

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press is Democracy's First Line of Defense

What About This "The Influence of the Individual Newspaper?"

Brown, of the Providence, Rhode Island, Journal and Bulletin "is not to be measured by circulation but by the intellectual capacity of the editors, correspondents and reporters of the individual newspaper."

The speaker was talking to newspapermen who were conscious of the great improvement in American newspapers but also alert to the need of steady self-improvement.

Erwin D. Canham, editor of The Christian Science Monitor, and W. S. Gildred, editor of The Detroit News, likewise warned that American newspapers must deepen their areas of penetration and responsibility if they are to meet increasing criticisms of the press in today's world.

We call attention to the statement of these newspaper men for the purpose of making a few observations about The Birmingham Eccentric. As the editor of this newspaper, we are quite conscious of the shortcomings that exist and more acutely aware of the difficulties, financial and otherwise, that confront the publishers of a newspaper in areas similar to that which we strive to serve.

Considering all the difficulties involved in the production of a newspaper in Birmingham, we do not feel that any apology is necessary for The Eccentric. This does not mean, however, that we are not very much aware of the possibility of improvement. In fact, just as fast as financial support is available, it is our purpose to enlarge the contents of The Eccentric in an effort to make it still more useful than ever to its readers and advertisers.

It is necessary, of course, to realize that a newspaper, like a church, a school, or a government, can rarely exceed the intelligent demands of its readers and advertisers. While it might be asserted, from a theoretical standpoint, that newspapers should dig more deeply into subjects now given hasty or superficial treatment, the fact is that a newspaper, like a business corporation, must deliver the goods that the readers desire and, in so doing, attract a following which makes it profitable for business houses to advertise in its columns.

Unlike many business enterprises, the vast majority of the newspapers in the United States, observe, in the fullest degree, a sense of responsibility to the public. There are very few businesses in the nation which attempt, while depending upon public goodwill for support and success, to publish news and express opinions which, at times, offend individuals or organizations which are pow-

erful and in a position to inflict financial injury upon the newspaper.

So far as we know, no person connected with The Eccentric is completely satisfied with the idea in mind and the ideal behind it is to publish the best newspaper possible under the circumstances and to make progress toward a better newspaper just as fast as financial conditions permit.

Let no one believe that The Eccentric finds fault with the people it attempts to serve. Certainly, we make grateful acknowledgment of the many kind acts of assistance that come to us regularly and we deeply appreciate the goodwill that has been evident through the years.

Ten-Man Verdicts

The State of New Jersey, by action of its legislature and the approval of Governor Alfred E. Driscoll, has decided that it is not necessary to require the unanimous verdict of "twelve good men and true" in civil cases.

Hereafter, verdicts will be accepted when ten of the twelve jurors agree. This will prevent many costly retrials that result from "hung" juries.

The New Jersey precedent is worthy of notice because in time most of the states will follow the example. There will be a considerable delay before ten jurors will be authorized to convict in serious criminal cases but there is no reason to be afraid of such verdicts in connection with civil cases.

If you can't wait till November 2 and must know the name of the next president of the United States now, just ask any political worker. Of course, his answer will vary, depending on which party he is working for.

The Birmingham Eccentric

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'Tis Washington

By The Duchess

Abandon Germany? The next administration... will have to decide whether to leave Europe or start defending it against the Russians.

From 1942 to 1945 we fought to keep Europe free. To that end we have poured billions and the services of some of our best men to Europe from economic ruin.

Yet we may abandon Europe. There's already talk of it. But if we do, will any nation on earth ever believe us again?

Inflation is more likely than

ever to be the major campaign issue.

Iron Age, the great propaganda magazine of the steel industry, tells the story in three scoops.

1) Steel wages are due to go up soon.

2) Price increases will follow.

3) Steel plants are going to move nearer their customers.

But the customer must pay for the move.

As steel goes, so goes the nation.

Why did Warren say "yes" this time?

The obvious answer would seem to be that this time Thomas Dewey is more likely to win the presidential sweepstakes.

But from talks with the tall governor from California, it's a matter of believing more in Dewey than he did back in 1944 when he could have been his running mate.

And Dewey has gained in stature.

There is a difference between a porch and a balcony.

A balcony is a place where emperors, kings and dictators appear.

An American porch is a place on which to rack up sinners.

Our President and the President of Venezuela, with their wives, sat peacefully on the much-talked-about White House porch the other day... and were still... by cameramen!

Reports to AAF Base for More Training

KEESLER FIELD, Miss.—Pfc. Patricia L. Sandov, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. P. Sandov, 844 Ruffner, Birmingham, has reported to Keesler Field, Miss., to begin training in the airplane and engine mechanics school located here.

Keesler Field, a base of the Technical Division, Air Training Command, is the home of the world's largest Airplane and Engine Mechanics School.

The training Pfc. Sandov receives in the school will equip her over a period of approximately 28 weeks and will include instruction in all the latest types of airplane operations, fuel and oil systems, propellers, structures, instruments and engine controls.

The training will qualify her to perform maintenance on all conventional type aircraft flown by the USAF.

Happenings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO July 15, 1848

George D. Sanderson, 78, a native of New York State, and one of the pioneers in Birmingham, died at his home here June 30. He had been a resident of this section for 88 years.

T. Langley picked ripe tomatoes from his garden on July 5. Any other horticultural records we have not heard of.

The thanks of our villagers should certainly go to George Fay for his vigilance over the Fourth. Several accidents were averted due to his alert watchfulness.

Crops in the vicinity of Road City have been destroyed by the severe frosts which have struck there. We have had no 28 degree temperatures here, but it certainly has been cold for mid-July.

An old story in a new way: We wish some of our subscribers would forget the Main long enough to remember the Eccentric.

Miss Xenia Post has brought the editor a beautiful bouquet of 70 roses. This may be said to be kind of the good lady, but when the thought that all blooms are on one short stem, he will really be amazed.

TWENTY YEARS AGO July 19, 1928

A careless smoker threatened lives and property at the McKee service station Tuesday evening when he tossed a lighted match to the ground. The match ignited gasoline which had spilled from a tank truck. Firemen kept the flames from spreading to the buildings, and no one was injured in the blast.

Police Chief James Anderson says motorists are continuing to loiter about Maple avenue, and that as long as they do this, he and members of the police force will continue to ticket every car seen parked double. If you don't want a ticket, obey the law, seems to be the order of the day.

Police are seeking to identify and apprehend the armed thugs who, Saturday night, attacked Andrew Korbakis on Hamilton, near Woodward, and robbed him of \$100 in cash. Korbakis was going to his home with the days receipts from his restaurant when attacked.

The city commission is advancing plans to create a "Great White Way" for Birmingham. New, and far more powerful street lamps will be installed along Woodward, making it much safer and more pleasant for those who are out in the evening hours.

It looks as though the Fourth of July, 1943, which is being celebrated in Birmingham, has arisen to outlaw the use of firecrackers within the limits of the village. The step is taken as a precautionary measure against personal injuries and fire.

FIVE YEARS AGO July 15, 1943

The severe thunder storm which struck Birmingham Monday evening resulted in damage to the A. A. R. Lindbergh road when it was hit by lightning. Another burned out the tubes of the radio transmitter at police head-

Road Block



Michigan Mirror

By Gene Allman

Lucerne—"For quiet, restful week end, away from the state capital, what we need is a place of our own up in the North Country." I said, pulling out a state highway map.

The Mispou took a look. "See this patch of green," I pointed to the point. "It stretches from Kalkaska to Hartsville. It blankets the Ausable State Forest quarters, interrupting service between station and cars for an hour.

Hearings held last week before the local OPA board resulted in the confiscation of gasoline ration books of several drivers. All had previously been arrested for speeding.

A swimming show will be staged at Burnham pool July 28, by the children who have been taking swimming lessons there. The other recreation highlight of the summer will be the circus at Torrey Field on July 16, presented by the youngsters who use that field, and their pets.

A Detroit bookbinder has recently completed the huge book which will be placed in Baldwin Library. Here the names of all the men and women of this city, who entered the armed services of the country, will be entered as a permanent record of their patriotism.

Isn't it odd the way some things go? The draft board and the FBI are searching everywhere for Christopher Wilson, formerly of Labor road. We can't help but wonder why they do not check with the army—that's where Christopher is, now.

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THE ECCENTRICS' Camera Corner



The happy thrill of a day at the zoo is perfectly caught in this simple snapshot.

For More Than Animal Pictures

NOT long ago a friend of mine sent me several snapshots he had made at a nearby zoo. With them came a note "I suspect," he wrote, "that most camera users load on a zoo primarily as a place for animal pictures. I am convinced this is wrong. To prove my point, I am sending you some snaps of my own and suggest."

One of his pictures is the shot appearing with this column. It's a shot I like. I like it chiefly because it is honest, simple, and wholly natural. Go to a zoo any time and you'll see a host of youngsters watching the animals with this same placid intensity.

At first glance, you might think this shot had been made from within the enclosure. It wasn't. My friend simply took his camera around to one side of the enclosure and shot through the fence with his lens in an opening. Meanwhile, of course, the children paid no attention to him. They were

by twilight the parade of automobiles, bringing more fishermen and sightseers had worn a deep rut in the road by the trailer. The misadventure closed the trailer windows.

"You tough guys," he said in an ancient car. Where glass windows had once been, by rods stuck out, harkened the car around in an angle, the men descended the bank carrying a basket filled with bottled beer and there camped for the day.

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"I'm not sure I heard her. The camper's dog was howling for food. And someone here and there radio going full blast.

Then the fishermen with "rubber doughnuts" appeared. Loaded down with crates and equipment they descended the bank to the Ausable amid farewells of their families. Stridling down the "doughnuts" they would float down to the Red Oak bridge, two miles downstream. Our cyclists explained they "always" pushed off from this spot.

Other tourists arrived with canoes or boats. "Where can I put this boat in the river?" was the usual query. Like a traffic cop presiding over a busy street, I volunteered detailed instructions to each guest. "Drive down the trail to the first bend. Park your car there. Carry the canoe down the footpath to the river's edge. A well placed...

Across the river, down at the bend, two men were putting up a cabin. They had engaged the Indian Trail lodge on Kellogg road to furnish lumber. The easiest way to deliver it was by boat, ferrying the supplies across the stream from our camp, and all with automobile horn signals and put-putting of an outboard motor.

Our Sunday guests included a fellow who took possession of the river's edge. A well placed outlet. Well, by actual count, more than 60 persons—men, women, children and pets—swarmed over our leased land in one week end. Fly rods to the left. Canoes to the right.

It suddenly dawned on us that a lot of other folks had traveled to the spacious North Country, too, in quest of solitude and relaxation. It also dawned on us that we were vastly outnumbered—a point of view to which my friend's popular Ausable camping and fishing spot. The place fairly shouted: "Don't fence me in!"

Well, we don't intend to. Who are we to dispossess so many people of their pleasure? Anyhow, we're too tired!

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