

ASTOR COMMENT

A Gift To Last

A splendid gift from the Little family and Mrs. Little's sister, Jean Hay of Weston, to the Village of Russell. A gift that will be remembered. The Little bush, ten acres of almost primeval woodland in what some day will be the centre of the village, or near it, preserves a choice window on nature for the years ahead.

It will be known as the J. Henry Tweed Conservation Area in honour of the pioneer owner of the land, the father of Mrs. Mabel Little and her sister.

Lopsided Levesque

It appears that Mr. Levesque and the PQ Party have an excellent chance to win the referendum, although it is still a bit too early to say that the disorganization of Levesque's opponents is complete. Perhaps the most audacious ploy of Mr. Levesque's audacious career was when he said that if the referendum is successful it will no longer be necessary for a government in an independent Quebec to legislate supremacy for the French language. He spoke of a commitment to safeguard and protect the rights of English.

It will be surprising if this tactic gains much support among English speaking Quebecers. Mr. Levesque has had plenty of opportunities as head of the Quebec government to recognize the rights of the English. In no single instance has he taken advantage of such opportunities. Is he suggesting that if he gains everything he wants — complete independence for Quebec, with English Canada paying the economic shot — he will overnight adopt the tactics of Joseph Mugabe — conciliation for everyone?

Squeezing the public

Many signs point to a world staggering in the same direction as in 1928. We are told as an excuse for government inaction that interest rates must be kept on a par with those of the United States or investment money will leave. What does it really mean? It means that the foreign subsidiaries — mostly American — who dominate our economy, will send their money home to U.S. banks, rather than leave it here.

In the post-war years, when we had a fixed rate and a similar situation existed, the government met it not by allowing wholesale usury, not by allowing people to lose their homes and be put on the street, not by allowing farmers to go to the wall, while the rich got richer, but by imposing foreign exchange controls so that money earned in Canada stayed in Canada. Is it too much to ask the government to exercise the authority granted by the people?

Highway monsters

The prospect of 105-foot trucks crowding super highways like the Queen Elizabeth, the 401 and the 417 is one to terrify the ordinary driver. From Oshawa to St. Catharines the 401 and QE presently constitute a nightmare of monstrous, rushing shapes in which the driver of a small car is about as much in control as a gnat among a herd of elephants.

Yet, this insane proposal is currently under study by Ontario highway authorities. Truck lengths on the province's super roads are currently restricted to 70 feet. The proposal to allow two trailer units of 45 feet each would bring the weight of these highway behemoths to better than 20 tons. A remark by the vice president of the Ontario Trucking Association was illustrative of the trucking industry's consideration of the public. What difference does it make, asked Stephen Flott, quoted in the Globe and Mail, whether a car driver gets crushed by a — 10-ton or 20-ton vehicle?

The Ontario Government can resolve the matter very simply. If the trucking companies want to put 20-ton, 105-foot juggernauts on the roads, let them build and pay for their own roads as the railways do.

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Dr. Lynn — The legacy lingers

The healing hands are stilled and fifty years of contributing to the community have slipped away in a twinkle. Dr. Lynn Morrow, beloved Metcalfe physician has been laid to rest. This dedicated country doctor, who became a byword in our pioneer story, followed in the footsteps of his father, a horse-and-buggy physician whose practice antedated the turn of the century.

Like the father, the son represented the very best type of that category of men known as the country doctor. A force for good in the community, men whose knowledge of their neighbours was not confined to ailments, or a tag on the end of a hospital bed. Men who wielded an almost Godlike omniscience as they went tirelessly on their daily rounds, administering to the suffering, handling emergencies, with little equipment but with enormous

skill and devotion amid conditions which would have made a city practitioner recoil in horror.

They were always in the front lines, their first duty to their community, to the friends and neighbours whom they often drew back with an intervention almost divine from the brink of the grave for more years of useful living.

They battled the elements, giving themselves without stint to the service of others. And miraculously, they found time to contribute heavily to community activities.

The country doctors set a standard which is today almost impossible to equal. Not for them the impersonal coldness, the clinical abstractions of big city

hospitals, nor the dreadful anonymity of those confined to their care and treatment. For Lynn Morrow, as for Frank Kinnaird and that ilk of country practitioners, a patient was a friend and neighbour. Their solicitude knew no bounds.

Closely involved with Dr. Morrow in his practice was his wife, Myrtle, a qualified nurse. To Mrs. Morrow, the sympathy of the community goes out in a loss which all of us share in common, although none to the same extent as the helpmate who worked by his side. In the passing of Dr. Lynn Morrow, following fifty years of service, the community salutes a gallant member and, in a small way, acknowledges the imperishable achievement of the band of dedicated men and women of which he was so able a representative.

POETS OF THE... CASTOR

GREAT OAKS

The acorn cup is empty,
Where once a life-bud grew,
At the side-walk's edge we notice
The promise of life anew.

A new tree is beginning,
Two leaves we see, so small,
Can this an oak be, someday?
Will it ever grow quite tall?

Deep in the earth go the rootlets,
Down in the cool earth's shade,
This is the secret, though choked
with pavement,
This is where life is made.

Life's dreams may seem a fantasy,
Our progress seem quite slow,
But deep from the roots of our
faith there comes
The strength that will help us
grow.

The strength from love and
forgiveness
From the One Who created us all,
To lift our heads, and raise our
sights,
Like the oak, to grow quite tall.

Beaver Bob Spring explosion



Spring hit the Castor like an explosion. One weekend, skiers were making tracks on the snow; four days later, you could have shot the rapids of the flood-swollen waters in a scow. The ice-packs floated heavily down, jamming up in the narrows. Four-foot thick blocks perched on the dam, sliding reluctantly down the other side. The river expanded to more than respectable torrent.

As the river flung itself against the Russell bridge, a gentleman from Environment Canada was busy measuring the strength of the current with a peculiar contraption which at first glance resembled one of those rigs used by fishermen to bring in tarpon. It was not that.

In response to gentle questioning, he allowed that a great deal of water was being wasted and that it would have been considerably to the village's advantage to have added another five feet to the Russel Dam, since much of the runoff could have been gathered in and kept all summer, proving an attractive small lake in the centre of the town.

From older residents, we have ascertained that this was exactly the intention of the dam builders but they were forced to reduce the dam's height for fear of flooding one or two properties, a fear that has not been realized even when the spring freshet is at its most violent.

We also spoke to the man who engineered the Russell Dam, Joe Mangione, who told us that the original intent was certainly to erect a higher dam and that in its present state it was largely self-defeating. "Another four or five feet, without altering the contours of the river would have made all the difference in the world," he said.

Along the North and Boundary roads, the new ditching and drainage system completed last summer, seemed to carry out its role satisfactorily. When we came down the Boundary Road, the night of the big rain storm, the drains were galloping torrents. Water was lapping the edge of the road and the sensation was very much like driving on top of a dike.

The next night, the waters had subsided somewhat, at least they were not rising and the rushing motion had slowed down considerably. In fact the ditches, although still brimful, were so calm that they reflected the evening sky, with its dark, scudding clouds as faithfully as fragments of a mirror.

It was a good night to get home. The rain sank into the sodden earth with the velocity of hissing arrows. It was time to inspect the sump pump drain and in the savage twilight, with the river roaring down three feet away and only an icy slope in between, the great cakes smashing against one another like so many demented ships driven by crazy captains, it was just the right time for a poor, half-frozen, half drowned muskrat to drag his shrinking form up on the ice and look up with an ironic, remorseful glare, as though to say, "I don't like this any better than you do." Then he was gone, carried away by the flood, as spring came in on the Castor with a rattle and roar.