

The Ottawa Spotlight

By Wilfrid Eggleston

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Ottawa, March 10—A committee of the House of Commons is to make an inquiry into the rising cost of farm implements. (This promise was made by the Minister of Agriculture at the conclusion of a brief debate on the subject. Prices for 1936 are from \$3 to \$18 higher for a wide range of farm implements, as compared with prices for the past four or five years. The House appeared to be unanimous in supporting an investigation, although the member for Brantford, W. R. MacDonald, urged that there had been plenty of investigations recently, that the average increase in the price of implements was only three per cent, and that it was important that workers in the implement factories should receive a fair wage. It was also brought out that the implement companies had not been making any profits of recent years. One member urged that the real reason for the plight of the implement company was the destruction of purchasing power of the farmer. When agricultural prices rose through treaties and other means, the demand for implements would go up and everyone would be better off.

(Want Aid for Sugar Beets)

A delegation of members representing areas where sugar beets can be successfully raised waited upon the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture last week seeking assistance for the industry. One suggestion was that a rebate be given direct to the beet farmer of a cent a pound, which is the present excise tax upon sugar. This would be a direct subsidy to the farmer and would, it was urged, do the most good.

Other members opposed this on the ground that a direct subsidy given to the beet grower would open the door for a flood of similar suggestions regarding other branches of the farming industry, and other industries. These members, as an alternative, asked that in the case of sugar beets the present one cent per pound tax be removed altogether. In either event the cost to the country would be in the neighborhood of \$1,300,000 per year. At present Canada supplies about 13 per cent of her sugar requirements from her own beets, and the remainder is made from raw sugar made from sugarcane, largely from the West Indies.

The government did not say whether assistance would be granted or not. One problem is that if the protection given the Canadian beet grower is increased, the shippers of cane sugar may lower their prices sufficient to offset it.

(Canada's Voting Machinery)

Canada's whole elections and franchise machinery is being examined with a view to improvement. A committee of 30 members of the House met for the first time last week to consider the matter, learn what is done in other countries, and make recommendations for suitable changes.

One improvement desired is a system of voting which would ensure a more accurate reflection of the popular vote in the membership of the House of Commons. To secure this, proportional representation and the transferable vote will be considered.

The 'basic list' maintained continuously, for the registration of voters, which was started about two years ago, has proved very expensive and will probably be abandoned. In former days a new list was made before each general election. The absentee vote system has also proved costly.

(No More Gerrymanders?)

An attempt will also be made to get the whole question of redistribution out of party politics. Every ten years, after a census, the ridings are altered to conform with the changes in population, and there is usually a dogfight, with much heat and charges of 'Gerrymander' or 'Hiving the Grits' or something of the sort. It is hoped that the redistribution can in future be done by some independent tribunal.

Dr. J. K. Blair, member for Wellington North, secured first reading of a bill which, if passed, would abolish hanging, and provide instead execution by means of a lethal chamber or something of that sort.

An amusing incident developed last week when W. A. Fraser, diminutive member of Scottish extraction from Northumberland County, Ontario, arose and complained that regulations of the Health department were making it impossible to import haggis from Scotland, with the result that devotees of this delectable dish had to bring it in from France. No promise was made by the government to rectify the matter, but the House had a hearty laugh over it.

(Italian Consul Reproved)

The House of Commons spent the

better part of a day on the League of Nations, but nothing very constructive came of it. In a general way all parties in the Canadian parliament are favorable toward a system of collective security, and it is difficult to work up much controversy. The most sensational passage concerned Luigi Petrucci, Italian Consul-general in Canada, who was rebuked by J. S. Woodsworth for criticising Canada's membership in the League and her adoption of sanctions. Mr. Mackenzie King agreed with the C. F. leader that Signor Petrucci had been indiscreet, if not worse, and that if such an incident occurred again it would be necessary to make representations to Il Duce.

Most of the week was devoted to the trade agreement with the United States. Fifteen or twenty members had a whack at it, either defending or attacking.

(Different Points of View)

J. T. Thorson, Liberal, Selkirk, took the view that the agreement was a step in the right direction. "We are satisfied," he said, "with a fair exchange, and we believe that in this trade agreement we are making a fair exchange with the United States."

J. H. Harris, Conservative, Toronto, feared dumping of excess products from the United States as a result of the trade agreement. The \$100 free entry provision for tourists would, he said, cut \$12,500,000 per year from Canadian payrolls. He made a plea for Canadian manufacturers who were having a hard time getting along.

Hon. Charles A. Dunning, Minister of Finance, answered in detail the objections of the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett). In many respects the agreement as signed was the agreement as originally offered by Mr. Bennett. After a couple of exchanges with Mr. Bennett as to what the offer really was, the Minister advised everyone to read the letter of December 14th, 1934. "It is a truly historic document," said the Minister of Finance. "The man who wrote it (Mr. Bennett) is forever estopped from criticising the treaty which this country entered into."

(Mr. Stevens Changes Attitude)

Hon. H. H. Stevens, Reconstructionist leader, said frankly that in the past he had opposed reciprocity. He had fought a bitter battle over it in 1911. But he had changed his view about trade with the United States.

When he was Minister of Trade and Commerce in 1932 he had realised that trade with that country was not on a very good basis. He had instructed some officials of his department to see if offers could not be made to the United States. Some of the suggestions then produced were incorporated in the present agreement.

"Why, under those circumstances, should I oppose the agreement?" Mr. Stevens asked. He went to analyse the various provisions.

Hon. W. E. Rowe, Conservative, Dufferin-Simcoe, said that he believed in trade east and west, rather than north and south. "If we establish trade north and south we shall be faced with the advantages that are given to American labour and the advantages that accrue to the American manufacturer because of his short rail hauls."

J. A. Glen, Liberal, Marquette, Man, said he was in hearty accord with the trade agreement. "I realise that this is the first break in the crust of economic nationalism under which this and other countries of the world have been during the last five or six years," he said. "I should like it to be much more comprehensive, but I am willing to accept it knowing that it marks the acceptance of a principle which will do much to raise the hopes of the people of the Dominion of Canada."

(Social Credit View)

A. H. Mitchell, Social Credit, Medicine Hat, wished to remove a misapprehension which people might feel that the Social Credit members were not interested in trade. They were very much interested in trade, but they did not confine their interest to external trade. They were even more interested in internal trade. Mr. Mitchell praised the provision whereby \$100 could be brought back in goods by a tourist without collection of duty. He hoped that the regulations regarding it were not made too stringent.

These were only a few of the speeches, but they give a fair cross section of the opinion of the House of Commons regarding the trade agreement.

The Senate sat briefly on several occasions, lamenting among other things that little or no work was given them to do in the early stages of a session, and then it was all piled up near the end.

The editor of the Stouffville Tribune recently saw a picture of the new Post Office soon to be erected in Richmond Hill. In the last issue of the Tribune Editor Nolan remarks that while the Stouffville Post Office erected a few years ago cost more than the local building is to cost, the Stouffville mail centre would not make "a good garage for the new Post Office soon to be erected in Richmond Hill."

Edward B. Graham, president of the Peel Memorial Hospital, Brampton, died on Monday, March 2nd, aged 46.

At the annual meeting of the West York Conservative Association held in Weston on Saturday, Feb. 29th, R. J. Wallace, reeve of Swansea, was elected president and Fred Bragg of Humber Bay, secretary.

The statistics for the first two months of 1936 show that there has been a substantial increase in marriages in Toronto over the first two months of 1935. Evidently some of the Toronto ladies are exercising their "leap year privilege."

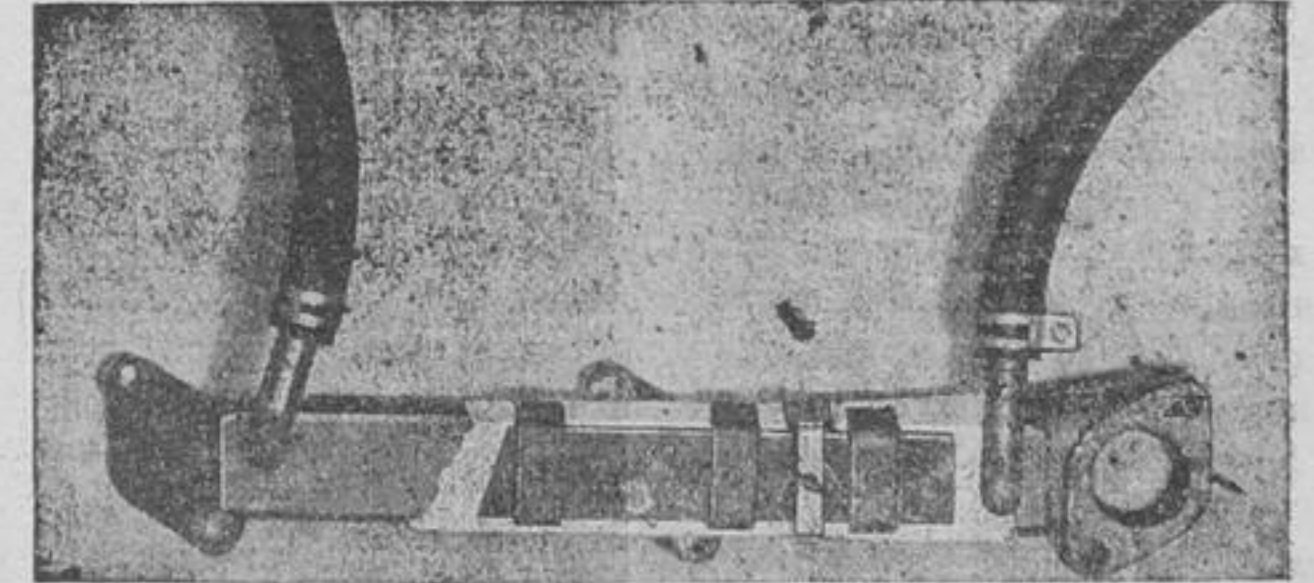
A sale of western horses in Stouffville last week attracted a large crowd but few buyers. Only a very few of the horses were sold.

Laurence Lyon, young Weston lawyer, died at Naples, Florida, on Monday, March 2nd, in his 34th year.

The marriage took place at Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Toronto, on Tuesday, Feb. 25th, of Marjorie Jones, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Jones of Palgrave, and Albert Glover, son of A. D. Glover, Toronto. Rev. A. C. Stewart officiated.

The "Dionne Girls" are probably the most widely known children in the world with the one possible exception of the "Royal Children" of the Duke and Duchess of York, who are well up in the line of succession to the British throne. However the "Dionnes" have not been the only ones to acquire wide spread publicity from the fact that they are quintuplets. The little country doctor, A. R. Defoe, who has been caring for them since birth is probably one of the most widely known doctors in the world to-day.

See the new Webber Heater Booster

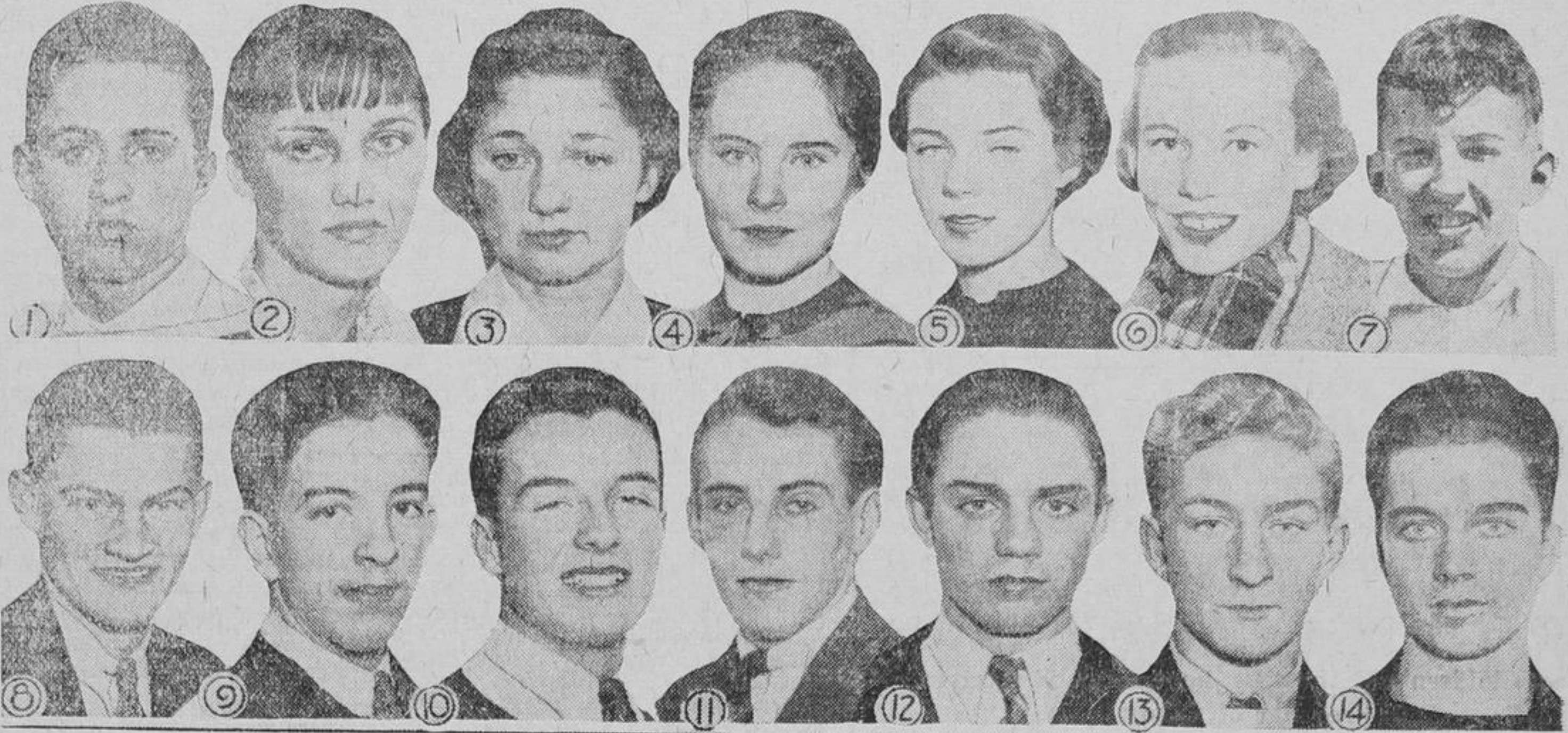


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Richmond Hill



TOOK PART IN "COMMENCEMENT"

Students of Richmond Hill School prominent in the 13th annual Commencement Exercises last Friday and Saturday evening. (1) James Mizen, winner of the art prize; (2) Dorothy Barraclough, who took the part of Donna Lucia D'Alvadorez in the pres-

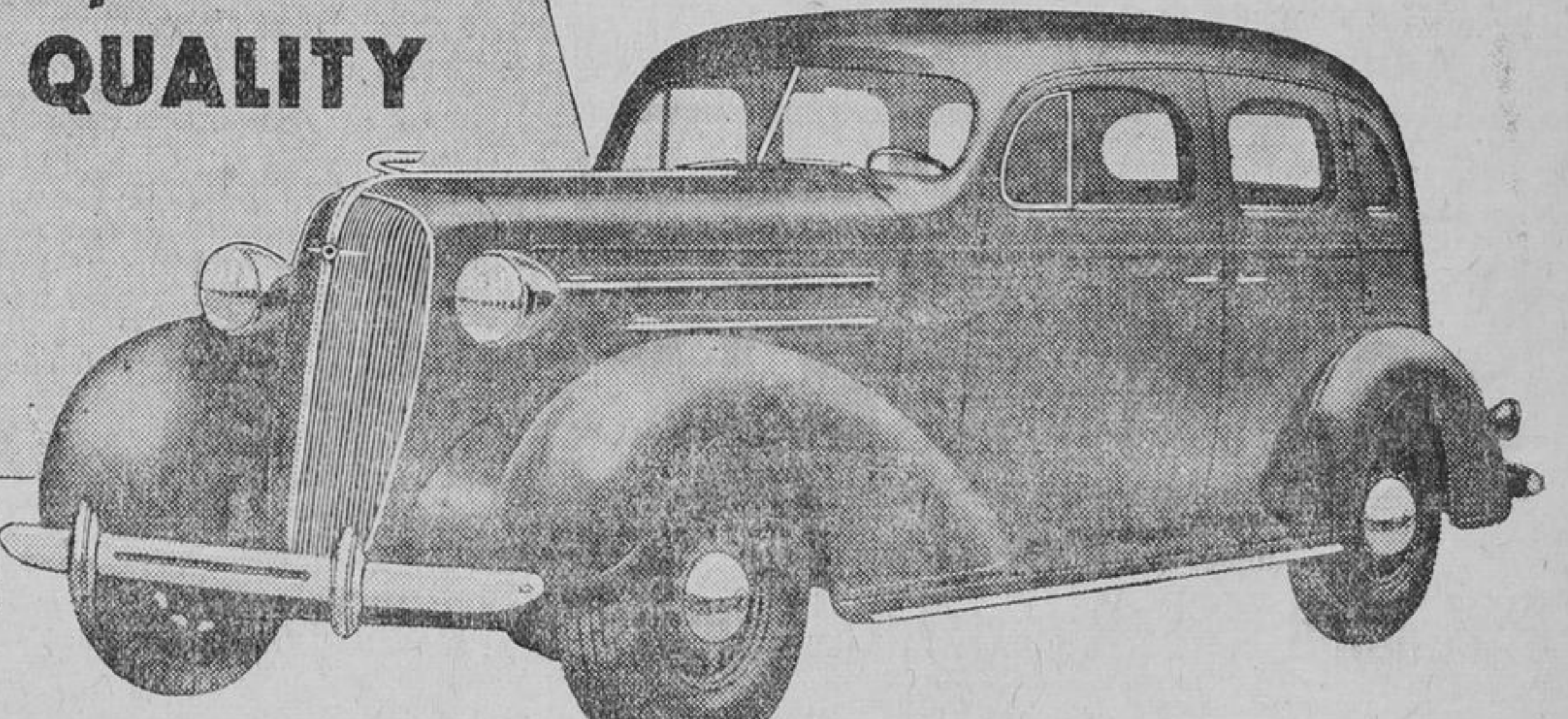
entation of "Charley's Aunt;" (3) Ruth Angle who played Kitty Verdun; (4) Isobel Oliver, winner of award for general proficiency in third form, middle school; (5) Jean Robinson, junior girls' athletic champion, by reversion, and in (6) Isobel Ainslie,

North York junior girls' athletic proficiency; (10) William Campbell, champion, who secured the award for lower school, second form award; (11) the school last year. William Stewart Jack Webb, who took the lead part in (7), upper school scholarship; (8) William Pollard, senior boys' champion, by junior boys' champion; (13) Joe Morris, juvenile champion, and (14) school, first form award for general James Ley, senior champion.

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