

THE WILLINGDONS WILL BRING FINE TRADITIONS TO CANADIAN CAPITAL

Sprang From Old English Yeoman Stock With Roots Deep in Records of Race—Families Emerged Into Diplomatic Life After Fortunes Were Amassed in Railway Age.

HIS EXCELLENCY OUTWITTED GANDHI

(By Blawden Davies)
A penetrating pen will some day write a history of Rideau Hall which will hinge upon the personalities of its various vice-regal occupants. There have been days when devotion to the arts and to literature were the ruling passions, days when the glamor of royalty made the Hall the focus point of all social

win is himself an example of the evolution. The love of the soil still clings to him and his pigs and his roses divert his tired brain from politics. The son of a great manufacturer, he finds his vocation in politics.
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sical of the navy department and then he became Governor of Victoria, Australia. It was here the two great yeoman families crossed paths. Thomas Freeman went through Eton and Cambridge. At Cambridge for his two senior years he was captain of the Cricket Eleven and led his team to victory in a contest out of which Cambridge graduates are still able to get a vicarious thrill. When he left college, and after a few years' travel, he became attached to the staff of Lady Willingdon's father as aide-de-camp.

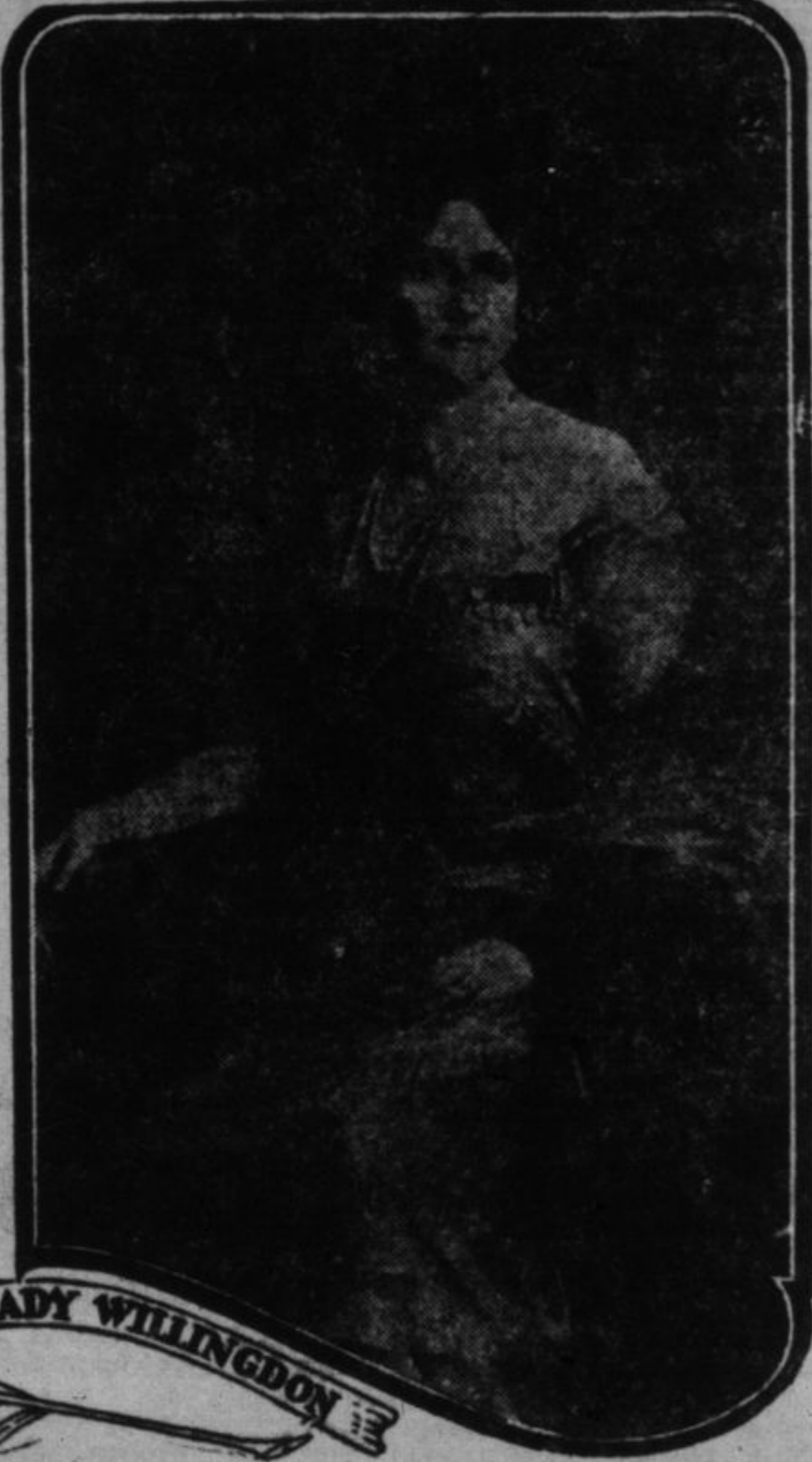
Lady Willingdon was the Hon. Marie Adelaide Brassey, one of Lord Brassey's three charming daughters, who, with their father and their clever mother roamed all over the world in the famous sailing yacht, The Sunbeam. Of those wanderings the mother's facile pen kept a record, and the publication of her diaries made her one of the most popular writers of her day. In

three millions under his administration. There he was so successful in securing native co-operation that he completely frustrated the plans of the British rule. From the splendor of his oriental presidencies, Lord Willingdon returned home with Lady Willingdon to England in 1924. There his remarkable knowledge of the oriental mind was called into use in the matter of the return of the Boxer indemnity, which was complicated by the present political state of China. His mission took him across Canada and he had a bird's eye view of the country. He was in China when the message reached him, inviting him to be Canadian Governor-General.

On his return to London, Lord Willingdon made a speech in which he recounted some of his impressions of Canadians. The two characteristics which seemed to impress him most were the confidence and the optimism of the coun-



LORD WILLINGDON



LADY WILLINGDON

NEW OCCUPANTS OF RIDEAU HALL

Viscount Willingdon, famous administrator of Bombay and Madras, and Lady Willingdon, who arrived to-day to assume the vice-regal honors at Ottawa, Lord Willingdon is a well-known sportsman and Lady Willingdon a charming hostess.

eyes; there were days when scions of Britain's oldest and finest aristocracy filled the King's place in his biggest Dominion.

In October it will yield to the sway of an interesting pair as ever held its governance in their hands. Lord and Lady Willingdon are not familiar to the average newspaper and magazine reader, not because of lack of achievement, but because their duties have been carried out with so little sensation or appeal to lurid interest, that gossip and small talk have had little to do with their names.

They are of quite different stock to the last few families to occupy the seat of government. Though bearing a title of high degree, they are not aristocrats, in the sense in which Lord and Lady Byng were of the aristocracy, or the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. They belong to that exceedingly interesting class of English, the yeoman stock. Their family records go back in history far beyond the origin of many of England's most famous titled families.

A family originating in the days of Elizabeth, or of the Stuarts (where, indeed, many great families had their beginnings), is regarded as fairly historic. But the families of both Lord and Lady Willingdon trace their way far beyond that, even to Norman times. In spite of what may have gone on in London, the country and going of dynasties, from Plantagenets all the way down to the House of Windsor, these yeomen of England have clung to the soil of their native land with a tenacity that preserved them intact as a class. They regarded with a sort of toleration the rise of many aristocratic families, but treasured to themselves more highly the descent from father to son of rich farms, of old manor houses, of thoroughbred cattle and ancient woods, and all that they stood for.

The recent evolution of these families makes fascinating reading. Until the railway age their class was safeguarded, but the invasion of remote parts of England by railways and the conversion of distant country districts into mere adjuncts of manufacturing cities has, also, spelled change to a large part of this old yeoman stock. Three or four generations have seen the evolution of the English farmer into business man and administrator. Galworthy in his Forsyte stories traces the fortunes of one old yeoman family. Stanley Bald-

win is himself an example of the evolution. The love of the soil still clings to him and his pigs and his roses divert his tired brain from politics. The son of a great manufacturer, he finds his vocation in politics.
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Frederick Freeman Thomas, father of Lord Willingdon, was a great iron and coal merchant. When Freeman Thomas completed his education there was no necessity for his entry into business. The family had acquired its wealth. The next step was therefore politics, and the diplomatic life. The evolution of the Thomas family had reached that point.

In the meantime the same thing had been happening in the Brassey family. Lady Willingdon's grandfather was a friend of George Stephenson of railway fame. Through him he secured his first contract. He married a daughter of the first resident of the new town of Birkenhead, child of the railway age. She encouraged him to become a contractor and eventually he became probably the greatest railway contractor in the world. He built part of the Grand Trunk Railway, he built railways in Great Britain, in India, in Argentina, in Italy, in Borneo and elsewhere. When his son, Lady Willingdon's father, came to manhood, he too had acquired so much of this world's good that a business career was unnecessary. He too took to politics. Twenty years as a member for Hastings, then an of-

Canadian libraries there are to this day bulky volumes, profusely illustrated with photographs and sketches from those trips on which the merry family became so well acquainted with the world. Lord Brassey's title, like Lord Willingdon's was conferred as a reward for important imperial services.

Backed, therefore, by the best traditions of the finest British stock, familiar with remarkable achievements in commerce and industry and personally so closely associated with the administration of civil government, Lord Willingdon has much to offer to Canada. In 1913 Lord Willingdon was made Governor of Bombay Presidency in India, in authority over thirty million people of mixed races, in British and native-ruled states. One of the powerful princes in his presidency was the Gaskwar of Baroda. He was there throughout the war when Bombay, as the Indian port nearest to Europe, was the channel for that great flood of soldiers that went from India to help win the war in the west. So successful was the administration that he was persuaded at the end of his term to proceed south to the presidency of Madras (which, by the way, became British under the same treaty by which Canada was ceded to Britain), where he had forty-

ty. He concluded by a simple statement that was almost a vow. This is what he said:

"I am determined, so far as it lies in me, to do my utmost to ensure the prosperity and progress of the great Dominion."

Lady Willingdon is a very charming woman. Bred in an atmosphere of public service, she has been a valuable asset to her distinguished husband. She has suffered, too, and carries within her heart a grief that will make her kin to Canadian women who wear little silver war crosses. Her older son, doing his "bit" in France, vanished with the host of missing men. It was in the battle of the Aisne, in 1914, that he "went west," and no man has discovered what his fate was. Not among the dead, or the wounded, not among the prisoners was he found. There are many Canadians who can sympathize with those folks "lost in authority over us" who shared the common sorrow of the war. Their second son, Capt. Inigo Freeman-Thomas, now the heir to his father's honors, is married to a daughter of Sir Johnstone Forbes-Robertson.

On the return of Lord Willingdon to Hastings, which he had represented in the House of Commons, he took a hand in the return to Quebec, City of the shield which had been taken from one of the city's gateways in the conquest of Quebec and presented to Hastings.

There seems little doubt but what Lord and Lady Willingdon will be personally popular in Canada. Lord Willingdon is a sportsman, noted for carrying into all his daily dealing the principles of fair play. He is genial, in spite of his natural reserve; he is fine looking, tall, bronzed, muscular, and looks ten years less than his sixty years. He is a fine French scholar, has a broad knowledge without being a bookish man, and is well versed in financial affairs. Lady Willingdon is a worthy daughter of one of the noblest women of her age, the late Lady Brassey, whose charities were famous. Much of her sweetness, her fortitude and her practicalness have been transmitted to Lady Willingdon, who is also a charming hostess and a woman of broad intelligence.

October will see the beginning of the Willingdon regime in the setting of Rideau Hall.

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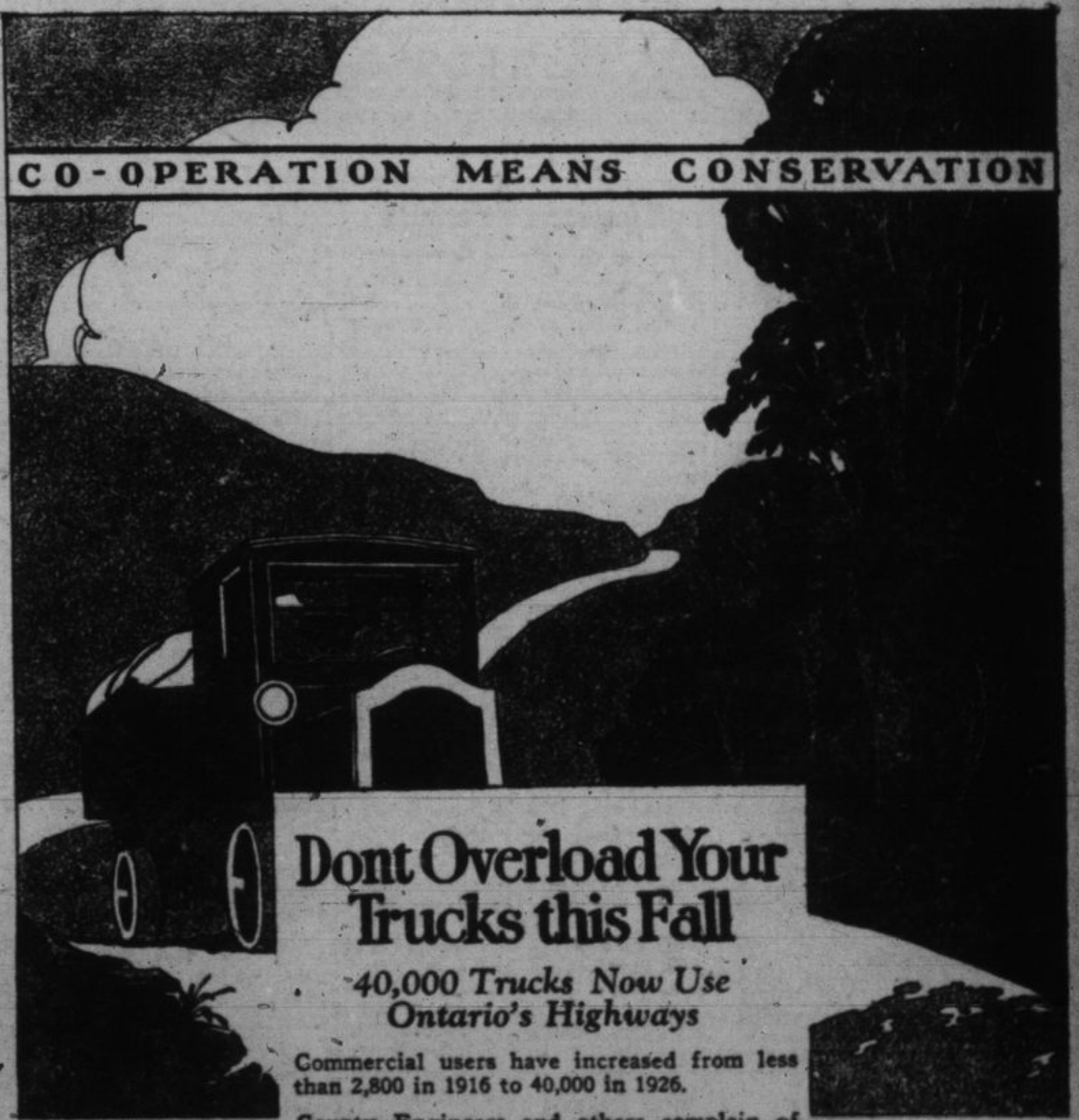
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