

# The things I see

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Many businesses fail in Canada every year; their demise is always a loss to the commercial area in which it was located. When a community newspaper dies, I feel that the town it served also dies a little. This will be evident in the neighbouring village of Jarvis.

On Wednesday, January 14, the staff of the weekly newspaper "The Jarvis Record" was informed that the publication would cease with the issue dated Thursday, January 15th, 1976. The newspaper had been founded 98 years earlier, and some local historians report that it had been printed several years before any records were kept by its founder. Perhaps the present owners (who are not residents of Jarvis) have made arrangements for resumption of publication at a later date, but I think not, as the operation has not been financially self-supporting for some time.

City of Nanticoke councillor from Jarvis, James Davidson (a former Reeve of Jarvis) told The Maple Leaf this week, "The Record has been a real asset to our village, I really hate to see it close up."

I have worked in the community newspaper field in my childhood after-school hours and all my adult life, many people believe I have ink in my blood, for I love hometown newspapers and look forward to reading about a dozen of them every week. It is with regret that the Jarvis Record has ceased to be a living part of this area. For almost one hundred years the citizens of the village looked forward every Thursday morning to their own newspaper. It chronicled the births, baptisms, graduations, marriages, the high points and low points of their lives, and finally their death. For many years it published a column entitled "Wise and Otherwise"; also Mrs. Jessie Miller was a valued contributor to the news columns; and a weekly farm feature headed "Haldimand Harry." The editorial page was also highlighted by the "Scissors and Paste Pot" column.

During its hey-day the Jarvis Record was owned by the Miller family. When George L. Miller retired from an active role with the paper in 1935, his son, Laird, became editor. Under his direction the newspaper prospered and won many awards — two highly coveted honours being "best weekly newspaper in Canada" in its category, and "best editorial page." It was during these years that the Record and The Port Dover Maple Leaf carried on a weekly feud. Each of the two editors (Mr. Miller and Sam H. Morris) would insist their hometown was superior to the other. Editor Miller (with tongue in cheek) would refer to "that sea-sick seaside town in sandy Norfolk County" which would be countered the following week by Editor Morris with "the truckers at the crossroads community haul their area's best product into Norfolk County to spread on farmer's fields."

They loved to jibe each other's opposing political views.

Laird Miller was not alone in the production of The Record. In April, 1933, Russell More, of Creemore, joined his staff and worked faithfully for the newspaper (almost as manager) until it was sold in 1968. "Rusty" is now a part-time type-setter here at The Maple Leaf. The Miller family, and most citizens of the community, took an active part in contributing to the interest and success of their hometown newspaper.

Mr. More told The Maple Leaf this week, "after spending half a lifetime in the Record office, I now feel badly that it has ceased, for sentimental reasons and for the good of the town."

With his health failing, Laird Miller sold the newspaper in 1968 to a group of Tillsonburg businessmen. The following year Mr. Miller died. For a few years the name of the paper was changed to the West Haldimand Record. During the past eight years a parade of editors and business partners have headed the weekly journal. The most promising of these was Miss Donna Crone, who resigned the post about one year ago to become the McMaster - Mohawk liaison officer in Hagersville, (now married, she resides in Port Dover).

Mrs. Laird Miller, of Jarvis, told The Maple Leaf "after all the hard work for so many years, a little of me died when I heard the Record closed."