

# Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

A free, responsible and aggressive Press is democracy's first line of defense

## Knocking on Wood

with JOHN H. HARWOOD

### AN AMERICAN TRADITION

It's an old custom in most of the civilized world that wherever there are at least a few hundred people who congregate in a village, some one starts a store. Here in America, and in other English-speaking countries, we carry it one step further: we have a newspaper, and usually there's a church.

In just about every hamlet big enough to possess a main street, you'll find a printing office and an ancient, clanking press or two; some cases of dusty type that were used first when Noah set foot on the ark; and general conglomeration and confusion mixed with that delightful smell of paper and ink. The man in charge is usually a printer, not a newspaperman, and that is the reason why the smaller papers usually are not very newsy. But there are 15,000 of them, scattered in every part of the United States, and they serve their purpose, helping maintain community spirit and activity.

### Style On Battleships

Thus, it is not strange that as soon as an Army or Navy station gets set up, it is not long before there's a post newspaper of some sort to be passed from hand to hand, and often the same way. The folks can read what's going on. The big battleships even have a linotype machine to set their own type, but in the smaller establishments, a typewriter and mimeograph machine will do the trick. It is set up shop, in far off New Delhi, a news sheet is published for the Chinese, Indians and Burma contingents, and I've enjoyed reading it. The other day, an old news associate, Capt. M. P. Moore, sent me "The Observer," a mimeographed paper published at a military station in England. It was engaged in S-2 (intelligence) work, and part of his job is supervising this 16-page midweek newspaper.

"The Observer" has plenty of life in it, chiefly because of drawings made by some talented artist who through the courtesy of his draft board is now in uniform. There's a page of cartoons with some gags that aren't bad. One shows the dogfaces (at least widely used to designate the common soldier) seated in their mess hall. The cook says: "It's spring chickens today, and the dogfaces will be 'Snake Ranch,' place where 2-2 beer is served. One woopy person calls out: 'Hey! Call me a taxi!' and his partner answers, 'Okay! You're a taxi.' Then one guy asks: 'Do you do drink whiskey?'

## What Your City Commission Is Doing

May 24, 1943  
Bills approved total \$93,387.55, including two-week payroll in the amount of \$8,178.89. Mrs. William E. Hays' resignation from the Recreation Board was unanimously approved. Reduction in lighting rates for Municipal Building approved. Appropriation resolution adopted under 1942-44 budget, and estimated revenue received. IRENE E. HANLEY, City Clerk.

## Will Limit Calls On Long Distance

Don't be surprised if the telephone operator asks you to limit your long distance call to five minutes.

The Michigan Bell Telephone Company is instituting the new practice in order to help conserve time on overloaded telephone lines. The request by the operator will be made only on calls which have been delayed because circuits were unavailable.

On such calls, the operator, after a connection, will say: "Please limit your call to five minutes—others are waiting."

**HITLER THERE, TOO**  
The officer in charge of a new recruit company at the Naval Training Station, Sampson, N. Y., thought someone was pulling his leg when he picked up the muster ship classmate who had just returned from Hitler. He paused and then said: "All right you wise guy, when did Hitler die?" "Here, sir," said a voice and Muejaquet, William E. Hitler, Cranston, E. L., stepped forward.

### PECK'S

Cash and Carry  
Suits, Topcoats,  
Plain Dresses ..... \$1.09  
CLEANED and PRESSED  
For Delivery—Phone 230  
WOODWARD—NEAR MAPLE

### SALVAGE MEMO

TIN CANS—Rinse after using, remove label, open bottom end and flatten with foot. Place in can for last city collection day of the month. Keep dry; keep separate from rubbish.

### WASTE FATS—Strain and keep cool. Turn in to your market when you have a few pounds. Rancid fats not wanted.

### SCRAP METALS, GLASS, RUBBER

Leave in bin near Post Office or put at curb on your last city collection day of the month. Copper engraving plates and old keys may be left at the library.

### NEWSPAPERS, M.A.C.A. ZINES

You can donate these to the Salvation Army, which will scrap for them. Phone 4014. Scrap paper not wanted.

### WABECK STATE BANK

OF DETROIT

### Why Go All Over Town To Pay Bills?

Save time and trouble by using a Pay-As-You-Go Checking Account. No service charge—only cost is five cents for each check drawn and each item deposited. Ask about it today.

### WABECK STATE BANK

OF DETROIT  
BIRMINGHAM OFFICE—WABECK BUILDING

## Our Heroic Merchant Seaman

Upon several occasions we have commented and upon the great service rendered the allied nations by the sailors of the merchant marine who, at great risks, deliver the stuff across the seven seas.

The other day, however, we received a request from a brave American who had made the trip across the Atlantic. He asks that we call attention to the fine work of the heroic sailors of the merchant fleets who have endured great hardships and suffered considerable loss of life.

It is a pleasure to write this article and to state again that few Americans realize the contribution that these sailors have made to the success that looms hopefully upon the horizon of battle. Without brave merchant seamen the allied cause would be hopelessly lost, and it is only proper that the people appreciate the fact that they assume risks that are not less dangerous than the perils of the battlefield.

Hundreds of merchant sailors have given their lives in the present war, in the cause of freedom. Without such fare, and often without praise, they have gone down to the sea in ships and sometimes they have not again come home.

To their sorrowing families must be given the knowledge that their sacrifice is not in vain, that their part in the struggle is correctly appraised, and that they lie buried under the water in the shroud that is reserved for brave and courageous men.

## A Promise And A Threat

"The American Government will hold personally and officially responsible for these diabolical crimes all of those officers of the Japanese Government who have participated in their commission. It will due course bring those officers to justice."

This is the solemn pledge of the Government of the United States, contained in a statement of President Roosevelt, announcing the barbarous execution of American sailors who fell into Japanese hands as an incident of warfare.

It is a pledge that the full fighting strength of this country will make good. It is a promise to Americans and a threat to the guilty Japanese, and the peoples of both countries should keep it in mind.

Americans were naturally shocked at the execution of our aviators by the Japanese, but if they had been well informed as to the treatment accorded the Chinese they would understand Mr. Chiang Kai-shek's declaration that the act "comes as no surprise to us Chinese."

The cruelties visited upon the captured soldiers and civilians of China equal Attila at his worst. The sack of Nanking, with widespread murder, looting and raping is described by some persons as almost without equal in the world's history.

EVEN THE LOCAL POSTAL SERVICE is being affected by the loss of carriers and inability to get new ones, according to Postmaster Service in this area, going to Postmaster Byrnie.

## What's What About Our Men In Service

### 2 Officers End Instruction Course

The following officers from Birmingham, having completed a six weeks course of military instruction at the Naval Air Force Officer Training School at Miami Beach, Fla., have been assigned to duty with their class in the Air Forces of the Army of the United States. They are: Lt. J. L. White, with the Army Corps, England, Australia, and the Air Force maintenance. These officers, along with their home address, at the time they were assigned, are: Lt. J. L. White, 375 Arlington and 2nd Lt. John J. Shaffer, 824 Wimbledon.

### LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

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### DEAR MOTHER AND DAD:

I hope everything is going along O.K. back home. According to your letters this has been a very cold winter. Frankly I would love to have a letter just like the one you wrote me the very day here, but they tell me your mails about July.

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### AIR FORCE SIGNAL MAN

Fletcher Plant, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Fletcher Plant, 654 Brookside, has completed his five weeks of Air Corps basic training at Atlantic City and is now stationed at Camp Crowder, Mo. where he has been made a corporal in the Signal Corps of the Air Force.

### CALLED TO SERVICE

Frank H. Coe, Jr., and John G. Coe, Jr., both of the Birmingham freshman year at Purdue where they were in the Enlisted Reserve Corps, have been called to active duty. Frank is being sent to Ft. Custer. Frank is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Coe, of North Avenue, and John is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Gillespie, of Florence street.

## Says Newspapers British author and Are Dead

H. G. Wells, the British author and forecaster of the future, died on May 25, 1943. He was 80 years old. He was a pacifist and a democrat. He was a man of letters and a man of action. He was a man of the future.

The historian thinks that it will be possible in the future, to secure news by turning a dial on the radio and then listening to a "summary of what has been happening in the last two or three hours."

He considers this a most reasonable way of getting the news that "our despairing attempts of buying three or four newspapers to find out what is being concealed from us."

Apparently, the author has an idea that news will broadcast itself. Whether one prefers to listen to a chronicle of events on the air or read them in the columns of the newspaper, the ominous shadow of the editor is ever present.

Certainly, it would take a considerable part of the day to listen to interminable broadcasts and select the major items of interest upon which our attention is directed.

Newspapers have their faults, as we well understand, but no other news source can get this over the radio let sit down and see how long it will take to "broadcast" that much wordage.

### SURE, IT'S FINE TO BEGIN planning for post-war problems—even to considering the placing of a quart of milk on every doorstep, the world around. However, let's not forget the home, too, and when was American doorstep given its daily quota of Ole Jersey's offering?

## The Birmingham Eccentric

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### Wm. D. Hooper, Jr., Now Lt. Colonel

William D. Hooper, Jr., of 763 Lakewood, is now wearing the silver oak leaves of a lieutenant colonel, having been promoted from the rank of major for his part in the completion of an advanced course in anti-aircraft gunnery at Fort Totten, N. Y. He is currently studying one type of gun. Lt. Col. Hooper was a second lieutenant in the 1st Cavalry Division and continued activity in the Reserve Officers Corps. His son, Bill, the third, was sworn last week in the Navy 12 category. Two other children live here with Mrs. Hooper.

### FIRST LIEUTENANT

Second Lt. Edwin D. Wolf, whose home address is 780 Oakland, Birmingham, has been promoted to First Lieutenant. Lt. Wolf is flight leader of bombardier training sq. No. 11, at Vetsville (Calif.) Army Flying School. He was commissioned Oct., 1942.

### STUDIES BOMB AIMING

Frank O'Toole, a 1941 graduate of Baldwin High, has gone to Elvington Field, Texas, to train as a bombardier. His parents moved recently to Erie, Pa.

### FORMER RESIDENT

Robert H. Reynolds, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Reynolds, formerly resident of Birmingham, has been promoted May 29 from Stockton Field, Calif., as a flying officer. He is a Baldwin High graduate. His father's home is at Vetsville (Calif.) Army Flying School.

### IN MECHANIZED CAVALRY

George H. Schultz, son of Mrs. J. Leonard Juhl, Beverly Hills, is now at Camp Gordon, Ga., where he is training with the 1st Cavalry Division. He spent one year at Georgia Military Academy and one semester at the University of California.

### SEABEE HOME

George H. Schultz, seaman second class in the Navy Seabees, is home on nine-day leave, visiting his mother, Mrs. Fred W. Schultz, 519 West Brown. He has been in the service since February and has been stationed at Camp Endicott, R. I.

### IT'S NO SNAP

"Dear Sirs: I am not at a new address so am forwarding on to you so that I may get my paper every week. I am attending laboratory work at the University of Michigan. I like to keep track of my buddies. Thank you very much. E. BROWN, MDETS, Co. E, Barracks 1616, Fort Harrison, Ind."

## People's Column

### Thanks Public For Poppy Support

The Eccentric: Birmingham Post 2645, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its auxiliary wish to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Birmingham for the many generous responses to our Buddy Poppy sales last Saturday.

We wish particularly to acknowledge the assistance of the members of the Junior A.W.V.S. made possible through the cooperation of Mrs. Paul N. Love, the City Commission for the cooperation of our local Police Force, the fine assistance of all persons solicited and also the Birmingham Eccentric for their publicity in connection with this drive.

The proceeds of the annual Buddy Poppy sales are protected by law from being used for anything but the relief and rehabilitation of our World War I veterans and their dependents; for the maintenance and expansion of the U.S. National Home for orphans of veterans; at Easton Rapids, Mich.; for rehabilitation and hospitalization in the Veterans Administration; for expenses incidental to the hospitalization of non-combatant veterans, and for relief and aid in the event of great natural disasters such as the Ohio river floods.

### Hits More Personnel On City Payroll

The Eccentric: As I have been a subscriber for several years to your paper I am sure you are familiar with the reaction of some of Birmingham taxpayers on our budget. The Birmingham Eccentric, City Commission's ideas about the necessity of an increase both in valuation and in expenditures for the year 1943-44, and when you say \$1 million came out with the announcement of additional personnel to be added to the payroll.

As I was hoping we could get along for the duration, holding the jobs open for the boys when they return, especially since the military order and our government is doing everything to conserve man power. Personally, I am doing the work that required two men in 1941.

### Writer Comments On Winning of Peace

The Eccentric: The American Legion and Auxiliary are to be congratulated for their generous cooperation this

may I be privileged to write concerning your article about the winning of the peace. I am sure that the boys who do not live in Birmingham will be heard at the conference for World Peace. When death and destruction have been put behind us, and the world is in the hands of a Benevolent Father and Wonderful Creator have been

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### Happenings of Long Ago

50 YEARS AGO  
May 25, 1893  
"If the Indians leave an order prohibiting Indians leaving their reservations will be included in the bill of the Tammany Hall."

15,000 pounds of milk were received at Birmingham's butter factory last Monday morning. The average for the week is over 11,000 pounds.

Mr. John Baldwin says he is thoroughly in touch with all the reasonable and unreasonable weather that we have or are liable to have for he has ice in his refrigerator and fire in his coal stove all in the same room.

### 20 YEARS AGO

May 25, 1923  
Playing at the Baldwin Theatre: "Betty Gordon" in "The White Flower." Softly falling moonlight in the air. Oh you one-piece bathing suit!

On Friday evening, June 15, 53 members of this year's graduating class will receive their diplomas and end their high school careers.

It comes the announcement that spring potatoes are high in price. It seems that the cold weather in Germany has retarded the growth of home grown "spuds." So we've got to pay freight on the ones we get from the South. Perhaps that's the reason cotton is so high and sugar too.

When you get your money out of town, when you patronize stores in other cities, or buy from mail order houses in Germany, you come back. Money spent outside of Birmingham will never be used for the betterment of your home town.

The trouble between France and Germany is a parade through the principal streets of the city, patriotic exercises in Greenwood Cemetery, and by the close of banks and shops for a general legal holiday.

Barbara Johnson and Robert Navin were valedictorian and salutatorian respectively of the Baldwin Grading School.

Mrs. Harold H. Corson, in charge of the American Red Cross work in Birmingham, has been named to a committee meeting of Red Cross directors and aides to decide the local sympathizers in the South in relief work to the war sufferers in China. The Birmingham quota of \$100 was raised by Wednesday, June 11.

Adolf Hitler, German dictator, will be in Germany next week. He will result a future that is glorious and prosperous.

Mrs. and Mrs. Karl B. Lutz, of Rivenook avenue, are receiving congratulations on the birth of their second daughter, Mrs. Lutz, May 22, at Ford Hospital in Detroit.

The Topic party given by the club of young ladies (ladies) and had on the grandest clothes, and wore the biggest diamonds.

Neighbor's Maid—"And what did they talk about?" First Maid—"Us."

Editor's note—Contributors to the People's Column are asked to sign their names and addresses to their letters, even though these may be withheld in certain cases.