



lynda's lashes

Secret board ballot is bad

The regional public school board shouldn't be electing its chairman and vice-chairman by secret ballot.

That's what it did at the 1977 inaugural meeting this past week.

Because the board has too many seats, it already is too hard for the public to keep watch on school affairs.

This secret ballot

isolates the voters even further from their elected representatives.

Such a secret ballot on an item of board business is the same as an illegal secret meeting, from the public point of view.

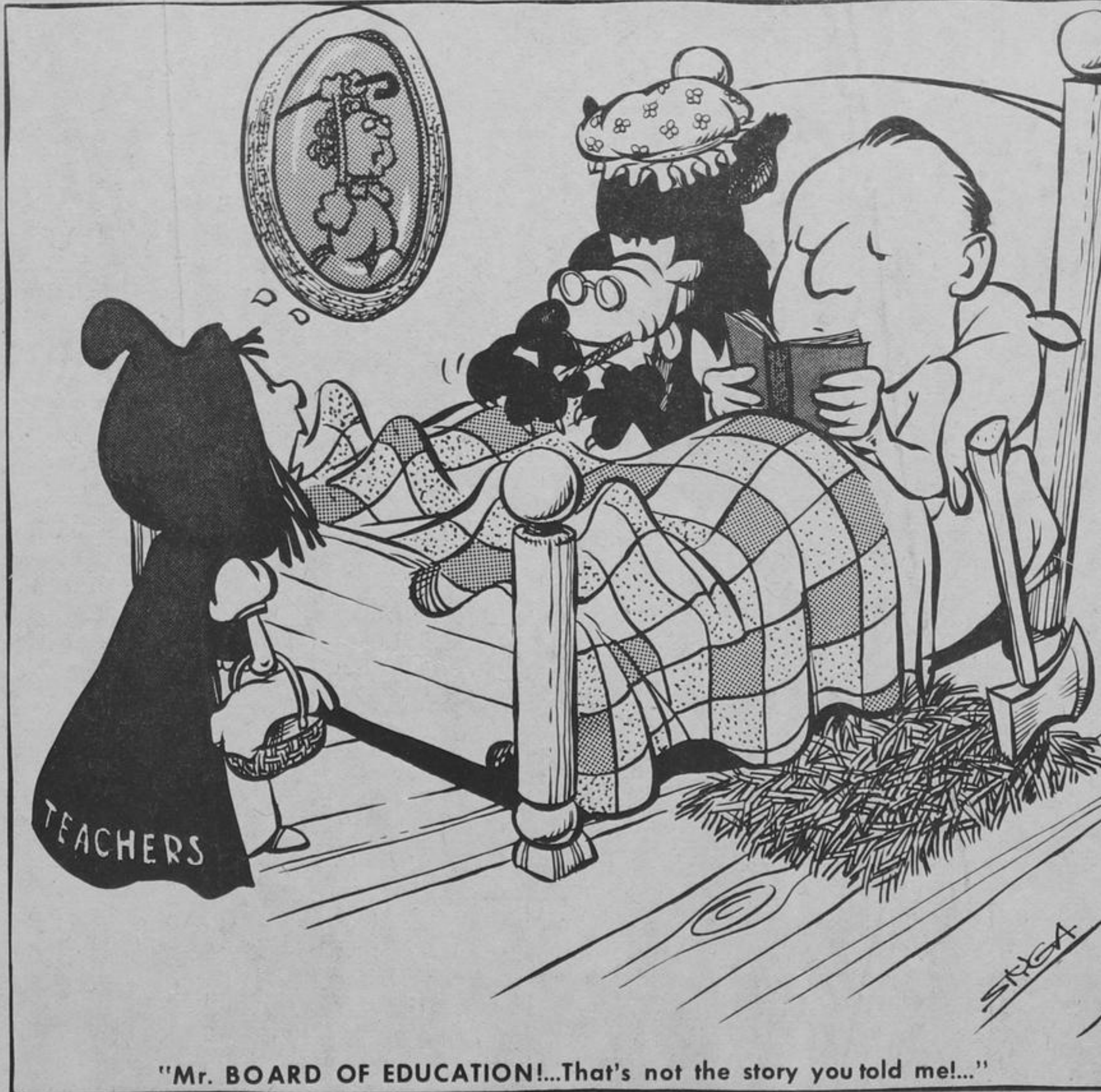
Worse, from the trustee view, the board members are put in turmoil because they can never be sure who supports the leadership and who doesn't.

The old local school boards had a healthy tradition of electing officers openly. This better method disappeared after the formation of the regional board near the end of the last decade.

The school board should return to the open vote system. It should abandon the sneaky secret ballot.

Letters...

Letters to the editor are welcome and should be addressed to The Editor, The Liberal, PO Box 390, Richmond Hill, Ont., L4C 4Y6. The writer's full name and address must be included, and telephone number if it is unlisted. Unsigned letters cannot be considered for publication. The Liberal reserves the right to edit all contributions.



Daurio report

By Lynda Nykor

You remember the fairy-tale about the princess and the pea, don't you? It goes something like this: a certain prince was trying to find a princess who was disguised as an ordinary peasant girl.

The prince's clever mother figured the sure way to find which of the many peasant girls in the vicinity was the true princess was to make all of them sleep on a stack of mattresses with a tiny hard pea underneath.

Only the delicate hide of one of the girls was bothered by the pea, and voila! that one was, of course, the princess. Quality will out.

Markham's legume

Now, right here in Markham we've got a reasonable facsimile of this obstructing little legume in the form of a report prepared by Ward 2 Councillor Stan Daurio.

Stan got a reputation as a hard worker during his first term on council. He put a lot of extra time and effort into preparing a report.

It shows how council operations could be reorganized and streamlined.

His main concern centered around meetings that get so bogged down decisions are often made far into the wee small hours.

Alertness and efficiency then have long since left.

Limit debate

He wants to see council adopt a more formalized structure. This will limit discussion of most items to a certain length of time.

Having to approve things like a day off for a municipal employee cuts into councillors' valuable time, too.

Stan suggested department heads should be given the authority to make these kinds of decisions.

He recommended some committees, like works or property, be made up of fewer than the full council complement of 10. This is to ease the load.

There's such an abundance of material to be read for every committee meeting, he says, that often there isn't enough time left to intelligently formulate policy.

Full day meeting

Stan has also recommended that instead of a monthly afternoon meeting, a full day-long meeting should be held with council keeping attendance records.

This community, Stan says, particularly the Thornhill area he represents, is one of the fastest growing in the country.

"A community like this has sophisticated needs, and the kind of council we've had has been less than adequate at meeting them."

Single-handedly, Stan tried to change all that. He says, though, he's been a voice in the wilderness.

Better staff

Only one page out of his 25-page report got any response at all from his fellow-councillors.

That page was the one that recommended salary increases, in line with the AIB guidelines, to attract candidates of stature and ability.

Stan is bitterly disappointed the rest of his report got a reception best described as thundering silence.

He feels his finest shots were totally ignored.

Unlike the princess, Markham councillors laid down on this report and slept like babies.

They didn't feel a thing.

regional viewpoint

Having covered York Region council for the past four years, I suppose I should have some idea of what's going to happen come the inaugural meeting, Jan. 13.

That is, I should be able to predict with some accuracy who its next chairman will be.

All right, just to show you I have the inside track on such things, my foot on the pulse and my hand on the accelerator, or however that saying goes, I shall give you my prediction. And I

hope I'm completely wrong.

My prediction

And that prediction, based on deep reasoning powers, which, in turn, were formed from waking up suddenly just before crucial voting periods at several hundred meetings, is that the man who wins won't be the one the majority wanted, because those voting want those running to know that, while they really wanted them to win — don't turn the page, yet — their vote would have only caused them to lose, because they

only knew of two others who planned to vote for them, too.

However, they had the assurance that, if they pooled their votes with five others and voted for the one that nobody really wanted — you could follow it if you put down your drink for a minute — they would at least keep the candidate that both their groups didn't want, from getting in, and — and — and it's also the easy way out.

It's Garfield

Who does that give the crown to? The

present chairman. For only Garfield Wright qualifies as the one that nobody wants. That is, if they're at all honest about it.

But what is more comfortable than the old status quo on a Thursday afternoon? Both for those times when nobody feels like working and also for those times you want to push your favorite project against all odds; and any kind of disciplined leadership from the top will only keep debate in line and, had you only done limited homework the night before, any chances of success to a minimum.

That is why I say Chairman Wright, awkward, unsure, unknowledgeable and definitely out of place at the head of the mass, will be back to slow things down for another two years.

A good fellow, Mr. Wright. But he's still back there as reeve of East Gwillimbury, filling his pipe between resolutions and cups of coffee around the council meeting stove.

Council, if it's not afraid of hurting a few feelings here and there, will vote the chairman out, and install either Bob Adams of Markham, or Bob Forhan of Newmarket.

What they should

That's what council should do and is

Wrong but Wright

Letters

Sorry church locked

Dear editor:

In your article reporting on our recent fire, an impression was left our caretaker was somehow remiss in his duties by leaving "the building unattended and unlocked" during his lunch break.

In fact, this simply is not so.

We have left our building open during the daylight hours whether or not staff have been on hand so everyone so desirous could "enter, rest and pray".

When Mr. Shearer returned it was

due to his quick and effective response to the fire which limited it to the Servers' Room.

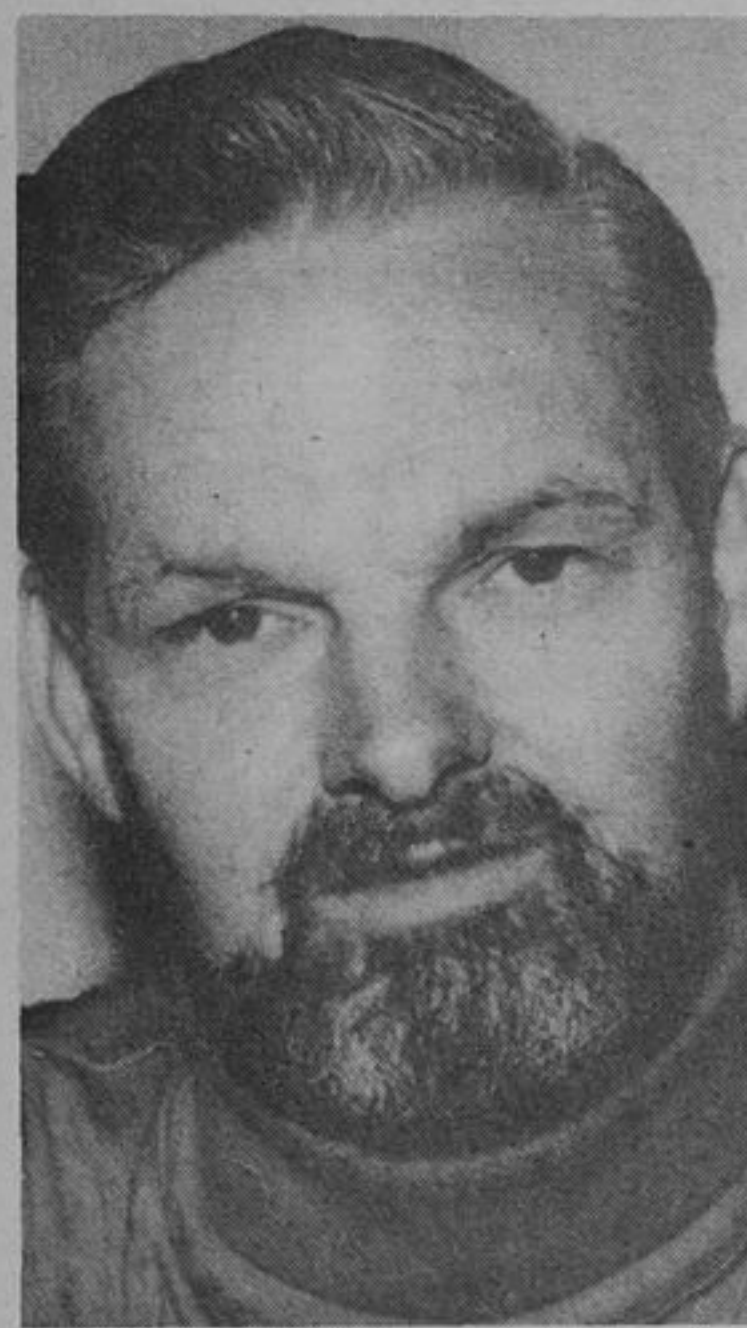
Had he not acted with such despatch and with some danger to himself, we would most certainly be without our old, historic church building today.

Now, due to this act of the arsonists, it will be necessary to keep the church

locked at all times when staff are not present.

We deeply regret this move and many will suffer the loss of freedom of access due to the actions of those involved.

ROBERT GRISDALE, Rector, Holy Trinity Church, Thornhill, Ont.



James Davis ...better losing

Vaughan lost

Dear editor: In regard to the recent election in Vaughan Town... I feel I am better off losing with the slate of four candidates than winning with what was elected to council.

The result is not what is so sad, but the loss to the people of this area and its possible forthcoming results plus the tragic consequences that will possibly arise.

My heartiest thanks to the contestants who had the courage and conviction to offer their time and energies to stand for what they believe is a very worthwhile cause.

As I have stated before, the loss is not theirs but the people of Maple initially, and in the long run the people of the town of Vaughan.

JAMES DAVIS
21 Gosling Rd.,
Maple, Ont.



sharon's sunshine

By Sharon Brain

I got back my latest photographs today.

They weren't great. There were too many shots of headless guests blocking the view of the Christmas tree.

The people who have heads all look slightly devilish, thanks to a strange quirk in my camera.

Whenever I use a flash bulb, it happens. Red eyeballs!

Sinister camera

I think there is something sinister about that camera. In candid shots, men are seen to be leering at women not related by marriage.

Women who are perfectly, perfectly presentable seconds before, suddenly have slips showing three inches below their dresses.

Sweet young children put out their tongues the moment the shutter clicks.

But everyone seems to have certain problems to surmount when they get a camera in their hands.

My mother is rarely allowed access to a camera. She seems to have an affinity for the wings of airplanes.

She has taken pictures of all makes and models of plane wings, in all weather, on route to and from all sorts of destinations.

Some of her more dramatic efforts are those in which the sun catches the metal and produces a glare that reduces the photo to a blaze of light.

She says modestly that she is really trying to capture the view from the plane window. But we know better.

No one could get a seat over the wing every time she travels.

She must work at it.

I suspect she is attempting a

thematic essay on travel by air.

In the meantime, she is only allowed to take pictures once she has reached her destination.

Now father-in-law

My father-in-law's approach is also thematic. For many years he took his camera and kids to the Santa Claus Parade.

Never once was he tempted to take a picture of Santa. No doubt he felt everyone had seen the old fellow already.

Instead he concentrated on the less photographed sections of the parade.

Like the drum majorettes!

When he travelled, he never once took a palm tree's picture. But we have a record on film of all the bathing suit styles of the last 20 years.

Camera conspiracy

The camera merely records what the eye observes.

Most obnoxious

My brother is a specialist in that most difficult of arts, the home movie.

He wins the award as the family's most obnoxious photographer.

That is thanks to his light bar, an eye-searing piece of equipment that hypnotizes his subject the moment it is turned on.

He then must remind the subject that these are "moving" pictures. We all find ourselves twitching and gesturing obscenely to satisfy his desire for action.

His children have been accustomed to this since they were babies. Whenever the light goes on and the camera whirrs, they do too.

He also has a zoom lens he loves to focus on distant women in bathing suits.

He and my father-in-law have more in common than they care to admit.

Born loser

One friend has a Polaroid camera. But he never gets any pictures from it.

He pays for the film, takes the picture, watches it develop, and then has to give it away.

Everyone loves a picture of himself. People never think they take a really good picture.

By that they mean they are much better looking than the silly looking person in the snap shot giving that foolish grin.

For example, take a look at the picture at the top of this column. Now, I hope you don't think I really look like that.

Well, I do, but better, if you know what I mean.

If you don't, then you've never had your picture taken.



yesterdays by mary dawson

Footpath to road

Because E. A. James was the York County engineer, he was naturally deeply interested in the development of roads in what is now York Region.

He wrote at length on that subject for The Liberal in 1926.

James reported that road development in the county dates back to the closing years of the 18th century.

Prior to the formation (in 1791) of the Province of Upper Canada, communication between the new settlements in the vicinity of Niagara and the older settlements along the St. Lawrence was infrequent and irregular. It was attempted only by water.

In the settlement of the province the pioneers followed the course of the lakes, bays, rivers and smaller streams. Wherever an Indian path was

found, it was pursued. Necessarily the creation of roads through the dense forest by cutting and burning trees was gradual.

Paths formed

When settlers took up their land on lots remote from the water, paths would be formed to the nearest navigable waterway. These wandered about to avoid natural obstacles.

In time the footpaths became widened for horsemen and later for vehicles.

Then attention was given to straightening the road, levelling hills, grading and bridging streams.

At first this was accomplished by the early settlers working in groups or singly.

Later public funds were used to open

up new roads and to improve existing highways.

Connected rivers

The first settlers found an Indian trail connecting the mouth of the Don with the mouth of the Humber.

When they followed these rivers to their headwaters they found Indian portages connecting them with the headwaters of the Holland River which emptied into Lake Simcoe.

John Graves Simcoe, lieutenant-governor of the new province, laid out a system of roads radiating from Little York.

He had in mind the military requirements of the province. These included Yonge Street, Kingston Road and Dundas Street.

In 1794 the building of Yonge Street was begun. Surveyor Augustus Jones

led the way. 30 men of the York Rangers cut down trees to mark the route. Each mile they chose a large tree to be marked as a milepost.

Thornhill marker

One of these, a large elm, remained standing in North Thornhill until a few years ago.

The last time I saw it, it had lost all its limbs. The trunk was badly riddled with disease.

Yonge Street was laid out as a portage road between Lakes Ontario and Simcoe.

It formed a link in the short route from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay by way of Lake Simcoe and the Severn River.

This was an inland route which would

not be harassed by our southern neighbors.

For farms, too

While opened up primarily as a military measure and with military labor, its possibilities as a means of colonization were not overlooked.

Farm lots of 200 acres each were laid out along the road. Settlement followed rapidly and Yonge Street soon became the "backbone of York County".

Yonge Street's development is characteristic of other roads in the county.

Yonge's various relocations at York Mills, Thornhill, Jefferson, Aurora and Holland Landing have enabled students to trace the progress of highway transportation and the commercial development of the district, Mr. James said.