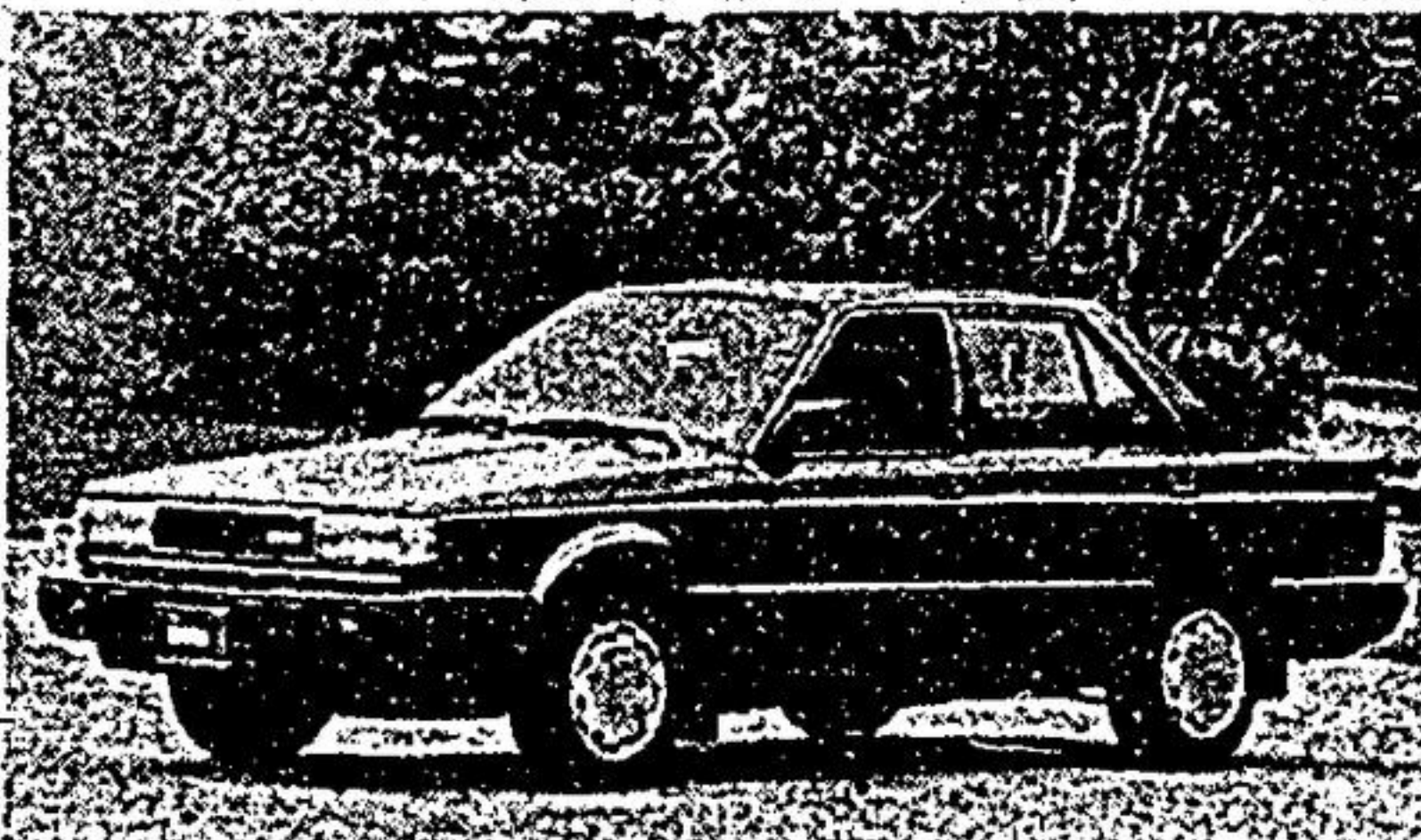
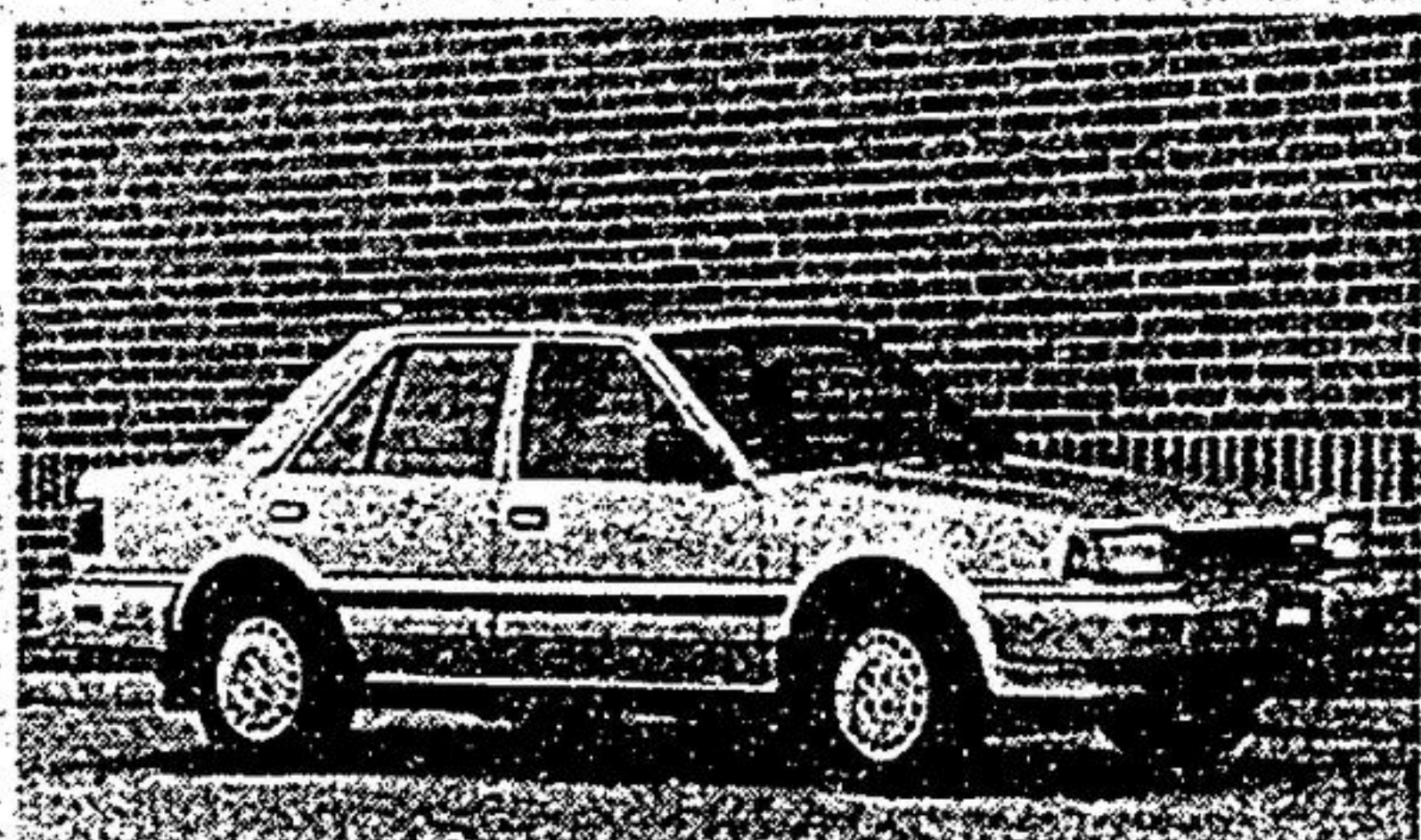
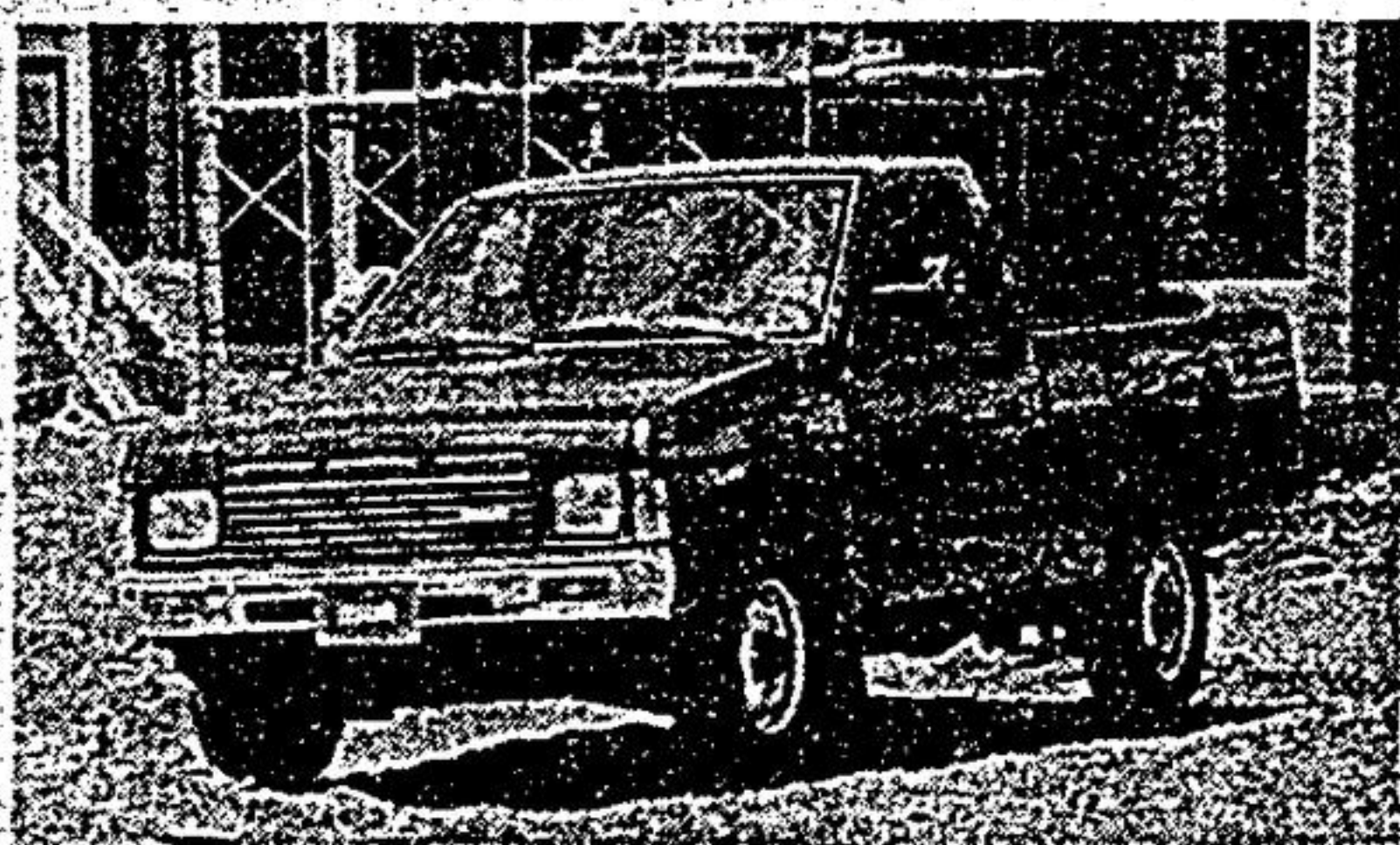


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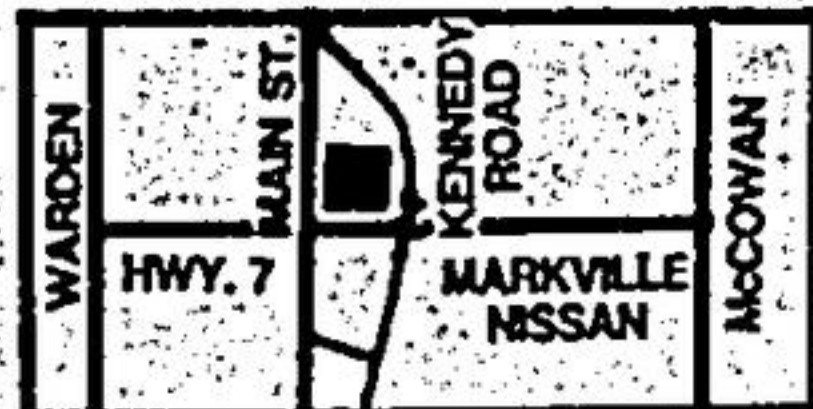


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Extended trip is no holiday

By BRUCE STAPLEY

For most people, the thought of extending a vacation in Venezuela an extra two weeks would be a dream come true.

But for Dickson's Hill resident Vera Moyer and her family, the 14 day layover in that South American holiday destination was a frightening ordeal.

Vera, her husband Warren and daughter Janice were returning from a side trip to Angel Falls in an unpressurized DC-3 when she started to experience severe head pains.

The resulting pains were diagnosed as a stroke leaving her left side paralyzed.

Janice, a nursing student at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto, managed to keep her mother breathing for the remainder of the trip back to Caracas where an ambulance was waiting to rush them off to the University Hospital.

"We couldn't speak the language," says Warren. "But we met a Christian nurse and doctor who spoke English. The doctors were very good to us."

Vera stayed in the hospital for treatment for two weeks, finally returning home on Sunday, March 13.

She wasn't able to fly until the airline received a certificate from the doctors in Caracas assuring them she was fit.

Since her return, she has entered Scarborough Centenary Hospital for continued tests and therapy.

According to Warren, her spirits are high and they are optimistic in terms of her recovery.

While they were delighted with

the overall quality of treatment in the Venezuelan hospital, Warren admits it was a different type of medical facility than we are used to here in Canada.

"There were no sheets on the hospital beds. You had to bring your own bedding, pillows, cutlery, thermometer and bedpan."

The government provides free hospitalization in Venezuela so the Moyers were not faced with a horrendous hospital bill.

"We were only required to pay \$70 for the CAT scan, and \$50 for the semi-private room," Warren said.

"They treated us like royalty," he continued. "We had more visitors than we would in Toronto."

At one point there were 15 to 20 people in the hospital room, consisting of friends and family of the doctors, nurses and of the patient sharing the room.

Warren credits the representative from Sunquest Vacations, the tour company they were travelling with, as being very helpful. He also praised local travel agent Ged Stonehouse.

"The Sunquest girl came to the hospital four or five times, brought cutlery for us and arranged the payment of the bills."

"Ged Stonehouse sent us a Telex offering to arrange finances. He was in touch right away and told us he'd make sure we got home okay."

The flight home was facilitated by the fact the plane wasn't full. Vera was able to use four seats, enabling her to lie down.

"We saw a lot of Venezuela we wouldn't have seen," concluded Warren. "We came home with addresses of some very kind people."

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