

## More Than Century Of Service Ends For Thornhill Landmark

**BY DORIS M. FITZGERALD**  
After more than a century of continuous use a Thornhill store has been closed, perhaps forever. Recently Mr. Russell T. Elgie sold his Village Hardware and the deep lot on which it stands, to an undisclosed purchaser. No plans have been announced but it is safe to predict that this old landmark will eventually be torn down to make room for a more modern structure.



FORMER VILLAGE HARDWARE STORE  
Yonge St., Thornhill

### Reflects Building Debt St. Mary's Anglican Vestry Approves Biggest Budget Ever

The annual vestry meeting of St. Mary's Anglican Church last Monday night elected the following officers for 1965: A. W. G. Farwell, rector's warden; W. D. Ross, people's warden; H. Stanford, warden emeritus; J. D. Brodick, treasurer; D. J. Fettes, J. O. Graham, J. D. Miller, delegates to synod; S. D. Gadsby and G. L. Lewis, alternates; C. R. Williams, envelope secretary; L. T. Wainwright, chief sidesman; M. Ashkanase, stewardship chairman; D. L. Little and H. C. Montgomery, committee; W. Lennox, finance chairman; J. M. Langton, planning and development chairman; J. B. Anderson, vestry clerk; S. Appleby and D. C. Smith, parochial tri-

### Water Color Artist At Langstaff S.S.

That classroom walls are moving outward is evidenced by a program being carried out in the grade 11 art classes at Langstaff Secondary School. Interest is focused outside the school to an extensive degree by providing personal contact with unique individuals in the field of creative arts.

On the morning of January 20, Harley Parker presented a demonstration and talk on water colors to the grade 11 students at Langstaff. They were joined by the grade 11 students from Thornhill Secondary School. All gave most rapt attention to the brilliant discourse of the talented guest, who is general display chief at the Royal Ontario Museum, is connected with Exposition '67 and the Centre of Culture and Technology, and is concerned with the curriculum for art and literature.

An earlier event in the series, which involves bringing creative artists into the classroom, featured Abel Lee, who gave a talk and demonstration on graphic arts, prints, line cuts and mono prints. Mr. Lee is an Estonian artist, who has exhibited in New York, Montreal and other large cities.

### TOWNSHIP OF MARKHAM Committee of Adjustment NOTICE OF HEARING CA/65/4

Notice is hereby given of a hearing to be held by the Township of Markham Committee of Adjustment at the Municipal Offices, Buttonville, on Thursday, February 11th, 1965 at 7.30 p.m.

The application to be heard has been submitted by John M. & Isabel M. Barbour, owners of Lot 65, Plan 2368. Release is requested from the provisions of By-Law 1442 as amended in order to erect a commercial building 30 feet from a highway rather than 40 feet as required by the by-law. Relief is requested in order to allow the present building to be demolished and removed and a new building to be erected in approximately the same location.

Signed written submissions on this application will be received by me at this office prior to the hearing.

When Wm. Parsons died, Mr. Purkiss was appointed Thornhill's second postmaster. The post office was moved to a corner of his shop and remained there, despite change of ownership and postmasters, for 42 years. Mr. Purkiss, a prominent member of Thornhill Methodist Church, had a daughter named Jemima who married J. H. Martin a well known local builder. Their grandson Cecil W. Martin and his family moved a year or so ago from Centre St. to Willowdale.

Following the death of Josiah Purkiss the store was bought in 1885, by John T. B. Lindsay and his brothers-in-law, John H. and J. Edward Francis of Newtonbrook, and became one of the best patronized mercantile houses on Yonge St., doing a big business in groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes, flour and feed, hardware and stoves. The partners ran a stage coach to carry passengers and mail bags between Thornhill and the railway station at Concord. They were responsible also for bringing the first telephone to the village. Mr. Lindsay died in 1895 and the Francis brothers carried on the business until 1911 when they sold out to a Mr. Johnston. Some years

later John H. Francis, builder of the Francis Block, was killed by a radial car. J. "Ed" Francis died at the good age of 94 in 1960. He had embarked on a second career in insurance and real estate, and, as the member of many committees and as a Thornhill Village Trustee, always took a helpful interest in the community (later United Church). His daughter Miss Lillian lives in the village. Mr. Johnston kept the store for only a short time, selling it in 1912 to John L. McDonald of Markham Township, who had managed the store in Concord, and spent a few years farming before coming to Thornhill. The McDonalds four sons, Neil, Bruce, Craig and Hugh helped around the shop as youths, and Frank Charlton clerked there for a long time before buying the Grace's grocery store at Yonge & Colborne Sts. (now Thornhill Paint Supplies).

Because of advancing age Mr. and Mrs. McDonald retired in 1937. We remember them as a dear old couple, always pleasant and obliging. To a former city dweller their shop with its dark woodwork, bins and barrels for bulk goods, and drawers full of fragrant spices, seemed agreeably old-fashioned, but actually they had been keeping up with the times. Mail order shopping had become popular and there was a hard-



JOSIAH PURKISS  
Thornhill's Second Postmaster

ware store in the village so they dealt chiefly in groceries rather than in general merchandise. In 1917 Mr. McDonald replaced his horse drawn wagon with a truck for daily deliveries around the village, and bi-weekly trips to the Westwood Lane and Steele's Ave. areas. In 1920 the annex at the south end of the store in which the Lindsay-Francis firm had kept stoves and hardware, was torn down and in its place a commodious

many newcomers moving in to the district had no such ingrained loyalties. Elgie and Smith realized they would soon be competing with the supermarkets moving in to the area, so they decided to become hardware merchants instead of grocers. When Wib Smith left to open his own hardware in Newtonbrook Mr. Elgie took his son Wally in to the business. Wallace and his family live in Nobleton and he is now a real estate agent. After the Village Hardware was sold Mr. Smith bought the remainder of his former partner's stock, so closing the store was a comparatively simple matter.

Mr. and Mrs. Elgie, now comfortably settled in the house they bought on John St., are enjoying a well earned holiday and rest. Doubtless they will sometimes miss the daily contact with customers, and certainly they will watch with interest any developments on their former property. "We had a nice garden," said Mrs. Elgie, "and both the shop and house were well built. Even the old barn where we kept the car was lined with tongue and groove boards. There is still tracey work about with the grocery stores. However the

## Goodhead Opposes Dump

Former North York Reeve Norman Goodhead appeared before a finance committee meeting of Vaughan Township Council last week and objected to the township operating a garbage disposal area in competition with private enterprise.

Mr. Goodhead with a partner, Max Solomon, operates Disposal Services Limited. Their landfill site is immediately adjacent to the township's on Concession 3.

Conditions at the Disposal property were so bad last fall that the township threatened to close their operation down. Messrs. Goodhead and Solomon appeared before council early

## CNIB Founder Addresses York Cty. University Women's Club

The founder of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Col. E. A. Baker addressed the January meeting of the York County University Women's Club, held at Kingcraft House.

Friends organized the Col. Baker Foundation which promotes research, gives cash assistance to needy graduates who wish to study ophthalmology and encourages ophthalmologists to locate in areas other than large cities.

## Dr. Rosenberg CMHA Speaker

Dr. Stuart E. Rosenberg will be the speaker at the seventh annual meeting of York County Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association. The meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday at St. Andrew's United Church, Main Street, Markham Village.

He is author of a weekly column "Lines on Life" which appears in a number of daily newspapers and of nine books which include "A Time To Speak" and "Bride to Brotherhood". He contributes frequently to various American, Canadian and Jewish magazines and periodicals on subjects of general and scholarly interest.

Dr. Rosenberg was an official observer of refugee operations and has travelled extensively visiting Iran, North Africa, Austria, Italy, France and Israel at the invitation of the joint distribution committee. In the spring of 1961 he toured the Soviet Union and is the first Canadian rabbi to study the cultural and spiritual situation of Jews in the USSR on the spot.

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Committee of Adjustment  
R.R. 2, Gormley, Ontario.