

The need to work it, I believe, as much a part of the Divine Plan for mankind as the need for love. But only does work move mankind along the road to material Utopia, but it does infinitely more, and to his mind and soul... the greatest reward of work.

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# The Birmingham Eccentric

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SECTION ONE  
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## OUR HOLDS THE BLAMELESS

### THIS and THAT

By G. R. A.

**THOUGHTS ON THE PASSING OF AN OLD AND CHERISHED FRIENDSHIP**

Over in White Chapel Memorial Cemetery, just a few miles from where I am standing this, there was laid the body of Floyd J. Miller, late publisher of the Daily Tribune, of Royal Oak. He had passed on suddenly Thursday morning of last week, although his health had been failing for many months.

As I write these lines, my memory goes back to a date 34 years ago when he and his surviving brother, Lynn, purchased the then weekly Tribune, when I came to Birmingham to take over the small village weekly which today publishes this comment.

Both our newspapers were small, as were our communities. But they began to feel the population growth that started trickling into Southern Oakland county from Detroit, bringing with it the many business problems attendant upon such growth.

BUT IT was especially in the Royal Oak area that our county received its greatest expansion, and so more than 26 years ago the Miller brothers converted their weekly into a daily... until today it is one of the best journals in its class in this nation.

I mention this, briefly, only to point out that Floyd and Lynn through long years of real struggle, developed their newspaper into a characterful, dependable community project, one that achieved success only because of the self-sacrifice these two men made, plus their complete sense of dedication of their time and talents to the end that their life's work might endure in the heads and hearts of their readers.

OVER THESE 34 years I have traveled, as it were, a companion journey with these two brothers. Each of us started in as a reporter on larger daily newspapers, then launched into the precarious experiences of proprietorship in our own publication ventures. We have gone through good times and poor times, and survived.

Floyd Miller became, outside of my own family, my closest friend. We were together in the early days, each other our problems, exchanging our ideas, with utter frankness and confidence. I know, intimately, much of the history of The Daily Tribune's trials and tribulations; those those financial early thirties, when the financial demands of the newly created daily were draining their resources... yet during that time they kept their own compassions very meagre, in order to keep their newspaper on the upward path of community service.

ALL THIS was climaxed two years ago when they moved into their beautiful new, modern newspaper plant... a fitting material evidence of their dedication to the traditions of good newspapermen.

Yes, for 34 years I was closely associated with Floyd J. Miller. We have traveled together, attending meetings of newspapermen in many sections of this country, endeavoring to learn things to improve our newspapers, now and then offering ideas gleaned from our own experiences.

We have made many fishing trips together, have found recreation in the woods and on the streams.

Never in these 34 years has a personal controversy or word passed between us. To me, he exemplified the very best in the tradition of community ideals. He was a graduate of the school who believed that his job was to use his mind and talents to improve, wherever he could, the lot of the average person.

HIS KNOWLEDGE of history, of people, of government, eminently fitted him for his position as head of a newspaper, responsibility to its community.

It is not easy to witness the passing of a loved one. Although Floyd was not related to me by blood, yet the bonds of our affection were strong.

(See THIS and THAT, Pg. 8, Sec. 1)



**LITTLE ELAINE FRASER** was on hand Friday, Sept. 17, to help cheer on the efforts of Birmingham high school gridders as the 1954 football season opened officially on the Southfield high school field. The mascot must have encouraged the backing the Maples needed as they defeated Southfield in the first contest for the two schools, 6-0. Shown here explaining the school yells to Elaine is cheerleader Judy Boyd. For pictures on the Maples' first encounter see page 5 part 5. (Eccentric Photo)

### Daily Tribune Publisher Dies

Co-founder of The Daily Tribune and its president and general manager Floyd J. Miller died Thursday, Sept. 16 in Providence hospital, Detroit. He was 68 years old.

Mr. Miller entered the hospital Wednesday for observation of a suspected virus infection and died in his sleep of coronary occlusion. His death was unexpected although he had been in failing health for several years.

He lived at 805 Pemberton, Bloomfield Hills, and had a winter home at Cocoa, Fla.

Born June 13, 1886 in Onondaga, N. Y., he was the son of the late Myrtle J. and Rita L. Miller. After his graduation from high school in New York, he continued his education at Wesleyan university at Middletown, Conn., where he received a degree of bachelor of philosophy was conferred in 1907.

FOR A YEAR he taught in the Princeton preparatory school, Princeton, N. J., and then took up newspaper work. He spent a year on the editorial staff of the Courant of Hartford, Conn., and a year in Cuba, was with the Star in Onondaga, N. Y., the Detroit Free Press and the Indianapolis News.

Mr. Miller was a director emeritus of the Exchange club, a director of the Exchange club, a director of the Royal Oak Tribune. It was then his first paper requiring the work of only three persons to publish it. In 1923 Mr. Miller took up active, full time work in connection with the Tribune.

In 1925 the Tribune celebrated its fifty-fifth year of its existence. The year before that a new and modern publishing plant had been erected.

A WELL-KNOWN newspaperman, he served as president of the Michigan Daily Press Association for many years and was a director emeritus of the directors of both the Inland National Editorial association and the Michigan Daily Press Association.

He was one of the founders of the Inter-American Press association and was a director emeritus. Mr. Miller also was secretary-treasurer of the Pontiac-Oakland County Legal News.

Mr. Miller was a life member of Royal Oak lodge 404, F. & A. M., former director of the Rotary club, president of the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce, former president of the Exchange club, a director of the Royal Oak Credit Bureau, and vice president of the People's Federal Savings and Loan association. He was first president of the United Service clubs of Royal Oak.

FORMERLY, he served on the

### Phone Lead Fizzles; Cars Found

Birmingham police this week continued to question the widow and relatives for any further clues which might lead to the slayer of Doyle Howe—the 24-year old gas station attendant who was killed 10 days ago in the washroom of a service station at Woodward and Chapin.

Detective Lt. Merle Holmquist, working in Flint Tuesday night, down a mysterious phone number scrawled on a scrap of paper found at the service station. The phone number was that of a cousin of the deceased.

Meanwhile police are investigating another key piece of evidence which could not be revealed at this time, Police Chief Ralph W. Moxley said.

MOXLEY SAID the detector tests are being given to all suspects who could possibly have any knowledge of the case.

Last week police located two cars sought earlier.

In locating the 1937 black Chevrolet, police believe they found the last two persons to see Howe alive before the killing. The car belonged to a resident of Pontiac lake who with his wife, stopped at the Speedway station and purchased \$1 worth of gas on the way home from visiting friends in Royal Oak.

THE YOUNG man said he asked for a time and a flower replied that it was 6 minutes until 2 A.M. The couple then drove to Kean Harbor to pick up their baby who had been left with a sister. The family said the couple arrived about 10 or 20 A.M.

Retracing the route they took police found the drive took them 19 minutes at the speed they were traveling.

The second car—a 1951 blue Ford—led police to the questioning of three Detroit youths who allegedly threatened the life of Howe about a month ago. All three were given the detector test Saturday and police said their stories checked out. On the night of the killings they each were in different places.

ALTHOUGH \$61 was taken from Howe's pocket, police still are investigating possible grudge motives.

Last week the Redford State police assigned Detective Frank Barkman to work full-time on the case, adding that as far as they were given the detector test Saturday and police said their stories checked out.

### Commission Seeks Definite Answer On Civil Defense

Faced with the recent resignations of civil defense commissioners, the Birmingham city commission is seeking a definite answer whether or not such a program is needed or wanted here.

They had asked both men to meet with them at an early date to discuss what they have learned of civil defense in Birmingham, and what they feel should be done.

Commissioner Ilean Beier said he felt the question should be decided "once and for all." He expressed surprise at the amount of work which had been done in the past two years, adding that as far as he knew, the request for a sirens has been the only item turned down.

COMMISSIONER Vincent Watkins said he was in agreement with Beier and felt a decision should be made to "have a civil defense group that can function, or forget the whole thing."

Main's resignation was accepted "with regrets" Monday night.

### Interview Three For Postmaster

Three men are being interviewed and investigated for the Birmingham postmaster job, according to Robert L. Davis, investigator for the U. S. Civil Service Commission.

They are Eugene C. Beier, 1841 Penitence; Felix J. Jachimowicz, 1805 Amberst, Beverly Hills; and Roland W. Reese, 347 Webster.

Beier now is assistant postmaster here, Jachimowicz is postal transportation clerk and Reese is acting postmaster.

IF CIVIL service procedure is followed, Beier and Reese are followed by Davis, and the three men may be certified and referred to the U. S. Civil Service Commission in Washington, D. C. for recommendation to the president and confirmation by the Senate.

### UF Accepts Goal of \$186,388

A goal of \$186,388 has been accepted as this area's participation in the 1954 Torch Drive of the United Foundation, today announced John K. Stevenson, chairman for Birmingham-Bloomfield-Franklin.

The advisory committee of the Birmingham-Bloomfield-Franklin area met on Tuesday night and arrived at the quota as the fair share of the overall amount of \$1,200,000 which was set by the metropolitan board of the United Foundation.

This will make the drive, which begins October 19, the largest single cooperative effort in the community's history, Stevenson said, and will call for the most intensive work ever undertaken by a local volunteer organization.

Stevenson said the quota compares with last year's \$152,715, with the increase partly due to continued rise in area population and greater demands upon the 150 health and welfare agencies who combine their fund-raising efforts under the United Foundation.

THE GREATEST part of the increase, however, is due to the inclusion of the annual Red Cross sales in the Torch Drive for the first time. Previously the Red Cross has made an independent solicitation in the spring. Except in emergencies, none will be made in the future.

"The increase in our quota this year," Stevenson said, "is \$33,673."

(See GOAL, Page 8, Sec. 1)

### Overload Causes 30-Minute Power Failure in B'ham

See Picture, Page 9, Section—

When two Detroit Edison substations were knocked out Sunday by a circuit breaker overload, electric service to Birmingham residences was restored after only 30 minutes, but it was two hours before it was completely available again to some 200,000 other residents in the southeastern part of the county.

A Detroit Edison spokesman said the trouble occurred Sunday at 10:33 a.m. when the company was doing some maintenance work on the feeders through the northeast station. While the work was in progress, the south Oakland county area was being fed through an alternate circuit.

But the demand was greater than anticipated and the failure occurred when the circuit breaker tripped. Company spokesman P. C. Grant said it was fortunate the trouble occurred Sunday morning, when the demand is less great.

THE TWO stations affected were those of Lincoln and Bloomfield.

Hardest hit was Berkeley where some 20,000 residents also were deprived of water until service was restored about 1:30 p.m.

A request from the Berkeley fire department to borrow the Birmingham department's heavy duty generator was denied because it was in use here. Fire Chief Vern W. Griffith said.

All wells in Birmingham went dead at 11 a.m. at which time the generator was hooked into the well, where it pumped approximately 100,000 gallons before power was restored to the municipal building, Griffith said.

SOME 18,000 telephones operating out of Birmingham's telephone exchange were maintained by the company's emergency battery power.

When so many people at one time sought to find out why the electricity failed, the phone equipment could not handle the volume

### Scoreboard Won't Register \$ Signs

While fans at Friday night's football game here will probably be aided in watching the game by a new electric scoreboard, the big question of how the board's purchase is to be financed will loom in the minds of members of the Charles Edwards American Legion post.

The Legion, depending on community spirit to pay the bulk of the scoreboard's cost, ordered the sign two weeks ago and would have it installed for the first home game of the season.

The post, through an earlier contribution drive and money out of its treasury, has only \$600 of the necessary \$1,600 to pay the bill.

Appeals to local civic groups has failed to gain any support and the post has taken the idea for funds to the people of Birmingham.

MEMBERS point out that \$1 from each family in the city would not the scoreboard drive over the top with a possible reserve to buy other athletic equipment for the school.

A dedication of the new board is planned for between the halves Friday night.

The state champion drum and bugle corps from the Thomas Edison Post in Detroit will be on hand to help with the festivities. The 18th District Ritual team will direct the actual dedication ceremony. Birmingham Civil Air Patrol Members in attendance.

Post members are proud that the scoreboard is ready for the opening game at the new field, but their troubles will continue until the sign is paid.

Post members are proud that the scoreboard is ready for the opening game at the new field, but their troubles will continue until the sign is paid.



EDWIN A. O'NEAL

Began career in harness shop (Eccentric photo)

### Last Rites Monday For Pioneer Businessman

One of Birmingham's oldest citizens, Edwin A. O'Neal, 583 Madison avenue, died Saturday at the age of 91.

Funeral services were conducted Monday afternoon at the Manly Bailey funeral home with the Rev. Harry O. Martin of the First Methodist church officiating. Burial was in Roseland Park cemetery.

Born Oct. 24, 1862 in Brant County, Ont., he was the son of James O'Neal and Savilla Thompson O'Neal.

For 68 years, Mr. O'Neal had made his home in Birmingham. Coming here as a young boy, in 1865 from Paris, Ontario, Mr. O'Neal began his business career, opening a harness shop in a small frame building on the main street of the village—now the site of the Charles E. Peck and Sons tailor shop.

MR. O'NEAL PLAYED an important part in the civic life of the village of Birmingham.

He served on the village board 1884-95, 1896-99 and 1901-07. He was elected vice president of the Citizens League in 1912, a group composed of business men and civic leaders who were interested in the public affairs in the village.

Mr. O'Neal was a member of Birmingham lodge 44, F. & A. M., Scottish Rite Lodge of Detroit and the Modern Shrine.

His only survivors are nieces and nephews including Miss Margaret Hendra of Birmingham, Symon Hendra of Appleton, Mich., Mrs. Kenneth Mowat of North Street,

### Commends Effort Of Department At June 14 Tragedy

By GEORGE WM. AVERILL

A cloud of suspicion which for the past three months has hung over the Birmingham fire department is completely dispelled in the long-awaited report of the special three-man citizens' committee, printed copies of which were released to the public today.

The board of inquiry found that the Birmingham fire and police departments "were not guilty of any improper or negligent conduct" in the June 14 early morning flash fire at 1189 Brookwood where a mother and her two sons perished, and one was rescued.

THIS SPECIAL INVESTIGATION team, appointed only two days after the fire, in its report declared members of these two city departments "performed their duties with commendable competence."

The three men—Chairman James Spencer, Charles Kass and Jack Ray—made only one suggestion in their report to the city commission: that an independent board be created to advise the city commission and city manager on matters pertaining to fire-fighting.

City commissioners have made no comment on the report, although they have had since the weekend to read and study it.

It is expected that next Monday night at their regular meeting, receipt of the report will be officially acknowledged and there may be some discussion of the committee's recommendation.

FIRE CHIEF Vern W. Griffith, who in the past 14 weeks has steadfastly maintained that any investigation would show his department was not negligent, was shown The Eccentric's copy of the inquiry report.

Said Griffith: "I have not received my copy yet, but I am happy to note the committee's conclusion, and more than pleased to discover the board's commendation. 'But knowing my men as I do, I don't see how the outcome could have been any other way.'"

Griffith said he would make a formal statement after he has received his copy and had an opportunity to study it.

THE 26-PAGE printed report, which was completed and turned over to the city commission Friday afternoon, answered three main repeated complaints that firemen were:

- Slow in answering the alarm;
- Slow in playing water on the fire;
- Seemed incompetent and poorly trained;
- Not properly attired;
- Inadequate in number and required civilian assistance; and
- At times did nothing but "stand around."

The report stated that the criticism that the department was slow in responding was unfounded.

IT SAID that from testimony obtained from the 18 witnesses interviewed, the first pumper arrived five minutes after the alarm was sounded at 1:10 a.m. at the under truck was no more than 60 seconds behind the first, and that from several friends who learned more than five minutes after the first alarm.

Regarding use of water, the three-man committee said this complaint was based on incomplete information.

"Most spectators were at the front of the house where water was used, and used only 1:10 a.m. report said. 'This was from the second line laid from the north hydrant and the third line in use.'"

"However, before 1:02, water from the booster tank on the ladder truck had been used up at the south side of the house. Water from the first line from the north hydrant was in play at the back of the house between 1:02 and 1:03. Very few spectators were aware that this second line of water before water was played on the front of the house."

REGARDING civilian aid, the report said, (See INQUIRY, Page 8, Sec. 1)

### STRICTLY FRESH

Fellow in Santa Monica, Calif., stole a ukulele and a book on how to play the harmonica. He was arrested by the police and how to play the "uke" the same way.

City fathers of Morehead City, N. C. wondered why they only sheltered 10 refugees from Hurricane.

Woman in Brazil, Ind., accused of killing her husband. She had to be given a blood transfusion before she could take a blood test. Keeping her hands off the "uke" the same way.

Benefits in Fallsburg, W. Va., forced the residents to hand over \$172 in admissions. You're guessed it—the picture showing that night was the "uke" the same way.

Two patriots in Pueblo, Colo., are under suspension for delivering a lute to a fellow patriot.