

Fred Douglass Recalls Days When Baseball's Great Visited His Plant

There's one man in Birmingham who gets a thrill that brings back memories as he hears the sharp crack of a bat meeting a ball, and hears the roar of a crowd as the batter struts toward first base. He is Fred Douglass, 424 Southfield, who at one time brought some of baseball's greatest to Birmingham to visit his factory, and personally supervised the making of the bats they used to slug their way to fame.

Among the great who came here were Hughie James and Ty Cobb, as managers of the Detroit Tigers, Sam Crawford, Johnny Beese and the very famous Wild Bill Donovan.

"They sure were funny," Douglass recalls. "They'd stand around while the one man who hand-turned the bats worked, and then they'd probably handle a dozen before they'd find one that suited them. They were worse than a bunch of fussy old women! Those bats were all the same size, length and circumference, and they all had to weigh exactly the same, but the batters had to handle them all to find one that 'just suited' him."

Flash Floods

Another time when the Rouge "acted up" with Douglass did not concern his lumber business.

"We used to have a chicken yard right by the river," he recalled. "One day my wife and I went to Detroit and another of those floods struck. This time when I came home we found about half of our chickens with their heads poked through the wire, drowned. That river might not look like much, but when it really starts it sure can do a lot of damage. More than once I've seen Woodward avenue and Maple road under two feet of water."

"The billies we made for the cops were another big item for us. We supplied the wire, drowned in Detroit, and sent them to quite a few other places, too. Used birch for them, that is for the cops. The officers had their made of black walnut."

Douglass ended the interview he looked a little sad that the old days are gone.

"We just did the best we could," he said, "and it paid us. You know, we used to sell a dozen top-grade bats for \$10.00. Now you can't get more than you'll pay for one today that we probably would have rejected. There have been a lot of changes in Birmingham and business, even in baseball, haven't there?"

Best Wood Used

Douglass explained that he used the best white ash available to make bats.

"We looked for straight, strong grain, without knots or twists. When the best of the material on hand was selected, it was cut into billets and seasoned, out in the open, for three years. Then it was graded again, and even after the bats were turned, some were rejected. Why, when I was running the factory every kid in Birmingham owned a baseball bat! They used to come around every spring and stock up on the ones we rejected."

Douglass passed to smile. "I imagine some of those bats were better than a lot that are sold today. My wife and I gave the last one away just a couple of years ago. We always had some around the house."

While the baseball bats may have brought more fame to the Birmingham Handle Factory than other items, they were by no means the only industry there. The fact that one Detroit buyer might take from 50 to 100 dozen a shipment did not mean the factory was not turning out many other items of perhaps greater importance.

"We made hammer handles, peavy, axe, maul, and all sorts of handles there," Douglass said. "We also made whiffletrees, neck yokes and eveners. They were sold in some cases directly to lumbermen for use in the woods, the rest going to jobbers."

Tract in Arkansas

"Hickory was the wood for these. We bought up everything we could around here, and where we couldn't get anything more that met my requirements, I bought a tract of land in Arkansas, and brought lumber in from there. We, the 15 to 18 men who worked for me, and myself, prided

Will Discuss Problems of High School Students



Sally Buck

Defending their class B regional championship Saturday at Ferndale the Maples will clash with 11 other B class schools beginning at 2 a.m.

Entries are Berkeley, Cranbrook, Canterbury, Clawson, Redford Union, Marysville, Rochester, Romeo, Roseville, Utica and Yale. Regionals will run all day with the preliminaries in the morning and finals in the afternoon.



Roberta Connor

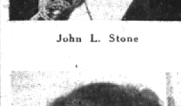
News Notes from Vaughan School

The second period of the spring semester closed last week, but in spite of the extra studying for exams that this involved, several of the classes have taken trips within the last two weeks.

On May 5 the American civilization class, who are ninth graders, went to Convention Hall to see the travel show. One of the exhibits that particularly interested them was the show of native costumes displayed on life-sized mannequins. The junior business class went to Pontiac to the Bell Telephone Company offices, and the biology classes have made two trips nearby, one to the woods surrounding Cranbrook for wild flower specimens and one to Cranbrook Science building to see the embryology exhibit.

The past week brought the senior pictures to the school. Each senior received one of the composite pictures, and they have been busy autographing them during the succeeding days. The large framed picture of the class, that will be hanging in the library with other graduating classes, is now in the school office where it is being admired by the members of the school and the public.

The last week also brought the new track warm-up suits the Side Line Quarterbacks club bought for the athletes. They have blue jackets with blue pants and are trimmed in white. On the jacket is a large white "B". The athletes who were eligible to receive a suit are very proud of them and grateful to the fathers whose generosity made them possible.



John L. Stone



Jane L. Kerr



William Shank

These five persons (above) will discuss problems of high school students and parents at the second annual Family Life Institute today at Baldwin high school. (See story on Page One.)

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Barnum Junior High News

The following students have received an "A" or "B" or "C" for the third marking period and have not received a "D" in either effort or cooperation.

GRADE 7

Martin Abrecht, Barbara Aikens, David Andrae, Mary Buchanan, Robert Barnes, Robert Beatty, Carol Baker, Dorothy Bogg, Theodore Berr, Keyna Biehn, Patricia Boone, John Boulton, Margaret Brenner Alan Bumpus, John Campbell, Nancy Carlisle, Payson Chapman, Sarah Colwell, Janice Cooper, Barbara Corkery Marjorie Crawford, Diane Desk, Ethel Didier, William Dunes, Joan Garsaway, Karen Gavie, Thor Halvorson, David Hamill, Cherry Harris, James Hogan, William Hohmeyer, Virginia Houle, Marilyn Howard, John Hubert, Patricia Hummel, Linda Hunt, Patricia Jackson, Howard Johnson, Roger Johnson, Suzanne K'Barz, Chad Ketchum, Ronald Lange, Lorraine LaTrobe, Marlene Lawson, Richard Loading, Judith Lundquist, William Masters, Jean Masterton, Ann McDonald, Elizabeth McQueen, Judy Millman, Alice Mohler, William Newman, Dorothy Ojala, James Owens, Susan Reason, Alice Richwood, Beverly Seales, Dorothy Schwimmer, James Serguson.

Martha Sharples, Carolyn Shattuck, Joie Stannom, Margery Streten-Reuter, William Stridger, Janet Symons, Virginia Thomson, Adele Toepfer, Nancy Waiser, Nancy Waungberg, Gerald Webb.

GRADE 8

Phyllis Abbott, Shirley Abbott, Betty Aldred, Robert Appleford, Linda Ball, James Barr, Marlon Becker, John Bennett, Evelyn Bernier, Kathleen Berry, Shirley Bever, Carol Balck, Janet Brown, Sylvia Chalk, Peggy Crin, Norman Cupp, Norma Curdin, Dorothy Davies, William Donaldson, William Donaldson, Carol Dorman, Beth Fitch, Mary Fulton, Robert Gasser, Jo Ann Getz, Susan Harley, Gail Haugan, Patricia Hibbard, Marielle Knights, Beverly Lewis, William Malender.

Linda Miller, Roger Miller, Lois Moore, Elizabeth Olmstead, Beverly Oswald, Carol Pilon, Sarah Reed, Ellen Richards, Virginia Robertson, Ted Schwarz, Andrea Snyder, Robert Thalacker, Peter Thomas, Polly Viet, Josephine Watt, Janet Weber, Charles Weir, James Weldy, Sally Wilkinson, Susan Wilson.

GRADE 9

Claire Anderson, Ted Averil, Alysanne Brewster, Elizabeth B. Carter, Patricia Cuniff, Sally Catter, Woody Dars, Bonnie Dayton, William DeLoria, William Dadds, Sara Dunn, Richard Emery, Howard Green, James Hagoe, Eleanor Hamill.

Loisae Harris, James Hardin, Rosemary Hicks, Ann McDonald, Carol McClelland, Susan Morse, William Nicholas, Mary Ritzing, Janice Rose, Russell Sanders, Stuart Schiefel, Joy Sauerbrun, Mary Van Pietersen, Bruce Wallace, Muri Webster, Ruth Yeomans.

Have You Met?

Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Pearsay, formerly Detroit, who are now living at 710 Colonial court? Mr. Pearsay is owner of a commercial insurance agency in Detroit.

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Prices Effective Thursday, May 19, Through Wednesday, May 25

Fresh Dressed Michigan HEN TURKEYS 59¢

lb.

CHOICE POT Roast Beef 49¢

lb.

CANNED HAMS

11-Lb. Ave. 89¢ lb.

FRESH JUMBO Shrimp

Cleaned lb. 89¢

Country Cut-Up Chicken

Buy Just the Pieces You Want!

- FRESH!
- TENDER!
- ECONOMICAL!

Legs 99¢ lb.
Backs 29¢ lb.
Breasts \$1.09 lb.
Wings 59¢ lb.

Fresh Daily! FROM OUR OWN FAMOUS KITCHENS!

Buy it BAKED!

- Chicken Pies... All Meat ea. 65¢
- STEAK and Mushroom Pies... ea. 50¢
- OLD FASHIONED Potato Salad... lb. 35¢
- Baked Spaghetti... lb. 35¢
- Baked Beans... lb. 35¢
- Cabbage Salad... lb. 35¢

McMillan's Country Roll BUTTER 62¢ lb.

HORMEL'S MIDGET HAMS 64-Lb. 1/4-Size \$6.99 \$2.49

FRESH Sweet Breads 69¢ lb.

SKINLESS FRANKS 39¢ lb.

FRESH COTTAGE CHEESE 19¢ lb.

FLAVOR FRESH PRODUCE

U. S. No. 1 CALIFORNIA POTATOES 10 lbs. 69¢

Fancy, Clean, Crisp HOME GROWN SPINACH 2 lbs. 25¢

Home Grown ASPARAGUS 2 bunches 29¢

Fresh Daily CALIFORNIA STRAWBERRIES Picked to suit direct from the harvest... lowest possible prices.

FIRE'S HICKORY SMOKED BACON 69¢ lb.

Wefer Thin Sliced

PHILADELPHIA CREAM CHEESE 2 Pkgs. 29¢

KOSHER STYLE BRISKET Corned Beef 59¢ lb.

LADY BORDEN

STAR CROSS Tomato Juice... 19¢

STAR CROSS No. 2 1/2 Tin Tomatoes... 19¢

NAPKINS... 2 Pkgs. 25¢

Sifre Bros. Columbia, Mara and Mocha COFFEE 63¢ lb.

FRENCH DRESSING 33¢ New Low Price

AMERICA'S SMOOTHEST... COFFEE 49¢

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE 49¢

DON-DE COFFEE

LARGE RINSO - LARGE LUX... Pkg. 28¢ 3-Lb. Tin 87¢

AT SFIRES Bakery AT SFIRES

Butterscotch Nut Cookies per doz. 42¢

Individual Strip Top Pineapple Pies 3 for 44¢

New York Currant Buns per doz. 60¢

Tasty Date Filled Loaf Cakes each 49¢

Fresh Fruit Banana Cup Cakes 6 for 37¢

Appicot Filled Danish Triangle Coffee Cakes, each 58¢

Cinnamon Sugar Dunkers per doz. 44¢

FRIDAY & SATURDAY ONLY Small Golden Snow Layer Cakes each 58¢

FRIDAY & SATURDAY ONLY Butter Frosted Chocolate Fudge Layer Cakes, each 90¢

SATURDAY ONLY Strawberry Cream Frosted Angel Food Cakes each 85¢

Snow Crop

Broccoli 25¢

Spinach 25¢

Makes 1 1/2 Pints

ORANGE JUICE 2 For 45¢

OLD MONK Mayonnaise, Pt. 45¢

OLD MONK THOUSAND ISLAND Dressing, Pt. 45¢

DONLESS AND SKINLESS Sardines 2 Tins 65¢

GOLD MEDAL PILLSBURY FLOUR 5 Lb. Bag 45¢

HUNT'S WHOLE UNPEELED APRICOTS 4 No. 2 1/2 Tins 97¢

GOOD-AIRE-LICKS OFFENSIVE ODORS Small 98¢ Large \$1.89

Tauxsun Grapefruit - Pink or White Juice 46-Oz. 2 Tins 49¢

SWEETHEART SOAP 1c SALE

Reg. 3 Bars 28¢-1 for 1c-4 Bars 27c Large 3 Bars 38¢-1 for 1c-4 Bars 39c BLUE WHITE DEAL 3 Boxes 30¢-1 for 1c-4 Pkgs. MEDIUM SWAN SOAP Bar 9c LARGE SWAN SOAP 2 Bars 29c

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