

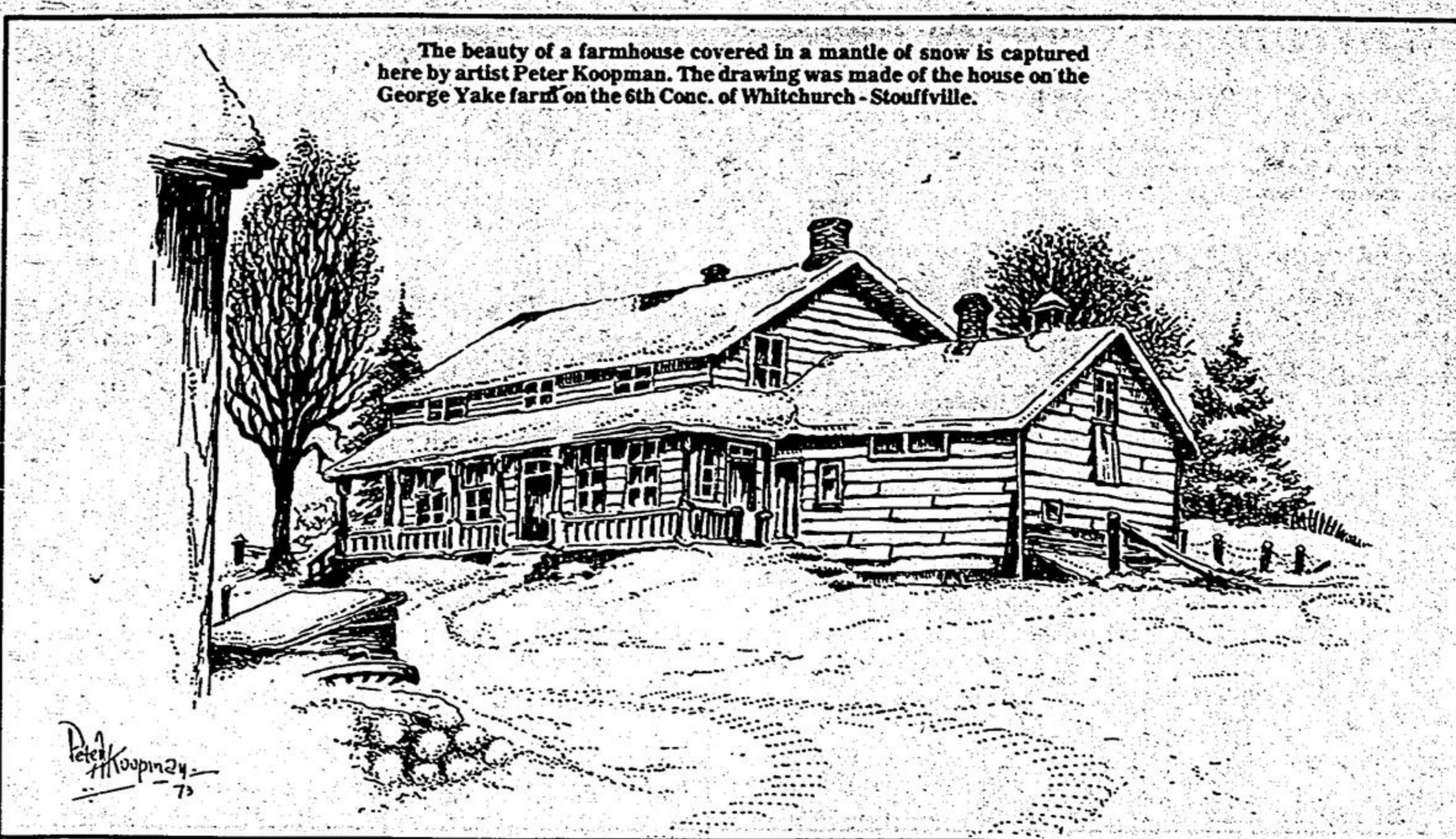
The Tribune
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The beauty of a farmhouse covered in a mantle of snow is captured here by artist Peter Koopman. The drawing was made of the house on the George Yake farm on the 6th Conc. of Whitchurch - Stouffville.

Editorials

Controls became necessary

Most people seem ready to admit that the inflation spiral cannot be allowed to continue, and thus ready to admit that the government

was justified in taking drastic action. It's been no secret for long enough that Canadians in general have been living "high off the hog," more concerned about getting all they could out of the system with little thought concerning how much they were putting into it.

Government too, has been one of the biggest culprits in this regard. The Prime Minister tells us that this is going to stop, and we are now in the wait and see period. There is no question the strong moves recently made, will need time to show effectiveness to the economy in general. Whether inflation is of such a world-wide nature that it will sweep over us anyway, is no longer of concern. We've got our controls and we wait to see if they will moderate spiraling costs, and at the same time not knock the economy completely flat.

There will be no quick results, but many pit-falls along the way that can knock the entire plan in the head. The government has said it will use "the big stick" to gain compliance. If it does not, the scheme is dead.

It remains to be seen whether the public in general, the unions and business, are all sufficiently alarmed with the way matters have been going, to give the all-out support necessary to halt the spiral now before it becomes any worse.

Traffic snarl begs for town bypass

Council last week made clear its intention to push the provincial government into providing a bypass south of Stouffville.

The traffic on Main St. during rush hour and on Saturday mornings has gone far beyond the point of being a joke and although the motoring public are subjected to some discomfort, not to mention frustration, the big losers are the downtown merchants.

On Saturday, normally the busiest shopping day, only a masochist would battle through the downtown traffic to shop in local stores.

A southerly bypass should be a first priority item for council if they are committed to keeping downtown Stouffville alive as a shopping district.

There is no way a community should be needlessly subjected to the type of traffic congestion which occurs regularly in the village.

Freedom and responsibility

In a terse statement to York Regional Council, King Township Mayor Margaret Britnell maintained her right to speak freely about injustices being perpetrated by the region's top civil servants.

She failed, however, to justified comments that she was reputed to have made in an Aurora Banner story of July 30, 1975. The comments indicated that the regional department heads were exerting undue pressure on the Land Division Committee.

The LDC, as a quasi-judicial body, is to be free of political pressure. In subsequent meetings, Mrs. Britnell was not present to defend her statements. Last Thursday, she marched out of the council chamber before judgement could be passed on her.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Britnell must realize that responsibility is implicit in the right of free speech. If York department heads were not acting properly, the matter should have brought to the council, not published in the newspaper.

In that Mrs. Britnell has shown that she is not afraid to speak out against injustices, but has failed the test of a responsible civic leader who must be prepared to back-up charges. Mrs. Britnell's refusal to substantiate the charges leaves the impression there is no substance to them.

That kind of "shooting from the hip" type approach is both wrong and unfair. There are enough real injustices for Mrs. Britnell to waste her time on "unsubstantiated" ones.

Bible thought for the Week

From The Living Bible

I Paul, the servant of Christ, am here in jail because of you — for preaching that you Gentiles are a part of God's house. No doubt you already know that God has given me this special work of showing God's favor to you Gentiles. God himself showed me this secret plan of his, that the Gentiles, too, are included in his kindness. I say this to explain to you how I know about these things. In olden times God did not share this plan with his people, but now he has revealed it by the Holy Spirit to his apostles. Ephesians 3:15

SUGAR AND SPICE



Bill the toothless wonder

By BILL SMILEY

One of my recurring dreams is that all my teeth are crumbling, and breaking off like toast. It's a terrible nightmare and I always wake up sweating, jam some fingers into my mouth and groan with relief when I find the teeth are still there, and with pain because I have bitten my fingers.

Today I feel that I'm having a daymare, rather than a nightmare. Last night at dinner, one of my front teeth came away in the midst of a glorious dish of curried chicken. I love curried chicken, and this time my wife had excelled herself, whatever that means, but I am not keen on curried chicken with teeth in it, even when they are my own.

However, this incident did not alarm me, unduly or otherwise. It was only my peg tooth. Every couple of months it comes unscrewed or whatever, I carefully comb it out of the soup or spaghetti, trot down to the dentist with it clutched in my hand; he dusts it off, pops it back in, cements it in place and I'm back in business, stuffing my guts.

But this morning, munching my matins (in this case a ripe yellow pear that tasted, as so much fruit does nowadays, like wet cardboard); I crunched on something hard. Now I know that pears do not have either bones or stones. They have pips. And I knew that this particular pear did not even have a pip, because my loving wife, knowing I was one tooth short from the night before, had disembowelled it. Right, another front tooth broken off, just beside the missing peg.

There was no pain in either case. Just a sense of horror and self-disgust. It's bad enough to pull a filling when eating toffee, or to snap off a bit of molar when you crunch down on an unsuspected beef-bone, or even to have an aching tooth yanked. But to have one break off when eating an over-ripe pear... Yeeecch!

I still wasn't plunged into the depths. Some people go for years with no hair on their heads (and plant articles in magazines suggesting baldies are more virile). Others go all their lives with no brains to speak of. I reckoned I could get through the day without two teeth.

And I did. But by noon, the tip of my tongue was raw and shredded, from thrusting it into that jagged crevice (crevasse?).

But I was coping. And I knew that if I hustled down to my friendly dentist, he would squeeze me in somehow, and patch me up somehow.

I should have known better. From my air force days, I know that disasters always come in threes.

Right in the middle of a brilliant lesson on the use of four-letter words in Victorian literature (such as "legs"), somebody, somehow, rammed a red-hot needle into a tooth in my lower jaw-bone, four teeth and two spaces from the missing ones.

I almost screamed aloud. I screamed silently. The needle was removed. Two minutes later, that red-hot needle plunged into the tooth directly above (I have two teeth on that side, upper and lower, and they are fairly

friendly with each other, because there is nobody else around.)

This time I couldn't help it. I emitted, "Huh!", as though someone were driving a stake through my heart. I sagged into my chair, white and shaken.

You can always depend on students. They rally around when things are tough, despite their outward cynicism. They're all heart inside that tough exterior.

"I think the old sod's havenna hardatak. Wuddell we do?"

"Jeez, I hope he hazzen godour tests marked yet, I think I failed mine."

"Maybe he's just godda bad hangover. Slap him in the face a couple times and he might come around."

I came out of it, of course, and pretended I

was enacting Heathcliff's grief in Wuthering Heights. When they looked as though they didn't believe me, I curled back my bottom lip and snarled at them with my new gap-toothed look. They shut up.

When everything cooled down, I realized that my back teeth were merely expressing sympathy for my lost front teeth. It made them lonelier than ever. But they didn't have to shriek their sympathy at such volume.

My whole jaw has been aching for the remainder of this dark day, but the red-hot needle has cooled to a blunt instrument.

As soon as I finished telling you this fascinating episode of a continued story called "One Man's Fangs," I'm going straight to the dentist, and have him rip every tattered remnant of bone out of my head.



Big joke fizzles out

By JOHN MONTGOMERY

You know how sometimes you get an idea and you keep putting it off and putting it off until finally something happens and either somebody else does it or you get outflanked by events.

Well I'm afraid I'm about to get outflanked on a little joke I've been intending to pull for about the past five years.

The joke concerns the sending of Christmas cards — which I think is one of the stupidest and most inane North American customs — second only to Hallowe'en.

As you may have gathered I don't send Christmas cards but what I have been intending on doing is to stock up on cards after Christmas when they go real cheap and then pick the hottest spell of the summer and send everybody I know a card.

Big joke eh? Well anyway I figured if I sent cards in July they wouldn't get lost in the avalanche of in season cards. They'd be more meaningful you see?

I always got a chuckle out of planning it. I could just see somebody stagger up to their mailbox, semi-paralyzed by the scorching heat hovering around the 90 degree mark (or whatever the hell the metric equivalent is), taking out their mail and finding this Christmas card — complete with wintry scene and sentimental verses extolling all the Noel pap.

But as I mentioned earlier I think I've been outflanked. The culprit is the post office and postal workers. As we all know they went on strike Tuesday and when you hear all the rhetoric, both sides are spouting it doesn't take much imagination to figure we're in for a long postal strike.

You take the tremendous backlog of mail we're going to have and you figure in the already painfully slow mail (I almost said service but that word certainly doesn't apply) delivery and you'll probably come to the same conclusion I did — we're all going to get our Christmas cards in the middle of a July heatwave.

In passing I'd like to heap a little vilification on the post office employees. Personally if they stay out for the next 10 years I hope the government doesn't cave in and give them what they want.

In my opinion they are for the most part uneducated, unskilled people, doing flunky jobs, who, if they were working in private industry would be thankful for a fraction of the pay, holidays and fringe benefits they are now so disdainful of.

The continued deterioration of the postal service is especially galling to us as we are a business which is very dependent on the post office.

Time and again we receive notice of a press conference or meeting — that occurred three days before the notice arrived.

Of course not all the ills of the postal system can be laid at the feet of the workers. A good deal of bureaucratic ineptness was also required.

The postal workers just don't seem to give a damn whether they do their job properly or not. Recently I spent about 10 minutes waiting for service in a Scarborough post office. Not because they were busy, in fact I was the only customer, but because the four employees standing at the back chatting just couldn't be bothered to break up their conversation for something so insignificant as a customer.

Thirty years ago this week

Grasshopper meat, grass for broth

A meat course of boiled dried grasshoppers, and broth from common grass, were on the bill-of-fare served the Canadians captured at Hong Kong by the Japanese, and are among the things that Allen Harper, prisoner for about four years will never forget, yet despite such eatables this ruddy-faced lad declares, it might not have been so terrible had only some salt been available. The boys craved for salt, but never got any.

Allen is the second eldest of five sons, and one of four who enlisted from the family of Mr. and Mrs. Ross Harper, 6th concession, Whitchurch. He reached home on Sunday after about four years, most of which time relatives and friends feared for the worst, since no trace or word was forthcoming for so long.

He enlisted in the summer of 1941, and after short training was among the boys of the Royal Rifles of Canada to embark for Hong Kong where he was among 1200 captured on Christmas Day little more than seven months from the time of his enlistment. Chief cause of falling prisoner was the fact that the Royals, arrived ahead of their equipment and were unable to fight with their guns and ammunition failing to catch up with them on the water voyage.

"When captured that memorable Christmas Day," said Allen, "we were sent to what was known as the China camp on Hong Kong Island. Food and

medical supplies were terribly short, but no cruelty was practised on us. For misdemeanours the Japs would slap our men. Rice formed the chief diet, but one of the not-to-be forgotten items was dried grasshoppers, which might have been palatable had there been salt available. As it was they made poor meat. The men craved for salt."

"Another dish was broth made from common grass, and under such fare I dropped weight noticeably," he said.

Allen stayed in the camp on Hong Kong Island for a year, then the more fit were chosen and sent to Yokohama in Japan to work in the great dock yards.

No news on the progress of the war reached the prisoners up to this second year; no mail, and no tidings of any kind whatever. In fact it was not until 1944 that this boy received his first letters from home, then at least two years old. Parcels were mostly stolen.

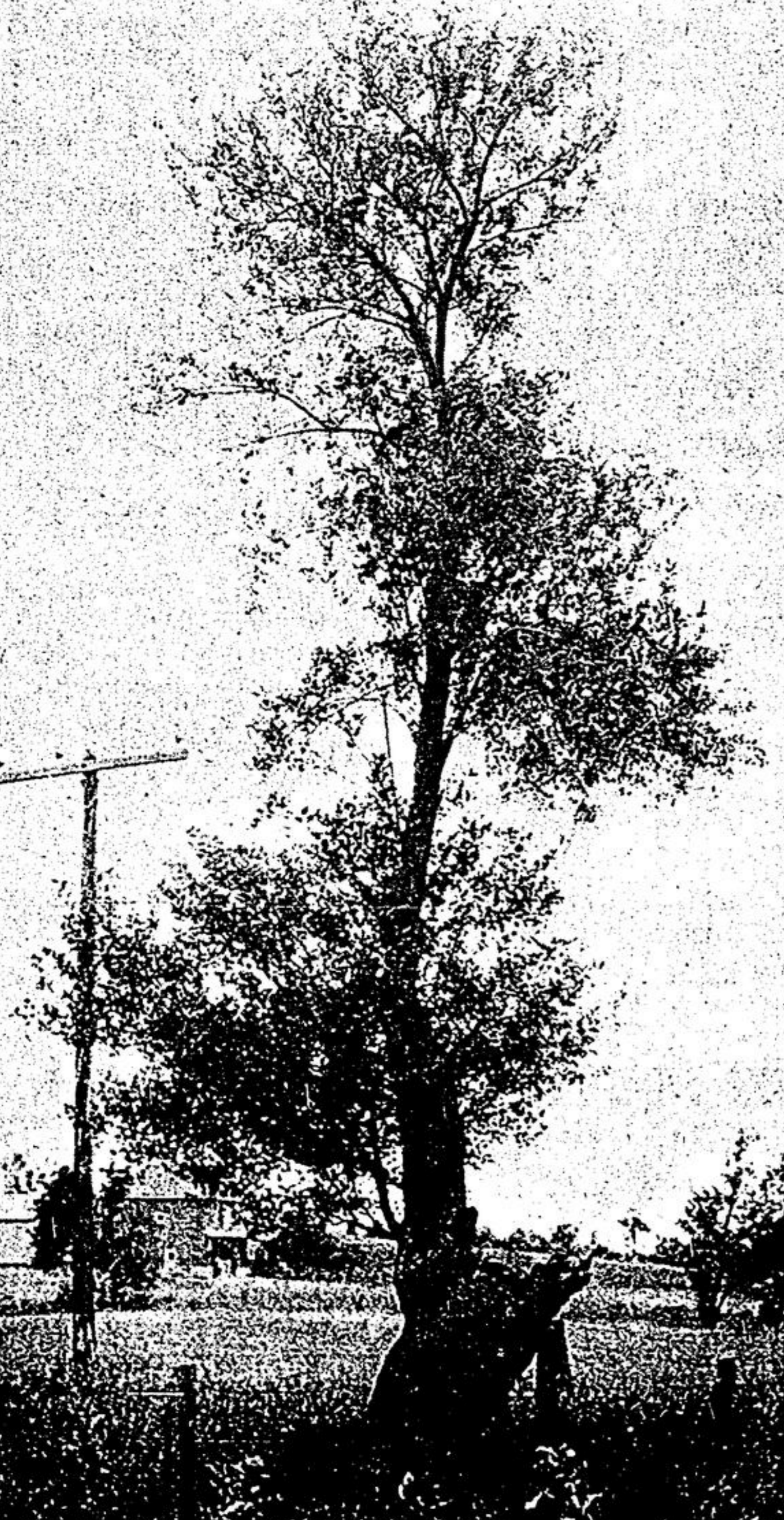
In May this year Allen and a group of his companions were moved again. They were put to work in the mines 4,000 feet below ground and it was hard going. By now about 30 had died from malnutrition and sheer lack of medicine. This camp was known as "Hell and Slavery Camp," a name attached to it by the English whom they replaced.

"We were given an issue of Japanese soap," said Allen, "and this was something even the native civilians didn't obtain," he continued. "Then we broke

the bars and gave part to the guards as a bribe for English papers. By this means we at last began to learn about the good turn the war had taken; and we noticed too, a slight improvement in the treatment of us as defeat became possible for the Japs."

"We were released one day after the surrender was signed, so the Japs got an extra day's work out of us," he said. On being set free they were able to visit the surrounding cities, and were soon back in Yokohama, awaiting passage to America. However, Allen was due to a sore disappointment when he went aboard ship here. He was found to be ill with a spot on one lung, and was returned to land for treatment. The boat went without him. Still, when he was recovered, instead of going aboard a boat he took off by plane. In fact he made the journey in several hops all the way by air to San Francisco.

His flying, too, was delayed when the plane reached Saipan, for the cold weather up above was too much for his condition, and he was stricken with pneumonia, causing a delay of three weeks when he grounded at Saipan, midway between the Philippine and Wake Islands. Once at San Francisco, interest rather lagged in the great winter mecca for world tourists, because of his eagerness to reach home, so a stop of only four days was all Allen Harper allowed himself, before he boarded the train for home to be greeted at Toronto by his home folks and 25 or 30 friends.



This tree is growing out of a stump despite the fact that a major section of the tree was cut off. Still a tall, thin trunk has grown and the tree appears to be flourishing in the circumstances.

— John Montgomery