

My life has had its full of mis- takes; but I thank a kindly Providence that the mistakes of the past have revealed the iden- tities of things to be shunned in the present and the future.

# The Birmingham Eccentric

PART THREE

FIFTY-FIRST YEAR—NO. 52

BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1929

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## HILLS VILLAGE POST OFFICE IS STARVED

Commission From Govern- ment Received in Bloomfield

SUPPLIES ARE AVAIL- ED

The Bloomfield post office is expected to be under way late this week, following the receipt yesterday by Eugene Walton, postmaster, of a commission from the government. The commis- sion for the department, listing it as fourth class, also was re- ceived.

This will mark the conclusion of a long effort on the part of Hills residents to get mail service in their village. Formerly they were dependent on the Birming- ham post office for their mail.

The new office, located in the Barbour building at Woodward avenue and the Long Lake road, will not only bring an official sup- ply station to the Hills, but will be the center of a mail delivery service to the homes.

A truck has been obtained and will make daily deliveries to all parts of the village.

Luther D. Allen, president of the village, said yesterday the or- ganization would get necessary supplies as soon as necessary supplies ar- rive.

## VILLAGE CLUB AT DEDICATION

Birmingham Rotary was repre- sented at the charter presentation services at the new Bloomfield-Canada, Rotary club's presenta- tion night here Tuesday evening by Glenn Routier, Frank J. Mul- holland, Thomas Neely, Phil Wil- liams, and John Wheat. Mr. Neal responded to greetings from the Bloomfield club with a short talk. About 15 local Rotarians are expected to attend a similar meeting when the new Centerville, Michi- gan, club receives its charter next Tuesday night.

It costs nothing to publish a news item in The Eccentric, Mrs. Birmingham. Call for a reporter on 11 or 12.

## AMONG THE WOMEN

Behind The Scenes At The Telephone Office

By DOROTHY E. WILLIAMS

"Number please!" Behind that query there is a story. In the case of Miss Laura Schroeder is a colorful story of her rise from "Hello" girl in a small southern town to chief operator of the Birming- ham branch of the Bell Tele- phone company, a position which she has held for nearly two years and which places her in charge of more than 40 girls.

It was during the summer fol- lowing her graduation from the Holmes High School at Lake De- pait, Miss Schroeder chose the telephone work, an experience that decided her life work.

Her family had moved back to Cullman, Ala., her birthplace, a small town where, as Miss Schroeder puts it, for the girl who wanted summer work there was either store work or the telephone com- pany. So Miss Schroeder chose the latter. "I went into the South- ern Bell telephone exchange there with the idea of doing summer work preparatory to leaving for school in the fall. It was an ac- cepted fact that I would be a school teacher. For a long while I had planned to teach. I thought that I would enjoy the supervision that went with the work."

But it was the same knack for supervision which was to play such a great part in her rise through the employ of the telephone com- pany. She inspired confidence and had the ability of a leader. Her employees realized this and repeat- edly advanced her.

Starts Again  
For five years she worked in Cullman and then once again the Schroeder family moved, coming to Pontiac, Miss Schroeder was again forced to start at the foot of the ladder as is every tele- phone girl when she moves from one district to another. Soon she was made toll operator there, and from then on rapid advancement came until she became evening chief operator. For 10 years she was employed by the Pontiac tele- phone company before coming to Birmingham.

Miss Schroeder is still fascinat- ed by her work. "There is an atmosphere to a telephone ex- change which grows on a person. Time and time again we have girls

come back begging for work after resigning. There is a loyalty and harmony in the telephone ex- change which the girls appreciate. "Above all the telephone oper- ator must have an even disposi- tion. The patron must never sense any irritation. We are given our set phrase and we must adhere to them."

Miss Schroeder takes a personal interest in her girls. She inter- views them considering them care- fully before employing them. "Even height must be considered. A short girl tires too easily work- ing on a high board. Then there are accents. If a girl has the slightest trace of an accent, a speech impediment she will not make a telephone operator. A pleasing voice counts for a great deal."

Each girl is given three weeks training in the district office school and then five weeks of supervision in the local office. She is given both physical and mental tests before being employed. The general supervision of all this falls to Miss Schroeder's lot.

"I try as much as possible to have the operators personalize their service. They should visual- ize the person behind the voice and feel that they are in direct contact with him. It is amazing in how short a time one will come to know the girls. In a community the size of Birmingham the oper- ator often recognizes many differ- ent voices. Her ear is so carefully attuned that once she has heard a voice she will recognize it a second time."

Friendly Attitude  
There is considerable organiza- tion in a telephone office. It is one of Miss Schroeder's favorite beliefs that without the proper respect and admiration for the chief operator this organization will be of little avail. She makes every effort to know her girls per- sonally and to fill the role of friend rather than supervisor.

"If a girl is discouraged and unhappy I help her to feel that she can come to me with her troubles. Perhaps I can help her, but I am convinced that that is the only way to produce the right sort of atmosphere and harmony in a telephone exchange. The work must be so precise that to

## ECCENTRIC PRAISED IN CLASS AT OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITY

Here is a letter from a student of journalism at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Okla. It is typical of requests that constantly come to The Eccentric office and is self explanatory:

April 2, 1929.

Editor The Birmingham Eccentric, Birmingham.

Dear Sir:

My Journalism prof says that yours is the best paper in your section of the country; that every issue embodies many novel and worth- while features. Since my Semester paper is to cover the ideal newspaper, I'll certainly need a copy of yours to be sure that I have left out nothing of importance. Just one of your regular editions will be fine. I have enclosed a single wrap.

Rawleigh H. Halls.

## WE HEARD IT SAID BY—

John A. Gilray, of Dorches- ter road: "The Eccentric is an excellent weekly news- paper. When I am away from Birmingham for a week or more Mrs. Gilray has a stand- ing request to keep all copies so that I may read them when I get home."

## PROGRESS MADE IN NEW HILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT, ONE MONTH OLD

Six volunteer firemen are soon to be on the Bloomfield Hills fire department, one month after its organization under Chief Russell Moore. It is planned later to add another six.

In order to be able to cope with any of the numerous demands made upon a fire department, meetings are to be held semi- monthly under Moore's direction and study will be made of the various angles of fire fighting.

Organization of the department comes after considerable effort on the part of Hills residents. Pre- viously the Birmingham fire de- partment responded to all calls in the Hills. This could not be con- tinued, however, as the village of Birmingham was being at least partially neglected while the de- partment was out in the township. So the commission in the Hills took matters in its own hands and bought a large chemical truck, said to be the most modern in Oakland County.

It is located at Woodward avenue and the Long Lake road and Chief Moore and his men are al- ways in attendance. Since its organization, the de- partment has been called upon to fight only grass fires and all were extinguished before damage was done. This branch of work is ex- pected to be one of the most im- portant of the department. The broad expanses of land in the Hills during the dry season often blaze up and menace the large homes near them.

Included in the new equipment that the fire department has is a high powered electric light that can be used from the chemical truck. An inhalator, costing \$21.00 has also been added for use in drowning and suffocating. The inhalator gives artificial respiration. The lungs are collapsed and the person forced to breathe a com- bination of pure oxygen and car- bon dioxide.

"It is a great improvement over

the former pulmotor in that it is not a forced respiration which often times tore down the tissues of the lungs, causing tubercu- losis," Moore stated.

Mr. Moore is extremely proud of the new chemical truck, which he says is the last word in fire fighting apparatus. It has a ca- pacity of 80 gallons of foamite.

## BEAUTY IS AIM OF NEW GROUP IN THE HILLS

Progress of the Bloomfield Hills planning commission is reported today. The board was named to make plans for the orderly growth and development of the village in the Hills and negotiations are being made to obtain the services of a planner.

While work of the group is still in its early stages, several pro- jects are under consideration. Billboards are expected to be banned, the members of the group feeling they mar the beauty of the Hills.

Shrubs will be planted along the roadsides in such a manner they will blend with the natural scenery.

There are many other projects which have been brought to the attention of the commission but they have not taken definite enough shape today, members of the board said, to be announced.

## WE HEARD IT SAID BY—

Ray Palmer, member board of education: "The present ratio between the faculty and the student enrollment in the Birmingham schools averages one instructor to every 22 pupils."

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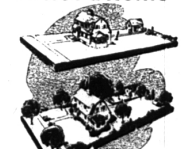
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