

The Birmingham Eccentric
Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in The
Eccentric Building, 215-222 North Woodward Avenue.
Telephone 11, 12 and 13.
GEORGE R. AVERILL, Editor and Publisher
PAUL NEAL AVERILL, Business Manager
JOHN H. HANWOOD, Advertising Manager
BERT L. JOHNSON, Production Manager
ELAINE S. WALKER, Circulation Manager
Entered as Second Class Matter in the U. S. Postoffice at
Birmingham, Michigan.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
(Inland Outside)
One Year \$1.50 \$2.00
Six Months .75 1.00
Three Months .40 .50
All newspaper and advertising copy must be in the Eccentric
office by Wednesday noon to obtain insertion for that week.

The Eccentric is a member of
National Editors' Association, United
Press Club, and United States Press
Association.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1940

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events
which have news value and which are written by persons not
connected with the paper. All copy must be received before
noon on Wednesday. The right to make such editorial changes
as may be necessary to the style of the copy is reserved.
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Ever since the first World War, experts on the
development of the youthful mind have encouraged the abandon-
ment of any idea or device that tends to
thrill about martial activities, even the eliminat-
ing of war toys at Christmas time has been
suggested. Therefore it is interesting to note
that last week, at Birmingham's annual Piskin
Prom, the decorative and amusement theme of
the business of war.

To quote Barbara Bercher, who wrote a
description of the Prom for last week's Eccentric:
"Baldwin High School students had their
first taste of war last Friday night at the
annual football dance, the Piskin Prom.
The original ever conceived at the school,
the decorations carried out the military
theme."

"Signs such as 'Duck in at the Air Raid
Shelter for a Snack' and 'Tea will be served
at 4:00 advertised the refreshment stand.
One had to be careful when dancing be-
cause of the huge bomb 'crater' in the cen-
ter of the floor. Flares were heard overhead
and sirens were sounded, lights were doused,
and it was so dark you couldn't tell
whether or not the citizens lay flat on their
stomachs or kept on their feet."

"We felt safe enough with soldiers parading
up and down in front of the doors, and a
Red Cross nurse ready to help any unfor-
tunate who got cut while dancing."

"Searchlights not only searched for enemy
planes, but also helped the dancers find
their partners, who hid or hiding in the
dark."

These Baldwin High school students, of
course, personally abhor war and all that it
implies; but the fact remains that they are too
young to figure out the profound part that their
recent "war theme" may play in their own
adult thinking. Which simply raises this ques-
tion: "Were they wise in selecting such a
theme? Was it okay for the Baldwin faculty to
allow a theme to be developed, without an
effort to discourage it?"

We are not attempting to criticize the young-
sters for their "war theme" at all. We are merely
"thinking out loud" upon a subject that is the
world's greatest concern. Even in the innocent
spirit of good fun, making a game of "what
does this to one's mental attitudes" hardly
matches up to so many other human activities
that seek to outlast the barbaric brutality of
damnable war.

Have any of our readers thoughts upon this
subject for publication in this newspaper?
If you have, send them in for next week's
Eccentric.

Three-fourths of the States now have state
police systems, with general authority to enforce
all criminal laws.

State Police
Systems
The International Association
of Chiefs of Police point out that the expansion
of state police authority is on the march.
It is generally agreed that state police
is an excellent function, only half of the
States have created the departments under the
governor. Some of the others are under officials,
indirectly responsible to the chief executive, but
ten States have police responsible to independent
boards or commissions.

In the twelve States which have no state po-
lice system, officers are restricted to the enforce-
ment of motor vehicle and highway regulations.
In time, it is believed, most of these depart-
ments will merge into genuine state police sys-
tems.

The size of the force employed varies with
the States, ranging from 14 members in South
Dakota to 1,595 in Pennsylvania.

The astronomers insist upon promptness on the
part of the heavenly bodies as they make their
appointed rounds, and hence
30 Seconds
Ahead!
Mercury, passing across the
face of the sun this month, was half-a-minute
ahead of schedule.

Immediately, the students of the stars seek
the cause of this aberration in the skies. The
reason is that a tiny miscalculation might mean
an irregularity in the turning of the earth upon
its axis, or in the movements of Mercury. Both
would require explanation.

The United States Naval Observatory, which
announced the time when the contact
would be made, will be asked to decide the question
and to determine, also, whether the clocks of
the nation should be set back thirty seconds.

Here's a GOOD REASON to follow: Say what is on
your mind; say it profoundly—even if you have
to remain quiet!

In demanding that developers of subdivision
property within the limits of Birmingham in-
stall and pay for the maxi-
mum of necessary im-
provements before
adding to the city treasury, we believe that our
City Commission is serving the interests of the
whole community. Birmingham, during the
"boom Twenties," unwittingly annexed too
much "speculative property" which, after the
1929 crash, became a drag upon the real estate
market. This fact is easily seen when we re-
call that nearly 70 per cent of existing Birming-
ham land is still vacant. Our city, fortunately,
continues to grow in population; this growth
will require timely decisions by the Commis-
sion, to the end that subdividers themselves
are required to pay for improvements which,
alas! in the "dear old days" were too often sold
upon the whole taxpaying public.

An example of "mob-frenzies" is evidenced in the
treatment accorded Vice-President-elect Henry
A. Wallace, upon his arrival in
Mexico City last week. There to
represent the United States, the
Mexican inaugurated its new President
Manuel Avila Camacho, Mr. Wallace was
jeered at and narrowly missed physical injury
when followers of defeated candidate Almazan
stormed his entourage. Not that these people
personally dislike Mr. Wallace at all, but they
merely "feel" that he symbolizes sympathy for
Camacho—and so, just as might and does hap-
pen in the U. S. A., the "mob-frenzy" overcomes
people and they manifest the same negative
qualities that can result in frightful war.

In spite of the fact that a majority of American
newspapers were opposed to the re-election of
President Roosevelt to a third
term, he won. This results in
many people saying: "The
newspapers have lost their in-
fluence." Well, that isn't quite true. For year
American newspapers have been less partisan
in their offerings to their readers; they often
print "both sides" of political campaign talk;
they print, even though in their own editorial
columns, they may feel for some specific
candidate or issue that loses at election time. The
real truth of the situation is this: the news-
papers print the news, and this news is what
influences the voters—not mere editorial
opinion. Of the news columns were "colored,"
perhaps the story would be different. It is
a credit to the character and methods of the
average American newspaper, carrying out the
tradition of a "free and unkept press" in this
country.

**"Power of
Press"**
We do not see any justification for those eight
very diverse students in New York City who
signing up for the draft in the U. S. A. They
ought to have registered later claiming ex-
emption because of their conscience attitude toward
war. The law allows for such exemptions. These
young men were properly governed by their
emotions, more than their reason. They could
serve their God well, if they refuse even to
serve their country? (By this we do not mean
that they would have to bear arms; mere regis-
tration is compliance and service to the law.)

BECAUSE OF A DISPUTE between America's three
large radio networks and the American Society
of Authors, Composers and Publishers, after
January 1 most of the old, familiar music you
have been used to hearing will be gone.

It seems that the musicians want double their
pay from the radio stations, so the latter have
started their own machinery for getting music.
We are glad that our national anthem is not a
copyrighted feature.

HERE'S A QUESTION for communities using
mechanical voting machines to answer: Is it
legal to place small, abbreviated digests of any
proposition before the voters, at the top of
these machines, instead of providing them with
the full text of the entire proposition? We doubt it,
very much. The law states that voters be
afforded the right to read the WHOLE propo-
sition.

THESE FEDERAL INDICTMENTS relating to some of
Michigan's political bosses" ought to aid in
creating a better Republican Party. We trust
that Michigan Republicans will be able to fol-
low a line of leadership that will function in the
interest of the people. Personally, we do not
believe that Governor Dickinson rates such
leadership, honest though he may be himself.
We need younger men in that role.

PROOF THAT MOST PEOPLE are interested in the
spectacular things of life is evidenced in Hous-
ton, Texas, where more people voted for a
young woman in a popularity contest than they
did in the mayoralty election. Which probably
reverts to that classic statement made by a
philosopher when he said: "Average people are
more interested in physical attractiveness than
they are in mental and spiritual development."

THERE IS AN OLD American saying that "when
Greek meets Greek a new restaurant is started."
But what happens in these warring days when
Greek meets an Italian soldier? (Yet one ought
not meet the courage or bravery of the average
Italian soldier who, in the Greek campaign,
led and leadership by his highpriests.)

**WONDER IF RAISERS OF TURKEYS, cranberries, and
pumpkins** were behind the move to create two
Thanksgiving Days in the U. S. A. Anyway,
compared with the rest of our earth, our country
has enough to be grateful for so that every
day ought to be a thankful one.

WHAT GRAND TOURING DAYS are ahead for the
next generation in this country! Imagine being
able to drive to Alaska or South America—
which surely will be the privilege of U. S. A.
folks in a decade or two.

ALL PEOPLE COME into this world without any
clothes on. Some of them endeavor to remain
that way through much of their lives. (We re-
fuse to reveal which sex we are referring to,
too.)



**Writer Guesses What Van Wagoner
Will Try to Accomplish as Governor**

By GENE ALLEMAN
Michigan Press Association

LANING—The "hot stove" license fees, for example, and it
leagues has convened at country
general stores, and one of the
choice, timely topics is Governor-
elect Murray D. Van Wagoner.

What will "Pat" try to accom-
plish during his administration?
How will he get along with the A-
merican legislature and an admin-
istrative board which he can't control?

Folks take their politics seriously.
In the "hot stove" license fees, for example, and it
leagues has convened at country
general stores, and one of the
choice, timely topics is Governor-
elect Murray D. Van Wagoner.

On the basis of campaign re-
marks, press statements and Lan-
ing analysis, here is a fairly good
picture of what is to come.

Business Administration
First, Governor Van Wagoner
will emphasize a business admin-
istration.
Van Wagoner intends to
secure a gradual liquidation of the
\$29,000,000 state debt, a book-
keeping result of fund juggling, by
having a specified amount of state
revenues set aside each year out-
side of reach of pressure group
spenders.

When times are good and the
state and liquor revenues are
mounting, this thrift program
should be no hardship on anyone.
To reach the \$29,000,000 mark,
proof enough that it is a produc-
tive result, is not ideally fair to the low-
income group.

The governor-elect is confident
that a more business-like collection
of taxes through a centralizing
agency, will enhance the produc-
tivity of the sales tax. This is a
sore spot in state government, and
it evoked a nasty situation last
spring in Wayne county where
rumors were thick that many re-
tailers were being favored and that
exemptions and adjustments were
made entirely too promiscu-
ously.

Budget Revision
Under the present budget ar-
rangement, the legislature appro-
priates funds for use of state in-
stitutions and departments, but
there is no legal power to penalize
or check state officials who exceed
their appropriations.
For example, Budget Director
Gus Hartman, who has earned a
reputation for being hard-boiled as
an army top-surgeon, has risked
his position and honor by arbitrar-
ily to grant additional funds in
excess of allotted budget sums.

A new budgeting system, now
being drafted by the "Young Re-
publican" study committee of the
legislature, to achieve a two-way
objective:
1. Consolidate all tax-collecting
agencies into a single revenue de-
partment.
2. Invest the governor with
power to veto individual items of
legislative appropriations and
otherwise fix financial responsibil-
ity on the executive branch.

This imposes the responsibility
of budget balancing squarely on
the governor, as he enforces the
spending instincts of a legisla-
ture which gives way to pressure
groups and thus introduces trou-
bles to the executive branch.

How Far?
It is one thing to draft a bill, but
it is entirely something else to get
it passed by the legislature.
This would be particularly true
in 1941 when a Republican legisla-
ture would be asked by one of its
own study committees, to clip the
government wings of such popu-
lar vote-getters as Sen. Van
State Harry F. Kelly. Mr. Kelly's
department collects automobile

Knocking on Wood!
with JOHN H. HANWOOD

WILL DEMOCRACY SURVIVE?
THEY'RE being saying some hard things about Joe Ken-
edy, former member of that great fraternity of amate-
ur ambassadors whom the American Presidents
habitually dispatch to the great nations of the earth. Joe
says he is now going to give full time to keeping America
out of war, and a couple of weeks ago declared that he
doubted whether democracy can survive in England. That
is an interesting question: Can democracy keep its head
above water in Britain? If not, why not?

First of all, there are several
things to be understood about de-
mocracy, which might be defined
as rule through consent of the
people who possess full civil lib-
erty. George Donders, master
of America is not a democracy.
He is a Republic, because he
is governed directly by the
people themselves, but by elected
representatives. The ancient mean-
ing of democracy, however, is
voice by the people, like in a New
England town meeting. But peo-
ple have lost sight of this distinc-
tion, and my definition above is
a somewhat more commonly under-
stood one, I believe.

Democracy Depends on Income.
The most commonly misunder-
stood fact about democracy is that
it is NOT something to be had
merely for the wishing. It can
just as well be voted for and achieved
through a revolution. It can be en-
joyed only when a people can
afford it. A substantial ma-
jority of the people must be suf-
ficiently free, there will be auto-
cratic rule.

In the old days, when the land
supported most of the population,
democracy was easy, because the
people were successful in throwing
off the yoke of the privileged
classes. Nowadays, the economic
system is so complex that it is
much more difficult, for an in-
dustrial civilization a great sector
of the population depends on the
complex system of manufacture
and trade. As long as the wheels
of production can be kept turning,
the people can eat and be housed
and be satisfied with their govern-
ment, merit though it be. There
will always be a measure of
unemployment, but workers are
not allowed to support the govern-
ment. But when this system
of private production falters, when
self-sufficiency begins to grow and
grow, the dissatisfied throngs
begin to demand a new leader
to show them the way out, and the
man who promises the most gets
the job.

Poverty Means Dictatorship.
That is exactly what happened
in Germany and Italy. Poverty
and the loss of the old order
led to the rise of the new order.
The people were so poor that they
were willing to give up their
freedom for a leader who promised
to give them a better life.

It is indeed gratifying to learn
in your columns that the Michigan
Public Expenditure Survey, Inc., in-
forms you through Frank Rogers
that it is "not going to attack the
schools."

Your readers will no doubt re-
joice that we wrote in your People's
Column last week urging citizens
to be on guard for the sake of our
schools, when asked to sign the
Michigan Chamber of Commerce
petition through the Michigan Public
Expenditure Survey, Inc. This peti-
tion recommends that the Michigan
Legislature make the "total state
budget for 1941-42" at least 5
per cent and possibly 10 per cent
lower than that of the last ses-
sion.

We trust that Mr. Bogart, an
official member of the commit-
tee, is sufficiently high in his coun-
cils to speak authoritatively, be-
cause Hugh White, Executive Di-
rector, Secretary and Treasurer of
the same "Survey," launched a
trade against the schools in a re-
cent meeting, intimating that Michigan
schools were wasting \$1,000,000
of State funds each year. Mr.
White has never publicly with-
drawn or altered this statement,
which received state-wide circula-
tion.

Incidentally, we believe that
many of your readers will be in-
terested in the following warning
in a recent issue of the New York
State Fiscal Bulletin:
"The Citizens' Public Expenditure
Survey, Inc. is a national orga-
nization financed by the largest
corporations, interests in the United
States."

Why are economic interest groups
directing so much attention at
public school expenditures, when
they represent only 13 per cent of
the total tax burden in the state?
No one knows, but several reason-
able answers can be suggested:
(1) It is difficult to reduce Federal
taxes, which account for 40 per cent
of New York State's tax bill. (2) It
is impossible to consider more ex-
penditures for education, when the
public is so interested in reducing
state expenditures than expenditures
over which political machines have
control. Children do not vote. But
strong lobbies protecting their in-
terests as do certain adult groups.
Each of these economic interest groups
is interested in reducing some tax
upon which the schools directly or
indirectly depend for their support.

Board of Directors of Amer-
ican Association of University
Women.

PARAGRAPHS
Ought to Be
Radio crooner's wife has got a
divorce because he dragged her
there ought to be some way for a
divorce to be granted occasionally.
Borlino Times

Maybe
A writer promises that under
ground houses will come soon.
Then we shall probably see New
York going up for new skyscrapers.
Passing Show, London.

A minute for safety is better
than a month for repairs.

**Happenings
of Long Ago**
Fifty Years Ago
Dec. 11, 1915
Tidly Winks is the new and
popular game and can be bought at
Whitehead and Mitchell's. It is a
new and quite interesting game for
children.

William Willis is now owner of
the G. F. Willis store, 1115
Birmingham. He has reason to be very proud of the
fact that it is a noble piece of prop-
erty.

Birmingham, we can boast, has
more older girls and young ladies
catching on buses in the streets
than any other village in the state.
We come out this week with a
little supplement and print 300
extra Eccentrics to inform our
readers where to buy their Christ-
mas presents the cheapest and the
best. Read all the ads and buy
accordingly.

Twenty-Five Years Ago
Dec. 10, 1915
Members of the peace exposition
organized and financed by Henry
Carter, a conference of repre-
sentatives of neutral nations in
the hope of ending the war left
Hoboken Saturday on board the
Scandinavian-American line steam-
ship Oscar II.

Charles B. Randall, Earle W.
Randall, Max Randall, Bessie May
Niles and George Casey, the heirs
of Henry W. Randall, recently
sold the old homestead on Brown
street to Mrs. Zilpha Simonson,
who declares that she has decided
to locate elsewhere, she has
decided that Birmingham is the
best after all.

Five Years Ago
Dec. 12, 1935
Succeeding Paul N. Averill, Rus-
sell McBrine is the new president
of the Birmingham Lions Club.
Following election of officers Wed-
nesday noon at the Community
House.

The Goodfollows of Birmingham
fringed policemen, businessmen,
members of the lodges and veter-
an groups, doctors, lawyers, mer-
chants, food will turn "news-
papers" for exactly 12 hours Saturday,
Dec. 14. That is the day for the
annual Goodfollows Sale.

Depends on Recovery
Dec. 10, 1935
If the business of the world
is unable to pick up where it
left off and start over, producing
and selling "batteries" and other
goods, the starving population will
turn to the government. "You take
the factories and run them for our
benefit, you produce what the peo-
ple need," the people will clamor.
That will be state socialism. Only

Auto Loans—New or Used
Low Rates

BUY INSURANCE FROM YOUR OWN AGENT
The cost may be added to your balance

**Wabeek State Bank
of Detroit**

BIRMINGHAM OFFICE—WABEEK BLDG.
FERNDALE OFFICE—141 WEST NINE MILE RD.
MAIN OFFICE—FISHER BLDG., DETROIT
DOWNTOWN OFFICE—FORD BLDG.