

Fire destroys historic home

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

An abandoned century house that could potentially have been designated a heritage building burned down in an early Friday morning fire deemed "suspicious" by fire personnel.

At about 6 a.m., firefighters arrived at the blaze at the Regional Road 25 home located on the west side of the road north of Hwy. 401.

They were about to go inside the building to fight the fire when part of the roof collapsed. At that point, District Chief Ron Townsend called off the internal attack.

"The fire went through the roof and part of the structure collapsed into the building. We were just about to go in when that happened," Chief Townsend said.

The blaze then intensified as it was fed by the oxygen. Firefighters surrounded the house and battled the blaze from outside, Chief Townsend said. Heat cracks quick-

ly began to form at the house's foundation.

"The structure was obviously dangerous," Chief Townsend said. "It's a good thing we didn't do an interior attack."

About 30 firefighters got the blaze under control after about an hour.

No one injured

There was nobody in the house and there were no injuries.

The fact that the driveway was too narrow for two tankers and numerous other factors led to a 500-foot-long, four-inch supply line being snaked across the field.

Chief Townsend said he was pleased with the crew's efforts.

"They worked quickly to set up a supply hose through the field and worked diligently to get the fire out."

The stone house, built around 1847, was on Heritage Milton's list of properties, said Mel Iovio, the

Town's director of planning and development. This list contains all the properties in town that could have "architectural heritage merit," Mr. Iovio said, adding that the home was early Ontario gothic style.

Although he stressed it hadn't been designated a heritage home, it was "waiting to be inventoried" to see if it had the necessary criteria.

"It's unfortunate it's gone now," Mr. Iovio said.

Chief fire prevention officer Don Stewart said the fire is "suspicious."

"There's no power to the building, and no one lives there. Something started it, but we don't know who or what," he said.

Mr. Stewart pegged the damage at roughly \$150,000.

"It's completely gone. There's absolutely nothing left."

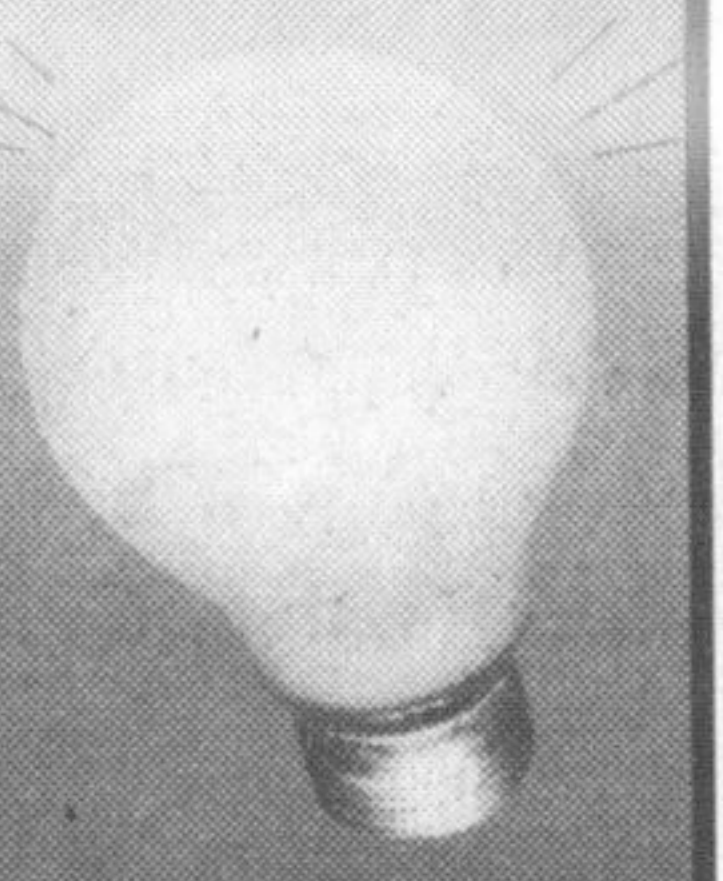
Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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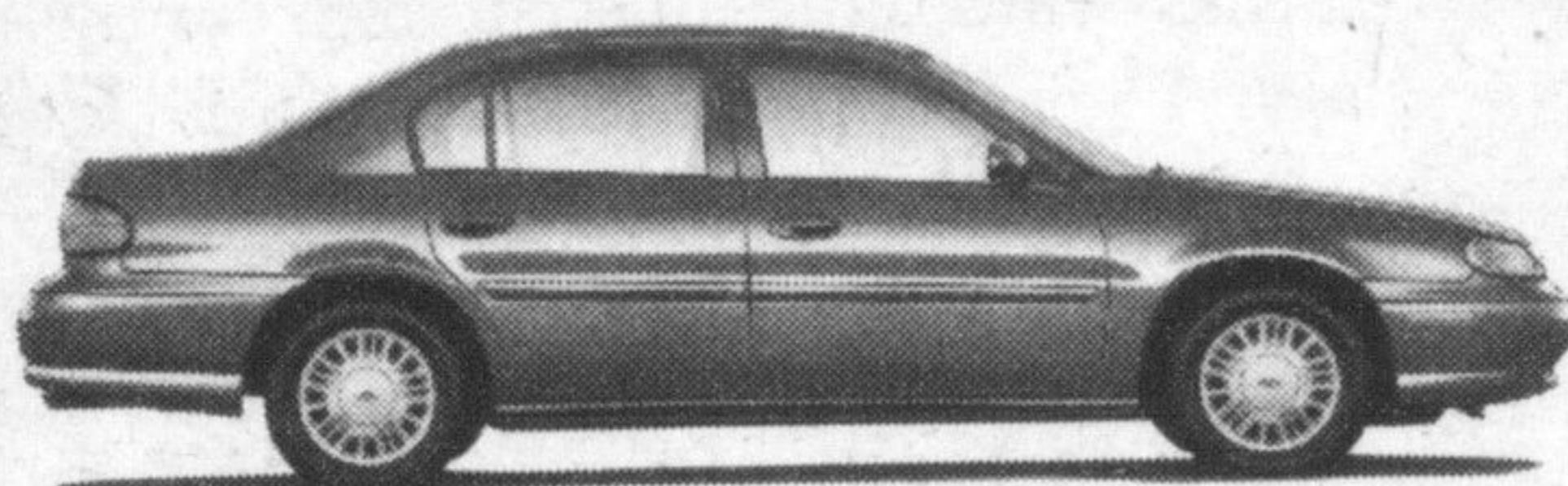


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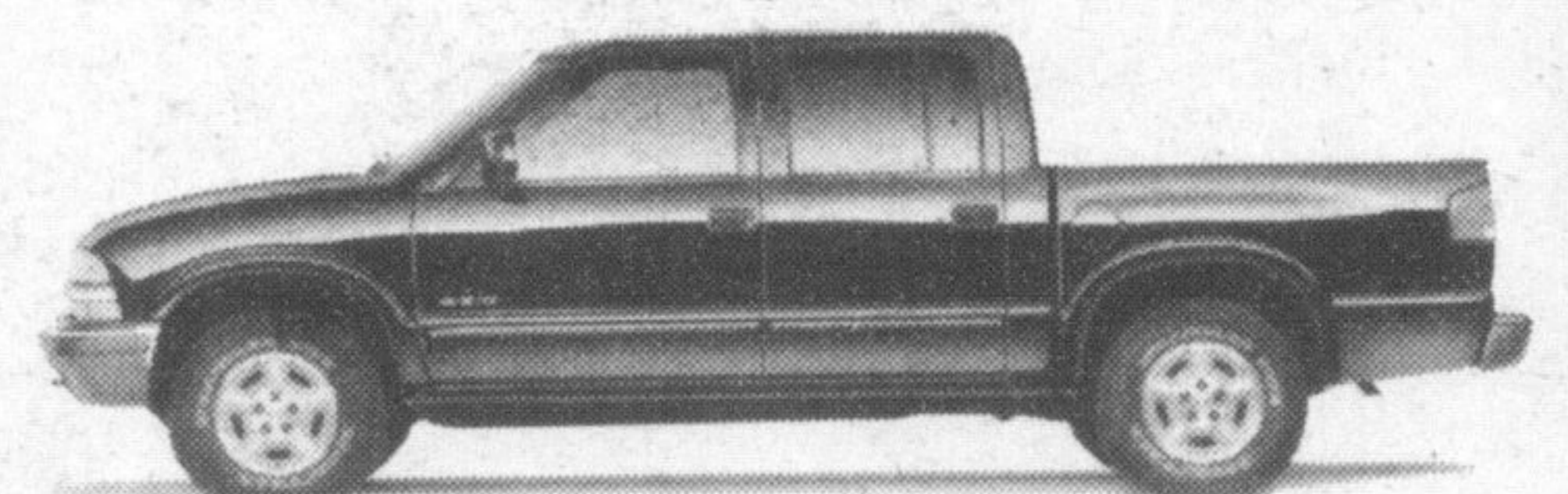
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