

The Birmingham Eccentric

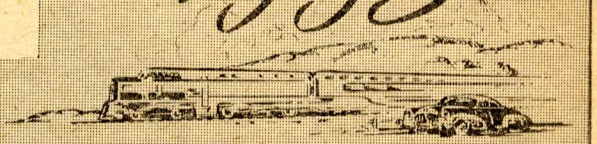
1878

Section
May 1953

B

Local Village, City and
Township Governments

1953



Heart of B'ham City Government

Opened in October, 1928, the \$175,000 Municipal Building houses B'ham city government, including police and fire departments. This early photo from the corner of Martin and Pierce streets shows the final stages of landscaping. This photo could not be duplicated today because the trees have grown to such a size as to prevent an unobstructed view of the building.



Court Action Failed To Halt New City Hall

The "Home of Our City Government" almost did not have a home at one time.

Between the months of July and December of 1927, when the rapidly expanding village of Birmingham was attempting to find a home for its increasing municipal activities, a difference of opinion existed as to the completion of the proposed new municipal building.

A portion of the village commission was in favor of the completion of the new civic project because the people had voted for the new building. The other faction of the commission, although not believing the new edifice necessary at the time, objected to the proposal that the police and fire departments be housed in the new municipal home.

This strife continued for several months during which a trio of local citizens sought to stop the entire proceedings in the Pontiac Circuit Court.

This latter faction lost out in its fight when it failed to carry its case in court and the court finally gave the village a decree favorable to the completion of the project.

FOR MANY years, long before a group of civic-minded residents decided that their growing village needed a larger home for municipal offices, the offices were located in the old Baldwin Public Library on the southeast corner of Woodward and Maple avenues.

Soon the village of Birmingham began to grow at incredible speed. At the dedication ceremonies in 1928 of the present municipal building, a report prepared by the late Charles J. Shain, former president of the village, and George R. Averill publisher of *The Eccentric*, told of the tremendous growth of Birmingham:

"Hundreds of new homes have been erected here since 1922; the village has increased in area during that time from its original

square mile of 640 acres to over 2,600 acres.

POPULATION has more than doubled until today it is estimated that approximately 12,000 people live within our corporate boundaries. Such progress has taxed to the utmost the institutions of Birmingham including its municipal government."

With the police and fire departments using the ground floor and the small but ever-increasing library housed on the top floor of the old Baldwin Public Library Building on the spot now located by the Cunningham Drug Store, the village offices discovered that they could not operate in such cramped quarters.

Because of these conditions, a civic movement slowly gained momentum. The present municipal building was first conceived as part of a Civic Center Plan during the regime of Village President Charles J. Shain and Commissioners Charles A. Bingham and Samuel Oliver Wylie Bell.

IT WAS ENGLAND'S HISTORIAN, Lord Macaulay, who said: "That is the best government which desires to make the people happy, and knows how to make them happy."

Moved by the spirit of this belief, Americans have ever struggled to develop a form of government that places control over their rulers in the hands of the people themselves . . . thus assuring the best protection against the rise of old world tyranny.

Such has been the pattern of the growth of government in this area . . . from the time when the Northwest Territory was broken up into several States, including Michigan.

In this special 75th Anniversary Edition is told the story of the development of this area's self-government on the village, city and township levels.

AFTER NUMEROUS discussions held between Commissioners Shain, Bingham and Bell with members of the library board, it was decided that the best interests

of the community would be served if the future library and village offices were separated into their own buildings.

(Continued on Page 7)

Bloomfield Hills Was First Known as 'Bagley's'

The history of the Bloomfield Hills area goes back to 1819 when three men, the first to settle there, first claimed their lands.

The men were Amasa Bagley, his son-in-law, William Morris, and Elijah S. Fish. Fish was the first to enter his land, the northeast quarter of section 23 (both sides of Woodward Avenue between Lone Pine and Brady Lane) with the government registry now in the Oakland County register of deeds office.

The date of this entry was December 9, 1819.

Bagley and Morris waited until September 28, 1821, to enter their names for the west half of section 14 (diagonally northwest of Fish's property).

Amasa Bagley, who came from Norfolk County, Mass., opened a tavern. The log structure was located on the northwest corner of Saginaw trail and the road that was to become West Long Lake. To travelers on the trail, his tav-

ern and its locality became known as "Bagley's".

BAGLEY LATER served as associate justice of the first county court of Oakland which assembled at Pontiac, July 17, 1820. From that time on he acted as both judge and innkeeper.

A frame tavern was built in 1832 by Morris, replacing Bagley's building. This building was used for public meetings and social activities for more than 45 years.

Morris came to Bloomfield Hills with Bagley, although he had been in Michigan for some time prior to

his settlement. He purchased the southwest quarter of section 14, lying south of Bagley's land, and planted the first wheat in Bloomfield township in 1819.

MORRIS WAS later to be the first sheriff of Oakland County.

Fish was a Presbyterian and it was through his efforts that a Presbyterian church was built in Bloomfield. In 1834, a three-day meeting was held in Fish's barn and at an organizational meeting later the same year, he was appointed elder and deacon.

His home was a frame dwelling in a grove of maples which he had

planted on the east side of Saginaw road, about midway between the present centers of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills. The structure, still standing, now is known as the Benedict farm.

Other early settlers and land speculators who purchased property from the government were Elliot Gray, 1824; O. W. Miller, 1824; Miles Palmer, 1823; John and Polly Vaughan, 1824, '26 and '27; Chelsey Blake, 1823; David Hiler, 1823; and Pierce Patrick, 1825.

FIRST MILL of any kind in Bloomfield township was a sawmill (Continued on Page 15)

1923

THIRTY YEARS
IN BIRMINGHAM

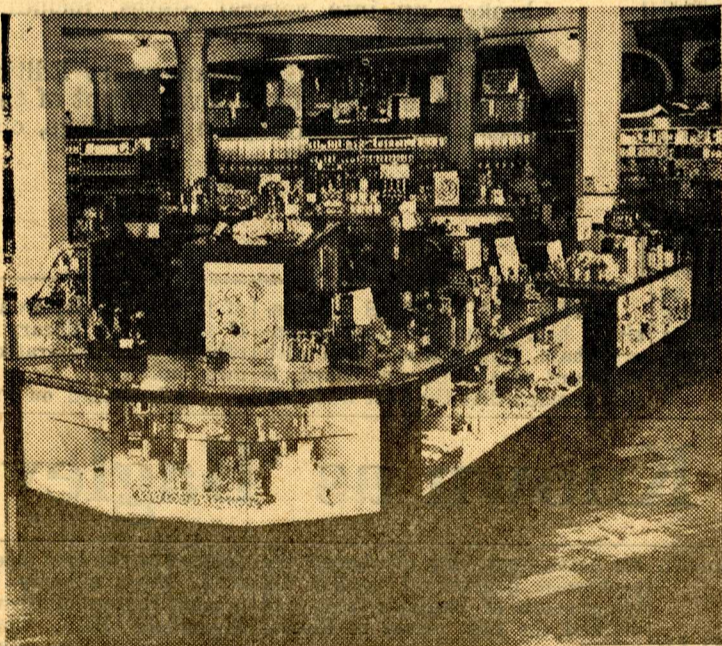
1953



*Congratulations to The BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
On Its 75th Anniversary*



Prescription Department



Cosmetics Department

*W*e, too, are proud to announce our Thirtieth Anniversary of Business in Birmingham.

We take this opportunity to say thanks to the people of this community who by their ever increasing patronage through the years, have indicated a confidence in our store. We like to feel this trust has been justified.

Great as the growth of Birmingham during these past years, we are confident that it will continue at an even more rapid pace. Our fine homes, schools and churches . . . the increasing numbers of shops and stores, offer much to attract people to this community. We here at Wilson's pledge our desire to be of still more service by the increasing of inventories, personnel, knowledge of products and by keeping in mind that quality, good selection and fair prices is a duty we owe to those we serve.

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WOODWARD AT MAPLE

Bloomfield Farms Taxed \$2 a Year Before 1845

Seventy-five years ago Bloomfield township was a purely rural area dotted with fairly prosperous farms and one trading center, the town of Birmingham.

Earliest records of township rule date back to 1828 but the history is sketchy and the only government record still in existence is a small tax record book which listed the names of the various farms and the annual taxes that were paid on the properties. Many of the large farms were required to pay only one or two dollars for the entire year.

First records of township board meetings began in 1845 when James R. Hunter was supervisor and Z. Swan, Jr., was clerk.

With township Trustees R. R. Belding, Peter Stiles, George W. Morris and E. P. Baldwin, they approved the bills in meetings held every two months and came up with a total audited amount during that year of \$224.32.

Other supervisors who served in the early days of the township were

Peter Dox, H. Lee, Henry L. Fish, J. A. Fitzpatrick, George Blakeslee, Luther Stanley (who owned the farm on the southeast corner of Woodward and Lincoln), Robert F. Opdyke, and William Patterson.

Two accounts were set up by the township in the 1850's. One called for the regular township expenses while a second was for the expenditures of the highway commissioners.

ONE BILL in 1863 called for the payment of \$138 to construct a bridge over the Rouge river near the farm of G. C. Randalls.

It wasn't until 1930 that the need for a more thorough township governing body was apparent. Population had increased slowly and only the Village of Birmingham had showed any signs of expansion.

One of the first offices of the township was in a frame building on the corner of Pierce and Martin. They were later moved to the second floor of a store building on the northwest corner of Maple and Woodward.

From there the offices were transferred to the second floor of the Municipal building while Birmingham still was a village.

THE FIRST township building

east of Woodward on East Long Lake road was built in 1930 and township officials moved into the building in 1933.

Shortly after Bloomfield Hills became a city, the township found itself out looking for another site for its offices. The building became the property of Bloomfield Hills in the city-township settlement of assets.

The present township building on Telegraph road just south of West Long Lake road was built in 1938.

The township's first police chief was Joseph Garbovit who was employed in 1940. A paid fire department had been created earlier when Archie Bradley was hired as the first fireman in April, 1932.

With the incorporation of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills and subsequent annexations to the

cities, Bloomfield township now has only 26 of the original 36 square miles.

TO PROVIDE fire and police protection, the township now has fire departments stationed at both the township hall and Bloomfield Village and police protection in both areas.

Growing pains are being felt by the township for the first time. A small residential building program was started in 1940 but was stopped soon after with the outbreak of World War II.

But the suburban impetus has now reached Bloomfield. Since 1950, developers have been keeping township officials busy with subdivision plats and planned residential developments.

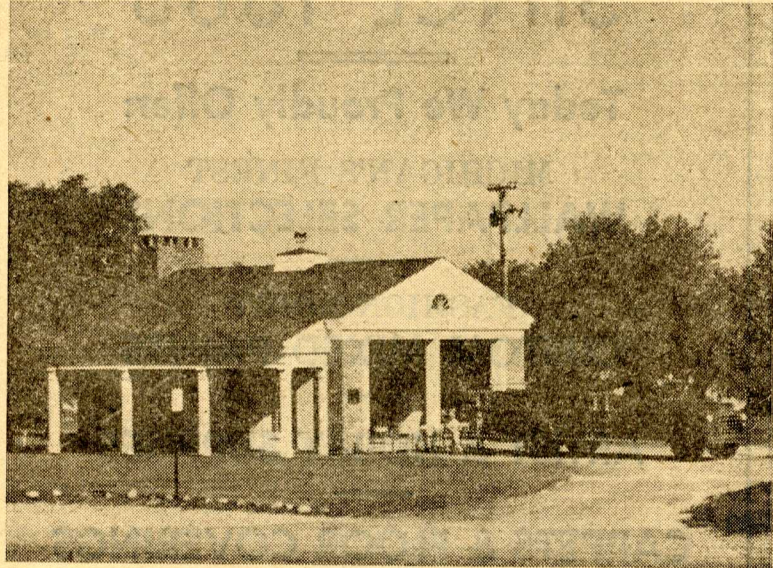
One of the township's greatest problems is sewage disposal but this and other difficulties will have to be solved to meet the demands of the suburban-bound home owners as the last phases of rural living pass from the township.

PRESENT TOWNSHIP board members are Supervisor David E. Anderson, Clerk Robert H. Dudley and Treasurer Arno L. Hulet.

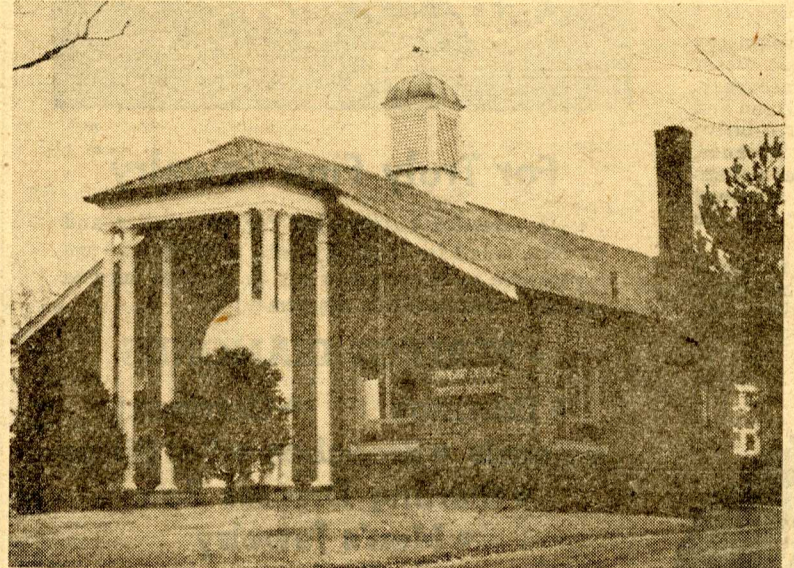
Anderson has served the township since April 4, 1932, when he was employed by the township as treasurer. He remained in the treasurer's office for over 18 years and became supervisor upon the retirement of Perry Vaughan in October, 1950.

Hulet was a township justice from 1933 until Anderson left the treasurer's post vacant in 1950.

Deputy Clerk Mrs. Ann Birrell, who actually fills the position of clerk except at board meetings, has been with the township since 1930.



\$15,000 BLOOMFIELD VILLAGE FIRE HALL
Built in 1950, it is one of twp.'s two stations



TOWNSHIP'S 15-YEAR-OLD MUNICIPAL HDQRS.
But it had 4 other locations in previous years

First Southfield Cabin Built 123 Years Ago

Southfield this year is celebrating its 123rd birthday as a township.

In 1830 the Southfield area, originally part of Bloomfield township, was established as a separate township.

Ossewa was the name chosen for the area when it was incorporated by the Michigan Territorial Council, but the name was not acceptable to residents and on petition was changed to Southfield.

First resident of the township is reported to have been John Daniels who settled in a small log cabin near the present intersection of Thirteen Mile road and Bingham in 1823.

Early families included Lee, Cook, White, Hunter, Hall, Durkee, Crawford, Henry, Parker, Botsford, Thorn, Dodd, Rodgers, Fuller, Bullock and Wilson.

Benjamin Fuller is said to have built the first frame house in the area in 1828 at the present corner of Telegraph and Eleven Mile.

Joshua Davis and Michael Beach built a saw mill in 1829 in the northern part of the township on the Rouge river. The Rouge was later to see many small industries along its banks that harnessed its water power.

MOSES RODGERS built the first tavern near the present intersection of Telegraph and Eight Mile in 1829.

The first church was the Presbyterian, organized in 1831, which, along with the first school, was located in the Franklin area.

H. S. Babcock was elected as the first township supervisor in 1831.

Earliest tax rolls available date back to 1870 when a typical example of land value and assessed taxes was the description of one acre of land in section 21, presently bounded by 10, 11 Mile roads, Lahser and Berg roads. The property was valued at \$50 and assessed \$1.50 for state taxes, \$2.33 for county taxes, \$4.12 for schools and 45 cents to the township.

ALTHOUGH cemetery burial records date back to 1833, the first township cemetery was acquired in 1847 when a 2½-acre parcel of land was purchased from Thaddeus Griswold north of 10½ Mile road and east of Berg road. Lots were sold at \$2 each.

Earliest justice court records to be found begin in the year 1850. The first case on Nov. 23 was brought by John Waters against John Trowbridge, a mill owner, before Justice Jonathan Stephen's court.

Waters sought action against

Trowbridge after he had taken 508 pounds of "good" wheat to the Trowbridge mill and was returned only 359 pounds of wheat after the milling process. He lost the case.

ALTHOUGH LACK of railroads hampered any appreciable industrial growth in the township in the early days, good soil made the area one of the richest farming sections of Oakland County.

Settlements soon grew up in the Franklin and Southfield Center areas, but Birmingham was the social and business center for Southfield residents for many years.

In more recent years, Southfield's population has boomed and with this increased census have come the many administrative headaches.

The change from the agrarian life in the township to residential development has brought more and more demands for better services.

HEAVIER POPULATION densities now call for improved roads, sewer and water facilities, better fire and police protection and the several jobs asked of local government.

Everywhere in the township today groups are pressing for incorporation. Some proponents of city services suggest that the entire township should be incorporated. Others seek separate municipalities in their own areas.

One incorporation vote failed in the southeast corner of the town-

ship in late 1951. Still other petitions yet to be acted upon are for Lathrup and the entire township.

TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS themselves are at a loss to predict the township's financial future. As more services are demanded, revenues from state agencies are lessened.

The greatest commercial development to be attracted by Southfield is the J. L. Hudson Company of Detroit whose planned \$22½ million shopping center already is under construction.

All types of commercial stores are joining in the rush to join Hudson's Northland Center, and sewer, water and traffic problems will be multiplied tenfold within the next few years.

Both light and heavy industry already have found Southfield an ideal area for development and the rural atmosphere north of Eight Mile road has been replaced by large industrial and residential areas.

SOUTHFIELD still has room for expansion and the opportunity to claim centrally located land for parks and schools.

The township hall on Berg road, between 10 and 11 Mile roads, dates back to the area's early history and has been used for township duties since 1873.

The fire department was set up as a paid department in 1942 and was housed in the present water department building next to the

township hall.

Chester Tolman is reported to be the first volunteer chief. The chief was then recruited from the ranks of the volunteers.

IN 1942, two firemen were hired and a fire truck purchased.

Since that time the department has grown rapidly and now numbers 20 firemen under Chief Frank Kruk. The township now has three fire stations and the latest in fire equipment. The first fire hall was abandoned when a station was built on Ten Mile road near Northwestern highway in 1949.

The water department was created in 1941 under a revenue bond issue to install mains and connections with the City of Detroit's water system.

Planning-wise, the township has been aware of its sudden rapid growth and a seven-man planning commission was named in 1950. David S. Geer, nationally-known planning consultant, was retained by the planners in 1951.

BASIC STEPS to strengthen the planning commission and develop a master plan were taken in 1952, and planners, like school administrators in the area, often find that their efforts have fallen behind the population growth.

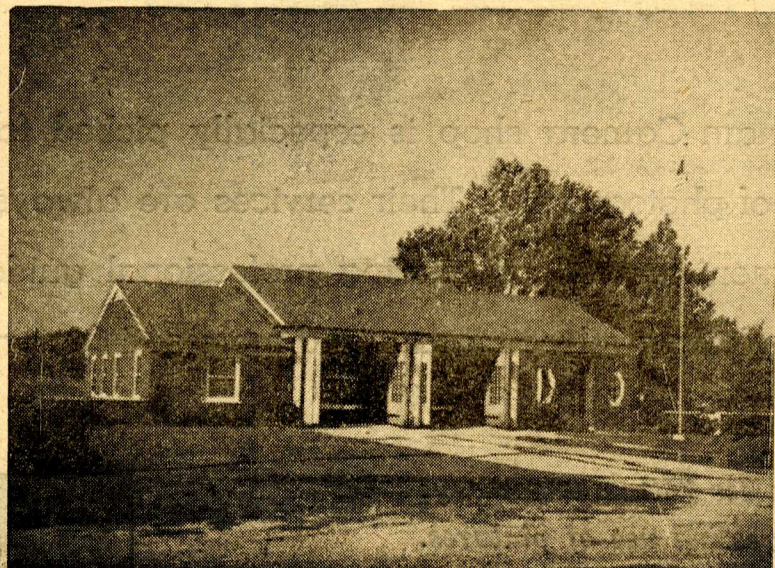
The latest estimated population of Southfield has been set at 24,500 by the township building department. This figure is based on a recent survey of building permits issued by the department.

Was That the Answer To a Weighty Problem?

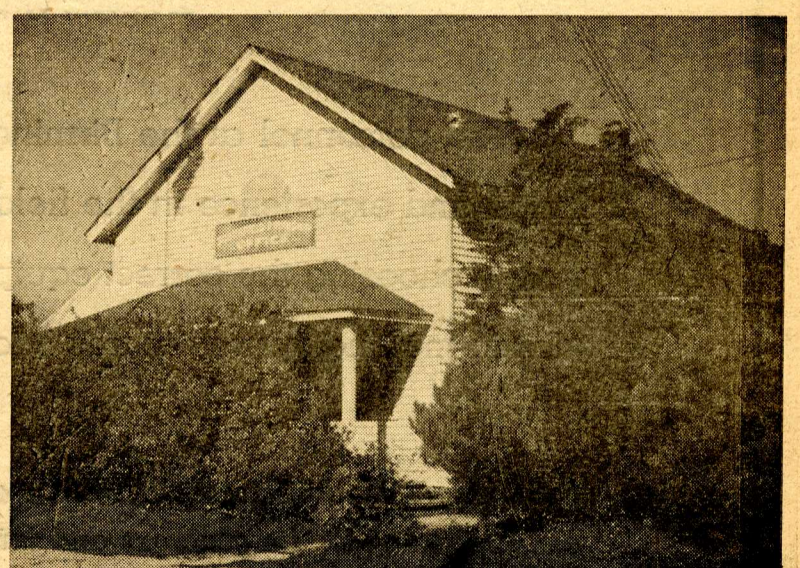
Typical of the newspapers of that day, the early issues of The Birmingham Eccentric carried many patent medicine advertisements, each proclaiming the medicine's wonderful powers.

Among these ads was Allen's Anti-Fat—"the great remedy for corpulence", which its makers claimed was purely vegetable and perfectly harmless, acting upon the food in the stomach thus preventing its being converted into fat.

When three local ladies stepped into a village drug store one day and were weighed, their combined weight reached the total of 931 pounds. Each weighed respectively 298, 312 and 321 pounds. As they filed out in a "solid" column, the accommodating clerk presented each one with a free bottle of Allen's Anti-Fat.



ONE OF THREE SOUTHFIELD FIRE STATIONS
This is main station at 10-Mile and Northwestern



TOWNSHIP HEADQUARTERS FOR PAST 80 YEARS
Built on Berg road site in 1873

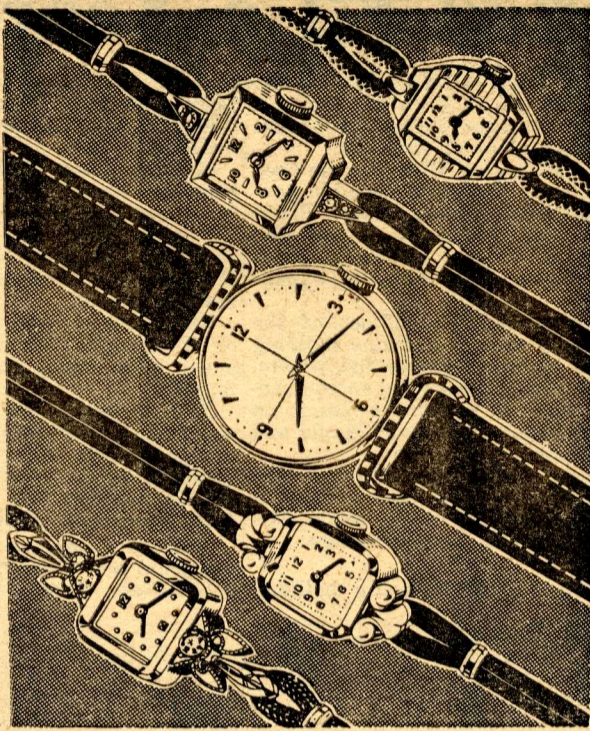
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that aspire
to the stars
for accuracy

* * *

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*Our Congratulations to the Eccentric on Its 75th Anniversary;
and especially for its generous and interesting use of piutures.*

Developing AND
PRINTING

Railroads Ignored Early Hopes of Franklin Village

Franklin Village is an old settlement in Oakland county. Its early inhabitants had high hopes for the growth of the little community, but when one railroad after another passed it by, it has indeed remained "a village that time forgot."

Its first settler was a man with the uncommon name of Dillucene Stoughton, who came in the spring of 1824 and purchased 80 acres of land now comprising the eastern half of the village.

A year later came Elijah Bullock, who with his four sons and son-in-law George Gage, purchased 240 acres of land lying on the west side of the main street of the present village.

Bullock was by trade a blacksmith, but came to Michigan with the intention of farming the land he had purchased.

Both Stoughton and Bullock owned a distance of a half mile north and south on what is now the main street.

At this point the growth of the little village was begun and developed more rapidly than other points in Southfield township. Nearly all the trades in the township were begun here and the first school and the first professional man were established here.

The place was known as the Stoughton and Bullock settlement when Dr. Ebenezer Raynale, a young physician from Pennsylvania, came to it in the spring of 1828.

HE FOUND seven families in the settlement at that time. They were the families of Dillucene Stoughton, Elijah Bullock, his son-in-law George Gage, Dorus Morton, a mason and bricklayer and a relative of Dr. Raynale, Samuel Babcock, Henry S. Smith, a blacksmith, and Richard Bignall, a carpenter and joiner.

Morton, Smith and Bignall had come to the settlement in the fall of 1827. Morton purchased four acres of land from Stoughton and built a log dwelling house on the property.

Dr. Raynale (grandfather of Dr. George P. Raynale now living in Birmingham) lived with Dorus Morton and his family and established himself in his profession, his first patient being the wife of George Gage.

IN THE SUMMER of 1828, Henry S. Smith built the village's first frame house on the east side of

the main street upon a small lot which he purchased from Stoughton.

A post office was established in the fall of 1828 and the village officially was named Franklin. Dr. Ebenezer Raynale was the first postmaster, his appointment bearing the date of Sept. 19, 1828.

The post office first was kept at the log house of Dorus Morton where the young doctor resided for the first year and a half of his residence in Franklin. Raynale held the office until 1835 when he resigned and was succeeded by Winthrop Worthing.

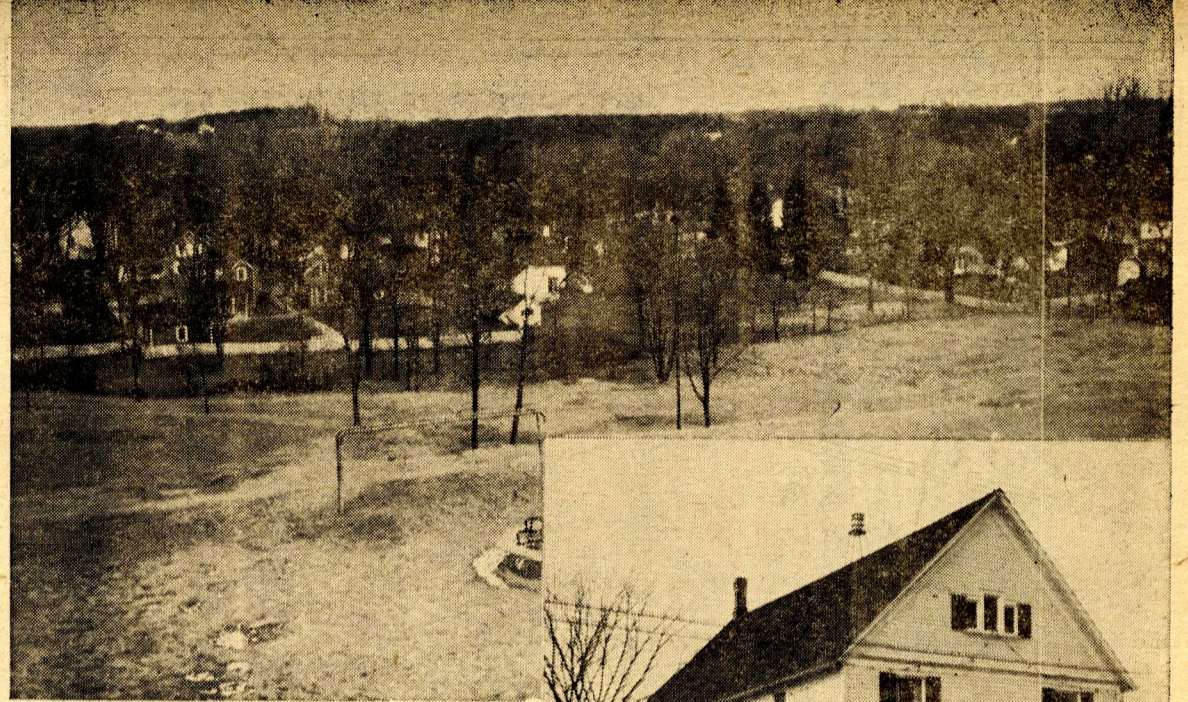
A LOG CABIN school house was erected in the village in 1828 on the west side of the street with a Miss Sophia Gotie as the first teacher.

Stoughton built a brick house in the summer of 1829, which not only was the first brick house in Southfield township but among the first in the county. It was comparatively easy to erect a brick house in Franklin for bricks could be obtained at Bigelow's brick yards in nearby Farmington.

An excellent bricklayer was close at hand in the person of Dorus Morton who had purchased his land from Stoughton and was probably glad of the opportunity to pay for it in work at his trade.

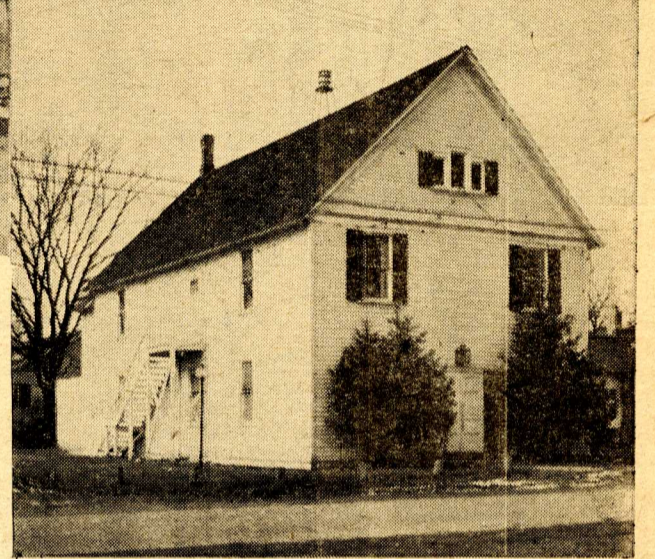
About this time, many settlers and land seekers were streaming into the county and many came to settle in Franklin and its vicinity.

SOME IDEA of the great numbers of settlers and the rapidity with which they came may be seen in the fact that when Dr. Raynale went to Pennsylvania in 1830 for his wife, he found upon his return that 40 families had come in and settled within four miles of Frank-



ABOVE: FRANKLIN'S ROLLING COUNTRYSIDE ONE OF ITS MAIN ATTRACTIONS.

At right: Franklin's 'town hall' and community assembly point.



lin during his absence of only 25 days.

The year 1830 saw the erection of a public house in Franklin—a log structure built by Elijah Bullock—and the opening of the first store by William Houston.

The store was erected and owned by Dr. Raynale. When Houston died two years later from tuberculosis, the business was taken over by Dr. Raynale and Morgan L. Wisner, a brother of Governor Wisner of Michigan.

A YEAR LATER Bullock built the building which served as the second store in the community. It stood on his land on the west side of the street but Bullock did not operate the store.

At its first opening in 1831, the proprietors were Frank Darrow and a man named Thompson.

About 1833, Morton opened the second tavern in a frame house which he had added to his log dwelling. Afterwards, it was kept by a Mr. Hulbert and later by William Van Every who named it the "Franklin Cottage."

THE NAME of Edward Matthews, a young man from New York, is found in the early histories of Franklin and of Bloomfield

township. Matthews, in 1833, bought large tracts of land adjoining Franklin but across the town line in Bloomfield township.

Here he made extensive preparations for the erection of a mill upon the stream called Franklin brook and laid out his lands into lots which he intended to be an addition to the village.

While Matthews had considerably more financial backing than most settlers at the time, his funds finally were exhausted and both his projects failed.

The mill, however, later was erected in 1837 by Peter Van Every, Sr., who came from Detroit. This mill, now the Franklin Cider Mill, still is in operation.

VAN EVERY, although his chief businesses—the mill, a distillery and a potash works—were located in Bloomfield township, was a resident of Franklin until his death in 1859.

In the town itself, a grist mill called the Oakland County Mill, was built the next year on the same stream by Winthrop Worthing and William A. Pratt.

The land upon which this mill was erected was owned by Worthing. The millwork was done by Pratt who was a professional mill-

wright. This mill and its site have long since been abandoned.

The Franklin House was opened as a hotel by George Green after 1840. It was not a newly erected building, but was formerly the store which had been built by Dr. Raynale and opened by Mr. Houston in 1830. Another building was moved and joined to this and the entire two structures remodeled and repaired.

IT STOOD on the original site of the Houston store. It was kept as a public house for many years but by 1870 became a residence.

Franklin in the 1870's contained three physicians, a church, school house, postoffice, one temperance hotel, two flour mills, three general stores, a drug store, a hardware store and tin shop, four blacksmith shops and two wagon shops.

Through the years, Franklin slumbered on, forgotten in the rush of "progress." It still is a village, but within the past few years many people have been drawn to the typical New England countryside of Franklin to build their homes.

With transportation problems solved by present day automobiles and good roads, more than 1,000 families now live in the peaceful setting of Franklin and its surrounding area.

Franklin Landmark Originally Ground Flour for Nearby Farmers

The Old Cider Mill is of particular interest in Franklin and one of its most charming features.

Bert D. Wood, considered by most Franklin residents as their local historian, tells its history for the Birmingham Eccentric's 75th Anniversary edition.

Mr. Wood, now 74 years old, has lived all his life in Franklin—the locality where his forefathers settled sometime in 1828.

"It was in 1833 that Edward Matthews came from New York and purchased a large tract of land on the northwest corner of Fourteen Mile and Franklin roads on which the mill now stands", Mr. Wood recalls.

HE LAID out the property in lots intending it as a part of Franklin and also made preparations to build a mill. However, his program was too ambitious for his finances and he was forced to abandon both projects.

Peter Van Every came from New York with his wife and family of 14 children and settled on a farm where the Detroit Water Works now is located. Besides the farm, he operated a large feed store in Detroit which he continued to operate for some time after coming to Franklin.

"In 1837, he purchased the property from a man named Sears to whom Matthews had assigned it and finished building the mill.

"This is the same mill that is so popular on weekends that it requires one or more policemen to keep traffic unsharred. It is presently owned by Robert A. McKee, of 17166 Beechwood, Birmingham.

"MANY WEEKENDS McKee and his retinue of helpers grind five to seven hundred bushels of apples and press the juice, to say nothing of all the fresh donuts

which are made right there on the job.

"Of all Franklin's varied industries down through the years, the Van Every Mill probably takes the lead.

"Of course, several changes have been made, but in appearance it is practically the same now as then. The old fashioned spillway next to the south bank was replaced by the modern concrete structure you see today. This was done about 30-35 years ago when James H. Flynn owned the property. He also installed the huge overshot waterwheel. It was and is one of the largest in Michigan.

"**IT WAS NOT** uncommon in the early days to see teams of both oxen and horses lined up around the corner waiting while wheat was ground or exchanged for flour.

"The grinding was done by two stones revolving in opposite directions which crushed the grain between them. The grain then was elevated to the top of the mill where it passed through bolting cloths which separated the hull or bran from the flour.

"Our family got the last flour to pass through this process—that was over sixty years ago.

"For many years after that it did custom grinding for the surrounding farmers. Later the necessary equipment for making cider was added but it was not until McKee took it over that it gained such popularity. When people find

you are from Franklin, you hear, 'Oh yes! That's where THE Cider Mill is!'

"**AT ONE TIME** another mill operated by steam was necessary

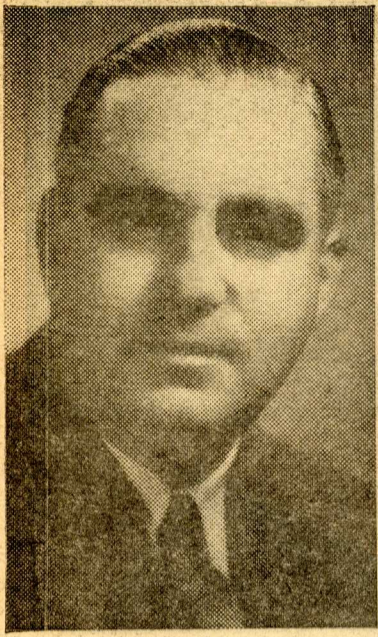
to handle the trade.

"The Van Everys also operated a potashery and a brewery where some of the grain was used to make pure whiskey which sold for 50¢ per gallon.

"Because flour was handled chiefly in barrels and barrels were also needed for whiskey, Mr. Van Every also added a cooper-shop where all kinds of barrels were made."



COMPLETED BY DETROITER 116 YEARS AGO TO GRIND FLOUR
Installation of electricity, apple press have been the only changes

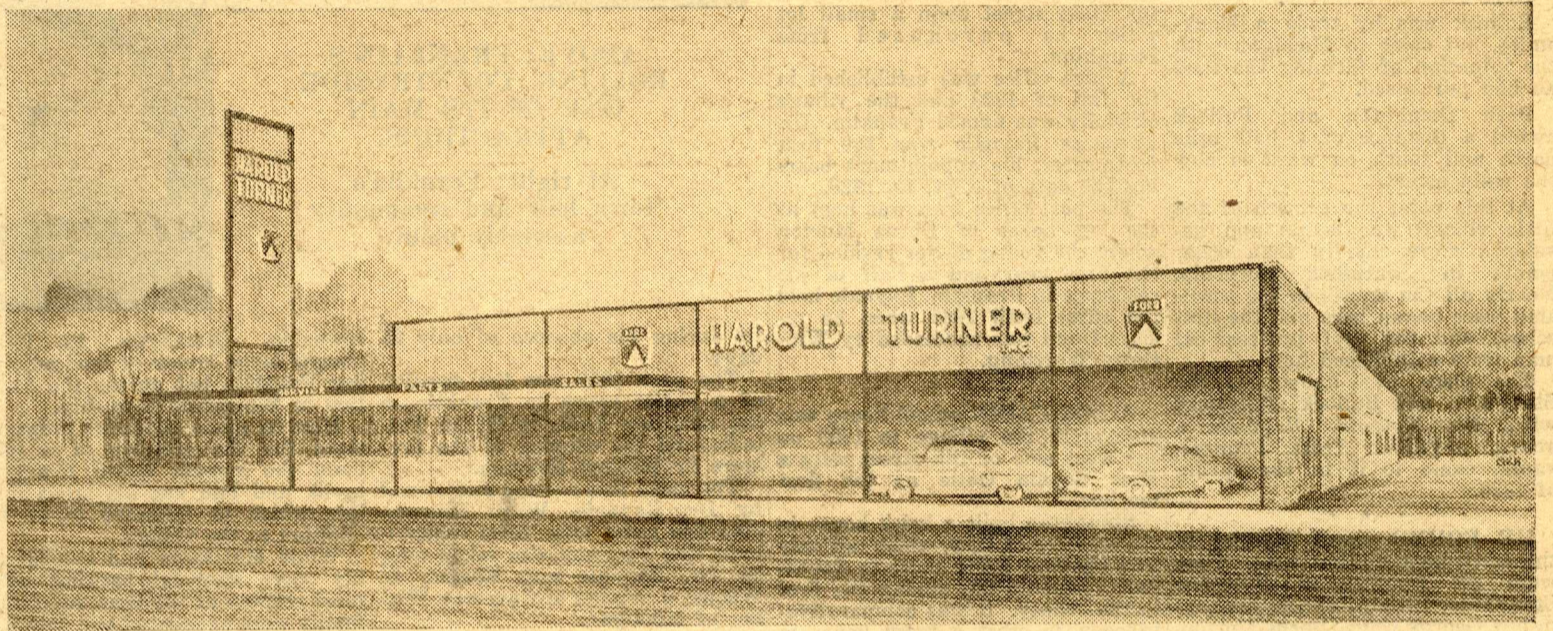


Best Wishes to The ECCENTRIC and to BIRMINGHAM

... City of Beautiful Homes and Fine Automobiles

Nowhere in this favored land has the automobile, and its numerous and varied uses, been developed more fully than here in our own community. On the occasion of this 75th Anniversary, we wish to salute The Eccentric and the fine people of the Birmingham area, many of whom are associated with us in some phase of the automobile industry.

Harold Turner



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The New Showrooms of

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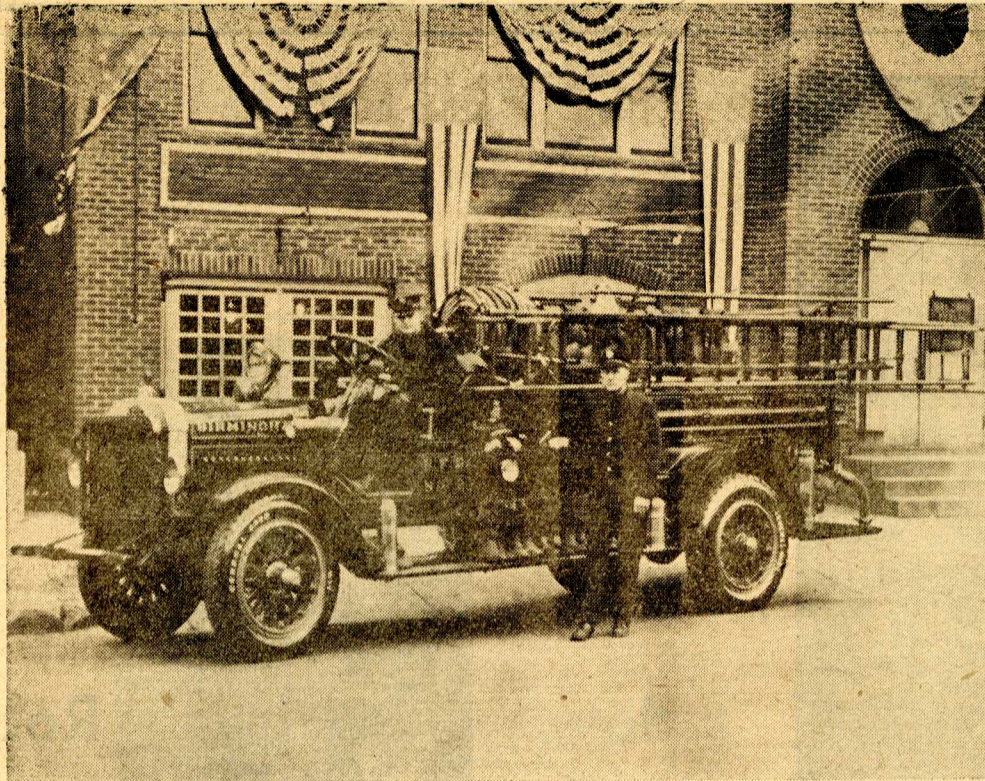
464 South Woodward Avenue

Birmingham Home of the

'53 Ford

ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY





CITY'S FIRST PIECE OF MECHANIZED FIRE APPARATUS
Chief Griffith (right), Stan Pepperell still with department



DEPT.'S NEXT STATION WAS ON BROWNELL STREET
City now had 6 paid firemen; volunteers led by late Wm. Olsen (center)

Fire Dept. Horsepower Now Reserved for Fires

Let's go back to the year 1914.

Suppose you were living in the small village of Birmingham, once known as "Piety Hill", when your family's wooden frame house caught fire. You went running down Saginaw Trail (now Woodward), dodging horses-and-buggies as you went, desperately trying to attract the villagers attention with cries of "Fire!" "Fire!"

You finally reached the old fire hall at the southeast corner of Woodward and Maple, and panting, you relayed your story to Chief James W. Cobb. Seconds later you ran away in disgust to see what you could do after Cobb ashamedly said, "Sorry, mam, you'll have to wait a jiffy, the horses are pulling old man Jud to the cemetery".

As Birmingham was slowly raising from its original foundation as an old pioneer agrarian settlement, this was the condition of the village's first fire department. Today our city has available at a moment's notice one of the most complete and efficient fire fighting departments for a city this size in the state.

BUT LIKE the other civic developments in Birmingham's history, the story of the growth of the

fire department can be traced back to the time when Birmingham was first beginning to receive a flow of travelers going from Detroit to Pontiac by horseback.

In the early days of Birmingham's growth, what there was of the fire equipment was housed in the old Baldwin Library building which was located where Cunningham Drug is today.

The department shared the building with the library, the city's initial police force and detention cells plus the village dog pound.

The fire fighting crew consisted entirely of volunteer villagers who would drop whatever they were doing and go and fight the blaze when they heard the bells on the old ladder truck being pulled by two white horses.

SOON THE village of "Piety Hill" began to show signs of growing pains. Houses began to sprout up and the population increased by leaps and bounds.

The village saw a need to enlarge its fire fighting equipment which could not be done as long as the department was a joint tenant with the library and dog pound.

Under the expanding conditions of the town, temporary quarters were established on Brownell street which the department called home until it moved into its present quarters in the municipal building in 1928.

On July 1, 1927, as the department awaited completion of the municipal building, the town was awarded with its first paid fire department.

OF THE FOUR original members of the paid department, two are still serving today. Fire Chief Vernon W. Griffith and Assistant Chief Stanley Pepperell have seen the department grow with the city. The other two firemen who made up the city's first paid crew were George Jones and LeRoy Weier.

broken in January, 1928, with the cornerstone laid on April 21.

The new building was ready for occupancy in October 1928 with a first meeting of the commission informally opening Birmingham's new structure.

Today this \$175,000 tax-supported edifice is the "Home of Our City Government."

Included in the building is a spacious room where the city commission meets every Monday night to transact public business.

AT ONE END of the building is the Fire Department complete with quarters for the firemen and a large garage to house the department's four engines.

At the other end of the building, Birmingham's police force has its offices. Offices of the city manager, engineer, treasurer, assessor, municipal judge, clerk, building inspector and water department also are located in the building.

The building houses a staff of approximately 100 city employees which includes department heads plus police and fire department personnel.

COME ELECTION time, eligible voters flow in and out Birmingham's municipal building to register for the coming election.

As Birmingham continues to grow, its municipal activities are assured of a "home" to keep pace with the community's rapid expansion.

May, 1953

BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
75th Anniversary Edition

Page 7

These four men and one truck plus the usual contingent of volunteers were ready to answer alarms day and night while at the same time the village commission was debating over the location of a permanent home for the paid department.

The citizens of the town had voted to house the department in the civic center under construction at the time, but a faction of the commission decided that in order to save the town money the department should have a home built on Hamilton street.

AFTER A seven-week deadlock, which saw petitions being circulated throughout the town and The Eccentric publishing rebuttals against the opposing commissioners, the commission voted on having the growing fire department housed in the municipal building.

Early in 1928 two more paid members were added to the department and a new truck arrived to aid in fighting fires which began to increase as Birmingham showed signs of modernization.

Under the direction of Chief William G. Olsen, a volunteer himself, the department grew in staff and equipment strength and began a program to improve the department's status and its service to the community.

WHEN THE firemen were not out fighting fires, ranging from field fires to home blazes, they were finishing a booster pump which was later mounted on one of the trucks.

The pump was the first one to ever be mounted on a truck and a national manufacturer of pumps prepared extensive publicity on the department's project praising the ingenuity and industry of the organization.

Besides their "leisure" time work

on the booster pump, men in the department saved the community some money when they constructed their own ladder truck.

During the depression days, the firefighters pitched in to help those who needed help. The fire hall served as a depot for some 250 families to get food and groceries.

THE GOODWILL spirit of the department was shown when the crew made all sorts of toys for the many toyleless families during the 1929 era.

With the department housed in its present municipal building quarters, the training, size and efficiency of the organization was increased under present Fire Chief Vernon W. Griffith.

On July, 1952, the department celebrated its 25th year of excellent service to the Birmingham community.

During those 25 years the department responded to 6,738 alarms, some serious, while others were minor grass fires.

As long as the department continues to assist the welfare of Birmingham, the story of the antique shop explosion in December, 1949 will probably be remembered as the most tragic in the department and city's history.

FIVE PERSONS were killed, including fireman Lee C. Carroll, and one injured when a gas leak resulted in an explosion and fire.

This mid-winter blaze which attracted curious spectators for miles around, was the first such fatal accident in the department's history.

Today as the city of Birmingham continues to grow, the 22-man fire department which rates among the best in the state, is standing by with its topnotch equipment when the phone rings and someone says, "I want to report a fire!"

B'ham Municipal Building

Continued from Page One

The library building was not the property of the village and the village was allowed the lower portion of the building provided the taxpayers continued their support of the library.

This was accomplished by public funds which amounted to one-half mill annually on the assessed valuation of the village property. In the event the village ceased to provide the funds, a reversionary clause in the deed stipulated that the property be turned over to the Regents of the University of Michigan.

MORE INCENTIVE for the building movement was supplied when the widening of Woodward avenue was proposed, thereby necessitating the tearing down of the old Baldwin Public Library home.

Through court action, the library property was acquired by the village commission and the library board was granted control over the first block of the Civic Center originally purchased for both purposes.

Upon this first site of the center, was built the present Baldwin Public Library.

When the widening of Woodward became more than a proposal

and the commission discovered that there was too high a value on the property acquired through the court action, a search began to find a suitable piece of property to house the village offices.

WITH THE HOPE that the village might actually have a Civic Center with all the different functions housed together, attention was turned to a section of land one block east of the property where the library was under construction.

From two bond issues approved by the voters and \$125,000 acquired from the sale of the old library property, the village commission started its plans to build the beautiful building that houses our city government today.

The commission desired that the fire and police departments be housed in the proposed building in such a manner that if the future development of the village required their quarters for offices, they could be removed to another location without excessive expense to the village.

THIS STIPULATION started the rhubarb that eventually led to almost losing the municipal building project entirely. After settlement of the strife, ground was

Some Dogs Were So Good They Had \$3 Price Tags

The status of dogs in Bloomfield township has changed a great deal since 1878 just like everything else.

Luther Stanley, supervisor of Bloomfield township, in an official statement in 1878, said that there were "273 dogs in the township and 20 of them were \$3 dogs."

For the year 1952, Birmingham City Clerk Irene Hanley issued 1,499 dog licenses for Birmingham alone. This makes an approximate ratio of one dog to every five Bir-

mingham homes.

The average family in this vicinity is believed to pay between

Reserved for U of M

In Southfield township, four sections of land originally were reserved for the University of Michigan. These were two sections southwest of Franklin Village, and two others along Inkster road immediately north of 8 Mile road.

\$50 to \$75 nowadays for a pedigreed dog of the more common breeds. Some breeds, such as a boxer, range in price from \$100-\$150.

2 Townships Originally

Lewis Cass, governor of the territory of Michigan, proclaimed the boundary of the new county of Oakland on Jan. 12, 1819. On June 28, 1820, the county of Oakland was divided into two townships—Oakland and Bloomfield.



DEPT. NOW IN MUNICIPAL BUILDING WING
Garage doors open south onto Merrill street

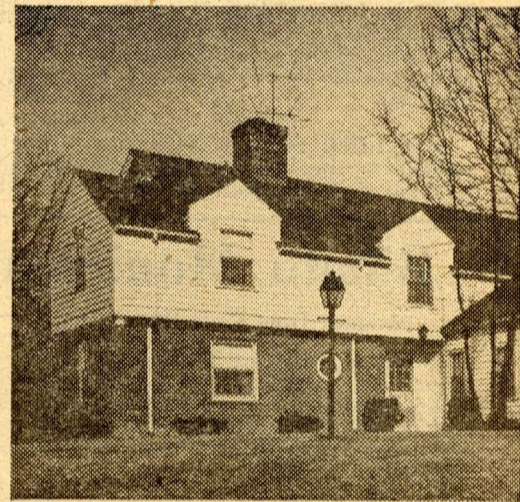
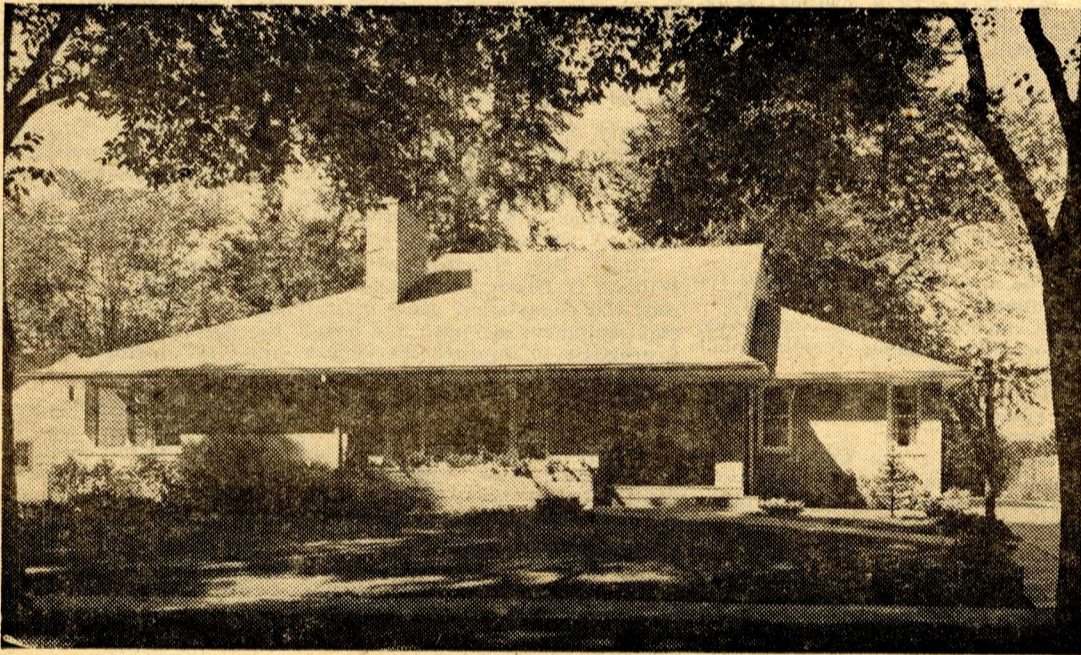


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We are proud of our contribution to the growth of the Birmingham-Birmingham-Birmingham country. Our firm continuously is striving to promote and maintain the high

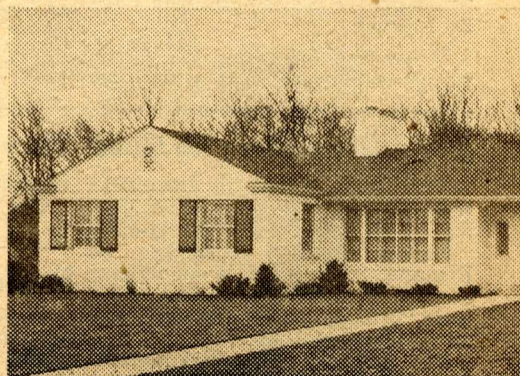
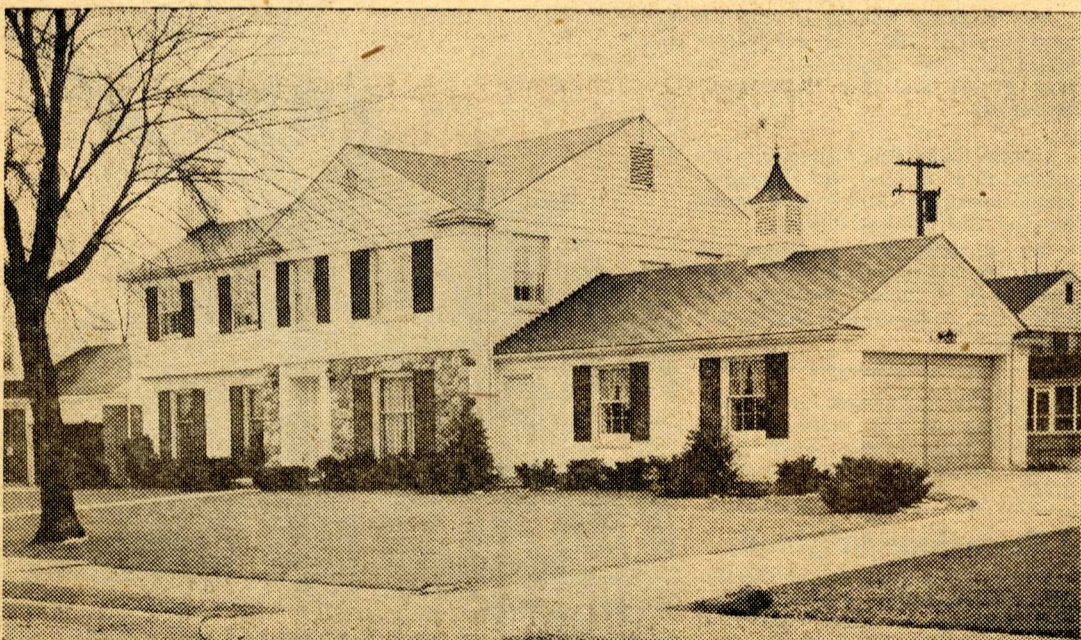
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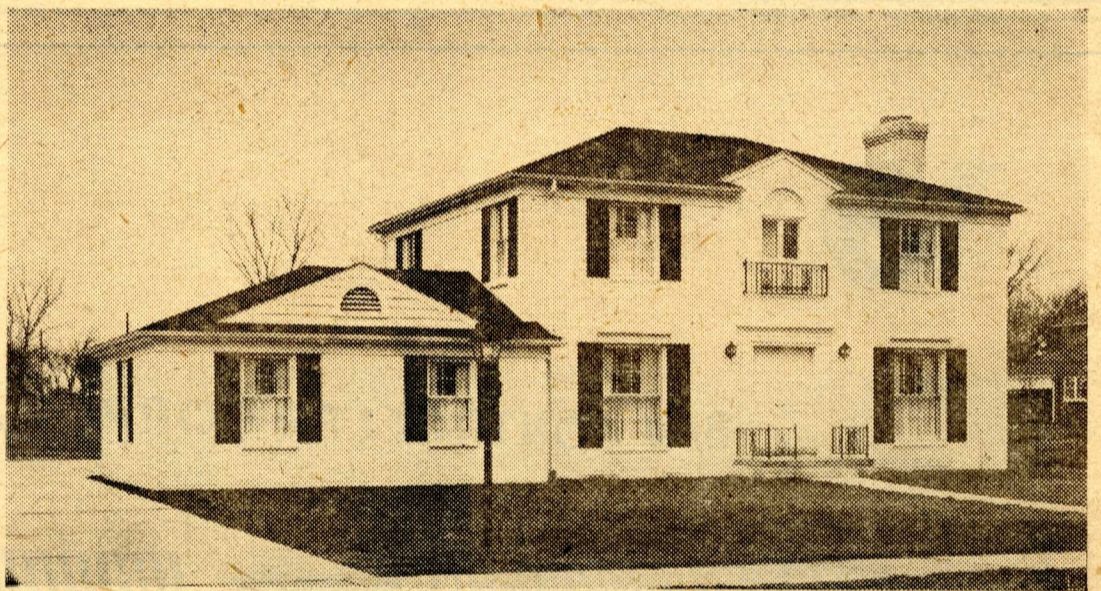
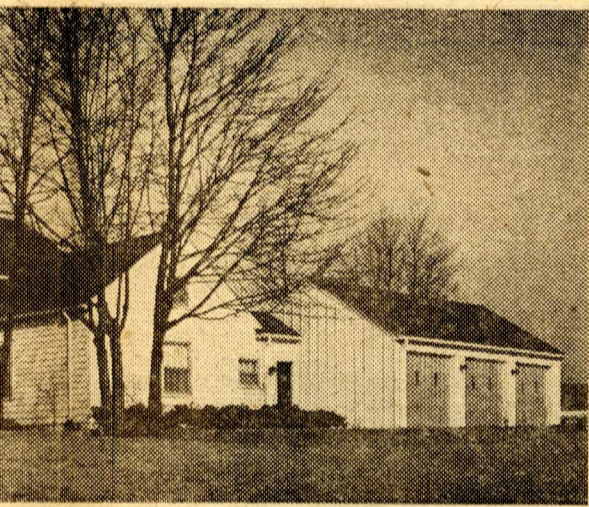


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make this area more enduring as a community which each of us may always gladly
standing unequalled.



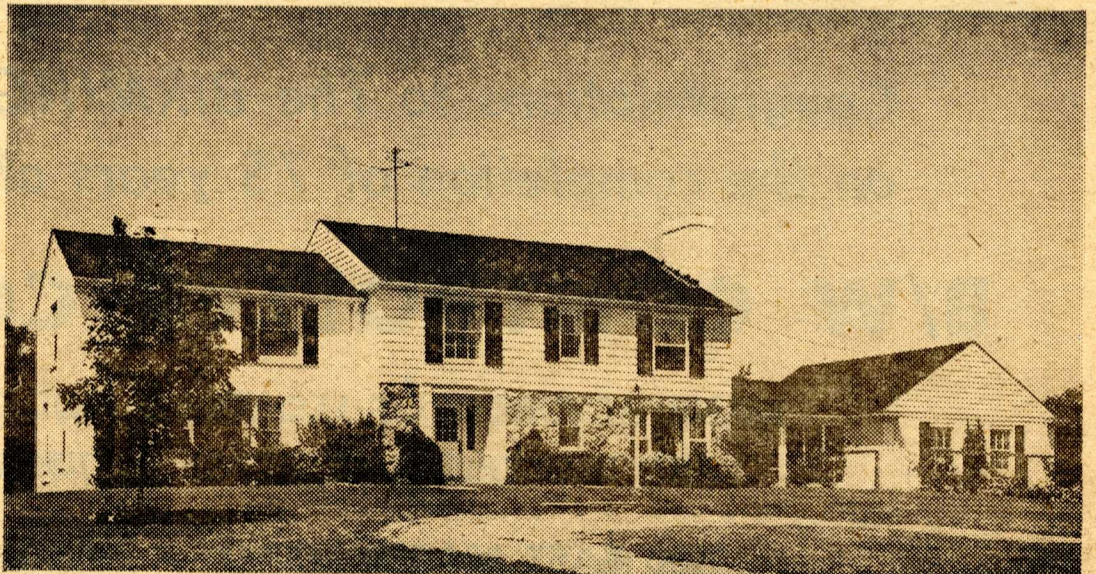
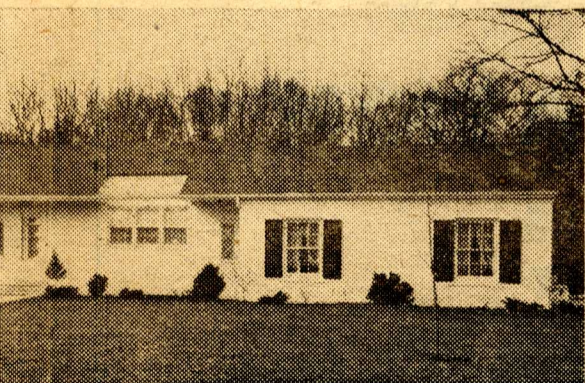
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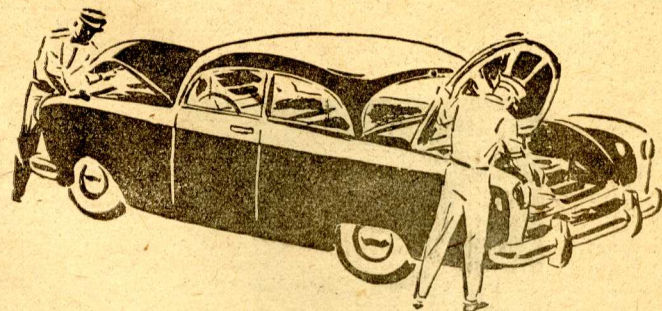
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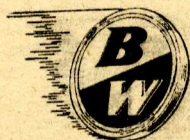
Whether you bring your car for a major or minor repair, you have a right to expect the job to be done promptly, accurately and at reasonable cost. And here we wish to emphasize that General Auto SERVICE performs all of its work in just that fashion. In the thirty-five years of servicing Birmingham cars the name of General Auto has become synonymous with good service. May we have the pleasure of handling all your car needs.

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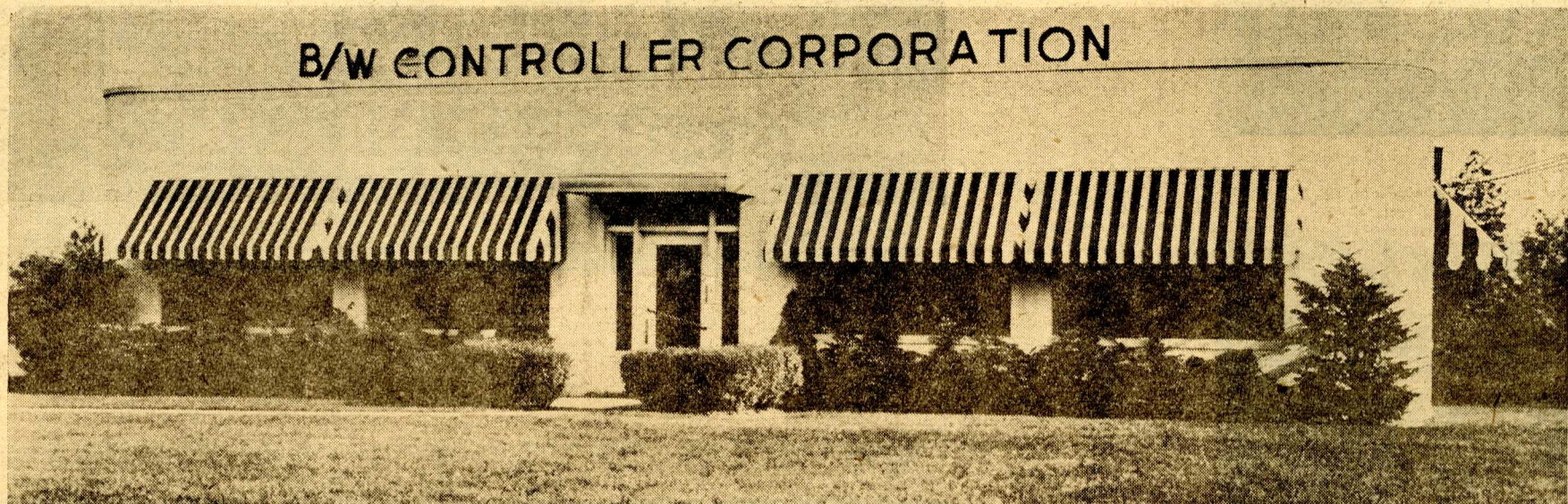
Oliver Cornwell Erich (Dutch) Kurth
 WOODWARD at FOREST

Your assurance at all times of competent service is our membership in

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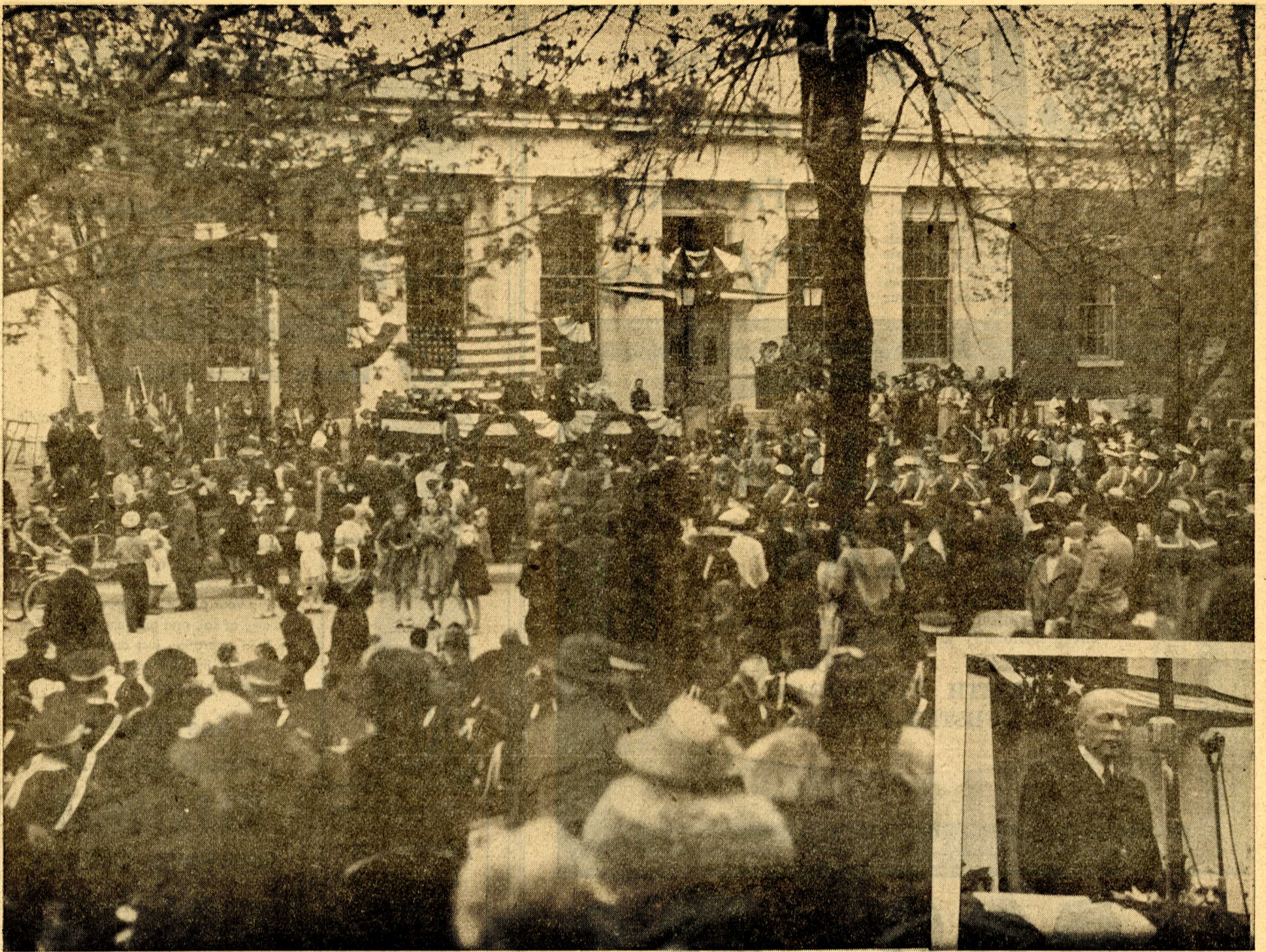


Congratulations to The BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
 on the completion of 75 years of Community Service

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2200 EAST MAPLE ROAD -- BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN



HUNDREDS OF TOWNSPEOPLE TURNED OUT MAY 18, 1940, FOR DEDICATION OF NEWEST ADDITION TO CIVIC CENTER
Principal address was given by Michigan governor, the late Luren Dickinson (inset)

Postoffice Dedication Solidified Civic Center

To many of the earlier residents of our city, Saturday, May 18, 1940 may be recalled as a milestone in Birmingham's long history.

For on that day, over 2000 spectators packed the streets and lawns surrounding the Martin, Bates and West Maple area to hear and witness the official dedication of Birmingham's post office.

The ceremonies, which included a luncheon and parade, climaxed many years of hopeful dreaming and intensive planning by the original founders of Birmingham, to establish in their city a suitable civic center to fill the many needs of the growing community.

Today our civic center, which includes the Post Office, Municipal Building, Baldwin Public Library, the beautiful city park separating the latter two, the Community House, the old Baldwin High School, and several surrounding churches, is regarded by many as one of the most complete centers for a city of Birmingham's size.

AT THE dedication of the city's new \$155,000 edifice the late Governor Luren D. Dickinson spoke of the ever-increasing importance of the United States Postal Service.

Joseph A. Byrne, postmaster at the opening of the building, described the addition as one "that was built to last 100 years" because of its exceptional modern Georgian architecture as compared to the Old English design of the neighboring library and municipal buildings.

"Our new building is so substantial that this will be the last

Only 330 Oakland County Residents Back in 1820

In 1820, only a short while after its lands were open for public sale, Oakland county had 330 inhabitants. Ten years later, this number had jumped to 4,910.

In 1840, only 20 years later, the population of Oakland county totaled 23,646. This attests to the fact that the years of 1820-40 were ones of mass migration to the "West."

Large numbers of land hungry people came to Oakland county to seek new homesites and they came within a short number of years.

post office dedication that Birmingham will see for a good many years," Byrne said during the ceremonies.

WHEN THE "Open for Business" sign was, figuratively speaking, hung on the building on May 31, 1940, the postal service that was to follow was a far cry from the service that was available when Birmingham was a one-horse village in its early growing stages.

Back in 1819, when Birmingham was just beginning to attract travelers going from Detroit to Pontiac along Saginaw Trail, now Woodward avenue, mail used to be brought from Detroit by horseback.

Those desiring postal service as early as 1821 had to hitch up their horse-and-buggy, saddle the family mare, or just plain walk to the corner of Lone Pine and Woodward. For it was here on March 24, 1821 that the village, then known as "Piety Hill", established its first post office.

SINCE BIRMINGHAM did not receive its city charter until late 1833, the village did not have city limits and the first post office was known as the Bloomfield Post Office.

Sidney Dale was the town's first postmaster, having been appointed such by President James Monroe. Dale, who according to old records was the lone post office custodian, held the position as postmaster until April 2, 1826.

On this date Ezra S. Parke took over the position as head of the Bloomfield office.

On April 5, 1838 the post office began the first of eight re-locations until it became situated in its present modern quarters on Martin street.

IT WAS ON this fifth day of April that the Bloomfield office pulled up stakes and moved to a group of stores on Woodward ave-

nue near Maple and officially became known as the Birmingham Post Office.

Sullivan R. Kelsey was postmaster in the first Birmingham post office.

The office was located in a small village retail store making it possible for the townfolk to buy groceries, hardware and stamps all under the same roof.

Since the post office was moved to Birmingham it has been located in seven different locations. The first was in the retail store on Woodward and Maple. It was later moved, around 1895, to a store built by J. A. Allen Bigelow on Maple avenue on the location now occupied by Shain's.

THE SECOND post office was in the Mitchell and Whitehead store "where everybody came and knew everybody".

Soon before the turn of the century, the home of the postal service moved to its third location. This time only a short distance had to be covered in moving the office across Pierce street to the corner now located by Kay Baum.

In 1917 it was again moved into a building which E. C. Huston had built next to his hardware store. At this time George H. Mitchell was acting postmaster.

In 1924 this building became inadequate so Mr. Huston built a larger building on the north side of the store.

BY 1928, the post office management also found this building too small to handle the increase in the amount of postal service desired by the growing town.

So, while the other civic organizations were moving into their new offices in the municipal building, the post office moved into a building constructed by John B. Williams on the present site of Beck Cleaners.

It wasn't long before the post office also found these quarters too cramped. With the civic building program well underway, the city commission planned for the construction of the present Birmingham post office building to house the postal activities alone.

TO ESCAPE West Maple traffic, it was decided to have the building

facing Martin street with a large reception driveway and loading platform facing Maple.

The building was designed in very modern architecture. The terrazzo floor was to be spacious enough to meet the needs of an expanding city.

The designs called for seven windows to handle the flow of business and 285 boxes for residents of the city.

Today the 80 employees of the post office have lockers and a shower bath available in the basement.

The basement also contains a big storage room and five smaller storage rooms and a steam boiler and fuel room.

BY MAY, 1940 the building was ready for dedication. Twenty-

May, 1953 Page 11
BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
75th Anniversary Edition

eight employees under the civil service program were hired to handle the first flow of business in the new building.

The amount of business the post office has been registering has been on the upgrade year by year due to the rapid growth of Birmingham.

In 1910 post office receipts were \$4,614.67. In 1930 the amount was \$62,958.10 while in the first four months of business the new edifice receipts totaled \$24,046.88.

Bernard E. Fowler, present postmaster, is the 14th postmaster to guide postal service in this community since the early days of Birmingham.

Piscatorial Picture For Village President



LYMAN PEABODY

When Lyman B. Peabody retired from public service, after serving for many years on the Birmingham village board and as village president (1891-94), the prominent citizens of the village presented him with a gift of two large fish pictures . . . one a trout, the other a bass.

Mr. Peabody had long been an enthusiastic fisherman and was a member and former president of the Birmingham Fishing Club.

In a formal resolution dated 1894, the citizens acknowledged their appreciation of his years of work for the good of Birmingham.

THE RESOLUTION was signed by many familiar old-time Birmingham names including Alanson Partridge, J. Allen Bigelow, J. F. Rundell, George E. Daines, George Mitchell, George Shain, Samuel C. Mills, Volney Nixon, John Purdy, Frank Ford, Frank Blakeslee, Almeron Whitehead and John Baldwin.

J. Bert Peabody, 272 Oakland, still has in his possession the fish pictures which were given to his father, who died in July 1911.

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ON

BIRMINGHAM'S

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on its
75th
ANNIVERSARY

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... and man!
what a
selection of

For the hardest working member of the home, Mrs. Housewife, we carry every item to get her job done, from scrub brushes to brass polish. And lots of items that will make her chores easier and more quickly finished. So, if it's a scrub pail or chamois cloth, we've got it.

- FISHING EQUIPMENT
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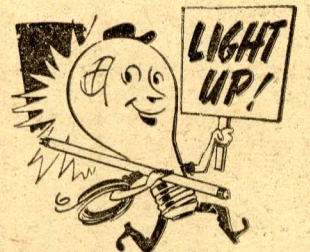
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Emergencies Were Rare— And So Was a Policeman

"The good old days"—how many times have we heard our parents and their parents utter these words when they begin to reminisce?

That phrase, as overworked as it may be, is a fair description of the Birmingham "arm of the law" back over a century ago.

Today we speak of those "hard-boiled cops" who ticket us the minute the red flag on a parking meter appears, and those "sneaky" police cars equipped with radar, sirens, two-way radios and up-to-date first aid equipment.

Yes, times certainly have changed. So has the police enforcement since "Piety Hill" days to the present day modernized 26-man Birmingham Police Department.

TO GET an accurate account of the early beginnings of the police department in Birmingham, the 50th Anniversary edition of The Eccentric supplied the following description:

"A half century ago in Birmingham a shrill 'Help, Help, Police!' might and might not have brought results, with the odds in favor of the negative conditional. Emergencies requiring the aid of police were exceedingly rare; so were the police.

"Drive your buggy as fast as you please in the old days," sighed a veteran who now 'steps on the gas'. "Never have to worry about some hard-boiled cop pulling alongside with a mean grin on his face and a ticket in his hand. Wish Nick Mooney was the arm of the law again".

SOLE RIGHTS of exercising police power in the village a half a century ago went with the privilege of wearing a shiny town marshal's badge. The reimbursement for the job was little or nothing, the hours for work uncertain and subject to convenient arrangement, and the police station wasn't.

In spite of these ostensible handicaps, the stern champion of peace seemed always available at crucial moments, although this test was rarely made because of the lack of such moments.

"Old timers" will remember such famous figures as will be recalled by mention of some former incumbents as marshal here: Charley Mudge, Jim Beatty, George Fay, Harvey Hedding, Dick Lake, Mack Hunt, Webb Bray, George Toms, Charley (Red) Smith, Nick Mooney and Flying Dan Bray.

JIM BEATTY, huge of stature, will be remembered in connection with Birmingham's only first class shooting which resulted in the extermination of one burglar discovered in Ed Poppleton's house together with a narrow escape for Ed whose hair was virtually parted by one of the intruder's bullets before the latter was finally shot. Jim took expert charge of the turmoil on the following day, and arranged to have the dead man on display.

Jim had other feathers in his cap. His arrest of a watch thief about to board a train at the local depot was spectacular, to say nothing of its indication of Jim's prowess as detective.

IN THE early days the office of town marshal was frowned upon by the village council.

Once, when Almeron Whitehead was on the board, a circus was opening in Pontiac. Aware of the danger from vagrants invariably following circuses, Whitehead suggested the appointment of a night watchman in Birmingham.

In spite of all arguments the board voted against such a needless expenditure of money, but Whitehead was certain of the necessity of such a guardian.

George Fay offered to do the work for a dollar a night. The board fumed at the price of safety, and refused to appropriate, so Whitehead, with the courage of conviction, paid George his dollar a night.

FAY HELD the post for some time, and was finally recognized as an institution by the board members, who agreed to retain him regularly. His work began with darkness and concluded with the opening of Alec Park's store at daylight.

Of later years in Birmingham's crime wave, perhaps the mention of a near murder, or at least what

might have been a murder, may suffice.

Nick Mooney, well known resident then, was the town marshal at the time. A man in the southern limits of the village returned from Detroit with his wife to find the front porch of his residence spotted with blood.

MURDER WAS, of course, the answer, while to find the murderer and murdered was the problem. Nick took over the problem end of the case and investigated diligently, only to find all clues ineffectual.

Two or three days later a man told Nick he was passing the mystery shrouded home, had seen a raccoon on the porch, and had killed it with a club, taking the dead animal away with him. Birmingham sighed with relief. The police were (or was) pleased.

Like the fire department, library, and other municipal offices that the village of Birmingham had in its early stages of growth, Nick Mooney and his crew also adopted the old Baldwin Public Library building (located where Cunningham's stands today) as the police department's home.

AS THE village of Birmingham began to grow rapidly, the inhabitants saw a need to organize a police force on a more permanent basis.

Back in 1919, a group of villagers asked Mr. Homer F. Gaskill if he would be interested in taking the position as the town's first chief of police.

Mr. Gaskill, still a resident of Birmingham today, consented and in 1921 a three-man police department with one motorcycle and a village-owned Ford pick-up truck was the official "arm of the law".

Under Chief Gaskill at the time were Earl Hathaway and Clayton Stokes who received a monthly check from the village of \$140 while Chief Gaskill was the "highest paid" member of the department at \$150 a month.

"I HAD many duties other than chief of police back in those days", Mr. Gaskill commented. "I checked weights and measures in the various village shops and also was sanitation inspector which meant that I personally had to check all cows for tuberculosis that were brought into town".

"The three of us on the department didn't have speeders, fatal traffic accidents and robberies to cope with back in 1921 and 1922 but we did have our share of robberies", Mr. Gaskill said.

"One night we got a call at the station that there were some prowlers up at George Newman's place on the northside of town", Gaskill recalled, "so I jumped in

the pick-up and went up but couldn't see anybody around so I went back to the station where a call was waiting for me that some chickens had been stolen on the southside of town.

"THE THIEVES were quite clever in those days", Birmingham's first chief of police remarked.

Time passed rapidly. Days of hard work faded into tomorrows of more hard work and the community kept growing. Soon there was a railroad, factories, foundries, many more places of business and residence.

Like the other municipal functions of any growing community, the police department grew right along with the town.

Still housed in the old library building, which could truly be called the center of Birmingham's civic growth, the police force was expanded from a three-man group to five men.

THE JOB of chief of police was handed over to James Anderson who, along with Sgt. Clark Green, Sgt. Dick Lawler, Patrolman Dutch Myers and Patrolman William Green, preserved the welfare of the community around 1926.

William Green is now lieutenant in charge of the Detective Bureau of the present Birmingham Police Department.

Green said, "In those days, the city limits were from Lincoln to Oak street and we had three men working days with the other two working on the night shift."

"Our equipment consisted of two motorcycles and a Model T Ford that we had to crank with one hand and scrape the snow off with the other when we had to answer a call", Lt. Green said.

"THE MAJORITY of our work in those days, the prohibition period, consisted of picking up drunk drivers and 'moonshine' peddlers", Green remarked.

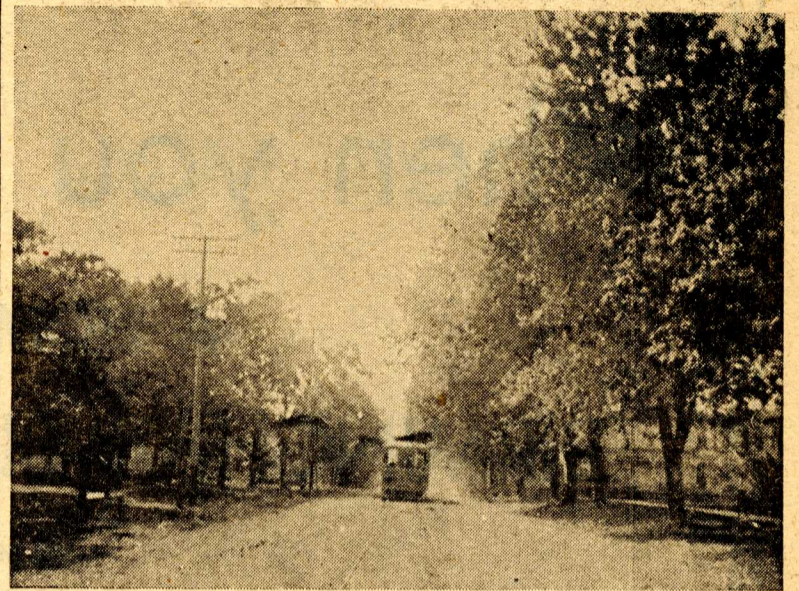
"The department wasn't bothered much with speeders and traffic accidents like today, for back then just about everybody rode street cars and buses", the lieutenant continued.

"The conductors and drivers used to kick the drunks off in Birmingham whether they lived here or not and the force had to see to it that they were either locked up in the few cells here in town or taken to Pontiac", Green said.

GREEN ALSO recalled that the department had its share of murders to investigate because the Detroit gangsters found Birmingham "a very popular place to dump their victims".

"The wooded area near Quarton and Telegraph roads was more than once a dumping spot for Purple Gang victims brought out from Detroit", Green stated.

When the civic improvement of the town gained momentum, the growing police department moved to a temporary house on Martin street to await completion of the



NO POLICE PROBLEMS ON S. WOODWARD
No traffic, either, in early 1900's—just a trolley

present municipal building where the force is now quartered.

Under the leadership of Chief Tuttle, the police crew moved into the east wing of the municipal building when it was opened for business in 1928.

SITUATED IN these modern quarters, the department year by year grew in order to offer more efficient police protection for Birmingham and help make the city a safer community in which to live.

After Chief Tuttle's short regime as head of the department, John P. Hackett took over the post in 1930 which he held until 1948.

During this period, 1946 to be exact, the Birmingham Police Department recorded the only murder in its long history.

On April 13 of that year, two Mexicans were involved in an argument while driving through Birmingham when one of the Mexicans stabbed the other, leaving him to die on Hunter boulevard.

IN 1941, the department consisted of 19 men who traveled some 136,795 miles in squad cars to answer 1908 calls. Ten years later the force consisted of 26 men who traveled 191,480 miles in five squad cars in response to 1,919 calls.

The annual reports of the department reveal that in 1941 there were 376 accidents with three fatalities and 76 injured while in 1951 there were 303 accidents on Birmingham streets which resulted in 76 injured and one killed.

In 1948 the 20-man force initiated a scheduled firearms training program which resulted in the department team placing eighth in their division at the Michigan State Police Shoot held at Jackson.

IN 1948, present Chief of Police Ralph W. Moxley took over the department as its fifth chief.

The previous year the installation of parking meters on city streets necessitated the addition of a motorcycle to the department to handle the traffic problem.

In 1950 the department adopted the Michigan Uniform Enforcement Policy and according to Chief

Moxley, "Although 50% more motorists were penalized, fewer cases were contested".

The same year saw the Birmingham force being increased to 23 because of the increase in crime in the city. Training of the men was stressed and one member took special instruction at Northwestern University.

THE ENTIRE department initiated yearly training during early spring with recruit training being held during fall.

During 1951 two notable changes could be seen in the department to improve its efficiency. A radar unit was purchased to enable the department to cope with the problem of the speed prone driver.

The organization also was divided into three divisions, the patrol division, detective division and services and staff functions, with a lieutenant in charge of each branch.

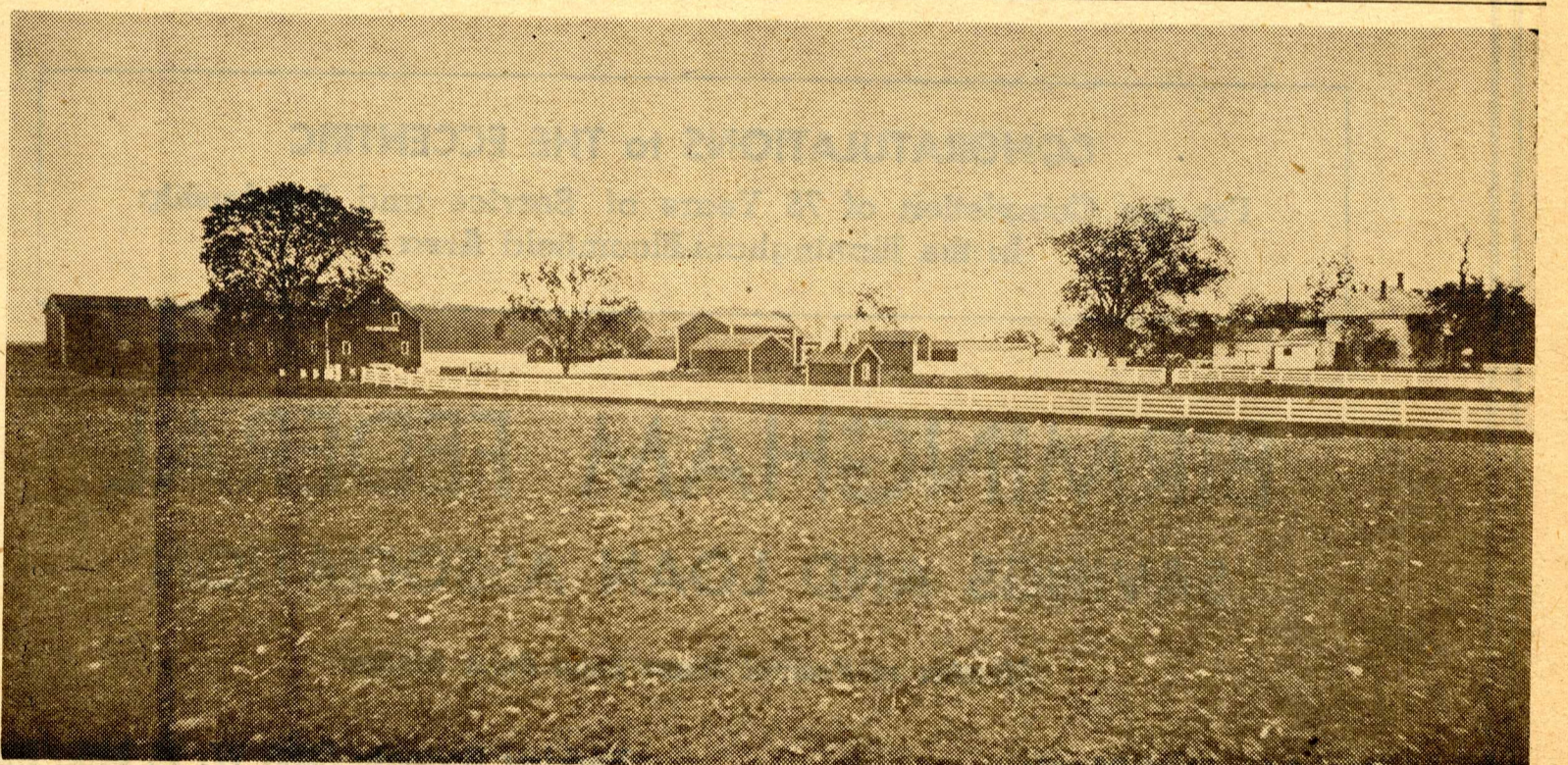
Today the detective bureau under the direction of Lt. William Green plays an important role in service to the community. The bureau checks gasoline pumps and taxi meters as part of the weights and measures program.

THE DETECTIVE branch makes liquor inspections, checks junk dealers and peddlers for licenses, and investigates the numerous larceny cases that are reported in Birmingham.

The bureau of identification, a branch of the detective bureau, has on file the cards of 3,110 persons to assist in their location and identification that might be needed by the Birmingham department or other surrounding cities.

To teach the children of Birmingham the danger of reckless bicycle driving, the department under the direction of Lt. Henry Timm, started a bicycle court to "punish" offenders.

Today the Birmingham Police Department is at full strength with a 26-man force equipped with four modern squad cars and one radar car ready day and night to protect the safety of the residents of this community.



BACK IN 1896 BIRMINGHAM TOWNSPEOPLE used to come upon this scene at the northeast corner of Cranbrook and W. Maple roads. But today, the well-tended farmlands have been replaced by residences and landscaped yards. This used to be the farm in the Area bounded by Cranbrook, Maple, Lakepark and Quarton roads.

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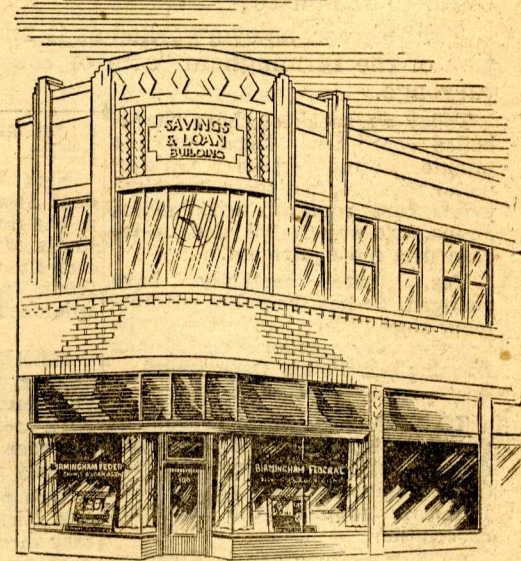
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Johnson Niles First Troy Settler

The history of the Troy township area dates back to 1821 when Johnson Niles came to the territory of Michigan and claimed his land near the present intersection of Livernois and Nineteen Mile road.

This was only two years after Amasa Bagley, Elijah Fish, John Hunter and others settled in Bloomfield township.

Niles, after clearing land in the area, began building homes for others who followed. Soon a small but thriving community arose and at one time, four churches were reportedly holding services in the community that became known as Hastings.

More recently this community has been called Troy Corners.

Actually the name Hastings came from the name of a subdivision plat laid out on the southeast corner of the intersection in 1838. The town of Hastings never became a reality because of the lack of water in the area.

Early industries that depended on water power to operate their crude machines moved north to Rochester and the bustling community never reached the size that early settlers predicted.

THE TROY community did boast of a hotel, blacksmith shop, tin

Detroit-Pontiac Route 1st Called 'Ball Line Road'

Before Oakland county was organized, government surveyors had run it into townships.

Colonel Wampler and Horatio Ball were prominent surveyors of the county who probably did most of the early work. Wampler had surveyed as early as 1816.

Horatio Ball, whose father Daniel lived only a short distance from John W. Hunter but did not enter lands, surveyed the road from Detroit to Pontiac, called the "Ball Line Road."

It was Horatio Ball who marked the great oak tree called the "Royal Oak" with the letter "H" which served as a land mark for the early settlers coming into the area.

THE FIRST district surveyor was John Mullet who appointed Capt. Herve Parke as his deputy in 1822. Capt. Parke had done some surveying in 1821 and during the period of 1821-29 did a very large amount.

The surveying was under the direction of district surveyors until 1833 when a county surveyor was elected by the people. Capt. Herve Parke served as county surveyor for many years.

Troy Attracted Revolutionary War Veterans

A soldier of the Revolutionary War, Zadock Wellman settled in Troy township with his sons, Joel and Aaron as early as 1819, coming from Vermont.

Zadock Wellman's name is found in the list of Revolutionary soldiers who were pensioners in 1840 when his age is given as 79, and he resided with his son Joel in Troy.

The Wellmans were buried in the cemetery east of Troy Corners, which is at 19 Mile and Livernois roads.

Revolutionary War soldier Samuel Niles was born in Rhode Island and was a private under General Green, being wounded in action in his native state.

HE CAME to Michigan in 1835 and took up his residence with his son Johnson Niles, the first settler in the township of Troy and remained there until his death in 1838. He was buried in Crook's cemetery in Troy township.

Silas Sprague was another early settler and soldier of the Revolution who was buried in the Crooks cemetery.

Born in Connecticut, he came to Michigan in 1824 with his son, settling in Troy. Silas Sprague served in the Continental army, Capt. Goodrich's company, Col. Ashley's regiment at 17 years of age. He died in March, 1841 in Troy.

Lots of Squirrels, Too?

Oakland county obtained its name from the vast oak forests which originally covered most of it. It was the fifth county in Michigan to be named—in 1819, or only 23 years after Wayne, the first county in the state.

shop, rug weaving industry, wagon shop, and a bicycle shop.

Churches included St. John's Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist. Recreation was offered by the town's ball team and a band.

Professionally, Troy Corners offered three physicians and one lawyer in the early years.

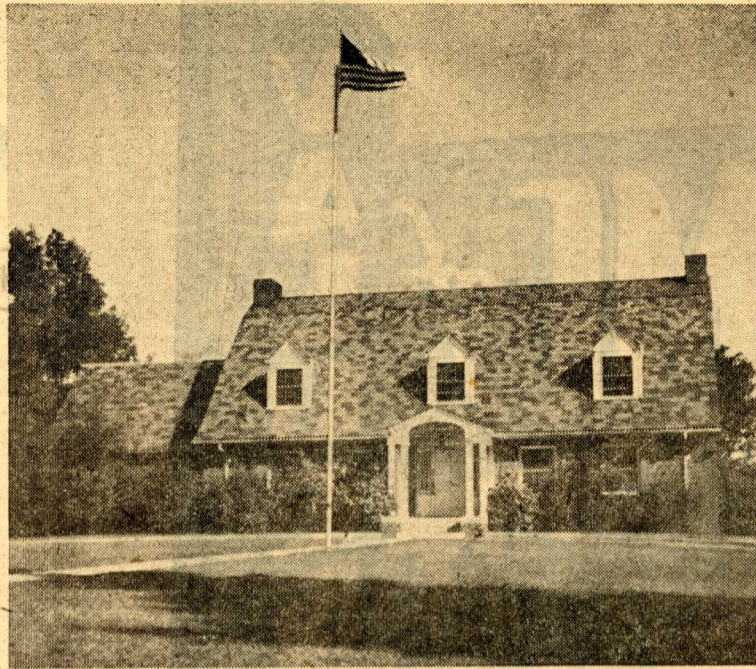
One of the oldest post offices in the State of Michigan can be found at the Livernois-Nineteen Mile road crossing.

Started by Niles in 1823, the post office at one time had carriers delivering directly from the office. The post office received mail once a week from Detroit by way of Mt. Clemens.

ORANGE NILES, son of Johnson, became postmaster after his father had gained the branch office. It took Niles and his family 14 days to make the trip from Detroit to Troy when Indians and wild animals comprised serious traffic hazards.

Orange made the trip from Detroit to Troy often, taking his grain to a mill in Detroit operated at the time by Gen. Lewis B. Cass.

The first town meeting was held in 1827 and one of the first funds instituted was a sum of money for the poor.



NERVE CENTER OF TROY TWP.'S GOVERNMENT
Building also houses the area's police department.

Meetings were held in various township officers' homes for several years. The township built a hall on the southeast corner of Wattles road and Livernois that was used until the construction of the present township hall on Wattles road west of Livernois in 1927.

EARLIEST ASSESSMENT records available date back to 1848

when Johnson Niles owned 219 acres in sections 9, 10, and 15, which were almost in the center of the township.

The aggregate value of taxable real estate and personal property for that year was set at \$149,297. Of this total the county assessed the taxable property for \$895.78 for the state and \$746.49 for the county.

Bloomfield Hills First Known as 'Bagley's'

Continued from Page One

erected by Corbett and Monroe of Detroit on the west branch of the Rouge river. Later this mill was sold to John W. Hunter of Birmingham, who, in turn, sold to William Morris.

Morris operated the township's first grist mill in 1828 on his land. Area settlers hailed this mill as one of the area's greatest conveniences. Morris soon after opened a store near the mill.

What is said to be the site of the first Methodist camp meeting in the State of Michigan was a brick and pottery making works opposite Bagley's and built by George Morris in 1837. The camp meeting was reported held on this property in 1828.

THESE WORKS were later purchased by John Daines of Birmingham, who, with a machine of his own invention, began the manufacture of drain tile.

Most flourishing business of all that thrived and died at Bloomfield Hills, then called Bloomfield Center, was a distillery in connection with the grist mills of William Morris. This business continued until the late 1870's.

Among the later settlers of Bloomfield Center was Thomas McGraw who was a member of the state legislature in 1846. At the time of the discussion on whether or not to move the state capitol, McGraw contended that Bloomfield Center would be an excellent place for the new seat of government.

UPON HIS being somewhat scathingly requested to describe the location of the place he so highly recommended, he was unable to give more definite information than that it was "three-fourths of a mile north of the Morris Mill."

The first school house was a small frame structure built about 1850 on the southeast corner of Saginaw and Long Lake roads.

It was not until 1903 that a

brick building was constructed on Long Lake road just west of Woodward avenue, although a new school house had been needed for some time. The building now houses the Swanson architectural firm.

The brick school was erected at the time Charles Stinchfield came to Bloomfield Hills. He and Milton Conklin were the first to recognize the residential possibilities of the area.

STINCHFIELD became a trustee of the Whitney estate, which was assessed in Bloomfield, and paid for more than two-thirds of the \$2,800 construction cost of the school for the community.

Soon after Stinchfield and Conklin came George A. Booth, William T. Barbour and John T. Shaw, all of whom built estates in Bloomfield Hills.

As the property gradually became more developed, others perceived the beauties and possibilities of the section.

The attractiveness of the area soon brought Edwin S. George, Walter Thompson, Frank Bromley, John Endicott, William and John Vhay, Manly Davis, John Donnelly and Walter Morley.

Bloomfield Hills became a city in 1932.

The city's charter, having gained approval of area voters, was formally approved by the state on August 15 and signed by Governor Wilbur M. Brucker.

THE CITY'S first commission to govern the five-square mile area met September 15 to formulate city policy under Mayor D. D. James.

Besides James, the commission included Robert B. Hargreaves, mayor pro tem; Frank W. Atkinson, Luther D. Allen and E. E. Otter.

Allen carried his interest of local government from the village commission to the first city legislative body. He was the first village president after the area was

incorporated as a village in 1927.

The population at the time of city incorporation was nearly 1,100 and the first city government met in the second floor of the building on the southwest corner of Woodward avenue and West Long Lake road, now occupied by the Kingsley Inn.

THE BUILDING formerly housed a bank and barber shop on the first floor.

Russell D. Moore was named as the city's first fire chief and William A. Putman became the first chief of police.

Operation of municipal affairs began without a city manager.

H. S. Starr, an engineer, served the city on a consultant basis to help solve early problems and later

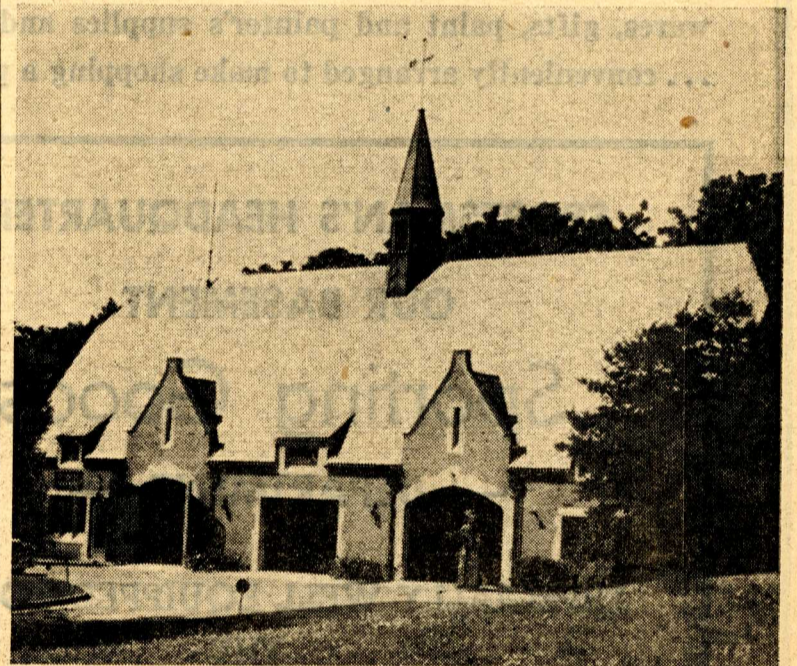
was named as the first administrative head of Bloomfield Hills.

William Story became the first city clerk.

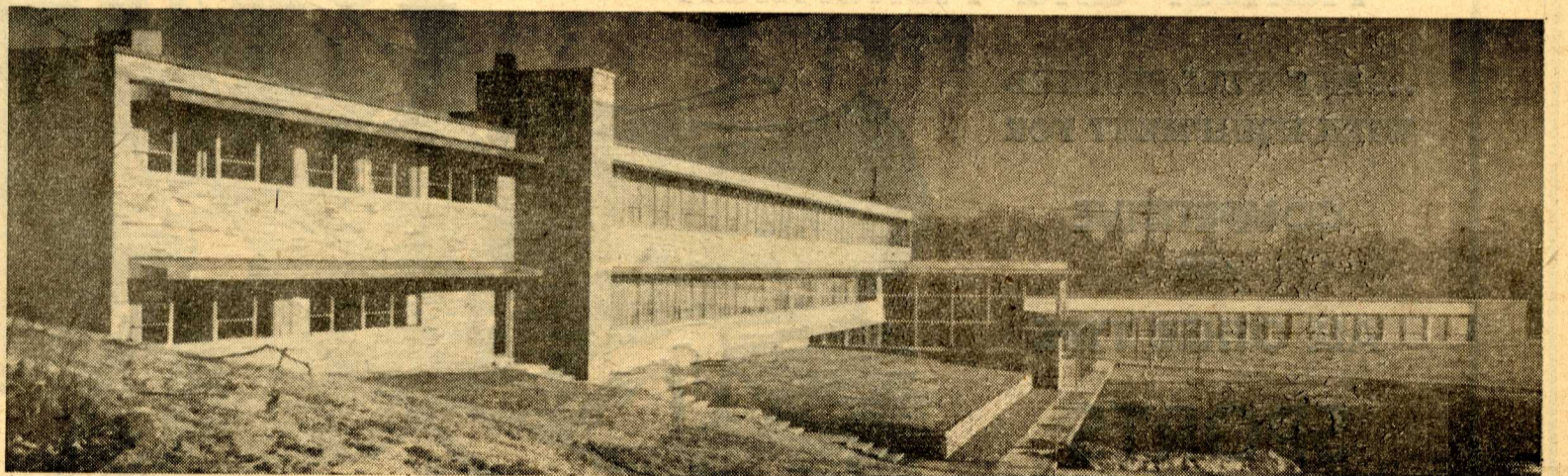
The city obtained its present building on East Long Lake road, east of Woodward avenue, from Bloomfield township in 1933 and moved in the next year.

Elmer Kephart, present city manager, joined the city as clerk in 1946 after serving with the police force since 1930. He became acting city manager in 1948 and the position was made permanent the following summer.

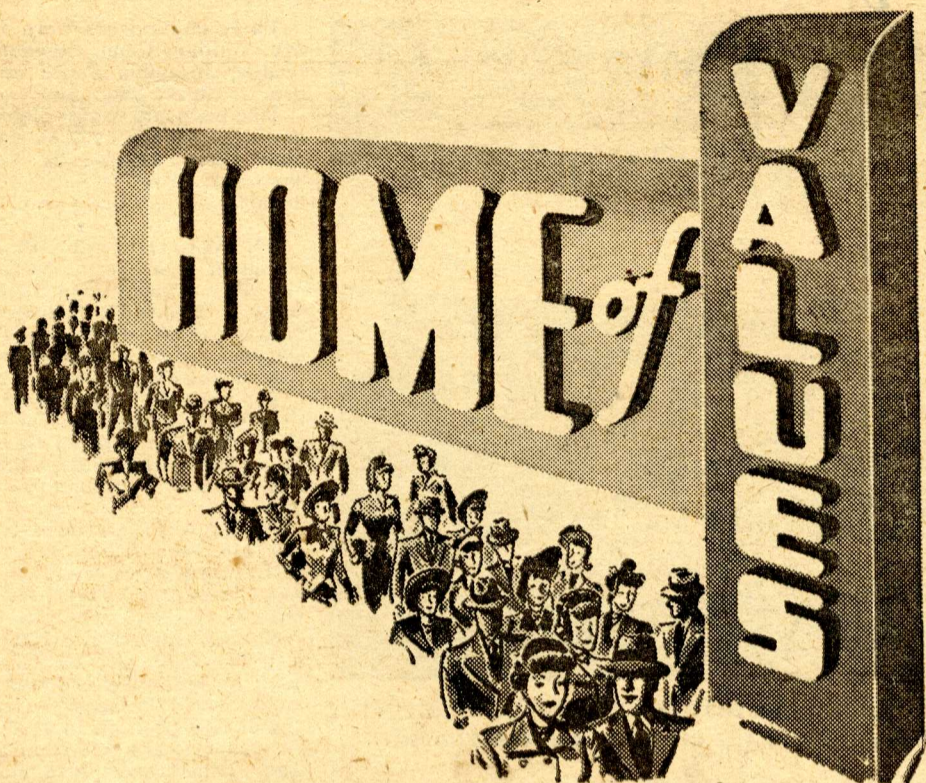
Present City Clerk Robert Stadler also came up from the police department. He was named city clerk in 1948 when Kephart was selected city manager upon Starr's death.



HILLS' CITY HALL ONCE USED BY TOWNSHIP
Former 'home' was SW corner Woodward, Long Lake.



MACMANUS, JOHN & ADAMS AD AGENCY RECENTLY BUILT ITS NEW OFFICE IN HILLS
In early days, city had several 'industries', but built its reputation on its fine residential nature.



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