

Democracy, as practiced in the United States, is a maddening process of self-government; but it is the best for individual freedom yet devised by mankind.

# The Birmingham Eccentric

PART TWO

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR—NO. 2

BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1940

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## Christian Science Meetings Started Here in '16

### Church Building Erected in 1927 At Cost of \$120,000

(Continuing its series of church histories, The Eccentric presents this week the story of Birmingham's Christian Science congregation. It was written by a member of the church.)

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Birmingham, had its inception early in 1916 when some of the Christian Scientists who had come from Detroit to live in this town village met at their homes to conduct services. The First Sunday School lessons were taught in automobiles parked outside of the

homes. By September the congregation had grown to such an extent that more central quarters seemed necessary and the hall room of the former picture theater located on North Woodward avenue, and a smaller room in the same building was leased for use of the church.

As the lease provided for only Sunday services, the first Thanksgiving Service was held in the two-story picture theater located on North Woodward avenue. At this service opportunity was afforded for the attendants to express gratitude for healing through Christian Science treatment.

Up to this time, this had been an informal group but because the members were desirous of having a permanent home, the Christian Science Society of Birmingham, a branch of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., was founded in May, 1924. The first pastor was Dr. Frank C. Carter and as Second Reader, Mrs. Frances Reineke. A building fund was established and \$1,000, which was augmented by contributions from the members of the congregation from time to time.

The matter of a church home remained uppermost in the thought of the members, and a building site was purchased in the east end of town, but this was later sold when the property of the Birmingham Club was purchased for \$11,000. This money provided a permanent meeting place, centrally located, with ample room for the growing Sunday School, and a leading room on the main street of the village. This seemed rather a large obligation for the small organization to assume, but the wisdom of their action was revealed when property values in that section of the village were enhanced to the extent of furnishing a large group having no room necessary for a new building—the one in use.

The members were ever mindful of their opportunities to serve the cause of Christian Science, as early records indicate establishment of literature distribution, war-time activity, and the giving of lessons to the first child in the high school in 1918, filling to capacity the auditorium, a large group having come from Detroit in chartered interurban cars, as well as by automobile. Copies of Mrs. Wasey's writings were first placed in the public library in 1920, and a lending library in the large room was established in June, 1924, with the aid of the Trustees under the Will of Mary Baker Eddy.

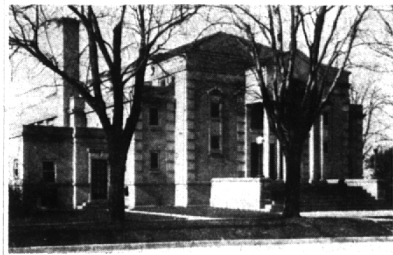
**Birmingham Expands**  
During all this time, Birmingham had been passing through a period of expansion, and the church quarters seemed inadequate to accommodate the growing attendance. This again brought up the matter of church building and the first plans were considered and in the spring of 1925, the site on which the present building now stands was purchased at a net cost of \$9,000. A building committee and a real estate and finance committee were appointed and proceeded with the disposal of the Woodward avenue property and the submission of plans for the new structure.

It was realized that with those steps being taken for the establishment of a new home, the advancement to the status of a church would be a step in progress. There were on the rolls a sufficient number of names to meet the requirements of The Mother Church, but as yet no practitioner who was registered in The Christian Science Journal was among the membership. This requirement was met within the next few months when the name of Mrs. Frances M. Reineke, one of the charter members, appeared as a registered practitioner in Birmingham. In July, 1924, the organization officially became First Church of Christ, Scientist, Birmingham, Mich.

Plans for the new church began to take definite form. The Real Estate and Finance Committee reported an offer of \$104,000 for the Woodward avenue property, which was accepted. Plans for the new church building were presented by the Building Committee, approved by the membership and the contract let in September, 1926.

**Cornerstone Laid**  
The cornerstone was laid December 7, 1926. The first snow of the winter had fallen during the night, and before daylight a small group gathered for the services. They were conducted by Mr. Albert Wasey, first reader, and those attending were the Board of Directors.

### SCIENTISTS' CHURCH HOME



This is the home of Birmingham's First Church, Christ Scientist, built here in 1927 at the corner of Chester street and Willis. There are extensive Sunday School rooms on the ground floor, while the Reading Room adjoins on the south. The auditorium will seat nearly 400 persons.

rectors, Building Committee, choir officers and a small group of members.

Favorable winter weather aided greatly in the early completion of the building, and on Communion Sunday, July 1927, the first service was held in the new building, although it was incomplete in some details. The reading room was moved into the building in August and in September, after a summer vacation, Sunday School reopened at the same hour as church services in its new room on the ground floor.

In order to dedicate a Christian Science church, it is necessary that it be free from all idolatry. This having been accomplished, the church was dedicated Sunday, June 10, 1928. The members' hearts were filled with gratitude to God for the completion of the church edifice in Birmingham where the Gospel of healing is preached as well as sin through Divine Love, would be preached through the Christian Science services.

Subject of the lesson sermon was "God the Preserver of Man" and was constituted of extracts from the Bible and "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy, read alternately by the readers, Albert W. Wasey and Mrs. Grace W. Wasey.

**Sketch Is Read**  
Mrs. Reineke, a charter member of the church, read a brief sketch tracing the history of the Christian Science movement in Birmingham. She closed with these words: "Those early members heeded well the teaching of our revered Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, on page 546 of the Christian Science Text Book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures." Mrs. Eddy defines church as "The structure of Truth and Love; whatever rests upon and proceeds from Divine Principle."

"The growth of this church has been through the manifestation of the Christ Truth in the healing of sin, disease and sickness, in accordance with the admonition of Christ Jesus to his disciples.

"And thus as we build, we come to the realization of the spiritual church described by the Apostle Paul in his second epistle to the Corinthians as an 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

The building is situated a block north of Baldwin High School on the west side of Chester street at the brow of Willis street hill at the southwest corner of the intersection of these streets.

**Building of Brick**  
The building, constructed of buff brick and ornamented with Bedford stone, has a simple dignity of architecture which is enhanced by the four Romanesque stone columns forming the entrance which faces Chester street and is reached by a flight of stone steps.

The building together with the lot cost \$120,000.

Continuous services have been held on Sundays with a constant presence of attendants at both the church and the Sunday School services. At the present time the church is under the leadership of Mr. and Mrs. Adele B. Eiske is the second reader. The Sunday School is under the supervision of Mark Harris, superintendent, and Mrs. Marjorie Cromwell, assistant superintendent.

Heating apparatus has been placed under the Reading Room and separated from the main part of the building by a solid wall of cinder block and concrete construction, giving fire protection and leaving the large ground floor of the main part free for other uses.

The building together with the lot cost \$120,000.

### MSC Alumni Plan County Organization

Former students of Michigan State College now residing in Oakland County will form a permanent county alumni organization at a banquet Friday, April 26, at the Birmingham Community House.

Arranged by an informal alumni committee headed by Leon V. Belknap, engineering manager of the County Road Commission, the banquet program will include addresses by Dr. M. M. Knappert, head of the college history department; Dr. Marie Dye, dean of the college of education; Glen O. Stewart, alumni secretary; Dr. Knappert will discuss "This Changing European Situation"; Dr. Dye will speak on a subject of particular interest to women and Mr. Stewart will discuss alumni activities. Mr. Belknap will preside.

### Burglars Carry Off Oil Burner Parts

Continuing to victimize the owners of unfinished houses, thieves, Saturday, broke into 562 and 494 Pleasant avenue, and carried off oil burner controls, pumps and thermostats. Entrance was gained through windows.

### Rare Opportunity

RARE opportunity to purchase large, well-built home; beautiful located on wooded lot in Adams School district; four bedrooms, tile bath, hot water heated screened porch, large living room with fireplace, extra toilet etc. Priced at \$8500 on reasonable terms.

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### 11 Grass Fires in Three Days

Eleven grass fires in three days kept the fire department busy Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Most of the blazes appeared to start from igniter cans and rubbers. A permit is necessary to burn a field.

The record is as follows: April 7—Chesterfield and Oak, 708 Larchlea, Larchlea and Midvale.

Monday it rained and the fires came to an end.

### Driver's License Examinations Are Changed by State

EAST LANSING—Modified examination forms were being handed applicants for drivers' licenses throughout the state this week.

New examination sheets together with a revised chart of traffic signals had been distributed by the safety and traffic division of the Michigan State Police with instructions to all stations to place them into immediate use.

"Crabbing" is made difficult through use of the new blanks. Since examinations have been required, one blank has been handed out for written examination answers. A glimpse at the applicant's paper at the adjoining table might have occasionally helped in the past but hereafter his blank will be different from his neighbor's. In fact, the new set consists of six different sets.

### HAS OLDER SKATES

OLIVET (MPA)—When an Eaton county man revealed last winter that he owned a 54-year-old pair of skates, he met some competition. Walter Grant, Kalamo township farmer, has a pair of ice skates used by his father that are 70 years old, and another pair he used himself as a boy 60 years ago.

### Alfalfa a Source Of Vitamin A, MSC Discovers

Development of a new process on which a patent has been obtained for obtaining carotene from green plant tissue such as alfalfa is announced by the Michigan State College experiment station. This is the first major finding under research financed from the half-million dollar Backham research foundation given to the college in 1938.

Carotene is the name given to three yellow pigments which occur naturally in green plant tissue and to some extent in other parts of plants such as carrot roots. The substance is transformed into vitamin A in the bodies of humans and animals and thus is the ultimate source of this vitamin whether it is obtained from milk, vegetables or fish liver oils.

Preliminary estimates indicate that a ton of alfalfa meal containing a half pound of carotene would be a source of sufficient vitamin A for 100 persons for a year.

### A Heap o' Livin'

Yes... there are many years of contentment and happiness available in this lovely old home situated among large shade trees on Southfield Ave.

Here you can enjoy the advantages of a close in location and at the same time enjoy the freedom of a large plot of ground (lot is over 250 feet deep).

The house is of solid masonry construction—it has been completely reconditioned including a new forced air heating plant with oil burner. There are five bedrooms and two baths... modern kitchen.

The interior has been newly decorated and is now ready for occupancy.

### Magnetism Puzzling In Copper Country

Puzzling magnetic earth currents, most marked on Isle Royale and near Duluth, are phenomena of the entire native copper district of Lake Superior. In 1866, shortly after the laying of the first successful Atlantic cable, Asers Stockley sent a telegraphic message a distance of nine miles between two Ontonagon county points, utilizing the earth currents. Horace J. Stevens, writing in The Copper Handbook, manual of the copper industry, credits Stockley with being the first man to telegraph successfully without the use of wires.

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