

# Disasters are only challenges for Rockwood International

Les Millington, the executive farmer, leaned back in his easy chair, lit a fragrant cigar, and stated in his modest yet informative manner, "It was not unusual, when we were fully concentrating on the livestock export business, in the early 1970's to do a few million dollars worth of business in 17 countries during one year."

Les Millington, founder of Rockwood International Livestock Limited located on

Trafalgar Road beside the municipal offices, is now semi-retired and his son Jimmy has taken over the business. Like a chip off the old block, Jimmy is presently in Europe negotiating with well-established contacts. After orders are placed, top grade livestock will be purchased in Canada and shipped to the foreign buyers.

Rockwood International inaugurated shipping of cattle overseas by Air Canada Jet Air Freight, to meet the world demand for Jerseys, Charolais, Herefords, Aberdeen Angus, Ayrshires, Guernseys and especially, the climatically adaptable Holsteins.

Established as a dairying and ranching operation in 1935, Rockwood International was able to boast of having the largest privately owned herd of Holstein cattle twenty years later.

Some of Millington's cows milked 100 pounds daily,

double the average and in 1952, history was made at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto: for the first time, the two grand champions in both the male and female categories were bred and showed at the exhibition by a single owner, namely, of course, Les Millington.

Success continued. Today, Millington has a 100-acre nest egg consisting of over a million dollars worth of land, barnyards, stables, offices, an auction arena and a sixteen-room house, which has been fully renovated, re-decorated, and divided into three separate sections to accommodate relatives.

However, material wealth is not responsible for the satisfied smile on the lips of this country gentleman's personal accomplishments are.

"We couldn't help but make money by working long enough and using a little common sense," explained Millington,

who added, "There was never a time in my life when I tried to make money... I just got fun out of doing things."

Doing things like spending \$145,000 in less than 90 days for equipment and to renovate the buildings he purchased in Halton Hills 12 years ago...

In 1950, the year of the historic Manitoba flood, Millington and his crew drove his herd of cattle 11 miles through the swamped prairie, loaded the animals on railway box cars, and shipped them out of danger to the exhibition grounds in Brandon, 150 miles away.

"We decided to leave at four in the morning," remembers Millington. "It was a 24-hour ordeal."

But they pulled through. Corrals were constructed from snow fences, and they stayed at the park for a month until it was safe to return to the ranch.

A more recent catastrophe was the fire, caused by a short in electricity, which destroyed the roof of his barn in

November 1963—the night before his first cattle auction in Halton Hills.

"There was so much snow, the firetrucks had trouble getting in," Millington recalls. "But the flames were extinguished; only one of 130 head of cattle was lost and a successful sale took place as scheduled."

Millington considered disasters challenges, and used his ingenuity to overcome them.

Even during the depression, he earned and saved \$40 a month as regular as clockwork, optimistic that the economy would pick up. "I had nothing to lose," said Millington optimistically, "Just everything to gain."

## Living In Halton Hills

Doing things like adventuring alone to Canada from England at the age of 13 to work as a farm hand in Alberta...

Doing things like enrolling in an auctioneers' course in Indiana in 1945...

Doing things like spending 10 years travelling, the world showing cattle...

Doing things like managing three prairie farms totalling 7000 acres of land spread 200 miles apart in the 1940's...

To Millington, farming is not just a way to make a living, it's a career. By grasping at available opportunities and having the dedication to put his planned projects into action and see them through to completion, Millington went from rags to riches.

His motto: "You can if you think you can" kept his spirits high through some pretty tough situations.



EXECUTIVE FARMER, Les Millington, renowned exporter of Holsteins, strolls through the property of his family business, Rockwood International, with his wife Luvena and grandsons Jimmy and Johnny.

by Lynn Rhodes  
When researching the life of a 'typical' farmer for the 'Living in Halton Hills' series, I made a discovery: there is no such thing as a 'typical' farmer.

According to Henry Stanley, agricultural representative, there are approximately 400 farms in Halton Hills, 60 percent of them being situated on Class One or top quality farmland.

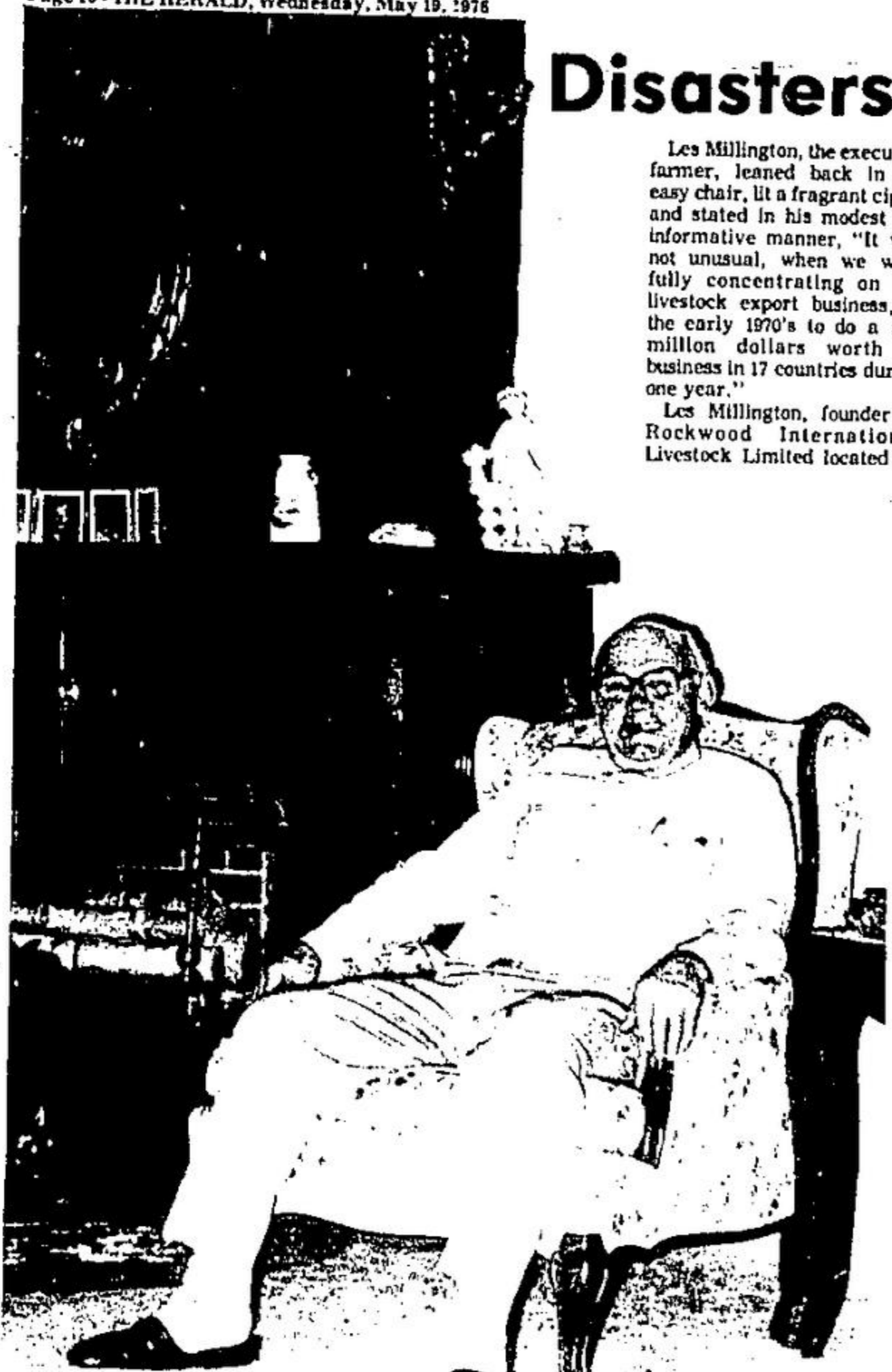
"There's a good mixture," said Henry, in reference to the way local farmland is utilized. Farm categories include dairy farmers; livestock farmers (poultry, hogs, beef); truck farmers fruit and vegetables; cash crops grain; part-time or hobby farmers, family farmers and this week's topic, executive farmers.

## Reader Reaction

Herald reader response to the May 5 "Living in Halton Hills" feature on mobile homes indicates public agreement with the point the article made: there is a need for more public mobile home parks in this province, especially in the Toronto hub area.

One caller cited the case of her son-in-law, who is presently residing in Silver Lake Mobile Home Park in Stratford, Ontario. He was offered a better job in Toronto, but decided, regrettably, not to take it, because there is nowhere close to his potential place of employment for him to park his mobile home year round. He can't afford a house.

People generally seem in favour of more permanent mobile home parks.



Les Millington enjoying his semi-retirement.

## Regional government one of greatest blunders of 70's

The validity of the regional government system must face heavy questioning in light of Ontario's financial condition, Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed said last Tuesday in the legislature.

The Liberal MPP was speaking during debate of the April 6 provincial budget. "The financial condition of this province, which has closed hospitals and placed constraints on such things as children's aid societies, must be taken as evidence that the regional system must be questioned," Mr. Reed said.

"The treasurer's (Darcy McKeough) main method of applying restraints has been to shift the burden of fiscal responsibility on to the municipal taxpayer."

"At the same time he has defended the system of government, of his creation, which is one of the most costly blunders of the 1970's," Mr. Reed said.

Mr. Reed said the treasurer now admits there is duplication of service. He admits publicly that regional government is more costly. But, he says any recommendation for a change must come from the municipalities.

The member suggested those functions which could be more efficiently, more cheaply performed at the municipal level, be turned over to the municipality.

"Mr. McKeough has defended the higher cost of regional government by saying the quality of services before imposition were, in some cases, very low. Will he ever tell the people by whose standards these services were low?"

"Who, outside of a municipality, has the right to tell the people their standards or service are too low?" he asked.

"Does the government of this province have the right to tell us what is good for us?" Mr. Reed asked.

## Col. Barber to inspect Cadets



Col. John R. Barber.

The Royal Canadian Air Cadets will be looking their best May 29, for their eighth annual inspection.

The Squadron, formed in 1968, now has a membership of 756, who will be inspected by Colonel John R. Barber, a well-known Georgetown resident who has been continuously involved in active and militia service for 50 years.

In 1925, Barber was Commanding Officer of the Georgetown-Acton Company of the Halton Rifles (now Lorne Scots). He joined the active service in 1940 and served overseas until April of 1947 when he was discharged at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1949, Colonel Barber was appointed Commanding Officer of the Lorne Scots Regiment and held that position until December, 1954. In 1963, he was named Honorary Colonel of the Regiment.

The upcoming inspection will be at Georgetown District High School.

## School year will be shorter next year...by one day

While students eagerly count down the number of school days left before summer holidays, staff of Halton's schools are counting the number of days in next year's school year.

There's good news for students. They'll have to spend less time in school next year...one day less, that is.

According to a report filed with the Halton Board of Education by John Graham, superintendent of special services, students face the prospect of sitting in classes

for 187 days next year, one day less than their 188 days this year.

But the drop of one day doesn't indicate the start of a trend to fewer and fewer school days. In the 1977-78 school year they'll have 189 days, two more than this year.

While pupils may be happy with the report, teachers and principals of Halton's secondary schools have indicated that they aren't. The board has set out nine days during the coming year for Professional Activity Days.

The Secondary School Principals Association have called for 12, District 9 (Halton) of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, although not listing an exact number, have stated that the number of PA days should be increased from nine.

The matter will likely be discussed at the next board of education meeting this Thursday night.

Incidentally, school begins next fall on September 7 and ends on June 30, 1977.

# IS YOUR GAS RANGE AS UP-TO-DATE AS YOUR PHONE?

Once upon a time that crazy lookin' stand-up phone was considered by many to be "the bee's knees." (Yes kids, they really spoke like that way back when.)

But today the telephone has evolved into an extremely sophisticated piece of communication machinery. Precise circuitry. Bold, futuristic design. The phone's really come a long way.

The same is true of gas ranges. Really.

Why today you can get modern gas ranges that have smokeless/odorless broiling, continuous cleaning ovens, micro-ray broilers, self-timing ovens, burners with infinite heat settings and more.

Ready? Here goes: some models come with eye-level ovens, warming shelves, rotisseries, and your choice of decorator colours.

But you didn't know we had all those incredible features.

Modern gas appliances. Superiorly designed to run at optimum efficiency that saves you natural gas.

And that saves you money. Visit your Union Gas showroom or local gas appliance dealer today and see the efficient new gas ranges.

They're really worth looking into.

(Whoops. We've got to go. The phone's ringing.)



Visit your Union Gas showroom or local gas appliance dealer today, and see the efficient new gas ranges. They're really worth looking into.

UNION GAS