The Birmingham Eccentric

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GEORGE R. AVERILL, Editor and Publisher
PAUL NEAL AVERILL, Business Manager
JOHN H. HARWOOD, Managing Editor
BERT L. JOHNSTON, Advertising Manager
CLAUDE E. WALKER, Production Manager

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THURSDAY, MAY 16, 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 editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be presented before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by those other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

Well, we see by the papers that James F. Thomson, chairman of the Michigan Republican State Central Committee, plans to resign his job today when the Party meets in Convention in Grand Rapids, and will campaign this summer for the office of Lieutenant-Governor. In making his resignation known Mr. Thomson, a former head of the State Agricultural Department, declared himself as in approval of the administration of Governor Dickinson; the supposition is that Mr. Thomson, should the Governor run for re-election, will try to ride in on the aged Chief Executive's coat-tails.

Poor Jim Thomson, He Seeketh Office Now

Stateth Mr. Thomson, in a letter to the Governor," I shall devote all my time from June 1 until the primary in September to a constructive campaign, stressing the accomplishments of your administration, with a view at all times toward electing the entire Republican ticket in November and preventing a return of New Deal extravagance in Michigan."

Brave words, Jim! Especially brave, Sir, in the light of your months of known criticism of the present benighted Republican administration in Lansing!

Which recalls, just a few short months ago in Lansing at a meeting with Mr. Thomson, this scribe, and Floyd J. Miller, of the nearby Royal Oak Daily Tribune. For more than an hour Mr. Miller and this reporter listened to numerous statements by Mr. Thomson, every one of which was directed at Governor Dickinson, his executive weaknesses, the domination by boss Frank D. McKay, extravagance in State purchasing, and many other similar items. At that time Mr. Thomson "only wanted to put the Republican Party on a high plane of public service, to eliminate bosses, etc., etc."

Now poor Jim has changed his acts; we doubt if, deeply, he has changed his mind at all. But good old Jim has seen the attempts to unseat him from power; he knows that there is a time in politics when jumping becomes imperative, and that now, unwilling to fight further for his principles, he must jump out of power as chairman, or into subordinate potential power as a candidate. He has chosen the latter.

Jim knows so well that the editor of this newspaper, plus the editors of hundreds of other Michigan newspapers, are against boss rule; he knows that we are critical of the Governor's record, of the Governor's inability to practice what he preaches in State government; yet upon this subject of criticism Jim wrote the Governor," Such criticism as is directed against you, I feel, comes largely from people who do not appreciate the many difficult problems you have had to solve."

Oh joy! oh well! oh boy! oh hell! what a change has come over our faithful Jim Thomson!

He sacrificeth himself upon the altar of public service or should we say that he merely changeth his acts upon the *alter of political servitude?*

Of course we like Jim, as a personal being. But as an aspirant for public office—unless he changeth his acts—we shall miss the memory we had cherished of his faithfulness to practical idealism in public affairs.

Just about ten years ago the Naval Limitation conference was concluded in London, with the United States, Great Britain and Japan reaching an agreement in regards to cruisers, destroyers and submarines.

Just Ten Years Ago

The three nations had earlier agreed, in Washington, upon a battleship ratio, the famous 5-5-3, but only after Japan had demanded and secured agreement from the United States not to fortify certain areas in the Pacific.

It is a long cry from this disarmament parleys to the year 1940, when practically every nation in the world is feverishly enlarging its military, naval and air power. The disarmament agreement did not prevent Germany from surging into a preparedness campaign, based largely upon the development of the world's largest airplane fleet.

The lesson to be learned from the failure of the disarmament agreements, as we see the matter, is that it takes more than signatures to an international pact to maintain peace. There must be good will between the nations or, where this is lacking, there must be power somewhere to uphold law and order in the world.

WE SEE BY LAST WEEK'S Eccentric that school board members Mark Hardin and Earl Potter will not be candidates in June for re-election. Both have served this district for years, and no doubt feel they have contributed their civic bit in matters educational. Who will succeed them? Get busy, Folks—election day will soon be here.

DON'T THOSE YANKEES look kinda funny, way down in the American League cellar? You don't suppose they are afraid of a cyclone from either Boston or Cleveland way, do you?

Because it is generally recognized that the blockade of Germany, together with a reduction in German farm output was responsible for the ultimate collapse of that country during the World War, it is interesting to get some idea of the food problem in Germany at this time.

Germany Is Under-Nourished

The effort of the National Socialist regime to make Germany self-sufficient is reviewed in a study which appeared in Foreign Agriculture, a monthly publication of the Department of Agriculture. Despite the efforts made in Germany since 1934, Harry L. Franklin, author of the survey, says that German domestic agriculture produces only about eighty per cent of total food requirements, or about the same proportion that was produced in the five years preceding the World War.

While self-sufficiency has been achieved in regard to some food products, the supply of meat depends upon imported foodstuffs and the shortage of edible fats and oils creates a serious problem. Normally, nearly one-half of all fat requirements are imported but such imports are now blocked by the Allied blockade.

Mr. Franklin points out that official German data indicates that the 1937 diet of the working family was at least fifteen per cent below the 1927, and pre-World War, levels. Under food-rationing regulations introduced a few days before the present war began, allowances for normal consumers represented substantial reductions below pre-War consumption.

While those performing heavy manual labor and members of the armed forces received extra allowances, the rations for normal consumers "are not sufficient to afford proper and adequate nourishment." It appears "that Germany entered the present war with a large proportion of its population already inadequately nourished."

While this shortage of foodstuffs may not result in serious maladjustments immediately, it is certain to affect the staying power and the health of a large portion of the German population if the war runs longer than a year.

Pan-American Airways Corporation had 131 aircraft in operation in 1939, maintained 264 terminals and intermediate airports and 202 radio-telegraph and radio-telephone control stations.

Air Travel Abroad

This flying company, operating to South America, Europe and Asia, employed 6,907 individuals. Its gross revenues were $20,610,930, of which the United States government paid $8,250,000 for transportation of mails. Foreign governments paid $2,850,000. Passenger, express and incidental revenues were $9,500,000.

Out of this business the corporation had a net profit of $1,984,438.

From these figures it is easy to see how important is the contribution that the government is making through its payments for mail transportation.

Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, has some interesting ideas about education and does not hesitate to put them into public circulation.

Two Kinds of Education

Speaking recently at Columbia University Teachers College, recognized as an ardent exponent of modern methods, Dr. Hutchins asserted that throughout the nation there are university students who cannot read, write, speak or think because they are the products of a higher education beset by "triviality, mediocrity, vocationalism, inertia and indolence."

There is truth in his remarks. Just the same, education, like other processes, must advance with the march of intelligence. The old system has its fine points but it was not perfect. The "modern" methods may go to some extreme but there is reason and logic behind them and they reflect widespread dissatisfaction with the results of education.

We are quite ready to admit that the reading, writing, speaking and thinking of some university students reflects a childish and untrained brain. This is a condemnation of present methods. However, there are some who can read, write, speak and think intelligently and this is to the credit of modern schools. Under no system of education that we know of has it been possible to make wisdom available to all students.

If any of our readers, male or female, have a yen for going to Hollywood to seek their fortunes before the cameras that grind out motion pictures for the 17,003 theatres in the United States, let us remind them:

The Hollywood Fever

That although the annual Hollywood payroll is estimated at around $130,000,000 the average annual earnings of the "extras" is only $317.26 a year.

It should be understood that this figure is what those who found work received. It does not take into account the thousands who sought employment in vain.

CONGRATULATIONS to Jane Follis and Cameron Biggers, valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, of this spring's graduating class at Baldwin high school. These young women were selected for these honors because of scholastic standing, leadership, and other virtues. Why is it, fellows, that the girls get most of these high school honors?

SATURDAY OF THIS WEEK Birmingham dedicates its new post office. Distinguished guests including Governor Dickinson, will be present to help in the ceremonies. Due to previous engagements, the editor of The Eccentric will not be present Saturday. Birmingham does welcome the new post office and will receive the Governor with graciousness.

"SPRINGDALE PARK OPEN for Pleasure" was the headline in last week's Eccentric, announcing the opening of the 1940 season in Birmingham's combination park and playground. Lack of space probably prevented managing editor Harwood from adding the word "profit."

SCHOOL VISITOR

People's Column

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed, but signatures will be held confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 500 words, and must be in the office by Monday noon for publication the following Thursday.

To The Editor:

When we were listing the splendid assets of Birmingham now, we can add those very helpful articles written for the "Garden Page" in the Eccentric by Mrs. Marc T. Patten. It is a joy as well as a need to have them. She has turned out to be a real garden consultant from soil to gadgets.

She seems to like her readers and in a friendly sort of way to share with them her valuable gardening information. Her do's and don'ts emphasizing the need for protective and gentle care while working with nature makes one more alert to the fact that cooperation with nature brings greater pleasure to gardener and observer alike.

In her chummy, challenging sort of way she is building better gardens in the yards and hearts of a lot of people.

FRANCES R. McCALLUM
(Mrs. Wm.)
Chairman Conservation Committee, Birmingham Branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden Ass'n.

Congressional Comment by Representative George A. Dondero 17th Michigan District

—Taxes on Business: This week I wish to devote my comment to statements contained in the annual report of a well known corporation having extensive interests in many sections of the country. The statements, standing by themselves, effectively point out the present tax burdens which must be borne by American business. The experience of other corporations would be but a repetition of the tax report made by this corporation.

I quote, without comment, as follows:

"References have heretofore been made in these reports to the ever-increasing tax burden being imposed upon business . . . Today, there is probably no more serious business problem than the stupendous burden of taxes being imposed by the Federal Government, States and various municipal subdivisions.

"In the year just closed, petroleum taxes amounted to almost 10% of all taxes collected by Federal, State and local governments. The petroleum industry's tax bill, in 1939, was approximately $1,335,000,000. In the history of the industry, this was the greatest amount paid in any single year. It was an increase of 4% over the 1938 total and 100% greater than the tax bill of 1929.

"The total aggregate tax expense of the company for 1939 of $18,236,868 was more than four times the net income of the company. This direct tax expense was equivalent to $4.92 on each share of common stock outstanding at December 31, 1939.

"All taxes, including sales taxes collected for governmental agencies, for the year 1939 exceeded such taxes for 1932 by $28,400,000 and exceeded total payrolls for 1939 by approximately $16,800,00."

This one company alone, in 1939, collected sales taxes for governing the year 1939 were mixed more than $39,000,000. The foregoing paragraphs need no comment. They tell the dramatic story of American business struggling to carry on in the face of taxation of punitive proportions. This company is not alone in its tax misery; countless thousands of other American corporations are confronted with the same situation.

Because some are of the opinion that "big business" can only think of profits and that "big business" welcomes "blood dollars," I quote the following paragraph from this same annual report:

and unsettled, due among other things to the imminence and outbreak of the European war. In the latter months following the beginning of the war in Europe, certain lines of industry were stimulated by orders from the warring nations. However, any expansion in this class of business is not desirable, particularly if it requires any considerable outlay of new capital for enlarged plants and equipment. The war order business will contribute little toward permanent industrial recov-

From the Women's Angle

By NELLIE HURLEY MINIFIE

Mention of the meeting of the Junior Musicale Monday evening when modern swing music was the discussion topic, reminds us that this thing called swing has long since outlived the brief life predicted for it. It has rolled on an on, gathering momentum, until now it has reached the point where many are viewing it as a national menace.

Actually it is no menace and this department suggests that short sighted critics analyze the situation. In the first place it is already visible even to the hep-cats' prejudiced eye that Bach, Beethoven and Brahms turned out music that is readily adaptable to swing. And so the exponents of the jam and jive sessions have shown a predominantly classical taste in their dance music.

Miss Minifie

The situation assumed national proportions when the president of an Eastern Bach society granted considerable publicity by loudly defending a swing arrangement of that master's incomparable "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor." In no uncertain terms he told the jitterbugs that if they must have their swing they had best leave the classics alone.

All of which, naturally enough, proved the impetus for a brand new type of swing music that strongly smelled of the classics. There was Claude Debussy's exquisite piano piece which zoomed to the top of the Hit Parade by the name of "My Reverie." The same Larry Clinton who introduced swing addicts to the singularly effective tonal harmonies of the French modernist, later drew from his Tschaikowsky repertoire the poignant love music from "Romeo and Juliet" and pinned the label, "Our Love" to it. And so on and on, not forgetting, of course, the Ravel "Pavan" which bore the dance title "The Lamp is Low" and the Tschaikowsky "Andante Cantabile" which for some unexplained reason reminded its arranger of "Moon Love."

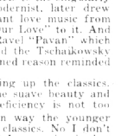
Understand, it's not that I condone jazzing up the classics. Naturally the swing arrangements lack all the suave beauty and subtleness of the original form. But the deficiency is not too serious when you consider that in their own way the younger generation is becoming acquainted with the classics. No I don't advocate swinging Bach and Brahms but what I am saying is that if the young people like the classics well enough to sing and whistle them they no doubt are interested in hearing them as originally intended.

Serious musicians who loudly declaim the atrocities that pass for modern jazz no doubt have forgotten that even Sebastian Bach was not above writing dance music himself. Frankly we feel that too much time is spent in worrying about swing music and too little spent in devising ways and means of making jazz work with the classics, rather than against them.

By KATHERINE W. GEORGE

Picnic weather will soon be here. At least, I am encouraged to think so, not that we have had a few warm days.

Soon we can pack our dinner in a basket and drive somewhere and cook it. A salad, cookies, fruit and cheese and a nice thick steak or hamburgers to grill, are all that are necessary, except for a pot of thermos of coffee and milk for the children. And it is so easy to stow them away in the trunk of the car at a moment's notice and take off for some shady spot in park or woods and the food tastes better than when cooked at home. Picnic grills are so common now along the roadsides that one does not usually have to travel far in any direction on any main highway without finding one, complete with table and benches and running water.



Mrs. George

But the nicest spot for outdoor meals is still Belle Isle, its only drawback being that 100,000 other persons think so too. If you want to enjoy eating at the river's edge, though, and watch the freighters steam by, go now, before summer sets in. It is not quite so beautiful this early in the year, at least on week-days, and if it is a bit chilly or windy, what matter?—the pungent aroma and flavor of a hot meal will have even greater appeal. Take along an extra sweater and tie a bandana around your head and try going over for Sunday breakfast. You can have your pick of locations and be as solitary as you like, if you go early enough. Cook your coffee in an old-fashioned pot—it tastes better that way—heat buttered rolls over the grill and fry bacon and eggs or breakfast sausages. Orange juice, squeezed at home and bottled, and a supply of paper plates and cups, silver, and iron skillet and an old cloth and napkins are in the picture too.

As for the men of the family, they may need a little persuasion at first. They are always inclined to grumble at the suggestion of a picnic, but they usually fall into the spirit of the thing when they find out that it is to be the cooking and not the sandwich kind. In the end, they nearly always turn out to be quite cheerful about the whole thing and even work up an enthusiasm about building the fire and superintending the cooking.

Knocking on Wood!

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

Is the President Trying to "Sell" Intervention?

That America should not take a stand against entering the war has long been an argument of the "internationalist" school in this country.

"Keep 'em guessing abroad" has been their policy, with President Roosevelt the chief spokesman, the theoretical result being that indecision about the United States' future policy will keep Europe from doing anything rash and terrible.

To this commentator's way of thinking, that argument is all washed up and shot full of holes—large ones from Nazi bombs. Before the war started last fall, and before the Norse and Low Country campaigns, it MAY have been legitimate, but now we see that Hitler has gone ahead with his plans with apparently not a thought about the United States.

The Nazis will do everything and anything they can to win this war in the immediate future. They have been violating the rights of small neighbors from the very start, and the invasion of Holland and Belgium has been expected for months. Nothing particularly startling about that, for the "rights of neutrals" is largely a dead issue, as the United States Congress acknowledged when it passed the neutrality act barring our ships from combat zones and thereby surrendering the old doctrine of "freedom of the seas." When big nations are at war, the rights of neutrals mean nothing if the neutral stands in the way or can be used to achieve victory. Much as we may deplore the fate of Holland, Belgium and Norway, war will always be thus.

So President Roosevelt's and Secretary Hull's indignation can have but one effect—it will not deter the aggressor nations of Europe one whit, but it will tend to break down the anti-intervention sentiment which has been so strong in the United States. It will provide leadership for the small but vociferous minority which ever since the war began has been in favor of American intervention but has been afraid to say so.

Who Stands Where?

The time has come for a clarification of the record. Intervention or peace is our greatest national issue, and there is no reason why the candidates for this fall's election should not state their position.

Thomas E. Dewey made this statement May 11:

"There should be no question whether we shall join the wars abroad. The American people have made up their minds on that issue. We will always fight in defense of our own shores. We will oppose threats of foreign powers against this hemisphere. We are determined that no American forces shall ever again be sent to fight in Europe.

"How reliable are the pledges of an Administration which, time and again, has demonstrated its unwillingness to be bound by the pledged word? How can we put in the hands of such an Administration are the momentous decisions which may keep us at peace or lead us to war?"

The people have a right to know how every representative and senator is committed on the issue.

An America "on the fence" has utterly failed to keep leashed the dogs of war in Europe, and our future plans, whether for war or peace, will not deter any nation in Europe from its aim of winning the war by the best methods it can devise. No harm can ensue from knowing where the Administration and the candidates stand, but to the people whose interests are at stake, the stand of these men is of great importance.

The interventionists are slow to show their hands. But the more terrible the war in Europe becomes, the more vocal will become their cries that "America is in danger from world domination," and that "the Allies are fighting our battle." Watch for it; the people will be impress us."

beating the war drums are increasing the tempo.

Speaking of indignation, the neutrals of Europe and the people of England should be highly indignant with the Conservative party and Chamberlain for failing to keep apace in armaments. But for that great blunder, Hitler could have been stopped when he first invaded the Rhineland, and there would be no war today.

Happenings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO
May 22, 1890

One day last week John K. Adams took his mastodon relics to Detroit where they will be put on exhibition in the museum of the public library. They consist of several pieces of vertebrae, the lower jaw with the molars intact (as large as a saucer) portions of the upper jaw and the end of one tusk. They are worth seeing.

A squad of cavalry cadets from the Michigan Military Academy, armed with swords and accompanied by a bugler, visited our village last Saturday mounted on blooded Kentucky horses and made a very creditable display both in appearance and military manners and drills. The boys are gentlemen in every sense of the word and we shall be pleased to see them again.

In a Berlin cafe the coffee is not only boiled by electricity, but a small electric railway carries it to the various tables, so that the guests may help themselves to their liking. The establishment is also lighted and ventilated by electricity.

Twenty-five Years Ago
May 21, 1915

A Zeppelin airship was destroyed near Ahrel while engaged in a battle with the allied air squadron. The wrecked airship fell 3,000 feet and the entire crew of 60 was instantly killed. Two allied aeroplanes were destroyed by the Zeppelin and the pilots killed.

"You can't be Germans or descendants of Germans in the United States; you must be Americans," Rt. Rev. P. J. Muldoon, bishop of the Rockford diocese, told the German-American members of the Illinois Catholic Union, who met at Aurora, Ill., in the 23rd annual convention.

The teachers of the Barnum School gave a reception Thursday evening for the teachers of the Birmingham High School, complimentary to the retiring superintendent, Miss Rhoda Starr, of the high school.

Five Years Ago
May 23, 1935

Three men are definitely in the running today for seats on the Board of Education in the annual school district election June 10. Two places are to be filled. Three candidates are John H. Rosso, Draper Allen and Charles S. Kinnison.

Mrs. Martha Lee Campbell, widow of Albert Wilkin Campbell, former Birmingham village clerk and justice of the peace, died Wednesday morning at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Charles J. Boyer, of Highland Park. Mrs. Campbell would have been 82 years old next month.

Erection of large banners at strategic points along Woodward avenue, blaming Murray D. Van Wagoner, state highway commissioner, for its crowded traffic condition is being considered today by the committee appointed by the City Commission Monday night in its attempt to secure completion of the Wider Woodward cut-off along the old Grand Trunk right-of-way.

The Vicious Circle

"I wish my wife would not live beyond our means."

"Why does she do it?"

"Just to impress the Millers who live beyond their means just to impress us."

SIGNATURE LOANS TO SALARIED EMPLOYEES WITH SATISFACTORY CREDIT RATING

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MAIN OFFICE—FISHER BLDG., DETROIT
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