

The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 1938

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events
which have news value and which are written by persons not
connected with the staff of the Eccentric. All copy must be
presented before noon on "Monday." The right to use the
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to allow insertion for that week. The Eccentric is not responsible
for the return of copy not used. The Eccentric is not responsible
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In the adoption of "Birmingham's Annexation
Policy," a tremendous valuable service to the tax-
payers was performed by the City Commission last week. It is im-
possible to conjecture, at this moment, the extent of
financial savings to local citizens that this instrument
will give in time to come. For this policy, while not
mandatory upon either the present or future City
Commission to follow, certainly creates a
fact in precedence that cannot easily be overlooked
at any time goes on.

Just what does this policy mean?
In brief, it holds that Birmingham's present area,
now only 50 per cent improved upon, containing be-
tween 11,000 and 12,000 people, can support many
thousands more; it means that with the increased
population will come more homes, more buildings of
every description, each of which will bear a portion
of the tax burden; it means that present land within
Birmingham will not have to face continued com-
petition with adjacent lands outside the City which,
from time to time in the past, have been annexed—
thus keeping the use value of vacant land already
within Birmingham below what it should be. It
means a lower tax rate!

Birmingham is—basically—is a residential area,
and support for our City and public schools de-
pends almost entirely upon taxes levied upon property
within the City's limits; and to date most of this prop-
erty has been depreciated because of unnecessary
past annexations.

A City like an industry, ought to be developed
along lines in keeping with human demands for the
use of land for, in the case of a residential area,
homes, or for an industry, factory sites. You would
consider the management of an industry foolish to
buy too much land, at the expense of expanding its
machinery; then why isn't it equally foolish for a
community to annex to it much more land than its
pocketbook can afford to own—and we base this
logic upon the universal fact that a too rapid ex-
pansion of the area of all cities tends to result in
oversaturation of vacant property within such cities.
Certainly a look into Birmingham's experience with
past annexations proves that too many of them have
become financial liabilities. And that means only one
thing: it means that people who own homes pay
more than their just share of the cost of operating
local government.

What Birmingham needs is the greater develop-
ment of the 70 per cent of its present vacant prop-
erty, before more lands are annexed. (We exclude from
this the proposal now before the City, which will be
voted on in April.)

City Treasurer H. Harold Carson has shown that,
during the period of a few years ago when the late
State Senator Andrew L. Moore sought to have all
delinquent taxes cancelled, improved property in
Birmingham owed about \$90,000 in back taxes; Mr.
Carson also showed that at that same time VACANT
PROPERTY owed more than \$600,000 in back taxes.
That is, the city who have lived through a serious
look for revenues in times of depression, doesn't it?

Neither we nor the City Commission blame any-
body for past annexation policies—policies that were
part of those glorious days (2) when every city, town,
and cross-roads honestly felt that the straight-
en-up to an earthly Heaven was to be "bigger and
better." But we who have lived through a serious
depression, and have witnessed the results of the
speculative use of vacant land, ought to chart a
safer course for the future.

That is what Birmingham's City Commission did,
we feel, in adopting its "Annexation Policy." As
taxpayers who are thus protected, would it not
be a fine gesture of appreciation on your parts to
let your City Commissioners know of your grati-
tude? Really, why not write them a "thank you" note—
it will make 'em feel that you appreciate their
efforts on their behalf.

Dr. Alexis Carrel, one of the leading scientists of his
generation, proposes a study of the process of aging.
He forecasts a longer human life when we
learn to regulate what he calls the "inner time." Im-
proved tissues and blood will make possible longer
years for the average person, he says.

Dr. Carrel calls attention to the "physiological
clock" by which some persons of forty are really as
old as others of sixty. He thinks that the hands of
the clock are the blood and check the clock the body
issues and he surmises that the marring is
perhaps the mind. Without posing as an expert,
we revert to the current slang to remark that the
good doctor seems "to have something there."

Certainly, the mental attitude of individuals has
a great deal to do with the state of their health. In-
cidentally, Dr. Carrel is the scientist who took a
small piece of heart from a chicken in 1912, to prove
that living flesh will last forever. The bird, chicken,
washed every few days to remove waste products
from the cells, is still growing actively and showing
no signs whatever of "growing old." He maintains
that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

At last the Grand Trunk Railroad is going to pay a
portion of its debt to the State of Michigan!

That news came out
of Lansing the other
day when officials of
the State and the rail-
road got together and signed an agreement regarding
the total cost of the Grand Trunk's new right-of-
way, setting the figure at \$5,440,101.50, or just
\$227,622.36 less than the State's actual expenditure
of \$6,367,723.86.

Under the terms of the contract, the railroad
was supposed to start the first of 15 annual pay-
ments to Michigan in 1930; since this date, however,
the matter has been in the courts, for the railroad
contested the State's figures. During this seven year
period the State did not get a cent of interest on the
debt.

If you would add together the total interest charge
on the State's expenditure, plus the decrease of
nearly a million dollars, created by the final ad-
justment, you would get a fair idea of just how
easy it is to finance a new railroad right-of-way
at the expense of your government.

For years The Eccentric has periodically reminded
its readers of this situation. It has been a glowing
emblem in our memory. And it also reveals to all who
would ponder it this fact: that politics is a mighty
power business. For through the administrations
of Republican and Democratic Governors alike,
delay in paying for the new right-of-way has been
made possible by the almost inanimate processes of
politics.

If we were a member of the State Legislature we'd
ask for an investigation of the reason why the State
of Michigan failed to get every cent it expended,
under a mutual contract, for acquiring a new right-
of-way and building through a new railroad system.

Certainly, the loss of several millions of dollars
merits such a procedure.

Will flying boats, carrying forty or fifty passengers,
supplant the huge liners that now plow the seas of
the world?

That is the question
raised by the report of
the Maritime Commis-
sion, which makes a distinction between the so-
called "luxury" passenger ship and the smaller, more
serviceable vessels.

The superliner, built to catch the high class trade,
costs around \$5,000,000, with a "life" of about
twenty years. Huge flying boats, on the other hand,
costing about \$1,000,000, will carry passengers
across the Atlantic six times as fast and at prices ex-
pected to be much cheaper than super-liner charges.
A fleet of eighteen flying boats could offer the same
"passenger service in point of number as that given
by a Queen Mary.

Already the trend of maritime circles is to regard
the flying boat and the dirigible as another "ship" in
service. The Navy, we understand, treats its patrol
planes as independent units, and the flying schedule
between New York and Bermuda has been doubled
to take care of the demand. Steamship companies,
even now, are looking to the flying boat to supplant
floating ships in express service and some of them
are considering the addition of aircraft to their fleets.

Increasingly reliable performance by huge flying
boats and their ability to maintain schedules are
admitted. A sixty-ton flying boat is expected to carry
passengers 5,000 miles non-stop at 175 miles an
hour, and comfort in the air is making great strides.
While the likely competition of flying boats was
originally for the failure of the commission to recom-
mend the construction of a luxury liner, there were
other factors, summarized as follows: Excessive
investment, speedy obsolescence and expensive oper-
ation. Instead of building such vessels for sentimental
reasons to serve as window dressing for a defunct
operation, the commission favors "fireproof,
vibrationless, attractive and economical vessels of
reasonable size and speed, distinguished by the ut-
most in safety and comfort, suitable for business or
pleasure travel, available for national defense and
manned by competent, resourceful, and disciplined
personnel."

The cost of war is mounting rapidly as nations
develop new and improved weapons. Since the last
great struggle tanks and airplanes have as-
sumed increased importance, and defense
programs involve additional costs. Mechanization
of army corps, together with speedier transportation
plans, add to the sums that heavy fighting will in-
volve.

Experts have estimated that an army of 150,000
men, in a major battle, could use \$2,000,000 worth
of ammunition. The rest of the soldiers and their
subsistence is calculated as a minor item in the ex-
pense column, but the destruction of material would be
a considerable factor in costs.

Not only is the future war sure to cost much
more, but the expense of "keeping the peace" is
mounting. New battleships cost \$60,000,000. Flying
fortresses to bomb enemies are worth \$250,000
each. Defense measures, necessarily prepared before
hostilities, require huge sums, as can be seen from
Great Britain's huge \$45,000,000 rearmament
program.

Here's news for ladies who have been blamed for
careless driving of automobiles!

Paul Hoffman, president of
the Automotive Safety Founda-
tion, contradicts the popular
idea that the woman driver is
dangerous, saying they are proportionately safer than
men.

Statistically, perhaps, the automobile executive is
right, but he never will succeed in persuading the
male driver that he knows anything about it. Of
course, women will accept his statement unthinkingly.

Cautious men, without their own statistics to re-
fute Mr. Hoffman, will not say much on the sub-
ject around their female kin, but, at the first nar-
row escape on the road, you'll likely hear them ex-
claim: "No wonder; a woman was driving that
car!"

THE AVERAGE BOY OR GIRL, if not subjected to the
so-called civilized teachings of the world, would be-
come more of a jungle creature than he or she does
become, when older. That's why every right activ-
ity in mental power to see things as they are, the
only real basis for the machinery of government.

IT MAKES YOU WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING OVER THERE



Congressional Comment

Representative A. J. Dondero
of Michigan

Current reports indicate an up-
turn in the number of jobs to
an extent which causes deep con-
cern. Estimates of the number of
unemployed vary from 6.8 to 8.5
million, and the reports of the
recent unemployment census are
made known to us, we have no ac-
curate information available.
Even then, it is believed that the
number of jobs will increase
during the period of census con-
sideration. So far, however, the
number of jobs is not increasing
fast enough to meet the demand.
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Figures from officials of private
business of this Nation reveal
that direct relief this year has
cost about \$100,000,000 more
than last year. In 1936, relief
cost was \$100,000,000 more
than in 1935. This distressing
fact was an as a warning to
the stock market reaction and
business to our economic health.

Manufacturing industries which
took on 100,000 workers in Sep-
tember last year, had lost 20,000
in September this year. Railroads
took on 8,000 additional employ-
ees in 1936 and reduced them to
4,000 in 1937. Building con-
tractors added 1,000 in 1936
and lost 2,000 in 1937. The
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WASHINGTON LETTER

BY SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

To Spend or Save Is Roosevelt's
Unsolved 1938 Business Problem

WASHINGTON. — Reports
made to the President by
his close advisers on the con-
dition of business are conflict-
ing, and it's anybody's guess
which ones he will finally believe.
If that could be accurately fore-
casted, it would be possible to
clearly what will be the admin-
istration's attitude in the new
year.

The conservatives who have
Roosevelt's ear are telling him
that business will revive more
quickly if he adopts a "hands
off" policy. Contradicting those
who preach that "lack of confi-
dence" is responsible for the pres-
ent "recession." Dr. Leon Hen-
derson, chief economist of WPA,
says:

"The plain truth of the matter
is that business in general has
too much confidence, and specu-
lation in inventory buying."
He supports this point by say-
ing further, "When a corpora-
tion is uncertain about the fu-
ture, it does not buy materials,
supplies and new machinery.
Business went blindly ahead
even when many stern warn-
ings were signalling that the
great mass of consumers lacked
purchasing power to take their
goods off the market."

Great Britain 847,000,000
France 716,000,000
Japan 207,000,000
U. S. 227,000,000
Since the World War pe-
riod, the trend in armament out-
lay by the powers of the world
has been upward. You will note
that Germany spent more for na-
tional defense last year than did
the United States. The Soviet Union
spent more for national defense
last year than did the United States.
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Random Remarks
Lewis I. Dublin, health statisti-
cian, says: "We are not likely to have an
important influenza outbreak in
1938."
Pat McCarran, U. S. Senator from
Nevada, says: "We should have been out
of China long ago."
Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, says:
"The attainment of durable
peace is still a matter of desire
and hope rather than a reality."

The United States, along with
the other countries of the world,
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A recent estimate by the
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Happenings of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—
The Items That Make Up The Historical Background
Of The Birmingham Of Today.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The smiling face of Miss Rose
Albion was one of the "old fa-
miliar" we were glad to see dur-
ing the fun-making last week.

Bowser is gone, and the average
small boy has other cash. He was
a good boy, but he had his failings.
As to so many of us mortals, too,
must be that hard cider and cold
weather have knocked out "Old
Jack" of Drayton Plains. We are
hoping to hear from your lady.

John M. Trask, of Pontiac,
goth about with his face an inch
thick, arrived by the arrival of a
battering baby boy at his home
just in time for Christmas.

Statistics show that there is
less liquor and tobacco consumed
in the month of January than any
other month in the year. This
shows that the boys really do
swear off a while.

Over 300 visitors and friends
New Year's Eve at Valley
View in Monday night, and
had a good time. Frank Webb
and family, of Windsor, were
present, and passed a very jolly
day.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Mrs. Cora Mayhew on Twentieth
street, underneath all the
New Year's Eve. Refreshments
were served and a jolly time was
had by all.

Christmas was like Sunday all
day long, and nothing doing on
the streets all day. And with all
the stores closed, the city was
Birmingham is a metropolitan
little city.

Stagnant is also a candidate
for the position of post mas-
ter of Birmingham. While all the
other candidates are busy fixing
up their fences, Sammie just smiles
cheerfully, as he hands out 13
stamps a minute.

Paying taxes is all the rage now.
Collector Carter meets all with a
smile, child-like and bland, as he
explains how like the ducks it
costs to build a new school building,
and \$1,000 for fishing off a
few more out of the school of
the assessment was made, pay in-
terest on money and a thousand other
ways for it to go. Oh, no, really
today, the treasurer's job is as
hard as ever.

What about our dances and dance
clubs? Have our young people all
grown up to dance? Or have they
not? Or is the trouble? With
fine weather and the loss of music,
a couple last night. Odeon.

FIVE YEARS AGO

Lighting the city Township
board to "perform" the day-
to-day work of the city.

Tax payment reach \$81,000.
We don't have to pay for it.
We don't have to pay for it.
We don't have to pay for it.

Public relief fund falls to Town-
ship. Unit system becomes effec-
tive.

These, too, are Pillars of Our Prosperity.

WABEEK STATE BANK

WABEEK BLDG.
CONDENSED
Statement of Condition
at the close of business

DECEMBER 31, 1937

RESOURCES

Cash on hand and due from other Banks \$ 774,436.38
U. S. Gov't Securities, direct and fully guaranteed 3,221,500.00
U. S. Gov't Securities, direct and fully guaranteed pledged to secure Public Funds in deposit 215,000.00
Other Marketable Securities 509,000.00
Other Marketable Securities Pledged to secure Public Funds on deposit 94,000.00
Loans and Discounts—Secured 173,549.81
Loans and Discounts—Unsecured 38,577.26
Real Estate Mortgages 173,930.23
Banking House and Site 20,000.00
Furniture and Fixtures 25,830.06
Other Resources 39.71
Total \$5,274,930.02

LIABILITIES

Capital \$ 300,000.00
Surplus 103,000.00
Undivided Profits 35,188.12
Other Liabilities 2,550.00
Public Funds on deposit—Secured by U. S. Gov't and other Securities 292,499.68
Public Funds on deposit—Unsecured 456,193.26
Commercial Deposits 2,376,115.75
Deposits from Banks and Trust Companies 129,000.00
Savings Deposits 1,576,313.02
Total \$5,274,930.02

Officers

W. M. CORNELLIS, President
FRANK COLEMAN, Vice-President
HENRY T. EWALD, Cashier
B. F. SCHULTE, Vice-President, and Asst. Cashier

Directors

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GEORGE B. JUDSON
W. R. YAW