

Glad Hand From Town On The Hill Is Very Much Appreciated

Newcomer Tells Of Warm Welcome To Friendly Town

By Yvonne St. Claire

Anybody who has experienced the rigours, worries, and countless handicaps that crop up when moving an entire household from one locality to another, will know how deeply appreciable an outstretched hand, a kindly look, or a proffered suggestion can be. Such a time is always one of confusion, blunders, things forgotten or mislaid, and above all it is a time of weariness, of bewilderment, and that strange, almost terrifying sense of - Aloneness, that comes at such times, when the body is tired, and the mind jaded too.

That is when a friendly smile, even from strangers casually encountered means so much and that is what we found, my sister and I, when we set out from our old home in the Big City, intent on making a new one, not so very far away, but actually in The Town upon the Hill.

Kay and I sold our home in September, and because the purchaser was young and ardent, and "engaged to be married," we agreed to take possession as soon as possible. In order to prepare it for his bride, so we agreed to hurry out, and of course the Estate Agents who engineered the Deal promptly supported us. No sooner was our decision reached than they descended on us with a sheaf of attractively pictured and still more attractively described, "one thing" but it wasn't as simple as that. Some were too expensive, others too far out of town, others again not feasible, from our point of view anyway. Then as the Agent gathered up his latest batch, a single slip of paper floated out to lie temptingly at my feet. "What's that?" said Kay, "It's a picture of a house that looks just beautiful!"

"That," said the Agent, hopefully picking it up. "Well, that, ladies, if you really care to consider it, is just the place for you; right price, right terms, right everything! And it's right on The Hill. Would you care to see it?"

The Big Decision

"Let's go, Lil," rapped out Kay, so that is how we came to be motoring, one shiny Autumn morning, in company with two genial Land Office Agents, farth-

er and farther North into the colourful hills that surrounded Canada's Queen City. It was a lovely house, we both saw that, and promptly fell in love with it. And speaking of sociability we had no sooner stepped from the car, and our Agent-Escort was groping furtively for a missing key, than a bright-faced young woman came out of the neighbouring house, looked keenly in our direction, then positively ran towards us. "Are you, are you going to buy this house?" she asked, speaking eagerly, and with a charming smile.

"We're thinking about it," I answered shyly. I'm afraid, and just then our Agent frowned, and a volley of self-reproaches for forgetting the key, but her smile brightened, as she said cordially: "You are Oh I'm so glad, I hope you do... The Key? Have you forgotten it sir? Never mind, I think I can let you in, for I know you can't decide unless you see inside. You see I did some work for the last owner, and I think I know a trick..." She did; and so we all trooped into a pleasant little dwelling as attractive within as without.

"The answer is "Yes," ejaculated Kay, before we had been inside five minutes "Isn't it Lil?" she added over her shoulder. But I just nodded, for I was as at home as the young woman, who now we'll be neighbours," she exclaimed, then: "I must tell my husband, he'll come and help you move in." "Now it's back to your lawyers," exclaimed our gratified Land Agents, as we drove away, "and then you can start packing!"

Kindly Neighbours

Days that followed were full of bustle, confusion and courtesies, and handshakes, yet, whenever we made flying visits to the home-of-our choice, during the interim period, those days were always lightened by the cordial welcome of that same bright-faced young woman, and her stalwart husband, whom she promptly brought to us, the next time we arrived there. "We're so glad you are coming," said she, and he, "Is there anything you want done before you get here? That fence? You'd like it mended?" "If you could," I ventured differentially, "You see we have some pet dogs, and we would not like them to wander, or annoy other people." "Of course not; you want them to stay home!" he nodded genially. "All right ladies, the fence will be mended by the time you get here!" And it was.

The movers arrived promptly at 8 a.m. sharp one morning, after we had worked for days packing up and tying small parcels of books, nick-nacks etc., hoping to save time and effort.

"Now, ladies, you leave everything to me and my pals," said the Leading-Moving-Man, taking in the situation at a glance, and then purposefully rolling up his sleeves. So very thankfully we did!

The Hill

The place to which we were bound is a thriving independent town, complete in itself, yet nearer and more easily reached from the heart of the Great City, than many of its own suburbs. It is the Town on the Hill a go-ahead community named for a much older and very historic one in Old England. It is a place of rolling hills, of vast skyscapes, where the dawns and sunsets are rich and vivid in colour, and it is a place that, despite the hurly-burly of City life, so palpably near, has managed to retain its own Soul.

It has been called The Hill, and it seemingly specializes in warm-hearted co-operation and the frequent employment of the Welcome Mat.

The first place Kay and I entered was the town's Municipal Offices, for the good and sufficient reason that we had to "sign" for the Hydro and Water, and from the moment we drew near the counter, and, somewhat timidly stated our business, we encountered instances of the Good Will and friendliness that seems characteristic of the place.

"Are you new here?" queried the lady at Information Desk.... "Oh! Good! Then welcome to our town. Have you arranged to have your water-heater connected? Ah no, you wouldn't think of that right away. Just sign here for your Hydro Power, and I'll just telephone Mr. J--- and ask him to go right over, and now, the Water Department's right next door, just go in and sign, and they'll hurry things up for you I'm sure!"

The Water Department was just as obliging, and we had scarcely entered our new home when their truck drew up at the door, two sturdy fellows descended carrying those mysterious-looking instruments that evidently can conjure up water for places totally unsuspected by the uninitiated, and one of them looked up, saw me peering out, waved a friendly hand and called.... "Quick as we could be, lady! Now you can have your cup of tea!"

Moving in seemed easier than moving out, and when we were alone, and Kay and I were looking about for the first time to set

straight, there came a tap at the door. There stood the bright-faced young woman, who had greeted us from the first. "Come over to our place," she said. "We have some lunch ready and you must be all lagged out. Then Dad and my husband will come over and help you."

The Welcome Wagon

Days that followed were busy and eventful. Everywhere we encountered kindly faces, welcoming smiles and such cheerful remarks as.... "Have you just moved here?".... "Oh, I'm sure you will like it! Now if there is anything I can do...." And these were no mere empty pleasantries or proffers, as we soon discovered, people really were glad to see us and would help us gladly. Once we found we needed another key for the side door, so we went to the nearest Hardware Store, tendered our key and requested a duplicate to be cut. The clerk looked at us keenly, then: "You are the new folks come to No.... aren't you? So you want another key? Certainly, we'll fix you up in no time, but there's no charge; that is our gift to you from the Welcome Wagon."

"The-? repeated Kay questioningly, and our new friend smiled. "Haven't you heard of the Welcome Wagon? Oh, we have a very energetic one in our Community; they'll be giving you a call."

Settling a new home is a full time job, for a period anyway, and though Kay and I basked frequently in the consistent kindness of all about the mysterious Welcome Wagon, until one noon-day some three weeks after our arrival there came a knock at the door, and a smiling lady stood there, a gaily be-ribboned basket on her arm, and in the drive below, a very serviceable-looking Austin.

"Good afternoon," she said, speaking our names as familiarly as if she had always known us. I am Mrs. B--- your hostess of the Welcome Wagon, May I come in?"

From Pioneer Times

Then followed one of the pleasantest half-hours we have ever experienced. It was not merely that she came laden with all sorts of charming little gifts, good will tributes from various friendly and enterprising tradesfolk of the town, gifts which, being human, were found acceptable and heartwarming, but it was the friendly, kindly, chatty way in which she talked; familiarizing us with local districts and events. There were Church doors open to receive us, she brought their message among the rest, there were utilities, such as Service Stations, Cleaners, even Medical Centres, giving us, as it were, a friendly hand, and assuring us that they were standing by if needed, and even the local paper and the local theatre proffered introductory treats, so the universal spirit of good will thrilled us. "Welcome Wagon!" I said speaking to our friendly visitor, "It is a charming idea, but how comes it? Where did it originate?"

"From Pioneer Times," returned she, and have not forgotten." Expressions of Good Will

"Yes, we have remarked on that," said Kay, "The friendly, generous, common-sense attitude, which we always believed to be an attribute of the true Canadian, but which sometimes seems obscured by overcrowding, is very evident here."

Our visitor nodded. "Yes; and suburban committees, such as ours are seeking to keep it so, and indeed to strengthen it. The Welcome Wagon idea, as a means of greeting newcomers, is springing up everywhere. As I said, it dates from Pioneer Times, when "home" often meant just a covered wagon, pulled by a team of horses or oxen. The women of any established camp, used to be on the look-out for any new arrivals. They would load up a wagon with all sorts of gifts, and utilities, fresh water, food, medicine, clothes, anything they thought that newcomers, especially inexperienced newcomers, would need. And they would hurry forth to meet them, calling a cheery greeting as they came. Today, my "wagon" is my faithful little Austin, the gifts are tokens, useful or attractive from various residents and tradesfolk, but the Spirit of Welcome remains the same. We are glad you have come to live among us, and we hope you will be happy here. Now, if there is anything you need, any advice or information that I can give you now, or later, here is my phone number; you have only to call...."

I Was A Stranger

Long after our charming visitor had glided away in her up-to-the-minute "Welcome Wagon," Kay and I sat talking, looking over the gifts, pretty and useful in themselves, but priceless because they embodied something more. Something so valuable, so rare, that we spoke of it softly, and with bated breath.

"It's Friendliness, Lil," said Kay at last, after one of our long, thoughtful pauses, "and those little things that mean so much. The ready smile, the proffered hand, not merely from people we know, somehow one

gets to almost expect that, but from folks we never saw before, who never saw us; who only know that we are strange, and lonely, because we have come from a place where we were known to a place where we are not...."

I nodded; other words came echoing into my memory, words I had often heard, but which, somehow, now took on new meaning. The One Who uttered them was Divine.... "I was a Stranger, and ye took Me in!"



Remember the first promotion you received? The one you worked so hard for?

If so, you have some idea how five young fellows and two not so young ones felt on Tuesday evening, November 24th.

Many were the envious grins and yet warm the grasp as each Cub of the 1st Beverley Acres Pack shook hands with his fellows from the six as he was leaving. Then with rigid backs and shaking knees they marched up to Scoutmaster Norm Foster and were presented by their respective Akelas, Tom Carney and Alec Smith, Ex-cubs Keith Falls, Tom David, Bill Grant, Allan Miller, of the Sherbrooke Pack and Bruce Johnson of the Kaa Pack were accepted into the ranks of the Scouts and took their places side by side with their new mates.

One really notable achievement: Allan Miller wore all thirteen badges it is possible for a Cub to earn. Quite an accomplishment!

After the boys had their Insignias, John Turner, Assistant District Commissioner for the York Summit District, Boy Scouts Association was introduced. He requested Jim Dunkley, president of the local Group Committee to bring forward new members of the Committee. In a moving ceremony Alec Young and Jack Sparling repeated the Scout Promise and were invested into the Scout movement and presented with Group Committee Pins.

The Assistant District Commissioner spoke briefly to the assembly and had special words of praise for Scoutmaster Foster.

The Ladies Auxiliary, ably represented by Mrs. Enid Amos, Mrs. June Dunlop and Mrs. Mary Derick served refreshments to the parents and leaders.

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Thornhill High School Honour Graduates



In addressing the Honour Graduates of Thornhill High School at their 5th Annual Commencement held recently, Dr. Helen S. Hogg advised, "shun the easy life proclaimed in the TV commercials and instead work and produce for the good of the country." She also expressed the hope that "Canada will become a bi-lingual country and that the imagination of its people could be fired to develop the Canadian Arctic, 'the centre of the world, not its edge.'"

Thirteen of the graduates are shown above:

Front row, seated, left to right: Cynthia Jane Taylor, Margaret Helen Thacker, Marylou Ethel Fugler, Carla-Christa Gelke, Dorothy Lynn Condon, Elizabeth Louise Patterson.

Back row, standing, left to right: Clive William Simpson, Irene Agnes Watters, William Franklin Harvey, Graham Neal Houze, Brian George Smith, Katharine Anne Elwood, James Leslie Green.

Absent: Marion Whitney Laird.

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