'The Town That Time Forgot'
Franklin Reflects
A Proud Heritage

BY NITA HARD
Special Writer

The history of this small town is intimately interwoven with its irregular topography. Much of Franklin's early history is intertwined with the development of Southfield, Bloomfield, and Farmington Townships. Two men, Dillucena Stoughton and Elizabul Bullock, bought big sections of land in 1824 and 1825, as soon as the territory was open. In 1828 the area became officially identified as Franklin, with the establishment of the United States Post Office.

On Sept. 13, 1828, Dr. Ebenezer Rayado was named first postmaster, with the office housed in the log cabin dwelling of Dorus Morton where the young unmarried doctor was a boarder.

A LOG CABIN school house was also erected at the village, long before families began to settle there. A public printing office was built in 1830 and a store was built by John W. Averill to be operated by William Huston, said to be from New York. Nameless school teacher, Harvey Lee. Bullock built a tavern and a second tavern was opened by Dorus Morton in 1833 as an addition to his loghouse and post office.

When Peter Van Averill, Sr., moved out to Franklin in 1837, he really intended to homestead a mill, a distillery and a pottery.

By 1877, Franklin had a church, a schoolhouse, a temperance hotel, two new mills, three general stores, a drug store, hardware, tin shop, four blacksmith shops, shoemaker and two wagon shops.

"THE SAID that destiny chose to favor Birmingham, rather than Franklin.

In the beginning of the development of the territory, the two settlements were of like size, but the Grand Trunk Railroad provided Birmingham with that vital link between Detroit and Pontiac, and Franklin fell to the wayside.

Then, in the early 1890's, Franklin got George Wellington Smith, and modern history has no choice but to admit that this made a big difference to the present character of Franklin.

The young ambitious land developer from Detroitહહ. sailed to this quiet little rural town of Franklin and made it fulfill its destiny.

HIS DEEP conviction that the charm and natural beauty of the area should be rigidly controlled by building restrictions and architectual standards has given Franklin its present prestige.

INTERIOR OF EARLY FRANKLIN BLACKSMITH SHOP
Forge and bellows were used by George E. Coulton.

VILLAGES BERT WOOD TRACES FRANKLIN'S HISTORY
Historian's "Franklin Yesterday" relives past.

Meet 'Mr. Franklin'—Historian Bert Wood

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD
Special Writer

Bert Wood, affectionately and officially known as "Mr. Franklin", can trace his family back as far in the history of the village as any other resident still living here. Wood's great-grandfather, Daniel Wood, came to Franklin from New Hampshire in 1825, bringing with him his wife and family who were to become the Cray family there three years earlier.

Some years later, Daniel went on westward, and his son, John, who was about 15, was already working in the Village of Franklin making his home for his lifetime. He married Eliza Young and had two sons, William and Milton.

THE FAMILY remained there on the site of Franklin Hills Country Club, and a second farm they owned was at 14 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. William was Bert Wood's father. The brothers, William and Milton, owned the Wood Brothers Stock Farm, specializing in breeding horses.

Bert Wood also had a younger brother, James D. Wood, former Town Clerk of the town and supervisor in Southfield Township, who died in 1945. Bert Wood and his wife, who died in 1924, had three daughters.

As Franklin's dedicated historian, Bert Wood, a spy and private eye, turned over many memories of the past in "Franklin Village in its yesterday, tomorrow."