

**Birmingham's Progress Reflected
In Rapid Growth Of Postoffice**

One day during the Christmas season of 1916, 55 sacks of mail addressed to Birmingham arrived on a single train. It was such an enormous amount in those days that the station helper, who usually hauled the sacks between the station and postoffice in a three-wheeled cart, was forced to enlist the services of a drayman with a sleigh.

In front of the postoffice, then located at the corner of Pierce and Maple streets, the rig and its driver, hurriedly paused while a photographer took a picture.

One day just before last Christmas, 457 sacks of mail from one train were hauled from the Grand Trunk station to the postoffice in a modern truck, supplied by the United States government, and nobody thought anything about it.

A comparison of these two incidents embodies a summary of the history of the growth of the Birmingham postoffice, which in turn, reflects faithfully the history of the entire community during its most progressive period in the last two decades.

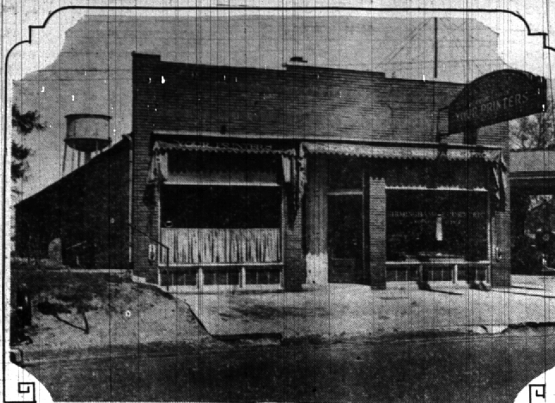
The Birmingham postoffice became a second class office on July 1, 1917, having fulfilled the requirements by doing an \$800,000 business the year before. In 1928 it was made a first class office, doing more than \$40,000 a year. This rating has been retained ever since.

When James W. Cobb, the present postmaster, was first appointed to the post in 1923, there were three clerks and three carriers. Now there are nine clerks and 11 carriers, making one rural delivery over four routes, two resi-



Postmaster James W. Cobb

ECCENTRIC ATTAINS HIGH RANK



ence deliveries and three bus-line deliveries daily.

The office last year did a business of more than \$54,000, an increase of 400 percent in the past 11 years. City delivery was first established on July 1, 1921. Previous to that time, two carriers had been engaged in an "experimental" delivery to determine whether the services was warranted.

Complete parcel post delivery service was inaugurated four years ago. Upwards of 15,000 first class incoming letters are handled daily, and about 11,000 outgoing letters. A total of 47,367 sacks of mail were handled during the year ending Dec. 31, 1928.

The postoffice has occupied four different buildings since 1917. On Aug. 2 of that year it moved from the Pierce-Maple location to the Huston building on North Woodward avenue. Four years later it moved into the building adjoining on the north, or what is now the F. J. Mulholland Company, remaining there until Dec. 2, 1923, when it moved into its present location on block north on the opposite side of the street.

An appropriation of \$150,000 for a new postoffice site, made during the last session of congress, indicates that another move will be made in the next few years.

T. C. Hotelling, who has been connected with the office since 1916 has served as assistant postmaster since July 1, 1917.

Growing, in the course of 53 years, from an inconspicuous four-page publication to Michigan's largest weekly newspaper, and continuing in those 53 years steadily to fulfill the function of Birmingham's "Home Town Newspaper," The Birmingham Eccentric today ranks among the foremost institutions not only of the village but of the entire county as well.

Established in 1878 by those two quick-witted and keenly observant chroniclers, George H. Mitchell and Almonr Whitehead "The Eccentric" today has attained

an enviable rank among weekly newspapers throughout the country. Its most recent honor was that of first place in advertising promotion among more than 11,000 weeklies, awarded last June by the National Editorial Association at its annual convention in Atlanta, Ga.

George R. Averill, the publisher, is president of the Michigan Press Association. The home of the Eccentric, shown in the picture above, houses the largest combined newspaper and job printing plant in Oakland County.

**Birmingham's Police Department
Mirrors Village's Progressive Spirit**

One of Birmingham's most pertinent claims to the honor of being southeastern Michigan's most progressive village rests in its up-to-date minute police department, composed of 16 experienced and efficient officers, one policeman and a secretary.

John F. Hackett, chief of the department, was appointed to the post in April, coming to Birmingham after serving six years as chief of police in East Lansing. Other superior officers are Lieutenant Richard Lawler, Sergeant William Green and Sergeant Doyle Service. Mrs. Alice Haldane is the policeman and Miss Carole Stoddard is clerk of the department.

Police headquarters, located in the Municipal Building, include offices for the chief, detective bureau and policeman; squad and locker rooms; desk headquarters, and two detention rooms, consisting of three cells for men and one for women and lodging room for vagrants.

Two motorcycles and three automobiles are included in the list of police equipment.

**FIREMEN SLATED
TO THRILL CROWD**

Spectacular Evolutions Promised At Demonstration On Hill School Ground

The firemen's demonstration to be given as part of the celebration on the Hill School grounds at 11:30 A. M. will include some of the most spectacular evolutions of the Birmingham fire department.

According to Fire Chief Vernon Griffith, a 55-foot ladder will be erected in record time, a stream of water will be shot 150 feet skyward, and two teams of firemen will engage in a "water polo" game with two streams of water and a barrel.

About 20 men, divided into two companies and including both regular and volunteer firemen, will take part in the demonstration. Chief Griffith said. The demonstration will last approximately 45 minutes.

**Modern, Full-Time Fire Department
Guards Village Lives And Property**

Birmingham's fine homes and business houses are guarded from the ravages of fire by one of the best equipped fire departments in the state in proportion to the size of the community.

The force consists of 30 men, nine of whom are on full-time duty and volunteers. Members of the department in the Municipal Building, Vernon Griffith, is the chief, having been appointed to the post last March to succeed William G. Olsen.

The equipment includes one truck with a 750-gallon pump; a combination truck with ladders, 2 1/2 inch hose, booster pump, tank and chemicals; and a third small truck with 40-gallon tank and gear pump equipped especially for fighting grass fires.

The department was established on a full-time basis on July 1, 1927. Space for the department in the Municipal Building includes garage for the trucks, modern sleeping quarters for the regular firemen, kitchen, dining room, lockers, showers, recreation and meeting room, two supply rooms, drill room, workshop and chief's office.

More than 500 water hydrants are ready for use at all times



Chief Hackett

**We Wonder If He
Kept His Promise**

The following story is literally "old as the hills" but it has been handed down as the stark truth and will bear repeating:

Judge Fairbridge was justice of the peace in Birmingham in those days, and he was looked upon with considerable reverence by the populace. He was not what could be termed strictly a modernist, being fully satisfied with the horse and buggy days.

One morning he met John Bodine down at the four corners and struck up a conversation.

"There's a rumor getting around about 'em putting in electric cars between here and Pontiac," quoth the judge. "Yuh," came back John Bodine, "I guess she's going through O. K."

Replied the austere judge, "Well, I don't see what they want to do that for. Who in hell will ride in 'em when they get 'em? I won't."

It might be said in the judge's favor that the old electric was quite some below the par of modern commuter service.



Chief Griffith

throughout the village. The 1931-32 village budget appropriation for the fire department was \$27,745.

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We employ a radio service man 12 months out of the year, a general service man, a carpet and linoleum man, a window shade expert, a stove repair man. We also operate the largest "Trade-In Store" in Michigan—covering 10,000 square feet, where we trade in all kinds of furniture and make liberal allowances. Two cars are maintained at our "Trade-In Store" for the benefit of our customers. Just phone 8174 and we will call for you and bring you back without any obligation of making a purchase.

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