

The Birmingham Eccentric

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TREE REMOVAL CAUSES TILT

White's Ire Aroused At Action Prior To Board's Approval

A verbal tilt between Village Commissioner Lee A. White and a representative of the Wabsek corporation, owners of the Cousins property on west Maple avenue, over the method of removing three trees, took place at the commission meeting Monday night when it was learned that grading had already taken place between the curb and sidewalk, resulting in the exposure of tree roots. Emil G. Olin, employed by the village to remove trees, stated that the present condition of the trees warranted their removal, because of danger to pedestrians.

Commissioner White's ire was aroused when he learned that the grading was started prior to permission being granted for the removal of the three trees. The Cousins' representative declared that grading was started only after proper permission had been obtained from Village Engineer Harold Corson's department.

"I am in favor of keeping a tree as long as it can stand, unless a plan of construction and improvement of a piece of property will so completely cut the tree off from nourishment that it cannot live," stated Commissioner White. Mr. White's motion to deny permission to cut down the trees was defeated by President Ellery, and Commissioners Robert R. Allen, Scott Herry, and Harry Allen. A motion to allow the trees to be cut was opposed only by White later.

AMONG THE WOMEN

Russian Baroness Tells Of Strenuous War Work

By DOROTHY E. WILLIAMS

Post-war found her in charge of all European prison camps, the only woman to serve in that capacity. Readjustment days brought her to America, where today she is employed by the village of Birmingham as public health nurse. Prior to war times, she was a baroness living in the social whirl of the great Russian capital. Such are the changes of fortune that the World War brought to Baroness Olga Von Roenne Benning. Today she is known as Mrs. Benning, wife of Dr. C. H. Benning, who is public health director of Royal Oak township.

When war days came to Russia in 1914 it found the citizens unprepared for hardships. Mrs. Benning said. Russian women of the upper classes had never come in contact with a working world. They knew little but the social life of Petrograd. Among the wealthy there were a few who had followed a profession. Baroness Von Roenne was one of these. She was the daughter of a physician, who, far in advance of the Russian thought of his day, had demanded that his daughters be educated in some specialized field.

So it was that in 1914 Baroness von Roenne graduated from the Red Cross training school of the Marine Hospital in Petrograd. "In those days the woman's place was still in the home. Those of us who did study professions never seriously considered making a living. It was not necessary in the life of a Russian woman of the higher class," she said.

But the war changed conditions for the Baroness. Following her graduation she entered the hospital for a year of practical training and in 1915 saw her in charge of a hospital train on the western front. Here she carried on her work supervising the 18 nurses on the train. Then in 1916 came the German bomb that shattered the train wounding many of the workers. Baroness von Roenne was seriously wounded and for more than five months was confined to a hospital. Upon recovering she once again returned to her work on the train continuing in this capacity until the close of the war in 1918.

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Actor, War Worker Gives Program In Local Church

Nephew Of Irving Back After Long Absence

Ben Scovell, veteran entertainer of the World War and at one time co-worker of Sir Harry Lauder, will present a dramatic program, "The Sign of the Cross," Sunday at 7:30 p. m. in the First Baptist Church. During his stay in the village Mr. Scovell is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Gore, of Yorkshire road.

A reunion of World War veterans last month in Detroit brought Mr. Scovell back to a city that 25 years ago knew him as Marcus LaBranche, actor, and at that time director of a dramatic school on Grand Circus Park.

An Early Start
The nephew of Sir Henry Irving, who was the first actor to be knighted and the only actor to be buried in Westminster Abbey, Scovell as a child knew the theatrical world. He often played with his uncle and later was a member of such famous casts as those headed by Maud Adams in "Peter Pan" and "The Little Minister."

Although a native of Salisbury, Eng., Mr. Scovell spent considerable time in the United States. He was educated at Colorado College and at Harvard University, later entering the New England Conservatory of Music. At the time of the opening of the World War he was a professor of English and Dramatic Art at Occidental College, Los Angeles. He tried to enlist and was rejected.

Ignored Rejection
But a rejection was not to keep Scovell out of the war. He had been fighting in the Boer war in South Africa, at that time a correspondent for the London Graphic. He hit upon the idea of going across as an entertainer. He carried out this plan and has the distinction of being the first entering entertainer to enter the World War.

It was work that brought him in contact with thousands of men, many of whom were famous or whose later works brought them fame. In 1915 he worked for six



MR. SCOVELL

weeks with Harry Lauder on the Somme. He tells a Scottish story of his parting with Lauder. "Ben, me bairn," says Sir Henry to me, "I love ye like a son and I'm going to give ye something. Then he hands me this," and Mr. Scovell displayed an English farthing or halfpenny.

One of the greatest honors Scovell has ever been accorded, he believes, the poem written for him by Alan Seegar, author of "I Have a Rendezvous With Death." Mr. Scovell vividly describes the scene of his meeting with Seegar. Four officers were sitting about talking in the hollow silence that precedes a charge. Scovell came upon them, distributing chocolate and joking with the group. One of the four asked if he had any paper in his pack. Scovell handed over a wrinkled sheet on which Seegar wrote his last poem. Three days later the war poet was killed.

Seegar's Poem

The poem follows:
"Here to Ben Scovell, the actor:
Has been and always will be;
Chieftain of men in the trenches,
Of His Majesty, George, and of me.

May his years be as long as
That of the river
That drains all a continent's space
And then find a home like that
river.
In the infinite depths of God's grace.

This be the song of our parting,
After the bread and the salt,
I shall wait your return like a sentry:
I shall shoot at you if you don't halt."
Then came the bombing of Vimy Ridge and Scovell was among those picked up for dead. For months he lay between life and death. At the close of the war he came to America and for the past 11 years has been touring English-speaking countries giving his dramatic programs. This will mark his first appearance in Birmingham.

ANIMOSITY CAUSE LAID TO TOURISTS

American's Reckless Spending Is More Irritating Than National Debt, Speaker Says

"If any animosity is felt by the French people toward the Americans, it strikes me it is not so much because of the national debt as because of the general attitude of some American tourists toward the people of France," Raymond Girardin, managing editor of The Eccentric, said in his talk Tuesday noon to the Exchange club at the Lone Pine Inn. Mr. Girardin recently returned from a trip to Europe.

"The attitude often manifested by tourists is one of arrogance. They seem to feel they have the money to spend and that it will impress the French if they spend it lavishly. As a matter of fact, the French people are not running a side show and they are more disgusted than awed at reckless spending.

"Without exception, every tourist who told me on the return trip he had been insulted and that he had been insulted in Paris was either so arrogant that he would be overcharged in his own country or so gross he would be insulted."

Mr. Girardin mentioned several incidents where he found Parisians going far out of their way to be honest, thoughtful and courteous and said the French work and play in the same manner as any other people, except that they seem to have fewer inhibitions forced down their throats by the policeman on the corner."

"What's this big volume?"
"Oh, that's 'Songs the Soldiers and Sailors Sing.'"
"And what's this little pamphlet?"
"That's the exonerated edition."—American Legion Monthly.

"Movie" Proverbs

The longer the film the more familiar the theme song.
The nearer the centre of the row the fewer the disturbances.
The bigger the orchestra, the longer the conductor's hair.
The nearer the screen, the stiffer the neck.
The less talk on the picture, the more in the audience.—London Opinion.

Maid: I'm sorry to have to tell you that your wife kidnapped the children, took all the money in the house and eloped with the butcher.
"Well, dang that woman—I'm beginning to lose faith in her!"—Life.

Teacher: Can you hear a thing faster than you can see it?
Terrible Fessie: Yes'm, in the talks.—Life.

Two little urchins were watching a barber shave a customer's hair.
"Gee!" said one, "he's hunting 'em with a light."—Material Facts.

Dumb Dora has resigned from the Book of the Month Club. After a short rest she expects to join the Book of the Year Club.—Life.

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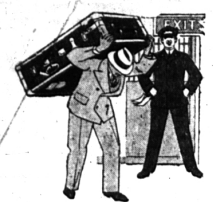
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