

Milton Then and Now

The Princess Theatre

By Mel Robinson

The Princess Theatre's successful beginning at the end of 1912 was no mere flash in the pan. T. D. Hume took a very business-like approach to motion picture entertainment. Encouraged by his early success, he had his theatre newly painted in February 1913, using "colors which served to bring out the pictures to better advantage." On Feb. 20 he was complimented in the columns of The Champion. This was not only because of the improved appearance of the theatre. The quality of the pictures was also appreciated.

"No pictures are shown at the Princess until they have been passed by the official censor. Nobody need fear seeing anything objectionable there."

There was still the occasional reference in The Champion to a "choice lot of pictures," but local news notices and advertising became far more specific and informative during 1913. The program for March 21 and 22 (Friday and Saturday evenings) was the first to be described specifically in the paper.

"Neath the Honespun," (the serpent).
"The Mountain Tragedy."

"The Power of Conscience," a wife's extravagance embarrasses her husband.
"Where There's Soap There's Hope."

By the end of April 1913 the weekly program of shows at the Princess was expanded to include not only shows on Friday and Saturday, but also on Tuesday and Thursday. The doors of the theatre were

open and ticket sales began at 7.30 p.m. The pictures for the first show were started at 7.50, which gave the early comers a chance to exchange greetings. The second show of the evening started about 9.00, after a short intermission allowed the early crowd to depart and the late show patrons to settle down and visit for a while.

By July of 1913 Mr. Hume was building a 24 foot addition at the rear of his theatre to accommodate the increasing crowds. One of the things which greatly impressed my father was his care of the premises. He usually swept the floors himself early in the morning following each show. The fire escape doors on each side of the screen were opened wide, as were the entrances from the street. Regardless of the weather, the building was aired out thoroughly. Mr. Hume maintained that it was easier to heat fresh air.

Although some shows consisted of one long feature story, e.g. "East Lynne" the usual thing was to have a group of short features. For instance, at the middle of November one program included "The Last Blockhouse" (2 reels), "O'Hara Helps Cupid" and "Bachelor's Flat" to appeal to a variety of tastes. The regular admission was five cents for children, ten cents for adults.

The commercial, the Hollywood touch, was becoming evident by the end of that year.

"Don't fail to see Ambrosia's greatest masterpiece, SATAN, or THE DRAMA OF

HUMANITY, 4 reels, cost \$500,000 to produce. October 14 and 15. Admission 10 cents and 15 cents."

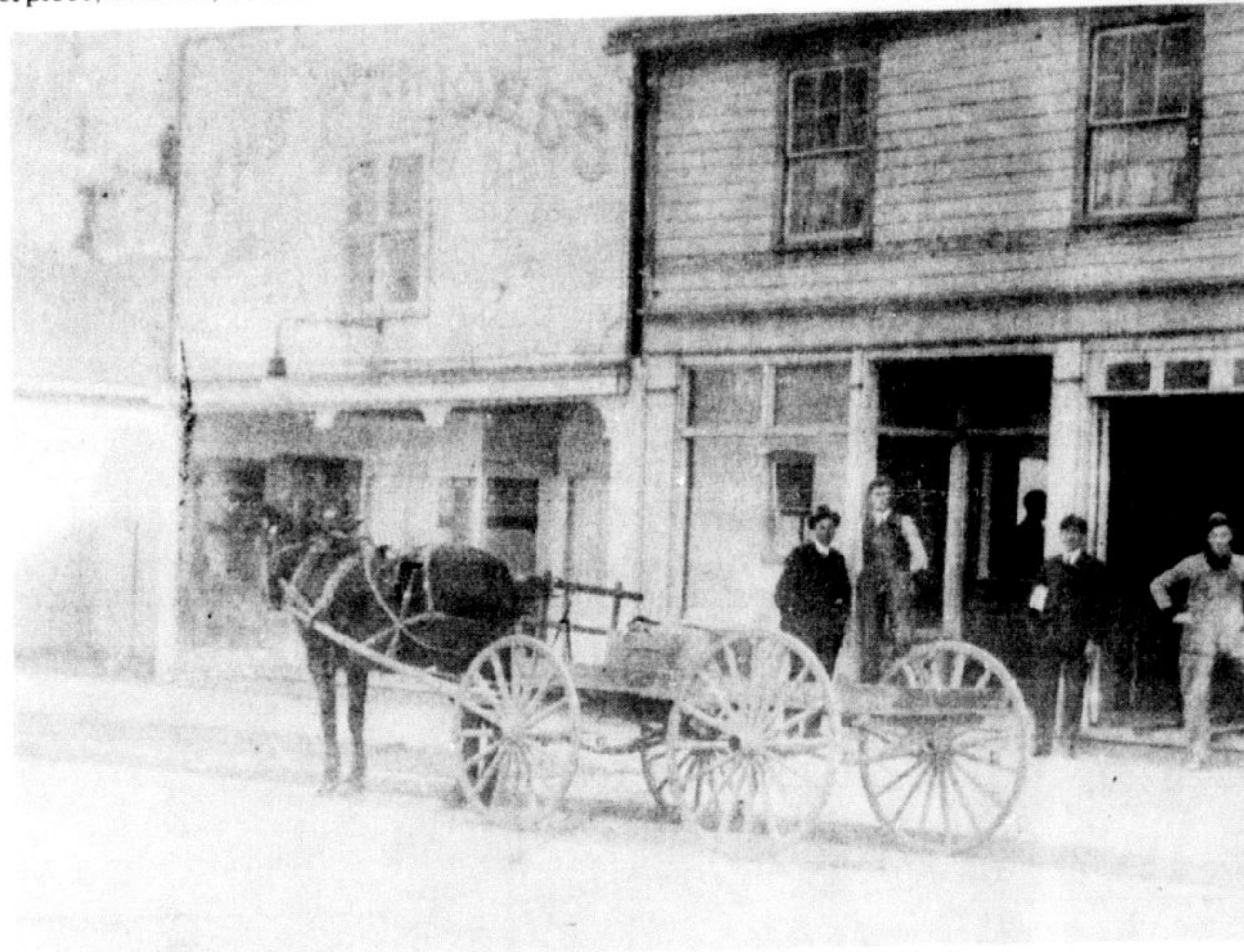
Despite the low cost of admission I seldom saw a show at the Princess in its earlier years, but I have a few pleasant memories. As the crowd filed in with friendly exchanges and wisecracks I was enjoyably impressed. Then the projectionist, Mr. Fred Babcock (I believe) appeared and proceeded up to the Projection room.

He was often in the limelight performing his glamorous duties. Several times each evening a film would break and the screen became a blinding white sheet for an instant. The projector would be shut off and the theatre lights came on. Mr. Babcock then spliced the film and started things up again as soon as he could, but each break in the films was good for a few minutes of fun. Then too, there were the breaks as each reel was rewound and replaced by another.

To entertain the crowd during these numerous breaks the theatre had a "player" piano which provided lively music so long as new rolls were inserted in it from time to time, and its pedals were pumped regularly. It could be used as an ordinary piano, of course, when some local musician was paid to provide music for the evening.

In the first half of that decade motion picture entertainment

was becoming improved greatly, and became an enjoyable experience for most Miltonians.



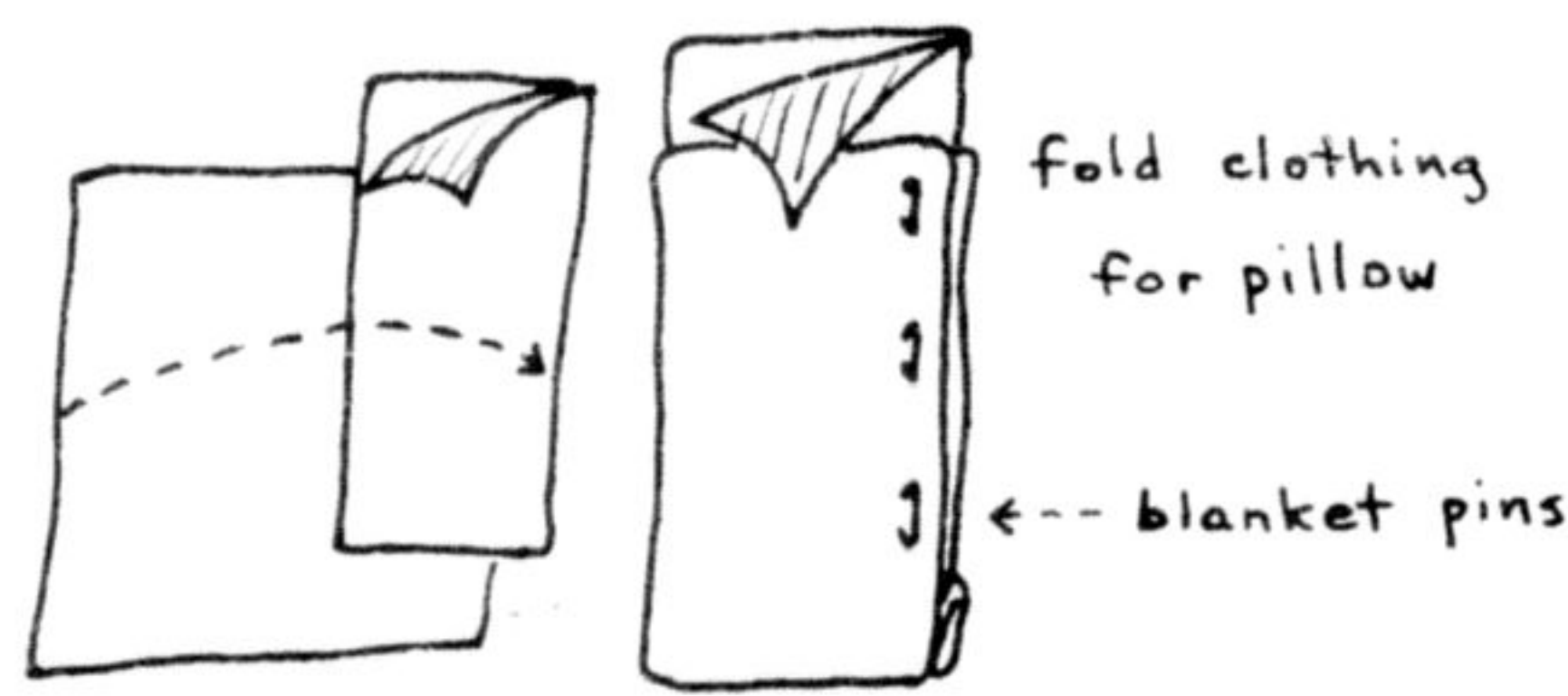
MILTON'S PRINCESS THEATRE which opened in 1912 is pictured in this early photo. The tinsmith's shop is next door.

Around the Campfire

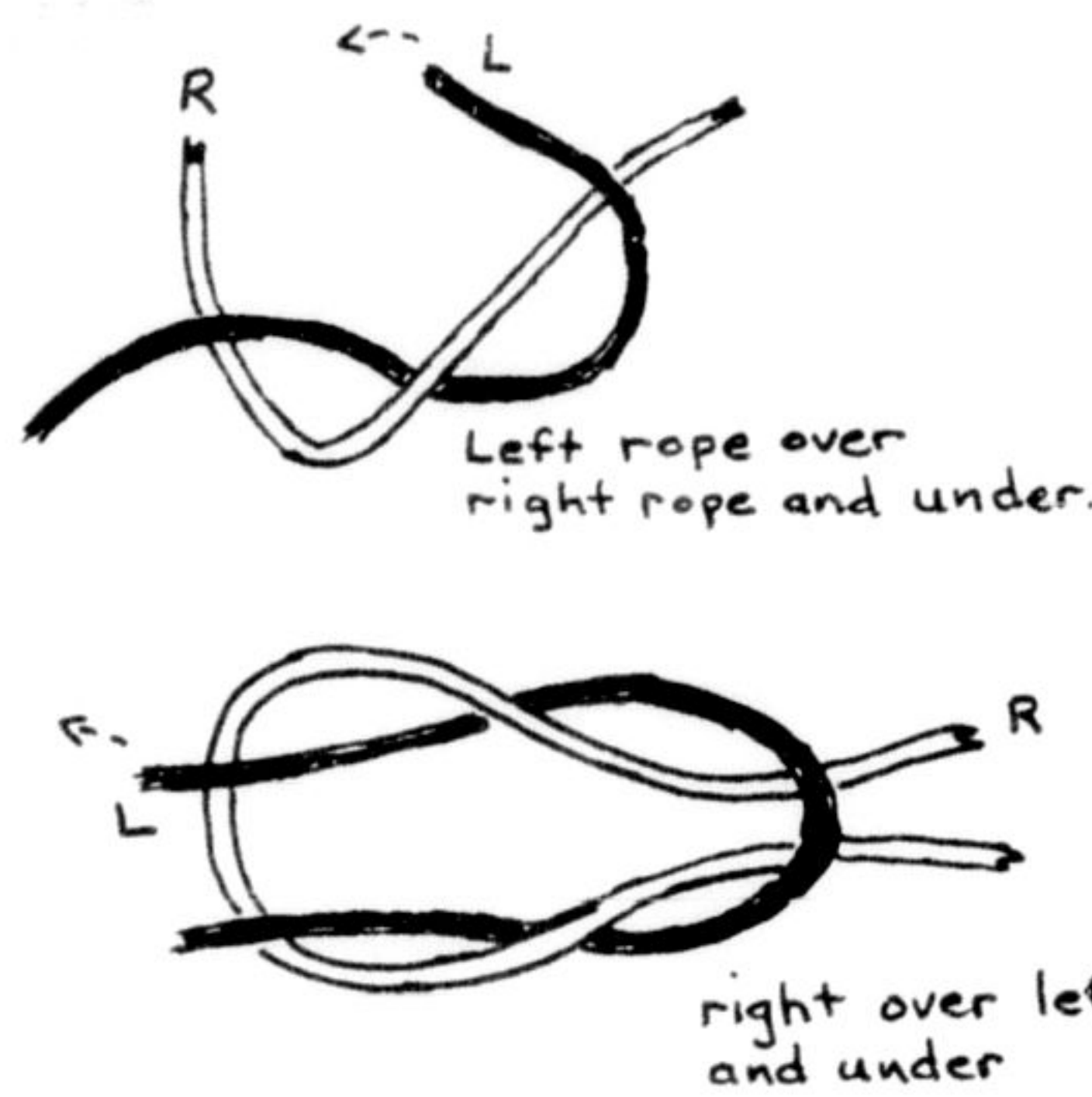
Camping tips

By Rocco Losole

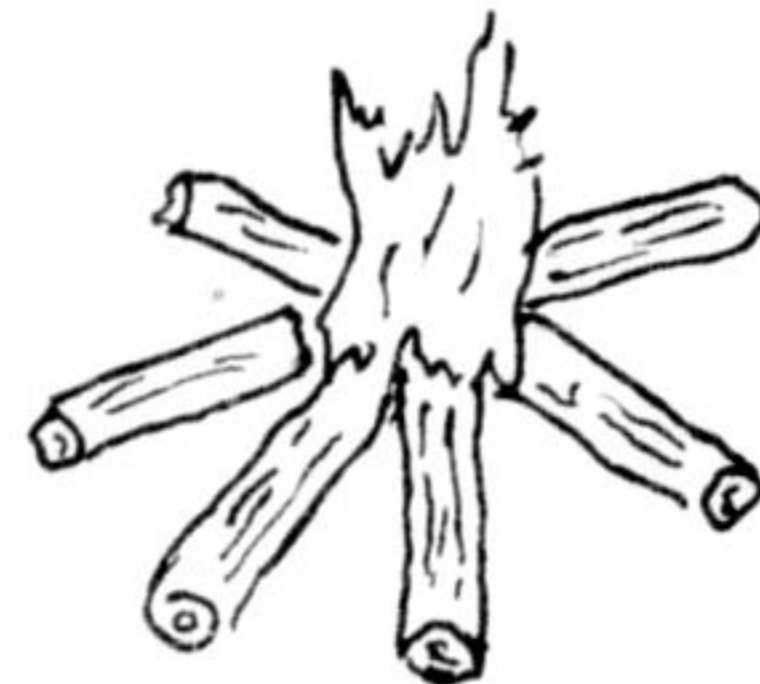
1. If you're camping on a shoestring or you're interested in old style camping, then you should consider improvising a sleeping bag. All that's needed are two blankets (wool outer, flannel inner). An old Scouting manual recommends the following method for a homemade sleeping bag.



2. Remember the reef or square knot? It's used for tying two ropes of equal thickness and triangular bandages in first aid exercises. It is an easy knot to untie.



3. The Indian or star fire is used mainly for slow cooking or for conserving wood. If properly tended, it can go all night.



As the logs are consumed they are pushed gradually into the centre.

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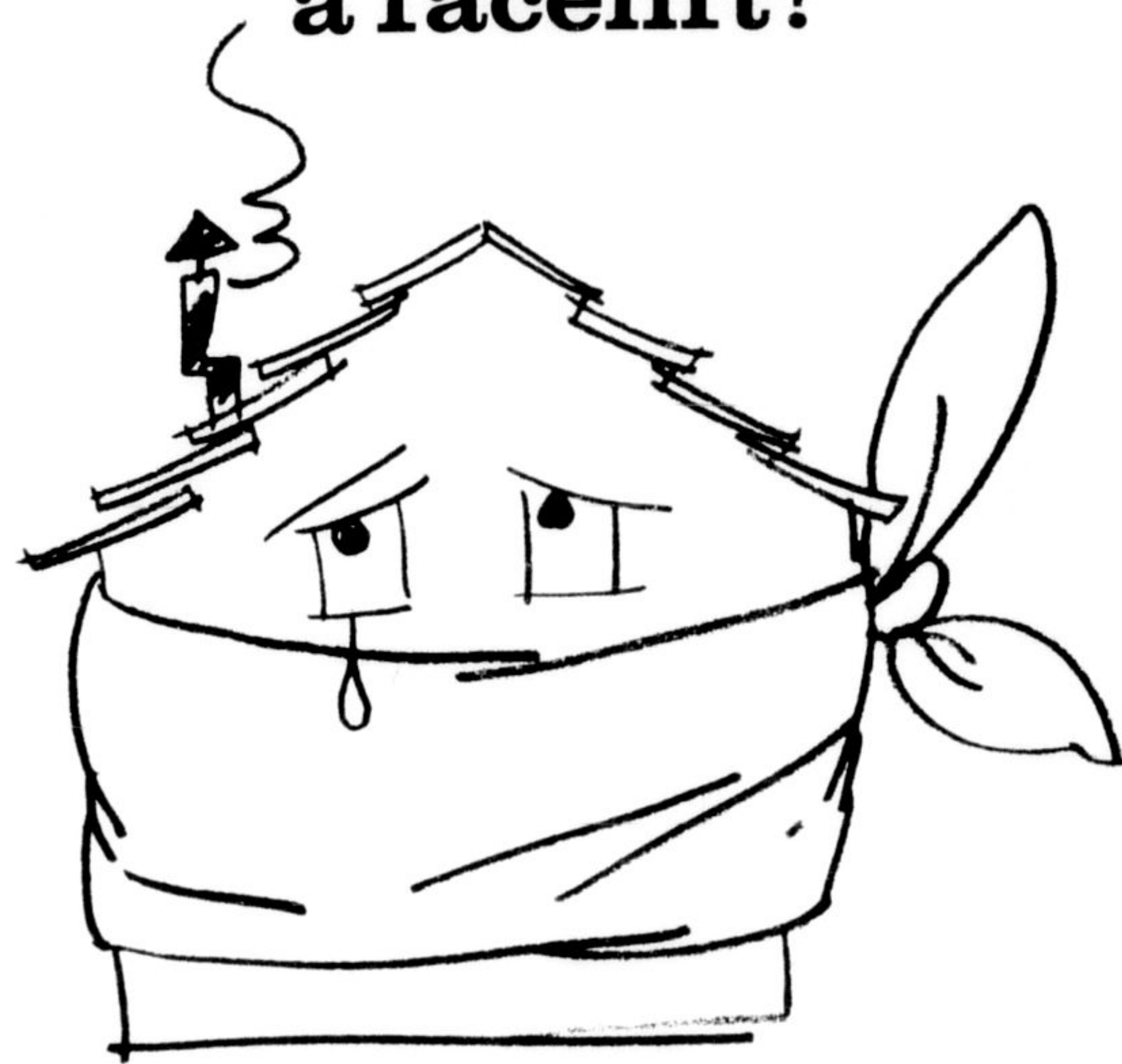
By Edith Sharpe

It isn't what you say, it's how you say it.

While breaking up a friendship is very painful, as we all realize, sometimes it is necessary, for when a relationship is no longer enjoyable, then it's time to cut the ties.

More important than what others say to you, is what you say to yourself, because we are talking to ourselves most of the time.

Your home due for a facelift?



you may be due for a home improvement loan...

If your home is showing it's age, don't let a tight budget delay those needed repairs. We'll give you the cash you need... fast! And a repayment plan that's convenient for you. Stop by today and we'll "fix up" the terms for a "fix it" home improvement loan that will give your home... and you... a lift.

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878-8835

338 KERR STREET, OAKVILLE
844-0866



Between the Willows

It's a GRAND old flag

By Don Byers

A pox on you, Paul Hellyer, wherever you are. You were the Minister of Defence responsible for the unification of Canada's Armed Services.

I for one have never forgiven you for dumping the navy and air force blues and army tan for the parking meter patrol "Green Hornet" uniforms.

To demonstrate my undying disgust, and in defiance of your decision, I proudly fly the flag of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Thanks to you, Paul, a generation or more Canadians have grown up without the slightest idea of what this beautiful bunting is all about.

I do. To me it is a symbol of a national effort that made Canada respected the free world over. It is the flag that flew over training facilities from coast to coast. If you recall, Paul, our country was given the massive responsibility for the Commonwealth Air Training Program. Thousands of young men from Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and other countries received their training here and went on to aid the war effort immeasurably.

Compared to contemporary times those were years of greatness for Canada. We flew together. Now, it seems, we are on the brink of flying apart.

While not so richly endowed with tradition as the Royal Canadian Navy or the Army, the RCAF most certainly has a distinguished history enshrined in its archives, in the

memories of those who served and the enemy who faced them.

But in the name of efficiency, Paul, you had to wipe that all out. And how come every time a politician sets out to save us money, we wind up paying more? And get less.

So be it. On my front terrace the past lives on. It flies proudly from an 18-foot pole. The RCAF is alive and thriving and living on Mount Nemo.

And with the help of a Milton entrepreneur, from whom I am able to buy the bunting, the flag will fly on and on. Per Ardua Ad Astra.

Take that, Paul!
And to think you had a shot at being Prime Minister of Canada!

Received a jolt this week. A young friend of David who lives up the road a ways, became involved in a serious accident while riding his motorcycle. One of his feet was severely smashed.

I remember, some years ago, when the three of us went fishing regularly in the river down in the valley. He was a happy little guy with an easy, shy smile and infectious laugh.

At the time of writing I lack details, but the news is certainly not very encouraging.
I guess when you're riding a motorcycle you don't have much protection when something goes wrong.
Hang in there, Tony!

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GET YOURS WHILE THE SUPPLY LASTS.

RIGHT NOW YOU CAN SAVE \$4 A GALLON ON OLYMPIC OVERCOAT OUTSIDE WHITE. OUTSIDE WHITE IS THE MOST POPULAR COLOR FOR HOUSES, BECAUSE IT MAKES ANY HOME LOOK BRIGHT, FRESH AND NEW. OVERCOAT KEEPS YOUR OLD PAINT UNDER COVER FOR GOOD WITH A TOUGH ACRYLIC LATEX FINISH THAT LASTS FOR YEARS. GUARANTEED SATISFACTION OR YOUR MONEY BACK. SO GET YOURS WHILE THE SUPPLY LASTS AND SAVE \$4 A GALLON! (OTHER COLORS AVAILABLE AT REGULAR PRICE.)

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