

Back In Birmingham's Saad Days . . .

By OLIVE DENISON FOX

Those of you whose eyes have wearied of modern architecture—the shining sheets of glass and steel that reach into the sky—get into your cars tomorrow and drive along the narrow road that hugs the northern shore of Orchard Lake and ponder over the group of rugged red brick buildings that sit high on the shore and look southward across the lake.

Recall, too, those of you who can, those bright Sunday afternoons half a century ago when the parade grounds of the Michigan military academy resounded with the beat of drums and the tread of marching in full dress parade. Eighty-one years ago the academy was founded and 49 years ago this so suddenly that many of the past January it suddenly closed—



turned from their Christmas holidays before they learned the sad news.

STUDENTS WERE confronted with the possible loss of half a year unless an immediate transfer to another school could be arranged, college courses were interrupted, and the newly commissioned officers viewed with sadness their bright new uniforms, amors, breast plates, etc., now quite useless and to be stored away in closets for future children to wear in mock dress parades.

I visited the academy at the time of closing and saw the young cadets in the barracks reluctantly tossing their possessions into small trunks and suitcases, and wearing out a pair of old suspenders, an old boxing glove, or a well-worn pair of shoes, respectively.

The Sunday parade had been traditional at the academy and visitors gathered from neighboring localities, only, for those were horse-and-buggy days and Orchard Lake was a long way from Birmingham and almost out of bounds for anyone living as far away as Edgerley or Franklin.

BIRMINGHAM had two livery companies at that time but the average young girl did not carry a spare dollar in her pocket to engage a horse and carriage. Furthermore, it simply wasn't done. And a young man had to look twice at every dollar that came his way and the second look usually convinced him that a walk with his best friend to the Electric park was almost as delightful.

Farmers had horses, a week's toil in the harvest fields or pulling a plow were not enthusiastic about a long drive out to Orchard Lake to a dress parade on Sunday afternoon, and this was quite in accord with the farmer's personal opinion about the whole matter.

There were only two or three automobiles in Birmingham at that time so it remains a great mystery to me how I happened to be one of four fortunate girls invited—with an equal number of boys, of course—to journey to Orchard Lake to witness the dress parade. We would travel in two cars, one of which belonged to a family on East Maple avenue—actually distant cousins of mine. Naturally, this was not the car I was to occupy—for cousins do not invite other cousins to share an expedition of this magnitude save by parental edict. So I truly do not recall whose car I shared that day. They were touring cars of course—no tops—and passengers to occupy the rear seats entered through a small door at the center of the rear.

WHAT TO WEAR? Not being accustomed to motoring, none of the girls had proper motoring clothes—long tan dusters, goggles, etc., then in vogue. Clothing presented no problem to the boys who had no worries at that time regarding Elvis sideburns or the latest cut in trousers. Boys always looked just like boys.

For want of anything more dashing, the girls wore their best white shirt, waists, starched by their mothers in cold starch until they crackled, high stiff collars with jabots, and long flaring skirts that dabbed in the dust.

All of the girls except myself wore sailor hats, over which they tied long, bright-colored veils borrowed for the occasion. They knotted the veils cozy beneath their chins and long streamers billowed out over their shoulders.

BUT NOT ME! It was simply against my nature to appear too frivolous too suddenly and a fluttering romantic veil was simply

out of the question. I'd go bare-headed just as nature intended on a summer holiday. My hair was down, I must have appeared sufficiently un-frivolous to please even myself.

I recall our hilarious start. Who should sit where? And why not? Admiral Byrd's expedition for that reason would not have created more commotion. Our route took us north to Bloomfield Center, or the Circle as we knew it, thence west to Orchard Lake. The ten-mile journey was a success, both socially and mechanically—the latter phase being actually the more important for cars at that time were mysterious and temperamental, and just plain stubborn.

It was a lovely mid-summer day. Orchard Lake sparkled in the sunlight and provided a perfect backdrop for the dress parade. The sky wore its best Sunday blue, trimmed here and there with white clouds. Visitors were grouped closely and deeply around the parade grounds and the throbbing drums and snare of the handsome young cadets as they swept past on intricate maneuvers was almost more than I could bear.

I HAD A secret inner pride, too, that at last I had arrived socially for attendance at a Sunday dress parade carried a dash of social distinction and would be mentioned casually in conversation for some time to come.

But for some unaccountable reason, there was a touch of sadness mixed with my emotions as I climbed into my place in the car for the homeward journey. Perhaps the day had simply been too perfect, and it end too near. But soon learned that even the feeling of sadness can be worn and my heart skipped a beat when our driver gave a brisk, confident turn of the crank on the front of the car and nothing followed but silence.

He tried again, and again, then straightened up and turned his

2-5 THE BIRMINGHAM (MICH.) ECCENTRIC July 17, 1938

worried face toward us. Meanwhile, the other car parked close beside us was panting excitedly and anxious to be away. The driver put off its motor and came to help. Turn and turn about, the four boys risked broken arms and exhausted themselves.

My newly acquired social position was a little as I sat in the rear seat of the car that wouldn't go. Why did it have to be ours? Why not Deputy Cousin's car? Passerby leaving the parade grounds paused briefly, studying our long, teardrop-shaped, and wearing small aloof smiles. The boys tried pushing the car, pulling it, shoving it, but it would not move.

THERE WAS only one solution. Standard equipment for all cars at that time was a good strong tow line. I do not recall whether ours was of rope or chain. I do know that it was not rigid, for our car followed its leader under violent protest—traveling in its cloud of dust, darting in and out of deep ruts—pointing its nose first to the right, then to the left, like some angry trapped monster. I held my breath as we rolled slowly toward the long, teardrop-shaped hill just south of Bloomfield Center.

In this car ahead riding with Deputy Cousin was a girl named Jean. Under ordinary conditions, I loved Jean. She was slightly younger than I, and my pride protests when I admit she was a little more popular at times, also. I lived in a modest white frame house that looked across a small vacant field toward Jean's imposing residence.

I can see her now wearing the bright blue veil that matched her eyes and sitting sideways in the rear seat of the car ahead, looking back at us across the tow line, her white teeth busy with laughter. Was she anticipating, too, how excessive funny it would be if our tow line should break.

JEAN HAD long golden braids that reached below her waist and she appeared almost as fetching as she moved away from you as when she walked toward you. One look at those braids and you knew the scales were tipped. At times, also, Miss was sport of sparrow-brown—not heavy and luxurious like Jean's—more of a wolver-weight but that swung with the wind.

For at least an hour that afternoon I hated Jean with a deep, pastel hate. Outwardly I was

laughing but inwardly I longed only for a sight of my modest frame home, and this was of course eventually accomplished. Jean has been dead for several years now and that is sad to contemplate. One of the streets in Birmingham bears her family name.

AND WHO was I? Well, those of you who remember the one popular song, "I'd Have to Get Under, Get Out and Get Under," can just call me Johnny O'Conner's girl.

And tomorrow if you drive along the northern shore of Orchard Lake, you will still see young men bent on learning hurrying across the

campus and in and out of the rugged red brick buildings—as it was half a century ago—for this is now the home of St. Cyril and Meth.

ELLIOTT UPHOLSTERING
 Creators of Fine Living Room Furniture
 VISIT OUR NEW SHOWROOM
 TABLES — LAMPS — CARPETS
 Open Evenings by Appointment ELLIOTT FURNITURE
 5395-5400 DIXIE HWY. WATERFORD — OR 3-1225

SALE!
FREEMAN SHOES
 Every pair of summer shoes; also limited selection of fall styles on sale now... terrific savings!

VALUES TO \$19.95
 now **\$15.90**

VALUES TO \$15.95
 now **\$11.90**

Boy's Shoes \$5.90

BANISTER SHOES
 also reduced for clearance

Higgins and Frank
 Wabek Building
 Birmingham
 Detroit Chicago
 Free Parking at the Rear

SALE!
FREEMAN SHOES
 Every pair of summer shoes; also limited selection of fall styles on sale now... terrific savings!

VALUES TO \$19.95
 now **\$15.90**

VALUES TO \$15.95
 now **\$11.90**

Boy's Shoes \$5.90

BANISTER SHOES
 also reduced for clearance

Higgins and Frank
 Wabek Building
 Birmingham
 Detroit Chicago
 Free Parking at the Rear

LAKES' offers

STARTING JULY 20
A Never-Before

Gorham Sterling SALE!

LIMITED TIME
30% off
 all pieces

two famous designs
KING EDWARD and FAIRFAX

Savings on all 26 serving pieces in both patterns.
 for instances:

KING EDWARD	FAIRFAX
Table or Serving Spoon \$8.95 Reg. \$12.75	Sugar Spoon \$4.90 Reg. \$7.00
Jelly Server \$5.43 Reg. \$7.75	Gravy Ladle \$5.43 Reg. \$7.75
Pie or Cake Serving Knife \$8.75 Reg. \$12.50	Olive or Pickle Fork \$4.03 Reg. \$5.75

Other serving pieces only \$2.15 to \$1.75... regularly \$4.50 to \$2.50

Typical Popular Services	REG.	NOW	REG.	NOW
16-Pc. Basic Set for 4	\$107.00	\$74.90	\$96.00	\$67.20
30-Pc. At-Home Set for 6	\$199.50	\$139.95	\$180.00	\$126.00
48-Pc. Hostess Set for 8	\$310.00	\$217.00	\$280.00	\$196.00
72-Pc. Party Set for 12	\$465.00	\$325.50	\$420.00	\$294.00

Other services of your choosing at comparable savings.

Convenient Budget Terms

"Sterling Is For Now... For You"

LOWEST PRICES IN THIS AREA

IF YOU NEED FURNITURE OR BEDDING — NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY

PRICES WILL NEVER BE LOWER

Before you buy any furniture anywhere
 Be Sure to Check our Prices

Open Monday, Thursday, Friday Till 9 P.M.

Har-Trom HI-WAY FURNITURE MART
 1537 WOODWARD AVE., BIRMINGHAM, MICH.
 4 BLOCKS N. OF 14th M.L.R. Midwest 4-1410

Charge It • 30-60-90 Days • Budget Terms Up to 24-Months

LAKES' JEWELERS
 "The Sterling Store of Birmingham"

For the first time we are offering these two famous open-stock Gorham "best-sellers" at 30% savings on every item in both patterns. After this sale, both patterns return to regular prices, in open stock. They were selected because they are typical of the wide range of current Gorham designs from the elaborate to the simple... King Edward, a gay, ornamental design... Fairfax, a clean, classic design.

About Gorham King Edward — if you like accents of richness on your table, if sterling handsomely ornamented is your preference...

KING EDWARD IS FOR YOU!

About Gorham Fairfax — a timeless beauty in sterling design, a favorite with smart homemakers. If you like quiet design in the American tradition...

FAIRFAX IS FOR YOU!

Just decide the pieces you want in the pattern of your choice... we'll tailor payments to your convenience.

Integrity free with every purchase at LAKES'

Woodward at Maple
 MI 4-5315