

Willingness to work, to save a bit of one's earnings, to develop self-reliance, to face the future with self-confidence... these were the virtues of a pair that most have thrown away in a single, skillless, generation.

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# The Birmingham Eccentric

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PART ONE

22 PAGES FIVE CENTS

## THE S and THAT

By G. R. A.

### "Soapy" & A "Hot Rod" Car

A lot of staff recently has been printed about Gov. Williams being escorted by police through the nearby city of Trenton at "70 miles per hour."  
Williams since has apologized, stating that he believed "we were going only 40 miles per hour."  
My sympathies are for Williams in this case. If the car in which he was riding did go faster than it should, no doubt the pace was set by the local police.  
I remember when Kim Sigler, during his first year as Governor in 1947, attended the Tiger's opening ball game in Detroit. A group of us from the Executive Office had seats together. Sigler flew over from Lansing and was met at the airport by Detroit motorcycle police.  
WELL, THESE BOYS apparently liked to go fast, and with sirens sounding, the Sigler car and the escort came to Briggs Stadium hell-bent-for-election.  
I was in another car, and it just happened that both our cars met at the same place.  
I had heard the sirens, etc., and knew that the public's attention was being focused on the question: "Well, who is the celebrity causing all this racket?"  
So I kidded the former governor when we got together in our seats... and he agreed that the "Soapy" and last police escort." And it was.  
So, in the current case of Governor Williams and his Trenton escort, I don't become excited. I don't believe "Soapy" willingly would break the traffic laws anywhere.

### Good, Old Jim Devlin

The recent testimonial dinner to James L. Devlin, Detroit News reporter who covered the federal beat here for 35 years, recalls my first meeting with him, when I was a reporter for the old Detroit Journal over 30 years ago. Jim made a friend of every person he met. He was a modest, quiet chap, with a keen sense of humor. Jim was natural and unpretentious. Now and then, in the years since I've been in Birmingham, Jim would drop in to refresh my clasp his hand and give me his frank, smiling face.  
I remember Jim as being a "vast riches... of the imperishable kind; he's a multi-millionaire of the wealth of Friendship!"  
May he enjoy his remaining years at his desk in the News' grand offices... is the wish of his host of admirers.

### June Fires Average One Call Each Day

Birmingham firemen responded to an average of one call each day during the month of June. Fire Chief V. W. Griffith reported a total of 30 calls for the month, which resulted in damages of \$2,600 to local property.  
There were 16 silent alarms for fires and fire investigations, 12 gas investigations and one each on first aid runs and general alarms.  
The department conducted 229 inspections in June, with 19 found where action by the fire prevention bureau was needed.

### Local Car Dealers Swamped As Shortage Rumors Spread

Families in the Birmingham area have been placing orders for new cars at an "amazing" rate since the start of the Korean war, according to local automobile dealers.  
Whispers of "World War III" and rumors of auto factories being converted to weapons plants have given sufficient impetus to prospective car buyers to create a shortage of new cars in Birmingham, it appears.  
Used cars, especially late models, have failed to go into the usual summer slump, a survey of local dealers has shown. Prices have stayed up and demand is at least as strong as it was prior to July, they say.  
THERE ARE usually 12 to 14 new cars on hand at Clonest and McCutchen (Hudson), according to sales manager George Brown. A wait of four to five weeks now faces buyers, Brown says.  
Tom McDonnell says he has had to turn away orders for cars totaling 40 per cent of new car shipments in the last two weeks since the start of the Korean war. The owner of Tom McDonnell, Inc., Lincoln-Mercury, says he doesn't want to get into the fix of a backlog of orders that dealers were faced with during the last war.  
Jess McNeal, Inc. (Nash) reports the situation has been similar. "We're being completely out of new cars going fast."  
SOME DEALERS, able to provide immediate delivery on all their

### SAD BUT TRUE

It may be too small for your junior; but it's just right for someone else's youngster. Let that someone else know about our new line of outgrown children's clothes in THE ECCENTRIC'S Classified Section.  
Phone MI 4-1100  
Ask for the West Ad desk

## HOSPITALS MAY BE BUILT INSTEAD OF ONE HERE

### Land Owners Adverse to Park St. Plan

Several property holders in the area affected by the proposed extension of Park street from Hamilton to Maple appeared before the city commission Monday evening.  
Arthur DeBue, who some time ago purchased a parcel of land in the area, asked the real need of the extension, saying that should it be approved, his land would be so divided as to be worthless.  
DeBue said he had purchased the land in order that he might build a small shop for the servicing of electric cleaners. He contends that, should the extension of Park street go through, his holding will not be large enough for any commercial use, either as a building site or for sale value.  
CHARLES KINNSON, who also owns property in the area, backed DeBue's statements, saying he could not see where the extension would greatly benefit the traffic problem, and would certainly work a hardship on those who owned the land which would be needed for the right-of-way.  
John W. Griffin said he saw no need of the continuation of Park street. He said it had been as it is at present for years and that, to the best of his knowledge, no serious accident had ever been recorded because of it.  
He stated that if the extension is made straight across Hamilton, it will cut into his house, but if that, a slight curve is permitted, the building can be avoided.  
GAPILL SAID he purchased the property about three years ago with the idea of having a home of his own. He stated that consideration was being given other parcels of property involved, but (See OWNERS, Page 2)

### Work Continues, Replacing Crossway With Parkway



Chunks of steel-reinforced concrete are being hauled out of the Adams-Woodward crossway this week, as the Oakland county road commission prepares to turn the dangerous crossing into a grassy parkway.  
The crossway was closed temporarily Oct. 25 last year and Birmingham police have reported only two property damage and one personal injury accidents since then.  
In the period between Oct. 24, 1948 and the crossover closing, there were nine property damage accidents, according to Police Chief Ralph Moxley.  
STATE HIGHWAY Commissioner Charles Siegler ordered the closing last month when informed of the good results of the temporary closing.  
Work was delayed when a merchant in the area issued an injunction charging the blocking off of the crossway would be injurious to his business.

## Hospital Groups' Discussions Fail to Bring Agreement

As the result of meetings held during the past week by the three groups interested in increasing hospital facilities in southern Oakland county, it appears that, instead of these groups combining to build a single hospital in Birmingham, three of them may be constructed.  
Wednesday evening of last week the Ferndale Board of Commerce brought together representatives of the Greater Metropolitan Hospital Group of Detroit, who have allocated \$3,500,000 for a hospital to be erected in Birmingham, the Southern Oakland County Hospital Authority, which originally planned a hospital at Woodward and Thirteen Mile roads, and the Bloomfield Medical Center group.  
A PUBLIC DISCUSSION of the general problem was held finally resulting in the Detroit group's willingness to change its plan by giving \$2,000,000 for the Woodward project and \$1,500,000 for the Bloomfield Medical Center.  
William J. Norton, of Pleasant Ridge, chairman of the Greater Metropolitan Hospital Group, and also on the committee which defended the single hospital project for Birmingham. He announced that it would be hoped to get the maximum number of beds in one project.  
H. Lloyd Clawson, chairman of the Woodward Hospital Authority presented his side of the case, taking issue with Norton. It is understood that some supporters of the Bloomfield Medical Center project are sympathetic to dividing the \$3,500,000 fund into two hospital projects.  
RELIABLE INFORMATION obtained by The Eccentric this week says that some members of the Oakland Hospital project board (the one for Birmingham) are in Clawson's corner.  
Chad M. Ritchie, Birmingham city commissioner, who attended the Ferndale meeting, and his fellow commissioners here Monday night that "Norton appears to dominate the picture. He wants the single hospital in Birmingham and declared that, if present members of the Oakland Hospital Authority resigned, their places would be filled by persons sympathetic to the local project."  
As the matter now stands, this is what it looks like: Clawson's group will use what funds it now has, approximately \$700,000 plus the site, together with any federal funds available, to go ahead with the Woodward Hospital project; the same will happen in the case of the Bloomfield Medical Center; if Norton's group doesn't change its mind, a third hospital will be erected in Birmingham.

## Water Situation OK This Summer, City Manager Says

Barring unforeseen difficulties, there will be no water shortage in Birmingham this year, City Manager Donald C. Egbert announced this week.  
The seven deep wells supplying the city with water (star needs are in good condition and four of the largest have been completely overhauled in the last few weeks, according to Fire Chief Vernon W. Griffith.  
Egbert anticipates last year's record peak load of four million gallons per day will be broken this year, but added that the water system will be able to handle the situation.  
"APPROXIMATELY 4,900 services are being used this year, Egbert said this represents a 10 per cent increase over last July's figure.  
He predicts an additional 15 per cent increase by one year from now.  
This rapid growth in water services is due to the increased rate of building, primarily residential, in Birmingham, Egbert explained.  
A six per cent increase in the water services has occurred in the last two months alone, he said.  
Municipal water supplies in southern Oakland county are available from the upper reaches of the area, including Royal Oak.

## Hills Crash Fatal To Detroit Men

Two Detroit men died as results of injuries sustained last Wednesday when their car swerved off Opdyke road in Bloomfield Hills and crashed into a tree.  
The driver, Henry J. Habermas, 73, 1256 Ferdinand street died Saturday at St. Joseph's hospital, Pontiac. A passenger, Frederick Volenz, 63, 5651 Romeyn avenue died Friday in Providence hospital, Detroit.  
Both men were employees of the GMC truck and coach division in Pontiac, and were on their way to work when the accident occurred.  
The scene of the crash was near St. Hugo of the Hills church.  
Mr. Volenz is survived by his widow, one son, one daughter and two sisters while Mr. Habermas leaves his widow, one son, two daughters and two grandchildren.

## Pitching Machine Center of Attraction on Playground



John Braidwood, Franklyn Whitney, Ronald McCrumb, Julius Harrington, Sue Kennedy and Gary Littleton (Kneeling) Group admires precision of new machine.

This spring considerable publicity was given concerning the automatic pitching machine used by some of the major league baseball squads for their spring training.  
Last week the Birmingham recreation commission acquired an automatic machine of its own. Although smaller than those used by the professional teams, it serves essentially the same purpose; develops timing on the part of the batter at the plate.  
THE PITCHING robot, which is operated by electricity, is in use each afternoon after 1:30 at the Barnum school playground. Small rubber balls an inch and a half in diameter are used and the batter stands the regulation distance from the pitching mound.  
There is a continuous lineup of boys and even girls of all ages, waiting to take their turn at the plate.  
Franklyn Whitney, director of the summer recreation program, said that the machine can be set to throw at various speeds and can be controlled to throw the balls higher or lower.  
WHITNEY SAID that he plans to let the high school baseball team use the machine next spring so that the batters can sharpen up on their hitting.  
The idea of automatic pitching devices is not new. As far back as the previous century, attempts were made to use mechanical means to deliver the ball across the plate. Even low and arrows and gunpowder have been used for this purpose.  
There are now some pitching machines on the market, which throw curves.  
Birmingham is one of the first cities in the area to possess a robot pitching machine. It will be interesting to observe if it will have an effect upon the hitting ability of the future ball players of this city.  
The local pitching machine, which is new on the market, is manufactured by Deddes Industries of Berkeley.  
After meeting favorable response the matter was tabled until this meeting.  
Hearings will also be held to discuss the cost of street improvements for parts of Magnolia subdivision.  
All members of lower spring mattress committee ROYAL KITCHENS COMPANY. Dial—ask for Superintendent 4-111.

## Wrong Way Driver Also Wrong in Other Ways

Birmingham police officers got a little more than they bargained for Monday morning when they stopped a car going the wrong way on W. Lincoln, a one-way street.  
Robert Seabrooks, 31, of 10210 Delmar, Detroit, couldn't prove ownership of the car he was driving (the wrong way). In fact Seabrooks admitted that he never had been issued an operator's license.  
He was arrested on investigation of ownership, but later released when a telephone call to a friend proved the car had never been stolen.  
But Seabrooks didn't get off without tickets for driving without a license and driving the wrong way on a one-way street.

## Return of Starling Flocks Bring Trouble for Weary Residents of Knox Street

Haul out the buckshot, men—the starlings are back!  
Once again Birmingham police officers are getting in some evening shooting out on Knox street where flocks of the noisy birds gather in towering maple trees every night to harass weary residents.  
Miss Olive Maxwell, 911 Knox sounded a bit disgusted with our feathered friends this week.  
"They're worse than ever this summer," Miss Maxwell cried, "and are concentrating on just three or four houses instead of all along Knox and Poppleton like last year."  
Besides the Maxwell's, the Hask and Dusty's residences on Knox are plagued with starlings.  
Miss Maxwell says the noise starts just before dawn when the birds fly away and start discussing the day's mission.  
"The proposal of the South Oakland Hospital Authority to the (See HOSPITALS, Page 2)

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