

# Real Estate / Business

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## Let buyer beware, agent says

**Editor's Note:** This is the first of a three-part series on purchasing a new home. While it is primarily designed for the first-time buyer, even experienced buyers should not discount the possibilities that they may overlook something. Part one is the pitfalls and what to look for in making a purchase.

BY DON ATANASOFF  
News Editor

The old saying 'Let the buyer beware' should be the byword for new home buyers, according to a local real estate agent. Dan LeBarr, an agent with Remax Markville Realty, advises that prospective purchasers must "take the time to check things out," before finalizing a deal.

Before taking the big plunge, buyers should talk to the municipal planning department and verify what they've been told by the builder, Mr. LeBarr said in an interview.

He recalled two recent cases in the Town of Markham where the buyers took the word of the builder's agent, only to find out later everything wasn't quite the way it was described.

One, described in last week's Economist and Sun, was about homeowners in the Thornlea East subdivision in Thornhill. When residents asked what MTC stood for on the builder's site plan, they were told it meant Metropolitan Toronto Conservation Authority.

In reality, MTC stands for Ministry of Transportation and Communication. Thornlea East residents have now found out an Hwy 404 interchange is to be built at 14th Ave. bringing a major thoroughfare into their quiet residential area.

Another happened a few years ago in Unionville when the agent told people buying expensive homes that RSD on area maps meant residential subdivision. Instead RSD meant residential semi-detached. Only a concerted effort by the Unionville Ratepayers' Association, and the Town of Markham changed the zoning and prevented the semi-detached homes from being built.

It's incidents like the ones previously described that prompts Mr. LeBarr to recommend to first-time buyers that they ask for and receive more than just a site plan.

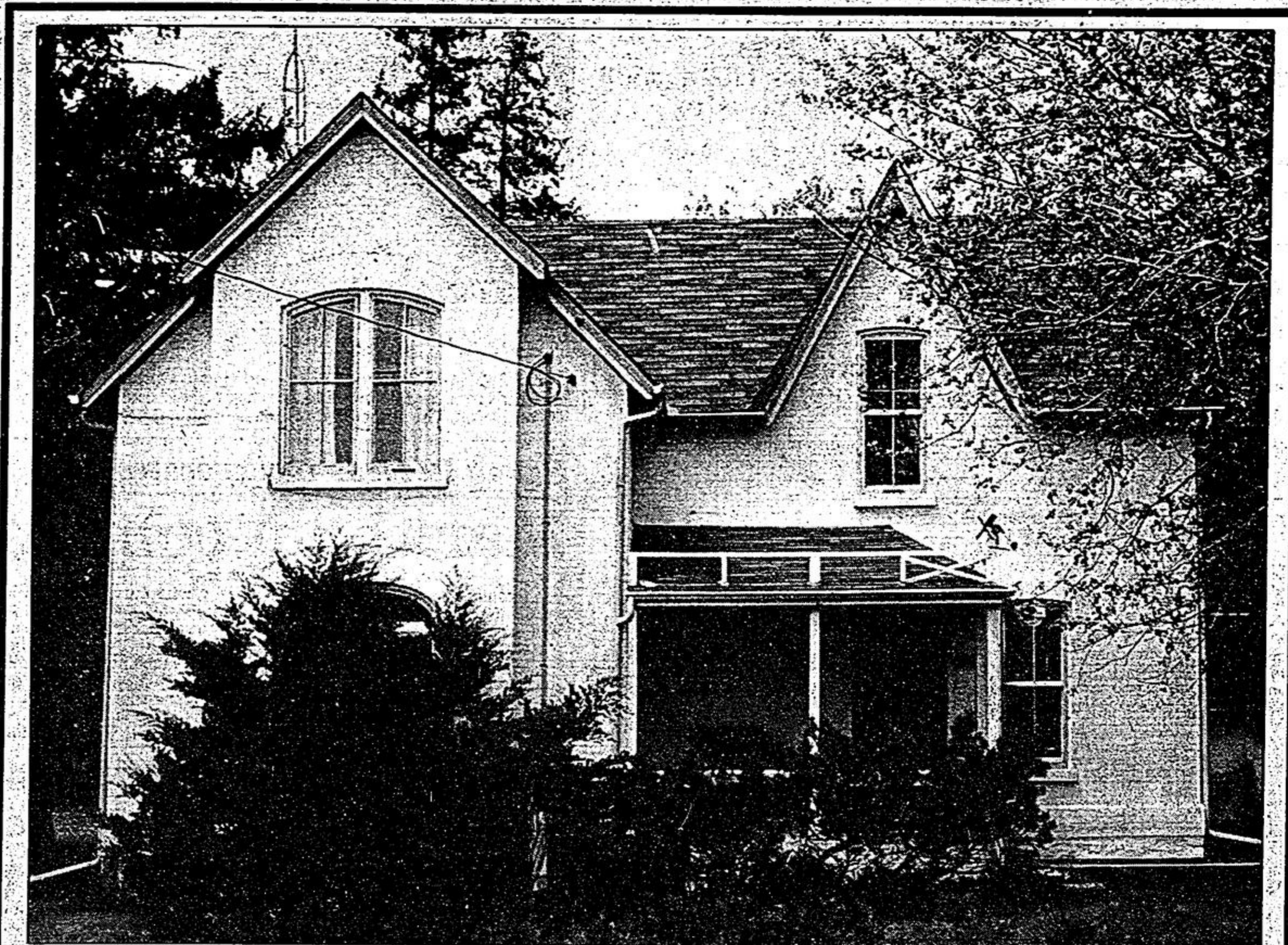
"You have to see a map of the total area," said Mr. LeBarr. "You have to know what type of zoning is there, where the schools are, the parkland and public transportation are."

Aside from checking out everything with the town including how much taxes are to be paid, Mr. LeBarr offered a list of dos, don'ts, and what to look for before signing an agreement of purchase.

- Do not sign a builder's agreement of purchase and sales form. It is not a standard form.
  - Only use a Toronto or Ontario Real Estate Board form. Don't sign anything until you take it to a lawyer. That's what you're paying him for.
  - Don't go in and immediately decide to buy. Come back later or in a few days and look at the home again. It may not be the same as your first impression.
  - Compare resale market in the area you intend to buy. Go out and make sure the home you are buying is not overpriced and is a good investment.
  - When purchasing, allow yourself some extra money to furnish, decorate and landscape.
  - Be aware that some builders offer better financing rates, but the cost of that financing has been tacked on to the asking price.
  - Always make sure you receive a Schedule A so that you know what is being put into the house you intend to purchase. Many times the model house you tour will be dressed up with many extras that will not be added to your home unless you pay for them.
  - Look for quality in a home. If you can't recognize it yourself, take someone like your parents or a resale agent with you.
  - Get in first when buying in a new subdivision. You may have to pay a little more, but you get a better choice of lots. Do the landscaping quickly. When the subdivision is complete, your home will be worth 10 to 15 per cent more than you paid for it.
  - Be wary of a builder who says he'll accept a conditional offer contingent upon you selling your previous home if the builder insists that he list it. Don't let anyone dictate terms to you and leave your options open.
  - Use local real estate agents and local lawyers. They know the situation in the area that your moving to.
  - Don't let anybody talk you into anything you can't afford. Buy a home that won't put a strain on your pocketbook or your relationship with your family.
- Finally, Mr. LeBarr recommends patience when making that final decision.



DAN LEBARR



## The Home of the Week

# In the heart of Green River

On the east side of Green River on Hwy 7, stands a two-storey, detached home on a large lot for sale at \$117,900.

Framed by mature evergreens and a white veranda one enters through the kitchen which has nine-foot ceilings and stained-glass windows. The country kitchen has been modernized in this 1915 home and new cupboards put in.

Decorated with pine boards and wainscoting, there is also a new cushioned floor. The former pantry has now become a two-piece bathroom servicing the main floor.

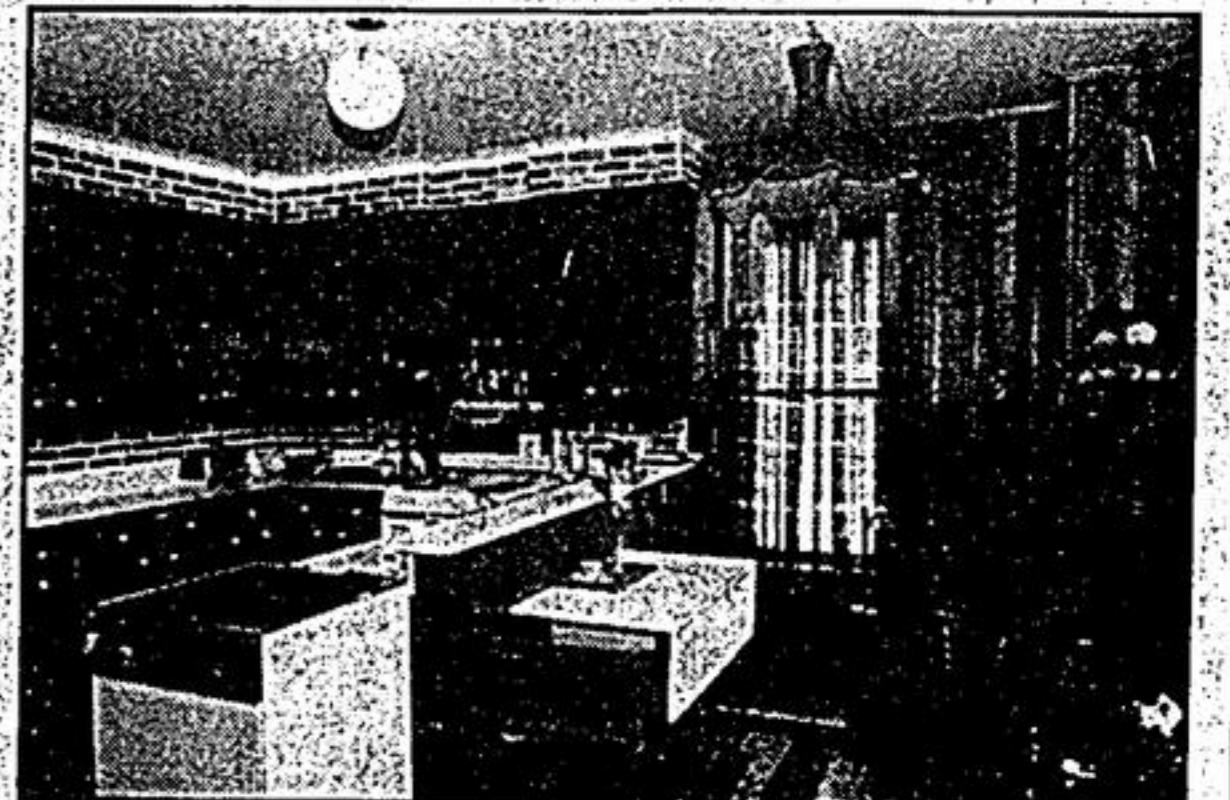
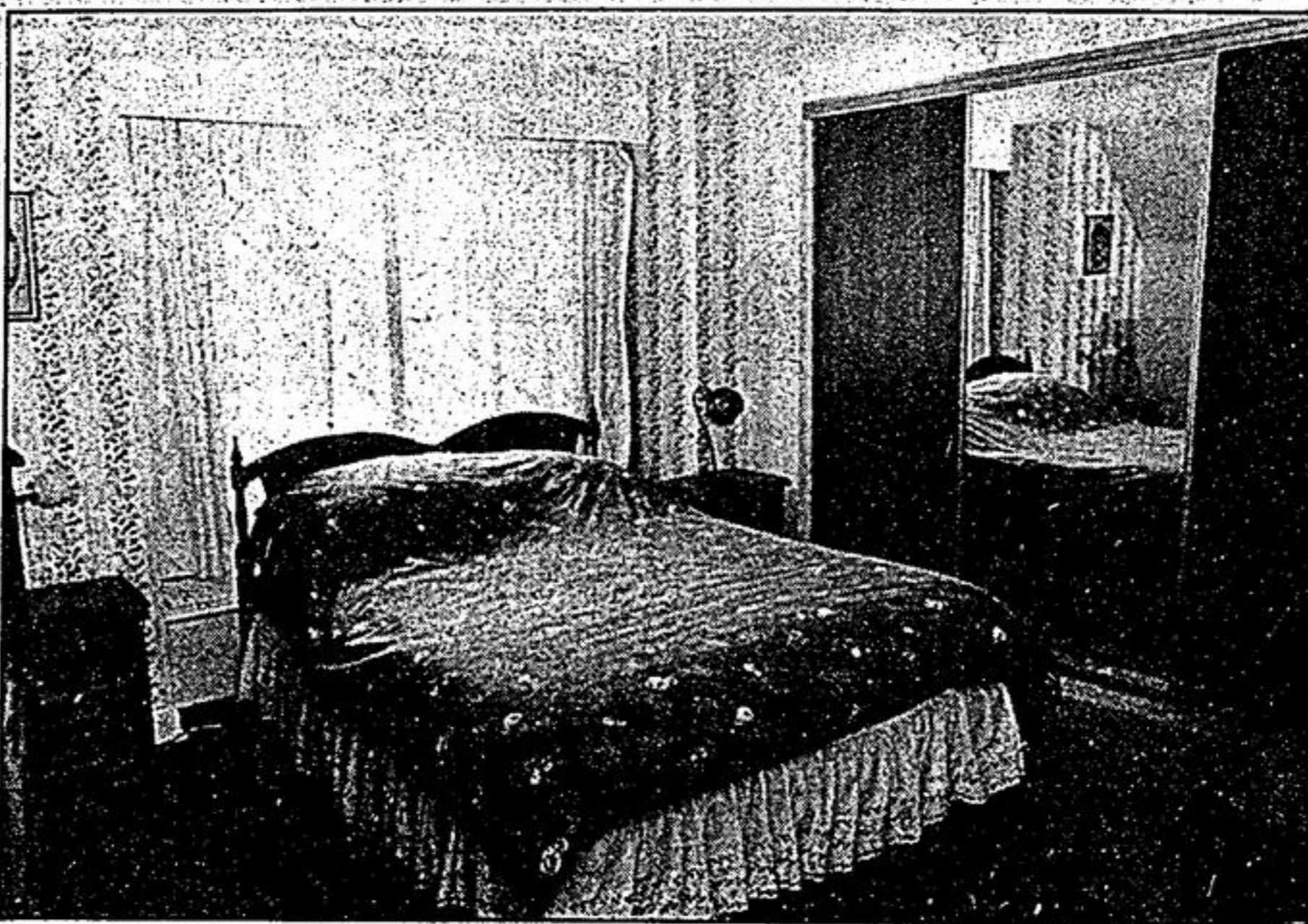
There is an exit to the backyard from the kitchen. The living and dining rooms have the original oak trim and cupboards for storage. The front window has been fitted with interior storm windows to allow the sunlight to enter through the stained glass inset.

Upstairs there are three bedrooms. The master has a mirrored closet with additional storage space under a window seat which runs the length of the rooms double window. The main bath-

room has been newly renovated and is decorated with cedar cupboards, ceramic tiled counter and bath area.

The property is zoned residential-commercial and has a large driveway. Heating is provided by forced-air oil furnace, and has a well, a septic tank and a cistern well for an ample supply of soft water.

The house is listed by Philip Mihorean & Associates Ltd. The agent is Hersh Rosner who can be reached at 477-1777.



### Business expanding?

## Schomberg worth taking a look at

Schomberg Business Association members think their town is such a great place to do business they've taken to the road and are telling other people about it.

Peter Blundell, chairman of the association, and member Lenore Acheson, recently visited Markham to knock on doors.

"We decided to get aggressive and spread the word," says Mr. Blundell. "Compared to Markham and Unionville, the prices in Schomberg are worth looking at."

A combination store and residence on Main St., Schomberg, can be bought for as little as \$90,000, with the average price being \$120,000, according to Mr. Blundell.

"That could cost you as much as a quarter-million in Unionville," he says.

And, Mr. Blundell points out, Schomberg's Main St. has been declared a tourist area enabling merchants to open on Sunday.

Mr. Blundell, who owns an antique store on Main St., Schomberg, and is former chairman of the York Tourist Region Board, says, "Nothing like this has been done before, we're actually going out head hunting."

The two stopped by businesses at random in a "shot-gun approach" through Markham and Unionville last week extolling the virtues of their town and encouraging merchants to open up branches there.

"We not real estate brokers," explains Mr. Blundell. "We're just attempting to attract the right kind of mix in town and that means we have to spread the right kind of message."