadership victory, as it would be too burdensome for both of us. However, I do suggest that if you are interested in receiving Mr. Mulroney's position on any subject pertaining to the federal scene, do contact me as I would be only too pleased to forward it to you.

In the meantime, I am taking

the liberty of sending copies of several recent newspaper articles outlining just some of Brian's stands."

Sincerely yours,  
Otto Jelinek, M.P.  
Halton

I've just reread the column you refer to to refresh my memory and get my reply thoughts in order. Also, I've taken the liberty of showing your letter to two people, both Independents I believe, who commented to me about the column, to see what they thought of your reply.

I'm well aware Mulroney published his positions book for the convention. I don't have a copy, but I distinctly remember reading excerpts from it in his mounds of campaign literature available in Ottawa at that time. Please do send along a copy for me, and some extras for others who may be interested and I will pass them on.

However, I think you misread the point I was trying to make in the column a couple of weeks back. I know Mulroney has positions on issues every politician has. His were written for the convention and carried on into his leadership by some university professor, I think from Queen's.

They are lengthy and complicated. Mostly they were the same as the other contender's views, I concluded.

But, after reading the material, and then listening to his speech and comments in policy sessions, I'm not sure if his book contains his views, or simply positions he was handed by his handlers and dutifully memorized.

What I was writing about was what Mulroney is saying to the Canadian public, particularly the voters of Central Nova, whom I presume elected him this week (I wrote this reply Friday).

I fear very few Canadians will read Brian Mulroney—Where I Stand. Like me though, many watched the campaign in Central Nova with interest, following Mulroney through the daily news-



by Gord Murray  
Free Press editor

papers and radio and television dispatches. Those reports have contained little substance, as I said previously. Tell me why Brian isn't saying to the media "this is what I wrote in my book and this is what I tell Canadians now."

Why when I saw him on TV did he not say what he'd do about opting out and extra billing under medicare, even when asked specifically by the reporter, and restrict his comments to blasting the Liberals? I know he has views, mostly critical of the Grits, on this issue. Please don't keep these pearls of wisdom buried away in an obscure book few voters will have the time or inclination to read; make them available through the means by which we usually learn about our national government and leaders—the media.

Without saying much except to hand them the letter, the two readers I contacted said much the same thing, sans prompting. They said they are disturbed by your leader's lack of substantive comments in the papers, on radio and particularly on TV. One mentioned the medicare issue in particular. The other suggested when a new issue crops up they want to hear what the man they suspect will be the next Prime Minister thinks rather promptly, not what he thinks after a flock of advisors put out a book or paper. (Since they knew their response would be used in my reply because I wasn't sure my perception was anything more than the ramblings of a disenchanted political junkie, I promised not to mention their

(Continued on page 5)

## Back issues

### 10 years ago

August 29, 1973  
Rookwood's Nelson White guided one of the country's fastest three-year-old pacers, Ambro Nadir, to victory in the Prix D'Ete, one of Canada's top harness races, this week.

Fred Kentner also picked up a prize this week. He was presented with the Howard Miller trophy for most points earned by his white leghorn chickens in the Canadian National Exhibition's Poultry exhibit.

Bandmaster George Elliott also had a lot to be proud of as Acton Citizens' Band topped competition at the CNE, picking up the Whaley-Poyce trophy.

### 20 years ago

August 29, 1953  
Acton's first ladybarber, Josephine Pardasch of Milton, is taking over the former shop of Vito Cipola of Toronto.

The Free Press has been chosen best all-round newspaper in the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association competitions, it was announced this week.

Four-year-old Richard Murdoch is reported okay after being knocked down by a motorcycle Monday. According to OPP reports, the child darted into the street from behind a parked bus.

Traffic on the Toronto-Stratford CNP Line was halted early last Friday when five railway cars were derailed at Acton Limestone Quarry east of Acton.

Provincial election campaigning is in high gear. Candidates include Progressive Conservative MP George Kerr of Burlington, Owen Mullin (Liberal) of Burlington and William Gillies (New Democrat) of Oakville.

### 50 years ago

August 24, 1933  
A big crowd assembled in the park yesterday afternoon and evening for Acton Community Picnic arranged by the Acton Petal and Business Men's Association. Over 1,000 attended this year. Mr. P.N. Kerr welcomed everyone before the races began.

In a ball game Dublin school defeated Lorne school 24 to 15. This was followed by a game between businessmen with Dr. Nelson and Dr. Pearen the captains. W.M. Cooper was the umpire. The horse-shoe pitching was won by Stephen Cox and Mel Wilson who eliminated F. Poney and Basil Mellon. Tea and coffee were provided to go with the picnic lunches with free treats for children. In the evening Guelph Jockey Club played hardball against an Acton team. The locals, who lost, were Walters, Waterhouse, Holloway, Ainslie, Morton, Marshall, Tyler, Chalmers and Cripps. The final feature was a tug-of-war. The Beardmore team of eight men were pitted against 20 others for the first pull but this number had to be lessened. Acton Citizens Band gave a few stirring numbers.

### 75 years ago

August 27, 1908  
The Beardmore house on Main St. is being enlarged and improved. It will be occupied by Mr. and Mrs. James Lackey and will provide accommodation for the Messrs. Beardmore and members of their family. The Robert Little property, which was recently purchased from Mrs. Little, will shortly be occupied as the residence of Mr. W.W. Beardmore who is announced to wed Miss Katharine Mackenzie, daughter of William Mackenzie Esq., of Mackenzie and Mann.

Robert Somerville, who had been working on Lindsay's barn at Limehouse, has died of typhoid. Mr. Ernest Macklin, electrician, has created quite a beauty spot of the lawn in front of the Power House.

Main St. roadway has been gravelled from J.C. Nelson's gate to Piver St. It has also been turpined from Fairview Ave., to the foot of the hill.

### 100 years ago

September 6, 1883  
The Exhibition of Equesing Agricultural Society for this fall which will be held in Acton on the third of October, promises to be one of the most successful ever held by the society. The committee here are using every effort for the success of the affair and the residents of the township will on this occasion have an opportunity of showing what a little exertion and enterprise will do for an exhibition of this kind.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was held in the Council Chambers on Monday evening last. Members present: Mr. Jas. Matthews, chairman and Messrs. W.H. Storey, Jas. Moore, D. Henderson and J.E. McGarvin.

## Complete band list

Dear Sir:  
The Page 2 article, supplied by the fair board, on August 17 regarding the bands in the Acton Fall Fair anniversary parade on September 17 contained some errors and omissions.

As of today, here is a complete list: The Acton Citizens' Band; The Georgetown Girls' Pipe Band; The Hamilton Fire Fighters Brass Band to accompany the Legion Colour Party and members, brought in by the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 97; The Ajax Sea Scouts; The

Arthur District High School Marching Band; The Canadiana Accordion Band; and a special feature, back by popular demand, a return visit of the Brampton Shriners' Go-Kart Patrol.

Rumor also has it that the Acton Merchants are also preparing a surprise for our 70th anniversary edition of the Acton Fall Fair parade.

Yours truly  
Robert Johnston  
Chairman, Fall Fair Parade Committee

## Reader needs help with genealogical research

Dear Sir,  
I have recently acquired a copy of "Nassagaweya Centennial 1850-1950." How fortunate are the people of the area to have had individuals (including the Free Press) with the foresight, energy and dedication to compile such a book. It is invaluable to those of us doing genealogical research. In this regard, I am most anxious to correspond with or come to interview anyone interested in/or descendants of the following:  
Joseph Anderson, son of John, Lot 8, Conc. 7, Nassagaweya Twp;  
Joseph, William, George (died

1887) Anderson, sons of John, Lots 23 & 24 Conc. 5, Nassagaweya Twp; Peter and Isabella Dixon Deforest of Lot 11, Conc. 4, Nelson Twp. She is buried in St. David's Presbyterian Church, Campbellville; James and Matilda Bonus, Nassagaweya Twp; Thomas and Jean Bonus (1861 Census) Nassagaweya Twp; James Hume born 1844 Charles Hume, both lived in Nassagaweya Township; Peter Hume, N.W. corner Pushinch Twp.

Sincerely,  
Jean Anderson  
R.R. 5, Perth

## Coles' slaw

Remember when I told you about my Aunt Nell visiting Acton several months ago and her surprise at the growth since she lived here as a girl? Well, she's visiting again and I recalled a story she told me about my grandfather.

He was British army clean through, the epitome of the sergeant major which he was. He served in the South African War, (Boer War) with the British Army. When war broke out again in 1914 he was one of the first to join the Canadian Army and was the recruiting sergeant in Acton, I believe, for the predecessor of the Lorne Scots Regiment.

He served overseas, was wounded and invalided home where he was sent to guard the locks on the Welland Canal. When WW 2 broke out he managed to get into uniform again, although age probably worked against him, with the militia. He was a stickler for discipline.

His background was impeccably British. He flew the Union Jack on his flagstaff at home, voted Liberal, was a tea-totaler and as



by Hartley Coles  
Managing Editor

strong a Baptist as you'll find anywhere.

But he was also full of fun and my aunt described him as somewhat of a "devil", a point I think she might have been suggesting was inherited. She recalled an old-fashioned sleigh ride to Eden Mills from Acton one frosty night. A certain swain smitten with a pretty country girl sat as close to her as he could as the horses trotted

## My grandfather made me burn...

briskly along the snow-covered roads.

It was one of those nights when the cold is so intense even the shyest person, cuddled close to their neighbors. The moon being up there like a Japanese lantern.

At one point in the ride when a cloud pulled a curtain over the Man in the Moon, Elmer, (fictional name) reached out his hand for that of Esmeralda, that pert clerk from the country store.

He squeezed. A squeeze came back. He squeezed again—harder. The squeeze came back—harder.

And so it went, squeezing hands all the way to Eden Mills, where passengers disembarked for refreshments. As the sleigh unloaded Elmer watch Esmeralda get off. It was then he realized the hand he held belonged to someone else.

"Her" hand turned out to be my grandfather's.

Needless to say, gramp's action had been observed by everyone on the trip. The poor swain was the butt of jokes the rest of the night. And if everyone has a memory like

my aunt's for decades later, I guess.

It didn't phase my grandfather one bit. It was typical of his kind of humor, which as kids growing up we learned by experience to be wary of when ever we visited the grandparents. The one who sat next to him had to be specially careful, after tea was served.

After my grandmother would pour tea, he would take his cup, pour a bit in the saucer, swirl his spoon around the cup and the apply it to the wrist of the nearest grand-kid, which usually turned out to be me.

It burned like hell because the tea was piping hot, having just come from the pot.

He would laugh delightedly at our discomfort. My grandmother, ever solicitous after our welfare, said, "Now Fred, you've brought tears to his eyes."

And he had sometimes. But when we got over the surprise we couldn't help laughing along with him at a trick he could pull on us just about every time.

He loved to play jokes on people

but he was one of the softest touches in Acton when it came to helping people in trouble. He never had a great deal materially but he was eager to share it with anyone who didn't have any. And he helped many people over some of the bumps in life without a thought of return.

I often think of him when I pass the cenotaph in Acton because he raised and lowered the flag when they played Last Post and Reveille for Armistice Day services for a long time. He had a row of medals. They looked a block long when I was a kid. And he kept them scrupulously shined and wore them proudly on his chest.

He loved music especially that of brass bands and military bands of all stripes.

When ever I see a veteran striding along behind a band, head up, chest out and pride of bearing in their stride, I think of my grandfather and the times he burned me with those darn spoons.