

Early Canadian family learns of its history

by Shirley Whittington
 "We all remember our heritage," says Waverley's Mrs. Mossie Snider, one of the seven McWatter sisters whose recent reunion was featured in a Toronto newspaper and was part of a CBC morning radio broadcast.

For the seven sisters, (There were eleven in the family. Four brothers have died) the family heritage is enshrined in memory. But with the 42 grandchildren, 98 great-grandchildren and 23 great-great-grandchildren of William and Matilda McWatters the heritage is kept alive in "An Early Canadian Family" a book of family history and sepia photographs collected by Morley Kells, Mrs. Snider's nephew. Each of the descendants was given a copy.

William and Matilda were children of Vasey homesteaders. After their marriage they lived in Vasey and Waverley. Today they lie buried in the Vasey cemetery - land which was once part of their parental homestead. Mossie Snider has happy memories of life on the farm with ten brothers and sisters although with such a large family, they were never all home at one time.

"The boys - Ab, Colonel and Alfred went out west in the thirties," she says. "Times were hard then, and they went on harvest excursions. The fourth boy, Jack, went to work in the mines at Timmins. He died when he was 34, and we all thought it was lung trouble from being in the mines."

The happy times on the farm included lots of hard work. "We girls used to milk the cows, and separate the milk and wash the separator," recalls Mossie. "The laundry was all done on a wooden scrub board, although later on we got a wooden hand-operated machine."

"We used to spend whole afternoons ironing," she continues. "We used flat irons that we heated on the wood stove." Sometimes Mossie and her brother Ab would be sent across the fields with a basket of home churned butter, and some eggs which they'd exchange at the Waverley store for tea or whatever was needed at home.

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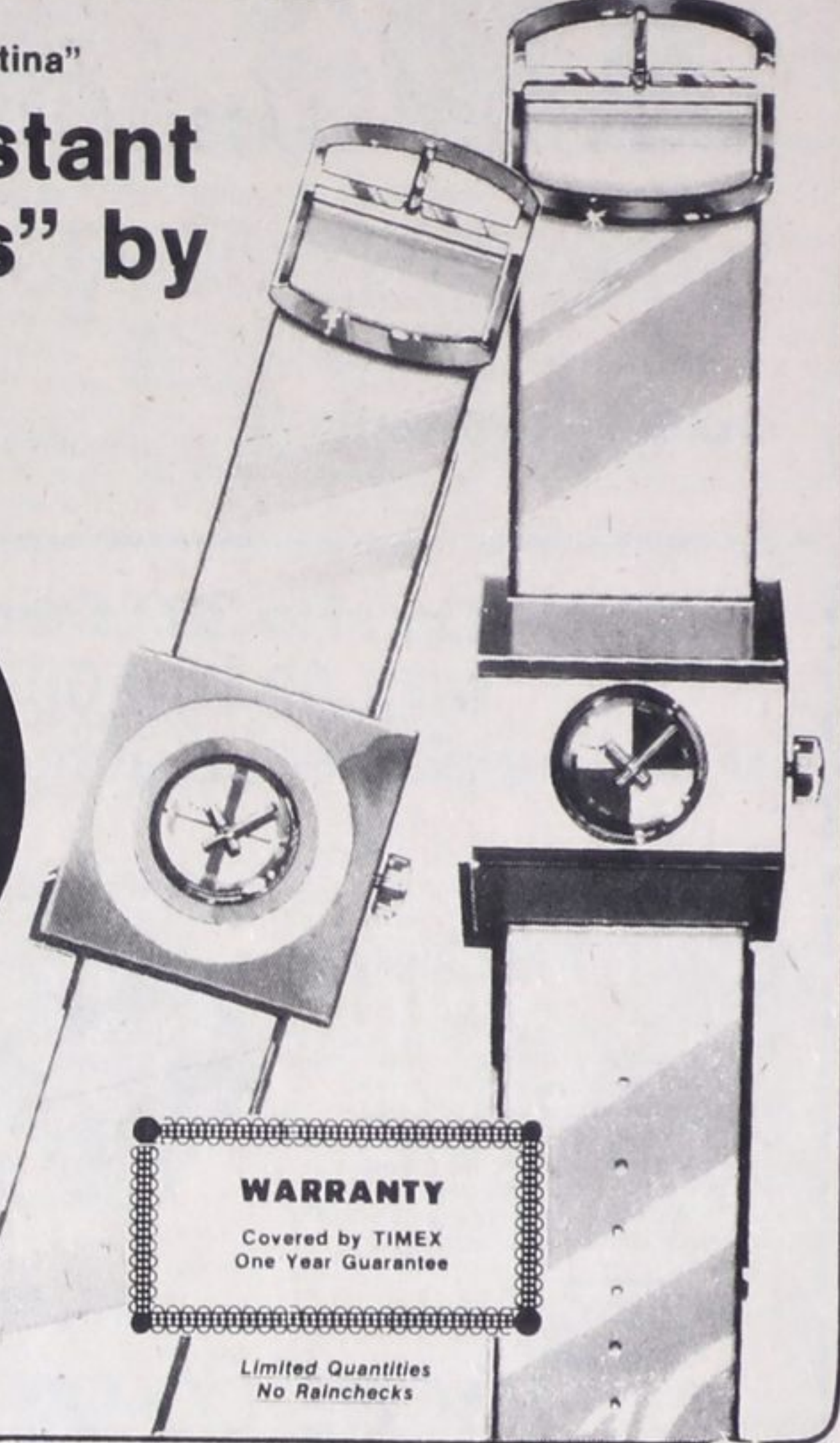
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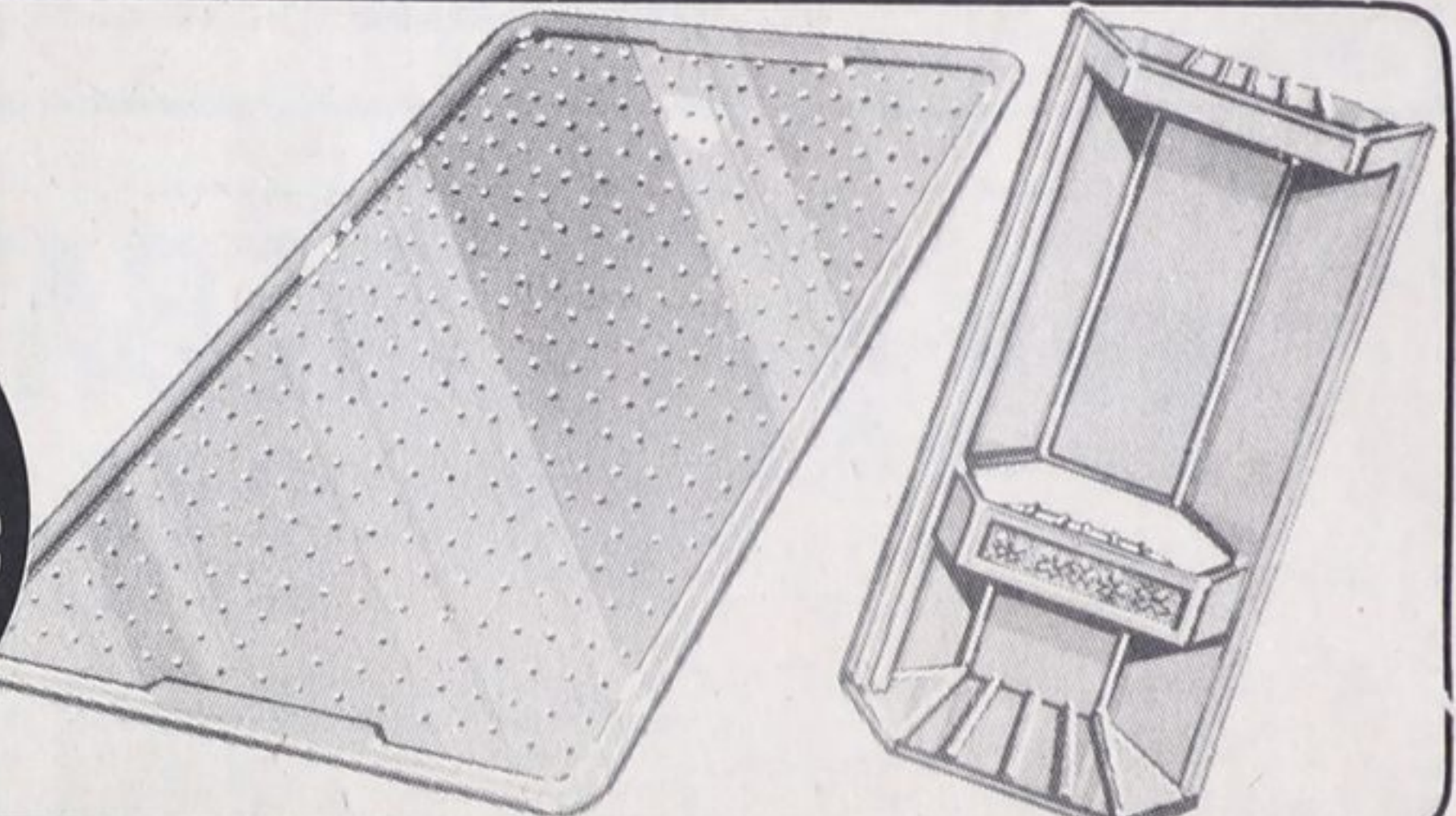
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