Today offers me an opportunity to apply to life the best precepts and examples that I can bring to my mind. And I know that, in proportion as I leaven my acts with sincerity and humility, today will be a success.

The Birmingham Eccentric

12 PAGES, PART 1

FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR—NO. 25 | BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1931 | $2.00 PER YEAR—SINGLE COPIES 5c

THIS and THAT

By G. R. A.

One hundred-eighty-four thousand shoes scuffled over the downtown pavements of Detroit Tuesday of last week as 92,000 members of the American Legion paraded in annual convention. It was America's annual commemoration of a World War, and offered those who survived it a yearly opportunity to get together . . . to talk over the war days . . . to toss dull care away in the foam of ginger ale or beer . . . to pat one another on the burdened shoulder that seeks to bear today's problems . . . to hear speeches, and to gather in formal meeting to consider the problems of themselves in relation to their country. From every state in the Union they came. They had a good time, too—and who will say that these men whom organized HATE sent into battle 14 years ago were not entitled to their little fun and frolic in Detroit last week? Not many persons will censure those Legionnaires who forsook Detroit's water system for the Canadian beer system, if you will pause to ponder the entire subject. Because . . . .

What do you expect will happen to most young men if you take them from the peaceful and bloodless pursuits of everyday life, put uniforms on them, give them guns, and send them forth, with every resource of their country supporting them, to kill young men of other countries—young men whom they have never seen; young men whom they meet in any other way would be to make friends of them, not human targets for organized, inflamed HATE? Certainly, you would not expect all of these young men, after being transformed from peace-loving humans into soldier-killers, with many of the characteristics of a modern battlefield still fresh in their memories, to answer the roll call of a national reunion by making a scramble for the Gideon Bibles in Detroit's hotel rooms? By way of contrast, may you recall with me, that it's quite a mark of progress for men in uniform to lay down their bayonets for the much shorter instrument known as a corkscrew, (or the thing in a bottle opener of another type) don't you think? And so, though I personally obey the Eighteenth Amendment, I am quite willing to overlook the tendency of some of the Legion boys to slake their thirst as some of them do on annual parade . . . and this, Dry Folks, is my reason . . .

When the Legion gathers in annual convention, and some of them appease their Adams apples with the illegal stuff, they ONLY DO WHAT A GOOD MANY REGULAR CITIZENS DO EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR! And, if the law enforcing officers of Detroit winked at wholesale violations of the Eighteenth Amendment during the Legion Convention there last week, they did exactly what Police Chief Van Dusen Grady said they would do, in a statement issued several weeks ago when arid, voluble Rev. R. N. Holcapple gushed forth about drinking at Legion meetings; Chief O'Grady said "the Detroit police will look upon violation of the Volstead Act during the Legion Convention just as they have done in the past." (Let me repeat: I do not condone the Legionnaire drinking except as it is but the same act committed every day by my fellow citizens. When the rank and file of our citizenry sets a law-abiding example for the Legion, it will be time to condemn the ex-soldiers severely. True, if the Legionnaires refused to drink, in spite of their fellow-citizens' violation of the Eighteenth Amendment, the blankety-blanks would be better citizens. But, under present conditions, let's be fair in our appraisal.) My sympathies, after all, are with the Legionnaires. Although they may cause the almost complete suspension of the Eighteenth Amendment when they gather annually, they do it entirely in the spirit of fun—fun without viciousness; they live again olden days. Once a year, they feel, they are entitled to "go over the top, and take the enemy." . . . These brief paragraphs are here recorded in defense of those Legionnaires who patronized the improvised beer bars set up, I am told, in many places about downtown Detroit last week. Not as one who wishes to encourage violation of the law of the land do I publish these statements—but as one who wishes to see equality dispensed in this country to all people; as one who would bring to the attention of people the hypocrisy of elected and appointed law enforcing groups who, upon occasions like the Legion Convention, disregard their solemn duty to enforce the law, yet who upon other occasions place behind bars those who are unfortunate enough to be caught in the net of the hit-and-miss methods of modern American law enforcing agencies.

I, personnally, stand for law and order to the extent that I refuse to violate the Eighteenth

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SET HEARING ON TOWNSHIP FIRE PROJECT

Objections To Assessment Will Be Heard Thursday, Oct. 8

PLAN WINS APPROVAL

The Bloomfield Township Board announced yesterday that a public hearing will be held Thursday, Oct. 8, on the establishment of a special assessment district to provide for fire protection for all sections of the township lying outside incorporated limits.

The hearing will be held in the township offices in the Municipal Building here from 10 A. M. to 4 P. M. If no objections to establishment of the district are entered, the tax roll will be spread and a second hearing on the assessment will be held.

Calling of next Thursday's hearing came as the direct result of a series of meetings held by township residents during the past few weeks after several serious grass fires had threatened property in unprotected areas.

The last of these meetings was held at the Hickory Grove School house on East Square Lake road last Friday at which approval was again expressed of the township's proposal to establish a fire department of its own by the special assessment method.

The proposal calls for the expenditure of $5,000 for equipment, to consist of a truck with booster pump and 500-gallon water tank, and the hiring of four full-time firemen at $1,500 each per year. The truck would be assembled and housed by township employes in the township highway garage in Bloomfield Hills.

Although it is proposed in the beginning to maintain the department independently from either the Birmingham or Bloomfield Hills departments, Township Supervisor Perry A. Vaughan is conferring with fire-commissioners in Bloomfield Hills over the possibility of working out a co-operative arrangement for the future.

PREVENTION OF FIRE STRESSED

Village To Join State, Nation In Observance, Oct. 4-10

The Village of Birmingham will join the state and nation next week in the annual observance of Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 4 to 10.

Although there will be no general campaign beyond the ordinary routine of inspection and elimination of fire hazards, village officials and Fire Chief Verhon Griffin have urged the citizens of the community to interest themselves in stamping out menaces and lending their co-operation wherever possible in complying with the spirit of Governor Brucker's proclamation, issued last week.

A formal resolution taking cognizance of Fire Prevention Week and emphasizing its importance for community welfare was adopted by the Commission Monday night.

"Fire prevention and the elimination of hazards is carried out the year round in Birmingham, and there is therefore no need of a general clean-up campaign concentrated in any one period, but nevertheless we should take notice of Fire Prevention Week as a further aid in our attempt to rid the village of every fire menace," said Village Manager James W. Parry in urging adoption of the resolution.

The resolution, introduced by Commissioner Charles E. Lewis, follows:

"Resolved, that in accordance with the proclamation of the Governor of the state, proclaiming the period from Oct. 4 to 10 inclusive as Fire Prevention Week, that the citizens of the village be urged in every particular to interest themselves in the prevention and elimination of the danger of fire within the village."

EXCHANGITES TO ASK EXPENSE REDUCTIONS

The Birmingham Exchange Club Tuesday voted to adopt a resolution opposing further unnecessary expenditure of money by all governmental agencies and appointed a committee to incorporate the resolution in a petition which will be circulated throughout the county.

The committee is composed of James Taylor, H. T. Ellerby, George R. Averill and Oliver Kirk. The co-operation of all service clubs in the county will be solicited for circulation of the petition.

BUILDING CODE PUBLISHED

The new building code recently adopted by the Village Commission has been published in book form and a limited number of copies are now ready for distribution from the office of the village clerk in the Municipal Building, according to Donald C. Egbert, building inspector.

L. Virginia Hewitt, Club Leader, Dies After Long Illness

Mrs. Hewitt

Mrs. L. Virginia Hewitt, former Bloomfield Township treasurer and prominent Birmingham club woman, died at 5 P. M. yesterday in Harper Hospital, Detroit, where she had undergone an operation in July. She was 65 years old.

Mrs. Hewitt had been confined to the hospital from July 13 to Aug. 14, when she was believed sufficiently recovered to enable her to be removed to her home, 208 Oakland avenue. A relapse, however, forced her to enter the hospital again on Sept. 10, after which her condition steadily grew worse.

A resident of Birmingham since 1910, Mrs. Hewitt was identified with many club and civic activities in village, township and county. She served two terms as township treasurer, and last spring was a candidate for township clerk, but was defeated.

She was the first president of the Birmingham Zonta Club, and was one of the organizers of the Oakland County Tuberculosis Association. She was active in the early work of the Community House and has served at various times as president of the Child Conservation League and of the Woman's Civic League. She was also a member of the Woman's Literary Society.

She is survived by one son, Carpenter Hewitt, at home, and by a sister, Mrs. C. C. Fields of Birmingham.

The funeral will be held Friday at 2:30 P. M. from the S. O. Wylie Bell Funeral Home.

BALDWIN GRIDMEN MEET PORT HURON

Hope To Avenge Last Season Defeat; No Change In Lineup

Spurred on by its 12 to 0 victory over St. Anthony's in last Friday's opener, the Baldwin High School football team will journey to Port Huron Saturday, hopeful of avenging a 2 to 0 defeat suffered at Port Huron's hands last season.

Coach Robinson has worked his men hard this week in an attempt to iron out the rough spots which cropped up in the St. Anthony's game, and is looking forward to Port Huron with optimism.

It is quite probable that the same men who started last week's contest will again take the field at the opening kick-off Saturday. They are:

Shepherd, le; McClelland, lt; Wedge, lg; Usher, c; Hilty, rg; Miller, rt; H. Brelsford, re; Rochelleau, lh; Bunyan, rh; Harris, q; Hunt, fb.

PETITION SIDEWALK ON BALDWIN ROAD

A petition for a sidewalk on Baldwin road north from West Maple avenue was referred by the Village Commission Monday night to Manager James W. Parry for study and report. The petition was signed by 15 property owners on Lakeview drive and one on Harmon street.

PROBABLY LOOKED LIKE IT, ANYWAY

"Say, do you know where you are?"

Sergeant Delos Anderson of the Bloomfield Hills police asked the question Tuesday night of a motorist who appeared to be having a hard time driving straight and staying on the right side of Woodward avenue.

The startled driver pulled himself together.

"Certainly," he said, with emphasis. "I'm just two blocks from Grand Boulevard."

He was taken before Justice Floyd S. Buck yesterday morning when a $50 fine for drunk and disorderly conduct helped him straighten out his geography. He said his name was Forest White, 4129 West Jefferson street, Detroit.

A companion, Ralph Hindson, 3569 Sutton avenue, Detroit, paid $25 for the same offense.

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—Adv. 21tf

WHO BOOSTED OUR TAXES?

An Editorial

By GEORGE R. AVERILL

One of the most powerful words in the English language that stimulates people to action consists of only three letters. It is spelled "t-a-x." The practical application of it Tuesday by the State Tax Commission brought to the Birmingham Community House, where State Tax Commissioners Edwin F. Saunders and Alvin C. Richards held a review of the new valuation placed upon Bloomfield Township, more than a thousand property owners, each intent upon learning how much, or how little, his assessed valuation had been boosted. Increases were revealed varying from a small percentage to as high as 400 percent.

It was the first time in the history of Bloomfield Township that a state tax assessor supplanted entirely the local supervisors in the matter of arriving at an assessed valuation on local property. It was necessitated because of the inability of the Oakland County Board of Supervisors to arrive, among themselves, at an agreed equitable equalization of their respective tax rolls; and the coming of the State Tax Commission has been in the offing for several years.

It may interest you to know just how your supervisor, after making his annual assessment in the spring, defends it against the remainder of the county supervisors, as they meet for equalization purposes in Pontiac each June.

At the June meeting the equalization committee of the supervisors appointed by the chairman, holds a session to review the rolls presented by the various township and city supervisors. Each supervisor presents his total roll, and does all that he reasonably can to keep it as low as possible. This results, too often, in a scrap among the supervisors—which for many years was eventually settled by the "horse trade." But for the past four or five years, the supervisors have been unable to quit scrapping, resulting in some one or more townships or cities calling on the State Tax Commission.

Several times the state group has sent men into Oakland County these men would go into a unit of government under dispute, make some random assessments, and adjudicate the county equalization. But, about a year and a half ago, the State Tax Commission, feeling that Oakland's unceasing squabble called for a complete re-assessment, decided to send its field men into the county, where about 54 of them have been to date, Tuesday's meeting in the Community House was for the purpose of reviewing the assessment work done by the field men in Bloomfield Township.

Most of Oakland County's supervisors feel that the city of Pontiac is chiefly responsible for the State Tax Commission's re-assessment of the county. They believe that Pontiac has dominated the Oakland County Board of Supervisors for many years. Pontiac has eight supervisors. The chairman of the board, of course, appoints the equalization committee. Therein lies the tale of the long battle among the various Oakland County townships and cities for equality. After more than five years of Pontiac's domination of county equalization powers, the entire Board of Supervisors became a hotbed of political maneuvering. Two years ago, when Robert Y. Moore was made chairman, he lead a movement to oust the Pontiac clique, and was successful. Moore is now a member of the County Board of Auditors. But the snatch had been applied to the smoldering fire; a blaze was started, a conflagration followed—and right now Oakland County is receiving, at a time when depression and delinquent taxes rest hardest upon its tax-burdened shoulders, "the gift of the magi," in the form of unprecedented boosts in assessed valuation.

The history of Oakland County's tax dilemma is the history of human nature—revealed in the inability of people to keep their own house in order. Pontiac, as you may see, the elected supervisors of the various county units of government placed in office to protect the interests of their respective citizens, defeated their own purpose—simply because they were not equal to arriving at a satisfactory determination of their mutual problems. Like a scrapping married couple who became embroiled over some domestic problem and, in a moment of foolishness, called in the police, so have the Oakland County supervisors called in the State Commission. As in the case of the married couple who aired their problems in court, finally resulting in paying the court costs, so do the taxpayers of EVERY piece of property in Oakland County find themselves penalized in the increased tax assessment placed against them this year.

It is unfortunate, too, that Pontiac, with its great industries, its admitted leaders in industry and civics, did not see far enough ahead during the past 10 years to show a fair-minded leadership in the problem of Oakland County's mountainous tax burdens. Pontiac, so many people close to the picture feel, sought only to keep its own tax valuations down on the county's equalization sheet. It was, of course, successful for many years. But, in the end, as now revealed by the State Tax Commission's new assessment, Pontiac will pay, and pay, and pay. And so will the remainder of the county. The conclusion of the county tax scrap has proved a victory for the state's tax coffers, and a defeat for the Oakland County property owners' pocketbooks.

A wise Frenchmen said, many, many years ago: "Taxation consists in plucking the most feathers with the least amount of squawking."

In Michigan, it appears, taxation consists of plucking the most feathers without any attention being paid to the squawking.

And, in the meantime, the list of delinquent taxes soars higher and higher.

Unless officials of Michigan create sources of tax revenue that lead to places other than real estate holdings, people interested in the subject prophesy a grave outlook for organized government.

As it begins to appear as though Gov. Wilbur M. Brucker would do better to refrain from gallivanting about the state, and project a course of action that at least promises some relief to those who look to him for governmental leadership.

VILLAGE OPENS GAS RATE PROBE

Lewis Says Consumers Power Charge for Furnace Heat Is Too High

Investigation of the rates charged by the Consumers Power Company for gas used to heat furnaces in Birmingham is under way today on a suggestion of Commissioner Charles E. Lewis at the Village Commission meeting Monday night.

Mr. Lewis asked James W. Parry, village manager, to look up the franchise under which the Consumers Power Company is furnishing gas in the village to determine what clause bear on the fixing of rates, and asked Village Attorney Clare H. Ogden to investigate the legality of the village fixing its own rates.

Mr. Lewis claimed he thought the present rate was too high, and his suggestion for an investigation was interpreted as a move looking towards an attempt to have it lowered.

His suggestion involved especially gas for furnaces, the rate for which is higher than that for cooking appliances since an initial hook-up charge is demanded for the former but not for the latter. Mr. Parry said yesterday that any explanation of this difference might be a question for the State Public Utilities Commission to settle.

Work Begins On Woodward Sewer

Work of laying the deep sewer along the east side of Woodward avenue between Lincoln and Clawson roads began yesterday with the opening of digging operations at a point about 500 feet south of Clawson road.

A full force of eight men and two machines was put to work on the job immediately and will be retained at full speed until the project is completed, which will be in about 35 days, according to W. C. Russell of Birmingham, who is in charge of the job for the R. H. Baker Company, the contractors.

The work was to have been begun last week, but delay in shipping the tile, nearly half of which is 72-inch in size, interferred, Mr. Russell said.

The job is being financed by a three-way agreement between village, state and contractor which will relieve the village of the necessity of selling bonds.

HAVE YOU MET?—

Mr. and Mrs. Edgerly W. Austin, who with their little daughter, Marilyn Jane, reside at 211 Aspen road. Mr. and Mrs. Austin moved to Birmingham on Sept. 19 from Detroit, where they had made their home for the past five years. Their daughter, who is six years old, attends the Quarton School. Mr. Austin is associated with the Timken Roller Bearing Company.

Protests Swamp State Tax Commission Over Sky-High Valuation On Township

Commander Stevens, New Legion Head, Is Visitor Here

Takes Dry Stand, Comments On Bonus During Stay With Kin

Henry L. Stevens, Jr., the new 35-year-old national commander of the American Legion, paid a short and unheralded visit to Birmingham Saturday, the plaudits of 100,000 World War veterans who made him their youngest leader at the Detroit convention still ringing in his ears.

He was the guest of Rev. D. L. Woodward, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Birmingham, and Mrs. Woodward, for lunch at the Woodward home, 911 Bates street.

Mr. Stevens and Mr. Woodward are first cousins, and grew up together as boys in the little town of Warsaw, N. C., where Stevens still lives. The commander's wife and brother, E. Walker Stevens, were also guests at the Woodward home.

—Courtesy Detroit News.
Henry L. Stevens, Jr.

Leave For Washington

The commander's party remained in Birmingham for about an hour, after which they left for Detroit, en route immediately for Washington, D. C. where Stevens was to confer with President Hoover Monday to invite the chief executive to be the principal speaker in the American Legion's annual Armistice Day program over a nation-wide radio hook-up on Nov. 11.

"After that," Stevens said in his deep-voiced, genial southern drawl, "I'm going home and go fishing for a whole week."

Though only of medium stature, Stevens nevertheless gives a lasting impression of unassuming power and dominance. He has the broad shoulders and narrow hips of an athlete, the poised bearing and command of the trained officer. Virility exhales from his every fiber. His black hair is streaked with gray, though still thick and slightly curly.

Takes Dry Stand

Though the commander of an organization which has been the butt of criticisms of reformers, especially of dry leaders, almost

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ATTACK TAKES JOHN HANNA

Former Merchant And Postmaster, 73, Held Many Public Offices

Nearly half a century of business pioneering and public service came to an end Saturday with the death of John Hanna, 73 years old, former village merchant and postmaster, who died at 7:30 A. M. following a heart attack at his home, 154 Forest avenue.

Mr. Hanna, whose name survives in the Hanna block at the corner of Maple and Woodward avenues, had been in poor health since 1923, when heart trouble forced him to retire from active life and to spend his winters in Florida.

He had been a resident of Birmingham for 53 years, and of Oakland County practically all his life. He was born in Ireland, and was brought to this country when he was only three years old by his family which settled first in Royal Oak Township, later moving to Southfield.

Worked For Bigelow

Coming to Birmingham as a young man, Mr. Hanna was first employed at the combination grocery store, postoffice and express office conducted by J. A. Bigelow until 1884, when he went to Detroit for a year to assist in the management of a hotel on Grand River avenue.

In 1885 he went into the meat and grocery business with Alec Park in a store on the Northeast corner of Woodward and Maple avenues, where he remained until 1892 when he purchased the building at the corner of Pierce and Maple streets and opened up a private business.

He was made postmaster in 1899, and held the position for 14

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HUGHES FREED IN $5,000 BAIL

Negligent Homicide Charged In Deaths Of Two Women

George A. Hughes, 36 years old, 156 Waddington road, Birmingham, was released today in $5,000 bond on a charge of negligent homicide as the result of an accident Friday night at the corner of Woodward avenue and Thirteen Mile road in which a car he was driving crashed into a second machine, resulting in the deaths of two women, and seriously injuring two others.

Mrs. Fanny Sleeper; 70 years old, of 8716 Beaubien street, Detroit, died while being taken to a hospital in the Kimball-Bailey ambulance. Mrs. Frances P. Yeats, 76 years old, of 345 East Grand boulevard, Detroit, died in Royal Oak Private Hospital Saturday morning.

They were travelling south on Woodward avenue in a car driven by Mrs. Yeats' daughter, Miss Elise H. Yeats, 40 years old, when it was struck by Hughes' car coming north. Miss Yeats suffered severe head injuries, but will recover. Mrs. W. I. L. Stearns, 60 years old, of 425 Lincoln road, Grosse Pointe, another passenger in the car, is still in serious condition.

Hughes, who is a prominent insurance agent with offices in Detroit, was also badly injured, but had sufficiently recovered by Monday to enable him to be ar-

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PLAYERS' SEASON TO OPEN OCT. 16

Three One-Act Plays Cast For Production At First Performance

The Village Players' 1931-32 season will open Friday evening, Oct. 16, with the production of three one-act plays. Casts for the plays have been chosen and the productions are in rehearsal, each under different directors.

Each play requires two characters. Mrs. Warner Forsyth and Mrs. Charles Asper have been cast in "Society Notes," which is being directed by Mrs. Russell Mrs. Clement. Dr. J. B. Hassberger is the director and Mrs. C. G. Eden the assistant director.

Trunks sent to and from Detroit Railway station. Special Rates.
SHAW BROS. GARAGE 136 Brownell
Adv. 26tf

Dancing at K. P. Hall, Oct. 2.
—Adv. 28

Bloomfield Residents See Assessments Jump 50 To 400 Percent

PLAY 'DISCRIMINATION'

Saunders Refuses To Answer Questions of Property Owners

Bloomfield Township property owners turned out in defiant hundreds at the State Tax Commission hearing here Tuesday, milled about the Community House in confused helplessness for 10 hours, and then went home, discouraged and defeated by the sight of figures which showed the assessed valuations on their property doubled, tripled and quadrupled.

Some stood for hours on end at long, slow-moving lines leading up to a bare table where stacks of cards revealed the new valuations. Others, discouraged by the long wait, drooped out, shrugged their shoulders and quit the room, convinced they could do nothing about it.

Most of the patient ones who stayed to see, returned with formal protests to two members of the State Tax Commission, seated at another table, that their valuations were so high that the increase was incomprehensible.

Would Refuse to Pay

Scores stated frankly they would refuse to pay any tax levied on such a figure. Scores of others said they would be unable to pay. Some claimed the valuations were far above the cost of reproducing their buildings at the sale price they would ask for their lots. The protests were patiently heard and calmly filed away.

Although the total valuation of the township as estimated in the state's figures was not computed, Perry A. Vaughan, township supervisor, estimated at the close of the hearing that it would be close to $55,000,000. The township Board of Review last June evaluated the township at $32,805,55.

If the state's figures are allowed to stand, Mr. Vaughan said, Bloomfield Township next year will be asked to pay twice as much in state and county taxes as it has in the past.

Big Estates Hit

Increases on individual pieces of property ran from 50 percent to 400 percent. Large estates were boosted to especially high figures. The Oakland Hills Country Club was raised 125 percent, the Oakland Hills Country Club and George G. Booth's estate in Bloomfield Hills each 100 percent.

Charges of discrimination against Bloomfield Township and against Oakland County on the part of the State Tax Commission continued to cloud the air at the hearing, after Edward F. Saunders, one of the members of the commission, had refused either to confirm or deny reports that the state's new valuations will be applied this year only to Oakland County, and only in sections of that.

These reports, which caused the Board of Supervisors last week to adopt a resolution threatening the Tax Commission with an injunction if they attempt to col-

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CALLS MASS-MEETING

Charles J. Shain, chairman of the Property Owners' Division, announced yesterday that a public mass-meeting will be called some time next week for the special consideration of township tax problems.

"From what occurred at the meeting Tuesday," Mr. Shain said, "it is apparent that Bloomfield Township property owners are in need of an opportunity to study the tax situation thoroughly and carefully, as they have not done in the past. We hope to afford them this opportunity at the mass meeting."

The exact time and place of the meeting will be announced later.

Here's A Hint—

Maybe you think that unused piece of furniture can't be sold, or maybe you have a room or a home that has been vacant for months—somewhere in Birmingham you can find people who want just what you have to offer. Let Want Ads help you. They are read by thousands of people.

Phone **11** *today!*

The Birmingham Eccentric