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Page 5-P  
BHAM ECCENTRIC  
Thursday, June 4, 1964  
**Congregationalists Start Summer Sale**

Beginning Sunday, June 14, The Congregational Church of Birmingham will start its summer sale. A church service is scheduled at 9:30 a.m. and the nursery and kindergarten will be open.

During July and August, the Pilgrim Fellowship, the church's high school group, will be responsible for an 8:30 a.m. church service.

Whenever you have wants of any description, turn to The Eccentric Want Ads to buy, sell, find.

To order a Want Ad, phone Want Ad headquarters, Midwest 4-1100.

## FOR SALE IN 1880 ECCENTRIC

# Want to Buy a Family Skeleton?

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD  
Special Writer

Although there may be many bone skeletons in the local family closets late in the 1870's, the ones the residents offered any information about were the scannings of the present-day reader, one of old classified columns in the earliest Eccentrics, got quite a shock from an ad which appeared in a July 1880 issue.

It read: "For Sale Cheap - a skeleton in good running order, newly painted and refitted. Inquire of Dr. Thomas Rainey, Big Beaver, Mich." When a doctor sells a skeleton, that is something to think about.

NO LESS SURPRISING was the one in a September 1883 issue: "For sale cheap - a light skeleton, almost new - Call quick or you will lose a good chance. John Lawson, Clawson, Mich."

However, two others which ran in the meantime, cleared up the matter. Dr. C. M. Mayhew offered for sale a single seated cutter and skeleton wagon, and J. W. Perry, of Big Beaver, had a pair of new belsajigs and a skeleton wagon.

In those days a skeleton was more than a bag of bones.

The first Eccentric, on May 2, 1878, contained one classified ad: "DR. E. R. RAYNALE - wishes the party who borrowed his scythe last summer to return it immediately." It ran for two more weeks.

All classifieds ran under the heading of "Wants, Lost, Found, etc." Business cards were listed in classified fashion, containing the person's name in capital letters and stating the nature of his business or services.

One of these was: "E. L. PARKER, D.D.S., office first door west of the Presbyterian Church. Nitrous oxide gas used for extracting teeth."

ANOTHER BUSINESSMAN, apparently a veterinarian, told of his services in the same way: "OWEN SWAN - can cure the following diseases by his new method: Coughing, Driving on One Rein, Shying, Pulling, Baulking, Running at the Eyes, Stoving and all diseases caused by imperfect medication."

For more of the first 10 years that The Eccentric was published, the classifieds occupied part of the left hand column on page one, but occasionally appeared briefly on the back page also.

On May 9, in the second issue, the following ad appeared: "Wanted - a few lively clerks to assist Nealand and Pinn in their laborious occupation. Must come well recommended."

Perhaps the villagers were familiar with Nealand and Pinn, but there was no further explanation of what their occupation was.

The first lost item, a gold cuff pin, was also advertised in the second issue. Other lost items in later issues included one lemon colored silk handkerchief, a black silk parasol with a wooden handle, and: "Lost - while attending the funeral of Israel Beattie, on Monday last, an enameled gold breast pin. Finder will be suitably rewarded by returning it to the owner. Mrs. Frank Ford, Birmingham."

MOST CLASSIFIEDS pertaining to lost items, although seemingly offered liberal rewards for their return. The finder was usually instructed to leave the recovered items at the post office.

The first farm for sale, in August, 1878, was 87 1/2 acres, two and a half miles north of Birmingham, owned by Thomas Stone. No price was given.

The first classified ad for real estate in town, in March, 1879, was for a house and lot on Sagnaw St., now Woodward Ave., for \$800. In February, 1882, a barn owned

by J. Cranch in good condition, was offered for \$600.

L. B. Peabody offered for sale in 1878, "a large telescope. Has been used in high houses near Detroit, Mich. Will sell for the price." In 1879, someone wanted "a horse for its keeping. Address X, Y, Z this office."

ONE OF THE MOST amazing as well as amusing things about the goods and services offered over 80 years ago, was the value placed on them. In many instances a trade was requested.

William Mason, of Birmingham, was anxious to sell his fine parlor organ. He offered to take, in part payment, hay, wheat, oats, corn, pigs or sheep. Louis Herka, of Fontaine, wanted Louis in exchange for money or "tomatoes" and Arthur Johns, of the Watkins Stock Farm, wanted all the manure he could get offered to pay for it in wood or straw.

R. Fulford, a nearby farmer, offered goose feathers for sale at 68 cents a pound and A. L. Shavolt, of Birmingham, wanted 1,000 doves or tame pigeons brought to him immediately.

A teacher of music, Anna Hawley, advertised in 1882, that she would give lessons on the piano or organ, at the pupil's home, for \$10 for lessons.

The foreign language curriculum may have had its start in November, 1884, when Peter Klinger advertised that he wanted "some scholars for taking lessons in German, beginning December 2; instruction twice per week. Charge \$1 per month."

WILLIAM SMITH's cider mill used apples from local trees and in September, 1879, he requested 5,000 bushels of apples, offering to pay 15 cents a bushel for them.

Hired household help was fairly uncommon and would be today, but in 1878 a girl to do general house work for a family of four, in return for her board and the opportunity to attend the village school.

The following year another ad appeared: "Wanted - a girl to do general house work for a family of five. Wages \$2 per week. The price was still the same in the fall of 1885 and the applicants to the door very fast. The ad ran for six weeks.

In 1882, the majority of the classified ads were for the sale of livestock, mostly cattle, horses, and pigs; or property, largely farms. C. W. Pinn, of Big Beaver, had for sale "a new pony, sound and kind to a lady or family horse."

THE FLOWERY PHRASES and excess words used in the early ads make amusing reading today. For example, in March 1882, the following ad appeared: "Having removed my blacksmith shop to my new building west of my house on Martin street, I am now better prepared than ever before to execute all kinds of blacksmithing, horse shoeing, etc. Satisfaction guaranteed in all cases. Shop next to Advent church, F. Richardson."

Also in September, 1882: "I am now prepared to make cider in any quantity for anybody, having just finished my new mill, which will run by steampower. I am convinced that I can give satisfaction to all. Try me. F. W. Phelps, one mile south of Big Beaver."

MANY OF THE families in town owned their own cow or cows, but

for those who did not have a built in milk supply, H. Lester informed the public in November, 1881, "Having rented the R. Bird property, formerly occupied by R. P. Fulford, I can now prepare to furnish good, pure, fresh milk in any quantity, delivered at your door. Leave orders at Whitehead and Mitchell to secure prompt delivery."

Students at the high school often boarded with families in town and two local ladies with diverse talents appealed to them in December, 1884, with the following ad: "Miss Allen has opened a millinery room at Mrs. Carter's, opposite the school house, where she will be pleased to see anyone wishing anything in her line. Mrs. Carter anything that she will furnish 5, 10 and 15 cent lunches for foreign scholars. Surely one need not eat cold dinners at these rates."

By the mid-1880's, an ad to sell a house in town had to offer more than a reasonable price and a good location, and Julian Lest did that when he advertised his "Good new house with every modern convenience, such as coal closet, wood house, well, cistern, out houses, small fruit, etc. Easy terms."

Frequently the merchants in town used the classified columns for their wares, as well as display advertising, which often took up most of the left half of the front page, but rarely with an illustration of any kind.

WHITEHEAD AND Mitchell's general store had an eye catcher with their "are you ever troubled with poor vinegar? Then buy Alden's genuine cider vinegar, 30 cents a gallon. For sale only by Whitehead and Mitchell, who will pay you cash for all the pickles spoiled if you use Alden's genuine cider vinegar."

Another Whitehead and Mitchell eye catcher read: "It's too cheap. Only \$4 for a set of dishes; 56 cents a dozen. Buy now while it's cheap but you can have them at that figure. That brings a large, handsome earthen tea pot for only 9 cents."

Cheap or not, either they were overstocked or undersold, because the ad ran from January 24 through November 14, 1889, every week.

Mr. Mitchell also asked, "Do you want a cheap buggy?" and asked the interested parties to see him and he would sell "an open buggy so cheap it will make your hair stand on end."

SUDDENLY in 1889, the churches made themselves known in the classified columns. The first to advertise was the Baptist Church, calling itself "the little church around the corner." The ad told the hours of services, name of the preacher, and ended with: "All are cordially invited. Seats free."

The January 7, 1886 issue of the Eccentric was misdated 1885, but the following week was correctly dated 1886. In that year, Wild's Steam Laundry in Detroit sought laundry work in Birmingham where work would be "sent and returned ready two weeks without extra charge."

Every week from Oct. 28, 1886, through Dec. 8, 1887, Samuel Jarvis offered for sale, cheap, his village lots "bounded by Chester, Townsend and Merrill streets, lying just south of the school house."

Today's housewives, appalled by the weekly grocery bills, have one thing for which they can be thankful. In 1887, E. R. Post hoped he was telling prospective customers about the choice, light Brahma

eggs he had for sale at \$1 for 13 eggs. Several later ads for eggs also gave prices for 13 eggs rather than a dozen.

If a 19th century German linguist had not had such a stubborn streak, we might all today be speaking and writing a language called Volapuk, an artificial tongue created from the word roots of several European languages.

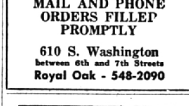
The invention of a Catholic priest named Johann Martin Schleyer, Volapuk was first presented to the world in 1880 and within ten years had supporters, estimated in the millions, all over the globe. It was the stubbornness of Volapuk's creator that led to its downfall. An academy was formed to promote the study of the new language and the members of the academy proved that certain changes should be made. Father Schleyer held that Volapuk was his personal property and refused to let anybody tamper with it. The members of the academy then dropped Volapuk altogether and took up other artificial languages. Volapuk declined steadily in popularity and has now ceased to exist.

When Dave Wickersham defeated Minnesota in his first two starts for the Detroit Tigers he ran his career record against the Twins to 9 and 3.

Our Decorator's Choice Of The Week

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These multi-colored, imported decanters would make an unusual gift for Father's Day. See our displays for that hard to find decorator item.



FROM \$6.50 Each

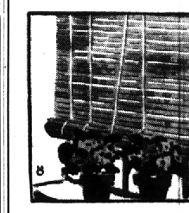
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