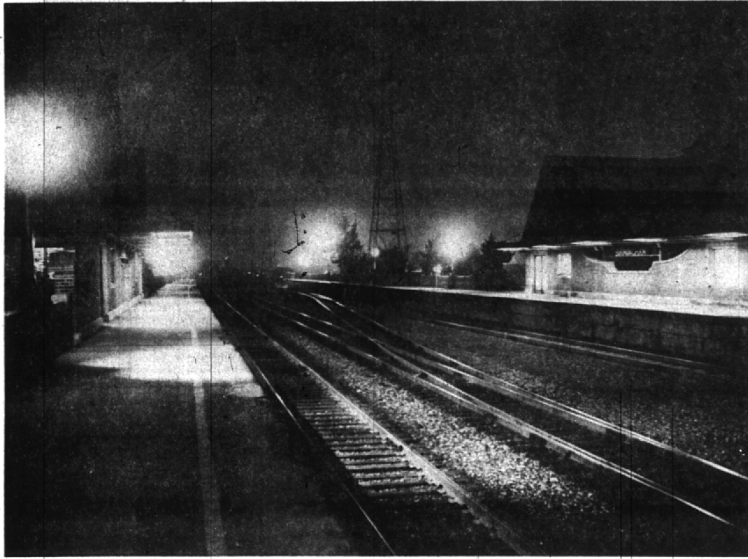


The successful art of self-government requires a reasonable quality and quantity of intelligence about politics, economics, social studies, and the virtues of honesty, loyalty to truth, self-reliance, courage. Without the right application of these and other intelligent facts, self-government will fall into decay.

A Commuter Station Can Be a Lonely Place at Night



Only the few who have occasion to ride the late night passenger train to Muskegon are familiar with this scene. The lights which illuminate the long passenger platforms,

crowded twice daily but now deserted, provided the photographer with his only source of light.

Trains and Patrons Are Few After Dark

PHOTO STORY BY LES LINE

You might say that Birmingham's Grand Trunk railroad station leads a double life.

During the early morning and late afternoon hours the English gothic structure on Eton bustles with activity as hundreds of commuting Birmingham businessmen leave for and return from their downtown offices.

The pace is fairly brisk the rest of the day, too, as the station handles the normal flow of passengers and freight for outstate points.

At night, however, the picture presented by the commuter station is a contrasting one.

The Grand Trunk's parking lot, jammed during the day by the cars of the many commuters, is glaringly empty. Until 10 p.m., when the station agent arrives to handle passengers, mail and baggage for the late night train to Muskegon, the station is dark except for one lone light behind the ticket windows and the street lights illuminating the circular drive in front of the station.

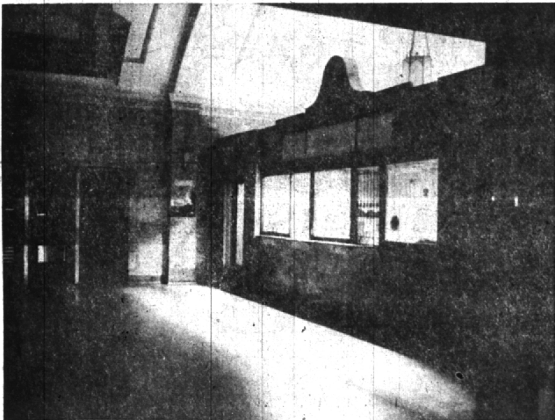
The occasional one or two passengers for the 11:50 p.m. train for Durand and then Muskegon seem dwarfed by the huge waiting room. That midnight train is the only regularly scheduled passenger through Birmingham after the Detroit-to-Pontiac commuter schedule ends, although an unscheduled freight hurries through without slowing now and then.

The corridors and stairways leading to the passenger ramp are empty. The platform itself is deserted except for a baggage cart loaded with mail bags bound for points west.

The Eccentric, in this picture page, presents an unusual study of the Birmingham railroad station at night.

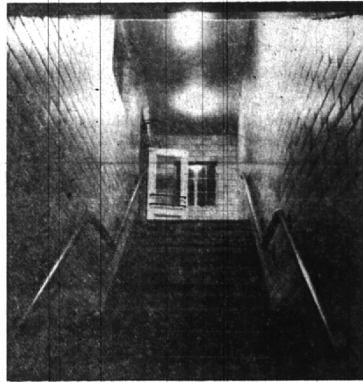


Each morning Monday through Friday hundreds of Birmingham businessmen use this wooden stairway which leads from the Grand Trunk parking lot to the passenger walkway. At night, the lot and passenger platform now deserted, it serves only as an interesting subject for a composition-minded photographer.

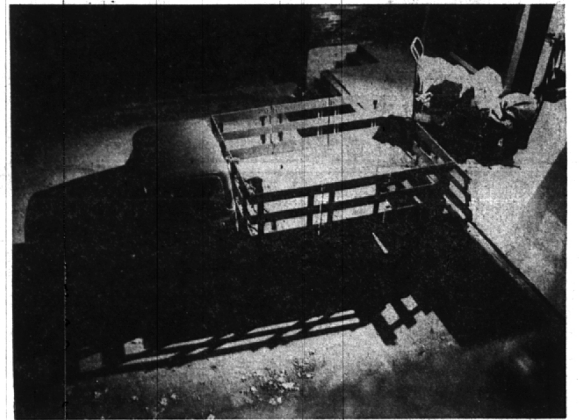


From the time the station empties of its last commuters until about 10 p.m., when the agent opens for two hours to serve passengers of the 11:50 train and to handle

baggage and mail, the interior of the station is dark except for a single light behind the ticket windows, a light that casts a soft glow on the empty waiting room.



An open door at the head of a tall flight of stairs leads out onto an empty passenger platform on the east side of the station. Each evening returning commuters hurry down these steps and through a brightly-lit tunnel which leads under the tracks and to the waiting room. At night the footsteps of the few passengers of the 11:50 Detroit-to-Muskegon train echo through the lonely corridors.



A nightly visit by the mail truck helps break the monotony for the station agent. The several sacks of mail are loaded from the truck onto a baggage cart, then taken

through a tunnel under the tracks and onto an elevator to await the 11:50 p.m. passenger to Muskegon.

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