

Under World Scrutiny



Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO JANUARY 22, 1904 "The E. S. Lawrence Hotel, Southfield, Mich., burned Monday morning. It was an old landmark... used for hotel, postoffice and store. Loss \$200,000. Insured for \$3,000. A defective chimney caused the fire."

J. P. Campbell sends five dollars for five years of Eccentric all the way from Sitka, Alaska where he is doing finely and waxing wealthy in that far off cold country."

Frank L. Covert has announced himself as candidate for prosecuting attorney for Oakland County."

"Archie Brown and Miss Hoff were united in marriage Monday 20 at the home of the bride near Utica."

"Samuel Alexander is a very sorrowful, blue, happy and joyful man. Why? He has sold his farm to Mr. G. G. Booth of Detroit for an even \$15,000. Samuel is in doubt now whether to mourn or rejoice."

30 YEARS AGO JANUARY 18, 1924 Because but 407 names out of a required total of not less than 200 were on the petitions submitted to the Village Commission for voting in changing Birmingham from a village a city form of government, the local officials Monday night adjourned their meeting to tonight, during which time additional petitions were to have been circulated and presented to them."

A baby daughter, Hildegard Hope, was born Thursday, Jan. 3, to Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Clark at their home "Crow's Nest" on Adams road."

Celebrating their eleventh wedding anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Moore entertained 20 Birmingham friends at a 500 party at their home on Oakland avenue."

Mrs. Rowena Goldsmith, mother of Harry Goldsmith of Smith avenue, 500 City, has just gone through the harrowing, though unique experience of near-asphyxiation by varnish."

A purse of thirty dollars in gold, the gift of those local residents who were invited to the fiftieth wedding anniversary reception of Mr. and Mrs. Edna Lane of Willets street was tendered to the happy couple."

15 YEARS AGO JANUARY 19, 1939 Receiving his first setback in seven starts, the Baldwin High school basketball team suffered defeat at the hands of Royal Oak High school 24-16, Tuesday night, at Birmingham."

Mrs. Ella Richards of 1139 Emmons avenue, died suddenly at Ardmore hospital Friday evening at 7:45 p.m. of a heart attack following a tonsillectomy."

The library at the Bloomfield Hills school has just succeeded in obtaining a copy of "Crisis". This unusual book is a report from the Columbia Broadcasting system, giving word for word the various broadcasts given by CBS at the time of the Czechoslovakian crisis."

PONTIAC — Miss Catherine Cummings, 40 Lincoln avenue has been chosen queen of the Citywide Ice Carnival to be held at the rink at Edson and Montclair streets, on Jan. 21 and 22."

Mr. and Mrs. William A. McCarty of Puritan road are spending several weeks at the Marine Terrace Hotel in Miami Beach, Fla."

FROM OUR own experience, though, we must be far, far ahead of the national average. We know that we have regularly read two weekly magazines, plus quite a stock of monthly publications and an assorted number of newspapers."

Not only that, but a lot of our friends in the same class. We talked to one who, somewhat amazed at his new-found accomplishment, said he had read 74 books last year. About half of these were technical books, considered the "slowest" readers of the lot."

ANOTHER GASPED, saying she knew she had read better than 50 books because that many had been added to the family library and she has read them all."

A teen ager in the group snorted, saying she had read more than that for fun, plus a number of books required for school reading. She's also an avid reader of the pocket-size whodunit, fast 10 to movie and television magazines and all the "picture" magazines."

Her younger brother, just next 11, said he was three past the 20 mark and so, well above the national figure."

A GRANDMOTHER told us she read an average of two and a half

ONE THING OR ANOTHER

By George Wm. Averill

One similarity between the respective jobs of cops and reporters is that both are composed largely of a steady routine in which the unexpected and/or spectacular can arise on a moment's notice."

Like the Walter Reuther shooting case, on which Detroit Police Commissioner Donald Leonard has spent several 40-hour stretches without sleep."

Last week Leonard fulfilled a speaking engagement before the Birmingham Rotary club—but he didn't know until ten minutes after noon whether he could keep the date."

He made a fast trip from his Detroit office out to the Birmingham Community House, just in time to have his friend and college classmate, Birmingham City Attorney Forbes Hascall, introduce him."

Following his remarks 45 minutes later, Leonard picked up a brown paper bag containing a couple of sandwiches (prepared especially by the House kitchen staff), and Leonard had his "lunch" in the car en route back to Detroit and further work on the Reuther case."

"Are drug store soda fountains on their way out?" This question is raised in a feature story this week on the front page of the Northville Record, which tells about two soda fountains which have just been closed in that city. "Tide of the times," explained the wife of one drug store proprietor.

"Times change and we have to change with them," declared the owner of the second establishment.

The story quoted this second owner with pointing out that in the past 10 months, 55 drug store soda fountains between Northville and Detroit have been dismantled.

Earlier this year in Birmingham, Wilson's drug store gave up its fountain, you may remember.

Should such a trend prevail, we may find the "drug store cowboys" forced to roam some other range."

As I recall, these "outdoor", glass-enclosed pay telephone stations came into prominence in the U.S. during the war to provide war-housing projects with a community telephone.

But now that the telephone emergency has ended, I still see more and more of these booths in use—only this time, they are being spotted along well-travelled streets and highways.

Michigan Bell officials find these outdoor booths in growing demand as a convenience to people who suddenly remember they have to make a phone call.

And contrary to what may be the general belief, the Bell Co. finds these "convenience" booths seldom cut down on use of pay stations in neighboring stores, but rather increase the "insider" pay phones' use noticeably, for some unknown reason.

help your Congressman and get him to help you!

Learn what laws are in the making. Get the facts. Study the issues. And, when you've made up your mind, tell your representatives and senators what you think... and when you write, do it right.

- Here are ten good tips: 1. Address them properly. Don't confuse a senator with a representative. 2. Be local; tell them how a national question affects your business, your industry, your community. 3. Be businesslike; brief but not terse. 4. Be specific; if you're for something, say so, and tell why. If not, don't hedge, but tell why not. 5. Be polite; members of Congress de-

- serve respectful treatment. 6. Be reasonable; ask only practical action. 7. Be yourself; use your own letter-head and letter style. 8. Request results; your man is elected to do something. 9. Ask for an answer; you've told him where you stand, now ask him where he stands. 10. Be appreciative; thank him for good votes, compliment his better speeches, and praise his staff, too. Better Government requires continued effort!

Korea Has Claimed Many U. S. Men

The death toll for members of the United States armed services in Korea will probably pass the 30,000-mark next year. Pentagon officials are already classifying many of the 7,955 original "missing" service men as presumed dead.

When the truce in Korea came into effect it was estimated the United States had suffered something over 25,000 fatalities. The Army, of course, suffered the brunt of the losses and some 4,000 Army officers and men, who have been listed as missing, will be declared presumed dead shortly after the first of the year if new information does not appear on them.

personel still listed as missing, although that service will declare over 150 of them presumed dead next month. The Marine Corps has about 500 men listed as missing. The Navy's losses in Korea were negligible. This the known cost of the Korean War is still rising. The complete casualty total in Korea stands at 142,277 killed, wounded and missing. That figure will remain the same.

The transfer of so many men in the missing classification to the killed classification is sadder news for many American families, although the worst has been expected since the Communists returned such a small number of U.S. prisoners in the much-publicized prisoner exchange which followed the signing of the truce.

THE AIR FORCE has some 671 of its

These Mixed-Up French

Perhaps you have wondered why domestic France is so mixed up in its domestic politics, with so many parties, including a large bloc of Communists.

The answer is simple: France's troubles are chiefly economic. Too much of its wealth has been in the hands of too few

of its people, plus the fact that Europe, itself, is over-crowded in population.

Basically, the French are liberty-loving, and have fought many wars to win and preserve freedom. The perplexities confusing the French mind are the same in pattern that confuse others less fortunate than U. S. citizens on this earth.

Rural Churches Have Problems

Recent statistics show the steady decline in number of rural churches operating in the United States has been ended. Up until 1950, hundreds of rural churches closed each year.

Prior to World War II, rural churches in this country were closing at the rate of almost a thousand a year, although World War II seemed to slow down the trend.

In 1950, the tide seemed to turn, and Dr. Thomas Alfred Tripp, head of the Town and County Department of the Congregational Christian Church, recently said the rural church is actually gaining strength in the country today.

munities, the depression had its effect and the trend of the population from rural areas to metropolitan areas also exerted its influence.

The advent of good roads and cheap automobiles made it possible for many rural citizens to attend churches in towns or cities, and the dust bowl disaster in the Midwest further reduced the number of churches in the Thirties.

THE REASON WHY the number of rural churches has stopped shrinking is not as clear. One advanced by some experts is the intensive effort put forth by many denominations today to revitalize the nation's country churches.

Whatever the reason, it is good to know that the trend which started in the 1920's has been checked.

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

It is estimated that the per capita cost to Americans of operating the U.S. Weather bureau is 15 cents per year. Considering, then, the cheapness of this forecasting, how can you complain too often when the predictions do not coincide with actual weather conditions?

Throughout the United States, in this year 1954, there will occur many elections, from U.S. Congressmen down to local candidates. From the higher echelons of candidates will come many statements, some of them foolish and impractical promises to get votes, some of them sincere, hopeful promises, some of them just a lot of empty political words. If the average voter reads, listens, then thinks . . . and then votes his balanced judgments on various personalities and issues, he will get reasonably good government. After

all, a Constitutional Republic such as we have in the U.S.A. simply "turns its citizens on the loose, and hopes they will carve out their Utopia."

One of the most difficult problems that today's youth is confronted with is bringing its parents "up-to-date". (Perhaps this has been the problem of the youth of every generation . . . yet how few of each generation's adults will admit this fact.)

It is estimated that at the beginning of 1953 there were 75,000,000 horses on this earth, a decline of a million from the year previous. It is argued, though, that not all of the decline became hamburgers in the interim.

If most of the people who talk so much about capital and labor really had some capital and had labored, their comments would find greater acceptance.

So They Say . . .

William Neil Connor, British columnist, back in London after visit to this country:

"Whether it is bulldozing roads in Korea . . . or breeding hogs in Illinois or making gadgets for removing ice cubes from refrigerators, these people (Americans) are alive, alert, curious, combative and rarin' to go!"

Dr. Orway Tead, educator: "I believe in human love, affection and friendliness as the great solvent and amalgam. The great catalyst, which holds society together."

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HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY ALICE E. MORGAN

A recent monthly magazine carried an article on reading speed, making a practice of reading a certain part of every day, all aimed at the amount of reading which could be done in a year.

Boiled down, the article stated that reading at a speed of 300 words per minute, for 15 minutes a day, a person would be able to read 20 "average" length books a year.

The writer said, was about four times the national average of books-per-person.

We won't argue with national averages, because we admit there are a large number who do not read books, sticking strictly to magazines.

FROM OUR own experience, though, we must be far, far ahead of the national average. We know that we have regularly read two weekly magazines, plus quite a stock of monthly publications and an assorted number of newspapers."

Not only that, but a lot of our friends in the same class. We talked to one who, somewhat amazed at his new-found accomplishment, said he had read 74 books last year. About half of these were technical books, considered the "slowest" readers of the lot."

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books a week. Don't run away with the idea that Grandma does nothing but read. She has crocheted an even dozen of table clothes and bed spreads, knitted countless mittens and socks, does all the family mending, sews for her own and her daughter's church groups and spends many an evening playing poker with her sons-in-law."

Furthermore, she can discuss all these books and, from the ones whose interest she most, quote long passages verbatim.

Her reading covers just about every type of book on the market, too.

Now then, does all this boil down to the fact that the people in Birmingham are way and beyond the national average?

WE DO NOT consider ourselves the literary type at all. We read for three reasons: curiosity, or for relaxation. We read whatever happens to be on hand, for the most part, and so get into some pretty scattered fields.

The people we know are not "high brow" readers, but follow this pastime for the same reasons that we have.

None of us are bookworms. We have no set schedules of reading, no particular types of reading. We just read. Must be an unbelievable number of persons who read nothing at all to make up for what the national average shows to be our "surpluses."

News copy submitted early is especially given preference, so the "early bird" usually gets the

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