

# Danger of Fire and Loss of Old Records Aided Campaign

## FORMER REPORTER RECOUNTS DRIVE

Brig Young Writes About Publicity Details

Editors note: The story behind the story of the educational campaign which resulted in the erection of the new county building is told by Brig Young, author of the following article and former editor of the Bay City Daily Times editorial staff. Mr. Young is now supervisor of the federal business census for the fourth Michigan district, which includes Bay and nine adjoining counties.

BY BRIG YOUNG

Adoption by the voters in the April, 1931 election of the proposal to issue bonds for the erection of a new Bay county building was a direct result of a strenuous three-months campaign of education and information. The question received an affirmative majority in every precinct and township but one and in that one, through a misunderstanding of dates, no public meeting was held to explain the proposition to the voters.

After the board of supervisors, at its January meeting, had adopted a resolution ordering a referendum vote on the proposition as presented to the body by Circuit Judge Samuel G. Houghton, the judge and the present writer outlined a campaign designed to present to the public the need for a new building to replace the old courthouse.

**Appointed Committees**

At the request of Judge Houghton, each supervisor appointed a committee from his ward or township to inspect the old building and to discuss with the judge the need for a new one. Beginning late in January, these committees began visiting the courthouse, one or more coming virtually every week day. The judge received each committee and made a personaly conducted tour of the old building, pointing out the fire hazards and describing the tremendous burden of expense which would be borne by the county and property owners should fire destroy the many records on file.

The judge and the committee then spent some time discussing the plan of financing which had been worked out in detail by the judge and which had met with the approval of financial experts.

In virtually every instance, the inspecting committees adopted resolutions proclaiming the obsolete and dangerous condition of the old courthouse and approving the plan for building a new one.

**Addressed Meetings**

In addition to these personal tours and discussions, committees, Judge Houghton sought every possible opportunity to address organizations or groups of every character. Rotary, Kiwanis, Exchange, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Masonic, Elks, Y. M. C. A. clubs, church societies, and many of every sort. A meeting was set in every township hall and in many of the rural school districts, and Judge Houghton spoke at many of these times in widely separated locations in the county.

on every committee inspection and meeting. Detailed descriptions of the financing plan as outlined by the judge was given through the columns of the newspaper.

A "Question and Answer" pamphlet describing in simple terms the need for the new building and the manner in which it could be financed was prepared and printed and distributed at every meeting addressed by Judge Houghton.

**Example Cited**

That the method of carrying the message to the people was correct was demonstrated graphically in one township. Meetings were arranged for Judge Houghton in one of the northern communities and in Frankenlust township in the southwest corner of the county on one night. Judge Houghton asked his colleague, Circuit Judge Clarence S. Browne, Saginaw county, to speak at the Frankenlust meeting during the early part of the evening until the Bay county jurist could get there from the other meeting. Judge Browne chose to discuss the referendum on capital punishment, favoring its adoption. Frankenlust township, incidentally, was the only district in Bay county which gave a majority in favor of the proposition.

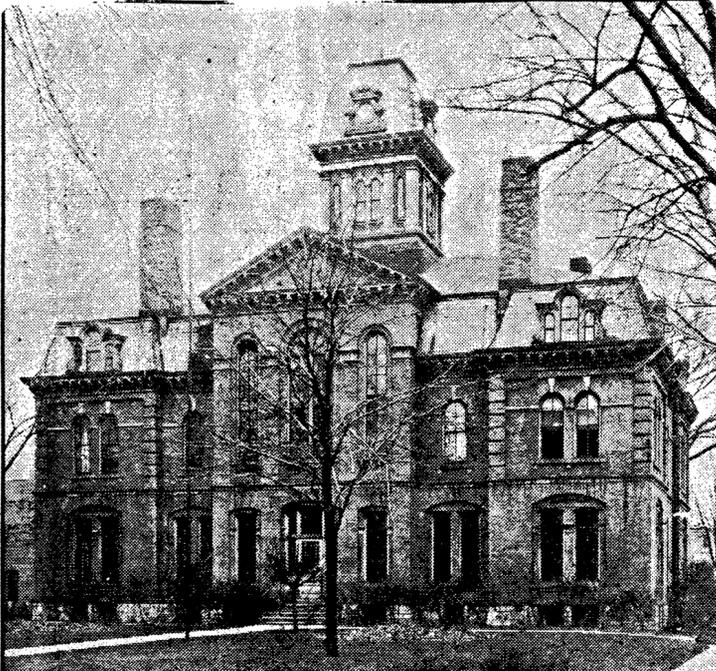
The task of informing the public as to the need for the new building and the desirability of building it at once was not without its hazards. During the latter days of the campaign, Judge Houghton's throat was in constant need of medical attention. On one occasion when the judge and C. L. Fox, county auditor, and the writer were en route to Bentley for a meeting, the judge's car overturned in a ditch near Finconing. Mr. Fox received a scalp wound. Judge Houghton's shin was barked and the writer was laid up for a week with an injured foot. But the judge and the auditor continued the trip and attended the meeting.

The result at the polls was gratifying to Judge Houghton and others who had given their time and efforts to the campaign.

Worked With Judge on Publicity Drive



## Old Courthouse: Gone, But Not Forgotten



Gunshots of the Civil war were still echoing when plans for this, the first Bay county courthouse, were discussed. The cornerstone was laid in 1868, and upon completion of the building, then one of the attractive structures of Center avenue, all appeared well for generations to come. But time and progress proved differently. Sixty-three years bring many changes. During the last 20 years there had been talk of a new county building, that the old one was a firetrap endangering records which, if destroyed, probably never could be replaced. Finally, in 1931, the battle was won, and thus was sounded the death knell of the old red brick courthouse at the northwest corner of Center and Madison avenues.

## X-RAY IS PRAISED BY CANCER EXPERTS

### Temple University Attaches Okeh Method

PHILADELPHIA, March 10.—An effective treatment for certain forms of cancer, recently announced from the Middlesex Hospital in London, has been found with gratifying results in the Temple university hospital, Dr. William N. Parkinson, dean of the university, reported.

The treatment, known as the fractional X-ray method, was discovered by Dr. Coulaud, a French scientist.

"We have followed the method here for the past three years," Dr. Parkinson said, "and have had very satisfactory results. It is not applicable to all cases of cancer. In fact, there are special types in which a few large doses of X-ray will accomplish more than a so-called 'Coulaud series.'"

"We have used the method in cases of cancer of the tongue, esophagus, lungs and practically every part of the body, but it will be necessary to continue the work for several years before we will be certain which methods are best suited to each type of cancer."

Hot summer months will hold so many cancer operators or practitioners in the public courts, that the Bay county judges will be at a disadvantage at village points in the winter.

## DARTMOOR PRISONERS SPURN AID OF CHURCH

Only Five Of 200 Sect Inmates Attend Sunday Services At Times

LONDON, March 10.—Dartmoor Prison has long been reckoned one of the toughest of British penal institutions. The prisoners mutinied there in 1922.

Now the Bishop of Exeter thinks the trouble is that they do not have compulsory attendance at Sunday services.

Out of a total of 200 Church of England prisoners, the Sunday congregations "did not" numbered only five, said his Lordship.

The bishop, after a meeting with the governor, told him that his safety.

## JUDGE HOUGHTON URGED NEW UNIT

Old Courthouse Ablaze Five Times In Two Years

BY JUDGE S. G. HOUGHTON  
Bay County Circuit Court

In January, 1931, I realized that the Courthouse Sinking fund would amount to more than \$200,000. I also appreciated that opportunity for labor was fast disappearing and that the building of a new county building would assist in relieving this unfortunate situation.

I was fully aware of the fact that the old courthouse had caught fire five times during the last two years, by careless use of matches and burning cigarettes; that the interior construction of the building was chiefly white pine, which with its age of 64 years had resulted into a veritable fire trap, entailing a large expense in maintenance, and so inadequate to necessitate the payments of large sums of money as rent for quarters for public officers in which to transact the business of the county; that the old building afforded but little protection for the enormous public records of Bay County.

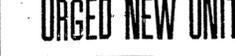
**Could No Longer Delay**

For two years I had been examining the cost and efficiency of county buildings and the probable cost of a new building adequate for the present and future requirements of Bay county. Being confronted with the steadily increasing fire hazard; the enormous cost to other counties in restoring such of its records destroyed by fire, as could be restored; the reduced cost of construction and opportunity for aiding the unemployed, I was convinced we could not afford to longer delay.

At the January, 1931, session of the board of supervisors a resolution was adopted providing for submitting to the electors a proposition to authorize the construction of a new county building. The legal requirements having been performed, the next and most important duty was to devise a plan to correctly inform the electors as to the condition of the old county building, the large unnecessary expense entailed by reason of its age and inadequacy, and the plan to defray the expense.

(Continued on Page 4 This Section)

## Spoke At Meetings On Building's Need



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to the Service of the Bay County District... Its Peoples and Its Communities

Today we join thousands of other citizens of Bay County in expressing our admiration and congratulations upon the completion of our imposing New Court House. It is an expression of confidence in the future of Bay City!

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