It is reported to me that over a fireplace in Henry Ford's home is this statement: "Chop your own wood—and it will warm you twice."

The Birmingham Eccentric

PART TWO

SIXTY-SECOND YEAR—NO. 51 | BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1940 | $1.50 PER YEAR (In Oakland County)—SINGLE COPIES, 5c

United Presbyterians Organized Here in 1883

Building Put Up Here in 1897 At A Cost of $4,500

(Editor's Note—The history of Birmingham's United Presbyterian Church, presented herewith, was written by the Rev. Theodore Wagganer, Jr., with the collaboration of the pastor, the Rev. Joseph A. Mears.)

The United Presbyterian Church got its start in Birmingham when the Rev. J. Gibson, minister of the Southfield and Royal Oak churches, began conducting evening services in Library Hall in January, 1883. For some years the local group was served by ministers of this pastorate. A great deal of publicity was given to the beginnings of United Presbyterianism here. In fact for quite some time this was the only local church that advertised its services regularly through the medium of newspaper. Mr. Gibson left in 1884 and was succeeded by the Rev. J. Sherrard.

It appears that Mr. Sherrard was well-liked and the members were happy at the prospect of establishing their own church in Birmingham. Though it was customary at that time for churches to give frequent benefit socials called "donations", for their ministers, in the case of Mr. Sherrard, we have the only evidence of a repeat performance.

Served 3 Churches

In January, 1889, Mr. Sherrard moved to Birmingham, assuming the pastorate of the local congregation, though continuing to conduct services at the Southfield and the Royal Oak churches. It was believed that Birmingham was the more promising field, and that, by living here, he would be more successful "in gathering the scattered members." However, he remained but six months longer and left to accept a call to Big Rapids in June of that year.

With his departure the plan of having a resident pastor was temporarily abandoned. In April, 1890, the Rev. A. Orr was installed as pastor of the Royal Oak and Southfield pastorate. He also served the Birmingham congregation. This pastorate lasted for **eight years. At that time the** Southfield church decided to go it **alone, and Mr. Orr took over the work at Royal Oak and Birmingham. His successor was the Rev.** Montrose Maxwell, who came in December, 1898, and remained for six years. He was succeeded in turn by the Rev. John W. Good, and he by the Rev. H. G. Pinkerton in 1909. In 1912, the Rev. Wilson Reid came to the pastorate. His wife, a very gifted woman, very frequently filled the pulpit.

In 1917, The Rev. David Curry was installed as pastor. He served for five years and then left the United Presbyterian Communion transferred his affiliation to the Presbyterian Church. He, while here, organized another congregation, which is now known as the Embury Methodist Church.

Missionary in Pulpit

The church was then pastorless for some time. The Rev. Irvine Acheson, a former missionary to Egypt but back in America to recover from a serious attack of dengue fever, served the church for one year.

In 1926 the Rev. Henry Evans, just graduating from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, became the pastor of the church and served for about six years, leaving in 1932.

For a period of almost four years, the church had to depend upon supply preaching, and the Sabbath School work and Young People's department and the women's work was in charge of Miss Janet O. Kerr, Detroit Presbyterial worker. Then in October, 1936, the present pastor took up the work of a double charge, serving Birmingham congregation and the Joslyn avenue church in Pontiac. Since July, 1939, however, Mr. Mears has been full time pastor at Birmingham.

The present building, located at Woodward and Forest, has served the congregation as a place of worship since its construction in 1897. Previous to that time, in addition to Library Hall, the Adventist and Baptist Churches were used for services. (That certainly was indicative of a genuine spirit of cooperation among the members of other denominations.) It was under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Orr that the present church was built. It was dedicated in October, 1897. Its total cost of construction was at that time $4,500, and on dedication day there was remaining an indebtedness of just $500. An interesting feature of the present pastorate was the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the dedication of the building. The original dedication day program was followed out because old timers had carefully kept copies of the program. The church was crowded and many former members and friends and several former pastors took part.

Improvement Made

A number of improvements were made as time marched on. Electric lights were installed in 1911 and steam heat in 1913. The Eccentric was moved to comment, "Come and enjoy its comforts and you will enjoy the services also."

All through these years the church has been a loyal witness to the Goodness of God. With never a trace of forsaking the Faith of Our Fathers, she has ever centered her worship on the Christ, using the Divine Word as the sure guide in all faith and practice. Believing that an educated ministry means enlightened people, she has rightly insisted upon a high standard for the men who have served the pastorate. The present incumbent finds Birmingham a delightful place in which to live with a group of genial Christian brother ministers who find genuine pleasure in working together as watchmen on the towers of Zion building up the Kingdom of God among men.

Mr. and Mrs. Mears came to Birmingham after having served the First United Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis for almost seven years. They have one child, Sara Jane, who is in Kindergarten at Pierce School.

Patient

Visitor: "And why can't you walk down to the subway station with me?"

Little Boy: "I can't because we're going to eat as soon as you go."

FAMILIAR SIGHT FOR 43 YEARS

The familiar white form of the United Presbyterian Church has stood at Woodward and Forest since 1897. The original cost was $4,500, with all but $500 subscribed on dedication day. Electric lights were installed in 1911, steam heat in 1913.

PRESENT PASTOR

The Rev. JOSEPH A. MEARS has been pastor of United Presbyterian Church here since October of 1936, coming from the United Presbyterian Church of Indianapolis. Mr. and Mrs. Mears have one daughter, a kindergarten student. (Eccentric photo)

Auto Brakes Fail, Crash Results

Brakes that did not work and the mistake of going through a red light were responsible for two accidents here this week.

Monday night, at the northern intersection of Hunter boulevard and Woodward avenue, just outside Birmingham limits, Mrs. Dorothy McHenry, 27 years old, of 462 South Edith street, Pontiac, going north onto Hunter, crashed into a truck driven by Lester L. Winn, 27, of 524 Luther, Pontiac, going south. A report on file with local police states that Mrs. McHenry told a relative that her brakes failed.

Appearing to be critically hurt, Mrs. McHenry was taken to St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, where it was found that she escaped with nothing but abrasions and shock. She was still at the hospital Wednesday morning.

Last Saturday, cars driven by Donald Flynn, 16 years old, of 732 Pierce street, Pontiac, going east on Brown and crossing Woodward, ran into the side of a car driven south on Woodward by John T. Webb, of 14918 Ferry street, Detroit. Webb admitted failing to stop for a red light.

Realtor Official

Mr. Galbreath

Opportunity for new business enterprise that is opening in the rehabilitation of existing dwellings, particularly in the group rehabilitation of small houses for families of low income, will be a central subject under discussion by Realtors of the Great Lakes states at the coming Great Lakes Regional Conference of the National Association of Real Estate Boards. The conference, one of four regional meetings scheduled by the Association during the first half of the present year, will be held at the Pantlind hotel, Grand Rapids, April 18-20. It will bring together Realtors from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and surrounding states, and from the neighboring Canadian provinces. JOHN W. GALBREATH, Columbus, regional vice president, is chairman of the general committee in charge of arrangements and will address the opening session.

RANDOM REMARKS:
Joseph Goebels, German Propaganda Minister:
"This is no potato war."

Football Stars at Camp Rally

Tom Harmon, Michigan's All American grid player, and Archie Kodros, Michigan's 1939 football captain, attended a reunion dinner held at the Methodist Church by Oakland County Y. M. C. A. campers last Saturday night.

Following the dinner, Eugene Hubbard, program director of camp Mahn-Go-Tah-See showed slides taken of the various camp activities.

The two players were then introduced to the group of fathers and sons by Vern Larson, boxing instructor at the University of Michigan.

Archie Kodros spoke first and briefly told the boys of the advantages of camp life. Harmon then gave a short speech on football to the boys, followed by a period of questions an answers.

Harmon related humorous incidents which happened during the football games. He named Clint Frank, of Yale, as the fastest man Michigan played against and, to the surprise of many, named Pennsylvania as the best football team scheduled by Michigan in 1939.

As the reunion came to a close, Harmon and Kodros met and talked with all the boys as they left.

Seven Are Confirmed At Lutheran Church

Seven children took the vow of Confirmation before a large congregation at Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church last Sunday morning. They will receive their first Communion Easter Sunday. The group includes the following: Nancy Burns, Doris McKee, Marguerite Kurth, Patricia Faist, Thomas Mildebrandt, George Breitfield and Richard Hermann.

Forgets Court Order; Must Pay $15

Because he neglected to follow the court's orders, Ronald L. Edwards, 23, a local gasoline station attendant, has been fined $15 by Justice Forbes S. Hascall. The youth was arrested last October for having no operator's license and at first his fine of $15 was suspended when he promised to return and show his operator's license. That he did not do, and a bench warrant was issued.

RANDOM REMARKS:
D. Frank Salmon, preacher:
"In my opinion, there is far too much preaching in this world."

Quick Work With Blanket Smothers Fire in Curtains

Quick work with a blanket saved the home of Mrs. Jean Cole and family from serious fire damage last Thursday evening when a gasoline room heater puffed flames onto curtains. William Cole smothered the blaze with a blanket and received only slight burns on his hands. The fire department had nothing to do when it arrived. The home at 512 Martin street is owned by Mrs. John Heth, 452 Southfield avenue.

There were grass fires last week at 246 Dorchester and at 1115 Brookwood lane. A chimney fire occurred at the Richward W. Lawler residence, 831 Madison avenue.

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The only one offered for sale in Birmingham is now available to the discriminating buyer who is looking for something different.

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