

In Our Opinion . . .

Professor Finds A Complication In City-Township Unity Drive

Those forward-looking civic activists hoping for consolidation of Farmington city and township must have received a jolt when Prof. Arthur Bromage of the University of Michigan last week spelled out the difficulties of such a project.

Dr. Bromage spoke at a meeting of the Future Farmington Area Study Committee, a group which formally isn't committed to anything except gathering facts. Most people apparently believe otherwise, however, because the committee keeps issuing denials that it's committed to consolidation.

Until now, the activists had been thinking in terms of city and township votes on a consolidation. Dr. Bromage, one of the state's and nation's experts on municipal administration, said it may be more complicated.

The consolidation law is unclear, as Dr. Bromage views it. This means the State Supreme Court will ultimately be asked to rule.

THE PROBLEM is whether the law requires a separate vote for villages. If, as Dr. Bromage says, the villages would get a separate vote, then the Farmington consolidation plan will require four approvals instead of two—one for the city, one for the township, and one each for the two villages in the township.

Signs of Spring, Signs Of People

You can tell a good bit about a person by asking him how he knows Spring has arrived.

If he answers "the tulips are sprouting," then he—or probably she—is a gardener.

If he says something about the "vernal equinox," he's a scientific type.

If he answers that he watches for the first robin, then he doesn't know much about nature, because robins are commonly spotted in February and sometimes in January or December.

If he answers that he listens for tiny frogs called "spring peepers," then he's the outdoors type.

The wife of one of our staff members, however, has a system all her own. She says Spring has arrived when little girls put on their mothers' high-heeled shoes and old dresses, and hold a fashion parade on the street.

She must be young at heart.

Looking Back in the Files

- 5 Years Ago**

APRIL 5, 1962

Cville Retrenches
Some sharp retrenchments and revisions in the Clarenceville School District's programs and services are going to be necessary as a result of defeat of the five-mill operating levy proposal voted on March 27.

Council for Fluoride
On a split vote, a motion was passed by the City Council Monday night recommending that the City of Detroit consider favorably the fluoridation of its water supply.

Meters Retired
Acting on the request of the management of Borman Food Stores, the City Council took action approving the removal of parking meters on Farmington and State St. around the Food Fair Store at this location.

Falcon Cagers
This year's varsity basketball team tied with Berkley for the Inter-Lakes championship, won the district championship, but were then defeated by one point in a heartbreaking regional game by Dearborn.
- 10 Years Ago**

APRIL 4, 1957

Salaries Up
Substantial increases in the salaries of the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer were overwhelmingly approved by the electors at the Annual Township Meeting held Saturday afternoon at the Town Hall.

Mills for Cville
The Clarenceville School Board Thursday evening set 12 as the date for a special election on the proposed levying of four mills for operation purposes to cover a period of five years.

Election Results
For the first time in the history of Farmington Township, a Democratic candidate has been elected as Supervisor.

No Majority
City voters, Monday, failed to provide a sufficient majority to permit the borrowing of \$50,000 for construction of a new Public Works Dept. building, but they did authorize the issuance of a \$25,000 bond in lieu for new public works equipment.
- 15 Years Ago**

APRIL 3, 1952

Fire Hall
Final plans and specifications for the new Farmington Township Fire Hall to be constructed in the Clarenceville area are expected to be reviewed by the Board at a special meeting Tuesday afternoon or Friday, Ernest Blanchard, Township Supervisor, stated Tuesday.

New Captain
Dick Tyler was elected captain of the FHS basketball team for next season. Tyler is a junior now and this was his second year of varsity competition.

Champs
The sophomores defeated the seniors 25 to 23 in the final round of the volleyball playoffs. This enabled them to capture the championship.

Crews Expanded
Masonry crews have been increased at all the new buildings now under construction in the Farmington School District in a move to speed up completion of the units, O. E. Dunckel, superintendent, stated Tuesday.

The Farmington Enterprise

"A Continuing Journal Of Progress" Established 1888

Publisher Philip H. Power
Editor Tim Richard
General Manager Jeanne Beck
Circulation Manager Fred J. Wright
Advertising Representative Russ Oehler
Printing Superintendent Victor Howard

Published by Farmington Enterprise, Inc., 23623 Farmington Road, Farmington, Michigan, each Sunday. Entered as Second Class Matter at the U. S. Post Office, Farmington, Michigan. Advertiser's mail subscription change of address forms 3579, to Box 425, Farmington, Michigan 48024.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
By Carrier, Single copy, 10c; Monthly rate, 35c.
By Mail, \$4.00 with Farmington Address; \$5.00 Elsewhere.

PHONES
Home Delivery Service 474-8737
Subscriptions and Want Ads 474-6225

M. P. A.

A. N. R.

Stories of 'The Great War'

Dwindling Farmington Veterans Recall

The Conflict U.S. Entered 50 Years Ago

"We're the forgotten men," a World War I veteran said matter-of-factly the other day. "Forgotten? Some of us never learned. We recently came across a high school girl who was dimly aware that there was such a thing as World War I but wasn't certain who fought. Even some World War I vets themselves aren't entirely sure. They say "Germany" when you ask them who the enemy was. Actually, Germany was the country the U.S. citizenry paid much attention to. But Germany was allied with Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey. The side the U.S. joined consisted of Great Britain, France, Italy and (until 1917) Czarist Russia.

NEXT THURSDAY, April 6, marks the 50th anniversary of the United States' entry into World War I. President Woodrow Wilson called Congress into session in March, and three weeks later Congress declared war.

In Farmington, there is a group of World War I veterans whose number dwindles each year. They're now in their late 60's to middle 70's in age.

They constitute Barracks 1152 of the Veterans of World War I, and they meet the second Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. in the basement of the American Legion Hall on Grand River at Lakeway.

They have programs and speakers on various topics, a military flag ceremony, and a prayer for the buddies who never returned from Europe and the ones whom the Great Commander has thinned from their ranks with increasing frequency in recent years. We went to one of their recent meetings and asked several of them about the Great War, as it used to be called.



ROY MATTHEW

ROY MATTHEW, a former Farmington resident now of 14303 Yale, Livonia, was 22 years old and married when he was drafted in September of 1917. "I had tried my damndest to get into the Marines," he recalls. "I was up at Mett—a first sergeant in the artillery. I was lucky—I spoke a little French." That made it easier to acquire the refreshments which troopers craved.

Food was a big complaint. "Our mess sergeant had been a traveling salesman. Our first mess sergeant was a former cavalry man; they had to bust him; he couldn't cook. He could run a stable, maybe, but he couldn't cook. Today they train 'em."

Matthew's battle station was as much as 14 or 15 miles from the German lines, onto which the artillery would lob 155 mm. shells. Spotter planes would phone back directions. The World War I soldier wore wrap-around leggings. "I've often tried to find out who the hell invented them. They're not like these combat boots now."



ARCH DOGUE



RUSSELL O. GASTON

ARCH DOGUE, 21555 Mayfield, joined a "free-for-all" ambulance outfit that was organized at the University of Michigan, from which he and a few dozen other students dropped out to enlist.

"We were supposed to replace the American Field Service . . . All these fellows came from the universities. About 5,000 of us" were shipped to Allentown, Pa.

The bait was that we would be shipped over right away. So the first two shiploads did go over quickly. But when they got over, what happened was the American Field Service joined the U.S. Army ambulance service. I got stuck there in Allentown! A good many of the fellows transferred out to other services.

"Early in '18 over on the Italian front, they said, 'We haven't seen any U.S. Army men at all.' They (the Army) said, 'Well, we've got those damned ambulance men in Allentown . . . So we called in June of '18 on the Giuseppe Verdi . . . Later the unit went to France."

"They were supposed to have two horse-drawn ambulance units and two motor-drawn units of 15 or 20 men each. The 80th Division actually had one motor drawn unit, and here we were, 45 men.

"We were so damned good, after the war they sent us on to Germany . . . We never had a cold meal the time we were there."

"The saddest fellows, I think, were the ones who got shot: at the 11th hour of the 11th day (the armistice took effect Nov. 11, 1918, at 11 a.m.)

RUSSELL O. GASTON, 26445 Drake, first went into the infantry, "but the whole company was transferred into the 119th field artillery."

"They trained 'em there with horses and guns. But when we went to France, they transferred many of the boys to the French motor school . . . Then I was transferred to a heavy artillery corps—56th Coast Artillery."

"I fought in three big battles. When I got to going in the war—in the Meuse-Argonne offensive—I was driving a four-wheeled white truck. My job was to carry ammunition up to the front, to our guns; carried 100 pounds of high explosives every time I went to the front."

"I started as a quartermaster sergeant and wound up a wagoner—which was a chauffeur for the commander. Wagoner, I guess, was about corporal's pay, about 35 or 40 bucks a month."

"I was in 21 months; got out February or March, 1919."

"Fifty years ago, I was a young fellow, scrappin'. Now here I am, 74 or 75 years old—doesn't seem possible we went through all that. "The boys have it a lot better today. We had to walk, but now they're all mechanized."

Another man broke in: "Yeah, I had to walk 4,000 miles through France and up into Germany, Luxembourg."



ERNEST R. LUEDER

ERNEST R. LUEDER, 31707 Alameda, is commander of Barracks 1152 of the Veterans of World War I.

"I was a farmer before I went in—enlisted from Mt. Pleasant. I was in 120 days."

"I was an instructor in the convoy corps, teaching driving rules, loading and unloading troops; driving at night without lights, camouflage."

"We had truck drivers that used to drive ice trucks and that, and when they got there they couldn't do it. Fellow said driving at night, with 15 feet between trucks, that was quite a job."

"Of course, we all had whistle signals. I trained truck drivers over here, and they went overseas and drove troops to the front."

"When I got out, I went into the meat business, came to Farmington 43 years ago."



FRED MAAS

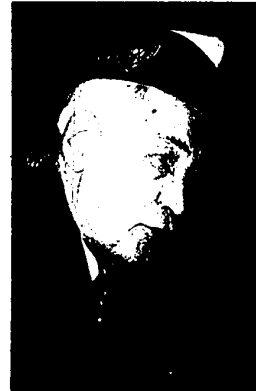
FRED MAAS, 24021 Pickett, served in the infantry "around Metz (in Belgium) and—what was the name of that forest we went through?"

(That forest was Argonne, described in one history book as "the greatest battle in American history." It ran 47 days, and the U.S. threw a million troops into the battle. It was an impenetrable mass of fallen timber; tanks were useless, snipers rampant.)

"I knew German fluently. I've got away from it now. They took me on what they called listening-post duty. I never really got in any conflicts."

"In listening post duty, you're out ahead of 'em, you're between the lines. At times I was close enough that I could look right into their camps. No, I can't say I had any close calls."

Maas returned two years later, in June of 1919. After the war, he went into carpentry.



ANDREW FLETCHER

ANDREW FLETCHER, 22036 Pickett, was the only Navy man in the group.

"I was on a sub-chaser. We'd operate in flotillas of three out in the North Sea and English Channel. It was full of live ones."

"Live ones" were German submarines. It was the Imperial Germany's attacks on shipping that were to a great extent responsible for American entry into the war.

"Edison had just invented an electronic listening device. You could listen for two or three miles."

Sub-chasers, said Fletcher, went on patrol for one to three days from bases in Ireland and Scotland.

Fletcher had had hospital experience before the war. When he enlisted, he wasn't sent to Great Lakes, Ill., for training, but was put almost immediately to work overseas.

An acting chief pharmacist's mate, he was the only medical person on board a ship with 68 enlisted men and seven officers.

After the war, he spent 40 years as an X-ray technician and physical therapist for Detroit Industrial Clinic.

That was how the men who were in it remember World War I. They smile now at their youthful zeal. And although the Great War failed to "make the world safe for democracy," their patriotism is undimmed.