

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Closed sign not up yet

Does officialdom, in its many phases, want Acton and area to just close down and go away? It seems so when Halton Hills council Monday night voted to tear our old arena down and leave nothing in its place, albeit this time there was only a one vote margin.

It's the latest in a round of blows to this community which is struggling to maintain its identity. Last week we were again confronted with the realization that two Acton elementary schools - Robert Little and MacKenzie-Smith Bennett - were on the closing hit list because they don't conform to new provincial space regulations.

It seems also that the powers-that-be who run the post office were considering closing the Acton facility and moving it to Georgetown. They changed their minds. But the intent was there. Quite likely it will surface again.

In January of 1998 the Province downgraded Highway 25 to a Regional road, a blow to the business community, anxious to promote easy access to business here.

Is there anything else they can close and move away from Acton? They've already moved the motor vehicle licence bureau somewhere else despite a notice that said it would be reopened.

Several businesses in Acton anxious to expand are finding the roadblocks thrown in their way not only a physical impediment but a demoralizing one as well. Instead of cooperation they find consistent resistance to expansion plans which would provide jobs and modernity.

Obviously if this is what regional government is all about - stupid decisions made by outsiders - then the quicker Acton and area can get out of it the better. This community does not want to become a vassal of Georgetown. We are a community in Halton Hills, not a doormat.

Anyone who things this community is going to lie down and let others walk all over us had better be prepared for one heck of a fight. The closed sign is not up yet.



WITCH WAY: A pre-Hallowe'en test flight proved too much for this stylish witch who embraced a tree on the south side of Highway 7, just west of the Sixth Line. The witch is the handiwork of R.R. 1, Acton resident Stephanie Dulewicz. - Frances Niblock photo



CLEANUP CREW: Imperial Oil has agreed to pay \$5,400 to clean up and beautify the former Esso gas station by the railway tracks. The weed-infested, garbage-strewn property has been vacant for a decade. The Acton Business Improvement Area will maintain the property once the work is done. Ready to dig are (left to right): BIA directors Gord Chapman, John McNabb, helper Frits deHaan, BIA general manager Janis Fread, crew boss Len Tuitman, helper Todd Schonn, BIA chair Brenda Watson and BIA director Norm Paulsen (on tractor) - Frances Niblock photo

Pages from the Past

1865 murder shocks Acton

In June of 1865 the small village of Acton was shocked by the murder of a young man. In his search for material for the police history of Halton, Sgt. Bob Andrews managed to find this account of the circumstances of the murder from a Guelph newspaper which sheds some new light on the murder.

It is right that the fact of the escape of the murderer should be widely known, not only that the public may be on the lookout, but as a warning to all country constables to use all fair means in their power to prevent a recurrence of such a mishap. Most country villages are without suitable places for the safe keeping of prisoners generally. This is not right; for unfortunately as our population increases our criminals increase in equal, if not greater ratio, and every centre of population ought to have its 'lock-up.' A very judicious use might be made of them in minor offences, and they would doubtless often be a means of restraining disorderly characters, who otherwise escape that punishment which would be a kindness to the. I remember that some two year ago the inhabitants of Acton petitioned the County council to assist in building 'lock-up' but that economical body declined the invitation.

A correspondent kindly sends us the following, which gives in detail the circumstances connected with the shooting: Drunggold it seems was rather a cool customer, and so far from avoiding or shunning Lighheart, he was at some pains to throw himself in his way, and followed him through the village. When Drunggold expressed his intention of being present at the funeral, Lighheart sent him a warning not to attend. This he did not heed.

He went to Mr. Lozier's house, from which the funeral was to proceed, wearing a hat which displayed an unusual quantity of crepe. On entering he took off his hat and deliberately laid it down before Lighheart. The latter unable to endure such effrontery, rose and left the house. Drunggold got up and followed him. Lighheart again entered the house. Drunggold still following him After a little Lighheart went out a second time, followed closely by the deceased. Both went round house, but in different directions. When they came on sight of each other at the back of the house, Lighheart, unable to control himself, drew a revolver and shot Drunggold, exclaiming "I can stand this no longer." Drunggold immediately went in at the back door of the house, and running through towards the street, fell before he reached it.

Attempted murder

From the Daily Leader (Toronto), of March 31, 1855. The item is credited to the Brampton Times.

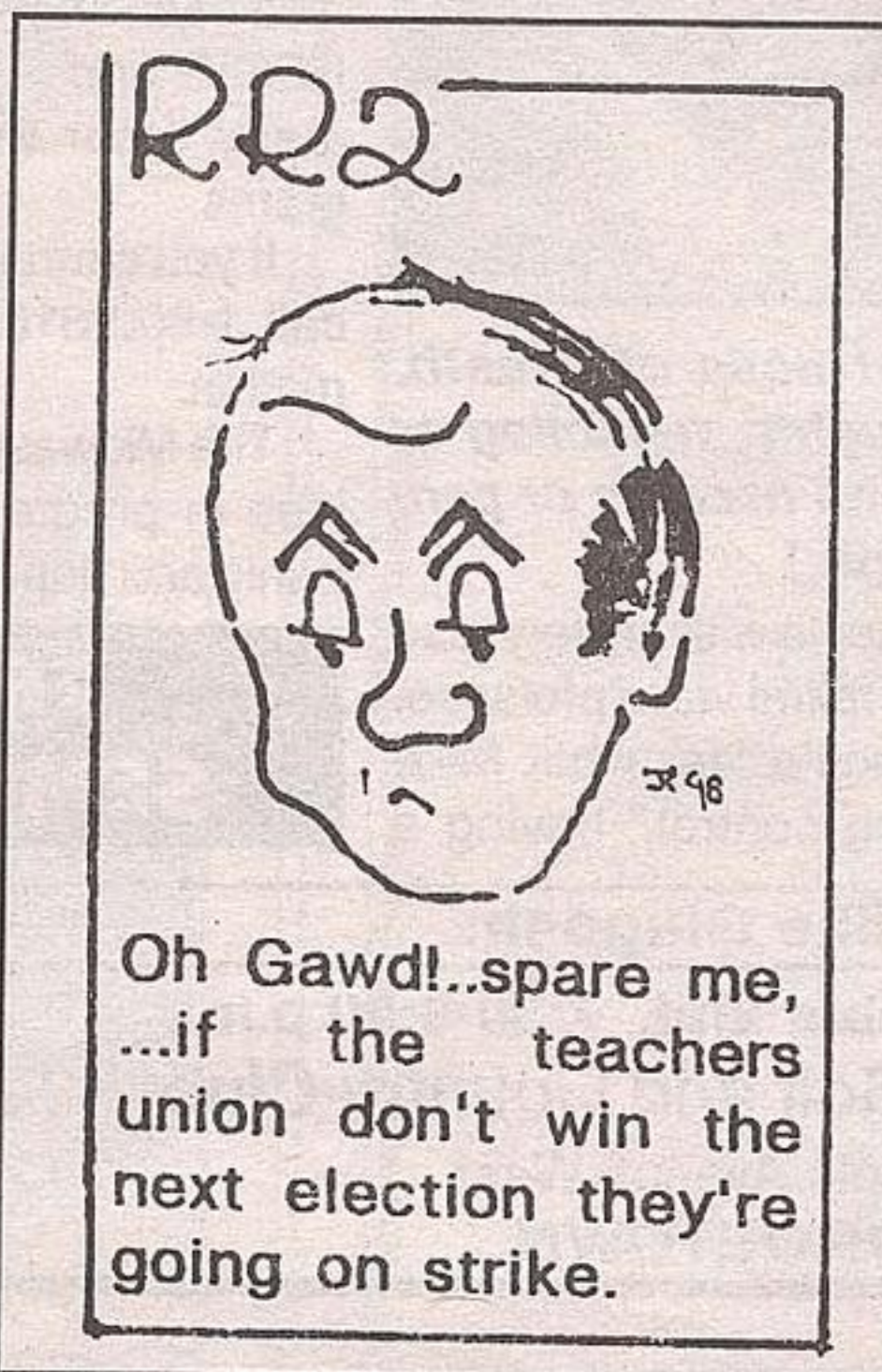
Attempt at Murder in Acton

Michael Carrol, a Catholic, and Wm. McConnel, an Orangeman, were drinking in a tavern last evening, and got into a dispute rather warmly. Carrol left the tavern, and meeting McConnel, at 11 o'clock, a.m. assaulted him in the open street. McConnel was struck with an axe on the cheek, making a horrible wound and knocking several teeth out; and he fell, apparently lifeless. Dr. McGarvie was promptly in attendance, and rendered efficient service. Carrol was convicted, and now waits his trial. McConnel is in a fair way of recovery.

Same source, but dated April 7, 1855.

Outrage in Acton

Yesterday, four gents riding in two cutters, came from Georgetown, and passed through this village on the way to Guelph. About three quarters of a mile out of the village, they overtook a man, Mr. Davidson, who was returning home from this place with an ox team, and ordered him to leave the road and let them pass. Mr. Davidson stopped his team and told them to pass, but they swore that he should leave the road, and commenced pelting him with stones, making a wound in his forehead that left his skull bare. Two of them were taken on the spot; the other two were caught three miles beyond Guelph and brought back to this place. They had their trail today; when one was fined five pounds, and the other three one pound each.



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