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*Founded in 1914 to serve the engineering and professional community.*

The Engineers Club does not assume responsibility for statements and opinions in articles, papers, and discussions appearing herein.

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# I WAS THERE!

*Elwyn Treat*

I was privileged to have known two great General Motors men in the late years of their lives, who were important men in the early days of the auto industry.

William (Bill) Chryst was a member of the original Barn Gang, who developed the electric automotive starter. He went on to be chief engineer of Delco. I met him at the Engineers Club in 1940, but didn't really know him until 1951, when we both became charter members of the newly formed Christ United Methodist Church.

This new church was like the original Barn Gang. The members did all the work, including lots of manual labor necessary to make the Old Colonial Inn (at the corner of Far Hills and Stroop) into a church. About two weeks before Christmas, Bill brought a truckload of live greenery, and all of us and Bill, who was 75 at the time, all had a ball decorating the church.

Two weeks later, I was in my hometown of Flint, Michigan, and visited my great uncle, Dr. David Leroy Treat, who was 77 at the time and had retired as chief medical

officer of the Buick Motor Co. Not only was he a highly respected member of Buick, he was a role model for the entire Treat Family. Being the youngest member of a farm family of 12 children, he had to work his way through medical college. Uncle Roy and his wife, Aunt Georgia, had no children, but they literally adopted all of the dozens of nephews and nieces as their children. They were like an extra set of grandparents to my brothers, sisters and me.

During my visit, I told Uncle Roy about the wonderful experiences I was having in the "Gem City" of Dayton. Then he told me that he had a friend from Dayton with whom he used to go fishing. His name was Bill Chryst. Did I ever feel good when I told him of my experience two weeks earlier and that Bill Chryst was now my friend.

*Note:* The 1919 letter below was written to my Uncle David by General Motors vice president W.F. Chrysler, who later founded the Chrysler Corp.

