

Dondero's 18th Try on Seaway Seen Successful

Michigan's 18th District Congressman George A. Dondero of Royal Oak declared this week that success now is in sight after a half century of effort in Congress to obtain authorization for United States participation with Canada in construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

"The House public works committee, of which Dondero is chairman, last week voted to report the St. Lawrence Seaway Bill for consideration by the House of Representatives by a vote of 25 to 6. The measure had passed the Senate on January 20, 1954.

"For the past 18 years, I have introduced a bill each Congress to authorize United States participation in building the Seaway. The bill passed by the Senate and now reported from the Public Works Committee to the House was introduced concurrently by Senator Wiley of Wisconsin and myself.

"BY GETTING the Seaway Bill out of the house committee," Dondero pointed out, "seaway proponents surmounted the most difficult hurdle of all in securing its enactment into law.

"During my entire service in Congress, and for nearly half of the entire period during which authorization and construction, I have fought in support of this legislation.

"As soon as the committee vote was recorded, I telephoned the White House to inform President Eisenhower of the committee's favorable action. I knew of the President's interest, because earlier I had discussed the seaway legislation with him personally.

"I TOLD the President that I felt his personal support of the seaway project, as economically desirable, and even more importantly as a vital factor in continental defense against aggression, had been one of the determining factors in the public works committee's action.

"President Eisenhower, in his message on the State of the Union, stated: 'Both nations (Canada and the United States) need the St. Lawrence Seaway for security as well as for economic reasons. I urge the Congress promptly to approve our participation in its construction. This being his position there is no question but what he will sign the measure when it reaches him.'

So long as one lives, one has demands made upon him . . . by himself or by others. Indeed, without the impacts of demands many people would be rise above the little world they otherwise would vegetate in . . . and their lives would be less interesting.

'Downtown' As It Was In 1896

There has been quite a change at the intersection of Maple and Woodward avenues in Birmingham, since the above picture was taken 58 years ago.

Gone are the sheltering maples except for the one shown at the right in the picture, which is still standing guard on the north side of Cunningham's drug store.

Gone too, are the board walks, the oil street lamps put up by the Village Improvement Society, the fire tower, Corney Sherman's popcorn stand by the store on the northwest corner, and the electric street car which first made its appearance in Birmingham, June 15, 1896.

The old stores have been torn down long ago. Lyman B. Peabody's general store was on the southwest corner of the intersection. He sold this property to John Hanna in 1901 for \$4,500, cash.

IN 1896 Frank Ford bought the three old store buildings on the opposite corner, known then as the Jones, Jennings and Leach buildings. Two years later Ford built a new business block on the site.

The fourth old store shown at the extreme right in the picture was called the Rogers building, because it was owned by the family of Thomas Rogers who in the 1870's had a harness shop there.

William Erby and Nixon bought this property in 1896 and used it as their feed store. In 1908 they built the brick building that now stands on the site. Their names still are on it.

BIRMINGHAM which previously had experienced a slow, steady growth, began to boom with the coming of the electrical street cars. Visitors from Detroit came in great numbers to spend a holiday or two "out in the country" and some of them stayed to make their homes here.

"Gangs of picnickers come out from the city on the trolley," commented The Eccentric in the summer of 1896. "They bring ham-mocks and lemons and eatables and things, and Papa takes a nap

after dinner in the woods and Mama sees to it that the children don't get drowned in River Rouge, the young folks make love and they all go home on one of the evening cars, sunburnt, tired and happy."

Birmingham's population in the 1850's was about 500 inhabitants and after 30 years the increase was slight—only 743, according to a census taker named Blair.

FROM 1896 to 1913, a period of 17 years, Birmingham's population jumped from 975 to over 2,000.

At first, the trolley made the run from Birmingham to Detroit and there was only one track. A year later (1897) the service was extended to Pontiac and in 1899 a double track was laid along the right-of-way.

Patronage of the Detroit United Railway was so heavy during these

times that a waiting room was located in Birmingham in 1910 and by 1916 there was 15-minute service to Detroit or Pontiac.

JAMES COBB, 103 Oakland, remembers when the electric street car lines were being built. He had a summer job in 1895, hauling gravel used in building the right-of-way. The gravel pit was a few miles north of Birmingham on the

way to Pontiac.

"When the foreman quit," recalls Cobb, "I was given the foreman's job and the responsibility of 30 men with their wagons and teams. I worked out a different system of loading the wagons with gravel and we got that gravel out in double quick time."

George Mitchell, editor of The Eccentric at that time, was building his new house (now the Amer-

ican Legion home) on Woodward avenue in 1896. Philip Schlaack, a carpenter then, was working on it. He too, remembers the day when the trolley came to town. "I left my work," remembers Schlaack, "to see the first electric car come into Birmingham. Strath-burn Hendrie was driving it." Schlaack, now 88 years old and living in Troy township, is the oldest living ex-president of the Birmingham village board.

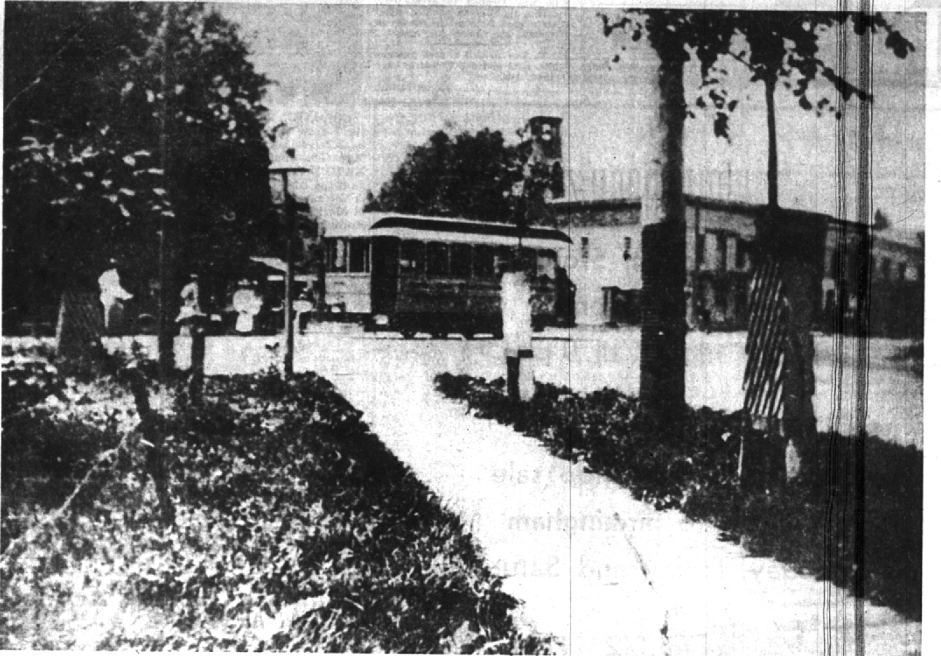
The Birmingham Eccentric

SECTION 3

Thursday, February 11, 1954

BIRMINGHAM BACKGROUND

Local History in Story and Picture
As Compiled and Written by RUTH ANNE SILBAR



THIS WAS THE WOODWARD AND MAPLE INTERSECTION A FEW YEARS BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. There were wooden sidewalks, unpaved streets, electric trolleys and beautiful trees. This view looks toward the northwest corner.

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Rubbish Pickup Schedule Changed In Southfield

Rapid population growth during the past year coupled with the incorporation of the Lathrup Village area has forced a revision in the rubbish collection schedule in Southfield township.

The new schedule will start Monday, Feb. 15. Residents are asked to place their rubbish at the curb on the morning of the first day designat-

ed by the above map. Because of varying amounts of refuse collected each week the township department of public works is unable to conform to the same collection day weekly.

The township only collects rubbish. Garbage collections are made by private contractors.

All rubbish collections are made at the curb and residents are asked

to limit containers to bushel basket size so that one man can easily handle the refuse.

Rubbish includes home heating unit ashes and newspapers, if banded.

News copy submitted early is necessarily given preference, so the "early bird" usually gets the space.

Rifle Platoon Serves As Guard of Honor at Welcoming Ceremonies

BERLIN—Sgt. Robert Randolph, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert V. Randolph, 29867 Farmbrook road, took part in welcoming Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, as he arrived at Berlin's Tempelhof Air-drome on Jan. 22 for the Big Four Foreign Ministers' conference.

Randolph is a member of the 650th Infantry Rifle Platoon which served as a guard of honor at the welcoming ceremonies. He is a machine gunner in the crack unit which welcomes visiting dignitaries in Berlin and participates in formal ceremonies and parades.

Sgt. Randolph, who arrived overseas in August 1952, entered the army in February 1951 and completed basic training at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

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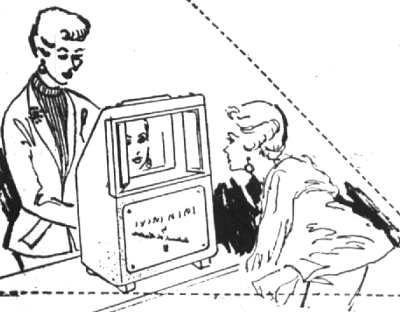
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